

The Times of Halcott



Summer 2016 Vol 75 (woohoo!)

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Halcott

beautiful green

farming playing helping

cold creek for swimming

summer

by *Simone Norwick*

(Editor's note: Cinquain is an un-rhyming, 5-lined poem. Line 1, one word, is the subject. Line 2, two adjectives which describe line 1. Line 3, 3 action verbs, describe line 1. Line 4, a four word sentence relating to line 1. Line 5 is one word to sum it all up.)

APRONS!!

From Arlene (Sis Griffin) Needleman:
Hello, "Halcoteers" and Friends of:
I just came across the enclosed article and it took me down "Memory Lane" because I could picture my Mother, Allena Griffin, my Aunt, Claretta Reynolds, and my Grandmother, Gram Griffin. Thought I would send it along to share:

Aprons (I remember this soooo well and you might too):
I don't think our kids know what an apron is. The principle use of Grandma's apron was to protect the dress underneath, but along with that – It served as a potholder for removing hot pans from the oven.

It was wonderful for drying children's tears and on occasion was even used for cleaning out dirty ears.

From the chicken coop, the apron was used for carrying eggs, fuzzy chicks, and sometimes half-hatched eggs to be finished in the warming oven.

When company came, those aprons were ideal hiding places for the kids. And when the weather was cold, grandma wrapped it around her arms. Those big old aprons wiped many a perspiring brow, over the hot wood stove.

Chips and kindling were brought into the kitchen in that apron.

From the garden, it carried all sorts of vegetables. After the peas had been shelled, it carried the hulls.

In the fall, the apron was used to bring in apples that had fallen from the trees.

When unexpected company drove up the road, it was surprising how much furniture that old apron could dust in a matter of seconds!

When dinner was ready, Grandma walked out onto the porch, waved her apron and the men knew it was time to come in from the fields to dinner.

It will be a long time before someone invents something that will replace that "old-time apron" that served so many purposes.

And just another thought: Grandma used to set her hot baked pies on the



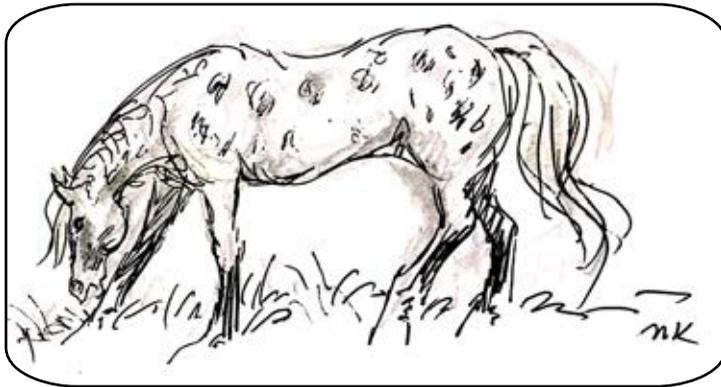
window sill to cool. Her granddaughters set theirs on the kitchen counter to thaw!

Vic

There's something about girls and horses. When Claire was young, we acquired a rescued Appaloosa, run-down and raggedy, underweight and unloved. Ten year old Claire immediately named him Dark Victory, and diligently worked to right the wrongs in his life. And if you're getting one horse, you may as well get two, so we brought home Mama, as well - a stocky, slightly cranky, no-nonsense brown and white paint who had befriended Vic at the animal shelter.

While Mama was teaching Kane and Suzanna to ride, Vic and Claire bonded. He gave Claire superb riding skills; she taught Vic that he could trust a person to be kind and loving. He gave her confidence, and she helped restore his spirit. Claire and Vic explored the Halcott Valley, often with Adina Johnson and her horse Skoal.

For nearly 3 decades, when he wasn't being groomed, ridden, or climbed on by small children, he spent his days eating and sleeping. Or sleeping and eating, depending on which sequence seemed to fit the day. He loved sleeping in sunshine, and there was little that could do to rouse him once he laid down. We often got phone calls, or had people stop by to



solemnly inform us that we had a dead horse in the field. Our ferrier remarked that Vic was the only horse

he had ever tended to horizontally. Vic would get his pedicure in recline, occasionally flicking an ear and expelling a relaxed sigh.

