

Those Times of Halcott!



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Editors: Carrie Bradley Neves; Innes Kasanof; Judy DiBenedetto; Peg DiBenedetto. Art: Nina Kasanof

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The Farm Report: JoJo

Sometimes when I look around our farm at the different fields, places in the buildings, or especially at the animals themselves, all sorts of memories come flooding back. A farm, not unlike one's childhood home, is truly a place where many stories—past, present, and future—abide together, making a beautiful tapestry. A simple walk or observation of the livestock can bring such stories, even those seemingly long forgotten, to the forefront of my mind, and it is then that I'm so grateful for the gift of memory. Here I share a little nugget from our early days farming here in Halcott.

One of the most memorable events ever to occur on our farm was with JoJo, a Holstein cow that was really special to us. JoJo's mother, Josie, was among the first cows we purchased when we first began farming in the fall of 1989, on a rented place over in the Denver-Vega Valley. Cow prices were quite high that year and we were limited in what we

had to spend to start our herd, so some of our earliest purchases were not exactly the top of the line. However, they were cows that milked well and, if bred correctly, could give us some nice calves with which to build our future herd. Josie was that sort of cow. She was not the fanciest looking, but she had a nice, even disposition and she milked her heart out.

We were thrilled when JoJo was born; a nice heifer calf sired by a good bull out of one of the "better" cows in a herd makes any dairy farmer's day. As JoJo grew and calved in for the first time, she quickly became one of our favorites. Not only was she beautiful to look at, she had inherited her mother's outstanding milking ability as well.

One year, a few days after JoJo had calved, it became obvious that something wasn't right. Her normally robust appetite had all but disappeared and she just seemed generally droopy. We tried our usual treatments and little tricks to get her eating normally again but it wasn't enough so we called our veterinarian. The vet came right out, checked JoJo over and gave her a few

additional treatments. Nothing out of the ordinary presented itself during the examination and we were all confident of a complete recovery.

Over the next couple of days, JoJo improved rapidly. Her appetite returned to normal and she was back to her old self. During the time she wasn't feeling well, JoJo hadn't wanted to go out to pasture with the other cows, but suddenly one day she decided to go with the herd. At the time, the cows were to go to the field along the left side of West Settlement Road. Because it's a fairly long hike from our main barn to that field, we were a little concerned about JoJo going that far after just recovering from an illness. However, JoJo was adamant about going, and we were relieved to see her moving right along with the rest of the herd as they eagerly crossed the road and ran into the field, kicking their hooves up and snatching bits of the fresh green grass as cows often do when they enter new pastures. We always enjoy watching the cows for a few minutes after they go into a new field, so we hung around for a bit until they settled in to the business of grazing. Satisfied that all was well, we closed the gate and

headed for home.

Early evening came, and with it, the job of gathering the cows in for evening milking. A light rain had moved into the valley and it was a comfortable, early summer

evening, so Corrie, my trusty Border collie and I were only too happy to go get the cows. We followed the well-worn cow path across the field behind the old Crosby barn and crossed the road, and I waited for all of the cows to gather behind the gate while Corrie went out to round up any stragglers that might have hidden beyond the dip in the field. Then, as the cows poured through the now open gateway to head home, I realized that JoJo was missing.

Once the rest of the herd was safely across the

road, Corrie and I went to look for her. In short order, we found JoJo lying peacefully in the shade of a small group of apple trees. There was no sign of struggle or anything amiss; JoJo simply passed away as she rested in the coolness provided by those trees among the other members of the herd that she and her mother, Josie, continue to influence through

Greene County 2017 Rabies Clinic

The Greene County Public Health department has announced its 2017 Rabies Clinic dates. Several locations around Greene County will be offering rabies clinics for dogs, cats, and ferrets; the one closest to Halcott Center will be held on April 26 at the Lexington Firehouse on Route 42 in Lexington, from 6 to 8 p.m. Locations for other clinics are posted on the community bulletin board at the Halcott Grange Hall. Donations for services received at these clinics are highly encouraged and pet owners are asked to bring a record of each pet's previous vaccination, if applicable.

