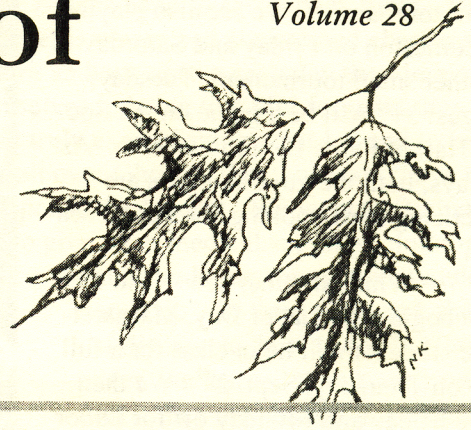


The Times of Halcott

Autumn 2004
Volume 28



Editors: Innes Kasanof; Peggy DiBenedetto; Judy DiBenedetto;
Karen Rauter. Features: Laura Vogel.
Art: Nina Kasanof.

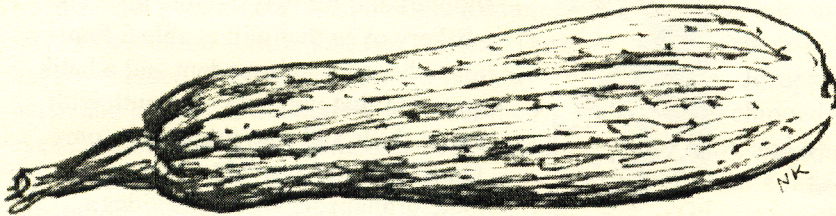
Poem

Nina Kasanof

In February, I dreamt of seeds,
My garden yet to be.
The dream kept warm my hopes of spring,
Of summer's gardens, summer's fruits.

Now winter's dreams are long since gone,
As summer passes into fall.
And now I fear to go outdoors:
I fear what waits for me.

No monster lurks behind the trees,
No bear hides in the bushes;
But something's there beneath the leaves
That wasn't there just yesterday!



And now it's here, a giant menace
And has brought others, just as big.

The alien presence is my fault,
The blame is mine for its appearance.
I brought about its yearly visit.
Yet every winter I forget
The impact of my invitation,
And every year the green-striped guests
Arrive in stealth and laugh at me.

Back to School *Elena DiBenedetto*

It's hard to believe that the summer is already coming to an end. It seems like only last week that we were sitting in class, waiting for that final bell to ring before vacation would begin. Now we are trying not to think about how few days are left until that first bell will ring again, starting the new school year.

I am kind of looking forward to seeing some people again, especially those I don't get to see all summer.

Varsity soccer practice has already started and both teams are preparing for games coming up soon. We play some games even before school starts! We will be playing in South

Kortright on Wednesday, Aug. 25th in a small tournament. We are also playing in Edmeston on Friday and Saturday in another small tournament. Tuesday, August 31st will be a game on the Soccer Hall of Fame field in Oneonta. As always, both the guys and girls are practicing hard, looking for a good season.

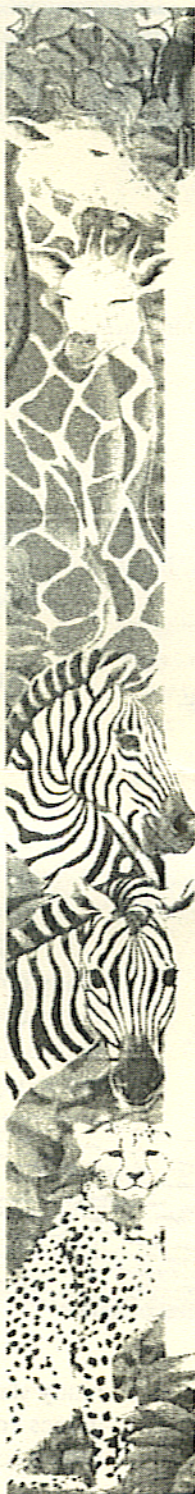
While all other schools in the area begin after Labor Day, Margaretville students will be in class for a full day on Thursday, Sept. 2nd. We then have Friday and Monday off for Labor Day weekend.

There are about 20 kids who ride the bus from Halcott, ranging from 6-7 yrs old all the way to 16-17 yrs old. You always know who sits in the front of the bus and who sits in the back because the little kids are jumping around looking forward to their first day of school while the older kids are half asleep in the back of the bus. Most of the older kids no longer really look forward to the first day of school.

