

2017

Hickerson: Suburban News Articles, 1992-2017

Doug Hickerson

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Doug Hickerson, Freelance Writer

Over the past 23 years I have written articles about interesting people and places in the Brockport area.

Leaving a career in college administration, I started freelance writing in retirement. The people in these stories first captured my attention in the daily course of my life in the Brockport area. The article clippings were hidden in my files over the years. Recently retrieving them and laying them out created a visual delight in the rich human fabric of our community. The woven threads are a variety of fascinating people and cherished places. I am pleased to share these stories through the kindness of Seymour Library.

All the articles were written for the *Suburban News* and *Hamlin-Clarkson Herald* under the editorship of Evelyn Dow, now editor emeritus. I am grateful for her

support in what has become a part-time second career. I took the photos for the articles until the last several years when my wife, Dianne, thankfully has more expertly taken on the artful task.

Brief Biography

Doug Hickerson was born in Brooklyn, New York, in 1938. His career has been in student development administration in several colleges. He retired from The College at Brockport in 1987 where he served eleven years as Assistant Vice President for Student Affairs.

His civic involvement in Brockport and Rochester has included: leading a peace initiative in Rochester (The Task Force to Reduce Violence), local church leadership, preserving historic places, and fostering appreciation for the Native American culture. He is a member of the select Leadership Rochester organization, class of 1993. He was a recipient of the Faith in Action Award from the Greater Rochester Community of Churches in 1997. He has written articles for the *Genesee Country Magazine* and the *Good News Rochester* newspaper. He published a book, [The Kingdom of God and the Yellow Barn Church](#) in 2006. He holds a Doctor of Education degree from Penn State University. Doug lives in Sweden Village with his wife, Dianne, an artist and retired teacher.

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Suburban News

"Giving you what you're looking for --"

A WESTSIDE NEWS, INC. PUBLICATION ©1992

ISSUE NO. 34 WEEK OF AUGUST 25, 1992 - OUR 4TH YEAR

Larry Nichols Diagnostician of pings, thuds clangs and plunks

by Doug Hickerson

Larry Nichols' auto repairs price list starts at "Ping Ping Ping \$35, Plunk Ping Plunk \$50" all the way to "Clang Thud Klunk \$325." You will find Larry always smiling, as though he just posted the list. Or, he may be just happy after 37 years of repairing automobiles in Brockport. I watched Larry, Scott, and Dale at work one day when my broken fan belt made me a captive audience. "Nichols Service," secluded where Owens Illinois meets State on the canal, seemed like a crossroads for other drop-ins with their pings and plunks.

A young couple watched as shocks were installed. A woman drove in needing a new tail light bulb. They couldn't take her now; she said she would drive "uptown" and would be back. A bearded man with a bag of empty pop cans ambled in from walking the canal and asked if his car was ready. The phone rang several times. Cars filled all three bays of the shop. Two were just outside the door with the hoods up.

There was a sense that time and hard work had settled in here with the seasoned smell of old oil. A free-standing furnace stretched ducts like a modern sculpture across dusty ceilings and walls. Boxes and tools were neatly placed on shelves or pegs with no space to spare. Old signs, faded certificates, photos of fishing trips, and more humor covered the walls: "Never mind the dog - beware of the owner."

The owner is not to be feared. In this "Mayberry" milieu, Larry is a mild and masterful mechanic who uses computer technology, good management, and business ethics that keep customers coming back.

Pings and plunks are diagnosed by computer. Larry's electronic scope detects codes from a car's computers - at least one computer in every car since 1981. The decoding literature is a heavy investment. "We've got reams and reams of manuals and schematics (diagrams) for cars in order to do electrical work - easily \$300 or \$35,000 worth," Larry boasts. He gets business from dealers and other shops that do not have his skill, patience or resources, he says.

The computer does not solve all problems. Some testing of circuits has to be done by hand, tracing wires from one end of the car to another, a time-



John Clifford/Westside News Inc.

Speaking the language of car repair

Vehicle owners, whatever year or make they have, share common needs from time to time - the need for repairs. Brockport's Larry Nichols has been repairing motor vehicles for 37 years so he's had to adjust to the changes in the business, including computerized systems.

consuming process, according to Larry. "Sometimes we have to pull up seats, pull out door panels to get to a wire; you can easily spend two or three days to locate a problem."

Pricing the repair of pings and plunks takes more than pouring the poster. After all the labor, "You don't have anything to show but a small piece of frayed wire," Larry says of customers waiting to see what they're paying for. "I try to charge the person for what the job should entail." He adjusts the price down, if he thinks he should have found the problem sooner. Full price might be charged to the customer who was too embarrassed to tell what caused the problem - such as putting jumper cables on the wrong battery terminals. A lot of labor and money can be saved with the up-front confession.

How does Larry manage all these repair jobs, scheduled and unscheduled? With a team of three it is manageable. Scott is assigned to electrical work and Dale to the mechanical problems, with some overlap. Besides helping Scott and Dale, Larry orders parts immediately, takes time to discuss repairs with customers, and takes most of the drop-ins. "If you can get that guy out of there in say

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Larry Nichols - diagnostician of pings and plunks

Continued from page 1
half an hour, and keep him happy, he might come back."

Larry's ability to manage comes in part from his experience at Kodak where he first worked as a 1955 Brockport High graduate. His four years there included a

position as expediter in what was "Camera Works." In 1959, he joined the new Dynacolor in Rochester and worked as foreman in several areas for ten years. In 1967, Larry earned an associate's degree in business management at R.I.T. His wife, Pat, helps manage the business as bookkeeper, as his mother and father did before Larry bought the shop.

By 1969, Larry knew he wanted to work full time with his hands. He had helped with his father's auto shop parttime since 1955. In 1969, he bought his father's former shop in Clarkson where the K&K now stands. He soon moved the shop to the Arco Station in the present Pizza Hut location. After 15 years there, he moved to his State Street shop.

And the customers followed. Larry estimates that up to 50 percent of his customers have been with him for ten years or more. He gets about 5 percent new customers each year, most of those by word of mouth.

I asked Larry what his greatest reward was after 37 years of repairing cars. "Well, I guess basically you get customers who have enough faith in you to say, 'Look at my car, check it over, do whatever it needs, don't call me.' That makes you feel good that somebody's got that much trust in you."



John Clifford/Westside News Inc.

Manuals and schematics for electrical systems and decoding for computers for all makes and models help Larry Nichols and his mechanics find out what's causing the 'pings and plunks.'

Editor's note: This is the first of a series of articles Westside News Inc. plans along the theme "It's a tough job, but someone's got to do it."

Enjoying the Signify!

WHILE HAVING MY CAR INSPECTED AT A GARAGE, I Used

AUTO REPAIR PRICE LIST

| | |
|------------------|----------|
| Ping-Ping-Ping | \$ 35.00 |
| Plunk-Ping-Plunk | \$ 50.00 |
| Klunk-Ping-Klunk | \$125.00 |
| Thud-Klunk-Thud | \$200.00 |
| Clang-Thud-Klunk | \$325.00 |

John Clifford/Westside News Inc.

It's a simple price list clipped from some publication long ago, but it's part of the Mayberry-like milieu at Nichols Service.

Suburban News

The Nesbitt's: Sealing driveways and bonding the family

by Doug Hickerson

"Nesbitt's Driveway Sealing": The large crop of signs on driveways is a sure sign of summer's end.
If you happen to pass a driveway in

progress, you may look twice. Doing this rough and dirty work you will see two young women in T-shirts or tank tops, old jeans and three-dollar sneakers. They are pouring over 10 gallons of sealer at once,

mucking in it as they spread the goo with a squeegee and broom. Meet Amy Nesbitt, 20, and Julie Nesbitt, 23.

I met them across the dining room table at their large farmhouse in Hamlin. Alongside Amy and Julie was their sister, Chrisa, 24, also a partner in the business. The change from drudge-work clothes to their present appearance was understated by Chrisa, "We clean up well." Indeed! This lovely trio exuded boundless energy, charm, intelligence, self-confidence, and a devoted friendship. Their father, Tom Nesbitt, explained how the business started. A math teacher at Brockport High, Tom began sealing driveways in 1969 as extra income in the summer. In high school, the girls began working with him in teams of two, trading off their time with other summer jobs. In the last several years, the girls took on the majority of the work to earn money for college.

Amy and Julie have been the primary team in the last two summers. Chrisa quips, "They won't let me work; they say they'll pay me \$4.00 an hour!" More friendly banter from Amy, Julie, and Tom about Dad's role last summer: "We worked, you sat under the shade trees and chatted with people." All such comments were made with laughter, respect, and an occasional pat on Dad's arm.

My next question sounded like, "What are nice kids like you doing in work like this?", disguising my respect for any work done well. The chorus came back, "We love it! You can't beat it! You're outside

and talking to people, working on your own."

They start at 7:45 a.m. and do driveways until 2:00 p.m. The rest of the day includes doing estimates and picking up their signs. But they insist working on driveways is the easy part.

The enthusiasm is matched by pride in workmanship. I asked how their technique compares to the do-it-yourself homeowner. They're scared to get in it. No one wants to walk in it; it's going to get on you. The Nesbitt's pour out ten to twenty gallons at a time. Amy spreads it with a squeegee and Julie follows with a wide push-broom, making a smooth finish the length of the driveway and a straight line at the edge of the garage and sidewalk. They do make skeptics into believers. Isn't this supposed to be a "man's" job? It is mostly the older homeowners, men and women, who tend to watch the process closely, as though wondering if these young women can do the job.

Amy is a Physical Education major and a senior at SUNY Cortland. Julie is majoring in Interior Design and also is interested in sculpture. She received a two-year degree at SUNY Cobleskill in Animal Science and Animal Husbandry. Chrisa, a graduate of Nazareth College, will begin her teaching career this fall at Hilton's Merton Williams School, teaching 7th and 8th grade French and Spanish.

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John Clifford/Westside News Inc.

Julie, Chrisa, Amy and Tom Nesbitt pose with tools of the trade and their sealer-equipped pick-up truck.

Hamlin-Clarkson Herald and Suburban News - September 8, 1992 25

Sealing driveways and bonding the family

Continued from page 1

In conversation, which included Mother Donna Nesbitt, the family showed great respect and affection for each other and a joy in being together. What does the popular term "family values" mean to them? Chrisa said it was "growing up with a strong moral fiber in your family, good role models, parents that are together, always supporting you. Everyone supports everyone else in what they want to do."

To Amy it also included "helping each other out, knowing the difference between right and wrong." Julie empha-

sized, "we've always been and will always be there for each other; there is never any doubt about that."

For parents Tom and Donna, "unity that we have" is part of their definition and that all the family members can "be individuals and have their own ideas." The girls added that it was their parents that made the family strong. They were "always there." They did family things together, camping, going on many trips, and, when they were younger, taking cows to the fair in the 4H program. "They have always taught us to be very self-confident," was Amy's final assessment.



John Clifford/Westside News Inc.

Julie Nesbitt (foreground) brushes in sealer as sister Amy squeegees.

4B Suburban News & Hamlin-Clarkson Herald-June 7, 1993

"Dr. Bowdler, DMD: Drilling? Maybe, Boring? Never"

by Doug Hickerson

One of Bill Cosby's old routines is "The Dentist Chair." He describes the dentist putting all this metal in his mouth and then going away...forever! Unlike Cosby's character, a patient in Dr. Tom Bowdler's office would not be preoccupied with the hardware in his mouth. "Forever" is shortened by studying the surroundings that speak of the man.

In one of the two chairs facing the bay window you may think you are visiting a late-nineteenth century home, gazing through windows framed in their original, restored, handgrained casings. Lace curtains soften the glare and lend a homey touch.

The dentist who just left you in solitude purchased the house at 33 West Avenue and personally redesigned the interior and retained the exterior, keeping much of the homey character in a clinical setting.

Dr. Bowdler's talent for design is seen in his home and garden on Sweden Hill Road. The wood and stone exterior and airy rooms with high vaulted ceilings were his creation. All the painting and staining were done by Dr. Bowdler and his wife, Jane.



Paul Sherman/Westside News, Inc.

Dr. Tom Bowdler's avocation is aviation. A licensed pilot, the Brockport dentist has this "work in progress" in his West Avenue basement - a 1929 vintage single engine plane.

Back in the dentist chair, still feeling abandoned, look down at three large shallow pots on the floor, one bridging two, containing a corn plant, Danish ivy and other greenery. Here is the man's love of landscape transplanted to office space.

At home the decks and landscaping are his own design and his own labor. His front yard has thriving apple trees. In the rear, a rambling deck has a miniature garden nestled against it - Dr. Bowdler calls it "Japaneseque." His next landscape design is a "water

garden," still in the sketching stage.

A final focus in your dentist chair solitude is the airplane mobile suspended in front of the lace curtains. Five tiny bi-planes move with the slight airflow. Next to them is another bi-plane fashioned from a Coke can and Coke bottle caps.

Dr. Bowdler returns in time to satisfy your curiosity. With the hardware removed, you practice jaw movement with "Why the aviation display?" X-ray time! Your jaw is again incapacitated and the doctor's reply fills the former silence...

He received his pilot's license four years ago and has been flying a Cherokee Warrior, co-owned with a friend and kept at Ledgesdale Airpark. He flies mostly for pleasure, having just returned from a family trip to Florida. Family life, including two boys, Jeff and Greg, is his first priority.

Someday he will be flying in an airplane made by his own hands. In his basement he is constructing from wood a Pietenol Air Camper, a 1929 vintage single engine plane. "I wanted something easy to fly, just to go up on a nice evening and putt-putt around. It only goes 70 miles per hour, and with an open cockpit and a flat board as a seat, you're not likely to make long trips in it."

The fifteen-foot fuselage is made of strips of spruce, fir and ash, cresting the frame on which certified aircraft plywood is glued.

"I've always been fascinated by building things of my own. For instance, we designed our house, I designed this office, and I've designed all the landscaping."

Continued on page 5B

"Dr. Bowdler, DMD: Drilling? Maybe, Boring? Never"

Continued from page 4B

became interested in the Experimental Aircraft Association which is a group that fosters that whole idea," he says.

Your X-rays are o.k. and you are ready to leave; your stiff jaw and numb lip are able to utter, "What else do you do? Haven't I seen you in the Brockport Symphony Orchestra?" Indeed, he is the tuba player for about eight years now. He was also a member of the Symphony Board for about the same time.

It's time for the next patient. No time to ask Dr. Bowdler, Eagle Scout, and about his many years as a Boy Scout leader, and his new position as Troop Committee Chairperson in Troop #85. And certainly no time to ask about his 18 years in several leadership positions in the Brockport First Presbyterian Church.

Let Bill Cosby make fun! You were no victim in the dentist chair. Alone or attended, you were in the presence of Brockport's "man for all seasons."



Paul Sherman/Westside News, Inc.

Amidst backyard garden plantings he designed, Tom Bowdler plants his tuba. He's a Brockport Symphony Orchestra musician.

Lilies, Lillian AND OTHER PERENNIALS

by Doug Hickerson

On Redman Road, just north of West Avenue, a small green paradise stands out against vast acres of brown fields. Drive slowly past Lillian Totter's yard in spring or summer. Blossoms abound in lush flower beds ranging across an acre of shaded lawn with a creek winding through it. Daffodils, tulips, iris, peonies, rhododendron, daisies, poppies, holly hocks, lilies, and others appear in their respective seasons.

To meet Lillian you must first make friends with her companion, Ajax, the one-hundred and forty pound long-haired German Shepherd.

Meet Lillian Totter, going on 87, who alone tills and keeps this Eden. Her story has some romance and beauty, mixed with the sweat of her brow.

Lillian's reflections on childhood include Sunday rides in a survey with two brothers, three sisters, and parents William and Mary Lee, attending the Baptist Church "since I was in diapers." Home was just north on Redman Road, then a dirt road on which she walked to the school house on the corner at West Avenue.

She met husband Tom at a cousin's wedding when she was sixteen. She married at 21. The interim was needed "til I got brains in my head," Lillian says.

That was 64 years ago. In this storybook setting you can imagine a wedding reception amid flower beds on the shady lawn. Not so. The front of the house was all orchard grass. The new bride used a horse and dirt scraper to clear the land

for planting. All the perennials, still regenerating after 64 years, she acquired by bartering with cow manure.

A rugged farm life filled the rest of the years. The original farm, 120 acres, grew hay, sweet corn, tomatoes, cherries and apples, all sold at the A&P factory on Fair Street. At first the farm couple used horses to drive farm machinery. Then Lily and Tom had their own tractors, sharing in the dragging and hay raking.

Lillian would start her day feeding breakfast to several farm hands who boarded there. Then to the fields, back to fix lunch, back to the fields, and home again to fix dinner. Evenings were spent quilting or playing gin rummy with the farm hands. Her busy life was also devoted to raising her daughter, Joyce Henion, who now lives on Gallup Road.

She also supervised about 80 workers in the cherry orchard. Two or three of these have remained loyal. Now elderly, they return every year looking for work.

One day at Brockport Cold Storage she "faced" 1,500 bushels of apples (filling them with the best apples on top). The bushels filled two railroad cars.

This hardy soul says about life of labor. "I enjoyed it; it was fun." What does she like best about farm work? "What I'm doing now, taking it easy, being my own boss."

"Taking it easy" includes every morning in the garden hoeing. Flower beds and pathways are meticulously edged and weed free. Watering takes 20 trips with a watering can.

Lillian's creativity and perseverance are not limited to the garden. The same hands that grub the soil have hand-stitched

one-hundred and seventeen quilts.

With a couple of hours daily, she can create a quilt in about one month. A recent quilt numbered 7,500 pieces as tiny as an inch square. Her quilts have been sold in Washington state, Nebraska, Florida and California and shown in many local quilt shows.

Like her garden outside, three spacious rooms abound in glorious colors, fine textures, and magnificent designs in her quilts, hooked rugs and wall hangings, braided rugs as large as 10 by 13 feet, and clothes on miniature dolls.

In the Garden of Eden, God placed Adam to till the soil and He sewed the first garments for the occupants. You leave Lillian Totter's garden and home, awe-inspired at what her hands have created, and humbly aware that she is engaged in a divine occupation.



Paul Sherman/Waichute News Inc.

The gardens surrounding her Redman Road home represent only one of the special interests of 87-year-old Lillian Totter.

Suburban News

Giving you news and consumer information for over 40 years

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ISSUE NO. 36 WEEK OF SEPTEMBER 6, 1993

How techno-ready are you?

Upwards of 55 percent of Americans remain resistant—even phobic—when taking advantage of technology in their everyday lives.

According to a nationwide survey by Dell Computer Corporation, one-fourth of all US adults have never used a computer, programmed a VCR or a car radio.

If you're one of 25 percent of surveyed Americans who still mourns the demise of the typewriter, you might profit by 'defining' your techno-type before making the big step into the world of technology.

Techno-Tolerance in America



• Techno-wizard

Is a technology expert or hobbyist who wants the hottest equipment for the lowest price. Greatest concern is 'losing the edge.'

• Techno-to-go

Wants a computer that comes ready to go right out of the box. Interested in what a computer can do but not how it works. Greatest concern is being left alone without service or support.

• Techno-boomer

Wants to look smart; researches and seeks recommendations before making a purchase decision. Greatest concern is making the wrong decision.

• Techno-phobe

Rejects technology or avoids whenever possible.

• Techno-teamer

Uses a computer at work and is part of a network. Productivity is a primary concern for work that is largely job and team-oriented. Greatest concern is network failure.

• Techno-critical

Relies on computers for more sophisticated tasks which are critical to doing the job, such as computer-aided engineering or design. Greatest concern is system failure because it hurts business.

James Baston: Homestyle wizard who can change your image

by Doug Hiekerson

You just received your parents' 40th wedding anniversary photo portrait. After phoning them to say you're framing it for a special place in the house, you find Junior added mustaches with his crayons. Your folks are visiting next week—how can you fix it in time?

By "magic," says Jim Baston (pronounced Ba-stone), president and owner

of Monroe Digital Imaging, Inc. That is the name of the "electronic imaging" business in his Chili home.

Using computer equipment, he can scan the photo, re-create it on his monitor, erase Junior's art work, and output a totally restored photo. And, it can be done and returned in a couple of days, in time for framing, hanging, and your parents' visit.

Customers first take their damaged photos to one of the stores that subcontract the work to Jim. Standard estimates can be given for the work to be done, such as a "scratch removal" on a 5 x 7 ranging from \$23 to \$39. The staff call Jim and describe unusual cases to get a final estimate on the phone. He picks up and delivers twice a week at each location.

It is not just erasing blemishes. This electronic "manipulation" includes removing objects or people in the original photo and reconstructing the empty space. For example, an inn in the Adirondacks wanted their historic house featured on a brochure, without the cars and street sign appearing in the only photo they had.

Manipulating with his computer's "mouse," the cursor on the screen deleted the cars and sign, leaving empty spaces on a tree, the road, and the house. Jim copied pieces of the existing tree and road and placed them in the spaces. More imagination was called for in re-creating the details of the hidden porch railing. All unwanted objects vanished literally without a trace.

Jim also can add people or objects. A photography studio recently sent Jim a formal family portrait, plus the individual portrait of a family member who could not be present. Jim inserted the family member, looking as if she had been present at the photo session.

Jim acquired his expertise in 19 years as an Eastman Kodak Company employee, starting as a draftsman and retiring in December 1992 as a Photographic Applications Engineer for Testing and Analytical Services.

Jim's home industry is now "run on a shoestring," he says. "As I can afford more, I hope to be out of the house and into a store front in about a year."

His wife, Jeanette, has been very supportive of Jim's venture. To help finances in this start-up period, Jeanette went from part-time work to full-time as office administrator in a Brighton dental office.

Do-able at home

All this magic is done on a computer and components neatly arranged at one end of an upstairs spare bedroom. Jim says his operation is "state of the art insofar as it's do-able in the home."

He explains that the normal photo lab restoration involves a lot more steps on much larger equipment: photograph the print, process the negative, re-touch the

Continued on page 3



Paul Sherman/Westside News Inc.

Jim Baston can perform magic. His photo restoration and reconstruction techniques can fix or re-create the photographic images in an at-home business he recently launched.

'Centerpiece' of Spencerport Plaza

Continued ➔

by Evelyn Dow

Work is expected to begin in mid-September to transform a building in the center of Spencerport Village Plaza into a retail complex. The former Spencerport Family Restaurant site will be developed into shops, Linda Mentessana, property manager of Goldstein Management which owns the plaza, said late last week.

Mentessana said efforts to re-locate the Spencerport Family Restaurant, either at the former location or at another site in the plaza, are at a stalemate. Operated by Peter and Anna-Marie Stojanov, the local eatery burned in a January 30, 1993 fire ruled arson. Though the property management company and the restaurant owners have been negotiating specifics

on rebuilding the restaurant, they have not been able to reach an agreement. Mentessana declined to comment on reasons for the delay.

Alternate locations for the Spencerport Family Restaurant included sites north of the existing Ben Franklin store and west of the liquor store at the east side of the plaza. A third site, east of the children's clothing store located on the north side of the plaza, was denied by the Spencerport Planning Board last May.

The new complex will occupy the same space as the former restaurant, about 5,000 square feet, and will house shops varying in size from 500 to 2,500 square feet. Entrances will be on the east and

west side of the structure. "We're looking for retail businesses rather than service providers," Mentessana said. "It would be very nice for the Plaza and the village to have more retail shops there."

Part of the existing restaurant structure, the west expansion added about three years ago will be retained and new construction added to it, Mentessana said.

She didn't rule out the possibility that the building would house a restaurant, though no operator has approached Goldstein about locating one there yet. A pre-Christmas opening is anticipated, she said.

Homestyle wizard

Continued from page 1

negative, make a print, then air brush touch-up on the print.

Compared to the labor-intensive process, Jim's home industry gains in speed and quality. "I do all this on the computer; there is no chemical involved or need to re-photograph anything. I can turn it around quickly." According to Jim, the air brushing in the normal process creates a painted look, compared to the computer maintaining the photographic look. The photo of the inn would end up looking more like a painting.

Looking to the future, Jim wants to become a "service bureaus" on the "high end," as he calls it. Upgraded equipment with a larger, higher-resolving output would make prints larger than 8" x 10", which is his present limit. And, he could scan negatives up to 4" x 5", compared to the present 35 mm.

He would also be able to print to standard photographic paper. Presently he copies to Kodak Ektatherm (T) dye transfer paper. Not too shabby itself, as it ac-

cepts 16,700,000 different colors from the printer's dye ribbon for photo-like prints. These prints are expensive individually, compared to standard photo prints. For making prints in quantity at standard prices, his new equipment would create negatives.

All the upscale equipment would enable Jim to reach a larger market of professional and commercial photographers. Jim's advantage with these new clients is his knowledge of the art of photography with his background as a photographer and his associate's degree in photography from RIT.

Re-touching real life

It wasn't always this way. Jim never held a camera until he worked for Kodak where he took classes and seminars in photography. In his childhood, Jim's mother and brother were the creative artists, while he worked on cars. It's as though Jim went back and manipulated an old family photo, changing his image to artist and technician - with a career that is developing nicely.



Before
Oftentimes a family's most precious photos are the ones which show the most wear and tear - literally. Jim Baston can use computer technology to "heal" the blemishes in family photo albums. The process can be done with success with both color and black and white photos.

Sheri Morganti: Teaching beauty below the surface

by Doug Hickerson

For the next several Saturdays, you can find Sheri Morganti at Sears Marketplace Mall store. She is not shopping for a washer or dryer. She is helping Sears' new "fashion attitude" assert itself over the washer-dryer image. Morganti is the coordinator of Sears Model's Club for girls from 8 to 17 years old which meets at the Marketplace Mall store, one of four which began recently at area Sears stores.

Sears Model's Clubs are also trying to help girls with their own image-consciousness. The clubs provide five classes in personal appearance, fashion coordination and modeling.

Sheri, a Brickport resident, is a professional model and former Mrs. New York State.

Breaking the mold, building the person

The club's name and Sheri's professional background suggest that the store is trying to produce models or model stereotypes. To the contrary, Sheri is teaching girls to develop their own unique beauty. The club welcomes girls of any size, shape, weight, color, and any handicap. They follow Americans with Disabilities Act guidelines on equal opportunity and accessibility, she says. "Every girl does have the right to be on stage in modeling class and not be discriminated against," Sheri says. Her views come from her "experience as a mother, and as a model also being rejected at times and knowing how it feels."

In 1979, Sheri worked in a Florida Sears as fashion coordinator and teaching modeling classes. She recalls that any girl could get into those classes, but some were rejected as only the "prettiest" ones were selected for the Teen Board.

Today's club operates on the philosophy that every girl is special. There is also a sensitivity to the self-consciousness at that stage of development. "At that age, many girls look in the mirror; they're not sure if they measure up."

Each girl needs only to measure up to her best self, she says. In the five-class course, the goal is for each girl to develop self-confidence and self-esteem in developing her best appearance, coordinating her own fashions and modeling in front of an audience.

"In the modeling class, there is constant positive reinforcement. There's nothing that you're doing wrong. No matter what they do, they're a star," says Sheri.

Following mother as a model

Sheri, too, is a star in her own right with a long history of modeling and winning beauty contests. Her mother, Bobbie Pierce of Fairport, is a professional model,

originally working in the New York City and Philadelphia area. "It was in my blood, too," says Sheri. "As a little girl I used to watch her get dressed for fashion shows and I'd see her on TV commercials and bill boards, and I'd think, 'WOW, I want to be a model some day!'"

She was never pushed to be a model by her mother who wanted her to have a normal teenage life. "Where she wouldn't push me, the more I had a mad desire to do it."

She has followed her mother's footsteps. Her first job was at the age of two, posing with her mother for a Kodak colorama in Grand Central Station. She continued modeling part-time in high school. In 1979, she and her mother won a national "mother-daughter" beauty contest and were on a national TV program originating in Miami, Florida.

Sheri and her mother have a strong relationship. She says, "I always tell her, 'I hope some day my girls love and adore me as much as I love and adore her.'" In 1985-86, Sheri was Mrs. New York State and was tenth runner-up in the Mrs. U.S.A. beauty pageant.

Homemaker and professional woman

Sheri has her daughters and family first in her priorities. Her husband, Terry, works for Kodak. She has two daughters, Ashley, who is five, and Shanna, who is nine.

"I'm very enthusiastic and dedicated to my career. But there is a line I draw..." I just pulled two different ways," as she carefully weighs Saturdays or travel assignments against being at home. She turns down assignments when they encroach too much on family time, she says.

Sheri has been a full-time professional model for the last ten years. Ninety percent of her work is with Kodak. She is past the point when, as a typical aspiring model, she used to "pound the pavement" once or twice a week looking for work. Work comes more easily now. "Now, after being in it for ten years, people already know me, and I am more relaxed."

Sheri's work becomes a family thing now and then; her girls have done some modeling. Photographers occasionally ask her to bring her girls and sometimes their puppies for special assignments.

She brings her work home sometimes. Sheri has applied her experience in teaching "self-improvement" to young girls, including a course taught in her home last year. With five girls once a week over eight weeks, she taught health, nutrition, walking, basic skin care, stress relieving techniques, and other skills that "give them the edge on self-confidence."

"The goal is not that they have to fit in a mold as a model, but that they are happy with themselves," she says.



Paul Sherman-Watkins News Inc.

Sheri Morganti (second from left) sets priorities in order to balance a career in modeling and family life. Shown with her mother, Bobbie Pierce, right of Sheri; her husband, Terry (back); and children Ashley (left) and Shanna.

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Paul Sherman/Westside News Inc.

Kodak wizards charm the children

Continued from page 1
 when they first entertained children with some simple demonstrations.

The show is now part of Kodak's 21st Century Learning Challenge to enhance the teaching of science and math in the Rochester City schools. Suburban teachers soon caught on and by popular demand the chemistry show travels throughout the county twice a month.

The portable lab spreads across a 16' table. Beakers, bottles, bulbs and tubes hold liquids, gases, and powders that change colors, bubble up, heat up, cool down, blow-up and light up, sometimes with the help of a flame or electrical spark.

All the chemicals and their reactions explain such everyday phenomena as neon signs, fire extinguishers, static electricity, rust, lightning bugs, nylon rope, and super-absorbent diapers (yes, with sodium polyacrylate that absorbs 800 times its weight in water). The small "volcano" that blew to the ceiling was not an everyday experience to Dahn Bull, but he was able to compare it to Mount Vesuvius.

Can a banana pound a nail into a board? The children saw a messy demonstration of the "obvious" answer. Then the scientific answer was demonstrated. Enlightened children can now tell their parents, "Yes, if the banana is first dipped into liquid nitrogen (dry ice), freezing it solid at -312 degrees Fahrenheit." Impressed parents will no doubt respond, "Oh, Cool!"

The children did a hands-on experiment they could take home. To experience polymers, they each got to mix polyvinyl

alcohol and borax in a cup, creating a green oozy slime, which they compared to "Gak." They watched as pennies were turned to "silver" with a zinc plating. When heated in a flame the zinc and copper created a brass finish. Each child got to take home a magic "gold" piece.

Giacofe, who is from Hilton, says he "likes kids a lot" and first did this kind of demonstration at his son's Cub Scout troop. City resident Wilson first became interested in chemistry in fourth grade. The teaching part comes easy as he does home schooling with his own children. Kelley, from Farmington, also took a liking to chemistry in fourth grade, inspired by "Mr. Wizard" on TV. He summed up their mission: "We hope to show the more fun aspects to the kids so the seed is planted. When they get older, and are able to understand math and science, chemistry might interest them."

Third grader Ellen Dong is already looking ahead. "I used to think that chemistry was hard. But now I know it's fun. When I grow up I think I want to be a chemist." Tory Spencer affirmed, "I'm a lot more interested in science now," and tried to engage the professors at a deeper level with, "Do you like bio-chemistry?"

As a possible future chemist, Devin Hogan, would like to use all this wizardry at a Disney imagination theme park. Cassie Webster would like to be a chemist; she would help people by "making batteries for clocks, improving cooking, stoves, and helping them to not pollute the air." Nicholas Papageorgis' father works with the "professors" at Kodak. Nicholas knew right away how Kodak is using chemistry. The future chemist or VP for marketing responded, "They're trying to make better film."

The right mix of instruction and entertainment brought plenty of response from elementary students at the Hill School in Brockport last week as Eastman Kodak Company chemists visited the school for some chemistry demonstrations. Above, Brian Kelley creates the colors of the rainbow by reacting chemicals together.



"Cookin' with chemistry" Kodak wizards charm the children

by Doug Hickerson

The program started with two cans of Coke placed in water and ended with "gold" pennies and green slime to take home. After the "Cookin' with Chemistry" show on March 27, third graders at Brockport's Hill School also had a lot of knowledge to digest. All this was served up by three Kodak chemists who call themselves "Professor Russ," "Professor Tim" and "Professor Brian."

Why does a can full of regular Coke sink to the bottom while the Diet Coke floats? Because Nutri-sweet in the diet drink is 180 times sweeter than sugar. It takes a lot more sugar to sweeten the regular Coke and the heavier sugar makes it sink in water.

From fun to facts is the teaching method used by Russ Giacofe, Tim Wilson, and Brian Kelly to bring the wonders of chemistry from Kodak to the kids. The whole thing started at a Kodak family Christmas party about two years ago

Continued on page 24

Monday, July 31, 1995

Going ..., going ..., going ..., gone!

But the good life remains at Lois Kaiser's

by Doug Hickerson

"Untouched for over 60 years" the newspaper ad said of the hundreds of items for auction in Lois Kaiser's yard Saturday, July 22. Well, not all untouched. Lois says, "There was so much stuff in the barns, whenever I wanted to put in my lawn mower or something, I had to move ten things." Lois' plight had been turned into good promo in the ad: "Nothing was ever thrown out."

The stored things, ready for the auction block, covered her expansive lawn on North Hamlin Road: old cars and a motorcycle, engines and parts, primitive farm equipment, furniture, hundreds of old tools, dolls and toys.

Auctioneer Dan Bauer, who runs the new Economy Auction Center in Clarkston, said, "This is rare for any auctioneer to find a collection like this," noting many items from the 1800s. Auction notices had been sent nationwide.

They were mostly 'guy things' which is explained by the fact that Lois' father and brother were carpenters and the whole family ran Kaiser's Lumber Yard right next door.

Lois, a gentle and jolly woman, enjoyed her work in the tough world of lumber and hardware. Because her mother died the day before the lumber yard opened in 1947, she had to quit school at age 16 to help run the new family business with her father, William, brother Milton (Milt) and his wife, Irma.

The lumber yard is still open, but is reduced to primarily hardware. According to Milt, the big sign blew down 40 years ago and they never put it up again. Its best advertising has come from customers and friends who for almost 50 years have stopped in daily to enjoy talking and the free cookies and coffee provided by Lois.

Milt Kaiser seemed to have no sadness in sorting with his childhood toys and the carpentry tools he and his father used to



Paul Sherman/Wastside News Inc.

"You bought it!" says Auctioneer Dan Bauer at the Kaiser auction in Hamlin July 22. Decades of accumulated machinery, tools, and memorabilia were auctioned off to the highest bidder.

make a combined one-dollar an hour. Milt admitted, "I'm a pack rat," but acknowledged 60 years might be a limit. His ultimate wisdom was, "You can't take it with you." There was only a slight tone of nostalgia for the IGA scooter. As a boy, he saw it displayed in the IGA store window, requiring 4,000 IGA can coupons to take ownership. He scavenged six dumps for 4,000 cans and their labels to own the coveted scooter.

Milt also had a priceless story about the 1912 Indian motorcycle that went for several thousand dollars. His father, William, bought it once. William's bride-to-be got on the back. According to Milt, "He gassed it quick and didn't know she fell off. He got down the road and didn't know she was missing until he said something to her and she didn't answer." William, who died in 1977, always "bought all new stuff," according to Jim Martin, life-long friend of the Kaiser family. "If he were alive today, he'd be into Pentium chips and computers," Jim said. Jim expressed appreciation for William and what were now his rusted relics of early technology, calling them "the cutting edge ... the new stuff for its day."

The day before the auction, Lois had no mistakings at parting with the family memorabilia, not even the 1929 Dodge touring car in which she learned to drive. She had some pleasure in kind of being at her own estate auction. "When I'm dead, it's going anyway. Now I know how it feels when you're dead and gone and they have an auction ... but I'm here to enjoy it."

Will life change for Lois who was born and lived all her life in this house, attending the one-room school house on the corner? No, she has just lightened her load to do what she likes best. "I love my home, my yard and flowers. I'm going to stay right here, mow the lawn when I want, go on day trips with the seniors, and my shopping trips to Tops with my friend, Mary."



Quality carpenter tools (top), many of them top-of-the-line when new, and their storage box were used by William and Milt Kaiser when they worked for one dollar per hour, combined. At left, the 1912 Indian motorcycle sold for several thousand dollars at the Kaiser auction in Hamlin. Like many of the items sold that day, it carried a lot of family history with it.



Known for years as "The Cookie Lady," she will also continue to bake cookies and give them to friends at the hardware store and to charity. If she gets paid, she contributes all the funds to her church, such as the time when she baked one-hundred dozen for an event put on by

former Senator John Day. She plans no fling with the proceeds from the auction. Friends have advised her that she needs a bigger mower than her forty-six-inch. She might get that. And, now she can easily get it in and out of the barn.



Lois Kaiser at home in Hamlin.



Paul Shemay/Westside News Inc.

Some of Dianne Hickerson's former students enjoyed finding themselves in a class photo from 1986-87. The seniors visited Hickerson's Brockport class during the last few weeks of school to reminisce about their elementary school days. The reunion was organized by Jason Kurz who had volunteered during the year in Hickerson's class. Without officially knowing it would be so, the visit was especially poignant for the veteran teacher who is retiring this year.

Fifteen Brockport teachers take retirement incentive From the chalk board to the paint palette

by Doug Hickerson

On June 5, 23 alumni of Dianne Hickerson's 1987-87 third grade class visited their "family core" teachers, now located at Hill School. They were Brockport High School seniors who wanted to honor their former teachers and recall old times. Mary Wanzler was present for the fun as their second grade teacher. The Family Core Program, originally located at Barclay School, moved to Hill School in 1990 and was renamed the "Independent Group."

The reunion was planned by one of the seniors, Jason Kurz, who has been working all year in Dianne's class as a volunteer.

Neither Jason nor the other seniors knew that their reunion was also a farewell party for Dianne, unaware that she had given notice of her retirement two days prior.

After 32 years of teaching 3rd and 4th grade in the Brockport schools, Dianne feels she is leaving many generations of "family." That is the proven word for this program that kept the same students in the same group through three grades to build peer bonds and meet their educational needs. The spontaneous reunion also shows an attachment to the teachers even nine years later. (Editor's note: Dianne Hickerson is writer Doug Hickerson's wife.)

Others of Dianne's alumni are out there, almost a thousand of them, grown-ups who end up next to her in Wegmans check-out line with their own children in tow. Decades later she can still recall the names of these forty-ish former students. Over the years she has had many second generation children in her class. Two years ago she had three. The parent-teacher conference became another kind of reunion.

All the alumni and parents know Dianne's trademark, the emblem of her style and quality of teaching: her classroom, strikingly arranged and decorated to inspire awe of the world and to draw kids into the excitement of exploring and learning.

The same is true for our home, as I am surrounded by her works of art, watercolor floral paintings, a hobby that was inspired by Dianne's teacher-training and will likely be her next career.

Dianne's inspiration for painting came from an Aesthetic Education Institute workshop several summers ago. In the Aesthetic Ed program, public school teachers attend workshops led by professional artists. The teachers also can invite these same artists to teach one day in the teacher's own classroom.

In one such workshop at the Memorial Art Gallery, local watercolorist Wendy Gwertzman did a painting demonstration. That kindled Dianne's childhood flame that was snuffed out when her first and only paint set ran out of paint.

Since that fateful summer in Aesthetic Ed, each of her summers has been filled with traveling to week-long workshops

with renowned watercolorists: Sondra Freckleton, Zoltan Szabo, Tony Couch, and Barbara Nachis. At Sondra Freckleton's workshop in Onondaga, Dianne was the only amateur among 13 participants, selected by slides of their work from several hundred applicants across the country.

Last summer's workshops took Dianne to Portland, Oregon; Portland, Maine; and Williamsburg, Virginia. This summer she will learn from Jan Kuz in California, Jim Koevane in Washington state, and David Hiser also in Washington at Mt. Rainier.

Not only our summer schedules, but our year has been rearranged to accommodate the artist. In 1988, I built a studio addition on our home.

The newest addition to the studio is a state-of-the-art computer system and software. Dianne paints from photos she takes herself. She pencil sketches from a combination of photos to create the desired arrangement. With the computer system purchased last winter, she will scan the photos, arrange them on the screen, and print from the printed graphic.

Now there are two of us retired, she in her studio, I in my study, both of us pursuing hobbies that can become careers if we sell enough of what we do. With the time to do it now, Dianne will also compete in juried art exhibits and market her art.

Dianne is painting with the same dedication and skill that recently placed her in the national Who's Who Among American Teachers. The visit by those grateful senior students was the most moving endorsement. She eventually may win the same respect in the art world.

Dianne Hickerson is one of fifteen teachers in grades 1 through 12 who took the State Education Department's retirement incentive this year. Under the incentive, teachers who are at least 50 years old and have at least 10 years of service were offered one month extra credit for each year in service.

Allan Berry, director of personnel/public relations for the district, indicates that the last budget voted on contained approximately \$300,000 savings on an estimated 10 retirements. Even though the number of retirees is high, a final savings can not be figured until new teachers are hired. The board determined that they must save half of the salaries of the teachers who would be replaced. Berry observed, "This is really a double-edged sword; there is a prospect of savings, a handsome savings, but there is also the certain realization that we are losing outstanding veterans of this organization (and) really changing the organization significantly, I think."

...18 years later....



Artist Dianne Hickerson stands with her painting "Rose Bowl Three," one of her three watercolor paintings in the recently-published book *The Artistic Touch 6*. Provided photo.

Local artist's paintings included in newly published art book

Local artist Dianne Hickerson has three watercolor paintings included in a recently published art book, *The Artistic Touch 6*, edited and published by Chris Unwin. About 160 works were selected from across the United States and the United Kingdom.

"A collection of today's finest contemporary artworks" is Unwin's description of the book. She adds, "Each painting in this book is a story told with passion. The use of beautiful, subtle color combinations, exquisite use of lines and unusual, sometimes complicated compositions will entertain you and make you think as well as feel the emotions expressed by the artists." The artist featured in the book comment on their work, and explain their inspiration and technique.

Hickerson's work includes "Rose Bowl Three," featured on a two-page layout that

introduces the section "Nature's Beauties." Her "Apricots & Sweet Peppers" appears inside as well as being featured on the back cover of the book. Her third included piece is "Breath of Spring." All three paintings appear in the artist's web site www.diannehickerson.com.

Hickerson, a signature member of the Transparent Watercolor Society of American (TWSA) is a town of Sweden resident. She taught third and fourth grades at Brockport Central School for 33 years. After retiring, she pursued watercolor painting. Over the years her work has appeared in major exhibitions around the U.S. and Canada, and in books and magazines. Many of her paintings are on display at Red Bird Cafe on Main Street, Brockport.

Provided information

Also by Doug Hickerson

Habitat supervisor continues a legacy of good teachers

Continued from page 1

returned to home building. He worked for builders Dick Van Valkenberg and then Luther Jacobs. He remembers Lou Jacobs as a "wonderful man who could inspire and direct."

Through the '50s and '60s, Bud tried several partnerships and formed his own company. In 1979 he and his wife, Zlata, bought the Canadside Inn, beginning a decade of new interest in historic restoration and working on mansions in Rochester. The work "enabled me to enter into another whole dimension of architectural intricacies," Bud says.

The earlier culmination for Bud came several years ago when, he says, "Another person in my life gave me the opportunity to test my skill." That person was a wealthy man who made Bud the head finish carpenter in a three-year project to construct his grand home. "I worked forty-five years waiting for that job so I could advance to the next level and do things that I just dreamed about." It meant the kind of workmanship he would often see and wonder in awe, "Oh, how did they do that? I think I could do that!"

For Bud, it was a half century from digging foundations with Joe Keable to crafting fine stairways, railings and trim work in an exquisite home. Longfellow's entire poem, *The Builders*, is a metaphor

for the daily mindfulness needed in constructing our lives, saying at one point, "Our today and yesterday are the blocks with which we build. Truly shape and fashion these..." That view is seen in Bud's retrospect on his own life. "Each step in my life as it progressed I had something better happen to me." He built on the opportunities with the help of "all the people who gave me the consideration, recognition, and confidence I needed."

Having built many good homes and a good life, Bud enjoys working with Habitat volunteers, passing on the direction and confidence to build "with greatest care."

Editor's note: Doug Hickerson is a free lance writer. He is also a volunteer in building the Brockport Habitat Project house in Clarkson.

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Gardener

Brockport's new Middle School blends old and new

From building design to student discipline, Principal Jack Milner shows an appreciation for the past

by Doug Hickerson

Jack Milner was kicking a ball around the second floor of the school when his shoe flew off and went through the glass window. School board members, teachers and parents should not panic about their principal who had a key role in the renovation and expansion of the newly-opened Brockport Middle School.

Milner's hapless adventure occurred when he was a sixth-grade student in the Clarkson Academy "about 45 years ago," he recalls. The school principal is a living tie between the refurbished 63-year-old school and Clarkson's boarded up academy building almost a century-and-a-half old. The Clarkson Historical Society is attempting to restore Jack's boyhood school building. Similar historic sensitivity went into retaining architectural features of the building where he now presides.

Milner credits school District Superintendent Jim Fallon and the school board with the initial determination to preserve the heritage in the middle school's architecture. He says the architect, Mike Konopka, "deserves credit for molding the building into what it is now," based on consultation with school

and community people.

On a recent tour of the building with Milner, the writer could see how old virtues and new visions in architecture were tied together. Even in small details, going from the old building into the new addition, hallway tile mosaics mix the old brown and tan with the new blue and aqua colors that accent the addition.

An expanded state-of-the-art library retains the wood tones of the old library. Where interior walls were knocked out, supporting steel pillars ended up in the middle of the library. These were encased in wood columns and made part of an oak finish service counter holding the OPAC terminals (a computerized "card catalogue").

The original library tables were retrieved from around the community, refinished and placed back in their first home. The chairs for those tables and all furniture for the refurbished building were purchased new "with a replication of the old furniture in mind," Milner says. New window units on both outside walls of the library and the entire front of the building are metal with wood grain inside and small glass panes as on the original building.

The auditorium is a showcase with refinished original features: dark grained waincot, wood ceiling beams, stained glass windows, chandelier fixtures, and new dark blue curtain fabric set off against plaster walls. The wooden seats were also restored after consideration of new modern ones that would have been bigger, but would reduce the seating capacity of the auditorium. The original seats were sanded, stained, re-upholstered; a spring pop-up was added; the detailing on the aisle seats is impeccably



Jack Milner and seventh grader Janelle Cannon check out the technology available in the newly refurbished Brockport Middle School library. Photo by Doug Hickerson

restored, and all at a savings of \$70,000 compared to the cost of new seats.

The attention to the seats represents the prudent balance among historic integrity, educational function, and economy in the planning and execution of many other aspects of the building. Jack Milner says the architect early on talked with school staff committees. "He wanted a sense from the teachers on what they needed to make them work."

In the opening school orientations Milner has made a special effort to instill in the students a sense of pride and responsibility for their new building. What would he do with a careless student who breaks a window? He still relies on the lesson learned at Clarkson Academy.

"I have a lot of fond memories of the school because all the kids in the neighborhood went there. I lived across from it."

Jack remembers his teacher's reaction

to the broken window incident. She saw he was careless, not malicious. She treated him with respect while still holding him responsible. "I remember in the recesses of my mind that my teacher dealt with me that way because I was young."

He learned his lesson well and carries that teacher's attitude into his work. "We have really high expectations for our kids at the middle school. But one of the things we try to do -- and that makes middle school teachers special -- we realize they are 11, 12, and 13 years old. They are going to make mistakes once in awhile, they are going to mess up. And so we try to respond accordingly."

Clarkson Academy Preservation Project - For more information call: Angela P. Markham, Chairwoman, Clarkson Historical Society 637-9013.

Brockport Middle School
Re-dedication Sunday, September 28,
2:00 p.m. Middle School Gymnasium
- public tours follow

Right, Milner is shown standing next to a window he broke over 40 years ago at the landmark Clarkson Academy. Milner is now principal of the Middle School and worked on the plans for the renovation project. Photo by Doug Hickerson.



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Old Clarkson school house gets roof repair in the nick of time

by Doug Hickerson

One more winter with holes in the roof and the old Clarkson school house would deteriorate beyond repair in five years. That's what construction experts told Angela Markham who heads the Clarkson Historical Society. The group is working to preserve the historic building located next to the Clarkson Community Church near Clarkson Corners.

Markham scrambled to get estimates on a temporary roof repair that would buy some time to save the school building. A contract for the job was approved on the day before the first snowfall of the season.

The next phase was the roofing man versus the weatherman. Contractor Roger Young recalls, "I kept watching it and waiting for the snow to melt. With no heat in there it didn't melt off right away." He found the window of opportunity the day before Thanksgiving when snow finally disappeared.

To expedite the work, Markham got on the roof and helped pull plywood sheets that Young pushed up to the top of the ladder. The two worked with the wood and roll roofing until the elements, a downpour and wind, once again prevailed. "She was up there the whole time. She got soaked," Young said with admira-

tion. On Saturday, November 29, Young was able to finish the job.

Young was not just doing a job, but helping to preserve a place of childhood memories. He was a third-grade student there in the last year the school was used. He recalled his one-and-only teacher, Betsy Browne. Each spring the boys would bring in snakes and one got lost in the piano. At recess he and his friends played among the trees between the school and the church which still owns the building. Young was one of the lucky students who got to ring the school bell to end recess. The bell is still there and still

rings, according to Markham, who teased it.

"The building was scheduled to be demolished last spring until Markham and the Clarkson Historical Society initiated the preservation project. Young seemed glad to be part of the effort. 'All I wanted to do was help preserve it for the future ... I don't want to see it torn down.'"

About the project - For information about the Old Clarkson School Preservation Project phone Angela P. Markham, 637-9013.

Hamlin-Clarkson Herald and Suburban News May 12, 1997 7

Broadway in Brockport - "A chance to show what I'm good at"

by Doug Hickerson

"I love being on stage. There is nothing I like better than being in front of a big audience. It makes me happier than anything." Cara Zimmer's enthusiasm no doubt will strike the audience at "Broadway in Brockport" when she sings "Sixteen Going on Seventeen" from "The Sound of Music" and other numbers.

A Brockport High senior, Cara is one of 20 local students singing and acting in a review of songs and scenes from the most popular Broadway musicals in "Broadway in Brockport." The show's second annual production will be held at Brockport High School's large group instruction room on Saturday, May 24 at 8 p.m. and Sunday, May 25, at 2 p.m. The young artists, mostly high schoolers, are in grades 5 through 12 and live in Brockport, Hamlin, Holley, and Rochester.

All the singers are students of Denise Milner who produces and directs the show. Denise, a 1987 graduate of Brockport High School, received her master's degree from the New England Conservatory of Music. She is an adjunct professor at SUNY College at Fredonia's music department and teaches area students at her home in Bergen.

"I learned a lot last year," Denise says, admitting to being slightly overwhelmed by taking on the entire production alone. "I'm a little more organized this year," she says, although the work is doubled. A second performance is added this year due to the overflow crowd attending last year's single performance. The work this year is shared by several parent volunteers helping with ticket sales, costumes, props, lighting, and concessions.

The most significant difference will be an all new repertoire that has not been explored by these students before, according to Denise. "There will be more ensemble numbers than last year; songs, duets, and trios from the best musicals ever written."

The variety of songs and scenes is a real plus to Lindsay Packard, a Brockport High senior. She has been in high school musicals in which one or two students get to solo. This musical review "showcases everybody," Lindsay says. "We have a chance to put it together ourselves. Everybody gets to be a star. It's a great experience and we're so lucky to have this opportunity before we go on to college."

Both Cara and Lindsay are pursuing music careers in college next year. Cara

will study musical theater or opera at SUNY College at New Paltz. Lindsay will attend SUNY College at Fredonia, where Denise teaches, and will major in musical theater.

Several students in "Broadway" distinguished themselves in the prestigious RPO Young Artists Competition in March. Out of about 40 young female competitors from the region, Sabrina Martin, a junior from Brockport, and Lindsay Packard were two of only ten finalists. Of the 12 young men competing, David Webster, a senior from Brockport, was one of two runners-up to first place.

Denise is not one to push her students to the top; she and her students affirm that she helps each student achieve the level of accomplishment that the student wants. For each student, performing in "Broadway in Brockport" is "a chance to show what I'm good at," as Cara says.

Scating is available for 136 for each performance. Advanced tickets are available at \$4. Tickets at the door will be \$5. Call 964-3039 for ticket information.

Continuing to learn

Denise Milner was recently chosen to perform in Chautauque Institute's opera program this summer. She is one of only 26 vocalists selected from 800 applicants nationally in Chautauque's Young Artist competition. She will sing in the choruses of all of the operas and perform "comprimario" or secondary roles in Puccini's "Sister Angelica" and Verdi's "Rigoletto." She will undertake a major role in Puccini's "Gianni Schicchi" and in Gilbert and Sullivan's "Princess of Pezance."

Denise says, "The experience of working with these people, learning what I can just by watching and working with them is marvelous. It's a big step in my career."

The cast

Jenna Barber, Holley; Janelle Cannon, Brockport; Angelyn Cater, Holley; Julia Finn, Rochester; Dan Graf, Lancaster/Fredonia; Trevor Horton, Brockport; Rony Hoffman, Brockport; Jason Jacobs, Hamlin; Fred Kimmel, Holley/Fredonia; Katie Kimmel, Holley; Sabrina Martin, Brockport; Melissa Miner, Hamlin; Kathy Olson, Brockport; Lindsay Packard, Brockport; Julia Rogers, Holley; Adam Sanford, Holley; Kasey Smith, Hamlin; David Webster, Brockport; Stephanie Winalow, Brockport; Cara Zimmer, Brockport.



Angela Markham of the Clarkson Historical Society helps with roof repairs on the Clarkson School House. A break in the weather allowed Roger Young to complete the roofing before more winter snows could damage the historic structure.



Some of the leads in "West Side Story" are: Top row, (l to r) Craig Kenyon, Adam Sanford, Jenna Lee Barber, Katie Kinnick, Katie Gunn, Bobbin, J. J. Wagner, Mark Fantasia, Mike Kinsey, Taz Young, Angelyn Cataler, Beth Kenney.

Huge cast meets the challenges of "West Side Story" in Holley

Holley High School performances start March 11

by Doug Hickerson

Think about it. In a high school, where club members, select chorus members, swimmers and other athletes, all with talent, mind and body working in unison? There are often cliques that hang out separately. But, each day, from March 11 through March 14, over 120 Holley High Schoolers and Middle Schoolers of diverse backgrounds will be in time and in step with each other in "West Side Story."

It's the annual Holley High musical production, directed for eight years by language teacher Dan Burke. "It's important to involve as many kids as you can," says Burke. He does about 130 auditions every year, not to cut, but to find the best places for each student's talent. "A lot of times we find that our best talents are kids who didn't know they had any. Each year it's big news around school to find who gets that part."

Dan Burke is a dedicated educator helping students discover themselves. "It's amazing the kids that are out there that have talent and don't even realize it." One of them is J.J. Wagner, a junior and a varsity soccer player who is on stage for the first time. He plays a lead part, Bernardo, and says, "I love it, it's really fun. I am definitely looking forward to next year's play."

This year's production breaks with the tradition of light and humorous musicals at Holley High. "West Side Story," a Romeo and Juliet theme in a street-gang setting of New York, has deep drama and a death scene. That is some serious acting by thirty students who are double, triple and quadruple cast in fourteen leads over four performances.

A different cast each night is a manageable challenge for Kellie Burke who directs the staging and choreography. She teaches 8th grade English and 9th grade computers and is Dan Burke's sister. (Both the Burkes are Hamlin residents). In her theatre experience she has played the parts of Rosalita, Anita, and Maria. "It's fun to pass on the experience of one of my favorite shows." About the serious drama she says, "Kids really love it. Young people respond to drama in a serious way; their whole life is a drama."

Kellie Burke says that it's "draining in a way" to work with four acts of actors. In fact, she notes that it provides built-in

understudy if an actor gets sick. Jenna Lee Barber, a freshman who plays Maria, learns from the others playing Maria. "It's interesting because you can ask the other people in your role how they would perform a scene."

This year's musical also required many male dancers. No problem, according to Ma. Burke. "The minute we announced the need for male dancers, the word spread and we had a great response from guys." For guys and girls the dances are demanding. "There were times I said, 'I don't think you'll be able to do this,' and the kids said, 'Well, give us a chance.' With her direction and the student's hard work, the students proved themselves. 'I haven't had to change a thing this year,'" Ms. Burke says.

It has taken hard work by this multitude of students, practicing from after school until 6 p.m. Monday through Thursday, and on Sundays and vacation days since early December. Yet, like J.J. Wagner, they express enthusiasm and personal reward from performing. Katie Gunn plays Maria. A senior who will study journalism at SUNY Cortland, she wants to join a college theatre group. She speaks highly of the Burkes. "They make us work hard, but the end is always a great production. I love it." Beth Kenney plays Maria and Rosalita. A junior, she aims for pre-med studies and wants to carry the stage experience to college. "I want to stay with my interest in stage. I love doing it, it's my personality." Mike Kinsey, a sophomore, plays Action and Riff. Compared to a small part he had last year, "Riff is very involved, more work and a real challenge." Mike adds, "I love being on stage. I like the attention and the spotlight."

Kellie Burke says that such individual attitudes and efforts of over 120 students will combine for a great show. "The audience will see a high energy performance by our dedicated and hard-working students."

Coming next week - The story of students Jenna Lee Barber and Adam Sanford who have been lifetime neighbors in Holley. Beginning with make-believe theaters, then lessons and performing on stage, nine years later they play opposite each other as Maria and Tony in Saturday's performance.

"West Side Story" - Holley High School Auditorium, Lynch Road, Holley, March 11, 12, 13 at 7:30 p.m.; March 14 at 2 p.m. Pre-sale tickets \$5; at the door, \$6. Call 638-0376.

Ready to entertain with show tunes - Vocal and dance students are rehearsing for their upcoming production which features musicals. Some of the cast is shown above with directors Julie Izzo (seated, far left) and Denise Milner Howell (seated, far right).

Musicals in spotlight in Broadway in Brockport production

by Doug Hickerson

Trevor Horton, a senior at Brockport High, says that he has dreamed of being a Broadway star since he was little boy. Performing in "Broadway in Brockport" gets him closer to fulfilling his dream.

In its third season, Broadway in Brockport will take place on June 5, 6 and 7. Each year another performance has been added because of overflow crowds. This year 18 area high school students will perform scenes from 15 Broadway musicals.

For the students who take voice lessons from co-directors Denise Milner Howell and Julie Izzo, performing in "Broadway" is a unique way of showing their talents. Trevor says, "It's a great opportunity for people who would not otherwise have a chance to perform. And for those like me who are into theater, we get to do the songs and scenes we've always wanted to do."

Denise confirms the students' benefits from the Broadway review kind of performance. There are very few opportunities for each student to have the spotlight in school theatrical productions. And, Denise contrasts this with the stand-up singing ritual where the students "must create an environment all by themselves. ... In this kind of production, we take the same solos and put the other characters there to react to, singing to another actor, rather than the audience."

Julie Izzo will be directing half the scenes this year at the request of Denise who vowed last year she would not again bear the same challenge alone. Julie, a Brockport resident, brings her experience as a drama teacher in the Brockport School of Dance and a voice teacher. Julie says the "Broadway" production is "just the right thing" for her. "It has all the elements I like: singing, dancing and acting. I feel I can help most in interpreting the characters in these Broadway songs." Denise, like a community "Pied Piper," has drawn out the musical talents of local students with differing musical aspirations. Brockport High sophomore Karla

Crowley is in "Broadway" for the first time. Inspired after seeing last year's production, she started lessons with Denise. Compared to her minor role in the school's "Guys and Dolls" production, Karla will be singing seven songs and will be in nine scenes. Nervous? Yes, but Denise is such a great director; she gives me confidence in myself." Karla wants to be a medical student in college and keep music as a minor.

Stephanie Winslow, like Trevor is one of several seniors in "Broadway" who will be off to college to pursue careers in voice and theatre. Stephanie has been in the show for all three years and enjoys working with her friends who will pursue the same interests in college. She says, "It's fun working with people that care so much about it." In March Stephanie won first place (Devarian Award) among all girls in the RPO Young Artists Competition at the Eastman School of Music. She also was awarded the Jan McGinley Scholarship for first place vocalist in the competition.

But, the Pied Piper is leaving town. Denise, her husband, and a baby expected in July will be moving to a new Florida home in September. Will the show go on next year? Very possible. Both Denise and Julie see their partnership this year as a likely transition to Julie's leadership in the future. This year, what can the audience look forward to in "Broadway in Brockport"? There will be 22 scenes as last year, but many more Broadway shows represented. This year every student will have at least one featured number. Denise says, "It's going to be great? We're still growing, still changing and learning from past years' mistakes and triumphs. This will be an even more polished performance than in past years."

Broadway in Brockport will be performed at the Large Group Instruction Room at Oliver Middle School, Allen Street, Brockport, Friday, June 5, at 8 p.m., Saturday, June 6 at 4 p.m., Sunday, June 7 at 2 p.m. Tickets are \$5. Call 964-3039 for information.

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**DRIVE CAREFULLY --
SCHOOL STARTS
THIS WEEK**

West Edition

Suburban News

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ISSUE NO. 36

SEPTEMBER 7, 1998

Habitat supervisor continues a legacy of good teachers

*He brings half a century
of labor and learning to the tasks*

by Doug Hickerson

"In the elder days of Art,
Builders wrought with greatest care
Each minute and unseen part;
For the gods see everywhere."

**The Builders,
Henry Wadsworth Longfellow**

Bud Nichols seems to have the same divine standards. Standing at a corner of the Habitat for Humanity under construction in Clarkson, he eyes the errant edge of a gable. Workers just nailed down this end of the roof deck. Sorry! Pull the nails; get some workers on that long board to push back the bulge — just so. O.K., nail it again.

Bud is the Construction Site Supervisor, hired by Flower City Habitat for Humanity to manage the construction of the first Habitat house to be built outside the City of Rochester in Monroe County. He oversees a crew of six volunteers on the three working days of the week.

There are different volunteers each day; some repeats; most with little or no experience. One or two more experienced workers help the mix. Every volunteer is welcomed to contribute whatever skills he/she has and to learn on the spot.

Bud starts each work day with introductions and what the crew can expect. He gives some of his own background and his appreciation for what Habitat is about. He gives many cautions and assurances to the workers, such as: Be careful. We're not in a hurry. Don't do anything you don't want to do. Stop when you want to. You may be doing something for part of the time. I may have to suddenly switch you to another job that needs to be done.

After 50 years experience, how does a seasoned builder have the patience to train and guide these novices to build to the code and meet his own high standards?

I relaxed with Bud in his pagoda and Japanese garden he created in a vast treed lawn in back of the Canal-side Bed & Breakfast which he and his wife own in Adlams Basin. It was a perfect setting for his answer. "Because I'm retired with less financial worries, I don't have to push like people in business. I have developed a laid back attitude that I can take the time to show, teach, and be understanding of those with less ability."

Bud is eager to share his skills, to "give back" to the community and to the memory of mentors and teachers in his life who moved him to each level of his ability.

Bud was born in 1929, one of seven siblings on a farm across from Basell's Restaurant on Ridge Road. His father worked for Roosevelt's WPA program, building the Brockport High School. "I was very aware of the difficulty of the times and how I had to train myself to make a living."

An early influence was his boyhood friend, Joe Keable Jr., and Joe's father, who owned a carpentry shop in Brockport. "Joe Keable Sr. was just a wonderful person. He took me under his wing as a second son and

nurtured both of us." Bud's first paying job was cleaning the shop with his friend each Saturday afternoon for twenty-five cents.

Joe Sr. would let them use hand tools. They built cars and trucks and played with them in the yard outside the shop. Bud looks out on his Japanese garden and says with a smile, "My friends wonder why I have such an attraction to this. It's not just from my Oriental experience in the military. I am regressing to the time when we played in Joe's garden and built towns, roads, streams, and used the cars and trucks we made in the carpenter's shop."

As a teen, Bud worked for Joe, siding and roofing houses during the war. In 1946, when restrictions were lifted on building materials, he began working on new houses, starting with digging the foundations. Bud recalls the Brockport High School shops as being one of the best in the region. He recalls his teachers: Mr. Casey, Warren and Russel Hill (sons of Fred Hill for whom the new elementary school is named), and Carl Neuschler. He particularly recalls Mr. Neuschler as "an inspiration, a lender, a mechanic and a craftsman."

Right after high school graduation in 1948, Bud went into the home remodeling business with Herb Stanford. He soon enlisted in the Army.

After seven years training and working as a machinist, part of those years in the military, Bud

Continued on page 11; see photo essay page 10



August 6, 1998. Bud Nichols, Brockport Habitat for Humanity project manager, points out the plan for the Brockport Habitat home in front of a busy crew of volunteers "scaling new heights." Above, Nichols does some nail sorting in addition to being the guide and inspiration for a host of volunteers. His savvy and patience has helped train the volunteers and resulted in quality work being done on the project. A photo essay inside shows the progress on the site over several weeks. Photographs for Westside News Inc. by Walter Horylev.

Slowly but surely, a new home comes to the neighborhood



August 6: An overview of the Habitat House as of this date. Construction began late in April; it should be finished sometime around Thanksgiving.



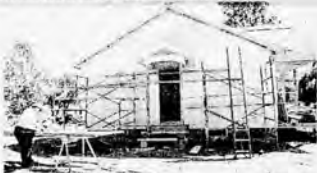
August 6: Bud Nichols and his crew of volunteers take a photo break from their roofing activities.



August 6: Doug Hickerson holds a shingle steady for Chris Romanchick to nail on while Jim Bolthouse enjoys the moment.



August 13: Bud Nichols gives some advice to Jim Bolthouse on how best to trim the edge of the porch landing.



August 20: Gary Musante cuts 2x4s to order for framing. The house now sports a blue insulation board layer and the beginning of a side porch.



August 20: John Price, Bob Westcott, Larry Baker and Elaine Fox (photo at left) raise the framing of a wall for one of the bedrooms.



August 26: The Habitat house features a side porch and a finished roof.



August 26: Pub-a-dub-dub, three workers in a tub: Don Woodward, Angela Markham and Bud Nichols (below) take a relaxing break on the first accessory to be installed in the house.

Photographs by Walter Horylev



Two Holley students share a love for theater

Lifetime friends on a journey to Broadway

by Doug Hickerson

"I remember her when she was little and we used to sing on the swing set." Adam Sanford, 17 and a junior, reflects on childhood days with Jenna Lee Barber, now 14 and a freshman. "Now her voice is amazing and her acting ability is, too. She really works hard."

Adam and Jenna were cast in the two lead roles as Tony and Maria in the Saturday night performance of "West Side Story" at the Holley High School. They have lived three houses apart in Holley since they were born.

The feelings are mutual - Jenna says Adam: "I love performing with him; he helps you get into the role. It's easier when you play opposite someone you know so well."

Performing with him began when she, in second grade, Adam, and other friends put on plays and dance productions in the basement for relatives and friends. The same year they appeared for the first time on the stage acting and dancing in SUNY Brockport's "Wizard of Oz." In these early years, both started voice, dance, acting, and piano lessons.

When Jenna was in third grade she and Adam played Nazi children in "Cabaret." From her fourth through sixth grade they appeared together in "A Christmas Carol" and "Barnum." For each of the last three years they both were in "Broadway in Brockport."

They started together in Holley High School productions with "Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dream Coat," when Jenna was in sixth grade and Adam in eighth. The next year they played lead roles in "Grease." They were opposite parts, but not on the same night. The same was true in last year's "Something Happened to Me on the Way to The Forum." Dan Burke, director, told them he kept them apart because their voices were so strong he wanted to balance out the cast.

This year they were cast together. Because he had not put us together in the past," Burke told her that he had so much talent in the four Marias and two Tonys that "he thought I would do the best with

Adam because our voices are similar; it would mix well."

About performing with Adam, Jenna says, "I am comfortable with Adam. Having the years of friendship, knowing Adam and performing since we were little, we know our strengths and weaknesses."

Adam says, "We got lucky this year. I like it because we are serious about it; if we really want to work on something, we can. Since we know each other, there's more chemistry than with someone else."

Praise for Adam and Jenna also comes from their directors in "West Side Story." Dan Burke says, "Jenna's an exceptional kid all around. She's very talented but very unaffected by her accomplishments. She's a hard worker, very reliable and responsible beyond her years."

Burke recalls Adam auditioning for the high school production in sixth grade. "They could hear him through the walls and down the hall. I was amazed at this little sixth-grade kid. He was poised, confident, and had memorized his part. His talent is remarkable. He has professionalism way past his years."

Kellie Burke, Dan Burke's sister, directs the staging and choreography. She says of Adam and Jenna, "They always do things right. They have an innate sense of what's right and wrong on stage and go with their instincts. They listen and take directions well."

Beyond high school, Adam and Jenna both went to major in musical theatre in college. Each looks forward to a career on Broadway and, for Jenna, eventually motion pictures.

Tony and Maria sing to each other in "West Side Story," "There's a place for us, a time and place for us. Hold my hand and I'll take you there..." In a growing friendship, Adam and Jenna already have enjoyed a series of "times and places" together on stage, each a new step in the development of their talents. There will be more achievements in their separate careers with their artistic skill, passion for the theatre, energy, and dedication. When their paths part next year, what better way for these lifetime friends to wish each other a successful future: "There's a place for us, a time and place for us."



Now and then - Jenna Lee Barber and Adam Sanford performed as Maria and Tony in Holley High School's "West Side Story." Life-long friends and neighbors, the photo at right shows Jenna, in third grade, and Adam, in fifth grade, costumed for their roles as Nazi children in "Cabaret."

Suburban News, Issue No. 37, July 2, 2001



Marcia Johnson, and daughters, Mary and Greta, sit to flip through an album of memorabilia from Mary's visit to Romania last year. Teens from Romania will be visiting the Brockport area in late July as a project of the Christ Community Church. Photo by Doug Hickerson

Local youth group prepares for Romanian visitors

by Doug Hickerson

tributing.

In the cultural exchange, Mary lived with a Romanian family, visited a children's orphanage and hospital, a gypsy village, and helped lead worship with the teens that are members of the church whose name means "divine church of the reborn." "Basically, our purpose was to encourage the youth group and help them understand different things about America and what we believe in," Mary said.

The teens coming here will enjoy seeing Niagara Falls, a Rhinos soccer game, and the "Kingdom Bound" show at Darien Lake, among other attractions still being planned. Seven of the visiting group are worship leaders in their church and are preparing contemporary Christian music to be performed in several churches here.

About the cultural differences, "I have come to understand how much we have in America," Mary said. She noted such things as clean water from a faucet and family incomes well above the average \$70 per month that a parent earns in the Romanian household. Mary does not think the Romanian visitors will be lured by this country's material prosperity. "Life is simple in Romania," she said.

Marcia Johnson is Mary's and Greta's mother and also has two sons living at home; David, ten years old, and Kevin Jr., who went on his church's mission trip to Granada in high school. Marcia says it will be fun to serve their guests American food and to see what they like to eat. The additional teenagers in the Johnson home will not be a bother for her. "I can't wait to have them in our home," she said. "I love extra kids."

"They talked about how amazing it would be if they could come to America," Mary Johnson said of the teens she met in Romania last year. Now, the 13 Romanian teenagers will be hosted in the homes of Brockport's Christ Community Church families. One teen is already visiting the area, the others will be here by the end of July.

Mary, a recent graduate of Brockport High School, and her sister, Greta, home-schooled and entering tenth grade, expect two of the female visitors to be guests in their home in Sweden Village.

The two-week visit by the teens from Tigru Murea, Romania, is a project of Christ Community Church's forty-member teen youth group. The group has made mission trips yearly for several years to New York City, Pittsburgh, Granada, England, Mexico, Guatemala. This is the first time an exchange visit has been arranged.

The project is headed by youth pastor, James M. Hinman. "The (Romanian) teens we visited were amazed and could not believe that we would make the sacrifice necessary (for the visit)," Hinman said. "It was beyond their comprehension of possibility."

The Brockport church's teens are making the trip possible through fund raising projects. Greta was the top salesperson of plants contributed at discount by Kirby's Farm Market in Brockport and by Nagle Garden Center in North Chili. A church variety show by teens also raised funds. Mary contributed from her summer job earnings. Each of the 40 teens must raise \$250 with other church members also con-



FIND OUT ALL ABOUT BROCKPORT MERCHANTS' SIDEWALK SALE INSIDE THIS WEEK!

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More stars and stripes flying high

"Old Glory" sightings gaining

by Doug Hickerson

Are more citizens displaying the American flag this year and why? The questions struck me on a walk through Sweden Village and the south end of Brockport on Flag Day (June 14). Flags seemed to have popped out here, as well as in other villages and townships, this patriotic holiday like the first daffodils of spring.

Why? An informal phone survey of friends and acquaintances provided heart-felt reasons for unfurling the flag: "Because I am proud of my country and flying the flag is one way to show it," was Bill Andrews' response from his home on College Street, Brockport. "Because I'm very patriotic and I am proud to be an American," says Sara Cook, a retired teacher who lives on Park Avenue, Brockport. Frank Warner, a retired Kodak worker and Army vet on Coleman Creek Road, says, "I believe in it, and I served under it in Korea and Greenland."

Andrews cites some key principles he feels the flag stands for: "freedom, openness, generosity, democracy." By "generosity" he includes the increase in volunteerism in this country and our influence around the world. "Since the Cold War, I think that American prestige and influence has increased," says Andrews, who is village historian for Brockport and retired professor of political science at SUNY Brockport.

"I think it's important that individuals recognize what this country means to them personally," says John Price, displaying Old Glory on Sweden Lane, Brockport. For him the flag represents "freedom to do practically anything we please: freedom of speech, freedom of movement, freedom from want."

Price, retired from teaching in the communications department at SUNY Brockport, has "Flag" as a family name on his father's side going back to the Revolutionary War. His son, whose middle name is "Flag," was christened on Flag Day.

Family roots and the example of parents are part of the inspiration to raise

the Stars and Stripes. I started displaying my flag a couple of years ago, partly from recollection of my father dutifully displaying the Stars and Stripes on national holidays. Cook remembers, "We always had a flag pole in Angola. My father would put the flag up everyday." Warner recalls of his boyhood home in Irondequoit: "My dad always flew the flag."

For many, family roots are part of our nation's ethnic "melting pot" that the flag represents. Tony Pietrzykowski's parents immigrated from Poland and the American flag was always in front of their home. "I can visualize the flag at 12 Hyde Park in Batavia. My parents were proud to have the same address as President Roosevelt," Pietrzykowski says. He lives on Hollybrook Road, Brockport, and is a retired Kodak employee. Last year on Flag Day he and other Knights of Columbus delivered flyers to neighborhoods encouraging citizens to "Fly Your Colors."

Mark Ricci, just down Hollybrook from the Pietrzykowskis, has his American flag displayed with the flag of Italy below it. On St. Patrick's Day his wife, Tracy, adds the flag of Ireland to honor her great grandfather's native land. Ricci is an officer with the University Police at SUNY Brockport. His grandfather was an immigrant. He has boyhood recollections of the flag pole on the family farm at Lyndonville. "I can remember for more than 25 years Mom and Dad put up the flag," Ricci says.

Bob Booser says his immigrant ancestors had a deep patriotism. He was the first football coach at SUNY Brockport. His flag flies on a pole at his Main Street home. Booser has traced his mother's side to Germany in 1680. "My forebears came because of religious persecution," he says of their escape to Holland, then settlement in Pennsylvania as Pennsylvania Dutch. "When our people came over to this country and saw the flag, it was a symbol of what they were here for: liberty and pursuit of happiness, and all of those things. Sometimes we lose sight of that."

Many who fly their colors are mindful of the human sacrifice to preserve our freedoms. Ricci, a veteran of the Vietnam



All for the red, white and blue - Mark and Tracy Ricci and five-year-old Adrianna and 15-month-old Alex proudly display the American flag and, at right, the flag of Italy. Photograph by Doug Hickerson.

War era, says his flag is "an inspiration after what we fought for. A lot of people have died for our country through the wars; it's in memory of them."

Mary Ann Pietrzykowski, Sweden town councilwoman, says the flag "represents all the good things about America." She adds, "It also honors the service men and women who go to war for us to defend liberty for us and others and around the world." Booser, who served in the Navy, describes how the flag was an inspiration to those sailing into combat: "When you're at sea, in a convoy - and you see all those flags flying - you can't help getting a lift out of that."

All my contacts seemed to share my observation that more citizens are showing their colors. Dan Azzaroni, store manager at Chas-Pikini in Brockport, says that their stores' annual sales in the Rochester region were up an average 23 percent from 1997 to 1998 for the two different styles of flags they sell. The same increase is projected for 1999.

These figures should please John Price who says, "I think it's important to (fly your flag). We ought to acknowledge that we believe in this country, what it stands for and what its heritage is. And if others see my flag out there like you did, maybe that triggers in them a little more recall of what benefits we have."

Sweden Village's merry mailman

Caring courier brings the joy year round

by Doug Hickerson

"Neither snow, nor rain, nor heat, nor gloom of night stays these couriers from the swift completion of their appointed rounds."—Inscription on the main Post Office in New York City.

"One day last winter I looked out — we had those huge, huge drifts — and here is the mailman crawling over the snow drifts to deliver the mail," said Robert Berry who lives on Hollybrook Road in Brockport. "I thought to myself, God, this is dedication; nowhere else would you see it. He did not miss a day, not a day. This guy is unbelievable, always upbeat, always has a nice word and a smile." Berry wrote this praise to the Postmaster General in Washington.

The dedicated mailman is letter carrier Tom Moran, who has served the Sweden Village subdivision and beyond for about 13 years. He doesn't defy just the weather on his appointed rounds. When road construction blocked Keystone Court for several days, Tom timed his deliveries during the construction workers' lunch break. He parked his vehicle and walked the length of Keystone Court and back delivering the mail. Official policy would have required customers to pick up their undeliverable mail at the post office.

One resident tells about forgetting to put a stamp on an electric bill that was close to overdue. Tom put a stamp on it and left a small envelope to be reimbursed. He wrote, "I thought you wouldn't want this delayed." He does this for all his customers. Normally such a letter goes to the post office, then comes back several days later noting postage due.

All of Tom's customers have high praise for an extraordinary human being who is sensitive and responsive to the special circumstances in the families he serves. "He delivered the mail right to my door for three weeks after I had heart surgery," said Jim Kenney of Keystone Court. "I didn't ask him to do it. He looks after the people he works for. He's a great guy, always friendly, always a smile."

Tom looks after people by being aware of routine life in the neighborhood and at the homes along his route. In early November, Maury and Liz Kleiman were suddenly

gone from their Hollybrook Road home without giving Tom the usual notice. Tom also noticed the number of cards coming to the Kleiman home. He then learned from a neighbor that Kleiman's grandson and son-in-law had been killed in a tragic camping accident in Arizona.

On the day he heard the news, Tom wrote a sympathy card to the Kleimans, eloquently expressing his deep empathy and support. A typical sentence: "I extend my sincere and deepest sympathy on your tremendous and extremely painful loss." Tom also enclosed a memorial gift to Lifeline Assistance, Inc., "because of your exceptional dedication (to that organization)," Tom declared.

Tom is equally adept in expressing compassion or congratulations to his customers. He will create a customized card for any occasion, such as milestones or special achievements which he usually discovers in newspapers. Tom's cards typically have impeccably sound prose or poetry. He often researches the field in which his subject was recognized, such as sports or art. He pastes appropriate clippings — photos, headlines, and graphics — from magazines, newspapers, and web sites. Envelopes are hand-decorated as well. The words and art create a collage that elevates the person into a kind of "Hall of Fame."

As Sweden Villagers have begun to share their Tom Moran stories, the experience has taken on a science-fiction movie aura. It's as though they've had an encounter with a friendly space alien but didn't think anyone else would believe their story about Tom's feats and fantastic cards. There has been much joy and surprise as neighbors have learned that they're "not alone" in receiving a special message.

For example, Melanie and Dan Logan have received cards for about eight years, some to their son Devin, following his participation in football and volleyball. Joan and Richard Fenton report that their son, Mark, a race walker, received Tom's humorous and encouraging cards through high school, college and beyond.

Sharon and Carl Wheat have received Tom's cards for about 15 years, starting at their home on Holley Street in the Village of Brockport. Tom followed Carl Wheat's career in politics, first on the Village Board, then the Town of Sweden Board after the Wheatas moved to Tudor Road. "He's one of our favorite people," Sharon Wheat said. "Whenever something happens in our family, he comes a card." That includes congratulations



Tom Moran brings letters and a smile to a Hollybrook Road, Brockport, resident. Photo by Doug Hickerson.

to their son, David, in his career moves as a manager in professional sports. Daughter Mary Karen, who excelled in softball, received not just cards but a Wheaties cereal box with Tom's own artwork added and the big word changed to "Wheat." We used the box as a table centerpiece at her high school graduation party.

"He is one of the most creative people I have met," said well-known artist Helen Smagorinsky, who has received Tom's cards about her artwork and her Pantheon bread that she gives Tom annually. "He is a polite, charming, accommodating, kind, gentle person, interested in people," Smagorinsky said. "He remembers things about you." In her painting of the Village of Brockport, which she donated to the Seymour Library as a fund-raiser, she included a mail truck. "I know the village isn't my mailman's route," Smagorinsky said. "But, I usually try to put mailmen in my paintings as my tribute to Tom."

Tom Moran lives in Batavia with his wife, Lisa, their son, Michael, who is ten, and an older stepson, Dan. Tom is a native of Batavia and attended SUNY College at Brockport. He has been in the postal service for almost 23 years. Donna Chichester, Postmaster at Brockport Post Office and Tom Schmidt, her predecessor from 1981 until December 1999, both affirm Tom's dedication to the postal service and to his customers.

His daily route has him delivering about 2,000 letters and magazines to 500 mailboxes and about 45 parcels to front doors. "Part of the reason why I like to write cards is that I don't get a chance to talk with people," Tom said, adding that he is a shy person and expresses himself better in writing. All the profuse prose, poetry and crafting is done only on Sunday "because my brain is dead after a workday," Tom said. Everyone asks Tom about how he creates the meticulous cards with appropriate historic details and clippings.

His answer — he does research at the library, once in a while. But Tom mostly relies on rummaging through his own "archives" — a tub full of magazines and newspapers.

When asked why he doesn't take the easy way and do only his "appointed rounds," Tom replied, "That would be boring. It's so much more interesting to know the people you deliver mail to." And, Tom is glad for his customers to know him. "By now, and after 13 years on this route, I hope people know me as Tom, not just 'the postman.'"



A sample cluster of cards and envelopes created by Tom Moran. Photo by Dianne Hickerson.

Gathering in a global family

by Doug Hickerson

"The beginning of our family goes back to me in high school," Doni LaRock said. "For whatever reason, the clearest vision I had for my life, growing up in my high school days, was that I wanted to be a dad and I wanted to adopt children."

In their home on Hollybrook Road, Town of Sweden, Beth and Doni LaRock recently talked about their long journey that brought them to this moment: Three adopted Brazilian youngsters were playing outside. Their biological daughter, Meghan, was expected home from college that evening. And, their adopted daughter, Wanda, would soon be home from work.

As SUNY College at Brockport graduates, and area residents for about 30 years, Beth teaches part-time at Christ Community Church school and Doni is a sign language interpreter at the National Technical Institute for the Deaf at RIT.

With Beth and Doni sharing hopes for a family, Meghan was born to them 20 years ago. Pregnancy complications prevented Beth from having more children. Adoption was financially prohibitive then also.

"We started with absolutely no money. It's been a walk of faith."

Doni LaRock

For ten years, the LaRocks expended their family each year by hosting foreign exchange students: six from Brazil and the others from Germany, Spain, France, and England, twelve in all. The LaRocks will remain in touch with all of them.

Four years ago, Beth and Doni began adoption procedures for Wanda, then a 19-year-old student at Roberts Wesleyan College and staying in their home. Raised in foster care most of her life, Wanda was officially adopted in May 2000.

While Wanda's adoption was progressing, Doni kept running into friends who had adopted children. "This thing about adopting hasn't left me," he told Beth after hearing many joyful stories. "We agreed we had to do something one way or another."

The LaRocks knew they wanted to adopt Brazilian children because of the

students they had hosted. Visiting those students in their own country in 1993, "We fell in love with the people, the language, the culture," Beth said.

Two years ago they started looking for a brother and sister, but none were available. They saw Elaine on an adoption agency video and immediately wanted her. Elaine was 12 at the time and legally would not be available for adoption when she turned 14. Elaine lived in a "closed" state, politically unfriendly to adoptions by Americans. The LaRocks had to search an open state for an adoption before the \$5,000 worth of legal work expired in nine months. They found a brother and sister available: Evan and Emma, then 10 and 11. They held out hopes of adopting Elaine also.

They flew to Brazil on October 16, 2000, to get Emma and Evan. After arriving in Brazil, they also received approval to adopt Elaine — the result of the LaRocks' Brazilian friends intervening for them in high places. Beth and Doni with their three new children arrived in Brockport December 18, two months after they had started their odyssey to Brazil.

Emma, Evan, and Elaine have settled into the white, middle class neighborhood, enjoying activities like soccer, roller blading, biking, visits to the library, and sledding in their first experience with snow.

"The school district has been wonderful," said Beth. "They loved going off to school and came home happy," she said of Evan and Emma who were in 4th and 5th grade in the Hill School. The ESL (English as a Second Language) program helped all three.

Elaine had a rough time with adjusting in the Middle School, especially with the initial language barrier and teasing she received from peers. She has gained new friends at the orphanage, she said of Evan and Emma who were in 4th and 5th grade in the Hill School. The ESL (English as a Second Language) program helped all three.