Owners of ferrets are asked to call ahead. Please call (518) 719-3600 for any questions.

their offspring today. Although in disappointing moments like these it is easy to rush to unhelpful questioning, years of raising animals has given us a healthy perspective of trying to learn from such experiences while understanding that despite everyone's best efforts, we are working with living beings and not every case will turn out as we had hoped. We always can be grateful for the time any animal was on our farm, and hopefully there are some descendants left behind to carry on that particular family line.

That day, as I turned to walk away from JoJo for the last time, I saw something that I will never forget—something that brought great comfort that day and on other days since then. As I looked up to walk across the road to where the rest of the cows were on their journey to the milking barn, I saw a stunningly beautiful rainbow with all of its brilliant ROYGBIV colors spanning the sky over the old Crosby barn. It was one of those sights that one just has to stop and admire. Today, when I see a rainbow, I often remember that day with a certain gratitude in remembrance of JoJo the Holstein cow. **JD**

The Accidental Birder

Growing up, pretty much all I knew about birds was that they fly. I could never identify a species other than a cardinal, a crow, or a blue jay. Furthermore, I was not interested in knowing more. And so I stagnated, ornithologically speaking, for decades.

Then I began to watch eagles.

Then I became interested in raptors in general. And now I regularly and ongoingly attempt to become a “birder”—but only through osmosis, because my eyesight is not good and my brain cells are old. My only “real” birding credit is that I once, rather incredulously, organized an expensive and serious expedition for eight serious ornithologists in the Dominican Republic. For a whole **week** I stumbled behind them through river and jungle, trying to absorb even just a fraction of their knowledge. That trip indeed opened many ornithological doors to me; yet I am constantly having to dispel the perception that I am a real birder.



My preferred method of birding is to

hang out with a group of real birders. I follow behind them, binoculars in hand, feeling like an interloper. When they all raise up their binoculars, I raise mine too, but I never seem to see what they're looking at. I look in the general direction and listen to the discussion, nodding my head, feigning comprehension. When fortunate, I might see the blue flash of an indigo bunting, the dipping flight of a woodpecker, a brown bird sitting in a tree.

I have better luck with what I think is the best way to bird—birding by ear. Learning the language of birds allows me to close my eyes instead, and concentrate. Even for those experts, before they peer through their binoculars, it is often the bird call or song that directs their attention. Combining some bits of visual

knowledge with recognizing bird sounds makes identification easier yet.

When I'm out in the field, I know I won't be able to identify every bird, but I view success as

picking up a new clue or two, so that next time out, I might be able to identify another species. And my lack of skills has not prevented me from encouraging the next generation; we have formed a relaxed little group of youngsters that meets for monthly field trips to learn the sport of birding together. Indeed, they have younger eyes and a few of them are easily more adept than I, and I enjoy learning from them.

There's a very good birding weekend this spring at Frost Valley YMCA Camp in Claryville. "Taking Flight: Birding in the Catskills" will take place on June 9, 10, and 11. Presented by the Catskill Center for Conservation and Development, it is an opportunity for bird walks with experts; workshops; and a hike up Slide Mountain in search of the Bicknell's Thrush. This little bird is a "life bird" for many (most birders keep an informal or formal list of the species they have seen and identified in the wild, and rare and difficult-to-spot birds are coveted goals for one's life list) because it only occurs in Vermont, the Adirondacks, and three of the highest mountains in the Catskills—Slide included, when the Bicknell's is not wintering in the Caribbean. Our keynote speakers will be John J. Audubon himself (skillfully portrayed by a performance historian), and Richard Crossley, the author of several bird-

identification guides. And for anyone who wants to get started in birding, there will be a Birding for Beginners session, too! *PD*

Parsley, Sage, Rosemary, Thyme, and Time Again

Oh, the March madness, March mudness, this stern but changeable season. Days when bone-chilling winds blow out of clear blue skies, sloppy rains make mud and murk everywhere, or a sudden snow huffs or puffs or blows its big white house down—when you can't not believe the ground is frozen solid for fathoms—alternate with sweet, balmy, bright days where in an instant the ground seems to soften under our step and we feel a subterranean and subconscious buzz of all things stirring, as the homecoming song of the redwing blackbirds tickles our ears and we realize we have one eye cocked for the first robin.