For now, students are just preparing for school, buying supplies and resting up. Before long, the "smiley face" school bus will be heading up and down our Halcott Valley again. Please remember to drive carefully!

GHANA A GLIMPSE OF AN AFRICAN EXPERIENCE

My adventure in Africa began with Ghana Airways, on U.S. soil. Having been forewarned that Ghana Air is "always late" I wasn't surprised at a 9-hour delay, which re-adjusted my day nicely to include an afternoon at the beach. Suffice it to say that we



did not leave 9 hours later, but finally took off at midnight after 8 rows of seats on the port side of the plane were cordoned off because there was a "slight problem with the door". Somewhat disconcerting, but after eleven hours we landed safely at Kotoka Airport in Accra. Unfortunately, several of our bags had not. Fortunately, only one of us (not I) went without her "luggages" for 13 of the 14-day trip.

As inconvenient as all of that was, it did not affect our trip or put a damper on our spirits. The 16 of us – 8 from a church in Brooklyn, 2 women from White Plains, 2 from Pennsylvania, 1 from Connecticut, another from Boston, our team leader Joseph, and I – were excited and anxious to get to our task of doing the most good we could in the time we had there. Opportunities abounded. We began at a school that is operated by a Methodist Church in a middle-class neighborhood for the lower- to middle-class children of the area. We presented them with medicine and clothing, and sweated along with them in the construction of a new school building that will house more classrooms and significantly increase the number of students this fall. We also gave them funds for classroom supplies and for two satellite projects: a bakery oven that will enable 3 families to become independent and a batik operation that will provide youth with textile skills and also produce income.

Our focus then turned to a foster home/orphanage, which provides a lively and loving home to 54 children, aged 2 to 18. It was heartening to meet 30 American teenagers while we were there – American Field Service volun-

teers who were there for 5 weeks of painting, teaching, construction, and general helpfulness. We presented the orphanage with medicine and clothing, and after leaving the facility we were determined to do more for the children. I remembered Karen Rauter asking me about taking shoes over with me to give away, and I asked Joseph if that would have been a good idea. At that point we realized that none of the children were wearing decent, well-fitting shoes, so we collected enough money amongst ourselves to put a new shoe on each orphaned foot. (By the way, Joseph said shoes are always a good idea to pack along to give away.)

One of the most difficult experiences was the visit to Budumburum Refugee Camp – a settlement of 40,000 Liberians who fled their war-torn country in the late 1990's. Liberia was a rich society that had been known as "little America" – a beautiful and bountiful land of opportunity before the war. In Ghana, these refugees have made a place that has commerce and infrastructure, primitive as it is, but it is a community of desolation -- little joy, few smiles. They have witnessed or experienced conditions so harsh and painful to the human soul that their eyes have no spark of liveliness or hope. Most have lost family members through death or separation; many have no idea if loved ones are still alive. The one place they can forget what they've lost for a while is the United Methodist Church deep in the labyrinth of paths that lead through the camp. They have a 35-member



choir led by a phenomenally talented director and a 7-piece band to accompany them. The preacher is young and sincere and charismatic, and for an hour or two each day they immerse themselves in being thankful for what they have; truly exemplifying what I found to be the case all over Ghana – that those who have the least praise the loudest. We went to Budumburum to give them medical supplies, clothing, and funds; we thought we would go and "do" for them and teach them skills, music, how to fend. However, we learned that in their own way, they are "doing" for themselves better than we could hope to, that there was little we could teach them, that there was little we could offer to them other than evidence that people from another place care. It's all we could do, perhaps it's enough.

We were able to do a few more good deeds along the way. A woman in the hospital required emergency surgery and incurred a debt she needed help with; we dug into our pockets and contributed more than \$100, which should go pretty far. Our driver, Agyman, not only put up with us, but also was our guide, our guardian, and protector on those occasions Joseph had meetings and we were on our own. We wanted to tip him at the end of the trip, but didn't know what was appropriate. Joseph had the perfect suggestion and we all chipped in to buy a large bag of rice, one of corn, and a smaller bag of sugar; it will feed Agyman's family for the rest of the year.