Beth and Doni have been challenged as parents. "I went through a rough time in May and June," Beth said, adding that she previously had two years of the "empty nest" with time to herself. "It was a big shock to us, having to adjust 24/7," Doni said. Much effort has gone into teaching responsibility in the household and to kids of a different culture and language. "We don't just tell them what to do or what not to do, but why," Beth said. Beth and Doni emphasize showing love while being firm



The LaRock family at their home in Sweden Village, Brockport. (l to r) Meghan, Emma, Evan, Elaine, Wanda, (center) Doni and Beth LaRock.

and consistent. "That is where their security comes from," according to Beth. "We are over the hump now, I think," Doni said. Beth added, "I feel like we are a family right now; I feel we have settled in."

The new LaRock household is filled with stories of vision, faith and determination. "I waited nine years to have a family in the United States," Elaine said of her early childhood dream which she shared with friends at the orphanage. "I prayed to Jesus and he answered my prayers." Even with skeptical friends Elaine knew that, "Sometimes you have to wait for what you want," as she expressed it. Her next vision? "I want to be a missionary doctor and go into all the countries."

Emma was determined to not be separated from her brother by adoption. She refused to go with a family who wanted just her. The story made the newspaper with the headline "Children who were left behind." A photo of the two appeared with the story which was clipped by the adoption agency and forwarded to Beth and Doni. Without Emma's dogged devotion to her brother, the LaRocks would not have found the brother and sister they had hoped for.

After being moved around foster care system in Massachusetts, Wanda struck out on her own four years ago to start college at Roberts Wesleyan College in North Chili. She then went to a Bible college in Virginia for two years "to get my life in order." That

included deciding if she would accept the LaRocks' offer of adoption. "Then God started changing my heart and I actually wanted to be adopted," Wanda said. "I loved them and it made sense." Wanda describes herself as somewhat a loner with strong self-confidence she learned as a survival skill growing up. She works full time at the Catholic Family Center while pursuing a degree in Criminal Justice at RIT. Now, she has an anchor in the LaRock home. "Being adopted gave me roots," she said, "a place to call home I never had before."

Beth and Doni's first daughter, Meghan, has been to Brazil four times and also to Mexico, England, and Germany. She is majoring in international business at Bentley College in Boston and aims for a law degree in that field. "My parents are amazing people for what they do and how much they give to other people," she said. "I think it's great that they can give this a little better life and I respect them a lot for that."

As for Doni, his persistent vision from his teen years has been realized. "For me, it is deeply moving to know that something I had in my heart as a teenager was real," he said. "And, now I realize God was speaking to me to do something significant. And it came to be. As an adult, it has grounded me in my faith more than any other experiences of my life."

Two miracle children thrive

by Doug Hickerson

In 1980, Pam Shillieto had a bone marrow transplant, after extensive chemotherapy and total body irradiation to treat acute lymphocytic leukemia. Doctors told her that she would never have children. In March 1992, she gave birth to her son, Kase. In January 1995, she gave birth to her daughter, Kristi. Both children were born prematurely. Doctors predicted this might weaken lungs, heart, hearing, and affect learning ability. Both children are in excellent health and doing well in school.

Kase, who will be ten in March, and Kristi, going on seven, are each like a rose unfolding from the arid soil of medical stats and pessimistic prognoses. Two lives - that were not supposed to be - have been emerging in the nurture of family, church, and divine providence that even the children recognize.

Kase and Kristi both know they are special. When asked why, Kase replied, "They predicted mom wasn't supposed to have a baby and God made me come, so I think he has something special in store for me." Kristi's version is "Mommy thought she could not have kids, that's when she did have kids." The six-year-old's theological perspective is "I know God created me, he creates me, he tried to help us, he is all around us and he is special."

Besides this uncanny spiritual insight, and maybe because of it, Kase and Kristi are blossoming into the world and touching lives around them. Pam said of Kristi, "She's a sprite. She wants to sing, dance, smile, and make everybody happy." She makes up her own songs, "about family, our house, our dog, flowers, kitties, rainbows, horses, anything," said Wayne Shillieto, the children's father. Betty Schroeder, Pam's mother, also noted that Betty Kristi makes up her



Kristi and Kase Shillieto after Sunday school at the First Presbyterian Church in Brookport.

"...God made me come, so he must have something special in store for me."

Kase Shillieto, age 9

owns songs about God, "as well as memorizing and adding words to songs she learns at church.

Over several years, reports from school are that Kase and Kristi are "very kind to other people, like children that no one else seems to be playing with" according to Betty. "They are very sensitive to other people and big helpers in the classroom." About Kase, Pam said, "Teachers have said they appreciate his calming influence on other kids. He is a joy to have in class, I'm told."

Kase also can discuss current issues, like the war in Afghanistan. "We are using all sorts of different bombs in different places," Kase said. "But they signed an agreement that they won't use nuclear weapons." And you glad about that? "Yes, because the radiation would kill people in different places." Kase said. "He wants it to be peaceful. I think Osama bin Laden since they out-powered Russia, he thinks that he is good enough to destroy America so he can be the ruler of the world." What does God think of this war? "I think he is very sad that this happened in the first place," Kase said. "He wants it to be peaceful. There is too much violence. He doesn't like violence." In his own life, Kase's interests include saxophone lessons, math and science, soccer, Pokemon, youth choir, Sunday school, and the family pets.

When asked how he keeps up with the news, Kase replied, "I ask my grandma." "Grandpa" is Kermit Schroeder. Both he and Betty took early retirement in May 1991, a few months before Pam's pregnancy was discovered - a providential decision in retrospect. "We felt God was preparing the way for us," Betty said, referring to the long days and weeks they helped Pam and the new-born Kase.

Now they have Kase and Kristi at their home about twice a week, often overnight. The Schroeders live in Greece. On most Sundays, they pick up the children at their home in Spencerport to bring them to the First Presbyterian Church in Brookport. Pam, a registered nurse, and Wayne, who is in the public safety department at Rochester General Hospital, are members of the church, too. They often have to work on weekends.



The Schroeders and Shillietos in church after worship and activities on a Sunday morning. Back, Kermit Schroeder and Betty Schroeder, seated (l to r) Kristi, Pam, Kase, and Wayne Shillieto. Photographs taken on this page by Doug Hickerson

The Schroeders do engage the minds and hearts of their maturing grandchildren. To focus their attention in church, this year the grandparents challenged Kase to listen for key words and phrases in the Bible reading and sermon. Kristi does the same with the children's message. All this becomes part of conversation after church. It's customary in the Schroeder home to sit and talk at the dinner table. "We often discuss what's bothering them, or what was a good time, or what's coming up that they are interested in," Kermit said. "It's almost like a second home to them." Pam said, adding that her parents are good at teaching values, such as how to treat people, how to appreciate what they have, and saying prayers at meals and at bedtime.

Brookport's First Presbyterian Church seems to be a second home, too. "Since I was five years old, I have been in this church," Pam said. "Kase and Kristi are the third generation coming in." Betty says that her children and grandchildren have benefited from the children's programs: Sunday school, bell choir, children's choir, and "a word with the children" in worship service. "The congregation has been very nurturing and supportive to children," Betty said, a quality she adds, that has been found in the church's ministers and Christian education directors over time.

When Pam was first diagnosed with leukemia in 1979, it was the church that ral-

lied to support the sixteen-year-old and her family. Drivers were organized to help with regular trips to the hospital. Meals were prepared and brought to the Schroeder home. The Schroeder Fund was established by the church to help with medical expenses. Now, both services continue as the Family Service Team and the renamed Good Samaritan Fund to help other families in need.

The Shillietos and the Schroeders are now on the giving side of this legacy of service that started for them 22 years ago. It's another way that the children are blossoming in the world and touching lives around them. "Kase and Kristi have heard many stories of people bringing food to us," Pam said. "Now it's nice that the kids and I have been able to send cards, and they come with me to bring food to people who are sick. It's good to see them giving back."

Editor's note: In July 1992, in Westside News Inc. publications, Doug Hickerson first wrote about Pam Schroeder Shillieto's struggle with leukemia as a teen, the birth of Kase years later, and the help of family and church that surrounded her. After observing Pam's two children grow up in his church for nearly a decade, he provides this happy sequel.

Local church layman engages congregation in creative worship

by Doug Hickerson

Dan May's bread-and-butter job is with Eastman Kodak Company as a mechanical engineer in product development. But off the job, May knows that "man shall not live by bread alone," as he has promoted creative worship services at Brookport's First Presbyterian Church.

As a lay member of the church, May is coordinating a special worship service for Pentecost Sunday, May 19. In the Christian tradition, Pentecost is the celebration of the Spirit descending on the disciples of Jesus in the days after Easter. "The worship service will stimulate the senses, using primarily sights and sounds," May said, citing a church's procession, artwork, water and wind sounds, and music. "The whole idea is to praise God and to get spiritually in tune in much the same way the disciples experienced the Pentecost." Further, May explained, "We are not just putting on a show, but trying to engage people in a way that is based on Scriptures."

May has worked for Kodak for 14 years with a bachelor's degree from the U. of R. and master's from M.I.T., both in mechanical engineering. He is a 1982 graduate of Brookport High School. He grew up in Brookport and in the Presbyterian Church where he was a deacon at age 14. After years away as a student, May returned in 1997 to live in Sweden Village with his wife, Julie, and two daughters.

He has no formal theological or religious training, but in the last few years May has thoroughly read the Bible and other Christian books, as well as listened to contemporary Christian music. This year May also has attended creative worship workshops sponsored by the Presbytery of the Genesee Valley.

May appreciates traditional worship as familiar experiences learned in childhood and the comfort of knowing what to expect each week. But, compared to sitting through worship, "I believe worship is something to experience and live, as opposed to having it done to me," May said. "One personal reason I like to plan these services is that I find myself much closer to God after all the study and hard work that it takes." He avoids the term "contemporary worship" because it sounds like a split from traditional worship. "That's not what we're doing," May said. "I prefer blended or creative worship."

"I believe worship is something to experience and live, as opposed to having it done to me."

Dan May

The Presbyterian Church is searching for a new minister to fill the vacancy left by the Reverend Jim Long who moved out of state in December, 2001. The Sunday services now typically include sermons by visiting ministers or church lay people. With these traditional worship services, May has served as worship leader, sometimes writing the prayers and responses. He alternates the worship leadership with church members Dr. Tom Bowdler and Gerry Maar.

First attempts at creative worship were a joint effort by May and Jim Long before

the minister left. On May's own inspiration, he and other church members conducted a special worship service on January 20. Titled "Fingerprints of God," the service was based on a song by Steven Curtis Chapman. "I listened to that song for months," May said. "And one day a lyric struck me and I thought of Sherlock Holmes and Dr. Watson searching for God."

With light humor, the dramatization had Holmes (Bill Noel) in pursuit of evidence, followed by a needing Watson (Gerry Maar). Earlier in the service, May and church member Kirsten Moore each stood behind two crotas about flats with spray paint and created two large fingerprints. Holmes walked up the aisles, magnifying glass in hand, and commented on individuals he "discovered" in the congregation. He concluded that he didn't need hard evidence. It was "elementary, dear Watson," that God was simply found in these unique people. The overall theme was Creation with background Nature paintings in front of the sanctuary. The message to the children was that each one of them is God's unique creation with one-of-a-kind fingerprints.

"The whole service just came to me in such a way and went on paper so easily that I don't really believe I wrote it," May said. "The rehearsal was great, but the performance went beyond my expectations and really moved me."

According to May, there is more member participation in various aspects of the church that were previously managed by

the former minister. The upcoming production about Pentecost is another team effort by May and four other church members: Peggy Hale, Anita Marolt, Kirsten Moore, and Laurie Smith. Hale and Smith attended the Presbytery workshops with May. The five had an excited planning meeting for May 19 that "lasted three and a half hours with discussion that went everywhere," according to May.

Such a charismatic meeting itself is a hint of the Pentecost and the experience of the first disciples. The church's leader at First Presbyterian has gone away causing some grief and bewilderment among the members. But many in the congregation are experiencing a new spirit. "We have some very talented people who are stepping up their efforts — not just in worship — to keep the church vital and growing," May said. "I am hopeful that those who are getting anxious (waiting for an ordained minister) can see this positive energy, especially since I will be relying on our own lay ministry for a while longer. It says on the back of our bulletin, we are all ministers in Christ."

Morning worship service, "Stirring Up the Spirit" followed by discussion, Sunday, May 19, 10:00 to 11:15 a.m. at First Presbyterian Church, 35 State Street, Brookport.

Parking on State Street or Market Street (to enter rear of church).

Note: Hickerson is a member of Brookport's First Presbyterian Church.



Dan May feels at home in the front of the sanctuary at the First Presbyterian Church in Brookport. Behind is part of the artwork used in one of the church's creative worship services he wrote and coordinated. Photo by Doug Hickerson.

RPO recognizes outstanding volunteers

The Rochester Philharmonic Orchestra recognized contributions of its volunteers on Wednesday, May 8. Awards were presented by Music Director Christopher Seanan, Board Chair David Heiligman and President & CEO Richard Nowlin to individuals in honor of their outstanding service to the RPO during the past year. The RPO relies on volunteers for a number of activities, from office staff support to assisting at concerts, and volunteers usually

contribute approximately 25,000 hours of their time to the Orchestra.

The honors are: Emily Grisinger of Brighton; John Beck of Webster; Fred Weingarten of Pittsford; Josephine Truback of Brighton; Erik Gifford of Clifton Springs; Marjorie Tabachian of Rochester; Dan Stare of Pittsford; Larry Michael of Fairport; Frank Luellen of Pittsford; Annis Apone of Rochester; and the Gleason Foundation of Rochester.

Bob Molnar:

Hands and heart fully occupied

by Doug Hickerson

Sitting at the kitchen table with Bob Molnar, I could see the den walls covered with "half hull models," exquisitely carved and mounted miniature boats. In the dining room was a cherry table finished to match the Stickley hutch. Another room had assorted Adirondack furnishings. In the garage was a full-size "cedar strip canoe"

and an oak desk just completed for his son, Dave.

Dave lives in Spencerport and another son, Mark, lives in Ohio. Bob and his wife, Pat, just celebrated their 40th wedding anniversary. He is retired from Eastman Kodak and she is retired from the Foxport school system.

Their Sweden Village home of 23 years is a treasure trove of Bob's handwork. De-

cade before building fine furniture, Bob learned from his father "how to get things done." As a young teen he helped his father with the rough work of plumbing and wiring the family's farm house. When Bob and Pat purchased their first Brockport home, it needed complete remodeling. "I knew I could accomplish what I needed to accomplish," Bob said about the successful home project. "I have always enjoyed the challenge of doing it myself. It's a learning process; you never stop learning."

Bob is a self-taught craftsman, using his library of favorite how-to-do-it books and magazines as well as "making mistakes and doing it over." He learned carving and finishing the half hull models at the Wooden Boat School in Maine, partly to prove he was not dependent on his power tools. He markets a few of these in stores in Florida and the Adirondacks.

He usually builds something "not just to have a function, but because I like the way it looks, pleasing to my eye," Bob said. Selling his models or furniture is not a priority and they usually end up being given away to family or friends. The gifts have included such items as red tables, oak tables, book cases, and a queen size bed in cherry. "I sign and date every piece because that will be my legacy some day," Bob said. "I hope my family passes them on through the generations."

Bob is good at making chili, too. A pot of chili was simmering on the stove and half of it would be given to his son, Dave. Bob and Pat have been providing some meals and other caring support for Dave and his two children, Erica (four) and Luke (10 months) for almost a year.

Dave's wife, Debbie, died on December 12, 2002, suddenly and unexpectedly while visiting Bob and Pat. Since then, they and Debbie's parents, David and Joy Rose of Hamlin, have rallied to help Dave and the children. Pat, Joy and Sue Rose (Dave's sister-in-law) take care of the children five days a week while Dave is at work.

For the Molnars and the Roses, both retired couples, this abrupt turn in their mature lives has been eased by the loving care of friends and family.

Dave Rose expressed deep gratitude for the way people have turned out to help him

and joy in a time of grieving. "I don't know how we would have gotten through this without the kind help of so many people," Dave said, referring to volunteers who offered help with tasks like mowing the lawn. Also, friends have asked Dave and Joy out to dinner, "helping us to get away and let our minds relax for a while," Dave said. He and Joy were greatly comforted by a friend who showed up the morning after Debbie's death to tell how he, as a father, has coped with the death of a child many years ago, and, more recently, the death of a son who was killed.

Bob has similar stories. "Our house was overwhelmed with friends when she passed away," he said about people who helped with the children, brought food, and greeted out-of-town guests. "For four days, until the funeral, people were showing up at 8 a.m. We did not have to worry about a thing." Similar kindnesses, especially helping with the grandchildren, have continued to this day.

One form of support was the Debarah Rose Memorial Golf Tournament held on September 20 to benefit the education of Erica and Luke. The organizing committee consisted of Buckley Acks, who first proposed the idea, Tom Nesbitt, Ed Helke, Jack Ileck and Bob. Sponsorships and prizes were donated, including wood crafts by Bob himself, John Deats and Tom Nesbitt. Helen Szwagorski donated some of her art work. The tournament and dinner at the Pine-wood Country Club sold out with 72 golfers seven weeks prior to the event. "Our friends, the Roses' friends and Dave's friends were there," Bob said. "Some could hardly hold a golf club, but they were there to support."

Bob's craftsmanship is the work of a self-reliant man who has met the challenge of learning on his own. But he is glad that he and the families are not alone in this crisis. Through the tragic loss, Bob has been awed by the numbers of compassionate people who have responded creatively and generously to the families for almost a year.

Editor's note: In a December issue of *Suburban News* and *Hamlin-Clarkson Herald*, free lance contributor Doug Hickerson will offer aspects of coping with grief during the holiday season.



Bob Molnar, at home in Sweden Village, is giving finishing touches to the oak desk he made for his son, Dave, who lives in Spencerport. Photograph by Doug Hickerson.

Holley High senior scholar also ranks high on stage and in sports

by Doug Hickerson

Jenna Lee Barber has been busy with more than books while becoming salutatorian in Holley High's graduating class of 2002. In the course of accumulating a 98.26 cumulative average, the senior, who aspires to Broadway, also has achieved on the school stage and sports fields.

Currently, Jenna is rehearsing her lead role in Holley High's production of "Hello Dolly" scheduled for March 7, 8, 9 and 10. It will be her "swan song," appearing as Dolly in the Friday and Saturday night shows, after having leads and dance roles in school musicals each year since 6th grade.

It is a rigorous task to get to the top in school music performance which is the New York State School Music Association (NYSSMA) All-state Conference. In fact, it requires a perfect score of 100 in auditions.

In spring of 2000, Jenna received a 99. She set her goal for a score of 100 in the 2001 audition, her last chance to make All-state before graduating. She received 100 and became the first Holley High student in 14 years to make the All-state Conference. During the week of the conference, Jenna also was selected by the Rochester Broadway Theater League to attend their Master Class where the cast of "Phantom of the Opera" critiqued her performance of Shakespearean and contemporary stage roles.

She sets goals for herself in sports, too, like cutting her track time from 73 seconds in the 400m in the Sectional tournament last year to 69 seconds in this year's event. She did it. She also helped the varsity soccer team achieve a Section V championship. And, she received a Sportsmanship Award and Academic Scholar Team Award.

Jenna says she always has achieved her major goals until this year. Since sixth grade she has aimed to graduate from Holley High at the top of her class. She is philosophical about coming in second by a fraction of a grade point. "I'm going into a competitive field where there is a lot of rejection," Jenna said. "This disappointment is good preparation for the future. I can accept it as long as I know I did my best."

Jenna's Biology teacher, Dan Burke, also directs the musical and technical aspects of the high school productions. "She just attacks everything and puts her heart and soul into it," Burke said of Jenna's performance in the classroom and on the stage. "You rarely see a kid who does that and still has such a great outlook on things." About his six years of working with Jenna in lead roles, Burke said, "She is always very focused, very determined, and well prepared - just unbelievably professional."

One more challenge for Jenna is in pass the auditions and be one of the few out of many applicants admitted to the musical theatre major at an institution of her choice. She has been admitted academically at six top universities in the field. But selection into her major is very competitive, based on performance. At Carnegie Mellon University, for instance, five percent were admitted last year from almost 1,000 applicants to the Musical Theater Department.

The role of Dolly in her last school musical is another challenge for Jenna. "Dolly is an older woman with a very low, raspy alto voice," said Jenna, a soprano. Jenna is cautious with Dolly's "belting voice" to maintain vocal health for college auditions. She still says, "It's fun. It's a big role, ending my senior year on a big note."

"Hello Dolly"
 •Holley Senior High School Auditorium
 3800 North Main Street, Holley, corner of Lynch Road
 •March 7, 8, 9 Thursday, Friday, Saturday at 7:30 p.m.
 •March 10, Sunday, at 2 p.m.
 •Admission: \$5 in advance; \$7 at the door
 Call the school for reservations, 7:00 a.m. to 3:30 p.m., 638-6335.



Jenna Barber Photo by Leichter Studios, Inc.

Coping with grief during the holiday season

by Doug Hickerson

David and Joy Rose of Hamlin told how the Rose family has traditionally celebrated the Christmas holiday. The children and grandchildren gather at their house after Christmas eve services for oyster stew, homemade cookies and the exchange of presents. The festive season really would start much earlier with a day on which Joy, their daughter, Debbie Molnar of Spencerport and her young daughter, Erica, would make those cookies.

"So, those are things that won't be anymore," David said, referring to the fact that Debbie, at 32 years of age, suddenly and unexpectedly died last December 12, leaving her husband, Dave Molnar, and two young children, Erica (4) and Mark (19 months).

"Well, we're still going to make Christmas cookies," Joy responded. "We are going to make that a tradition for all the grandchildren, getting them together to decorate cookies."

David didn't really mean "those things won't be anymore." He was acknowledging that Debbie would no longer be there physically. Joy was affirming that the family will move on. There lies the crux of coping with grief in a season traditionally filled with joy and festivity.

The Roses managed their grief and the Christmas season as best they could so soon after Debbie's funeral. David and Joy got together with Dave Molnar and their son, Greg, and his wife, Susan, who have two young children. "We decided we were going to make the best Christmas possible for the children," David said. "And even though their Mom wasn't there, Aunt Deb wasn't there, we were still going to go on and not make it a remorseful Christmas for them, but as happy as we possibly could."

For John and Sue Zagata in the Town of Sweden, the passage of time has helped them cope with grief. More than a decade of time has eased the original pain of the first Christmas without their son, Mark, who died at age 18 on Labor Day, 1992, almost three years after his leg was amputated because of cancer. "It was horrible," Joan said of the first Christmas. He and Sue gave only glimpses of

"We're still going to make Christmas cookies."

Joy Rose

"If we face the essential suffering and deal with it affectively with the support of others, then we grow through the experience."

Al Datro, counselor

Mark's Christmas stocking, the Christmas tree ornaments that Mark had made, and "the empty place at the table." The house also seemed emptier in the absence of many people who would visit Mark before he died.

Coping with grief during the holidays is not just making it through a tough period and coming out where you were before. From one holiday to another - and the time in between - the appropriate working through grief produces growth. "Predominantly I think people do grow in wisdom (through the grieving process)," Al Datro said. Datro is a counselor with a private practice in Brockport for 15 years. "If we face the essential suffering and deal with it effectively with the support of others, then we grow through the experience."

I asked the Roses what growth and wisdom they have experienced through their grief in the relatively short time since Debbie died.

"It definitely has made the family closer, especially with our son (Greg) and daughter-in-law (Sue)," David said about the couple who lives in Hilton with two young children. "They never leave here without hugging us." He added that "affection to one another has increased tremendously; we just don't take life for granted anymore." To Joy, cherishing life also means "not putting things off. If you're going to do something, do it."



Sue and John Zagata, of Sweden, with a photo of their son Mark as a high school Junior. Mark died on Labor Day 1992. Photograph by Doug Hickerson.

John and Sue Zagata also have grown in faith and wisdom gleaned from over a decade of coping with grief.

"That emptiness and void that was in our life was filled with the Lord," John said, referring to many nights of prayer meetings at their church when the grief was new and raw. For Sue, "the presence of the Lord came down so strong." John reflected on their struggle and growth. "I just can't imagine going through something like this without faith in the Lord and the support we received from the whole community," he said. "There are those letters that we got that still make me cry - from people whose lives were touched."

Today, the Zagatas have other reminders that the end of their son's life was an inspiration to many. As a junior and a football player at Brockport High, his leg was amputated in December. He returned in his senior year with a prosthesis to play the season and to graduate on schedule, receiving a standing ovation at the ceremony. His heroism was in the news. A plaque in Brockport High's weight room dedicates the facility to his memory. Each year, a graduating senior with proven courage receives the Mark Zagata Sports Award.

Interviewed separately, both couples revealed that empathy is part of their growth, along with a desire to help others. "When someone else has a death in their family, you understand more of what they are going through," John said. "You can give them some words that help as others have helped us."

Editor's note: Doug Hickerson is a Westside News Inc. free lance contributor who lives in the Town of Sweden.

Professionals in the community suggest that a simple memorial ritual can help families deal with grief during the holidays.

Mark DuPré, associate pastor of Christ Community Church in Brockport, says that in the season of joy and with the presence of many family members, people often feel obligated to hide their pain.

"It is critical that the feelings of grief among the family members not be avoided," DuPré said. He recommends that a time be set aside for the family to embrace the memory and acknowledge that we are moving on. "For example, the time could be just before going to the dinner table, letting each person share a brief memory. The type and place of a memorial will vary with each family, but it is a fixed period of time after which the family moves on with the festivities. Also, DuPré says the length and intensity of such a holiday memorial can diminish each year as grieving subsides over time.

Al Datro also recommends the family "therapeutic ritual" be part of holiday gatherings. Families can deal with grief as the nation has. "Prior to 9/11, our culture promoted denying or minimizing the loss of a loved one in seasons when we 'should feel' happy," Datro said. "With the annual 9/11 memorial services held across the nation, we have learned to grieve openly as a nation through therapeutic rituals that help us to remember the lost, to acknowledge our life is going on, and to learn and grow from this process."



David and Joy Rose of Hamlin with the high school Senior photo of their daughter, Debbie Molnar, who died last December 12 at age 32. Photograph by Doug Hickerson.

Tips for coping with grief in the holidays

Al Datro, counselor, MS, FCH, CH

1. Within yourself be mindful of pain and loss while also aware of the joy of life that goes on.
2. Engage supportive people who know you and understand your loss and who respect your needs to talk or NOT talk.
3. Take time to journal. Just write your thoughts and feelings. Address a letter to the person and put it in a special place.
4. See what life lessons you can learn through the process; what makes the grief worse and what makes it better.
5. Get assistance if necessary from clergy or a counselor. A professional who is not in relationship with you can objectively help you sort out what is helpful or not.

Note: Additional tips on coping with grief during the holidays can be found at www.sutternaandhospice.org - click on "coping with holiday grief."

Brockport High wrestlers restore prominent village home

The stately brick home at the corner of Main Street and Park Avenue in Brockport is getting a facelift. The historic gem with a unique roof and cupola is shedding its flaking paint and getting a fresh coat, thanks to the work of more than 25 members of the Brockport High School wrestling team.

This is the second year the wrestling team, assisted by booster club members, has done a community service project. Head coach James Cannon says the team selects someone in the community who might not have the means to do such a major home project and is "a long time resident and valuable community member." Cannon credits assistant coach Mike Ferris with the idea of having the team serve the community. Ferris attended Brockport High School and was an All-American wrestler at SUNY College at Brockport in 2000. He lives in Brockport and teaches fourth grade in the Hilton School District.

Beatrice DeRuysscher owns the home chosen for refurbishing. She has lived in it for 40 years beginning in high school, and then all her married life, raising four children with her husband Howard. She says the home was once a stage coach stop and it appears on an 1861 map of Brockport that hangs in her living room. DeRuysscher says the house, with its ten-foot ceilings was built with square nails, has four kinds of plaster and the floor joists in the basement are full logs with hatchet marks. She recalls that the house was last painted in the 1950s.

Bill Andrews, former village historian, admires the house which he says was built by Sanford Goff. "It's a handsome home in such a prominent village location and it needed this exterior refurbishing," Andrews said. "Besides aiding Ms. DeRuysscher, the wrestling team is providing a great service to the community in restoring it."

Submitted by Doug Hickerson



Members of the Brockport Wrestling team prepare to paint the house.



Beatrice DeRuysscher and her historic village home.

Belfast boy enjoys Brockport visit

by Doug Hickerson

"When you have a lot of children, you just find a place for whomever comes into your home, whether it's a child from the neighborhood, your church, the soccer team, or another country." Angela Zale talked about her family hosting Eamonn, a 14-year-old boy from Belfast, Northern Ireland, who has been here for about half of his 30-day visit. He is one of about 24 Catholic and Protestant boys and girls between 10 and 14-years-old who come to the Rochester area from Belfast each summer as part of the Irish Children's Program (ICP). This is the second consecutive summer that Eamonn has visited the Zales.

The Zale family in Brockport's Sweden Village includes: Sammy, 9; Christian, 14;

Amanna, a recent high school graduate and Mike in his early 20s who is home each summer. An older daughter, Alyssa, visits frequently from Spencerport. Lary Zale is their father.

"Over here it is more quiet, bigger, and more space," Eamonn said of American life in Brockport. "The towns are bigger and the streets are wider than back home." His favorite thing is being in the sun in a tee shirt and bare feet, which is not possible in Belfast's colder and overcast climate. He liked his visit to Darien Lake and loves playing soccer and basketball here. With this July's weather imitating Belfast, there has been a lot of indoor activity like playing baseball on the X-box®, watching Nick-

elodeon and professional baseball on TV. Amanda says she likes being "big sister" to Eamonn. "We enjoy joking around together," she said. "He is a well-mannered kid and a great influence on my brothers. He's fun to hang around with."

"I like to make new friends in the program and make friends in a different country," Eamonn said, describing the highlights of his experience. The child's sentiment of making new friends sounds like the Irish Children's Program is succeeding in its guiding principle of peace through understanding. Since its creation in 1982, the program has sponsored the visitation of an equal number of Catholic and Protestant children from Belfast to the greater Rochester area for a four to six week period each summer. The U.S. experience is intended as a respite from politically unsettled Northern Ireland. Catholic children stay in Protestant homes and vice versa. The ICP youth also enjoy organized Catholic-Protestant mixed activity in their own country and during their stay in the U.S.

"In Brockport there is freedom to get on a bike and just go," Angela said. "In Belfast, it is not so easy. The communities pretty much stay in their own setting. Things are much better since the 1998 Good Friday Agreement. Until more details are worked out in the agreement," she added, "parents prefer that their kids stay in their own communities unless there is something organized for them across communities."

"I have never been a person interested in history or politics at all," Angela said. "I think this country just grabbed my heart from a young age." Her concern for peace in Northern Ireland began when she was about 12 years old. She was aware of the two countries in conflict. She happened to see a television drama, based on a true story about a Catholic woman and a Protestant woman who had worked together on a peace process. Her conscious concern for that country continued through the 1980s and then waned. Soon after the 9/11 World

Trade Center tragedy, Angela saw a TV news report on the status of the conflict in Northern Ireland. With renewed concern for "what and why this is going on," she perused the internet and library material, thinking there should be something people could do to help out. Two years ago, she and Lary learned of the Irish Children's Program through a newspaper article.

Angela has kept regular e-mail contact, almost weekly, with Eamonn's mother for over a year. Much like the Catholic woman and Protestant woman Angela admired as a girl, the communication between her and Eamonn's mother always has an underlying hope for peace. "We joke about everyday things about being mothers, but really very much at the core we have a passion for seeing things change there in a peaceful, sensible way," Angela said. "Both communities want the best for the next generation."

Eamonn's experience in the ICP shows promise for his generation. Of the first contact with the ICP's cross-community orientation, he said, "I figured they would be a little different; they might not have the same interests as me but I may as well try and get along with them since I am going to be with them for a while," Eamonn said. "It worked out." When asked if he saw any differences in the mixed group over two years in the program, he said, "No, there is no difference. We are just there to have good fun. Everyone joins in."

As future citizens and leaders in Northern Ireland, Angela hopes all the ICP children share Eamonn's positive perspective: "If they can make it work on the soccer field together, in the future they can make it work around the table at city hall."

For information on being a host family in the Irish Children's Program see the web site www.irishchildrensprogram.com. Or contact the local president of ICP, Betsy Prince, by e-mail bprince1@frontiernet.net or by phone (585) 621-7835.



Christian Zale, Sammy Zale and Angela Zale (l to r) are shown with their guest, Eamonn, in the Zale home in Sweden Village. Eamonn is visiting for a month from Belfast, Northern Ireland. Photograph by Doug Hickerson.



Kevin G. Johnson (left) and his brother David Johnson in Brockport Fire Department turn out gear. As part of Explorer Scout training, David has accompanied Kevin in the duty officer vehicle (shown) and on the fire truck. Photo by Doug Hickerson.

Brockport Fire Department Explorer Scouts: Learning from lessons, training and family role models

by Doug Hickerson

Firefighter Kevin G. Johnson received a fire call while watching football at a friend's house with his brother, David. He and David rushed to his car where they keep their "turn out gear" and they were off to the fire.

The scene is typical of Brockport Fire Department firefighters being ready to respond on a moment's notice. It also shows the kinds of family bonds that help develop the next generation of firefighters in the department. Kevin, 26, is a captain in the Brockport Fire Department, assigned to Station #4 at Main Street and Park Avenue. Brother David, 15, is an Explorer Scout in the department.

The Explorer Scout program, the career-related division of the Boy Scouts of America, provides preliminary firefighter training for teens. The Explorer Post was chartered in 1973 and today has a membership of 25. Joining at age 14, Explorers begin classes and practical training that make them highly prepared for regular recruitment training at age 18.

Explorer training is every Monday night which includes classroom learning in the firehouse. A major part of Explorer training is the hands-on experience and testing they must take to qualify for "ride along" on the fire trucks with a family member or other designated adult firefighter.

Lieutenant Ken Smith became head of the Explorer Post a year and a half ago. The Ride Along program had begun a few months prior. To get "signed off" to ride along, Explorers must pass 60 written questions on protective equipment and tools, and perform about 90 equipment skills. To this, Smith added procedures he adapted from his experience in the Coast Guard: answering questions before a board of three firefighters, plus demonstrating knowledge and skills called a "practical." David Johnson was the first to take the new oral exam and practical, passing them with no mistakes. He has begun riding on the trucks with his brother.

At the scene of a fire, Explorers are not qualified to enter a burning building. Outside, they provide vital support services to their mentors so the firefighters may spend more time extinguishing the blaze and protecting property.

David is a home-schooled sophomore and lives with his parents, Kevin M. and Marcy Johnson in Sweden Village. He has made a lifetime commitment to being a firefighter because "it is such an amazing service to the community; it's great to be a part of it," David adds. "It helps that my brother is a firefighter. He has taken his training seriously and does his job well."

His brother, Kevin, began the regular fire recruit training when he was a junior at St. John Fisher College. He has been a firefighter for six years with Brockport, two years now as Captain. Kevin is in his second year of law school at the University of Buffalo. He is away all day at classes Monday through Thursday, but on his free time he is often duty officer (overnight first responder to calls) and also responds to various fires throughout the week when not on duty. He lives with his wife, Marne, in Brockport.

Smith and other fire department officials say that Explorers and regular recruits often are following generations of firefighters in the family, some going back 170 years. Most typically now, several Explorer sons are working with their fathers in ride along and other parts of training.

"Our Explorer program is very unique in Monroe County," Smith said, adding that he gets calls from other fire departments wanting more information on the Explorer program. "It is a result of all the kids working together as a team. The kids are remarkable, just a riot to work with and going on to do great things," he said.

Several former Explorers have moved on to serve the department as fire chief, while others have secured careers in Fire Protection Technology and Fire Protection Engineering.

Brockport Toy Shelf supported by lots of Santas

"I knew nothing about fixing bikes. I was too poor as a child to even own a bike," Jack Mazzarella said. Now, he restores about 100 used bikes each year for children who might go without, as he did. "That's what makes me so happy," he added. For four years, self-taught bike repairer, Mazzarella has worked with Brockport Boy Scout Troop #111 to put the bikes in top condition for the Brockport Toy Shelf Christmas distribution.

One evening in early December, he met with 35 scouts and their leaders in his mammoth shop. Following Mazzarella's instructions, the scouts worked on 102 bikes, washing, waxing and checking tires for worn spots and pressure. "The kids enjoy doing it each year," said Mike Krabe, scout master, adding that it is part of ten hours of "service time" required every six months. Through a citizens' grapevine, bikes come in through the year, plus the Clarkson and Hamlin DPWs and Clarkson dump provide discarded bikes. Mazzarella does the mechanical work, this year scrapping about 25 unusable bikes after salvaging their good parts.

Beginning each fall, many other community groups contribute toys to the Brockport Toy Shelf, said Ruthann Tryka, co-chair of the organization. She provided some examples: The Brockport High School hockey team shops for toys with funds raised in a bottle/can collection. The Middle School holds a fundraising dance each year and the students donate all shops for toys. The High School has a toy drive. Barclay Clark School teachers donate funds each year and shop for teens. There is a collection box at Wegmans. Hill School has a "nickel drive" and students buy books at the Lift Bridge Book Shop. Lift Bridge Book Shop also has a "Gift Angel" program, asking customers to donate \$1 which the store matches to purchase books. The Brockport service clubs meet organization, BISCO, makes a generous donation each year, and the member service clubs make their own donations as well.

On Friday evening December 19, the bikes will be trucked to the Brockport High School cafeteria where several dozen Toy Shelf volunteers will arrange a wide variety of toys, sorted and displayed on tables. On Saturday (8:30 a.m. to 4 p.m.) and Sunday (8:30 a.m. to 2 p.m.) by phone-in appointments, heads of families will arrive each half hour, and will be accompanied by a volunteer "shopper" through the toy sections. Approximately 200 volunteers, including organizations such as scouts and churches, will be helping throughout the weekend. Last year, over 850 children, from newborn to 17 years, received toys, hats, mittens and books.



Bikes are part of the Brockport Toy Shelf inventory and are made ready by many helpers. Provided photo.

"This year more than ever we have a large number of people in need of toys, due to the economy I'm sure," said Tryka, adding that the number of toys and funds so far are under the amount at this time last year. "The community reacted on the many volunteers in Toy Shelf and similar relief efforts in the Brockport area. "We have some wonderful people in this community," he said. "That's why these things go."

Besides Ruthann Tryka, other members of the Toy Shelf committee are: Rick Barby, Don Clement, Carol Dolan, Kathy Harris, Molly Mitchell, Bob Sims, Charlene Veltz (co-chair) and Rose Veltz.

To contribute, toys can be dropped off by December 19 at Wegmans, First Niagara Bank, Dollar General, State Farm Insurance (downtown location), and Gift Angel contributions at the Lift Bridge Book Shop. Financial donations can be mailed to Charlene Veltz, 12 Glendale Road, Brockport, 14420 (Checks "Brockport Toy Shelf"). Those in need of gifts (must live in the Brockport School District) may phone for an appointment by December 17. 352-5915.

by Doug Hickerson

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Richard Willis: A productive man from parks to puzzles

by Doug Hickerson

Richard Willis has the knack of working in large numbers. A resident of Lakeside Bekirch Care Center in Brockport, he works on two or three puzzles at a time, some with 1,000 pieces, working about five hours a day. When he was employed by Rochester City Parks, he took care of 11,000 roses in the Maplewood Rose Garden.

As we sat in a lounge near his room, a nearby table displayed two puzzles in progress and two magnificent completed ones. The finished barnyard scene had 1,000 pieces, the other puzzle was a seascape. Asign on the table read, "Please don't touch the puzzles," a measure taken after someone mistakenly dismantled a completed puzzle and put it back in the box.

Richard took that in stride, just as he does the frustration of nearing completion and sometimes finding a piece missing. Another challenge is fitting together pieces of the same color, as he found in the seascape. "If you have a lot of sky or one color, it is going to take you a lot longer," Richard said.

One puzzle manufacturing problem has been solved since he first followed his parents' puzzle enthusiasm as a boy. "Years ago the puzzles didn't have books so they could hook together," and would fall apart if touched, Richard said. Now, they not only snap together, but a glue and laminating process secures the finished handwork for framing. Two are hanging in Richard's room and the barnyard scene and seascape will

be displayed in a public area. Other framed puzzles have been given to friends and relatives.

Richard's mastery of puzzles comes after a career of manuevering rose gardens and manuevering a Zamboni machine. As a Rochester City Parks employee for eleven years, he would tend the 11,000 roses at Maplewood from late March through November. In the winter he would operate the Zamboni machine at the Edgerton Park ice rink.

Richard said he first watched his mother care for 100 African violets in their home, but had no training on care of roses. "It just came natural to me," Richard said. "The loss put me in the garden the first day and said it's yours to take care of," receiving a helper some time later. He also worked in private rose gardens on East Avenue to be able to support his family.

Richard grew up in Savannah, NY and moved to Rochester at 10 years of age. He has six grown children, four of them living in the Rochester area.

Richard likes to attend the coffee hour and play bingo at Bekirch. But, working on his puzzles is his consuming passion, working for hours after breakfast, afternoon, and at night. And, in food memory, he can piece together visions of roses he loved. "My favorite roses are miniatures the size of your finger nail. Or, if you want a nice tea rose, it would be the Peace Rose. The regular Peace is red and the Chicago Peace Rose is several colors. A nice white rose is the John F. Kennedy."



Richard Willis is ready to work on two unfinished puzzles at Lakeside Bekirch Care Center. Two completed puzzles are in the background. Photograph by Doug Hickerson.

Two typos done by editor, not author!



Clarkson historic home at 3773 Lake Road is being restored. Provided photo by Doug Hickerson.

Clarkson historic home receives loving restoration

by Doug Hickerson

"People would say, 'Oh, what an ugly mess,' and I'd want to say that this is an incredible piece of history."

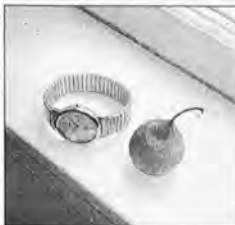
Betty Joseph spoke of trying to sell the brick house at 3773 Lake Road in the Clarkson historic district. It was partly hidden in overgrown trees and brush, and was beginning to deteriorate. The real estate agent wanted to rescue the home and persuaded her skeptical husband, David Joseph, to make the joint purchase. Now they own the house with a passion for restoring its historic beauty.

The Josephs purchased the house in August. After 19 tons of trees, brush and rocks were cleared from the expansive yard, the stately home suddenly appeared from the jungle that had surrounded it and attracted curious passers-by. The Josephs have been working on it for nearly three months, and hope to have the whole house finished in the spring of 2009.

The house was built by architect and builder Gustavus Clark who came to Clarkson in 1810. He built the house in 1828 for his business partner in a mercantile store, Henry Martin. One famous resident of the home was Henry R. Selden, founder of the Western Union Telegraph Company and lawyer for suffragist Susan B. Anthony.

The Josephs are restoring the home to meet Landmark standards on the exterior and to keep the interior authentic to the period. They have consulted with the Landmark Society, the Genesee Country Village & Museum, and the Clarkson Town Historian. Betty has done extensive historical research, using a full abstract of all the deeds to the land and house, poring over documents in the Monroe County Clerk's office, and using a Monroe County Library System web site.

David Joseph is doing all the work with the help of two or three laborers. He learned his skills as a boy working with his carpenter father and has restored several homes, including their own historic home in Hamlin. He originally used more skilled workers, but they were too eager to use modern materials and methods unsuited to historical restoration. Now, he closely super-



Small pears still grow on Mr. Pinney's 160-year-old tree. Provided photo by Doug Hickerson.

vises the less skilled workers.

The house, with 3,860 square feet, has a big parlor, a formal dining room, and an historic kitchen downstairs. At the top of a grand winding staircase there is a master bedroom. There are four bedrooms in the back section.

Betty says the most interesting feature of the home is the working "beehive oven" which shows frontier genius in energy conservation. Surrounded by a massive brick structure, the oven holds heat for up to eight hours. Kindling is lit in the oven until it heats up to about 450 degrees, and the coals are removed to the fireplace. At the higher temperature, it could bake loaves of bread. Then, a lower temperature would bake pies, and an ending temperature would bake puddings. The oven is next to an open fireplace that still has its original kettle on a swing-out crane.

Another unusual historic treasure, a living legacy, is a 160-year old gnarly pear tree standing isolated in the back yard. It is the remnant of an orchard of prize-winning pears, grown by Autin Pinney who lived there from 1849 to 1862. It still produces small, delicious pears which David and the workers enjoy.

"It's such fun for us," Betty says about the renovation project. David shares her enthusiasm, although he originally "didn't want to do it and dragged his feet," she added. "Now, everyday when I leave, he says, 'Don't buy a house.'"



David and Betty Joseph are standing near the historic home's "beehive" oven. Provided photo by Doug Hickerson.



On October 17, State Assemblyman Bill Relich hosted an Oktoberfest at the Sweden Senior Center. 150 people were treated to a five-star meal prepared by Tina and Eddie Hundt with the help of many friends and volunteers. After the Sweden Senior Singers sang, all participated in a (rooft) beer toast to Relich and Nancy Duff, long-time Director of the Center. Shown above are State Assemblyman Bill Relich, Gary Skoog and Cooper Harvey. Provided photo.

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This is Suburban News. Thank you for reading!

Seymour Library's new director brings innovations at work -- and visions for the community she loves

by Doug Hickerson

"What a charming place," Cassie Guthrie thought as she drove down Brockport's Main Street 15 years ago. "This would be a nice place to live." Her fancy has become fact, after nearly two years in Brockport as director of Seymour Library. In an interview she recounted many aspects of her Brockport experience ending with "I love this community."

Guthrie recently invited her beloved community to a big party to develop a relationship. "After Hours at the Library" was the library's first annual fundraiser and a "friends raise" she called it, "an opportunity to bring people into the building and show them what we've got and talk about what we need." The March 28 event was attended by 170 supporters, raising \$10,000 for the Tot Spot Program, a new literacy area for babies through five-year olds.

The gala was the first public fruit of Guthrie's outreach efforts in the community. "Outreach is just about my favorite thing to do," she said. Her prior position was "community relations librarian" at the public library in White Plains, Westchester County. Since starting as library director in May 2007, she has gone into the community engaging citizens, business leaders, civic clubs, merchants, college departments and government leaders to know and support their free public library. Many became sponsors, donors or workers for the gala.

Guthrie wants all citizens to see the importance of the library as an "informal public gathering place" that Ray Oldenburg wrote about in his book, **The Great Good Place**. The urban sociologist calls them "third places" like bars, coffee shops, and general stores (in contrast to first and second gathering places of home and work) and says they are "central to local democracy and community vitality."

"There is something for everyone here

and we serve all segments of the community," Guthrie said about the library gathering place. "On any afternoon people of various ages with laptop computers are using our wireless network." Programs also serve parents and children from "Babies Love Libraries" to pre-school story times and a summer reading program. Teen programs include an Anime Club (Japanese animation movies), a BRATS group (Brilliant Readers Active in Teen Services) doing volunteer work for the library, Wii games, and a teen book festival. Adult and senior offerings include guest presenters and interactive activities. Many patrons are job hunters or career changers who use the new career information center and a part-time career counselor. Guthrie notes that the increase in network use, DVDs checked out, and job/career-searching reflect the declining economy, as more families face loss of jobs and the cut costs of internet access and entertainment.

All services are free to the public on a tight operating budget funded by Clarkson, Sweden, and the Village of Brockport, making Seymour unique as a tri-municipality library. Guthrie boasts of a quality professional staff while "we are the second lowest in per capita spending on personnel" among the town libraries of the Monroe County Library System. "And, the library is open 60 hours a week, well above the state-mandated 40-hour minimum. Being open on Sundays is also unusual, compared to many local libraries," Guthrie said.

Besides the gala, Guthrie named the library's web site www.Seymourlibraryweb.org and career services as her most significant achievements in her short tenure. There was no web site when she arrived. The operating budget couldn't support one, so she created it herself (including a state-of-the-art calendar) with professional coaching on the software. She re-



Cassie Guthrie, director of the Seymour Library in Brockport, wants the community to know the vast resources available to them at the library. Photograph by Doug Hickerson.

mains the web master while Friends of the Library support the software at \$1,600 per year.

The career center and career counselor are also Guthrie's innovation. She updated the library's career literature, obtained DVDs on interview skills, and placed it all in a central convenient location. She retained a part-time professional career counselor, free to patrons, with friendly help from Brockport State College's career center staff and a state grant obtained through contact with Assemblyman Bill Reilich's office.

Guthrie's penchant for outreach is not just to win support for the library, but to see how Seymour Library can contribute to

the "community vitality" of the Brockport area. "I have tried to look around, read the paper, and see what is going on and how I can be involved," Guthrie said. In her first year, she attended BISCO, spoke at Rotary, joined Kiwanis, created a mutually promotional project with merchants, and sought out professional colleagues at the college. She wants Seymour Library to be "community partners" with the service clubs, municipalities, the college, and merchants to enhance public life and attract tourists and new businesses. "There are so many people doing really great things," she said. "We just need to get together a little bit more."



Donald Lage at the Clarkson Academy. To complete the restoration of the large meeting room another \$17,000 is needed. Photograph by Doug Hickerson.

Six-year Clarkson Academy restoration near completion pending final funds

by Doug Hickerson

Donald Lage looks forward to the day when the six-year restoration efforts on the Clarkson Academy will come to fruition. Then (he hopes by this fall), it will begin again to serve the community as a meeting place "to hear a lecture or a book report, see an art exhibit, enjoy a quartet, and meet other people with like interests." He is president of Clarkson Historical Society which, since 2003, has been restoring the 1853 two-story brick school house just west of the Clarkson Community Church at Clarkson Corners.

Lage's words appear in his April 15 fund drive letter to raise \$17,000 needed to complete a year-and-a-half of work on the first floor. That amount will finish off the large meeting room and vestibule with flooring, painted walls and ceilings, and new light fixtures and a public address system installed in the ceiling. This reporter's recent tour of the facility with Lage showed deteriorated walls and ceilings had been stripped and replaced with new wall plaster-sub-flooring laid, and all original woodwork had been restored or custom replicated. All new electric service and plumbing had been installed.

Lage states the six-year project so far has received \$110,000 in grants and cash donations. "Our largest support (about \$62,000) has come from the generous contributions,

both large and small, from our friends both local and distant," his letter says. Two state grants from Senator George Mazaris and Assemblyman Charles Nesbitt totaled \$28,000 and saved the Academy from "im-pending destruction." The Rochester Area Community Foundation provided \$20,055 which paid for the completion of utilities. "Further support came from in-kind contributions from an army of volunteers, suppliers, local businesses, craftsmen, construction experts, architects, consultants and engineers totaled \$70,000." The Town of Clarkson helped with the sewer hookup and provided dumpsters during the tear-out phase. Volunteer work included 1,000 hours from Society members and 1,178 hours by Lage as manager of the project.

With the six-year history of devoted labor and generous financial support, the project has been at a standstill for several months for lack of the \$17,000. The previous sources of grants were not able to help again. Lage writes: "To continue the work we are requesting help from everyone we can reach both local and far away, to complete at least the first floor and vestibule so that we can, at last, be in the place that inspired our efforts in the beginning."

For information, contact Don Lage by phone at 585-395-0009 or email donaldlage@frontier.net. Donations may be sent to Clarkson Historical Society, P.O. Box 600, Clarkson, NY 14430.

"Angel Food" takes wing in westside communities

by Doug Hickerson

On Friday morning, April 17, the men's Bible class at Bergen United Methodist Church set up tables in the fellowship hall right after class. At 5:30 the next morning, others drove to Henrietta to pick up 35 boxes of fresh and frozen food transported by truck overnight from Atlanta. They rushed the boxes back to the tables in fellowship hall. Another team of volunteers distributed the food to 15 families by 9:30 a.m. that same day.

A similar operation takes place monthly in 35 states, at 5,200 volunteer "host sites" (mostly churches) of Angel Food Ministries. The organization is non-profit and non-denominational, founded in 1994 in Moore, Georgia, by Pastors Joe and Linda Wingo "to provide food for friends and neighbors who were struggling financially," the corporate web site states. Headquartered near Atlanta, Angel Food Ministries provides food relief to over 500,000 families each month. Participants order quality food monthly from an extensive menu at about half the store retail price (see side bar).

Locally, Bergen United Methodist is the newest host site in the wider Brockport area. The Brockport Free Methodist Church, hosting for two years, is also a distribution site where the truck from Georgia normally drops off food (the April drop off in Henrietta was a one-time exception). Hope Lutheran Church in Greece and Spencerport Assembly of God Church both pick up their food orders at the Brockport church. The church also will supply new host sites expected in Hilton and Hamlin in the next few months.

Kris Genagon is co-director of the Bergen United Methodist host site she started in December 2008. How did she see a need? "A lot of people out of work, a lot of single parents trying to feed families, and seniors skipping meals to pay for expensive medications," she gave as examples. "I felt if people could get \$60 worth of food (per box) for \$30, all well-rounded meals, it's a good deal." She sees results in typical comments from a single mother who said, "I love the food. It's been a great benefit for me," and a young couple with three children who said, "This is great. We love the food."

Distribution has been as high as 45 boxes to 25 families one month.

Hope Lutheran Church in Greece has provided Angel Food since March 2008, serving an average of 170 families each month. Director Bill Webster is pleased that every month several boxes are purchased anonymously "to go to someone else as a blessing." He also is gratified at the high number of people who take advantage of the "prayer table" near the check-out

point. All Angel Food host sites provide people to pray for those who would like the spiritual support and intervention.

At the Brockport Free Methodist Church host site, monthly distributions average about 175 families. Since starting two years ago, the site has served between 300 and 400 family units. Jim Pray is the founding director and has been a help to directors at new host sites. He expresses amazement at the growing number of sites, since Henrietta was the only drop off point for the deliveries from Georgia when he started. Now, besides Henrietta, trucks from Atlanta go to Brockport, Lyndaville, and Farmington, delivering orders for 22 host sites each month in the greater Rochester area.

Spencerport Assembly of God Church will soon become an official host site. Director Carrie Russell says, "With the downturn in the economy, the Lord had placed it on my heart that people are going to need help." Her church participated in March and April, ordering through the Brockport host site, while she waits for documents and a sign to go in front of her church. Russell is not waiting idly and has plans to reach into the Spencerport community "We're starting now, not in three weeks when I get everything," she says. "Right now the people need the help and we are going to be there for them." (The Angel Food Ministries web site is www.angelfoodministries.org.) To contact church host sites: Bergen United Methodist (585) 494-1312 or see link in the church web site www.bergenum.org. Brockport Free Methodist (585) 637-9785; Hope Lutheran (585) 254-6999. Spencerport Assembly of God (585) 352-5900. Deadline for May orders is May 9.

Angel Food ministry

The food fits into a medium-sized box at \$30 per unit. Each month's extensive menu is different and consists of both fresh and frozen items with an average retail value of approximately \$60 determined by comparison shopping in a wide range of retail grocery stores nationally. Customers may select what they want each month from the menu.

Generally, one box of food assists in feeding a family of four for about one week or a single senior citizen for almost a month. The food is all the same high quality as found in grocery stores, states the Angel Food Ministries web site and confirmed by local host site directors. There are no second-hand items, or damaged or out-dated goods. There are no income qualifications or limits to how much can be ordered. Food stamps can be used. All orders must be paid in advance.



Volunteers including these worked to fill orders for "Angel Food" at the Brockport Free Methodist Church on distribution day in April. At left, Elmer Delaha (left) and Sandra O'Mara help a customer fill her order at the "Angel Food" distribution at Brockport Free Methodist Church on April 18. Photos by Doug Hickerson.

On the job with Sweden's new town supervisor

by Doug Hickerson

"I'm an advocate for community service, for doing things just for the good of the community, without always having the dollar sign attached to it," Jack Milner said. "That is one reason I took this on." He was referring to his new position as Sweden Town Supervisor, sworn in on April 16, to complete the term of former supervisor Buddy Lester.

Milner's words are confirmed by a record of volunteer community service. In 1999 he retired as principal of the A.D. Oliver Middle School, ending his educational career of 31 years. He then became consultant to a new school labor-management committee. The union (SCTU) of non-teaching staff met with management to discuss issues proactively, solving many problems until the group agreed to dissolve in 2008.

He is founding president of the Sweden Community Foundation, a not-for-profit organization begun in 2004. He and the nine-member board have raised funds to support area recreation opportunities for all ages without using town tax revenues. Milner also is president of the Monroe County Public School Athletic Conference which serves all athletic programs of county public schools. None of Milner's community positions are paid, except for a small stipend as president of the Athletic Confer-

ence. In 2008, he received the Sweden Clarkson Community Service Award.

In a recent interview, Milner reflected on the challenges and hopes in his first experience in governmental office.

Milner was asked if his career and volunteer positions prepared him for the contentious aspects of politics and holding a government office. Referring to his leadership in the middle school, he said, "I used to sit down and listen to people. I would not promise what I couldn't accomplish, and get back to them with answers. That's much of what I am about here." He added, "I don't want people to be upset with me, but it's a reality and I can handle it."

With town officials and agencies, Milner will continue the administrative style he had as school principal: get out from behind the desk and talk with people. "I tell people, 'I don't care if it's good or bad news, I want to know what's going on,'" he said, adding that he has made first visits to the Sweden Senior Center, Seymour Library, and the Town's Highway Department so far.

Milner also emphasizes "the importance of all of our municipalities working together," giving the example of Sweden's connection with Clarkson, Parma, and Hamlin in sharing the purchase of a street sweeper. He looks to such collaborations to save costs, keep taxes low, and maintain services.

Being "good neighbors" is important to Milner, calling himself a "stickler for property maintenance," including the borders between residential, commercial and public areas. The clean-up and landscaping of the roadside area across from Wal-Mart on Route 31 is a "pet project," he says, noting it was neglected after the utility poles were put up. "I'm concerned for residents whose property backs up to the area," he said, "and I am looking for ways to create sight and sound barriers." He is also seeking organizations that will volunteer to keep this area clean, calling it "the entry to our community."

Milner stated the goals that he wants to accomplish for the town, many already under way when he took office: Maintain all services provided now at a reasonable tax rate. Increase the availability of town

water at reasonable costs, subjects to state mandates. Encourage "reasonable" commercial and residential growth; keeping the rural character of the community. A priority is to fill empty commercial spaces at the Routes 31 and 19 corridor.

He will run for election in November. With his background in community service, volunteerism, and working directly with people for common goals, he was asked if party politics would hinder his effectiveness as a leader.

"My greatest wish is that people could work together and get along. I think we (town offices) are at the grassroots of government. We are probably closer to the people than higher elected officials. So, it behooves us to get along. I don't care if you are Republican, Democrat, Independent or Conservative. I am not and never will be an extreme political person. But, I am reg-

istered as Republican and running as Republican. I will do things to promote those parts of the platform that I believe in," he said.

"I have lived here all my life, except for four years in college, and have a lot of strong feelings for this community. I hope politics will not impede the progress I would like to see in the future," Milner said.

Jack Milner lives with his wife, Beverly, in Sweden Village. Their daughters are Denise (Greg Howell), living in Medina, Ohio, and Korri (Steve) Noyes residing in Rochester. The Milners have five grandchildren.

Note: The annual salary of the Sweden supervisor post is \$23,023. Pro-rated to Milner's start date, he'll receive about \$15,990 for this year, according to town officials.

BOCES 2 Culinary Arts Program hosts Culinary Summer Camp

BOCES 2 will host two Culinary Summer Camp sessions in July taught by BOCES 2 Culinary Arts chefs and visiting chefs from Wegmans. Students in seventh through tenth grades from the Brookport, Churchville-Chili, Greece, Wheatland-Chili school districts and BOCES 2, participating in the Monroe County School-Business Partnership, will be eligible to participate in the week-long camp where students will experience the variety of career possibilities in the culinary and related professions. The day will run from 8 a.m. to noon and will be held at the Career and Technical Education Center at 5589 Big Ridge Road in Spencerport.

Culinary Camp I will be from July 6 through 10 and is offered to newly participating seventh and eighth grade students. Students will learn sautéing, grilling and frying, fruit carving, fresh pastas, sandwiches, breads and baking.

Culinary Camp II is from July 13 through 17 and is available for ninth and

tenth grade students who previously attended Culinary Camp I in 2008. Students will learn baking and cake decorating, soups and saunas, and preparation of meat, poultry and seafood entrees.

Visits to local restaurants, the Wegmans Bakery and a final culinary presentation for parents and guests is planned.

The Culinary Arts program at Monroe 2-Oletha BOCES Career and Technical Education Center was recently named as one of the Hot 100 Culinary High Schools in the nation by Sullivan University in Louisville, Kentucky. The Hot 100 is a list of the best culinary prep schools in the country. BOCES 2 thanks Monroe County School-Business Partnership, Wegmans, RIT, and Monroe Community College for their support, sponsorship and donations.

Tuition is \$45 per student and the deadline for enrollment is May 30. To learn more about the program and enrollment, contact Joanne Grebe at 362-2472.



Jack Milner, now Sweden supervisor by appointment, says he plans to seek election to the post this November. Photograph by Doug Hickerson.

James C. Fallon, Brockport School District Superintendent

A career of four decades: Loving it from day one

by Doug Hickerson

As a college student, education was not a career goal for Jim Fallon. He was a biology major and, as a senior, asked himself, "What am I going to do with my life?" He came across a one-year program which afforded a master's degree and elementary teacher certification from SUNY College at Brockport. He completed the requirements and, in September 1970, began teaching 4th grade in Brockport. What he did with his life in the ensuing 39 years in the Brockport School District, including the last 16 as superintendent, is a personal history of passion for his work and service to the community.

Fallon taught for only three years before starting to serve in administrative positions in the superintendent's office. Why? "I loved teaching from the first week. I did not know if I would, but I did. I loved my three years of teaching. I was attracted to everything about the school. It (administration) was the challenge of doing something more." He began as assistant to the superintendent in 1973, then assistant superintendent for personnel and finally assistant for instruction before filling the superintendent's position in 1993. His last day as superintendent is June 30.

"I love my job just as much today as the day I started it."

Jim Fallon

"Overall I have very mixed emotions," Fallon said. "Mostly, I am and about leaving the district because it has been most of my life. When you are superintendent, it is hard to put it out of your mind day or night, you live with it constantly. But, I love my job. I love my job just as much today as the day I started it. And, I would for me to leave. Looking ahead, he said, "I also feel happy I am looking forward to doing things I have not been able to do."

Change — success in meeting challenges

Asked about his accomplishments in office, Fallon reflected, "I don't know if you ever achieve completion because things change. Things are changing every day in education, and you have to keep up with them. I think one of my strengths is that I have been able to change readily and lead the district in new directions."

Fallon successfully faced externally imposed changes. "The biggest challenge has been the change in testing initiative that federal and state guidelines have mandated," he said. "Our whole organization has had to gear up over the last several years. The testing is ongoing, accountability is ever increasing and we have kept up with it well, and I think our kids have too." He shows no resentment, but a pragmatic approach. "Overall, people have settled into the fact that these are the tests, and we have to get the kids through them, and that's the way of the world," he said. He adds that the new regulations do make the curriculum "more rigorous, more comprehensive" and "I'm proud to say our published test results are very good. We stand very well compared to our peers throughout the state." (From an article previously printed in the district newsletter "Focus.")

Fallon met a different kind of challenge when he instituted his own radical change for quality education. Scared his own radical change for quality education, he said, after becoming superintendent, he and many of his staff proposed "block scheduling" which would extend class periods from 40 to 45 minutes. "Change comes hard. We had many, many complaints," he said about student, parent and teacher reaction to the proposal. Once implemented, "We never heard one single complaint to this day. If the proposal went away immediately because the change was successful, it worked well, kids and teachers liked it. We are all pretty proud of that." The new scheduling became a model for many school districts in the state and now "probably a vast majority are on the longer period day," Fallon said.



Jim Fallon in a recent interview in his office talked about his 39 years with the Brockport School District, serving as superintendent for the last 16 years ending June 30. Doug Hickerson photo.

With the students — encouraging teacher and role model

Has student behavior changed over the decades? Fallon referred to his 34 years of conducting disciplinary hearings on severe cases, an unusual role at the superintendent's level. "I enjoy working with the students who have major disciplinary issues and trying to help them," he said. As to the student mind, "Over these hundreds and hundreds of hearings, overall, I haven't seen a lot of changes. I would say kids are kids and over the last 34 years they have pretty much made the same mistakes."

Fallon estimates that each year he sees between 40 to 50 serious cases which are referred by principals because of severity or repetition of the offense. Some students are suspended for a specified time, but continue their academics with tutoring at BOCES. He sees school discipline as a chance for students to learn from their mistakes before they leave school and enter society which will deal harsh consequences. "I think I have had pretty good success in getting them to realize that, after high school, if they do these things again, it is not going to be the same."

"I would say kids are kids and for the last 34 years have pretty much made the same mistakes."

Jim Fallon

Fallon enjoys interacting with all students in various contexts, and is a nurturing role model, as portrayed in photos and staff comments appearing with this article.

The campus — history honored, facilities renewed, and grounds beautified

"One of the things I am most proud of is the campus and things we have done with facilities, especially the middle school," Fallon said. "It is a showplace for the community." Crediting others as well for the initiative, he said, "We were able to preserve that building and it is magnificent inside. We brought everything back to the original, including the auditorium and the library. We found the original library tables from 1933. The A.D. Oliver Middle School restoration was completed in 1997, including new plumbing, wiring, and a modern extension that continued the original architecture."

"The major renovation of the high school (completed in 2001) is also magnificent," Fallon said, "with a first class band room, cafeteria, large group instruction room, and the whole building upgraded. We saved thousands of dollars each year with the geothermal heating system."

Moving the transportation facility off campus was another at Fallon's initiative. When completed, it will provide more traffic/pedestrian safety and added beautification in a central area of campus.

All buildings are brought up to snuff, and Mr. Sweeting and his crew keep the campus beautiful," Fallon said. "It looks like a park and I am proud of that."

Looking forward — pursuing many interests

Fallon looked ahead to how he would spend his time in retirement. "I have a lot of interests. I have a large library at home and now I will have more time to read my books. I read all the time, as seen as I read a book, I put it down and get another." He owns about 3,000 books, which he says are overflowing his home. "I am building a new library room in the barn," he said, "just like my home, a heated room" which he expects to complete in a couple of years. His reading interest focuses on The American Revolution, "The Civil War, and World War II," with several hundred books in each.

Fallon will pursue other current interests such as gardening, biking, working out at the gym, skiing, hiking, road camping, and home projects. He plans to visit his daughters in California, but not much other traveling beyond his home town. His wife, Kelly, works as an instructional specialist in Hill School.

Fallon's family includes a son and daughters with his first wife, Anne, who died in 1988: Michael, 40 (in Kentucky), Michelle, 36 (in California), Katie, 34 (in California), Christine, 31 (in Brockport). He and Kelly have two children: Tyler, 16 and Tina, 13.



Superintendent James Fallon often reads to students during Read Across America Day and other occasions. Here, Fallon reads to students in Deb Roe's Kindergarten class in 2006.

Four-term board member reflects

On Fallon's leadership of the district

Gerald Maar has been a member of the Brockport Central School District board since 1991, now in his fourth term. He was president of the board when Jim Fallon was appointed superintendent in 1993 and worked with Mr. Fallon for his entire tenure in the position. The following is his condensed statement made to Westside News on May 14.

Jim built relationships from day one when we hired him as superintendent. He wanted to know all the people. That includes the kids, and he would have lunch with them, play chess with them and attend all the sporting, music and art events. He would make it a point to know all the bus drivers, all the grounds crew, and all the teachers and staff.

The story is about his caring. I can't think of a board meeting in the last several years where we didn't sign a card for somebody at any level of responsibility in the district. He made it a point to visit people in the hospital. That's how he built relationships and showed he cared.

He has had a good relationship with everyone on the board. There were no surprises ever by Jim or a board member bringing up a subject that hadn't been talked about ahead of time; there was constant communication. We functioned as a team and Jim was a true team player, never wanting credit for himself.

Another thing that has impressed me over the years is that Jim could make a quick decision if he had to. But, in board meetings we would wrestle with issues in extensive discussions. We would often reach the point where he would say, "Let's sleep on it." He gave us a little extra time, making sure that each stake holder could make the best contribution.

Brockport staff members' perspectives**Supporting students**

"Jim is a very hands-on superintendent. He attends many of our sporting events, music concerts, student activities, and plays. He is a positive role model for our students. In Brockport, the students know who their superintendent is. They know that he will be at their leadership breakfast, Friday night football game or talent show. He is their biggest supporter."

— Mike Myers, dean of students

Inspiring staff

"Personally, Jim inspires me by his pure zest for life. He takes on each day with a brisk walk and a great attitude. We have been so fortunate to have such a highly regarded leader at BCS these past 16 years. He will be greatly missed."

— Sharon Pajek, Jim Fallon's administrative assistant.

Sharing outdoor adventures

One place Mr. Fallon will surely be after retirement is outdoors. He has camped, climbed mountains, hiked, and canoeed through the Adirondacks all his life. This is a passion he shared with the District. "He has taken his children, their friends and other students, who we have worked with in the District, along on these week-long adventures," said Buck Noble, enrichment specialist. "We usually have between 6-10 kids with us on each camping trip."

Improving student achievement

University Park District-wide literacy initiatives, the 3-12 program, and many AdA placement courses instituted under Mr. Fallon have gone a long way toward improving student achievement.



A Class Act. The theme for this year's Class Act (high school student talent show) was "Mamma Mia." The show included the pilot of finding a new superintendent for the Brockport Central School District. Fallon made a guest appearance and danced with other faculty to "Mamma Mia."

Note: Westside News Inc. staff freelance writer Doug Hickerson thank Debbie Miller, communication specialist, for permission to use these excerpts from the spring 2009 "FOCUS," Brockport Central School District's newsletter. She also aided in providing photographs from district files used in this article.

BISCO multiplies benefits to Brockport through its summer festival

By Doug Hickerson

The Brockport Summer Art Festival on August 8 and 9 is in its thirteenth year, sponsored by BISCO. "BISCO" stands for Brockport Integrated Service Club Organization, joining the efforts of Brockport's Kiwanis, Lions, Rotary clubs in support of children and youth in the Brockport area.

The not-for-profit group was formed in 1995 when the clubs realized individually that they did not have the funds to support youth projects needed in Brockport, said Greg Lund, treasurer of BISCO and a founding member. "We thought if we pool our resources together for one major fundraising event, we might raise enough money to make a real impact." First thoughts centered on a music event or a dance, but there was not enough upfront money to rent a hall or pay a major band. They came up with the idea of a festival with a promoter to provide upfront money, and the first Brockport Summer Art Festival was born in 1996. It was a rocky start, "not being able to pay for the first playground equipment without a loan of \$4,000 from the Elks Club," Lund reflected. "The \$11,000 from the first festival wouldn't cover the first phase of play equipment, and we had no credit."

That first project was Corbett Park on Clark Street. Installing state of the art play equipment in three phases was completed in 1998 at a cost of \$36,000. It was BISCO's determination and the increasing popularity of the Summer Art Festivals that completed Corbett Park and have continued to benefit the Brockport community over 13 years. The Lyman-Barry Streets playground, completed in 1999, cost almost \$22,000

with BISCO members and other volunteers building it. A skateboard park was built at the Sweden/Clarkson Recreation Center over two years for \$40,000, completed in 2003.

In the last few years, the focus for BISCO's support moved from the big-ticket equipment items in public areas to a variety of support for various local organizations, Lund said. As a not-for-profit 501-C-3 organization, BISCO adopted the Cool Kids organization, when it started eight years ago. Financial sponsorship has continued each year for the Cool Kids weekly summer events in Sagawa Park and its participation in the Summer Art Festival. In a similar way, BISCO helps the Brockport Toy Shelf with sponsorship and non-profit support. BISCO donated \$8,000 each for "jaws of life" for the fire department and for equipment at Lakeside Hospital. It has donated a race track for the Cub Scout's "Pinewood Derby," funded Eagle Scout projects, contributed to Max's Parade, and helped a number of smaller projects and activities in the Brockport area.

Each club in BISCO has its own projects and the clubs have a friendly competition for the most funds raised in ringing the bell for the Salvation Army in December. But in BISCO "we really work together in harmony to have a major impact," Lund said, adding that it is a "unique situation," not typical for such service clubs around the country. In the next couple of years, Lund sees the closing of Main Street for utilities excavation as a real challenge to continuation of the festival. "We have alternate plans, we'll make it go," he said, reflecting BISCO's original resolve 13 years ago that created the first Brockport Summer Art Festival.

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August 2, 2009

2009 Brockport Summer Art Festival August 8 and 9

Annual festive event supports local causes

by Doug Hickerson

The 2009 Brockport Summer Art Festival takes place on August 8 and 9, celebrating its 13th anniversary.

Filling 10 blocks of Main Street, the event last year drew over 50,000 people to two days of live music, kids events, canal cruises, yoga instruction, food, and the works of over 100 artists and craftspeople, said event producer Jeff Springut of Springut Group. He expects similar numbers this year, including about 15 bands. New this year will be area craft breweries adding their products to last year's wine tasting tent, now called "The Wine & Beer Tasting Garden" with jazz included.

The festival runs from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. on Saturday the 8th and from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. on the 9th. It is free and sponsored by BISCO (Brockport Integrated Service Clubs) which uses festival proceeds to serve children and youth in the Brockport area.

A popular event each year is the Duck Derby at 4 p.m. on Sunday. Colorful plastic ducks are dumped into the canal to float to the Main St. bridge finish line. Even losers are winners, as the last five and first five are scooped up and the

numbers underneath reveal prize-winning donors who paid \$5 for each duck during the festival. Prizes this year are three generous travel certificates (or cash alternative); Wegman's \$500 shopping spree; table for 10 at Lakeside Foundation's Annual Gala Dinner; and many other gift certificates. The Derby made \$21,400 last year, which was apportioned between BISCO for its projects and Lakeside Foundation for hospital equipment upgrades and facility improvements.

Kelly Smith and Rob Blair are co-chairpersons of BISCO which consists of Brockport's Kiwanis, Lions, and Rotary service clubs. "BISCO membership really represents the community," Smith said. "It's nice to know the proceeds from the Duck Derby really stay in Brockport to benefit Lakeside Hospital and the BISCO projects."

For more information on the festival, including a schedule of musical entertainment, go to www.rochesterevents.com or www.brockportNY.org. For Duck Derby information, phone the Lakeside Foundation (585) 395-6049.

Note: Shortly before press time for this Special Section, Cool Kids Director Steve Appleton announced that Cool Kids Day at Brockport Art Fest and CAN-imals on Parade would not happen this year. More information in the next issue of **Suburban News** and **Hamlin-Clarkson Herald**.

August 2, 2009

Westside News Inc.



Cool Kids Director ponders: What's next?

by Doug Hickerson

The sudden cancellation of Cool Kids Day and its Can-imals on Parade at this year's Brockport Summer Art Festival sent shock waves through the community.

After his announcement went out by email on July 28, Cool Kids director Steve Appleton received an overwhelming number of emails and phone calls from volunteers and sponsors expressing concern and support to the man who orchestrated the Cool Kids events at the annual Art Festival for eight years. An unexpected, non-life-threatening surgery was the immediate cause for cancellation, bringing further expressions of concern for his health.

What is the future of Cool Kids concert series on Friday nights and Cool Kids events in the annual art festival? The "Can-imals" sculpture contest has drawn community involvement and provided tens of thousands of food cans and newspapers for local food shelves (over 14,000 last year alone).

In an interview, Steve reflected on Cool Kids' roots in Brockport and what the future might hold.

Beginnings in an ice cream shop

The origin of Cool Kids was Cool Scoops Ice Cream Shop," Steve says. In March 1997, he and his cousin, Danny Canham, opened the shop on Main Street in the building now housing Our Village Optician near the Brockport Diner. It was a family oriented ice cream shop with espresso, cappuccino, and eight computers in the back for cyber games. Steve ran the front end ice cream and coffee operation, and used events to market their shop which became popular in a short time. Sagawa Park was soon developed next door, and village summer concerts were moved from the canal dock to the new Main Street park. Mayor Mary Anne Thorpe asked Steve to coordinate the Thursday night concerts in Sagawa Park which he did as a volunteer, with village funds to pay the bands. Steve also expanded Cool Scoops' offerings of programs to include classic car cruise-ins, local story tellers, school field trips, artists, performers, entertainers and similar attractions.

Within three years Cool Scoops had to close for financial reasons. By then, it had become a very popular spot for families and young people. A year before the shop closed, Steve had started Cool Kids concert series on Friday nights in Sagawa Park, a unique combination of entertainment, culture, and engaging children and families in community service. Now, with Cool Scoops' offerings of programs to include classic car cruise-ins, local story tellers, school field trips, artists, performers, entertainers and similar attractions.

Community leaders help save concerts and Cool Kids series

Soon after the ice cream shop closed, then-Mayor Thorpe wanted him to continue to do the Thursday night



Cool Kids Director Steve Appleton is known for his contagious sense of joy and enthusiasm and charismatic personality. He has championed causes such as Green Seeds which provides school supplies to children or sneakers being recycled for AstroTurf football fields. Such community caring is "infectious," he says. "You feel great. Something shifts inside you about the way you feel about yourself and your community."

concerts and asked him to write a proposal to keep it going as coordinator. The village board accepted his proposal and Steve started to be paid for his service. To help continue the Cool Kids concerts, Dick Lingle of the Sweden/Clarkson Joint Recreation Board eagerly offered Steve \$500. Steve then started finding Brockport business sponsors.

"The concerts thrive, while for Cool Kids Day -- "I have to rethink how my energy best serves this community"

Cool Kids Director
Steve Appleton

With grants he received, he had raised \$16,000 in about three months. He needed a not-for-profit organization to handle the funds and provide tax exemption. Pat Baker, president of BISCO Inc., was the prime mover in getting the board to act as "fiduciary agent" for Cool Kids. Four years later, BISCO also became a funding sponsor. BISCO, the aggregate entity made up of Brockport service organizations, is sponsor of the Brockport Summer Art Festival and funds the Cool Kids Day and Can-imals on parade.

Steve also has high praise for Ron Blair, now a co-chair of BISCO, who was president of the Brockport Student Government. It was Blair who convinced Steve to bring the Cool Kids series to the SURY Brockport campus where it ran successfully for four academic years. Other colleges caught on, and the Cool Kids series is in its eleventh year at Geneva Community College and its fourth year at Corning Community College.

Steve says the success of the Cool Kids Friday night concert series is that it does not provide typical kid entertainment such as clown, jugglers and magicians. The entertainment is multi-cultural and educational, using groups such as Catskill Puppet Theater, Hindu Temple Dance, Bollywood Dance Mania, African drum and dance, steel drums and others. It is hands-on, interactive and fun, with the audience connecting and trying their own skills. As MC, Steve encourages an "attitude of gratitude," as he acknowledges the sponsor for the evening's event. He leads a shout "Thank you" to urge gratitude "as a way of being." Steve also directs the audience's attention to service projects, like Green Seeds which provides school supplies to children or sneakers being recycled for artificial turf football fields. With reminders at each concert to bring old sneakers or school supplies, people respond. They bring their goods to the next concert where the total numbers are celebrated with a cheer. "It's infectious. You feel great. Something shifts inside you about the way you feel about yourself and your community," Steve says. "You know you can effect change and it carries over into other areas where you choose to serve."

What does the future hold?

The Friday night Cool Kids series is proceeding well with sponsors for each event in Brockport and the two college campuses, Steve says. He is not ready to say that Can-imals on Parade or Cool Kids Day at future Summer Art Festivals are over. But, he says the prospects are not good, due to several factors. "Funding has been shifting very radically in the last two years." And, grants and volunteers have been increasingly difficult to find. A major factor is that "the project is very labor intensive and the pressure builds toward the event. This medical situation (recent surgery and another August 7) has taught me that I can't do it the way I have been doing it, as the only person with no back up," he says. "I also think maybe it is just time for something different, something new, something not so complex. I have to rethink how my energy best serves the community." Steve is taking time to think over the future of Can-imals on Parade and Cool Kids Day. He will pursue some pastimes he loves, like gardening, painting, travel, outdoor activities, writing, and speaking.

He will follow the advice he recently received: "Just be still and it will come to you."

Thanks to all for spruce up

I would like to extend a great big thank you to all the folks who participated in sprucing up downtown Brockport by helping to plant around the trees on Main Street making us beautiful for the Art Festival and the rest of the summer. First, thanks to Kathy at Sara's Farm Market who donated all the annuals and sold us the mulch at cost. We paid for it with money generously donated by The Brockport Chamber of Commerce, and assorted citizens including Ann Rutten (Gina Mancuso, Rosie Rich, and Mary Lynne Truett).

Thanks to Archie for making up 34 bags of mulch in Cheryl Arthur's pick-up truck and delivering the mulch to each tree.

Thanks to Merchants Association president Jo Matelin - Red Bird Cafe - did the four trees by the canal - a lot of work there. They look fabulous! The rest of the planting and mulching took place on Wednesday, August 5. Members of the Brockport Garden Club organized by Kathy Dixon donated gorgeous hostas, Gary Sloug not only donated hostas, but also an hour of his time to help dig around the trees and plant. The soil was like cement, but we persevered, and when finished everything looked great. Several merchants came out to help when we got to their tree.

Thanks to Rain - Bicycle Outfitters, Marie Bell - Country Treasures, Mike, Miles and Bethany - Main Street Pizzeria. Thanks also to Tony - Brockport Computer, and Harvey - Java Junction, for filling watering cans over and over. Thanks also to the Tremblay Jains, Gavin, Jack and Beverly - who made many trips to water the plants as the beds were finished.

This project would never have happened without Christ Community Church who came to the village board and offered to do something special before the Art Festival. Mayor Connie Castaneda put us in touch with each other. This was a perfect project. Becka Taylor put together a great team of volunteers: Jason Taylor, Crystal Keefe, Marlene Boelcher, Rhonda Greiner, and Barbara and Joe Blossenhauer who are also members of White Birch! Thanks to Jeff Krahe of the Village DPW for watering the hanging plants and the trees all summer. Without your follow up, all our work would be for nothing.

It is amazing what can be accomplished when good people get together with a good idea.

Please come downtown and enjoy the results.

Thanks again to all

Pat Katz
Lift Bridge Book Shop

Give the Sweetest Gift...



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Clarkson family makes Soap Box Derby a family and community sport

by Doug Hickerson

"I always wanted to be a race car driver and this is the closest thing to it." Max Sever said about being a Soap Box Derby driver. He is 10 years old, and lives in Clarkson with his parents, Shannon and Allan Sever, and his brother, Sam, who is seven years old. Shannon teaches global studies at Brockport High School, and Allan is in pharmaceutical sales. Sponsored by the Brockport Kiwanis Club, Max is one of approximately 35 racers from New York and the northeast expected at the Soap Box Derby qualifying races in Brockport on Saturday and Sunday, August 29 and 30. Racers are attempting to earn points that will help qualify them for the national championship races to be held in Akron, Ohio next summer.

Whether or not Max gets to the fiercely competitive NASCAR world, his gentle start in Soap Box Derby racing has many benefits for him and his family. Max's racing is family fun with Mom, Dad, and Sam acting as a kind of "pit crew." On arriving at the race site, Max and his dad unload the 150 lb. car, take the wheels off, sand, clean and lubricate the axles, put the wheels back on; take the car to the weigh in; then take it to the starting ramp.

At the bottom of the run, his mom and Sam help take the wheels off to be switched with the other car for the next run to any advantage of better wheels or tires. Then, with his dad, they all load it on the trailer that heads back up the hill. The Sevors have done the race routine at three meets since Max began in May and will continue at races for one or two weekends every month, including in the winter when there is indoor racing.

The Soap Box culture includes "building a family of all the families," Shannon said. She explained that experienced Soap Box families teach the ropes to the new ones who then pass on the same favor. "I learned so much from other fathers who have been doing it for a while." Allan said about his lack of mechanical skills. He calls Soap Box a "great family and community sport" because of such helpful sharing, an emphasis on "trying-your-best" rather than winning, and good sportsmanship. The Soap Box drivers are taught to say "Good luck" to each other as the races start, and to shake hands and say "Nice race!" at the end. The most coveted trophy in Soap Box is the "Sportsmanship Trophy," Allan said.

Allan praised the generosity and moral support of the Kiwanis Club of Brockport. As Max's sponsor, they provide the kit from which the official Soap Box car is made. It contains a floor board on which mechanical parts are to be mounted, axles, wheels, plus a ready-made fiber



The Sevor family stands with the car Max will drive in the Soap Box Derby event in Brockport, August 29 and 30. (L to R) Max's brother, Sam, parents Allan and Shannon, and Max. Photo by Doug Hickerson.

glass body called a "shell." Kiwanians were among those showing Allan and Max how to assemble and operate the car. The club also pays Max's registration fees for each rally.

There are three divisions in Soap Box, each having increased complexity in the mechanics and design of the car: Stock, Super-Stock, and Masters. Max has begun at the Stock level where all the cars are the same design with no alterations allowed, making the competition truly about the drivers' performance. At the two higher levels the cars can be altered for better performance and/or appearance, so the competition gets into the design and mechanical alterations as well.

Max hopes his wins will qualify him for the Super Stock division next year and he looks forward to building and driving the more advanced car.

Seven-year-old Sam shows strong interest in following

his brother as a Soap Box driver next season. Sam was asked if he wanted to become a professional race car driver, as his brother does. He gave a surprising immediate "no" answer, as though he had his own vision for what he wants to be when he grows up. When asked what that was, he said "A cashier."

Editor's Note: This is the fourth consecutive year the Village of Brockport has hosted the Soap Box Derby qualifying races. On August 29 and 30, they run from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. on the Smith Street hill at Corbett Park on the corner of Clark Street. Admission is free. The event is sponsored by the Kiwanis Club of Brockport, with support from the Village of Brockport BISCO and the Brockport Chamber of Commerce.

