

DECEMBER 2019

GCU



MAGAZINE

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Basil M. Wahal,
Managing Editor

On Our Cover: Remember the gifts and beautiful decorations are not the reason for the season—the birth of Our Lord & Savior Jesus Christ is! Christ is Born! Glorify Him!

We wish all our members a Blessed & Merry Christmas and a Happy & Healthy New Year.

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George N. Juba
President
CEO

Holiday Memories

Although I continue to become more distinguished each year (older), I have become lesser of a fan of the winter season. However, this was not always the case! I recall in my youth how my Mom bundled up my brother and me when the temperatures were in the single digits or below and we just couldn't wait to get outside, especially when there was an abundance of snow. My Mom was "the best" in layering clothing from the first level of thermal underwear (Long Johns), to the jeans, sweaters, scarfs, stocking caps, wool stockings (at least two pair), a heavy outer jacket to the infamous black rubber boots with the buckles! I will never forget how she would wrap my jeans around my ankle and tuck my legs inside the stockings for snow proofing. I could never seem to duplicate the process!

The Christmas Season was always a special time of the year I looked forward to, as she also had such a special touch for each of the holidays! My Mom seemed to step up her "game" even more at Christmas time. From the sending of Christmas cards to family members and friends, the beautifully wrapped gifts, her festive decorating of our home, to the Christmas Eve and Christmas Day dinners that she prepared. Moms are certainly special and my brother, my Dad and I were most blessed to have a Mom and wife that brought perfection to all that she did! I truly miss her each and every day.

I am so grateful to my Dad as well, his Christmas preparation duties were relegated to decorating the exterior of

our home, setting up the platform for our miniature railroad trains and decorating the Christmas tree. He really enjoyed the holidays as well. My brother and I were most blessed and fortunate to have such wonderful parents. Such great memories to be cherished! So, I do hope that you were blessed to have had a similar experience and have very fond memories of your parents as well!

In reality, there are so many individuals around the world that are not as fortunate. The holiday season is a time to remember these individuals and to provide some type of joy and hope to their life. With all the hustle and bustle of the Christmas Season, please take the time to support the less fortunate whether you volunteer at a soup kitchen, participate in one or more of the many programs sponsored by charitable organizations this time of year or just even donating to Salvation Army's Red Kettle Campaign. I currently serve on the Salvation Army's Beaver County Advisory Board here in Western Pennsylvania and can vouch for the wonderful work this organization does for the needy, not only at Christmas time but throughout the year.

The GCU's fraternal mission is ongoing as well! We extend our appreciation and gratitude to the officers and members of our lodges and districts for organizing the many fundraising, volunteer efforts and social events in support of our churches, communities and membership.

We encourage all of our membership to participate in the various fraternal programs offered by the GCU. Please note that you can participate directly in

many of the GCU's fraternal programs offered in support of your causes that are near and dear to your heart. Please contact the Fraternal/Communications Department or visit the GCU's website – www.GCUusa.com – for more information. Presented are the various programs that center around the GCU's purpose of "Investing in the Goodness of Community"!

Give

Matching Funds

- ✦ Community
- ✦ Church
- ✦ Disaster Relief

Scholarships

- ✦ National (1 Year)
- ✦ Academic Performance (4 Yrs.)
- ✦ Athletic
- ✦ Jr. Bowling

GoGive!—Fund Raising Seed Money

GoGive! Direct—New in 2020

Helping Hands—Environmental Service

Holiday Meals for Needy Families

**St. Nicholas Charity Dinner
Benefit for Byzantine Seminary**

Affinity Programs

GCU Foundation for Charitable Giving

Compete

GCU Sponsors

Art & Photo Contests

National Bowling Tournament

Spring Golf Tournament

National Golf Tournament

Unite

Social Activities

Amusement Park Discounts & Outings

Professional Sports Events

Theatre Outings

Access to Seven Oaks Country Club

CONTINUED

We extend our congratulations to Agnes Rohrbach, a member of GHRL-Hazleton, PA for being selected as the GCU's 2019 Fraternalist of the Year. An article appears on the next page detailing Agnes's involvement in her lodge, church and other community related activities.

I will be continuing to schedule meetings amongst our lodges and districts to present once again the regional lodge concept for consideration. I recently attended the annual meeting of District 11 that was hosted by Lodge 860 based at St. Nicholas Byzantine Catholic Church located in Clinton Township, Michigan. My thank you and appreciation to the President Gary Mozuras, the officers of District 11 and pastor of St. Nicholas Reverend Joseph Repko for the hospitality extended to me and Director Mike Karaffa during our visit. My congratulations to all the members of District 11 for sponsoring a wide array of volunteer, fundraising and social activities throughout the year, in support of the GCU's fraternal mission.

In addition to our current lodge structure, the GCU is in the process of initiating a test market for a state lodge system in the areas of Northeastern Pennsylvania, Northern New Jersey and New York. One of the first steps is the hiring of a Regional Fraternal Coordinator as we are currently in the process of accepting resumes. An overview and

responsibilities associated with this position is located below as we invite all qualified candidates to apply.

Financially the GCU continues to perform well as we extend to our members and agents our sincere appreciation and thank you for placing your and your client's insurance and annuity business with our Society. As of September 30th, the GCU total admitted assets stand at \$ 2.035 billion with net income of \$14.2 million after dividends and capital losses. I invite you to review the GCU's third quarter financial statement presented by our Chief Financial Officer, Tim Demetres. Please note the prior period surplus adjustment that was recorded in the third quarter that increased reserves and decreased surplus that will provide for increased reserves for possible future annuity life settlements.

In closing, I extend to you and your



GCU Director Dorothy Ann Foran, GHRL President Deacon Larry Foran, Agnes Rohrbach and GCU Director, Vice Chariman and Secretary of the Board George Kofel.

family a most joyous Christmas Holiday Season. Again, please remember the less fortunate as we celebrate the birth of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, for we are all God's children and we all deserve joy during such a joyous occasion! My best wishes also for a most healthy, safe and prosperous New Year!

**MERRY CHRISTMAS!
CHRISTOS RAZDAJETSJA!
CHRIST IS BORN!**

George



GCU President/CEO George N. Juba (center) presenting Red Cross representatives Christine Paiano and William Wilhelm a \$2,643.33 check from donations and Matching Funds collected for GCU Hurricane Relief. Salvation Army and Catholic Charities also received checks in the exact same amount for their efforts following Hurricane Dorian.

Regional Fraternal Coordinator

Position Overview—This newly created position requires candidate to reside in the Northeastern Pennsylvania or Northern New Jersey area and have a minimum two years planning events in multiple locales. The successful candidate must have the ability to work and communicate well with people and possess good Social Media skills. The Fraternal Coordinator is responsible to work with current organization officers in planning their events as well as to plan social & volunteer activities to engage members that are not currently active within the organization.

Responsibilities—Coordinate social, volunteer or fundraising activities quarterly throughout Eastern Pennsylvania, Eastern New York and New Jersey for members not active in established GCU Lodges as well as regional activities for all GCU members in the area.

Work with onsite GCU graphics department to develop attractive eblasts and flyers to invite members to the events.

Establish good communication with current lodge officers to assist with their planning and execution of sponsored events.

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AGNES ROHRBACH

GCU 2019 Fraternalist of the Year



The Fraternalist of the Year

award recognizes an individual within GCU who is the embodiment of fraternalism. Someone who lives a life of service through their local lodge, church, and community.

After consideration of the numerous candidates submitted to the committee, Agnes Rohrbach of Greater Hazleton Regional Lodge (GHRL) was chosen the 2019 GCU Fraternalist of the Year. She has been a devoted lodge officer and previously a district officer of the former District 6. She also volunteers time to her parish and community.

Agnes is a member of Queen of Heaven Parish in Hazleton, PA. She was a past president of the Christian Women's Society and is also a member of the Altar-Rosary Society at St. John B.C. Church.

Agnes joined the GCU in 1992 and became a bowler for the GCU 89er's. She was elected secretary of the league in 1995 and continues to bowl in the league and serve as league secretary-treasurer. In 1998 she was elected secretary of the former District 6. She presently is the



Presentation to St. John's Rosary Society—Fr. Jerome Wolbert, OFM, Agnes Rohrbach and Mary Letchko.

secretary, athletic director and activities director of GHRL. She has also served as a delegate to various GCU National Conventions where she served on the balloting committee.

Each year Agnes organizes the GHRL Jr. Bowling Tournament, the No-Tap Bowling Tournament, the annual Holupki Open Golf Tournament and frequently organizes bus trips to shows in Lancaster, PA & New Jersey and to casinos for lodge members and guests.

When the GHRL lodge was formed from the former District 6, Agnes helped to coordinate a smooth transition from the former independent lodges. The success of the GHRL is largely due to her efforts, a fact most lodge members can attest to.

Agnes also assists each year with the Helping Hands Day at Holy Annunciation Monastery, the Cold Hands - Warm Hearts clothing drive, the Big Brothers Big Sisters fund raiser bowling tournament, coordinates the Altar Rosary Society at St. John's B.C. Church and sells carnations on Mother's Day for a Human Rights organization. She annually organizes a hayride for children which includes not only lodge members but any of the public in general who may be interested in this activity. In the community she assists the Helping Hands Society of the Hazleton Area, Meals on Wheels, Catholic Social Services and Brandon's Forever Home—a place for children needing social and physical support. This year she organized a fund raiser for a family who lost their home to a fire and was instrumental in creating a GCU GoGive! campaign for a woman who was terribly injured in an automobile accident.

In his nomination GHRL President Deacon Larry Foran stated, "Agnes is



Meals on Wheels Presentation—Meals on Wheels Administrator Anita Masteller and Agnes Rohrbach.

always ready when called upon to assist in organizing any project for community service. She is indeed a "people person" who enjoys being instrumental in community service. Agnes works to get people involved with various activities and plans our lodge fraternal activities for each year. Whenever there is a need or something to be done to assist others, Agnes always offers her most capable help. She is a selfless person who will always donate her time and talents for others. In this respect, she can always be counted on."

Agnes received a plaque from GCU Vice Chairman of the Board George Kofel. She chose to split her \$500.00 award to three organizations: St. John's Rosary Society, Hazleton Meals on Wheels and Queen of Heaven Parish. Congratulations Agnes on a lifetime of serving and caring for others.

Nomination forms for the 2020 GCU Fraternalist of the Year will be available for completion on the GCU website in January.

Third Quarter 2019 Financials



Tim Demetres
Chief Financial Officer

GCU is committed to the goodness of community and providing members with life insurance protection and retirement benefit products. Notwithstanding the strength in the U.S. economy, we continue to see low interest rates from a slow-down in global growth and trade wars with China. After three consecutive rate cuts by the Fed, we are hopeful the yield curve and, therefore, our crediting rates will improve in the not too distant future. Highlights of the third quarter ended September 30, 2019 are as follows:

Net Income after realized gains (losses) was \$14.2 million in 2019 compared to \$17.2 million in 2018. In 2019, we realized capital losses of \$4.0 million on sales of certain energy related securities. In 2018, we recognized capital losses of \$1.9 million resulting in a year-over-year change of (\$2.1) million. The net change in Surplus was a decrease of \$2.3 million to \$152.0 million compared to \$154.3 million at year-end 2018. In the third quarter we recorded a prior period adjustment of \$17.1 million to increase annuity reserves for potential annuitizations/settlements. Although most of our annuity holders do not settle or annuitize their contracts, annuity reserves must be established as if they do.

Assets grew to \$2.035 billion, an increase of \$143.9 million or 7.6% from \$1.891 billion at year end 2018. The increase is attributed to continued positive operating cash flows from life and annuity sales, investment earnings and controlled spending.

Liabilities grew by \$146.2 million to \$1.883 billion at September 30, 2019 compared to \$1.736 billion as of December

31, 2018. This increase is due primarily to increased annuity reserves of \$123.2 million from net new deposits; an increase of \$1.5 million for life reserves; and an increase of \$21.3 million for potential annuitization settlements.

Total Income increased \$25.4 million or 10.4% to \$270.1 million from \$244.7 million in 2018. Revenue from life and annuity premiums increased by \$17.7 million from the prior year. This increase is mostly driven by the \$16.6 million increase in annuity premiums. Net investment income increased \$8.0 million from growth in invested assets.

Operating expenses, before the change in reserves, increased \$16.5 million or 14.5% for the nine months of 2019 and totaled \$129.9 million compared to \$113.4 million in 2018. The increase is primarily due to higher annuity benefits paid and exchanges of \$17.3 million offset by a \$1.3 million decrease in pension expense from retirements in 2018. General insurance expenses increased modestly by \$268 thousand from increased fraternal giving, technology improvements and business development activities.

The Change in Reserves increased \$9.8 million for the nine months and totaled \$121.8 million compared to \$112.0 million in 2018. Reserve changes are a function of premium deposits, mortality & settlement benefits, payment of death & annuity benefits and interest accumulation.

Financial strength and stability are foundational pillars of GCU. After adjusting Surplus by \$17.1 million for the prior year's impact of providing additional annuity settlement reserves, Surplus now stands at \$152.0 million compared to 2018 year-end surplus of \$154.3 million for a net decrease of \$2.3 million. The prior period adjustment was mostly offset

Summary of Financial Statistics

<i>(000's omitted)</i>	9/30/19	9/30/18	Change
Total Income	\$ 270,104	\$ 244,676	\$ 25,428
Total Expenses	251,685	225,358	26,327
Net Income (Loss)	14,181	17,191	(3,010)
<i>(000's omitted)</i>	9/30/19	12/31/18	Change
Assets	2,034,790	1,890,844	143,946
Asset Valuation Reserve	17,122	19,311	(2,189)
Interest Maintenance Reserve	22,558	22,583	(25)
Surplus (Net Worth)	152,009	154,269	(2,260)
Total Adjusted Capital (TAC)	169,281	173,730	(4,449)
Normal Solvency Ratio	108.1%	108.9%	-0.8%
Solv. Ratio by Total Adj. Capital	109.1%	110.1%	-1.0%

Change in Surplus

<i>(000's omitted)</i>	
Beginning Surplus-12/31/18	\$154,269
Net Income/(loss)	14,181
Prior Period Adjustment	(17,083)
Change in Unrealized Gain/(Loss)	(218)
GCU Holding Company & Other	(846)
Changes in Non-Admitted Assets	(484)
Changes in Asset Valuation Reserve	2,189
Net Change in Surplus	(2,260)
Ending Surplus-9/30/19	\$152,009

by \$14.2 million in net income.

Total surplus is the amount we set aside for unexpected losses from operations and financial protection against business volatility. Total Adjusted Capital decreased \$4.5 million to \$169.3 million September 30, 2019. The solvency ratios based on total adjusted capital at September 30, 2019 and Decem-

ber 31, 2018 are 109.12% and 110.1%, respectively. These ratios continue to reflect a strong and stable balance sheet.

Falling leaves and cooling temperatures bring holiday cheer. Wishing everyone a Merry Christmas and a wonderful holiday season!

