

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was with God in the beginning. Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made. In him was life, and that life was the light of all mankind. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.

John 1:1-5



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On Our Cover: May the Light of
Christmas enlighten you throughout
the New Year.

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George N. Juba
President/CEO

We are right in the midst of “**The Christmas Season**” which takes on a whole new look and feel of its own. A time of giving and sharing and spending time with family and friends that mean so much to one another. For me it’s a time of reflection as I often look back and reminisce about the “good old days” and think about all the good times spent with my family and friends and countless memories created during Christmas time! The warm and caring parents I

was blessed to have that always focused on God and family making me the person I am today, the traditions created by my Grandmother especially on Christmas Eve, the Christmas mornings as a youth waking up with my brother with excitement abounding, the opening of presents, Christmas dinner and the visits to the homes of family and friends throughout Christmas week never seemed to get old. As time passes on many of our family members and friends are called by God, and the lasting memories created during Christmas and throughout the year will always keep alive in my mind the people that are so near and dear to my heart. During this Christmas season, with all the hustle and bustle of the season it is most important to focus on the really important things in life, God, Family and Friends!

It is unfortunate that many children and many individuals have not had the same opportunities and upbringing that you and I were blessed to have. It is most important that we all reach out to the needy during this season of giving by getting involved within our communities to give back through so many organizations in need of our financial and volunteer support. So many great organizations would welcome your generosity—a generosity that would fill such a huge void in the lives of the less fortunate and be the best present of all to give! Many of our lodges and districts do so much as well during the Christmas season and throughout the year in support of the GCU Mission Statement – “**Protecting Families, Promoting Faith and Fraternalism, Strengthening Communities.**” As 2016 comes to an end, our appreciation to the officers and members of our lodges and districts for your involvement in support of your church, your community and our members. I know that this is very much appreciated by the individuals and organizations you serve. **Thank You!**

As I stated numerous times in my *GCU Magazine* articles and presentations, the fraternal side of the GCU can only be as strong as the financial side that allows for the funding of so many programs offered by the GCU on a national level and to its members, lodges and districts. This issue of the *GCU Magazine* presents our financial statements for

the first nine month of 2016. We continue to exhibit strong financial results as our assets total \$1.5 billion, surplus now stands at \$107.3 million with net profits totaling \$18.4 million through September 30, 2016. I invite you to review the detailed third quarter financial reports and commentary presented by our Chief Financial Officer Tim Demetres presented on pages 4-5.

One of the major factors contributing to our financial success lies within the continued growth in our annuity business. We have exceeded our 2016 Business Plan annuity goals by a wide margin thus far in 2016. This has produced very strong positive monthly cash flows enabling the GCU to meet all claims and overhead obligations with excess being transferred to our investment portfolio. Our appreciation to our entire agent force for your support of our Society as we strive to meet and exceed your’s and your clients’ expectations. Our life business continues to be challenged. We are very optimistic for the future of this line of business as we have developed various strategies in an attempt to increase premium.

As we complete our 2017 Business Plan and Budget, we are very optimistic that next year will provide for another strong fiscal year as we project a continued increase in our asset base and surplus along with excellent profitability. We have and will continue to monitor each and every facet of the financial markets that affects our business, especially keeping close watch on interest rate movements. We want to assure our members that the GCU will remain relevant and competitive in the fixed annuity marketplace while continuing to produce strong financial results. As we prepare for 2017 a major focus will also be centered on risk and strategy as we are very conscious of the fact that the GCU’s future must be planned for - **TODAY!** I can assure you that your Board of Directors, general counsel, executives and department directors have and always will make sound fiscal decisions always in the best interest of our members and our Society.

The year 2017 marks an historic year in the annals of the GCU as we will be celebrating our 125th anniversary. Our Society was founded on February 14, 1892 with a starting treasury of \$600.⁰⁰. Our Society has much to celebrate and be thankful for as there is no doubt that our founders’ deep faith in God and our patron St. Nicholas of Myra has guided our administrations over the years that have made the GCU what is its today! Our founders and all that have supported the GCU since its founding should be very proud of our accomplishments. Although somewhat modified over the course of our 125 year history, the plan of our forefathers has stood the test of time. The good works that we continue to perform as a fraternal benefit society continue to uphold the values and traditions of our forefathers, making their initial plan and mission stronger than ever! The GCU will be holding a celebration on May 6, 2017 at Seven Oaks Country Club to celebrate this milestone. Our lodges and districts will also have the opportunity to hold local celebrations honoring this historic achievement with funding and organizational support from the Home Office.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 6

From the Executive VP/COO



Deborah Tatro
Executive Vice
President/COO

Whenever Thanksgiving and Christmas roll around, I am reminded of the many things I am thankful for. Like many of us, I run the risk of getting too wrapped up in what is happening at other times of the year to be thankful all year long for what we have and for the people in our lives. With that in mind, I try to step back and look at my favorite quotes about thankfulness to inspire me:

“No one who achieves success does so without acknowledging the help of others. The wise and confident acknowledge this help with gratitude.”

-Alfred North Whitehead

“Let us be grateful to people who make us happy; they are the charming gardeners who make our souls blossom.”

-Marcel Proust

“If the only prayer you ever say in your entire life is thank you, it will be enough.”

-Meister Eckhart

“The world has enough beautiful mountains and meadows, spectacular skies and serene lakes. It has enough lush forests, flowered fields, and sandy beaches. It has plenty of stars and the promise of a new sunrise and sunset every day. What the world needs more of is people to appreciate and enjoy it.”

-Michael Josephson

“Gratitude unlocks the fullness of life. It turns what we have into enough, and more. It turns denial into acceptance, chaos to order, confusion to clarity. It can turn a meal into a feast, a house into a home, a stranger into a friend.”

-Melody Beattie

In closing, I am thankful for my outstanding staff at GCU, my family and you, our members who give our good works and jobs a higher purpose. Thank you, may God bless you and your family, and Merry Christmas & Happy New Year!

Deb Tatro

Third Quarter Financial Results from Our Chief Financial Officer

It is my pleasure to report on the strong financial achievements of the GCU as of September 30, 2016. Highlights of the third quarter are as follows:

- ❖ The financial results for the third quarter continue our journey in growing balance sheet strength. Through increased annuity sales, expense and reserve management, Net Income increased 14.9% to \$18.2 million compared to a Net Income of \$15.8 million for the first nine months in 2015.
- ❖ Total Assets grew 11.4% to \$1.5 billion, an increase of \$154.7 million from year end 2015 that totaled \$1.35 billion. The increase in assets is primarily attributable to strong cash flows from annuity premiums and strong investment earnings.
- ❖ Liabilities totaled \$1.404 billion for the third quarter of 2016 compared to \$1.264 billion as of December 31, 2015. This increase of \$140 million is due primarily to higher annuity reserves of \$129.4 million from increased sales and \$5.8 million payable for securities purchased not yet settled. Slight increases in other liabilities account for the additional increases in the liabilities.



Tim Demetres
Chief Financial Officer

- ❖ Total Income increased \$30.2 million or 14.4% for the nine months of 2016 to \$240.4 million compared to \$210.2 million in 2015. The increase is primarily due to strong annuity sales increasing by \$27 million and net investment income by \$2.9 million from our growing fixed income portfolio.
- ❖ Operating expenses before the change in reserves decreased \$9.1 million or 8.9% for the first nine months of 2016 and totaled \$93.5 million compared to \$102.6 million in 2015. The decrease is primarily due to lower annuity paid benefits of \$11.3 million offset by \$1.8 million higher commissions paid to producers.
- ❖ The change in Reserves for Life and Annuities for the nine months totaled \$128.7 million compared to \$91.6 mil-

CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE

Summary of Financial Statistics

| (000's omitted) | 9/30/16 | 9/30/15 | Change |
|------------------------------|-------------|-------------|-----------|
| Assets..... | \$1,509,610 | \$1,307,335 | \$202,275 |
| Total Income..... | 240,400 | 236,448 | 3,952 |
| Total Operating Exp. | 222,217 | 220,622 | 1,595 |
| Net Income (Loss)..... | 18,183 | 15,826 | 2,357 |
| Surplus (Net Worth) | 105,678 | 85,918 | 19,760 |
| Asset Valuation Reserve... | 16,003 | 11,842 | 4,161 |
| Interest Maint. Reserve... | 17,730 | 15,422 | 2,308 |
| Surplus & Spec. Rsrvs. ... | 139,411 | 113,182 | 26,229 |
| Normal Solvency Ratio.... | 107.5% | 107.0% | 0.50% |
| Solv. Incl. Spec. Rsrvs..... | 110.2% | 109.2% | 0.89% |

lion in 2015. Reserves are established on new premiums and the emergence of claims. Life and annuity premiums increased by \$26.3 million, and life and annuity claim reserves increased by \$37.1 million during 2016.

- ❖ Surplus stands at \$105.7 million compared to 2015 year-end surplus of \$90.7 million. The \$15 million increase in surplus for the nine months ended September 30, 2016 is primarily attributable to net income of \$18.2 million for the period reduced by a \$2.8 million increase in the Asset Valuation Reserve and the change in net unrealized losses of \$0.4 million.
- ❖ Safety Funds that include Surplus of \$105.7 million, Interest Maintenance Reserves of \$17.7 million, and Asset Valuation Reserves of \$16.0 million totaled \$139.4 million for the third quarter of 2016. This is an increase of \$18.7 million thus far for 2016. In addition, the solvency



| Income Statement - Nine Months 2016 vs. 2015 | | | |
|---|------------------|------------------|-----------------|
| <i>(000's omitted)</i> | <u>9/30/16</u> | <u>9/30/15</u> | <u>Change</u> |
| Income | | | |
| Life Premium..... | \$ 1,508 | \$ 2,116 | \$ (608) |
| Annuity Premium..... | 178,417 | 151,472 | 26,945 |
| Med. Supp. Prem. (net)..... | 180 | 5 | 175 |
| Sub Total..... | <u>\$180,105</u> | <u>\$153,593</u> | <u>\$26,512</u> |
| Net Investment Income... | 57,123 | 54,194 | 2,929 |
| Other | <u>3,172</u> | <u>2,434</u> | <u>738</u> |
| Total Income..... | \$240,400 | \$210,221 | \$30,179 |
| Expenses | | | |
| Death Benefits | \$ 2,011 | \$ 1,648 | \$ 363 |
| Annuity Benefits Paid..... | 77,892 | 89,217 | (11,325) |
| Surrender Benefits | 946 | 1,362 | (416) |
| Acc.+Health Benefits (net)..... | 102 | — | 102 |
| Commissions..... | 6,426 | 4,665 | 1,761 |
| General Insurance Exp..... | 5,707 | 5,578 | 129 |
| Pension Benefits Paid | 262 | 93 | 169 |
| Other | 159 | 49 | 110 |
| Sub-Total | \$ 93,505 | \$102,612 | \$(9,107) |
| Reserves-Life & Anu. ... | <u>128,666</u> | <u>91,605</u> | <u>37,061</u> |
| Total Expenses..... | \$222,171 | \$194,217 | \$ 27,954 |
| Net Gain/Loss bef. Rfnd.. | <u>18,229</u> | <u>16,004</u> | <u>2,225</u> |
| Refunds to Members | <u>(194)</u> | <u>(191)</u> | <u>(3)</u> |
| Net Gain/Loss aft. Rfnd... | <u>18,035</u> | <u>15,813</u> | <u>2,222</u> |
| Net Cap. Gains (Loss) .. | <u>148</u> | <u>13</u> | <u>135</u> |
| Net Income/Loss..... | \$ 18,183 | \$15,826 | \$ 2,357 |

Note: The GCU quarterly report is unaudited but consistent with proper accounting procedure.

Note: Small dollar differences in these reports are due to rounding.

ratios for the nine months of 2016 are 107.5 and 110.2 that include Special Reserves, Asset Valuation Reserves (AVR) and Interest Maintenance Reserves (IMR). These ratios reflect a strong and stable balance sheet.

As fall slowly wanes into winter it brings joy and delight knowing Christmas is soon to arrive. Let us give thanks and may your Christmas season be merry. Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!

Tim

| Balance Sheets | | | |
|------------------------------------|----------------|----------------|-----------------|
| September 30, 2016 vs. 2015 | | | |
| <i>(000's omitted)</i> | <u>9/30/16</u> | <u>9/30/15</u> | <u>12/31/15</u> |
| Assets | | | |
| Bonds..... | \$1,398,320 | \$1,236,038 | 1,268,001 |
| Preferred Stocks..... | 37,685 | 23,681 | 21,413 |
| Common Stocks | 11,954 | 12,235 | 12,314 |
| Cash/Short Term Inv..... | 36,662 | 13,941 | 30,815 |
| Mortgages..... | 1,572 | 1,136 | 1,120 |
| Real Estate | | | |
| Beaver Home Office..... | 611 | 412 | 401 |
| Certificate Loans | 593 | 656 | 659 |
| Inv. Inc. Due & Accr..... | 21,203 | 19,027 | 19,501 |
| Other | <u>1,010</u> | <u>209</u> | <u>703</u> |
| Total Assets..... | \$1,509,610 | \$1,307,335 | \$1,354,927 |
| Liabilities | | | |
| Life Reserve Fund..... | \$ 64,830 | \$ 64,117 | \$ 64,800 |
| Anu. Reserve Fund.... | 1,288,801 | 1,120,664 | 1,159,426 |
| Acc.+Health Rsrv. Fnd..... | 85 | — | 16 |
| Emp. Pension Fund..... | 6,999 | 6,508 | 6,549 |
| Convention Reserve | 154 | 381 | 406 |
| Adv. Prem.+Fut. Ref. Rsrvs | 330 | 335 | 341 |
| Payable for Securities | 5,758 | — | — |
| Accounts Payable | 527 | 239 | 425 |
| Refund Accumulations..... | 1,822 | 1,369 | 1,378 |
| Overfunded Pension.. | <u>893</u> | <u>540</u> | <u>893</u> |
| Sub-Total Liabilities..... | \$1,370,199 | \$1,194,153 | \$1,234,234 |
| Asset Value Rsrv.-AVR | 16,003 | 11,842 | 13,218 |
| Int. Maint. Rsrv.-IMR .. | <u>17,730</u> | <u>15,422</u> | <u>16,735</u> |
| Total Liabilities | \$1,403,932 | \$1,221,417 | \$1,264,187 |
| Surplus Fund..... | <u>105,678</u> | <u>85,918</u> | <u>90,740</u> |
| Total Liab. + Surplus ... | \$1,509,610 | \$1,307,335 | \$1,354,927 |

| Reconciliation of Change in Surplus | |
|--|----------------|
| <i>(000's omitted)</i> | <u>9/30/16</u> |
| Surplus Previous Year 12/31/15..... | \$90,738 |
| Net Income..... | 18,183 |
| Change in Unrealized Gain/(Loss)..... | 171 |
| GCU Holding Company & Other | (630) |
| Changes in Non-Admitted Assets | 1 |
| Changes in Asset Valuation Reserve..... | <u>(2,785)</u> |
| Net Change in Surplus | <u>14,940</u> |
| Ending Surplus 09/30/16..... | \$105,678 |



Deck the Halls

As you receive this issue of the *GCU Magazine*, you have probably heard the old Christmas carol “Deck the Halls” a number of times already. One of the verses never meant much in years past when I heard and sang the words: “Fast away the old year passes...” Each year this line becomes more frightening when it is hard to believe that

there are no more pages on our calendars! It seems only a short while ago some of us were gathered in Atlantic City for our convention. That was over five months ago!