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A touch of "Holley-wood"

The Mark home in Holley used in movie

by Doug Hickerson

Diane Mark of Holley was using her hair dryer at home when she heard, "Quiet on the set!" She quickly turned it off. On other days the command sent her out to hold on to the wind chimes, or to the neighbor's house to quiet their bird. And, by all means, no toilet flushing allowed.

That was typical of life in the Mark home for 31 days in the fall of 2007 as the film crew, actors, and directors occupied the downstairs from 6 a.m. to 6 p.m. to film part of the feature-length movie, "The Secrets of Jonathan Sperry." The movie, which opens in the Brockport Strand Theatre on September 18, uses outdoor and indoor settings in Brockport and Holley.

Diane owns the home on Park Place and lives there with her brother, Jim Mark, and their 87-year-old father, Larry Mark. The home was discovered by the director Rich Christiano and his producer and photography director who cruised Holley's residential streets looking for a neighborhood for the 1970 setting of the movie. Diane permitted them to examine the Mark's house as a possible location for the home of the lead character, 75-year-old Jonathan Sperry, played by Gavin McLeod. McLeod was the captain in the 1977-1986 TV series "Love Boat." Built in 1898, the home has exquisite oak wainscoting and other woodwork. After the tour, with "oos and aahs" overheard by Diane, they asked if they could use the downstairs and the front porch as Sperry's home.

In a few days, shooting was under way with equipment tractor trailers in the street each day. Cars owned by the Marks and neighbors were moved out of site, replaced by the vintage cars that were loaned for the set. The property crew moved the Mark's living room furniture into storage and brought in period furniture.

What was home life like during the four weeks of filming? "It was very exciting. We stayed right on the porch if they were filming inside," Jim said. "The whole neighborhood came with their lawn chairs to sit in the street and watch," Diane said. "It was a big deal. When we heard 'Cut!' we could go in, but we also would sneak in once in a while."

One Saturday, Jim and his father were quietly eating their subs in the kitchen when they heard "Cut!" In a few moments, Gavin McLeod came in from the dining room filming and sat down. The two elderly men had never been introduced. In just a few minutes they were chatting. "He's a really fine man," Larry said. "We found out we both had the same surgery on one of our legs."

Larry Mark is a McLeod look-alike and he caught some of McLeod's star power. At Charles Finney High School, Larry was standing in the auditorium lobby after the preview of the movie, when several youths came up to him and said, "Nice acting!" And, in a restaurant scene and funeral scene, where Larry was part of the crowd, they had to turn his face away so the audience would not think they were seeing Jonathan Sperry.

The movie is about three 12-year-old boys hanging out in the summer and facing some typical pre-teen problems. They all live on the same street as Jonathan Sperry. Three other houses in the Park Place neighborhood were used as the fronts of the boys' homes. One of the boys owns Jonathan Sperry's lawn, a man he has seen at church. A friendship starts between Sperry and the boys, and with the help of Bible study in Sperry's living room, the boys learned some life lessons.

Continued on page 5



Larry Mark, Jim Mark, and Diane Mark (top to bottom) stand on the front steps of their home at 24 Park Place in Holley. Their porch, lawn, and some downstairs rooms were used as a setting in the movie "The Secrets of Jonathan Sperry." Famous actor Gavin McLeod (l) stands with Larry Mark, 87, who lives with his daughter and son in the Holley home chosen as a movie set. Photographs by Doug Hickerson.





Diane Mark, Larry Mark, and Jim Mark (l to r) sit in their dining room which was used in the movie "The Secrets of Jonathan Sperry." The house was deemed perfect by the director and producer for the movie set in 1970. Photograph by Doug Hickerson.

A touch of "Hollywood"

Continued from page one

The summer of 2007 was very dry, a bad time to film Jonathan Sperry's overgrown lawn that needed mowing. "It was wonderful. They told me not to mow my lawn," Jim said about the grass that took watering every day and fertilizer to be ready for the mowing scene. Diane was given a break, too. "They had a special crew that came in each night and cleaned the whole place," she said. "My house never looked cleaner."

As for desire benefits of seeing the movie made in their home, "I feel very blessed to have been a part of it," Diane said. "It made me realize what being a Christian is about. We were glad to open our house to these people and the story they were telling."

"It was a total intrusion into the house in order to set up," said director Rich Christianso. "They (the Marks) were just so kind, and they realized that this is going to be something they will talk about for the rest of their lives. We were so appreciative."

By the end of the filming, the cast, the crew and the Marks had become "one big happy family," Jim said. "When everyone was leaving, we all cried."

Note: Visit the movie's web site for other information, www.sperrymovie.com. Check the Strand Theatre advertisement for show times for the movie starting Friday, September 18.

Movie filmed in Brockport and Holley to open on Sept. 18 at Brockport's Strand Theater

From late August to early October, 2007, it was "lights, camera, action" on Main Street, Brockport, and on Park Avenue in Holley, filming the movie "The Secrets of Jonathan Sperry." Now, all the work comes together in the opening of the Christian film at the Strand Theater in Brockport on Friday, September 18.

Best buddies Dustin (Jansen Panettiere), Albert (Frankie Ryan Monroque), and Mark (Allen Isaacson) are 12-year-old boys looking forward to a summer of fun in 1970. When Dustin meets the lawn of 75-year-old Jonathan Sperry (Gavin McLeod), a man he has seen at church, a unique friendship develops. What happens the rest of this summer is something Dustin and his friends will never forget.

Rich Christianso is the movie's writer, director and producer. Along with his twin brother, Dave, he has been writing, directing, producing and distributing Christian films since 1985. Rich has written, produced and directed three feature films: "Time Changer," "Unidentified" and now "The Secrets of Jonathan Sperry."

Although Christianso's office is in California, he grew up in Waterloo, NY, and attended St. John Fisher College. In a phone interview, he noted that the locations for the Sperry movie required villages with sidewalks and two-story houses that cannot be found in California. He searched the Rochester area and found Brockport and Holley to be the perfect settings. The shooting took 21 days, mostly on Park Street in Holley as Jonathan's residence, but also in Callera's Cafe on Brockport's Main Street and at the Smith Street High Bridge on the canal. Two funeral scenes were shot in Rochester's Mount Hope Cemetery.

Gavin McLeod, well known as the Captain of "The Love Boat" TV series, is the lead actor as Jonathan Sperry. A screening of the movie in Augusta, North Carolina, July 21, McLeod told the audience of pastors that he first started in film around the late 1950s working with Hollywood stars like Cary Grant, Dean Martin, Bing Crosby, Bob Hope, and many others, but the upcoming Jonathan Sperry film is by far the greatest film he has ever been in. The story of the film is "one that is closest to my heart," he said in a press release on the movie website www.sperrymovie.com <<http://www.sperrymovie.com>>



Gavin McLeod as Jonathan Sperry.

The movie is positioned to be the Christian film of 2009, according to Mark DuPre, adjunct professor at RIT teaching film in the Liberal Arts department. He compares its projected success to the 2008 Christian blockbuster, "Fireproof," which beat out all other independent film Oscar winners in attendance and box office receipts. About the generations represented in the film and its message of love, kindness and forgiveness, DuPre said: "If you are young, you can relate to the trio of teens struggling with problems like a crush on a girl and their struggles with bullies. If you are a parent, you can relate to the things the young teens experience. If you are an older person, you learn the possibility of reaching out to the younger generation."

DuPre is also associate pastor at Christ Community Church in Brockport which is sponsoring the Strand Theatre showing, opening on Friday, September 18. The movie will also show in Rochester at a theater not known at press time. The fall premiere of the movie will be in nearly 200 theaters across the country with local churches as sponsors.

For information, go to web site www.sperrymovie.com <<http://www.sperrymovie.com>>. Or phone Pastor Mark DuPre at 885-637-3979.

Lift Bridge Book Shop: The book store that grew to a whole lot more



Used textbooks for resale



Cheryl Arthur has kept the books at the Lift Bridge Book Shop for 23 years.



Annie Crane and Joe Hoffman have both been with the Lift Bridge Book Shop for 20 years. They started the first book discussion group seven years ago. "Annie and Joe's Eclectic Book Club."

Photographs and article by Doug Hickerson

Entering the Lift Bridge Book Shop on Brockport's Main Street, your eyes gaze upon a vast landscape of books. Here are non-fiction paperbacks, new hard books, coffee table books, and volumes on the Erie Canal. Over there are Westerns, mysteries, paper back fiction, science fiction, and endless other shelf lists. The labyrinth of aisles meanders past nature, music, cooking, and more, leading to fascinating displays of children's literature and merchandise. Downstairs are more books, new and used college text books, art supplies, and a baby grand piano you can sign up to play.

Altogether, 7,000 square feet of floor space holds about 105,000 books and other merchandise. The store is a crucible overflowing with publications, merchandise, and activities to engage the mind, the spirit, and artistic interests.

Lift Bridge Book Shop is one of a vanishing breed of independent book stores, the only one of its kind in the Rochester area and west. In a market dominated by "big box" chain book stores, it has thrived for 37 years due to: The village roots and vision of its original founders, the marketing wisdom, devotion and drive of co-owners Archie and Pat Kutz; the longevity and dedication of the current store staff, and the store's proximity to The College at Brockport campus.

Early roots - surviving as an independent book store

Archie Kutz was born in Brockport. He attended Brockport High School with his friend Tim Fabrizio. Soon after college graduation, the two formed a partnership and opened the first Lift Bridge Book Shop in 1972 at 48 North Main. After nine months, they moved to 71 Main Street where the store remained for 30 years. In 2001, the store moved again to its present location at 45 Main. Archie and Pat met in college and married in 1976. Starting a family right away with a son and daughter, Pat did not become involved in the book store until several years later.

"We knew nothing about business or book selling," Archie says about setting up the first store. "It helped that our families knew a lot of people in town, including faculty," he added. "We learned a lot about construction, built our own fixtures, and put our own building and business together. The business exploded with the college customer base," he says, citing text book sales as the primary source of the store's continuing success. The college is a mixed blessing to his business, Archie says, as he competes with the book store on campus and faces a perennial "struggle" to get text book requisitions from the college to "survive."

In book sales generally, the Lift Bridge's ultimate competition is on-line purchasing and big box chain book stores. In a kind of "David and Goliath" confrontation, independent book stores have had to develop creative weaponry. Besides having a good "shopping environment," Archie says the independent book stores "have had to do other things, creating a community center with activities that make it a vibrant part of the local community."

Indeed, the Lift Bridge has done just that. The store provides a variety of activities including book discussion groups, writing workshops, author appearances/signings, and children's special events, suggesting a kind of "recreation center of the mind." "The book clubs, with two recent new ones, have been significant in bringing people to the store," Archie says. Pat calls Taisy Pennington and her children's activities "a transformative influence on the business."

A dedicated staff brings 78 years of service

The dynamics of this vibrant community center come from the employees with decades of service. "We have a fabulous staff," Pat says. "We cannot say enough about them."

Taisy Pennington has been at Lift Bridge for 15 years, doing all children's events, as well as ordering children's books and merchandise. She studied special education in college and minored in children's literature. Taisy says her most successful programs have been working with Girl Scout merit badges (as a former GS leader); projects in science, magic, and "stuntology" for 8-12 year olds; and girls programs using the American Girl theme and the book character "Fancy Nancy."

Annie Crane has been with the store for 20 years, placing orders, entering newly-arrived books in the computer, and working cash register shifts. Her greatest pleasure is "helping a customer find just the right book," she says. "It's a good feeling seeing them walk out happy with their purchase, when they weren't sure what they wanted when they came in."

Joe Hoffman, a 20-year staff member, is the store's manager, text book manager, and adult program director. He says about staff relationships, "It's a family operation. There is a closeness and supportiveness of each other." He and Annie Crane started the first book discussion group seven years ago, called "The Annie & Joe Eclectic Book Club."

Cheryl Arthur has been the store's bookkeeper for 23 years. "I love it," she says. "Pat, Archie, and all the folks are great." Recalling the early years and bringing her kids to work, she says, "They (Archie and Pat) were very supportive of me after my husband passed away."



Pat and Archie Kutz are the owners and guiding force of the Lift Bridge Book Shop which has served the Brockport area for 37 years.

Fulfilling the role of independent book stores

"So many wonderful book stores similar to ours have closed down over the last four to six years. It's chilling," Pat said. "Independent book stores are important for literacy and the community," she says. "When that number diminishes, you get fewer and fewer books being published and it's hard for the local author and other new voices to be heard." The independent stores provide a wide choice of thousands of books that come out each season, compared to the big box stores that concentrate on the most popular books, she explains. Although publishers make less profit with the independent stores, "They see us as a breeding ground for new authors and genres."

The personal rewards and distant retirement

Archie and Pat find personal rewards with all the hard work of surviving — even thriving — in their business. "We like the control we have," Archie says. "If you have to be employed and working, we would rather be in charge, doing our own thing, making our own decisions. That's where our creative juices come out." Pat adds, "I enjoy running a healthy business where people can come to work and have a good time."

Archie bemoans the fact that they are not free to do "other things that a lot of (retired) people our age are doing now." But retirement is not in the immediate future. If people are wondering, he says, "We expect to keep doing what we're doing for a while longer." Pat says, "We are good for another 10 years. We have just added a garage to our house, so we don't have to shovel out in the winter."



Taisy Pennington has run the children's activities at the Lift Bridge Book Shop for 15 years and was preparing for the "Snoopy Jones" event when this photo was taken.

Community asset

While pursuing this story, free lance writer Doug Hickerson met Bill Heyen shopping in the Lift Bridge and asked for his views. Bill is a poet, author and Ph.D. professor emeritus of English at The College at Brockport. He and his wife, Hanny, have lived in Brockport for 40 years.

"Hanny and I go back to the beginning with the Lift Bridge. Our lives would have been less connected with the world of books, and with local writers who show up for readings and gatherings, if this great store had not come into being. How often we found gifts here for friends and family, and first editions inscribed for me by the writer. It's hard to think of Brockport without this signature village store."

Note: Westside News Inc. readers can follow happenings in The Lift Bridge Book Shop advertisements in Suburban News and Hamlin-Clarkson Herald. The store's website is www.LiftBridgeBooks.com.

Suburban News HAMLIN- CLARKSON HERALD



Volunteers sort and pack baskets in the Brockport Food Shelf effort November 22. Provided photo.

Brockport Food Shelf thrives on wide network of community support

On Saturday, November 22, food for the Thanksgiving and Christmas holidays was given to 109 families at the Brockport West Avenue Fire Hall in Brockport. It was the annual Brockport Food Shelf distribution, a well-orchestrated project involving many citizens.

On the night before, local Scouts and their families transported the various nonperishable foods from the Food Shelf on Main Street to the fire hall. At 8 a.m. Saturday, volunteers began assembling cardboard boxes and sorting the foods so each family had a box and bag of food. Families came by appointments starting at 9:30 a.m., scheduled ten minutes apart. There was no crowding or waiting. The project involved 53 volunteers with a total work time exceeding 100 hours.

Many volunteers commented that the efficient process was due in part to the use of two different size boxes, compared to four last year. "We used to divide families by size into four categories," said Monika Andrews, president of the Brockport Food Shelf board and organizer of the project. "This year it's only two boxes and it's much simpler." Another efficiency this year is the combining of the Christmas food distribution with Thanksgiving. "It was too much work to do two distributions within one month," Andrews said. Vouchers were given for the purchase of perishable Christmas food.

The wide variety of volunteers included teens, retirees, and families. Four young women were seniors at Hilton High School, doing required service for their Participation in Government course. Retiree Steve Reed was serving for the third year with his wife, Debbie. Cheryl Sime drives a school bus for the Holley School District, and was a fourth-year volunteer with her husband, Bob, and two grandchildren. Karen Sweeting, Sweden town clerk, was working with her son, Daniel, who was doing community service as a 7th grader in the Brockport School District. Sweeting started last year, with her other son who was a 7th grader then. "It's nice to be able

to give people the food they need for the holiday," Sweeting said. "It's very organized and there are great people helping."

The Brockport Food Shelf began in 1973 as an outreach to migrant workers by Nativity Church on Brockport's Main Street. Because of increased demands, it re-organized as a community ecumenical agency in the early 1990s, said Monika Andrews, who has been the board president since 1994. There are eight members on the board from various churches. It serves residents of Brockport, Sweden and Clarkson from the basement of the "Collins house" next door to Nativity Church. "We serve people four or five days a week, depending on needs," Andrews said.

"We have never had to ask anyone to do a food drive," said Andrews. She explained that food drives are initiated by numerous groups, from kindergarten through college students, many businesses, service groups, and others. Food is also donated by Food Link, and some surplus bread is donated by Wegmans and Friehofer's. Ryan's Big M gives a discount for foods that need to be purchased. The post office drive and the scout drive are other sources of food. Community and service groups make financial donations. The annual CROP walk contributes part of its proceeds locally.

"We have been blessed with enough donated food," said Andrews. "This community seems to take care of its own. Even though our numbers are up (more requests for food), we do not feel that we need to limit the number of families, nor their frequency in coming to the Food Shelf." When asked what has been rewarding to her in her Food Shelf leadership, Andrews replied, "Solid support by the board and the community."

Note: Questions and donations may be addressed to Brockport Food Shelf, 152 Main Street, Brockport, NY 14420. Email: mwandrews@frontiernet.net. Phone: (585) 637-8169.

by Doug Hickerson

Growing Christmas trees helps to grow the family

Ritchie family caters to tree needs with "you-cut" business

by Doug Hickerson

Driving by the Ritchie home at 17045 Ridge Road just west of the Orleans County line, people notice the expansive front yard has a large stand of Christmas trees instead of lawn and landscaping. The trees were there first, and the ranch-style home added later — part of a story about the land and trees shaping the life of the Ritchie family.

For Jim and Holly Ritchie and their teen children, life is ruled in this season by their "you-cut" Christmas tree customers. A driveway buzzer sounds off in the kitchen, and on a busy day, everyone goes out. The kids direct traffic. Eric, 17, and Jim hand out saws and manage the cut trees with shaking and baling equipment. Jim and Holly handle the money. Irena, 15, hands out candy canes, and sometimes talks with families and plays with their kids. "It's a family activity for everyone, as well as a business," Holly says. "That's what appeals to me."

The couple originally lived on the adjacent land in Jim's grandfather's former house, part of 100 acres inherited from him. Jim had helped develop his father's Christmas tree farm on Peck Road. He continued the tradition by planting Christmas trees on his inherited land in 1988, soon after he and Holly were married. The Fir tree plot had to be near the road for the dry and sandy soil they need. Plans to add on to their house failed, and the Ritchies built their present home behind the vast spread of Christmas trees on Ridge Road. The open moist land behind them supports the Spruce trees.

Growing the trees coincides with growing the family. 1998 was the first year of selling Christmas trees and the year that Irena was located for adoption from Russia. The Ritchies received her name and photo from the adoption agency in early December, 1998. Thousands of dollars were needed in the adoption process. "I felt everyone was buying a tree to bring Irena home," Holly says. "I remember standing in that front window, with tears streaming down my face, because every car that came in, I said, 'Lord, this is your provision for bringing Irena home.'" Today, many families look for Irena on their annual visit. They enjoy her company, Jim says, "and some know we adopted her from Russia and they like watching her progress."

Living with their trees 24/7, the Ritchies have faced some unusual situations with customers. Holly describes a Sunday morning near-blizzard last year, when the family arrived home late from church to find several vehicles parked along the roadway because the driveway was drifted over.



The Ritchies (l to r) Irena, Jim, Eric, and Holly in their backyard with their Spruce trees in the background. Photograph by Doug Hickerson.



A view from Ridge Road shows a small portion of the Fir trees in front of the Ritchie home. Photograph by Doug Hickerson.

One was a truck with a snow plow and the driver offered to clear the driveway for them. Jim started working in his dress clothes and shoes while the rest of the family rushed inside to change clothes and return to relieve him. Customers were patient and helped out with the snowbound adventure.

One of those customers returned again this year from Medina — buying one tree for his Mexican restaurant and saying he would return in two weeks for his home tree.

The Ritchies tell of other special customers. One family phoned two Sundays before Thanksgiving this year, because their son was coming home from Afghanistan and they wanted to celebrate Christmas early. They invited the family to come for a tree, even though they had not opened for the season. They filled a similar request last year for a family's son who was returning from service in January, after they were closed. "A couple of years ago a lady bought one of our trees and drove it to Texas," Holly says, and quotes the customer saying, "You just can't get a tree like this anywhere in Texas."

For 28 years Jim taught math in Brockport High School and the Middle School. Vacations and the summers off allowed him time for planting, transplanting, watering, tree trimming, weeding, roto-tilling and other work for the Christmas trees and an extensive flower and vegetable garden. He

retired in June 2007, allowing him more time with the trees and garden. He is now a substitute teacher and he writes 9th grade final exam math questions for a national test publishing company.

Holly was a junior high teacher in the Spencerport Schools for 14 years, then for several years in Christ Community Church School in Brockport.

In 2006, she started four years of home schooling Irena and Eric. Eric is now in his senior year of home schooling and taking two courses at GCC. Irena is in special education at Spencerport High School. As a volunteer, this year Holly started an after-school program on Mondays at Christ Community Church.

Jim trims each Christmas tree annually to shape it as it grows for ten or more years. And, the Christmas trees have helped shaped the Ritchie family: Fulfilling Jim's passion for planting; making sales a fun family activity; annually meeting new people in the community, making a kind of "extended family" with regular customers; and helping to bring Irena from Russia. And, the trees have enabled Holly to be at home in the years she was most needed as a mom. "We had a commitment for me to stay home with the kids," Holly says. "Being on one income, we needed to use this land, as a blessing from the Lord, to make it possible."



The Russo family from the Holley area chose the tree in back of them for their Christmas tree on a recent visit. Parents Sara and Nick stand with (l to r) Sam, 5, who brought his own chain saw along for the cutting tasks; Abby, 2; Joe, 4. Sofie, seven weeks, was asleep in their nearby minivan. Photograph by Doug Hickerson.

Hamlin Public Library's 10th anniversary: Still "up to date and moving forward" with a new director

by Doug Hickerson

Growing up in Palmyra, Kay Hughes-Dennett learned to love libraries. Every week she and her mother would visit the public libraries in Palmyra and Newark. Beginning with that early experience, the new director of the Hamlin Public Library says, "I have always been a huge reader."

Hired in August 2009, she begins directing the library in its 10th anniversary. "Over the years, I have had a great affinity for small libraries, trying to keep them up to date and moving forward," she says. "And, that's one of the things I liked about the Hamlin position (as an applicant)." The facility is located in a shopping plaza near the corner of Route 19 and Clarkson-Hamlin Town Line Road.

Kay's first career was chemical technician, working for Kodak, Xerox and other companies over ten years. Her true calling came on one of her regular walks, with her two boys in a stroller, to the Paddy Hill Library near her home in Greece. She quipped to a staff member, "Some day when I grew up, I am going to be a librarian." She was immediately offered the job of page, working part time. That was the start of a career ladder spanning 17 years in the Greece Library system, advancing to clerk, then librarian in training, then librarian. Her last five years were in the Barnard Crossing Branch as manager. While working for Greece libraries, she earned a bachelor of arts in English Literature at SUNY Brockport and a M.S. degree at SUNY Buffalo. Prior to coming to Hamlin, she served as director of the Ogdén Farmers' Library for two years. She continues to live in Greece with her husband. Their two sons are grown and away from home.

A major challenge in her new position is the library's location. "We aren't near a business or commercial district where people might come in off the street," Kay says. "And, Hamlin does not have its own school district. We have to try hard to make sure everybody knows we're here and what services we provide." She has updated the website www.HamlinNY.org and gone on facebook "to keep up with the younger generation." The wireless internet access has been updated for easier use.

She looks to more programming to draw people (see side bar). The library's collection of 30,000 items includes a wide variety of fiction, non-fiction, DVDs and CDs with more quickly available through the Monroe County Library System. The Town of Hamlin supports the library, including five paid staff, with a budget of close to \$184,000.

Kay praises the renovations done to the library over the past ten years. She notes



Kay Hughes-Dennett, the new director of the Hamlin Public Library. Doug Hickerson photo.

the expansion of the library space, renovating three times to open up four walled sections. "We have had extraordinarily healthy contributions from the community," she says. "They have been very supportive with donations and help with moving." She is planning a reading area at the front of the building with comfortable lounge chairs and shelves for periodicals.

Plans are under way for the 10th anniversary celebration. Kay sees plenty to celebrate. "This is a wonderful library, a great staff all ten of the five women serving here all very supportive," she says. "We also have a very supportive board that wants to make this the best library the community could possibly have."

Hamlin Public Library Events
February through April 2010
Free unless cost is indicated
Scheduled details and registration:
www.HamlinNY.org or 964-2320

Classes for children and young adults

- Munchkin Mondays
Storytimes and Crafts for children ages 2 to 5
- Thursday Evening Storytimes
Storytimes and Craft for Children ages 4 to 10
- Children's Craft Saturdays
- Valentine's Day Gift
Make a Valentine's Day gift for your favorite someone.
- Spring Butterfly Craft
Make a butterfly to welcome spring.
- Easter Bunny Craft
Make an Easter Bunny craft to hold candy.
- Home Alone Safety (Red Cross Certified - \$18 per child) Pizza, Home Alone Safety Class, and the movie Home Alone and popcorn.

Microchip ID helps reunite pets and their owners

by Doug Hickerson

Not long ago, my wife Dianne and I pulled out of our driveway on Hollybrook Road, and a little brown dog came sliding down the middle of the road. She was a well-groomed miniature terrier type of dog with a collar, also possibly escaped from some running owner. She ran with amazing speed and we followed her behind to see if she would stop or we might try to rescue her. In the course of running about a mile in the road, she stopped in two front yards, but ran away scared, when Dianne tried to approach her. Two other concerned drivers got out of their cars and tried, but they had no success.

Finally, in a Gary Drive front yard she stopped long enough for Dianne to catch her attention. The approaching Waste Management truck driver stopped so the noise would not be a distraction. A concerned lady across the street brought a dog biscuit and a leash. In about 15 minutes, the cute escapee was in Dianne's arms and we took her to our home where we called the dog control officer. The dog was wearing no collar ID tag that would have enabled us to call the owner and return her directly.

Kathy Beaumont, the Swanton/Clarkson dog control officer, arrived in quick time and took the dog away. In about an hour, she phoned us to say she had scanned a micro chip ID in the Lakeland Terrier, leading her to the owner in our suburb town.

That was a happy ending to the efforts of many people to rescue a stray dog who might have ended up forever lost, stolen, injured or worse. Dog owners would never want such a fate for their beloved pet, but they often neglect the simplest prevention.

five measure: an ID collar tag or micro chip. That Lakeland Terrier is safe at home because the owner had the micro chip inserted. It is a tiny pin-like object that stores data, a veterinarian painlessly inserts it below the skin in the back of the neck. An electronic scanner reads out the important information (see photo). The ID information is in the national registry, so dogs can be returned from very far away. Even with a micro chip, an added collar ID expedites locating the owner without having to go to a vet or dog warden to be scanned.

Over the years, the several stray dogs we have found wandering in our yard or on the road have had no license, other collar ID, or the micro chip. If the owners had purchased a name tag (just over \$5 at a pet store), we could have ended their worry much sooner by immediate contact. In each case, we called Kathy Beaumont. Her procedure with any unidentified stray dog is to wait seven days for the owner to claim it. She makes devoted efforts to find the owner, but after seven days, the dog can be put up for adoption.

Certainly, keep your dog secure at home. But, for that unthinkable chance he or she might escape, a collar ID -- even better with the micro chip -- can shorten that traumatic separation for both of you.

Editor's note: Doug and Dianne Hickerson express thanks to the towns of Swanton and Clarkson for maintaining excellent dog control services, especially for Kathy Beaumont who has served for 23 years. They suggest keeping her numbers handy for any stray dog emergency: Home 637-4260 or pager 625-2615.



At Clarkson Veterinary Hospital, Dr. Jess Buttery and Kathy Beaumont check over a stray dog that Kathy found in early December wearing no collar. Dr. Buttery is using a micro chip ID scanner which unfortunately found no chip. (Photo: Doug Hickerson)

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Teens at Seymour Library: More space needed

"Treasure in Brockport" - the flip side of "Trouble in River City"

by Doug Hickerson

In the Broadway musical "Moose Man," Professor Harold Hill alarms the town citizens with, "There's trouble in River City" and it's at the pool hall where kids hang out. The young men are "fritters" away their nighttime, supertime, chore time, too to the company of degenerates who are corrupting them into bad behavior, lowly language and naughty books like "a dime novel hidden in the core crib."

Quite the opposite, if Professor Hill visited Brockport, he would exclaim about Seymour Library, where 200 teens per month attended one or more programs in 2009. Not frittering away their time, but

involved in volunteer activity to help the library and read to younger children; intelligent interaction in discussion groups about books and their own writing skills; games that challenge mind and body; socializing and fun. They have praise for their adult teen director, grateful to their parents who led them there first, and a desire to introduce the library to their friends. Rather than have trouble, there is treasure in a safe place that nurtures development.

The remarkable teen program is designed and orchestrated by Seymour Library's teen services coordinator Chris Dally. She has served the library for over 21 years, first as clerk, then the last 10 years in her present

position. "I love it, I do," she says. She described the various activities and introduced this writer to four teens who shared how the library has been an important part of their lives over several years.

Activities

The library programs are organized into age groups corresponding to the school district. Children's programs are through 5th grade and teen programs are divided into middle school grades 6 through 8 (some not yet in their teens) and high school grades 9 through 12. The numbers of teens attending is growing and new activities were added in the fall of 2009.

B.R.A.T.S., an acronym created by the kids themselves, means "Brilliant Readers Also in Teen Services." The group, originally middle and high schoolers, meets monthly and helps the library by volunteering in a variety of ways, including book sales, and hosting holiday and summer programs for children. The numbers became so large that, in fall 2009, B.R.A.T.S. split off the high schoolers into "T.L.C." meaning "Teen Library Corps." Each group has about 25 members and meets once a month.

There are *two book discussion groups*, one on Mondays and one on Wednesdays with 15 participants in each, and several teens waiting to get in. The groups are reading eight books that will be the focus of the Greater Rochester Teen Book Festival in May, attended by 2,000 area teens and 25 authors. The teens pick three or four authors to meet in small discussion groups where they get their books autographed. The Seymour teens have their own books because they are purchased by Brad Alexander of Northside Services Center and Northside Express Mart in Brockport. He also pays for the bus going to the Rochester event.

Twice a year there is a "sleep over" in the library as a fun reward for the teens volunteering. The winter event starts with a two-hour read-a-thon, raising funds through pledges to support the Teen Book Festival. The overnight, with chaperones in a five to one ratio, includes a movie, pizza, flashlight tag, and a scavenger hunt using library topics to hunt for clues.

The *Anime Club* for junior and senior highs meets twice a month on a Saturday afternoon to talk, have snacks, and watch Japanese animation cartoons. About 30 teens participate.

Summer is the busiest time for teens at the library. Last year 114 attended and the teens was "Express yourself at the library." Chris started a *writing group* that was very popular. It continues now with about a dozen regulars. She gives them a photo or a topic to write about in each session; they discuss each other's work. Four of them are starting on their own novels.

Dungeons and Dragons is another group that started in the summer of 2009. The game has been around a long time and, "You can play it on line now," says Chris. "But these kids play it the old fashioned way with characters and cards, and a 'dungeon master' creating action scenarios and characters for the participants." About 12 teens meet for this every Saturday.

The Teens

•Emma Gira is 15 years old in the 10th grade. She is president of the TLC and is in the book discussion group. She loves math and science and is taking extra science courses. She plays varsity volleyball and runs indoor and outdoor track. Emma has volunteered at the library every summer since 6th grade "People don't realize the activities offered here, including a creative



Chris Dally is the teen services director at Seymour Library. She looks for the expanded teen space to be a "gathering place, something inviting to meet friends, study together, relax and find good things to read." Photo by Doug Hickerson.

writing group and lots of fun activities," Emma says. "I have brought some of my friends from school."

•Dustin Rochette, a 7th grader, is 12 years old. He has been coming to the library since his father first brought him at three years old. At school he loves science and is on the swim team and in the art club. He is a member of B.R.A.T.S., the book discussion group, and is a Book Buddy with little kids in the summer. Dustin wants to get his neighbor involved in the library. "At the school library she has read every non-fiction dog book there is," he says about the girl whose family is getting two dogs soon. "She likes coming here and reading the dog books to train and raise them."

•Joe Kucmerowski is a senior, planning to attend M.C.C. and SUNY Brockport to become an English teacher at the secondary level. He is one of the founding members of *Dungeons & Dragons*, and is a dungeon master. "You can get with a group of friends, unwind, sit around a table, eat some pizza and play a role playing game," he says. He enjoys the Anime Club in a similar way, "catching up with some of my friends I don't talk to much during the school week." He likes the writers group for helping him get into the writing flow and is writing a fantasy novel.

•Bekah Leathersich is president of B.R.A.T.S. She is a 12-year-old 7th grader who likes social studies and French courses, runs cross country and track, and does Irish Dancing. Bekah says she has been coming to the library since 5th grade. "Now, I have a lot of my friends going, too." She is in most of the teen activities, but the writing group is "really fun," she says. "It's a good way to share our writing, doing exercises and reading them aloud to edit each others' work."

Better Teen Space Needed

About the library, Bekah says, "It is a good way for me to get out of my house, get some quiet, read, hang out with my friends, and help the library." The present designated space for Bekah and other teens to hang out is really very small. It consists of a sofa, two bean bag chairs, and two book cases in an area about 10 x 12 feet. Like the "Fit Spot" project completed last year, a new effort is under way "to create a teen-friendly area that is comfortable, interactive, flexible in design, and filled with technology," says Cassie Guthrie, library director. The "2010 After Hours @ The Library" gala on March 20 will provide funds for the purchase of books, computers, equipment and furnishings.

For other information on the teen programs and the gala, visit the library website at www.seymourlibraryweb.org.



Four of the many teens who participate in Seymour Library activities: (l to r) Bekah Leathersich, Joe Kucmerowski, Emma Gira, Dustin Rochette. They are in the present teen space that is due to be expanded. Photo by Doug Hickerson.

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Bill Gerew works with goldendoodle **Mikey**, who swims twice a week in preparation for a total hip replacement in April. Swimming builds his muscle mass and increases fitness. Mikey is a certified Therapy Dog who works at Lakeside Bekirich Care Center, visiting residents every week. Photograph by Doug Hickerson who, along with Doug's wife, Dianne, are Mikey's favorite humans.

Canine deep water swimming: A life and limb saver

by Doug Hickerson

Bill and Jill Gerew's home nestles in the woods on Gallup Road in Spencerport. An addition in the back houses a pool and is named the Canine Aquatic Center. Bill works with 35 to 40 dogs a week doing swim therapy under the business name K9 C.A.R.E. Inc., meaning "Controlled Aquatic Rehabilitative Exercises."

The Gerews started their business five years ago when their own eight-year-old Shiloh Shepherd, Gryphon (pronounced Griffin) needed an operation for his hip dysplasia. A year prior, anticipating that diagnosis, they had launched extensive on-line research for the kind of therapy needed before and after surgery. In England and other European countries they discovered "controlled deep water swim therapy" for dogs. Deep water therapy "totally unloads their joints from weight and impact," says Bill, "and they move the joint pain free." The conditioning strengthens the muscles prior to hip or knee surgery and facilitates recovery after surgery. The same benefits apply to strengthening muscles in an injured leg for healing without surgery. In the U.S., Bill and Jill found deep water therapy was widely available for horses and humans, but only about a dozen facilities nationally specialized in dogs.

Convinced of the benefits of deep water therapy, the Gerews built their own enclosed therapy pool attached to the back of their home. The pool measures seventeen feet long, eight feet wide and four feet deep. Heated to 93 de-

grees, with no chlorine, the salt water pool is light on salt and has other additives and filtration to aid the skin. The room housing the pool is about 1,000 square feet enclosed. The vaulted ceiling rises to the second floor of the house, making the pool visible from the living room picture windows.

Bill was raised in Brockport and Jill in Canada. Each had long experience in dog breeding and handling before they met at the Jack Russell Terrier Club of Canada over 10 years ago.

Bill does nearly all of the water therapy, assisted by Jill on occasion. Jill runs the business end. "Most of it is dog handling or training, knowing how to read and speak to the dog so he feels safe and comfortable in the surroundings," Bill says. "By handling dogs in the show ring, you know how they should move," and that translates to water therapy. He uses an underwater camera to monitor the dogs' movements. Every dog is different; Bill screens each one based on weight and normal activity levels to determine his starting swim level. He keeps track of vitals such as heart rate and breathing. Two-thirds of Bill's clients are referred by veterinarians who provide documentation that the dog is healthy enough to participate in water therapy.

A normal appointment is one hour long, with 30 minutes in the pool, and time for checking in, weighing, changing collars, and donning a life jacket. Bill guides the dogs as they swim around the circumference of the pool. He can increase the effort level by turning on jets to create a current to swim against. Taking off the life jacket at the appropriate time is another means of increasing the muscle effort.

About one-third of the dogs are brought to the Canine Aquatic Center for recreational reasons. Typically, they are high energy dogs like pit bulls, border collies or terriers. "Owners often can't walk them enough," says Bill. "Every 10 minutes in the pool is almost the equivalent of one hour running around the back yard."

Bill also sees the advantage of younger dogs starting life with swim therapy. "Rather than be faced with possible future surgeries, there are preventive rewards for swimming a dog," Bill says. "They will develop more muscle tone, tighter ligaments, expel energy in appropriate ways, and be calmer and more stable as they get older."

Since they started deep water swim therapy five years ago to help their dog Gryphon, the Gerews say it now has a "big draw." Customers come from as far away as Newark, Walworth, Marion, Binghamton, Cicero (north of Syracuse) and Michigan.

Bill says, "It gives such satisfaction that I have touched a life, not only the dog's life but the human's. Because of the relationship between the dog and the human, I have made two lives better. It's an awesome feeling to be able to do that."

For other images of dogs in treatment visit www.352SWIM.com. For more information phone (585) 420-9140.



Bill and Jill Gerew hug their Shiloh Shepherd, **Gryphon**. His hip condition was their reason for starting the Canine Aquatic Center five years ago. Photograph by Doug Hickerson.

Victorian style homes on Brockport tour

"Old Victorians" is the theme for the 13th annual Lakeside Twig Association Tour of Homes. Four ornate Victorian homes, all in Brockport, will be open to the public on Sunday, June 6, noon to 4 p.m. Tickets are \$10 and can be purchased at each home that day or advanced tickets can be purchased at Lakeside Hospital Gift Shop, Dunn's Furniture, Sara's Garden Center, Bittersweet, Java Junction, Ryan's Big M and Country Treasures in Brockport.

Toured homes include The Victorian Bed & Breakfast, 320 Main Street; Morgan Manning Victorian Mansion, 151 Main Street; Gingerbread Manor, 6590 Lake Road and the LePage Victorian on 1462 Covell Road. All homes are completely restored to the period of the middle 1800s and filled with antiques of the Victorian Era. Cameras will be allowed.

The Morgan Manning Mansion was built in 1854 by John Ostrom. A significant owner, Dayton Morgan, an Erie Canal clerk, started an ironworks company that manufactured reapers designed by the famous Cyrus McCormick of the McCormick Reaper. McCormick sued Morgan for using his similar designs. An original Morgan Reaper can be seen on display at this house. The Morgan Manning Mansion had heavy fire damage in 1964 in which Sara Morgan-Manning, a descendant of Dayton Morgan, died. The Western Monroe Historical Society purchased the home in 1965 and restored it to its original elegance and gave it a landmark standing. Every room will be opened to the public including Sara Morgan-Manning's bedroom with her original wedding dress and original bed. A billiard room, a child's room with porcelain dolls and other rooms are open to the public.

The tour will benefit Lakeside Memorial Hospital for the purchase of hospital equipment.



Kelly Muszak signs her letter of intent to play golf at Niagara University. Joining her were her parents Jim and Kim Muszak, and her golf coach, Stephen Zaffuto (in back). Provided photo.

Brockport golfer to attend Niagara

Brockport High School senior Kelly Muszak recently signed her letter of intent to play golf at Niagara University on a partial scholarship.

Muszak began playing golf as a seventh grader and has been a varsity golfer for six years, team captain for four years, sectional winner for two years, MVP for four years, and Scholar Athlete for six years.

Her coach, Stephen Zaffuto, says he has enjoyed having Kelly on Brockport's team. "No one has worked harder at her game than Kelly," said Zaffuto. "She has found success in both the classroom and on the golf course. Kelly's positive attitude and determination made the Varsity golf team at Brockport one of the most respected in the county. Kelly often would work with her teammates during practice to help them improve their games. I am proud of Kelly and her accomplishments and she will be greatly missed. I am positive Kelly will have a fantastic career at Niagara University."

"I am very excited to attend Niagara, get my degree in elementary education, and continue one of my passions, golf, as a Purple Eagle this fall," said Kelly. "Thank you to my family, BHS golf team, and coach Stephen Zaffuto for their awesome guidance and support."

Provided information



Joyce Lawrence takes pride in a family heirloom quilt created 120 years ago by her great aunt Mary Behrens. The quilt was part of the Morgan-Manning House Spring Quilt Show. With sunlight coming through the window behind the quilt, it was the first time she saw cotton seeds embedded in the batting. Photo by Dianne Hickerson.



Visiting from Lakeside Beikrich Care Center, Anne Matela admired "Burgoyne Surrender," a quilt by Cheryl Doody, among 100 quilts at the Morgan Manning House Spring Quilt Show. Photo by Dianne Hickerson.

Spring Quilt Show highlights many stories

Avid quilter Dorothy Tidwell continues ten-year gift project from her nursing home

by Doug Hickerson

Dorothy Tidwell is a resident of Lakeside Beikrich Care Center in Brockport. She has been a quilter "most of my adult life," she says. "I was taught by three elderly sisters from Germany who were aunts of a close friend of mine." She quilted on frames her husband made for her 60 years ago. "It has just been a passion of mine all my life," she says. "I just always quilted."

Ten years ago, Dorothy started the quilting group which meets every Monday at the Sweden Senior Center on State Street in Brockport. The group

produces quilts which are given away to newborns at Lakeside Hospital, to the veterans hospitals in Batavia and Canandaigua, and to the Open Door Mission in Rochester. Dorothy moved to Beikrich Care Center almost a year ago. The Beikrich administration granted the quilting group's request to meet in the activity room on Dorothy's floor every third Monday. Now, about five residents have joined Dorothy in the quilting activity conducted by several members of the Senior Center quilting group. The quilts are now given to the Beikrich residents, too.

Dorothy and Anne Matela, another Beikrich resident, visited the Spring Quilt Show which was held at the Morgan-Manning House in Brockport on May 14 and 15. Anne says her daughter-in-law is the quilter in her family. Her skill is sewing which she taught to 4-H girls for about 17 years. Both visitors enjoyed viewing some of the one-hundred quilts on display throughout the house.



At the Morgan-Manning House Spring Quilt Show, May 14 and 15, Lucille Ribble and Dorothy Tidwell are in front of Lucille's quilt entitled "Roseville," the name of the ceramic vessels represented on it. Lucille is a member of quilting groups at the Morgan-Manning House and the Sweden/Clarkson Senior Center. For many years she has quilted at the Senior Center with Dorothy, whom she calls "a delightful lady." She now enjoys working with her at Beikrich Center (see story). Photo by Dianne Hickerson.

New "Encyclopedia of Brockport" filled with people, places and interesting trivia compiled by local historian Eunice Chesnut

by Doug Hickerson

Monday morning, May 17, did not start as just another week for Eunice Chesnut, the historian at the Morgan-Manning House in Brockport. She arrived at her office just as 300 newly printed copies of her "Encyclopedia of Brockport" were being delivered. It was the culmination of a two-year labor of love, compiling the book with facts on almost 2,000 people, starting with the earliest arrivals in the area. About half the people listed are living and contributing to Brockport in the present.

There are 200 places listed, Eunice said, "From the long-gone Stanley's Meat Market and the A&P to current spots such as Oak Orchard." Forty memorable events are included, some from the past such as Old Home Week in 1911 to the yearly Leukemia Marathons of the present. "I also put in items which people have called to ask me about," she added, "such as who owned the Roxbury before it was the Roxbury, and when did Brockport first get running water." The hard back book has 323 pages, weighs about 3.5 pounds, and measures roughly 9 x 11 inches.

The inspiration for such a work came decades before Eunice started compiling it. She originally worked at the Morgan-Manning House as a volunteer guide, a newsletter writer, and other duties until 1980. The Western Monroe Historical Society, with offices in the historic museum home, then hired Eunice to "actually try to establish some firm to the local history of the area," she said. "All had to start with were two bushel baskets of the Morgan family letters that were saved from the 1964 fire," a tragedy that destroyed part of the home at 151 Main Street in Brockport, and took the life of Sara Morgan-Manning. The West-

ern Monroe Historical Society purchased the home in 1965, then restored its original elegance to become a landmark, and has maintained it since.

"The letters were interesting, but often I had no idea of what places or people they were talking about, and I kept wishing I could just look up some things in an encyclopedia type book," Eunice said. "The only way I could really learn much was by spending hours and hours at the college library, poring over old local newspapers. I took scads of notes and would come back to the Morgan-Manning House to write out little cards. I could alphabetize. This was, of course, before computers."

"Over the years, I gathered information to fill 26 four-drawer file cabinets," she said, "and it all started with those two bushel baskets." With material she had gathered over 25 years, and conducting interviews and other fact gathering, Eunice started putting items in book form in 2008. "It became my only project, and usually I worked on it seven days a week," Eunice said. "No one was forcing me — I just did it because it gave me great pleasure to feel I was really doing something that would be of value in this time to come."

"This writer met Eunice in her cluttered office on the second floor of Morgan-Manning House, a couple of hours after her new book had arrived. Some of those 26 file cabinets lined the walls, and piled on top were various documents and memorabilia. Her work area is a huge dining room table that fills most of the room, with barely space to walk around. The top is a sea of clippings, letters, books, and other pieces of paper, seeming bits of Brockport's history and the present.

Asked about her new book, "It looks wonderful," she responded, "I am so pleased



Eunice Chesnut at her Morgan-Manning House office holds her newly published book entitled "Encyclopedia of Brockport." Photograph by Doug Hickerson.

with it." Among her joys in producing the book were "the people who have given me interviews, shared their memories of the 'olden days,' and their snapshots, letters, clippings, and scrapbooks," she says. "Many of the people I first interviewed have passed away, so I am glad I got started on this years ago." The biggest frustration in producing the book were the three donated used computers she went through. "I was almost in tears when it wouldn't do anything," she said about the third computer that failed.

Eunice has written seven other books on aspects of Brockport area history, including food in area farms and restaurants,

entertainment, founding leaders, Lakeside Memorial Hospital, and more. The "Encyclopedia of Brockport" is her major work, and maybe not a stopping point. On her busy work table, Eunice had a folder containing 45 entries she had cut from the book because of size constraints. "I am saving those entries for Volume II," she quipped. Or, maybe not. "At 84 years of age, who in her right mind would think of Volume II?"

The book is available for \$30 at the Morgan-Manning House during office hours. Phone 637-9645. The Lift Bridge Book Shop in Brockport also has the book in stock.

Local watercolor artist becomes Braille teacher

From bright floral paintings to little black dots

by Doug Hickerson

Dianne Hickerson, a lover of Sweden's resident, is an accomplished watercolor artist with many national and local awards. Currently, she has a painting in the Transparent Watercolor Society of America National Exhibition in Kenosha, Wisconsin. Another painting just returned from the Adirondack National Exhibition of American Watercolor artists traveling show which toured the eastern U.S. She will be included in the TV series "The Artistic Touch," being published in July.

With bright crystal, elegant lace, and brilliant flowers as her artistic trademark for almost a decade, Hickerson also has taken on the work of producing black dots in meaningful clusters as a Braille transcriber. Her first inspiration came from viewing the TV series "Little House on the Prairie." "I was awed by Mary Jaggals who went blind and learned to read Braille," Hickerson said. "It always fascinated me how anyone could feel dots on a paper and read them as words."

She was trained and certified in literary Braille transcribing by the Library of Congress last June, after a nine-month course at the all-volunteer Spencerport Lions Braille Service in a class of six students. For over 40 years, the organization has transcribed books for the blind and visually impaired. They have produced over half a million published Braille pages since their beginning. The group of about 20 meets every Thursday morning at the Spencer-

port Volunteer Ambulance Corps.

To be certified, a student must complete 35 pages of a published book essentially with no errors. Dianne was certified in her first submission of 35 pages from "The Shack," a best-selling religious novel. She will soon complete transcribing that book which will go to ABVI in Rochester, the Braille Group of Buffalo, and a similar group in California.

Braille writing consists of raised dots on a page in cells or clusters which are read by the touch of fingers. It is like a second language for the transcriber who must learn the dot formations as words, letters, or parts of words. In the first 12 weeks of the class the writing is done on a Perkins Braillewriter, a mechanical typewriter that must be pressed hard to emboss dots on heavy paper. The student moves up to a computer program which uses six keys on the keyboard and prints out black dots. The final computer work is transferred to a Braille embossing machine.

How does the artist get rewards from these two different modes of expression and communication? "Obviously, watercolor is much more creative and exciting as far as vibrant colors and composing the painting," Dianne said. "But Braille is challenging as far as remembering all the rules and being sure everything is just right, so the blind person reading the finished product will understand what's being said." Unlike her painting which provides direct feedback from patrons and professional awards, with Braille, "It is satisfying to know that the work I am doing will be appreciated by a blind person somewhere."

Dianne has been appointed by the Spencerport Lions Braille Service organization to be the Braille teacher, start-



Noted artist Dianne Hickerson says there are many rewards from both of her modes of expression. She is shown with one of her award-winning watercolors, "Tea and Poses." Photograph by Dianne's husband, freelance writer Doug Hickerson.

ing with the class in September. Looking to her new role as Braille teacher, "It will be exciting to see other people learn Braille," she said. "The more people we have, the more books we can transcribe. It is challenging, but very rewarding."

Note: For more information on the full Braille class, call 585-637-2695.

Brockport High School alumnus and math teacher awarded for academic excellence by Cornell University

by Doug Hickerson

Riding my bike down Frazier Street a few days ago, the tree shade, the homes and the tranquility gave me a sense of Brockport village life preserved from the past.

Later that day, I interviewed 22-year-old Greg Strabel who in late May had graduated in the top one percent of his class at prestigious Cornell University in Ithaca. With a double major in math and economics, he was named a Merrill Presidential Scholar, granted to the top 35 scholars out of 3,600 baccalaureate graduates. When he told me he had been raised on Frazier Street from childhood through graduation at Brockport High, my "Mayberry" mood was shaken. I realized Greg was launched from our quaint village into the highest realms of academia, including a future Ph.D. degree at Yale University.

The Merrill Presidential Scholar award also recognizes a secondary school teacher and a Cornell professor who most inspired Greg's scholastic development. The Brockport High School teacher Greg named was math teacher Jane Bowdler. Mrs. Bowdler was among 35 other high school teachers from around the nation and world who attended two days of celebration and recognition. In addition to honors received by the teachers, a one-time \$4,000 scholarship is awarded in the secondary school teacher's name to a Cornell student with financial need and who is from the teacher's high school or the geographical area.

The joy of learning in high school

Greg's high scholastic record was evident all through Brockport High School. He took home six or seven awards on each annual awards night — typically covering math, chemistry, physics, calculus, history, economics, and French — and graduated as class Valedictorian in 2006.

...asked what he attributed his academic success to, "A mix of things," Greg said, naming Brockport's "strong school system" for one. "Obviously, my parents spent a lot of time on my education. When I was young my mom always read to me. She would volunteer all the time in classes in elementary school. That's a good foundation." He also credits the advanced track in some classes where the teaching was very challenging.

Greg remembers Mrs. Bowdler's teaching and support through pre-calculus, honors calculus, and AP calculus (Advanced Placement). She was also advisor to



Jane Bowdler, math teacher at Brockport High School, was named by Greg Strabel as the secondary teacher who most inspired his scholastic development, as part of the Merrill Presidential Scholar celebration at Cornell University. A one-time \$4,000 scholarship is awarded in Bowdler's name to a Cornell student with financial need and who is from Brockport High or the geographical area. (Photo: Doug Hickerson)

Mathletes during all four high school years, a student math team that traveled to county competitions.

Greg recalled the Computational Mathematics Science and Technology Institute sponsored by SUNY College at Brockport. Mrs. Bowdler guided the student team project using Newton's Law of Cooling in developing a computer model and math model for a thermometer that could tell the time of a body's death, Greg explained with delight. It was at the time that the popular TV show "CSI" (Crime Scene Investigation) had just started. Greg's team won the competition.

Greg also praised Mrs. Bowdler's "incredible reward" in preparing students for the AP calculus exam, scored from 1 - 5, recalling most of his class got a 5 on the test "which is really hard to do," but earns college credit. In a separate interview Mrs. Bowdler said that 77 percent of her Brockport students scored 5. That is extremely high because among all other students taking the test worldwide, only 22 percent received a five. Those figures have been consistent over many years.

"There's usually one, two, maybe three teachers' names that keep coming up in talking with old friends years after graduation," Greg said. "In baseball, these kinds of personalities are what you'd call franchise players; Mickey Mantle was a franchise player, he defined what it means to be a Yankee. Mrs. Bowdler is like that for Brockport High School, whether you were good at math or not. She'll always be one of those people that at least my friends and I will always remember. She is just an incredible teacher and really dedicated to her students."

College and graduate school:

More joy of learning, a balanced life, a future

The transition from Brockport to Cornell changed Greg's student lifestyle. Compared to eight hours spent daily in high school, "At college you spend about two hours in class and about 10 hours studying outside of class." Not a book worm, he managed his studies in a math and economics double major while living in the Lambda Chi Alpha fraternity house as a sophomore and junior. Other activity included Cornell Math Club, Cornell Economics Society, and Omicron Delta Epsilon International Economics Honor Society.

On the light side, Greg played fraternity league intramural sports which included softball, flag football, soccer, ice hockey and others. He works out three or four times a week, mostly lifting weights but occasionally running three to five miles, which he wants to continue at Yale "for relieving stress and getting your mind off of work." Greg said he reads quite a bit, both in the classics and in math. Recently, his reading has included Oscar Wilde, Hemingway, Faulkner, Dostoevsky, Poe and others. He plays golf during the summer and does a lot of hiking and camping.

"I also read a lot of math textbooks for pleasure," Greg said, one sign that his ultimate joy is the life of the mathematical mind. "I have stayed on the theoretical side, because I like the really math-heavy stuff," he said about his Yale Ph.D. program which will concentrate on "game theory" and "behavioral economics." Game theory uses advanced math theorems that, for instance, apply to a winning strategy in tic tac toe, chess and checkers, but can apply to economic strategies like auction bidding. Behavioral economics is also high math that can apply to playing the stock market, and even why a shopper varies from his previously committed food list once he gets to the store. Greg conveyed the theories and applications with excitement, and captivated this writer, even with a partial understanding of what was said. Greg plans to pass on his joy of learning as a university professor.

What value can be placed on Greg's academic excellence and prospects for his future? Yale University, for one, highly values him as the institution is providing a fellowship that covers all his tuition and fees for the five to six years it would take him to complete his Ph.D. degree. He will receive the University health insurance fund, and will receive a stipend to cover all living expenses.

The joy of teaching — and model for life-long learning

For four days prior to our interview, Mrs. Bowdler had attended day-long workshops at U of T's Summer Math Institute. The Saturday before the institute, she was up from 10 p.m. to 5 a.m., volunteering at Brockport High's Project Graduation, the safe place for Graduation night. Both activities are typical of the influential role she has played in the Brockport School District, first as a volunteer, then a highly skilled math teacher.



Greg Strabel holds a plaque from Cornell University, naming him a Merrill Presidential Scholar. With a double major in math and economics, he graduated in the top one percent of 3,600 baccalaureate students. He heads to Yale University in the fall to study for a Ph.D. degree. He was Valedictorian in the 2006 Senior Class at Brockport High School. (Photo: Doug Hickerson)

She started seeking fulltime teaching in Brockport in 1985, after her two sons were in grade school. She had taken time off from teaching to "be at home with them while they were young." Thinking the teaching field would be open to her after the maternal time off, she spent 10 years seeking a full time teaching position. Meantime, "I volunteered a lot in the Brockport District," she said, "in my own children's classroom and I did a lot with computer lab." Finally, in 1996, she started off a full time teacher in Brockport High.

Asked how she felt about receiving her Cornell recognition, she said the gratification was all the greater because "there were all those years when no one would hire me. I kept in there, volunteered and did my part until I could finally get a job."

"In baseball, these kinds of personalities are what you'd call franchise players; Mickey Mantle was a franchise player, he defined what it means to be a Yankee. Mrs. Bowdler is like that for Brockport High School, whether you were good at math or not. She'll always be one of those people that at least my friends and I will remember."

Greg Strabel

I asked her to be honest about what knack she had to inspire a student like Greg. "I think students are aware that I continue to learn, even though I am much older than they," she said. "I am a believer in continuing education, always going to workshops and conferences to learn more." And, after 14 years full time at Brockport, "I am up on the latest technology, like the Smartboard" in my room. I use the latest graphing calculators and have a web page that has lots of resources for students to use."

It sounded like Mrs. Bowdler not only taught well with the best media, but was a model for the love of learning — continuous learning — and striving for excellence. Greg Strabel not only learned well from her and achieved high honors in college. He had grace to look back and thank her for her inspiration.

Greg Strabel is the son of Leisa Strabel, Town of Sweden Finance Director and David Strabel, an architect at The College at Brockport. His sister, Carly, is a professional ballerina with the Ballet Theatre of Maryland, based in Annapolis, MD.

Jane Bowdler is married to Dr. Thomas E. Bowdler, DMD, a Brockport area dentist. The couple has two sons, Jeff, a Cornell graduate 2002, who works for the federal government, and Greg, a University of Tampa graduate 2006, who works in UT admissions.

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Chet Fery: A decade of "Bread Time Stories"

15,000 loaves of free bread and stories for a "kinder and gentler world"

by Doug Hickerson

Right off the driveway, the front door to the Fery home in Sweden Village enters directly into the kitchen. That is appropriate for getting right to the heart of Chet Fery's life: The place where, for the last decade, he has baked an estimated 15,000 loaves of bread to give away free to family, friends, colleagues and strangers.

Chet ushered me in and introduced his wife, Marina. On the counter were several pans of cinnamon swirl bread waiting to rise, then produce a "wonderful smell when baking," Chet said, "That's part of the joy of doing it." Marina and I sat while Chet talked and tended to baking.

Spraying the loaves with a spritzer bottle, he began telling one of dozens of stories prompted by bread baking and bread sharing. He had admired the calzones in a shopping mall Italian restaurant and asked the chef how he makes them so brown. By spraying them with a mix of water and baking soda was the answer. "Anybody who bakes bread loves to talk about it," Chet said about the brief conversation that yielded a practical hint and instant bond with the chef who graduated from a culinary school in Ohio.

Talking with people, telling his stories, hearing theirs, and handing out loaves of bread is what Chet has been doing since 2001. Called "Bread Time Stories and More," his free bread project shows "how random acts of kindness can change our lives and create a world community that is caring, supportive and secure," says his web site. Each Bread Time Story tells of people engaged in kindness toward others, and

"will inspire, instruct, motivate and also take you much further."

He has brought his loaves and stories to diverse groups such as: garden clubs, civic clubs, at-risk urban youth, church groups, anniversary and birthday parties, volunteer groups, charity golf tournaments, college student groups, school staff training sessions, senior centers, and many more. He will also give personal bread making lessons or make pizzas with guests at private parties.

Chet also strikes up conversations with people at public events, or on his rural road trips to art and collectible shops where he visits old friends and makes new ones. Each person gets a loaf. "I am so taken with how receptive the people are," Chet said about his presentations and other contacts. "They seem ready and eager for a kinder and gentler world powered by acts of kindness. I am amazed by it."

Beginning in the family kitchen

The baking began 10 years ago with an attempt to copy the "perfect pizza" at his family's favorite pizzeria. "The family got tired of eating my experimental pizza three or four nights a week," Chet said, admitting he was "obsessed." "They suggested I start making bread." He did, and it was tested at home and at work, the Gates Chili School District where he was director of student services. He would bake 20 loaves of bread on weekends and bring them to his staff on Monday mornings. Received with great enthusiasm, he soon took his proven bread to more meetings, birthday parties, and "gave a loaf of bread to everyone around Thanksgiving," Chet said. "It had such a wonderful feeling tone, and it also changed people's state of mind. It was really interesting, like a social experiment."

A variety of groups, recipes, and conversations

Ten years into his free bread project, and



Chet Fery is about to put cinnamon swirl bread dough in one of his two home ovens where, for a decade, he has baked an estimated 15,000 loaves of bread to give away free for his Bread Time Stories project. Photo by Doug Hickerson.

retired since 2006, Chet is now known as "The Bread Man." He is all over the landscape in the Rochester-Brockport area, west to Buffalo, south through Caledonia, bringing his loaves and his stories. These are some samples.

• Herbs and hardtack - Sometimes it's by special request, like the herbal garden club at Lockport's Kenan Center, asking

him to create a recipe using fresh herbs from the gardens in the area. He did just that, making 18 loaves before he arrived, then demonstrating for them how he makes bread in a six-quart bowl. "We had a great time and the ladies were fantastic," Chet said.

Continued on page 5



Chet Fery delivered 43 loaves of free bread to Gordon Hall for Camp Abilities on The SUNY College at Brockport campus. Cindy Gial is the coordinator for District 21 E Lions clubs which help prepare and serve the meals for the blind and low vision children attending the week-long developmental sports camp. Photo by Doug Hickerson.

A decade of "Bread Time Stories"

Continued from page one

He visits the Genesee Country Village and Museum and brings "Dave," a Civil War buff, a loaf of wheat bread. "We have a wonderful conversation over Dave's favorite wheat bread. He talks about the Civil War," Chet said. "One day I made hardtack, biscuits that Civil War soldiers carried for six months; they were like rocks. He sent me a thank you note saying how much he enjoyed that hardtack. Those are the fun things."

•Brockport service clubs - He uses another unique recipe when visiting Brockport service clubs with gift loaves and stories. He named it "Brockport Heritage Bread," using a 1911 recipe called "Potato Bread" he found in the Brockport museum. He talks about Brockport people eating the bread 100 years ago, and bakeries and industries of the period. "It very much interests them," Chet said, "and they leave with a loaf of bread and a better appreciation for the village and the area. It is really kind of neat."

•Senior citizens - The itinerant Bread Man reaches senior-citizen centers, including in Greece and Lockport. "I stay connected to them," Chet said. "The seniors are very interesting people to me. They love the bread, they love the camaraderie, and I love being part of that because they care for each other and support each other."

•School staff development - Chet does training for BOCES staff and paraprofessionals, to help build staff morale, loyalty and effectiveness. "As a teacher and counselor for many years, I can relate some of my stories about working with students," he said. "They are an attentive audience and seem more sensitized to the needs of youth."

•Newman Oratory - Chet belongs to Newman Oratory, the Catholic church serving The College at Brockport campus. His bread has been used in Communion during Sunday evening masses for college students. Once a

month, he brings 40 loaves to the Sunday night event where refreshments are served, and students bring a loaf home with them. They coined the name "Bread Man," Chet said.

Looking back and ahead

When asked about the source of his gregarious and giving nature, Chet responded: "I do feel I have an ability to give. I am not sure exactly where that comes from. Sometimes I think it's because of my relationship with my wife and my family. I also feel fortunate that I had a career that filled me up everyday and never felt like a job. Really, this work is a continuation of my teaching role."

Another influence was Chet's father "going out of his way to help people," he said. "He used to stop in on people he knew to make sure they were OK and give them some food." As a boy, Chet would ride with him in the car, but said, "I didn't realize the value of what he did until I was much older."

Under way right now is a book, "Bread Time Stories and More." It will include some of the 150 stories he has created over a decade; several suggestions on how to improve your life; and a simple method of bread making that calls for two loaves, one to keep and one to give away. Chet said the book will show "that the true reward of sharing your talents and gifts is knowing that you can make a difference in your own life and the lives of others."

The cinnamon swirl loaves were out of the oven and the interview ended. Chet was on his way to deliver free bread to Camp Abilities at The College at Brockport, a sports camp for blind or visually impaired children. He loaded 43 loaves, baked last night, into his car and headed to the campus where they would be part of lunch that day.

I took home my free loaf of cinnamon swirl bread. Sharing the delicious bread with my wife, I passed on the story about Chet Fery, our neighbor up the street, working to make the community and the world a friendly neighborhood.

(The project web site is: www.breadtimestoriesandmore.com. Chet Fery is a community member of BISCO and is assisting in planning the Brockport Arts Festival.)

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Community members serving community members through meaningful acts of service.

July 25

FREE Water @ the Farmer's Market, 12-2pm
Lakeside Beikink Nursing Home - cards & crafts done by children

July 26

FREE Car Wash @ Capen Hose Fire House, 6-8pm

July 27

FREE Laundry @ Laundry Time, 6-8pm (while quarters last)
Kid's Fun Night @ Sagawa Park, 7-9pm (FREE drumming, ice cream, crafts)

July 29

Clean Up at Lifetime Assistance Main St. Adm. Building 9-12pm

July 30

FREE Popcorn @ Cool Kids event, Sagawa Park, 7-9pm
FREE Frisbee @ Wendy's (Necci coupon, handed out at other events)

July 31

FREE Balloons @ Brockport BBQ & Blues Festival, 11-4pm
Brockport School District - grounds clean up

August 1

FREE Water @ the Farmer's Market, 12-2pm

Throughout the Weeks

Lakeside Beikink Nursing Home - flowers delivered
HOME IMPROVEMENT PROJECT - one frozen piggyback in Brockport will be the recipient of various improvements to their home.

Bless Brockport has been organized by Chris Community Church of Brockport. For further information: 637-3979 or www.blessbrockport.org

BROCKPORT BLIZZARD



2010-2011 Brockport Blizzard Soccer Club Travel Tryouts

TEAMS FORMING FOR BOYS & GIRLS U8 - U19

Mandatory Try-Out Dates

Friday - Sunday, July 30, 31 & August 1



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Tryout Weekend

We are still accepting head coaching applications. If interested, please contact David Garcia, Director of Coaching & Player Development, dgarcia1@brockportnyc.com



A new judge's bench for the Clarkson Justice Court building

*A grand touch in continuing courtroom
and office enhancements*

by Doug Hickerson

The Clarkson Justice Court building has served the community for over 20 years. Somewhat hidden between the fire house and recreation facilities at Clarkson Corners, the modest box-like structure houses a newly renovated courtroom and up-to-date office equipment.

The latest improvement is a "bench" where town justices Allyn Hammel and Christopher Wilcox preside. It consists of a platform for the judge's chair, a witness booth, and a polished hardwood façade. The structure was recently completed by Cook-Dahl, Inc.

The courthouse and the original bench made of plywood were built by the Town of Clarkson Highway Department. "The old bench was in excess of 20 years old," said Judge Hammel. "It had served its purpose well; it was just time for updating." The new bench adds dignity to the front of the courtroom. It is a "formal presence" for a defendant approaching the bench, the judge said, "but it is not overbearing."

The bench was designed by Judge Hammel, Judge Christopher Wilcox and Court Clerk Colleen Rogers in applying for a state JCAP grant (Justice Court Assistance Program). JCAP receives upgrade grant requests from 2,700 village and town courts annually. "It's been a two-and-a-half year effort to get approval," said Rogers about the grant of \$14,200 for the project that was put out to bid. The first grant application for 2008-09 was denied, but approved in 2009-2010. Bureaucratic procedures included submitting and resubmitting the design to Albany for special variances in dimensions and special provisions for handicap accessibility. "It's been a long journey," Rogers said, "because they demand a lot of specifics, right down to the last nail."

It is a "drastic improvement," Judge Wilcox said about the new bench, "along with other improvements this



A new judge's bench stands at the front of the court room in the Town of Clarkson Justice Court building. Standing are those responsible for its design, grant support application, and construction: Judge Christopher Wilcox, Court Clerk Colleen Rogers, Judge Allyn Hammel, and George Dahl of Cook-Dahl, Inc. Photo: Doug Hickerson

courthouse had made in bringing us up to par with the town and village courts in western New York." The grant-supported improvements over several years include: A walk-through metal detector, cushioned chairs, and yearly upgrades on computers and software used for reports, filing and ticket processing by email. Recently, a new copy/fax machine was acquired and a digital lap top recorder for recording all court sessions. Town of Clarkson removed the old bench and installed new carpet.

"We are very busy for a small court," Rogers said about court held every Monday night, plus bench trials and jury trials during the week. "It is a community building as well," she said, citing events like a Christmas party, the DMV every Thursday night and group meetings such as the Clarkson Horseman Association, Clarkson Historical Society, and the Boy Scouts.

"We're very proud of it," said George Dahl about the bench's custom workmanship in solid cherry and cherry

vener. He is owner of Cook-Dahl, Inc., a remodeling business located in the Town of Sweden. "We took extra time building it because we want it to be a nice showpiece for the town." The installation over several days had minimal impact on office activity. "They were very considerate," said Rogers. "They were very conscious that I still had to conduct business in the office. Before they started a loud power tool they would warn me. The crew was just wonderful."

Judge Hammel has served on the bench for over eight years, and was elected to a third term last November. Judge Wilcox is ending his first four-year term on the bench, and is up for re-election in November. Colleen Rogers has worked for the Town of Clarkson for 11 years, two-and-a-half years as Court Clerk, after serving as Deputy Town Clerk. George Dahl has been in the remodeling and custom cabinet business for 42 years.

INSERT NOTICE

• **ANG MARKET** – In Churchville, North Chili (partial) and Bergen.
• **TOPS** – Inside all papers in Bergen, Clarendon, Murray, Holley and Kendall.

• **BIG M** – Inside all papers in Hilton, Parma, Ogdon, Spencerport, Churchville, Riga, Hamlin, Clarkson, Bergen, Clarendon, Murray, Holley, Brockport, Sweden and Kendall.

• **HOLLEY PHARMACY** – Inside all papers in Clarendon, Murray, Holley, Sweden (partial) and Kendall.
• **ACE** – In Ogdon (partial), Spencerport (partial).

Margary Blackman

Mobilizing the community to steward Brockport's trees

by Doug Hickerson

Margary Blackman loves wood. Entering her Victorian-style home on Park Avenue, the view of spreading downstairs rooms is softened by the warm tones of wood grain everywhere. Original floors with a mix of poplar, maple and fir and oak added later, custom built kitchen cabinets of cherry, and doors and trim in a rich grain.

We sat at her cherry dining room table to talk about her work as the founder and chairperson of the Brockport tree board. The tree board is just one aspect of being a "Tree City, USA," a designation awarded to Brockport just two years ago by the National Arbor Day Foundation through Margary's efforts. The complimentary status means "this community cares about its community forest and is committed to maintaining it," Margary says.

That caring and commitment has been deeply challenged as the trees on Main Street have been victims at their roots by renovation of the street and the sewers, and at their tops by cutting to clear power lines. Many trees have been cut down leaving gaping spaces where once there was shade. Citizens have posed many questions and concerns about the trees in Margary and the tree board. She addressed many questions in a letter to the editor in Westside News newspapers on October 3.

There are signs of hope, looking at Margary's love for trees and her collaboration with officials and tree experts committed to establishing the community forest, especially on Main Street. At play is the struggle between mankind and nature and nature's own self-destructive ways.

On Margary's table where we sat was a salad bowl made by retired sociology professor Ed Lehman from the horse chestnut that topped in front of her house in a 2002 windstorm, after well over a century of existence. The saga of that tree — its endurance, demise, and replacement — illustrates the forces at work to keep a rich forest in Brockport's streets and public places.

Street trees face many obstacles

Margary was fascinated with horse chestnut trees from her first encounter with them in a 4-H project on trees in the 1950s. They are also called chestnut or "buckeye" trees for their glossy brown buds. Margary (Margaret Blackman, Ph.D.) is now retired as professor of anthropology at SUNY College at Brockport. She acquired her very own buckeye tree growing in the front of her new home on Park Avenue when she moved there in 1996. Her love for that tree is portrayed in an unpublished essay "Street Tree," written in 2003, a year after the fallen tree was removed (see side bar excerpt). The essay is a history of street trees in Brockport and the events surrounding the loss of the prized tree.

For all the benefits of that chestnut tree's long life, it was a precarious existence. The tree was too big to be surrounded by the asphalt of two driveway aprons and the concrete sidewalk which resulted in dry rot in the roots, Margary writes. "But for an urban tree, it had had a long life. Street trees today have an average life span of just over thirty years. They suffer environmental assaults at all seasons — from automobile exhaust to excessive dog urine to salt damage." Add to these the other man-made threats to tree tops and roots, already mentioned in the Main Street scenario.

Consider, too, nature's own destruction of trees in windstorms, ice storms, lightning, and diseases such as the devastating elm disease and the threatening ash disease.

A community collaboration to counter the odds

In the interview, Margary told of the human effort concentrated on the establishing and sustaining the community forest in Brockport. The endeavor involves individual volunteers, her citizens committee, the village board and DPW, college students and staff, and a state DOT landscape architect.

The village's tree board was started in 2005 as a result of one of Margary's students asking for an internship with the village. She suggested he work on urban forestry to get a program started for planting trees. Working with then mayor Jo Matela, intern Mark Beckwith did extensive research in other municipalities, suggesting Brockport start a "tree board," apply for Tree City USA status, and put all trees on a database — all now accomplished. The tree board of seven members establishes ordinances protecting trees, oversees the community forest, and holds the annual Arbor Day tree planting. Todd Longstreth of the DPW is also on the committee and Margary appreciates his expertise and good working relationship.

As a result of many cuts in the village's budget, the line item for shade trees was cut. The tree board is trying to raise \$4,000 for the 2011 Arbor Day planting. A fundraiser wine and food event was held at the SUNY College Alumni House on October 8. Tree donation jars are in various stores in Brockport.

In the Arbor Day plantings held since 2005, Margary praises the participation of about 60 volunteers from the community each year, including college students and school children. And, she cites the generous contribution from the college, that is, Rick Lair of the facilities and maintenance department with his crew and equipment. Rick is the expert who supervises the planting.

In the Main Street reconstruction, there has been a good working relationship with DOT landscape architect Bruce Cunningham who advises on the health of the trees, what should be trimmed or removed, and tree species for replanting. Margary sees hope in DOT's professional tree trimming in front of the downtown stores, the variety of trees being suggested — with the size of roots and crowns being appropriate to their limited street locations — and one and three-quarter to two inch diameter starting size rather than the usual "stick trees."

Margary says community members recognize the benefits of trees in their beauty, their shade, the capacity for muffling noise, slowing down traffic, and improving air quality by converting carbon dioxide into oxygen. "We are working for the community good in the streetscape and environmental health," she says. "And, all the new planting is a gift for posterity."

Margary's toppled chestnut tree had been



The community forest and its health concerns Brockport resident Margary Blackman who collaborates with officials across many interest groups to protect village trees. D. Hickerson photo.

a gift from the previous century. With its tragic end, the village responded to her requests in 2003, with a replacement chestnut just south of the old location on Park Avenue. Now, with a trunk of five inches and almost 20 feet high, "It's absolutely beautiful with pink blossoms in the spring," Margary says.

Note: For tree board members and more information go to treeboard.brockportny.org

Note: The accepted term "community forest" or "urban forest" refers to trees in a municipality, although "forest" is commonly understood to be a wilderness or outside a populated area.

Excerpt from "Street Tree" essay

"It stood sentinel curbside, hemmed in by the paved aprons to two driveways. It was old, its girth more than my arms could encircle, and its crown higher than the peak of my 2-1/2 story house. It was a landmark that told my next door neighbors and me where to make the turn to our driveways. In summertime it shaded the drives and sidewalk. It faithfully put on its Christmas candles each May. In the fall, its green canopy dulled to bronze and it dropped a mass of prickly brown pods. Those

that weren't squashed under car tires were eagerly rescued by the squirrels. On bright fall mornings they sat on my front and side porch steps breaking open the pods that held the shiny buckeyes, which they buried about the yard. The ones they failed to find over the winter sprouted the following spring, and about the time the buckeye v as flowering, I was yanking up its progeny from my flowerbeds."

From "Street Trees" - an essay by Margary Blackman. Used by permission.



Trimmed trees on Brockport's Main Street allow a clearer view of the facades of the historic buildings.

Jim and Jill Kelly slated for Christ Community Church's Christmas Extravaganza

Pastor's "Crazy Request" discovers big hearts behind the big names

by Doug Hickerson

Jim and Jill Kelly will be the featured speakers at the Christmas Extravaganza scheduled for December 11 in the Oliver Middle School in Brockport. The annual event is sponsored by Christ Community Church on Coleman Creek Road.

In 1997 NFL Hall of Famer Jim Kelly retired from pro football. Two weeks later, Jill gave birth to their son, Hunter, who died eight years later from Krabbe Disease. Last week, **Without a Word: How a Boy's Unspoken Love Changed Everything**, was released. The book is Jill's memoir of the joy, pain, and faith; their family experienced during Hunter's time on earth. It includes the couple's struggle to save their marriage during tumultuous times, leading Jill to reaffirm her Christian faith and Jim to find God.

Associate Pastor Mark DuPré is director and producer of the church's annual holiday event. His bold approach to retain the Kellys succeeded, but the contacts with Jill and her mother also brought him inspiration and an unforeseen focus for the Extravaganza event.

In first planning the event last January, he thought of the Kellys as featured guests. He knew Jill was a Christian and had spoken publicly of her faith, and he learned that Jim was beginning to do the same. What are the chances, he asked himself, that such an in-demand celebrity couple would grace our Christmas event in Brockport? Looking more to providence than improbabilities, he sent a giddy email to the Kelly organization, with the subject line "Crazy Request," asking if the Kellys would be featured speakers at the church's annual Christmas outreach to the Brockport community.

Pastor DuPré was surprised by a cordial email response, "not a brush off," from a staff member who said she would present the idea to Jim and Jill. The next contact was a phone call from Jill's mother, Jaque Waggoner, who coordinates Jill's appearances. "It was obvious right away that she was a Christian and understood what I wanted," Pastor DuPré said. "And, she told me that Jill was just finishing a book on how Hunter touched their lives, saved their marriage and brought them to Christ." The couple would be scheduling various places to promote the book in the fall, Waggoner told him, and she agreed to the December 11 Extravaganza date.



Jim and Jill Kelly will be special guests at Christ Community Church's Christmas Extravaganza on December 11. Provided photo.

Pastor DuPré had no idea the book was being published. The book about Hunter's birth and influence presented a theme for the Extravaganza, he said. He was already planning to use the Faith Hill song "A Baby Changes Everything" in the show. It turned out that the song is Jaque Waggoner's favorite and Faith Hill wrote a forward in the book with her husband, Tim McGraw. "What a perfect subtitle for the Extravaganza," Pastor DuPré said. "A Baby Changes Everything" applies to the arrival of Jesus in the world and Hunter into the Kelly family.

Eventually, Pastor DuPré talked by phone with Jill Kelly. "We talked for nearly an hour. She is absolutely delightful and loves the Lord with all her heart," he said. "She loves the idea of weaving the two stories together." He was amazed at the celebrity couple making no demands about their appearance in the show that normally includes seasonal music and dance. "You make your plans and put us in," was the message from Jill.

All the positive communications with the Kelly organization, Pastor DuPré said, were a gratifying fulfillment of "a crazy idea in the back of my head that I knew was from God."

The Christmas Extravaganza will be held in the A.D. Oliver Middle School gymnasium where an audience of over 1,000 is expected. Admission will be free with a ticket that will be available in November.

New documentary reveals hidden riches of Brockport's Morgan Manning House

by Doug Hickerson

The Morgan Manning House site with quiet dignity on the corner of Main Street and South Street in Brockport. Some passers-by may be curious, but have never ventured inside. Those who have been inside have not really seen its rich colors and exquisite craftsmanship in the low lighting. There is now a new opportunity to discover or rediscover Brockport's historic gem.

Just released by the Western Monroe Historical Society, the "The Morgan-Manning House Legacy" DVD presents a guided tour of all the rooms in the elegant Victorian home that was built in 1854. "I never shot a house before," said Ginny Orzel. "And when I saw it, it was like a dream come true — to be able to shoot that beautiful, beautiful work." Orzel is the photographer and producer of the new 36-minute documentary. The wood grains of furniture and woodwork, the colors and textures of collection items, all show up in the DVD in rich detail with strong lighting and intense color.

Orzel contributed about 200 hours in videotaping, starting in January 2010, and many more hours of editing starting in May. She is assistant professor of communications at The College at Brockport. She was in the TV industry for 12 years at Syracuse and Binghamton TV stations prior to coming to Brockport five years ago to teach and produce documentary films. In over 20 films plus animation shorts produced in her career, the Morgan Manning House is her first historic home as a subject. "When I walked into the house, I saw all that wood my mom had taught me about," she said, referring to the childhood time spent in her mother's furniture store. "I wanted to capture that so others would appreciate it too."

Guiding the house tour is Eunice Chesnut, 85, who became the Western Monroe Historical Society's historian in 1980. A few years later she began tours of the home for fourth-grade classes, supplementing the state-mandated history curriculum. The school tours continue today, along with public tours by appointment. She looks at ease and unscripted on screen, which she attributes to decades of touring and her extensive research of the home and its celebrated residents. "Since I was born talking, it never occurred to me to be nervous. I would rather be the talker than the photographer," she said in appreciation for Orzel's work. "I was very impressed with Ginny's talent, as well as her



Enjoying one of the many elegant rooms that are showcased in "The Morgan Manning House Legacy" are contributors to the documentary (l to r): Eunice Chesnut, Colleen Donaldson and Ginny Orzel. Provided photo by Doug Hickerson.

patience in lugging around all that equipment."

The documentary project is the brainchild of Colleen Donaldson who is a board member and past president of the historical society, and grants development director at The College at Brockport. In training to be a tour guide in the home, "I thought it would be great to have something to assist, something visual to learn features of the house," she said. "And, I saw so much here that we needed to share with the public as well." Donaldson has coordinated the project from the beginning to currently disseminating the DVDs in the community.

"I so appreciate Eunice's and Ginny's work," Donaldson said. "Eunice brought her charm and knowledge and Ginny brought her fresh eyes to show the house in totally different ways than we see it. I am delighted that we now can share the beauty of the house and the stories behind it, as we have not been able to in the past."

"The Morgan Manning House Legacy" is available for \$10 at the Morgan Manning House during office hours and at the Christmas Candlelight Show December 3 and 4. It is also for sale at the Lift Bridge Book Shop, 45 Main Street in Brockport. All proceeds support the Western Monroe Historical Society, thanks to an anonymous donor who has covered the cost of production. Copies of the DVD will be given to local institutions such as libraries, historical societies, senior centers and residences, and schools. For information phone (585) 637-3645.

Saving the Strand Theatre as a landmark building and a business

"I am a big fan of the Strand. I can walk a little less than a block and a half, take my family to a local business and see a movie for considerably less than driving into Greece or Gates to see it."

Scott Hunsinger, Brockport Village Trustee

by Doug Hickerson

"Support your local movie theater" is the marquee message on the Strand Theatre. The Strand is an imposing sight at the northeast corner of Main and State Streets in downtown Brockport. The distinctive art deco facade was created in 1946 with black and red Carrara glass tiles, its neon "STRAND" sign on the marquee, and other period design features.

The Strand is a state and national landmark building in the village's historic district. It is over a century old, starting as the Lyric Theater projecting movies continuously since 1908. It is said to be the second oldest motion picture venue in America.

Preserving such an historic gem has become a serious challenge as the famed exterior is slowly showing signs of fading glory. There are several of the 2' x 2' tiles missing, dropped off over time, and the marquee is rusting (note photos). At night, marquee lights are dim, making the movie titles difficult to read.

At issue are the interests in historic preservation and the business bottom line to show a profit. Both interests can be read into the message "Support your local movie theater."

Supporting historic preservation was the goal of a centennial celebration of The Strand in the fall of 2008. The Greater Brockport Development Corporation (GBDC) organized a two-day vintage movie festival, ending with a champagne gala. Many local merchants and businesses were sponsors. A September 25, 2008 press release reads, "A substantial portion of the proceeds will be used to subsidize repair and restoration of the marquee and facade of The Strand."

Bill Andrews, vice president of GBDC and chairman of the village's Historic Preservation Board, says that \$1,000 from the gala was offered to Bill Yantze, the theater owner and to his son, Jeff Yantze, who operates the theater.



Looking north on Main Street, the art deco facade of the historic Strand Theatre shows 2' x 2' tiles missing and rust on the marquee after 64 years of exposure to the elements. Photo by Doug Hickerson.

Andrews says the Yantzes did not respond to the \$1,000 offer, or to the invitation to participate in facade improvement grants in 2004 and 2009, offered to owners of the landmark storefronts on Main Street.

Bill Yantze says the amounts offered to subsidize refurbishing the exterior were too low to make the repairs affordable. Because of some damage to the theater and decline in patrons that he says has occurred from the road construction, "I am waiting for the street to be completed before money is put into the outside of the building." Yantze heads Rochester Theater Management which includes theaters in Canandaigua, Finger Lakes, Geneseo, as well as Brockport.

Yantze says he is making no profit on The Strand. He attributes that in part to the general state of the economy. He adds, "Across the country, a lot of small town theaters have gone under" because of competition from the Megaplexes, AMCs, Regal Enterprises and Cinemark theaters. "I took over The Strand in 1994 in absolute deplorable condition. I fixed it up completely. It was very successful until Tinseltown was built in 1996." Since then, "The Strand has suffered quite a loss of business. The only thing I ask (referring to his marquee message) is that people support the theater to keep it going." He cites the small town convenience of Brockport's theater, plus the fact that the same first-run movies at the Tinseltown theater cost "four or five dollars more."

In the same recent phone interview with Yantze, we discussed the potential public safety problem regarding the

height from which the 2' x 2' tiles were falling to the sidewalk. The next day he phoned with follow-up comments to our conversation, including "I have a construction company going out there today to make sure the tiles are secure. I have put into the works the replacement of the ones that are out now."

Later in that conversation, Yantze said, "I think if we all work together here, not only for refurbishing the outside of the theater, but also for its survival, which is more important to the theater, I think a lot of good can be done."