Tim

INCOME STATEMENTS

Nine Months 2019 vs. 2018

INCOME (000's omitted)	9/30/2019	9/30/2018	Change
Life Premium	\$ 2,473	\$ 1,413	\$ 1,059
Annuity Premium	174,010	157,807	16,203
Annuity Exchanges	13,343	12,938	405
Accident & Health	537	510	27
Sub Total	190,363	172,668	17,695
Net Investment Income	75,148	67,116	8,033
Amort. of Int. Maint. Resrv.	2,121	2,396	(276)
Commission-Reinsurance	1,931	2,076	(145)
Other	541	419	121
Total Income	\$270,104	\$244,676	\$25,428

EXPENSES

Death Benefits	\$ 1,686	\$ 1,963	\$ (277)
Annuity Benefits Paid	99,747	82,820	16,926
Annuity Exchanges	13,343	12,938	405
Surrender Benefits	653	731	(78)
Accident & Health Benefits Pd.	499	450	50
Commissions	7,805	7,451	354
General Insurance Exp	5,677	5,409	268
Ins., Taxes, Licenses and Fees	378	243	135
Pension Expense	56	1,339	(1,283)
Int. Contract & Deposit Accts.	54	57	(2)
Sub-Total	\$ 129,896	\$ 113,400	\$ 16,497
Increase in Reserves	121,789	111,958	9,830
Total Expenses	\$251,685	\$225,358	\$26,327
Net Gain/Loss Before Refunds	18,419	19,318	(899)
Refunds to Members	206	203	3
Net Gain/Loss After Refunds	18,213	19,115	(902)
Net Capital Gains (Losses)	(4,032)	(1,924)	(2,108)
Net Income/Loss	\$ 14,181	\$ 17,191	\$(3,010)

BALANCE SHEETS

September 30, 2019 vs. December 31, 2018

ASSETS (000's omitted)	9/30/2019	12/31/2018	Change
Bonds	\$1,900,426	\$ 1,762,021	\$138,405
Preferred Stocks	43,622	49,821	\$(6,199)
Common Stocks	15,737	13,990	\$1,747
Alternative Investments	20,129	15,908	
Cash/Short Term Invest.	21,306	18,882	\$2,424
Mortgages	5,091	4,770	\$321
Certificate Loans	571	648	\$(77)
Real Estate	483	490	(7)
Inv. Income Due & Accrued	26,621	23,960	2,661
Other	805	355	450
Total Assets	\$2,034,791	\$1,890,844	\$143,947

Percentage Change—7.6%

LIABILITIES

Life Reserves	\$ 71,485	\$ 70,023	\$ 1,462
Annuity Reserves	1,750,568	1,606,084	144,484
Accident & Health Reserves	195	200	(5)
Employee Pension Liability	6,769	6,311	458
Convention Reserve	279	279	0
Adv. Prem. & Fut. Ref. Resrvs.	358	367	(9)
Pending Investment Trades	10,286	7,415	2,871
Accounts Payable	906	985	(79)
Refund Accumulations	2,254	3,018	(764)
Asset Valuation Reserve-AVR	17,122	19,311	(2,189)
Interest Maint. Reserve-IMR	22,558	22,583	(25)
Total Liabilities	\$1,882,780	\$1,736,576	\$146,204
Surplus Fund	152,009	154,269	(2,260)
Total Liabilities & Surplus	\$2,034,789	\$1,890,844	\$143,945
Normal Solvency	108.1%	108.9%	
Solvency Ratio*	109.1%	110.1%	

*Adds AVR + 1/2 of dividend liability to surplus.

Financial information is unaudited and presented on the statutory basis of accounting.

Totals may vary slightly due to rounding.



Very Rev.
Richard I. Lambert
GCU Spiritual Advisor

Thanksgiving Everyday

Although this is being written before Thanksgiving, by the time you read this Thanksgiving will hopefully be a warm and happy memory, rather than a sad and miserable one in case the day did not go according to your hopes. If the latter was the case for you take heart, because every day should be Thanksgiving Day!

Time should be spent in retrospect and there should be time to pray. Thank the Lord for blessings sweet, for His great loving care that overshadows every day; and in that little prayer you should include your thankfulness for family and friends so true, for this great land in which we dwell, for skies so clear and blue, for little birds bursting with song, for babies sweet and small; for blessings such as these we should be thankful for them all, and even more!

Thanksgiving Day comes but once a year, and this is why I

say... not just today, but every day should be THANKSGIVING DAY! I came across a wooden plaque with the following message painted upon it. It has been hanging in my bathroom—I see this important message first thing every morning:

**What if you woke up TODAY,
With only what you thanked God for
YESTERDAY?**

Keep this thought handy not only today, but through the rest of this year and all the years to come! Celebrate the Birth of Our Lord properly, and always be thankful in the future! God Bless!



Atty. John J. Urban

Lessons in the Law

Uncle Sam's Hand is Out!

If you've been working for any number of years, you probably feel taxed to the breaking point. You might even be asking yourself how much more can the government possibly take? Plenty.

In an effort to fund the Affordable Care Act, a new heavy tax burden has just been shifted to IRAs and 401K plans. If the beneficiary you've named on these plans is an estate or trust, the potential tax burden could be over 45 percent.

In other words, about half of your hard-earned dollars won't go to your heirs if you don't have the proper designations on

your beneficiary forms.

In fact, the new tax law means that many of us have the designations listed incorrectly and they need to be changed right away. If you don't have any beneficiary named on your forms, your IRA or 401K will automatically go through probate. If it does, it will be processed as an asset and taxed accordingly.

To help you properly bequeath your retirement funds to your heirs, make sure you have a professional review your funds and beneficiaries.



Gary Sorensen
Sales & Distribution
Management Director

How Hard Are Your Dollars Working For You?

F **ACT:** You have and continue to work hard for your dollars—**BUT** are your dollars working as hard as you?

In the classical financial planning model, the most efficient money is diversified money—designed to spread your investment risk over many different types of assets. Each of the asset classes have specific purposes that allow you to stack other asset types to maximize a long-term goal. From low risk protection products to high risk and return products. Real life examples of these assets are annuities for protection, to real estate for growth, to stocks for more risk & return opportunities, to precious metals and art for the hit it big or crash.

The most important factor in creating a financial plan is TIME, followed by RISK tolerance. Everyone has a different timeline for when they want to retire and not everyone is willing to place a bet on the future value of their dollars. A diversified portfolio of assets across multiple types of risk classes will provide a more predictable future value.

GCU products sit at the base of every financial pyramid, designed to provide a solid foundation for your financial house. Assets that sit in the base of the pyramid have a specific purpose which can be summed up as the money that you cannot afford to lose. So, products like fixed annuities that credit and compound interest daily, are a keystone to a solid financial plan.



To paraphrase Will Rogers: “It’s not the return on my money, but the return OF my money.”

This is a perfect description of the types of assets that set within the base of the pyramid. GCU annuities have a minimum guaranteed crediting rate, which means interest rates can never fall below that level. Current rates are above the minimum rates and lock in the interest credits daily. This is real money credited to your annuity’s account value. An advantage of an annuity is you can defer paying the taxes until you start to withdraw the money. Therefore, you are saving money that you would otherwise have had to pay in taxes. This compounding effect allows the money to grow more efficiently. To give this perspective let’s make the comparison of a tax deferred rate verses a taxable rate.

If you have a 3.00% tax-deferred rate and you are in the

Tax Deferred Rate	Tax Bracket						
	10%	12%	22%	24%	32%	35%	37%
1.00%	1.11%	1.26%	1.62%	2.13%	3.13%	4.82%	7.65%
1.50%	1.67%	1.89%	2.43%	3.19%	4.70%	7.23%	11.47%
2.00%	2.22%	2.53%	3.24%	4.26%	6.26%	9.64%	15.30%
2.50%	2.78%	3.16%	4.05%	5.32%	7.83%	12.05%	19.12%
3.00%	3.33%	3.79%	4.86%	6.39%	9.40%	14.46%	22.95%
3.50%	3.89%	4.42%	5.67%	7.45%	10.96%	16.87%	26.77%
4.00%	4.44%	5.05%	6.48%	8.52%	12.53%	19.28%	30.60%
4.50%	5.00%	5.68%	7.28%	9.58%	14.10%	21.68%	34.42%
5.00%	5.56%	6.31%	8.09%	10.65%	15.66%	24.09%	38.24%

24% tax-bracket you would have to earn 6.39% in a taxable asset to create the same yield. When looking at safe taxable assets in today’s market, I believe you will be hard pressed to find this type of return.

Do you have other assets that work that hard for you? Annuities are a piece of a financial plan made up of a diversified portfolio. To learn more about how an annuity can be used in your financial plan reach out to your local GCU agent or call the Home Office.



Basil M. Wahal
Fraternal-Communications
Director

New 2020 Fraternal Programs

There are two new fraternal programs being introduced in January of 2020. One will be an extension of the GCU GoGive! and Matching Funds programs. The new program called GoGive! Direct will feature matching donations of up to \$100 to members' charitable giving, details appear below. The second program will be to reward our members' volunteer efforts. Members will be asked to provide their volunteer hours and as a thank you GCU will award several monthly and quarterly prizes to those members or their charities, that complete the online Volunteer Submission form.

GoGive! Direct—is designed as a Matching Funds program to benefit monetary charitable contributions of individual GCU members. GCU Members are permitted to use GoGive! Direct twice in a calendar year (January 1-December 31) for a total dollar for dollar match of up to \$100/member. A budget of \$25,000.00 has been established for the 2020 calendar year. Applications will be accepted on a first come first served basis and must be completed online. Applications will be available on the GCU website beginning in early January.

Applicants must provide all requested information on the online form or the application will not be processed. In addition, a copy or scan of the receipt from the donation on the charitable organization's letterhead showing donation amount, must be attached to the online application or mailed to the GCU.

GoGive! Direct donations will **not** be made to a GCU GoGive! fundraising activity, a church or charity already receiving GCU Matching Funds donations for the 2020 calendar year or to a church as a match of the member's regular

Sunday donation. Examples of acceptable charities include, but are not limited to: food banks, community libraries, most 501 (c) 3 charities, senior care facilities, veteran facilities, pet shelters, scholarship funds and individuals suffering a loss or major illness.

All checks will be made payable and sent directly to the benefiting charity. Checks will note that the donation is made in the name of the GCU member requesting the GoGive! Direct funding.

Volunteer Submission—In an effort to capture more of the GCU members' volunteer activities for GCU records and AFA reporting, an online Volunteer Submission Form has been created. As a thank you for members'

reporting, a monthly drawing has been established for \$25 Amazon Gift Cards. Gift cards will be awarded based on one (1) \$25 gift card per 20 member submissions with a maximum of 4 gift cards awarded monthly. In addition, two \$100 donations will be made quarterly to the charitable organizations of two of the members in their name from volunteer submissions made during that quarter.

Members with an email registered at GCU will receive an email notification when the applications are available for both programs. If you would like to add an email to your account, so that you will receive GCU emails, please contact the GCU Call Center at 1-855-306-0607.

Regional Fraternal Coordinator (*continued*)

Expect to travel to the events to ensure successful execution of the activity and to meet and greet the members attending.

Develop and maintain a budget working closely with Fraternal Director. Budget will receive subsidies for events as well as Matching Funds for fundraising activities planned for and through the State Lodges.

Record performance, costs and attendance at each activity as well as take photos for organization's publication and social media.

Event Coordinator Requirements & Skills—Degree in hospitality management or public relations or 5 years experience in an event planning position.

Work closely with Fraternal Director and Fraternal Committee.

Communicate well with internal and external team members.

Must possess strong written and verbal communications, be detail oriented, organized and provide accurate accounting and attendance of events.

Ability to work independently.

Available to do some travel and flexible to work outside of standard business hours.

Keep closely to established budgets.

Able to adjust to last minute changes and problems.

Proficient in MS Office (Word, Excel and PowerPoint).

Have ability to work on multiple social media platforms.

Resumes can be sent to: GCU Attn HR Dept., 5400 Tuscarawas Road, Beaver, PA 15009 or emailed to hr@gcuusa.com.

Giving

St. Mary Byzantine Catholic Church Parish Expansion

Cleveland, OH. On Sunday, September 15, 2019 St. Mary Byzantine Catholic Church held its annual Parish Picnic and Grand Raffle.

This year it was decided to hold the event in the courtyard of the parish's Crystal Chalet so those in attendance could see what the proceeds would be used for. The courtyard and building exterior are undergoing much needed repairs.

Those attending enjoyed a traditional picnic fare of hamburgers, hot dogs and sausage in addition to a variety of pot-luck side dishes.

There were children's activities and a performance by the Luchina Dance Group.

Two prizes were awarded. The \$2,000.00 winner was Richard Miller and the \$1,000.00 winner was Glen Galaida.

Mary Veronica



Parishioners & friends enjoying the picnic with plenty of food choices.

Annunciation Byzantine Catholic Church Parish Expansion



Parishioners preparing the ethnic foods.



Walnut and apricot horns.

Anaheim, CA. Annunciation Church in Anaheim sponsored the Anaheim Craft and Vintage Fair on September 21, 2019. Over 35 vendors offered a great variety of homemade craft items. The event featured an open house invitation to visit the church.

Church tours were provided by pastor Fr. Stephen Washko and the parish sponsored the luncheon and bake sale for the fair which featured Eastern European foods and baked goods, Apple & pear strudel, walnut & apricot horns, pirohi, cabbage & pasta and sausage sandwiches. The foods were all made in the parish kitchen by the parishioners.

Annunciation Church is famous for the monthly ethnic luncheons it sponsors. The parish honors the cultural diversity of its parish family. Italian, Chinese, Mexican, Filipino, Hungarian, Slovak and Ukrainian are some of the ethnicities represented in the Byzantine Catholic churches of Southern California. The church is located about 4 miles from Disneyland and 3 miles from Knott's Berry Farms. The Sunday Liturgy is at 10 AM followed by a coffee and doughnut social.

Be sure to visit one of the Eparchy's most beautiful church when you visit Disneyland. To learn more visit the website: annunciationbyzantine.org.

Fr. Stephen Washko

Saint Joseph Byzantine Catholic Church Parish Expansion

Toronto, OH. Saint Joseph Byzantine Catholic Church made nut rolls in November. Lodge 268 was happy that they were able to apply for the Parish Expansion Matching Funds. St. Joseph's will be making Paska and nut rolls during the Lenten season. The price will be \$15 for a large Paska and \$10 for a nut roll. If you would like to place an order please call Nancy Doerr at 740-765-5022 or Dana Rohal 304-374-2707. St. Joseph would like to thank that GCU for the Parish Expansion Matching Funds.

Carla Gasser



Nancy Doerr, Jennifer Barnhart, Michaelene Brem, Lisa Radick, Joanne Derosky, Homer Bowers and Dana Rohal.

Blanket Project for Cancer Patients

On Monday, October 14, 2019, members and guests of the Lexington Court Garden Club (McMurray, PA) gathered together to construct 26 blankets for cancer patients. The blankets were donated to the St. Clair Outpatient Cancer Center located in Bethel Park, PA. They will keep cancer patients warm while undergoing chemotherapy and

radiation treatment. A GoGive! grant received from the GCU made this project possible by helping to fund the purchase of the fabric needed for making the blankets. The Garden Club is extremely grateful for this wonderful opportunity to help these patients.

Donna Danchisko



2nd Annual Harvest Halloween



The Miss Greater Hazleton Scholarship Organization held their 2nd Annual Harvest Halloween on Sunday, October 27 at the Butler Township Community Center. The event was featured on WNEP's news broadcast. Video of the news story can be viewed at <https://wnep.com/2019/10/27/no-rain-on-this-parade/>. The event included a visit to Cinderella at the pumpkin patch, pumpkin decorating, face painting, a bounce house, games, a costume parade and contest.

Every child won a prize and the top 3 contest winners received Walmart gift cards. There was also a DJ, buffet and plenty of candy. Special guests included Paw Patrol's Chase & Skye, Belle, Ariel, Jasmine, Elsa, Anna, Wonder Woman & Pirates!

Proceeds from the event benefited the Miss Greater Hazleton Scholarship Organization's service initiatives and scholarships. Thank you to the GCU for all you do to support your members and their volunteer efforts in the community!

Sherri A. Homanko, Pharm.D. Executive Director
Miss Greater Hazleton Scholarship Organization



GCU Legal Counsel Theodore Trbovich Honored



Attorney Ted Trbovich with Duquesne University President Kenneth Gromley, Law School Dean April Barton and Commonwealth Judge Michael H. Wojcik.