This idea is emphasized when, even though we are re-

mindful in church in advance that we are approaching the celebration of the Birth of Our Lord, it arrives all too soon. We find ourselves rushing to deck those halls and get done all that we have put off.

It is my sincere wish that each of you finds peace at this hectic time of year. I pray that you experience a peace that replaces the short tempers and quick strong words that come all too easily when we forget to be loving and kind to everyone. In this way you can truly celebrate the birth of the Prince of Peace!

Our carol continues with the words: “hail the new ye lads and lasses.” Begin the year 2017 with joy and a firm determination to put Our Lord and God in His proper place as you greet each new day in the New Year with a prayer and promise to try to be a better person.

Christ is Born! Glorify Him! Happy New Year!

Very Rev. Richard I. Lambert, GCU Spiritual Advisor

From the President...

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 3

In conjunction with our 125th anniversary, the new branding initiative of the GCU will be launched giving our Society a new look and feel to stay relative to each and every generation we serve within the life and annuity marketplace. I am personally most excited about this project and am sure you will be most pleased with each and every aspect that we have updated... from the development of a new logo and a tag line that will be incorporated into all of our marketing of GCU products and fraternal programs... to the total redesign of the GCU's website. It is most important for the GCU as well as all fraternal benefit societies to tell our story of “Who We Are” and “What We Do” as fraternalists!

Fraternally in 2017 we will also be addressing the Regional Lodge Concept once again to our existing lodges and districts. A new alternate State Lodge Structure will be developed as well for individuals that would like to be involved fraternally with the GCU through their own individual efforts and on their own time structure. We are most excited about the GCU – GO GIVE Program that will be marketed and available to all of our members and agents giving them the opportunity to participate in the fraternal mission of the GCU.

In closing, once again I would like to extend to all of our members and our Board of Directors my sincere appreciation for the support you have given to me as I complete another year as your President and Chief Executive Officer.

Please be assured that your Board of Directors, executive officers, general counsel and management staff will continue to lead and guide our Society to ongoing success, now and into the future. A special thank you as well to our executive team, department managers, our support staff and our sales agents for your dedicated and conscientious efforts this past year that have made major contributions to our financial and fraternal success thus far in 2016!

My best wishes to our entire GCU Family for a very Merry Christmas and for a most Peaceful, Happy, Healthy and Prosperous New Year!

CHRIST IS BORN! CHRISTOS RAZDAJETSJA!

George

Interest Rates Effective December 1, 2016

New Annuity Accounts. The interest rates for all new GCU Annuity accounts effective December 1, 2016 are as follows. One-Plus-Four Annuity will earn 1.25%APY; Triple Advantage accounts will earn 2%APY; 5-Year Advantage accounts will earn 2.85%APY and Flex-8 accounts will earn 3.35%APY.

GCU Option “A” Annuities. Annual interest rates on Settlement Option “A” (interest only, minimum deposit \$5,000) annuities is 1%APY.

Please Note: Total deposits into new One-Plus-Four, Triple Advantage and Option “A” Annuities are limited to \$100,000 combined per member, per calendar year. Total deposits into 5-Year Advantage Annuities are limited to \$500,000 and total deposits into Flex-8 Annuities are limited to \$1,000,000 per calendar year.



Susan Chaffee, a GCU member and Home Office employee, has a passion to help dogs in need. She has been a volunteer with Distinguished Dobermans Rescue (DDR), a rescue committed to helping Dobermans, Miniature Pinschers and special needs dogs, for almost seven years. Aside from being the adoption coordinator, Susan and her husband, Brian, have fostered more than 200 dogs!

DDR runs solely on volunteers and donations. Each dog that comes into their care receives a vet exam, necessary vaccines and medicines, a micro-chip, a heart worm test (and treatment if necessary), and are spayed/neutered. Aside from those vet bills, many dogs who come to DDR are in need of major surgeries. The costs add up very

quickly. That's why Susan decided to hold a purse bash to raise funds so DDR can continue their very important mission.

Susan applied for and received GoGive! seed money that helped with purchasing designer purses and other supplies for the event. About 120 people attended and almost 200 people tuned in via Facebook to watch the live drawings for the purses, baskets, jewelry and other fund raisers. A total of \$14,900 was raised for DDR! This was the largest fundraiser to date for DDR!

If you are interested in adopting, fostering or volunteering with DDR, visit www.ddrinc.net.



Marylyn Barone from Lodge 2, District 1 held an icon workshop from October 27 to October 30 at Saint Mary Romanian Catholic Church, 318 26th Avenue, McKeesport, PA. Of the 11 participants there were four other GCU members. Marylyn Chuprinko, Judy Schall and Alfie Chico from District 1 and Mary Bannworth from District 7 .

All participants wrote an icon of Saint Patrick or one of their choosing using a prepared prototype on a gesso covered board, learning techniques for faces, garments, 24 kt. gold-leaf gilding, and background. The theology of icons and of the specific saints being written was also discussed. Marylyn has written icons since 1997. She gives workshops in parishes across Pennsylvania, Ohio and New Jersey. She has successfully taught people of all ages and abilities, from kindergarten and older. Marylyn also has written icons for many parishes and individuals.

Because of the large par-

ticipation of people from the Latin Rite Catholic faith in most of her workshops, Marylyn feels she is doing her part to inform others of our Eastern Rite practices and traditions.

Thanks to GO Give providing her seed money, Marylyn will be able to continue this ministry without raising fees even though supplies have increased in cost.

Marylyn attends Holy Trinity Byzantine Catholic Church in Wall, PA.

Marylyn Barone



What is **GCU GoGive!** ?

Visit GCUusa.com to learn more

DISTRICT 1 NEWS

BY KIM
KOLEGAR

Fall Hayride. On Saturday, October 1, 2016 District 1 held its final hayride at Duda's Farm in Brownsville, PA. Forty-five people attended. Several of them were first-time attendees. The day's forecast was partial rain; however, it turned out to be a sunny/partly cloudy day in the 70's.

Once everyone arrived, lunch was served. Three lucky adults were awarded the mums that were centerpieces on the tables. After lunch, all the ingredients to make s'mores were placed by the fire pits. The kids and adults also had time to explore the farm, shop at the market, ride the double barrel shotgun slide, or navigate the corn maze. The

corn maze was easier this year due to partial collapse from previous high winds and rain.

Next, a variety of games began: Frisbee throw, plunger ring toss, ball toss, hula hoop, Left/Right game, candy pick and vegetables/apple pick (utilizing a GCU tote bag). Both the children and adults had an opportunity to play the games. Prizes were



Singel family roast marshmallows.



Making s'mores by the fire.



Kids plunger toss.



Pumpkin bowling.

awarded to the winners. We must have appeared to be a fun group to the general public at the farm because we had "party crashers" at the games as well as under the tent!

After the games finished, the tractor took off on a long hayride. Riders viewed many scarecrows dressed in various attire along the way. One stop was made to pick a pumpkin in the pumpkin patch before arriving back at the farm.

Upon returning, everyone had more time to explore, eat and drink.

Children were each given a GCU treat bag along with coupons for Wendy's and McDonald's. The adults received a phone charger and eye glass cleaning cloth courtesy of the GCU.

District 1 Farewell Celebration

GCU District 1 was founded on February 16, 1919. After 97 years the District voted and decided that it was time to disband. This decision was made due to declining participation at events and duplication of events with the lodges.

On Sunday, November 6, 2016 District 1 held their farewell celebration at St. John the Baptist Cathedral Social Center in Munhall, PA. A crowd of 258 people (233 adults and 25 children ages 16 and under) made reservations to attend.

The afternoon began at 3 PM with a Moleben prayer service at St. John the Baptist Cathedral. Metropolitan Archbishop William Skurla, along with Father Dennis Bogda and Father Stephen Wahal, celebrated. Father Andrew Deskevich served as



cantor with the congregation joining in song. Following the Moleben, all in attendance walked across the parking lot to the adjacent center.

At 4 PM the social hour began. Upon entering, guests first received seating assignment cards given out by a greeting staff. Everyone had an opportunity to enjoy drinks along with cheese and crackers and veggies and dip, that was beautifully arranged on serving tables. Attend-

ees mixed and mingled and had an opportunity to talk with people that they had not seen in a while.

At 5 PM everyone was asked to be seated as a brief program began. Committee members, national officers, and past District 1 officers were recognized. GCU President/CEO

George Juba spoke about the history of District 1. GCU Director of New Business & Underwriting George Lopata pro-



Ethel Wahal with John Kuklinca (left) and Ernie Varhola.

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District 1 Farewell...

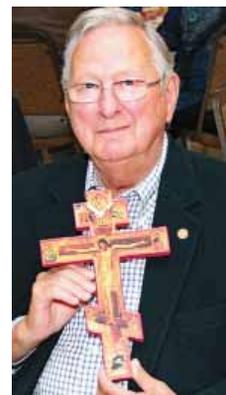
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vided the toast, and Archbishop William offered a blessing.

Stratwood Catering served a delicious meal of tomato bisque soup, tossed salad and rolls, a choice of chicken romano, pork tenderloin or crab stuffed cod with potato rosette and green beans almandine. Children received



Attendees that enjoyed the District 1 Farewell event.



chicken tenders, fruit cup and apple-sauce. Dessert was a choice of white

almond, chocolate or yellow two-layer sheet cake from Dudd's Bakery.

After dinner, a brief video was shown which chronicled the District 1 history. It is available on the District 1 web page on the GCU website for viewing. The photographs taken that evening by Nick Havrilla, and a copy of the commemorative booklet, created by Basil Wahal, are also on the web page.

A flower centerpiece and a Byzantine wooden cross were on each table. The crosses were made by District 1 member John Tomko. Past

National President Michael Roman came to the microphone to explain how the two centerpieces would be won by two people at each table.

The evening concluded with DJ Joe playing a wide variety of music for dancing and listening pleasure.

The celebration committee worked very hard this past year to plan this event so we are very happy to hear the many compliments on the evening. A special thank you to Basil Wahal and the Home Office for all their assistance, a thank you to everyone who placed an



The District 1 Farewell event allowed many families to have a night out together.



ad in the commemorative booklet, and a thank you to everyone who took the time to attend the celebration and helped to make it a success.

If you care to view all the photos from this event, visit gcuusa.com then go to District 1.

Lessons in the Law

By GCU National Director Atty. John J. Urban

Who's Going to Decide?

Anything can happen.

One minute you can be in your car on the way to grab lunch, and the next in the back of an ambulance unconscious and on the way to the hospital.

Nobody can predict when something terrible will happen. Life has a funny way of throwing a curve ball at us when we least expect it. Accidents and injuries happen. That's a fact.

But we can put a plan in place that protects us should the unexpected occur, and it takes just a few hours to do it.

Because life is unpredictable, it is crucial that everyone over the age of 18 have a durable power of attorney for healthcare.

Here's what can happen if you don't: You're taken to the hospital, unconscious and clinging to life. You don't have healthcare power of attorney in place and it's 11 at night. Your



attorney can't get an emergency court hearing to appoint a power of attorney on your behalf, so the doctors get to decide which treatment measures are taken.

It doesn't matter what you've told your friends and family about your wishes. Unless you've got that legal document, nobody can intervene on your behalf. I can try to get a court to appoint a guardian to make your decisions for you - if your accident happens during business hours - but that person might not even be a family member. This is just too important an area to leave to chance.

And while we're meeting to discuss your healthcare power of attorney you might as well get the other important critical protection documents in place: a living will, a will, and a financial power of attorney.

DISTRICT 11 NEWS

BY VAL
MARSZALEC



Accepting the role of chaplain for District 11, Fr. Joe Repko installs the district's newly re-elected officers following its annual meeting at St. Nicholas Church in Clinton Township, MI. Front row (from left): Kim Kaufman, Karen Kaufman, George Nagrant, Val Marszalec, Nancy Czarny and Anita Cipa. Back row (from left): Gary Mozuras, John P. Minarish, Nick C. Kovalcik, Eugene Kovacs and Nick P. Kovalcik.

Annual Meeting/Dinner. At the district's annual meeting on Sunday, November 6 at St. Nicholas Church Hall in Clinton Township,

MI, elections were held following an abundant delicious buffet. Delegates representing the district's lodges re-elected the incumbent officers

(shown here) who were then sworn in by Fr. Joe Repko, current pastor of St. Nicholas Parish, who accepted the office of chaplain. Officers are: President Gary Mozuras, Vice President George Nagrant, Secretary Anita Cipa, Treasurer Nick C. Kovalcik, Athletic Director John P. Minarish, Assistant Athletic Director Nick P. Kovalcik, Assistant Athletic Director Kim Kaufman, Fraternal Director and Publicity Director Val Marszalec Sergeant at Arms/Standard Bearer Eugene Kovacs and Auditors Karen Kaufman & Nancy Czarny.

A moment of silence was called for to remember the recently deceased longtime former District 11 and Lodge 860 chaplain, Rev. Robert Barter. Fr. Barter also served as a member of the GCU National Supreme Tribunal for many years. Eternal Memory!

DISTRICT 7 NEWS

BY MARY
BANNWORTH

Rahway, NJ. GCU District 7 held their annual meeting on Sunday, November 20, 2016 at the St. Thomas the Apostle Byzantine Catholic Church. The Right Rev. Archpriest James Hayer, pastor at St. Thomas Church opened the meeting with a

prayer. After a luncheon buffet, hosted by GCU Lodge 340 in Rahway, NJ, Patricia Dietz, District 7 president called the meeting to order.

Election of officers has the following serving for 2017: Mary K Bannworth, president, Patricia Dietz,

vice president, Linda Cwiekalo, secretary, Kathleen Meddaugh, treasurer, Michael Geles Jr, athletic



Gary Meddaugh, Greg & Roger Embley and seated is Auditor Tom Petty.

director and Thomas Petty, auditor. We are all looking forward to a very productive New Year.



Above is the Linden, NJ Lodge 665. Below is the New York Lodge 151.



Michael Geles Jr., Thomas Petty, Mary Bannworth, Kathleen Meddaugh, Linda Cwiekalo and Patricia Dietz.



The 2016 Community recipients.

The District 4 Community Recognition and Awards Banquet has quickly become one of the best ways to say goodbye to summer and celebrate the start of the fall season. Banquet Chairperson and Fraternal Director Connie Strittmatter welcomed members and community guests to the 19th annual banquet at the Rustic Lodge in Indiana, PA.