We never knew Vic's age, but the vet estimated he was well over forty this winter when he sadly passed away. He died as he lived. With grit and strength, and one hell of a heart. His age and his temperament were testaments to the Native American horse that was bred for endurance and perseverance despite all odds.

At the time, our Eagle Project was underway, and we had been searching for road-killed deer carcasses for our bait site. Claire considered Vic, and his life, and decided to donate his body to science. His final impact on this earth was to help us study the Golden Eagles in New York State.

How fitting and ironic that these two icons of the American West - the Appaloosa and the Golden Eagle - would be so intimately joined together here in the northeast. His spirit will soar over our

valley now; the warrior horse has gone home. **PD**

HALCOTT FAIR 2016 – OUR 17TH!

Join us at the Halcott Grange for our annual Halcott Fair on JULY 16th, from noon to six. Loyal supporters can anticipate all the traditional treats that happen at the Fair – the treasures from the attic, the perennials, the items that we didn't finish selling last year and so have discounted for this year. Local vendors will offer amazing local products. The Community Garden will have a table with heritage seeds.

Our magician will return, and we've planned several other excitements to hold the attention of kids of all ages. Free popcorn! Hotdogs! Cork race! Corn-shucking contest! Face-painting! (Maybe). Corn hole toss contests!

The grand finale of every fair is our dinner. Serving begins at 4:30-ish. Take-outs available. There will be barbequed chicken from the Fleischmanns Fire Department, baked beans, salt potatoes, corn on the cob, tossed salad, dinner roll and dessert.



Tickets can be purchased throughout the day at various booths and are still \$10. Kids

under 5 eat free.

Words of Wisdom By Robin White

“Listen to your elder’s advice. Not because they are always right, but because they have more experience at being wrong.”

~Unknown

As I enjoy the passing of the seasons here in our beautiful Halcott valley, I am reminded of the sage advice and local lore that has been used and referred to many times over in this area. Those that came before us had a much more difficult life to endure than what we enjoy today, and many life or death decisions were often based on the wisdom and sayings that were passed down from parent to child. Weather, farming, health, parenting, daily life..... all were steeped in advice and folklore that was passed down through the ages, many times based on sound scientific principles (but not always!).

Rural Living

I cannot count the times I have heard my husband say during the 38 years that I have known him, “If wishes were horses, then beggars would ride”. As a young wife and mother, with three children under 6, I had a lot of wishes back then! For all

of us trying to get by, no matter whether we live in the city or the country, who doesn't remember just starting out and working hard, yet still always seeming to stay at the same point? A few country-inspired sayings to remind us of those days:

- ☐ It takes pennies to make dollars.
- ☐ Every pea helps to fill the pod.
- ☐ It is better to have a hen tomorrow than an egg today.

Health and natural remedies:

- ☐ Common cold: Eat a roasted Spanish onion before bedtime.
- ☐ Sore throat: Wrap a dirty sock around your neck.
- ☐ Bad dreams: Rub garlic on the soles of the child's feet.
- ☐ Wounds or cuts: A bruised geranium leaf or a spider's web applied to the cut ASAP stops the bleeding and heals it.



And of course some general living advice as well:

- ☐ Make the house clean enough to be healthy and dirty enough to be happy.
- ☐ Even a fish wouldn't get

caught if he kept his mouth shut.

- ☐ A big wife and a big barn, will never do a man any harm.
- ☐ When the well is dry, you know the worth of water.
- ☐ Life is not a problem to be solved, but a gift to be enjoyed.

One of my favorites:

- ☐ The early bird gets the worm, but the second mouse gets the cheese.