As with any society, education is the key to a better life. Ghana has a long way to go even though they are ahead of many African countries. We found that education is not completely subsidized by the government, and so is

not free. Only those whose families can afford the \$25 to \$49 or more a year are able to fulfill their potential. My single greatest hero of the journey is a young missionary from Brooklyn named Pat who gave it all up a few years ago, moved to Accra, and now locates ghetto children who should be in school. She funds the education of more than 100 children through an organization she has set up to accept donations. Could I be selfless enough to leave my American life and do what she's done? I don't think so, but I can send her a contribution.

Our 2 weeks in Ghana went quickly, felt successful, and were emotionally overwhelming. On the return trip, as we were sitting on the tarmac with engines revved, suddenly the Ghana Air flight crew came back to economy class and peered out through our little oval windows **at our wings!** Disconcerting to say the least, but perhaps not as much as if we'd already been airborne. A fitting note: Ghana Air is now banned from U.S. airports due to safety issues! Huh. —PD

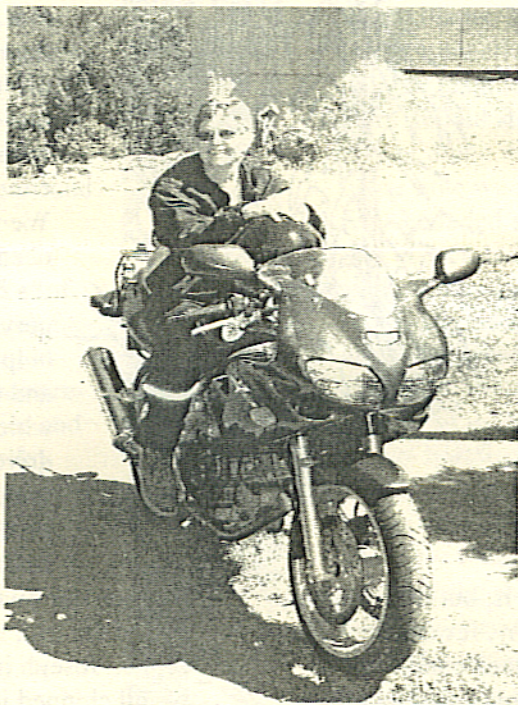
Editor's note: If you wish to see & hear Peg's experiences in Ghana, there will be 2 chances in town – at the Halcott United Methodist Church service on Sunday October 17th at 9am, and at the Halcott Grange on Saturday, October 23rd at 7pm.

Biking in the Catskills *Nancy Amy*

We used to have a joke in my family when we were growing up—"Sure our car has air conditioning. It's 4/60 air—open all four

windows and go sixty!" Well, it was funnier then, almost fifty years ago, but it doesn't make much sense now. Everyone has air conditioning, and no one rolls down their windows. We also used to go for Sunday rides. That's where "Sunday driver" comes from. Does anyone remember this?

My aunt had a big old Cadillac, and she would take my older sister for rides on the back roads around where my mom grew up. They would roll the windows down, get ready at the top of their favorite hill, then roar down, the big bench seats rolling softly over the cracked asphalt until right at the bottom was a little bump



that threw the car up—oooooh up in the air and they both squealed in delight. "Do it again, Aunt Ruth—do it again!" cried my sister, and my aunt would put that Cadillac in reverse, back up the road, and race back down the hill for that precious moment of air time, soaring way up in the air, flying, joy without words.

Now this is about motorcycling in the Catskills—why am I going on about driving with the windows down?

This feeling of flying, of being weightless, of feeling the line between me and the machine blue so that I can actually believe that for a while, I am very powerful and very fast. I'm sleek and move effortlessly wherever I care to go. I'm free.

Riding in the Catskills is a particular treat for me. Even in the car, I want the windows down and no other distraction. On the



bike, I can't wait to lean into the twists and fly over the surprising ups and downs, just like my sister in that big Cadillac.

Wheeee!

The way from my house on Turkey Ridge down to Fleischmanns is a 3.5 mile sweep of lightly traveled, well maintained road that can either be a relaxing tour of hills and fields and cows and newly renovated houses—or, if I'm feeling like I need to shake off a week's worth of work agita or depressing news about how much a new porch is going to cost, a pathway I can lean down into and transport into another world.