District 4 has seven lodges that encompass: Cambria, Clearfield, Indiana, Jefferson, and Westmoreland counties. Because we reside, work, and volunteer in this region, District 4's objective has been to assist local communities to be solid and vibrant.

District 4 has been a frontrunner in the Community Initiative Program and has provided financial support to organizations for many years.



2016 Scholar recipients.

The organizations chosen to receive financial assistance encompass a broad spectrum of how the lives of people in need vary. This year's list includes: 4 public libraries, 2 hunger relief groups, 4 religious affiliates, a volunteer fire department, a cancer support and family service group, a volunteer safety organization, a mothers and unborn babies support organization, and a

15-bed shelter with a comprehensive homeless assistance program.

District 4 had three individuals who were national scholarship winners. Scholarship winners recognized were Michael Dautlick, Andrew Witherow and Nicholas O'Toole. Bryan Abel, the 2016 national junior bowling scholarship winner, was also introduced.

District 4 initiated a new awards program for 2016 in the form of educational grants. The grants were established for those seeking a career change, an advanced degree beyond college, specialized training, skills advancement for required courses, or a certificate program. Many applications were submitted for review. The winners were Amy Drotar, John Swincanis, Jessica Svencer, Natalie Bukowski, Louis Ludwig, and Quinton Isett.

Thanks to those who attended the banquet. District 4 hopes that this experience will continue to echo in all your lives.

Mark your calendars for next year's event on Sunday, October 8, 2017.



2016 Grant recipients and Fraternal Director Connie Strittmatter (far right).

Lodge 53 Update

Wilkes Barre, PA. On Saturday evening, October 15, GCU Lodge 53 co-sponsored with St. Mary Church, a 300 Club fund raiser utilizing their matching funds for the benefit of the church repairs.

Those who participated in this event were invited to a complimentary catered dinner and final drawing of prizes.

Pictured are several members of our lodge, parishioners and friends with our new pastor Rev. Michael Kerestes.



Thanks to the Home Office for the printing of tickets and matching funds. Also, parishioners Pauline Kozich, Stephanie DeRemer, the Bealla family and all who helped make this event successful.

Marge Dorzinsky
Secretary/Treasurer



DISTRICT 5 NEWS

BY ILONA
DOLINISH

Our annual meeting was on October 23 with the Divine Liturgy at St. Nicholas Byzantine Catholic Church, Old Forge, PA followed by a Panachida memorial

service for the deceased members of our district. Fifty people attended the breakfast meeting at Lucca's Restaurant, Taylor, PA. All current officers who were present were re-elected: Gina Keil, president, Colleen Evans, secretary/treasurer, Ed Keil, athletic director, Bob Suflita, assistant athletic director, Bernard Shinko, sergeant-at-arms & standard bearer and auditor, Laure Marcin. Ilona Dolinish, publicity, was absent but appointed by President Gina Keil. Our chaplain for the year is Rev. Eduard Shestak.

On Saturday, October 29, 2016, seven of our members assisted the Carmelite Sisters at Holy Annuncia-



Annual Meeting: first row: Bernie Shinko, Gina Keil, Bob Suflita, Colleen Evans and Ed Keil. Back row: Deacon Ed Frey, Greg Barkowski, Greg Vladika and George Kofel.

tion Monastery in Sugarloaf, PA with their fall cleanup. We helped prepare their grounds for winter, remove annuals, cut down perennials, mowed the grass, cleaned up the Austree area, and folded cardboard boxes, which the Nuns use for their Christmas dessert sales. We were treated to a homemade spaghetti and meatball luncheon, along with a variety of the Nun's special cookies.

Our last Adopt-A-Highway cleanup for the year took place on November 12, 2016. It was a cold day. We were very fortunate to obtain the help of three members of Penn State Wilkes-Barre's golf team, along with Coach Ed Keil, who were eager to volunteer. Their help was greatly appreciated. Other participants included Paul Polanchik, Gina Keil, Ed Dolinish, and Ann Chaiko. Hopefully, we will have more volunteers in the spring.

Unfortunately our annual No-Tap Bowling Tournament scheduled for November 12 at Chacko's Family Bowling Lanes, needed to be post-



Mother Marija and Sister Emmanuel instructing some of the District members on the removal of the dead plants on the grounds.



Mari Sue Rayno (kneeling), Gina Keil and Topy Zayac digging out the old plants.



District 5 & 6 members warm up with coffee and donuts.

poned, due to lack of participation. Maybe this tournament can be held in the early part of next year, where it can be a precursor to the National Bowling Tournament which is being held there in May.

Our 49th annual St. Nicholas Brunch & Scholarship Awards Program was held on Sunday, November 27, 2016 at the Radisson, Lackawanna Station Hotel, Scranton, PA. Details and photos will be in our next magazine.

Upcoming events include our Founders' Day Luncheon on Sunday, February 12, 2017 and the hockey game on Saturday, March, 18, 2017.

May you have a very blessed Christmas and a Happy, Healthy New Year.



Hazleton, PA. As I am writing this article, the forecast is calling for some snow showers and colder weather—I cannot believe that we are already heading into winter. What was once a beautiful scenic view is now barren and gray!

We had our 4th quarter/annual meeting on Sunday, October 9 at SS. Peter & Paul in Minersville, PA. The agenda included final planning of the St. Nicholas Dinner and the list of 2017 activities. Our 2017 officers were next on the agenda. Serving will be: President Deacon Larry Foran, Vice President John Hoppey, Secretary-Activities & Athletic Director Agnes Rohrbach, Treasurer Ann Marie Betterly, Publicity Director Patricia Gallagher, Asst. Athletic Director David Rohrbach, Auditors Judith Betterly & Alois Kringer and Chaplains Fr. Peter Donish & Fr. Jerome Wolbert, OFM.

Hayride Ride and Pumpkin Pick. On Sunday, October 2, a group of 39 adults and children attended the annual “Hayride and Pumpkin Pick” that was held at Thomas Farms in Drums, PA.

The dreary day did not prevent everyone from enjoying the ride to the fields, going through the “Corn Maze” and picking the pumpkin of their choice.

Once they returned, all received goodie bags courtesy of Thomas Farms and a Trick or Treat bag from the lodge.

Everyone that attended had a great time and the rain held off until all got home.

Susan G. Komen for the Cure. GHRL recently participated in the Susan G. Komen for the Cure fundraising efforts in October.

At our quarterly meeting, the proceeds from the fundraiser were donated, St. John’s Bingo had a free will collection and the GCU 89’ers also took a free will collection on their bowling night. All in all, we



Posing for a picture at Thomas Farms.



Sarah Greco with her pumpkin.



Gloria Nassans (2 time cancer survivor), Pat Gallagher, Ann Marie Barna, Jean Jones and Cathy Cramond.

raised \$245 for the cause.

GHRL Trip to Hunterdon Hills. On Saturday, November 5, 46 people boarded the bus at St. John’s BC Church parking lot to go to Hampton, NJ to Hunterdon Hills Playhouse to see the show a Christmas Playhouse.

We enjoyed dinner and had time to shop at the gift shop and the bakery.

The show featured songs and dancers and enjoyable skits. The best part of the show was the manger scene—showing the true spirit and meaning of Christmas.

The first two weeks of November we had a Cold Hands-Warm Heart clothing drive and the donation was given to Fr. Jerome Wolbert, OFM to take to Catholic Social Services.



Hunterdon Hills Playhouse.

As year two of the GHRL comes to an end we have been very busy. This year we had four quarterly meetings, a pre-convention meeting, attended two local theatrical shows, held three Easter Egg Hunts, the GCU Jr. Bowling Tournament, a Big Brothers-Big Sisters Bowling Fundraiser, a No-Tap Blind Doubles Bowling Tournament, Byzantine Day at Knoebels Park, two Helping Hands Day at Holy Annunciation Monastery, had 20 delegates attend the GCU National Convention, had six casino bus trips and two show bus trips, a Back to School Bowling Tournament, the annual Holupki Open Golf Tournament, a Hay Ride at the Pumpkin Patch, a Matching Funds project, a Susan G. Komen Cancer Fund Drive, distributed Halloween Bags to the ECF Students, held our Cold Hands-Warm Heart clothing drive and the St. Nicholas dinner.

Whew, we sure were busy and many thanks go to all the participants and to the Home Office for the fraternal grants, the matching funds and all the great gadgets for give-aways. Thanks also to the staff at the Home Office for all the mailings and printings of events.

In the works, is a bus trip to Hunterdon Hills on Saturday, April 29th to see Born Yesterday. If you are interested, kindly let me know. Also, there has been some interest to see “Jonah” at Sight-n-Sound Theater. Please let me know if you would like to see this show so we can make arrangements to attend.

CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE

MORE FROM LODGE 644

BY JOHN
KEBLESH



President Sue Irving, Treasurer Joanne Angeltti and Secretary Mary Ann Pinto.



Eleanor Vinson accepts + Lee Panco's award from President Sue Irving.

Barberton/Akron. Each year Lodge 644 holds a recognition dinner to honor one of its members. This year the dinner took place on Saturday, November 12 at Papa Joe's Restaurant. The late Lee Panco, who passed away in January, was chosen posthumously for this honor. Lee had been very active, not only in the GCU but also at her church and the Eparchy of Parma. President Sue Irving presented the award (a plaque of The GCU St. Nicholas Chapel) to Lee's twin sis-

ter, Eleanor Vinson, who with her husband Jim flew from Tennessee to attend the dinner.

In addition, not only did we enjoy a delicious dinner but there was a lot



John & Amy Osterhage with Debbie & Bryan Gannon.

of personal interaction. It was wonderful to see members mingling and communicating with one another. Jim Vinson thoughtfully recognized the veterans present as this was the special weekend for honoring our service men and women.

Our newly elected officers—President Sue Irving, Secretary Mary Ann Pinto and Treasurer Joanne Angeltti were present and we wish them much success in the coming year.

Also, November 12 was an extra special day for Amy & John Osterhage as they celebrated their 61st wedding anniversary. Their daughter and son-in-law, Debbie & Bryan Gannon, were also in attendance.

Overall, the camaraderie was great and everyone seemed to enjoy the dinner. We look forward to future activities and commend our active officers for their fine leadership. We also extend a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year to all GCU members.

Never forget the "Christ" in Christmas!



Greater Hazleton...

continued from previous page

At this time, I would like to wish the entire GCU world a very Blessed and Merry Christmas and a very Healthy and Happy New Year.

Sometimes, due to circumstances beyond our control, dates and activities are subject to change. If you are in doubt about an event or meeting, please give me a call at 570-454-4869 or if you are computer savvy, check out the GCU website for updates.

Till next time, take care and may god Bless.



ECF students with their Trick or Treat Bags



Cold Hands-Warm Heart Clothing Drive: Seated: GCU National Director Dorothy Ann Foran, Marge Hoppey and Judy Betterly. Standing: Rick Hoppey, Deacon Larry Foran, Cathy Cramond, Agnes Rohrbach, Fr. Jerome Wolbert, OFM, Mari Sue Rayno and Mike Komishock.

Upcoming Activities:

January 22, 2017—1st Quarter Meeting—St. John's, Hazleton at 1 PM.

February 19—Pre-Lenten Casino Trip (Sands Casino).

March 26—Jr. Bowling Tournament at Bowl-Arena, Hazleton.

FALL HELPING HANDS DAY AT HOLY ANNUNCIATION MONASTERY



Presentation of District 5 check to Holy Annunciation Monastery—Ed Dolinish, Jr., Topyy Zayac, Gina Keil, Mother Marija, Ed Keil, Ilona Dolinish, Demetrius Dolinish and Chris Zayac.



Donation to Mother Marija: Agnes Rohrbach, Mother Marija, GCU National Director Dorothy Ann Foran, Claire Lorince, E. Kathleen Moro, Patricia Gallagher, Cathy Cramond and Michael Komishock.



A ray of sunshine overlooks the workers awaiting their assignments.

Sugarloaf, PA On Saturday, October 29 the Greater Hazleton Regional Lodge and members of District 5 met to help spruce up the property for the winter months. It was a little chilly, but Mother Nature once again provided us with a ray of sunshine and warmed up the temperature.

Prior to getting to work, we attended the Divine Liturgy in the monastery, celebrated by Fr. Anthony Skurla and assisted by Deacon Larry Foran.

After the Liturgy it was time for Mother Marija once again to supervise and give everyone directions on what had to be done.

Most of the men headed out and started cutting down dead branches off the trees, sprucing up the property... some repaired the fences around the corrals of the property... others

worked on the flower beds, uprooting plants and cutting back the annuals for the season. Still others mowed grass and in the end it was a fine job done by all.

For those who could not work outside, a crew of eight people made 750 boxes for the nuns to have for their annual bake sale.

After all the chores, it was time for lunch. Fr. Skurla gave the blessing and then we feasted on spaghetti & meat balls, garlic bread, ice cream sandwiches, beverages and of course the homemade delicious cookies that are always a great hit with everyone.

All of the volunteers received a Helping Hands T-Shirt and monetary donations were made to Mother Marija by the lodges, District 5 and some personal donations.

Thanks to the Home

Fr. Anthony Skurla enjoying the luncheon.



Office for the fraternal grant and the shirts.

Come join us on Saturday, June 3 for Helping Hands Day 2017. It is a great way to help and the nuns are very appreciative of all that we do in a short period of time.

In conjunction with Helping Hands Day for Holy Annunciation Monastery a bus trip to the Sands Casino was on Sunday, October 23. The profit of \$200 from this trip allowed the lodge to make a monetary donation of \$400 to the Sisters at Holy Annunciation on October 29—that was greatly appreciated by Mother Marija.

Agnes Rohrbach
GHRL Activities Director



Getting ready to fix the fence.



Box makers—Ilona Dolinish, GCU Director Dorothy Ann Foran, Stacey Musto, Claire Lorince, E. Kathleen Moro, Marge Hoppey, Cathy Cramond and Patricia Gallagher.



Group of men who took care of the trimming of the trees.

Lodge 81's Active Autumn

Uniontown, PA. Lodge 81 members were involved in various parish and community activities during the Autumn season. As a kick-off to Fall, Lodge 81 members held the annual Food Drive on October 8-9. Monetary and non-perishable food donations exceeded past collections. Secretary Stephen Petruska used the money to purchase additional items. These items were then divided between the Uniontown St. Vincent de Paul Society Food Bank and the Charleroi Area Food Pantry which is housed in Holy Ghost Byzantine Church.