Farming and Weather

Our rural ancestors were well connected to the weather and other natural cycles of the Earth, especially the moon. Farmers couldn't afford to make a mistake on when to plant the crops or cut the hay, and much of the advice related to farming was based on sound science. As I read yet another forecast for a dry, hot day tomorrow as this piece is written, I hope the saying "A dripping June sets all in tune" will ring true for 2016. Just a few sayings that farm folk still follow today:

- ☐ The higher the clouds, the finer the weather.
- ☐ Clear moon, frost soon.
- ☐ Rainbow in the morning gives you fair warning.
- ☐ Ring around the moon? Rain real soon.

- Red sky at night, sailors delight. Red sky in morning, sailors take warning.
- When the wind is in the east, 'tis neither good for man nor beast.
- Green Christmas, white Easter.
- The time just before the full moon is considered particularly wet, and is best for planting during drought conditions. (helpful this year!)
- Castrate and dehorn animals when the moon is waning for less bleeding.
- Dig your horseradish in the full moon for the best flavor.

filled the Hall, drifting out the windows to the children playing near the stream and cows grazing in the fields...PD

...In fact, the cow is the true pathfinder and pathmaker. She has the leisurely, deliberate movement that insures an easy and a safe way. Follow her trail through the woods, and you have the best, if not the shortest, course. How she beats down the brush and briars and wears away even the roots of the trees! A herd of cows left to themselves fall naturally into single file, and a hundred or more hoofs are not long in smoothing and compacting almost any surface.

Without the use of the Internet or public libraries, those who came before us had a unique wisdom that is not common in today's world. What these people learned and discovered over many generations is now left to us in the form of memorable quotes and sayings. It is up to us to keep their legacy alive.

Life Lessons from Cows

The following is an excerpt from a John Burroughs passage, read at the Halcott Grange on Friday, June 3 during a Headwaters History Concert. Original music inspired by Burroughs

Indeed, all the ways and doing of cattle are pleasant to look upon, whether grazing in the pasture, or browsing in the woods, or ruminating under the trees, or feeding in the stall, or reposing upon the knolls. There is virtue in the cow; she is full of goodness; a wholesome odor exhales from her; the whole landscape looks out of her soft eyes; the quality and the aroma of miles of meadow and pasture lands are in her presence and products. I had rather have the care of cattle than be the keeper of the great seal of the nation. Where the cow is, there is Arcadia; so far as her influence prevails, there is contentment,

humility, and sweet, homely life. Blessed is he whose youth was passed upon the farm, and if it was a dairy farm, his memories will be all the more fragrant. The driving of the cows to and from the pasture, every day and every season for years, -- how much of summer and of nature he got into him on these journeys! What rambles and excursions did this errand furnish the excuse for! The birds and birds'-nests, the berries, the squirrels, the woodchucks, the beech woods with their treasures into which the cows loved so to wander and to browse, the fragrant wintergreens and a hundred nameless adventures, all strung upon that brief journey of half a mile to and from the remote pastures. Sometimes a cow or two will be missing when the herd is brought home at night; then to hunt them up is another adventure. My grandfather went out one night to look up an absentee from the yard, when he heard something in the brush, and out stepped a bear into the path before him.

GREEN

When I was in the fifth grade, our art teacher put before each student a luscious set of paints, a small canvas, a paintbrush, and an assignment to paint what we saw out the windows. It was spring, and I decided that I would

start with the trees. I spent the whole period working on those trees, tentatively touching the canvas with my brush dipped in as many kinds of green as I could come up with. It was a very slow labor of love; I'm sure that I had my tongue sticking out from between my teeth, since I still do this when I'm concentrating. At the end of the class, Mr. Whoever was not very impressed with my progress, but I have never forgotten how proud I was of my half-white, half forested painting. So many greens!

Have we gardeners given enough appreciation to the lowly green? Summer is definitely a time of bright and sassy flowers. After a long, grey Catskill winter, we are positively thirsty for color. But each plant produces its beauty and then goes back to --- green. Oh, normal, undersung green! A few years back I wondered how it would be if I encouraged the greens by themselves.