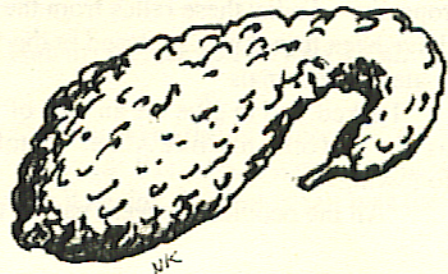
The immediacy of what is around me, and the intensity of focus required to ride a motorcycle, forces me to be strictly in the present. Does that dark road up ahead mean a wet surface or just shade? Is there a car around that sharp turn? Do those people walking along the roadside see me? What about their dog? Quickly these thoughts come and go as I race to make decisions of slowing down, leaning the bike into a turn, shifting up. I am no longer a passenger in my own life, but literally the driver, and we'll see if I'm good enough to respond to the wet leaves in that corner when I'm leaning into a turn, or if I'll misjudge and skid into the ditch.

The sudden cold of the Catskills shade makes me shiver. Quickly though, I am back in the sun, which makes me turn my head so the helmet blocks the glare in my eyes. The feel of the tires coursing over the road surface, grabbing on and throwing it away behind me -- I could go anywhere, do anything. And then the intoxicat-

ing, exhilarating smells of grass, raw earth, mysterious fresh-cut plants that take me to a place where life is good and it is possible to be intensely alive. I go on and go on, and a sense of fullness makes me stretch outwards, the way being with someone who loves you makes you feel as if you were as big as all outdoors. Open and able to do anything and love everyone. Strong enough to absorb all troubles and continue on with life.

Now, this may seem a bit odd, to read of such flights of fancy just from riding a motorcycle. Before I started riding, I saw motorcycles as transportation for young boys, hot-rodders, Hell's Angels. Gangs who smoked and drank and had tattoos. But seven years ago I took my first lesson, and instantly knew that I loved it. That ordinary people, like the women I ride with in the City, can have a passion for riding and have jobs and grandchildren and not drink.

It's hard to describe, and sometimes a bit embarrassing to admit to how riding transforms me from a 9 to 5 worker of computers to a being that flies and goes where others do not. So, if you see me riding on my electric blue Suzuki SV650S sportbike, hunched and intent on the road, you'll know that's me and that I'm escaping from the superficial world of annoying bosses and missed deadlines, of lost loved ones and transient disappointments. If you wave I'll wave back. And if I'm stuck along the roadside, I hope you'll give me hand, since as much as I love my chariot to other worlds, I still can't pick her up by myself yet. Rubber side down!





**“CAN YOU HEAR
ME NOW?”
COMMUNICATION
BEFORE THE SAT-
ELLITES**

Our veterans in the Town of Halcott have fought all types of wars. Although Ted Randazzo was a veteran from World War II, he was also a veteran of the Cold War. At the height of tensions between the US and the old Soviet Union, Ted

lived within the Arctic Circle helping to set up an early warning system in Alaska, a project known as White Alice. Alaska in 1958 was not even a state yet and was without a telephone communications system. We take for granted today our satellite communications, our cell phones, and our wireless communications. The story of White Alice reminds us of the huge efforts that were made only a few years ago to communicate as well as to protect the United States. The White Alice Communications System or WACS was a tropospheric communications system used throughout Alaska from about 1956 until 1979. There were 25 WACS tropo stations built originally at a total cost of \$140 million. The system was designed by AT&T and built by the Western Electric Company taking 3,500 people three years to complete. Ultimately there were 49 tropo sites. Today these relics from the cold war have been torn down, replaced in the 1980s with satellite terminals.

I asked Ted to give me an idea of what it was like to work on White Alice. He told me the following:

“All the people who were part of the

White Alice project had to go under an FBI inquiry to receive secret clearance. The Air Force provided all the winter gear which included parkas, pants, and mukluks. We usually flew around the country by DC3 (C47) or twin engine seven passenger Beechcraft. You would share the plane with Eskimos, dog sleds, and crates of food, something like a South American bus without the chickens and goats.

The communications equipment that we installed operated on one half of 1% of a signal (using the principle of forward propagation of tropospheric scatter). This was required because the Russians were trying to jam our signals and magnetic interference from the Aurora Borealis (Northern Lights) was also present.