The big annual event for St. John Parish was the 35th Annual Carpatho-Rusyn Celebration held on Sunday, October 30. Just as in the past, Lodge 81 members and parishioners were involved in all aspects of the event from start to finish. James Mihalko assisted with set up, Marcia & Richard Harrer assumed their cashier



Food drive volunteers: At left: Bonnie Balas, James Mihalko, Theresa and Stephen Petruska. Above: Helen Ponzurick, Bonnie Balas, Stephen and Theresa Petruska.

roles, Gerry Dorobish was busy with the Children's activities, Stephen Petruska and Paul Rubish & sons (L57) took care of beverage sales, Janet Gaydos worked in the Craft section, Helen Ponzurick and her crew worked the extensive Bake Sale area, and many Lodge 81 members such as



Gerry Dorobish (blue) with children's activities.



Janet Gaydos and Kay Breakiron at the craft area.



Bonnie Balas showing Baba Ridilla's basket cover



Slavjane violinist.



Bake sale crew: Dianne Harmon, Helen Ponzurick, Natalie Hospodavis, and Cecelia Kotyuha.



John Righetti explaining Rusyn culture.

Ann Kormanik, Norbert Duritsa, and Mary Ellen Harden worked tirelessly in the kitchen with food preparation and serving on the day of the event .

Bonnie Balas, festival coordinator reported that the event was an overwhelming success and income well-exceeded their expectations. This could not have been achieved without the help of the many parishioners and lodge members. In addition the enhanced attendance and the support that came from other GCU lodges was so welcomed.

Throughout the Pre-Christmas season, catechists who are also Lodge 81 officers, have been preparing their classes to sing Christmas carols to the Sisters at Mount Macrina Monastery. They have been doing this for years and are so enjoyed by the Sisters. This year's caroling will take place on Sunday, December 18.

At the quarterly meeting held on Sunday, November 6 plans were made for upcoming activities and events. The group agreed to make donations to Salvation Army, the Sisters of St. Basil for Christmas, and the St. Nicholas Charity Dinner event which benefits the Byzantine Catholic Seminary. Plans were also discussed for the Uniontown Public Library Christmas Program which is funded by GCU for the children of the community.

On the evening of November 7 members also attended the Vespers/ Divine Liturgy for the Feast of St. Michael (patron saint of Lodge 81) which was held for the living and deceased lodge members.

Bonnie Balas
Vice President &
Publicity Coordinator



Kids singing Ja Rusyn Byl.



What's New in Lodge 92

Jessup, PA. Golf Event.

Before the weather turned,

members of Lodge 92 were able to sneak in a few more rounds of golf. Supreme Tribunal Member Greg



Kneeling in front are Greg Evans & Sean Gaughan. Standing are Ed Gensel, Frank Romanowski, John Evans Sr. and Supreme Tribunal member Greg Barkowski Sr.

Barkowski Sr., former District 5 President John Evans, and his nephew Greg Evans along with their teammates were winners of the Northeast Seniors Golf League at Emanon Country Club in Falls, PA. The champs are pictured below with their prize: brand new GCU visors.

Chicken Breast Dinner.

GCU lodge 92 held its annual stuffed chicken breast dinner on November 6, 2016 at La-Salle Academy school hall to benefit Holy Ghost Byzantine Catholic Church in Jessup, PA. A total of 357 dinners were served for this take-out only event.

With 2016 coming to a close, the members of Lodge 92 have turned their attention to some end of the year and holiday projects. Over the Thanksgiving weekend, members distributed goodie bags made up from the grant received from the Home Office to residents of our local Senior center. We are also gearing up for our annual Saint Nicholas Children's Christmas Party which was held the first Sunday in December. The party was open to our church



GCU National Director Greg Vladika from Lodge 211 and from Lodge 92 Tim Keller, Tribunal Member Gregory Barkowski (president) and Mark Pegula, all helpers in the kitchen.



Patrons as they wait in line to receive their dinner.

congregation and local community. Finally, the lodge is working on our annual "making the holidays special" project which will help out a family in need this holiday season.

Lodge 92 would like to wish each and every family a blessed and Merry Christmas and a healthy and happy New Year. See you in 2017.

Mark A. Barkowski
Publicity Director
& **Michaela Mancak**
Secretary/Treasurer

Lodge 390 Fall Helping Hands Day

McKees Rocks, PA. Every fall GCU Lodge 390 and Holy Ghost parish gather to spruce up the public areas and grounds. This year's event included bringing in the Sears professional carpet and upholstery cleaners to remove years of accumulated dirt and stains from the chairs in the church basement hall. Inside work also included the deep cleaning of floors and baseboards in the classrooms. The table's



Lodge members with their HHD t-shirts.

room, hall and public areas all had that fresh pine scent when the day was done.

Outdoors the crew pulled all the dirt, weeds and plants from the sidewalks and curbs on the block surrounding the church and school buildings. Many bags full of scattered litter were gathered and properly disposed of as well. The activity went on despite the light rain and threatening weather. And many in the community noticed and appreciated the cleaner look on the block after the event. Many thanks to our volunteers.

Steve Puluka
Secretary/Treasurer

Lodge 625 Happenings

Conemaugh, PA. As part of our quarterly “giving tree” campaign this year, Lodge 625 delivered over 150 hats, gloves, socks and other personal items to the Salvation Army for the children they serve. President Paul Yackulich Jr. and Secretary/Treasurer Georgia Lehman, delivered the items to Penny Casey, Salvation Army caseworker.



Penny Casey, Salvation Army caseworker and Paul Yackulich, Jr.

Our fourth quarter “giving tree” collection is for non-perishable food products for our local food bank. Thirty-six members and guests of Lodge 625 attended the annual District 4 Recognition Dinner on October 9, 2016 at the Rustic Lodge in Indiana, PA. Lodge 625 would like to thank District 4 for the annual Mega Bucks Calendars that provides funds for various non-profit organizations in our district communities.

This year Lodge 625 designated, The Martha and Mary House (a homeless shelter in Johnstown) and Birthright of Johnstown, Inc. to re-



Chuck & Patty Webb at the District 4 dinner.

ceive the funds allocated to our lodge area. The lodge would also like to congratulate Brian Abel on winning the National Bowling Scholarship and Jessica Svencer for receiving one of District 4 educational grants.

On October 29, 2016 the lodge held its annual **Halloween Party** for our children. Eleven children participated in the event. The children made Halloween crafts, broke a piñata filled with candy and enjoyed Halloween movies and pizza. At the end of the event each child was given a pumpkin filled with additional goodies. Following the party, the lodge participated in the annual community trick or treat night. In little over an hour, the lodge gave out 150 candy bags and additional candy packets. Lodge 625 would like to thank the Home Office for the grant for this event.

Our annual **Steelers Tailgate Party** was held November 20 with a 1 PM kick-off. Twenty-two lodge members and their families participated in the event, watching the



Halloween Fun!



Lodge 625 presenting a check to Father Robert Oravetz, pastor, Holy Trinity Byzantine Church for \$3,500.⁰⁰. The check represents the proceeds from the Jackson Heritage Festival/ Matching Funds event. Two parish organizations also presented checks from their fundraisers the same day. From left: Lytton Croft-Blessed Bishop Romzha Men's Fraternity; Georgia Lehman, president of St. Ann's Guild & secretary-treasurer Lodge 625; Paul Yackulich Jr., president Lodge 625 & Blessed Bishop Romzha Men's Fraternity and Father Oravetz.

game on our 55 inch TV and enjoying food and fellowship. There were also drawings throughout the event.

As part of the second matching funds grant for community giving, Lodge 625 members took orders for gobs. A total of \$813.⁰⁶ was raised and the distribution of proceeds will be discussed at our annual meet-



Vickie Svencer and Georgia Lehman showing off the variety of gobs.

ing. We will also discuss plans for 2017, our annual St. Nicholas Social and Christmas Eve Social.

Lodge 625 would like to wish all our fellow members, Peace, Joy and Love this upcoming Holiday Season. May you each have a very Merry Christmas and a Blessed Happy New Year.

As a reminder, members of Lodge 625 who have email addresses are asked to send an email to the lodge email address so that we can com-

pile a distribution list to keep members informed of upcoming events and activities. The email address is GCUlodge625@yahoo.com.

Georgia Lehman
Secretary/Treasurer



Annual Recognition Dinner: Mary Danylak, Georgene Dubovecky, Bill Dubovecky and Rita Hull. Vickie Svencer, grandmother to Jessica Svencer with her mom Laurie. Jessica received a District 4 educational grant.



Lodge 340 Plunges Into Autumn

Rahway, NJ. GCU Lodge 340's newest member, Teagen Lynn Chapman received the sacraments of Baptism, Chrismation and Holy Eucharist at St. Thomas the Apostle Byzantine Catholic Church on Sunday, August 28, 2016 where the Right Rev. Archpriest James Hayer is pastor and celebrated the Divine Liturgy.

She is the daughter of proud parents, Theresa & Bert Chapman, grandfather, Joseph Rudo, and great grandmother Anna Rudo are both Lodge 340 members. The mother's cousin, Donald Pentz was the Godfather, while Aimee Bretones a close friend was the Godmother. The Chapman family traveled from their home in Arizona for this special occasion.

A coffee social was hosted by grandfather Joseph Rudo immediately following the service for the entire St. Thomas congregation. Later that day he also hosted a luncheon at Amici Restorante in Rahway, NJ.

Tricky Tray. Lodge 340 once again partnered with the St. Thomas Church's Altar Rosary Society and Men's Club for their annual tricky tray matching funds event to benefit St. Thomas Church on Wednesday, October 5 in the St. Thomas Church

hall. Over 300 people were in attendance. GCU members worked on setting up, cooking in the kitchen, as well as on the floor selling tickets. Lodge 340 also donated a beautiful theme basket prize. This event is one of the church's major fund raisers. It was a huge success.

Our 7th Annual Tricky Tray charity event this year was for the benefit of the New Jersey Special Olympics. The Special Olympics provides sports training and competition in a variety of Olympic-type sports for adults and children with intellectual disabilities. Over 25,000 athletes enjoy their accomplishments thorough this organization. Lodge 340 matching funds fundraiser awarded a \$250 gift card for this worthy cause. One of our members, Kristina Cwiekalo participates in a major Special Olympics fund raiser "Get Freezin' for A Reason" a plunge into the Atlantic Ocean in Seaside Heights, NJ in February. This event inspired us to support this charity. We can't wait to witness the event in February 2017.

Meeting Holly Morris. Mark & Mary Bannworth had an opportunity to meet with Holly Morris, a Globe Trekker, American author and documentary director/producer at

Seton Hall University in South Orange, NJ. On October 6, 2016 Holly Morris visited the university to present her award winning documentary, "The Babushkas of Chernobyl." It is a beautiful story of a

"The Babushkas of Chernobyl:"
Mark Bannworth,
Holly Morris
and Mary Bannworth.



group of older women who, after the Chernobyl nuclear accident in 1986 refuse to leave their homes in the Exclusion Zone. Although this land is not inhabitable, they chose to stay. They eat vegetables grown in their gardens, berries, mushrooms picked in the woods and eggs from their chickens. Holly Morris did a wonderful job of telling a story about the love and connection these Babushkas have to the Motherland. The Seton Hall Slavic Club along with the Raritan Valley Slavic Cultural and Heritage Society helped to sponsor this program. Mark and Mary are members of Lodge 340 where Mary serves as President.



A little help from the youth.



Attendees look over the baskets.



At left: Fr. James Hayer & Anna Sausnock at the Tricky Tray event. Above: Special Olympics representative with Dorothy Koenig and Linda Cwiekalo selling tickets.



Dorothy Koenig and Gloria Ryan receive mum delivery from the Veterans for Helping Hands Day.

Helping Hands. Our Helping Hands grant project was organized by Dorothy Koenig the chairperson for this event. She purchased over 30 huge yellow mums from a Veteran's organization to be planted in front of St. Thomas Church. A GCU lodge member and the church landscaper, Donald Anderson organized the planting of the mums on Friday, October 7, 2016. The mums add so much color and beauty to the church landscape.

Mary Bannworth, President

Festival of Trees

Each year the Beaver County, PA Festival of Trees draws thousands of visitors to spread the Christmas spirit and see the wonderful tree and train displays. The trees are decorated and donated by various businesses and individuals in the area. This year GCU participated as a sponsor.

Visitors vote on their favorite tree and can attend the auction to bid and purchase a tree. The proceeds benefit the Beaver County Children and Youth Services Advisory Board and the U.S. SARR Corps, which helps find missing children and adults who suddenly go missing. Both organizations “Provide Caring Support for the Children and Adults in Our Community.”



Ashley Guthridge, Gina Spickerman, Lisa Anderson, Virginia Locke and Gene Nagy.

John Ference Earns Eagle Scout Badge

John Nicholas Ference received his Eagle Scout badge for church and community service in October of this year. This award is earned by only 2% at this level of scouting. The requirements include earning at least 21 merit badges and demonstrating Scout Spirit, leadership and service. The requirements include an Eagle Scout Service Project where the Scout must further demonstrate service and leadership. Eagle Scouts are recognized with a medal and a cloth badge that visibly recognizes the accomplishments of the Scout. Eagle Palms are a further recognition, awarded for completing additional tenure, leadership and merit badge requirements.

John Nicholas is a member of GCU Lodge 386 in Carrick PA. He is the son of John Jude Ference DDS and Lisa Ference, MD, and grandson of John Ference who served as cantor of St. Pius X church for over 50 years and Helen Ference the president of GCU Lodge 386.

Congratulations, John Jude!

Beth Gulyasy, Lodge 386 Secretary/Treasurer



John's parents John Jude Ference DDS and Lisa Ference, MD pin Eagle badge on their son John.

GCU Home Office Celebrates Customer Service Week

Every year GCU celebrates the core of our business, providing personal and efficient customer service, with a week of fun and food. This year's theme was “Service Champions” since we just finished celebrating the Olympics. Every day someone was awarded a Service Champion medal and everyone enjoyed goodies like a popcorn torch, cookies, and even a pizza lunch. While we thank our Home Office staff for their hard work, we thank you for your loyal business and support!



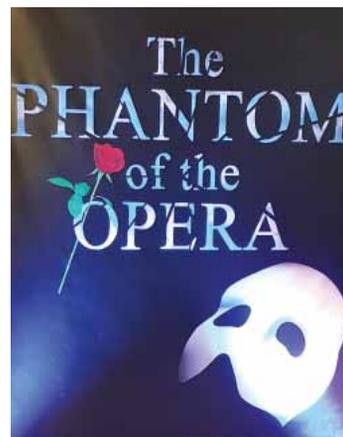
GCU Project Bundle-Up Sponsor

Project Bundle-Up is a combined effort of WTAE-TV and the Salvation Army in the Greater Pittsburgh area. The mission of Project Bundle-Up is to provide boots, gloves, hats and coats to help keep kids warm and healthy during the winter season. GCU was a shopping experience sponsor again this year and 20 volunteers met at the local Wal-Mart to help local children pick out their own new winter garb. It is a rewarding experience to get to know the children and see how fun it is for them to pick out their own coats. Thank you to all of our volunteers!