Right around the time we reach for the sap buckets, I also get out a stack of empty, dented plastic cell packs saved from last year, a sack of fine-grain and food-rich seed-starter soil, and a rubberbanded bundle of seed packets and plant my herbs.

Working from a Simon-and-Garfunkel system, I make my plan: Parsley is a must. My hearty perennial sage plant can be counted on to have survived its hibernation under layers of straw, ice, and snow. Rosemary, if I'm lucky, will have successfully overwintered in pots in the slightly leaky corner of the French doors to our patio—a bit of natural refrigeration that I hope approximates its native winter climate, the dry (it's important never to overwater rosemary), rocky slopes near the Mediterranean Sea and about 55 degrees F. As for thyme—oh, I always need more thyme.



While a lesser-known B-side, Simon-and-Garfunklesquely speaking, beloved basil goes in now as well. While it may grow quickly in some places, basil can be a very slow-goer in our valley, so I like to start a few plants indoors and coax them to a lush and leafy 6 to 8 inches tall before they go outside, in an effort to get lots of pesto and *caprese*— in full or partial sun, in the ground or in pots, the seeds I direct-sow always seem to yield somewhat yellow and peaked specimens that struggle and sulk. (Starting at the end of May, I direct-sow in a garden row and continue to seed every couple of weeks as well, but with those mixed results. Maybe it's me.)

As for bringing thyme into being, the thing is, you can't have too much. While it makes so many foods more exciting, more delicious, providing earthy notes or contrast or sweetness or an herbaceous perfume to everything from soup to nuts and vinaigrettes to roasted mushrooms, it takes a lot of those tiny leaves to collect a teaspoon or a tablespoon, and a lot of leaves requires a lot of stems, ergo, a lot of big, profuse plants. (Even more if you want to dry some to put in a bottle for your pantry; but this is veering into Jim-Croce theory.) On another hand, the plants are less hardy creatures than some of their cousins, and I have had trouble on our perch at 2,000ish feet getting them through the winter. While I pile on straw 8 inches deep and cross my fingers, I never know if my thyme will come back in spring. A 12-pack of cells cultivated under the growlight feels like thyme seeds well spent.

Unless I am in an experimental mood (for example, my sister-in-law just told me lovage is a lovely herb), the rest of the herb packets go back in the can until mid-May.

Seeds for chervil, dill, and cilantro, tender, fast-growing annuals, will be poked directly into the herb garden then, and again at two-week intervals, where they will grow fast and feathery and full of their unique flavors. (My two-week habit is called “succession seeding,” a strategy that extends the growing season and designs continuity into crops; lettuces, kales and chards and chicories, cukes, beans, and summer squashes are other candidates for this trick.) The French tarragon, another rugged perennial, will emerge from the snow by the back border; and the mint, impervious and prolific (mine is enclosed by tight wire mesh underground, since Lanore warned me how aggressive it is) is a cinch.



Whether you grow lots of veggies or just salad or nothing at all, I encourage you to get into herbs. In a few small pots on a sunny windowsill, outside in big pots or planters, in a perimeter garden, or smack in the middle of your backyard, having an array of your very own fresh-picked herbs is a great and special pleasure. Most of

them grow like weeds but have that old green magic in their leaves, and they are very expensive at the supermarket and sometimes even the farmers' market. A handful of fresh herbs brings infinite dishes to life, adding depth to the flavors and giving you a simple means for a broad palette to work from, and nothing beats them for color and charm as a garnish. Chopped fresh herbs with a sprinkle of lemon juice and salt elevates a chicken breast, a pork chop, or an iceberg lettuce salad. If you're not a cook, pluck herb sprigs and tuck them into your lemonade, or make your own sweet (mint) or savory (basil) tea with nothing but a kettle of boiling water.

I use herbs in lots of ways beyond the

kitchen, as well. I like to put small nosegays of fragrant herbs in a bud vase by the bed for guests or on the dashboard for long car rides; a bigger bouquet bound in a ribbon is a lovely hostess gift. A couple of big handfuls of sprigs in the bathtub wafts into homegrown aroma therapy—lots of herbs famously deliver a range of medicinal and nutritional benefits, in the form of scents, soaks, gargles, tonics, tisanes, food, pills, scrubs, and rubs. Thyme alone has applications for everything from controlling blood pressure to soothing rashes to soothing symptoms of coughs and colds. Parsley gets marks for being a superfood healthier than kale. These days, of course, it's easy to find DIY how-tos online for using herbs in the healing arts.