On Friday, October 4, 2019, at its 67th annual Law Alumni Reunion dinner, Duquesne University School of Law presented GCU Legal Counsel Theodore M. Trbovich with the Dr. John E. Murray, Jr. Meritorius Service Award. Dr. Murray was a past President of Duquesne University and renowned legal scholar. The award is presented in recognition of services rendered and contribution made to Duquesne Law Alumni Association and the School of Law. The focus of this award is on service and commitment.

Attorney Trbovich is a long time member of the Duquesne Law Alumni Association and served as a Board of Governor and Secretary for eight years. He is a mentor to many law alumni, encouraging them in their careers and to giving back to Duquesne Law.

Jillian McDonnell Recipient of the WAG Milli Award



For Jillian McDonnell, the magic began in high school at the age of 14 when she discovered that she could create metal treasures with a sketch, torch, jeweler’s saw and hammer. As her talents sharpened, she got her degree in Jewelry Design at the Fashion Institute of Technology and decided to step out into the world and pursue a career in the jewelry industry. She found herself in a place that has provided an incredible environment for young talent since it was founded 30 years ago – D’Errico Jewelry.

Richard & Salvatore D’Errico saw a spark in her and let it bloom. They realized McDonnell’s vivacious energy extended beyond the jewelry bench and brought her to the front to work on their sales floor. “I definitely started out very timid, but they allowed me to climb a huge learning curve, and I’m much more comfortable and confident than I was when I started,” McDonnell says.

Unlike many artists, McDonnell was able to pull inspiration for her designs by working face to face with customers in a retail environment. Living in Westchester, NY, McDonnell has built a home studio and has started designing her own line: Jill Mac Jewelry. Right now, this line is only available in D’Errico Jewelry’s two stores in Mount Kisco & Scarsdale, NY. “I couldn’t be more grateful for the opportunities Richie and Sal have given me,” she says. “To have my designs in the showcases of Westchester’s top jeweler is not just incredibly generous, but really exciting.”

Jillian is a life-long member of Lodge 7 in Yonkers/White Plains, NY.

Debbie McDonnell | Secretary-Treasurer

GCU Members Participate in Alzheimer's Walk



Ronnie Johnson, Gina Spickerman and Anita Grisnik at the Walk.

On Saturday, October 5, 2019 Home Office Member/Agent Service Support Representative Gina Spickerman and her two sisters Ronnie Johnson and Anita Grisnik participated in the two mile walk to end Alzheimer's in downtown Beaver, PA. The cause is important to them since their mother suffered from the disease.

The participants had a beautiful morning to walk and share the same goal: to end Alzheimer's. Each walker chose a promise garden flower to take home. Each color represents your connection to the disease.

Blue represents someone with Alzheimer's or dementia.

Purple is for someone who has lost a loved one to the disease.

Yellow represents someone who is currently supporting or caring for an Alzheimer's patient.

Orange is for everyone who supports the cause and vision of a world without Alzheimer's.

GCU Participate in Project Bundle Up Program



Volunteers at the Project Bundle-Up shopping event.



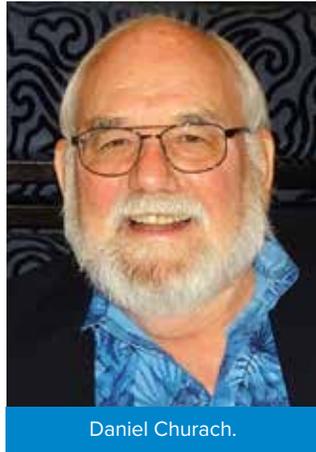
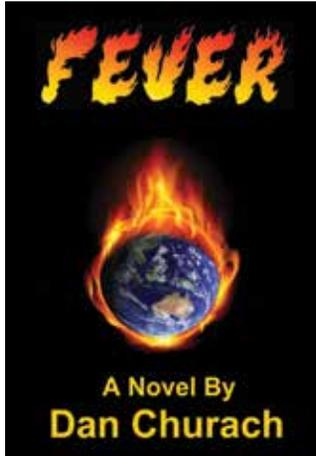
On Saturday, November 9, 2019 volunteers from the GCU Home Office and Beaver County area, joined the Salvation Army for the Project Bundle-Up shopping experience at Boscov's Department Store in Monaca, PA. Twenty-three GCU employees and members were on hand to assist the 21 children with choosing hats, gloves, coats and boots for the upcoming winter season. The morning began with a light breakfast for the children followed by shopping. The GCU provides a donation to the Salvation Army which assists with the purchase of the items that the children choose. The experience is very rewarding for the volunteers, many of whom return annually to assist with this community fraternal outreach.



Home Office volunteers are Rhonda Renkin, Gina Spickerman, Pam Prodonovich, Kay Lodovico, Lisa Anderson, Miranda Petro and Chris Chamberlain.

Two Lodge 69 Members Have Books Published

New Books Published by GCU Member Dan Churach



FEVER and *DREAMS*, are the third & fourth novels published by Dan Churach. He grew up in Pottstown, PA and is a member of Lodge 69. Dan and his wife Karen have lived in Western Australia for over 20 years where Dan earned his PhD. That makes the Churachs some of the most distant members of the GCU!

Dan has been a writer his whole life and released *FEVER* in June of this year and followed that up with the release of *DREAMS* in September. Dan was featured in the *GCU Magazine* back in 1990 when he wrote his first novel *PROOF!*

To learn more about all of Dan's novels and for purchase information please visit his website, www.churach.com. Dan is always happy to reply to any questions sent his way via email at DanChurach@iinet.net.au.

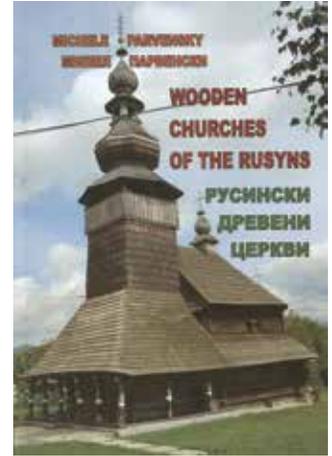
"Wooden Churches of the Rusyns"

GCU Lodge 69 member Dr. Michele Parvensky has published a new book "Wooden Churches of the Rusyns/Rusynski Dreveni Cerкви." The book printed in Europe, has arrived in North America and is available in the United States and Canada.

Miss Parvensky, as an author of text and photos, put all her knowledge & experience into the pages of this book! The book was compiled from over 20 years of visiting and photographing these gorgeous architectural marvels of the Rusyn people!

The colorful 130 page book is bilingual, English and Rusyn, with more than 130 photos, a register of villages with Rusyn wooden churches, a table highlighting the construction year of the Rusyn churches, attached map to assist in locating the churches in Poland, Slovakia, Ukraine and Romania. Publisher is Rusyn Publishing Center, Canada.

The price for each copy in the USA is: \$25 USD + \$3 USD for shipping. If you are interested in purchasing a copy, please email gkoljesar@gmail.com.



GCU Home Office Hours of Operation & Holiday Schedule

The GCU Home Office (800.722.4428) is open Monday through Friday 8:30 AM to 5 PM EST.

The Call Center (855.306.0607) accepts calls Monday through Thursday from 8:30 AM to 7 PM EST and Fridays 8:30 AM to 5 PM EST.

5400 Tuscarawas Road, Beaver, PA 15009

The GCU Home Office will be closed on Tuesday, December 24 & Wednesday, December 25, 2019 in observance of the Christmas Holiday and Tuesday, December 31 & Wednesday, January 1, 2020 in observance of New Year's Day.



District 5

With Deep Sympathy | Unfortunately, death is a part of life. I believe it was Ben Franklin who said we are only certain of 2 things in this world, death and taxes. As Christians, we believe that our deceased loved ones are in a better place.

October 15 was a very sad day with the passing of my mom, Alice Dolinish and Sharon Kofel's mom, Elsie Kolcun.

My mom was all for the GCU. I can recall her telling us how she participated in the Sokol gymnastic events as a very young girl. She was Lodge 17's secretary-treasurer as for long as I can remember. Whenever a baby was born in our parish, she would try to convince the parents what a great deal it was to buy a GCU life insurance certificate. Every event that the GCU had, both district and lodge, she played an active role. This included being a delegate at conventions, participating in bowling and golf tournaments, committee member for Scholarship and Founders' Day Dinner Dances and participating in Hoop Contests. She always volunteered her time for food collections for the poor, eyeglasses for the needy, and selling daffodils for the American Cancer Society. Love you and miss you Mom.

Sympathy is extended to the families of Elsie Kolcun, John Kish and Mary Barkowski. Elsie participated in many District 5 events since moving here from the Pittsburgh area. John was a GCU National and District Officer, but I best remember him as an Adopt-A-Highway participant. I didn't know Mary, but her family—son, grandchildren, brother, and nephews are active participants in District 5. Blessed repose and eternal memory!

Fall Helping Hands Day | On Saturday, October 26, 2019, nine members assisted the Carmelite Sisters at Holy Annunciation Monastery in Sugarloaf, PA with their fall cleanup. Lodge 945 brought 2 truckloads of newspapers from their newspaper drive to be shredded for the animals. Grass was mowed and weed wacked, day lilies & peonies



Adam Borton, Gerald Rusak, Topyy Zayac, Jakob Razvillas, Ed Keil and Mariah Tague. Missing from photo is Gina Keil.



District 5 officers Mike Mokay, Laure Marcin, Bernie Shinko, Ed Keil, Ilona Dolinish, Gina Keil, Colleen Evans, Daria Shierly, Bob Suflita and Krissy Williams with GCU Directors Greg Vladika and George Kofel.

were cut back and impatiens & begonias were removed. Indoor work included folding cardboard boxes, which the Sisters use for their Christmas dessert sales. Volunteers were treated to a meal of spaghetti & meatballs, garlic bread and the Sisters' special cookies with Klondike bars on the side. Next cleanup is Saturday, June 6, 2020.

Annual Meeting | The district's annual meeting was held on October 27 with Divine Liturgy at St. Mary's Byzantine Catholic Church, Kingston, PA, followed by a Panachida for deceased members of the district. Forty-one people attended the breakfast meeting at the Holiday Inn East Mountain, Wilkes-Barre, PA. The following were elected as District 5 Officers: President Gina Keil, Vice-President Daria Shierly, Secretary Krissy Williams, Treasurer Colleen Evans, Athletic Director Ed Keil, Assistant Athletic Director Bob Suflita, Publicity/Fraternal Activities Director Ilona Dolinish, Sergeant-at-Arms & Standard Bearer Bernie Shinko and Auditors Laure Marcin & Mike Mokay. The District Chaplain is Rev. Michael Prodanets.

Adopt-A-Highway | The final Adopt-A-Highway cleanup was held on Saturday, November 2. There was a crew of 7 on the sunny but cold morning. The work could not have been accomplished without the help of 4 members of the Penn State Wilkes-Barre Golf Team and their coach. We cannot thank them enough for helping with the pickup of car parts, bottles, and other trash, totaling 12 bags. It is great to see young people interested in helping their environment. Hopefully, they will return in the spring.

Annual St. Nicholas Brunch & Scholarship Awards Program | The 52nd Annual St. Nicholas Brunch & Scholarship Awards Program was held on Sunday, December 1, 2019 at Billy G's in Old Forge, PA. A report of the event will be detailed in the next issue.

May you have a very Blessed Christmas and a Happy, Healthy New Year!

Ilona Dolinish | Fraternal & Publicity Director

District 7

Celebrating 100 Years—“We Stand on the Shoulders of Giants”

| On Sunday, October 20, 2019, District 7 celebrated their 100th Anniversary. It was held at St. Mary Byzantine Catholic Church, Hillsborough, NJ in conjunction with the annual meeting. President Mary Bannworth welcomed everyone to the milestone event. District 7 is one of the oldest districts in the GCU. Vice President Steve Bachovin began the program with a quote by Isaac Newton, “We stand on the shoulders of giants.” He reminisced about events and people that were inspirational in 1919. Other speakers included: Kathleen Meddaugh, Marcy Embley, Michael Geles and Roger Embley.

The speakers highlighted the charities the district has supported, social & athletic events held through the years and national representation. Publicity Director Alberta Fulsome explained the showcase she prepared in the church lobby. Exhibited were new pictures and very old pictures of GCU events through the years. The district was honored to have Scott Schuetz, Executive Vice President/COO of the GCU in attendance. Scott congratulated us on this anniversary.

He spoke about the GCU past, present and future. It was a very interesting program. GCU members enjoyed a walk down memory lane and a look into the future.

Deacon Alex Kubik was given an award by Lodge 254 for his good works. Deacon Alex is a deacon at St. Mary Church, as well as, a GCU Lodge 254 member. The award was presented by Lodge 254 President Elias Zareva.

A buffet luncheon was enjoyed by all with a delicious anniversary cake for dessert. Fr. James Badeaux, chaplain of District 7 and pastor at St. Mary Church offered the invocation. The afternoon entertainment was provided by Donna and her accordion. Donna was dressed in traditional Slavic dress-Kroje and played Slavic tones. The GCU Home Office was a fundamental part in helping the district organize this event. A Fraternal Grant and anniversary

grant were given to District 7 to help make this event a success. The Home Office also provided a beautiful 100th Anniversary ornament for each attendee to take home.

May God bless District 7 with many more healthy and happy years!

Mary Bannworth | President



Seated: Linda Cwiekalo, Kathleen Meddaugh, Alberta Fulsome and Fr. James Badeaux. Standing: Michael Geles, Mary Bannworth, GCU COO Scott Schuetz and Steve Bachovin.



Elizabeth Pentz, Dorothy Koenig and Margaret enjoying the 100th Anniversary.



Hillsborough, NJ Lodge 254 table with Deacon Alex (seated at left). Donna the accordionist is in the background.

UPCOMING DISTRICT 7 EVENT

Quarterly Meeting

Sunday, May 17, 2020

11 AM Divine Liturgy

1 PM Meeting in Fellowship Hall

St. Mary Byzantine Catholic Church
1900 Brooks Blvd., Hillsborough, NJ 08844

District 11



Deacon Robert Cripps, one of the program facilitators, speaks to the men in attendance at the Men's Day of Reflection.

Men Prepare Spiritually for Feast of the Nativity |

Men from all over southeast Michigan gathered to spend a day in thought and prayer on Saturday, November 16. The Day of Reflection was sponsored by GCU District 11 and hosted at St. Nicholas Church in Clinton Township, MI as organized by Fr. Joseph Repko, pastor of St. Nicholas and chaplain of both GCU District 11 and Lodge 860.

The event aimed at preparing men spiritually during the St. Philip's Fast for the Feast of the Nativity. The program featured talks by guest facilitators Deacon Gregory Loya and Deacon Robert Cripps from the Eparchy of Parma, as well as the parish's own Subdeacon Phillip Dinsmore.

The daylong event was held free of charge, thanks to a GCU District Fraternal Grant. The day began with a continental breakfast followed by prayer and the speaker program. The event concluded with the 4 PM Divine Liturgy at St. Nicholas.

Val Marszalec | Fraternal & Publicity Director

District 15

Matilda the Musical | District members and guests enjoyed an uplifting October afternoon at Lincoln Park Performing Arts Center in Midland, PA for the matinee performance of Matilda the Musical. The cast of mostly children was just amazing! Before the show children and adults engaged in a variety of activities, such as using virtual reality goggles and building with giant Legos, all held in the Black Box Theater.

Annual Meeting | The 2019 Annual Meeting was held on Sunday, November 3 at Seven Oaks Country Club. Officers in attendance were President Elizabeth Harbist, Vice-President Janet Uram, Treasurer Laura Seech, Athletic Director Bill Uram, Assistant Athletic Director Paul Lebanik and Auditors Mike Spanik & Irene Miller. The treasurer, athletic director and president provided reports. A complete 2020 District 15 Calendar will be available in January.



District members and guests at the Matilda Show at Lincoln Park Performing Arts Center.