The wind seemed to be blowing all the time. And the snow would often be so deep that we would have to dig tunnels from one building to another. During the winter months, we would have filtered daylight, but no sun ever came up. By about three o'clock in the afternoon, you had lights on.

One time on St. Lawrence Island, three of us were able to go out hunting with the Eskimos. Each of us was in a sled with an Eskimo. They were looking for polar bears and seals.



The dogs smelled them – you could tell by how excited they got, but we never saw any. (I had my 30.06 with 220 grain bullets with me.) We stopped at a hunting hut (cabin) in the middle of nowhere. When we came out to leave, there

wasn't a dog in sight. All of a sudden, the snow came alive. The dogs had completely buried themselves. As we were going along on the ice, one of the other teams came along side of us and one of their dogs chewed the ear off one of our dogs. Then every time dogs from the other sled came by, they went after the smell of blood. It didn't take long for the blood to freeze. It was minus 40 degrees and below. I got frostbite on that trip. All the skin came off the right side of my face and chin.

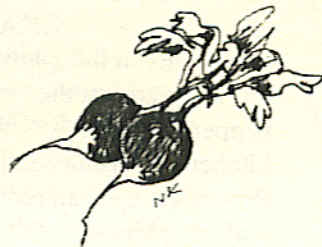
Another time we had walked down to the shoreline and the Bering Sea ice had come way up on land. The place was covered with huge blocks of ice. We had heard noise during the night but didn't realize what it was.

I guess pretty much of the Bering Sea had frozen over. Some of the blocks of ice were two stories high."

Ted's story reminds us that sacrifice comes in many forms. We are thankful for the efforts of people like him who helped to make our country strong during the Cold (sometimes very cold!) War. IK

Enough, Already!

That's what modest Paul Steinfeld was saying the other day about all the attention that's been heaped on him lately. But it's not enough! Especially since some of The Times of Halcott readers may have missed the August 8th celebration in honor of Paul held at the B'nai Israel Congregation in Fleischmanns. And some may have missed the follow-up article in the Catskill Mountain News that week. The reception, which included speeches, music, and refreshments, was to acknowledge Paul's long service as president of the Congregation, as well



as his contribution to the community at large. Lillian Steinfeld also was honored as a vital part of the Steinfeld team.

I was impressed by the number and variety of the people who attended. In addition to Congregation members, representatives of other religions and beliefs were there, evidencing the broad scope of Paul's work in the community. Of course, the Steinfeld family came, some from as far away as Jerusalem. I saw lots of Halcott neighbors at the celebration, too.

The whole atmosphere was joyous, enhanced by the musical selections, which included songs accompanied by guitar and keyboard. Naturally there were speeches and presentations of plaques made lively by lots of personal anecdotes about Paul. Mention was made of Paul's valorous World War II service, his work with the Interfaith Council, his presidency of the New York Forest Owners Association, and service on the board of Margaretville Hospital. Paul has also serviced as Halcott Town Justice and on the Halcott Town Board. (I'm sure I'm leaving out some of his activities – there are so many!)

What I personally found most affecting on this day were Paul's words of acknowledgment at the end of the ceremony. It was an emotion-filled moment as he accepted the many tributes he had received, but then, in a powerfully delivered statement, Paul declared that the emphasis of the celebration should not be on the individual, the "I," but on the "we," the "us," and that we are here on earth to help each other. What a wonderful demonstration of this belief is Paul's life and service. *Nina Kasanof*

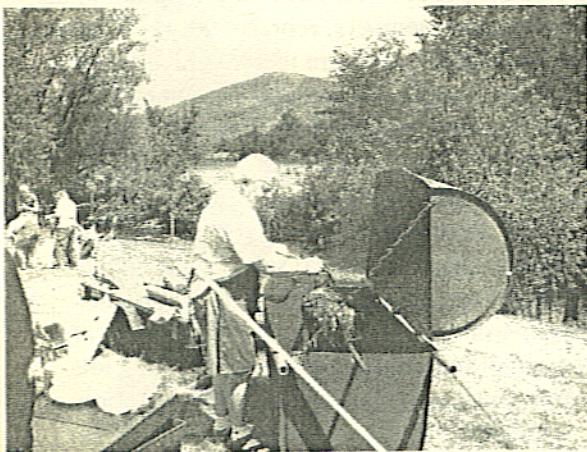
Halcott Community Fund's Fair

&

Square Dinner Dance

It sounds like a broken record, but we have to say it again: this year's fair was the *best*