Seven Oaks & Lincoln Park Outing

GCU and Seven Oaks members enjoyed a memorable night out in Beaver County, PA on October 15 with dinner at Seven Oaks Country Club and a limo ride to Lincoln Park Performing Arts Center for their production of The Phantom of the Opera. It was a great night to “close your eyes and let the music set you free.”



**Deadline to Apply
for a
GCU 2017
Scholarship Award
is Saturday,
December 31, 2016.**

**Visit the
GCU Website at
www.gcuusa.com
for complete information.**



Winners of a Amazon gift card were Carol & Pastor Bill Silver.



Above & below attendees enjoy the limo ride.



Lodge 144 Veterans Celebration

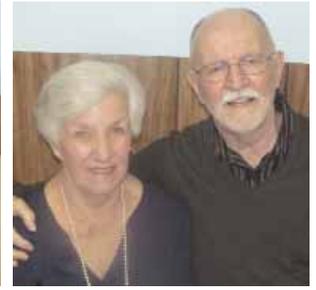
Denver, CO. On Sunday, November 6, 2016 GCU Lodge 144 had the privilege of honoring our members, our veterans and our servicemen and women. During the Divine Liturgy their names were read by the pastor of Holy Protection



Stacey Harris, Audrey Peek, Auditor John Chabin, Dottie Chabin, Cantor Mark Souter and National Director John Oslick.



Cantors John Chabin and Mark Souter.



John & Dottie Chabin celebrating their 61st wedding anniversary.

Church. A social followed in the church hall which was decorated in red, white and blue. Thank you cards were placed on the tables along with the plaques listing the names of all who served and are serving in our military.

Mary Ellen Oslick, President

Lodge 321 Report

Bradenville, PA. On November 6, 2016 Lodge 321 held a Parishioners and Veterans Appreciation Breakfast for St. Mary's Byzantine Catholic Church in Trauger, PA. Many members of Lodge 321 belong to this church. Attendees were asked for a FREE WILL offering to be made to the church for the benefit of the building fund instead of a fee for the breakfast. St. Mary's has had to complete many repairs this year. They also would like to install an elevator to help elderly and handicapped parishioners with easier access to the church from the parking lot.

We had applied for matching funds



Scott & Susan Wajdic with Zoltan Kristof at the breakfast.

from the GCU Home Office for this event. Thirty-eight parishioners came and socialized with us and one another. The GCU Home Office donated giveaways and Lodge 321 gave each veteran a flag lapel pin. The event was a huge success. St. Mary's qualified for the entire \$1,500.00 in matching funds.

The pastor of St. Mary's in Trauger is Rev. Paul Alexander Schutt, OSB, who is a bi-ritual Benedictine priest from St. Vincent Archabbey in Latrobe, PA.

In July John Siko, president of Lodge 321, and Scott Wajdic, treasurer of the lodge, presented a matching funds check to the director of the Blackburn Center in Greensburg, PA. The Parent's Day celebration in May resulted in cash and goods for the Blackburn Center in excess of \$1,100.00. This was the lodge's matching funds event for the community.

Finally, Lodge 321 awarded its scholarship for the current school year to Sarah Wood in July. Sarah is the



Scholarship recipient Sarah Wood receiving her award from President John Siko (seated). Back are Fr. Joseph Borodach, pastor at St. Mary's, Treasurer Scott Wajdic, Alex Wood and Sherrie Wood, Sarah's mother.

daughter of Bob & Sherrie Wood of Jeannette, PA. Sarah attends IUP and is studying criminal justice with the hope of becoming a police officer.

Laurene Kristof
Publicity Director



President John Siko presenting matching funds check to the director of Blackburn Center, Ann Emmerling with Treasurer Scott Wajdic (center).

Lodge 302 Fourth Quarter News

Brecksville, OH. It was a ghoulish afternoon on Sunday, October 30, 2016 for the Trunk or Treat and Halloween Party events for more than 40 children and adults. Treats were distributed from St. Joseph's Hall due to inclement weather. The children paraded throughout the hall in their Halloween costumes receiving their GCU treat bags and candy from members and parishioners. Refreshments included apple cider and donuts. A big thank you goes out to Diana Simpson, Jean Karaffa and Diane Richey helping to make this a



Kathy & Barb are ready with cupcakes, donuts and apple cider.

Kathy & Barb are ready with cupcakes, donuts and apple cider.

spooktacular event.

The quarterly annual meeting and luncheon was on November 6, 2016. Officers elected for the 2017 year are Judy Weitzel, president & secretary; Bonnie Ciresi, vice president/recording secretary; Michael Andrako, treasurer; Jean Karaffa, athletic director; Diana Simpson, fraternal director; Diane Richey, publicity director; Jerry Holderbaum, sergeant-at-arms/standard bearer; John Kresnisky, auditor; Don LeFleur, auditor and Fr. Bruce Riebe, chaplain. Congratulations to this hard working team of officers!

Judy Weitzel represented GCU in a sales capacity by having an event table with information and handouts at "A Forum on Respect," which took place



Halloween Trunk-or-Treaters.

on November 13 at St. Mary's Byzantine Church in conjunction with The Cathedral of St. John the Baptist.

On Saturday, November 19 and Sunday, November 20, the annual Lodge Food Drive and Banner Sunday came to St. Joseph's Church, Brecksville. Non-perishable food items were donated to St. Mary's Hospitality House along with a lodge monetary donation of \$105.



National Director Michael W. Karaffa gives the oath to the 2017 lodge officers. Members gather at the 4th quarterly meeting.



Please like us on Facebook! Lodge 302 photos and events are also posted on our Facebook site www.facebook.com/GCULodge302.

Diane Richey
Publicity Director

2017 Events Calendar

Sunday, February 5—1st Quarter Meeting/Founders' Day Luncheon, St. Joseph's Church, Brecksville, OH immediately following 10:30 AM Liturgy.

Saturday, March 12—12th Annual Game Night for Adult members and guests at 5:30 PM at St Joseph's, Activity Center, Brecksville, OH.

Sunday, April 9—Easter Egg Hunt-12 NOON, St. Joseph's Church Hall, Brecksville, OH.

Sunday, April 30—2nd Quarter meeting, St. Joseph's Church Hall immediately following 10:30 AM Liturgy.

Sunday, May 28—Memorial Day Service, St. Joseph's Church, Brecksville, OH immediately following 10:30 AM Liturgy.

Helping Hands Day at St Joseph's Church—Date and time to be determined.

Saturday & Sunday, June 10-11—Flag Day at St. Joseph's Church.

June—Cleveland Indians baseball game, June date to be determined.

Sunday, August 6—3rd Quarter meeting, St. Joseph's Church, Brecksville, OH, immediately following the 10 AM Liturgy.

Sunday, October 29—Trunk or Treat at St. Joseph's Church, following 10:30 AM Liturgy.

Sunday, November 5—4th Quarter/Annual Meeting, St. Joseph's Church immediately following 10:30 AM Liturgy.

Saturday & Sunday November 18-19—Food Drive and Banner Sunday, St. Joseph's Church.

Sunday, December 3—St. Nicholas Pot Luck Dinner/Children's Christmas Party, St. Joseph's Church following 10:30 AM Liturgy.

Lodge 17 News

Old Forge, PA. On October 7 three members of GCU Lodge 17, along with Rev. Eduard Shestak and Pani Oksana Shestak, beautified the front of St. Nicholas Byzantine Catholic Church, Old Forge, by planting 14 yellow/orange mums along the railings. This was part of our Helping Hands Project. Also, for part of this project, there were six volunteers for cleaning up the kitchen in the social hall. A thorough deep cleaning needed to be done—the floors, the stoves, the refrigerators, the freezers, and the microwave. The cabinets were too much of an undertaking at this time.

GCU Lodge 17 participated in the fall cleanup at Holy Annunciation Monastery, Sugarloaf, PA on Saturday, October 29, 2016. Five of our members assisted the Carmelite Sisters with preparing their grounds for winter. We cut down peonies,



Mike Mokay & Gina Keil scrubbing the sink.



Kitchen volunteers Mike Mokay, Betty Ann Gatto, Rev. Eduard Shestak, Maria Calogero, Ed Dolinish Jr.



Planting mums in front of St. Nicholas Church are Linda Mokay, Joe Sopp, Pani Oksana Shestak and Rev. Eduard Shestak.

lilies, and irises, as well as mowing the lawn. Inside work included folding boxes for desserts that the nuns sell during the holidays.

The nuns prepared a homemade spaghetti and meatball luncheon for us, along with a variety of their special cookies.

St. Mary's Byzantine Catholic Church, Taylor, PA held their Turkey Bingo with the assistance of GCU Lodge 17 on Sunday, November 13, 2016. GCU sticky note pads and GCU pens were distributed to the attendees. Activity books and crayons were given to the children.

Twenty BINGO games were held, including specials, with turkey gift certificates given away to the winners. There were 39 basket fund raisers and numerous door prizes. Food items for sale included haluski, wimpies, hot dogs/kraut/chili, pizza, pierogies, cof-

fee, soda and water. A bake sale was also held with delicious homemade baked goods. This was a matching funds project to help with repairs at St. Mary's. Thanks to all who contributed.

The month of November included food collections for the poor and used eye glasses for the Lions Club. In December, the lodge will help with the church Christmas Party and hold their appreciation luncheon and fourth quarter meeting. Details will appear in the next issue.

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

Ed Keil, Secretary/Treasurer



Check presentation: Gina Keil, Ed Dolinish Jr., Mother Marija, Ed Keil, Ilona and Demetrius Dolinish.



At right is Jeanie Sluck & Ilona Dolinish displaying their Turkey certificates for winning a bingo.

At right is Nadine Oliver & Ilona Dolinish manning the bake sale.



Volunteers for St. Mary's Turkey Bingo: Marion Savinelli, Nadine Oliver, Mason and Melissa Wolfe, Rev. Eduard Shestak, Pani Oksana Shestak, Pat Oliver, Olga Korpita, Carol Granko, Betty Ann Gatto and Ilona Dolinish.



Bingo players included Ilona & Alice Dolinish.

Lodge 57 Fall Activities

Brownsville, PA. St. Nicholas B.C. Church held their annual food festival on Sunday, October 2, 2016.

Lodge 57 Treasurer Becky Thomas and parishioner, Rose Kordich were in charge of the kitchen. They and their helpers prepared 350 pieces of chicken, 300 dozen potato/cheese pirohi and 700 cabbage rolls. As usual, all food items sold out. Many thanks to the men who helped in the kitchen: Joe Duda, Michael Thomas, Gary Gresh and Chuck Steeber.

Planning the floor design and preparing the nearly 50 baskets for the Chinese auction were Lodge 57 Secretary Melody Yeardie and her daughter, Jamie.

A lottery ticket tree was donated by Genevieve Marszal. Sean Dirda, Steve Grzesiak and Michael Thomas, Jr. assisted with the fundraisers.

Lois Dirda and family took care of the bakery table. This year, jars of tomato juice were donated, as well as the customary long rolls and a variety of cookies. All items were sold.

Those who took care of the take-out orders were so efficient. Valerie Thomas, Pam Gresh, Jackie Ducar and Madison Gresh were terrific in getting all the orders together and checked out quickly. Denise Grzesiak and Jean Mangini were the busy cashiers.

Many thanks to all those who helped or donated in any way, and especially, thanks to all those who came and supported this worthy fundraiser.



Lodge 81 members Bonnie & Kay Balas.



Lodge members Helen Gaskey, Jamie Tozser and Ann Tozser.



Fr. Burke with cashiers Denise Grzesiak and Jean Mangini.



Genevieve Marszal and the "lottery plant."



Lois Dirda and family at the bakery table.



Secretary Melody Yeardie at the Chinese Auction.

flaky apple, blackberry and cherry-filled pastries were baked and sold.

This fundraiser is always a great event and many supporters often ask when will the next turnover sale take place?

Becky Thomas and

Rose Kordich were once again in charge of the kitchen. Many thanks to all those who came to bake the turnovers and then fill the orders for distribution. Proceeds from both events will benefit the needed repairs of St. Nicholas Church where Fr. Christopher Burke is pastor.

Bernie Karoffa, Publicity Director



Genevieve Marzal icing the turnovers.



The baking crew with their pastor, Fr. Chris Burke & volunteers preparing the turnovers for pick-up.



Lodge 401 Holds Dinner

Nanty-Glo, PA. The annual Chicken & Biscuit Dinner sponsored by GCU Lodge 401 was on November 6, 2016 in the parish hall of St. Nicholas Byzantine Catholic Church. There have been numerous requests for this dinner and we thought it was a good hearty meal for the autumn season.

Prep work began on Friday, November 4. With a crew of five volunteers, 40 quarts of chicken stock were made from scratch. Later the chickens were removed and prepared for the main course. While things were cooling down the tables were arranged and dressed with tablecloths and seasonal flowers. With all this done, it freed up Saturday for everyone.

Our parish priest, Fr. Robert Oravetz, accommodated the workers with a special Saturday Liturgy since they would be busy with the dinner on Sunday.

After the Saturday Liturgy two of us went to the hall to



Millie Fenchak, Shirley Oblinsky & Dave Truscott. Marina Sell & son Nathanael with Shirley photo bombing.

organize the bills

for the dinner. Upon opening the door to the hall we noticed insulation hanging from the ceiling near the kitchen and water coming down. The water main was immediately shut off and calls were made to the electrician and plumber. It appears the heat tape caught fire on the plastic water pipe. It burned the plastic pipe and when the water came through it put out the fire. We were very fortunate that it wasn't more serious. A cleanup crew that consisted of parishioners of St. Nicholas had the mess contained and cleaned up. The Sunday dinner went on as scheduled and was a "sell out."

The lodge extends a sincere thank you to all the volunteers that made this dinner possible. We also thank all our patrons. We also thank God that the situation on Saturday wasn't more serious.

Eugene Ostinowsky, Vice President



Left: Linda Deskevich & Betty Nedrich. Center: Father Paul Alexander. Right: Lori Bender & Bev Chekan.

Lodge 69 Dumpster Clean Up Day

Pottstown, PA. With the assistance of a Helping Hands Day grant from the GCU, Lodge 69 members cleaned up around the church grounds and surrounding area of St. John the Baptist Byzantine Church in Pottstown. The grant helped with the cost of a dumpster brought in to remove unwanted items to help beautify the neighborhood. Parishioners were also able to bring trash from their homes and yards to dispose in dumpster. Areas concentrated on were garage, school and parking lot.

Nancy Harding
Secretary



Lodge 860 Fall Activities

Detroit, MI. Annual Reunion Dinner. Several dozen lodge members from far and wide attended this annual catered affair on Sunday, October 2 to return and reconnect with fellow 860 folk.

The event, held in the hall at St. Nicholas Church in Clinton Township, MI, provided a comfortable setting for members, including lodge officers and very active members, to mingle with those who participate less often in GCU events. Hopefully a recap of the year's successful activities—which earned the lodge a \$350 prize at this year's GCU National Convention—piqued renewed interest from among those less active members!