I call it herbal magic; you may call it herbal madness. But for me, while March may be stuck in the mud, in many ways, it is the true beginning of a new year. *CBN*

Skillet Corn Bread Pudding *Claire Norwick*

Greetings from Two Rabbit Farm (aka the Norwick homestead over on Red Kill Road)! Maple season is almost here, so we thought we'd share this yummy recipe. What fun to come in from the cold with some fresh syrup and warm up with a skillet pudding. Enjoy!

3/4 cup medium-grind yellow cornmeal
2/3 cup all-purpose flour
1/3 cup ground amaranth
3 tablespoons sugar
1 teaspoon baking powder
1/2 teaspoon baking soda
1/2 teaspoon salt
2 cups whole milk

2 large eggs
3 tablespoons melted butter, plus 1 tablespoon butter, at room temperature
1 1/2 tablespoons distilled vinegar
1 cup heavy cream
Maple syrup for serving

Preheat the oven to 350°F. Place a 9- or 10-inch cast-iron skillet in the oven while the oven is heating.

In a large bowl, combine all of the dry ingredients. In a small bowl, whisk together the milk, eggs, melted butter, and vinegar. Make a well in the center of the dry ingredients and pour in the milk mixture. Stir



until the batter is smooth. The batter will seem runny, but all is well.

Add the 1 butter to the skillet in the oven. When it has melted, tilt the pan to coat the bottom. Carefully pour in the batter, tilt to spread it evenly, and then pour the cream directly into the middle of the batter in the skillet. Do not stir and be careful not to shake

or knock the skillet. Bake for approximately 50 minutes, or until the bread is golden brown. Serve warm with maple syrup.

What Can the Hemlock Teach Us? *Erik Johanson*

In a cathedral grove of ancient hemlock, that could care less about their precarious foothold clinging to the side of Halcott Mountain, the birds were loudly chirping. It wasn't the occasional "tweet tweet tweet . . ." that you'd expect in the depths of winter, but a full-on, "How ya doin' Sal? How's the wife? How were the holidays?" as if they were just pulling into Jack's in Arkville for the first time after a long vacation. The gossiping cacophony was unsettling to hear so early in the year. The *New York Times* reported today that spring, as measured in lilac blooms, had quickly greened up most of the southeast and had already entered New York harbor, weeks ahead of schedule.

Radka Wildova and Jonathan Rosenthal, a husband and wife research team from the Ecological Research Institute, recently gave a presentation about *Tsuga canadensis*, aka hemlock, at a meeting of the Catskill Regional Invasive Species Partnership. Radka and Jonathan set out to describe the services that ancient groves of hemlock provide, in addition to hemlocks apparently serving as the local diner for our feathered friends.

The most important service these ancient beings provide is, simply, being hemlock. They are like the bald eagles seen fishing along the Vly: They are iconic. Perhaps it's the relative rareness of being able to find the time to hike up to one of these ancient groves that makes them so special.

Those that survived the onslaught of the tanning industry or that were not uprooted for cropland, thus allowed to age gracefully, are few and far between.

Because hemlocks are so attuned to life clinging to the steep sides of our mountains and cricks, they're relatively inaccessible unless you strap on some sturdy boots (or risk a wet foot) and gain some elevation. Especially rare are those ancient groves that hold a permanent hush over the forest, aside from the cackle of a passing crow or the gossip of a few warblers and wrens. But they are survivors.

Although their ancestors were much diminished in numbers and density by the devastation wrought upon the forests, those ancient survivors have inherited the values of their forebears: descended from a time when the forests were majority hemlock, they have a deeper well of resistance to call upon for survival because of diversity within the species, a deeper and wider bench of inherited tools to resist the encroachment of a range of new diseases. But most young hemlocks are too similar to one another to have the tools to resist new disease. Because they're so similar, the survival of all could be threatened by a single new bug.