District 15 Senior Award Applications Are NOW Available |

Applications for the 2020 District 15 Senior Awards are now available. District 15 high school seniors planning to continue their education at college, university or trade school are encouraged to apply for a senior award. Applications must be requested by December 31 from Scholarship Committee Chair, Kathy Kapaldo via email: kkapaldo@comcast.net Completed applications and all materials, including transcript and recommendations are due January 31, 2020. Awardees and their parents will be honored at a dinner in March.

Elizabeth Harbist | President

CONTINUED

UPCOMING DISTRICT 15 EVENTS

After Christmas Children's Holiday Party

Sunday, January 5, 2020
12 NOON-2 PM

Main Event

200 Quinn Drive, Pittsburgh, PA 15275

Contact Laura Seech at 412-580-8159 to reserve a space for your child(ren). More info will be emailed this month.

Sisters of St. Joseph Christmas Party

Saturday, January 25, 2020
12 NOON

Volunteers are needed, including children age 10 and older. The Sisters enjoy playing bingo and sharing cake & ice cream with the volunteers.

1020 W. State Street, Baden, PA 15005

Contact Elizabeth Harbist at 412-913-1446

Jr. Bowling Tournament

Sunday, March 15, 2020
12 NOON Lunch with Bowling to follow

Center Lanes, 3084 Brodhead Road,
Aliquippa, PA 15001

Contact Bill Uram at 724-287-0689

Adult No-Tap Bowling Tournament

Saturday, March 28, 2020
3 PM

Center Lanes, 3084 Brodhead Road,
Aliquippa, PA 15001

Dinner to follow at Seven Oaks CC

Contact Bill Uram at 724-287-0689

**Like and share us on Facebook where
you can find additional details for all
District 15 events.**

Lodge News

Lodge 17

OLD FORGE, PA

Fall Helping Hands

GCU Lodge 17 participated in the fall cleanup at Holy Annunciation Monastery, Sugarloaf, PA on Saturday, October 26, 2019.

Volunteers cut down day lilies and peonies, removed begonias and impatiens, as well as mowed the lawn and weed wacked. The Sisters served the volunteers a homemade spaghetti and meatball luncheon, along with ice cream and a variety of their special cookies. Plan now to help at the spring event on June 6, 2020.

Turkey Bingo

St. Mary's Byzantine Catholic Church, Taylor, PA held their Turkey Bingo with the assistance of GCU Lodge 17 on Sunday, November 10, 2019. There were 130 participants,

along with 17 workers. GCU pill containers were distributed to the attendees. Candy and Christmas activity books with crayons were given to the children.

Twenty BINGO games were held, including specials, with turkey gift certificates given away to the winners. There were 36 basket prizes, door prizes and a 50/50 fundraiser. Food items were sold and a bake sale featuring delicious homemade baked goods was available. This was a Matching Funds project to help with the air conditioning at St. Mary. Thanks to all who contributed.

Doing Good

The month of November included food collections for the poor and used eyeglasses for the Lions Club. In December, the lodge helped with the church Christmas Party on December 8, the church cookie sale on December 14 and will hold an appreciation luncheon and 4th quarter meeting on December 18.

May you all have a very Merry Christmas and a Healthy and Happy New Year!

Ed Keil | Secretary-Treasurer



Ilona Dolinish and Gina Keil presenting a Community Matching Funds check to Jeanie Sluck, Director of the Taylor Community Library.



Turkey Bingo kitchen help: Marion Savinelli, Carol Granko, Paul Prislupsky, Fr. Eduard Shestak, Tom Korpita, Marie Wolfe and Carol Wardach.

Lodge 47

BINGHAMTON, NY

Rummage Sale & Hot Dog Day

There's been a loud "Buzz" in Binghamton starting with preparation for the Fall Rummage Sale at Holy Spirit Church. Parishioners and Lodge 47 members cleaned out their attics and closets to help raise funds for the church by generously donating their treasures. Rows of tables were set up with "new" merchandise that a team spent several days organizing and pricing. When the doors opened on Saturday, November 2, shoppers were excited to see the goods and made their move.

On the same day, Lodge 47 Hot Dog Day was a fun way to bring back summer. Everyone had a happy smile and agreed that the November BBQ was definitely tasty. It was unanimous that the best way to enjoy a hot dog was right off the grill!



Rummage sale items.



Hot dogs off the grill!

Thank You & Happy New Year

There is no better time to be thankful to everyone at the GCU Home Office for their continued support, the Matching Funds and Fraternal Grants. The lodge is also thankful for the blessings of lodge members, parishioners, and for all the volunteers and those who have helped to make the fundraising activities a success. A very Happy Holiday Season and a prosperous New Year to all.

Daria Shierly | Secretary-Treasurer

Election Day Pie Sale

A few days later, Lodge 47 once again partnered with the Holy Spirit Mother's Club to sponsor an Election Day Pie Sale. For 3 days, a team of dedicated crust mixers, rollers, pie fillers, apple peelers, corers, slicers, bakers and many more, gathered to make apple and cherry pies. Parishioners also donated a variety of baked goods which were available on Tuesday, November 5 when area voters came to cast their votes.



The pie makers.



Rev. Deacon Edward Frey with Marge Dorzinsky, former Lodge 53 Secretary.

Lodge 53

WILKES BARRE, PA

"300" Club Dinner

Lodge 53 and St. Mary Church recently co-sponsored the annual "300" Club dinner. Over 100 people attended the dinner where the final prize drawings were awarded. There were many happy winners!

Lodge 53 would like to send a big "thank you" to the GCU Home Office for the hand-outs of gifts and GCU information given out at the dinner.

Halloween Party

The members of GCU Lodge 53 co-sponsored a Halloween party with St. Mary BC Church Wilkes-Barre for the community on Saturday, October 26, 2019. There was dancing and snacks for everyone to enjoy. A big thank you to the GCU Home Office for the giveaways for the kids.



John Marko | Secretary-Treasurer



Lodge 62

PUNXSUTAWNEY, PA

Helping Hands Day

Thanks to a Helping Hands Fraternal Grant, spring & summer flowers were planted and now the fall Mums take their place. House cleaning in the church was also on the list of chores. Thanks to all the volunteers, with their helping hands everything was accomplished.

Helen Meko | President

Lodge 69

POTTSTOWN, PA

Friends Helping Friends

On Wednesday, October 16, 2019, Boscov's Department Store hosted its 23rd Anniversary of Friends Helping Friends - a day of fun and fundraising to benefit non-profits.

GCU members sold tickets and anyone who purchased a \$5 ticket received a 25% discount shopping pass for October 16.

Everyone enjoyed volunteering that day.



Gene Harding selling a ticket to Michael O.



Chinese Auction items.

Chinese Auction

The annual Chinese Auction was held on November 8, 2019 at St. John the Baptist Church Hall. Parishioners donated the prizes. Members of the GCU and Guild collected and set up the gifts. Parishioners and community residents helped to support the event. Baked goods and soft pretzels were served during intermission and everyone had a great time.



Gene Harding with some of the kids at the Boo Bash.

Boo Bash

Boscov's Department Store held a Boo Bash on October 26, 2019. Members of Lodge 69 volunteered to hand out candy, supervise games, and help children with crafts. Everyone had a great time.

Nancy Harding | Secretary

Lodge 77

LORAIN, OH

Annual Picnic

GCU Lodge 77 held their annual Family & Friends Picnic at the Lakeview Park Gazebo in Lorain, OH on Sunday, September 15, 2019. Members of the lodge and St. Nicholas Parish, along with friends enjoyed a beautiful day and fantastic picnic lunch. GCU members reminisced when looking through the photo albums of events from over the years put together by Lodge Secretary LaVerne Mackin. The children played ball and went for a walk on the beach. Lodge 77 provided most of the food and drinks while guests each brought a side dish or dessert to share.



Annual Picnic.

Bus Trip to Presque Isle Casino

On October 13, 2019 over 50 GCU members and friends took a bus trip to Presque Isle Casino in Erie, PA. Everyone enjoyed the 50/50 and Basket fundraisers on the way to the casino and the Horse Race game on the ride home. Lodge 77 provided all bus riders with a GCU drawstring pack full of goodies along with a special gift so that everyone was a winner. It was a beautiful sunny day with the fall leaves just starting to change colors which made for a safe and enjoyable trip. Proceeds will be used to benefit the local community, St. Nicholas prayer garden, and other parish needs.



LaVerne Mackin | Secretary
Anne Dillon | Treasurer

Invested in Education

2019-2020 GCU Scholarship Programs

FRIENDLY REMINDER...

Applications for scholarships must be completed and submitted online in one session by 11:59 PM EST on December 31, 2019.

GCUusa.com

Lodge 81

UNIONTOWN, PA

Parish

Lodge 81 and St. John parishioners met with a great challenge for their 38th Annual Carpatho-Rusyn Celebration on Sunday, October 27. Due to serious damage to the social hall floor caused by heavy summer rains, an alternate site had to be used. Everyone pulled together to transport foods, crafts, displays, prizes and necessary items using trucks and trailers to the Uniontown Fire Department Social Hall. On Saturday at the St. John kitchen, Stephen & Theresa Petruska with helpers made pagach, while others were at the alternate site setting up, packaging baked goods, and preparing the various areas. On the day of the event Stephen Petruska and the Rubish family (Lodge 57), Marcia & Rich Harrer, Janet & George Gaydos Jr.,

Joan Bridges, Kay Breakiron, Bonnie Balas, Gerry Dorobish and Helen & Bryan Ponzurick were all on hand to help things run smooth. Entertainment included lively performances by Dean Poloka & folk musicians, Slavjane Folk Ensemble directed by Robert Bartko, and a presentation by John Righetti of a film "The Resurrection of a Nation" produced by the John & Helen Timo Foundation. Displays and demonstrations include Mary Gido (bobbin lace), AnnMarie Zerishnek (spinning), Mark Jesko (iconography), and Julie Pillar and Joseph Borytsky (egg art). The event was overwhelmingly attended and a great success showing that the parishioners and Lodge 81 members could overcome the challenge. Lodge 81 will receive Community Matching Funds from GCU which will be presented to the Uniontown City Police Department for the purchase of a K-9 police officer.



Kay Breakiron, George Gaydos Jr., Joan Bridges and Janet Gaydos at craft table.



Helen & Bryan Ponzurick selling long rolls.



Gerry Dorobish (seated at right) and her great nieces at the children's activity area.

Local Community

Gerry Dorobish has continued her weekly reading program at the Uniontown Public Library on Tuesday and Wednesday mornings for up to 20 preschoolers. She also assists her sister Linda Zungri at St. Mary Nativity Roman Catholic Church with catechism for the local Catholic churches. Sister Ruth Plante also relies on Gerry for her volunteering at the Mount Macrina Religious Gift Shop.

Greater Community

Joan Bridges, Mark Jesko, and Bonnie Balas once again participated in the Annual Polish Festival at the University of Pittsburgh held on Sunday, November 10. Carpatho-Rusyn Society President Maryann Sivak sponsored the table which represented Lemko Rusyns. Bonnie Balas demonstrated and sold embroideries, Carpathian Cookery Cookbooks, and icon ornaments, and Mark Jesko showed and sold drop pull method eggs and ornaments.

Bonnie Balas | VP & Publicity Director



Mark Jesko, Joan Bridges and Bonnie Balas.

Lodge 92

JESSUP, PA

Operation Noel

Every year Lodge 92 helps to decorate the town of Jessup. This year's decorating took place on November 10 and 11. For such a small volunteer group they manage to beautify the entire town. Lodge 92 also donates to the Operation Noel group each year to keep upgrading all the decorations. Wishing everyone a "Merry Christmas!"



Mark Berta, Ken Marchegiani, Chris Nattichi, Michael Mancak, Ronald Mancak, Mario Nattichi, Tim Keller and Bobby Berta. In the bucket is Gary Pezak.



Kitchen Crew: Michael Mancak, Tim Keller, Gregory Dick, Gregory Vladika, Ronald Mancak, Mark Pegula and Steve Wizda.



Cake & Servers: Margaret Esgro, Lucille Kubrick, Lorraine Suche, Mary Lou Ritzco, Georgette Duchak and Jeannie Cucura.

Annual Stuffed Chicken Breast Dinner

The 12th Annual Stuffed Chicken Breast Dinner at Holy Ghost Byzantine Catholic Church, was held on November 3, 2019. Members of the church and GCU Lodge 92 served dinners to a soldout crowd of 360 people. This very successful dinner will profit the church renovation projects in progress. Everyone enjoyed their meal and are looking forward to the Ethnic Dinner in the Spring!

Michaela Mancak | Secretary-Treasurer

Lodge 93

NORTHERN CAMBRIA, PA

Good Samaritan Food Pantry

Lodge 93 sponsored a basket fundraiser to benefit the Good Samaritan Food Pantry. This Matching Funds project provided \$1,955.⁰⁰. Lodge members helped to serve the needy in the Northern Cambria, PA area. In addition to food distribution the pantry's goal is to create a produce program and a soup kitchen.

Northern Cambria Arts & Heritage Festival

Thanks to the Home Office for approving a Fraternal Grant to sponsor a vendor tent at the Northern Cambria Arts & Heritage Festival. GCU information was disseminated and desserts



Walter Rogal and Good Samaritan Director Don Lowmaster.



Connie Strittmatter presenting a check to Irene Shulick and Irene Midock.

CONTINUED

Lodge 93 CONTINUED

were offered. Baskets of items were donated and awarded. This is the third year for the lodge's participation in this community wide event.



Arts & Heritage Festival.

Picnic

Lodge 93 sponsored a summer picnic in conjunction with St. Anne's Byzantine Church in Clymer, PA. Reverend Wesley Mash started the picnic with Liturgy followed by members and guests enjoying a tasty picnic buffet. Games were played by both children and adults. A drawing for door prizes completed the picnic. Thanks to the GCU for the Fraternal Grant.



St. Anne's Yard Sale.

Parish Expansion

The Parish Expansion Matching Funds achieved \$1,600.00 for St. Anne's Byzantine Catholic Church in Clymer, PA. This was a two-day indoor yard sale and baked goods festival held on the church grounds. The event helps to defray the costs of needed church projects.

Connie Strittmatter | Fraternal Director

Lodge 109

LYNDORA, PA

Fall Hoagie Fund Raiser

Lodge 109 held its second hoagie sale of the year on Thursday, October 10 to complete the Matching Funds Project for 2019.

As was the case for the Spring sale, orders were taken in advance from businesses, schools and individuals and then filled accordingly. Delivery was provided for the larger orders while pick-up took place at St. John the Baptist BC Church for the smaller ones.

The lodge's assembly line method of making the large number of hoagies is very efficient. Nearly 500 hoagies can be put together and bagged in just a few hours. The hoagie crew works well together since each person knows their job and performs it well.

Thanks to the Home Office for doubling the profits with Matching Funds, which will help pay the utility bills this winter at St. John.



Helen Musko sells the last remaining hoagie to Pam Gagen.



Some of the children gather in their costumes for a picture with Deacon Paul (Chef Boyardee) and Janet Stetzer (back row).

Halloween Party

On Sunday, October 27, 2019, Lodge 109 held a Halloween party for the parish children and a coffee social for the adults. The party was held in the Religious Center at St. John since the church hall was being readied for the annual rummage sale conducted by the Ladies Guild.

The children played games conducted by Deacon Paul Simko and his wife, Sandy, while the adults, mostly parents, enjoyed the coffee, cider and doughnuts provided by the lodge.

After the activities and refreshments, each child was given a treat bag created by Lodge 109 President Janet Stetzer.

Janet Uram | Secretary-Treasurer

Lodge 144

DENVER, CO

The Ronald McDonald House

Audrey & Sarah Peek recently volunteered to serve a meal to residents of the Ronald McDonald House in Aurora, CO. The menu included a taco bar and Halloween themed desserts.