ever. The fair committee met in the spring and decided not to advertise the date broadly, wanting to make this primarily a Halcott affair. As a result, almost everywhere you looked, you saw



people you knew. And sometimes, you hadn't seen them since the last fair. People brought their pocketbooks and generously gave everywhere – from the attic treasures, through the perennial plant sale, to the auction. The kids in town have caught on and set up their own table of treasures and made over \$250 towards a swing set for the Grange! Dinner was a feast, as usual, with Karl VonHassel spending the afternoon roasting the pig. We thank everyone who was there – those who sold and those who spent. We especially thank Gloria German, who baked melt-in-your-mouth cinnamon buns for the weary clean-up committee the next day.

The fair raised over \$3,000. Each year our goal is to support the Town's efforts in fixing up the Grange. At the fair, we were proud to present the Town with a check for \$5,000 which included last year's contributions collected for the kitchen and this year's contributions raised for the work to be done on the roof.

But you may have noticed that Hilton and Stella Kelly with their very special foot-tapping music were not at the fair. We decided

to divide the fun this year. The square dance that used to happen at the annual fair has been moved to **November 20th**. We'll start downstairs in the Grange Hall's new dining room at 6:00 PM with a potluck dinner and then move upstairs to work off our suppers with some enthusiastic ducks and dives. On display will be the wonderful photographs of the fair taken by Camille Vickers and Greg Beechler. Come dancing with us and bring a dish to pass. IK

WHAT'S HAPPENING AT THE GRANGE ?

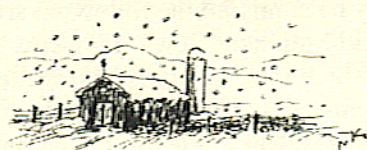
Even though we haven't quite finished our renovations, the Halcott Town Grange Hall is open for business! We have a working kitchen downstairs and a stage and hall upstairs. Private groups can rent the building for \$50.00 with an additional \$50 deposit, or for ongoing activities, \$5.00 a happening, again with a \$50.00 deposit. You may also borrow our tables and chairs in return for a donation to the Town. Karl Von Hassel is our building administrator and he has all the details. He can be reached at 254-4340.

Here are some upcoming events:

Ghana! A Public Presentation By Peg DiBenedetto
Saturday, October 23 7pm

Halcott Square Dinner Dance with Hilton & Stella
Friday, November 20th, 7pm Donation - \$5

Community Christmas Party
Saturday, December 4th, 7:30pm





JACK LUCAS

When you
look into the eyes of
Jack Lucas you catch a

twinkle and a bit of the devil lurking somewhere deep down. Did this come from being raised in Halcott? He recently visited us again from his home in Magnolia, Kentucky and I caught up with him, his son Scott and daughter Patricia at Vicki Fronckoviak and David Shepherd's wedding. Jack came to Halcott when he was five years old, living first in the Mountain Star House, then in the Parthenon for three or four years and next in Turk Hollow. He went to school with Donald Bouton in the schoolhouse that has become Don and Shirley Bouton's home. He went to war as a young man and was in Hawaii during Pearl Harbor. Wounded in the Philippines, he received the Purple Heart.

When Jack came home from the war, he married Pete Ballard's older sister Harriet on August 14, 1945, because, as Jack puts it, she was the first one to kiss him when he returned from the Pacific. They bought the Hiram Avery Farm in Turk Hollow and Jack went into dairy farming. He also did some logging in Halcott, cutting logs for Jim Johnson, and did some dynamiting to help build Belleayre Ski Slope. Harriet worked for Jim and Blanche Peet at The Maples Boarding House. Jack was proud to claim that he and Harriet had the first TV in Halcott. He said that the screen was tiny and the picture very snowy.

I asked Jack what was his fondest memory of life in Halcott. Both his children demanded that he tell me the story of when Jack was a kid and tipped over a 1929 Model "A" Pick-up while carrying milk cans to the creamery. He said he was showing another kid how

fast he could go. The kid landed on his bottom and ripped the seat of his pants. Jack said the covers came flying off the milk cans and everything tumbled into the stream. The farmers at the creamery saw all the milk and the cans floating down the creek and said to each other, "That's Jack!" *IK*

Thanks!