There are many beautiful expressions of green. And best of all, green is very accommodating when it is placed in the shade. There is no boredom when greens are jumbled together in my driveway garden. In fact, I'm quite startled when an actual flower muscles its way into the fray, startled to realize that I don't miss the other colors at all.

So what performs well as a “green?” Start with my favorites, the hostas. Alas, deer like them as well. I’m not sure how one protects against the occasional bite-takers; that subject can be saved for another discussion. Hostas come in all manner of green, from white-striped green, to blue and grey green, to yellow, sunshiney green. Dot a length of garden with various hostas in front and you’ve got some bones to work around. Oh, did I mention that they are difficult to kill?

Brunnera is a wonderful companion, also for the front. Her leaves are rounded in nice contrast to the spears of the hostas and the green of her leaves, usually frosted heavily with white, is greyer than a hosta.

Behind them could be some different varieties of geranium. I do not mean the gaudy (and hugely adored) pelargonium, which is the sun-loving annual that we call geranium. No, these plants are beloved for their leaves, although Johnson’s Blue puts out a stunning display of color early in the summer. And, oh yes, there is a wildly pink one that gives great electricity to a shady corner. But if you seek them for their leaves, you can find them gold-green, green and white stripes, grey-green, chocolate and green, sometimes wispy little things that remind you of child’s hands.

Some turn a brilliant red in the fall. Some are evergreen even here in Halcott. Some come forth in the spring a knock-down, drop-dead chartreuse (took me 70 years to use that word). Japanese ferns are green, but only slightly. They are deliciously silver, burgundy, grey and their feathered fronds are perfect behind the more solid hosta leaves. Polygonatum or Solomon’s seal is medium height, waxy green, and dignified in its graceful and permanent bow. It has early dangling white flowers. Monkshood (aconitum) has rich, dark leathery lacy leaves that stand like sentinels behind everyone else. The deep blue (I also have some much coveted white) comes and then goes, but you know by now the refrain: the green continues as a stern and elegant statement.

Of course, I haven’t yet touched the magnificent coleus. Coleus comes in so many “colors” of green to yellow to red, that it will delight any dark corner. And although it is an annual, if you have one that has plucked your heartstrings, you can winter it over by snapping off a branch and rooting it.

When I think of plants that give us wondrous, even outrageous flowers such as daylilies, peonies, roses and such, it seems as though they were created with more flower in mind than

foliage. But those plants not endowed with petal brilliance were not forgotten in the foliage department. These can be treasured for their leaves. And leaves can be counted on to stay all summer. Hooray for green. *IK*

SUN POWER

Solar energy is a very seductive concept. Once in place, solar panels will sit quietly, collect the sunshine and turn it to electricity. Our town uses a lot of electricity. One of the struggles of a small town such as Halcott is to budget enough to pay the monthly electric bills for our two buildings, the Town Grange Hall and the Highway Department. These bills are paid with our taxes. No one lives at the Grange, yet it must be kept at a constant temperature to prevent freezing of pipes and to be able to be warmed quickly to accommodate meetings and other events. The Highway Department must keep warmers plugged into their vehicles so that they will start on cold winter mornings. Solar energy seems a perfect solution to these expensive problems.

But the initial outlay to install a solar array is expensive. The Town Board has explored our options and finds that a solar array mounted on the (south-facing) Highway Garage roof

and supplying enough energy for both buildings, would cost the town in the neighborhood of \$31,000 after rebates. We cannot afford this. Town Board is caught between being frugal with our money and being forward thinking about ultimately saving our money. Happily, there are grant opportunities for projects such as this. Also, the Halcott Community Fund directors have committed to \$5000 if their coffers are full enough after the fair. The board is aware that this is an issue many of us are excited about and so are giving community members a chance to help defray the cost. At the Halcott Fair this year, there will be a bucket for our contributions toward the project. Every penny is a vote for the future. We are proud to take steps into a future that uses renewable energy.