In a phone interview with Scott Hunsinger, Brockport Village Trustee, he said: "I am a big fan of the Strand. I can walk a little less than a block-and-a-half, take my family to a local business and see a movie for considerably less than driving into Greece or Gates to see it. I think it's a very very valuable asset to the community. It's a business that is very important, just like all the businesses in Brockport that we support. I am going to be doing a majority of my Christmas shopping walking up and down Main Street in Brockport. With the economic climate, and with the construction on Main Street, that is something I would really communicate to all our community residents. We need to get out there and support our local businesses and The Strand is one of them. Anything we can do to help support them is a step in the right direction."

Hunsinger said further, "As a trustee, I am in the business of opening lines of communication ... and helping people. I will be reaching out to the owner of The Strand after the Thanksgiving holiday."



Doug Hickerson photo

Dr. James P. Goetz, M.D., M.P.H.

Brockport physician feels pull to help others worldwide

Over thirty years of healing and teaching in the Brockport area and in impoverished regions of the world

While in Tanzania, Jim delivered their third child, Stephen, in their house on the shore of the Indian Ocean. Son Jimmy was fluent in Swahili within a year of being there. "He knew Swahili before he knew English," Jim said.

Inspiration prevails over skeptics
Asked about his driving force in such challenging service, Jim said, "I am very much rooted in the Catholic Christian tradition of helping the unfortunate. It is as simple as that." Any influences from parents or siblings? Jim said there were no other medical professionals in the family. And, with a laugh, he said his brothers had scoffed at him about his potentially risky venture to Tanzania, and his parents did not want Kathy and the grandchildren to go with him.

When Jim was finishing his degree in public health, someone asked, "Why are you going to Africa when we have plenty of need here?" Jim responded, "It is quite different here. If you are poor, you can go to an emergency room; someone is going to take care of you. Over there, there is nobody to take care of you and the doctors are not well trained. I would prefer to go where (other medical) people are reluctant to go."

"The real world is where millions of people are living with no running water and kids are dying."
Dr. Goetz

Serving the Brockport area and the world

After his three-year experience in Tanzania, Jim chose to come to the Oak Orchard Community Health Center in Brockport because "it was taking care of not just the town folks but migrant workers. I was struck with its mission to help all people regardless of their ability to pay." He liked the physician's role divided with duties as medical director "because I could hopefully effect the health system of the community, not just individual people." The clinic began in 1973 and Jim came in 1978.

In his 30-year tenure serving the Brockport area, Jim made occasional trips to impoverished countries to stay informed on medical needs and provide support. From 1995 to 1996 he spent a year in a medical center in American Samoa. From 1978 to 1990, there were several medical trips to aid in rural villages of the Dominican Republic.



Top left first column and above: Jim Goetz at work in Haiti. Submitted photos.



Jim Goetz at home. Photograph by Doug Hickerston.

In May 2010, he went to Haiti to help earthquake victims. The 7.0 earthquake on January 12 destroyed 80 percent of the buildings and killed 25 percent of the population in 30 seconds. By May, endemic diseases, diarrhea, malnutrition and respiratory tract infections had set in. There was a call for primary care physicians. "When I saw that, I just had to do it," Jim said. He was on a team of 12 medical workers, one of 16 such teams working ten day stints in a field hospital. With minimal orientation, they worked around the clock in extreme heat, treating long lines of the suffering with no lab facilities, and eating only one good meal in the day. "It was physically and mentally challenging, plus emotionally draining," Jim said.

Jim's most recent trip was in October 2010, returning to Tanzania for two weeks. He visited mission centers in slums near Nairobi, at a large medical center on the shores of Lake Victoria, and a girls school in Kilimanjaro.

"All of those experiences help me grow. All through my career I have worked with poor people and have tried to connect with other countries, because I don't see America or Western Europe as the real world," Jim said. "The real world is where millions of people are living with no running water and the kids are dying."

That real world "centers me," Jim said. "It keeps me from getting crazy" with TV, junk mail, and newspapers, his samples of distractions in this world. The real world is "very simple, elemental living, where you are not sure of tomorrow: What will be the next case to show up? What equipment will break down and will there be electricity? Who will live and who will die?"

Loving this place, but the "pull to go back"

"I love Brockport; it is a great town," Jim said, "I love the people. I very much like where I work and the people we take care of; they are needy and grateful. And, we take care of everybody in the community, not just the poor."

"But, there is this pull to go back (to those places I have been) and try to be a little

more helpful," Jim continued. "If I were single and did not have kids, I probably would still be in Africa instead of here. But the kids needed a good education, needed a place to call home, so we decided to do that. I still have this pull to go back."

"I would like to continue some clinical presence here," Jim said. "But, in the next several years, I would like to help in some of these places like Haiti, Africa, or South and Central America for a month at a time. I don't know exactly where, but I am looking around the world right now."

(Note: Space does not allow full mention of Dr. Goetz's distinguished history of academic appointments in the greater Rochester area, including the U of R Medical Center, Strong Memorial Hospital, Nazareth College School of Nursing, plus serving as school physician in the Brockport and Holley school systems, and teaching child health topics to parents who are inmates at the Albion Women's Prison and Men's Prison.)

The Jim Goetz Family

Rooted in a "place to call home" on Park Avenue in Brockport for 30 years.

Wife: Kathy
Children: Jim, Jr. - Married, two children, lives in Rochester
Elizabeth - Lives in Nashville, Tennessee
Stephen - Married, one child, lives in San Francisco, California
Catherine - Lives in Miami, Florida
Grandchildren: Three

Presentation on Haiti

Dr. Goetz will give a slide presentation on his Haiti experience at the Morgan Manning House, 151 Main Street in Brockport, on Thursday, January 20, at 7:30 p.m. It is free and open to the public, sponsored by the Western Monroe Historical Society. For information phone 637-3044.

Early vision fulfilled

"Beginning as a premed in college, my philosophy was to try to focus on people who have the hardest trouble getting good care and trying to make a difference," Jim said. After graduating from Notre Dame in 1965, that commitment carried him through the years of post-graduate education and service: Medical school at Ohio State University, two years as a medical officer in the U.S. Navy in Monterey, California; and a master's degree in public health from Harvard University.

In 1975, he and Kathy (married in 1967) went to Tanzania with their two children. He began three years at the University of Dar Es Salaam, as lecturer in the Division of Social and Community Medicine. Jim worked with post-doctoral students who would become district medical officers. In a month-long rotation "we would go out to the far reaches of the district where there was no health care to see how people fared. My approach was to go beyond the established health system and say, 'Look, the system is here and the people are way out there. How are you going to take care of those folks?'"

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Volunteer firefighter tradition thriving but threatened

"I know that I am going to help somebody who is probably having the worst day of their life."

Lt. Joe Indelicato about emergency response.

by Doug Hickerson

On Saturday, April 9, the Brockport Volunteer Fire Department displayed its equipment and facility at Fire Department headquarters on Market Street. With demonstrations and many personnel present to answer questions, the event was part of a statewide program entitled "Recruit NY," an element of National Volunteer Week 2011, to interest residents in becoming volunteer fire fighters or emergency medical services responders.

Volunteer firefighting over the last several years has suffered an overall decline in recruits, impacting a long tradition that has served American communities so well.

Fire Chief

Michael Henry's perspective

Brockport Fire Chief Michael Henry says that there are 150 people associated with the Brockport Volunteer Fire Department (established 1877), with 80 of them active members. "We are at an even keel right now," he says. "We might get ten to fifteen recruits a year, but we lose about the same number." The losses may be people moving away or changing jobs. But, the difficulty in recruiting and retaining firefighter volunteers centers on the demands many families face with both spouses working and other community involvements. "Interest in volunteering is the same as it has always been, but many do not have the time to train once a week and attend calls," Chief Henry says. "We always stress to potential new members, 'Your family comes first, then work, then us.' They have to make the balances."

Even with the challenge of keeping an adequate volunteer force, "We have done a good job," Chief Henry says. "Our annual numbers are high as far as volume goes -- the number of calls in the 900-1,000 range, almost three calls a day with all volunteers." He cites fairly recent fires that were successfully handled, including a residence on Spring Street "where the dwelling was pretty much fully engulfed when we pulled up." A youth was saved from the flames and the structure was saved. A fire above an antique store on Main Street was put out, the second floor apartment was saved, and

the store owner expressed thanks publicly to the firefighters who put tarps over the merchandise and saved it from water damage.

Chief Henry says that, because the volunteers perform so professionally, many people are not aware that the Brockport Volunteer Fire Department is 100 percent volunteer. "A compliment to us is that many people think we are a paid fire department. I have been to people's houses who have been in the village 30 years and they never knew we were a volunteer department." Asked about the advantage to the municipalities of a volunteer fire department over a paid department, he says, "It would easily take over a million dollar budget to do that with a paid fire department." He compares that with a volunteer fire department where tax money is paying for equipment, outfitting the firefighters and building maintenance, not for salaries and other employee benefits.

The volunteer firefighter experience

Although today's economy and family activities make it difficult for spouses to commit to volunteer firefighting, the historic volunteer firefighter movement has been rooted in the family. One generation of a family would encourage the next in passing on the proud tradition of service and sacrifice for the community.

Many members of the Brockport Volunteer Fire Department are from families with several generations of firefighters. Chief Henry, a manager at AT&T in his day job, has been a firefighter for 23 years, the third generation of firefighters in his family. John Rombaut has been a firefighter for 43 years and is president of the Brockport Volunteer Firefighters Association. He was fire chief in the early 1980s. His brother and his son were fire chiefs. His nephew was a lieutenant. And, he hopes the next generation will follow. "Maybe my grandson one of these days," he says.

Carrying on such a family tradition was easier in the days when offspring remained in or close to the communities where they were raised. The fire hall sometimes became a social center for firefighter families in these simpler times in America. Comrades in firefighting became a kind of second family, which is still evident today.

Lieutenant Tim Russell doesn't have family roots in firefighting, but had a compelling inspiration to join several years ago. He was working at Northside Service on Park Avenue, when the Fire Department arrived at the Kleen Brite factory to put out a fire. "The fire trucks came by and I



As part of "Recruit NY" on Saturday, April 9, the Brockport Fire Department demonstrated the use of the "Jaws of Life" to free a victim from a car after an accident. Photo by Dianne Hickerson.

watched the whole thing," he says with admiration in his voice. "I said, 'Man, I want to do that,'" and he signed up for training soon after. With five years experience as a volunteer firefighter, Russell names some of the rewards: "It's a learning experience. I get to meet a lot of interesting people. And, I just like helping the community." In one recent helping moment, he was the firefighter, along with two or three Brockport Police officers, who caught the boy who jumped from the window of his burning home on Spring Street.

Russell says there is a great time demand, including the intense initial training to be certified, drills once a week, and being on call during the day when he is not working nights as a foreman in a machine shop. "It keeps you busy and keeps them busy, too," he said about his wife and three children who are three, seven and twelve-years-old. "They adjust, and the kids like coming and looking at the fire trucks."

Lieutenant Joe Indelicato does not come from a firefighter family, but he cherishes being part of the volunteer firefighter's long heritage. "I am proud to be part of a tradition that started before there was an America," he says, citing the first "Fire Ordinance" adopted in 1648 in the Dutch Settlement of New Amsterdam, the beginning of organized volunteer firefighting on this continent. He has been a volunteer firefighter since 1993, in Mendon, then Gates, and in Brockport starting in 2008.

Indelicato says volunteer firefighting for him is a "life style choice" that his wife adopted when they married in 2000. They

have a six-year-old daughter. "I try to engineer my life to have time to give to the fire department." His day job is with the state Department of Health in Bio Terrorism Preparedness, traveling to 17 western counties to provide training and technical support for emergency readiness.

Among his rewards as firefighter, "I enjoy camaraderie with brothers and sisters. They are like family," Indelicato says. "We help each other out with just about anything."

There is a significant commitment. "We make sacrifices, but it is worth it. We leave family meals, church, and birthday parties to respond to calls. But, I know that I am going to help somebody who is probably having the worst day of their life. I am helping their situation and can come home and share the story with my family."

Indelicato also likes being "plugged into the community" as a firefighter, getting to meet the public at department open houses and other events like the Saturday for creating. He finds kids and adults expressing respect and appreciation for volunteer firefighters. He says, "I am proud to be part of this tradition that has been such a blessing to so many people."

Note: Besides the Market Street headquarters, the Brockport Fire Department has fire houses in Clarkson Station #2, on West Avenue Station #3, and at Main Street and Park Avenue Station #4 Capen House. For more information go to www.brockportfire.org. Phone 637-1030. Leave any questions an extension #8888.



Lt. Joe Indelicato, left, and Fire Chief Michael Henry worked on "Recruit NY" at the Market Street fire hall to attract more volunteer firefighters to the Brockport Fire Department. Photo by Dianne Hickerson.

Neighborhoodly "mutual assistance" helps get the job done with volunteer departments in rural areas

by Doug Hickerson

Fire departments in Hamlin, Morton and Walker held their "Recruit NY" events last Saturday and Sunday. Officials report little or no turnout by potential volunteers. However, the volunteer levels in these departments, while not increasing, are providing adequate coverage for fire calls with the help of "mutual assistance." In the adjoining article, the Brockport Fire Department had wide mutual assistance for the Main Street fire, with Holley, Hamlin, Spencerport, Morton, Clarendon, Churchville, Hilton, and Bergen responding and Albion and Walker serving as "fill ins".

Hamlin has about 45 active volunteers, while Morton and Walker both have about 30. Fire Chief Allen Smith with the Hamlin Fire Department says that his volunteer levels have fluctuated, "but we are in the

best shape we have been in over the last five or six years," as the department gained more volunteers than it lost. "However, our call load is increasing, along with more demands for training, so I don't think we've changed anything," he said.

Assistant Fire Chief Ken Keirs of the Morton Fire Department said their "Recruit NY" brought no new applications. With 30 volunteers, "We're holding our own," he says, "especially with relying on neighboring departments to provide equipment and manpower."

Deputy Fire Chief Ed Barth in Walker says, "We definitely need volunteers" to add to the 30 now active. "It's just tough, and I don't know what the solution is today." He says that the mutual assistance has made all the difference, naming Hilton, Brockport and Hamlin fire departments as examples.

INVEST IN YOUR COMMUNITY

SHOP AT HOME

30th Anniversary of Morgan-Manning's "Old Fashioned 4th of July" brings change and opportunity

Grant money offered in citizens' contest

by Doug Hickerson

This July 4 will mark the 30th anniversary of the "Old Fashioned Fourth of July" at the Morgan-Manning House on Brockport's Main Street. For decades the event has opened with resounding marches and patriotic music played by

the Brockport High School Band. With variations each year, the rest of the program has included local musical groups, folk singers, patriotic readings, children's stories and games, refreshments, and the famous "Cake Walk."

The Western Monroe Historical Society, with offices in the Victorian home, has provided the event free to salute the nation's historic roots and to celebrate some of our American traditions as the Brockport community.



4th of July favorites on the grill at the Morgan Manning House. File photo.



Now, citizens who appreciate this event can enable the Historical Society to receive a grant to fund future improvements.

The first event was in 1981. It was the idea of Eunice Chesnut, the Historical Society's historian, who said she first suggested to the trustees "a July 4th celebration where people can come, have a hot dog, some music and enjoy games for kids." The music was provided by Bill Hulfish and his band. The second year, 1982, started the tradition of opening with the Brockport High School Band concert and ending with the "Cake Walk."

Changing times

Ironically, on the 30th anniversary, the Brockport High School Band will not be playing at the event this year. Budget constraints in the school district have eliminated funding for the summer band. "I am disappointed that we can't continue with such a fine tradition," said Gary Skoog who has helped organize the July 4 event for several years. "They were a wonderful draw for the whole community."

Alicia Fink expressed regret over the loss of the High School Band and acknowledged their generous and faithful contribution each year. She is the new president of the Western Monroe Historical Society's board of trustees. Fink outlined new plans for this year's July 4 event which will start at 11 a.m. and end at three. Saying that "we have not had much for the kids to do," she announced new focus on children and families. "We will have a two-part parade for the children, with strollers, bicycles, and wagons decorated for the 4th of July.

Then, a parade of decorated bicycles" which will proceed around the driveway and sidewalk near the home. Details will be announced later.

Opening music this year will be provided by the Brockport Community Jazz Band which has been a feature in the event for several years. There will be a sing-along of patriotic songs. New this year will be two short stories from the Morgan Manning House first floor during the event. The famous "Cake Walk" continues, offering home-made cakes.

Citizens can "vote" for grant support

The changes in Brockport's popular July 4 event coincide with the Historical Society's opportunity to obtain a grant that could fund improvements in the future. Liberty Mutual Insurance is hosting "Bring Back the 4th," an on-line contest allowing cities and towns across America to compete for one of ten \$10,000 grants to support their 4th of July celebrations. The grants are offered in three population-based categories across the country. Located in the "small" municipality of Brockport, the Western Monroe Historical Society would be eligible for one of four grants in that category.

Residents in the 14420 zip code can "vote" for their July 4 event by taking a brief online history quiz. By choosing from multiple choice answers on eight quiz items, each completed quiz is registered as a vote for Brockport's July 4 event (thus, only the 14420 zip code) to receive the grant. June 14 is the deadline for voting.

To take the quiz, log on to www.bring-back-the-4th.com. The interesting quiz items are about people and places that are significant in the nation's history; they make you think and appreciate. It does not matter how many questions you get right; just entering counts as one vote. Liberty Mutual states that information submitted for the online quiz will be used solely for the purpose of the contest, and no other purposes.

The Historical Society's treasurer, Gordy Fox, said the grant money would enable the Society to expand the event with more entertainment and other features that would draw more community interest. He believes that the Liberty Mutual contest purposely avoids "grant writers" and that the company wants to see "how much the community will get behind the celebration." "... It shows the citizens' dedication to the event," he said. "It takes only a few minutes to open the site and answer the questions."

Note: Members of the July 4th event committee are: Alicia Fink, Mary Pat Musselman, Deanna Shifton, Gary Skoog, and Don Voorhees. For information, phone 585-637-3645.

SALMON CREEK C.C. 2011 Junior Golf Camps



The goal of this five week program is to provide your child with a positive and enjoyable golf experience. This will entail instruction on swing fundamentals, short game, putting, etiquette, rules, playing and safety. The camp director and instructor is Jim Muszak, PGA Professional.

Camp I: Tuesdays, June 28, July 5, 12, 19 & 26 (Sign-up deadline June 22)
Camp II: Tuesdays, August 2, 9, 16, 23 & 30 (Sign-up deadline July 27)

Camps will be broken down into two groups, Juniors (13-18) & Sub-Juniors (8-12). If any group doesn't fill up SCCC reserves the right to combine age groups.

Schedule for Juniors will have instruction from 11:30-12:30 & Golf from 12:45-3:30. Sub-Juniors will have instruction from 12:45-1:45 & Golf from 2:00-4:45.

Cost of the Camp is \$120 (\$65 for members). Price includes Instruction, Range Balls & Green fees (non-members).

All Camp dates will be held as scheduled. In case of bad weather, instruction will be held inside and rain checks will be issued for golf.

All Sub-Juniors will be required to have an adult present for at least one week of on-course supervision.

Return Registration to: Salmon Creek Country Club,
355 Washington Street, Spencerport, NY 14559
Make checks payable to: SCCC - Jr. Golf Camp

NAME _____ AGE _____
STREET _____ PHONE # _____
CITY _____ ZIP CODE _____

Please Circle: **Camp I (June 28 - July 26)** **Camp II (August 2 - August 30)**
For Sub-Juniors Only: Weeks of availability for adult on course supervision.
Please Circle: **Week 1** **Week 2** **Week 3** **Week 4** **Week 5**

I understand that Salmon Creek C.C. owners & instructors are not liable for any accidents or injury sustained while participating in the program.

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____

Emergency Contact Name: _____

Phone Number: _____

355 Washington St.
Spencerport, New York 14559
Fax: 352-1854



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The new "Sport Aviation Center" takes off with first events in June

Grand opening June 25 shows off aviation facility built for community

by Doug Hickerson

"We have dreams of unbelievable programs for the future," said Dr. Tom Bowdler, current president of Rochester Chapter 44 of the Experimental Aircraft Association (EAA). He was referring to the educational aviation programs envisioned for youth at the chapter's new "Sport Aviation Center" (SAC) at Ledgesdale Airport south of Brockport.

The nearly-completed facility on Eisenhauer Drive covers 3,500 square feet and features a large meeting room for 200 people, a workshop area, a pilot's lounge, and a large covered patio overlooking the runway.

Programs for youth and families

One youth program started by the national EAA in the late 1990s is "Young Eagles," giving youth background information on flying and free airplane rides. The local chapter has adapted the program for local schools as "Young Eagle Adventure." This year it was offered to Spencerport's Cosgrove Middle School, providing five days of 90 minute school classroom sessions on aviation for 7th and 8th graders, taught by the local EAA volunteers. By the time the students earned their plane ride, they knew some math and science of aviation, and some of the instrumentation of flight.

On May 21 about 60 Cosgrove students and parents came to the Sport Aviation Center for a day of hot dogs and hamburgers, and 23 students enjoyed free plane rides. A similar program was started three years ago for 5th and 6th graders in the Rochester City School District. "Our primary purpose is to share our love of aviation," said Norm Isler, current vice president of Chapter 44. "A lot of that is outreach to youth." Two girls in the Spencerport class caught the love of aviation and are planning to become aeronautical engineers, he said.

Bowdler is waiting for the SAC completion to re-start his "Aerocomp" program which enables Scouts to earn their Aviation Merit Badge. As an Eagle Scout, father of two Eagle Scouts, and Scout leader, he conducted the three-day camps for years at the chapter's old facility elsewhere at the airport. There was a Girl Scout program that provided the same experience, Bowdler added. As a 30-year EAA member, he states his philosophy as, "If you enjoy something, you can't really enjoy it unless you share it with the next generation."

Both Bowdler and Isler emphasize that they don't want the Center to be seen as an "old boys' club," Isler said that, during his term as president for the past two years, "Many more women became involved." He added that the chapter is very "family-oriented" and part of the Sport Aviation Center design is to attract families - eventually to have playground equipment and have families enjoy a Saturday outing watching planes take off and land.

The organization:

purpose and leadership

EAA Chapter 44 has thrived for 53 years, "started by a dozen guys who wanted to build their own airplanes," Isler



Students and parents from Spencerport's Cosgrove Middle School gathered on May 21 at Ledgesdale Airport for food and free plane rides as part of the EAA Chapter 44 "Young Eagles Adventure." In the background is the new Sport Aviation Center. The plane is a Van's RV-6A built, owned and flown by Larry Greeno, chapter member. Provided photo.

said. He clarified that "Experimental Aircraft" in the organization name is a misnomer, really referring to "home built" aircraft. But the EAA activities are also much broader. The chapter membership of over 60 includes aircraft builders and restorers, pilots and student pilots, aircraft owners and renters, non-pilot aviation enthusiasts, and spouses, their website states.

And further, as a not-for-profit educational organization, "We are dedicated to educating our members and the general public about aviation, aviation safety, aircraft building and maintenance skills, introducing youths to aviation, and exploring Rochester's aviation heritage, and much more."

Norm Isler and Mike Clayton, the project manager, have been the two main "spark plugs" behind the SAC project, Bowdler said. About Isler, he added, "Without his enthusiasm and hard work we would not have this building." Last year, Isler, an EAA member since 1978, received the Major Achievement Award given by the international EAA for "outstanding service to the EAA and recreational aviation" - one of only four such awards conferred in the worldwide organization of 150,000 members. Clayton, a retired aerospace engineer, "has been critical in dealing with vendors, contractors, and keeping the project on track," Isler said.

Community support and hard work

The labor, materials and funds for the Sport Aviation Center have come from EAA members and the wider Rochester-Brockport community. Bowdler and Isler said the completed facility will be completely paid for and estimated



Robin Woodfield of Cosgrove Middle School enjoys a ride with Norm Isler in his 1976 Beach Sport as part of the "Young Eagles Adventure" program. Provided photo.

the value will be "a quarter million dollars (which) includes the value of member cash donations, corporate and other sponsorships, donations of materials and professional services, and countless hours of member-provided volunteer labor." They name major donors: Crosby-Brownlie Mechanical Contractors, Curiosity Shop, KenLou Foundation, Kriterion, Optics Technology Inc., Colby's Pig Roast, Mahan's Discount Liquor, Tim Hortons's and Wegmans.

"Company's coming"

work expedited for June 21 and 25 events
Ground was broken for the Sport Aviation Center in August 2009 and a shell constructed that could be locked. Phase Two began in January 2010, with chapter members working Saturdays on framing, drywall, electrical and other work to receive the provisional Certificate of Occupancy, now granted. There is now a rush to get all drywall completed, paint and clean up in time for the first public use of the building. On June 21, the national EAA president on a Grass Roots Pilot Tour will be at the Sport Aviation Center to dedicate the building with Chapter 44 members present.

On Saturday, June 25, there will be a Grand Opening open house from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. The new building will be on display, along with home-built aircraft. There will be brief presentations on various aspects of aviation, including local history (see www.EAA44.org for details). "Essentially, we are just opening our doors to the community to let them know who we are and what we do," Isler said. Looking toward final completion, "I am proud of the work we have done here," he said. "When we get this wrapped up near year's end, we will have one of the nicest chapter facilities in the country."

For information phone 585-754-7263.

Public can vote for \$10,000 grant for the "Sport Aviation Center"

Light Speed Foundation is providing five grants of \$10,000 for organizations that promote general aviation and inspire future generations of pilots. EAA Chapter 44 is one of 20 finalists for a grant. The public votes for the winners. Go to their website www.EAA44.org and see how to vote for EAA44 on the first page. "Please help us continue our community and youth education programs by helping us win this grant," Norm Isler says.



Norm Isler (left) and Tom Bowdler in the meeting room of the new Sport Aviation Center. They are confident that the room will be finished for the first events June 21 and June 25. Photo by Dianne Hickerson.

Historic Clarkson Academy takes success to the next level

by Doug Hickerson

On Saturday and Sunday, June 4 and 5, the Clarkson Academy was the scene of a quilt show and sale in the newly-restored first floor of the 1853 two-story school house, just west of Clarkson Corners on Ridge Road.

Two years ago, Westside News Inc. (May 10, 2009) reported on progress of the six-year restoration project. At the time, \$17,000 was needed to complete construction with flooring, painted walls and ceilings, light fixtures and a built-in sound system. In just over a year, those finishing touches, including white oak flooring, were completed with \$15,000 provided by the Rochester Area Community Foundation. The remaining \$2,000 came from fundraising events by the Clarkson Historical Society which owns and maintains the building.

The spacious room is used for the Historical Society's monthly membership meetings which include a guest speaker, and for board meetings also held once a month. Other community events and presentations are held there also.

The restoration project, both construction and grant applications, has been managed by Don Lage, president of the Clarkson Historical Society. Money is raised from

the community with events like the quilt show and sale, arranged by Lage and his wife, Rita, with quilts provided by their daughter, Barb Sackel of Spencerport. Sackel is a quilt and pattern designer, fabric designer, and quilt lecturer, and provided 40 percent of the quilt sale receipts to the Historical Society. Of the nearly 50 quilts displayed, about half were sold during the two-day event.

Lage, at 78, is a dynamo with designs and determination to move to the second floor for restoration. It was originally an open classroom that was ruined with water damage, and is now stripped to bare wall studs and ceiling rafters. He received another grant from the Rochester Area Community Foundation ("Wonderful people," he calls them) for \$12,000 to create a ceiling, as the first stage of the project. Work should start in a couple of weeks, he said. The room will be restored to an 1800s classroom, keeping the first floor room set up with chairs for meetings. The restored classroom, with period desks, chairs, and blackboards will be used for giving today's fourth grade students a "day of instruction in the 19th century" once a year, Lage said. Four public schools already have shown interest.

"People are just wonderful," said Lage about the school teachers showing interest and the support that has been provided for



A finished interior was evident at the Clarkson Academy during a recent quilt show and sale. New flooring, paint, and ceiling lights completed the first floor restoration of the brick school house built in 1853. Photo Doug Hickerson.

the project. "It's just fantastic."

The next fundraising event is a 5K race that starts from the Academy at 9 a.m. on Saturday, August 27. For information or

donations, Don Lage can be contacted at 585-395-0009. Donations may be sent to the Clarkson Historical Society, P.O. Box 600, Clarkson, NY 14430.

Mikey's busy Monday mornings completing five years of canine therapy

"Santa Paws" to bring holiday cheer again this year

Every Monday morning since January 2006, Mikey has been a visiting companion for the elderly residents at Lakeside Beikirch Care Center in Brockport. Accompanied by his mom, Dianne Hickerson, the 110 pound Goldendoodle therapy dog brings joy and comfort, and receives loving attention from staff and residents. After about two or three hours of visiting, Mikey goes to swim therapy at the K9 CARE Inc. Aquatic Center in Spencerport. The swimming keeps his legs strong to control his hip dysplasia. The swim therapy originally was started to prepare him for hip replacement surgery (reported in Westside News, March 2010). But, the surgeon found him functioning so well from swim therapy that surgery was cancelled. Everyone at Beikirch was delighted for him.

On Christmas Eve Day, Mikey will play Santa again and bring presents to the residents of Beikirch. He will be accompanied by Dianne and her two grandsons.



Mikey takes a swim after Beikirch visits, chasing his favorite turtle.



Mikey takes a treat from Ruth Werth, a resident of Lakeside Beikirch Care Center.



Mikey relaxes at home with Dianne after a busy Monday morning. Provided photos.



Jim Larkin, Jan Larkin, Carter Bigley, Marilyn Bigley, Ellie Wandel and Dorothy Jones lead the Monday Bible Study at Lakeside Beikirch Care Center every week. Photo by Dianne Hickerson.

Monday Bible Study at Beikirch: Every week for 15 years

*"They do this with such kindness
and a genuine compassion ..."*

Nancy Duff

by Doug Hickerson

"I have joy, joy, joy down in my heart, down in my heart, down in my heart to stay," Jan Larkin leads Lakeside Beikirch Care Center residents in singing the words and pointing to her heart. Called "action choruses," she conducts the songs with movement to open Monday Bible Study, co-led every week with her husband, Jim Larkin, and others on their team. The choruses get the residents' attention to start a half-hour or more of Bible reading, singing a hymn, a closing prayer, and some conversation.

Beyond the singing, reading and praying, the Bible study team tries to make personal contact with each of the 15 to 25 residents who attend in a fourth floor lounge each Monday. Many of them have no visitors, Jan said about the need for personal contact. "We try to reach each person, to learn their name and something about them to show 'we care about you.' They relate to us as though we are a part of their own family."

Not everyone attending Monday Bible Study is awake; others aren't receiving the message and some don't respond. "There are people who have trouble talking to you," Jan said. "But, play 'Jesus Loves Me' or similar songs that they might have heard in Sunday School and it comes back to them. They can sing the words." She also passes out bells

to shake while singing "Jingle Bells" at Christmastime. "I ask how many know about a one-horse open sleigh, and many will tell of their experience from the past. The Lord uses these songs to bring back some pleasant memory."

Nancy Duff is the recreation director and Lakeside Memorial Hospital volunteer coordinator. "This generation treasures and participates in their faith," she said about the residents. "Being connected to a local church was a very important part of their family life. The Bible study has helped cover this sacred desire of the residents."

Jan and Jim Larkin have led the Bible study every week of the year for about 15 years, starting at the former Beikirch building. "The beautiful thing is we have a team," Jim said, "so we never miss Bible Class, except if Christmas comes on a Monday." Carter and Marilyn Bigley have been on the team since the beginning and rotate the Bible readings with Jim. Marilyn also leads the action choruses. Dorothy Jones and Ellie Wandel have been on the team for several years; both had close relatives who lived at Beikirch. Jim and Jan also lead a worship service at Beikirch for their church, Grace Baptist Church, once every other Sunday. "They are an amazing couple," Nancy Duff said, and added:

"The Bible study is well attended every Monday and the volunteers who oversee the program are the most dedicated group of individuals I know. They do this with such kindness and a genuine compassion for the residents' spiritual needs. Their weekly dedication has built relationships with the people. We are so grateful to have them be a part of the residents' lives."

New church to occupy former The Apple Tree Furniture Store in Clarkson

by Doug Hickerson

The Apple Tree Furniture Store in Clarkson has been closed for several years. In its day, people would browse the store before or after a meal at the adjacent Apple Tree Inn restaurant which still thrives.

The sprawling building at 6897 West Ridge Road has been a ghost with a changing "For Sale" sign as the property came under different realtors. Over time, the landscape for the Colonial-style building became overgrown. Many have wondered about the fate of the property that for years provided handsome architecture outside and vast displays of upscale furniture, clothing and gifts inside. In recent months, new landscaping and the appearance of contractors' trucks have been hopeful signs of revival, leaving a mystery about who the new occupants will be.

The renovation is creating the first permanent church building for New Beginnings Christian Fellowship congregation. Since March, an architect and engineer have been engaged, with contractors and parishioners at work more recently. The rambling open display space east of the entry lobby has been converted into a sanctuary. West of the entrance new walls have created classrooms, offices, and other activity spaces.

New Beginnings Christian Fellowship started in November 2006 in the Greece home of Pastor Dave Crespo and his wife, Nisa. The congregation now has between 150 and 200 members who met first in Athena High School and now in Apollo Middle School in Greece. Most of the members are from the Clarkson and Brockport area, so the new location is geographically more central for the congregation, Pastor Crespo said. "We were so blessed to close on the property in February because we had been praying that the Lord would provide a home for us. We had been setting up and leasing down our temporary quarters each Sunday. The church has grown, and it will be nice to have our own place and be established." He said an opening date is uncertain right now, but he hopes for the first Sunday service to be at the end of this year, or early in 2010.



Pastor David Crespo stands at the entrance of the former Apple Tree Furniture Store in Clarkson. The building will become the New Beginnings Christian Fellowship church with expected completion by early 2010. Photograph by Doug Hickerson.

Campus School: A life-transforming experience

by Doug Hickerson

Mary Lou Dorgan liked her secluded childhood on the family's Churchville farm and in the public school where "no one paid much attention to you." That all changed when her family moved to Brockport and Mary Lou entered fourth grade at the Campus School at her father's insistence: "I didn't like it," Mary Lou Rockow said, reflecting back 65 years. "I felt smothered to begin with."

Within the first year at Campus School, through a "hard transition," Mary Lou "loved it," she said. She realized all that attention was to "enhance your personality, to build you up." In personal development, the very private fourth-grader, now 73, emerged with communication skills, self-confidence, and artistic self-expression. She states her experience another way, "They encouraged you to become all that you could become." In fulfilling roles she enjoys today, she became a wife (55 years now), a mother of three boys, and a sales person at Westside News for 34 years and still going.

Mary Lou attended the Campus School in Hartwell Hall on the college campus from fourth through eighth grade, 1946 to 1960. As a kind of laboratory for education methods and teacher training, each classroom had a master teacher and two "cadets" who were student teachers in training.

Communication skills

The communication skills came in different forms. "In public school (attended previously), you did your own thing and went home," Mary Lou said. "In Campus School they made you interact. If you had a problem with someone, they made you sit down and work it out."

Another way of relating to others was to be a "lady." There were lessons by English teacher Miss Ora VanSlyke who held tea parties where the young ladies wore white gloves and learned manners, including how to eat soup and "to cross your legs at the ankles," Mary Lou said. Not just genteel etiquette, being a lady meant "to keep yourself under control, to think it out. To this day, I go back to that because I seldom lose my temper."

Her most memorable teacher was Miss Dorothy Foster in 7th grade. "She was always encouraging you. You could go there in a bad mood and she would get you out of it." In Miss Foster's class, Mary Lou's report card shows under

The Brockport Campus School Reunion is scheduled for Friday, July 22 at the Seymour College Union on the Brockport Campus. For info: www.brockport.edu/alumni/campuschoolreunion/index.html.

"character building traits" the comment "courteous and uses self-control." Miss Foster emphasized being neat and the report card showed Mary Lou "keeps desk and locker neat" - a habit she says she still exhibits at home.

Self-confidence and self-expression

Somehow, the girl who liked being by herself blossomed on stage in front of large audiences. Mary Lou took to acting in school plays at the Campus School - "The Tempest," "The Golden Cockerel" and "Hansel and Gretel." She continued in supportive roles through Brockport High School and finally got the lead role as a senior in "The Brat." About her passion for the stage, Mary Lou recalled, "They said I always put my heart into it and jumped right into the character as it was intended." Relating her stage experience to being a sales person, "It all goes back to establishing self-confidence," Mary Lou said.

Mary Lou credits Campus School art classes for learning "basic design and concept" which she now applies to quilting and to home decor. As a freshman in high school, she was assigned a report "Me and My Career: Past, Present, and Future." In the autobiographic exercise, she projected a career in "modeling or interior decorating." Although neither came to pass as a career, that anticipation -- as a freshman starting a public high school -- showed how far she had come in four years since entering Campus School as a reluctant, fourth-grade student "very set in my ways."

"Tis a gift ... to come down where you ought to be" - Amish song

Mary Lou's adult life started with graduation from high school in 1955, marriage in 1956 and their first baby in



Mary Lou Rockow shows some memorabilia from her four years at Campus School: Photo of her 4th grade class, report cards, and a program from one of the plays she was in. In back is a report, graded "A+", about her past, present, and future written as a freshman in Brockport High School. Photograph by Doug Hickerson.

1957. She had been accepted at Brockport College and decided not to go. Was she disappointed about not starting college? "No, I was very much in love. I have been married 55 years and I am still smiling," she said. She and husband, Dave Rockow, raised three sons: William, now 54, Michael, now 52, and their youngest, Douglas, who died in January.

She first worked in corporate offices, but found sales - first in real estate, and then 34 years in ad sales - as the career she still loves. She has no plans to retire as "working keeps me young," Mary Lou says.

And, what did Campus School have to do with who she is today? "If I had gone to public school, I would not have gotten the attention I needed," Mary Lou said. "I am grateful for the opportunity to attend Campus School. Without it, I would not have accomplished half of what I have done in my life."

Meet The Quilt Man:

Cast iron or cotton quilts -- Hamlin's Jim Smith brings genius to design and production

by Doug Hickerson

Jim Smith once made his own tractor from discarded parts he found: A Briggs & Stratton 10-HP engine, a junked car's three-speed transmission, a Model T truck frame, cast iron sprockets, old wheels and other parts. He assembled them one weekend. The tractor served him for seven years, in the woods moving heavy logs and at home doing yard work.

In Colonial America it was called "Yankee ingenuity" - the skill to invent and craft a mechanism from available materials to get a specific task done. That genius has served Jim well in his three decades at Eastman Kodak and at home.

In retirement, Jim is now cutting up pieces of cloth and making quilts on his sewing machine at his Hamlin home. In the last 12 months he created 334 of them for various organizations, and another 12, called "comfort quilts," for family or friends.

How Jim went from working with iron, steel and Kodak equipment, then sewing quilts in large quantities, is the story of a man whose mind and hands do not remain idle. His heart is fully engaged, too.

From foundry to fabrics

While in high school, Jim worked in his grandfather's hand foundry where he learned to melt metal into anything, Jim said. "Working in a foundry, there is a lot of scrap metal. If you need something, you build it." That carried over to his work at Kodak as an engineering technician in an engineering shop. He did everything from working in the machine shop where he made his own parts, to creating electrical designs and fabrication, and making test equipment for Kodak products.

Now 64, Jim retired seven years ago. After a year of catching up on projects around the home, he told his wife, Joan, that he was bored. Joan has been a quilter from her youth and asked him to start cutting up scraps of cloth. After two days, Jim said, "I'm tired of this," and started sewing them together. It began a new era in which his years of inventiveness turned to quilting. "I enjoy making quilts," he said. "A piece of material will talk to me, and depending on its shape and size, it sets the direction for the pattern I use."

The first few quilts he made were for grandchildren and other relatives. He has made wall hangings for all of their seven grandchildren, creating a design for their middle names, such as: an angel for Rachael Joy, lilies for Rebecca Lillian, and a lion for Caleb Daniel. Joshua Alexander was a challenge, but Jim came up with the image of a brightly-colored, six-sided crystal called "Alexandrite" (see photo top right).

Seniors produce about 300 quilts annually for community organizations

The downstairs of Jim and Joan's Hamlin home has neatly arranged work areas with his and her sewing



Once a month, Jim's quilts are brought to Lakeside Beikirch Care Center, where the residents help to them. Here, Joan Smith (Jim's wife, standing) works with Beikirch resident Dorothy Tidwell to put the finishing touches on a king size quilt. Photo by Dianne Hickerson.



Above, Jim Smith works on a quilt at his sewing table in his home. Top, center column, he watches students from the Migrant Education Program in Brockport pick out their own quilt. Jim made 16 of the 19 quilts donated, many with Indy cars, motorcycles, and planes for the boys and pink and purple for the girls. "It was fun to see the kids respond and grab them up," he said. Photographs by Dianne Hickerson.

machines (see photo above). From this home workshop, Jim has been producing about 250 quilts a year (many more this past year), roughly assembling them to take to the Sweden Senior Center where seniors do the final tying of the tops to the backing. Other members of the group contribute about 50 quilts a year to be tied at the Senior Center.

Joan introduced Jim to the Senior Center quilting group five years ago. He has since been there every Monday morning with 16 ladies who do the final tying of the quilts he brings. The group sometimes works on sleeping bags for the Open Door Mission, or cuts out blocks, and may lay out blocks and sew them together. Jim will take stacks of blocks home to finish them.

The finished quilts get a "Made in the Sweden Senior Center in Brockport, NY" label. "The group has made over 300 quilts a year for the last three or four years that we give away to charity," Jim said. He estimates about 25 community organizations in Monroe and Orleans counties receive the quilts, such as: Veterans Administration in Batavia, Alternatives for Battered Women, the Brain Trauma Unit and Center Treatment Center at Strong Hospital, YWCA, Hillside Children's Center, Ronald McDonald House, and recently the Summer School of Brockport and Genesee Valley Migrant Education (see photo). The quilters group also gives "comfort quilts" to those in their own Senior Center who may have lost a loved one, had a recent operation, or other serious difficulty.

It was Dorothy Tidwell who started the quilt group at the Senior Center more than ten years ago. She is now a resident at Lakeside Beikirch Care Center. Once a



Jim created this wall hanging to represent his grandson Joshua's middle name, "Alexander." The design represents the six-sided crystal called "alexandrite." Photograph by Dianne Hickerson.

month Joan and several other Senior Center quilters take quilts to Beikirch for Dorothy and other residents to work on (see photo lower left).

The fabric for the quilts is contributed by individuals and quilt groups that no longer meet. "Almost every week we have a donation waiting for us," Jim said about material dropped off at the Senior Center. The batting is purchased with money raised annually at the Senior Center in raffling a special quilt made by Joan at home.

A helping hand in his neighborhood, too

Even with logging 1,435 volunteer quilting hours last year, Jim is not bound to his sewing machine. He continues his vigorous lifetime build-it and fix-it skills, helping as a handyman in the neighborhood where he and Joan have lived for 31 years. For example, over several days prior to our interview, he had: Helped put a boat storage pad in a neighbor's garage; took down the swimming pool next door and moved it to a home across the street; and helped an elderly couple with tree trimming. With his snow blower, he clears six driveways in the neighborhood each winter "just to help out," he said.

Why is he such a giving person in the quilt group and his neighborhood? Jim said he is living by some wisdom he received in an exit program for Kodak employees about to retire. Jim recalled a speaker telling them: "Find something you enjoy and make yourself active. Go out and contribute to society and you will find it very rewarding."

Jim confirms seven years later, "I do."

Over half a century of farm life --

Devoted and durable, Hank and Marion Dilger keep the rural heritage alive

by Doug Hickerson

For over five decades Hank and Marion Dilger have loved farm life, tilling the land, preserving their historic 1830s home and barns, and keeping the farming tradition alive. The Dilger farm, south of Brockport on the corner of Lake Road and White Road, will be one of several on a barn tour to be held on September 18 in the Town of Sweden.

Town girl and farm boy

"It was my dream ever since I was a little kid," Marion Dilger said about living on a farm. Her fantasy included "having every animal I wanted, because Mom never let us have animals." In a recent interview at their home, they reflected on their farm life, including the sheep, pigs, a hawk, a baby raccoon, and a pet skunk that were part of Marion's dream come true.

Marion grew up in the town of Sanborn near Niagara Falls. Their family moved to Brockport when she was in high school. Hank grew up on a farm nearby on West Sweden Road. They were married in West Sweden and moved into their newly-purchased farm home on July 4, 1958.

In the HEYDAY --

"A time of maximum power or prosperity" -- Webster
Make that the "hay day," when their original farm was 110 acres. For forty years, beginning in the 1960s, they would grow, bale, and stack as much as 6,000 bales of hay in a year. With some left over to sell, that hay would feed their herd of nearly 60 Black Angus cattle which they had until 2003. "For many years Marion drove with the baler," Hank said, "and I and



Marion and Hank Dilger stand in front of a silver maple tree in their front yard. It was less than a foot in diameter when they moved to the farm over 50 years ago. Photograph by Dianne Hickerson.



In the Dilger barn complex, the barn at the left is estimated to date back to the mid-1800s and the large barn to circa 1900. With a crumbling foundation wall under the facing white door, Hank Dilger and a crew went into action last spring. Old rocks were hauled out, a 35-foot steel I-beam was inserted, a foundation was dug, a concrete block foundation was erected, and a new concrete apron poured in front of the white door. In the foreground is their beloved dog, "KD" (pronounced Kadey). Photograph by Dianne Hickerson.

others would load the wagon." Marion used her own International 656 tractor for haying (see photo). Besides pulling a baler, "she raked many a field of hay way back when she first got it," Hank said. They both laughed at the tractor being his birthday present to her one year, then two four tires as gifts the next year. "Eventually, I bought her a cab for it," Hank said, adding, "It's hard to buy a gift for a woman who has everything."

When not at a tractor steering wheel, Marion might be found at her spinning wheel, spinning the wool shorn from her sheep, and then knitting caps and sweaters.

Marion also was at the steering wheel of a school bus for 15 years, starting in 1964. "We both had to work," Marion said. Even in the heyday, the Dilgers did not make a living off the land. After leaving school bus driving, she went to work at Lakeside Hospital Admitting and ER, then the Wellness Center, before retiring. Hank first serviced cars at Judge's Ford in Rochester, and then worked 23 years at Eastman Kodak before retiring in 1986.

Their three children, Carl, Diane, and Steven, learned responsibility and a good work ethic on the farm. They raised



Marion sits in the International 656 tractor which was a birthday gift from Hank about 25 years ago. She drove it to rake and combine hay. Photo by Dianne Hickerson.

calves and pigs, and would bale straw, earning enough money to pay half their college tuition while their parents paid the rest.

"I am outgrowing it."

Gradually, since the heyday, the Dilgers have sold off land, and now own 53 acres. "I am outgrowing it," Hank said about haying, which is down to about 1,000 bales a year, done in halves with his son. If he has outgrown the heaviest work of the last half a century, he is not slowing down. At 80 years of age, Hank has a quick wit and the rugged appearance of a man who still cuts and splits mountains of firewood, works four acres of wildlife corn, mows the weeds, and maintains the barns (see photo). He also keeps four tractors running, he said, for planting corn, cultivating the garden, raking hay, "buzzi" wood, "bumping" wagons in the barn, and running the hay combine. "They are all old, but still running," he said on a positive note about age and endurance.

With the roughest days of farm work behind her, Marion is a lady of grace and

grit who still shows the stamina for farm life. A typical day might see her tending a huge garden that produces over a dozen varieties of vegetables, and several cotton plants. And this year, she has a bumper crop of okra. Now, in late August, "I am canning and freezing everything I can," she says. There are eggs to gather, too, from nine hens in the barn. She and Hank alternate using the Husqvarna rider mower and a push trim mower in a five-hour operation that keeps their vast lawn pristine.

Marion's girlhood dreams of farm life may have had a touch of storybook romance. The realities of farm life for over half a century brought unforeseen challenges, but more rewards than she envisioned.

Obviously speaking for Hank, too, she says, "It's been a lot of hard work, but there is no other place I'd rather be."

See Side Bar on Barn Tour Sept. 18

Town of Sweden Barn Tour September 18

On Sunday, September 18, the Town of Sweden will host its first barn tour. Citizens will have the opportunity to step back into the town's rural past, and appreciate the architecture and function of historic barns that are slowly fading away. The Barn Committee for the Town of Sweden has been conducting a survey with photos and fact gathering to preserve the history of barns in the township. Town historian Kathy Goetz chairs the committee.

"The barns are so important because they represent the strength, the perseverance, and the incredible hope that these people had when they first came to this area," Goetz said.

The tour takes place from 1 p.m. to 4 p.m., starting at the Farmers Museum, 4988 S. Lake Road (Rt. 19). It will include seven barns of various architectural styles, from the Victorian Carriage House at the Morgan-Manning House in Brockport, to the English hay barn at the Farmers Museum.

Tickets are available at Sweden Town Hall, the Peddlers Market on September 10 at the Morgan-Manning House, and at the Harvest Festival September 17 at the Farmers Museum. Tickets will be available on the day of the tour at the Farmers Museum. The cost is \$10.00.

Brockport Ecumenical Food Shelf -- in a new place with new procedures starting Sept. 7

by Doug Hickerson

Beginning Wednesday, September 7, the Brockport Ecumenical Food Shelf will open at a new location at St. Luke's Episcopal Church at the 14 State Street entrance. Also new, the Food Shelf will be open specified hours three days a week and clients can shop for the food they want (see side bar).

Called "client choice," the new shopping procedure has long been the goal of the Food Shelf, and is also urged by Food Link, a major supplier of food. Food is arranged on shelves in categories with a limit to the number of containers allowed. Clients may pick out what they want and bags are checked before exiting.

The previous location was in the basement of the parish house next to the Church of the Nativity on Main Street. Clients phoned in to indicate their need and to make an appointment to pick up bags of

Brockport Ecumenical Food Shelf

Location: 14 State Street entrance to St. Luke's Episcopal Church, Brockport

Opening date: Wednesday, September 7, 1 to 4 p.m.

Regular hours: Mondays 10 a.m. to 1 p.m., Wednesdays 1 to 4 p.m.

Thursdays 5 to 8 p.m.; walk in. One family shops at a time.

Waiting room available.

New Requirements:

Current utility bill proving residence in 14420 or 14430 zip codes;

Birth certificate for each child in the household.

Donations:

Bring food donations during open hours.

Send checks to: Brockport Ecumenical Food Shelf, 14 State Street,

Brockport, NY 14420.

food that would be pre-packed for them. Space would not allow for the client choice procedure. Now, "if they already have pe-

anut butter, or corn, or peas at home, they can avoid duplication and possible waste," said Marie Johnson, Food Shelf director. She was illustrating how the pre-packing might cause clients to end up with too much of a specific item, or something they didn't like.

The Brockport Ecumenical Food Shelf was organized in 1972 under the auspices of the Church of the Nativity. Except for a three-year period, Monika Andrews was president of the Food Shelf board from 1983, until recently when she stepped down for health reasons. She expressed gratitude to Nativity for their hospitality over the years of serving the community. She made "every effort ... to implement the new concept at Nativity, but the space simply did not permit that."

The new Food Shelf space at St. Luke's has been renovated to make one large room with shelves for shopping and other rooms for storage, plus a waiting room (only one family shops at a time). Volunteers from various churches have done the painting, electrical wiring, and plumbing. The College at Brockport student volunteers transferred the food from the previous location.

Johnson says her duties as director will change for the better in the new location. She previously was answering phone mes-

sages and scheduling clients by phone. "Now, I will talk to them face-to-face. I look forward to it," she said about spending time on site. "We will be able to talk to them more and have more things available to them, such as literature and agency referrals, to help them out of their situation. Eventually, they might not need the Food Shelf." People may still phone to request delivery, if they have no means of transportation. Johnson asks the community "to be patient with us when we first open. It could take some weeks to have the new system up and running."

With the bright prospect of better service for clients in the new location, Johnson says that the Food Shelf is at a time of great need for financial and food donations. Besides

Food Link, some usual sources for food have included food drives by Scouts, college students, and the U.S. Postal Service. Nearly 3,000 individuals were served in 2011 (860 families), and each month has seen an increase in the numbers served so far this year.

"This summer donations of funds and food have been way down from what we need," she said. "And, the costs of relocation also have made heavy demands on funds."

Monika Andrews served about 15 years as president of the Brockport Ecumenical Food Shelf. With her typical enthusiasm which has kept the Food Shelf thriving, she recently said, "The members of our community have been wonderfully generous to the Food Shelf over the year. They have always responded with great generosity whenever we have asked. That must not change during these difficult times. They must keep up the support which has made the Food Shelf such a success."



Marie Johnson, director of Brockport Ecumenical Food Shelf.



Jerry Klafehn works on wood trim as a volunteer paints at the new Food Shelf location. Photo by Dianne Hickerson

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Hamlin-Clarkson Herald and Suburban News West Edition - December 18, 2011

Care facility resident crafts over 100 holiday cards in gratitude

"I want them to know...somebody does notice that (they) are doing something really nice."

-- resident Julia Gibbs about the staff at Lakeside Beikrich Care Center

by Doug Hickerson

Lakeside Beikrich Care Center is truly "home" to resident Julia Gibbs. "They have become my family," she says about her fellow residents and the staff. She uses "awesome," "phenomenal," and "fantastic" to describe the nurses, case workers, and others who work at the Center.

To show her gratitude, Julia is creating over 100 holiday cards to give to her extensive family at Beikrich. A resident since August, she started work on the cards in October. They made a colorful display in her room during a recent visit.

Julia demonstrated how she cuts the large craft paper to card size and glues a lighter color on dark. "My friend, Leah, gets this paper for me," she said, referring to Leah Kalpin, recreation specialist. Julia makes original sketches "from my head" and sometimes adds clip art. Christmas trees, stockings, and snow men are typi-

cal. "I'm in love with Santa's sled," Julia said of her favorite figure. All receive watercolor paint and sparkles. Her busy table top is covered with paint bottles, brushes and other supplies. Julia also makes full-size canvas paintings as gifts. The latest, with a fantastic display of Disney characters, was made for a staff member's child.

Julia's interest in art started years ago with wax painting -- her's wax and crayons for color melted with a candle onto canvas. She has been fascinated with Egypt as a subject in her wax paintings; two of them appeared on her walls. Candles are not allowed at Beikrich, so Julia switched to watercolor for her art work. Her daughter, Meredith Willis, has a degree in art and has provided art supplies and "taught me a lot of things," Julia says.

Will her cards be done by Christmas day? "I hope so. I'll just keep trucking until I get done," Julia said. "It will probably be Christmas eve."

Julia's "friend," recreation specialist Leah Kalpin, says: "Julia has brought a whole new energy to the fourth floor and makes an effort to build relationships with all the residents and staff here as well as family members. She is a very sociable person, and when she's not at group programs, visiting with her family, or playing Rummikub, she keeps herself busy in her room painting and drawing."

Julia told of the gratitude behind her creative gift projects: "I just wanted to show the nurses and everybody here how much they are appreciated for what they do. Sometimes they are just so overlooked, taken for granted. I don't do that, I just appreciate them. I want them to know, 'Hey, guess what, somebody does notice that you are doing something really nice.'"



Julia paints on canvas as well as cards. This painting is for a child of one of the Beikrich staff.



Julia is making more than 100 holiday cards like the ones she is showing above. Photos by Dianne Hickerson.

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Sarah Hart spends many hours each week painting in her studio in Brockport. One of her passions is copying paintings of the Old Masters. Behind her is her copy of "Portrait of a Man" by Velazquez. Read about her experiences in art and her life journey inside this week. Photograph by Dianne Hickerson.

Fire districts to vote on consolidating

by Kristina Gabalski

Members of the Boards of Commissioners of the Hamlin, Walker and Morton Fire Districts will hold a special meeting Wednesday, January 18 at 7 p.m. at the Hamlin Fire District Building on Lake Road to discuss and vote on consolidating the three districts.

Hamlin Fire Chief Allan Smith says a study committee consisting of members of all three fire districts has recommended moving forward with consolidation.

"The three fire districts will make a decision whether to move forward (with consolidation) or not," Smith says.

The three districts have spent the past year studying consolidation. The Center for Governmental Research (CGR) in Rochester completed a study which included assessment of shared services and consolidation opportunities.

CGR Senior Associate Scott Sittig, M.P.P., says the study includes a couple of different models that could be considered and "assessed the feasibility of consolidating into one."

Areas studied included cost, services and staffing, Sittig says

He notes fire districts around the state are considering consolidation because they are facing two major issues - financing - particularly in light of the new tax cap - and volunteers/staffing.

"Fire districts are asking, 'How can we do more with potentially less?'" he says.

"The numbers of volunteers are dwindling," Sittig

The journeys of Sarah Hart

by Doug Hickerson

Artist Sarah Hart has had a fascinating life journey, starting with her childhood in Brockport, followed by college, and then years in Europe studying the paintings of the Old Masters. While away, bundles of letters were exchanged with her childhood sweetheart still in Brockport, until she returned home to marry him. Talking with Sarah in her art studio above A Different Path Gallery on Market Street, her story includes a great passion to teach the unique painting techniques of the Old Masters, a love of Brockport where she is settled with her family, and continuing world travel with her husband in their biking adventure company.

Roots in Brockport and returning "home"

Sarah was born in Brockport, as were her older siblings Rich and Karen and her younger sister Marsha. Her parents are Richard and Sally Booth. She went to the Brockport schools where in fifth grade she first met Benton Hart, who would become her husband. After graduation in 1986, she attended Meredith College in North Carolina, planning to teach art. "The romance with Benton was on and off through college and my post-graduate years in Italy, but he was my best friend and I had all these things I wanted to do," Sarah said. "So, we always corresponded with letters, always. We both have bundles of the letters."



In addition to painting in oils, Sarah also works in charcoal. She specializes in portraiture, painting from live models. This charcoal drawing is of her daughter, Jasmine. Photograph by Dianne Hickerson.

Sarah said. "He was the one." While she remained in Impruneta, the two families planned the wedding set in June, 1996. "Benton did the Herculean task of moving me home from Italy." The move to Brockport was completed just two weeks before the wedding.

Resurrecting the Old Masters' painting method

"I like to paint the way the eye really sees," Sarah said, referring to the method used by the Old Masters, such as Rembrandt and Leonardo da Vinci, whom she studied for years. "Our brains are wired to see lines, but in Leonardo DaVinci's time, artists figured out that the eye actually sees cast shadows." She often draws a figure in charcoal first, revealing the light and shadows that create form, then she reproduces it using oil paint (see photo with her daughter's image).

She teaches the "Atelier" method (French for "studio"), "which means you can be re-creative in a classroom, passing on from one artist to another," she says. "The best way I can teach you is to have you work 1 work and show you what I do."

Sarah's main outlet for teaching the classic painting technique is at the Memorial Art Gallery in Rochester. In 2008, Sarah had the distinct honor of copying the MAG's Rembrandt painting "Portrait of a Young Man in an Armchair." Visitors to MAG observed the creative process over several weeks. Sarah currently teaches three courses at the MAG: beginning drawing, portraiture, beginning oil painting, and drawing in galleries, learning to copy the Old Masters' paintings.

In her Brockport studio one of Sarah's select students is Judy Czerenda who owns a home in Brockport and in Florida. "Judy is very talented. I see what she wants to do as an oil painter and I know I can help her," Sarah said. Judy has a doctorate in nursing and ran a

consulting company for health care organizations until two years ago. She then started art classes in Florida, but found many of them to be for "hobbyists" which did not suit her deeper interest in art. She was referred to Sarah Hart. "Sarah was exactly what I was looking for, trained in the Atelier method," Judy said. "She really set me on the right course. I think she is a treasure to have in our community."

Lori Skoog agrees. For ten years Lori has run the Skoog Farm Workshop south of Brockport, teaching local artists. She referred Judy to Sarah as a suitable mentor, knowing the work of both women. "Sarah is a classically trained fine artist," Lori said. "Her studies in Italy have made a huge impact; she is unique in the way she teaches."

At home and out in the world

Sarah and Benton live in a Victorian home on Adams Street, her "dream house" because of its historic architecture and proximity to the Brockport schools. They have three children: Jasmine, 15; Madeleine, 13; and Van, 10 years old. With her studio in her home, "It was hard to get work done with the demands of running a household," Sarah said. "I feel in a way that I had been sitting on my hands for 15 years (prior to moving into her new studio last May), except for my teaching at the MAG since 2007."

Sarah remains a world traveler. She and Benton own Classic Adventures, a bike tour business which he manages. They own bike shops in Beaune, France, and in ancient Corinth in Greece. They run tours primarily in France, Greece, and Germany. The newest tours are in Austria and Switzerland. For the travel season, art has to wait while they are on the road. "It's a nice combination when the two of us run a trip together," she said. "It's a husband-wife thing." Aiding their travels, they both speak Greek; she also speaks Italian, and he speaks French.

Having studied in Europe and now hiking various countries, "I love the world travel, but I need my hometown, too," Sarah said. "I am definitely where I want to be - back in Brockport. I would never leave here."

Sarah Hart Exhibit January 13

Sarah Hart will exhibit her works at A Different Path Gallery, 27 Market St., in Brockport.

The opening reception will be Friday, January 13, from 6:00 to 9:00 pm. The exhibit will be on display during regular hours from January 6 through January 31.

The exhibit will include her most recent paintings and drawings, as well as older works. The collection consists of portraits in oil, pen and ink, and charcoal. The artist's subjects include local Brockport residents, her children, and various copies and interpretations from the Old Master painters.

Other artists exhibiting their work at the gallery in January: Diane Elmalie and Jolene Beckman. For information phone (585) 637-6494.

*"Where we love is home,
home that our feet may leave,
but not our hearts."*

Oliver Wendell Holmes

She studied a semester in Paris with renowned fresco painter Ben Long, spending mornings in his studio and afternoons at the Louvre sketching paintings of the masters. After receiving her BA in 1991, she spent four years of post-graduate studies at the Charles Cecil Studios in Florence, Italy, living in the small town of Impruneta. "I was planning to stay there the rest of my life," Sarah said. The letter exchange continued with Benton. Then, she began to realize, "I would always be the foreigner on the outside looking in. I wanted to come home where I knew everybody and belonged." In 1995, her brother flew her home for the Christmas break. "I saw Benton and realized I could not live without him."

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| Italian Sausage | | | |

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| Tomato Salad | Colored Salad | Cris Slaw | Salt Pretzels | Over Roasted Potatoes | Corn |
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Sarah often does a charcoal rendering of her subject before painting it in oil. In this photo you see both the charcoal drawing and the finished oil painting of her daughter reclining in a chair, reading. Photographs by Dianne Hickerson.

A new partner and a new place: Historic Brockport law firm looks to the future

by Doug Hickerson

"I can look down Main Street, right down to the bridge. It seems just so vital. It's who we are. It's so exciting," Attorney Roy Heise was exclaiming about the view from his second story office in his firm's new Main Street location in Brockport. His excitement was about the transformation of his firm with a new managing partner and in a new place near the heart of the village. "This is my home. I can feel the vitality coming back to Brockport," Heise said, referring to the completion of Main Street's reconstruction. In semi-retirement after 40 years in the practice, he continued, "I can't sit home. I enjoy the people too much, talking with them and helping them. It's who we are."

"Who we are" is Heise's repeated phrase for being a friendly "small town firm" rooted in his beloved Brockport where his sons grew up and his law firm evolved.

The Klafehn & Heise law firm has been in Brockport for decades. Starting at Coopman & Klafehn over 50 years ago—in a walk-up office on Main Street—Roy Heise joined the firm in 1972, right out of law school. Adding other partners over time, Mark Klafehn and Roy Heise were most recently located on Water Street, near the Welcome Center since 1998. "It was a beautiful place," Heise said, "but off the beaten path." Mark Klafehn retired in 2006, but remained active in the firm until he passed away in July 2011 at 83 years of age.

Now, "Who we are" is the firm called Klafehn, Heise, & Johnson, with Kevin G. Johnson, 31, as owner and managing partner. Heise co-fully chose Johnson in 2010 to be his successor and to continue the firm's tradition. With new blood comes a new office location rooted in Brockport's history. On March 5, "Klafehn, Heise, & Johnson PLLC, Attorneys at Law" opened their newly-renovated offices in the former rectory next to St. Luke's Episcopal Church on Brockport's Main Street, previously the location of attorney Bill Cody's firm.

Transition: The search for a partner with shared values

Heise treasures his life's experience as a small town lawyer. "I love Brockport," Heise said. "My best memory of being a small town lawyer is the summertime when my two sons rode their bikes to town to have lunch with dad—little

things you don't have in the big city" including "walking to work," he added. Heise said he looked for several years for a partner who could take over the firm, someone with similar values about Brockport and a small town practice. He found that partner in Kevin Johnson.

Johnson, born and raised in Brockport, had long held a vision of being a small town lawyer. But, right out of University of Buffalo Law School in 2008, his first opportunity to practice was in employment law and class action law suits in a large firm in Rochester. After two years of travel, working 60 to 100 hours a week, with a wife and baby at home in Brockport, he returned to early thoughts about a small town practice. With a smile, Johnson said he envisioned himself more like attorney Atticus Finch in Harper Lee's *To Kill a Mocking Bird* rather than Mitch McDeere in John Grisham's *The Firm*.

Johnson and Heise see providence in the circumstances that ultimately brought them together as law partners. Living a block away from Johnson's boyhood home in Sweden Village, Heise had known Johnson as a youngster. Years later, Johnson became disappointed with his large law firm experience and looked for guidance from lawyer acquaintances, including Heise. "While at that other firm, I decided to call him just to pick his brain," Johnson said. "I was not asking for a job but just wanted to discuss working in a small town and going out on my own."

In that momentous phone call, Heise recalls Johnson saying, "Roy, can we talk. I don't think this is what the Lord wants me to do as a lawyer." Heise told Johnson that he had been looking for a law partner and invited him to talk in person. In that meeting, Johnson said, "As Roy talked, I felt he was speaking to everything the Lord had put on my heart—about this type of practice, how you treat people, and what the purpose of the law is."

From his side, Heise saw Johnson fitting perfectly in the practice. And, Heise said, "With his lovely wife Marne (the couple is totally committed to Brockport," Johnson was hired as an associate on March 15, 2010. On January 1, 2011, Heise transferred ownership of the firm to Johnson and made him managing partner.



Above, a sign names the new occupants of the former rectory near St. Luke's Episcopal Church on Main Street in Brockport. Kevin Johnson (left in photo at right) and Roy Heise are seated in the

conference room in the newly-renovated historic house at 108 Main Street next to St. Luke's Episcopal Church. From 1868, with major remodeling in 1928, the building served as the rectory for St. Luke's pastors. The attorneys have retained the period interior design, while installing all new ceilings with recessed lighting and crown moldings, new ceiling fans, gas burning logs in the three fire places, and ceramic tiles in the entry. Original wood floors have been refinished throughout. The building is located between two distinguished neighbors: the historic church and Durn's Home Furnishings which celebrates its 100th anniversary this year. Former mayor Maryanne Thorpe advised on the interior design as a favor to the new occupants. "Maryanne loves old buildings and has quite an eye for design," Kevin Johnson said. "She helped us restore the house to be functionally modern with an older feel to it." Photography by Dianne Hickerson.

Carrying on the firm's legacy

Sitting with Kevin Johnson in late February, it was stunning to realize the swift and sure path his career had taken—just four years out of law school and just two years at his new law firm. Johnson talked as though he had been planted in just the right place, and echoed Heise's vision of "Who we are" as a law firm.

"It's wonderful for me because the practice is varied. I work on hard-fort-nant matters, estates, wills, real estate, business contracts, and business formations. I am all over the place. I enjoy that aspect of it. But more importantly, I enjoy working with clients as though they are family, as Roy and Mark did for decades. With probably 70 percent of people who come in here. I know them, their kids, and their grandkids; there is a connection there already. We are able to serve professionally and be close to our clients. If you want to come in, have some coffee and chat, we are not going to send you a bill."

Community matters

A lifelong resident of Brockport, Kevin G. Johnson lives on Brookdale Road in the Town of Sweden with his wife and two sons.

He and his wife, Marne Robinson, a Kendall native, are extensively involved in the community. Kevin is a town councilman on the Sweden Town Board and a member the Lakeside Health System Foundation Board of Directors. Marne is the director of the Brockport Ecumenical Food Shelf (since 2008) and is also a member the Lakeside Health System Foundation Board.

They are active in Brockport's Christ Community Church where Kevin has attended with his family since childhood. Kevin has been a firefighter with the Brockport Volunteer Fire Department since 2000, including the ranks of captain and lieutenant, and currently serves as a support member.

Note: An Open House at the new offices is planned for Sunday, April 15.

Maureen Werner (left in photo at right), paralegal and office manager, has been with Klafehn, Heise, & Johnson since 1999. With her is Connie Hertzlin, legal assistant, who has been with the firm since 2007. Werner is attending law school in Michigan on weekends. She will transfer to the University of Buffalo Law School in the fall 2012 with an anticipated graduation date of April 2014. Dianne Hickerson photo.

“Old Fashioned Fourth of July” at Morgan-Manning House ‘explodes’ with new features

by Doug Hickerson

A new “Children’s Parade” was added to last year’s “Old Fashioned Fourth of July” at Brockport’s Morgan-Manning House. Strollers, tricycles, wagons, bikes, and their riders, were decked out in patriotic colors and paraded around the historic house. It was the 30th anniversary of the event sponsored by the Western Monroe Historical Society.

But, for the first time in its history, the event did not open to the rousing marches and patriotic music of the Brockport High School Band. Cuts in the school district budget prevented a summer program for the band. The stirring fanfare was silenced, leaving a definite void in the patriotic spirit of the celebration.

New this year:

The Brockport Community Concert Band

“Brockport needs its Fourth of July band, my friends, and it’s coming to town.” You can almost hear Professor Harold Hill, “The Music Man,” on Main Street proclaiming the new Brockport Community Concert Band. It will be led, not by Professor Hill, but by Shawn Halquist, one of the directors of the Brockport High School Band. The band is returning to the Morgan-Manning event as an expanded volunteer band that includes student and

alumni band members, as in the past, but also adding a variety of citizens who want to contribute their talents to this community celebration. (See the new band story elsewhere in this issue).

How was the band’s return made possible? It was citizens of Brockport voting for their village to win the aptly-named “Bring Back the Fourth” grant contest sponsored by Liberty Mutual last year. Brockport won and transferred the \$10,000 grant to the Western Monroe Historical Society to continue and enhance the event into the future. A very small portion of the grant brought back the band this year. The Brockport Community Concert Band premieres at 11 a.m. to open the July 4 event at Morgan Manning House. “We are very happy with the return of the High School Band, expanded to represent our wider community,” said Alicia Pink, president of the Society board of trustees. “For many years this band has been an integral part of the 4th of July festivities. We greatly missed them last year.”

New: Children’s Parade led by Excelsior Brigade Fife and Drum Corps on village streets

This year, the Children’s Parade will begin on the eastern section of Park Avenue near Remembrance Park. The street will be closed by Brockport Village Police while the children gather there. The parade will move to South



Children show their patriotic enthusiasm in decorating their bicycles appropriately for the Old Fashioned Fourth of July Children’s Parade in Brockport. This photo is from last year’s first such parade which drew about 50 participants. Organizers expect to double the number of participants this year. Provided photo by Dianne Hickerson.

Street which goes directly to the Morgan-Manning House. To insure the safety of the children, South Street will be closed from about 10 a.m. to around noon, except to local traffic.

Another new feature this year, the parade will move to the music of the Excelsior Brigade Fife and Drum Corps. This group has been practicing on the grounds of Morgan-Manning House every Tuesday, from 6 to 7 p.m. and will continue throughout the summer months. The community is invited to bring lawn chairs and enjoy the practice sessions.

“Last year we were very pleasantly surprised when more than 50 children participated in the parade,” Funk said. “We hope to double that number. With a longer parade route and the Fife and Drum Corps, we are very excited about this year’s event.” Each child will receive a favor at the Morgan-Manning House when the parade ends just before the 11 a.m. opening of the festivities on the grounds.

Traditional treats continue

Returning over several years, The Community Jazz Band will play immediately after the High School Band, from around noon to 1 p.m. John Izzo also returns to sing and entertain from about 1 to 2 p.m. The popular “Cake Walk” takes place from 2 to 3 p.m., with delicious homemade cakes donated by the Historical Society members taking center stage.

For the children, the day’s activities include old fashioned games, face painting, and chalk painting on the parking lot. A member of the Genesee Country Village and Museum will come to the Morgan Manning House prior to July 4 to teach the old fashioned games to volunteers who will guide the games on July 4.

Festive appetites can be satisfied with a choice of hot dogs, hamburgers, veggie burgers, and Italian sausage. Other refreshments for sale include ice cream cones, cookies, slices of cake, and popcorn.

Parents of parade children are asked to register with Janet at the Morgan-Manning House (637-3645) for a record so the right number of favors may be provided.

For other information on the 4th of July event, phone Janet at (585) 637-3645.

For more on the Excelsior Brigade Fife and Drum Corps go to www.fifedrum.org/excelsior.

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Brockport Area Community Concert Band makes debut at July 4 celebration

Group performs music "of the people, by the people, and for the people" in the Brockport area

by Doug Hickerson

This year's "Old Fashioned 4th of July" at Morgan-Manning House saw the rebirth and return of the concert band that had been a major feature of the celebration for 30 years. Last year, the Brockport Central High School Band's rousing opening concert was missing, due to school district budget cuts. "I was really upset about it, because it was something I looked forward to every summer," said Michelle Lopez, who graduated from Brockport High School last month. "I was so happy that they brought it together again." Michelle plays the flute and piccolo. Her piccolo solo during the stirring "Stars and Stripes Forever" concert finale won the audience's applause.

Michelle was one of 85 members of the new Brockport Area Community Concert Band, with musicians ranging in age from 11 to 70. "It's even better this year," she said, "because you get to see not only band people from school, but your teachers, your church members, and others in the community." It was the regeneration of the high school band for the July 4 event, expanded to include community talent.



The Brockport Area Community Concert Band in its premiere performance at the Morgan-Manning House July 4. Its 85 members are directed by Shawn Halquist. Photograph by Rick Nicholson.

The variety of musicians included 6th grade and high school band members, band directors of Brockport's 4th, 5th and 6th grade bands, and returning band alumni. Band directors from other school districts joined. There were three families with four members and several more families with at least two members.

Shawn Halquist, director and producer of the new Brockport Area Community Concert Band, aggressively rounded up the variety of community musicians. Shawn, a director of the Brockport High School Band, noted a "growing movement across the country to create intergenerational bands. One of the great things about playing a musical instrument is that you can be active with it as long as you want to be." Shawn and Andy Stoker share the directorship of the Brockport High School Band. The two colleagues agreed that the intergenerational community band was the way to go for the July 4 event, "especially with the wonderful support there is in the Brockport community for our music programs," Shawn said. "We gave it a try

and it worked very well."

Band Members Doug Briggs, chemical engineer, with son and two daughters

It worked very well for the Briggs family in Brockport. Doug Briggs played trombone, along with his son Sami, also on trombone, and daughters Emily on French horn and Sarah on clarinet — all of them in the Brockport school music program. Doug is a chemical engineer. He graduated from Hilton High School in 1979 where he played in the band, continued with the Hilton Firemen's Band, and is now with the Hilton Generations Band. "The new community band was an attractive idea for us," Doug said. "I played trombone since grade school. It's been important for me to demonstrate different opportunities for my kids to continue playing as they get older."

**Andy Stoker, Amy (Maar) Stoker,
and the Maar family musicians**
Andy Stoker, his wife Amy (Maar), and the

extended family were a strong presence in the new band. Andy plays the saxophone, and so does Amy, a fourth grade teacher at Hill School. Her sister, Holly Sheehan, teaches first grade in Churchville-Chili, and plays the tenor saxophone. Her brother Scott plays the tuba and his wife, Debbie, plays the oboe. Their daughter, Natalie, is in sixth grade and plays the tenor saxophone.

**Brenda Tremblay, morning host
of WXII Classical 91.5, and her father**
Brenda Tremblay is the morning host of WXII Classical 91.5. She is also the music director at St. Luke's Episcopal Church in Brockport. She lives in Brockport with her husband, two teens and a pre-teen — all three in the Brockport music program. Brenda grew up in Albion where her father, Sid Bolton, was band director at Albion High School. She played the bassoon under his directorship. After high school, Brenda did not play the instrument for 20 years, until she read about the new community band in the **Suburban News**. She contacted Shawn Halquist who welcomed her and provided her with a bassoon. After a few weeks of practice, she convinced her father, now 70 and retired, to join the band with his trombone. "It was the first time I had ever played in a band with my Dad. It was just a fun experience," Brenda said.

"For families who make music, what you put together for Brockport families is just a precious thing, a special memory, and an artistically satisfying experience, a gift to the community."

Brenda's compliment was directed to the Western Monroe Historical Society which sponsored the July 4 event and to the Brockport Central School District. The not-for-profit organization and public school system collaborated on bringing back the band to the "Old Fashioned 4th of July." The Historical Society used part of the "Bring Back the 4th Liberty Mutual Insurance grant which it had received last year. Shawn Halquist launched the intergenerational community band that exceeded all expectations for the opening concert. A record turnout of about 500 citizens received the community's gift of music with enthusiasm and generous applause. It was a good day for the Brockport community.

"For families who make music, what you put together for Brockport families is just a precious thing, a special memory, and an artistically satisfying experience -- a gift to the community."

— Brenda Tremblay

Residents share their stories in new Care Center publication

by Doug Hickerson

Residents at the Lakeside Beikirch Care Center in Brockport recently launched their own in-house newspaper called the *LBCB Banner*. Mary Fessenden created it as editor, after just one year as a resident. She thought of B words that would go with "Beikirch," she said, and landed on *Banner*, "because it seems to imply some sort of flag, soaring above us all, as we go through our lives here at the Care Center."

"Think of Mary as Beikirch's Betsy Ross, flag creator and bearer as well, lifting residents and staff above isolation and daily routines to appreciate each other's stories and human qualities."

How *The Banner* was born

Mary's inspiration for starting the newsletter came from self-reflection and a desire to prompt interaction among the residents.

"The idea for a newsletter came from two converging thoughts going through my mind: One was that I didn't have enough to keep me busy, that is, my kind of busy which involves reading and writing. I was doing both of those things but kind of running out of steam."

"The next was that it seemed like my fellow residents didn't know each other very well. Their communication with one another seemed limited. I wondered how I could help open things up, get them really talking to each other. I wanted everyone to relax and read about some fellow residents or the staff so that they could become interested enough to perhaps approach that person and ask a few questions. And, that is already happening after just one issue!"

"I found out that most people (all, so far) are willing to share their life experiences



The staff: (left to right) reporters Joanne Nicolucci and Ralph Smith, Editor Mary Fessenden, and reporter Ruth Langdon. Photo by Dianne Hickerson.

with others and that the others are curious as can be. Even though most of our residents have lost their life-partners, they aren't consumed by sadness; rather they are eager to share their joyous memories and their current lives."

Mary brings her varied background to *The Banner*. She has a bachelor of science degree in psychology and a master of science degree in Teaching Reading from The College at Brockport. She taught elementary school at Brockport Central for 20 years and put out a newsletter to parents every week. After retirement, she was asked to contribute to "The Literacy News," a developing newsletter for the College's Reading Department. She was state editor of the New York State Junior Women's newsletter in the late 80s.

Mother and daughter in the creative process

"I've been absolutely thrilled with the response to *The Banner*, and ... I'm really proud to admit to its authorship, and to my daughter's part in the layout," Mary said.

For the first issue Mary wrote all of the text (except for two submitted stories), took the photos, and then sent them by email to daughter Amber who did further editing or corrections in a computer newsletter creation program. About the photos, Mary said, "I took the photos since I'm the only one with a camera. I find it fun to wheel about, camera at the ready, looking for good shots."

After Amber did some editing on the news and photos, she paid her usual weekly

visit from Buffalo. "We sat together, head-to-head, for many hours, sifting and sorting through all of the material to see how it fits," Mary said. "We work well together on almost anything we try, and this was the most fun of all. Since we think so much alike, this was a very fulfilling process."

Mary's daughter, Amber Kallen Monroe, previously worked as a photographer for a school portrait company where she also did yearbook layout for schools in the Rochester area. She also is a writer of children's fiction and is working to publish her first book.

Mary's good camera shots, and the "filling-out" layout process, resulted in an appealing newsletter with eye-catching articles and photos on each page. The eight pages are filled with interesting personal profiles, information, event announcements, and unique design elements. The photos of residents and staff are in bright, sharp color. The printing was done in the offices of Lakeside Beikirch Care Center.

The Banner's content and organization

"For the first issue there were no defined subject areas except for interviews of residents, one from each floor," Mary said. "In going through the gathered material, Amber and I could see that categories were emerging: Three Cheers for Volunteers, CNA (Certified Nursing Assistant) of the Month, Resident Spotlight for each floor, staff interviews, and shorter features such as Looking Ahead, Looking Back, Looking Around. Pleased with those unanticipated subject areas, Mary will stick to them for

the next issue scheduled for December 1. News will include a name-the-beauty-parlor contest, Christmas announcements, and reports on Family Night and a Halloween social. Being considered for the next in future issues are letters-to-the-editor and possibly jokes and riddles.

New reporters for the next issue

"I asked for volunteers to help me on the newsletter," Mary said, "and three residents stepped forward to be new reporters."

One reporter is Ruth Langdon who taught kindergarten for 24 years, including in Attica, "outside the walls," she said with a laugh. She likes to write poetry: "I just dabble for my own pleasure." But, she did write her husband's life story in poetry. And, "For many, many, many years I wrote and produced all the plays for my church's Christmas programs at West Middlebury Baptist," Ruth added.

Another reporter will be Ralph Smith. Ralph worked as golf courses in his early years, then factories such as GE, Layton, and Owens-Illinois locally. He retired at 62, and returned to golf course maintenance for 23 more years. He worked on newspapers in Brockport and Albion. As a WWII vet, he wrote and produced a Holley VFW newspaper called "The Reveille." "It's hard work but satisfying in a way," he said about his newspaper work. "When you get it done, you look at it and say, 'That wasn't so bad after all.'"

JoAnn Nicolucci is also writing for the next issue. With training in secretarial courses at RTI, she worked for General Dynamics, later for J.M. Fields, Bell, and the American Legion in Scottsville. At Bull's Head Clinic in Rochester, she worked on the newspaper, writing about events and the people. Writing a story for the next issue of *The Banner*, "I stayed up until the wee hours of the morning to get it done. It was on my mind and I wanted to get it out," she said about the story written in longhand. She is excited about writing after seeing the first issue. "I loved the newspaper and I hope it goes far, I really do."

The editor reflects on the first issue

"The newsletter has been a very satisfying and rewarding experience," Mary said. "I have been a resident here at LBCB for one year now. Since I started work on *The Banner* I feel more a part of my community. I'm really getting to know the people who live around me. I hope *The Banner* helps other residents feel a part of this community, too."



Mary Fessenden, editor of *The LBCB Banner*, is at work for the next issue. Photo by Dianne Hickerson

Sweden-Clarkson Dog Control Officer on the job for 26 years

*"I still enjoy it
as much as I did
on the first week I started."*

Kathy Beaumont

by Doug Hickerson

"They are all my kids," Kathy Beaumont says about the dogs she rescues and temporarily places in the Sweden-Clarkson Dog Shelter on White Road. It is an affectionate and protective attitude she has had for 26 years on the job. Kathy is the Sweden-Clarkson Dog Control Officer on call 24/7 for the two towns, including the Village of Brockport.

The most typical call for Kathy is the sighting of a stray dog. Placing the stray in the shelter, she waits for a possible

phone call from the owner and she posts flyers in the community. She also scans for an ID chip in the dog's neck, but not many people register their pet's chip, she says. After about 10 days, the dog is put up for adoption. Meanwhile, Kathy goes to the shelter twice every day to feed the dog.

"Tango" is one example of rescue and adoption to a happy home. Last March, Mr. and Mrs. Vandertang phoned about a stray in Northampton Park. Kathy picked up the dog in very sickly condition with no hair on the back half of his body and nails overgrown. "He was skin and bones and you could see every rib." She took him to Clarkson Veterinary Hospital "who are always on call for us and provide a generous discount." The dog could not be admitted because mange was suspected and could infect the premises.

Pleading "What can I do?" Kathy was advised to feed him chicken or hamburger with rice every two hours until he improves. "I went to the shelter to feed him every two hours throughout the night," Kathy says. By morning, he was up and bouncing back. She named him "Tango" in honor of Mr. and Mrs. Vandertang who initiated the rescue. It turned out Tango had fleas, not mange. With the needed vet treatments, Tango was adopted out, still underweight and needing care. Kathy stops by Tango's new home once in a while. "He weighs over 100 pounds, now. He is a gorgeous dog with a shiny coat," she says. "When Tango sees me, he goes crazy and runs to me," remembering he was first one of her kids.

Kathy also receives complaint calls, typically a neighbor's dog continuously barking. Her approach with the complainant and the dog owner is to negotiate a resolution. "I go out to educate, not beat up," Kathy says. "We are friends and we are going to talk this out," she adds about her approach. She discusses options for the dog owner to relocate the dog on his property or some other kind of behavior control. In almost every case, the dog owner takes reasonable measures. Where there is resistance, the dog owner is also made aware of possible citations under the municipal dog ordinance, a court appearance, and fines up to \$300 in the extreme case.

Kathy feels the community's support for her work. Asked how she thinks the community would rate her over 26 years, from 0 to 100, she says "90." Some have put themselves on her "want list" to be called if a dog is up for adoption. Kathy receives community contributions to supplement dog supplies. On Thanksgiving 2006, "Lucy" the Beagle had six puppies at the shelter, after being found pregnant and abandoned. Many contributed supplies and local Scout troops helped care for the puppies.

"Twenty-six years and I am still going strong," Kathy mused. "I still enjoy it as much as I did on the first week I started. I have run into a lot of nice people, and I have learned how to handle people." As for her "kids," she says, "I see them as tiny, then grown up and I usually hear when they pass away." She sometimes checks the town dog

license records that show current and deceased, asking, "Does so and so still have that dog?" "I don't remember the people's names, but I remember their dog, where he came from, and the home where he lives."