For this reason, Radka and Jonathan are researching more than 30 sites of hemlock with a minimum of 10 trees in dissimilar habitats to learn the wisdom retained in the genome of those trees. Those hemlock may have experienced similar threats our forests now face due to the trade of a globalized economy with invasive species that move along with it, like hemlock woolly adelgid (HWA) which arrived in our region from Virginia in 1951 and is spreading at a rate of 10 to 20 km a year; or elongate hemlock scale,

which was introduced in 1905. Those bugs are adapting to changes as well, such as our less severe winters. When those organisms survive a mild winter instead of being killed off by the severity of the season, just like ancient hemlock, they reproduce with new knowledge encoded in their genome, thus making their descendants that much more resilient.

As we continue to see the weather getting weirder and weirder, what are the tools that these ancient trees use to survive? They have a tendency to drink much less water than their hardwood counterparts—about half as much or less during the summer, meaning they won't dry up the streams near them during hotter weather. Those hemlock forests have a tendency to also intercept more rain and snow. They'll be relatively dry underneath in the winter, but the snow that is retained will stay there much longer feeding those streams through the summer. The hemlock also shade the streams in the summer, keeping anyone looking for a respite on a hot summer day cool, not to mention keeping our native brookies happy.

By contrast, certain forestry policies may contribute to a greater chance of flooding. When forests are clear-cut in an effort to control the threat of invasive bugs like the hemlock woolly adelgid, that single big slash to the forest means the trees aren't able to gradually and naturally fill openings--as by the process wherein a hemlock falls and clears a spot of sunlight on the forest floor for a fast-growing tree to replace it--resulting in erosion and run-off and possible flooding.

Perhaps the most interesting story the hemlocks tell is one of persistence. Like the pioneers who sojourned over from Lexington to settle Halcott, slow and steady, the hemlock carve out a life in the forest. While they take

much longer to grow, their huge root systems and how they help build a forest for their neighbors (Google “nitrification”) carries their longevity out around them and allows the community to persist.

What the hemlocks tell me is that we need to protect, strengthen, and diversify. Only then can we draw on a toolkit for survival strong enough to resist the changes we're experiencing now faster and faster. Through diversity we find strength. Slow and steady like the hemlock, Halcott continues to draw on the tools its wealth of history provides to preserve its community, providing new places for the birds to gossip, the brookies to cool off in a spot of shade below a hemlock bough, and for this author to sit and stay awhile.

Remember Dial-Up?

sshhhhhsscrrsccscshhhbeeeeppp!
Remember? And then came satellite dishes. Lots and lots of satellite dishes on roofs, mounted on poles, placed here and there. We need to remember. Some things in life do get better!

And it will get even better. The news from the Margaretville Telephone Company (MTC), our high speed internet provider, is good. At the February meeting, MTC reported to the Town Board that Halcott is almost completely wired to receive the Internet. The next day, MTC's Steve Finch e-mailed us to say that Governor Cuomo had just signed a \$39.2 million grant for New York Broadband, Round II. This will allow them to complete expansion of broadband to the town. Yippee! For those of us who already have this service, we cannot compliment MTC enough for pushing ahead, going out on a limb and basically gambling that the funds would come

through, by paying from their own pockets while they waited.

But they are not stopping now that they've got us covered. They continue to enrich and embroider their offerings, giving customers an ever-growing list of options. Their "Watch TV Everywhere" allows you to take your channels wherever you go on a mobile device. There is no charge for this. So the next time you visit a busier than usual doctor or a less-than-exciting family member, you can watch your favorite soap while you wait/listen. MTC constantly updates their channel line-up that is available for this option. Call (84) 586-3311 for more info on this temptation.

Enhanced WIFI, powered by Amplify, increases the area of coverage in your house. This is another service MTC provides. Many front door bells and outdoor security cameras, for instance, depend on the internet but are located far from the router. Again, MTC will have the scoop on this.

In May, MTC is anticipating a roll-out of Vu-It, an enhanced television solution that combines cable TV with streaming. One box will consolidate all available sources, such as Hulu, YouTube, Netflix, and others to be viewed on your TV. They are very excited about this development but can't be more specific yet.