The members and guests were welcomed by the lodge's Secretary-Treasurer Bob Kulasa.

Teaming Up with Young Adults for Faith, Food and Fun! On Friday, October 28 Lodge 860 co-sponsored a "Faith, Food and Fun" event hosted by the St. Andrew Young Adult Association (SAYAA).

The lodge helped the fledgling group for Byzantine young adults to purchase one of the goals for a permanent soccer field on the grounds of St. Nicholas Church in Clinton Township. The group gathered for their very first soccer game

The special "GCU Lodge 860" cake that was served at the reunion dinner.



on the new field, followed by a pizza dinner in the church hall.

The evening also included a talk on prayer by Sub-Deacon Lazarus Der-Ghazarian, followed by a compline service, then cider and donuts and more fellowship.

Third Trivia Night. This threepeat of the pub-style trivia event hosted by Lodge 860 provided an evening of challenging, educational fun for adults with food, snacks and prizes, all for a \$2 admission fee (and a fraternal grant to help cover costs!).

The event was on Saturday, No-

vember 5 at St. Nicholas Church.

Once again, clever Trivia Master Anne Nagrant attempted to stump the participating teams with several rounds of questions designed to both test and increase their knowledge in various categories, including some on Byzantine faith and traditions.

Annual Meeting/Election of Officers. On Sunday, November 20 Lodge 860 held its annual meeting at St. Nicholas Church hall. Following a pizza luncheon, the lodge held its annual election of officers, re-seating nearly every position for another year.

The lodge also mourned the absence of its longtime chaplain and pastor emeritus of St. Nicholas Church Rev. Robert Barter, who fell asleep in the Lord in September following an extended illness. Eternal Memory and Blessed Repose, Fr. Barter!

Fr. Joseph Repko, current pastor of St. Nicholas Church, agreed to assume the role of chaplain.

Val Marszalec
Frat. Activities & Publicity Director



Just a few of the participants of the recent Lodge 860 co-sponsored "Faith, Food and Fun" event of the St. Andrew Young Adult Association posing with their GCU visitors in front of their new soccer goal.

Organizers of the successful Trivia Night event are Diane McDonald and Anne Nagrant.



Top prize winning team at Trivia Night at St. Nicholas Church: Mary Jane Kovalcik, Val Marszalec and Catherine Marchione.



Third prize team at the Trivia Night: Nick & Marianne Nagrant, Sharon & Jerry May.

Lodge 288 Fall Report

Clairton, PA. Ascension Church picnic was held on Sunday, September 11 with perfect weather for over 100 attendees. The Holy Name Society planned the picnic and provided a delicious buffet luncheon. Father Ivan Mina had family visiting from California and Russia who joined everyone in the festivities.

An educational program on the life and habits of animals, was presented by Chenoa Scott from Animal Tracks. She brought eight different species for her demonstration. The kids' favorites were the tortoise, python, and Madagascar cockroaches. Also, a special thanks to Carla & Dean Maksin for donating a flat screen TV to be awarded at the picnic. Theresa Frantangelo was excited to take it home. Proceeds were donated to the Ascension Ladies Guild.

During August and September, Lodge 288 requested household items be donated for a matching funds event. There was a great response from parishioners and friends who brought in enough items to create two baskets that we awarded. The recipients of the household baskets were Adelene Bodnar and Scott Bellavance. I'm sure they were anxious to get home and start cleaning! Matching funds proceeds will be donated to the Ascension Church Ladies Guild towards a St. Nicholas Day Celebration and brunch for the parish.

Lodge 288 received a \$500 prize during the National Convention for their participation in meeting criteria in a contest involving planning activities, events, fundraising, charitable efforts, helping hands and more. The lodge voted to donate the money to the Clairton Public Library to help support their efforts to continue the programs for children and families in the Clairton area. At one point the library was in dire need of financial support and was at risk of closing.



Marianne Roberts, Virginia Perlick and Odessa Ellis.

The lodge donation helped tremendously with their goal.

Our Halloween Party was on Sunday, October 30 with all the ghostly and spooky additions of a haunted hallway where the children could trick-or-treat. The group participated in a costume contest, apple bobbing, pin the smile on the skeleton, pumpkin toss and a Halloween Limbo contest. Lunch came thanks to help from the Ladies Guild.

Trish Roberts
Vice President



At left: Alexandria Lassige and Madagascar cockroach. At right: Subdeacon Raphael Ruggiero, Monsignor Russell Duker, Fr. Ivan Mina and Chenoa Scott.



Close and personal with the animals.



Halloween group.

IMPORTANT CHANGES TO REPORT TO THE GCU IT ONLY TAKES A PHONE CALL!

Help us to keep your account information current.
Please contact GCU Member Services at
1-855-306-0607 with any of the following changes:

- ✦ Marital Status
- ✦ Address Changes
- ✦ Banking Changes for Deposits or Withdrawals
- ✦ Request for IRA Minimum Distributions

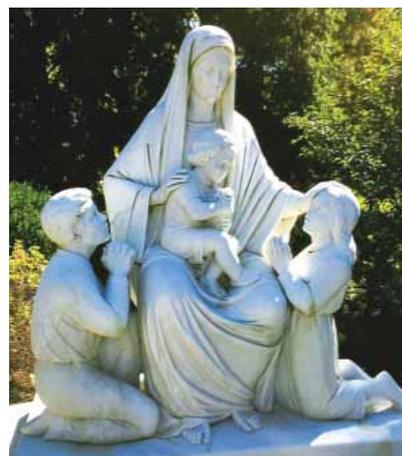
Lodge 319 Holds Dynamic Catholic Event

Flushing, MI. On Saturday, October 8 Lodge 319 in District 11 held a grant funded event for 20 people at St. Andrew Church in Rochester, MI. St. Michael's from Flushing, MI, St. George's from Bay City, MI and St. Basil's from Sterling Heights, MI attended. Matthew Kelly from Dynamic Catholic and musical guest Eliot Morris.



decision makers by prayer, study, generosity and evangelization.

Dynamic Catholic organizes world class learning systems through their research department. They produce Confirmation text books for Catholic parishes and are working on first communion and marriage text



books currently. They also distribute books at Christmas to all Catholic churches.

The day was enjoyed by all and inspired us all that the Catholic faith

Passion and Purpose was the topic for the day. Mr. Kelly spoke that as Catholics we need to engage the disengaged, continuously learning. We need to have game changers to strengthen our church and faith. He said we all can be phenomenal



Church and lodge members enjoy fraternalism while learning about their faith.



Speaker Mathew Kelly

is alive and growing. It was a day for personal growth and renewal of our faith as Catholics. We left with a motto of Be Bold-Be Catholic. For further information visit DynamicCatholic.com.

Patricia Chartier
President

Lodge 384 Social

Allen Park, MI. Coffee and Donut Day. GCU Lodge 384



relaxing time, chit-chatting with each other. Young and old enjoyed this time together.

Irene Durisin
President



Theresa Butella, Maryalice Lukas and Sue Kreft serving Fr. Mike Lenz.

Lodge 994 Supports Veterans

Beaver, PA. At the October 5, 2016 Veteran's Breakfast Club at Seven Oaks, John Schweich and Andy Zeedick of Lodge 994 presented a check for \$300 to VBC Director Todd DePastino.

The breakfast also included Colonel Daya Singh Kherra describing his 30-year (1961-1991) career in the Indian Army. A Sikh from India's Punjab Region, he served with Indian forces in responding to China's incursion into Northern India in 1965. After Prime Minister Indira Gandhi's assassination in 1984 by Sikh separatists, India imposed limits on the ethnic and religious minorities serving in the armed forces.

John Schweich



Lodge 18 Aids Flood Victims

Leisenring, PA. Flood Devastation. At the end of August 2016, Connellsville, PA was hit with a terrible flood. Many homes were destroyed and many people lost some or all of their belongings.

It was to be the first day of the new school year for the children of the Connellsville Area but that Sunday evening around 8:30 PM the flood changed all of that. Schools and businesses were shut down for over a week. Instead of the children starting school, some had to struggle to save their belongings, new school clothes and supplies and homes. The city was declared a State of Emergency and normal everyday life stopped as it was. Police had to enforce a 7 PM curfew because it was dangerous for people to be out. Homes, roads and bridges were washed away while people stood by watching. Families were stranded on roof tops and on cars hoping for someone to rescue them.

The town is along the Youghiogheny River but believe it or not that wasn't the worst areas hit. It destroyed an entire community at Dutch Bottom, Breakneck Road, an area on Route 119 and many places in Bullsken Township. It was amazing to see a town come together so quickly. Command posts were set up at the lo-

cal fire stations. Everyone was trying to find out how they could help and what was needed.

Hailey Sitko, a member of Lodge 18 of St. Stephen's Byzantine Catholic Church, wanted to do what she could to help. She is a member of the National Junior Honor Society and the teacher in charge decided they would do a school supply drive. They asked everyone that could to donate school supplies and Hailey spent a whole day boxing the supplies up and handing them out to kids in need. She also decided to help at New Haven fire hall. She spent several days collecting and handing out cleaning supplies to people in need. She would go at 7:30 in the morning till 7 PM for several days. Then they needed help at a house along Route 119 that was destroyed. So she spent the next several days at those houses crawling underneath and in basements pulling out cinder blocks and insulation.

I am so proud of my 13 year old for all her hard manual labor work. We just keep picking up trash bags of dirty muddy clothes and replacing them with clean clothes for her



to wear the next day. She did this for a week and never complained... she was a very dedicated hard worker helping to do what she could.

Connellsville Ministries. The Geibel Cheerleaders decided to collect donations in front of local businesses. One day they were outside Trailside Treats, Connellsville and one day outside the Uniontown Shop-n-Save. They collected over \$2,600.⁰⁰. Abbey Sitko, a member of Lodge 18 helped with that project. She was also able to arrange matching funds from the GCU. They made that donation to Connellsville Ministries who helped several families directly affected by the flood.

Bakeless Bake Sale. Lodge 18 collected money instead of actually having the bake sale. All the money collected was matched by the Home Office and given to a family whose home was devastated by the flood in

August in Connellsville. Thanks to all who participated in this matching funds event.

Linda Sitko
Athletic Director



District 15 Scholarship Awards

GCU District 15's annual senior award applications are available by contacting Secretary Kathy Kapaldo at kkapaldo@comcast.net by December 31, 2016 and returning by February 15, 2017. The applications will be sent to the student's email address. Any high school senior who is a member of GCU District 15 is eligible to apply for this award.

Lodge 351 Holds Dinner

Indiana, PA. Lodge 351 held a Ham and Holupki Matching Funds Program at St. Jude Byzantine Catholic Church in Ernest PA on Sunday, October 30, 2016. This year, the dinner not only benefitted St. Jude Byzantine Catholic Church, but the dinner was coordinated to provide information about Dysautonomia through Cupcakes for a Cure. Dysautonomia is a disorder that affects the autonomic nervous system, and it is more common in females. Information concerning this disorder can be found at the following website: <http://my.clevelandclinic.org/health/diseases/conditions/hic/Dysautonomia>.



Addie Little after enjoying a cupcake.



Ray & Ellen Kulis and Agnes Klyap. At left is Monica Kowalski with Cupcakes for a Cure.



Above: Agnes Klyap and Roberta Metro. At left is Katie Kowalski with Cupcakes for a Cure.

The dinner was coordinated through the efforts of Agnes Klyap, Katie Kowalski-Little, and Monica Kowalski of Lodge 351 with the help of members of Saint Jude Byzantine Church. Katie Kowalski-Little, who has been diagnosed with POTS, a type of Dysautonomia, baked the cupcakes and donated them for Cupcakes for a Cure. She also distributed information to those who came to purchase a dinner and who gave an additional donation to Dysautonomia International. Additionally, all of the items needed for the dinner were donated by members of the parish and Lodge 351 members, in-

cluding additional cupcakes that were baked by members of St. Jude. The dinner sold out early, so next year there are plans to increase the number of holupki that will be made.

Patty Yamrick, Publicity



Lodge 999 Oktoberfest 2016



Phoenix, AZ. On October 30, Lodge 999 held an Oktoberfest that was a matching funds event. The day was full of activities for all ages. We had a pumpkin walk and a bounce house for the kids. Potato pancakes and "brats" were served along with apple crisp and ice cream. The Life Choice Center that we sponsored drove their mobile RV to the

event so guests could tour it.

The lodge also held an Oktoberfest at St. Thomas in Gilbert, AZ. The event assisted the parish and was enjoyed by all.

Joanie Mahar
Secretary



Lodge 255 Photo Highlights

Steeler Tailgate Party



Kids at the Halloween Party.



Athletic winners present-Darlene Mafesic for women's bowling and Charlie Robinson and John Niskach for golf with Athletic Director John Miller.



Fifty-year members Clay Cato and John Niskach with national officers Ted Trbovich & Melanie Basl.



Lodge officers Patty Niskach and John Niskach with lodge member Judy Gula presenting their donation to the Greenfield Food Bank and St. John Chrysostom Church with the money raised from the Steelers Tailgate and GCU matching funds.

Greenfield-Pittsburgh, PA Our annual Steelers tailgate held on Sunday, October 16. The annual Halloween party was on Saturday, October 22 run by Jennifer Gula. Annual awards meeting Sunday, November 20. At the Annual Meeting a unanimous ballot was also cast to extend all officers to an additional year term.

Melanie Basl
Publicity Director

Parish Expansion

Tucson, AZ. On Saturday, September 24 the Youth of Saint Melany Byzantine Catholic Church in Tucson, AZ hosted their second annual "Rummage Sale" fundraiser to benefit their attendance at Eparchial and inter-Eparchial Youth events. The sale was a parish expansion matching funds event with the assistance of Lodge 999 in Phoenix, AZ. Over the months of August and September the Youth, solicited, gathered and sorted donated items common to any yard sale or swap meet: appliances, furniture, home goods, kitchen and bath items, cloths, holiday decorations, books, CD's, DVD's, records, electronics, medical supplies, sports equipment and more. I couldn't be prouder of my kids, said Father Rankin; when it comes to volunteering and working hard to promote their Faith our young people really demonstrate the joy of serving God and helping others through their Church.



Submitted by Joanie Mahar

Solon, OH. On Sunday, October 16, 2016 St. John the Baptist Byzantine Catholic Parish hosted a Chicken Paprikas Dinner to raise funds for the maintenance of the parish. The congregation has decreased to approximately 20 faithful members, and sustaining the parish with so few parishioners is a major difficulty. The parish makes and sells nut and poppyseed rolls all year long, but tries to augment that income with a few dinners per year. Sadly, the Paprikas Dinner was only attended by about 35 people, despite advertising in all the local Byzantine Catholic parishes and local newspapers and newsletters. All ingredients, except the chicken, were donated, so the expenses for the dinner were \$81.18. Ticket sales brought in \$424, leaving a net profit of \$342.19. St. John Parish is very grateful to the Greek Catholic Union for matching the profit!