The Town Highway Department would like to thank Pete Ballard for donating his time and equipment to screen gravel in preparation for road work to be done this fall. We are grateful for his volunteerism.

TOWN BOARD TOPICS

Ambulance Services

As you may have experienced, when someone in Halcott calls 911 for an ambulance, Margaretville Memorial Hospital sends one out right away. The ambulance serves three communities, Hardenburgh, Middletown and Halcott. It is swift, efficient, and staffed by professionals. Everyone speaks highly of the caring, compassionate service. But in the last few years, the Hospital's ambulance service has suffered like all volunteer organizations, from dwindling volunteers and ballooning medical costs. This summer, a task force of the three towns was formed and the Hospital has been working with them to find a way to share some of the financial burden. The task force is looking into our options. They range from providing our people with no service, to contracting with outside organizations for service, or third, to bolstering the coffers of the MMH ambulance service. The Halcott town board has ruled out the first option and the second option seems to be much more expensive than the Hospital's budget for ambulance service. Besides, who knows what the response time would be for an ambulance company based in Cooperstown or

Poughkeepsie? That leaves the third option, working together with MMH to continue to provide good ambulance service. As this newsletter goes to press, we are preparing for a public hearing to be held to learn the thoughts and comments of our citizens. We will keep you posted.

And Town Health Insurance:

The Town Board has determined that all town officials, appointed or elected are entitled to purchase health insurance through the Town. If you are interested, call our Town Clerk, Bob Van Valkenburgh for details.

And Road Maintenance:

Last year, the Town Board passed a Rural Roads Guidelines Law in response to the Comprehensive Plan's goals. The law recognizes our low volume of traffic and protects the town from being forced to follow the rigorous standards of more highly populated cities or towns. It describes how different roads will be maintained in Halcott. One category of road identified in the law is "minimum maintenance road," a new name for our former seasonal roads. These roads serve only seasonal homes, will be plowed after the primary ones are attended to, and maintained in general on a less demanding schedule. The Board hopes to have a public hearing at either the October or November meeting to give townspeople a chance to ask questions about this new category of maintenance. We will be sending out letters beforehand announcing the date, but if this interests you, please call for more information to Russell

Bouton, Highway Superintendent, or Innes Kasanof, Supervisor.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

We have wanted to send a check for this little newsletter and I am finally sending it. "The Times of Halcott" was such a great idea! We enjoy reading it so much. We are hoping our friends and families up in the Catskills are having a really great summer (which I am sure you are.)

Bob and I are fine, and even enjoyed a bus tour to Burlington, Vt. We wanted to do that before getting much older, as the forgetfulness has settled in big time. There are a few good things about getting older though, I guess, like things we buy now probably won't wear out, we have a party and the neighbors don't realize it, and our supply of brain cells are finally down to a manageable size!

Again, we appreciate the Halcott Times very much, Sincerely, Bob and Norma Johnson, 361 Omen Rd; Bloomsburg, PA 17815.





The Times

Of the
Halcott Methodist Church

Pattie Kelder, Correspondent

OUR ROOF

Neighbors have been hearing sounds of progress -- the installation of a new church roof by Gentry Construction. Since "the bill is in the mail", contributions are welcome. Thanks a bunch!

VBS

Vacation Bible School was held in combination with Fleischmanns and Margaretville United Methodist Churches this year. Those who attended had a wonderful time and may still be singing! A highlight was having Peg DiBenedetto on hand to share her Ghana trip with the children.

PROGRAMS

Looking for a spiritual pick-me-up? The Parish was pleased to host a dynamic workshop on Contagious Christianity with the Rev. Jeff Glassey at the Margaretville UMC on Saturday, September 11 from 9 a.m. to noon. It may be repeated at Hobart UMC on Saturday, October 2nd. Highly recommended! All welcome.

How about a little music? Roxbury UMC is hosting another group of singers, this time from Russia. Lyra will perform a combination of sacred and folk music on Sunday, September 12 at 7:30 p.m. A rare treat. Not to be missed!