Note: Contributions such as sheets, towels, biscuits, leashes, and bowls can be left at the Sweden Maintenance Garage office on White Road or at the Town of Sweden office on 18 State Street. Any questions or concerns, call Kathy's home phone 637-4260. For emergencies phone her cell phone 748-4478. Reports of animal cruelty, abuse, no food or shelter, should go directly to the Humane Society at Lollypop Farm which has powers of police enforcement: 223-6500.



One happy ending—At the Sweden-Clarkson Dog Shelter, Kathy Beaumont stands with the senior beagle she named Toby. Early last week she located his owners who will take him back home. Photo by Dianne Hickerson.



Another happy ending—"Lucy" enjoys her parents, Brockport residents Jack and Chris Mazzarella. Now seven years old, they adopted Lucy in 2006. Lucy had been found abandoned and pregnant, then was rescued, and delivered six puppies at the Sweden-Clarkson Dog Shelter. "She is just the sweetest thing," Chris says. "Did we ever win out with this one." Photo by Dianne Hickerson.

First Monika Andrews Leadership Awards presented

Reviving gardens, restoring people, respecting history for Brockport's vitality

Monika Andrews Award honoree
Pam Ketchum

by Doug Hickerson

Pam Ketchum has a knack of bringing out the best in plants and people. Working on Brockport's public gardens, she has enhanced the beauty of flower beds and has given a sense of worth and accomplishment to the court-assigned individuals who assist her. Over 40 years of gardening experience, plus graduate studies in floral and textile design, are behind Pam's creative touch. Starting in 2007, she has applied her skills at: Kemembrance Park, the Visitor's Center, Sagawa Park, Corbett Park, and on the north side of the canal between Main Street and Park Avenue where work is just starting. The small garden squares at the base of trees on Main and Market Streets are a work in progress.

Pam emphasizes that she avoids imposing herself on someone else's work. In biking or walking Brockport, she would first see how a garden's design is violated by weeds, overgrowth, or poor edging. "At the Welcome Center there was a sea of grasses," she said. "The original design had become overgrown." With permission, "We edged and defined the garden," put down a lot of newspaper and cardboard with wood chips," she said. "In these gardens, I respect the design that is there and help to accentuate and maintain it." At the Village Hall she did similar maintenance, but this year, "recognizing the structure and design, I made some additions here and there." Her "unique combination of skills" were cited by Village Trustee Margy Blackman, adding, "Her artistic eye and sense of pattern have resulted in visually pleasing and inviting garden spaces throughout the Village of Brockport." Pam credits the occasional help she receives from volunteer groups, such as churches, the Parks Committee, Pro-Brockport, and Walk! Bike! Brockport!

Also supporting yet adding to her work are court-assigned community service workers, serving an alternate sentence to jail or a fine, called "restorative justice." She started in August 2010, and in 2012, she supervised 14 workers over 291 hours. She doesn't ask what their past offenses have been, but respects them as partners in the work at hand. Pam encourages their suggestions and instills a sense of pride and ownership in the work accomplished. Some college students showed their handiwork to visiting parents, and a young father did the same for his daughter. "Pam's unconditional caring, concern and respect she shows these individuals and everyone else she works with is amazing," said village resident Heather A. Pecker.

Pam expresses many different motivations for her work, one being to beautify the village. She also wants to add economic value in making Brockport a destination, and to save the village money through volunteer time, talent, and muscle. And, she wants to promote Brockport as a very positive place to live, raise a family, and grow traditions.

Pam's career after graduate school was short-lived—teaching summers at RTI, Chautauque, and Cornell. She earned her real estate license 29 years ago to supplement the household income and raise a family. "My life was re-incarnated as a real estate agent and mother," she said.

For Pam, Brockport houses are not just commercial goods. Many have historic architecture which she treasures. "I want to preserve the older architecture, character, and integrity of our village," she said. She started by purchasing the rental home next door to restore it. She and husband Greg now own five rental homes. Four of them, along with their own home on Park Avenue, have been refurbished to landmark status. The fifth historic home burned down and was rebuilt. She is an advocate for good building code enforcement, especially on rental properties, to maintain the quality of residential neigh-



Pam Ketchum, photo by Doug Hickerson

borhoods. Pam has been a member of Brockport's Historic Preservation Board for about 24 years.

Pam is president of Pro-Brockport, and member of the political action group since it started in 2010. She emphasizes that the primary work of the organization is as a grass roots citizens' group involved in "good things happening in Brockport," such as gardens, parks, historic restoration, and festivals. She points out the slogans for Pro-Brockport express her personal devotion to her village: "Bridging tradition and tomorrow" and "Promoting positive living in Brockport."

Decades of grit and grace show their impact around Brockport

Monika Andrews Award honorees
Jack and Chris Mazzarella

by Doug Hickerson

Many years ago the doctor came into Jack Mazzarella's hospital room to see his patient and said, "Where's Jack?" Jack was under the bed making needed repairs to a stalan. It was that story sums up much of Jack's life — a man who can fix or build almost anything, with passion and a plan, even under adverse conditions. His wife, Chris, was the one who brought the tools he requested. That suggests their relationship — either as partners at work, or Chris providing moral support in Jack's unique projects. "Anything I have achieved in life has been possible only with her support," Jack says.

Their around Brockport and you will see many places that have received the devoted work of Jack and Chris Mazzarella: Church of the Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Morgan-Manning House, the Toy Shelf at Christmas time, the Welcome Center on the canal, and Lakeside Hospital where they volunteer every week. And, go beyond the village to Ledgedale Airport. Jack purchased the land, developed it for about 25 years, and sold it in 1987 to Walt Eisenhower complete with a paved runway, 13 individual hangars, and a hangar for airplane and airport maintenance.



Jack and Chris Mazzarella, photo by Doug Hickerson

The couple first met and married in 1952 while attending the College at Brockport. They graduated in 1954, with one child and two more to come. Chris stayed home, raising their children. She moved from substitute teaching to full time in 1973, when two of their children entered college. She retired in 1995. Jack taught school full-time from graduation until retiring in 1983.

As lifetime members, Jack and Chris raised their family in the Church of the Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary (BVM). Chris taught religious education for six years and helped start the Martha Ministry which provided receptions after funerals. Part of their legacy at BVM goes back about 20 years to the beginning of the annual summer Church Festival, popular for its barbecued chicken. Someone had a special formula for barbecue sauce, but there was no equipment for grilling large amounts of chicken. Jack welded four huge charcoal pits with special grills. They are still in use today, and Chris continues selling and serving as she has each year.

Across Main Street from their church, the historic Morgan-Manning House has had the caring touch of this couple for almost two decades. Jack has been a handyman, when called upon, to repair furniture, electrical wiring, plumbing, and other fix-ups. Jack has worked on housekeeping, polishing silver and furniture, and similar tasks to keep the house in pristine condition. Both have been regular members of the men and women volunteers every Monday morning (until about three years ago for Jack). Starting in mid-1990, Chris served three terms on the board of trustees of the Western Monroe Historical Society which maintains the house. She chaired the House Use Committee, and led the way in devising the first usage contract for outside groups. Both Jack and Chris have worked with other volunteers every summer to collect and refurbish items contributed for the "Junkee Sale" held at the annual Fall Peddlers Market. The couple expressed a deep commitment to maintaining Brockport's history. "It's who we are. We have to know our past, in order to know how we got here and where we are going," Chris said, emphasizing the obligation to the coming generations.

Jack may be best known for providing refurbished bikes to the Brockport Toy Shelf each Christmas. He has done the same for the Welcome Center on the canal, enabling visitors to borrow bikes for touring Brockport. In mid-1990, with a few bikes left over from an auction, Jack sent out a call for more used bikes to fix up in his shop and provide to the annual Brockport Toy Shelf in December. Over 100 bikes have been provided each year since. When Jack lost the full use of his hands three years ago, his friendly assistance to R-Bikes (a bike give-away in Rochester) resulted in that group continuing to provide the bikes for the Toy Shelf. Jack still does minor repairs to the bikes, as he is able.

Jack's loss of the full use of his hands followed a lifetime of painful arthritis since he was a teen. "I can't grip a screwdriver and I can't squeeze the pliers," he said. But Jack is resilient. Pointing out the kitchen cabinets and table he crafted, he was pleased with his proven handiwork, and with therapy that is slowly increasing movement in his hands. "You keep going, right?" he affirmed, saying he is still able to cut trees at a local golf course.

An hour's interview revealed the devoted couple's mutual support for over 61 years of marriage, family, and volunteer work that earned the award for "outstanding service to their community." Through their struggles and ultimate rewards, Jack says "The Guy Upstairs" is in charge. "He arranges things. Everything is planned."

During the January 22 Brockport Village Board meeting, the first Monika W. Andrews Creative Volunteer Leadership Award was presented to Pam Ketchum and Jack and Chris Mazzarella. The purpose of the award is "to encourage, recognize, and reward outstanding creative leadership by residents of the towns of Sweden (including Brockport village) and Clarkson who have served as volunteer leaders in improving the lives of their fellow citizens and the greater Brockport community.

Monika died in the fall of 2011 after battling a brain tumor. She was very active in a number of community organizations.

Ruby Foote -

Compassionate and energized enabler

Honored for meritorious service

by the Monika Andrews Leadership Award selection committee

by Doug Hickerson

At the young age of 12, Ruby Foote's passion to serve flared up when she saw the movie "Hotel Rwanda." Seeing the devastation in Darfur, "I got angry. It hit me hard," she said. She wanted to make an awareness video and raise funds for the victims, but found no resources in her middle school. Undeterred, she sought the help of a freshman friend and a teacher at the high school. They made the video which played on morning school announcements. Barred from placing collection boxes in the classrooms, Ruby and her friends went around the lunch room and hallways, and collected \$400 for Darfur. Her caring concern continued years later. In high school, she worked with other humanitarian causes through The Key Club, The Brockport Ecumenical Food Shelf, Camp Abilities, and other projects.

Ruby Foote turned 20 years old on February 12. She is a 2011 graduate of Brockport High School. Ruby is in her second year of AmeriCorps in Rochester. Across the United States, AmeriCorps members make an intensive commitment to service through more than 3,000 nonprofits, public agencies, and other community organizations, meeting critical needs in education, public safety, health and the environment.

That same determination as a 12-year-old helped get Ruby into AmeriCorps at the age of 18. The organization usually requires a couple of years at college first, but they allow one applicant to be selected under special circumstances. Ruby wanted AmeriCorps right out of high school. Because of her application essay, she was granted an interview "by the grace of God," she said. As a result of the interview, she was the only 18-year old among the 200 young people accepted out of 700 applicants.

In her first AmeriCorps year, Ruby was at Mercy Community Services in Rochester as the volunteer coordinator for activities involving pregnant or parenting teens. Activities included Jeans for Teens, Spa night for girls, baby-sitting services for girls going to school, clothing drives, and more. In this work, Ruby found that AmeriCorps did not allow anyone under 18 to volunteer, thinking it was a burden to train them. "This is crazy," she said, "I was once that kid who wanted to volunteer (in AmeriCorps at age 18)." She took the lead in finding the places where children and their moms could be useful and trained properly, and it was successful. After she left that program last year, there are still mothers and their children volunteering.

Now in her second year, Ruby works in the Recreation Department of the City of Rochester. She has two different programs, one in unplanned pregnancy prevention. The other is a girls' coalition at the Rec Center, meeting once a month with role models and positive messages for girls.

Reflecting on her first year in AmeriCorps, Ruby said, "It was, beyond words, my favorite. It was a fabulous experience. I learned so much from the hard-working moms and their kids," Ruby said of her time at Mercy. "I would go home at night and say my day was tough. But, I would think of those moms, raising children without support systems, or without a home, trying to finish school, and working at jobs. It made me rethink my idea of hard work and how hard my day was."

Looking back, she said she still has a connection with the people she served, but the relationship was never one of their dependence on her. "I never thought of them as 'my moms or my kids.' With that attitude, they don't have a chance to be themselves. It's not about doing something for



Brockport resident **Ruby Foote** received a special recognition from the Monika Andrews Leadership Award selection committee. Photograph by Doug Hickerson.

them. It's more about letting them see the strength that they have and to be themselves."

Ruby herself received that same kind of support in high school. "I had someone who was patient with me when I was a mess and had my own things to figure out," she said. She was speaking of a "prevention education specialist," an AmeriCorps worker, who taught and counseled at Brockport High. Feeling that her high school experience was too impersonal, "I wanted something connected with people, a face-to-face interaction and personal growth." The specialist from AmeriCorps told her of the focus his organization had on people. "He referred me to AmeriCorps and helped me get my foot in the door," she said. In AmeriCorps, and other positive experiences beyond high school, she has found the relationships and growth she wanted. "He was patient and encouraging, and made me see my higher self," Ruby said.

"Letting people see how strong they are in their own right -- It is a really powerful place for them to be," Ruby said about her new self-insight. "Now, I am paying it forward."

Ruby will be attending the SUNY College at Purchase in the fall.

Note: During the January 22, 2013 Brockport Village Board meeting, the first Monika W. Andrews Creative Volunteer Leadership Award was presented to Pam Ketchum and to Jack and Chris Mazzarella. Ruby Foote was presented a Certificate of Merit "in recognition of meritorious service to the greater Brockport community." Representing the selection committee, Helen Maier said the committee recommended Ruby be recognized for her outstanding work raising \$400 for the victims of Darfur through school activities at the age of 12, and for service in AmeriCorps. "The committee was quite impressed with what this young woman has accomplished in a very short time," Maier said, and explained that, even though the AmeriCorps stipend conflicted with the award criteria for volunteering, the committee wished to honor Ruby with a Certificate of Merit.

Articles about the volunteer work of Pam Ketchum and Jack and Chris Mazzarella were printed in the February 3, 2013 Suburban News West Edition and Hamlin-Clarkson Herald. To reread them visit www.westaidenewsnyc.com and open the "Local News" menu.

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Holley Hall of Fame Inductee Charlie Smith:

Humble hero grateful to others for his sports achievements

by Doug Hickerson

"A cold, snowy night did not keep family, friends and teammates from honoring Charlie Smith with a standing ovation after his acceptance speech," Lorie Bowers said. She had attended the Alumni Wall of Fame induction ceremony between the JV and Varsity basketball games at Holley High School on January 25. She praised his speech as "heartfelt, gracious, and inspiring."

Former teammates had nominated the 1974 Holley High graduate, now 57 and living in North Chili with his wife, Karen, Kevin Lynch, who knew Charlie since sixth grade, was one of those teammates and gave the introductory comments. He cited Charlie's outstanding sports record, including letters in 11 out of 12 possible sports, and called him "probably the most complete athlete on the Wall of Fame, talented in all sports." (See side bar).

Charlie's gracious speech turned his glory into a litany of gratitude to his former coaches, parents, and teammates: "Without them, I wouldn't be here receiving this honor today." He thanked his coaches "who made me work hard and expected more of me than I ever thought was possible." He paid tribute to his deceased parents. To his former teammates present, he said, "if it wasn't for you this would be impossible," and thanked them for their friendship which lasted over 40 years.

As sure proof of Charlie's sincerity, when he first learned about his nomination, he phoned his baseball coach in Texas and his soccer coach in South Carolina. They had not nominated him; he was thanking them for their role in bringing this honor to him. He phoned Betty Draper in Brockport, the widow of his basketball coach Bill Draper. "You guys were a big part of my life," he said to Betty. "We thought of you as a son," she responded. Betty Draper was present at Charlie's honoring event and he thanked her in his comments.

Charlie's sense of team work was not left in the past. He is a project superintendent with Holdsworth Klimowski Construction headquartered in Henrietta. Much of his work is in hospitals, expanding and renovating operating and MRI rooms to receive the latest high tech equipment. Charlie said, "I am the team leader, but I am probably the only supervisor who actually puts on



Charlie Smith stands at the Holley High School Alumni Wall of Fame. He was inducted on January 25. He holds his personal plaque which is smaller than the one on the wall. Photo: Doug Hickerson.

the tool belt and gets his hands dirty," Keith Bowers, also a project superintendent with Charlie's company, said in a phone call. "He is a working foreman. He doesn't ask anybody to do anything he wouldn't do himself." Keith attended the Wall of Fame ceremony with his wife, Lorie. "He is a very gifted carpenter to begin with, and he is a pleasure to be around," Keith added. "Everybody loves the guy." Charlie used to be one of Keith's carpenters, "but worked his way up to superintendent." Keith said with admiration for the former star athlete who still carries a winning attitude.

Charlie's final words that night at Holley High brought the audience to their feet with resounding applause: "I

leave with a last message to all the student athletes. A lot of people here know my mom and dad. If they could be here, they would be very proud. They sacrificed a lot, gave up a lot of their time so I could be successful in sports. And they loved their Holley sports. They never missed a game.

Students, there are many people around you who sacrifice their time to give you a lot of support. So I wish one thing tonight: That when you get home, or in the stands tonight, you thank the people who make those sacrifices and give you all that support. They need to hear it.

I am humbled because that wall has many great people. I am honored to receive this great award and I hope that I am worthy."

Charles "Charlie" Smith 1970 - 1974

Four years Varsity Soccer
Two time G-O All-Star 1972 and 1974
1974 Co-Captain and 1974 MVP

Three years Varsity Basketball
One time G-O All-Star 1974
1974 Co-Captain and 1974 MVP

Four years Varsity Baseball
Two time G-O All-Star 1973 and 1974
1974 Co-Captain and 1974 MVP

1974 Sportmanship Award
"Nobody is more important than the team."
Rejean Houle 2001

"Many thanks to all my family, friends, coaches and most of all teammates."

Above is the wording of Charlie Smith's plaque on the Holley High School Alumni Wall of Fame. "G-O" refers to Genesee-Oriens County. The last two lines were added by Charlie. His acceptance speech included the Rejean Houle quotation. Houle is a Montreal Canadiens hockey player.

Brockport resident Librada Paz - Robert F. Kennedy Human Rights Award Laureate 2012 Award brings new life to years of farm worker advocacy

by Doug Hickerson

"Ms. Paz personifies the grit and passion of a great human rights champion. She's lived and overcome the horror of being a victim to become one of the greatest defenders of farmworkers in the United States."

Those are the words of one of the judges selecting Brockport resident Librada Paz as winner of the 2012 Robert F. Kennedy Human Rights Award (see side bar). Librada Paz is one of only three U.S. citizens to win the award in the 29-year history of the RFK organization. The award was established in 1984 to recognize those individuals who stand up to oppression at grave personal risk in the nonviolent pursuit of human rights," according to literature from the RFK Center for Human Rights in Washington, D.C. As the recipient of the 29th annual prize, she joined 43 RFK Human Rights Award Laureates from 26 countries.

How did a resident of Brockport village end up with such heroic status among activist peers nationally and internationally?

It started with her dream as a young girl in her hometown of Oaxaca, Mexico to "be the highest I can be," envisioning technology and science. There was no influence from others, she said, just "my observation of foreign people visiting my town and wondering 'What are they doing? What did they study? And, what else can I learn?'"

She migrated to the U.S. with her older sister at age 15, joining their brothers in Ohio, and beginning work in the fields. They then moved on to New York, North Carolina, South Carolina and Florida. Her life as a farm worker consisted of sharing living quarters with up to 16 people, sometimes working 14 hours daily, and suffering abuse and sexual assault. While her family's home base was Okceehobee, Florida, she attended 9th grade.

Graduating Brockport High with special recognition

Wanting to continue her education, Librada came to Brockport to live with one of her two brothers. After starting Brockport High School as a sophomore, she joined her brothers working in the fields weekends and vacations. "It school was difficult for me," she said. "I was shy and afraid of speaking because I barely knew English at the time."

"My teachers were nice; they worried about me not finishing school because I was pregnant," Librada said about her senior year. "Thank God everything worked out really well. I graduated and the baby was born one week after graduation." That son is Brandon Nieves. In

"Ms. Paz personifies the grit and passion of a great human rights champion. She's lived and overcome the horror of being a victim to become one of the greatest defenders of farmworkers in the United States."

Assessment of one of the judges for the 2012 Robert F. Kennedy Human Rights Award.

spired by his mother, he now attends RIT on a scholarship. Both mother and son received special recognition at their Brockport High graduations in 1993 and 2011, respectively (see side bar).

Librada attended Monroe Community College part time for about four years. She took a year off, and then transferred to RIT, choosing a mechanical engineering major, fulfilling her dream as a young girl. She emphasized machine designs, which fit her current interest in designing cars.

The demanding journey between high school and RIT graduation

In the ten years between high school graduation, attending MCC, and RIT graduation, Librada's life was a mixture of working, attending classes, being a mother, learning about lobbying, teaching farm workers and educating others on the plight of migrant farmers.

Librada first became interested in advocacy for migrant workers when in high school. Each year for three years she went to Albany with other migrant workers' children to "Farm Worker Advocacy Day." They learned about the legislative and lobbying process and how to be a voice in their government. As the only student who was actually a farm worker (on weekends and vacations), one year she was asked to share her own experience with the students. That sparked her first interest in speaking for farm workers.

She continued to share her experience with students at the Albany conference for several years after high school graduation and continued to learn more about farm worker advocacy. She also worked with Oak Orchard Clinic for about 10 years, speaking in migrant health clinics when workers were arriving for harvest season. Migrant Education, a program of the SUNY Research Foundation, called her to tutor the children of farmworkers; she also worked with them for many years in the Summer School Migrant Program.

She attended MCC, working in the fields when she could, and continuing with the health clinic, while caring for her child.



Librada Paz sits with the sculpture award she received as the 2012 Robert F. Kennedy Human Rights Award Laureate. The award cites her extraordinary work for farmworkers' rights. Photo by Dianne Hickerson.

After MCC, she was strapped financially, worked part time on and off, until she was accepted at RIT.

RIT: "Working hard enough to make it happen"

Her experience at RIT "was not easy," she said, describing her situation as a single mom, with no supporting husband, and commuting between Brockport and RIT. "But, I really loved it." She was the only woman in the classroom. "I was proud of being a Mexican farm worker and a woman studying engineering," aware that few women chose that major at the time. She was also amazed and angry about the number of engineering students who dropped their majors. "I could not understand that," she said. "They didn't work hard enough to make it happen." She graduated with a bachelor's degree in mechanical engineering in 2003.

After RIT: Not the "American Dream"

As a Hispanic woman with a mechanical engineering degree from RIT, Librada could have pursued "The American Dream" with a lucrative career. How did she choose to

continue her self-sacrificing life of farm worker advocacy?

Already a board member of the Rural and Migrant Ministry (RMM) before RIT graduation, she continued learning about the Farm Workers Fair Labor Practices Act and serving the community by connecting with farm workers (see side bar). A year later she became an RMM staff member working full time to empower farm workers to speak up for their rights. She also spoke for her cause at churches, schools, and colleges.

Several years later she was made director of the Western New York district of RMM but had to leave after a year because of the work load. Representing RMM as a volunteer she has continued educating migrant communities by speaking to workers in the field and to the larger community. She also has been visiting senators and representatives with delegations of migrant workers accompanying her.

RFK Award adds new life to Librada's cause

In the 20 years since high school graduation, Librada has worked for the oppressed migrant worker, especially with RMM in the last 10 years.

A festive Fourth of July at Morgan-Manning House undaunted by foul weather

by Doug Hickerson

It was an unusual "Old Fashioned Fourth of July" on the Morgan-Manning House lawn. Events went as planned, but only with the determination of participants, volunteers, and performers on an overcast and stormy day. The opening music of the Brockport High School Chorus ended as the drizzle started. Then, the Children's Parade began and ended in an all-out downpour. There were over 50 children on tricycles or in strollers, with umbrella-bearing adults, moving on to Main Street with Brockport Police escort, then Union Street, Park Avenue, and returning to the carriage house off Spring Street.

"The parade participants were all troopers," said Ron White, Western Monroe Historical Society board member and MC for the event. "How resilient children can be with patient parents, grandparents, and others teaching the responsibility of follow-through on a commitment, even in the face of an obstacle like adverse weather."

Next, The Brockport Community Concert Band was scheduled at 11 a.m. The downpour had subsided as the



Photograph provided by Dianne Hickerson

Morgan Manning's 4th another great success

To the Brockport community:

We want to express our sincere thanks to the wider Brockport community for making this year's Old Fashioned Fourth of July at Morgan Manning House another big success. Thanks to those who came and who participated in any way: at the grill, at a booth, making music, baking cakes, running events, setting up and cleaning up.

A special thanks to the children in the Children's Parade, their guiding adults, and the Brockport Police escort for sticking with it in a downpour.

No matter how well established an event is, good publicity is a necessity. So, as always, we express our thanks to the *Suburban News* and *Hamlin-Clarkson Herald* and to writer Doug Hickerson.

Alice Fink, President
Don Voorheis, Vice President
Western Monroe Historical Society

band's equipment truck pulled into the driveway, and band members arrived. Would the show go on? For a few tense moments band director Shawn Halquist talked with the event organizers. The band had premiered at the event last year, and returned again as the featured attraction. Suddenly, in a slight drizzle, band equipment was off-loaded into the parking lot—keeping the band off the wet lawn where it normally gathers. Audience chairs were moved from under the trees to the north lawn in front of the carriage house parking lot, now a concert stage.

A hazy, sometimes bright sun reigned over the concert of lively patriotic songs, show tunes, and rousing marches. A bed of daisies at the edge of the parking lot made a colorful foreground for over 65 band members from a variety of backgrounds: Nineteen current Brockport High School Band members; band alumni from 2000 through 2013; students in 6th, 7th, and 8th grades; five Brockport district music faculty, one science faculty, and one retiree. The Heitz, Chibber, Briggs and Maar families had three or more members. And, there were several families with two members. The audience gave a standing ovation for

the music from the heart of the community.

The event continued with a Brockport Big Band concert and music by the Montage Real T's. An estimated 400 people attended through the day. About 100 people toured the Morgan-Manning House. Another 100, mostly children, enjoyed the "Cake Walk" where 20 home-baked cakes were given away. Food and refreshments were almost sold out when festivities ended.

"I am pleased with the amazing success of the day, given the weather," said Alicia Fink, president of the Western Monroe Historical Society board which sponsored the free event.

"For such a soggy day, things turned out well," event organizer and board VP Don Voorheis said; also praising everyone who braved the weather, and "the many volunteers who enjoy serving the community."

Farmworker Day celebrates advocacy tour for farmworkers

by Doug Hickerson

On Saturday, April 13, a Farmworker Day was held at the First Baptist Church in Brockport. The mid-day event celebrated the end of a week-long speaking tour of the state by farmworkers and allies, advocating for The Farmworkers Fair Labor Practices Act. That pending legislation in Albany seeks to bring the same rights and protections to migrant and other farmworkers that are enjoyed by other workers

in New York State. The event was hosted by Rural and Migrant Ministries (RMM) and Brockport Ecumenical Outreach Committee (BEOC).

The program began with a half-hour rally on the corner of Main and Erie Streets with banners and placards. A lunch was provided for about 50 people, representing the migrant worker communities and the public. Pedro Roberto Mares from Sodus and his son, Pedro Antonio Mares played guitars and sang "Cielito Lindo," a popu-



Farm workers and allies in advocacy held a rally at Main and Erie Streets in Brockport on Farmworker Day April 13. Afterwards, a gathering and lunch were held at the First Baptist Church in the background. Photo by Dianne Hickerson.



Shown at the rally (l to r) Librada Paz and son, Axel; Bill Plews, president of BEOC, and Barb Deming of RMM. Plews and Deming prepared lunch for the Farmworker Day April 13. Paz spoke at the event. Photo by Dianne Hickerson.

lar Mexican ranchero song. Farmworkers shared aspects of their lives, including some of the conditions under which they work.

Librada Paz, Brockport resident and former migrant worker who led the state tour, addressed the Saturday gathering. She is a 2012 recipient of the Robert F. Kennedy Human Rights Award for her extensive advocacy for farm workers (*Westside News* Inc. newspapers, March 31, 2013). "The tour was great," she said in an interview. "The workers who came along with us to tell their stories were so surprised at how much they learned and how important it is to work together with allies in the cause."

"I am inspired by the courage of the

farmworkers," Barb Deming said about their work in advocacy. "That comes from recognizing and claiming their humanity by sharing their stories and demanding equality under New York State labor laws." Deming is a representative of RMM. She was referring to the testimonies given that day, as well as the local migrant workers speaking in various cities and towns on the tour. "How can one not stand beside them in their struggle for justice?" she added.

Deming also thanked the First Baptist Church for providing the space and the BEOC for providing festive decorations. She also praised Bill Plews, BEOC president, for promoting the event and other help that day.

Two Lakeside Beikirch Care Center residents receive honors for their art work

by Doug Hickerson

Two residents of Lakeside Beikirch Care Center have been honored for their art work by LeadingAge New York, stating to each in an award letter, "The judges recognized your creativity and talent." Betty C. Eksten and Julia Gibbs each had a painting selected from 230 state-wide entries to be included among only 70 paintings in a traveling exhibit. The paintings will be on display at the organization's offices in Latham, N.Y. and will appear at its conferences in May, September and November this year.

In addition to being selected for the traveling exhibit, Betty Eksten's painting received a Merit Award.

"I was born with a paint brush and have been painting all my life," said 94 year old Betty. She has done original paintings in all media, with horses and dogs a prominent theme. Her works have been exhibited in many major cities, including Rochester. She has taught art at Rochester's Memorial Art Gallery. Several decades ago, she took photos in Sibley's photo studio and supervised young women in hand coloring sepia photos, the only color photos at the time.

"She has been quite a well-known artist in the Rochester area for years," said Betty's daughter, Jeanne Maxwell, visiting during a recent interview. Betty used to teach and paint with friends at her dining room table. Now, many of them come to Beikirch each week to paint and learn from her.

Betty also has bred and trained horses for the race track and for jumping, another skill she says came to her naturally. And, she has used the same talent breeding and training German Shepherds, including many champions, contributing some for training as seeing-eye dogs. Betty also has conducted dog obedience classes in the local area.

Julia Gibbs just finished her painting "Geisha Girl" (see photo) hours before the interview. Why the oriental theme? "I try to do an around the world type thing," she said about the variety of paintings in her room, including Egyptian and African images. The painting which won recognition by LeadingAge New York was a "double image of Cleopatra," Julia said. About the African painting in her room, she said, "I had a vision of doing a black woman, then I got more visions and it is like a collage," a technique she has never used before.

Julia paints whenever she gets the inspiration, using craft paint on a framed canvas. "I keep myself busy," she said about her sewing, crocheting, singing and playing instruments. She also uses her artistic talent to help decorate the Care Center for holiday events such as 4th of July, St. Patrick's Day, Easter, and Christmas. At Christmastime 2011, Julia handcrafted over 100 holiday cards to show appreciation to the staff and residents at Beikirch.

LeadingAge New York, founded in 1961, represents more than 600 public not-for-profit continuing care providers in the state, including nursing homes and similar institutions. They employ 150,000 professionals serving more than 600,000 New Yorkers annually. Nursing Home Week just ended, running May 12 through May 18.

(Note: The winning paintings by both artists are in the traveling exhibit and not available for this story. The photo shows each artist with another one of her favorite paintings.)



Betty Eksten (left) and Julia Gibbs show one of their favorite paintings. Their paintings chosen for a traveling exhibition were not available. The winning oil painting by Betty is a German Shepherd dog, mother of the dog shown here. Julia's winning painting of Cleopatra is part of her multi-cultural theme illustrated by "Geisha Girl" which she is holding, done in craft paint on canvas. Photo by Dianne Hickerson.



Jeanne Maxwell, daughter of Betty Eksten, stands near the painting her mother did of her over six years ago when she was about three years old. Photo by Dianne Hickerson.

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Lakeside Beikirch Care Center transitions through changes

by Doug Hickerson

Kimberly Sisco is the new administrator of Lakeside Beikirch Care Center, a long term care facility with a capacity of 120 residents. She had been the director of social work at LBCC since 2000, when the new position suddenly became available in February this year. Terence Klinetob, the former administrator, moved to a new job in a Webster nursing home.

The board of trustees of Lakeside Health System appointed her administrator of record in May, after three months as acting administrator. Sisco's is a fascinating story about how she completed her licensure for the position in that brief period, began the LBCC adjustments to the closing of adjacent Lakeside Memorial Hospital in April, and strives to keep the care center on an even keel today.

Her original interest in long term care also occurred under unusual circumstances. After receiving her bachelor's degree in social work from The College at Brockport in 1994, she applied for a part time activities position at then-named Orleans County Nursing Home. "I wanted to see what that population was like to work with and get some exposure," she said. The administration wanted her for a social work position, which she filled from 1995 to 2000.

"I really enjoyed it. I found my passion," Sisco said about her first five years in the profession. "I definitely felt like this was the population I should be working with. I just enjoy all of the facets of long term care."

Career plans go into high gear

Sisco never thought of an administrative position in long term care until 2006. "I really wanted to make a difference," she said. "You can make a difference in any position, but the administrator's position is where you have the most impact." Encouraged by Klinetob, she pursued studies for licensure through the New York State Health Department. At the end of January 2013, she completed a nine-month administrator-in-training requirement. She thought she would take her licensure exam, receive her license, and then look outside LBCC for an administrator position.

That leisurely plan changed when Klinetob left and his position became available. She became the acting administrator in February with Klinetob as administrator of record, providing her four hours of mentoring each week as required. As acting administrator, "I felt the spotlight on me to pass the licensure exam, and spent many sleepless nights over that," Sisco said. She took her exam on March 16, passed, and received her license on her birthday, April 15. In early May, the board of directors appointed her administrator of record.

Adjusting to the hospital closing

The Lakeside Hospital announced its closing on April 22. "The biggest challenges for me were from April 23 until

now," Sisco said. "We had so many shared services with the hospital: radiology services, occupational health services, human resources, finance services, emergency services. "With those going away, the biggest stress for me was to make sure there was no impact on resident care (110 residents currently), and then no impact on employee services."

Sisco has been occupied with agreements and contracts to bring various services to the care center, including laboratory services and a mobile radiology that comes right to the bedside and produces results within two hours.

She contracted with a company which provides services in pre-employment and maintenance of employee health on site twice a month. Two staff from the hospital will be covering aspects of Human Resources (HR). And, an HR generalist firm is now signed on as consultants for 30 hours a week.

Sisco said she has been able to add some very qualified nursing staff since the closing of the hospital. The care center has three new RNs and two new LPNs. "It has been nothing but a positive experience," she said.

With the various services coming to the stand-alone care center, Sisco said there have been no additional costs, because they were mostly services they were paying for while the hospital was operating. "I think with every service, we have been able to have the cost the same if not lower."

Sisco was asked about the long range viability of the Lakeside Beikirch Care Center. With the hospital closing, some wonder if the "other shoe will drop." Sisco recognizes the community's "realistic concern" she said. "I have received many phone calls about those concerns, mostly from families of residents. I have been able to reassure them we are financially very strong." Even the State Health Department initially had the same concern. "About a week after the hospital closed, they made a conference call to the care center. They wanted our monthly income statements and our cash flow projections through the end of the year," Sisco said. "We are financially stable, and the Health Department seems very satisfied."

Creating a living environment for residents

"We have a bright future, and I say that from a financial standpoint as well as our quality of care," Sisco said.

Lakeside Beikirch Care Center for some time has worked to shed the institutional approach to long term nursing care, using resident-centered approaches. Various programs at the care center are based on surveys of residents to determine the activities of interest to them.

Biggy is one of the most popular activities. There are opportunities for playing or listening to music and for arts and crafts. Music is also supplied by a guitarist coming to



Kimberly Sisco, administrator at Lakeside Beikirch Care Center in Brockport, has worked to keep the facility running smoothly after the closure of adjacent Lakeside Memorial Hospital. Photo by Dianne Hickerson.

the care center once a month. Two paid staff called "care partners" come on duty between 4 p.m. and 8 p.m., with spontaneous activities to entertain and engage the residents in the period which Sisco says is their loneliest time of day. Each week a Bible study is offered for those interested as well as a Sunday worship service. Also, therapy dogs bring joy to the residents.

Two or three times a week the van takes some residents to restaurants or other attractions like fall foliage tours. On the property, annual picnics are held, as well as big band concerts, and last year there was a bon fire on a holiday weekend.

"We find people flourish here," Sisco said. "People at first do not want to leave their home. When they come here, although initially not happy about it, they are pretty resilient. They adjust well and many times they are blossoming." She refers to residents who go out with their families, and after a while will say, "I want to go home now." Sisco says, "I want this to be a place where residents feel at home and that life is worth living here. All that has changed for them is their location."

"I have worked here a long time," Sisco said. "I care so much about the individuals who live here, their families, and the staff. We have a lot of long term care givers. They count on me. The biggest driver for me is to make sure this nursing home stays viable, that we are successful, and most of all that we are providing good personalized quality care. That is important to me."

Respite program aids children with autism and their parents

Local church and two colleges work together on unique program

by Doug Hickerson

Every Sunday morning, while giving his sermon, Pastor Tim Stroup saw two families sitting behind the glass walls in the church lobby. He knew the parents had children with autism who needed special attention. Tami Sullivan was a member of his Brockport Free Methodist Church and an adjunct professor of psychology at the College at Brockport. Stroup asked her what support could be provided for those families so the parents would come into the service. Sullivan was advised to a psychology major, Jordyn Bree, in the honors college. Bree needed a capstone project for her senior year, she was interested in how parents with autistic children have opportunities for respite. With Sullivan supervising, Bree started the autism respite program on Sundays at the Brockport Free Methodist Church. The two families were the first to sign up.

That was five years ago. Since then, the program has grown to include around 20 children from ages 4 to 17 attending each Sunday.

Sullivan is now Dr. Tami Sullivan, with a Ph.D. from the University of Rochester in counseling and counselor education. She is an assistant professor of psychology at Roberts Wesleyan College. Sullivan continues to direct the church project as part of the umbrella F.A.C.T.S. program at Roberts, standing for "Family Autism Community Together in Supports." She provides educational and psychological consultation and research programs from F.A.C.T.S., looking at the quality of life for families with children on the autistic spectrum. "I try to be responsive to community needs, what's going on," she says.

April is Autism Awareness Month

The American Academy of Pediatrics has identified autism as the fastest growing developmental disability. The glass wall scenario in the church is symbolic of families with autistic children being partly excluded from the largeness by misperceptions and lack of opportunities for



Luke and Clarice work on taking lums in the table games activity room. Photograph by Dianne Hickerson.

the children to function socially. Dr. Sullivan's dedication and extensive outreach aims to educate leaders in schools and in community programs through her F.A.C.T.S. program. "Our goal is to find new solutions to how family needs can be met through collaboration with community partners," she says. She has partnered with her church for the respite program, serving parents and the autistic children. From Roberts Wesleyan she has connected with the College at Brockport, engaging about 35 student volunteers to work with the children. Through the training and service, the college students develop their own personal skills and attitudes.

Respite program at the Brockport Free Methodist Church

The respite program runs from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. every Sunday at the church, 6787 Fourth Section Road. The spring semester started February 12 and goes through May 6. Once children are registered for the free program, the children participate in seven different activity stations: Music, Dance, Recreation and Leisure, Sensory Play, Adaptive Physical Education, Table Games, and LEGO® Social Skills Group. Each activity is planned to engage the children's interest and build upon their unique skills, and is staffed by two or more trained student leaders. "The fun, hands-on activities encourage positive social interaction, communication, reciprocal play, and group interaction," according to the program brochure.

Autism is now conceptualized as an autism spectrum disorder, presenting a variety of social, communication and behavioral impairments. Those seven activities in the respite program address the disabilities found on the autism spectrum, and range from high functioning to low functioning. "We customize our approach to each child, depending on where he or she fits on the spectrum," Sullivan said, although they also rotate through all of the activity centers to develop other skills. For purposes of the respite program, Sullivan said, "The child's location on the spectrum is not found by clinical testing, but by talking with the parents who are really the experts in the children's lives."

College student participation

About 35 student volunteers come from the College at Brockport and Roberts Wesleyan College. They serve as activity directors at the seven activity stations as well as one-to-one aids with the children.

Dr. Mark Noll, geology professor at Brockport, is an academic advisor and link between the respite program and the College's Career Exploration Program which provides internships and academic credits. The students are primarily psychology majors, but some are in physi-

cal education, health science, elementary education, and dance. "All of the students are fantastic," Noll said, citing "their dedication, their caring towards the kids, and their professionalism. They're undergraduates and volunteers that's amazing to me."

Some Roberts Wesleyan volunteers are undergraduate students in psychology. Others are graduate students in school counseling and school psychology, and have extensive training to facilitate the LEGO® social skills group for higher functioning children.

Chelsea McCann is a junior at the College at Brockport and the student director for the respite program. A major in psychology and health science, she recruits the student volunteers, interviews them, trains them, and schedules them. She began in the program as a freshman and served two years as an aid before her promotion to student director. She plans to attend graduate school to earn a Psy.D. degree in counseling psychology. "This position has taught me lots of patience, as well as passion for people as human beings," McCann said. "Everyone is different and we have to be accepting of people as individuals, all wherever they are."

Sullivan says McCann excels academically, interpersonally and in her advocacy skills. "That's what is so important to me, to see the passion that develops with these college students," Sullivan said. "Not only understanding what it's like working with children on the autism spectrum, but also becoming passionate enough about that work that they will continue into graduate school."

Beyond the respite program

The oldest youngsters in the respite program are 17. A concern of most parents is what happens when their children become adults and want to go on to post-secondary options in the world of work, Sullivan observed. She notes the increasing attention to students on the autism spectrum on college campuses. Many different college partnerships and collaborations now provide alternatives to low functioning students who need support. The Center for Innovative Transition at the University of Rochester helps lower functioning students with a campus-based college pilot experience certificate program, including relational and living skills. At Roberts Wesleyan, Sullivan says, "The BELL program (Bridge to Earning, Learning and Living) is a partnership with CP Rochester and BCES 2 where transition students between 18 and 25 have academic advisors, peer mentors, job training specialists to help with earning, learning, and living."

Whether it's the respite program at her church, or programs at her college, Sullivan says, "The bottom line, the objective for us (at F.A.C.T.S.) is partnering with families and using their expertise to inform our practice."



Valerie and Troy high five after achieving a social skills objective. Photograph by Dianne Hickerson.



Chelsea McCann (left) and Dr. Tami Sullivan (right) working at the Autism Respite Program at Brockport Free Methodist Church. Chelsea is the student director and Tami is the supervisor. Photograph by Dianne Hickerson.

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Restored Clarkson Academy is a nationally recognized museum and community center

A decade of devoted volunteer work and major community support saves building

by Doug Hickerson

After decades as a deserted relic, the 1853 Clarkson Academy building was raised like the Phoenix from ruins to new life. Over the past ten years, starting with a tarpaulin on the leaky roof and two steel beams to right the derelict bell tower, the schoolhouse has been restored to a historic gem in the community. It is not just a monument to the community's past. It also stands as a tribute to the devoted human endeavor of individual citizens, a church, local government, businesses, tradesmen and grant agencies.

The Academy, near Clarkson Community Church just east of Clarkson Corners on Ridge Road, is on the National Register of Historic Places. It is a brick, two-story Greek Revival building which was state-of-the-art for its time period and location. The Academy was used as an educational institution of higher learning from 1853 to the late 1800s, then as a local schoolhouse until 1956 when it was abandoned.

The restoration work started in 2003 and was completed this year. The first urgent priorities were the collapsing bell tower and leaking roof. Over the decade, work was done on painting inside and out, brick pointing, plumbing, utilities, electrical, heating and recently, a new fire escape.

Concentrated work on the first floor started around 2007. Renovation included painting walls and the replaced ceiling, new white oak floor, ceramic tiles on the restroom floor, new lighting inside and out, a built-in sound system, and all new utilities. The room is used for meetings such as the Clarkson Historical Society and the Brockport Garden Club. Other functions such as funeral memorial services, fund raising events, and history lectures take place there also.

Around 2010, work started on the second floor, stripping it to the bare wall studs and ceiling raf-

ters and restoring it to its original condition as a classroom. Original bookcases and a table were refurbished and in use again. Thirty-five 19th century desks were donated over the ten year period. The classroom is used now for local 4th grade students coming once a year to learn about school days of the past.



The Clarkson Historical Society and community members worked steadily to restore the Clarkson Academy. Once shrouded by tarpaulins to ward off further damage to the interior, the Greek Revival style building now stands as a testament to the hard work of many.

There were many in-kind donations such as a 19 century well water pump and American flag on a flagpole, both placed out front. Also donated was the original Morning Star #8 Clarkson School outdoors yet to be restored and placed in its original location out back.

The ten-year project by the Clarkson Historical Society was methodically designed and directed by Don Lage, a Brockport resident. Lage, going on 80 and prior president of the Society, is a dynamo with dogged determination that kept the project moving. He also proved successful in grant applications.



Don Lage

On August 1 last year, Lage was honored as the Clarkson Academy project coordinator at a gathering to celebrate the restoration. Current CHS president Mary Edwards said the event recognized Lage "tireless devotion and constant attention to all the details." She added, "To say the least, Don was the right person in the right place at the right time. Over 100 people attended, including members of the Clarkson Town Board, Rep. Steve Hawley, Sen. Joseph Robach, Sen. Charles Nesbitt, and a representative from Sen. George D. Maziarz's office." Note to Don from Governor Cuomo's office was read. Each visiting official presented a framed resolution thanking Don Lage for his outstanding contribution to historic preservation in Clarkson.

Lage's final touch to the project was his January 2, 2013 report to the Clarkson Historical Society, summing up the restoration project and listing the specific tasks achieved in each of the ten years. Outstanding in the report was the grand total cost of the project stated as only \$197,000. The source of support were generous and varied. The Town of Clarkson and Clarkson Community Church donated in-kind services worth \$22,000. (The church is adjacent and is leasing the property to the Society at \$1 a year for 99 years). Friends and member of the Clarkson Historical Society gave \$69,000. Rochester Area Community Foundation and New York State grants totaled \$93,000. Contractors an wholesale corporations gave in-kind services value at \$13,000.

Lage concluded his report with: "The unseen contributions that are so necessary in a venture such as this have been from volunteers, whose work has totaled more than 4,500 hours. Also of valuable note were our contractors who donated much of their labor to help bring costs down. The Clarkson Historical Society appreciates all that has been contribute to achieve the end goal. Now, instead of an abandoned old building next to the Clarkson Community Church, we have a fully restored architectural gem of which we can all be proud."

(Thanks to Mary Edwards and Don Lage for current information provided.)

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We do it all with YOU in mind!

Tom Stroup retiring after 36 years as lead pastor at Brockport Free Methodist Church

by Doug Hickerson

"God had wired me for ministry before I was ever born," Pastor Tom Stroup said. "When I gave my life to him in 1970, he called me and set me on a course of ministry." For Stroup, 64, that ministry started in Wilmore, Kentucky. In 1978 he came to the Brockport Free Methodist Church as lead pastor, and has served for 36 years - an unusual tenure for Protestant ministers. He will retire as lead pastor on September 1.

Staying power

Besides seeing his career divinely predestined, Stroup attributes his staying power to his father's work ethic and tenacity on the job. Following his father's example, he worked hard at various jobs as a youth. And, "I am not a quitter," he said. "Obviously over the years I have faced difficult times in the ministry, but I don't quit. I try to address what's there."

"And, the biggest staying factor is that I never felt God calling me any place else," Stroup said. Citing various opportunities for "what might be called significant advancements," he said, "The vision has always been for here."

Church growth

When Stroup came in 1978, the church building at 6787 Fourth Section Road, Brockport, was about 10,000 square feet and about 150 people attended Sunday worship. In 1990 a new sanctuary and atrium (large cafe) were added. In 2000 the church expanded with an administrative wing, adult ministry wing, new restrooms and renovated kitchen. The facility now totals 27,000 square feet and about 400 people attend Sunday worship. Also, the church purchased 44 acres of surrounding land several years ago.

Stroup said that attendance at Christ-nas Eve services is a kind of "litmus test" for measuring growth and community outreach. Attendance was over 800 at last year's Christmas service. "That attendance says something about the penetration of the ministry into the community," he said.

A ministry team developed from within

Stroup works closely with a ministry team. As lead pastor, Stroup "casts a vision" for the team and the whole church, based on Christ's great commandment to "go into the world and make disciples of all people." The team manifests the vision in specific programs and activities of the church. Each team member is considered a minister, with or without seminary training. Team members start as church members who have shown interest and abilities in certain areas of church life. Stroup mentors them into the appropriate ministry role. "I don't live my dreams through

them," Stroup said, "I let them have their dreams in their area of the ministry."

The eleven team members' responsibilities show the extent of the BFMC ministry. Four associate pastors cover administrative areas, assimilation, growth/discipleship, and service ministry volunteers. Directors from the team run the pre-school, worship arts, "Adventure Zone," and early childhood ministries. There is also a student ministries pastor. Only two are full time staff, the others range from three quarter time to volunteer.

The ministry team has adhered to the church's mission over 36 years, even guiding it over troubled waters in a few periods of internal dissent, Stroup said. "By staying on task with the mission of Christ, we never dropped the ball in terms of the mission, even though we were hurting."

During Stroup's 36-year tenure, most ministers have been hired from inside the church, which is uncommon among Protestant churches. "When you work with people from within, you see them serve, you know their personalities and abilities, they understand the heart and the vision of the ministry," Stroup said. "These people know everything about the church and you know them. When you bring someone in, it's just based on an interview and a résumé."

"Time to shuffle things up a bit"

In the last three years, Stroup was mentoring Associate Pastor Ray Hammond, who, by mutual agreement, would take over as lead pastor when Stroup retired. But Hammond gradually felt a growing call to church "planting" (starting a new church), Stroup said. On July 1, he left to help start the Epic Church in Williamsville as associate pastor and worship leader. "I was somewhat disappointed," Stroup said, "but if God was calling him to do that, I told Ray he needed to follow the call."

After more than three decades of guiding the church's laymen into ministry, "It's time to shake things up a bit," Stroup heard God say. He understood the revelation to mean "to bring someone else in from the outside, someone who will shed new vision and who is not stayed in things the way they are."

Stroup had said to Hammond, "If God is calling you to do that (plant a church), God's got something else really good for us here." The prediction came true when Andy Sass phoned Stroup about hearing God's call to a ministry in Brockport. Sass is lead pastor at North Gate Free Methodist Church in Batavia, a much larger church of 1,100. He and Stroup had been friends over many years, and Stroup counseled him to heed God's call. Knowing Sass so well, he was a clear exception to Stroup's long-held resistance to hiring from outside the church. Sass will be starting at Brockport Free Methodist Church as lead pastor on September 1.



Pastor Tom Stroup will be retiring from Brockport Free Methodist Church on January 1, 2014 after 36 years as lead pastor. Photograph by Dianne Hickerson.

"I have never felt called anywhere else. The vision has always been for here."

Tom Stroup

Past and future fulfillment

Stroup was asked what the most fulfilling achievement was in his long tenure. "Unconsciously, the changed lives of people who have come to Christ, found the Savior for themselves, and found forgiveness for their past. They discovered that they have a purpose and mission in this life, traveling the rest of this journey with Christ, and looking to the home in Heaven that God has for them. Nothing compares to that!"

Stroup will serve as "transition pastor" until December 31, helping Sass to

settle in as the lead pastor. On January 1 Stroup becomes a regular church member at Brockport Free Methodist, staying in the community where he has a large family. In the past he had looked ahead to how he might "model a good layman embedded in a church family, being supportive of the pastor and his vision. ..." The Sass asked Stroup what role in the church would be most fulfilling to him as he becomes a church member. Stroup's answer was, "To do whatever I am capable of doing to help you wherever you need it, and advance the work of Christ in the church."

About Tom Stroup

Excerpts from an August 6, 2013 letter

As a leader, Tom took much calculated "riks" in the ministry, leading the BFMC in some new and fruitful directions. That is never easy! His benchmark was, "Is this pleasing to God and transforming for people?"

He is obviously good at building teams and inspiring people to do their best for the Lord, something a gifted leader does. Even when there were inevitable roadblocks and disappointments, Pastor Tom would pray and lead his way through them, seeing miraculous answers in time.

As Pastor Tom "retires," I can't imagine that he will be idle! His wisdom, experience, heart, knowledge, love for God and His Kingdom, and for people, will drive him to new adventures in the Lord. Seeing him as a spiritual leader and spiritual father to our community, I trust that the Lord will allow him to have a continued influence here.

Bruce Plummer, Senior Pastor, Christ Community Church, Brockport

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Strong West opens in Brockport's former Lakeside Hospital building

Continued from page one

"That's why we have a lot of people here so we can smooth out those bumps and make sure things are going well for patients."

Strong West currently has several former Lakeside Hospital nurses employed. Anne Marie "Corky" Dailey was pleased to be back again. "Generations of area families were taken care of here," she said. "We are grateful to be back at it." Interviews are being conducted to fill more positions. It is not determined how many staff will be needed for Urgent Care or a possible future emergency department, Dr. Kamali said. "That will be fluid as we see how many patients are utilizing the services."

A major improvement presented by Strong Hospital is the state-of-the-art imaging technology available for the Urgent Care Center and for community physicians. "We have modernized all the technology in this hospital and brought it up to digital standards," said Dr. David Waldman, chairman of Imaging Sciences at the URM. "We have done this at other hospitals, too, such as Highland and Thompson," he said.

The new digital mammography machine, for instance, shows great advances from

the film based machine it replaced, said Mary-ellen Wilson, off-site manager from Strong Hospital (see photo). Instead of image is read immediately by the technologist; if no adjustments are needed, the machine compression automatically releases. Mammograms will immediately be read by Strong's specialists in the mammography center at Red Creek.

All digital images - ultrasound, X-rays, mammography, CT scans, and MRI scans - are viewed on monitors at the Urgent Care Center and forwarded to the appropriate specialist within the Strong system for analysis, Dr. Waldman said. He will be on site many days "to make sure the imaging procedures are running smoothly," he said.

In addition to Strong Urgent Care in Brockport, URM Strong West consists of Strong Urgent Care in Spencerport, primary care practices in LeRoy and Brockport, and orthopaedic and cardiac specialists who have existing practices in Brockport. URM Strong West provides health care services to the Brockport area, western Monroe County and the eastern portion of Orleans and Genesee counties.



Kim Bovee, radiologic technologist, (above) operates the new digital X-ray machine. She formerly was with Lakeside Hospital X-ray for nine years. With her is Connie White, clinical operations director of imaging at URM. Right, Natalie Root, CAT-scan technologist, attends the new CAT-scan machine. She was a former Lakeside Hospital employee. Dr. David Waldman (left) sits at Strong West's monitors that read all digital images taken in the facility - mammography, X-ray, ultrasound, MRI scans, CT scans. They are forwarded to specialists in the Strong system for analysis. Photographs by Dianne Hickerson.



Barb Deming receives first George Exley-Stiegler Award

Her work in migrant ministry recognized

by Doug Hickerson

Town of Sweden resident Barb Deming has been named the first recipient of the George Exley-Stiegler Award for her work in migrant ministry. The recognition is given by the Rural & Migrant Ministry organization (RMM).

The award was presented at the "Harvesting Justice Symposium & Dinner," held on October 29 at the Temple Brith Kodesh in Rochester.

The inaugural award is named for the Rev. George Exley-Stiegler, a priest in the Episcopal Diocese of Rochester who died in January this year. As priest at St. Luke's Episcopal Church in Brockport from 1956-1964, he led a migrant ministry. Much later, in 2001, the Western New York RMM office originated in St. Luke's basement. "George's work can be said to have laid the roots for St. Luke's renewed commitment and support of the socially transforming

work of both the BEOC and RMM," Deming said.

"Barb Deming exemplifies the vision and presence of George Exley-Stiegler," RMM literature states. "For twenty-five years, Barbara has been present in the quest for farmworker justice in New York State. She is persistent, passionate and engaged - all qualities she shares with George." She has worked in migrant ministry through St. Luke's since 1988 when she and her husband moved to Brockport. From that first activity, the Brockport Ecumenical Outreach Committee (BEOC) was formed uniting various Brockport churches in the migrant ministry. Deming chaired BEOC for nine years.

Deming was instrumental in bringing RMM, founded in the Hudson Valley in 1981, to western New York. The Western New York Council of RMM was created in 2000, based on her research and recommendations. For several years, she was

president of the RMM Board of Directors and remains an RMM Fellow. She has been a farmer and has written a book on homesteading with her husband, Dick Deming, who has supported her work in RMM. They live on Redman Road in the Town of Sweden.

"Fr. George Exley-Stiegler was my friend and mentor which adds significant meaning to receiving this award," Deming said. "He 'walked the walk' with the poor and the disenfranchised. He knew the life and work of farmworkers, the hardship of separation and their invisibility. My very best efforts just barely follow the footprints he has left us. I am truly moved and humbled to be the first recipient of the award in his name."

RMM is a statewide, non-sectarian organization that seeks rural justice. Its mission is to create a just rural New York state by standing with the disenfranchised, especially farm and migrant workers, promoting their leadership, and addressing unjust systems and structures.



Barb Deming in front of the altar at St. Luke's Episcopal Church in Brockport. She has received the first award named for Father George Exley-Stiegler who was a priest there from 1956-1964. Photo by Dianne Hickerson.

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BLUE DEVILS SWEEP SINGLES

Brockport swept all four singles matches and first doubles in their 5-2 girls tennis victory over Hilton.

Area high school fall sports coverage begins this week

Yellow dots alert

Yellow Dot is a free program designed to help first responders provide life-saving medical attention during that first "golden hour" after a car crash or other emergency.

read about it inside this week



There's a special canine in the area. He suffered severe trauma. He traveled many miles by air on small planes. He was frightened and anxious and hurting. He has the ability to pull at the heart strings of humans just by getting on with his own life.

Read his story inside this week.



It's Strong West now - A new sign marks the former entrance to the emergency department of Lakeside Hospital. Photograph by Dianne Hickerson.

Strong West opens in Brockport's former Lakeside Hospital building

by Doug Hickerson

The former Lakeside Hospital in Brockport, closed since April, came alive Tuesday, September 3 with new state-of-the-art technology, newly remodeled rooms, and the return of some nurses and technical staff who had served at Lakeside. It was the opening of URM's Strong West campus and Strong Urgent Care Center. Adding to an atmosphere of anticipation, medical professionals from the University of Rochester Medical Center were there

overseeing the start-up of the new medical services.

The center will provide health care services to patients of all ages who require immediate treatment of non-life-threatening issues such as sprains, broken bones, cuts, fevers and ear infections. The facility provides on-the-spot diagnostic services such as X-rays, EKGs and strep tests. No appointments are necessary. Current center hours are noon to 7 p.m. each day. Also opening on Tuesday were imaging services - ultrasound, mammography, MRI and CT - as well as walk-in lab service. Out-patient imaging is open Monday through Saturday from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. A free-standing emergency department is expected in early 2014, pending state approval. An ambulatory surgical center also is planned for 2014.

The new Urgent Care Center is located in the former Lakeside's emergency department. Dr. Mike Kamali reviewed improvements made to the area, including freshly painted walls and new lighting. A major addition is a waiting room just off the nurses' station, visible through an open window. "We like to get incoming patients to a bed as soon as possible," Dr. Kamali said. "When it gets crowded, we want those waiting to be as close as possible to be able to observe them."

Dr. Kamali is chair of Emergency Medicine at the University of Rochester, and is located at Strong Hospital. He has made many visits to organize the new facility and will continue in the next few weeks. "We know there will be bumps in the road," he said.



Opening Strong West's Urgent Care Center are (l to r) nurses Lianna Gates, Delia Bove, Dr. Mike Kamali, nurse Anne-Marie "Corky" Dailey, and nurse practitioner Paula Fessler. The nurses were formerly Lakeside Hospital employees. Dr. Kamali and Ms. Fessler are from Strong Hospital, directing the center's opening. Photograph by Dianne Hickerson.

Continued on page 6

The Bread Man: Thirteen years, 40,000 free loaves and rising

Continued from page one

He was reminded of this when presenting at a high school reunion. From the elderly alumni came very touching stories of teachers or staff who influenced them in school decades ago.

Chet's staff development message also has been delivered to pre-school teachers, food service workers, Strong Hospital emergency personnel, and others. He says the message of kindness to others can "change the whole workplace, the whole school, the whole company."

Practicing what he teaches

With his busy schedule serving others, does Chet obey his rule to "Take Care of Yourself"? He said he will sometimes ask his wife Marina, "Is there something we have not done that we need to do?" They do make special moments, he said. There are weekends away to visit family, a wedding in St. Louis recently, and a concert at Silver Lake that night. Trips have been limited to three or four days during their married life, but for their 36th wedding anniversary in October a cruise is planned.

Besides his bread making, Chet has found "A Happy Place" in an African drumming circle. "It keeps me balanced," he said about playing the djembe drum with about 100 people. "Tension moves away and you get in rhythm with others. My goal in working with a group (in his presentations) is making a connection with people, helping us feel one. Drumming does this."

In keeping with his value of kindness freely given, he will not sell his bread or accept donations from people who offer. If an organization has a speaker's budget, he accepts a fee; if they don't, his program is free. "The message is more important than the money," he said. "I find I usually get my materials almost paid for in the course of a year."

Fundamental for Chet's balanced life is a day hitting the road. "A perfect day is to bake 20 loaves of bread, put them in my bread bag and head somewhere, like Macedon or Webster. It's the best afternoon for me, reconnecting with people, meeting new people, and giving away the bread. It fills me up." His road trips may be a healthy escape from his busy schedule of group appearances. Yet, the message, the medium,



"The Bread Man" Chet Fery and his wife Marina (at his right) talk with students while providing bread after a recent Sunday Mass at the Newman Center on The College at Brockport campus. It is the place where a student first named him "The Bread Man" more than a decade ago. Photo by Dianne Hickerson.

and the reward are same. "It's invigorating. You can create an atmosphere of goodness and kindness by stopping in a shop or a mall and giving someone -- an old friend or a stranger -- a loaf of bread."

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Display cases inject historic roots into the daily routine

by Doug Hickerson

The expanding electronic media fills us with information and images of the present world. In a "now" culture, the past is easily neglected and historic roots become irrelevant. That is, until history pops into sight in the course of our daily lives. That is the strategy of the Brockport Community Museum Without Walls (MWW).

The Museum Without Walls has planted bits of local history in nine display cases in public places in the Brockport area. The display cases contain literature, photos, books, post cards, and real artifacts surviving more than 100 years of Brockport history (see photo). Six of the cases are table-style in oak and were made in the Brockport School District carpentry shop. Three ready-made cases were also contributed. Contents of the cases are provided by the Emily L. Knapp Museum and private individuals, and are detailed on the web site www.brockportcommunitymuseum.org. The cases are located at: Seymour Library, Chase Bank, Sweden Town Hall, Sweden Senior Center, Oliver Middle School, Hill School, Sweden/Clarkson Community Center, Dollinger's Inn and Suites, and the Wal-Mart Super Center.

The display cases present an amazing variety of products, people and places from the past. Awe is mixed with appreciation for the early industry and industry that have made present day Brockport rich in history with Landmark recognition.

There are also six historic interpretive panels placed around the Brockport area providing similar instant history lessons by MWW. The panels, measuring about two feet by three feet, provide photos and brief history on subjects like Brockport's educational institutions, commerce, the canal and

firefighting. The most recent panel was dedicated in Sagawa Park on October 19, featuring "Historic Churches in Downtown Brockport" (reported in the October 27, 2013 Suburban News and Hamil-Clarkson Herald. See web site www.westside-newsny.com.)

"The Museum Without Walls" concept was initiated by Bill Andrews, founding first president of the organization. The innovation was as an alternative to a defunct original plan for a stone-and-mortar Brockport Community Museum at 60 Clinton Street in Brockport. Feasibility studies in early 2000 gave estimates in the millions of dollars for restoration of the historic warehouse, plus \$50,000 in annual operating expenses for a museum.

"The whole idea is that we go out into the community with our exhibits and interpretive signs, rather than getting people to come to us," Andrews said about the practical alternative to a standing museum. "They are right out in the open where people are walking, staring them in the face." In contrast to the daunting expense of a museum, "We literally have no budget," he said. "We cost the taxpayers of the village nothing."

The museum organization includes an Interior Display Committee for the display cases and Exterior Display Committee for interpretive panels. Interior Display Committee members are co-chairs Bill Andrews and Sean Bruno, George N. Dahl, Karlene VanDeusen and Douglas Wolcott. Exterior Display Committee members are current MWW president and committee chair, Allan Berry, plus George N. Dahl, Norman J. Frisch, Kory Hunsinger, and Karlene VanDeusen. Two other components of the MWW are the web site and ongoing interviews with local citizens eventually to preserve an oral history of Brockport on the web site.



At the Sweden Senior Center, Bill Andrews stands at a display case containing buttons, dolls, tin ware, fishing tackle, shoes, and other artifacts of Brockport's manufacturing history. A kerosene can, a woman's shoe and a card of buttons are placed on top for better photo visibility. Photo by Dianne Hickerson.

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The Bread Man: Thirteen years, 40,000 free loaves and rising

by Doug Hickerson

In the greater Rochester area, "The Bread Man" is becoming a legend akin to Johnny Appleseed. He is Chet Fery, a town of Sweden resident who has traveled widely for 13 years, giving away free loaves of bread, and planting seeds of human kindness in his inspirational presentations.

He bakes loaves of bread at home to give away to his audiences and to friends and strangers. For Chet, making bread and handing out loaves is a simple act of kindness. Along with the sharing of bread at events come the "bread time stories" which tell about people engaged in kindness toward others. In Chet's affable style he demonstrates bread making while talking, engaging his audience to share their stories of making bread, now or in their family history, and of acts of kindness they have experienced. They leave with a new awareness of the power-

ful impact of kindness toward others. They also leave with a recipe for making two loaves of bread; one to keep and one to give away. Chet's ultimate goal for his bread project is "changing our lives and creating a world community that is caring, supportive and secure."

Chet's appealing wisdom is in such demand that he is booked up through February, with four or more events per week, at groups like senior centers, scouts, churches, historical societies, community centers, college campuses, weddings, and similar events. In 2012 he presented at 180 events, gave away 5,600 loaves and traveled approximately 9,000 miles.

Finding new ways to deliver his message

Producing thousands of loaves and driving thousands of miles in a year does not faze Chet Fery. He works at a leisurely pace in his home kitchen where he has two standard ovens. He told his own story there recently for Westside News, as he did three years ago (*Suburban*

"A perfect day is to bake 20 loaves of bread, put them in my bread bag and head somewhere, like Macedon or Webster. It's the best afternoon for me, reconnecting with people, meeting new people, and giving away the bread. It fills me up."

Chet Fery
The Bread Man

News, Hamlin-Clarkson Herald, July 25, 2010). Chet's words mingled with the aroma of baking bread.

He shared how his bread project has evolved since the interview three years ago. He has started bread

making in his presentations. "I found the visual of the hands on and watching dough rise intrigues us, especially our generation," Chet said. He is also doing bread making classes in a more formal way, recently at Tops Markets cooking school in Greece. He has begun singing songs — one he learned first from his father, and a Gospel song "Thank You Lord" he heard at an AME Church.

For a different mode of storytelling, Chet has taken a college course in one-act play writing, with a goal of acting out a story about Millie and her broom. He had heard 80-year-old Millie's stories of sweeping for 73 years. "I thought, wow, that straw broom and sweeping was an important part of our lives, too," Chet said. "The broom represents family, commitment, and keeping order. And, when you swept, you could think, grieve, or be joyful. The idea has captivated me."

A major change in Chet's bread project is an increase in staff development presentations.

Staff Development

The Bread Man recently spoke to 900 teachers and staff in the Fairport School District for their opening day. He did the same motivational presentation for the Brockport School District last year. "People in public service must take care of their own needs first to keep themselves strong, focused and balanced, taking time to like themselves," he said. His check list to accomplish this starts with *Take Care of Yourself*. "Without a basic self-love,



Chet Fery at work in his kitchen in Sweden Village during a recent interview. Photo by Dianne Hickerson.

other people are less likely to see the goodness in us," Chet advises, with encouragement to indulge in self-affirming treats and activity. *Take Care of Others* is next. "We all do a good job at that," he said, but advises finding a brief time for a closer one-to-one to make a person feel special. "Really committing time to a person gives it a punch." Third is to *Put Order in Our Lives*. Citing clutter on a desk or a mess in the garage, "It manages you rather than you managing the chaos," Chet said. "You never get caught up." Fourth is to *Find Companionship*. "Spend time with someone who gives you unconditional support," Chet said, such as a coffee buddy or family member with whom to chat or share deeper experiences. Finally, *Find a Happy Place*. For Chet, "making bread is my happy place." He urges everyone to have their special activity and space "that guarantees happiness, like walking, or reading, or working with your hands." He tells his audiences, "If you do those five things every day, you are going to lead a fulfilled and enriched life."

Chet likes to remind teachers, "When we create a special moment with a young person, we are planting something in their heart that will stay with them their whole lives." A retired educator himself, he said, "Kids will remember the teacher in their classroom who made them feel good in a critical time in their lives."



"The Bread Man" Chet Fery talks with a Brockport college student about the kinds of bread he and his wife Marina passed out after Mass at the Newman Center. Photo by Dianne Hickerson.

Interpretive panel "Historic Churches in Downtown Brockport" dedicated in Sagawa Park as newest Museum Without Walls element

by Doug Hickerson

Sagawa Park on Main Street, Brockport, now displays an attractive and informative panel with photos, graphics and facts entitled "Historic Churches in Downtown Brockport." The interpretive panel was dedicated on Saturday, October 19, as a gift from the Brockport Community Museum to the Village of Brockport. Allan Berry, chair of the Museum, made the presentation to Mayor Margay Blackman.

The interpretive panel was produced by the Brockport Community Museum which is a "Museum Without Walls." It names the sponsors who paid for the panel as the Presbyterian, United Methodist, Baptist, Episcopal, Catholic, Free Methodist and Lutheran churches in Brockport. The panel is one of six existing interpretive panels describing the history of Brockport village, the surrounding township and Erie Canal.

How did the "Museum Without Walls" get started? The Brockport Community Museum was chartered by the New York State Education Department in 2002. The organization originally pursued a traditional museum building, desiring to restore the historic stone and frame structure at 60 Clinton Street, last used as a car repair shop. Feasibility studies by an architectural firm and a past president of the Landmark Society gave estimates as high as \$4 million, plus yearly maintenance.

Faced with the daunting expense for a stone-and-mortar museum, the Museum Board displayed its ingenuity by conceiving of a "museum without walls." Its genius is



The interpretive panel, three feet by two feet, entitled "Historic Churches in Downtown Brockport" stands in Sagawa Park. It features photos of historic church buildings, a time line of each church's development, and a walking map locating the churches. Rev. Benjamin Titus Roberts is also pictured, founder of the Free Methodist Church of North America beginning in Brockport in 1860. Photo by Dianne Hickerson.



Allan Berry, chair of the Brockport Community Museum, presented the interpretive panel "Historic Churches in Downtown Brockport" in Sagawa Park to Brockport's Mayor Margay Blackman at an informal ceremony on Saturday, October 19. Photo by Dianne Hickerson.

to bring the museum to the people, making it accessible and affordable to the public. "By placing historic materials in prominent sites throughout the village, the museum makes its presence very evident and brings Brockport's history forcefully into the lives of its residents," the website states.

Another feature of the interpretive panels is the sponsorship by local organizations whose proud history is displayed. The organization pays (or multiple organizations share) up to \$1,500 for the installed panel produced by the Brockport Community Museum. It's an investment in community education as well as promoting organization history. Other themes and sponsors on interpretive panels are: "Public Education" in front of the Middle School, sponsored by the Brockport Central School District; "Higher Education" on the front lawn of Hartwell Hall, sponsored by the College at Brockport; "Fire Fighting in Brockport" on the West Avenue fire hall of the Protectives Inc. No. 1, sponsored by the Protectives; and, "Fire Fighting" at the Market Street headquarters of the Brockport Fire Department, sponsored by BFD.

In some cases a third party provides the funds, such as the panel "Canal Commerce in Brockport" on the south east side of the Main Street canal bridge paid for by Brad and Lance Alexander at the Express Mart and Northside Service Center.

In the near future, an interpretive panel on "Main Street in the early 1900s" will be dedicated in front of the Bittersweet store at the corner of Main and Market Streets. It has been paid for by the Hill School 4th graders

in Ms. Wanzer's and Ms. Jungbluth's classes selling calendars depicting historic Brockport.

By bringing the museum to the community one sponsored panel at a time, the Museum Committee also enjoys financial simplicity and efficiency. "The amazing thing is we don't have a budget and we don't do any fundraising," Allan Berry says about the panels that are prepaid before installation. The museum organization is uncomplicated, too, with a multitude of "friends" enlisted and guided by Museum Committee. Besides Berry, committee members are: George N. Dahl, Norman J. Frisch, Kory Hunsinger, and Karlene VanDeusen. "We are a small group, but we are moving as quickly as possible," Berry says about the different projects under way.

Interpretive panels are just one of four components of the "Museum Without Walls" bringing local history into the community. There are nine interior display cases throughout the area containing museum artifacts, photos, and information about local history. There are also ongoing interviews of citizens taking place as a means of preserving local history. Eventually the interviews will be recorded on the website. The website for the Museum contains extensive information at www.brockportcommunitymuseum.org.

Editor's Note: Read about other components of the "Museum Without Walls" in future editions of *Suburban News* and *Hamlin-Clarkson Herald* from freelance writer Doug Hickerson.

Suburban News

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Special Santas present gifts to each resident at Lakeside Beikirch Care Center

by Doug Hickerson

On Wednesday, December 18, lively chatter filled the Lakeside Beikirch Care Center lobby, as over a dozen people waited to unload Christmas gifts from the truck outside. The visitors, many in Santa hats, came from The College at Brockport to present each of the 114 residents a gift they had asked for. They were part of the Brockport Auxiliary Services Corporation (BASC) which contracts with the college to provide all food services, the bookstore, parking services other support. Fourteen staff members and two administrators were helping with the Beikirch event.

Merriment and military precision

Beikirch staff arrived in the lobby with carts to help these Santas bring the presents to the three floors of the residence. Boxes of presents with residents' names and room numbers streamed from the truck into the lobby and were immediately placed on carts for their designated floor. Soon, a train of gift-laden carts lined up at the elevators. Several BASC staff went to each floor with a Beikirch staff member and the gifts were given to each resident personally.

Betty Drennen was the heart and mind behind the event, working with Beikirch's recreation director Nancy Duff. Drennen is the executive administrative assistant for BASC, and has been with the college for 44 years. "We connected with Beikirch months ago," Drennen said, "and with their help we found an item that each resident would like." She sent the wish list to all BASC operations. "Any employee from student to management could adopt a resident and buy the item that was on the ticket," she said. "A week and a half later all the residents were all adopted. I was flabbergated." Gifts included sweaters, fleece blankets, bath lotion sets, crafts sets, books, CDs. There was over \$310 donated in cash, spent in part on a fresh flower for each resident. Each gift was tagged and gift bagged for ease of opening.

Motivation

Drennen's motivation was very personal. "My mom and dad (now deceased) were at Beikirch in rehab, and I lost an uncle in a nursing home," she said. "I came to realize how many elderly people over the holidays don't have anyone." Last year, in memory of her mom and dad, Drennen worked with Nancy Duff to adopt four Beikirch residents to receive gifts. "This year, I thought about something bigger," she said about the day's project. "I like to think each



Left, Betty Drennen of BASC and Beikirch's Nancy Duff are the two coordinators of the gift distribution to Beikirch residents. They joined the activity with their staffs. Photo by Dianne Hickerson.



Beikirch resident Olof Carlson gives a smile before opening his Christmas gift. He was one of the 114 residents who each received a gift from the Brockport Auxiliary Service Corporation (BASC). Photo by Dianne Hickerson.

and every one of these residents has contributed a lifetime to their family and the community, and this seemed like a nice way for us to give something back to them."

Magic moments

Drennen reflected on vignettes from the morning. "On one floor our staff came out and was in tears because the resident in the room wanted them to sing Jingle Bells, which they did. On another floor a lady came out of her room wearing a new Christmas sweater and said, 'Look at this. I didn't think it was going to fit me' (but it did). Another lady asked me where I got my Santa hat. She really liked it, so I gave it to her. She was all excited because she would go shopping with it tomorrow. A lady on fourth floor opened a gift blanket and hugged it. It melted my heart."

Mutual support and appreciation

"I congratulate Betty Drennen for such a fine idea and for leading her group, seeing it through to the end," Nancy Duff said. "They were extremely organized and displayed such compassion and support to the residents in purchasing personal presents and fresh flowers for every resident, plus taking the time to personally hand them out. If that wasn't enough, they made trays of homemade cookies for our staff."

"We had a lot of communication to keep things coordinated," Drennen said about working with Duff. "She and her staff were very organized. It has been true joy to work with them and see them so appreciative. It has been very fulfilling personally for me."

Kimberly Cisco, Beikirch's administrator, helped during the gift giving. "Holidays are a difficult time for a lot of people," she said, "especially residents who live in long term care facilities. The look on each resident's face as they were given a gift is just too difficult to describe, what joy they had." She added, "This was a wonderful event. Betty's team was so organized and caring in the way they did it, and so excited. We are deeply grateful."



Beikirch resident Ruth Langdon opens a gift presented by the Brockport Auxiliary Service Corporation (BASC) on December 18. Photo by Dianne Hickerson.





Local historian Eunice Chesnut in her office in the Morgan-Manning House with copies of the newly-published **Encyclopedia of Brockport, Volume Two** ready for sale. Photo by Dianne Hickerson.

Historian Eunice Chesnut publishes volume two: 'Encyclopedia of Brockport'

by Doug Hickerson

When Eunice Chesnut had just published her first volume of **Encyclopedia of Brockport**, she had to cut about 45 entries from the book due to limited space. "I am saving those entries for Volume Two," she said, but then questioned her sanity. "At 84 years of age, who in her right mind would think of Volume Two?"

That was May 30, 2010 (**Suburban News, Hamlin-Clarkson Herald**). Now, at 88 years old and quite sane, Eunice has completed Volume Two.

In a recent reprise of that first Westside News interview, she was asked what it was like to "give second birth to your book." In her typical quick wit, the reply was, "It was a long, hard, labor."

That labor did not just add names and places to extend the first volume. Her first encyclopedia contained facts on almost 2,000 people, from earliest arrivals in the area to current citizens. Volume Two does cover about 98 percent new names and places, but also has new visual appeal with historic file photos and illustrative ink drawings contributed by her daughter Glynn Chesnut. Eunice used a slightly different writing style "to make it a lighter reading with added interest." Compared to the first volume "which I made strictly business with more specific facts," she has included current commentary from people about the historic details.

Asked about challenges in writing this volume, Eunice said she had the text ready in September, but then the publishing date was delayed because of the decision to add photos and illustrations. Also, about a month of on-and-off illness diminished her productivity. The final frustration was the crashing of her computer which scrambled the new layout of text and graphics. The delays meant missing the intended early December publication for gift sales.

With the crises passed and 200 boxed encyclopedias under her work table ready for sale, Eunice said, "I feel good that it's put together and completed, because I think everything in there is worth preserving." She sees the book as unique, referring to many compiled newspaper clippings, quotes from Bill Andrews (Brockport Village Historian Emeritus), and other resources. "I would say I have offered something that hasn't been written before."

The book is available at the Morgan-Manning House, 151 Main Street in Brockport. The cost is \$30 for Western Monroe Historical Society members and \$35 for non-members. Proceeds support the society. For information, phone 637-3645. It is also available at the Lift Bridge

Brockport Ecumenical Outreach Committee marks milestone

A fire sparks a quarter century of attention to migrant farm workers' needs

by Doug Hickerson

Most citizens are aware of the clothing center in the basement of Brockport's St. Luke's Episcopal Church, first started to serve the migrant farm workers, but now open to all. Many have participated in the spring "Bienvenida" celebration welcoming migrant farm workers with a parade, a dinner, and Mexican dances. Brockport residents may not realize that the clothing center and festival were started in 1990 by the Brockport Ecumenical Outreach Committee (BEOC). BEOC has a long history of many other activities serving the migrant farmworker population.

Founded in February 1989, BEOC celebrates its 25th anniversary this year. The organization began as a result of a fire that brought attention to the living conditions of migrant farm workers in the community. It now consists of seven Brockport churches, three related area organizations, and three all-large members (see side bar).

In 1989, a fire in a Brockport Main Street apartment revealed that 40 migrant farmworkers were living in a one-room apartment with one bathroom. Inquiries into the incident made Brockport area churches aware of the hostility, discrimination, and difficult material conditions in which many farm workers lived. Brockport resident Erna Bowman first invited area churches to come together in concern for the farm workers.

According to Barb Deming, author of *An Abridged History of Activities for BEOC*, "Eight churches joined with farmworkers, growers, and several agencies that work with migrant farmworkers to 'encourage a peaceful multicultural community.' This would be accomplished by increasing mutual understanding, reducing prejudice and addressing food, clothing, housing and education needs of farmworkers, and assisting them to empower themselves." With that expressed purpose, the eight churches formed the BEOC, and since "has been an organization that has responded to voices in the farmworker community," the history continues. Deming was president of BEOC from 1996 to 2005, following Bowman who was the first president. The BEOC became an affiliate member of the Greater Rochester Community of Churches in 1993.

Interventions

The quarter century of outreach is characterized in part by awareness of farmworker needs and collaboration among re-

sponders in a long history of interventions (see side bar).

Advocacy

Another aspect of BEOC outreach is advocacy for farmworkers and for consumer purchase of local produce. Farmworker Advocacy Day started in 1995 and continues today, helping farmworkers empower themselves through state-wide networking and lobbying for legislative changes. In early 2000 BEOC worked with local growers to promote locally grown produce, advocating for the farmworkers and growers behind them. The "Bienvenida" festivities began in 1990 to promote appreciation for farmworkers as well as to welcome them.

Systemic Action

At the systemic level of BEOC's work, current BEOC president Bill Plews included this statement in an address to his church's congregation, St. Luke's Episcopal Church in October, 2013: "We work to support legislative change that would give migrant farmworkers just treatment and an end to discrimination. At the federal level, we are working for Comprehensive Immigration Reform. We seek legal status for those who are here, with a path to citizenship for those who desire it. For future immigrants, we support a system that fulfills our need for agricultural labor without penalizing those who come to fill those needs. At the State level we seek an end to discrimination against farmworkers. Specifically, they should get overtime pay, a day of rest, and the right of collective bargaining. Much of the work that we do in this area involves supporting the larger efforts of the Rural and Migrant Ministry headed by Richard Witt." In this quarter-century milestone, Plews was asked about the rewards he has received in his position as BEOC's president. "I can't imagine more rewarding work, given that we are a faith-based organization working on issues related to fair treatment for all and to loving thy neighbor. On top of that, I get to work with a group of people that I respect and care for."

Interventions -- A sampling condensed from original sources

Early BEOC history (from Barb Deming's *An Abridged History of Activities*)

- In May 1989, a **Migrant Information Night Forum** was held at Brockport High School with farmworkers as panelists and an audience including growers, clergy, officials, and other special guests.
- In spring, 1990, Amy Machamer of Hurd Orchards in Holley organized sessions of **Survival Spanish for Growers** to improve communications with their workers.
- A **Clothing Center** was started in August,



Members of the Brockport Ecumenical Outreach Committee (BEOC) prior to their December 12 meeting at St. Luke's Episcopal Church in Brockport. (front l to r) Charlotte Wright, Barb Deming, Peg Hale, Donna Laundry; (second l to r) Krista Gardner, Sister Beverly Baker, Penny Gardner, Ann Jasmyn; (back l to r) Dennis Lysy, P. J. Benedetti, Kathy Geetz, Bill Plews, Grace Carson. Absent from photo are: Sandy Cain, Rosario Rangel, and Don Zimmer. Photo by Dianne Hickerson.

1990 in the basement of Brockport's St. Luke's Episcopal Church and continues to this day.

- *An Investigation of a Farmworker Drowning* was conducted from June through August, 1991, clearing a police officer of allegations that he pushed the victim. The investigation revealed problems of alleged bias toward farmworkers by police in various law enforcement agencies.
- *A Farmworker Law Enforcement Agency Public Forum* was held in December 1991 to discuss accusations of bias and abuse with a panel of three farmworkers and representatives of three police agencies.
- *Motor Vehicle Workshops* were held in the summer of 1992, 1993, and 1994. The public forum (above) revealed that a major issue related to motor vehicle operations, ownership, insurance, equipment violations, registrations and driver's licenses.
- A bus *Shelter at Migrant Camp* was built in 1995 for migrant children who were waiting for the school bus in the dark and inclement weather. A local contractor, the

Membership in BEOC

Churches

First Baptist Church
First Presbyterian Church
Nativity Catholic Church
St. Luke's Episcopal Church
United Methodist Church
Unitarian Universalist Fellowship
Newman Catholic Center

Related Agencies

Brockport Ecumenical Food Shelf
Hispanic Migrant Ministry
Oak Orchard Health Center

At Large

Sandy Cain
Barb Deming
Rosario Rangel

farm owners, and farmworkers collaborated in the planning and building.

Recent assistance to farm workers (From Bill Plews' address to his church in October 2013):

- A woman needed three nights lodging for herself and her daughters before joining her husband who had found work in Georgia.
- Another woman needed a trip to Albion Family Courts for an order of protection from her American boyfriend who had abused her and her baby.
- A man needed two trips to the Mexican Consulate on Wheels in Geneva to get his passport.
- Another man was sick with West Nile Virus and needed airfare to Mexico to be cared for by his relatives.
- Carl Wheat agreed to help out with transportation, and is now teaching the teenage son of a migrant farmworker family how to drive.

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Three honored for community initiatives and caring

by Doug Hickerson

Donald Lage

Monika W. Andrews Creative Volunteer Leadership Award winner
Clarkson Academy restoration

After many decades of neglect and water damage, the once derelict Clarkson Academy building is now an historic showcase, restored to its original dignity and serving as a museum and community center. It is on the National Register of Historic Places.