IK

Emergency Planning *Alan White, Supervisor*

Communication during an emergency proves to be one of our greatest challenges in Halcott. During emergencies, ranging from floods, extreme snow storms or extended power outages, we need to develop systems to communicate. No one method of communication will serve the entire town, but we hope to employ strategies that will help everyone stay

informed. Here's a breakdown of our emergency communication plan:

- We will use the Town's Website (www.townofhalcott.org) to post updates during emergency situations
- We will send out town wide emails to those people on or town email list. If you are not getting Town emails, like the Town Board Agendas, and would like to be on this list please send your email address to supervisor@townofhalcott.org. We promise to not share this email and only use it for Town business.
- Our Grange Hall will be our Command Center during an emergency. You can either stop in during an emergency event to get an update or call 845-254-5401
- We can create a text communication list for those people that rely on cell phones. If you would like to be added to this list please send your cell number to supervisor@townofhalcott.org or a text to Alan

White at 607-201-3649. We will not share this number and promise to only use it for Town purposes.

- We will continue to work with the Fleischmanns Fire Department to maintain a list of people that may need help during an emergency. People that rely on medical equipment or have other limitations that may be impacted by severe weather can be checked on by the fireman to see if they need help. *Many thanks to the fireman for checking on folks last month during the power outage.* If you know of someone that should be on our emergency care list please let us know.
- Always feel free to call me directly if you have questions or concerns about emergency services. 607-201-3649



The Times of the Halcott United Methodist Church



Summer 2016 *Pattie Kelder, Correspondent*

Change of Pastors

Pastor Adrian Todd will complete 5 ½ years of ministry in the Halcott United Methodist Church at the end of June. He has accepted a call within his own denomination to pastor the Margaretville Advent Christian Church. We thank him for his service here. May God bless him in his new position.

Arrangements are being made for a new pastor to start serving here at the beginning of July. **All** members of the community are invited to extend a warm hand of fellowship in worship as we welcome this new pastor to Halcott. Our prayer is that God's grace and love envelope our whole community in new ways.

Good Eats

Thanks to all who contributed in any way to the success of the Super Salad

Supper. It's always nice to get together over a good meal. We look forward to seeing everyone again at the Halcott Fair's church bake table on July 16th. We'll try to have Operation Appreciation postcards available again to send combat veterans.

School Kits

Attention Children of All Ages: We will be designing and packing school bags again for UMCOR after school is out for the summer. Please call with available dates so we can arrange a meeting time.

Can you think of other things you might enjoy doing together? Please let me know.

Looking Up at Your GPS

The weekend before Memorial Day, the Halcott Cemetery Board of Directors had a clean-up day. A few others heard about it and turned up, about 15 people all told. Among the tagalongs were Adina Enck and I. We ended up

raking part of the north end near the church. It didn't take her long to observe that we could rake every day for a week and still not be done!

On one of our trips to dump leaves over the bank, I lost hold of my sack. Weighed down with branches that had dropped over the winter, it quickly rolled to the bottom of the longest and steepest slope. Sigh. I lined up my descent to correspond with trees so I wouldn't suffer the same fate and told Dina where I was going in case I didn't reappear. Eager to help, she offered me a hand up at the halfway point of my return. I preferred a tree, though, to the possibility of losing my footing and take both of us to the bottom. So she switched tactics, guiding me to a flat stone at the end of the stone wall. The end result? I finished my little adventure without incident.

Later in the day, I realized Dina had led me up an easier path than I had chosen. If I had only looked all the way

up, I could have improved my own prospects for a safe return. Even so, the easiest route of all would have eluded me because I was unable to see the stone landing at the top of the bank. That was only visible from Dina's vantage point above me.

It got me to thinking about how many times in life we fail to look up for direction from the One who can see the best path to follow. Or, we may seek direction at the start of a daunting task, and then consult that Guidance no further once we think we have everything figured out. At such times we can find ourselves unprepared and low on stamina in the face of hidden detours. Where's a good GPS when we need one? Well, if life's GPS turns out to be God Positioning Service, things go better. Not necessarily easily or to our liking, but definitely better than any of the alternatives. As the old adage goes, "An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure."

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