Peg DiBenedetto is readying her pictures for a community presentation about her Ghana experiences. While there, she and the rest of the Volunteers in Mission Team participated in constructing a school, visited a refugee camp and visited an orphanage. On their travels, they dispensed much needed funds along with clothing, school supplies and medical supplies. They were impressed with how much joy the people displayed in the face of unbelievable poverty.

The Parish organ recital by Jonathan Riss in

July was well attended and enthusiastically received. Many thanks to all who contributed and offered expressions of appreciation for his gift of music. \$645.00 was raised for the Parish, which will help ease the financial burden for member churches.

MISSIONS

Did you know? The United Methodist Church has a relief arm which quickly and efficiently delivers 100 cents on a dollar in situations of need. It operates worldwide through a series of ongoing projects and responds to emergencies, as well. Locally, the Parish benefited from such relief during the flood in January of 1996. Currently, aid is being provided to victims of Hurricane Charley in Florida. Want your dollar to help others 100%? Just specify the name of the project or emergency on your check memo made payable to the Halcott United Methodist Church and we'll do the rest. (More info is available at umcor.org, or call the UMCOR Hotline at 1-800-841-1235 for a pre-recorded message about hurricanes and other current disasters.)

UPCOMING EVENTS

Every fifth Sunday, including October 31, there is a special worship service followed by refreshments. Visitors are welcome, then and anytime.

Running low on home baked goodies? Visit the bake sale at the Grange Hall on November 2nd. Drop a hint ahead of time if you are hankering for something in particular.

YESTERYEAR: THE LADIES AID

After enjoying another Halcott Fair, the question of its predecessor, the Ladies Aid Bazaar, was raised. At one time, Ladies Aid Societies existed in churches for the purpose of funding various needs of

the pastor, parsonage and church. Hence the Ladies Aid Bazaar, or Fair, as it was sometimes called. In the days of Addie VanValkenburgh, Ella Bouton, and many of their peers, the Ladies Aid in Halcott was responsible for supplying the church with fuel, electricity and the like. Among those hired to provide services needed were young Carson and Donald Bouton. For shoveling snow, furnishing kindling and various chores, they received the handsome sum of \$10.00 per year. When they went to collect their paychecks from the Ladies Aid Treasurer, Nora Jenkins, they thought they were rich indeed!

After cars became available, the ladies supplied the minister with a Model A Ford so that Louis Crosby and Willie Griffin wouldn't have to take turns fetching him from Fleischmanns for the church service each Sunday. The ladies contributed toward his salary, as well.

Throughout the years, the Ladies Aid did its share of painting and papering and outfitting the church in general. Naturally, they worked year round to pay all of these bills. They even went door to door requesting contributions, on occasion. There was always a quilt in progress. It might be set up in someone's dining room while the family ate in the kitchen for a few months, or in someone else's spare bedroom after the boarders left. At meetings, everyone worked together on the quilt, chatting and catching up on the news while keeping hands busy. Between the meetings, any lady could spend a spare hour or two working by herself on the quilt wherever it was housed. Or she could do some fancy work at home to contribute to the cause: knitted sweaters,

mittens and baby sets; crocheted doilies and tablecloths; embroidered pillowcases and dresser scarves, and other forms of needlework. When the group finished the quilt, they picked out patterns for potholders and aprons and continued cutting and sewing. Little was wasted. They even turned out rag rugs.

These handmade things all found their way to the Ladies Aid Bazaar on the third Wednesday of July each year. They were eagerly sought by dozens of boarders who flocked in from the Maples, the Mountain Star, and the farmhouses of Chauncey Kelly, Willie Griffin, Ola Gardner, the "Vans", the Crosbys, the Deemers, the Wadlers, and plenty more. In their heyday, the bazaars also featured a bake table, a white elephant table and several other attractions. In a day when pricing didn't take into account the value of labor, buyers were well satisfied and the profit was adequate, given the volume of workers.

As time marched on, farms sold out, boarders stopped coming, young women worked increasingly outside the home, and the aging ladies sought retirement. By the mid 1980's, what remained of the Ladies Aid was a cookbook, a rug here, a quilt there, and many fond memories. The church gradually accepted responsibility for funding and maintaining the building and grounds, all the while missing the friendship and example of so many dear ones from a passing era. They sure would enjoy the Halcott Fair, were they still among us!

(Note: One of these ladies, Iris Faulkner, still lives in Mountainside in Margaretville. She is well into her nineties.)