Submitted by Loretta Nemeth, Parish Coordinator

News from the Big Apple



Breast Cancer money given to Adelphi Hot line and Support Group.



Marge Pajer Russell, Cathie Walsh and Josie giving Fr. Tyler the matching funds check.

New York, NY. TEAM GCU--Join the Fight. The Lodge 151 annual luncheon to raise funds for breast cancer research took place in early October. Doors opened at noon, but the 140 guests arrived earlier in great anticipation of celebrating leadership and survivorship in the breast cancer community.

The women of Adelphi New York Statewide Breast Cancer Hotline and Support Program (breast-cancer.adelphi.edu) and our very own Marge Pajer Russell, who was the consummate organizer, were the leaders of our GCU Breast Cancer Luncheon. There was an array of fundraisers and a delicious luncheon followed by a poignant testimonial of survival.

All in all, this day provided a powerful bonding in the struggle to redouble efforts to eradicate the second leading killer of women in America. As partners in the pink brigade, Christine Hulak, Ann Kandrato and Julia Hulak tested the acuity of the audience with questions about health and awarded pink ribbon key chains to winners and promoted the good works of the GCU. We were all "in the pink" as we happily carried prizes in our TEAM GCU pink bags, filled with great hope and squeeze balls.

We thank Marge Pajer-Russell for hosting this life-affirming celebration that brings us one event closer to finding a cure.

Theotokos Tea. St. Andrew's Church held its annual Theotokos Tea on October 2, 2016. Rosemarie, Sal and Miriam Manno did a great job organizing this beautiful luncheon. Parishioner Mary Elizabeth Hanson did a presentation on Eastern Catholic Church icons. She explained and demonstrated the process of creating an icon. The icon of the Theotokos (Blessed Mother) with the Christ Child

was then used as a fundraising prize. Thank you Rosemarie for all your hard work on this delicious luncheon.

Children's Day which was organized by GCU members Suzanne Mamay and Marge Russell turned out to be a beautiful day. Over 100 children of all ages enjoyed the pumpkins, candies, face painting, activity books and other treats. GCU teen Nicholas Mamay enjoyed helping the children decorate the pumpkins. The children left the party with big smiles and GCU Halloween bags full of goodies. It was a fun filled day.



Youth Activity.



Thank You! Fr. Jecewitz of St. Raphael's Parish and Food Pantry thanked GCU Lodge 151 for its numerous donations in the Sunday church bulletin. In addition to our check, the pantry received cereal, toiletries, books, hats and toys

We wish everyone a Merry Christmas and a Happy & Healthy New Year

Christos Razdajetsja!
Slavite Jeho!

Christine Hulak & Marge Pajer-Russell



Lodge 151 members enjoyed the Theotokos Tea.

Lodge 271 Assist with Prairie Fest

Homer Glen, IL. Annunciation Byzantine Catholic Church in Homer Glen held its 9th annual Prairie Fest Friday, August 12-Sunday, August 14, 2016. GCU Lodge 271 has been a main sponsor of the fest over the years as well as having its members volunteer throughout the weekend event.

The festival is filled with everything from music, art, food, education and evangelization. There was music for everyone from classic rock to 80's to country and culminating with "Polka Sunday." Children had plenty of activities from an arts and crafts area, to a play area with a bouncy obstacle course, to animal demonstrators with wolves, bats, snakes and other creepy creatures, and local



dance performances. For the adults, between the music entertainment, there were prairie tours, church tours, an art and wine event, dance exhibitions, fundraisers and a great bakery.



Father Thomas Loya leads group during the art and wine event. At left is a group of kids enjoy some arts and crafts.

Last but not least, the fest provided a great variety of food selections from our traditional ethnic foods to local vendors providing Latin foods to traditional American options.

The fest has grown from a church event to a truly community event. Summed up best by Rev. Father Thomas Loya, pastor at Annunciation, "It's a way for us to open our heart and our home to the community."

Next year's 10th anniversary of Prairie Fest has already been scheduled for Friday, August 11-Sunday, August 13, 2017—Save the Dates!

Robert Palasz, Treasurer



At left: Local dancers get crowd into a Brazilian dance. At right: Country band, Nick Lynch, rocking under the main tent.



Lodge 93 Fall Update

Northern Cambria, PA. Basket Fund Raiser. Lodge 93 sponsored a basket fund raiser to help benefit the St. John's Byzantine interior church painting project, Good Samaritan Food Pantry and the local library.

The baskets ranged from Christmas items, hardware, appliances, mountain bike, tools, children's toys, gift cards to many Steeler items. Volunteers served complimentary coffee and cake along with chips and pretzels.

A special thank you to the Home Office for matching funds for this basket fund raiser. Most appreciated. A thank you also to the volunteers that helped make this project a success. A job well done. Fr. Vasil Polyak is pastor.

John J Katana, Lodge 93 Secretary



Basket fund raiser items and participants.



Final roof project: painting of the dome and repair of the tower at St. John's Byzantine Church in Northern Cambria.

District 11 Tigers Game & Tailgate Party

GCU District 11 once again treated Detroit Tigers fans among the lodges and parishes to a Tailgate Party and Tigers baseball game on Saturday, September 10.

The afternoon Tailgate Party, held at St. Nicholas Church's hall in Clinton Township, MI featured the awesome buffet of "fan" fare repeat attenders have come to expect!

Afterwards, over 100 game-goers filled busses that transported them to Comerica Park and back to the church parking lot after an exciting evening of Detroit baseball.

Val Marszalec, Fraternal/Publicity Director



District 11 President Gary Mozuras (left) grills hot dogs for the Tigers Tailgate Party, Assisted by Jim Van Kula.



Far left: Tailgate Party preppers at St. Nicholas Church in Clinton Township, MI. From left: District 11 President Gary Mozuras, Pat Digon and Karen Kaufman.



Participants at the District 11 Tigers Tailgate Party. From left: Brian & Pat Chartier and John P. Minarish.

For Your Information

EVENTS

Mount Saint Macrina House of Prayer. **Poustinia Retreat.** February 24-26, 2017—7 PM Friday-11 AM Sunday. Presented by Sr. Barbara Jean Mihalchick, OSBM. Offering is \$75. Registration due February 17, 2017.

AVAILABLE

Spring 2017 Byzantine Online... Available through the Byzantine Catholic Seminary. Credit courses (Jan. 16-May 5, 2017). **Theology of the Divine Praises** (Fr. David Petras, SEOD)-This course will survey the theological, spiritual and historical elements of the daily official prayer of the Eastern Catholic churches. (2 credits) **Pastrics II** (Kyle Washut, STL, STM)-This course will introduce the history, theology, and spirituality of the patristic period from St. Athanasius of Alexandria to St. Symeon the New Theologian. The rich ethnic and cultural diversity of early Christian thought will be highlighted through study of primary sources. (2 credits; *Patristics I* not a prerequisite). Certificate courses (Jan. 16-March 17, 2017). **The Bible for Eastern Catholics** (Deacon Daniel Dozier)-The course will introduce students to the unique ways in which Eastern Catholic liturgy and tradition is steeped in the appropriation of Scripture. **Plainchant of the Byzantine Catholic Church** (Jeff Mierzejewski, Metropolitan

Cantor Institute)-In this course, we will examine the *prostopinije*, or plainchant, of the Byzantine (Ruthenian) Catholic Church. Students from other churches or disciplines will be provided with a living example of

a complete system of liturgical chant, and learn how it has been used in the past, and is used today. Application information and registration available at: online.bcs.edu.

Join **GCU** for **A Great Day for Hockey**




Come see your Stanley Cup Champion Pittsburgh Penguins face off against Jaromir Jagr and the Florida Panthers!

SUNDAY - MARCH 19, 2017 - 1:00PM

\$60 & \$70 member price add \$10/ticket for non-members **Seats available in sections 209, 210, 216, 233 and 234**

Call 724-495-3400 ext. 3809 for more info

✝ DECEASED MEMBERS ✝

(Lodge-Name-Residence)

| | | | | | |
|-----|---|-----|---------------------------------------|-----|---|
| 83 | Lillian M. Aimino, Indiana, PA | | | 994 | Maurice Mervis, Beaver Falls, PA |
| 83 | Robert Albright, Beaver, PA | | | 66 | Anne Mihalik, Crown Point, IN |
| 83 | Lloyd Alfred, Pittsburgh, PA | 83 | Mary Gallo, Brownsville, PA | 2 | Robert Minnick, McKeesport, PA |
| 83 | Patricia H. Altman, Oakmont, PA | 83 | Harold Goss, Pottsville, PA | 83 | William H. Mock, Clymer, PA |
| 600 | Peter Andrasko, Hazleton, PA | 271 | Theresa H. Gottfried, Orland Park, IL | 83 | Louise Molnar, Natrona, PA |
| 66 | Agnes Andrey, Highland, IN | 69 | Helen Grayouskie, Pottstown, PA | 340 | Anthony Murano, Linden, NJ |
| 83 | Slawka Angeloff, Aliquippa, PA | 83 | Edward Grecco, Norfolk, VA | 390 | William D. Murray, McKees Rocks, PA |
| 2 | Charlotte K. Asmonga, West Homestead, PA | 83 | William F. Haidar, Berwick, PA | 77 | Mary Nahm, Lorain, OH |
| 83 | William Atwell, Zieglerville, PA | 302 | Tillie Harrigal, Parma Heights, OH | 83 | Stanley F. Noga, Cresson, PA |
| 83 | Luella Babinsack, Freeport, PA | 83 | Florence A. Hartman, Johnstown, PA | 83 | Gerald Nowakowski, Butler, PA |
| 83 | Nancy Baker, McDonald, PA | 999 | Leone W. Hawley, Tucson, AZ | 83 | Carl H. Nunley, Walnutport, PA |
| 83 | Roy E. Baker, Boswell, PA | 271 | Barbara Heely, Springfield, IL | 83 | Kathryn M. O'Boyle, Shenandoah, PA |
| 83 | Elizabeth Baldrige, Cranberry Twp, PA | 83 | Robert H. Henry, Carnegie, PA | 83 | Randy P. O'Brien, Ellwood City, PA |
| 69 | Dolores Balis, Newton Square, PA | 83 | Martha A. Hopkins, North Apollo, PA | 83 | Stella M. Osche, Pittsburgh, PA |
| 83 | Maxine Barr, Marion Center, PA | 235 | Myron Horbal, Ansonia, CT | 83 | Joan Packe, Penn Run, PA |
| 288 | Mary Belic, Monongahela, PA | 83 | Clara Horvath, Morgantown, WV | 83 | George Palermo, McKees Rocks, PA |
| 83 | William R. Bell, Jenkintown, PA | 83 | Louis Horvath, Beaver, PA | 109 | John Panchik, Ford City, PA |
| 83 | Betty Bergmann, Boston, PA | 83 | Betty S. Hunter, New Columbia, PA | 83 | Shelby Patty, Murrysville, PA |
| 2 | Elsie Bodner, Jamestown, PA | 83 | Lillian Iannini, Aliquippa, PA | 83 | Betty Pavlosky, Johnstown, PA |
| 255 | Raymond Boldy, West Mifflin, PA | 66 | Daniel A. Ivanyo, Merrillville, IN | 7 | Margaret Petraschuk, Yonkers, NY |
| 83 | William L. Bradshaw, Tarentum, PA | 83 | Antonia Jacmenovic, Johnstown, PA | 83 | Marjorie A. Petrus, Brownsville, PA |
| 2 | Marilyn Braszo, Munhall, PA | 83 | George R. Jacob, Irwin, PA | 994 | Alfreda Petula, Beaver, PA |
| 83 | Anna Briggs, Glassport, PA | 83 | Carl L. Jakubowski, Pittsburgh, PA | 20 | Nicholas Platco, Phoenixville, PA |
| 83 | Margaret A. Bringer, N. Apollo, PA | 83 | Ruth Janeski, Chandler, AZ | 83 | Elizabeth P. Politan, Washington, PA |
| 83 | Helen Britton, Moneta, VA | 83 | Julius Jesso, Masontown, PA | 83 | Letitia M. Pollock, Lower Burrell, PA |
| 83 | Winifred Broomall, Charleston, SC | 83 | Clarence E. Johnston, Millerstown, PA | 321 | Richard Ponzurick, Mt Pleasant, PA |
| 83 | Helen Brouse, San Leandro, CA | 360 | Marleen A. Kana, Campbell, OH | 28 | Michael Popovich, Bethel Park, PA |
| 83 | Kenneth Bruce, Spring Church, PA | 21 | Johan Kane, Riverside, CA | 665 | Santa Powanda, Colonia, NJ |
| 625 | Robert Brush, Johnstown, PA | 83 | Betty A. Kardish, Ellwood City, PA | 336 | Frank Regula, Bay Village, OH |
| 83 | Francis C. Bryan, Martinsburg, PA | 66 | Irene Kesperich, Merrillville, IN | 83 | George Resetar, Bayonne, NJ |
| 130 | Carroll Call, Bradenton, FL | 83 | Paul Kirkham, Duncansville, PA | 386 | Geraldine Rhoads, Pittsburgh, PA |
| 83 | Flora M. Campoli, Jarrettsville, MD | 83 | Dolores M. Koch, Charleroi, PA | 182 | Berna Rishcoff, Swoyersville, PA |
| 83 | Frank A. Cargiene, Canonsburg, PA | 600 | Joseph Kokinda, Beaver Meadows, PA | 83 | John Risko, Tamaqua, PA |
| 83 | Dolores C. Celmo, McDonald, PA | 900 | Jayne Kolbeck, Marshfield, WI | 83 | Lawrence Roche, Springdale, PA |
| 750 | Collier A. Cerny, Wausau, WI | 28 | Barbara E. Komar, Pittsburgh, PA | 83 | Jean H. Rodgers, Bakerstown, PA |
| 20 | Joseph Cherepko, Bethlehem, PA | 83 | Anna Kotrady, Bridgeport, CT | 83 | Carol Rodnick, Pottsville, PA |
| 252 | Margaret Cikovich, High Springs, FL | 164 | Patricia Kovachik, Youngstown, OH | 83 | Caroline F. Rosensteel, Pittsburgh, PA |
| 83 | Richard Clark, Glenville, PA | 83 | Ann Krilosky, Stockdale, PA | 900 | Lorraine Rossmiller, Micco, FL |
| 21 | Edwin Colclough, Sun City, CA | 625 | Joseph Kudrick, Windber, PA | 900 | Carole J. Roulette, Green Bay, WI |
| 83 | Ellen E. Collis, Spring City, PA | 900 | Mara Kujawa, Franklin, WI | 83 | Mamie R. Rowe, Clairton, PA |
| 665 | Mary E. Connelly, Beaver, PA | 816 | Joanne C. Kurtz, Dubois, PA | 83 | Donald Rubenstein, Berwick, PA |
| 83 | Elizabeth T. Constanty, Orwigsburg, PA | 860 | John Kuzmak, Sterling Heights, MI | 999 | Warren J. Ruetten, Glendale, AZ |
| 83 | Beatrice S. Custer, Georgetown, DE | 83 | Richard Larko, Matthews, NC | 288 | Warry Ruffing, Monroe, NY |
| 83 | Patsy D'Antonio, Aliquippa, PA | 17 | Paul Lebeda, Parlin, NJ | 288 | Cheryl Marie Sabol, Dravosburg, PA |
| 83 | Victor DeBacco, East Brady, PA | 360 | Kolbrun Leffel, Lorain, OH | 83 | Kathryn Sage, Uniontown, PA |
| 83 | Peter F. Debuski, Morea, PA | 83 | Catherine E. Lennon, Glenshaw, PA | 83 | Herman Scheibelhut, Schuylkill Haven, PA |
| 600 | Mary A. Demjanish, Hazleton, PA | 53 | Helen Letner, Wilkes Barre, PA | 83 | Eleanor M. Schmidt, Saltsburg, PA |
| 28 | Helen Dettore, West Homestead, PA | 15 | George Lisnock, Lakewood, NJ | 860 | Gwynn J. Schrader, Centreville, MI |
| 999 | Andrew Dolyniuk, Glendale, AZ | 83 | Mary Lucas, Butler, PA | 130 | John Schwartz, Sarasota, FL |
| 83 | Walter M. Drennan, Cheswick, PA | 600 | John Lukatch, West Chester, PA | 83 | Reta Schwartz, Cheswick, PA |
| 994 | Kenneth Dripps, Beaver, PA | 83 | Lynda Lynch, King of Prussia, PA | 600 | Michael Semko, Tamaqua, PA |
| 83 | Mary Jane Dudash, N. Versailles, PA | 83 | Catherine F. Mack, Cannonsburg, PA | 999 | George E. Shaffer, Sun City West, AZ |
| 83 | John Dzurovcin, New Kensington, PA | 600 | Ruth A. Maguschak, Weatherly, PA | 83 | Anita M. Shean, Lower Burrell, PA |
| 390 | Elsie M. Eberle, McKees Rocks, PA | 83 | Francis Malesky, Beaver, PA | 83 | Michael Shemancik, East Amherst, NY |
| 401 | Audrey Edmundson, Portage, PA | 83 | Samuel Mancuso, Belle Vernon, PA | 83 | Hedwig Shkuratoff, Harwick, PA |
| 83 | Russell Ehrenberg, Wampum, PA | 271 | Raymond C. Mareno, Joliet, IL | 860 | Charles Shubeck, Camarillo, CA |
| 83 | Joanne Finch, Pittsburgh, PA | 999 | Helen-Marie Marshall, Peoria, AZ | 83 | Katherine Shylock, Stockdale, PA |
| 83 | Mary Firkaly, Beaver, PA | 83 | Alice K. Matrunics, Dunbar, PA | 10 | Ann Silipigni, Rochester, PA |
| 109 | Frank Franko, Butler, PA | 21 | Colleen McCoy, Rocklin, CA | 994 | Audrey Silosky, Rochester, PA |
| 83 | Helen Freeman, Mt. Pleasant, PA | 999 | James McCoy, Tucson, AZ | 252 | Edward Sivecz, Boardman, OH |
| 401 | Paul B. Gable, Portage, PA | 83 | Ethel McCutcheon, Apollo, PA | 83 | Nick Soley, Madeira Beach, FL |
| 999 | Fred Gahn, Tucson, AZ | 83 | Kenneth McGee, Butler, PA | 83 | Pauline Spagnola, Wilkes-Barre, PA |
| | | 945 | Mary Meila, Dunmore, PA | | |