The Greek Revival two-story brick schoolhouse is located next to the Clarkson Community Church at the four corners in Clarkson. Built in 1853, the Academy was an institution of higher learning until the late 1800s. Then it served as a local school house until it was abandoned in 1956. Its restoration began in 2003, when the Clarkson Historical Society (CHS) organized for that purpose. Over a ten-year period ending in 2013, Don Lage methodically designed and directed the project. He also served as president of CHS in the midst of the project from 2006 to 2012.

Lage proved himself a "man for all seasons," with skills in construction, fundraising, record keeping, and project management. "Don had a unique ability to get others to buy into our effort and to provide material, financial and moral support," said Mary Edwards, current CHS president.

The building's entire mechanical system had to be completely revamped. With a background in construction, "He was blessed with a way of working with the many contractors over the years," said Edwards. "He worked with roofers, carpenters, painters, expert craftsmen and electricians. Encouraged by his zeal for the project, many of the artisans and tradesmen also wanted to be a part of this area-wide volunteer effort and gave of their resources without compensation."

Lage kept the total cost to \$197,000 for the project which was valued at over a million dollars. The sources of support were

generous and varied. The Town of Clarkson and Clarkson Community Church donated in-kind services worth \$22,000. Friends and members of the Clarkson Historical Society gave \$69,000. Rochester Area Community Foundation and New York State grants totaled \$93,000. Contractors and wholesale corporations gave in-kind services valued at \$13,000. And, volunteer support made it happen. "The unseen contributions that are so necessary in such a venture have been from volunteers, whose work has totaled more than 4,500 hours," Lage said in his final report on the project.

"Among Don's many talents are his well-honed organizational skills and his attention to detail," Edwards said. "He kept meticulous records and detailed photos of the restoration from start to finish while also maintaining excellent records as president of the Clarkson Historical Society."

The Clarkson Academy now stands as an historic gem as well as a community meeting place. The first floor has refurbished walls and ceiling, a new white oak floor, new lighting, and a built-in sound system. Its uses include local organizations' meetings, history lectures, fund raising events and funeral memorials. The second floor is a restored classroom with refurbished original book cases and a table. The room is complete with thirty-five 19th century desks donated over the ten-year period. It is used by local 4th grade students to learn about the school days of the past.

The completed work of Lage and the Clarkson Historical Society has been well acclaimed. In April 2013, Lage and Edwards were asked to present a paper on "Rehabbing of the Clarkson Academy" at the Rochester Landmark Society's Preservation Conference held in Brockport.



Monika W. Andrews Creative Volunteer Leadership Award recipient **Donald Lage** is shown at right. Recipients of Honorable Mention are **Debbie Cody**, left, and **Jessica DeToy**, center. Photo by Dianne Hickerson.

At an August 1, 2013 event celebrating the project's completion, over 100 people attended including local, county and state-elected officials each presenting a framed resolution thanking Lage for his outstanding contribution to historic preservation in Clarkson.

On November 10, 2013, the Landmark Society of Western New York presented the Clarkson Historical Society with its Stewardship Award. The award was one of several in different categories presented to eleven individuals and organizations in a nine-county area for "outstanding efforts in the preservation of their homes, historic properties and landscapes." CHS was the sole winner of the Stewardship Award

which recognizes "continued care of and commitment to the preservation of an architecturally and/or historically significant property ... over a period of years."

Lage, at age 80, reflected on what the Monika Andrews Award means to him: "I am proud of myself and my team when I look at the completed building. It brings me joy to know the schools are using it to teach the children what school was like in yesteryear. I've made lifelong friends during the process. The award says to me, 'Don, you did something right to have such dear friends nominate you and stand by you during the whole process.' I thank everyone dearly for a job that took a whole village to complete."

At the Emily L. Knapp Museum: Putting order to an extensive local history collection

A community invested in organizing, cleaning, and filing to revive Brockport's showcase of historic treasures

Editor's note: Freelance writer Doug Hickerson and his wife, Dianne, toured the Emily L. Knapp Museum and provided this perspective of their visit. Dianne photographed parts of the extensive display for this feature and a second article to follow.

by Doug Hickerson

At the top of a long stairway in the Emily L. Knapp Museum, Dianne and I found the bustling activity of many volunteers at work. There was lively talk among the women, as collection items were being moved, cleaned and organized in a labyrinth of rooms. On that floor, and another flight up, every room was filled with an astounding number and variety of historic clothes, furnishings, pictures, toys, machines, books, documents, and more. After the visual feast, our focus turned to individual artifacts that were well-labeled, revealing their role in Brockport's history.

Those energized workers, led by Sue Savard, were near the end of a year-and-a-half of bringing order out of chaos in the historic collection. The project started soon after Savard visited the museum to do some research and found the collection in disarray. The work aims to help revive the museum located at 49 State Street. It seems to have faded from public awareness, even as the attached Brockport Village Hall sees daily public traffic.

Order out of chaos

Savard came to the museum in January 2013, to research one-room school houses. "There was stuff there, but you could not find it," she said about materials spilling over from filing cabinets, drawers, and shelves. From that experience, she recalled, "I thought, 'I am going to start a filing system,' having no idea a year-and-a-half later I would still be filing things."

The project went beyond filing to a major sorting and organizing of the museum collection. Very impressive were two closets that originally contained boxes of jumbled documents, now neatly shelved. One closet now has shelves labeled "year books, education, novels, history, local authors, technical, and children's books." The top shelves have children's games and law books from the 1800s. The other closet was similarly organized with archival boxes and book sleeves containing ledgers, fan-

ily Bibles, travel scrap books, post cards and more. Savard had typed all the labels and is making a list of every item for reference.

Labor but keeping it light

Savard praised all who have supported the project. "I am very lucky to have so many people who have helped me. I could not have done this by myself."

Reaching out to friends, she had enlisted a team of helpers who have been working each Monday morning. Most of the team were present on the day of our interview. As a team leader, Savard says she is fairly good at sensing what tasks the volunteers prefer and gives them a choice. The clothing closet was the main task that day, the last area to straighten out. Deb Talley and Rosemary Smith were padding wooden hangers. Margi Lewis hung some pictures and started unloading the clothing closet. Chris

Hunt came to photograph the clothes. Anne Frey made a list of books in the Mary Jane Holmes room. Jane Avery recorded a large collection of yearbooks going back to 1897. Sarah Cedeno, another dedicated worker, could not be there that day.

"Sometimes we go to lunch afterwards," Savard said. "We make it fun," evident in the spirited chatter heard that morning. "Last spring I had a champagne luncheon at my house for the women who helped me. I took the men out to breakfast in early fall."

The men volunteers are called to do special tasks. For example, Jim Bolthouse and Delos Jones turned a pile of tools into an attractive display, moved sewing machines around and hung signs. Tom Lewis built shelves and hung pictures. Allan Berry and his brother, Bob, painted the bathroom. Allan painted the library closet. Norm Frisch has helped by providing scanning and photography services.

A wide variety

of support for the project

Besides the immediate team she works with, Savard credits Jackie Morris, Museum Director and Village Historian, Doug Wolcott, Dan Burns, and Raylene Bucklin, "members of the (museum) committee who have given their time and effort to make the museum available on Wednesday afternoons and evenings, as well as for special visitation requests." She adds, "They



The cozy country kitchen in the Emily Knapp museum contains samples of dishes, cookware, utensils and furniture typical of a farm kitchen in the 1800s. The collection includes a complete reaper from the earliest days of Brockport's history (below). In 1846, the manufacture and sale of this machinery made Brockport famous around the world. Photographs by Dianne Hickerson.



also have helped our organization project by providing us with their valuable insight into the history of the village and its early residents. And, they have coordinated with the College at Brockport students in Museum Studies who are busy working on cataloging our items. The students are creating a database of information so it will eventually be a complete reference for the use of anyone with access to the internet."

Savard praises the Department of Public Works for helping with many heavy lifting jobs and installing equipment such as a toilet and window air conditioners. "For the staff downstairs (the Village office) it's the same thing," she said, naming several helpful services and guidance provided "with a smile" by the office staff. "Mayor Margay Blackman is a strong supporter of our efforts in the museum," she said. "I have received really good support from everybody. They are excited that something is happening up here I think."

Fruits of their labor -- to date

- 1,632 file folders labeled, filed, organized, and alphabetized
- 1,009 books organized and placed in archival sleeves and on shelves
- About 1,500 pictures, some labeled, some displayed, some stored
- About 200 bound historic newspaper books sleeved and organized chronologically

Currently setting up displays

Plan to visit

The Emily L. Knapp Museum at 49 State Street in Brockport is open every Wednesday from 2 to 4 and 7 to 9 p.m. A special Grand Opening event will be held on Saturday, July 5, as part of Old Home Week, part of the Town of Sweden's 200th anniversary. Savard says there is a rumor that Jane Seymour and possibly the ghost of Helen Seymour will be there that day.

Note: Read more in an upcoming issue of *Suburban News and Hamlin-Clarkson Herald*. Doug Hickerson will explore the museum's lingering problems and possible long-term solutions.

A devoted leader with diverse interests

Sue Savard was a business education teacher at Brockport High School for a number of years and eventually taught at Albion High School until she left teaching in 1988. She then taught computer applications for IBM and the State Education Department.

At age 76, Savard is a dynamo involved in the museum and many other activities. She estimates she puts in a total of 35 hours a week at the museum and at home working on the collection. At home she types labels for files and for pictures. She has transcribed "four huge diaries from the 1800s, all over 100 pages" turning script into typewritten pages. She is on the Brockport Community Museum board as well as the Emily L. Knapp Museum committee. She meets with a writing group weekly, travels, bikes, and skis downhill and cross country. She sews, quilts, baby sits grandchildren, and takes care of her home and garden by herself. Her husband, Jim, taught eighth grade social studies at Brockport's Middle School from 1963 until 1989. He died on April 17, 2010.

Sue Savard stands in front of one of 32 file drawers containing historical information gathered and organized by the volunteers. Photograph by Dianne Hickerson.



The children's room houses a collection of books, toys, games, clothing and baby shoes from the late 1800s, many of them donated by the earliest settlers. Photograph by Dianne Hickerson.



The Mary Jane Holmes room contains a complete collection of her novels and several pieces of furniture from her very large home which she referred to as her "Little Brown Cottage." Photograph by Dianne Hickerson.

Brockport's Emily L. Knapp Museum undergoes revival

Lingering problems and possible solutions defined

by Doug Hickerson

A previous issue of *Suburban News*, **Hamlin-Clarkson Herald** presented the work of Sue Savard and her helpers restoring order and appeal to the Emily L. Knapp Museum collection located at 49 State Street in Brockport. What prompted the project was Savard's visit to the museum a year-and-a-half ago to do research and finding "materials spilling over from filing cabinets, drawers, and shelves." Lacking public awareness and interest for years, the museum has been revived and welcomes the community to return to the showcase of Brockport's historic treasures. (See April 27, 2014, "Emily L. Knapp Museum: A community invested in organizing, cleaning, and filing to revive Brockport's showcase of historic treasures" now on web site www.westsidenewsny.com).

There remain persistent problems with the museum: uncontrolled collection contributions, no comprehensive filing system data base, poor accessibility, lack of climate control, lack of long-term financial footing, and exclusive residency requirements for governing committee membership. With more detail, and highlighting possible remedies, are considered here:

Collection contributions. How did the museum get so cluttered over the years? "What happens is that people clean out grampa's attic and decide we should have it," Savard said about items brought from all around the area that have not been refused. She explained there is no accession policy which would state the original intention that a donated item can come only from the village of Brockport. "That would make it easier to say, as a matter of policy, 'Thank you for thinking of us, but it is not from Brockport and we can't accept it.'" A deaccession policy is also needed, she added, which enables releasing unwanted collection items under specified terms, such as selling them on eBay.

Climate Control. There is no climate control, neither heat in the winter nor cooling in the summer, except for two rooms with window air conditioners. That causes slow deterioration to the clothing, paper, furniture and other items in the collection. It also causes discomfort for visitors on warm summer days, and lack of heating has necessitated closing during the winter.

Accessibility. Another problem is the museum location on a second and third floor accessible only by long stairways. That creates handicap inaccessibility and discomfort for any with physical limitations. Visually, the upstairs museum remains hidden from public view, lacking a welcoming walk-in entrance.

The problems of climate control, and especially accessibility, seem solvable only by a move to a new facility. At present, the former Fowler Funeral Home at number 52, across State Street from the museum, could be an option. "It's perfect," Sue Savard said, adding it does need some work. Such a move might call for a capital campaign or other funding. The purchase and maintenance costs could not come from the village general fund (see financial item below).

Database directory. "Although Sue Savard has established a comprehensive filing system," Mayor Margay Blackman said, "the museum needs a full comprehensive computer data base of its collection accessible on site or on line."

Savard and her team have organized about 1,150 books; she has typed a list with their locations in the museum. They also organized documents in over 1,600 file folders so far in 32 file drawers; Savard has typed a list of their file drawer locations. Each typed list is about 70 pages.

Students from the Museum Studies* (see note) program at the College at Brockport have been digitally documenting parts of the collection for three years. "They choose their own projects from the museum's collection, focusing on selected artifacts," Blackman said, "so documentation of the entire collection is spotty. When and how it will be complete and accessible for the museum is not known." They use the college's own licensed PastPerfect software, "probably the software that would be recommended for the museum to document its collection," she said.

A first step in creating comprehensive filing systems would be to make the college data base available to the museum. And, there is need to merge that computer data with data in the new hard files. Currently, according to Mayor Blackman, two grants are being applied for by the village. One is a local records management grant to provide for protection and storage of records. A "Get Ready" grant will provide expertise to suggest the first step in determining the direction and future of the museum. "The latter grant will probably recommend a comprehensive database," Mayor Blackman said.

Financial footing. The village is not spending any money on the museum, Mayor Blackman said, because it is not a line item on the village's budget. In its present condition, "It costs very little to run," she said, adding that \$2,500 was approved this year from the Shafer Trust Fund. The sum has been used by Sue Savard for things like a new toilet, carpet cleaning, preservation materials, and supplies. Jackie



Deb Talley (left) and Sue Savard spent many hours organizing the Victorian Parlor in the Emily Knapp Museum. Photograph by Dianne Hickerson.

Morris serves in the dual role of Museum Director and Village Historian, receiving a stipend of \$100 per month from the same trust monies.

The reviving museum can thrive only with continuing maintenance, supplies, services, and a data base to maintain the museum's high quality. Regarding long-term financial footing, "I personally don't think the museum will end up as part of the village general fund," the mayor said. "We need to look for other ways to make the museum self-sustaining."

Governance. A policy passed by the Brockport Village Board on January 6, 2014, states that only village residents on the museum's Executive Committee may vote. There are divided views on the residency requirement. Some justify the policy by the fact that the mission cites "the heritage and history of Brockport," and it is



The Helen Hastings's area in the third-floor garret has been designed as an art studio and writing desk to commemorate her work as an author and local historian. She became well known for her research on Old Houses of Monroe County. Photograph by Dianne Hickerson.

in the purview of the village government. Yet, the policy implies only legal village residents have the insight, wisdom and dedication to guide the mission of the museum. There are citizens community-wide interested in and committed to the museum, and qualified to vote on its guiding policies. For example, only two members of Savard's working team of 13 are village residents.

Regarding who should be entrusted with voting power to guide the museum, Blackman says the Village Board should revisit the January policy that "may have been passed without a thorough review of the residency requirements."

Grand Opening planned

A special Grand Opening event will be held 9 a.m. to noon on Saturday, July 5, as part of Old Home Week, in the Town of Sweden's 200th anniversary celebration. Savard says there is a rumor that some historic personalities will be present: James Seymour (Ron White), Helen Seymour Sylvester (Sue Savard), Helen Hastings (Mary Lynn Turner), Jimmy Costigan (Skip Perry), Harold Gardner Dobson (Bill Nielsen), Dr. Kenneth Wayne Moore (Joe Quarrante), Leah Covell (Marion Dilger), Hosen Covell (Scott Galliford), Visiting Violinist (Nancy Rhodes). Punch, cool cookies taken from recipes of old cookbooks found in the museum.

The Emily L. Knapp Museum at 49 State Street in Brockport is open every Wednesday from 2 to 4 and 7 to 9 p.m.

"The college's Museum Studies program combines the anthropology and history departments. Margay Blackman, Ph.D., is Professor Emerita of the anthropology department.

Note: Brockport Village Clerk Leslie Ann Morelli aided the research of this article.



On the third floor visitors will see the completely equipped dental office of Dr. Moore, who practiced on Main Street in Brockport from 1931 until 1958. Photograph by Dianne Hickerson.

The spinning area on the third floor features a large spinning wheel, yarn winder, and carder all ready for demonstration.

Photograph by Dianne Hickerson.



Arjuna Florist & Gifts changes ownership after four decades

by Doug Hickerson

On June 1, Don and Lynn Short will end 39 years of owning and operating Arjuna Florist & Gifts in Brockport. The popular store on Main Street will have a new owner and manager, Allison Andrews, who has been their employee for nine years.

The family business began soon after newlyweds Don and Lynn made a routine trip to the Brockport laundry. They stopped in the "Arjuna Plant and Craft Center" on Main Street near the Methodist Church, started in 1972 by a couple they had known at college. Their friends asked the Shorts if they wanted to buy the store. "We walked out of there thinking we had no experience and were a little naive," Lynn said, adding that Don had helped in the Arjuna store on occasion. "We had toyed with the idea, and had even looked at a place in Lewiston." The idea soon became a reality in a quick succession of momentous events.

Don had graduated from the College at Brockport with a master's degree in 1972, and Lynn graduated with a bachelor's degree in 1973. They married in 1974, and purchased the store in 1975. In 1979, the year their first child was born, "We made a decision to grow the business by buying the building down the street (78 Main, its present location)," Don said. "The rest is history."

"In that era plants were very big," Lynn said, "then flowers became more popular." Don took floral design courses with a master florist from Holland, and has run that aspect of the shop along with flower buying. Lynn has the business end, including managing the books and making purchases.

"I really feel invested in the place...."

Allison Andrews, employee, becoming owner on June 1:
Arjuna Florist & Gifts

The couple managed a family in those early years, too. Heather was born in 1979 and Kaitlin in 1982. Lynn had her office at home. "We decided not to do evenings or Sundays, as other stores were doing," Lynn said. "We made family a priority."

For over 25 years the store's prosperity has been greatly due to the college as their best customer, the Shorts said. Providing flowers for graduation each year, "we got more recognition on campus, so individuals and departments became loyal customers, too," Don said. The business also received a boost 30 years ago when Arjuna and other florists started a delivery pool to deliver each other's flowers from a central location, avoiding long-distance expensive deliveries in the greater Rochester area. And, weddings and funerals have been a staple for the business, along with individual customers.

The thriving store hit a tough time of transition in 2007 and 2008, the Shorts

said. It was a period of depressed national economy. Several employees left at once, including the head designer and manager. "We did not hire right away," Lynn said. "Things were bad for a couple of years. We worked more hours."

But, they had hired Allison Andrews part time in 2005. She soon emerged as a talented designer with previous wedding experience and with Don's training in floral design. Two years after she was hired, "The wedding designer retired and I took on that division," she said. "Don and Lynn also let me do wedding coordination from the shop."

Allison's career began in 1983 in the Boston hotel-restaurant industry managing different parts of hotel services. "I started as a waitress and hustess at age 20," she said, "and quickly moved to supervisory positions." After working in several fine hotels, she ended up at the famed Boston Harbor Hotel where she worked for 12 years, including designing large weddings.

Allison married Bill Andrews, Jr in 1996 and had four boys in four years. In 2000, while pregnant with her last child, they moved to Brockport, across College Street from Bill Andrews, her father-in-law. Bill Jr. had attended Brockport schools, received a master's degree at the University

of Rochester and is director of information systems for pathology at Strong Hospital.

Looking ahead

How does Allison feel about owning the shop? "I always felt like I was kind of an owner anyway," she said. "I really feel invested in the place and put my heart into the design in the front of the store and the windows. I love the relationships I develop with customers, especially brides and families planning funerals."

The Shorts expressed great optimism about the future of the store in Allison's hands. "She has lots of energy, enthusiasm, and creativity," Lynn said, adding that "she is the best designer we have ever had." "We have an emotional investment in the business," Don said. "We are known for really high quality and good service with an attitude of 'We can make it work.' I think she fits that exactly."

"We will miss all the people who have become wonderful customers and friends," Lynn said. Don added, "We're at a point now when women who planned their weddings with us are bringing their daughters in for the same thing." Looking to the future, the Shorts say they will enjoy their lake house and sailboat, gardening, visiting their daughters and grandchildren, and traveling to visit friends.



Lynn (left) and Don Short (center) stand with Allison Andrews in Arjuna Florist & Gifts on Main Street in Brockport. The Shorts will end 39 years as owners when Allison takes over on June 1. Photo by Dianne Hickerson.

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Read more --

Get out & grow!

by Kristina Gabashki



Crab apple blossoms and the stately building suggest Washington, DC -- but, no, it's really Buffalo! Take a tour in the Get Out & Grow garden column, online this week and in print in the issue of June 8.



Three members of the Hilton High School Class of 1931 are centenarians - read more inside.

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Delivered with newspapers in Ogdon, Spencerport.
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Delivered with newspapers in Bergen, Holley, Murray, Clarendon, Hamlin, Kendall.
 - DICK'S SPORTING GOODS**
Delivered with newspapers in Brockport, Sweden, Holley, Murray, Clarendon, Bergen.
 - WALMART**
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 - COUNTRY MAX**
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 - BAD APPLES BISTRO**
Delivered with all newspapers.
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- FIND OUT ABOUT HAMLIN WHEEL FEST INSIDE THIS WEEK.**



Dorene MacDonald (left) and Sarah Hart stand among some of the treasures found in six storage units belonging to their long lost relative. Magazines from the 1940s and '50s, newspapers, letters, collector stamps, Lionel trains, and many other vintage items will be offered in a "Time Capsule" estate sale on June 13 and 14. Photo by Dianne Hickerson.

A time capsule found

Hidden for half a century - storage pods' contents reveal link to long-lost relative

by Doug Hickerson

Family ties can have their strange moments, like a long-lost relative arriving at your front door with suitcases, ready for a surprise reunion.

For Brockport resident Sarah Hart, it was her great uncle's brother who showed up in Brockport, not in person, but in six storage pods of his possessions in Allied Storage. The 93 year old World War II veteran, Bill Munchmeyer, had placed them in storage 52 years ago with a company in Queens. The containers were moved to different cities, as the storage company changed ownership, incredibly ending up in Brockport ten years ago. The discovery caused a gathering of a dozen family members to sort through the contents on his behalf. It was partly an effort to find discharge papers to allow him Veteran's Administration services for the first time.

The storage pods held a board of treasures and trivium Bill had saved, including clothing items still in wrappers from the dry cleaner, five-decade-old powdered sugar and toilet paper still in original wrappers, and Lionel trains. More serious collector's items included folders filled with magazines from the 1940s and 50s, newspapers, photographs, and boxes of letters, some of them containing collector stamps sent as gifts. There were books of Shakespeare's works and the complete works of Mark Twain. "I love time capsules. They are fascinating," Sarah said. "This is a six-pod time capsule from the 1940s and 50s about a man who is an artist, photographer and a vet."

The family reunion was triggered in 2012 when the reclusive Bill Munchmeyer, living in squalid conditions, had fallen in the street in Queens and was taken to the hospital. Officials traced his family to Dorene MacDonald, Sarah's aunt. With court authority she looked into his affairs, and eventually found overdue bills for the storage containers. The bills were traced to Allied Storage in Brockport and were paid, giving her access to the storage pods. "Bill Munchmeyer has been searching for a loving family for 87 years, ever since his mother died," Dorene said. "He finally found us all through what he had placed in storage 52 years ago."

Bill's search for a loving family was revealed in unsent letters found in the storage pods, Sarah said. "He never married and knew only his aunt, uncle and sister." Why were the items in storage so long? "It's a mystery," she

said. "He was sleeping on the floor in a one-bedroom apartment. Maybe he thought he would get a house some day and put these things in it."

Sarah, a prominent artist with her studio above A Different Path Gallery in Brockport, beamed with excitement over the pods' contents which revealed Bill as an artist and photographer. "I've been so entertained opening his sketches, paintings, and supplies. I've kept some items for myself," she said, showing a 50-year-old watercolor set made in Germany and sketch books she is now using. Sarah may bring Bill's hidden works into the light after 50 years. "His photos are especially amazing," she said. "A few of my artist friends and I have thought of showing some of his photos and paintings here in the gallery. Other friends say they are ready to go on a road trip to do a documentary on him."

The contents of the pods will be offered at an estate sale in Brockport, advertised as 1950s and 1940s vintage items sealed in a 55-year-old time capsule. "I love Brockport," Sarah said, "and I am delighted that I can share this story through a sale here."

"I feel that there is some higher power at work, causing the items to end up here," Sarah concluded. "Now, Bill is going to have a happy ending." She spoke of family traveling to visit Bill, or perhaps moving him to this area closer to family. "He is going to find love here and his last years will be filled with family and happiness."

The estate sale of William Munchmeyer will take place at 58 Park Avenue in Brockport, June 13 and 14 from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Look for information in an advertisement in the June 8 issue of **Suburban News and Hamlin-Clarkson Herald**.

More happy ending for Bill Munchmeyer

Following up a reference early in this story, Dorene MacDonald could not find Bill's military discharge papers in the storage containers. But, she took several official documents to the Veterans Administration facility in Canandaigua to see what could be done. She found a sympathetic Veterans Administration representative who said the papers qualified him for full benefits. Bill soon went for medical attention at a Veterans Administration hospital near his new residence. He is in an assisted care facility in New Jersey, made possible after Dorene uncovered funds in Bill's estate.

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MaMa's Toolkit



It's all about family ..

by Michelle A. Dick

inside this week



B-B students cheer for yogurt -

Assemblyman Steve Hawley (R.C.)-Batavia) and State Senator Michael Ranzenhofer (R.C.)-Armerst) welcomed the 4th grade class of Byron Bergen Elementary School to Albany. The students lobbied members of the Assembly to pass their bill to make yogurt New York's official state snack. The bill passed the State Senate last month, and was passed by the Assembly with the students in attendance. The legislation now goes to the governor's desk to be signed into law.

Read more about it inside this week

What's your
(camping) story?
Share it with our
readers --
find out how on
page 4 --



Photograph by Dianne Hickerson

Lori Skoog's philosophy and love of life spread far and wide through her community connections around the world via her art, her classes and her popular blog. At the core of her outlook on life are her roots as a first generation Albanian which have fostered enduring attitudes about animals, people and living off the land. "Everyone I communicate with on a regular basis cares about the environment, food, animals, people, and community," she says. Lori devotes much time, attention and love to her two horses, 29-year old Berlin (left) and 15-year-old Abbe.

Read "Lori Skoog: Down on the farm and around the world" inside this week.

Look for these inserts

• ANG MARKETS

Delivered with newspapers
in Churchville, North Chili (partial), Bergen,

Lori Skoog: Down on the farm and around the world

by Doug Hickerson

Lori Skoog is known widely for the art classes she holds at Skoog Farm. Her students number about 100 over the past 13 years. They are just one of her many people-connections centered at her scenic farm just south of Brookport. That tranquil storybook setting hides a diverse lifestyle rooted in the home soil, yet stretching around the world. For the past seven years her daily blog and photo journal have reached over 300 followers. She has been in contact with people far and wide, bringing the world to her doorstep, making Skoog Farm, she says, a kind of international "bed and breakfast." She loves Brookport, enjoys and promotes its benefits, and takes photos of Brookport. Life that astound readers of her blog around the globe. She has a strong bond with animals and gives loving care to her horses and dogs. At the core of her outlook on life are her roots as a first generation Albanian which have generated enduring attitudes about people and living off the land.

Art for the people - "You can do it!"

In Lori's art classes, people with little or no experience in art have discovered their artistic abilities. Lori has held class every Tuesday morning for the last 13 years. She had been an art teacher at Brookport High School for 13 years prior to that. Soon after retirement in 1999, friends Kendra Gennett and Marcia Ullman came to her asking for lessons and Lori has taught ever since.

Lori's approximately 100 students, past and present, include young and old from all walks of life. So of

Lori Skoog is joined by some of her students in a Skoog Farm art class this past spring. From left: Tina Eibl, Donna Mancuso, Lori Skoog, and Lais Morgan. Lori and her beloved horses are shown on page one of this issue. Photo by Dianne Hickerson.



"Everyone I communicate with on a regular basis cares about the environment, food, animals, people, and community."

Lori Skoog

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EARLY DEADLINE

Due to the 4th of July holiday, there will be an early deadline for all news and advertising for the July 6th edition of Suburban News and The Herald.

All news and ads MUST be in our office by

4:00 P.M. ON TUES., JULY 1ST

Westside News offices will close at noon Wednesday, July 2nd and will reopen at 8 am Monday, July 7th.

WESTSIDE NEWS INC.

Publications of Suburban News & Home-Country News

Lori's older students were Professor Bob Thompson in his 80s and 92-year-old Lydia deKabides, Alicia Fink's mother from Ecuador. Two young girls were part of her summer classes some years ago. They did very well and the adult students enjoyed them, Lori said. Reverend Joanne Gilbert Cannon, minister at the First Baptist Church in Brookport, was a student. She did a series of paper collages called "Feminist Images in Sacred Art" for her master of art in religious studies degree at seminary. Other students include several college professors, retired teachers, two doctors, a lawyer, and people from a variety of other backgrounds.

"Most of my students have had very little art experience," Lori said. "I tell them, 'I can guarantee one-hundred percent you can do this.'" After learning ebony pencil and color pencil drawing techniques, students go on to a medium of their choice - watercolor, pencils, weaving, quilting, collage, etc. Lori says she becomes a facilitator for her students after she has taught them the basic methods. She allows students to use their creative "right brain" and they are free to discover their own artistic abilities. "We are very casual, we don't push," she said. "Somehow, at the end, they come out with something good."

Her students' works have been exhibited at the Seymour Library for many years. This past spring their work was shown at A Different Path Art Gallery in Brookport. She was delighted that the retrospective brought back many former students, showing they were still interested. "It was a boost for them to see their work professionally hung in a gallery," Lori said. "They started to realize their art was pretty good. We got many compliments on that show."

Farm Life and the animals

"... a huge commitment and I take it very seriously."

Thirty-four years ago, Lori and husband, Gary, purchased their farm with its house built in 1823. On just over five acres they grow a variety of organic foods and give much of it away to friends. Gary sells seed garlic and grows some for their table. Lori mows about one-and-a-half acres on a rider mower and Gary does hand mowing. Her life centers devotion to her two horses, Berlin and Abbe. Two boarding horses are cared for by their owner and share the barn and pastures.

Lori is up every day at sunrise. "Today I was before five, let the dogs out, fed them and the cat, and checked email," she said in an interview. "I cleaned the horse stalls, picked the paddock (of manure) clean as a whistle, put their masks on (protection against gnats), and let them out. Then, I prepared for the night feed." She has done that routine each day for 34 years. When teaching high school, with several more horses on the farm, she would complete the chores and be at school by 7:30 a.m. "You are tied down when you have animals," she said. "It's a huge commitment and I take it very seriously."

Lori allows her horses, Berlin and Abbe, their freedom. "It's the way I teach art," Lori added. "I let them be." The barn and pastures are set up so she doesn't have to lead them out. "When they go out in the morning, I open their stall doors and they go out on their own. When it's time to come in, I call them or whistle and they all know to go to their own stalls without me touching them. They do not need to be tied up for grooming; they stand still anywhere." The same freedom-to-be goes for her two dogs Phoebe and Gucci, both rescue mutts from the South. They follow her through the house and roam the farm with her. Asked about her bond with animals, Lori said, "It's different for women than men, if we are honest. It's

being needed. Your animals need you and it's nice meeting their need."

Her blog and other distant contacts

Every day Lori writes *The Skoog Farm Journal* subtitled "Writings and photographs from a small community in western New York" (<http://skooofarm.blogspot.com>). "I started my blog in February, 2007, and have not missed one day," she said. "It is a photo journal of what I do every day. I have 325 followers and I am approaching 300,000 hits since I started. It's incredible. Why do people care what I am doing? The blog typically has a variety of farm scene photos with animals and flowers, people also has met and places she has been recently, plus her brief writings and sometimes recipes. People respond with enthusiasm, some sharing their own blogs, and many actually come to visit at the farm. "It seems like magic to be able to connect with so many people," Lori said. "Everyone I communicate with on a regular basis cares about the environment, food, animals, people, and community."

Local people and many from U.S. cities, plus New Zealand, Scotland, England, France, Italy, Niger (West Africa), Saudi Arabia, Canada, Australia, Greece, Italy, Sweden, and Germany follow her blog. She has had visitors arrive from all around the globe. "It just keeps happening," Lori said. "It's like we have a bed and breakfast here."

Some of Lori's contacts come from the annual Welcome Center where she greets and chats with boaters. "That canal connects us to the world," she said. Lori has lunched with boaters from Norway, and continues to communicate with a boater couple from Cleveland.

And, Lori brings Brookport to the world. She is a kind of ambassador, taking hundreds of photos of Brookport events and scenes for her blog. "People all over the country and the world can't believe this community," she said. "They think we are the coolest thing because we have so many events, activities and interesting places for such a small village."

For Lori, whose life is tied to the farm, she says that being in touch with so many people and welcoming visitors from around the globe helps her to "travel in reverse." "I love meeting people, and it's bizarre how I have done it without leaving home."

Albanian heritage

"Sometimes I think I have the values of someone from the old country who lives off the land."

Lori's love for meeting people, and for the land and animals, traces back to her heritage as a first generation Albanian. She was raised near the lake at Chautauque. As a five and six-year-old, she lived temporarily in Jamestown with her grandmother from the old country. She spoke English in school and Albanian with "Nanna" who always wore black. "If you came to the door, I had to walk to you with a tray holding roses, a glass of water, and a spoon with marmalade in it. You would eat the marmalade, drink the water, and give it back to me. I did that for everyone who came to the house." Lori reflected, "I lived as though I were in the old country. It has had so much impact on me." It was that sudden emotional awareness that brought tears of joy. "I regard myself as a present, with the values of someone from the old country who lives off the land, and I like that. I think it's honest." And, like the greeting ritual as a child, "I like sharing, giving, and participating. And now I connect with people from around the world. It's the best."

Record crowds celebrated an "Old Fashion Fourth of July"

by Doug Hickerson

There could not have been more perfect weather for the Morgan-Manning House "Old Fashion Fourth of July" celebration. Warm sunshine competed with a gentle breeze wafting through the crowd of about 750 to almost 1,000 people. It was likely the largest turnout for this



event in its 33 year history. In shade or sun, families and folks of all ages filled the lawns in chairs and blankets or meandered to meet people or buy refreshments. The gathering was a human tapestry of the community.

The large numbers attending were also seen in The Children's Parade. An estimated 80 youngsters in festive patriot attire and on decorated kid's vehicles, accompanied by adults, made a long procession of nearly 200 parading around the block. Each youngster received a gift bag at the end.

The festivities opened with the Summer Community Choir. Formerly appearing as the Brockport High School Choir last July 4, Director Liz Banner announced the choir this year represented the wider community. She introduced several singers of various ages who joined the high school students in rousing patriotic songs.

The Brockport Community Concert Band held a concert of patriotic tunes, show tunes, and marches all excellently played with only two rehearsals. The rich, stirring sounds were made by about 70 musicians who came from all walks of life. The Brockport High School Band's 30-year tradition for July 4 changed a couple of years ago when Director Shawn Halquist invited community members to join. He introduced current high school members, recent and past graduates of BHS, BHS music faculty, graduates of various colleges, students just entering 6th grade, and various community family members playing together, including his wife, Deanna and son, Noah.

The Brockport Big Band kept spirits lively right after the concert band, playing swinging tunes of the 1940s Big Band Jazz era.

The Community Choir and Community Band (shown right) provided patriotic sounds in music to contribute to the Old Fashion Fourth of July celebration in Brockport. Provided photograph by Dianne Hickerson.



The patriotic theme was carried out in many ways at Morgan Manning's July 4 celebration. Bicycles and other similar vehicles of childhood were adorned in red, white and blue and their riders sported suitable and often matching attire. Provided photographs by Dianne Hickerson.

The popular Cake Walk had 35 youngsters walking the big circle to land on a number and win a cake. Over 100 participants walked and 18 cakes were won, donated by WMHS members.

Provided information



Curse writing revisits historic Clarkson Academy in Summer School Camp

by Doug Hickerson

The Clarkson Historical Society hopes to revive interest in curse writing which is disappearing from the curriculum in schools and from our culture. On August 20, 21, and 22 volunteers are conducting the organization's first "Summer School Camp." The camp will include the teaching of curse writing, history, games and reading stories, all typical at the Clarkson Academy in the 1940s and 50s.

"Put your John Hancock there" has been a common expression meaning to sign on the line. It refers to John Hancock's signature on the Declaration of Independence which is so bold and embellished that it stands out from the other signatures. It came to be the emblem for each person's signature affirming his or her unique identity on any document including petitions, legal or governmental matters, or confirming a loving message from the soul.

The "John Hancock" idiom is disappearing along with the teaching of curse handwriting. Can school kids today read the original Declaration of Independence and recognize the names signed? By not learning script, they are deprived of the ability to read the distinct visual expression in original historic documents.

Closer to home and families, can children today read a handwritten message added to a birthday card from a grandparent? What about old family letters bundled in the attic? Chris Mazzarella, one of the teachers for the camp, remembers an older cousin during World War II who received many letters from her boyfriend in the service. "They were all in curse and who is going to be able to read these family treasures in the future?"

A typed or printed personal letter lacks the emotive appeal of a handwritten letter. Curse writing is as unique to each person as a fingerprint or DNA. Although typing or printing can convey content in a personal note, a person's distinctive handwriting, thoughtfully penned by hand, visually expresses the writer's personality and genuine feeling.

The Summer School Camp is for 20 youngsters going into fourth and fifth grades. Monica Anderson, Chris Mazza-

rella, and Ruth Rath will teach the curse writing and other classes. Mazzarella and Rath are retired Brockport Central School District teachers who taught curse writing in the third and fourth grades. Anderson is a volunteer in the Rochester City School District primary grades and previously volunteered in Brockport schools. From 9:30 to noon each day, curse writing will be taught first, followed by recess to play period games. Then, they will gather for reading, hearing stories and snippets of history from the period, and singing American folk songs. The youngsters will relive the past with classes held in the restored classroom on the second floor of the academy built in 1853.

Mary Edwards is president of the Clarkson Historical Society and has organized the camp. She was asked what the students may get from the course. "They won't likely be able to write full sentences. I call this a tasting menu, a taste of this and that, with curse being the most demanding," she said. "I hope at the least they will learn and be proud of their written signatures which will be useful to them all through life."

In the initial planning Edwards was joined by Leanna Hale, Clarkson Town Historian, and Chris Albrecht, fourth grade teacher at BCS. Also involved with teaching or teacher planning are: Mary Edwards, Leanna Hale, Jerry Lemke, and Pam Mercer.

For other information phone Mary Edwards at 637-5810.

Scientific evidence of curse writing benefits

There are many scientific studies that show links run deep between handwriting and broader educational development. The studies show "Children not only learn to read more quickly when they first learn to write by hand, but they also remain better able to generate ideas and retain information," writes Maria Konnikova in the June 2, 2014 *New York Times* ("What's Lost as Handwriting Fades?"). "In other words, it's not just what we write that matters - but how." She cites many studies, including one "that found when children drew a letter freehand, they exhibited increased



Monica Anderson, Chris Mazzarella, and Ruth Rath will teach curse writing and other classes to children attending the Summer School Camp at Clarkson Academy. Here they are planning the cursive classes at Mazzarella's home. Photo by Dianne Hickerson.

activity in three significant areas of the brain, which didn't happen when they traced or typed the letter."

Brockport Central School District's position on cursive writing

Brockport Central School District maintains formal instructions for cursive writing in the third grade, and individualized support in grades 4 and 5. However, the importance of cursive writing as part of the curriculum has lessened, according to BCS Communication Specialist Debbie Moyer.

"We want to ensure all students have a comprehensive, well-rounded instructional program," said Susan Hasenauer-Curtis, assistant to the superintendent for elementary instruction.

Hill Elementary School Principal Sean Bruno says, "We are preparing students for their future, which will be technology dependent. This means that we incorporate an increasing amount of embedded technology into the instructional day, in addition to printing and cursive."

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Area school handwriting contest winners honored at Clarkson Academy

The Clarkson Historical Society held a handwriting contest for area schools as part of the "Campaign for Cursive" worldwide movement promoting cursive writing instruction in public schools. The campaign is sponsored by the American Handwriting Analysis Foundation which designated January 23 as National Handwriting Day. On January 23, the historical society declared the contest winners at an event held in the historic Clarkson Academy. With over 70 entries, nine winners from six different schools were chosen.

Winners in the grades 4 and 5 category: 1st place Tamsin Spiller (Hill School,

Brockport), 2nd Emma Lenhard (Quest School, Hilton), 3rd Genia Abbey (Sheridan Elementary, Clarence Center).

Winners in the grades 5, 7, 8 categories: 1st place Ise Auburn Schwartzmeyer (Byron-Bergen Jr. High) and Christina Bishop (Oliver Middle School, Brockport), 3rd Hannah VanSkiver (Byron-Bergen Jr. High).

Winners in the High School category: 1st place Breana Hagberg (Holley High School), 2nd Madeline Rowley (Holley High School), 3rd Garrett Sando (Byron-Bergen Sr. High).



Winners of the Clarkson Historical Society handwriting contest were honored at the Clarkson Academy on January 23. Shown in three grade categories, left to right in groups of three, one seated and two standing, are: Grades 4 and 5 - Tamsin Spiller (seated), Emma Lenhard (left), Genia Abbey (right). Grades 5, 7, 8 - Auburn Schwartzmeyer (seated), Christina Bishop (left), Hannah VanSkiver (right). High School - Breana Hagberg (seated), Garrett Sando (left), Madeline Rowley (right). Photo by Dianne Hickerson.

A new generation to take the helm of Lift Bridge Book Shop

Continuing 42 years of local ownership

by Doug Hickerson

Archie and Pat Kutz have owned and operated Brockport's beloved Lift Bridge Book Shop for 42 years. On January 1, 2015, they will retire and leave the store's ownership and future in the hands of new co-owners John Bonczyk, 32, and Cody Steffen, 26. The hometown flavor of this transition is found in the Kutz's April newsletter announcing, "Two local boys and former employees have grown up and bought the bookstore!" The bookstore, known for drawing people together as a "community center," was the setting where a friendship started and later the two friends became the store's owners. And, a family started at the bookstore when Cody met fellow employee Sara Baglioni who would later become his wife.

Two friends part, but not for long

John worked at the store just over two years while studying for his accounting degree at The College at Brockport. Cody worked there for four years after receiving an associate degree at GCC. "We became friends, and we have been friends ever since," John said.

Pat Kutz remembers the potential they showed. "They both knew the system, which takes a good three or four months to learn." About John, she says, "Soon after he started, I remember saying, 'Why do you bother to get a degree? You should just buy the bookstores. You are really good at this!'" He declined and said he wanted to finish his degree and become an accountant.

She said the same thing to Cody who declined for financial reasons because Sara was working on a master's degree in library science and they were supporting two children. Sara soon graduated and last August they moved to Maryland where she had a good job offer as a middle school librarian. "They were very sad to leave because they were really integrated

into the local community," Pat said about Cody who is from Brockport, and Sara, who is from Hilton.

"Everyone said 'Good bye, and Sara a nice life' to everybody else," Pat continued. "We thought that was that; it was great having them."

She did not foresee the destiny to be played out for Cody and John.

Returning "home"

to be business partners

What brought Cody and John back to Lift Bridge Book Shop to be co-owners? For Cody and Sara, it was their dissatisfaction with the Maryland area and some homesickness. In June 2014, ten months after going to Maryland, they returned. Sara obtained the position of school librarian in Kendall Schools starting this August.

Cody had worked at a bookstore in Maryland. While away, he again thought of the Lift Bridge which was announced for sale just before he left. He could see that prospect as a career. He phoned John to discuss a partnership to purchase the store. "We worked here together and we got along great," Cody said about John. "He was an accounting major, and I feel like we complement each other well."

John had graduated from college in May 2012. In January 2013, he started a job at Psychex. At Thanksgiving Cody phoned John. "We discussed our roles in the store and how our lives would change," John said. "We asked if this was a feasible thing to do to sustain our families." Both reaching positive conclusions, the two met with Archie and Pat over Christmas break to discuss purchasing the store.

"The prodigal sons" had returned!

Pat said, "We were really surprised and thrilled because these are two people who have spent enough time at the bookstore to know this is not some fantasy world. They know it's hard work and long hours."



In transition - (l to r) John Bonczyk, Archie Kutz, Pat Kutz, and Cody Steffen stand in the Lift Bridge Book Shop on Main Street in Brockport. In January 2015, ownership will transfer from Archie and Pat to John and Cody. Photo by Dianne Hickerson.

John began working at the bookstore in early May and Cody in early July. They will officially become owners on January 1, 2015. This interim period is a chance for Pat and Archie to mentor them further in the store operations.

For both, a commitment to the store and to the family

"I am excited to keep this Brockport landmark going," John said about his imminent ownership. "It has become a cornerstone of Brockport and it's exciting to have such a place of education and entertainment here in town." About support from the community, he said, "Many people I see are coming back to the store because they have children and grandchildren. They will say, 'I used to come in here when I was a kid,' and they're passing on the fun."

John and Sarah live on Kenble Court in Brockport. Sarah works at Psychex Insurance Agency as health and benefits agency specialist. They have two sons, Jonathan turning seven in August, and Joey, who is eleven.

Cody said, "I am very excited about starting here. I like that Lift Bridge has always been a big part of Brockport with a lot of events for the community. I want to keep that going." Referring to talk that internet booksellers like Amazon and E-Book will make small bookstores extinct, he said, "I don't believe it. I think bookstores like Lift Bridge will always have a vital place and I want to help make that happen."

Cody and his wife, Sara, live in Hilton. As a librarian specializing in children's books, she helps Cody at home in selecting children's books for the store. They have two children. Leo is 21 months old and Gemma is four years old.

In the interviews, Archie, Pat, John and Cody all referred to the need for community support. "Don't be tempted by the big box stores or the internet," was their message. John said he was encouraged by "a shop local movement" that seems to be going on. Archie said, "We have been happy doing this for the past 42 years. I hope people will appreciate what's happening in this transition and will continue to support the business with their wallets."

The writer's commentary

There is some historic irony in this story. Archie Kutz attended Brockport High School with his friend, Tim Fabrizio. Soon after college graduation, with no experience as booksellers, the two formed a partnership and opened the first Lift Bridge Book Shop in 1972 at 48 North Main Street. Archie and Pat met in college, married in 1976 and started a family right away. She became involved in the store several years later. (From Lift Bridge Book Shop: The book store that grew into a whole lot more," by Doug Hickerson, in the October 25, 2009, *Hamilin-Clarkson Herald and Suburban News*.)

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NORTH EDITION

Suburban News

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Give him something to smile about ... The photographer addressed the saw-whet owl, saying "Smile!" -- no reaction. Then he said, "Mouse!" Look for a photo essay by Walter Horylev inside this week.

Look for these inserts

- **GATES BIG M** -- Delivered with newspapers in Ogden, Spencerport.
- **TOPS** -- Delivered with newspapers in Bergen, Holley, Murray, Clarendon, Hamlin, Kendall.
- **ANG MARKETS** -- Delivered with newspapers in Churchville, North Chili (partial), Bergen.
- **WALMART** -- Delivered with newspapers in Brockport, Sweden, Holley, Murray, Bergen, Clarendon, Churchville, Rochester 14624.
- **DICK'S SPORTING GOODS** -- Delivered with newspapers in Brockport, Sweden, Holley, Murray, Clarendon, Bergen.
- **SWEDEN RECREATION** -- Delivered with newspapers in Brockport, Sweden, Hamlin, Clarkson.

Photo below:

WORK IN PROGRESS

Construction as part of the \$19.4 million capital project yields new bus and car drop off area outside the Oliver Middle School. Rick Nicholson photo.

Area artisans create trophy

"Walk to School Day" winning school to be recognized

by Doug Hickerson

The Walk to School Day, on Wednesday October 1 this year, will have a special feature. Project chairman Dr. Jim Goetz has introduced a trophy to be awarded annually to the Brockport elementary school which has the greatest percentage of walkers. It is the ninth year for the event sponsored by Walk! Bike! Brockport! which promotes the health and environmental benefits of students walking to school instead of using the school bus or the family car.

With his typical community spirit as the event organizer, Dr. Goetz asked two local artists to apply their talents in creating a one-of-a-kind trophy. Jennifer Hecker in the Department of Art at The College at Brockport has created the cast bronze figures on the trophy. Ed Lehman, well known locally for his wood craftsmanship, has created the walnut base of the trophy. He is a retired professor of sociology at The College.

To plan the trophy the two artists met with Goetz at breakfast three times over several months. The challenge was to coordinate the shape and size of the base to accommodate the sculpture and the metal name plates. Details evolved with each meeting. The resulting trophy features delightful cast bronze stick figures of two walking children on top of a handsome wood base.

Read more on page 5



Standing near the trophy they created are Jennifer Hecker and Ed Lehman. With them is Dr. Jim Goetz, chairman of the Walk to School project. He requested the one-of-a-kind trophy that would be awarded each year to the Brockport elementary school which had the greatest percentage of participants in the Walk to School Day. Photo by Matthew J. Yeoman, Photographic Services Manager, The College at Brockport. Elements on the trophy "came from thinking the walk to school is good for you as well as for the environment," sculptor Jennifer Hecker said. Photo at left by Dr. Jim Goetz.



Saved from cruel abandonment or from euthanasia, dogs at Hamlin's no-kill shelter go to caring homes

by Doug Hickerson

Dena was on a table in an animal shelter in Ohio about to be euthanized. Then the technicians found she was pregnant. The Labrador mixed breed was flown to this area by Pilots for Paws who looked for a dog rescue organization that would accept her. Being turned away at several places, it was the no-kill Hamlin Dog Shelter that took her in.

"We took on quite a project," said Dave Maynard, Hamlin's dog control officer. "There were a lot of doubters who said it was not going to work and we would lose the puppies." Dave went on, "We gave 150% to make sure these dogs were healthy, and guess what, we did it, we did it."

What Dave and many other volunteers have done is to help Dena give birth to 13 puppies. And, through well-organized care and feeding to assist Dena's nursing, the puppies are all healthy and ready to go to adopting families on October 17.

"The success of the puppy project illustrates the support and organization that has made the Hamlin Dog Shelter, in just a year and a half of its existence, a benchmark program for New York State Department of Agriculture & Markets. It provides a model for other towns which have been calling to learn more about its operations and performance. It has a committed volunteer base, a well-developed facility, and the inspired leadership of Dave Maynard."



Marlene Smith gives love to Dena's 13 puppies, born after Dena was rescued from a high-kill shelter in Ohio. Dena and her puppies have all been adopted and going to their homes October 17. Photo by Dianne Hickerson.

The rescue and adoption outreach to townships

All adoptions are done through Facebook. "We have 5,100 followers on Facebook and that number is growing daily," Dave said. "We adopted out 30 dogs last month, including to homes in Middleport, Medina, Canandaigua and, most recently, Victor. We provide a west side service left open when Lollipop West left Brockport."

"The shelter also serves Parma, Hilton, Gates, Wheatland and Henrietta.

The adoption process for 13 puppies - fast and thorough

Dena and her 13 puppies were adopted in just two days after Dave put up a reserve list on Facebook. He received 30 messages in just one hour. "When the puppies were two weeks old, we called in each family interested and interviewed them one by one," Dave said. "When chosen, the families completed all the paper work and paid the

adoption costs." The total fee is \$120, including \$50 for adoption, \$35 rabies shot, and \$35 deposit for neuter or spaying (returned when the dog has surgery). "We provide a place for the middle class who can't go out and pay three-to-four-hundred dollars for a dog."

Some very special dogs

Among the eleven dogs in the shelter that day were two very special cases. Cheyenne was a pit bull who had been abandoned, attached to a pole in a roadside ditch with a bag of dog food. "She is the sweetest dog. She wants to give kisses and hugs," Dave said, as he stuck his fingers through the cage and she licked them.

In another kennel was McKinley, an eleven week old mixed breed who could walk using only her front legs, dragging her paralyzed back legs behind her. She is a MIA Foundation dog. As an alternative to euthanizing dogs born with disabilities, the MIA Foundation provides surgery and prosthetic devices so these dogs can live a healthy and happy life when adopted out. McKinley will receive two wheels to support her rear legs, and is about to be adopted by a young couple. The MIA Foundation in Hilton was founded by Sue Rogers whose Chihuahua, Mia, was born with a cleft palate. The Hamlin Dog Shelter works closely with the Foundation. And, Sue Rogers was present the night the puppies were born, giving assistance.

The dog shelter facility

Dave became the Hamlin Dog Control officer in 2012, at the urging of town board member Craig A. Goodrich. He had previously been the assistant control officer. Dave agreed to take this new job on the condition that he be allowed to establish a quality dog shelter in an abandoned building used by the town at 80 Railroad Avenue. That was granted but no money was available to renovate the building. With donations of drywall, insulation and wiring, Dave solicited from 84 lumber, and workers from the Town Highway Department installing the drywall and wiring, the shelter took shape.

The only volunteer Dave had at that time was Austin Mann, 16, a Brockport High school student. "He spent night after night with me painting, cleaning, tearing stuff apart," Dave said. "The kid was incredible." Austin worked through the entire three-month renovation, and continued volunteering for about a year after the shelter opened in April 2013.

A new addition was completed in May 2013, with 10 additional kennels and a bath, which doubled the capacity. Building materials were donated by Home Depot, and Quality First Heating and Cooling is donating a furnace at cost, installed free. The shelter and the addition were supported by Craig Goodrich, who passed away in 2013, and for whom the shelter is named. Craig had been a li-

leader at Hamlin Senior at Brockport High School and a Hamlin resident. He ranks 8th in his class and plans to become a veterinarian. He volunteered almost daily for three months as

Dave Maynard's only helper in renovating the shelter building. Then, he worked as a volunteer in the shelter for about a year. "I loved it there," he said about the dog shelter. "It was a friendly environment and Dave is dedicated in his care for dogs." Austin had to leave when he could not balance the volunteer time with his present job at a veterinarian's office in Hilton. Provided photo.



Dave Maynard, Hamlin's dog control officer, says the dog shelter addition where he is standing was completed in May 2013, doubling the building's kennels to 20. Volunteers painted trees on the walls for the outdoor effect. Photo by Dianne Hickerson.

ason between Dave and the town board, and provided much encouragement. A 150 square foot outside dog run was also added, using Craig's funeral memorial funds. "Craig wanted the dogs to be free, not always cooped up in the building," Dave said.

Volunteers give daily care with Dave's leadership

There is an extensive volunteer base that attends to the dogs and maintains the kennel seven days a week, mornings and afternoons. The puppy project requires eight separate volunteers. The puppies are in quarantine to protect them from disease. These volunteers come in a back door to avoid contact with other dogs, and wash their hands before handling the puppies.

Dave calls Marlene Smith his "feed volunteer." She comes in Monday through Friday to feed and water the dogs, let them outside, give them medicines and "give them love," Marlene says. When someone asked what her job pays, she answered, "I have had some good paying jobs in the past, but, as a volunteer, this is the best paying job I ever had. It really is."

Dave himself spends many hours each day of the week volunteering at the shelter. He receives a salary only as Hamlin's dog control officer. He attributes his ability to run the shelter to his 23 years of working with 40 employees. Dave is manager of Austro Mold, a plastics company in Rochester. He has a wife, two boys, and four dogs at home in Hamlin. "I put in a tremendous amount of time," Dave said. "But, the thing is, you put this time in at the start and it's going to run itself eventually." He spoke of the shelter succeeding into the future to keep Craig Goodrich's memory alive. "I want this place to be the best shelter in New York State," he said. "For being open just a year and a half, we have done much, but you haven't seen anything yet."

For other information www.facebook.com/HamlinNYDogControl.HamlinDogShelter

Contributions can be mailed to Craig A. Goodrich Dog Shelter, 1658 Lake Road, Hamlin, NY 14464.

For information on the MIA Foundation see web site www.themifoundation.com.

New anthology crowns Bill Heyen's prolific literary career

by Karla Linn Merrifield

Brockport poet William Heyen's work has appeared in about 250 anthologies, many from major publishers here and abroad. But, this one is different. The recent appearance of *The Oxford Anthology of Contemporary American Poetry* makes it clear that he is considered one of the most important poets of his generation.

This Oxford University Press gathering, edited by Cary Nelson, will be adapted for classes at hundreds of universities, and will be found in bookstores around the world. Bill is represented by nineteen poems, including his well-known Holocaust ballad "Riddle," and by poems from his *Crazy Horse in Stillness*.

Bill was not always interested in poetry. He got to Brockport State from Long Island to attend college as a physical education major when he was just sixteen. He played basketball and was an All-American in soccer, but switched to English education, he says, because he felt a different life dawning in him. He graduated in 1961, married Hannelore Greiner in 1962 — they passed their Golden Wedding anniversary a couple years ago. The Heyens left Brockport for six years — Bill got his MA and Ph.D. degrees from Ohio University and taught at SUNY Cortland for two years, then returned to teach American literature and creative writing at

his alma mater. "Hanny" became director of the Senior Center for several years and then Congressman John LaFalce's regional representative for sixteen. The Heyens have two children, son Bill and daughter Kristen, and four grandchildren, all teenagers now. Fulbright Lectureship to Germany, and Guggenheim, National Endowment for the Arts, and American Academy & Institute of Arts and Letters prizes. His *Shoah Train* was a National Book Award finalist. He has read and lectured at more than 350 universities over the years, and has edited the major anthology *September 11, 2001: American Writers Respond*. His poetry has appeared in magazines ranging from the smallest to *The New Yorker*, *The Atlantic*, *Harper's*, and *American Poetry Review*.

But he's often seen at Brockport and Rochester events, too — dedications, Earth Day celebrations, readings along the Canal and has visited local schools to talk about his writing.

Having published dozens of books, and having kept a journal that may be the most extensive in American literature, Bill may be the most prolific poet in the country. And, the prestigious new Oxford anthology now placed him among the poets of our time likely to remain in the American memory.



Bill Heyen relaxes in the Brockport home he has cherished for 45 years. "I do have a sense of 'home'," he said in the story. "That's the most profound word in the language for me — HOME." Photo by Dianne Hickerson.

Poet Bill Heyen cherishes his roots in Brockport

by Doug Hickerson

I am pleased to join Karla Linn Merrifield in a tribute to Bill Heyen. She has outlined (above) his prolific publishing and the significance of his most recent honor in the literary world. I am writing more personal details about him as one who admires that friend and neighbor who settled in the community 50 years ago.

For years I have valued the wisdom Bill Heyen brings to Brockport celebrations and dedications as our resident poet laureate.

My appreciation for Bill is seen in the message I emitted him after the dedication of new trails in Sweden Township in June 2012. Referring to his words at the dedication, I said, "I previously called you the 'bard of Brockport' for similar presentations at exciting events in Brockport. Our village is blessed to have an internationally renowned poet-in-residence, giving the eternal context and spiritual meaning to our events, as one who truly loves the place where he lives."

Meeting Bill recently in his Brockport home, our conversation covered a wide range of his life, his ideas, and his writing. Some of the subjects covered: how he became a renowned poet; how he sees the deeper context of our local events; the importance of his extensive handwritten journals. And, there was strong confirmation of my hunch that he "truly loves the place where he lives."

Evolution of the poet —

"...I sensed a different life cresting in me..." The most striking irony in Bill's story is that the world-famous poet alerted out as a physical education major at the College at Brockport. In fact, he had to be nudged to go to college. "I got to Brockport after being a weak high school student," Bill said. "My coach went to Brockport and he asked me if I ever thought of going to college." I said, "No."

The switch to an English education major was "partly practical and I guess partly spiritual," Bill said. As he wrote in *Homes* (2005), "I knew there were few if any available teaching jobs in physical education, and maybe, just maybe, I sensed a different life cresting in me, a life of reading and writing — I switched to English education." Having taken no creative writing courses, Bill said, "I recall just trying to write poems, just scratching them out." What prompted that? "I don't know, maybe because I was heartbroken over some high school girlfriend who had rejected me." Seeing his heartbreak might be too trivial to be called trauma, "I do believe in the trauma school," that writers get hurt into writing and poets get hurt into poetry. I think that people who are very sane, balanced, and in harmony with themselves don't write lyric poetry... You get hurt into the life in poetry. We try to find balance, I think, by composing things and, doing so, we compose ourselves."

At Ohio University, in his master's degree program, "I got serious about trying to write," Bill said. "I would read an anthology with great poets like Richard Wilbur or James Wright, and I would say, 'I can do that.' I would stay up all night long writing, scratching things out when I would have been reading Victorian novels for classes."

Then, he challenged himself to be published. "I remember wandering around the library and saying, 'I

am going to get in one of those magazines. I kept sending out and getting rejections. All of a sudden, I am... I started hitting some magazines." While still in his master's program his poems were published in magazines like *American Scholar*, *The Nation*, and the *New York Times* editorial page. The acceptances kept coming until now his poems, stories and essays have been published in more than 200 anthologies and 300 prestigious periodicals such as *Atlantic*, *The New Yorker*, and *Harper's*. "It's a thrill to see your name in print," Bill said. "There is nothing like it; it's wonderful."

Bard of Brockport —

a deeper dimension brought to local events about his role at Brockport ceremonies. Bill said, "These occasions need something poetic about them so we realize, as we're standing here, we are profoundly within Time together as a kind of community..."

Bill spoke at the dedication of the newly renovated Main Street, November 14, 2011. Prompting the audience to appreciate the immediate moment in the flow of history, his statement included:

"What I'd like for all of us as we drive Main Street, and as we park and walk and shop and visit over a cup of coffee or have dinner or go to a movie, is to be conscious, during our present, of the long continuum of villagers and students and business folks and shoppers who have intersected time and space here, who drove their huggies and Model A's here and brought food to market here and firewood and loaded and unloaded Canal vessels here and went to war from here. We are all a human community through Time."

In the interview for this article Bill expressed a deep belief about human existence in this sense of time. "I want to continue to remind myself — and hopefully many of my poems carry this — of the mere miracle of our existence. There are, I forget, 20 or 30 billion stars in our Milky Way — and there are billions of Milky Ways — and that we exist at all is something profound. If we snap out of our jaded existence, if we snap out of our habitual life, then we can maybe appreciate this profound sense of space and time that we all share together."

Handwritten journals —

"The journals unify everything else of mine..." An astounding revelation is that Bill had been handwriting his daily journals since 1954, when he was 24 years old. He sits in his easy chair every morning and pens his thoughts in a free flow of consciousness with myriad ideas and observations. He fills the blank pages of bound hardback books, currently writing in volume #59.

"The journals unify everything else of mine because I write about my trips, my poems, and my reading," Bill said. "It's the journal that keeps company with all the other books; all these things come together."

He read to me today's entries which included, summer '63, the war in Kobani, the girl across the street just got on the school bus, Han will drive to Sue's for sewing, Doug and Dianne are coming today, maybe he'll go to the soccer game at 4 o'clock, comments about

the book he is reading, and seemingly guilty reflections about his own comfort and safety in face of horrific news out in the world. "Who knows what will be significant 100 years from now," Bill said about the fact that he edits nothing. I held the current volume #59. "What you are holding in your hand now," he said, "every word is going to be exactly like that when the book is printed."

Bill transcribes the handwritten words with his own typing. It is his typed manuscripts that are published. The first was *The Cabin: Journal 1964 — 1984*. The latest journal published is *Hannelore: Journal 1984 — 1990*. The third anticipated soon is called *Poker & Poets: Journal 1990 — 1986*. The first two journals have almost half a million words each, the third has just over 400,000.

Why curative writing? "There is a sense in which the journal is a companion," Bill said. "Young people these days can have the fusion of mind and fingers and work on a machine. I can't do that. I can have intimacy and companionship only with curative." He reflected back to fourth grade at home when he would enjoy practicing curative by just copying sentences out of the encyclopedia. "It was a pleasure making sentences on memo pads," he said. "Now I have the pleasure of these hard-back journals, and I am making my own sentences instead of copying them." Bill expressed appreciation for local news stories about advocates attempting to revive curative writing.

At the end of it all —

"Family, friends, love, and home" I asked Bill where he is in life right now and what the most recent honor means to him. "I am going to say, as always, the most important thing is family, friends, love, and home," he said. Earlier he had stated, "We have to constantly remind ourselves how fleeting time is and how lucky we are."

"I live such a good life now," Bill said. "I am so lucky. I am so lucky." Bill's good fortune centers on home and his marriage. "I do have a sense of 'home,'" he said. "That's the most profound word in the language for me — HOME. And, Hannelore and I have been on the same wavelength about that ever since we have been married."

Bill mentioned other aspects of his happy life, including good conversations in visits with long-time special friends. And, citing many of his works about to be published, he said, "At the end of my life I know I am writing better now. Even if I am deluding myself, it's a healthy delusion. I just think my poems are just better, stronger and more readable."

Bill's reflections suggest the core of his good fortune is his fulfilling career as a professor, enjoying publishing and teaching, for almost 50 years at his alma mater. And, it was in those undergraduate years, when that coach-to-be turned poet, that deep friendships started to develop. Upon completing his Ph.D. he felt called back to his "home." In his book by that title, referring to his .95 acre of land, he says, "I've had opportunities for more prestigious jobs at more prestigious universities. But, I know that in this floating world this small property of house, trees, lawn, cabin within this village, this roof and ward of generations of Brockport friends, is crucial to me. More and more, I'm reluctant to leave this acre for any length of time."

Western Monroe Historical Society celebrates its Golden Anniversary in 2015

Fifty years preserving the Morgan-Manning House for the community

by Doug Hickerson

The Morgan-Manning House is the stately mansion at the corner of Brockport's Main and South Streets. In 1964 it was damaged by a disastrous fire. Volunteers who restored the home in 1965 organized as the Western Monroe Historical Society that year. The year 2015 is the 50th anniversary of the Western Monroe Historical Society which has preserved the handsome structure as Brockport's landmark jewel and a center of community activity.

The home was built in 1854. Purchased in 1867 by Dayton S. Morgan, he willed it to his daughter, Sara Morgan Manning. It remained the Morgan homestead for almost 100 years, until the 1964 fire took the life of Sara Manning, a 96-year-old widow who was the last of the seven Morgan children.

The fate of the damaged home was not immediately clear after the fire, according to WMHS historian emerita Eunice Chesnut. Competition was keen to acquire Sara Manning's house, including two churches, the YMCA, and the College at Brockport desiring a faculty club. It was Wilbur "Doc" Hiler who saved the historic structure for posterity, fulfilling the wishes of Sara Morgan Manning stated in her will: That her home "would stand forever as a monument to the fine old traditions that are so important to our heritage."

A devoted history buff himself, Hiler approached a number of people he thought would be interested in forming a historical society to restore and preserve the fire-damaged home. He requested support from the Brockport Lions Club. The club president appointed Harry Sentiff chairman of a committee to work with Hiler in establish-

ing the historical society. Sentiff was the first president of the Western Monroe Historical Society which received a provisional charter on April 23, 1965. The final charter was granted in 1968 by the University of New York Education Department Board of Regents.

Hiler also worked with the Landmark Society of Western New York which determined the home was worth preserving and agreed to advise on its restoration. With the completed restoration and a board of trustees established for the Western Monroe Historical Society, the Landmark Society granted Landmark status to the home which had become the headquarters for the historical society."

For all of its austere presence on Main Street, the home and its grounds are a year-round thriving center of community activity sponsored by the Western Monroe Historical Society. The spacious tree-lined lawn comes alive each year with The Old Fashioned Fourth of July Celebration and The Peddler's Market in September. In December the house is brilliantly decorated for The Candlelight Christmas Sale, the Open House for members, and photos with Santa. Guest speakers on local history and other interests visit monthly September through April. Various local organizations hold regular meetings in the Morgan-Manning House: The Quilters, Spinners, Antiques, Gardening, Preservation and History Clubs. Supporting the local history curriculum of local schools, tours are provided for school children who learn of family life in the home and village history of the Victorian era. An extensive collection of local history records is available for research, the work of Eunice Chesnut who was the society's historian for over 37 years and retired in September 2014.

The Western Monroe Historical Society has supported



The Morgan-Manning House, Brockport. File photo.

the Morgan-Manning House for decades with fundraisers, dues paid by approximately 400 members, and donations from about 30 local business sponsors. Since the new board of trustees restored the home in 1965, under President Harry Sentiff, the subsequent boards have devoted volunteer time to preservation of the home and providing educational and entertaining programs and events. Local citizens who have provided leadership as board president since Harry Sentiff are: Betty Nibbelink, Wayne Dedmon, Margaret Bush, Ann Terry, Ken Dickinson, Shirley D. Maher, Jeanne Redman, Connie Drdek, Jean Warner, and Mary Halpin, Dorris and Frank Clune, Bob Brooks, Ara Zulalian, Anne O'Toole, Tony Zappone, Gary Skelton, George Rich, Merritt Ackles, Mary Duryea, Tom Nesbitt, Kathy Goetz, Colleen Donaldson, and Fred Porter. The current president is Alicia Fink.

"The fiftieth anniversary of the Western Monroe Historical Society marks half a century of dedicated work by people from the community who believe in the historical worth of the Morgan-Manning House," Fink said. "These community members have dedicated their time, their energy, their know-how, and their money to help restore and maintain this beautiful community jewel, an important part of the history of Brockport. We can only guess what the destiny of this beautiful home would have been without the volunteers who worked hard and invested money to organize the Western Monroe Historical Society. The subsequent volunteers who keep the House going year after year, with no financial support other than donations and fundraising activities, deserve the thanks of the community."

For other information:
www.morganmanninghouse.org.

"The paragraph on Doc Hiler is adapted from a WMHS July-August 1978 newsletter with an extensive eulogy upon his death July 3, 1978.



At the Brockport Farmers Market Colin Butgereit and Jena Buckwell educate shoppers about gardening and improving the environment. Their dog Lucy helps out, too. Photo by Dianne Hickerson.

"Homesteaders" preach what they practice by sharing Master Gardener lessons

by Doug Hickerson

"Bug hotels and integrated pest management" were the topics presented to shoppers at the Brockport Farmers Market on July 26. A young couple explained the method is about "all different kinds of bugs you want to have in your garden" to maximize successful growing.

Each week, the couple sets up a small table to educate people on how to work with nature and improve the natural environment. Next up they will feature a visiting local beekeeper discussing the basics of beekeeping. Topics such as preserving fruits and vegetables will be the focus near harvest time.

Colin Butgereit and Jena Buckwell, are students in the Master Gardener program at the Cornell Cooperative Extension in Orleans County. They are half-way through their training and will be certified Master Gardeners in December. Besides taking courses and studying the 400-page manual, they must complete 50 volunteer hours. Colin already has 50 and Jena is at 90 hours.

"We have chosen to educate the public," Jenna says about their volunteer work. "It provides a forum for us to talk with people about things we think are important in agriculture and keeping the environment happy and healthy."

Their dog, Lucy, joins them at their table at the farmers market and serves as a good will ambassador for the educational booth.

In their mid-twenties, the pair has chosen a lifestyle close to the soil, purchasing several acres near Clarendon. They live in a mobile home as they plan the construction of a house there. They call themselves "homesteaders," living off the land with a "main focus to take care of ourselves and have a little abundance to share with friends and family," Jenna said. Their choice of Orleans County to settle had much to do with acceptable building codes and acreage allowances for livestock. And, their land

is a ten-minute drive from Brockport, Jena's hometown.

Colin grew up in a Grand Rapids, Michigan suburb and studied welding technology at a community college. He is an installation coordinator for the Rochester branch of nrgHomeSolar, providing home solar energy products. Right now, his job is their source of income while, they say, "Jena is the manager of plans at home, making sure things work out for us."

Jena studied graphic design at RIT, and then worked as art director at a newspaper in New York City, where she and Colin met four years ago. They became involved in a farmers market in New York called GrowNYC. It was the inspiration for their current calling. Jena was glad to escape the big city. "I never liked living in New York City," she said. "I missed being out in the country."

The country setting Jena missed was rural Brockport, her hometown. They first retreated from New York City by moving to Stanton, Virginia, which they found "beautiful" and populated with people "who helped shape what we want to be doing now in sustainable farming." Although they loved Stanton, "I was homesick and missed family," Jena said. "And, thinking of starting a family at some point, I wanted my mom around."

They enjoy the Brockport area, and hope to find the kind of community support they knew in Stanton. "It was a great benefit to know a group of people in Stanton doing similar things and helping each other out," Jena said. "We are starting to find that community here." That is one benefit of the Farmers Market for them.

Colin and Jena are making a unique contribution in their teaching mission at Brockport Farmers Market. "We welcome them," said Ruthann Tryka, co-manager of the weekly market. "They are very interesting and I think a real asset, bringing a whole new dimension to the market."

Three honored for devoted contributions to the community

by Doug Hickerson

In 2012, the Monika W. Andrews Creative Volunteer Leadership Award was established as a memorial by three municipalities "to encourage, recognize, and reward outstanding creative leadership by residents of the Towns of Sweden (including Brockport) and Clarkson who have served as volunteer leaders in improving the lives of their fellow citizens and the greater Brockport community." During the February 2 Brockport Village Board meeting, the third annual award was presented to Norm Frisch, Mary Edwards and Sue Savard each received a Certificate of Merit. All three received a certificate and cash award.

The Selection Committee consists of a representative of each municipality participating: Kermit Mercer (chair) for the Town of Clarkson, Robert Westbrook for the Town of Sweden, and Linda Ketchum representing the Village of Brockport.

Norm Frisch

With dedication to the wider Brockport community, graphic designer Norm Frisch has contributed his expert skills through several media. Located around Brockport are eight interpretive panels with his layout of photos, maps, and facts etched in metal depicting Brockport's history. The brochures for the dedication of the eight panels were also Norm's contribution.

The panels are produced by the Brockport Community Museum on whose board Norm serves. He updated the museum's web site with graphics and information (www.brockportcommunitymuseum.org).

For the Sweden Bicentennial Committee he designed brochures for the Sweden home tours and barn tours, plus promotional materials for other Bicentennial events. For the Village of Brockport he created the brochure about the "Low Bridge High Water Festival." He helped Village Clerk Leslie Morelli format the annual village events schedule in poster form on the web and in print. Norm designed the advertising and brochure for the Village Old Home Weekend 2013 and 2014. For Walk! Bike! Brockport!, he created the group's brochure and Sweden's Community Walking Park Trail brochure.

Norm is also a former member of the Emily L. Knapp Museum Board of Trustees and a current volunteer who provided

scanning and photography services for the museum's renovation.

The Selection Committee's unanimous vote for Norm Frisch included the statement:

"Over a period of many years Norm Frisch has exemplified the spirit of the Monika W. Andrews Creative Volunteer Award by accepting and completing an enormous number of projects as creative consultant and as working manager. It is evident to the Selection Committee...that our three communities are fortunate to have Norm Frisch who brought us creativity, art, leadership and noble humility."

Sue Savard

Sue Savard led a team of volunteers in organizing the Emily L. Knapp Museum, reviving the collection over 18 months into a showcase of Brockport's historic treasures. On a research visit to the museum at 49 State Street, she found the collection in disarray. With approval of the museum board, "Sue and her volunteers set off to transform the museum," said Ann Frey, one of the volunteers. "To that end, material now fills eight filing cabinets, and is accessible. Closets were converted to mini-libraries with 1,500 catalogued books and shelves holding identifiable archival materials. Rooms have been refurbished and displays have been rearranged in an appealing way. Volunteers worked to build display racks, wash curtains, identify pieces of the collection, and clean rooms." At home Sue typed labels for files and pictures and transcribed four long diaries written in script.

Volunteer Marjorie Lewis praises Sue's leadership in allowing volunteers to use their individual strengths to choose their tasks and help solve problems. And, she said, "Sue fostered camaraderie with lunches for us and with a sense of humor as we worked."

Sue held a grand open house for the refurbished museum on Old Home Week on July 5. She had local residents reenact Brockport's historical citizens and she baked cookies with recipes from the archives. (Go to www.knappmuseum.wordpress.com, a web site created by volunteer Sarah Cedeno. At the end is a link to a Westside News feature article on the museum.)

Mary Edwards

Mary Edwards is recognized for "out-



Those honored on February 2 by the Selection Committee for the Monika W. Andrews Creative Leadership Award are: Norm Frisch, award recipient, receiving Certificates of Merit are Sue Savard (left) and Mary Edwards. Photo by Dianne Hickerson

standing leadership and tireless efforts in opening the doors of the Clarkson School House to the Brockport Hill School 4th and 5th graders for the last two years," as described in the nomination letter by Jackie Smith, a board member of the Clarkson Historical Society (CHS). Mary worked with the Brockport Hill School teachers in setting up field trips to transport students from their modern day classrooms to the historic Clarkson Academy classroom, returning to the early school days in building built in 1853. She brought CHS volunteers and teachers together to develop a curriculum of the period.

Mary's same leadership and energy were demonstrated in reaching the community's students and teachers to raise their awareness of the importance of cursive writing. Deeply committed to the benefits of cursive writing which some say is disappearing from modern school curricula, Mary organized and coordinated the Summer Cursive Writing Camp and the Sunday Cursive Writing Workshops this

past fall at the Schoolhouse. In January she also initiated a handwriting contest in area schools as part of the "Campaign for Cursive" worldwide movement promoting cursive writing instruction in public schools. There was wide interest with 70 entries from various school districts. Nine participants received awards at the Clarkson Academy.

Mary Edwards is president of the Clarkson Historical Society. Her term in office and her leadership extend back to part of the 2003 - 2013 decade when the Clarkson Academy was being refurbished from near-ruin to a restored historic gem on the National Register of Historic Places.

(See the feature article in www.westside-news.com "Cursive writing revisits historic Clarkson Academy in Summer School Camp," Aug. 3, 2014. On home page, click on features, archives August, 2014, p. 9. Also, see "Area school handwriting contest winners honored at Clarkson Academy," Feb. 2, 2015. On home page, click on features.

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Meet Alicia Fink: Leader, educator, and artist serving locally and in her birthplace Ecuador

by Doug Hickerson

Alicia Fink lives a comfortable life in the Town of Sweden. She has pursued her jewelry design for a decade as a retired teacher. She is president of the Western Monroe Historical Society in Brockport, ending a productive four-year term in May. Alicia's husband of 46 years is Herb Fink, Ph.D. in Psychology at The College at Brockport. They enjoy the social and cultural benefits of a quiet college town.

Behind this tranquil setting are Alicia's stories of leaving her comfort zone to improve the lives of other people. With determination and grit she restored a school in her homeland of Ecuador, and also searched for the hidden women poets of Ecuador to publish their work. Alicia's strong sense of purpose in Ecuador is also found in the educational and career path she set for herself in this country.

Restoring a school in Ecuador.
Alicia grew up in Quito, Ecuador's capital. She was a member of a middle class family who were typically architects, educators, artists, landowners, and manufacturers.

She left Quito for the U.S. after high school graduation in 1959 and did not return for 15 years. Then she made only short visits. Four years ago an aunt in Quito asked Alicia to visit the struggling school nearby. "The school was built on the grounds where my grandfather's farm used to be near Tupigachi," Alicia said. "As kids, we used to play our summers there. We grew up with the farm workers' families." Eventually, the native bought the farm from her grandfather by raising money in their commune. A hamlet was formed with a school of 150 students in grades K through 7 at the center of the commune.

When Alicia visited the school, "They had nothing," she said. "There were old beat up tables and everything was thrown on the floor. The principal had been there 15 years and did not have a desk or a computer."

Alicia's shock led to enterprising action. First, to engage the children and get their books off the ground, they would make shelves out of bricks and boards. Then, after a week in Quito asking for donations, her uncles, friends, and others started offering their store-away desks and chairs. And, a cousin bought a lap top computer for the principal. "Two weeks after my first visit, I went back with five pickup trucks and a big rental truck full of furniture," Alicia said.

As the locals unloaded the trucks, "Everybody was crying to see all these things coming to the school," Alicia said. "The principal's hands were shaking as he received the lap top." She left it to the principal to distribute what had been delivered. "I went back two weeks later, and I was crying because it was a different school. Everything was clean; nothing on the floor, and the children had learned to be organized."

Alicia's smaller projects also helped the school and delighted the children. She purchased: School supplies with a Brockport Lions Club donation; a swing set and slide with money from Brockport friends, plus her own contribution; and 20 mattresses and sheets for each of the preschool children with her own funds.

In January 2016, Alicia will return to the school with Dr. Laura Lieberman and ten students from The College at Brockport to develop a physical education curriculum that is completely lacking now.

An anthology of poetry by Ecuador women
For over 28 years, retiring in 1999, Alicia's career was teaching Spanish in Hilton High School. In 1990 she quotes a student in Advanced Spanish as saying, "You are always talking about women, reading poetry, and telling us about Ecuador. But you never read a poem by a woman from Ecuador." She promised to do so. Finding no such poetry, she called a Ph.D. friend and poet at Miami University of Ohio to seek help. After he could find no Ecuadorian women poets either, she vowed to him, "I am going to find them and we are going



Alicia Fink is shown in her Brockport home nest a painting by her uncle Leonardo Tejada. Continuing a tradition of many artists in her family, she has been designing jewelry for a decade. Photo by Dianne Hickerson.

to translate and publish their poetry." So began her seven-year odyssey back and forth to scour Ecuador in search of women poets.

Going beyond her familiar territory, "I did not know anybody," Alicia said. But, the country was so small and the people so open, she added, many were reached through word of mouth. "It was amazing how these women came with their poems, many written on scrap paper or in note-books. It was as if they were carrying their babies and handing them over to me."

In 1997, she and her friend selected out poems and published a small bi-lingual anthology. There were many writers, but only a few were included for lack of money. She explained, "Men in Ecuador had the money and controlled the whole publishing industry. So, men were published but not women."

"It was one of the more fascinating things I have done because it put me in contact not only with the women but with men who were writers," Alicia said about her seven-year adventure. "This broadened my horizons beyond family and friends I knew in Ecuador."

In her adopted homeland
Alicia's achievements in this country show the same sense of purpose and drive seen in her Ecuador projects. After graduating with many privileged young people from Ecuador's American School in 1959, she started in a woman's college in St. Louis. She went with the guidance of her father who sought her intellectual development as well as social status, Alicia said. Shunning the affected atmosphere on campus, she quit after two years. In a cultural turnaround, she spent two years in St. Louis ghettos as a welfare worker. To her shocked father, she said, "I love what I am doing. The experience has totally changed me."

Eventually, Alicia followed her life's dream of being a teacher, graduating from the University of New Mexico with certification to teach her native Spanish as well as her newly-mastered French. Immediately after graduation, she accepted a position to teach Spanish in the Peace Corps/College Degree Program at The College at Brockport. It was there she met Herb Fink and they soon started a married life in Brockport. During her 28-year career in teaching Spanish at Hilton High School, Alicia wrote several guides for teaching communicative competence in foreign languages.

Following a long line of recognized artists and musicians in her family, Alicia has discovered her own artistic talent in jewelry design. Ten years ago in retirement, "I realized I might reach 80, having spent my life in my night gown reading," she reflected with a smile. At the time she was attracted to a workshop in jewelry design with a revolutionary Precious Metal Clay (PMC) from Japan. She has worked with the material her own artistic talent is certified by the PMC organization. In a crowning satisfaction at this stage in life, her desire to teach now includes her jewelry making classes in area Continuing Education Programs, at the Rochester Memorial Art Gallery, Studio 34 in Rochester, and in her studio.

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Alicia Fink receives Lifespan's "Second Half Heroes Award"

Brockport resident Alicia Fink is one of five winners chosen for Lifespan's Second Half Heroes Award. The winners were honored at Lifespan's "Celebration of Aging" luncheon on March 25 in Rochester's Riverside Convention Center, attended by a record crowd of 1,470 guests. The keynote speaker for the event was Joan Lunden, host of the "Good Morning America" show on ABC for two decades.

The Second Half Heroes Award recognizes adults 60 and older who break the stereotypes of aging. The award literature states, "Nominees need a 'take it on' attitude about the second half of life." One of over 40 nominees, Fink's qualifications included her hands-on support for a school in her birth place Ecuador; searching out and publishing

the unknown women poets in Ecuador; starting her own jewelry design business; and leading the Western Monroe Historical Society for four years as the current president.

Her story appeared in the March 1, 2015 **Suburban News, Hamlin-Clarkson Herald** entitled "Meet Alicia Fink: leader, educator, and artist serving locally and in her birthplace Ecuador" (www.westsidenewsny.com, click on "Features," go to second page).

Lifespan of Greater Rochester, Inc., founded in 1971, provides more than 30 services and employs 115 at several locations to help older adults take on both the challenges and opportunities of longer life.

April 6, 2015

2 Hamlin-Clarkson Herald and Suburban News West Edition • April 5, 2015

"Step Up!" capital campaign launched at historic Morgan-Manning House

\$25,000 goal set to fund major repairs

by Doug Hickerson

"Step Up!" is the capital campaign slogan that describes both the project at the Morgan-Manning House in Brockport, and the supportive community action needed. The cantilevered staircase leading from the second to the third floor is separating from the wall where it is attached. It has been slowly pulling away from the wall over many years with widening gaps and cracks. The stairs lead to the third floor attic and to the "belvedere" on the roof, commonly misnamed a "cupola." The belvedere, with its commanding view for visitors and its shining light at night, is an iconic part of the stately structure at 151 Main Street, built in 1854.

Step Up! also presents the challenge from the Western Monroe Historical Society (WMHS) trustees to its members and the community to help repair the stairway structure and preserve the historic family signatures on the walls of the belvedere. The goal for the campaign is \$25,000 which includes the staircase stabilization as well as painting it and extending the painting and wallpapering on the third floor.

Handwriting on the wall brings members of historic family into the present

Part of the preservation will be the family messages and signatures written on the belvedere wall in the 1900s. Among the many writings and signatures, "Christmas 1933, Sara Morgan Manning" is significant. She was the last remaining Manning when she died at age 96 in the 1964 fire that severely damaged the house. And, her son, Arnold Morgan Manning, recorded his visits to the belvedere: "This

our old house, May 6, 1900; December 10, 1904; June 4, 1911." There are many other signed mementoes on the walls.