The Ronald McDonald house provides temporary housing for 46 out-of-area families allowing them to be near their hospitalized children at no cost. Serving the families a



Audrey and Sarah Peek.

hot meal enables them to have more time to devote to their hospitalized loved-one and to share a nice communal meal.

Sarah J. Peek



Breast Cancer Luncheon.

Breast Cancer Luncheon

On October 18, 2019 there was an eruption of good spirit and camaraderie at the Pompeii Restaurant for the Lodge 151 Breast Cancer Luncheon. There were over 150 guests in attendance to support the work of the Adelphi Outreach Program which supports those who have had breast cancer or are battling the disease. The toastmaster, Marge Pajer Russell regaled the group with stories of how the support of this charity began years ago as a luncheon at her home with 12 women to today's impressive event. Mr. Jeff Flynn from Adelphi spoke movingly about his personal battle with breast cancer. He is now a national voice who brings attention and awareness to men and women of all ages. GCU members Ann Kandratino and Chris Hulak entertained everyone with a game of Jeopardy entitled "Tickled Pink," celebrating good health. Prizes were given for correct answers. There were plenty of winners from the fundraising activities. A special thank you to all the GCU members that attended and for all their assistance. Much kudos to Marge for hosting another super successful charity event.

Lodge 151

NEW YORK, NY

Annual Ethnic Dinner

The Church of the Resurrection held their annual ethnic dinner and it was a huge success. Over 200 people attended the 2 seatings in the church hall. Ethnic food was enjoyed by all. Slovak dancers entertained wearing traditional clothing. Fundraisers and a boutique were available. Many of the guests bought pierogis to enjoy at home. Parishioner Judy Walsh, Andi Wools, Bob & Liza Knapp, and Cathy Hlinka worked very hard to make this event a success. The pastor Fr. Tyler is very proud of his congregation. Congratulations on an event well done!

Memorial Liturgy for Fr. Dan Bitsko

A packed church, including numerous GCU members, attended the Memorial Liturgy for Fr. Dan Bitsko celebrated by Father Tyler who was assisted by Deacon Joe Lavina. Deacon Lavina was a past parishioner at the Church of the Resurrection and now a deacon in Riverhead, NY. Subdeacon Bob Knapp gave a very heartfelt talk about Fr. Dan, their relationship and Fr. Dan's accomplishments in the community and church. In memory of Fr. Dan the past rectory, which is on the "Register of Historic Places," is hoped to be repaired and called the Fr. Dan house. Donations are being accepted. Send donations to Church of the Resurrection, 38 Mayflower Avenue, Smithtown, NY 11787. Father Dan's obituary appears on page 44.

Guys & Dolls Show and Luncheon

Some GCU members attended a luncheon and show at Westbury Manor. A terrific rendition of "Guys and Dolls" was performed—a great day and show. A special thank you to Cathy Walsh for all her hard work. The next show at Westbury Manor is "Meshugna Nun" on April 1, 2020. Anyone interest in attending let Marge know. Tickets are limited.

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Volunteers & kids at Youth Day event.

Lodge 151 CONTINUED

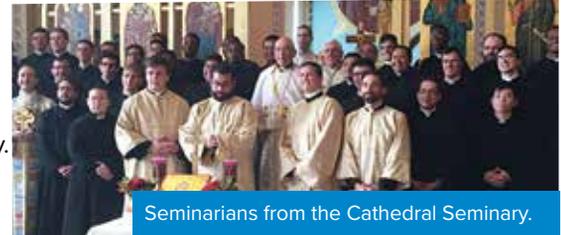
Youth Day

Youth Day was held at the Seasons for resident's grandchildren. The kids decorated pumpkins, colored in GCU activity booklets and enjoyed loads of candy. There was a face painter who did a great job disguising everyone. About 100 children with the aid of GCU members Ryan Pajer and Nicholas & Suzanne Mamay enjoyed the activities.

Day with the Seminarians

On Sunday, November 17, 2019, Fr. Nicholas Daddona invited the seminarians from the Cathedral Seminary to Immaculate Conception Center in Douglaston, Queens. Fifty seminarians and Rector George came to St. Andrew to participate in a Byzantine Liturgy. The seminarians are from New York City, upstate NY and dioceses around the world. Robert Kaziule, a Belarus citizen, has been at the seminary

for four months and already speaks English very well. Seminarian Paul Pieho, comes from Slovakia and will be completing his third year at the seminary. Anthony Maxson is in his first year at the seminary and is from Newburg, NY. The three young men were excited to speak with the parishioners and happy in pursuing their religious careers. They were very enlightened with the Liturgy and the chant.



Seminarians from the Cathedral Seminary.

The members of Lodge 151 and their friends wish everyone a very Blessed Christmas and a happy and Blessed New Year.

Marge Russell | President



Left to right are Don Danko, Fr. Richard Lambert, Karen Muransky, Diana Danko, Sharon MacDonald, George Lutza and Dr. Tom Sopkovich.

Lodge 164

YOUNGSTOWN, OH

4th Quarter/Annual Meeting

The Lodge 164 Fourth Quarter/Annual Meeting was held on Sunday, November 10 with 17 members and one guest in attendance. The vote was unanimous for the re-election of the current officers, minus the fraternal activities director, who declined to serve in 2020.

The theme for the meeting was "Remembering Our Veterans." Four veterans—Emery MacDonald, George Lutza, Don Danko and John Trella were honored for their service.

Dr. Tom Sopkovich | President



Lodge 164 veterans honored at the meeting.

UPCOMING LODGE 164 EVENTS

1st Quarter Meeting

Sunday, January 12, 2020

Following Liturgy

St. Mary's Assumption Social Center

Lenten Soup & Sandwich Fundraiser

Each Wednesday during Lent

Starting February 26

Served after Liturgy of Presanctified Gifts

St. Mary's Assumption Social Center

Youngstown Area Jr. Bowling Tournament

Sunday, March 29

Sign-in at 12:30 PM Bowling at 1 PM

Camelot Lanes
628 Boardman-Canfield Road,
Boardman, OH 44512

Contact Elaine Chachko at 330-755-6243

Lodge 182

KINGSTON, PA

Holubki Dinner

Members of Lodge 182 and St. Mary Byzantine Catholic Rosary Society joined forces to hold a Holubki Dinner on September 7, 2019. The dinner was held in the church hall. Take outs were available as well as dine in. Dinners included, holubki, mashed potatoes, carrots, red cabbage, dessert, coffee, tea and soda or water. Thank you to all who helped make this dinner, a huge success.

Laure Marcin | Secretary



Volunteers from Lodge 182 and St. Mary's Rosary Society who helped with the Holubki Dinner.



Deacon Alex Kubik and Lodge President Elias Zareva.

Lodge 254

HILLSBOROUGH, NJ

District 7 100th Anniversary

On Sunday, October 20 District 7 celebrated its 100th anniversary at St. Mary Byzantine Catholic Church.

Members of Lodge 254 and President Elias Zareva took this opportunity to thank Deacon Alex Kubik with an award for 20 years of service to the diaconate and the people of St. Mary's.

Icon Corner

The children of St. Mary's experienced a surprise when ECF classes began this fall. Lodge 254 sponsored an "Icon Corner" that was installed in each of the 8 classrooms.

GCU member and ECF coordinator Julie Klikus researched, purchased and supervised the project from beginning to end. What a great way to show our children how to pray to our Lord and Savior.



The children venerating the Icon Corner in their classroom.

Tricky Tray Event

On Friday, October 4, St. Mary Byzantine Catholic Church hosted it's famous Tricky Tray event to a capacity crowd. Lodge 254 member Marge Pavol was the chairwomen and coordinator of the event. It took plenty of Lodge 254 and church members to make this event a success. More than 500 people attended and over \$40,000.⁰⁰ was raised for the parish!



Capacity crowd at the Tricky Tray.

ByzanTeens Fundraiser

Sunday, October 13 the St. Mary Church ByzanTeens prepared pork rolls and egg sandwiches for sale under the watchful eye of coordinator Christina Duncan. This fundraiser was for their 2020 trip to the ByzanTeen Youth Rally in San Diego, CA.

Charlie Bazaral | Vice President
Alberta Folsome | Auditor



Youth fundraiser.

Lodge 258

HERMITAGE, PA



Recently Lodge 258 members (from left): Joan Walker, Lucy Mallick and Bill Dzuricsko presented their Matching Funds check to Fr. Kevin Marks (second from left), pastor at St. Michael Church in Hermitage, PA. The lodge sold fundraising tickets and candy bars from Daffins Candies and Philadelphia Candies. Thank you to everyone who participated in this fundraising event.

Lodge 268

MINGO JUNCTION, OH

Piroghi Making

St. John the Baptist Byzantine Catholic Church along with Lodge 268 made pirohi on Saturday, November 16. Thanks to the GCU for the Fraternal Grant the lodge was able to serve a fabulous luncheon! A great day of fellowship, fun and food was had by all while helping out the parish.

Carla Gasser | President



Volunteers from Lodge 268 and St. John work making pirohi.



Announcing the GCU

2020 Art & Photo Contest!

This year's theme: "Invested in... FUN!"

Need some inspiration? Brainstorm:
 What do you like to do for fun?
 What special thing makes it fun?
 Who do you like to have fun with?

If you're 12 or younger, enter your artwork!
 Submission must be original on paper or art board - maximum size 12"x18"
 Include short description of your art, name, age, address, phone number and email on the back of your submission.

Deadline: April 6, 2020

If you're age 13-23 enter your photo! Include short description, name, age, address, phone number and email with your submission. Photos that include identifiable people require a model release. The model release form is available for download at GCUusa.com/events.

One entry per member. All contestants must be a GCU member for one year. Membership and age is determined as of March 31, 2020. Visit the GCU Website for complete rules and details.

Lodge 302

BRECKSVILLE, OH

One World Day at the Cleveland Cultural Gardens

On August 25, 2019 several members of GCU Lodge 302 attended this unique annual event held in Cleveland, OH.

Blessing of Christ the Good Shepherd Monument

On Sunday, September 29, 2019, over 170 people were in attendance for the blessing of Christ the Good Shepherd monument which arrived from St. Eugene Byzantine Church in Bedford, OH. St. Eugene parish closed in January of 2019. Bishop Milan Lach requested that it be moved to St. Joseph Byzantine Church in Brecksville, OH since many former St. Eugene parishioners now attend services at St. Joseph parish. Thanks to Lodge 302, the Men's Club and some private donations, there was zero cost to move the monument to its new location.



Monument Blessing.

"Retro 60's Party"

A benefit for *The Up Side of Downs*, sponsored by GCU Lodge 302, took place on Saturday, October 5, 2019 at the New Orleans Party Center at St. Joseph Byzantine Catholic Church. Over 100 people attended the Retro 60's Party themed event. Some even dressed up in their best 60's outfits.

The evening's entertainment was the female singing group, The Pop Tarts. The group performed numerous favorite songs from the 60's with wonderful harmony. Dressed in black dresses and colorful Go-Go boots, the ladies encouraged the people to dance, and walked around singing at all the tables. During intermission, those dressed in 60's styles were asked to come forward, so that The Pop Tarts could decide "best dressed." The winner was a woman dressed in white Go-Go boots and a "British Invasion" dress.

A buffet dinner was served along with an ice cream sundae/root beer float for dessert.



Kids at the Trunk or Treat event.



President Judy Weitzel and Treasurer Mike Andrako, present a check in the amount of \$7,468.⁴⁶ to Toni Mullee of *The Up Side of Downs* organization.

Sideboards, a Chinese auction with over 40 baskets, silent auction and 50/50 were available for the patrons to purchase and win.

Thanks to the committee who worked hard to make this an evening of musical memories and fun—all for a good cause.



Lodge members and guests enjoying the Retro 60's Party.

Trunk or Treat

Lodge 302 again sponsored a fun and safe Halloween event for children on Sunday, October 27. Close to thirty children had fun "Trunk or Treating" in the St. Joseph's parking lot—receiving candy from the participating vehicles.

Painting with a Twist

This was a first time Lodge 302 sponsored social event at "Painting with a Twist" located in Strongsville, OH. A group of ladies enjoyed an evening of snacks and beverages while they

CONTINUED

UPCOMING LODGE 302 EVENTS

1st Quarter Meeting

Sunday, February 2, 2020

Following 10:30 AM Liturgy

St. Joseph Church, Brecksville, OH

Annual Adult Game Night

Saturday, March 7, 2020

5:30 PM - 10 PM

Bring Snacks and Beverages

St. Joseph Activity Center, Brecksville, OH



Painting with a Twist.

Lodge 302 CONTINUED

were instructed how to paint a snowman with the "Let It Snow" theme. The fun evening took place on Wednesday, November 6 and certainly will be planned again in the future.

Election of the 2020 Officers

At the annual Lodge 302 meeting, officers were re-elected to their current positions and the Oath of Office was administered by National Director Michael Karaffa.

Christine Bratnick | Publicity Director



John Krenisky, Cultural Garden, Treasurer Michael Andrako, President Judy Weitzel, Recording Secretary Bonnie Ciresi, Publicity Director Christine Bratnick, Sergeant-at-Arms Jerry Holderbaum and National Director Michael Karaffa. Missing: Athletic Director & Fraternal Activity Director Jean Karaffa.



Agnes Klyap.

Lodge 351

INDIANA, PA

Ham & Halupki Dinner

Lodge 351 held a Ham & Holupki Matching Funds Dinner on October 27, 2019 to benefit St. Jude Byzantine Catholic Church in Ernest, PA. Members of Saint Jude and other volunteers from

the nearby community worked together to make this dinner a success.

The recipe that was used for the halupki was handed down through the generations from the ladies who came from Eastern Europe to live in the small coal mining town of Ernest, PA and attend St. Jude. It was noted by one parishioner that the holupki tasted just like his mother used to make, which was a huge compliment, since his mother was one of the original holupki makers from the early 1950's. Once again Agnes Klyap directed the holupki makers in the correct way to roll them, so they would all cooked up nicely in the roasters. Haluski was also on the menu as well as home-made cakes.

Although many weeks of planning and preparation went into this dinner, it was so much fun that members of Lodge 351 are planning to hold another dinner in the Fall of 2020. With prayer and some hard work, members of Lodge 351 are happy to report that all things are possible with God's help.

Patty Yamrick | Publicity Director



Sheila Henry, Theresa Frederick and Pam Hill.

Lodge 360

CAMPBELL, OH

Three Tier Chinese Auction

St. Michael Parish and Lodge 360 co-sponsored a wonderful event on Sunday, September 8. The annual Three Tier Chinese Auction had donations of over 300 prizes and was tremendous fun and a great success. Lodge 360 held an individual giveaway of a Christmas tree

with \$200.00 in gift cards attached to it. Pictured is Lodge 360 President Ed Stanko selling tickets for the tree, along with Christopher & Aubrey Vokish and Brooklyn Chetsko parish children and gift runners for the event.

Lisa Kinnick Romito |
Secretary-Treasurer



Lodge 401

NANTY GLO, PA

Annual Ham & Halupki Dinner

Members of Lodge 401, held a Ham & Halupki dinner on Sunday, November 3, 2019. The event was held in the hall of St. Nicholas Byzantine Catholic Church. Volunteers prepared for 200 dinners and were happy and surprised the dinner was a total sellout.

To make the dinner happen volunteers shopped for the dry products & food items; advertised in newspapers, church bulletins & area businesses; cleaned the hall & kitchen; prepped all the food; schedule a work crew for the kitchen & dining room; made desserts; sold tickets; set & dressed the tables; welcomed the guests; waited tables and of course-helped with the cleanup. A sincere thank you to all the volunteers with a special “shout-out” to Millie Fenchak and Shirley Oblinsky for being present everyday of preparation. May God bless all of the volunteers for their charitable work.



Steve Bender and his sister Lynn at the Ham & Halupki Dinner.