SISTER STEPHANIE BAVOL, OSBM

Sr. Stephanie (Elizabeth) Bavol quietly and peacefully entered into the fullness of life on Monday, October 17. After retiring from active ministry due to health issues, Sr. Stephanie resided at Mt. Macrina Manor for the past eight years. Her cheerful countenance and acceptance of this change in her life was an inspiration to all who cared for her. She never failed to greet one with a smile and the question, "So, how are you doing?"

Sr. Stephanie was born in Trenton, NJ, the daughter of the late John and Susan (Vasilko) Bavol. She entered the Sisters of St. Basil from St. Mary's Church, Trenton in 1941. Having made the decision to offer her life in service to God at the early age of 16, she remained faithful to this call for 76 years.

Sr. Stephanie's life in ministry ranged from being prefect of boys and girls in St. Nicholas Orphanage, to prefect at Mt. St. Macrina Academy, to being a teacher in the primary grades for over 25 years in the various places where the Sisters served. For ten years, with other Basilians including her sister, Sr. Theresa, she was also a familiar face at Camp Come Alive sponsored by the Eparchy of Passaic. Of her last and most beloved ministry, that of iconography she wrote, "My last apostolate which is iconography—is the most prayerful and peaceful. I pray that the Holy Spirit

will continue to guide and help me." Sr. Stephanie, in fact, has the distinction of being the first iconographer in the community. In addition to this, Sister designed the community cross. This uniquely designed cross was accepted as the official community symbol of the Sisters of the Order of St. Basil internationally.

After receiving her degree in education and certification in elementary education and art from Marywood College, she was privileged to pursue her study in art under master iconographer, Philip Zimmerman, with whom she also conducted workshops both in this country and abroad. Over the years, Sr. Stephanie had been commissioned to write several icons for special occasions, one of which was presented to Pope St. John Paul II by the late Archbishop Judson Procyk as a token of esteem and gratitude. Through prayer and inspiration, Sister also wrote an icon depicting the Call of the Apostles which became the official Vocation Icon of the Eparchy of Passaic at the time. These and many other commissioned icons and the several which grace the walls of the monastery near the chapel are testimony to Sister's gifts and God-given talents.

In his homily at the Funeral Divine Liturgy, Father John Petro brought together the many aspects of Sr. Stephanie's life as a Sister by com-

paring them to the changing seasons in nature. One point focused on the beauty of the colors of autumn leaves. These brilliant colors are hidden during spring and summer, since chlorophyll is being manufactured all the time. Then the "leaf factory" slows down, and what has been hidden emerges in all its glory. So, too, Sister's earlier life in community found her busy in many ministries; but then, through her giftedness in art and her faith journey, an entire new ministry of iconography came into being. The richness which this brought to our Church has been noted above. Our prayer and belief now is that Sr. Stephanie in her falling asleep in the Lord will now open her eyes to the beauty awaiting her in her new life.

Sr. Stephanie was preceded in death by her parents, her sisters Mary Bavol, Ann Vanisko, and Margaret Mattaliano; and her brothers John and Michael Bavol. In addition to her members in community, she is survived by her cherished sister, Sr. Theresa, also a member of the Sisters of St. Basil, and many devoted nieces and nephews.

The Funeral Divine Liturgy was concelebrated on October 21 by Very Rev. Archpriest John G. Petro and Rev. Michael Huszti, monastery chaplain. Interment followed in the Dormition Section of Mount Macrina Cemetery

May God grant to his handmaiden, Sister Stephanie, eternal memory and peaceful repose.

✝ DECEASED MEMBERS ✝

| | | <i>(Lodge-Name-Residence)</i> | | | |
|-----|-----------------------------------|-------------------------------|--------------------------------------|--------------------------------|--|
| 83 | Charles St. Clair, Leechburg, PA | | 130 | Ruth Weidig, Palm Coast, FL | |
| 28 | William Starry, Mckeesport, PA | | 83 | William Wesche, Pittsburgh, PA | |
| 211 | Edward Stash, Forty Fort, PA | 83 | Ronald J. Timulak, Cairnbrook, PA | 271 | Thelma Whitsett, Georgetown, OH |
| 83 | Ruth E. Stepp, Tarentum, PA | 83 | Malcolm Trimble, Pittsburgh, PA | 83 | Rose M. Wilkes, Pittsburgh, PA |
| 83 | Lois A. Stiver, Indiana, PA | 255 | Robert Tubridy, Pittsburgh, PA | 83 | Charles Wilson, Duquesne, PA |
| 271 | Sharon L. Sturgeon, Crestwood, IL | 83 | Earl Tucker, Cochranon, PA | 83 | Nancy Wine, Brockway, PA |
| 83 | Doris J. Stutzman, Johnstown, PA | 83 | Brian G. Uansa, Pittsburgh, PA | 945 | Marjorie P. Yeager, Wapwallopen, PA |
| 83 | Margaret Sutter, Warren, PA | 750 | Lorraine A. VanderWeg, Milwaukee, WI | 999 | Josephine Yeley, Bennettsville, SC |
| 83 | Dante J. Tabacchi, Cheswick, PA | 360 | Lynn Vansuch, Richmond, VA | 600 | Marie Yurovchak, Hazle Township, PA |
| 83 | Dominic M Teny, Monaca, PA | 271 | Victoria Verges, Belleville, IL | 83 | Emily Zahorec, Hixson, TN |
| 83 | Joanna J. Tetanich, Altoona, PA | 83 | Yi Tung Wang, Carbondale, IL | 83 | Stephen M. Zakrewsky, Mahanoy City, PA |
| 999 | Donald Thompson, Peoria, AZ | 252 | Andrew Wansack, Youngstown, OH | 336 | James V. Zimmerman, Salem, OH |
| 83 | Helen Thompson, Cabot, PA | 390 | Michael Wargo, Cleveland, OH | | |
| 83 | Ruby Thompson, Duncansville, PA | | | | |

GCU 2017 Athletic Scholarship Program

A scholarship opportunity for High School Seniors ...read on for the details!

Requirements

- Student must be a current GCU member and have been a member for at least 5 years with either a permanent life insurance policy or an annuity with a minimum balance of \$2,000 at the time of request for application and maintain membership status throughout application and approval/payment process.
- Applications will be accepted for students currently completing their final/senior year in High School. Applicant must be seeking a degree program (Bachelor's or Associate) in the following Academic year.
- Student must have participated in at least one fraternal (volunteering/community service) activity during his/her junior or senior year, and provide documentation from the organizer of the event.
- Student must have participated in at least one competitive athletic activity during his/her senior year. The athletic activity may be as part of a school team, local or community club or league.
- Student must provide a letter of recommendation from the coach/instructor/organizer of each sport in which the student has participated. Letter must be on the school/organizer's letterhead and/or must be mailed, faxed or emailed directly from the group leader. Letters cannot be sent to the GCU through the student unless on letterhead.
- Student must submit his/her school photo as well as at least one photo of him/her participating in a sporting activity or in a sports uniform.
- While this is not an academic scholarship, the applicant must hold a cumulative GPA 2.3 on a 4 point scale at the time of application.
- A Committee chosen by the Board of Directors will review all applicants and award 2 scholarships, to one male and one female student.

Awards

One male and one female student will be selected to each receive a \$1,500 award.

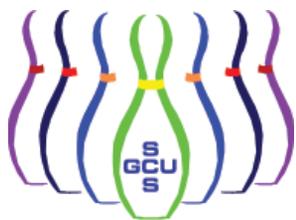
Please Note: All scholarship applications must be completed online at www.gcuusa.com/scholarshiprequest.html.

DEADLINE TO SUBMIT AN ATHLETIC SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATION IS DECEMBER 31, 2016.

Questions may be addressed to:

events@gcuusa.com or please call: 1-800-722-4428 Ext. 3809

2017 National Tournament Dates & Locations



GCU/SCS National Bowling Tournament

Friday & Saturday, May 19 & 20, 2017
Chacko Lanes in Wilkes-Barre, PA
Hotels—Best Western Genetti Hotel &
Conference Center and Holiday Inn
For information call 800-722-4428 Ext. 3808



SCS/GCU Golf Event Friday, August 18- Sunday, August 20

Treasure Lake in DuBois, PA
Hotels—Fairfield Inn and Hampton Inn
Cost will be \$285 which includes: practice
round, 36 hole tournament, prizes, Friday
Hospitality, Saturday Banquet and
hotel (based on double occupancy).

Lodge 109 Sponsors Church Golf Outing

Lyndora, PA. On Sunday, September 25, GCU Lodge 109 sponsored a parish golf outing for St. John the Baptist Byzantine Catholic Church at Stoughton Acres Golf Course in Butler, PA. The outing was a scramble subsidized by a fraternal grant from the GCU Home Office. It was a beautiful sunny Fall afternoon of fun and fellowship.

Twenty golfers participated at the event made up of mixed foursomes playing scratch golf and remarkably there were only three strokes separating the winning group from those in the last position. Low gross winners of the event were the team of Jim & Barb Hoover and Lyle & Nancy Hutchison who scored a one under par score of 35 which beat out the team of Bob & Patty Kosar and Lloyd & Pearl Cranmer on a score card playoff. Skill prizes were awarded for Longest Drive: Helen Musko and Longest Putt: Bill Uram Jr. Sleeves of golf balls, disposable

Winners of the event: Barb Hoover, Jim Hoover, Nancy Hutchison and Lyle Hutchison.



Second Place: Lloyd Cranmer, Pearl Cranmer, Patty Kosar and Bob Kosar.

water bottles and GCU tote bags were awarded for these prizes. These giveaways were provided by the



Skill Prize Winners: Longest Putt: Bill Uram Jr., Longest Drive: Helen Musko.

GCU as were the golf balls given to the rest of the field.

After the event all participants and guests enjoyed lunch at the picnic shelter adjacent to the golf course. Thanks to the generosity of the GCU Fraternal Grant Program which paid for the food and prize money for the winning teams.

Janet Uram
Treasurer



Third Place: Deacon Paul Simko, Janet Uram, Bill Uram and Jerry Tarcha.



Fourth Place: Derek Burns, Helen Musko, Michael Musko and John Musko.



Fifth Place: Cori Milkovich, Greg Milkovich, Alan Troyan and Ed Koch.



Announcing the

GCU 2017 Art, Photo & Video contest!

This year's theme is: **"For Goodness Sake"**



Need some inspiration? Brainstorm:
How do you show goodness to others?
What do you care about?
What's your passion?
Who would/do you help?



Photo

If you're 12 or younger, enter your artwork!

- submission must be original on paper or art board - maximum size 12" x 18"
- include short description of your art, name, age, address, phone number and email on the back of your submission



Deadline
April 3, 2017

If you're age 13 - 23 enter your photo or video!
-send photo submissions to events@GCUusa.com
-videos must be at least 30 seconds, maximum of three minutes
-include short description, name, age, address, phone number and email with your submission
-photos or videos that include identifiable people require a model release. *Find the model release and exact directions for submitting your video online at GCUusa.com

NEW THIS YEAR! If you're age 23 - 99+, enter your video!*

Winners in each category will receive a gift card of their choice!

For age categories and more rules, visit www.gcuusa.com.

One entry per member. All contestants must be a GCU member for one year.

Membership and age is determined as of March 31, 2017.