Mary Lou Pagano questioned the MTC team at the meeting about the procedure to put one's services on seasonal suspend. Be prepared to pay for it, although this is the same everywhere. If you want to keep your phone number while you are gone, suspending phone service is \$11.50 per month, down from the \$17.50 charged recently. MTC apparently pays the federal regulatory agency to keep the number and they pass that charge onto their

customer. Susan Aleksejczyk from MTC tried to explain to me some of the charges involved with suspending services. Each channel that MTC provides to us costs them rent, and fluctuates every year. There are fees for discontinuation as well as reinstatement that reflect the staff time taken to make these changes, the rental fees for router, and the cable box. Call to determine what your costs will be. It will depend on how many services you are enjoying. Every time I have called the office, the people who answer the phones are uniformly nice, dedicated to helping me out of a technical dilemma, or ready to recommend a solution. They're genuine, they're local, and they provide a wonderful service. We thank them! **IK**

Dear Friends,

Every March the Halcott Community Fund (HCF) asks you, our readers, for a contribution to help us in our work. One of our efforts is the publication of ***The Times of Halcott***, a quarterly of news, history, and other writings sent free of charge to all homeowners in Town and to anyone else who requests a copy. This is our 78th issue of the newsletter. It costs about \$1,600 a year to print and an additional \$800 for postage. Your donations help us hugely!

HCF also teams up with the Town to maintain the Town Grange building—home to our clerk, our justice, the town meetings, the Halcott Fair, and many other community events. (The Grange Hall can be rented for private events, too! Contact the town clerk, Patty Warfield, at okicuhello@yahoo.com.) This past year, we equipped the building with very welcomed air conditioning, while the Town paid for the refinishing of the upper floor. We extend a huge THANK YOU to

Richard Leahy of Halcott and of Yorktown Heights, NY, who donated the unit for the downstairs. Our Grange Administrator, Bob VanValkenburgh, donated his time for installation. And again, your donations helped us!

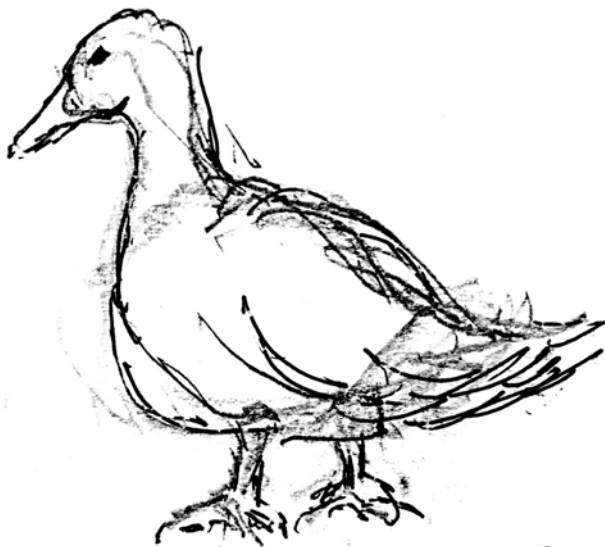
The Fund is also active in the community. We support such projects as the Halcott United Methodist Church's scholarship fund for graduating seniors, the Margaretville Hospital Auxiliary, the Fleischmanns Fire Department, and others. When there is a need in the community, HCF always tries to help. Your donations help us!

This summer of 2017, we are thrilled to lend our support to the Town Board's desire to install solar panels on the highway building. After a study that was conducted last spring, it was found that a solar array will generate enough electricity

to cover both the highway garage and the Grange Hall. These two buildings pay electric bills averaging \$2,500 a year. Within five years, we should be able to recoup the Town's portion of \$15,000 for this project. We will seek grant funding for the remaining costs. **YOUR DONATIONS WILL HELP US!!**

Please call us if you have any questions about HFC. Thank you for your support over the years. We have a faithful community! Please join us for the Halcott Fair this summer, our 18th, we think. It is July 15th from 12 noon til 6pm. We feature all manner of music, local vendors -- (cheese from Two Stones Farm! Ron Morse's maple syrup! Any others who want to participate!) -- a clown for kids and grown-ups, a duckie earth friendly race, baked goods from the Halcott UMChurch. hotdogs, ice cream, attic treasures, perennial plants, wonderful dinner and grand community fellowship. We hope to see you there.