Dinner and a Movie

On Sunday, November 17, 2019 members of Lodge 401 and St. Nicholas Byzantine Catholic Church gathered in the church hall after the 11 AM Liturgy for “Dinner and a Movie.” This is the second time the lodge has sponsored such an event.

Instead of a theatrical movie attendees viewed the premier DVD of the Hierarchical Divine Liturgy and Dinner celebrating the 100th Anniversary of the parish. Although the celebration was held in May of this year, final editing of the footage and copying was just completed.

A dinner of chicken and biscuits was enjoyed by the approximately 20 people in attendance.

Eugene Ostinowsky | Vice-President



Jerry Nedrich, a member of St. Nicholas Church and the food pantry staff.

Annual Food Drive

GCU Lodge 401 held their annual food drive with items being donated to the Interfaith Food Pantry. All donated items were distributed during November in time for Thanksgiving. A total of 25 bags were donated by members of the Lodge 401 and members of St. Nicholas Byzantine Catholic Church.

Greater Hazleton Regional Lodge

HAZLETON, PA

The days are short and the nights are long, so it is time to get ready for the Miracle of Christmas and the challenges of winter in Northeastern PA.

4th Quarter Meeting

As usual GHRL had a bevy of activities these past few months. The 4th quarter meeting was held on Sunday, October 13 at SS. Peter & Paul in Beaver Meadows, PA. GCU Director George Kofel presented the Fraternalist of the Year award to Agnes Rohrbach and commended her on all that she does for the lodge and the GCU. A list of activities for the year 2020 was presented, final plans were put



Members at the Miracle of Christmas Show.

together for the St. Nicholas Dinner and a slate of officers was nominated. Serving in 2020 will be President Deacon Larry Foran; Vice President John (Rick) Hoppey; Secretary,

CONTINUED

Greater Hazleton Regional Lodge CONTINUED

Athletic & Activities Director Agnes Rohrbach; Treasurer Ann Marie Betterly; Publicity & Assistant Athletic Director Judy Kringer; Auditors Judy Betterly & Michael Komishock and Chaplains Fr. Peter Donish & Fr. Gregory Hosler. GCU Directors George Kofel and Dorothy Ann Foran administered the oath of office.

GHRL Keeping Busy

Helping Hands Day was held at Holy Annunciation Monastery on October 26 and the lodge's hayride was finally held after cancelling twice because of rain, at Thomas Farms, the same afternoon. Lottery Calendars were sold for the month of November and the proceeds will be distributed to four area churches and four charitable organizations. On Saturday, November 2, a bus trip to Sight and Sound Theater was held to see the Miracle of Christmas and to enjoy a family style dinner at Good-N-Plenty Restaurant. Saturday, November 16, seventeen volunteers came to help clean the church hall, kitchen and various areas of St. John's Church in Hazleton. Sunday, November 17, it was off to Wind Creek Casino to do some gambling and Christmas shopping at the outlets. The annual St. Nicholas Dinner was held on Sunday, December 1 at Capriotti's—scholarship winner Morgan Kaschak and athletic scholarship winner Adam Keselicka were honored.



The cleaning crew at Helping Hands at St. John's Church.

Parish Expansion

Parish Expansion projects were held at St. Michael BC Church in McAdoo, PA (*church lighting*) they had a Chinese Auction and food sale; SS. Peter & Paul in Minersville, PA had a turkey dinner with all the trimmings (*sidewalk repairs*) and St. Mary BC Church in Hazleton had a pirohi fund raiser sale (*church repairs*).



Hayride at Thomas Farms.

Thank You

I would like to thank Deacon Larry Foran for the nomination as GCU Fraternalist of the Year and the GCU Board for the award. It is a great honor and I am very grateful to everyone who had the confidence to present this great award to me. Thank you for the monetary donation, which benefited three different organizations.

I would also like to take this time to thank the GCU Home Office for all their help in fulfilling all the GHRL requests, the Fraternal Grants, the gifts and their dedicated time. Thanks also to all the volunteers from the lodge that help make all of the projects a great success.

Here is wishing the entire GCU world a very Blessed and Merry Christmas and a very Healthy and Happy New Year. Remember to keep "Christ" in Christmas!

As always, remember that dates are subject to change. If you are in doubt about a meeting or an event, please call 570-454-4869 or if you are computer savvy, check out the GCU Website for updates or new postings.

Until then, take care and May God Bless!!

Agnes Rohrbach | Activities Director

UPCOMING GHRL EVENTS

1st Quarter Meeting

Sunday, January 26, 2020

2 PM

St. Michael Byzantine Catholic Church, McAdoo, PA

Pre-Lenten Casino Trip (Wind Creek Casino)

Sunday, February 23, 2020

Jr. Bowling Tournament

Sunday, March 29, 2020

1 PM

Bowl-Arena, West Hazleton, PA



CPRL participants at the hayride and pumpkin picking event.

Central Pittsburgh Regional Lodge CARRICK, GREENFIELD & SOUTHSIDE-PITTSBURGH, PA

Hayride at Duda's Farm

On Saturday, October 5, twenty-three participants spent a day on Duda's Farm in Brownsville, PA. The weather was one of the best hayride days CPRL has had - sunny and in the 60's. The picnic was ready to start at noon; however, the pizza was late due to a call-off at the local pizza shop. Not to be discouraged, appetizers of taco dip and veggie dip were served as everyone proceeded straight to the games. Games for children and adults this year included the several dice games, Left-Right game, candy pick, vegetable pick and bingo.

Following pizza, appetizers, games and toasting of marshmallows, the remainder of the afternoon was dedicated to the hayride and pumpkin patch. The CPRL group moved to the head of the line and board the next available tractor. After a long ride meandering through the farm countryside and sighting many scarecrows, a stop was made in the pumpkin patch. Each person got to pick their own pumpkin.

Upon arriving back at the farm, the attendees were free to shop and play.



Msgr. Russell Duker, Norma Langol and Beth Gulyasy.

A Big Thank You

This time of year, we all take time to recognize the need to give thanks for blessings received throughout the year. With that thought in mind, St. Pius X Church in Carrick, PA would like to give a big thank you to the GCU Central Pittsburgh Regional Lodge (CRPL) for their support with

two big fundraising events.

The lodge supported the parish's Great Fast Pirohi/Halushki sale. The Matching Funds were designated for renovations & repairs in the church.

CPRL also supported the Sam Langol "Benefit Bingo" through Community Matching Funds. The family was given a check for over \$4,000.00 to help them with travel expenses to different facilities for Sam's treatments & mobility devices. Without the ongoing support of our fraternally based GCU, the parish would not be able to support these worthy causes.



Athletic winners for 2019.

Annual Meeting and 50 Year Recognition

On Sunday November 10 CPRL hosted its Annual Meeting including recognition of 50 year members, athletic winners and election of officers. Congrats to all existing officers who will continue serving CPRL and new officers, Secretary Butch Bittner and Auditor Pat Kutzfara.



Members on the Run Again

John, Jackie and Angela (1st timer) Kutzfara ran in the 40th Nationwide Children's Hospital Columbus Half Marathon on Sunday, October 20. Fireworks lit the crisp, dawn sky as they started the race. Each mile, they were cheered on by special patients from the hospital. All three successfully crossed the finish line and received their medals.

Kim Kolesar | Trustee

Beth Gulyasy | Trustee

Melanie Basl | Publicity Director

Southeast Pittsburgh Regional Lodge

MUNHALL & CLAIRTON, PA

Annual Clothing Drive

The SEPRL held their annual clothing drive at St. John the Baptist Cathedral during the month of September. There were plenty of bags of clothing, some still with tags on them, for men, women and children. The Steel Valley Middle and High School sponsors a Caring Closet for students in the district in need of warm clothing and school clothing. Several large bags of clothing were donated to this cause.

The Duquesne Women's Club at SS. Peter & Paul Church was collecting hats, scarfs and gloves, so a box of those items was donated to their cause. The remainder of the bags were donated to the St. Vincent dePaul Bundle Day. They sent a truck to Munhall that was loaded with the many bags of clothing remaining.

A huge thank you to Bernadine McTaggart who sent a box of knitted and crocheted hats, gloves and scarfs and a huge thank you to all who dropped off clothes, helped to sort clothes and helped load the truck.



Carol Lawson, Patty Bovee and Steve Dumblosky help with the St. Vincent dePaul clothing pick up.



Pat Evans & Pat Ivan selling Kathedral kolache & cheregi at the craft show.

Annual Craft Show

St. John Cathedral held its 10th annual Craft Show on Saturday, October 19. There were 46 vendors at 55 tables. The kitchen served holupki, dumpling haluski, kielbasi, hot dogs, fresh cut fries and wedding soup.

The SEPRL booth sold the parish's famous Kathedral Kolache in nut, nut/apricot, apricot, poppyseed and lekvar. There were also nut horns, apricot horns, lady locks, apricot/nut torte, raspberry/nut torte, cheregi and chocolate covered pretzels with a Halloween theme.

A constant crowd passed through all day. Vendors were very pleased with the items that were sold. St. John's parish also held a Boo Bucks fundraiser, a vendor's auction and a lottery/gift card tree valued at over \$300.⁰⁰ in conjunction with the craft show.

Thanks to all lodge and Cathedral members who attended and supported this event. The funds raised will help to pay for the replacement of the Cathedral Center roof.



Group in front of Titusville Railroad.

Parish Field Trip

The Ascension Church parish field trip was held on Sunday, October 20. Father Ivan Mina offered an early Liturgy and blessing for a safe trip to start the day. First stop, Franklin, PA to the DeBence Antique Music Museum. It was an interesting experience to see and hear so many music boxes, Victrola's and piano's dating from the 1800's in working order and to see the motors and mechanics inside many of the instruments. The tour guide allowed the children an opportunity to demonstrate a pump organ and organ grinder's box. They also put coins in nickelodeons and juke boxes listening to the music. Next stop was the Oil Creek/ Titusville RR. It was a beautiful fall day to experience a train ride through the wooded areas and along the river. There was a refreshment car and an open-air car to enjoy nature on the ride. The day ended with dinner at Cracker Barrel Restaurant.



Natalie Tomkowity playing a song on an organ grinder music box.

Brunch and Annual Meeting

On Sunday, November 3 SEPRL had their annual meeting at Seven Oaks Country Club in Beaver, PA. After a delicious brunch, the group met to review business and hold elections for the new year. Officers are President Trish Roberts, Treasurer Patty Bovee, Secretary Mary Lou Salago and Auditors Barb Gomolak & Carolyn Nista. Trish and Patty will continue to share the publicity director position. Father Andrew Deskevich has agreed to continue as the lodge chaplain.

Veterans Day Recognitions Held

Veterans Day was celebrated at both SEPRL parishes Ascension Church in Clairton and St. John Cathedral in Munhall during Liturgy on Sunday, November 10. At Ascension parish everyone wore patriotic carnations and attended a social following Liturgy. The CCD instructors and children presented a program on the meaning of Veteran's Day opening with the Pledge of Allegiance and leading the group in This Land is Your Land. Each child decorated a letter from the word "veteran" and told the audience what it meant to them. They also presented veterans with a special

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Southeast Pittsburgh Regional Lodge

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prayer card. John Duchko shared a display of medals and military items from his service time in Viet Nam. Father Ivan Mina concluded the program as he invited the veterans to come together for a special blessing.

At the Cathedral, Fr. Andrew Deskevich remembered the veterans with petitions throughout the Liturgy. Following the Liturgy, he held a special blessing for all the veterans in attendance. A light breakfast and fellowship were then enjoyed in the church social hall. During the month of November, the lodge collected a list of items that were donated to the VA Hospital and new socks for a veterans' homeless shelter.



Food Drive

A nonperishable Food Drive was held at St. John Cathedral during the first two weeks of November. Over 400 pounds of food valued at over \$700.00, was collected and donated to the Pittsburgh Food Bank along with Matching Funds from the collection of \$700.00. Thank you to Agnes Borsh for once again coordinating the food drive for SEPRL.

Trish Roberts | President

Patty Bovee | Treasurer



Veterans Blessing.

Northwest Pittsburgh Regional Lodge

MCKEES ROCKS, PA

Fall Helping Hands Day

Every fall Holy Ghost Northside, PA parishioners gather to spruce up the interior, public areas and grounds. Outdoors the crew pulled all the dirt, weeds and plants from the sidewalks and curbs on the block around the church and social hall buildings. Inside major cleaning of all surfaces and trim was done. Professional plumbers also installed the backflow preventer now required by the City of Pittsburgh building code.



Cleaning Holy Ghost Church.

Fighting Fore Roman Golf Outing

On Saturday, August 17, 2019, the fourth annual "Fighting Fore Roman Golf Outing" was held at Quicksilver Golf Course. Over 136 golfers, 20 volunteers and many local businesses came together to support and participate in this annual event. The event raises money for The Children's Tumor Foundation via Cupid's Charities. The Children's Tumor Foundation is a non-profit organization that works tirelessly to raise money to fund scientific research that is based on finding treatment and a cure for Neurofibromatosis. In 2014, Roman began his fight against this rare genetic disorder called Neurofibromatosis (NF). NF1 causes tumors to grow on nerves, spine and brain.



The Carr family at the golf outing.

CONTINUED

Northwest Pittsburgh Regional Lodge

CONTINUED

It can cause blindness, learning disabilities and severe chronic pain. Through this golf outing, participants support the fight against NF. Northwest Pittsburgh Regional Lodge provided generous support towards this event!

4th Quarter Meeting

The NWPRL held their 4th quarter meeting on Sunday, November 17. The lodge comes into the 4th quarter having supported three Byzantine parishes to the fullest extent with Matching Funds including special events for the ByzanTEEN Youth group. Along with the full matching funds events for community service with the Pittsburgh VA Fisher House and Fighting FORE Roman. The lodge completed three of the five event grants with the final two planned for this quarter. Along with

various events and gifts throughout the year via general funds.

President Tina Burns presented the Matching Funds check for the Fighting FORE Roman Golf Tournament to Roman who attended to personally thank the GCU and the lodge for their support. This annual event raised funds for research by the Children's

Tumor foundation. Roman and his extended family are all GCU members and are working hard to find a cure for this progressive and debilitating problem with multiple annual events.

NPRL looks forward to another great year in 2020.

Steve Puluka | Secretary-Treasurer



Michael Carr (Roman's brother), Mitch Galiyas (lodge auditor and Roman's grandfather), Roman Carr and Tina Burns (lodge president).

Lodge 697

WEIRTON, WV

Helping Hands Day

A much needed landscaping upgrade was recently undertaken at St. Mary Byzantine Catholic Church in Weirton. Pastor Fr. Vasyl Symyon, GCU members and parish volunteers gathered to assist with the labor intensive work.

Some of the improvements included moving and painting of the church sign—bringing it closer to the entrance of the church. Rebuilding the cinder block wall leading to the social hall. Removal of old landscape plants & shrubs and the planting of new ones. Lastly, volunteers spread 10 tons of gravel and decorative rock around the



The newly moved and painted church sign.

plants and church building.

The final touch was Fr. Vasyl repainting the statue of the Blessed Mother outside of the church. St. Mary parish is grateful for the monetary assistance given by the GCU through the Helping Hands Fraternal Grant.

Janet Winwood

Lodge 860

DETROIT, MI

Annual Reunion Dinner

A catered meal at St. Nicholas Church Hall in Clinton Township, MI was the setting for a gathering of Lodge 860 members, their families and guests at the lodge's Annual Fall Reunion Dinner held on Sunday, October 13.

Following the 11 AM Divine Liturgy and a Panachida for deceased members of the lodge, folks gathered in the church hall to reunite and reminisce since last they met.

To recap for those involved and to pique interest among newcomers, Vice President George Nagrant spoke of the lodge's activities over the past year and announced a few upcoming events.

A 50/50 drawing was held and several gift cards from the Home Office were given away.