It was customary for family members to write on the wall when visiting on various holidays. Charles Garlock, Town of Sweden resident and a current trustee on the WMHS board, is related to the Morgan-Manning family. "I am the great-grandson of Gifford Morgan, who was the second youngest of the seven Morgan children," Garlock said, reckoning that Sara Morgan-Manning (Gifford's sister) was his great aunt. "My memories of the Morgan-Manning House as a child are very sketchy. I could not have been any older than five years old when my family visited Sara Manning for Christmas. When my family members' names were put on the belvedere wall, I suspect they were written by my father (Fletcher Garlock), while my mother watched my brothers and me downstairs."

The personal handwriting of historic family members makes them very much present today in the Morgan-Manning House, as visitors peruse the messages on the wall. The capital project aims to preserve the original writing as much as possible and to photograph them for posterity in archival files.

A challenge to emulate founding WMHS members as models

The Step Up! challenge comes in the 50th Anniversary year of the founding of the WMHS by volunteers who restored the home after the disastrous 1964 fire. The anniversary theme "Out of the Ashes" uses the Phoenix mythology to celebrate the founding volunteers who saved the home from destruction to a destiny as a preserved landmark for future generations. Today's board members challenge Western Monroe Historical Society members and the wider community to take the same initiative and pay forward the benefits received in the treasured home for fifty years. "Like our predecessors, we are called upon to preserve the Morgan-Manning House," said Alicia Fink president of the WMHS board.

Fink would like more local citizens to become familiar with the Morgan-Manning House and support the capital project. "This house is so special," she said, "unfortunately, many people in Brockport have never seen it." Board members recently entertained members of the Brockport Chamber of Commerce in the house.

"The visitors were awestruck at seeing it the first time," Fink said. To acquaint the public with the house, last year's 33rd annual "Old Fashion Fourth of July" event included tours of the first floor. Citing the "surprisingly long lines" waiting for the tours, Fink said the tours will continue this year and the second floor will be added, allowing a view of the stairway to the third floor.

The capital campaign looks to the end of July as the deadline for raising the \$25,000. That deadline means that repairs can be completed by the fall, allowing the belvedere to continue to fascinate children in the public schools' annual fourth grade tour of the home.



A unique architectural feature at the top of the staircase displays mementoes in time denoted by the Morgan Manning House's original owners. Provided photo.



Gathered at Beikirch Care Center are: Charlie Diehl (center), his mother Mary at his right, and Ann Marie Houseman, director of social work. Mary holds a photo of the family including Kevin Diehl, Charlie's father. The table displays a sampling of gifts Charlie and his mom are giving to the residents. Photo by Dianne Hickerson.

Charlie Diehl makes thoughtful gifts to Beikirch Care Center residents

by Doug Hickerson

Charlie Diehl is a very special ten-year-old. He has a captivating smile, a keen wit, appreciates his parents and family roots, and is sensitive to the needs of others. With all these qualities going for him, Charlie has initiated a project to deliver gift bags to all 120 residents of Beikirch Care Center in Brockport.

Charlie's father, Kevin, is a resident at Beikirch Care Center. Charlie visits his father on a regular basis with his mother, Mary Diehl. They have brought many gifts to Kevin, decorating his room with bright colors, balloons and messages.

Charlie had met other residents when he, with his mother and father, would go to Bingo where they made friends. "I saw many of those friends being upset sometimes, like the one who cried when his family left," Charlie said. "It's horrible to hear someone crying, especially when they are in the nursing home and away from their family."

In the interview with Charlie were Mary Diehl and Anne Marie Houseman, director of social work at Beikirch. Charlie was asked how the project started. "I was in the elevator going home one day," Charlie said, "and I told my mom, I want to do something for this nursing home. She said, 'OK' and that's how we started the gift bags." Sitting close to him, Mary joked, "I'm your manager." Charlie quipped, "Yes, this is my manager over here," hugging his mom and causing an outburst of laughter. Continuing the banter, Charlie exclaimed, "We are the only two people working for the company!" to more laughter.

Mary posted an appeal on social media, telling of Charlie's special act and asking for gift contributions. She also used Gofundme.com under "Charlie Diehl's Give Back." Cash donations and gift items poured in. Ann Marie has sorted items into gift bags for each resident by name. More able residents will get items to use like pencils, writing pads, and puzzles. Others receive gifts like lotions and shampoo. All fourth floor residents have received their bags (at press time). There are two floors still to go.

The gifts are delivered with copies of Charlie's note saying, "From Charlie, because my Dad has everything he needs and one day when I left, I thought of you."

Responding to comments about his sensitivity and maturity, Charlie said, "Thanks. I learned that from my Mom. And she learned it from her Dad and from her Mother. My Grandma is still alive, but my Grandpa passed away from a stroke, unfortunately. I wasn't even born when that happened."

Charlie appreciates family. He said he was born December 28, 2004, noting he shares a birthdate with his Father and his Aunt Kate. Charlie is named for his grandfather who is buried in a cemetery near Buffalo. "Charlie wanted to go with me when I visited my father at the cemetery," Mary said. She described how Charlie sat near the gravesite, telling his grandfather how proud he was that he was in the Army during World War II. "He also told my father that he wished he had met him, but, as his namesake, he is honored every day to be his grandson."

Charlie was asked how he feels about doing this project. "I just feel great that I have done this for the nursing home," he said. "I just wanted to make my dad proud..." His words trailed off into sobbing as he leaned on his mother's arm. After a moment, Mary told him to breathe deeply, then said, "We are crying with you because you are very sweet and have a very big heart. As a ten-year-old, you have said, 'I love my Dad and want to make him proud, and I want to give back.' It came from your heart and mind. You're amazing. We are proud of you." Charlie looked up and smiled.

"Every day he is hugged and told he is loved," Mary continued. "He knows he has a foundation of love and a strong bond with the family. So many have been inspired by him and have stepped up, donating to empower him."

Note: Donations can still be sent through Gofundme.com: "Charlie Diehl's Give Back."

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Hill School offers unique program for the academically talented

Meeting the needs of students who have passion to discover

by Doug Hickerson

The last image on the Power Point was Osama bin Laden. The presenters who had researched terrorism asked the question, "Is this the most dangerous man in the world?"

That presentation was on May 14, 1999 – two years, three months, and 28 days before the 9/11 tragedy in New York City, planned and instigated by bin Laden.

The two researchers were not scholars in a think tank. They were two fifth grade students, Brandon Hickey and Greg Strabel, in Brockport Hill School's Academically Talented Program (ATP).

The two were curious and concerned about terrorism in the world and wanted to study it. They approached teacher Buck Noble who located three mentors to guide them: LTC Steven Hoffpauer in military science, Dr. Ray Duncan in political science, both at The College at Brockport, and an expert on counter terrorism in Washington whom they interviewed by email.

ATP projects usually conclude with some demonstration to an audience. For these two students the power point was presented to two honor global history classes at Brockport High School. The two captivated their bright older audience with their research.

What's offered and expected

The terrorism project is one example of what Buck Noble has been doing with



"I backed into teaching at Brockport," Noble said. "I never thought I would ever be a teacher in my life." He has loved it ever since. Asked about the high level of energy he demonstrates, Noble said, "It comes from the kids. There is just something magic; I can't put it another way. They give it back to me."

Buck Noble
Brockport teacher

fourth and fifth grade students for the last 18 years as an "enrichment specialist" in the Academically Talented Program (ATP) in Hill School. He encourages and enables curious young minds with a passion to know more about something in their world. He locates appropriate expert mentor volunteers, carefully screened, to guide them in their quest.

Noble gives a presentation to all entering fourth grade classes, introducing them to existing group projects they can join: rocks and minerals, engineering, math labs, and robotics. Then, he encourages students to propose their own project of interest. Other projects initiated by students, individually or in groups, include: blue bird houses, spiders, Veggie Nation, music, dance, chess, hospitality industry, woodwork, and frogs.

There are no formal academic prerequisites to join the ATP. The students must be doing well in their classes, be able to afford time out of class, and be responsible to make up work missed in class.

Mining for mentors

One of Noble's tasks is to locate appropriate mentors for the students' projects. He uses all sorts of networking, social media, and sometimes, ads. Once mentors are assigned, he works out the logistics of where and when to meet.

The mentors are well-qualified. They are often professionals in the field of interest, including professors at The College at Brockport, or well-accomplished practitioners. The 20 students in dance meet with a dance class in Hartwell Hall where the college dance students are their mentors. Noble himself mentors a group of 50 chess players every Monday from 7:30 to 9 a.m.

Frank Rakoski is the founding mentor with whom Noble started the ATP program. Located through an ad 18 years ago, Rakoski, an electrical engineer, was about to retire after 30 years as a systems analyst with Kodak. He has since been a mentor in the robotics lab and the chess

club. He lives locally with his wife, Karen Rakoski, a mechanical engineer, who has mentored ATP students since 2006 in rocks and minerals and lapidary art. Noble has nominated the Rakoskis for recognition from the National Association for Gifted Children, for the quality of their work totaling 12,500 hours to date.

The demise of the labels

"gifted" and "talented"

Noble says that "Academically Talented" is a misnomer, but it's a convenient title for the program. He says the terms "gifted" and "talented" have become emotionally and politically loaded for parents, teachers and administrators. About 20 years ago a more formal gifted and talented program in the district was scrapped in the controversy. Still seeing a need for many students not appropriately challenged by the traditional curriculum, in 1997 BCSD administrators sent three teachers (including Noble as the new program leader) and two administrators to a two-week workshop at the University of Connecticut, the clearing house for all gifted and talented research, Noble said. "My conceptions about gifted and talented, and how to work with these kids, were blown out of the water!" Noble said. "I had a huge paradigm shift in my own mind about what this population of students is all about."

Passion is primary, backed by skills embedded in the learning standards

"Research shows there is no standardized test for measuring giftedness for the K-6 population," Noble said. It is a student's passion for a particular area of learning or skill that drives him/her to high achievement on that subject. Noble reminds his students that it is a healthy respect for the brain that is behind their gratifying learning adventure. That reminder is summed up in a kind of humorous secret code he often uses when greeting students: "How's your brain?"

Continued on page 4



Mentor Frank Rakoski helps students Jacob Thomas (middle) and Hayden Watt to operate a robot display in the robotics lab. They were part of break-out sessions following an overview of the Hill School's 2014-15 Academically Talented Program. Enrichment specialist Buck Noble led the presentation to parents and interested others at Hill School on May 5. Photo by DiAnne Hickerson.

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Hill School's program for the academically talented

Continued from page one

The ATP is pragmatic as well as passionate. Once a student has set his/her goal with a mentor and methods for getting there, then New York State standards are used for the learning skill sets that will be focused on. "It's called 'backwards by design', an educational methodology at the top of every educator's list," Noble said.

"There is something magic. They give it back to me."

Noble's passion for his work suggests he has found his very gratifying professional goal.

"My personal goal for these students is that they are able to function comfortably in the arena of novelty," Noble said, "because that is what they are going to be confronted with in the constantly changing real world." With a futurist perspective, Noble sees the students' journey of discovery in ATP as primary over the content learned in

their projects. "The job for them will be to face the challenge in totally unique situations, when asked to solve problems," Noble said. "My job is to give them challenging situations now and be the guide on the sideline, staying out of their way."

Noble met his own totally unique situation in life when he became a teacher. He trained in nuclear engineering with the Navy and became a hydraulics engineer on the last conventional aircraft carrier U.S.S. *John F. Kennedy*. Leaving the Navy, he earned three degrees in two years: Associate in International Studies, B.A. in Global Studies, and a B.A. in Spanish.

With no particular career plans, in 1983 a teacher convinced him to try teaching. "I backed into teaching at Brockport," Noble said. "I never thought I would ever be a teacher in my life." He has loved it ever since. Asked about the high level of energy he demonstrates, Noble said, "It comes from the kids. There is just something magic; I can't put it another way. They give it back to me."

Spencerport Depot reopens for the season

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Happy Birthday, Joan!

Joan Cunningham is celebrating her 90th birthday on July 13th! Born in Rochester, Joan married Leo Cunningham in 1948, and raised their family in Spencerport. Their children, Dan, Bob, Jim & Mary and their families will be celebrating with Joan in Bradenton, Florida.

Congratulations, Joan, and thank you for 90 years of joy and happiness!



This is Suburban News

Celebrating the 4th of July -
A patriotic participant in the Children's Parade lines up in front of the Brockport's Morgan-Manning House. The parade was part of the "Old Fashion Fourth of July" celebration in its 34th year on the mansion's lawn. A record crowd of several hundred also enjoyed the Brockport High School Choir (joined by many community members), the Brockport Community Concert Band, and the Brockport Big Band. Children's games, a cake walk, food and refreshment, and tours of the historic home were all part of the day's festivities sponsored by the Western Monroe Historical Society. Provided photo by Dianne Hickerson.



SOUTH EDITION

Suburban News

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It's a dog's life in every good way

Clarkson Veterinary Hospital is a key player in successful adoptions by Hamlin Dog Shelter

by Doug Hickerson

"It's a dog's life" sheds its negative meaning if that dog has been rescued by Hamlin's Craig A. Goodrich Dog Shelter and treated by the Clarkson Veterinary Hospital. Indeed, the shelter is a "no-kill" shelter, insuring any rescued dog will live. And, the pet will very likely live well, as the shelter partners with the vet hospital and responsible new pet owners.

Since the shelter opened at 80 Railroad Avenue in December 2012, over 300 dogs have experienced the transition from abandonment to loving homes. Dave Maynard is Hamlin's dog control officer. As a volunteer, he developed and manages the shelter. The efficiency and care by Maynard and his volunteers were especially demonstrated in October 2014, when the shelter took in a pregnant Labrador mix "Dena" who nearly had been euthanized in Ohio. She had 13 puppies in the kennel, cared for by a well-trained team of volunteers who worked with them in quarantine. When they were ready, it took just two days for all the puppies to be adopted out through contacts on the shelter's Facebook that has 7,128 followers.

An integral part of the rescue operation is veterinarian Dr. William J. "Jess" Buttery who heads the Clarkson Veterinary Hospital. When the shelter was starting up, Maynard said Buttery was helpful with advice on the symptoms

in a rescue dog that might signal a need for medical attention. Also from the beginning, Buttery and his partner veterinarian, Dr. Sabrina Miller, have given a checkup and rabies shot to each dog taken in by the shelter at a major discount to the Town of Hamlin. Last year, it was 145 dogs, and this year, so far, nearly 100, according to Maynard.

For any dog adopted from the shelter, Buttery provides new owners a free office visit for a complete physical exam and advice on health care. For puppies, in conjunction with Purina, a free bag of food is provided, plus a \$5 coupon to purchase one, and a coupon for \$25 off the next visit at any vet participating with Purina. For puppies under six months old, Buttery gives a free heartworm preventative and free flea control. For further vet services like neutering, fecal exam, or deworming, the owner may choose Buttery or any other veterinarian.

"We want to get them started on the right path," Buttery said, "whether or not they come back to us in the future. With this free visit, at least we know they heard about these important points for raising a healthy dog."

The volume of dogs rescued and adopted out is managed by Maynard's caring and efficient methods. The process is greatly facilitated by the Clarkson Veterinary Hospital giving "same day" service for the first check up and rabies shot.

"Dr. Buttery is just incredible,"



Ready for a good home - Dr. William J. Buttery has just given this puppy her first check up and rabies shot so she will be ready to be adopted. Caroline Thompson, Dave Maynard's assistant at Hamlin's Craig A. Goodrich Dog Shelter, is holding her. Photo by Dianne Hickerson.

Maynard said. "Any time of day I can call and get a dog in that day. For example, recently I had adoptions on a Friday night. I had three dogs that needed shots; he took all three dogs on an hour's notice."

The admiration is mutual, as Buttery observes that Maynard "is diligent, putting in a lot of time and effort into finding the right homes for the pets."

Many volunteers are needed to run the shelter 24/7. Right now, Maynard says he is in need of more

volunteers; the shelter's Facebook page makes a convincing appeal. It also provides a stunning array of photos of dogs available for adoption and new dog owners telling their stories of happy endings.

Go to: www.facebook.com/Hamlin-NY-DogControl www.hamlin-dogshelter.com (See "Dogs at Hamlin's no-kill shelter go to caring homes," *Hamlin-Clarkson Herald, Suburban News*, October 19, 2014, at www.westsidenevsnny.com.)

West Edition

Suburban News

Distributed to Bergen, Clarendon, Holley-Murray and Brockport-Sweden

Young teen entrepreneur learns, earns, and gives back

His vision: Be the fourth generation running the family farm

by Doug Hickerson

Mateo Mortellaro was eight years old when he started his vegetable business by pulling his red wagon full of produce to sell in his Brockport neighborhood. Now, at 14, he has given \$4,000 from his sales to an orphanage in Colombia. And his business, "Red Wagon Farms," took a major step on July 19 by selling for the first time at the Farmers Market in Brockport.

The whole Mortellaro family was present to make Mateo's first venture at the Farmers Market a success. Mateo and his eleven-year-old brother, Tiago, were adopted by infants from an orphanage in Bogota, Colombia. Their father, Matt Mortellaro, owns a large third-generation family farm with his brother near Elba, named G. Mortellaro & Sons, Inc. Mateo's mother, Stephanie Mortellaro, is a certified Experienced Registered Yoga Teacher (E-RYT) with the National Yoga Alliance. She teaches at her local practice and at various regional venues and national institutes. The Mortellaros have lived in Brockport going on 20 years.

Starting with a red wagon at eight years old

"My family is a farming family, and I took it to a very young age," Mateo said. His father gave him one-quarter of an acre at the farm to grow his own vegetables. Mateo praises his brother for his help with the crops. At about eight years old, "I decided it would be a great idea to give back a little bit to the orphanage where I was adopted."

To do so, he began selling his vegetables out of a red wagon he pulled around his neighborhood near Brockport Middle School. The same red wagon filled with vegetables, now his business logo, was in front of the Farmers Market tent as part of the display.

Last year the whole family traveled to the Bogota CRAN Orphanage to present a \$3,000 check, plus \$1,000 worth of toys and supplies. Coming primarily



Mateo Mortellaro will be a freshman at Brockport High School in the fall. He started his business, Red Wagon Farms, when he was 8 years old.

from vegetables sales, the sum also included money Mateo earned doing odd jobs plus funds his mother helped to raise at her yoga classes. Mateo plans to keep giving to the orphanage. He has also started a Cloud web site to support the cause: Gofundme/wm9jfc.

Learning at the Simon Business School

A major advance for the enterprising Mateo was his participation last year at the Young Entrepreneurs Academy at the University of Rochester Simon Business School. Attending classes for a couple of hours each week through the year, he was instructed by business people, lawyers, accountants, and went on field trips to various businesses. "A draft designer I hired through the class helped me make my designs," Mateo said. Mentors also helped with his business plan. At the end of the year students had to present their new business ideas to a panel of business people to request funding. Mateo asked for \$550 and he was awarded \$600 after his presentation. He is also now certified as DBA (Doing Business As).

A vision for the future

With this early start in the agricultural business, the rising high school freshman was asked if he intended to make it his life's work. "Yes, I want to inherit my dad's farm," Mateo answered immediately. "And, I want to attend Cornell University to study agriculture." He was also asked if he had a role model and mentor. "That would definitely have to be my dad."

Dad's wisdom on farming and Mateo's possible career

Matt Mortellaro reflected on the nature of farming and Mateo's possible career. "Over the course of 20 years, you experience both prosperity and hardship," he mused about his 300-acre corporate farm which is thriving in the third generation. In the long view, "The future is bright for agriculture," he said. "There is a burgeoning global population that needs to be fed, and an awakening among Americans about dietary choices, with (increased demands for) fresh fruits and vegetables. It bodes well." About his sons, he said, "I think it would be wonderful if either one or both decided to go into agriculture."

But, "They can do whatever they want," Mortellaro added, emphasizing the importance of free personal choice for a life's career. "Regardless of what Mateo



The Mortellaro family worked in the Red Wagon Farms tent at the Brockport Farmers Market on July 19, a business started by 14-year-old Mateo. Shown left to right: Mateo, brother Tiago, father Matt and mother Stephanie. Photos by Dianne Hickerson.

decides to do with his life, this experience (The Red Wagon business) is one he will be able to draw on."

About the first Farm Market experience, Mortellaro said, "We did not know what to expect. But, we sold out of almost everything. We greeted old acquaintances and met new people. It was great, a really pleasant surprise. We look forward to returning."

"Walk to School Day" now features trophy for the winning school

Continued from page one

Hecker's concept "came from thinking the walk to school is good for you as well as for the environment, reducing your carbon footprint," she said. "My thought was to make walking students out of things you might find along the way as you walk to school - things from nature - pine cones, nuts, and sticks. To make them look like kids I gave them back packs and sneakers."

Lehman's approach for the base started with hands-on methods. He brought scraps of wood to sample at the first meeting. At the next breakfast he brought a rough shape of the base made from scrap wood. With that prototype in the second meeting he discussed with Hecker the shape she would need for her sculpture. Besides those dimensions, "We left the meeting with specific dimensions for the base panels, how many name plates on a side, and the main front panel to name the event and the current year's winner," Lehman said. "The discussions at breakfast were crucial to coming up with a shape of the base that would work," he added. By the third meeting the trophy was complete.

Jennifer Hecker is a professor in the Department of Art where she has taught all levels of sculpture as well as general education courses since 1989. In 1999, she was awarded a Chancellor's Award for Excellence in Teaching. In 2002 she completed a six-year term as department chairperson. A Brockport resident for over 25 years, she is known in the community for her house-shaped steel sculpture, "Seasons and Roots," created in Remembrance Park on Park Avenue in 2006.

Ed Lehman started wood turning as a hobby in the mid-1980s. He is well-known locally for his finely crafted bowls, platters, vases, candle sticks and other wood creations. "The community has been very receptive," he said about his work that is often commissioned for items such as wedding gifts.

Lehman, with a PhD in sociology, retired as Distinguished Teaching Professor Emeritus from The College at Brockport in 1996 after 26 years. He taught research methods. His own research was pioneering work in the study of women clergy. Beginning in 1975, Lehman conducted research in the United States as well as England and Australia on the role of women clergy and lay reactions to their ministry.

Dr. Goetz expressed his gratitude to Hecker and Lehman for making his trophy concept a reality. "These village and community artists came together to donate their time and considerable talent," he said. "Their combined creative genius resulted in a beautiful trophy."

Kathy Goetz and Jackie Morris honored in Brockport Village Board proclamations

By Doug Hickerson
photos by Dianne Hickerson

On July 20, 2015, the Brockport Village Board signed two proclamations. Each document separately extols the volunteer careers of Kathy Goetz and Jackie Morris upon their retirement from official roles in preserving Brockport's history. The proclamations are summed up within Kathy's and Jackie's stories from recent interviews.

Kathy Goetz - Historic Preservation Board Chair emerita

Kathy Goetz and her family moved to their present home on Park Avenue in Brockport in 1978. Her interest in Brockport history started with that home which was built in 1840. "I always loved history and was a social worker," she said about studying people and their past. "Buying a home with the historic roots I had, I wanted to learn more about it." She soon was introduced to the Morgan-Manning House and pursued Brockport history primarily through the Western Monroe Historical Society (WMHS) which maintains the home as its headquarters.

It was Kathy's role as chair of the Historic Preservation Committee of the WMHS which led to her greatest accomplishment for Brockport's history. In that capacity, the Village Board proclamation states she "provided the leadership in drafting a proposed Historic Preservation local law for the Village of Brockport that was adopted and implemented by the Village Board and has served as the basis for all historic preservation efforts in the Village since then..."

The local law was implemented in 1990 and the Village's Historic Preservation Board was established. Kathy was one of the first members, and the proclamation states she "has remained an active member continuously in the 25 years since then..." The document further acknowledges her service as chair of that Board for the past three years.

Kathy says developing the preservation law took five years of gradually educating the Village Board and the public about the nature of the law and its impact on homeowners. It was engaging the public and officials that avoided controversy and brought about well-informed approval of the law, Kathy says.

The proclamation notes that Kathy's participation in all the work of the board "included successful applications for numerous outside grants to support historic preservation efforts in the Village." And, her work resulted in 100 structures in the Village receiving local landmark designations and some 125 Village structures being listed on the State and National Registers, including two historic districts.

The document also states, "She served loyally and actively as a member of the Landmarks Advisory Committee of the Town of Sweden."

Citing Kathy's "well-earned retirement from the Historic Preservation Board as of June 30, 2015," the concluding resolution states, "This Village Board does hereby commend and thank her for her long, loyal, and creative service to the historic preservation of this community and bestows upon her the honorable title of Historic Preservation Board Chair emerita."

Jackie Morris - Brockport Village Historian emerita

Jackie Morris arrived in Brockport as a 19-year-old bride in 1945. Her husband purchased their home on Maxon Street, Jackie says. "And gave it to me, saying, 'This is as you'll always have a home.'" Raymond died three years ago. She still lives there after 70 years.

She first became interested in Brockport's history around 1950 when the first Village Historian, Emily Knapp, asked her to contribute some volunteer time to the Village Museum on State Street. Her involvement

with the museum increased over the years. In 1979 she became a member of the Museum Board governing the museum, now named the Emily I. Knapp Library and Museum of Local History. The proclamation honors her for "some 45 years of good and faithful service" to the Museum, including chairing the Museum Board since 2006 and continuing now as a Museum volunteer.

In 2001, she became the official Village Historian and "has served well and faithfully" for 14 years in that role, and as a member of Brockport's Historic Preservation Board since 2010, and of Brockport's Tree Board since 2005, still continuing those board memberships.

The proclamation also states that "for several years, she provided the leadership with very little support to tend the museum and ensure its survival." Jackie said the work on the museum was her greatest challenge. "The museum was a complete mess," she said, and referred to her work with several people to "sort things out." Asked about her greatest reward, she said, "I guess it was making the museum visible. For so long people forgot it was there."

Asked why she was retiring now as Village Historian and Museum Board member, Jackie said, "I have done it for a lot of years. I'm tired. Some people have improved things at the museum, like putting things on file. They have a lot more expertise than I do. They see and do things in different ways. I think that's good. It's time for a change."

At the age of 90, her retirement comes after decades of preserving Brockport's history. Citing her retirement as Village Historian and Museum Board member, and her continuing service in other capacities, the proclamation states the Village Board "does hereby commend and thank Jackie for such an outstanding record of long, faithful, and creative service to this community" (and) "bestows on her the honorable title of Village Historian emerita."



Kathy Goetz



Jackie Morris

West Edition

Suburban News

Distributed to Bergen, Clarendon, Holley-Murray and Brockport-Sweden

Hosta sale supports The Center in Brockport

by Doug Hickerson

Peggy Hale is an advocate for The Center in Brockport. At her 26 Meadowview Drive home she is selling hostas as a fundraiser and providing literature about The Center to her visitors.

The Center is located at 133 State Street adjacent to the Erie Canal. It was formerly the "Sweden Senior Center." It is now a community center, a gathering place with activities for all ages. Peggy wants the public to know the wider purpose and to take advantage of The Center's offerings.

On her own, Peggy's project has included mail ordering 100 bare root hostas, then planting them in her garden, replanting some, mixing the soil to pot them, watering constantly, and displaying the pots on tables in her yard.

After this work investment, and paying \$100 for the order plus her other costs, she suggests a "donation of \$4 per plant" in her recent **Suburban News** ad headlined "Benefit Sale." Since placing the ad, her yard signs have a more customer-friendly message: "Take what you want, and pay what you can." She borrowed that sales approach from the Hartley Family Band who used the slogan to sell their CDs and DVDs at a recent concert at the Morgan-Manning House.

With a few sample plants at the street side, a sign invites visitors to look over the tables of plants near the house. Buying is on the honor system by leaving a donation in a jar. Or, she is glad to meet inquiring people and show them other plants she has for sale. "Some people

knock on the door," she said. "I like meeting people that way. It's been interesting."

"Pay what you can" means Peggy relies on the customer's good will to support the work of service groups that meet at The Center. The Quilting Group makes about 300 quilts a year for the homeless and the needy families in our area. In its first year the Community Sewing Group teaches how to sew and participants make a variety of hand crafted items. The Knitting Club knits and crochets items for area cancer patients. Dresses for Girls around the World makes dresses for needy and underprivileged girls in the U.S. and around the world.

Besides supporting its service groups, Peggy promotes the public's use of The Center that has activities for all ages. Anyone can join the groups and other activities, she says. And, The Center is available to other community service organizations which can apply to use the facility. She has a supply of brochures advertising Sweden and Clarkson Recreation, including a wide variety of activities offered at The Center.

Whatever the sales results, "I don't worry about making money," Peggy says. "I just remember that I want people to learn about the Center."

Note: Peggy will answer any questions by phone at 637-4857.

Peggy Hale (left) is joined by Laurana McCormick (center) and her sister, Claire McCormick. The two had stopped to admire the roadside hosta display. "Our mom loves gardening," Claire said. Photo by Dianne Hickerson.



New College at Brockport president meets the community at reception at The Center

by Doug Hickerson

A community reception was held on September 2 for area residents to meet the new College at Brockport president, Dr. Heidi Macpherson. It took place at The Center on Brockport's State Street, formerly the "Sweden Senior Center."

Community relations

In an interview with Dr. Macpherson immediately following the event, it was clear she had taken the initiative to get out and meet the community. After arriving at the college in mid-July, she said she discussed with her staff "how to get involved with the community by meeting with a lot of people in a short period of time." She asked Brockport's Mayor Margaret Blackman to recommend The Center as the venue with its new purpose as a community center located within the village. "It's a wonderful, wonderful idea for her to do this," said Town of Sweden resident Alicia Pink, referring to the reception. "I don't remember past presidents coming into the community instead of holding such a reception at the college."

Gene Wood, of the Brockport Rotary Club, presents a club banner to Dr. Heidi Macpherson, College at Brockport president and fellow Rotarian. Wood and other community members met face to face with the new president and her husband, Dr. Allen Macpherson at a recent reception at the Center (formerly the Senior Center) in Brockport. President Macpherson wants to learn more about the lovely village and great community where so many emeriti, alumni, current faculty and staff live. Provided photo.



Asked about any ongoing strategy she has for relating to the local community, President Macpherson referred to "open transparent communication" which has been her style in previous college towns. "I want to make sure, as best as we can, that the community knows what we are trying to achieve," she said, "and to make sure we have opportunities for our students to interact locally through programs like internships." About any possible complaints from the community, she said, "I want to be responsive to their concerns. If they have reason to criticize us, I would want to know what it is and to see what we can do to help."

Macpherson said she was very pleased to hear the Town/Gown Committee at the College had been revised and activated, adding that she is eager to become involved in it. ("Gown" refers to a professor's academic robe, meaning the College.)

Formed in 1960, the on campus committee became "basically defunct" between 2010 and 2014, according to Blackman. Last year, the committee was reinstated with 22 members representing both realms of the town/gown relationship. "The committee has virtually all impor-



Dr. Heidi Macpherson, the new president at The College at Brockport, and her husband, Dr. Allen Macpherson, greeted area residents at the September 2 reception in The Center. She is the first woman president in the history of the college. Photo by Dianne Hickerson.

tant stakeholders at the college and in the community. I think the committee, as presently constituted, is in a position to bring some real changes and some real understanding to the relationship between the village (including town) and the college," Blackman said. "President Macpherson's leadership will be critical to the continued effort of this committee."

Blackman is familiar with both sides of the town/gown relationship - she is anthropology professor emerita, retired after 30 years of teaching at The College at Brockport.

Besides reaching out to the local community, the President and her husband, Dr. Allen Macpherson, are temporarily situated on campus where they mix with the student residential community. They are living in a residence hall with their dog, Tilly, until the renovation of the President's home on Holley Street is complete, projected for November. The President says Tilly helps start conversations with students who miss their dogs at home.

Student behavior

When past incidents of student misbehavior in the village were mentioned, the President said: "One of the things we try to do with our students is to remind them of the importance of responsible behavior, not just because of neighbors, but also because of their own health and safety." Among many messages to students about behavior, she cited, "Not engaging in underage drinking and making sure if they

are of age that they are responsible in drinking behavior." She said the existing Student Code of Conduct guides student behavior, and includes corrective measures "with opportunities for students to think through their behavior and behave in a way that is useful and beneficial. That is our hope."

The President mentioned another source for promoting responsible behavior. "I am proud that we have revived our Better Community Statement Pledge, reinforcing the idea of having our own community on campus and being respectful, but also being part of the larger community," she said. The statement opens with, "We choose to be a part of an academic community dedicated to principles that foster integrity, civility, and justice."

Impressions

from some reception guests

Mary Edwards, a Town of Clarkson resident who attended the event, commented that President Macpherson "is very approachable, very genuine, very interested and interesting. I enjoyed meeting and chatting with her."

George "Topper" Bott from the Town of Hamlin said, "I think it was very gracious of her to meet the community and she did a very good job. When you ask her about what she thinks the college needs, she is quite articulate and that's great. Also, from what I have read, she is much attuned to SUNY Brockport and already has ideas about what the college should be doing."

SOUTH EDITION

Suburban News

DISTRIBUTED TO CHURCHVILLE-RIGA, NORTH CHILI, SPENCERPORT-OGDEN



Students from Justin Jackson's fourth grade class at Brockport's Hill School were eager to board the tugboat *Urger* at the Erie Canal Welcome Center in Brockport. During their canal-side visit and tour, students heard about the construction of the canal, the importance of tugboats, and the importance of recycling to keep waters clean. This is an annual field trip for all fourth graders, as part of their study of New York State history. "We are incredibly fortunate to live in Brockport where we have access to so many learning opportunities that extend beyond the classroom's walls," said Mr. Jackson. Photo by Dianne Hickerson.

The Welcome Center on the Erie Canal after ten years

by Doug Hickerson

Since its beginning in 2005, the Welcome Center on the banks of Brockport's Erie Canal has drawn visitors into the village from all around the world. From the water have come reflections of the fabric of the community, as boaters praise its features and quality.

Instrumental in Brockport's glowing reputation among national and global visitors are the greeters that welcome them at the Welcome Center. The greeters are the first to meet arriving boaters, giving instructions on use of the facilities as their hosts, and then sharing highlights of the community as ambassadors.

Sal Sciremammano has served as greeter since the beginning. Sal says, "There are not many places on the canal where your host is about 100 yards from a Main Street and a bevy of restaurants, coffee places, novelty shops, a movie theater, and a huge independent book store. And, our boaters love it." On evaluation sheets completed by boaters, a typical statement reads, "Beautiful town and wonderful reception center and people. Brockport has a great reputation with boaters. We can see why."

Managing the Welcome Center every day May through October

The Welcome Center on Water Street has state-of-the-art facilities and service, including water and electric hookups, Wi-Fi, showers, restrooms, and laundry facilities.

About 100 volunteers serve two-hour shifts for twelve hours daily during the peak season from June through September. It's a nine-hour day for the opening and closing weeks of the canal.

From the water come worldwide reflections of the community

Bill Andrews, Brockport's deputy mayor, started the greeters' project and now oversees it, working with Doug Wolcott to manage it. Doug schedules the greeters and Bill sends out the schedules by email. Doug also has been a greeter from the beginning. His duties now include arriving every day at 8 a.m. to check on paid boaters and, "Make sure all are happy with what they got."

A story sampler from the greeters

Some greeters are scheduled with a partner, allowing one to miss on occasion, but also allowing one of them to go on



Greeters Sal Sciremammano, Kyle McGonigal and Cathy Appleby gather at the canal side two days before the end of a busy season at the Welcome Center. Photo by Dianne Hickerson.

special errands for boaters. It's up to each greeter, Doug says, but some have driven boaters to Wegmans, Wal-Mart, the hospital, and to a store to get boat parts.

Doug and Sal have paired up from the beginning, taking a four-hour shift each week. They are joined by Kyle McGonigal, a man with Down syndrome who loves being on duty and helping with chores.

The Welcome Center also greets many bikers who arrive from across the U.S. Sal recalls two women, 80 and 82 years old who biked from Albany on their way to see their grandfather's home in Buffalo. They asked for a ride to Albion to expedite their trip. Sal drove them to Lockport.

Cathy Appleby, a greeter for 10 years, was amazed by an Ohio family arriving last year with three children, aged six, eight and twelve years old. "After a battle over cell phones, the parents decided, 'That's enough,'" Cathy said. "They sold their house, purchased a boat, and have been traveling for four years so their kids can learn to see beyond the material world."

Doug was surprised to find visitors from other states shocked to find that upstate "New York" is not as urban as they had imagined. "A couple from Texas wanted to see a large dairy farm," Doug said about driving them there. "They were amazed, saying, 'You have more farmland here than we have around Austin.'" The wife, who had grown up in Kansas, was shocked at how much corn we have here."

Center also available for community activities. Besides providing hospitality to boaters and bikers, the Welcome Center landing is the venue for different local events. Summer Serenades with musical groups are held there as well as other entertainment. Annually, New York State provides Erie Canal history to local 4th graders with a visit from the historic tugboat *Urger* and its crew. (See photo). Free loaner bikes are also available for visiting boaters.

Reflections on success

Bill Andrews offers this assessment of Welcome Center's success:

- Boaters tell us that we have the best welcome center on the canal and the only one that is staffed full-time by volunteers. The ease with which we have recruited volunteers, 90-100 each season, is a very heartening indication of the vitality of the volunteer culture in our village.
- The Welcome Center has been a very valuable investment for the Village in terms of the amount of business it brings to our downtown businesses. I have read that the average tourist spends \$150 a day.
- This year we lost bicycles 461 times through October 9. Russ Church at Bicycle Outfitters does any bike repairs with no charge for his labor. Gary Skoog volunteers to coordinate the bicycle program.

Bill also said the use of the Welcome Center has increased 23% over last year. As a result, the Center is making money from the low fees that don't exceed \$15 per boat.

Note: For other information, visit www.brockportny.org/about/canal-front-tourism

Gifts of a lifetime

Part one of two

by Doug Hickerson

In the season of gift-giving, several of our local citizens were asked what very meaningful or life-changing gift they have received over the years. Thinking of "gift" broadly, it was suggested the gift might be material, but more likely other categories like wisdom, advice, intervention, spiritual encouragement, etc. It might be realized as a gift only in retrospect. I reached some of the interesting people I wrote about in the past in this newspaper.

Below are the responses from some of them.

Alicia Fink

The most significant gift I received has been my rich ethnic heritage, and the appreciation of the same. I lived in Ecuador from birth to High School graduation. Ecuador is a third world country, poor but beautiful; made beautiful by the color of its flora, by the sound of the Spanish and Quichua languages, by the variety of ethnic clothing, by the variety of ethnic music, and the delicious native foods. My Spanish and native heritage were present in my everyday life. I have lived in the United States my adult life. The

distance has served to strengthen my understanding of where I come from. It has been important to me and I have been successful in making my sons become aware of, appreciate and value their roots.

Barb Deming

When I was four years old, my widowed mom remarried. One day with typical little girl fury, I stomped over to my favorite neighbor to complain about dad. Sid's willingness to listen to my reactions to all manner of things made him super special. After hearing my complaints, he said, "Well, I think he is trying very hard to be the best dad he can be. And, I think he would really like your help." I ran home filled with



positive intentions.

Throughout the years I often replay Sid's words. His advice has made an enormous difference in my attitude towards others. The funny thing is, having a tendency to be hard on myself, it took me decades before realizing that counsel also applied to me.

Buck Noble

Pie is the greatest gift of all! Each week my wife Kristen bakes a sugar free fruit pie just for me. I grow the organic berries and apples; she creates the golden brown treasures. Along with a bit of yogurt and a few nuts, it is my main meal every day -- it feeds both body and spirit. We work hard at our jobs, love up our family, and maintain the 1870s farmstead we call home. The weekly pie symbolizes the commitment we have to each other, the simple life style we choose to lead, and the fruits of our labors. Pie is love... the greatest gift of all!



Lori Skoog

One of the things that had the most impact on my life happened when I was 5 and 6 years old. Because my brother was frequently being taken to the Cleveland Clinic for treatment, I had to spend those two years with my Nana. She was from Albania, where my

mother was born, and passed through Ellis Island with her 3 children in 1929. My grandfather had gone ahead to find work in Jamestown, NY. I might as well have been living in the "old country" as we spoke Albanian, ate traditional food and practiced customs from that culture. At that early age, I learned to be very independent and picked up on my Nana's sense of humility. She created a very strong foundation for me.



(In the December 13 issue, Part 2, several more responses will be given: Chet Fery, Peggy Hale, Sarah Hart, and Dr. Jim Goetz.)

Gifts of a lifetime

Part two of two

by Doug Hickerson

In the season of gift-giving, several of our local citizens were asked what very meaningful or life-changing gift they have received over the years. Thinking of "gift" broadly, it was suggested the gift might be material, but more likely other categories like wisdom, advice, intervention, spiritual encouragement, etc. It might be realized as a gift only in retrospect. I reached some of the interesting people I wrote about in the past in this newspaper. Below are the responses from some of them. In the December 6 edition, Part 1 gave stories from: Alicia Fink, Barb Deming, Buck Noble, and Lori Skoog.

Visit westsidenewsny.com to re-read Part 1.

Dr. Jim Goetz

I have received so many gifts in my lifetime: Terrific parents, a great education, a meaningful job, a wonderful wife and family, a terrific community, to name a few. It is difficult to distill them down to one. As you see, none of these gifts relate to material goods. I think the unifying theme to the gifts mentioned, and the biggest gift I have received, is "love" -- both how to receive it and how to give or express it.

Once I fully understood that happiness (mine and those around me) was not only enhanced by love but defined by it, my entire outlook on life changed. This "gift" has been given to me over a lifetime by family, friends and teachers. Love is the gift I treasure the most.

Sarah Hart

I was 25 when my mother died. Debate and drama ensued over settling her estate, as my sister had chosen to live in the family home. Living in my in-laws attic, baby expected, we needed

a house. Fortunately my in-laws swooped in to help us purchase an older house full of artistic and architectural character.

A small gift from the estate was finally received, and with my passion for old homes, coupled with my husband's carpentry skills, we first used this money to save a dilapidated Park Avenue home. Today, we have leveraged that money into a thriving rental business featuring only Victorian buildings. The rehabilitation of these buildings has helped teach our children a work ethic, afforded me studio space at the local art gallery, and kept us close as a family. With that gift my mother's legacy is alive and well.

Peggy Hale

My significant gift is the ongoing experience of God's grace. There have been and are many people in my life who, through their behavior, have been the hands and feet of God and a witness to his grace. I am grateful for the presence of other children of God in my life. The gift of gratitude for God's grace-- made known through such people as my husband David, my children, grandchildren, parents, other family members, and the community of Brockport/Sweden, is a daily experience which brings many other gifts to me.



Chet Fery "The Bread Man"

A few years back a student surprised me with a Christmas gift wrapped in used wrapping paper. I asked and she helped me unroll the abundance of tape that consumed the small package. I smiled as a beautiful snow globe was unveiled, but was distracted by another student. To this day, I wonder if I properly expressed my heartfelt gratitude for this thoughtful gift. Years later I realized she gave me two gifts that day. The snow globe was a life lesson to never miss the opportunity to express gratitude for an act of kindness.



West Edition

Suburban News

Distributed to Bergen, Clarendon, Holley-Murray and Brockport-Sweden

Ray Duncan steps down as chairman of Walk! Bike! Brockport! Action Group

A milestone in the productive history of a citizens' organization

by Doug Hickerson

The Walk! Bike! Brockport! Action Group (WBB) chairman, Ray Duncan, always signed off emails to the group with, "Your humble servant." His January 26 email with the subject "Passing the Baton" was signed, "Your former humble servant." After serving 13 years since its inception, Ray has stepped down as WBB's leader.

Ray has facilitated the group's dynamic impact on Brockport's infrastructure. Walk, bike, or (less preferred) drive around greater Brockport and observe the phenomenal enhancements of the village environment: 42 steel benches on walkways, the striking "Howdeese" sculpture at the Welcome Center, the steel horse-like sculpture at Memorial Park on Park Avenue, the billboard painting of Victorian Brockport at the railroad bridge on Main Street, and walk the two-mile trail in Sweden Town Park. These are all projects of WBB sub committees.

Additionally, the downtown distinct renovation of Main Street (pedestrian crossings, bike lanes, curb-outs) and the East-West Avenue roundabout were the result of WBB playing an active role in lobbying the NY State Department of Transportation.

Emergence of a leader - unlikely beginnings

At age 19, Ray Duncan dropped out of the University of California, Riverside, and with a friend hitchhiked to New York City, and boarded a Greek ship for Europe. After hitchhiking around Europe, living in youth hostels, and being injured in a serious motorcycle crash, the journey focused him on a love of international affairs. He returned to complete his undergraduate degree. He was drafted out of graduate school and trained in counter-intelligence by the U.S. Army.

Ray's vast teaching experience includes Scholar-in-Residence at the C.I.A. in Langley, Virginia and teaching at the Naval War College. His profile publishing includes novels based on his real life experiences. The latest novel is about his boyhood life in Florida in the 1940's (Never Agitate an Alligator). He brought his background, committed and focused, to serve his beloved home village.

Leadership style and strategic planning

For all of his impressive credentials, Ray Duncan, Ph.D. in International Politics, Distinguished Teaching Professor Emeritus at the College at Brockport, does have a leadership style of a "humble servant." Asked how he would describe his leadership, "It's relaxed, informal, bringing out the best of all involved in a project," Ray said. "Give people a lot of attention, leeway, kudos, plus a lot of humor. Make it fun, not heavy-handed, and make room for people to assert their own personalities."

From the beginning, Ray used strategic planning to guide the work of WBB. During his teaching career he taught at the Naval War College in Newport, Rhode Island. "It was all about strategic planning and I got immersed," Ray said. "I brought all of that back and put it into the organization here. As a 'big group, flexible, with no constitution," Ray said the planning strategy included "Where do we want to go, how do we know when we get there, and how to reinforce the group to keep moving."



Ray Duncan relaxes in the Seymour Library. He recently retired from 13 years as chairman of the Walk! Bike! Brockport! Action Committee. Photo by Dianne Hickerson

Origin of WBB

In the summer of 2002, Town of Sweden residents Richard and Joan Fenton mentioned to Ray that their son Mark was arriving for a visit. Mark grew up here and became a recognized international authority on how to make towns and villages more conducive to walking and biking. Mark, his parents, and Ray with his wife Ute, met in front of the Post Office on Brockport's Main Street.

Suggesting improvements for walking and biking, Mark named curb-outs, better pedestrian crossings, bike lanes and a roundabout at the East-West Avenue intersection. Ray immediately volunteered to form a committee to pursue these projects and Ute voiced her support.

In gathering the first interested people, "The idea was not to make it formal, but to be a loose, flexible group that could adapt and do things on the spot." The first sub-committees were formed: Arts & Aesthetics with Alicia Pink, Kendra Gemmett, Deanna Shifton, Lori Skoog and Helen Smagorinsky. Bill Andrews also helped.

The Trail Building committee consisted of Peter Randazzo and Dave Ball. Dr. Jim Goetz ran the Walk to School committee. The Victorian Benches project was named "Sitting Pretty" by Deanna Shifton and Kendra Gemmett named it. Details of the sub-committees' completed work and other WBB projects are found in the side bar.

Current projects and the future

Ray will follow up with a project he has already started. It will place a Victorian Mural by Stacy Kirby on the Main Street railroad overpass. His goal is to raise a total \$15,000 with \$6,000 received so far.

Also remaining is the improvement of the physical infrastructure for pedestrian and bicycle traffic laid out in the Master Plan. The grant planning project of \$50,000, led by Mayor Margay Blackman, was completed during 2014-2015. The next step is to seek additional grants for the individual projects in the plan.

"At 80, it's time for me to step aside, pass the baton to someone else, and get new ideas and leadership," Ray said. He added that the group will be looking for a permanent chairperson. But, if an event came along appropriate for WBB, a chairperson could be in for that specific project. "The Walk! Bike! Brockport! Action Group stays in place with a budget, money in the treasury, and dedicated people ready to work," he said. "It's not going away."

Walk! Bike! Brockport! Activity 2002-2015

\$50,000 grant for improved walking and biking in village and towns

\$50,000 grant to develop a strategic plan, jointly with Village of Brockport, to improve the physical infrastructure for pedestrian and bicycle traffic in the village, including the Towns of Sweden and Clarkson. Grant from Monroe County's Genesee Transportation Council.

WBB's Walk to School Committee

\$10,000 grant from BISCO for "Safe Routes to School" infrastructure.

WBB's Arts and Aesthetics Committee

\$30,000 raised for village gateway artwork: "Howdeese" sculpture at canal Welcome Center by Bill Stewart. Metal sculpture at Park Avenue. Remembrance Park by Jennifer Hecker. Erie Canal Mural on DPW building on East Avenue by Stacy Kirby.

Victorian metal benches for Main Street and Canal. Individuals have purchased 42 so far.

Gateway to Brockport billboard painting on Main Street by Helen Smagorinsky.

WBB Trail Building

Two-mile trail in Sweden Town Park for hiking and cross-country skiing.

New pedestrian and biking lanes infrastructure in Brockport

WBB lobbied for NYSDOT for the present East-West Avenue roundabout, curb cuts in business district, distinct pedestrian crossing lanes, and bicycle lanes.

Welcome Center on the Canal

WBB actively promoted its construction 10 years ago. A success for boaters, bikers and walkers.

WBB numerous walking and biking activities

Organized biking, walking and snowshoeing activities in and around Brockport.

"Tour d'Brockport" attracted SUNY College of Brockport students to know downtown better.

Greeting bikers on the 400-mile annual Bike the Erie Canal - providing water, inviting to stores and restaurants downtown, free postcards of Brockport.

Support International Walk to School Day with promotion and volunteers.

Handwriting contest winners honored at Clarkson Academy

by Doug Hickerson

The Clarkson Historical Society held their Second Annual Handwriting Contest awards ceremony in the Clarkson Academy on Saturday, January 23. The event was part of the nation-wide "Campaign for Cursive" sponsored by the American Handwriting Analysis Foundation, which promotes cursive writing instruction in public schools.

The Foundation designated January 23 as National Handwriting Day as a celebration of John Hancock's birthday, January 23, 1737. A copy of the signers of the Declaration of Independence went on display at the Academy so all could see the distinct and beautifully written signatures on the 1776 document, most notably John Hancock's.

"Clarkson Historical Society is excited to be a part of this burgeoning interest in the teaching of cursive," said Mary Edwards, president of the Society that holds cursive writing classes at the historic Academy building.

Winners in grades 4 and 5 included: First place Emma Lenhard, Quesset School, Hilton; second place Louie Conte, Kendall Elementary School; and third place Aubrey Hammill, Union City, Pennsylvania (she visits her grandmother in Brockport).

Winners in grades 6 through 8 included: First place Carli Kirkwood, Byron-Bergen Middle School; second place



The Second Annual Handwriting Contest winners present at the Clarkson Academy awards ceremony included: Seated (l-r) - First place winners **Emma Lenhard** (grades 4-5) and **Carli Kirkwood** (grades 6-8). Standing (l-r) - **Louie Conte**, second place (grades 4-5); **Aubrey Hammill**, third place (grades 4-5); **Christina Bishop**, second place (grades 6-8); and **Madison Marsh**, second place (grades 9-10). Missing from photo are **Jacey Donahue**, **Kennedy Jones** and **Dakota Thompson**. Photo by Dianne Hickerson.

Christina Bishop, Oliver Middle School, Brockport; and third place **Jacey Donahue**, Byron-Bergen Middle School.

Winners in grades 9 through 12 included: First place **Kennedy Jones**, Holley Jr. Sr. High School; second place **Madison Marsh**, Holley Jr. Sr. High School; and third place **Dakota Thompson**, Holley Jr. Sr. High School.

Three judges selected the winners from the almost 140 writing samples submitted this year - double the number of last year's Handwriting Contest. Sixty-two entries came from the Byron-Bergen seventh grade, approximately 26 from Brockport's Fred Hill Elementary and Oliver Middle School, 37 from the Kendall School and 13 from the Holley High School.

Along with the writing entries submitted were two notes from teachers at the Kendall and Holley Schools: From Kendall School, "On behalf of the fourth grade students at Kendall Elementary School, thank you for a real life experience to apply our newly acquired skill of cursive handwriting." And from Mrs. Wantuck, a tenth grade English teacher at Holley High School, "Thank you for providing an opportunity for my students to share their cursive skills. They thought it was great that there is a contest!"

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Professor and pastor uses popular films in sermons

by Doug Hickerson

This year's Super Bowl included Michael Oher playing offensive tackle for the Carolina Panthers. Although Carolina lost the game, Michael personally is a winner who found his calling in professional football due to the kindness of the Tuohy family who adopted him. That true story is told in the movie "The Blind Side."

In a sermon at Christ Community Church in Brockport, Mark DuPré brought out the key message he found in the movie. Leigh Anne and Sean Tuohy became adoptive parents to Michael who was blind to his real potential and they "completely changed his life." They exemplified the Biblical principle of "being open to the needs and callings of others, coming alongside them and helping them," DuPré said in an interview. He is the church's associate pastor and director of arts and music.

DuPré's expert analysis of movies comes from his 18 years as adjunct professor of film at RIT. He earned his master's degree in film from Columbia University. He has preached on seven other movies: *42: The Jackie Robinson Story*, *Chariots of Fire*, *Frozen*, *It's a Wonderful Life*, *The Sound of Music*, *The Avengers* and *Man of Steel*.

"At first I was reluctant to do this," DuPré said. "With two degrees and teaching experience in film, I wanted to be sure I wasn't being superficial with something just light and fluffy like picking out a soft little moral. If I could not grapple with the entire film and pull the best out of the deepest parts of it, I did not want to do it." The references to three films here provide only brief samples of many points made in a 45-minute sermon.

With *The Sound of Music*, the deepest message comes from DuPré's research on the real life story of Maria and the Von Trapp family. Contrary to the movie, Maria was stubborn, self-willed and had a temper. She was raised by an atheist uncle. Her spiritual journey included Catholic conversion, life in the abbey and eventually becoming a wife and mother.

DuPré paraphrased her: "I had too many edges and God needed to knock those out of me, if I was going to be used to hold this family together." He continued, "Wanting to do the will of God was dominant in her life. The movie touches on that fact, but it was soft-pedaled and sweet."



Mark DuPré. Provided photo.

Frozen is the exception to the typical Disney movie theme: "Follow your heart and it will lead you to where you want to go," DuPré said. Rather, "Life is about using your gifts in a positive way which can sometimes mean self-sacrifice." He noted that Princess Anna "takes the sword" that was meant to kill her sister Elsa, a Christian theme especially surprising in a Disney movie.

DuPré plans to go on the road with his presentation of spiritual principals found in popular movies. "I would love to do versions of this out there in all sorts of ways," he said. For some groups he will present the "spiritual perspective hiding inside popular films," while at churches he will present a more specific Biblical perspective.

Many may know Mark DuPré from his 10 years as piano accompanist with the Brockport College-Community Chorus. At concerts he sometimes sings duets with his wife, Diane. Mark has also published the book *How to Act Like a Grown up*, a practical, semi-humorous guide for young and old on growing into responsible adulthood. More recently he has published *My Light and My Salvation: A One-Year Devotional Journal*.

To view more of Mark's work and mission, visit his websites: www.markdupre.com, www.actlikeagrownup.com, www.film-prof.com and www.dedicatetogrammar.com.

West Edition

Suburban News

Distributed to Bergen, Clarendon, Holley-Murray and Brockport-Sweden

Carol Hannan honored for devoted contributions to the community

by Doug Hickerson

Carol Hannan was born and raised in Brockport. She had remembered attractive family homes lining the village streets. After being away for 10 years, she returned to find these homes turned into rental houses in neglected condition. "I was horrified by what I saw in the village," she said.

That was about 12 years ago when she moved into her grandfather's home on Main Street to care for him. She soon discovered that a house next door and one across the street were rentals with rowdy students frequently disturbing the neighborhood, she said.

Eventually she was able to buy those two homes plus the one on the other side of her grandfather's house, which she now owns. She renovated those three inside and out and sold them as family homes. With all the houses she has since purchased and re-sold, she has broken even financially with no desire to make a profit.

It was for her renovation of a total of nine dilapidated village houses, and restoring them to family homes, that Carol was chosen for the Monika Andrews Creative Volunteer Leadership Award. With a unanimous recommendation of the selection committee, the award was announced in the February 1 meeting of the Brockport Village Board.

Pam Ketchum wrote one of several nominating letters to the selection committee. In part she said, "We have seen how she (Carol) has rolled up her sleeves and tackled difficult housing situations, turning houses and neighborhoods around from being derelict to desirable. The new home owners have maintained stable, inviting homes and carried on Carol's tradition of pride for our village and concern for historic preservation."



Carol Hannan stops for a photo while removing plaster from a chimney in the 52 State Street house she is renovating. She uses other more creative skills, sometimes with volunteers, to return many deteriorating Brockport houses to family homes. Her goal is to "revitalize Brockport house by house." Photo by Dianne Hickerson.

In addition to her physical labor, selection committee chairman Robert Westbrook said in the committee's report, "... she has also worked tirelessly to preserve the stories of more than eighty homes by documenting their history - a demanding task of research and writing. Her genealogies of Brockport families have helped to win historic preservation status for Village properties..."

In the 52 State Street home she and her partner Harry Snyder are refurbishing, Carol took time out from her work for an interview prior to receiving the award. Asked about the skills she has acquired, she named many including dry wall taping and mudding, "I always get stuck with the ceilings," she lamented, but, "I like finishing floors." Other skills she has mastered are finish carpentry, tiling and painting. She also makes all the curtains and drapes.

Asked about the award she was about to receive, "It's an honor. I never expected any honor," Carol said. "My reward is to see families love to live in these houses. That's my reward. I don't need to make money, I'd rather make a difference."

The Monika W. Andrews Creative Volunteer Leadership Award was established in 2012 as a memorial by three municipalities "to encourage, recognize and reward outstanding creative leadership by residents of the Towns of Sweden (including Brockport) and Clarkson who have served as volunteer leaders in improving the lives of their fellow citizens and the greater Brockport community."

The Selection Committee consists of a representative of each municipality participating: Robert Westbrook for the Town of Sweden (chair), Linda Ketchum for the Village of Brockport and Kermit Mercer for the Town of Clarkson.

West Edition

Suburban News

Distributed to Bergen, Clarendon, Holley-Murray and Brockport-Sweden

Kemberly's dream: From poverty to impacting lives as a lawyer

by Doug Hickerson

Kemberly Gil is a 20-year-old sophomore at The College at Brockport and an undocumented immigrant. She is one of the five "DREAMers Among Us" whose stories are told in the film by that name to be shown at Seymour Library March 29. The award-winning 21-minute documentary sheds light on the struggle of New York's undocumented youth to gain access to college, reach their potential and contribute fully to the state.

From poverty to**"living behind the shadows"**

In an interview, Kemberly recalled "living with Grandma in Colombia in extreme poverty until, my mom said, 'I want something bigger and better for my kids.'" When she was three-years-old, with her older brother and younger sister, the family came to the U.S. on temporary work visas, bringing all their possessions and \$20 cash. Her parents started working at car washes and restaurants.

Their work visas expired after six months. "We became undocumented and that's when my journey began, trying to find myself while we were living behind the shadows," Kemberly said. "At school I felt the same as my friends, but when I went home, I knew I was not the same. It was a big secret, something no one could know about."

Living in New York's Hudson Valley, her parents worked at various jobs, but remained positive, Kemberly said. Eventually, they started a small business cleaning homes and offices. In December 2015, her father went to Colombia to visit his dying mother. He cannot legally return to the U.S., and may never see his family again. Kemberly's mother is the remaining parent to support her children in college, two now, and soon three when Kemberly's sister starts college in the fall.

With minimal help from her mother, having no access to state or federal financial assistance, Kemberly must work several jobs and compete for the few small private scholarships available. Long work hours limit the study time needed to achieve grades to qualify for law school.

From the shadows to a bright future vision

Her high school freshman year began with her mother's warning about the realities of her undocumented status: not having the same benefits as her friends like a work permit, driving license, nor a citizen's access to college. "That's when I almost gave up," she said, "feeling like I would end up like my mom in the same system."

Her attitude changed when she joined the Youth Arts Group (YAG). YAG is a leadership program for Hudson Valley teens, part of Rural & Migrant Ministry. They learn to fight for social justice and make a difference in the migrant community, using art as a tool such as creating the "DREAMers Among Us" film. "YAG gave me hope," Kemberly said. "And, that's when my journey changed to fighting for myself, for my future, for my dream."



Kemberly Gil. Photo by Dianne Hickerson.

At school, "I always felt accepted, because I never told anyone my secret," she said. "I made friends with everyone. My status did not stop me. I just assumed I was an American." Her high school activities included soccer, track, cross country and cheerleading. She was elected class president in her senior year.

In her sophomore year, she was assigned a class essay entitled I Believe. "It was my chance to tell everyone who I am and come out of the shadows," Kemberly said. In reading the essay to the class, "I announced that I was undocumented. I said I believe I can change people's lives, supporting farm workers and fighting for their rights." After that, "I felt really happy," she said about her friends' responses to her revelation. "They did not run away from me, but asked so many questions."

Allies on her journey

Kemberly gratefully acknowledges many "allies" who have provided her practical support and warm encouragement.

First among allies, she names Richard Witt, Director of Rural and Migrant Ministry, who led her to the College at Brockport and helped her through many administrative procedures. "He has supported me and my family for eight years. He has pushed me to be a better leader, a better student and a better person."

Kemberly speaks fondly of the other people who have encouraged her on campus. Betty Garcia-Mathewson is Project Director for Opening Doors Diversity Project. "Betty advises me on every aspect of my life, and has helped me not feel so alone at Brockport." Karen Podsiadly is Director of Community Development. "Mrs. P. helps me develop my leadership skills, personally and professionally," she said about her supervisor in the Community Development job she loves.

Kemberly's academic advisor, Dr. Susan Orr, "has helped me choose the best courses for my major and guides my career plans." Dr. Arthur Smith, a retired professor who rents her a room, "is very kind and helpful," she said. "When I am having troubles, Art is very supportive and understanding."

At the end of the 2015 fall semester, when Kemberly's father planned to go to Colombia to be with his dying mother, she knew she would probably never see him again. So, she decided to withdraw for the semester to visit him. With allies advising against dropping out, she talked with her professors "who understood and worked with me to get my work done early to complete the semester, so I could see my father for the last time before he left." She especially named Dr. James Fleming "who went out of his way to comfort me and support me through this hard time."

Mom: "The biggest motivator ever"

In the interview, Kemberly projected self-confidence and charisma, expressed on her shirt as: "Undocumented, Unafraid, Unapologetic." Asked about the possible source of her strong character and energy, she said: "My mom is the biggest motivator ever. Growing up, she was the one I saw working so hard on so many jobs, suffering with back pain, but keeping a smile and helping us. When my dad asked her to go with him to Colombia, she said no, she was not leaving until all the kids are out of college. That is why I try so hard and drive so hard, so I won't ever see her suffer again or have to work so much."

And, Kemberly drives toward a specific goal. With a double major in political science and international studies, she wants to become an immigration lawyer.

"That's my dream," she said. "I want to be part of a large movement to change legislation, change the system on immigration. There are so many people suffering, and I want to have an impact."

Discover all the Dreamers

What: "DREAMers Among Us" a 21-minute documentary film

Sponsors: Brockport Ecumenical Outreach Committee (BEOC) Rural and Migrant Ministry (RMM)

Where: Seymour Library 161 East Avenue, Brockport

When: Tuesday, March 29, 6:30 to 8:30 p.m.

Who: Discussion follows, facilitated by Kemberly Gil; West Cosgrove, WNY Coordinator of RMM; Bill Pews, Chair of BEOC; and Barb Deming, local representative of RMM.

Coming Up: Daylight Saving Time begins Sunday, March 13, 2016, at 2:00 a.m. Don't forget to set your clocks ahead one hour next weekend.

Editorial Best Original Writing

Division A – General News

"The Little Free Library" by Doug Hickerson

March 27, 2016

West Edition

Suburban News

Distributed to Bergen, Clarendon, Holley-Murray and Brockport-Sweden

The Little Free Library: Promoting books and connecting neighbors

by Doug Hickerson

Eileen and Tom O'Hare are glad to see a slightly worn path from the street to the red maple tree in their beautiful front lawn. For the O'Hares, at 12 Highview Circle in Sweden Village, it is a welcome sign that people have walked up to the "Little Free Library" mounted in that tree. The sign reads, "Books. Take one. Leave one."

The O'Hare library is one of 36,000 Little Free Libraries around the world, including 70 countries. The mission of the movement is: "To promote literacy and the love of reading by building free book exchanges worldwide and to build a sense of community as we share skills, creativity and wisdom across generations" (Web site www.littlefreelibrary.org).

Exchanging good books and bringing people together

Eileen O'Hare is a registered "steward" in the organization. It costs just \$25 to register and appear on the web site map. There is minimal expense to build the library. Books usually come from the steward's own collection. Sometimes they're donated by supporters or purchased at used book sales.

Eileen retired in 2006 as a librarian at Drake Memorial Library at The College at Brockport. She has worked as a volunteer in literacy. After learning of the movement, the O'Hares were inspired to open their library last August. "I thought of all the walkers in the neighborhood who could use it," she said.

Eileen chooses books to appeal to a variety of people: Toddlers, young readers, history books, novels and romances. She is a strong promoter of the public library, hoping that discovering an author or theme in her little library will lead the reader to seek more of the same at the public library.

Two other registered stewards in the greater Brockport area are

Barbara Filardo at 39 Cherry Drive in Brockport and Kenya Malcolm at 834 Trimmer Road in Spencerport.

Barbara Filardo retired from the Holley School District three years ago after teaching third grade for most of her 42 years in the district. She first discovered the Little Free Library while walking in Saratoga Springs with her granddaughter who exclaimed, "Gramma, look, we can take a book!"

Started last spring, Barbara's little library provides year-round reading from pre-K through fifth grade. She loves decorating the house-style library for the seasons and holidays and provides books with the same themes. She has welcomed children of young families in the neighborhood, grandchildren visiting retired couples, and children from a local day care.

Kenya Malcolm is a psychologist at URStrong in Rochester. "I enjoy books. It's a hobby of mine," she said, adding she volunteers for a teen book festival and a children's library. She provides for a variety of readers including for young adults and children. She regrets her road does not have much foot traffic, but tries to lure walkers, bikers and drivers with occasional signs, such as "Read Across America Day" and "Dr. Seuss's Birthday."

Crafted by family, neighbors, professionals

The little libraries worldwide consist of a variety of sizes and creative, sometimes fantastic, designs (see www.pinterest.com, search Little Free Library). Some are handcrafted from scratch; others are modified objects like a grandfather clock, a phone booth, a small refrigerator, the top cabinet of a buffet and more.

"The libraries are elaborately decorated to draw interest and to make people feel welcome to approach and use them," Eileen O'Hare said. The O'Hares built a basic box. Then the Reixingers next door offered embellishments. Dave Reixinger built a sloped roof and placed glass in the door. His wife Charlene decorated the little li-



Tom and Eileen O'Hare stand with Jack next to their "Little Free Library" in Sweden Village. They built it with the help of the Reixingers next door. Photo by Dianne Hickerson.

brary in a MacKenzie-Childs style.

Barbara Filardo's little library, shaped like a house, was a Mother's Day gift last year. She had expressed interest since the Saratoga Springs discovery. Her daughter, son-in-law and granddaughter built it in their Saratoga Springs home and surprised her with it.

Kenya Malcolm on Trimmer Road designed hers. A friend led her to a retired wood worker in Rochester who built it.

Fun for everyone

"It's been so much fun and inspirational for me, something I do because I love it," Eileen said. She named some of the visitors: A mother and two daughters reading on the lawn; a mother bringing

her son regularly; a man interested in World War II books; and teenage and younger children.

Some of the visitors at the O'Hare little library have written comments in a notebook provided: "This is adorable and so great for our neighborhood. Thank you." "Terrific idea. Borrowed **The Red Tent**; very interesting; always wanted to read it." "Thanks for these books, Kyle age 4." "Thank you. So happy to see literacy on our street."

The O'Hares plan improvements such as an addition for more books and a bench (placed since the interview). As for that worn path in the lawn, they plan to lay stepping stones to make a welcoming approach for visitors.

West Edition

Suburban News

Distributed to Bergen, Clarendon, Holley-Murray and Brockport-Sweden

25 years on the Erie Canal

Lift bridge operator Jane Newcomb works with a loving sense of history

by Doug Hickerson

Watching Brockport's lift bridges go up and down, the observer may not think about the hands that maneuver the magical machinery. Since 2000, Jane Newcomb has been one of those lift bridge operators at Brockport's Park Avenue and Main Street bridges. This season she starts work at the Village of Holley lift bridge. At age 70, she has worked on the Erie Canal for a total of 25 years.

"I absolutely love working on the canal. I always have and I always will. It is like working in a time warp with all this old machinery and old facilities that have been taken care of by so many people down through the years," Jane said. "And to think the canal was hand dug, hand built, in the late 1800's early 1900's, to me is a phenomenon."

For a quarter century she has made her own mark caring for the canal. Starting as a "canal walker," she became a canal site operator at locks 32 and 33, and then a lift bridge operator in Brockport.

Her love for the canal and its history began as a child living in the Town of Clay, north of Syracuse. Her family owned a farm and her uncles operated locks on the canal at Brewerton. "We loved the canal and loved being there around the water," she said. "We used to go to the locks, fish, have picnics and watch the sunset."

Teaching ends, canal tending begins

Jane went to The College at Brockport in the 1960's. With a Master's degree from Indiana University, she taught for 18 years in public and private schools in the greater Rochester area. Her school teaching career ended when Webster closed some of its schools around 1983.

She became a full-time level two ski instructor at Bristol Mountain, which continued for about 12 years. She started a small business for summer work, doing wallpapering, interior painting, and landscaping. Being unhappy with the inside summer work led to her first canal job in 1986. Walking with her twin sister on the canal in Brighton near lock 33, her sister suggested she stop at the lock office and ask for a job application. Jane was hired immediately as a bank walker covering 12 miles each day to check for leaks or breaches in the walls of the canal.

Caring for the historic equipment

After about three years as a bank walker, Jane trained to be a canal site operator, working first at Lock 32 in Pittsford, then at Lock 33. She describes the locks' electrical control panels that have needed maintenance since the canal's beginning. "Turning off the electricity, by hand with fine tools, we had to remove the nuts, bolts, fuses and, using rouge, shine and polish the copper tops of fuses and the brass on the control panels," Jane said. "That was the ongoing maintenance from spring to fall." Any fault in running the valves or gates would mean probable failure in an electrical panel, requiring a quick and risky response to trouble afloat.

Although the crude equipment demands constant maintenance, she is fascinated with the engineering genius that created the canal equipment which has survived for over a century. "I love the job for the fact that something so beautiful and simplistic - so authentic in its structural design using the law of gravity - still



Jane Newcomb rests with Anna at Brockport's Welcome Center near the close of the Erie Canal season last year. For 15 years she was a lift bridge operator for the Park Avenue and (in the background) Main Street bridges. This season she transfers to the lift bridge at Holley. Dianne Hickerson photo.

works today in the operation of the gears, bridges, locks, gates and every feature of the canal."

Family tragedy brings interruption and new situations

Jane's youngest son died in 1994. She moved to Colorado for about five years to "regroup," she said. She returned from Colorado to care for her elderly mother in Irondequoit. "That's when I started in Brockport around 2000." Accompanied by her dog Anna, it was a job that had her walking or biking between the two bridges, plus doing maintenance work on the site. (Her training on various lift bridges had taken place when off duty from the locks).

She commuted from Irondequoit to Brockport until 2008. "That's when I bought my 1880's farm house fifteen minutes from Brockport on the Hamlin-Parma Town Line Road," Jane said. With over 13 acres and a vegetable garden, "It's much like where I grew up. I always had this yearning to get back to the country." She loves having visits by her older son's children, seven and four years old. In the winter she is a full-time grandmother wanting "to be present for them" at school activities and on field trips.

Daily work in the context of history

At the Brockport Park Avenue and Main Street lift bridges, "We did sanding, painting, mowing and gardening - all of the site maintenance in addition to putting the boats through," Jane said. This year she has transferred her multi-tasking job to Holley. "I was doing so much, I just realized I didn't need to work so hard at my age," she said about the change she requested.

She is still doing maintenance and putting boats through," Jane said, but explained everything is on a smaller scale and at a slower pace with only one bridge in the rural setting. "It's a very appropriate move for me at the age of 70," she added. "It's a new beginning."

In the "time warp" she refers to, Jane is mindful of the canal's history as she tends to it daily. "I have a passion for the Erie Canal and its beautiful history," she said. "When I work or walk on the canal, I can just feel the sense of humanity that lived and worked here over time. I am one with the past and the present, joining so many people who love it today while boating, walking, jogging or biking."

NORTH EDITION

Suburban News

DISTRIBUTED TO HILTON-PARMA

Bill Hullfish delves into history and delivers folksongs of the waterways

"Performing the songs is the only way to excite people about history."

by Doug Hickerson

Bill Hullfish, at 79, is a living legend in his own time. For 38 years, with the Golden Eagle String Band, which he started at the College at Brockport, he has researched and played the folk music of the Erie Canal and other waterways. Performing in the Northeastern U.S. since 1978, the band has appeared at a vast array of regional festivals, universities and museums, and community historic celebrations. They have recorded for Smithsonian/Folkways, toured under a grant from the National Endowment for the Arts, and received a gold medal from the Smithsonian Institute.

As a college student, Bill showed his passion to get out into the world to play music. "I was restless to play my clarinet, any kind of jobs or orchestras I could get into," he said about his state of mind as a junior at the University of Maryland. He passed the audition for Marine Corps Band, turned down their offer, and joined the Air Force Band. He loved singing in college and also made the Air Force Singing Sergeants. With both talents, he went on State Department tours in the U.S. and around the world for six years. "I was only 19 and finally living my dream," Bill said.

Bill eventually earned a B.A. and M.A. in music at the University of Maryland, plus an Ed.D. at University of Buffalo, through Air Force benefits. With job offers from three colleges, his advisor strongly advised him to accept the offer from The College at Brockport. He started at Brockport in 1963.



Bill Hullfish. Photo by Dianne Hickerson.

"Best class ever"

because Golden Eagle String Band Bill says he was teaching strictly classical music and playing clarinet in summer orchestras. In the 1970s he decided to teach a class on folk music with a concentration on New York. "I just lucked into one of the best classes of students I ever had," he said about his class in 1978. With all older students, one played banjo, another played dobro and guitar, and two others played dulcimer and mandolin. "I said this is an opportunity of a lifetime," Bill recalls.

"I sent these students out looking for folk music, local stuff, especially canal songs. They gathered songs that we played in class. We named our group 'The

Golden Eagle String Band' for the College mascot. That was one of my most exciting years, performing as well as researching," Bill said, adding, "I don't think I ever had a class like that again." He still has one original class member in the band 38 years later.

Bill and the band researched and played folksongs about fabled characters such as Sam Patch, whose last feat of bravado was to leap to his death into the Genesee Falls in Rochester. "The Blue Eagle Jail" was a song about the Monroe County jail with words that Dan Rice had written on a cell wall. Arch Merrill published the words, but, through years of investigation, Bill traced the original tune. Asked about the importance of recovering lost songs, Bill responded, "To get them played; that's the only way they're really enjoyed. It's fairly easy to find the words, but performing the songs is the only way to excite people about history."

Songs of the waterways

With a strong focus on the Erie Canal, Bill's band also plays folk music from various inland waterways. They have played several years at the annual Sea Music Symposium and Festival at Mystic Seaport in Massachusetts where waterways music is featured. "I research every source, from books, to newspapers, and elsewhere," he said, including songs about canals and rivers in New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Ohio, Delaware and New York.

Why do the inland waterways interest him? "I love the folk music from the 19th century," he said. "The height of the canal era is probably 1830 to 1880, a wonderful era that Stephen Foster and Mark Twain wrote about." Bill affirms that the waterways were key in building the United States. "The railroads took over," he said, "but the early development was almost solely through the canals; all of upstate New York grew because of the canal."

In 1981, with his band just two years old, Bill received a highly competitive grant from the National Endowment for the Arts to tour the Erie Canal by boat and perform. They boarded *The Tigress*, an old touring yacht, and traveled the Oswego Canal and the western Erie Canal playing in the canal towns.

More recently, Bill has arranged a little-known canal song, "DeWitt Clinton's Grand Canal March," for the Brockport Symphony



The Golden Eagle String Band is ready to perform at Brockport's Welcome Center, before the Low Bridge High Water Saturday events in May. (L to R) Ted Sherwood, bass; Dwight Garrow, fiddle; Mike Mumford, mandolin; Eric Carlson, guitar; and, Bill Hullfish, in whistle. Mike Mumford has been with the band for 38 years, since it began. The newest member is Ted Sherwood who has been with the band 12 years. Photo by Dianne Hickerson.

Orchestra; it was performed in a concert in early May. The piece was written by the director of the West Point Band and originally played for Governor DeWitt Clinton at Erie Canal celebrations in 1823 and 1825. Bill found the march in a piano score in the Johns Hopkins Library web site and arranged it for orchestra.

"Low Bridge, Everybody Down" - Analysis of the classic in a coming book

At the New York Folklore Society meeting at the Canal Museum in Syracuse in 2012, Bill was one of four folklore panelists discussing "Low Bridge, Everybody Down." "I was shocked at what little information came out from the other three panelists," Bill said about the panel that discussed questions such as who was the real author. "I had a vague idea of Thomas S. Allen, the composer, and of changes that occurred as it came into the folk repertoire," he said. "I knew there had to be more information somewhere," prompting his research for two years.

One of the mysteries solved was why a Boston composer would write a song about the Erie Canal. He found that Allen did visit Rochester when the canal was switching to the barge system and being re-routed past Rochester. "That's when he wrote the nostalgic song 'Bill's' said. Another characteristic that ties the "Low Bridge" song to Allen was his typical writing style of popular songs, starting in a minor key and ending in a major key in the chorus, seen clearly in "Low Bridge, Everybody Down."

"I have looked at all aspects of the piece: When written, why written, the man who wrote it, and the musical style it was written in," Bill said. It was the missing information on the Syracuse discussion panel that inspired Bill to research the song.

Bill's research on the famous canal song is covered in the first three chapters of his book under way, *Low Bridge, Everybody Sing: Songs of America's Canals*. The other six chapters cover the background of other canal songs, including when written, who wrote them and their place in the culture. One chapter includes a "Raging Canal" genre that was popular in sensationalizing the adventures on canal waters. Another chapter, "From Stage to Canal to Stage," portrays how canal music created popular music, and vice versa.

In retirement: Still remarkable

and remembered in a public mural Bill retired from the College at Brockport in 2012. Now at age 79, he has been playing with the Brockport Symphony Orchestra for 35 years. The symphony recently performed the DeWitt Clinton Grand March, which Bill arranged for the orchestra. And, for 15 years now, he has played big band music of the 40's with baritone sax and clarinet in the Gate Swingers Band, and has arranged music for the female vocalist. He also continues with the Golden Eagle String Band with fewer engagements by choice, playing about once a month.

Like the lad in 19 who said, "I am finally living my dream," Bill now says, "I am doing exactly what I wanted to do in retirement: play music, read, and write." Bill will not fade away. His primary legacy is perpetuated in the new mural at Brockport's Sagawa Park entitled "Portraits of our Past." Bill and the Golden Eagle String Band appear with other laudable figures who, over the years, have contributed to the riches of Brockport and the Erie Canal.

Open House provides a fresh look at The Center in Brockport

by Doug Hickerson

Schrader.

What do you know about The Center at 133 State Street in Brockport? Lori Skoog calls it "One of the best-kept secrets on the Erie Canal." Others may think it's still the "Senior Center" of bygone days, but there are many changes that have taken place.

A get-together is being held on July 17 for the public to enjoy the attractive setting and refreshments. Dessert and drinks will be served from 6:30 to 8 p.m. with entertainment provided by Jan Brooks on the piano, followed by Jim Foote's "Buskers".

The Center opened in 1980 as the Town of Sweden Senior Center serving the senior citizen population. When several concerned seniors learned that it was going to be sold in 2014, a committee was formed that included Lori Skoog, Hanny Heyen, Jan Brooks, Harry Shifton, Chet Fery and Cora

There was a great deal of community support and the Town Board reconsidered selling it, approving a budget that supported a wider purpose, encouraging a broader use of the facility. Skoog is still active as liaison from the Sweden Town Board, attending Senior Association meetings and working with Deanna Irvine, the building supervisor.

The Center is a community gathering place, where people of any age or background can come to socialize or participate in classes, programs and events that are interesting and stimulating," Skoog said. "Extensive volunteer hours go into creating quilts for children and the homeless as well as hats for cancer patients locally and in Rochester hospitals. Others make 'pillowcase' dresses for children in need around the world."

From singing in the chorus to joining in Line Dancing or Tai Chi, playing bridge or baking cookies sold at the center, there are numerous opportunities for participation. Also, The Center is a site for training. Lifetime Assistance clients who train in the kitchen with a full-time employment specialist.

The Center gets regular attention to keep it functioning and attractive. The Town Board made it possible to have several of the first floor rooms painted. Volunteers have been working on the grounds improving and maintaining the landscaping.

The Sweden Senior Association, Inc. raises money that is frequently spent on the needs of seniors, such as supplement-

ing special lunches and programs. They recently purchased a commercial dishwasher for the kitchen and through the years have invested over \$100,000.

More and more outside groups are taking advantage of the space for events, and others hold monthly meetings there. The setting is perfect for reunions, dances, parties, concerts and more. Special events, like the Chris Wilson concert, are drawing large audiences.

On July 17, come and see for yourself what The Center has to offer. There is no charge, but reservations would be appreciated. If you have not responded yet, please do so by July 6. Call 637-8161, email: deanna@townofsweden.org, or stop in at The Center.



The Center at 133 State Street in Brockport makes a picturesque setting on the Erie Canal. Provided photo.

Western Monroe Historical Society celebrates renovation completion at Morgan-Manning House

"Step Up!" capital campaign exceeds goal with generous donations from the community

by Doug Hickerson

On Sunday, June 5, the Morgan-Manning House in Brockport was filled with over 100 people and a festive mood of accomplishment. It was a celebration of the successful "Step Up!" capital campaign that was launched in April, 2015 to repair the cantilevered staircase in the historic home built in 1854. A campaign goal of \$25,000 was set to stabilize the staircase from the second floor to the third floor attic. (See "Step Up!" capital campaign launched at historic Morgan-Manning House," *Suburban News, Hamlin-Clarkson Herald*, April 5, 2014 at www.westsidenevsnw.com).

The campaign exceeded its goal by \$12,000, capping out at \$37,000. The success, well beyond expectation, represents the generosity of over 200 individual donors plus several organizations and businesses. They responded to a challenge from the Western Monroe Historical Society (WMHS) board of trustees

to its members and citizens in the Brockport area.

That challenge was made in 2015, the 90th anniversary year of the founding of the WMHS board by volunteers who restored the home a year after a fire nearly destroyed it in 1964. The challenge was "to take the same initiative and pay forward the benefits received in the treasured home for fifty years."

The extra funds enabled the repair of the neglected helvedere (commonly called the "cupola") and preserved the historic family signatures on its walls. Repair and restoration has also been extended to the WMHS office area of the home, which suffered years of water damage. The work on the stairway and extended areas was done in part by contractors and also by many volunteers including Valery Cicotti, Gordy Fox, Brian Fox, Larry Humm, Kevin McCarthy, Harry Shifton and Gary Skoog.

The capital campaign was chaired by Alicia Fink, president of the board at the time and currently the volunteer historian for WMHS. Gordy Fox supervised the entire project and invested many hours of work. At the celebration event he was presented with the first-ever "Lifetime Volunteer Achievement Award."



Gordy Fox stands at the repaired stairway in the Morgan-Manning House. He was project manager for all the work done with the "Step Up!" capital campaign funds. With more than a decade of volunteer work before that, the WMHS board presented him with the Lifetime Volunteer Achievement Award. Photo by Dianne Hickerson.

Hilton-Parma Gazebo Band
1984-2016

Summer Concerts
at the Gazebo
Hilton Community Center

Wednesdays
at 7:00pm
June 22 and 29
July 6, 13,
20 & 27



Dr. Charles P. Schmidt, Director
Music for the whole family...
Lawn seating...bring your own
chairs and snacks
Parking available
Indoors in case of rain

Keeping Brockport's gardens in caring for plants and people

by Doug Hickerson

"I think of gardens as public art," Pam Ketchum said. "And when people in a community see a garden in nice shape, they get a sense of well-being. They feel, 'Something is good in this world right here.'"

With an artistic touch and true grit, she has voluntarily developed and maintained many of the Brockport Village gardens since 2009. With occasional help from citizens, organizations and church groups, she tends Remembrance Park, Sagawa Park, Harvester Park and the Welcome Center, Corbett Park, and Village Hall. Add to those, many of the 26 garden fenced-in garden squares on Main and Market Streets.

Besides volunteer help, Pam regularly works with individuals doing court-required community service, wanting to engage in them, she says, a sense of self-worth and accomplishment.

Keeping gardens interesting year-round

In the first years Pam would pull weeds and, with permission, do touch-ups to the Village gardens. Over the years, she has become more involved with design. "I am trying to create gardens that are interesting year-round for the public," she said after working several gardening seasons. For instance, in spring there are tulips, daffodils and giant alliums. Summer brings irises, day lilies, sedum, hydrangeas, coral bells, hostas and ever-blooming roses. Winterbrines bring their red berry appeal in winter.

She has had to re-work some areas, such as Sagawa Park. Inundated with weeds, she took out almost everything in the north and south border four years ago. Now the south border looks "good and stable," while the north border "is defining me" with persistent weeds, Pam said.

The 26 garden squares on Main and Market Streets have been a special project. Merchants donated to some of them. Others were purchased by individuals with a plaque to honor someone; and among these, some donors have done the planting and maintenance themselves. Pro-Brockport coordinated the funds for this project. Last year tulips were contributed and have provided a "strong visual effect" in all the garden squares, Pam said.