HCF directors
Kari Pagnano, Jennifer
Bouton, Jamie Vogler,
Robin White, Innes
Kasanof



JK

The Times of the Halcott United Methodist Church

Spring! Spring! The Bird is on the Wing!



Correction?

This is really more of an apology. In case you felt left out while listening for Christmas carolers, the icy weather kept everyone home. We'll try again in December.

Cabin Fever

"... be not dismayed, for I am your God . . . I will help you, I will uphold you with my victorious right hand." (Isaiah 41:10)

Circumstances, such as dreary gray winter days, can make us feel all alone, even if the sun peeps out. What a comfort to know we can always reach upward for the hand of God. Author Marian Bond West exclaims, "Oh Father, the very same hand that was pierced for me still cares for me." Wow!

Spring Fever

"While the earth remains, seedtime and harvest, cold and heat, summer and winter, day and night, shall not cease." (Genesis 8:22)

Where we live, Punxsutawney Phil will see his shadow every year. There will always be six more weeks of winter; we just don't know if they will come in February, March, April, or (perish the thought) May! (Remember 1976?) Right now, beneath the

unfrozen sod, warmed by the sun and refreshed from drought by snow melt, flowers are beginning to stir in their sleep. It's not spring yet, but we see truth in the old adage, "Winter's back is broken." Thank God for that promise of spring!

A New Leaf

"Great is His faithfulness; His mercies begin afresh each morning." (Lamentations 3:23)

Flocks of redwing blackbirds and grackles arrived the same day tiny leaf buds began pushing autumn's oak leaves ground ward to skitter in a stiff breeze, reminding us of second chances and new life. In the words of writer Katie Ganshert, "Lord if I could truly wrap my mind around the magnitude of Your grace, I would never be able to get off my knees."

Lenten Lunch Schedule

Lunches, held at noon on Wednesdays in Lent, are open to the public. There is a basket for free will donations to missions. The Halcott mission has been the Darmstadt Shelter for the Homeless in Kingston. Dates are March 8^t in the Fleischmanns CUM Church; March 15^t in the Andes UM Church; March 22ⁿ at the Halcott Grange Hall (upstairs); and March 29 at the Roxbury UM Church. A dish-to-pass Lenten Supper will be held at 6:30 p.m. at the Margaretville UM Church. We encourage readers to attend.

Step Back in Time

On Sunday, April 9, at 6:30 p.m., the Roxbury UM Church will host a reenactment of the Last Supper featuring local actors in full period costume. The public is warmly invited to attend this special event, which will last about an hour and a half.

Thorn Bushes

In preparing my 20-year-old crown of thorns plant for a trip to the Thrift Shop, I stuck a sign in the dirt that read, "WARNING! Dangerous thorns! DO NOT TOUCH!" Its two-foot-long limbs thrashed around as the attendant perched it on a window sill. I held my breath, expecting the bush to topple and impale the nearest passer-by, wishing I hadn't neglected to note, "TOP HEAVY!"

In planning my catchy sign, I had considered writing, "BEWARE! The Romans didn't put a crown of thorns on Jesus for the fun of it!" until I realized that was exactly what they did. This was one of their barbaric blood sports leading to execution. The crown was specifically designed to painfully humiliate a king. And Jesus let them do it. Yes, Jesus let them do it. Why? The all-

warts and all.

"Greater love has no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends." (John 15:13)

Holy Week Services

We invite you to attend the area services that are being planned for Maundy Thursday, Good Friday, and Easter, including the Halcott UMC Easter service at 9:00 a.m. on April 16. There will be joyous music, an inspiring message, flowers, and something special for children. All are welcome to attend this celebration!

Coming Soon

A number of events are in the planning stages as we go to press: We hope to host a film night at the Grange Hall soon. A study on the book of Ephesians is in the works with Pastor Debb. News of our Super Salad Supper should become available as spring unfolds. An intriguing new idea for another dinner is under consideration.

Please feel free to call us for details about any of these community gatherings and to suggest other events.

Spring 2017

The Times of
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NY12430

Place
stamp
here