Children show off their costumes at the Halloween party.

Halloween Festivities

Costumed children, seasonal décor, festive food, creative games, decorated pumpkins and of course, gobs of candy and treats! All were featured at the annual Halloween party at St. Nicholas Church in Clinton Township, on Sunday, October 27.

After 11 AM Divine Liturgy in the church, parishioners,

lodge members and guests were treated to a pizza luncheon in the parish social hall. The children quickly transformed into their getups and gear to compete in fun games for prizes, decorate their own individual pumpkins and get goody bags, all with a contribution from Lodge 860.



Annual Reunion Dinner.

Fun Fraternal Rivalry Pervades in Trivia Competition

The sixth annual Lodge 860 Trivia Night event drew six teams of knowledgeable gamers out in chilly fall weather to compete for cash prizes (and bragging rights) at St. Nicholas Church Hall in Clinton Township, on the evening of Saturday, November 9.

Settling in after a light supper, the teams consulted amongst their players for consensus on the best answers to several sets of clever and challenging trivia questions in various categories.

Lodge member, event organizer and Trivia Master Anne Nagrant outdid herself this year with creative categories of questions in wide-ranging levels of difficulty, extended bonus rounds, and a spiffed-up slide display!

No team of wanna-be know-it-alls actually knew it all! But all teams split cash prizes of varying amounts depending upon their final ranking amongst their members from the \$2 admission charges collected—so everyone was a winner!



First prize winning team at Trivia Night.



One of the teams at Trivia Night.

Val Marszalec | Fraternal Activities & Publicity Director

Lodge 945

DUNMORE, PA

Fall Helping Hands Day

Six members from Lodge 945 traveled south on Route 81 on Saturday, October 26, 2019 joining 25 other volunteers at the Holy Annunciation Monastery in Sugarloaf, PA for the GCU Fall Helping Hands Day. Grass mowing, tree cutting, flower bed clean-up along with external building repairs were some of the many chores at hand to prepare for the upcoming winter season. After a busy morning of work, all were treated to lunch and of course the delicious baked good delights made by the Sisters.

Newspaper Drive

A successful newspaper drive to benefit the Mini Horse Corral at the Holy Annunciation Monastery was held by the lodge and St. Michael Byzantine Parish in Dunmore, PA. Lodge members pictured at the "Shredding Corral" are GCU National Director George Kofel, Sharon Kofel, Sister Kristina, Betty Salva, Myron Fedor, Chris Zayac and Mary "Topy" Zayac.



Newspaper Drive for Holy Annunciation Monastery.

Children's Halloween Party

Lodge 945 partnered with the Sherwood Youth Association to sponsor a Children's Halloween Party at the playground. Thanks to a \$200.00 Community Fraternal Grant from the GCU, the children had a wonderful day enjoying food, soft drinks and Halloween treats. Joining members of Sherwood Youth Association and filling over 120 bags of goodies, which were given to each child, were GCU National Director George Kofel, lodge member Myron Fedor, SYA President Matt Fedor and lodge member Susan Brace.

Christmas Angel Tree

A Christmas Angel Tree gift project to benefit the veterans at the Gino Merli Veterans Center in Scranton, PA is currently underway through December 22, 2019 at St. Michael Parish in Dunmore. Any lodge member who wishes to participate and make a donation to the Veteran Center may pick up an angel at St. Michael or can purchase one or more of the following items: Sweat pants and/or tops, socks (dress, sport, and/or diabetic), light blankets and sweaters or long sleeve pullover shirts (sizes and gender are your choice on all items). You are asked to place them unwrapped in a Christmas bag and bring to St. Michael Church vestibule either Saturday evenings between 4:30 and 6 PM, or Sunday between 8:30 and 10 AM. For more information, you may contact George Kofel at 570-241-2256.

Condolences

On a sad note, Lodge member Elsie Kolcun passed away on October 15, 2019. She served Lodge 945 as Publicity Director for the last 10 years. Prior to her move to Dunmore, she played an active role in the GCU serving in various capacities for the former District 1 and the former Lodge 117 in Duquesne, PA. Most importantly to me, she was a kind, and loving mother, mother-in-law, grandmother, great grandmother and friend. My family and all those who knew her will truly miss her. May God grant her eternal memory.



Sharon Kofel joined Sister Marija in the Mini Horse Corral for a photo with 2 of the 50 mini horses boarded there.

Thanksgiving Feed-A-Friend Project

In conjunction with St. Michael's Parish in Dunmore, Lodge 945 held its annual Matching Funds Thanksgiving Day Feed-A-Friend Project which benefited the Scranton Rescue Mission. The project was ongoing at the date of this publication. Results will be reported in the next issue.

By the time you receive this issue of the *GCU Magazine*, the Thanksgiving Day dinners have been digested, Black Friday sales are behind and many are now caught up in the hustle and bustle of the Christmas Season. Seasonal lights and decorations drape our dwellings. The delightful aroma of the delicious holiday baked goods is wafting through our households. Online shopping and sprints from store to store in search of that last-minute gift to place under the tree seems to be part of our daily activity. I hope that each of you can find a moment for yourself and reflect on the true meaning of the Holiday Season. The perfect Christmas Gift was given to us many years ago in a manger in Bethlehem through the birth of our Savior Jesus Christ.

At this time, on behalf of the officers and members of Lodge 945, I would like to wish all the families and friends in the GCU World a very Blessed Christmas Season and a Happy, Healthy and Prosperous New Year!

Christ is Born! Glorify Him! Christos Razdajetsja! Slavite Jeho!

George Kofel | Publicity Director

Holy Annunciation Monastery



District 5 members making donation to Hegumena Marija.



Greater Hazleton Regional Lodge presented a check to Hegumena Marija.



Lodge 17 members making donation to Hegumena Marija.



Group waiting for instructions from Hegumena Marija.



Doing some work at the entrance way of the Monastery.

Sugarloaf, PA

On Saturday, October 26 it was time to help get Holy Annunciation Monastery and its grounds ready for the winter.

Liturgy was celebrated at 8^{am} by Fr. Scott Boghosian, then it was time to get to work—of course there is always plenty to do. There were volunteers from District 5, GHRL and some new faces this time around. All in all about 30 people came out to help.

The grass received its final mowing for the year, there were perennials to be pulled out of the ground, cutting back of the peonies, some raking of the property grounds, tree branches that were damaged by storms were cut off and all of the grounds received a sprucing up.

For volunteers unable to work outside, there is always the boxes to be made for the bake sales and this year it was time to sort out the good walnuts from the broken pieces for the baked goods.

As always, there is a fresh pot of coffee waiting for the help along with homemade cookies.

Hegumena Marija thanked everyone for coming and said the meal prayer. The group sang God Grant Her Many Years



Sharon Kofel, Toppay Zayac and Betty Salva.

and offered prayers for her and the Sisters at the Monastery.

Lunch included spaghetti & meat balls, garlic bread, Klondike Ice Cream bars and refreshments.

Presentations were made to Hegumena Marija by GHRL, District 5, various lodges and individuals.

Thanks once again to all who volunteered—all are welcome for the Spring Helping Hands Day Saturday, June 6, 2020.

Agnes Rohrbach | GHRL Activities Director

Openness to God's Will at Come and See 2019



Seminarians and "Come and See" retreat attendees gather in the Byzantine Catholic Seminary chapel.

Friday, November 1 to Sunday, November 3, 2019, sixteen men came from the four Ruthenian Eparchies (Pittsburgh, Passaic, Parma, and Phoenix) and the Melkite Eparchy of Newton to visit the Byzantine Catholic Seminary of Ss. Cyril and Methodius in Pittsburgh. They were there for a discernment retreat accurately titled "Come and See." The idea behind the weekend was to help retreatants prayerfully discern God's calling by living with the seminarians and getting a taste of the experience of seminary life.

I was one of the men to attend this great weekend of prayer and fraternity. Prayer formed the structure of the retreat with beautiful Liturgical services, including Vespers, Compline, Festival Matins, Divine Liturgies, and 9th Hour, led by Fathers Will Rupp, Robert Pipta and Joel Barstad. There were also short classes and talks led by various seminary instructors, spiritual directors and the seminarians themselves.

Fraternity was also a significant part of the weekend. The seminarians were each assigned participants in order to mentor them. This provided for some very good spiritual conversations on discernment and life in general. The ice cream social was a very enjoyable event. It provided time for the attendees and the seminarians to talk, play games, and have genuine human interaction, which is something we all miss in today's tech focused world. I particularly appreciated a long

conversation with the seminary's head cantor, where we talked about Byzantine musical melodies for almost an hour.

One of the rules for the weekend was "phones-off," which strongly encouraged us to interact with each other and be able to focus on God during times of silence.

This weekend was very powerful in my life. Discerning God's will is important for me; I have been praying in front of my icon corner at home and at the Divine Liturgy asking for a clearer understanding of His will for me for quite some time. Attending this weekend was a significant part of my continuing discernment. With the meditative prayer, disconnection from the world, and the fraternity of men in discernment and formation, it really helped all of us to focus on God's plan and hear Him more clearly. I do not yet know fully if God is calling me to the priesthood, but this weekend was a very good aid in teaching me how to listen more diligently and peacefully for the voice of His call.

Benjamin Cafeo | Saint Mary Church, Windber, PA



Preparing to hear the gospel proclamation at Divine Liturgy.



Seminarian Riley Winstead delivers a witness talk on discernment and internal struggle.



Seminarians respond to a question during the panel discussion.

For Your Information

Events

Carpathian Homeland Tour

Always wanted to experience the Carpathian Homeland, meet your relatives, walk where your ancestors walked? Here's your chance... the 2020 Rusyn Heritage Tour, led by C-RS President Emeritus John Righetti. Dates of the tour are June 22-July 3, 2020. Trip includes visits in Slovakia, Poland and Ukraine. To get the itinerary or for additional information contact Mr. Righetti at rusynone@gmail.com or 412-518-7149.

Available

Carpathian Cookery Cookbook



Having sold over 17,000 copies, the cookbook has entered its 18th printing and was requested by the Library of Congress to be in their ethnic cooking collection. The 330-page cookbook has a new look and features a protective plastic cover. The book includes sections on Christmas and Easter customs and recipes, traditional Rusyn and Slavic foods, other ethnic dishes, and many other tried-and-true recipes of St. John's parishioners. There is a variety of paska bread and kolachi (filled roll) recipes, as well as meatless dishes and Lenten recipes, suitable for the Great Fast, as well as the Pre-Christmas Fast. The cost of the cookbook is \$14.⁰⁰ plus \$4.⁰⁰ postage and handling (\$18.⁰⁰). If ordering from Canada, please send a \$27.⁰⁰ U.S. Postal money order payable in U.S. dollars to reflect the difference in the exchange rate and postage cost. To order please send a check or money order to: Ethnic Craft Club, St. John Byzantine Catholic Church, 201 E. Main Street, Uniontown, PA 15401, call 724-438-6027 (M-F 9 AM-3 PM please leave a message) or email carpathiancookery@gmail.com.

Earn Your Master's Degree in Theology with the Byzantine Catholic Seminary

The Byzantine Catholic Seminary of Ss. Cyril & Methodius in Pittsburgh, PA is celebrating a semester of accomplishments. This fall, we are pleased to welcome Seminary board member and our 2017 Master of Arts in Theology (M.A.T.) graduate Helenanne Hochendoner to our slate of online instructors for the M.A.T. program. Ms. Hochendoner is teaching Introduction to Sacred Scripture, one of the required courses for the M.A.T. degree.

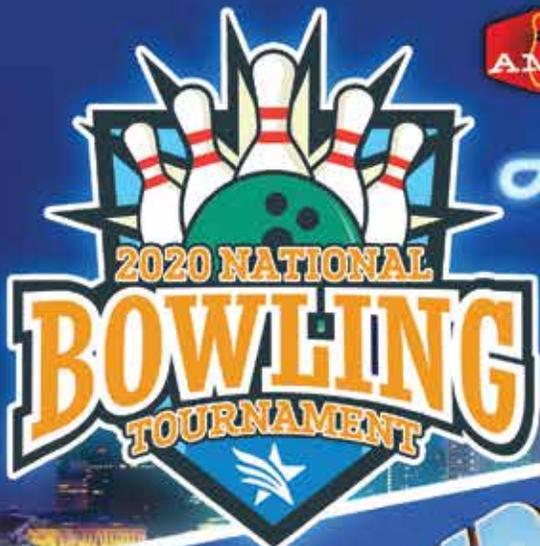
This fall has also seen the largest online course enrollment to date, with an average of eight students per class. Also, owing to our cooperative agreement with the Washington Theological Consortium, we have two students from member schools outside of Pittsburgh—both from United Lutheran Seminary in Gettysburg, PA.

For those who might be considering being part of the Seminary's School of Theology – open to men and women of different denominations, please look for more details by visiting: <https://www.bcs.edu>.

The Byzantine Catholic Seminary is a community of mentors, teachers, and students forming leaders for the Church in an environment of Christian unity, integrity, and missionary spirit with a commitment to ecumenism. Founded in 1950, the Byzantine Catholic Seminary is a free-standing, English speaking theological seminary, welcoming all those seeking the knowledge possessed by the Eastern ecclesial traditions.

The Seminary is authorized to grant graduate degrees by the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania and accredited by the Commission on Accrediting of the Association of Theological Schools. The Seminary operates as a non-profit 501(c)(3) organization incorporated in Pennsylvania and is governed by a Board of Directors under the leadership of the Metropolitan Archbishop of Pittsburgh.

If you would like more information about this topic, please call the Seminary Office at 412-321-8383 or email: office@bcs.edu.