Reviving gardens and restoring people sent by the courts

For community service helpers, Pam keeps careful records on hours worked and reports back to the courts and the College at the end of a season. In 2016

records as of June 23 show 31 people doing court-or-college-required community service for a total of 555 hours beginning in January. In 2015 she worked with 14 people completing 208 hours of community service from April to December. All were from the Village Court except one from Town of Sweden Court. In 2014 it was 20 people completing 324.5 hours, from April to November, ten from the Sweden Court and five from the College.

Pam started working with the Sweden Town Court in 2011. The first "co-worker" assigned to Pam said to her later in the first work day, "You are being so nice to me. I thought I was supposed to be your slave." Pam answered that she believes in respect. "That was the way the day went. We had a great exchange and we worked hard with great respect for each other and for the community that we live in."

She has gone from supervising one or two court-appointed helpers to as many as eight at one time over five years. As the numbers have grown, her managerial skills have evolved, she said. She trains and encourages her co-workers as a team. "We introduce each other and have a pretty nice time," Pam said. "I feel like everybody has something to offer and we can learn from each other."

Comradery is cultivated in chatting about recipes, travel or other favorite things. "We don't talk about offenses but concentrate on making the village gardens nice." Pam's attitude is that, "They are all good people who just made a mistake. We all do that," she said. "They are valuable in helping the village and helping me. And, there is such a good sense of therapy for everybody involved, including me. It's so worthwhile."

Beautiful gardens are a free gift to the public

"Priceless beauty" is a good term for the aesthetics as well as the economic aspects of the public gardens. Besides volunteer labor, contributions of plants and funds for plants come from a variety of donors, leaving essentially no demand on Village funds. Pam has done her own fund raising at times, once with buckets of hydrangeas in front of her house with a sign "Free or make donation." That gleaned \$100 and selling plant bulbs at a garage sale also made money.

Bill Andrews contributed funds for the eight ever-blooming roses Pam wanted for Remembrance Park. Ute and Ray Duncan have donated plants from their garden. The tulips on Main and Market Streets were donated by Josephine Matela. Duane Beckett (owner of Sunning, Inc. Brockport), and his cousin who owns a tulip



Pam Ketchum tends to the Remembrance Park garden on Park Avenue in Brockport. Photo by Dianne Hickerson.

bulb company in Holland, donated tulips, daffodils, alliums and crocus a year ago. Kathy Kepler at Sara's Garden Center has provided plants and systemic plant food at discounted prices.

Pam's gardening skills are free, but she wants her volunteer work to be of high value. "I feel a responsibility to do it right, do it well," she said as her reason for earning her Master Gardener certification at the Batavia cooperative extension. And, her work has received the attention of the regional Master Gardener's organization. Ten of the members visited Pam in

mid-June to view the Brockport gardens. Discussion included garden design, volunteerism and a program that ties law enforcement with community gardens and parks. "They were impressed with what is going on in Brockport," Pam said.

In 2013, Pam Ketchum was one of the first winners of the Monika W. Andrews Creative Volunteer Leadership Award. See the article sub-titled "Reviving gardens, restoring people, respecting history for Brockport's vitality" ([Suburban News, Hamlin-Clarkson Herald, February 3, 2013](#), www.westsideonline.com).

Kids learn old fashion games, crafts and carpentry at Morgan-Manning House

Victorian games and crafts were recently enjoyed by grade school students at the Morgan-Manning House in Brockport. Called "Carriage House Kids," the first-time program took place July 12 to 14, sponsored by the Western Monroe Historical Society (WMHS). Seven students, ages seven through ten, attended the program.

In the historic home and its carriage house, they made several games, quilts and did finger knitting and spool knitting. They also took a tour of the house, learned about the family that lived there, then worked on a coloring book about the house and its people. In the historic kitchen they learned about old-fashioned kitchen implements, and by simple methods they made butter in mason jars and made ice cream in zip lock bags.

The three days concluded in the parlor

with Gretchen Murray Sepik, actress, storyteller and playwright, interacting with the children in presenting a dramatization of two of Beatrix Potter's books.

The teachers for the project were Donna Ainsworth, a retired teacher from Brockport, and Julie Wilson, currently a teacher in the Brockport Schools. Volunteers helping included members of the WMHS: Joan Fenton, Alicia C. Fink (coordinator), Peggy Fox, Amy Harris, Chris Mazarella, Merrill Melnick, Eileen Ryerse, Deanna Shifon and Mary Lynne Turner.

For grades eight through 12, the "Carriage House Carpenters" met on July 19, 20 and 21 in the carriage house. Two boys and two girls each created their own dovetailed woodworker's tool chest made with hand tools. Gordy Fox instructed the project.

D.H. Provided information



Gretchen Murray Sepik met with "Carriage House Kids" in the parlor at Morgan-Manning House at the end of their three-day program. The actress and storyteller interacted with the group as she acted out stories by Beatrix Potter. Provided photo.



Jesse the Therapy Dog (left) has received the Outstanding Volunteer Award from Therapy Dogs International. He has delighted the residents of BeKirch Care Center every week for three years. Gracie the Therapy Dog (right) recently passed her therapy dog certification tests. She is already bringing smiles and puppy kisses to BeKirch residents with her mom Dianne Hickerson. Provided photo and information.

"Old Fashion Fourth of July" returns to Morgan-Manning House lawn

by Doug Hickerson

This year's July 4 patriotic celebration on Brockport's Morgan-Manning House lawn will begin at 10 a.m. with a flag raising ceremony and songs by the Brockport Summer Community Choir directed by Liz Banner. The Children's Parade begins immediately after, at about 10:30 a.m.

The parade features families and children of all ages in patriotic attire riding or pushing tricycles, bicycles, strollers, carriages, and pulling wagons also suitably decorated. Join the parade around the block starting in front of Morgan-Manning House. Children in the parade will receive gift bags.

At 11 a.m., following the Children's Parade, a concert begins with the stirring sounds of The Brockport Community Concert Band playing patriotic tunes, slow tunes, American selections and marches. The High School Band expanded for this event and became the Brockport Community Concert Band premiering four years ago. It represents the entire community, including families, Brockport Central students and music staff, area music teachers, college students and others. Shawn Halquist is director.

At 12:15 p.m., The Brockport Big Band continues a long tradition at the July 4 celebration, bringing sounds of composers like Duke Ellington, Count Basie, and Stan Kenton from the 1940's Big Band Jazz eras.

New this year, from 11 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. in the Carriage House, meet retired racing greyhounds and learn about what great pets they make after their racing careers are over. Some of these dogs will participate in the Children's Parade, too.

Old fashioned children's games will be enjoyed from noon to 1 p.m. The Cake Walk at 1:30 p.m. is a popular event, providing amusement and a free cake, if you win.

Food and Refreshments will be available from 11:00 a.m. to 1:30 p.m., including hamburgers, veggie burgers, Italian sausage



With patriotic appeal, this participant enjoyed last year's July 4 Children's Parade at Morgan-Manning House. Photo by Dianne Hickerson.

and hot dogs. Ice cream novelties, cookies and popcorn will be sold also. Tours of the Morgan-Manning House will be available for free at 12:30 and 1:30 p.m.

Members of the community are invited to join the choir or band for the July 4 event. The choir practices on June 29 and 30 from 6 to 7 p.m. in the Brockport High School choir room. Information and registration can be found by emailing elizabeth.banner@bcs1.org. The band practices are on the same days in the band room, but from 7 to 8:30 p.m. For information and registration, contact Shawn.halquist@bcs1.org.

The entertainment and other aspects of the event are paid for from a Liberty Mutual "Restore the Fourth" grant won by the Village and The Western Monroe Historical Society five years ago.

The Western Monroe Historical Society sponsors the event offered free to the public. The WMHS offices are located in the Morgan-Manning House, 151 Main Street, Brockport. For information, contact the office at 637-3645, or see the web site www.morganmanninghouse.org.

Preplanning, downsizing and uprooting: A senior couple chooses Brockport for their retirement home

by Doug Hickerson

"People who know us were very surprised that we were pulling up stakes and moving, very surprised," Cathy Chesnut said. She, at 67, and husband Doug, at 69, retired to Brockport in March this year, leaving behind a house they had built for themselves 23 years ago in Virgil, New York. Their original unspoiled mountain top home on five acres in Cortland County, with an adjacent home built for her parents, no longer suited them. Other houses had encroached on the land, her parents had passed away, and their life situation had changed. Their fascinating story includes how they parted with most of their material goods and real estate and moved to a basic apartment in Brockport. The story includes clear values and priorities in their lives, rational planning for their retirement years, and, after just six months here, their profound feelings about the many benefits of Brockport as their new home.

"This is like a perpetual vacation."
— Doug Chesnut



Doug and Cathy Chesnut stand near Phoebe, the mule, on the balcony of the Welcome Center. Photo by Dianne Hickerson.

Pulling up roots and creating a wish list for a new home location

"We loved it there," Doug said about their home near Greek Peek when it was rural. Gradually, over 30 homes were built nearby, but there were no sidewalks. They would drive to a local preserve to go for a walk. With no public transportation they had to drive everywhere they needed to go. Caring for Cathy's father until a few years ago, including his transportation, they wondered about their own mobility in later years with no family nearby. After Cathy's father died, they thought more about future transportation problems and upkeep of the two houses, and contemplated moving in the next few years.

The couple made a wish list for what they wanted in their next hometown. The wish list included walking access to town, a good library, a college (the setting for Doug to continue part-time work), a first floor apartment, and a location near the water. Also, it needed to be in the geographical area covered by their medical insurance, a major financial consideration. "I looked at the list and said, to be honest, we are doing well if we get three out of five," Doug said. "We're not going to get them all." But, he was wrong.

Brockport fulfills their wish list

Doug first did a computer search for rental listings. Webster and Fairport looked great on the computer, but failed after visiting. It was the same decision for Albany, the coast of Maine, and the Hudson Valley.

They visited Brockport twice with the Lift Bridge Book Shop one of their first stops while walking on Main Street. Telling the shop owners and customers what they were looking for, "They were free with information and we got a real sense of pride in the village from them," Cathy said. One of the things they heard is that Brockport is like "Mayberry" (the classic 50's TV series). "And it truly is; it's very nice," Doug says now. "The whole town seems to have a calmness to it," Cathy said about her continuing first impression.

The Chesnuts immediately found a first floor apartment that was the right size and right price at Autumn Woods Community on West Avenue. They also found the desired walkability in Brockport. "We can walk from where we live to Wegman's and Wal Mart with sidewalks the whole distance," Doug said. They say they are walking a lot more and getting more exercise than when they lived on the mountain.

They discovered the Wegman's here is a "lovely, fantastic store," compared to the one in Ithaca they said was too large for their needs and had a hectic atmosphere. They have found good restaurants and spend time at Java Junction on Main and Grinds 122 Cafe on West Avenue. They love Seymour Library and Cathy wants to volunteer there. They see a close "town-gown" relationship with The College. The couple is interested in The College's academic

offerings for seniors. Doug works part-time at the Barnes & Noble Books store on the campus. Cathy spins yarn and has discovered the Morgan-Manning House which she calls "just gorgeous" and has connected with the monthly spinning group there. They have returned to biking after 30 years, with bikes purchased at Bicycle Outfitters on Main Street. They say that store owner "Russell" helped pick the perfect bikes and, "He's a great support as we come up with questions."

In May Cathy discovered a volunteer opportunity when she went to get a new vacuum cleaner brush at the Magic Wands Vacuum Shop on North Main Street. "George (store owner) told me about the Welcome Center on the canal needing volunteers and connected me with Doug Wilcox that same day." Cathy and her husband are now on the volunteer schedule. They love the contacts with other volunteers and the visitors "who tell us there is no other place on the canal like the Welcome Center." Being near the Erie Canal, and 20 minutes from Lake Ontario, fulfills their wish to be "near the water."

Downsizing their home and traveling lightly

Cathy's training and nursing degree prepared her for 22 years in the geriatric field. Caring for the elderly, "I saw what they went through," she said. "I saw heart ache and I emptied apartments for people who had died." She affirmed, "As you get older, it is important that you look at your options and make good decisions."

Decisions on downsizing started six years ago when they switched from dressers and bookcases to Closet Maid storage cubes. Among other changes, two twin futon platforms replaced the queen size bed. Their goal was to make their furnishings portable by one or both of them. Two years ago, with a clear decision to move, they arranged the furniture they were planning to keep into measured off spaces they anticipated in an apartment. The remaining spaces in their house, basement and garage were filled with possessions left by Cathy's parents and several elderly friends, which, along with their own items, they would give away before their move. In the fall of 2015, with a floor plan (two bedrooms and a great room) for the Brockport apartment, "We actually constructed the apartment in our house and knew all we wanted to bring," Cathy said.

"Take what you enjoy"

"We did not have a sentimental attachment to things we had to eliminate," Doug said. "We brought what we wanted in our next stage in life." Cathy added, "When you look at what you want to take with you as you reduce your life experience, take what you enjoy!"

About half of what they moved were storage racks for totes filled with their collection of yarn and fiber. These are used in their hobbies with Cathy spinning and Doug weaving. She brought four small spinning wheels and he brought his two small looms. Averaging about two hours at home every morning spinning and weaving, they sometimes combine their hobbies with the joy of volunteering at the Welcome Center. (See photo)

Their frugal lifestyle includes meals in their efficient kitchen, plus eating out several days a week, meeting people and socializing in restaurants or coffee shops. Doug calls the money they save in their downsized lifestyle, and not drinking or smoking, their "vacation budget." "We are not big vacation travelers, never have been," he said. "But, this is like a perpetual vacation."



Doug and Cathy Chesnut sometimes weave and spin during their four-hour volunteer shifts at the Welcome Center on the canal. On her small, portable spinning wheel Cathy creates yarn for her knitting and for Doug's weaving. Doug weaves Japanese "Soari style" on a simple loom. There is no pattern. "You pick your colors and go where you want to go with them," Doug said. Doug is color blind, so Cathy spins yarns with colors that are compatible. On her lap is one of the many stoles that Doug has woven. Photo by Dianne Hickerson.

Inspecting Brockport's Erie Canal lift bridges

A top official honors his career roots and the canal's historical significance

by Doug Hickerson

On a sunny September 14, about a dozen Erie Canal staff, most in hard hats and safety vests, clustered around Brockport's Main Street and Park Avenue bridges. They were performing the annual operations inspection required for the canal's manned structures: 16 moveable bridges and 57 locks on the 600 miles of the canal. Beginning September 13, the project will continue to be done in sections and has the inspectors traveling by tug boat for two or three days at a time until the last inspections on October 19.

On this late afternoon, the team of inspectors had covered canal towns from Medina to Brockport. Three inspectors based in Albany traveled by Tug Syracuse, docking at the Welcome Center with its crew of four. Local personnel assisting and observing at the Brockport inspection included electricians, the operational staff of the bridge, and a roving bridge maintenance crew. John Callaghan, Deputy



John Callaghan is Deputy Director of the New York State Canal Corporation. His office is in Albany and he travels extensively on the canal inspection tours. Photo by Dianne Hickerson.

Director of the New York State Canal Corporation, stationed in Albany, supervises the canal inspection project, traveling on the tug also.

Three main areas of inspection by the Albany staff are: Safety for employees and the public, electrical and mechanical aspects of the bridge's operation, and overall appearance including landscape, paint, cleanliness, flags and signage. Score charts are completed for each item and are factored into the maintenance and operations plan.

In a friendly competition, the canal town that receives the highest scores for its lift bridge receives an award flag the following year. This year Holley received the "Best Lift Bridge" banner. "The contest brings out the sense of ownership and personal investment these men and women have in their work to maintain a living part of history, a 100-year-old operating museum, really," Callaghan said.

Riding the tug from Holley to Brockport was Beau Willis, vice president for ad-



The full force of Erie Canal personnel, both local and Albany-based, involved in the inspections of the Main Street and Park Avenue bridges. Photo by Dianne Hickerson.

ministration and finance at the College at Brockport. Callaghan said that they invite local officials and other stake holders along to "discuss canal issues in a contextual environment." Referring to The College's 1,000 feet of canal frontage, Willis said, "We want to think about how we can better bring The College and the canal together."

Asked about his background on the canal, Deputy Director Callaghan said he started as a seasonal tender captain when he left the Coast Guard in 1997. In 1998 he received a permanent appointment as a tug boat captain, "working in maintenance with colleagues on the boats, like Wendy Marble, captain of the Tug Syracuse," Callaghan said. In 2001 he became a canal traffic agent working in the Albany offices, then moved to his present second-in-command position. "I took what I learned in the early years and applied it in the administrative setting I work in now," he said. "It is really gratifying. I feel like I have a lot to offer."

Callaghan's love of his work is grounded in a rich appreciation for his place in the Erie Canal's history. Sitting at a picnic table near the Welcome Center, he was asked what reward he feels from his work. His impromptu eloquent statement is quoted in full here.

"It's incredible and enormously satisfying. When you see a boat leave lock 34-35, you realize that, in a 100-year-old operating canal, we just lifted that boat 570 feet above sea level. We have been doing that for one



Lift bridge inspection includes examination of pulleys, cables, gears and other mechanism with the bridge raised. Photo by Dianne Hickerson.

hundred years, two hundred years, if you go back to the Clinton's Ditch original canal.

Embarking on our third century of operation, we are still doing what we've done all those years. It's what made New York State the Empire State, opening up the West to expansion and economic development, which basically drew the modern map of America.

It's amazing to be still doing things largely the same way with the tradition we have in serving so many different interest areas: Recreation boaters, commercial boaters, tourists, farmers who irrigate from the canal, hydroelectric generators providing clean green renewable energy from the canal, industrial research facilities that use the canal for cleaning water, industrial water, and cooling water.

You have all these different people that are using the canal today. When they flip the light switch in a house they may be using the canal. When they turn on the tap they may be using the canal, (and the same) when they eat an ear of corn. And they don't really think about it.

We have become such an ingrained part of upstate New York State life; I don't think people realize how the canal touches them. Even if they haven't taken a boat ride along the canal or ridden along the canal way trail, this is such an inextricable part of upstate New York life. You could never take it away. Imagine what life would be like if this canal would disappear."



The inspection crew from Albany. (l to r) Darren McGrirk, heads the team and inspects the electrical and mechanical parts. Jeff Gritsavage, navigation program manager, inspects overall appearance (paint, landscaping, flags, signs). Bob Gardner inspects all safety aspects for employees and the public. They travel on the Tug Syracuse and stay at local hotels. Photo by Dianne Hickerson.



The crew of Tug Syracuse: (l to r) Captain Wendy Marble, deck hand Seth Brant, marine engineer Jim O'Connor, and deck hand Jerry Spicor. They stay on the tugboat overnight. Photo by Dianne Hickerson.

Student interns serve the Village of Brockport and gain valuable experience

by Doug Hickerson

"Local colleges involved in towns," was the front page article in the September 5 Rochester Democrat & Chronicle. It cited The College at Brockport as one of several area colleges increasingly offering their resources "on issues of economic development, poverty, and college completion." In addition to this major outreach, college-community relationships are also enhanced by students volunteering in the community.

An example at The College at Brockport ("The College") is the Saturday of Service each fall. In its seventh year, the project sends out the new freshman class on a day of work assignments in Brockport and the Greater Rochester. Also, fraternities and sororities have volunteered locally for many years.

In contrast, student internships are a longer-term volunteer service that mutually benefits The College's academic departments, individual students, and the Village of Brockport. For many years, students have bolstered their major studies with solid experience working on significant projects in the Village. The internships have been initiated and supervised by Margay Blackman, since before she became Brockport's mayor.

Margay Blackman: Mayor and retired professor creates Village internships

Mayor Margay Blackman retired in 2007 as professor emerita, after 30 years in The College's Anthropology Department. Since 2005, Blackman has been enlisting student interns from The College. With the campus contacts developed over three decades, and elected to the village board in 2011, she has over time located 10 interns with appropriate majors and interests to serve the Village. With the Village's growing reputation for excellent internships, in some cases a college department has contacted the mayor first.

The first intern made a major contribution while Blackman was a professor. One of her Anthropology students, Mark Beckwith, wanted to do an internship in forestry. She placed him with then-mayor Josephine Matela to study the Village's public trees. By the end of the 2005 spring semester, Beckwith had created the Village Tree Board, which Blackman chaired from 2006-2011. In 2009, resulting from Beckwith's initial work, the Village became a Tree City USA, a status it has maintained every year since.

Since then, other students have served as interns. The following list indicates the students' academic department and wide variety of service:

- Keryatta Davis - Communications (Code enforcement and off campus housing) 2011.
- Anna Rose - Communications (Marketing downtown businesses to students) 2011.
- Tanya Raycroft - Public Administration (Establishing a village court) 2012.
- Jennifer Packard - Anthropology (Historic Preservation) 2012.
- Lakita Marshall - Communications (Preliminary website design and content) 2013-14.
- Sam Tanner - Political Science (Active Transportation planning grant and LBHW event) 2014-15.
- Hannah Smith - Political Science (Bringing local government to fourth graders) 2015
- Richard Swift - Political Science (Study and hold a forum on Brockport Dissolution) 2016.

Justin Sullivan: Using his major to enhance Brockport's media presence

The current intern in the Brockport Village office is Justin Sullivan, a senior communications major. His work includes media relations and developing the first-time social media for the Village. The internship for a semester typically earns three credit hours, requiring at least 120 hours of work. The student receives no financial payment.

Sullivan is very enthusiastic about his career preparation on campus and in the Village office. "The College has an amazing journalism and broadcasting program. There is also very good extra-curricula experience," he said, citing the campus newspaper and the radio and TV stations. His work for the radio station and The Stylus had him observing court sessions, attending government meetings, and interviewing the mayor and trustees. With this background of interest and experiences, he and Mayor Blackman agreed on starting the internship.

"I am looking forward to everything I am going to learn this semester," he said about his Village government experience. "It's not like internships where students answer the phone and organize desks. I am actually getting real hands-on experience, writing, doing the research, connecting with people." Recently he contacted Seattle to obtain the city's social media policy and their permission to use a modified version as a model for the one he will help develop for the Village. He gave a presentation to the Village board on the proposed social media model at the September 26 public meeting.

"By the Village having the social media presence, they can connect not just with village residents, but with younger people (at The College) to have an understanding of what's going on in the local government," Sullivan said. Erica Linden, the Village's Deputy Clerk/Treasurer, also emphasizes the importance of the Facebook page being planned. "We have a web page, but we are not interacting with residents," Linden said, "and we are not getting out alerts such as what streets are being paved or other important happenings." She is in charge of the social media project (which may eventually include Twitter) and welcomes Sullivan's assistance, as she manages a wide variety of other office operations.

Linden and Mayor Blackman share supervision of Sullivan. The three meet every Tuesday. The conversation includes updates on the Facebook project and activities that might be publicized through press releases. Sullivan's ideas and work on press releases will be a major help in the busy office. "In the midst of keeping everything running smoothly, we don't take time to think about all the newsworthy things that are happening in Brockport," Linden said.

There is a mutual admiration between Justin and his mentors. "Justin is a very bright young man," Linden said. "He has a drive and a passion for this particular kind of work. He thinks hard about these community connections and gets things done in a timely fashion."

"I love putting my journalism skills to good use in this public relations internship," Sullivan said. "I want to leave Brockport in May and be able to go in any direction such as broadcasting, public relations, or writing. That's why this internship is so beneficial to me. It's really an honor to be here."



Justin Sullivan, Mayor Margay Blackman and Deputy Clerk/Treasurer Erica Linden meet weekly in the Brockport Village office building. Sullivan, a College at Brockport senior, recently started his internship working on media relations and social media for the Village. Photo by Dianne Hickerson.

West Edition

Suburban News

Distributed to Bergen, Clarendon, Holley-Murray and Brockport-Sweden

Volunteers create dresses to bring hope, security and dignity to girls world-wide

by Doug Hickerson

It was an impressive scene at The Center on State Street in Brockport on October 27. Eight women were at work in the second-floor room, clustered in project groups around fabric and sewing materials. They were in various stages of making dresses for girls who live in challenging conditions locally and world-wide.

Their mission statement reads: "Brockport Dresses for Girls Around the World" is a program of dedicated volunteers making dresses and a difference for girls in need around the globe by giving them hope, security and dignity — one dress at a time." According to the group's leader, Andrea Perry, the program is modeled after the international organization by a similar name, but remains independent and locally controlled. A unique feature of this local group is a local courier delivering a suitcase full of apparel in person to the chosen foreign region.

The volunteer organization has two dozen members on its email list. Some donate materials or money when needed, or sew dresses at home. Others turn out to the workshops held once a month.

Working with Perry in leadership are Hanny Heyen, Mary Lynne Turner and Marcia Rachow. The four are regulars at the workshops, and were joined this time by Kathy Martel, Irene Pasternak, Jennifer Sheldon and Linda Breitenbach.

Making dresses and more

The finished dresses seen at the workshop were both inexpensive and attractive. Basic dresses are made from donated pillow cases. With head and arm cut-outs, they

are colorfully decorated and a pocket added. For cooler climates, or where the culture prohibits bare shoulders, tee shirts are the top and fabric is added to make a skirt. Pockets and trim are added, all beautifully color coordinated. Kits are put together at the workshop for home-assembly, providing pre-cut fabrics and trims.

Along with a dress, girls receive underpants and a small handmade doll. Boys receive boxer shorts underwear and a Beanie Baby. A typical suitcase being delivered to warm countries contains 25 dresses, 25 underpants, 25 small hand sewn dolls, 25 boys' boxer shorts and 25 Beanie Babies.

In the winter season, domestic violence centers in Rochester (Willow) and Albion (Pathstone) receive appropriate apparel: Flannel nightgowns or pajamas, slippers, underwear for girls, boxer shorts, Beanie Babies and a quilt. Pajamas are for girls or boys, with a long sleeve tee shirt top and sewn flannel bottoms. The quilt is donated by the quilting group that meets in The Center.

Deliveries here

and around the world

Besides the winter items sent to local domestic violence centers, dresses have been donated to The Clothing Shelf at St. Luke's Episcopal Church in Brockport.

Since the group started in May, 2015, "We also have sent dresses to Ecuador, Nicaragua, Costa Rica, Jamaica, Tanzania and Guatemala," Perry said. "We are always on the lookout for opportunities to send our items to areas of poverty."

One opportunity occurred in September when a person at The Center said a friend is going to Guatemala. The friend was provided a suitcase of clothing to deliver.



Displayed at The Center are typical items delivered locally and abroad by Brockport Dresses for Girls Around the World. The items include: Handmade dolls, Beanie Babies, and slippers. Also shown are a sample tee shirt dress, quilt, boxer shorts, flannel nightgown, and pillow case dress. Project workers pictured are (l to r): Mary Lynne Turner, Marcia Rachow, Kathy Martel and Andrea Perry. Photo by Dianne Hickerson.

Typically, couriers are local people known to travel the world, for example professors traveling with a class of students. Katrina Arndt, associate professor at St. John Fisher College, travels to Jamaica each year with JASY (Jamaican Advantage thru Sports for Youth). Each year they alternate taking volunteers from St. John Fisher and from Fairport High School. They go with sports equipment, spending a week in sports activities and then leave the equipment. Arndt agreed to deliver a suitcase of clothing this year.

Generous donations

The program is partially funded by the Sweden Sisters Association, Inc. at The Center. Extra funds have been raised at various events by selling dresses made by Hanny Heyen and Terry Joseph, origami greeting cards by Mary Lynne Turner, and needle holders by Marcia Rachow. Money is also directly donated by members on the email list and others. The cash is necessary to purchase tee shirts and to provide the \$25 fee for couriers bringing the suitcase on a plane.

"Most of our materials are donated by local people aware of the program," Perry said. "Items have included: Sewing machines, cloth, trims, elastic, etc. The Lakeside Fig Twig gave us many items to make tee shirt dresses, plus packages of underwear and a generous cash donation."

"I feel this is a very contagious program," Perry said about support from the greater Rochester/Brockport area. "I once described it to a stranger, and she and a friend in Owego made us 16 dresses. A lady in

Canandigua made baby dolls for us, and so did the teen group at Seymour Library Ladies at the Village at Unity made dresses for us. A lady in Spencerport sent us 25 dresses. A lady from Irondequoit sent us 24 finished dresses, plus kits and material. People are dropping off donations at The Center all the time. We are very grateful."

Personal inspiration for the volunteer work

Perry started this program after meeting with Diane Acomb and the Dress-a-Girl program in Dansville. "I was attracted to the program because my mother-in-law, Ruth Perry, became involved when she was in her late 80's until her death at 91," Perry said. "She was a lifelong seamstress and advisor to Diane. I was inspired by her dedication and creativity."

Heyen has enjoyed sewing since she was 10 years old, starting as a member of a 4-H Club. That was two years after coming to the U.S. from Germany in 1948. "My family didn't have much money, but the club donated fabric, and a neighbor gave me a used sewing machine. I started making my own clothes," she said. "I feel like I've come somewhat full circle as I participate in Brockport's Dress a Girl Around the World program. Not having much money back then, I am now using some of those earlier sewing skills, getting together with others, and knowing that the girls receiving them in impoverished countries around the globe will have the dignity of owning at least one dress."



Dr. Katrina Arndt of St. John Fisher College was a courier delivering a suitcase to Kingston, Jamaica. Provided photo.

Gifts of a lifetime

Part one of two
by Doug Hickerson

In the season of gift-giving, I asked several of our local citizens what very meaningful or significant gift they have received in their lifetime. Thinking of "gift" broadly, it could be material, but more likely wise words or an intervention that made a major impact on them, even changing their lives. It might have been realized as a gift only in retrospect. Below are their moving messages.

Margay Blackman
Mayor, Village of Brockport

The greatest gift -- Stories. There is something special and intimate when a person shares his or her life story with you. As an anthropologist, I had the good fortune to record and publish the biographies of two strong, remarkable Native American women elders who told me their life stories and became my mentors. The gift continued when I taught a life history course at the college and watched my students experience what I had. Belatedly, I turned to interview my parents about their lives, and now that they are gone, I often look back, gratefully, on their words and the time we spent together recording them.



Bill Plews
Chair of the Brockport
Ecumenical Outreach Committee
Vice President of the Western New York
Coalition of Farmworker Serving Agencies
Retired as a Manager of the
Eastman Kodak Company



When I retired, I realized that the work that I had done supporting myself and my family was largely over. After some soul searching, I decided that I would involve myself in efforts focused on the needs of immigrant farmworkers in Western New York. Because of that decision, I have gotten to work with people in organizations such as Oak Orchard Health, Migrant Education, Legal Aid, Worker Justice Center, and the Rural and Migrant Ministry. The experience, energy and insight of these people is a gift to me as well as our community. To have their respect and affection is a treasure.

Next week's issue will have responses from: Allan Berry, Mary Edwards, Chris Martin and Nancy Steedman. All photos by Dianne Hickerson with the exception of Jo Matela.

Jo Matela
Owner, Red Bird Café in Brockport
Former Mayor, Village of Brockport

My grandparents Herbert and Esther George always lived by "This world is big enough for everyone." Even back then, I did not realize how much that important statement was going to mean to me. They both treated everyone with respect and looked for the good in others. I never once heard them say anything disparaging about anyone. They taught their seven children the same values and I see this throughout my family and my children. I sometimes have to remind myself of this, as it is easy to get caught up in the rhetoric of today. Thank you, Herbert and Esther.



Jack Milner
Former Supervisor for the Town of Sweden
Former Principal at Brockport Middle School

Bev Milner
Former employee Special Education
Office at Brockport Central School

On November 4, 1998, our grandson, Jacob, was born prematurely, with critical heart problems, a myriad of G.I. issues and Down Syndrome. At first, it did not seem like a "gift of a lifetime," as we struggled with the fear and challenges we faced. However, as we watched Jacob grow, it was very evident that he was having more of a positive impact on all our family members than we ever thought possible.

Our material gifts pale in comparison to the 18-year journey which has blessed all of us. We are all better people for having Jacob in our lives and the friends we have made along the way are priceless.



Editor's note: The full story about Jacob and his family will appear in a future issue.



Gifts of a lifetime

Part two of two
by Doug Hickerson

In the season of gift-giving, I asked several of our local citizens what very meaningful or significant gift they have received in their lifetime. Thinking of "gift" broadly, it could be material, but more likely wise words or an intervention that made a major impact on them, even changing their lives. It might have been realized as a gift only in retrospect. Below are their moving messages.

Allan Berry
President of Brockport Community Museum
Trustee of the Emily L. Knapp Museum
Owner of Berry Consulting Services, LLC
Associate with School Leadership, LLC

In 1972, as a relatively new teacher at Brockport High School, I took a graduate class from Dr. Don McWherter at The College at Brockport. I worked hard on the final paper. I was shocked to have it returned to me with the grade of B and a note that I could do better. After two days of fuming I returned to my effort and was rewarded with a better grade. Only later did I realize that my real reward was being pushed to accept higher standards for myself. And, from that experience, my additional gift was a friendship with Don. We remained connected and ultimately worked together when Don became a trustee of the Board of Education at Brockport Central while I was the Director of Personnel and School Community Relations. I also had the honor of speaking at his memorial service where I told the story about my final paper.



Mary Edwards
President, Clarkson Historical Society

"Shh, you'll have to be quiet today, my mother is listening to the opera." That's what I told my friends one day when I was about eight years old. So, my love of music started early, and now I can't imagine a world without it. Music encompasses a whole world of expression. From the innocent child's song "Twinkle, twinkle Little



Star" to the complexity and drama of Wagner's "Ring Cycle" to the happiness of the Beatles "Here comes the Sun." Then there is the simplicity of the hauntingly evocative "Taps" which can reduce me to tears. So, a heartfelt thank you to my mother for giving me the always fresh, always new, gift of music.

Christopher R. Martin
Public Information Officer for the Brockport Fire District
Full time job: Supervisor of Training and Accreditation at the City of Rochester Emergency Communications Department (Monroe County 911)
Former Deputy Mayor of the Village of Brockport

The most important gift I ever received was from my sister, Mary. Forty-three years ago, she joined the Brockport Fire Explorers. She invited me to accompany her to the next meeting. The rest is history. She did not continue on the journey with me, though she encouraged me to. Every job I have had, and most of the friends I have, are a result of joining the fire service. As an EMT, countless lives were impacted. Working at 911, someone makes a difference in another's life every day; some days, it is me. And, all because of Mary's invitation.



Nancy Steedman
Mayor, Village of Churchville

The most precious gift I have been given is the "gift of extended life." After diagnosis of ovarian cancer in 2014, extended chemo treatments and an operation, I am still here and able to share this with you. I will be forever thankful for my oncologist, Highland hospital doctors and staff, infusion center nurses and staff, coworkers, community members, friends, neighbors, my mother and especially those who drove me to treatments and turned that day into something fun and pleasurable. I would not be here today if it wasn't for their gift to me. I am appreciative of this gift and will be forever thankful.



Photos by Dianne Hickerson, with the exception of Christopher Martin's and Mayor Steedman's, which were submitted.

(In last week's issue, "Gifts of a Lifetime" were presented by Margay Blackman, Jo Matela, Jack and Bev Milner, and Bill Plews. They can be found at: www.westsidenewsny.com/author/doug-hickerson/)



West Edition

Suburban News

Distributed to Bergen, Clarendon, Holley-Murray and Brockport-Sweden

Christmas giving at Beikirch from staff members and The College at Brockport

by Doug Hickerson

Mid-morning on December 16, staff members of Lakeside Beikirch Care Center began rolling carts into the lobby. There was anticipation of Santa's truck arriving from the College at Brockport with presents for each of the 120 residents. The truck arrived, followed by ten employees of BASC, the Brockport Auxiliary Services Corporation. Boxes of presents with residents' room numbers were carried in and placed on carts for their designated floor. BASC and LBCC recreation staff started off to all three floors to visit each resident with gifts.

Compassion and coordination
from employees at The College

At the College, BASC employees provide all food services, the book store, parking services and other support. Jean Gillman, BASC executive administrative assistant, heads the Christmas project. She explained why the 150 employees are so enthusiastic about giving to the LBCC residents. "Many of our employees have grown up in this area and have had family or friends as residents in Beikirch," Gillman said. "It's close to our heart. Our employees look forward to it every year."

The project by BASC is in its fourth year at Beikirch. Following extensive procedures, it begins in early November, when the employees of BASC are under way with making lists, then shopping for and wrapping presents. The presents are first suggested by LBCC staff who know the residents. Gillman and Nancy Duff, LBCC recreation director, go over the lists to finalize them. The lists are sent to BASC employees. Tickets with residents' first names and suggested presents are provided.

"Our people enjoy taking a couple of names (tickets) and shopping for them," Gillman said. Presents were turned in by December 5 this year. "Then, a few elves in the office helped me bag everything in tissue paper and make new tags for them."

This year, special hand-made gifts were included for each resident. Last year BASC employees began making crafts on Saturday mornings. "It was so popular, they wanted to do it again this year," Gillman said, "but this time to make presents for the LBCC residents. Especially for our members who could not get a gift, this enabled them to provide one." In each bag was a hand-crafted ceramic tile coaster. Also, about 40 snow men made from socks, stuffed with rice and corn, were used to complete some gift bags. "It's a community thing for sure, and everybody

loves it and gets into it," Gillman said about this Santa's workshop.

Kimberly Kinetob, administrator for LBCC, expressed appreciation for the devoted work by BASC in the Christmas project. "We are so grateful for their generosity, time, resources and their hearts," she said. "The residents are grateful too; it is very sweet to see the looks on their faces when opening a gift."

Nancy Duff commented on the success of the gift-giving that morning. "It went like clockwork, running very smoothly for up to an hour-and-a-half, depending on the chatting in the rooms between the residents and college staff," she said. "My sincere thanks to the College (BASC) for all their hard work and compassion, and for their dedication in making this happen every year."



Lakeside Beikirch resident **Audrey Van Roo** awakened Christmas morning to find a special Christmas gift just for her. She is one of the 120 residents who received a gift selected especially for them, donated by an anonymous benefactor. Photo by Dianne Hickerson.

A secret Santa
on Christmas morning

Early Christmas morning brought more gifts from a secret Santa and the work of the LBCC staff. It's a tradition that goes back many years, according to Duff.

Making gift lists and shopping is done by the Recreation Department staff. First, they place a list of all residents on each floor, allowing other staff, nurses and nurse assistants, to suggest types of gifts for each resident.

The completed lists are used by the Recreation Department staff to shop for gifts in between their regular tasks. Nancy Duff says the shopping takes about five hours for the majority of the gifts, "counting travel and getting everything in a safe room until we wrap and label them."

When the Recreation staff cashes out the presents in the store, they are met by the secret Santa who pays the bill. The person, who wants to remain anonymous, also has been a volunteer at LBCC for three years and at Lakeside Hospital many years before that. As a secret Santa, the volunteer said, "I am happy to be in the background."



Beikirch resident **Mary Ellen Frawley** (left) was delighted to receive her Christmas gift, a beautiful cozy blanket, from the volunteers of the Brockport Auxiliary Service Corporation (BASC). Her daughter **Patti Frawley** (right) was there to share in the festivities. Photo by Dianne Hickerson.

Continued on page 2

Christmas giving at Beikirch from staff members and The College at Brockport

Continued from page 1

Wrapping and labeling is a major endeavor, Duff says, "as this is done around the routine activities and paper work the Recreation team has." All the efforts culminate on Christmas Day, when the nurses and nurse assistants greet the residents with gifts, as they awake.

Reflecting on all the people involved in both gift-giving events at LBCC, Duff said: "With all the hardships we see in the daily news, it is so refreshing to see our community come together in the 'Spirit of Love' for the Christmas season.



Jean Gillman (left) heads the Beikirch gift giving Christmas project for BASC. Beikirch Administrator Kimberly Kilnetob, right, expressed gratitude for their generosity, time, resources and their hearts. Photo by Dianne Hickerson.

Area school handwriting contest winners honored at Clarkson Academy

On January 22, the Clarkson Academy conferred honors upon winning students in the 4th annual Handwriting Contest. The contest is part of the Clarkson Historical Society's campaign to revive interest in cursive writing, which it sees as disappearing from school curricula and from culture.

With a total of 164 entries from six school districts, nine were chosen in three different grade categories:

•Grades 4 and 5: (Winners all fourth grade) First Place, Audrey Buck, Lake Ontario Baptist Academy. Second Place, Abigail Russo, Lake Ontario Baptist Academy. Third Place, Vincenza Viola, Fred W. Hill School, Brockport.

•Grades 6, 7 and 8: First Place, Charity Huber, sixth grade, Lake Ontario Baptist Academy. Second Place, Kayleigh Rodell, eighth grade, Lake Ontario Baptist Academy. Third Place, Skylar Sharpe, eighth grade, Byron-Bergen High School.

•Grades 9 through 12: First Place, Madison Huber, tenth grade, Lake Ontario Baptist

Academy. Second Place, Michaela Evert, ninth grade, Brockport High School. Third Place, Claire Buck, ninth grade, Lake Ontario Baptist Academy.

The local campaign is part of the "Campaign for Cursive" worldwide movement promoting cursive writing instruction in public schools, sponsored by the American Handwriting Analysis Foundation located in California. The foundation has designated January 23 as "National Handwriting Day." That is the date of John Hancock's birthday in 1737, the founding father known for his iconic signature on the Declaration of Independence.

The Clarkson Historical Society has promoted cursive handwriting with annual workshops called Cursive Sundays, being scheduled again for this spring. And, handwriting will be taught again in the annual Summer Camp being planned for August, all in the Clarkson Academy building at 8343 Ridge Road.

D. Hickerson Provided information



Winners in the 2017 Annual Clarkson Historical Society Handwriting Contest appear in the Clarkson Academy building where they received their awards on January 22. Students (l to r): seated - Abigail Russo, Audrey Buck and Charity Huber; standing - Claire Buck, Madison Huber and Kayleigh Rodell. Missing from photo: Michaela Evert, Skylar Sharpe and Vincenza Viola. Photo by Dianne Hickerson.

New book released on Brockport's history

Since 2013, Sue Savard has led a volunteer project to renovate and restore the Emily L. Knapp Museum of Local History at 49 State Street in Brockport. While organizing and documenting the museum's collection, she came upon the diary and scrapbooks of Joseph A. Tozier (1836-1894).

Feeling they needed to be shared, she transcribed his handwritten words and included in the book appropriate selections from Joseph's scrapbooks.

Savard's book has just been released: **In His Words**, subtitled, "Brockport, 1858 - 1866 The Diary of Joseph A. Tozier" and published by Create Space, a subsidiary

of Amazon. It is for sale at the Lift Bridge Book Shop, 45 Main Street in Brockport and on Amazon. There will be a book signing on Saturday, February 4 from noon till 2 p.m. at Lift Bridge Book Shop.

Joseph A. Tozier was a Brockport resident, an educator, scholar, school commissioner, entrepreneur, and observer of people and institutions. Through his eloquent writing, Tozier captures the pulse of the social, cultural and political life in Brockport during a critical time in our nation's history.

Using his writing and speaking ability, he chronicles and comments in the local newspapers and at area events during a period of time that saw many changes in technology, customs and political discourse. While continually striving to improve himself through study, he eventually became a pharmacist and owner of a drug and bookstore in Brockport.

Sue Savard is a graduate of SUNY Albany and The College at Brockport. After college, she taught business education subjects in Brockport and Albion. In retirement, she has been volunteering at the Knapp Museum. About the experience of delving into the words and life of Tozier, Savard said, "Through Joseph's eyes and ears and writing, I felt as if I were experiencing the vibrancy of Brockport's early years."

A feature story on Sue Savard and the continuing restoration of the Emily L. Knapp Museum will appear in the February 5 Suburban News and Hamlin-Clarkson Herald.

D. Hickerson Provided information



Sue Savard, author. Photo by Dianne Hickerson.

West Edition

Suburban News

Distributed to Bergen, Clarendon, Holley-Murray and Brockport-Sweden

The Emily L. Knapp Museum

Creative leadership and intensive labor key to restoring Brockport's landmark museum

by Doug Hickerson

At 49 State Street, the Brockport Village Hall is attached to the Victorian era Seymour family mansion with the Emily L. Knapp Museum upstairs. The joint structure symbolizes Brockport's loving link to its rich history represented in the museum's vast collection of Brockport artifacts. Several years ago, the collection was found to be in extreme need of organization. Since 2013, Sue Savard and her team of volunteers have made remarkable progress in restoring the collection and reviving one of Brockport's historic treasures.

The Work

Some pieces of the museum collection were restored by professionals. A magnificent golden eagle was sent to a taxidermist. Well over 107 pictures, with more coming, were reframed with archival materials. Three maps were restored to pristine condition by a conservator.

The major work of restoration is being done by devoted volunteers; a small sample is cited here. Tim Fabrizio restored a 1905 Edison phonograph. A grand bookcase was designed by Jim Bolthouse and built by George Cedeño. At home, Sue Savard made a dozen military uniforms look like new. Also at home, she typed labels for files and pictures, and transcribed four long diaries written in script. She has published the transcribed diary

of Joseph A. Tozier, a prominent Brockport citizen.

There has been extensive work in sorting, labeling and cataloging 251 duplicate items deaccessioned (released from the collection). Hundreds of original documents, pictures, news clippings and letters were organized, labeled and filed into 36 file cabinet drawers. Also, detailed attention went into restoring floors, repairing wallpaper and painting. All this took an estimated total of 5,000 hours by 25 volunteers since the restoration began, not including Savard's work at home.

The Workers

On a visit to the museum for this story, several volunteers were at work that day. Sue Savard oversees the work and, since the beginning, she has assigned tasks according to the particular interests of each team member. Briefly, here are their stories with reflections on the museum and what the work means to them:

Maggie LaPierre began volunteering last spring. She is happy with any task like sorting books, cleaning brass fixtures, sorting photos and moving furniture. "The hands-on aspect of what we've been doing is very satisfying," she says. "This little museum is a treasure trove of Brockport history. It's a lovely time capsule of the past. I've learned a great deal about the history of the village and its early residents."

Roberta Heseck began as a volunteer guide three years ago. She has worked on the



(l. to r.) Volunteers Sue Savard, Rosemary Smith and Pat O'Brien study a stereograph from the collection in the Victorian room. Photo by Dianne Hickerson.

Mary Jane Holmes Room and the kitchen. She joins in photographing and entering items into a data base. "It is exciting to learn about Brockport's rich history that contributed to the development of Western New York," she said. "Through this experience, I have met so many great and talented people connected to the museum and village. We feed on each other's enthusiasm."

Rosemary Smith began volunteering two years ago. She emphasizes the work of sorting, labeling and filing "boxes just full of articles on Brockport," she said. "Having always lived in Brockport, the museum has brought back so many memories of my family's past. It has been an incredible journey and so much more to do."

These three volunteers were asked about Sue Savard's leadership. From LaPierre: "Sue is great to work with. She has so much energy and enthusiasm for the museum that is contagious!" Heseck: "Sue has boundless energy and the ability to enlist volunteers from many segments of our population. She is dedicated to making this museum a place of pride for the Village of Brockport." Smith: "Sue has worked long hours at the museum and at home where she does all the typing and phone calls. She is a wonderful friend and a joy to be with."

Sarah Hart has been working for a couple of months on a special project at the request of Sue Savard. As a professional classical painter and teacher at the Rochester Memorial Art Gallery, Hart's expertise was needed to examine and assess an artist's paintings and sketchbooks found in the attic, work that is ongoing.

"It is an honor to have my education serve in this capacity," Hart said. "Working with Sue Savard is like being with a best friend and being part of Scooby and the gang, as we all have fun trying to solve mysteries." And, she added, "Sue brings a fantastic sense of

adventure to the project. She has a wonderfully honest and thoroughly organized sense of what needs to be accomplished in that museum."

Pat O'Brien has been working in the museum for about two years. She is also chairperson of the museum board. Retired from senior leadership in a major corporation, she has applied her skills to the operation and management of the



Sue Savard stands near the 1905 Edison phonograph restored to working condition by Tim Fabrizio. Photo by Dianne Hickerson.

museum. Among her many contributions are: A policies and procedures manual; a semi-annual report; facilitation of development of a strategic plan; applied for and received grants; led a program to digitize maps from the 1800's. She also worked with a team of volunteers who painted five rooms.

"Sue is a pleasure to work with," O'Brien said. "She has a high-energy level and always finds a way for people to contribute in a way that is consistent with their skill set."

Continued on page 9



The Mary Jane Holmes room is visited by volunteers (l to r) Roberta Heseck, Sarah Hart and Maggie LaPierre. Holmes' books in archival sleeves are organized in the cabinet in the background. This is the first room completely recorded by PastPerfect software with every item measured and photographed. Photo by Dianne Hickerson.

The Emily L. Knapp Museum

Continued from page 1

Outreach to promote the museum and Brockport's history

A vital part of the restoration is the work of attracting people to visit this historic treasure. Compared to other community activities and places of interest, on a relative basis, attendance at the Emily Knapp Museum is low.

One way to get the public's attention is the Brockport Community Museum, a "Museum without Walls," which brings Brockport's history to the people. The project includes nine display cases placed in visible public locations. Most of the case contents are provided courtesy of the Emily L. Knapp Museum (some by private individuals). The displays potentially might attract viewers to the museum.

Savard created a variety of outreach events to increase appreciation of local history and potentially draw visitors to the museum. Celebrating the first phase of renovation, a Grand Opening was held in July, 2014 attended by 100 people. A Black History Month event was held in collaboration with The College at Brockport, featuring Brockport's important African American residents of the past; 170 attended.

There were presentations on the Moore Shafer Shoe Company and on Myron Holley's work on the Erie Canal. A Downton Abbey clothing display drew fans of the TV series. "Be an Historian for an Afternoon"

had kids looking in each museum room for an item she "planted" that did not belong in the 1800's.

Chet Fery, "The Bread Man," taught children the art of bread-making at the Seymour Library's Local History Room where there was a display from the Knapp Museum.

An increase in volunteers has enabled the museum to expand its open hours, April to October, to Sunday afternoons from 2 to 4 p.m. This adds to the original open hours: Tuesday 6 to 8 p.m. and Wednesday 2 to 4 p.m. and 6 to 8 p.m.

There is a prolific website created by Sarah Cedeño, Brockport Village Historian: www.brockportknappmuseum.org. She also created and monitors the museum's social media, a blog with about 65,000 hits and Facebook page with around 20,000 hits.

Savard's recently published book, **In His Words: Brockport 1858 - 1866 The Diary of Joseph A. Tozier**, brings one of the museum's treasures to the reading public.

"We hope to increase our community outreach this spring with more talks about Brockport's history," Savard said. "This year our board has set a goal of attracting young people to the museum to learn of Brockport's rich history. We are working to reinstitute the fourth-grade students



Sue Savard (on ladder) and Pat O'Brien shelve a book in the new eight by eight foot bookcase. It was designed by Jim Bolthouse and built by George Cedeño using glass doors from an original Seymour bookcase. It was carried up two flights of stairs in two sections and assembled in the War Room. Photo by Dianne Hickerson.

annual visit."

For her leadership and hands-on work in the restoration of the Emily L. Knapp Museum, Sue Savard will receive the Monika Andrews Creative Volunteer Leadership Award from the Brockport Village Board on February 6. See the story elsewhere in this issue.

Editor's Note: An article on the initial restoration work at the museum appeared in the April 27, 2014 **Suburban News and Hamlin-Clarkson Herald**. See web site: www.westsidenevsnny.com/features/2014-04-27/emily-l-knapp-museum/. The print version can be seen in Seymour Library's Local History Room.

HAMLIN HERALD CLARKSON

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The College at Brockport brings Lifelong Learning to the community

Two generations interact as senior citizens audit college classes

by Doug Hickerson

In the fall semester 2016, many students at the College at Brockport saw change in their routine classroom experience. With them were one or more senior citizens auditing their courses. The College's Lifelong Learning program includes a new initiative allowing seniors, 60 and over, to audit semester-long college classes.

Forty such community members were in 15 different classes in the fall. Because they do not receive college credit for a course, auditors attend the class free. There is no pressure to complete course assignments. These adult learners also receive a college ID card, library access, discounted parking rates, and a discount membership rate to the College's fitness center, the SERC.

The initiative provides mutual benefits to the traditional students (usually ages 18 to 22) and to the community seniors participating in a class.

"We embrace the fact that learning is a continuous process that doesn't stop at a certain age, or when a person retires," said Dr. Jason Dauenhauer, Associate Professor of Social Work and the new Director of Multigenerational Engagement. "Our students benefit from engaging in dialogue and building relationships with older community members. What better way to dispel negative aging stereotypes than to have seniors learning alongside college students and sharing ideas?"



Laura Amor, LCSW, mental health therapist, is one of many senior community members auditing a semester-long class on campus at the College at Brockport. She is seen here at her town of Clarkson office. Photo by Dianne Hickerson.

Lifelong Learning

The College at Brockport provides these continuing learning opportunities free of charge to senior members of its neighboring communities:

- Audit a semester-long college class (Fall semester 2017 courses and orientation TBA)
- Attend a Lifelong Learning Community Lecture (Coming March 8 and April 19, 2017)
- Attend Mornings with the Professors

See details at: stumpi.brockport.edu/learning
For more information about the program, contact the Division of Advancement at 396-2451

The generations:

A bridge and no gap

Carol Taillie, a reading teacher retired from the Rochester City School District, is taking Young Adult Literature both semesters. Asked about the proverbial "generation gap," Carol Taillie said, "I don't feel any gap. If anything, the young people seem very respectful and very nice." She continued, "In both classes one thing that impressed me most is how smart and well-spoken the kids are." She praises "the College's idea to make connections between generations." She feels the connection in a special way when walking in a hallway and students from her class will say, "Hi, how are you?"

Dr. Scott Valet, M.D., specializing in Allergy & Immunology, retired in December, 2015. As the only senior citizen in his two classes this semester, he said the students are "thoughtful and respectful." New to him since his college days is the small group activity – several students working together on an assignment. "We talk easily," he said. "There is no hesitation from them."

In more than 30 years of living in Brockport, he had essentially no interaction with college students. "It is good for the town's people to see what the college kids are like," he said about his new perspective.

Laura Amor, LCSW, a mental health therapist, was back on campus for the first time since earning her Bachelor's degree at the College in 1988 (Master's degree from the University of Buffalo in 1989).

"She took a class on Aging Issues in America in the fall. 'It was fascinating,'" she said about the class that had about 12 seniors auditing and 20 traditional students. "It's not just being there to learn, but sharing our experiences with the 20-year-olds. And, we could hear what life is like for them in college and planning a career. There was excellent interaction between the generations."

Interesting courses and new learning technology

The auditing students interviewed had different reasons for choosing the courses



An advisory board of local community members was formed to help guide the new initiative in Lifelong Learning (l-r): Standing - Ray Duncan, Rosie Kirk, Gordon Fox; Sitting - Richard Fenton, Joan Fenton, Jason Dauenhauer. Dauenhauer is Director of Multigenerational Engagement and leads the initiative. Richard "Bud" Meade is absent from the photo. Photo by Dianne Hickerson.

they took. And, they had varied reactions to the new learning technology that has developed since their college days.

Dr. Valet wanted courses that would be "intellectually stimulating" in his retirement. He is taking Music Appreciation and Physical Activity in Adulthood this semester. Compared to when he attended college, Dr. Valet finds today's technology an enjoyable aid to learning.

Carol Taillie has an eleven-year-old granddaughter and takes her courses in young adult literature to keep up on what reading is being offered to young people. "Also, I always enjoyed the young adult literature and I thought it would be good to stay with it," she said.

Dan Burns worked at Lakeside Hospital, the Beikrich Care Center, and the DelMonte Hotel Group in Rochester from which he retired. His two courses this semester are The American Military History and Propaganda and Persuasion. He has always been an American history buff, he said about the first course. And, "What could be better than knowing propaganda and persuasion at this particular time of our political life?" He is pleased he does not have to buy books, but the technology is a challenge. "I do not have a handle on technology," he said. "It takes me a bit longer to find the articles."

As a graduate from the College at Brockport many years ago, Burns welcomes a new change. "I have a favorable impression of the College starting to open up to the community," he said. "It's a good thing. The new president, Dr. Macpherson, and

Mayor Blackman have been instrumental in doing that."

In addition to her fall class, Laura Amor's interest in ancient civilizations led her to take Greek Archaeology this semester. "I love to learn," she said. "Anything that enriches me helps me as a person and therefore as a therapist."

Amor recalls her undergraduate days being assigned to write "a paper." Gripping an imaginary paper in front of her, she said, "You typed a paper and handed it in. Now, nothing is on paper anymore. Everything is written on Blackboard, part of the electronic system of the College. The professor reads and grades it online." She doesn't prefer the new medium over print; she just finds it "different." Although she audits the courses, she loves the challenge of doing the homework and taking the tests.

"Space does not allow for naming the professors teaching the interviewees' courses. But all these seniors had high praise generally for their professors' depth of knowledge and enthusiastic teaching.

Concluding thought

"I think the College has a lot to offer community members who want to engage with students and with various programming here on campus," Dr. Dauenhauer said. "More importantly, I think lifelong learners are an untapped source of knowledge and experience that will greatly enhance our College and community environment."

Brockport native and village historian speaks at Morgan-Manning House

"Brockport's history became wrapped up in my love of writing." Sarah Cedeño

by Doug Hickerson

Sarah Cedeño is the historian for the Village of Brockport. On March 9, she will speak on "The Seymour House, Another Amazing Landmark." The power point presentation starts at 7 p.m. in the Morgan-Manning House at 151 Main Street in Brockport. The free program is followed by refreshments, and is sponsored by the Western Monroe Historical Society.

"I do most of my work as village historian out of the Emily L. Knapp Museum" (in the Seymour House), Cedeño said about the subject of her presentation. "We have many files that include letters, wills and photos of the Seymour family, resident anecdotes, a history of the home compiled by Carol Hannan, and Helen Hasting's archives that chronicle the beginnings of the library and museum."

Childhood, college education, and writing career in Brockport

Cedeño's relationship to the Seymour House, first as the Seymour Library, and then as the Emily Knapp Museum, goes back to her childhood. She was born at Lakeside Hospital, raised on Spring Street, and graduated from Brockport High School.

The historic home has captured her fascination, beginning in grade school years, and later as a student at College at Brockport where she earned her B.A. and M.A. degrees in creative writing in 2006. "I have been in love with Brockport's history in general, but, it's deeply personal as the place where I have always lived," she said.

She was drawn to the Seymour Library in her youth. "It's the only place my mother would let me walk to," she said. As an avid reader, "I would go there and hang out." A visit to the museum with her fourth-grade class prompted her early interest in Brockport's history. Led by curator Emily Knapp, the class went to what is now the Mary Jane Holmes room. "All I remember is this spare rustic wooden desk that was Mary Jane Holmes' writing desk," she said. After talking with Emily for a few minutes, "It was enough for me to feel like I wanted to know more."

Not trained as a historian, Cedeño's interest in history "became wrapped up in my love of writing." She has been teaching English courses at The College at Brockport for ten years, including creative writing since 2010.

In 2012, beginning her Masters of Fine Arts degree at Goddard College, she became immersed in the anecdotal stories she found on the *Brockport Republic* (newspaper) data base. Based on factual news accounts, she would write fictional short stories for her MFA creative project.

Appreciating the "factual or traditional" history of Brockport, her creative focus was on these "smaller, more notable moments that would not normally fit into an overview of early Brockport history."

Discovering the Emily L. Knapp Museum

Writing about one story from the *Brockport Republic*, Cedeño felt "limited by the newspaper," and went to the Knapp Museum for something more tangible like a photo. She met Jackie Morris, the village historian and they went through the files. Writing a different short story every two weeks, "I kept going up for more and more research," Cedeño said.

On her many visits, she enjoyed the company of Morris and volunteers who were helping to maintain the museum: Rayleen Bucklin (Jackie's daughter), Dan Burns, and Doug Wolcott.



Sarah Cedeño. Photo by Dianne Hickerson.

The museum collection was overflowing and in disarray, from decades of accumulating contributions from the community, Cedeño said, calling it "Brockport's attic." Rather than being turned off by the disorder, "I loved it. Going up there was like a treasure hunt," she said. "I never stopped visiting, even if I didn't have something to research."

She started volunteering on her own, doing "little projects" like cleaning shelves, putting files in order, or putting sleeves on books. She could be there only two hours at a time during the open periods. She realized that such

piecemeal efforts at organizing were fruitless. And, even as she loved the mysteries and surprises of "Brockport's attic," she said, "It wasn't practical or professional. It needed organization and a data base."

She appreciates Sue Savard who started reorganizing the collection with a team of volunteers. With Sue's strategic plans and follow-through, Cedeño saw the progress that was not possible with one person's short-term efforts.

In 2014 Cedeño, Sue Savard, and a college student, Amy Pepe, began a grant project to file the museum's documents. Cedeño became a member of the museum's board, then became secretary, and is now vice chairperson. She was appointed village historian in August, 2015.

Coming full circle

Cedeño has immersed herself in the Emily L. Knapp Museum in both of its modes. She had a loving adventure exploring "Brockport's attic" for local stories. Now, she contributes to the museum's new era of systematic curation, including establishing its website (www.brockportknappmuseum.org), Facebook and blog.

It has been a fascinating journey from finishing the fourth-grade museum tour, "wanting to know more," to the present day as the village's historian. "Had I known when I was a little girl that I was going to be the village historian, I would have been the happiest kid in the world," she said. "It seemed totally unattainable. I would have thought 'No way would I be able to do that.'"

Sarah Cedeño lives in Brockport with her husband and two sons, eight and five years old. She teaches creative writing at Rochester's Writers & Books, as well as The College at Brockport. She is the editorial director of the literary magazine "Clockhouse." Her work has appeared in "The Baltimore Review," "New World Writing," "The Rumpus," "Hippocampus Magazine," and many other publications. She is at work on a collection of short fiction inspired by twentieth-century articles from the *Brockport Republic*.

[Regarding Jackie Morris, the village historian referred to in the story: On July 20, 2015, the Brockport Village Board signed a proclamation honoring Jackie Morris upon her retirement as the village historian after 14 years of service. The proclamation stated in part that the Village Board "does hereby commend and thank Jackie for such an outstanding record of long, faithful, and creative service to this community (and) bestows on her the honorable title of Village Historian emerita." Jackie Morris passed away in November, 2016.]

HAMLIN CLARKSON HERALD

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Helen Hastings and Sarah Hart

Separated by a century, two Brockport artists may impact the art world

by Doug Hickerson

Helen Hastings was a Brockport resident in the early 1900's. She and current Brockport resident, Sarah Hart, are two artists who trained in the same unique "Sight-Size" method used in classical oil painting for centuries. Their studies took place at a great distance from each other in the world. They were also far apart in time by nearly a century. In that interim, Sight-Size came close to vanishing when it was rejected by the art world due to modern influences at the turn of the 20th century.

Hart "met" Hastings recently through her art work which was discovered hidden in an attic trunk in Hastings' former home on State Street. With Hart's ongoing examining and explaining the work, the hidden Hastings treasure may become an enhancement to understanding the Sight-Size method, now revived.

The potential impact of Hastings' art work

Helen Hastings was a student at the Philadelphia School of Art from 1899-1903. Under William Merritt Chase and Cecelia Beaux, she studied and carefully practiced the Sight-Size method when it was flourishing.

Brockport resident Sarah Hart teaches classical painting in her Brockport studio and at Rochester's Memorial Art Gallery. She spent four years of post-graduate studies at the Charles Cecil Studios in Florence, Italy, in the early 1990's (see footnote). "My school was the last one in the world teaching Sight-Size portraiture," Hart said.

Their paths crossed, providentially it seems, when Hart recently was led to a trunk full of Hastings' art work as a student. The paintings, sketches and notes were stored by Hastings in the attic

of the Seymour home in Brockport. Hastings was a relative of the Seymours, one of Brockport's founding families. That attic in the Seymour home is part of the Brockport museum which Hastings founded, now named the Emily L. Knapp Museum.

"As soon as I saw the work, I knew she was trained in Sight-Size," Hart said about the trunk's contents. "When I studied in Florence, I had lamented the loss of this style of education. This was the last Sight-Size school of portraiture. I thought at the time. But, now we have found Helen and her thorough work that demonstrates the painting method." Hart notes that Sight-Size has re-emerged since she lamented its demise 20 years ago. "There are lots of schools in the U.S. teaching it now."

Hart is excited about what the Hastings collection can add to the teaching. "Helen was able to create what she was taught," Hart said, adding, "Anybody can be taught, but it does not mean you are good at it." Untouched for decades, the trunk contained 109 oil paintings of mostly portraits, cast paintings, figure paintings, still life, and figures clothed and nude. And, there also were many sketchbooks with critiques, sketches, and personal information stored in the trunk. "I had a hunch that I would cover the whole breadth of what we learn in this school," Hart said. "The Helen Hastings find is unique and quite possibly nationally important." On April 28, Hart will give a presentation on her findings (see sidebar).

Anticipation, discovery, and destiny

The discovery of the Hastings collection was the culmination of several events which, in retrospect, had destiny hidden in them. One was finding the trunk and a long delay in opening it until what seemed the right time. Another was a series of incidents which Hart mysteriously was finding pennies on the ground. A third was Hart's and Hastings' connection with teacher-artist Cecelia Beaux.

Discovery as "dessert"

The discovery of the trunk came during the restoration of the Emily Knapp Museum. Since 2013, Sue Savard and her team of volunteers have made remarkable progress in restoring the collection (see footnote).

Early in the project, Savard and others went into the attic of the home to sort and clear out a clutter of items. "There was a trunk in the attic that I did not bother to open because there were too many other things I felt were more important," Savard said. "As time went on, in early 2014, with more free time, I opened the trunk. On top were a couple of paintings on stretchers, along with what appeared to be old papers, old books, magazines, and envelopes." She closed the trunk without probing into it. A year later, she opened the trunk again. Still curious but waiting for the right time, she



Artist/teacher Sarah Hart stands with a portrait from the Helen Hastings collection discovered in the attic of the Emily L. Knapp Museum. Hart is seen in the Mary Jane Holmes room of the museum. Photo by Dianne Hickerson.

said, "I closed the lid, but I never forget the trunk, thinking to myself, 'That's going to be my dessert.'"

About four months ago, Savard delved into the trunk, finding the great treasures from Helen Hastings' experience as a student in the Philadelphia School of Art. She asked Hart if she would assess the collection and determine its significance in the art world.

With an intuition about the importance of the trunk's contents, Savard had waited over two years for the promising moment to discover the mysterious contents of the trunk. Indeed, it proved to be "dessert," a treat for Sue Savard, for the museum's supporters, for Sarah Hart, and potentially for the wider art world.

Pennies and a premonition

"It's amazing," Hart said. "I've had this strange experience for the past several months: I have been finding ridiculous amounts of pennies laying around." She asked her son if he knew of others finding pennies. "He said, 'That's weird. No one is finding pennies.'" Soon after, they went to Hart's in-law's home. Her son looked on the ground and picked up a penny. In advance of the Hastings discovery, Hart asked herself, "What is going on? Yesterday I found two in the parking lot. What am I going to find next? I feel like it's leading up to something."

The Cecelia Beaux bridge between artists and across a century

At Hart's first sight of the Hastings collection, she said, "The artwork reminded me of John Singer Sargent and Cecelia Beaux. They could have painted these."

Helen was a student of William Merritt Chase and Cecelia Beaux from 1899 to 1903. Hart's first look at the collection was correct

regarding the Beaux influence. "We have all Helen's diaries reporting critiques by Beaux and Chase," Hart said.

"Since the discovery of the collection, 'I have been educating myself again, reading this stack of books,'" Hart said, pointing to the books near her on a table during the interview. She spoke of wanting to revisit her "art heroes," after being inspired by finding the Hastings collection. Among her books was *Background with Figures*, Cecelia Beaux's autobiography which she had purchased seven years ago.

"Cecelia Beaux wrote her book (in 1930) because she knew this kind of education was already obsolete, but wanted to keep it merits alive," Hart continued. "Cecelia Beaux is a famous artist, right up there with Mary Cassatt. I will expand on her in my talk, so we can understand who she is."

"This whole connection is very serendipitous," Hart said. "I sense the importance of the coincidences that has brought us together. It is making me refocus on the Sight-Size method Helen and I both learned. I feel like right now my job is to convince Brockport of the significance of her work, and what a treasure we have."

See the companion article by Sarah Hart in this issue.

Footnotes - See *Suburban News* and *Hamilin-Clarkson Herald* for past articles:

- Hart's studies in Florence - <http://www.westsidenevsnny.com/news/2012-01-08/the-journeys-of-sarah-hart/>
- The Knapp Museum project - <http://www.westsidenevsnny.com/features/2012-02-05/the-emily-l-knapp-museum/>

Brockport's Mysterious Discovered Art Treasure

When: Friday, April 28 from 7 to 9 p.m.

Where: New York Room, Cooper Building, 350 New Campus Drive, The College at Brockport

*A presentation by Brockport artist Sarah Hart and village historian Sarah Cedeno

- Slide show of many of Helen Hastings' paintings
- Introduction to her teachers William Merritt Chase and Cecelia Beaux
- Historical perspective on "Sight-Size" teaching methods and why the find is unique
- "Sight-Size" portraiture demonstration
- Questions and Answers, refreshments served, free admission

Getting to know Sight-Size and the Boston School

by Sarah Hart

Helen Hastings used a rare and specialized portraiture method called Sight-Size. Sight-Size is a method to make paintings the same size as what is being observed. It was practiced by American John Singer Sargent.

We imagine the artist seated and stationary at an easel. However, with Sight-Size the artist places the easel beside the model and backs up (three to four meters), continuously walking back and forth between easel and appropriate distance to gain perspective. Ultimately the picture is rendered the same size as the model. Sight-Size, coupled with another skill called "how to see," is what makes Hastings' work extremely specialized.

Circa 1500, Da Vinci discovered the science of how the eye sees cast shadows, rather than outlines. Learning to see cast shadow and translating this observation to a painting was a pivotal moment in the art world. The Mona Lisa is one of the earliest examples since the ancient

Greeks and Apelles. Seeing cast shadow is taught with white plaster casts. The casts, without color, help train the eye. The Louvre had one of the finest cast rooms in the western world. In fact, the Memorial Art Gallery had a cast room when it opened in 1913.

Sight-Size and "learning to see" ultimately became associated with the ivory tower of elite artists of the academies of Europe, only later to be rejected by modernism. Photography and modern art took over. The ivory tower was toppled.

Today, the Sight-Size method survives thanks to The Boston Museum's dismissed teachers' pupil, Ives Gammell. Gammell persisted with this method, teaching and encouraging a new generation of painters. Presently, this group and style of painters are known as the "Boston School," one of its most famous members being William Merritt Chase, one of Helen Hastings' teachers. Charles Cecil was the only pupil of Ives Gammell to found a school. Today he runs the Charles Cecil Studios where I studied for four years in Florence, Italy.

Hamlin-Clarkson Herald and Suburban News West Edition - May 7, 2017 19

Historic Housewalk features six village landmark homes

A village-wide collaboration of organizations and businesses

by Doug Hickerson

"There are so many great houses in this village that so many of us walk by," Jason Dauenhauer said. "The houses have a rich history of people who lived there and how they contributed to this community." Dauenhauer is Secretary of Brockport's Historical Preservation Board (BHPB). He and Kevin McCarthy, Chair of that committee, are heading a project to enable people to see inside some of those historic homes they normally pass by. The "Historic Housewalk" is set for Sunday, June 11. Ticket-holders in small-groups will tour six village landmark homes.

The Housewalk home tours run from 1 to 4 p.m., preceded by free tours of the Emily L. Knapp Museum at 11 a.m. until 2 p.m. Free tours of the Morgan-Manning House begin at 12 until 4 p.m. At 4 p.m. there will be a beer and wine-tasting reception with light hors d'oeuvres at the Morgan-Manning House carriage house for ticket holders.

Tickets for the Housewalk tours cost \$15 per person. There are only 100 tickets available in order to keep tour groups small. Funds raised from ticket sales will go towards continued preservation efforts by the Western Monroe Historical Society which maintains the Morgan-Manning House. Tour details and ticket sales information will be available in May at brockportny.org (also, see side bar).

The six tour houses are among 80 village houses so far designated as village landmarks. The Brockport Historical Preservation Board is responsible for identifying the



306 Main Street is a prime example of a well-preserved 1886 home of Italianate style with some very special features. It has two curved bay windows strategically placed to capture sunrises and sunsets. The most striking feature of the interior of the house is the large array of hand-painted, ornamental and pictorial murals by David Bruce, a well-known artist who died in 1905. Provided photo.

Village's significant historic and architectural resources, and initiating the designation process of Village landmarks and historic districts. The Board also reviews applications for proposed exterior changes to buildings that are village landmarks or in Village historic districts.

A Village landmark is an officially designated property/building that meets one or more of the criteria which includes possessing special historic importance to the village, such as identifying with an important person or event; exhibiting distinguishing characteristics of an architectural style or architect; and having a unique location of physical character that represents a familiar visual feature of the village.

The Housewalk event is a major collaboration among various institutions and businesses across the community. The Western Monroe Historical Society and Emily Knapp Museum providing museum tours; Walk! Bike! Brockport! Action Group giving volunteer support; The College at Brockport providing all marketing communications such as posters, tickets and maps.

The post-tour beer and wine tasting is provided by Stoneyard Brewing and Mahan's Discount Liquor & Wine. The village's BHPB is organizing the event with college-community leadership represented in Jason Danenhauer, a College professor and village resident, and Kevin McCarthy, a resident and landlord in the village.

"The idea is 'Let's celebrate Brockport's history. Let's learn about some of these great old houses,'" Danenhauer said about the House Walk. "And, it's a great bonus for the community if people are encouraged to consider moving to the village or if villagers become interested in applying for landmark status of their homes."

House Walk schedule:

- 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. - Emily Knapp Museum (49 State Street) open for tours.*
- 12 to 4 p.m. - Morgan Manning House, 151 Main Street, open for tours.*
- *Free/open to the public (no ticket purchase required).
- 1 to 4 p.m. - Historic House Walk featuring six village homes.
- 4 to 5:30 p.m. - Beer and wine-tasting reception at the Morgan-Manning Carriage House with light hors d'oeuvres. For ticket holders only.

Six houses on the walk:

40 College Street, 45 State Street, 61 Monroe Avenue, 76 Adams Street, 47 Park Avenue and 306 Main Street.

Tickets available:

Village of Brockport Office, 49 State Street; Morgan-Manning House, 151 Main Street; The College at Brockport Advancement Office (third floor Allen Building); Red Bird Cafe & Gift Shop, 25 Main Street.

West Edition

Suburban News

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Charlie Cowling receives the SUNY Chancellor's Award for Excellence in Librarianship

by Doug Hickerson

In April, Charlie Cowling gave a presentation at Morgan-Manning House on William Seymour and Dayton Morgan. Anyone slightly familiar with Brockport's history knows the Seymours and Morgans were distinguished founding families of the village. But Cowling got up close and personal about William and Dayton, drawing out their uniquely differing personalities and skills, yet their compatible, productive relationship.

Seymour, the inventor of his version of the mechanical reaper, and businessman Morgan joined to shape big business in Brockport. It was an international business, from the 1840's to the '80's, with a factory on what is now "Harvester Park," which used the machines around the country as well as to Europe.

With college and village buildings bearing the Seymour and Morgan names, these tributes to great Brockport families tend to fade into the background; we are unaware of the real human side of specific family members. Who knew that these two gentlemen were so creative, enterprising and productive to make our fair village an industrial center for the world?

These are the kinds of historical stories Charlie Cowling loves to pursue in his role as archivist at the College at Brockport Drake Memorial Library Rose Archives (see footnote). Besides being a reference librarian, he oversees the archives for The College and the greater Brockport region.

Archives research more demanding than reference librarian role

"Interesting, I have been a reference librarian for many years," Cowling said, "and if I spend more than five minutes with a student at a reference desk, it is a long time." He estimates he spends about three-quarters of his time as college archivist and one-quarter as librarian.

An inquiry pursued in the archives demands much more of Cowling's time and skill. "Down here," he said in the on-site interview, "if someone wants to know if their great grandmother went here in the 1890's, I have one book with a list of graduates." The search may not end there if she did not graduate. "I may have to surf through old handwritten ledger books, and I'll do that, and it may take me a few hours," Cowling said. "It is just part of the connection we have with people. I am happy to do it."

"... A bright and capable professional, and a gentleman."

Allan Berry



Charlie Cowling peruses a volume from his Drake Memorial Library archives. The archives contain materials about The College at Brockport since its inception in 1835 to the present day. It also includes a local history collection covering the wider Brockport area. Cowling spends about one-quarter of his time as a College librarian and three-quarters as The College's archivist. Photo by Dianne Hickerson.

The kinds and numbers of requests

Some of the variety of requests Cowling has recently received include: A photo of the women's basketball team 2007-2008 for a basketball dinner; history of the Brockport Methodist Church clock tower anticipating a renovation project; and, history of the Capen Hose Fire House for a historic panel to be placed by the Brockport Community Museum.

Cowling says one of the old documents have "taken on a new life, as we have digitalized them and placed them in the 'Digital Commons' for immediate electronic access." For example, A.B. Ellwell, an 1899 graduate of Brockport Normal School, became a teacher and had a house painting business.

"He came to be quite an active local historian, writing a column series in the 1950's for the "Brockport Republic" newspaper," Cowling said. "The columns were made into a book, *History of Brockport with Vicinity Happenings, 1828-1956*, which we scanned and it's online, people can download it and search through it," Cowling said.

In fact, the book was the source for his

information on the Methodist Church clock tower, and for the personal backgrounds of William Seymour and Dayton Morgan.

Cowling says he receives over 200 inquiries a year. Referring to about 25 of those who come in person, "It's not very walk-in friendly, as they try to find their way down here. But, I am happy to have people come here if they want to schedule something." He keeps a log of inquiries (see foot note).

The most efficient and popular access to the archives is by phone or email. With that kind of inquiry, "I can access a newspaper, for example, and email an article back to them," Cowling said. Some archive research is extensive, such as the clock tower inquiry. "I spent a couple of hours looking for the information, downloading, scanning and assembling it so I could send it to the requester."

Personal accolades and the Chancellor's "Amen"

Cowling has high regard for local organizations and individuals who preserve and promote area history, citing, for example:

"... Passionate about his job and the history of the college."
Sue Savard

Brockport Community Museum, Emily L. Knapp Museum, Morgan-Manning House, Clarkson Historical Society, and the work of Village Historian Sarah Cedeno and Village Historian emeritus, Bill Andrews. He sees his archives as a resource for their efforts.

"I know how to find and pull together information people may not be aware of or have access to," he said. He adds that good technology helps. "I have all the scanners, the data bases the College subscribes to, and the Digital Commons."

Cowling's services are gratefully received by those guardians of local history he named. One of them, Bill Andrews, said, "Charlie and his archives have been a great resource for me in my history endeavors. He is always cheerfully accommodating. I have to restrain myself from abusing his time."

Allan Berry, Chair of the Brockport Community Museum, said, "Charlie is such a gem and a wonderful example of how positively The College at Brockport impacts the community at large. He is a member of the Brockport Community Museum and of the Western Monroe Historical Society. He is ever willing to assist these and other organizations, as well as individuals, who are exploring the history of the community, the college, or even their family. In addition to being a bright and capable professional, I must add that Charlie Cowling is a gentleman."

From Sue Savard, who heads the Emily L. Knapp Museum: "Charlie is passionate about his job and the history of the college. He is always willing to share his knowledge and is helpful with technical assistance. He never seems to be in a hurry, although I know he's extremely busy. I love his presentation style. He's well prepared, but has a casual, unhurried, humorous mannerism. It's like listening to a good story teller, and I never want the story to end."

These personal praises, Charlie Cowling has received official SUNY recognition for his professionalism, which he modestly failed to disclose when interviewed. Several weeks after the interview, he was honored with The Chancellor's Award for Excellence in Librarianship, along with other Chancellor's Award winners at The College's Annual Employee Recognition Dinner on May 18.

Footnotes

Rose Archives (<https://www.brockport.edu/about/archives/>).
Log of inquiries <http://noteforarchives.blogspot.com/>.

Dr. Tom Bowdler retires from dentistry after 44 years in Brockport

by Doug Hickerson

The July 4 weekend this year marked the 50th anniversary of Tom Bowdler's first visit to this area from his New Jersey home. He came to see his girlfriend, Jane Maxon, at her home in Holley. She was a freshman and he was a sophomore at Heidelberg College in Ohio where they met as marching band members. Tom reflects, "If you had told me that day that I would end up living here, I would have said you're out of your mind, because I would never come to this hick town for all the money in the world."

The ensuing years brought their wedding in Holley in 1970, two sons and a granddaughter, a gratifying dental career in Brockport, the joy of several hobbies, and service to the community he now loves. After 44 years in dentistry, Tom retired on July 6. And, Jane retired in June from a successful career teaching math at Brockport High School.

Places and people in his career

Initially, the newlyweds lived in New Jersey where Tom attended dental school. In 1971, during his senior year, Tom visited Brockport to "walk around town and talk to dentists about what it's like to be a dentist here." But, it was a Wednesday afternoon and all dentists' offices were closed except Dr. Harold Craw's at 135 South Main. Dr. Craw invited Tom to dinner at his home that night. "We hit it off," Tom said, and months later he accepted Dr. Craw's invitation to join his practice.

He worked with Dr. Craw for two years and was offered a partnership. He respectfully declined and bought a relocating dentist's practice in 1974, moving to the Lakeside Hospital professional building. Five years later, he bought a Victorian home at 33 West Avenue and converted it to professional space - preserving the historic exterior and maintaining a homey interior. He was there 35 years until joining Dr. Maxwell Thane's practice in 2014 at 64 North Main Street.

Asked to reflect on his career, Tom said, "If I have been successful it's been in developing relationships with people and taking care of people." And about enduring relationships, he added, "I have had some four-generation families as patients." Among his patients, Tom was well-known for being available on his home phone for painful emergencies and treating them at his closed office during evenings, weekends and holidays.

High professional standards

In an interview, Tom reflected on "the marvelous changes in the profession, including materials and technology" during his 44 years in practice. Moving in with Dr. Thane provided the latest state-of-the-art equipment. "Toward the end of my career, with the knowledge, technology, and material changes, I was able to do a lot better job for my patients than when my career was in its infancy."

"Doing a better job" was also Tom's reason for pursuing continuing education to keep up with the latest procedures and standards in general dentistry. In 1987 he became a Fellow in the Academy of General Dentistry and in 1990 a Master. "The Academy affirms you cannot be clinically competent as a practitioner unless you engage in continuing education," Tom said.

New York State requires continuing education for licensure, but The Academy has higher standards. The Fellowship certification requires 1,000 hours of continuing education. The Mastership requires 600 hours beyond that in all disciplines of dentistry, and hands-on classes. "It's very rigorous," Tom said, adding that his continuing education hours have been well above the minimum standards.

The hobbyist

With devotion to his practice, Tom still found time for the diverse hobbies he continues to enjoy: flying his 1967 Cessna 150 single engine plane, building a full-scale replica of an historic plane, building model train layouts, crafting

wooden toys, playing the tuba, and touring and visiting car shows in his 1923 Ford hot rod roadster. He calls the car "a pre-retirement present," which he purchased in December. (See photo)

Tom received his pilot's license in 1989 and flies his Cessna for fun. He and a friend are building a replica of a 1929 Pietyenpol Air Camper vintage two-seat plane, which he plans to pilot next year.

Tom is deeply engaged with his G-gauge model train hobby. He has built three different portable track layouts that break down into eight pieces to take to train shows.

Tom says, "Whatever I am interested in, the best way to enjoy it is to share it with other people." He has displayed his trains at events in Canada, and in the Brockport-Rochester community including the December RIT train show. "They (RIT) always give me 'pride of place' in the middle, running trains for two days," Tom said.

Tom's trains are a niche in the model train world with "boiling water in the locomotive to make it run like the real ones; no electricity is involved," he said. He is about to craft his own steam engine. Experienced in crafting wooden toys, Tom now wants to learn how to machine metal and build his own locomotive boiler.

Serving the community

Tom has been a member of the Experimental Aircraft Association (EAA), Chapter 44, for 35 years. He has served as chapter President and was involved in the planning and building of the Sports Aviation Center at Ledgedale Airport, which was completed in 2011. The Center was built for community family activities, including programs for youth like "Young Eagles" that provide plane rides and education about aviation. Tom enjoys flying young people in the Young Eagles program.

Tom is an Eagle Scout as are both of his sons. He was a scout leader for many years, first as chairman of the Monroe County Dental Society Exploring Careers program, followed by many leadership roles in Brockport troops 85 and 86. He continues to counsel scouts for merit badges including the Aviation badge through a three day "Aero-camp" at the airport.

Tom played the tuba in the Brockport Symphony Orchestra under James Walker, and served on the symphony board during that time. He also was a member and chair of the local YMCA board and has been active in many roles at First Presbyterian Church in Brockport.

The future and final reflections

Tom and Jane look forward to more travel and adventure. Their goal is to visit all of the U.S. national parks. They have visited 32 so far with 27 to go. There will be more frequent visits to Maryland where his son, Jeff, and his wife recently had a baby girl. And, there will be more visits with son Greg in Florida.

"I was this brah young kid who moved here from New Jersey," Tom said about Brockport being initially a culture shock. "I have had three opportunities in the last year to go back to my home area, and you couldn't get me back there for anything. It is wonderful here in Brockport." And, there is a storybook ending: Half a century after that first romantic visit with Jane, they are living in Jane's family home in Holley.



Dr. Tom Bowdler.
Photo by Dianne Hickerson.



After 44 years of practicing dentistry, Dr. Tom Bowdler has many ways to enjoy his retirement; some are found in this photo. In the far background is the Sports Aviation Center, which he helped to plan and build at Ledgedale Airport. In the near background is his 1967 Cessna 150. He is leaning against his "pre-retirement present" to himself: a custom-made 1923 Ford hot rod roadster with a Chevrolet V-8 Engine, GM automatic transmission and Ford Mustang radiator. "I told everyone that I would get a car that was fast, loud and stupid," Tom said. "And, it is all of those things." Photo by Dianne Hickerson.