Brookgate Lanes



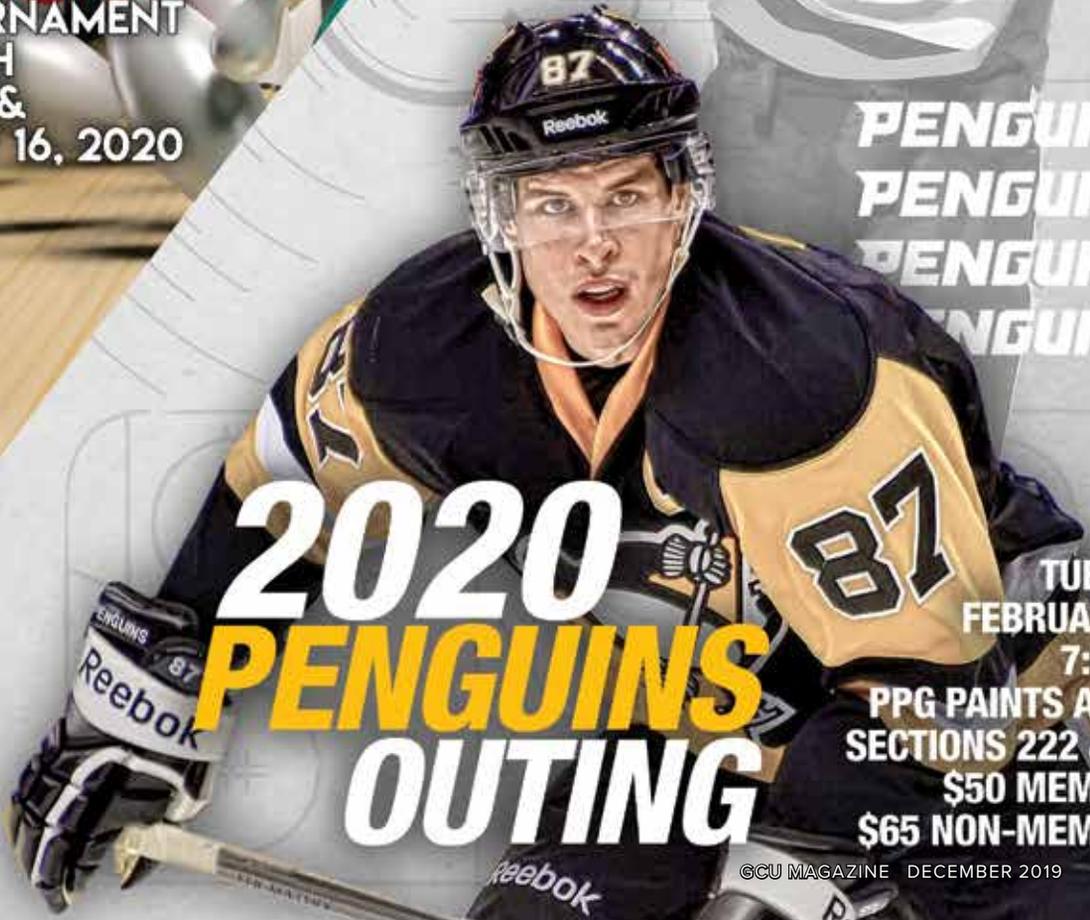
2020 NATIONAL BOWLING TOURNAMENT CLEVELAND, OH FRIDAY, MAY 15 & SATURDAY, MAY 16, 2020



VERSUS



PENGUINS
PENGUINS
PENGUINS
PENGUINS



2020 PENGUINS OUTING

TUESDAY
FEBRUARY 18
7:00PM
PPG PAINTS ARENA
SECTIONS 222 & 223
\$50 MEMBERS
\$65 NON-MEMBERS



Deceased Members

(Lodge-Member-City-State)

- 8341 Leotha L. Arnold, Youngstown, OH
994 Marlene A. Bannon, Pittsburgh, PA
10 Margaret Barilla, Monaca, PA
336 William E. Basalla, Lakewood, OH
8344 Mildred Batiste, Monongahela, PA
66 Benjamin Bennett, Indianapolis, IN
8344 Janelle Bergandino, Allentown, PA
8344 Ruth Billow, Hershey, PA
CPRL Irene Blehi, Pittsburgh, PA
8341 Charlotte Boone, N Benton, OH
8304 John E. Bosak, Northridge, CA
8344 Martha A. Bossler, Hummelstown, PA
999 Bernard Boston, Sun Lakes, AZ
8344 Carl Brickner, McMurray, PA
8344 Miriam C. Brooks, Hollidaysburg, PA
999 Dorothy Brown, Sun City West, AZ
8344 Susanna Brown, Warminster, PA
8344 Philomena Bruno, Verona, PA
20 John F. Burd, Newtown, PA
8344 Anna V. Busony, Johnstown, PA
8344 Linda M. Campana, Pittsburgh, PA
8344 Dino Canton, Coraopolis, PA
8344 Phyllis Chabassol, Washington, PA
999 Charles Christenson, Chandler, AZ
8344 Sandra J. Conklin, Saylorsburg, PA
994 Frank Mason Crain, Madisonville, LA
8344 Frank T. DePetro, McKees Rocks, PA
8344 Linda L. Doyle, Lancaster, PA
8335 Thomas Duch, Garfield, NJ
999 Elaine Duffy, Sun City, AZ
8344 Edward C. Eger, Duncansville, PA
8304 Theresa Esquerra, Sacramento, CA
SEPRL John Evans, West Mifflin, PA
8344 Edwin Eyerly, Bloomsburg, PA
8358 Dolores Feaker, Green Bay, WI
8337 Mathew G. Fedak, Niagara Falls, NY
CPRL Donald G. Fix, Pittsburgh, PA
8358 Gladys M. Floerke, Fort Atkinson, WI
8341 Helen Francek, Uniontown, OH
83 Shirley Frobe, Monaca, PA
81 Ethel M. Galida, Connellsville, PA
8341 Mary C. Gallagher, Cincinnati, OH
8344 Francis J. Geary, Pittsburgh, PA
8344 Patricia A. Godshall, King of Prussia, PA
999 Betty Gordon, Tempe, AZ
8344 Robert Graham, Pittsburgh, PA
8344 Carolyn M. Graziano, Warren, PA
8344 Terrien J. Grimsey, Stroudsburg, PA
CPRL Alice Haburchak, Pittsburgh, PA
8360 June E. Hardy, Columbia, SC
8358 Nancy L. Hassell, Appleton, WI
8344 Carol A. Hastings, Pittsburgh, PA
8344 James Hays, Cochranton, PA
8310 Lucille J. Higdon, Thomson, GA
8344 Patricia Hines, Jeannette, PA
CPRL Agnes Hogg, Munhall, PA
8358 Raymond Hoppe, Menasha, WI
8304 David Hunter, Seal Beach, CA
8344 John Husway, Frackville, PA
151 William Huzinec, Jackson, NJ
8344 Dolores Ivanisin, McKees Rocks, PA
999 Lindsey Jackson, Tucson, AZ
93 Evelyn Janocko, Morann, PA
8304 Jose Jimenez Jr, Stanton, CA
8344 Marion A. Kaib, McKees Rocks, PA
8344 Jerome B. Kaplan, Saylorsburg, PA
235 Mark G. Kassey, Plainville, CT
8344 Gerald R. Kimmel, Orwigsburg, PA
8344 Jacque King, Lansdale, PA
8344 John Kish, Ashley, PA
8344 Floyd A. Kline, Cochranton, PA
PSRL Joseph P. Knapp, Oakmont, PA
665 Flora Kocserha, Brick, NJ
69 Thomas Kocur, Chantilly, VA
945 Elsie V. Kolcun, Dunmore, PA
8344 Dorothy Kowalonek, Shenandoah, PA
994 Ann Kramzer, Bridgeville, PA
10 Romanza Krawchyk, Aliquippa, PA
254 John Krochta, Ruskin, FL
8344 Evelyn Kroepil, Sewickley, PA
8358 Helen M. Krohn, Verona, WI
8344 Harriet M. Krzywulak, Doylestown, PA
302 Robert E. Kurilec, Pensacola, FL
625 Helen Kutchma, Johnstown, PA
8304 Juliette Lauder, Alpine, CA
10 Elaine Lawryk, Aliquippa, PA
8344 Harry A. Lehman, Warrington, PA
8327 Inga A. Linder, Plummer, MN
57 Marion Lindstrom, Oldsmar, FL
625 Michael Margetan, Johnstown, PA
8344 James A. Marshall, Orwigsburg, PA
442 Rita M. Mentz, Lisbon, OH
8302 Sabrina L. Michaelson, Phoenix, AZ
151 Jane W. Mikula, New York, NY
994 Kathy Miller, Beaver Falls, PA
8358 Ruth Minami, West Allis, WI
8344 Clarence Minter, Kittanning, PA
8344 John Mudrey, Pottsville, PA
8344 James A. Musante, Warren, PA
8327 Ross B. Naegele, Minneapolis, MN
8344 James Nesmith, Russell, PA
8344 Bernice C. Oleksak, Johnstown, PA
625 Anthony E. Partsch, Johnstown, PA
8344 Thomas D. Patterson, Monaca, PA

SEPRL Elvira Patton, Ocala, FL
 665 John Paulich, Clifton, NJ
 8344 Pauline Pavliak, Export, PA
 8344 Maria R. Pena, East Stroudsburg, PA
 8344 Helen Perilli, Warminster, PA
 8344 Kathleen Peterson,
 Cranberry Twp., PA
 8341 Ruby Phippen, Youngstown, OH
 10 James Pitcavage, Edgeworth, PA
 8344 William O. Pocky,
 North Huntingdon, PA
 8344 William E. Rebar, Merrittstown, PA
 83 Edna M. Reed, Wichita, KS
 8344 Alyce A. Reichard, Transfer, PA
 77 Joan A. Reinhart, Lorain, OH
 8326 Anna Richter, Tampa, FL
 8344 Elizabeth Rosko, Johnstown, PA
 CPRL Stephen Rusinko, Cutler Bay, FL
 8344 Donald Ryber, Erie, PA
 8344 Thelma M. Samarco, Tarentum, PA
 SEPRL Milan Samudosky, West Mifflin, PA
 8304 Gerald Sanchez, Aiken, SC
 PSRL Edwin Sherman, Washington, PA
 8344 Donald Shoaf, Koppel, PA
 8344 Bernice Sitok, Clarksville, PA
 250 John J. Smilnak, Macomb, MI
 8344 Herman P. Sobotka, Glenshaw, PA
 8341 Sara A. Soltesz, Lyndhurst, OH
 10 Virginia Steinfeld, Narberth, PA
 8344 Robert Stickel, Murrysville, PA
 8344 Francis Streitman, Cabot, PA
 20 Mary Sumner, Mont Clare, PA
 8344 David R. Taylor, Indiana, PA
 8313 Sarah E. Taylor, Posen, IL
 8344 Russell Truby, Cheswick, PA
 SEPRL Elizabeth Uhal, McKeesport, PA
 8309 Robert Updegraff,
 Port Charlotte, FL
 8344 Dorothy VanRyn, Verona, PA
 8326 Agnes Veselenak, Livonia, MI
 8344 Kathleen A. Wagner, Murrysville, PA
 8344 John J. Walters, Pittsburgh, PA
 10 Jacqueline Waslo, Baden, PA
 8358 Allen Weirick, Granton, WI
 8344 Evelyn Wilson, Beaver, PA
 321 Mark A. Wolozsnowicz,
 Forbes Road, PA
 8344 Larry C. Wright, Palmyra, PA
 182 Kyle Luke Yadrnak, Kingston, PA
 NPRL Angeline R. Yagulli, Carnegie, PA
 8344 George Yartin, Monessen, PA
 8344 Joseph Zdun, Schwenksville, PA
 8349 Carmen Mary Zganich,
 Santa Fe, TX

Remembrances



Edmund F. Pokorski
Past National Athletic Director

Former GCU National Athletic Director Edmund (Ed) Pokorski of Troy, MI passed away on November 18, 2019. He was born on May 11, 1934.

Ed was a Lodge 860 member of District 11. He was an avid bowler and golfer and served as athletic director of District 11 before assuming the national duties from 1999-2014. He was always visible at the GCU National Golf and Bowling Tournaments.

Ed was the beloved husband of Do-

lores for 59 years; the father of three children: Mark (Karen), Kathy (Ron) Rogers and Matthew (Lori); the grandfather of Allison, Amanda Rogers, Adam, Alex and Charlie and great grandfather of Chloe and Gavin. He was a devoted father and husband—his family was the most important part of his life.

His funeral took place on Friday, November 22 with interment in Resurrection Cemetery in Sterling Heights, MI.

Blessed repose and eternal memory.

Fr. Daniel Bitsko

On September 4, 2019, Fr. Daniel Bitsko fell asleep in the Lord. Father Dan as he was known to all his parishioners and friends, was the pastor of Resurrection Byzantine Catholic Church in Smithtown, NY. He served the parish for 38 years, from its formation until 2005. Fr. Dan worked tirelessly to build up Christ's church both spiritually and physically. Fr. Dan made every effort to live his life as a model of Christ's love for us. Fr. Dan was well known for his tremendous caring and generosity towards others and for the simple lifestyle he chose for himself. He was well known as a lover of sports, animals and of course his parishioners. In addition to his service as priest, Fr. Dan also served others as a member of the Knights of Columbus, a volunteer fireman, chaplain of the local fire department and the NY Islanders hockey team in the NHL.

With all the effort Fr. Dan invested in building the fledgling parish he was entrusted with as a young priest, the parish felt an appropriate memorial for Father Dan would be the restoration of the historic rectory house he lived in during his 38 years at Resurrection Church. The home, which was recently added to the National Register of Historic places, is currently unlivable. It is in need of significant restoration so it may once again house the parish priest. Donations for this memorial may be made to: "Church of the Resurrection—Fr. Dan Memorial Fund" 38 Mayflower Avenue, Smithtown, NY 11787.

Elsie (Vasilisin) Kolcun

On Tuesday, October 15, 2019, Elsie Kolcun of Dunmore, PA and formerly of Duquesne, PA, passed away peacefully at the age of 83. Born in Duquesne, PA she was the daughter of the late Michael & Mary (Chabala) Vasilisin. She was married to the late George Kolcun, whom she shared 53 devoted years with before his passing in 2009. The couple had relocated to Dunmore in 2003 to be near their daughter Sharon and her family. Elsie was a lifelong member of SS. Peter & Paul Byzantine Catholic Church, Duquesne and most recently of St. Michael the Archangel Byzantine Catholic Church, Dunmore.

Elsie was retired from GCU Home Office Claims Department. Prior to relocation, she was a very active member of her church, former GCU Lodge 117, holding the position of secretary for many years and the former District One where she held several different officer positions through the years. She was very instrumental with the fashion shows held by the district to raise funds for the GCU St. Nicholas Chapel. In retirement, Elsie passed the time crocheting, building puzzles, reading mystery novels, surfing the internet for recipes and creeping on social media to keep updated with her family and friends. She loved to cook and bake for her grandchildren-the loves of her life.

Elsie leaves behind her only child, daughter Sharon and son-in-law GCU National Director George Kofel of Dunmore; grandchildren Michael (Malinda) Kofel and Michelle (Michael) Taramelli, and great-grandchildren Maximus Kofel and Lucy & Julia Taramelli, all of Pittsburgh,

PA. She is also survived by a brother Michael Vasilisin, Munhall, PA and sister Mary Lepovsky, Verona, PA and several nieces & nephews. Preceded in death by sisters Ann Ziros, Irene Krupa and Dorothy Pavlan and brother Robert Vasilisin.

The Office of Christian Burial with Divine Liturgy was celebrated by Archpriest John Petro at SS. Peter & Paul Byz-

Eleanor A. Hnat

Eleanor A. Hnat, 88, formerly of Youngstown, OH passed away on Thursday, October 10, 2019, in Estero, FL.

Eleanor was born December 23, 1930, in Campbell, OH a daughter of the late John & Anna (Hurajt) Sedlak, and lived her life in this area until moving to Florida a year ago to be with her son and family.

A 1947 graduate of Campbell Memorial High School, she was a homemaker who dedicated her life to raising and caring for her family. Eleanor also worked as a bookkeeper for Feldman Produce in Youngstown and as head cashier for A&P Grocery.

With her late husband Robert, Mrs. Hnat was the co-owner and secretary/treasurer of the Mahoning Wine Shop, Inc. on Youngstown's west side and was the treasurer of the Tri-County Carryout Association.

She was a member of St. Mary Byzantine Catholic Church in Youngstown, where she was a member and president of the Golden Pillars, and a member of the Rosary Society. Additionally, Mrs. Hnat was a member and past president of GCU Lodge No. 164, a member

of Slovak Catholic Church in Duquesne on Saturday October 19. Burial followed in the parish cemetery. Memorial donations may be made to the Ronald McDonald House Charities, 110 North Carpenter St, Chicago, IL 60607. Condolences may be sent to George & Sharon Kofel, 411 Reeves St, Dunmore, PA 18512. Vichnaya Pamjat! - Eternal Memory!

of Slovak Catholic Sokols Wreath No. 32 and the Ladies' Jednota. Eleanor was also the president of the Firefighter's "Fire Ladies" Association.

She enjoyed playing golf, and was chairwoman and a member of the Trelac Golf League and of the Spring Lakes Golf League. She also organized the St. Mary Golf League, that played at the Mill Creek Park Par 3 Golf Course.

Eleanor's husband of nearly 64 years, Robert M. Hnat, whom she married June 17, 1950, passed away on April 5, 2014.

Eleanor is survived by her son and daughter-in-law, Dr. Michael D. & Jill Hnat of Estero; and five grandchildren, Annaliese, Olivia, Abigail, Emma and Seamus.

Besides her husband, a son Robert J. Hnat; a brother John Sedlak; and two sisters Anastasia Blasko and Mary Sikora, are deceased.

Funeral service was held on Monday, October 14 followed by interment at St. John the Baptist Cemetery in Coitsville, OH.

Eternal memory and blessed repose.



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