

The Summer
Times of

HALCOTT

Summer 2019 vol 87



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

Arrived

"Dandelions," I said.

Our editor fixed an unexpected and complicated stare upon me. "Well, but," she said, doubtfully. "Yellow."

And after a moment, I knew what she meant. Different from a clear blue sky, the bluebird and bunting, a turquoise sea, the fluorescent green of new leaf buds, a ripe strawberry, a flaming sunset, the glowing gamut of fall foliage, poppies, pumpkins, plums . . . yellow is a famously conflicting color.

We live in a rainbow all the time, as sensitive as babies or bats to the quality of light, the theater of time, the palette of dark corners or pale rains or luminous mornings.

Yellow speaks of sunshine, happiness, warmth, optimism, positivity, and energy.

On the other hand, it evokes grim

things like dinginess, cowardice ("Yeller!"), the sickly sky before a tornado. The shirt your aunt bought you for your birthday that makes your skin look sallow. Over-bleached or ancient sheets. Mysterious foaming things on the beach.

But sometimes the sun, and sometimes the moon. Butter, lemons, egg yolks, fresh corn. Peace, and hope.

Here in our valley at two thousand feet, after a flash of snowdrops and the tiny purple flames of crocus, yellow is the signal of spring. It means it has *arrived*. First, the daffodils and the dandelions. Wandering lonely as a cloud (remembering our Wordsworth), the host we see here, tossing their heads and fluttering in dance, is more likely to be the dandies, not the daffies (unless in a long-lived and -loved garden). Lawns, meadows, and hayfields spread around us like gorgeous green and heart-

lifting seas sparkling and rippling with yellow caps. The dandelions.

But, yellow. Bile, jaundice, urine, pus. Dandelion—the weed of weeds, so often tackled with gardener’s fork and herbicides. But don’t do it!

I’ll say it again: Dandelions.

Reconsider this humble member of the bitter-green chicory family, if you need to. It is, well, lion-hearted. Named for its spiky tooth-like leaves (not the yellow “mane”), these early arrivals fill our green space, our dance card, in a heart beat, once a little bit of heat and sun are applied. And while they are often considered the enemy, they are in fact crucial to the cycle of spring. They provide one of the first and most vital sources of pollen and nectar for bees, butterflies, moths, and a larger host of pollinators. The seeds are also an important food source for some birds.

For humans, the entire plant is edible and nutritious. Pick the leaves and stems when they are smaller and tenderer for salads, or harvest them when they are bigger but sauté or boil them to remove bitterness. The leaves contain abundant vitamins and minerals: they deliver good doses of vitamins A, C, and K as well as calcium, potassium, iron, manganese, and anti-inflammatory chemicals. Right there in your yard, and likely on your to-do (or to-undo) list.

For beverage connoisseurs, the flowers, along with sugar and citrus, will turn water into wine; the roasted roots can be used to make a coffee alternative; and dandelion is a traditional ingredient in some root beers.

Dandelion has medicinal applications as well, including the treatment of inflammation, infection, and liver problems, and use as a diuretic.

Mustard. The lobsterman’s slicker. Fluffy baby chicks. The furry body of a maple moth. The male goldfinch after the snows are done. Buttercups will follow, while lower down below us, forsythia cracks its whip. In late summer, the goldenrod will come.

Oh, yellow; it runs through our seasons like threads of gold in a princess’s hem, like the stitches of paint on our roving roads. Spring has arrived, and another year’s journey has begun. **CBN**

Maple Milk *Nina Kasanof*

Some of you may have noticed a couple of recent articles in the **Catskill Mountain News** about Richard Ball. Richard’s grandparents had a dairy farm in Halcott, and Richard spent a lot of time here as a boy. Richard owns the Schoharie Valley Farms (The Carrot Barn), and was appointed New York State Commissioner of Agriculture and Markets several years ago. The Governor has asked Richard to promote products to be labeled New York State Certified, which adhere to high environmental and safety standards. In one of the articles Richard specifically mentioned a Halcott beverage.

Curious, I asked Chris DiBenedetto if the beverage came from his farm; he told me it did, and that it is his maple milk. He gave me a sample. I loved it! It can be put in



coffee, but I liked it all by itself. I think it tastes like a maple milkshake or eggnog. It can be used on cereal, and I bet it would make good French toast or bread pudding. It can be found at his farm, across from the Grange, at Two Stones Market in Fleischmanns, at the Pakataken Farmers' Market at the Shaver Hill Maple stand, at Freshtown, and other locations.

Trash Talk

Editor's Note: The Town of Halcott is geographically challenged when it comes to services offered by our Greene County. Everything from Meals on Wheels, to County transportation, to our community college (Columbia-Greene located across the Hudson River) to, alas, the transporting of trash is a hardship for us. Greene County in recognition of the problem, has made the effort to negotiate services with Delaware County whenever they can. However, in the case of garbage, Delaware County was not interested. So, Greene County offered a dumpster for us to use, and to cart it the hour's journey to the transfer station in Hunter free of charge. All we would pay is the tipping fee. This arrangement seems to be working, and last year our total garbage collected, at \$105 a ton paid by the Town, was 37.3 tons, or 74,600 pounds, or 297.21 pounds per person for a population of 251, about a pound per day. That can add up fast.

Halcott Recycles - Let's Help Kip

Kip Johnson likes his job. Every Sunday morning from 10 till noon, 52 weeks a year, Kip, or his designee, is on hand at

the Town Shed to both receive trash and organize the recyclables.

He would enjoy his job more if just a few of us would put a little more thought into what we leave there. For instance, the morning I stopped in to chat with Kip, he was diligently removing non-recyclables from the recycling bins. Folks had put kitchenware - including drinking glasses and candle holders - into the glass bin, where there were also 3 floodlights, also not recyclable (no light bulbs are recyclable). Someone had put plastics into the bin for cans. Someone had left a half-full jar of applesauce. These seemingly little inconveniences are time-consuming and unnecessary, and suggest that some of us are either unable to grasp the procedure for recycling or are just lazy. Kip should not have to clean up after us, and we should all respect the good job he does and appreciate the privilege of having a Recycling Center right here in Town! We used to have to drive to Hunter... isn't this better?

Kip would like us to know there are a few things that would help him out. Most importantly, he asks us to PLEASE wash out food containers! Some things like dog food cans and peanut butter jars might need soap and hot water (the dishwasher does a great job), but most probably just need to be rinsed out well with warm water. PLEASE rinse out milk containers! Sour milk and stinky food smells will encourage rats and raccoons, and are very disagreeable for Kip and the Town guys to deal with. Kip will have to throw out smelly containers and those with any food inside, which defeats the purpose and effort of your having put it

into the recyclables to start with. Realizing that we are all probably trying to do the right thing, it does Kip no favors if he has to flatten out your cardboard boxes - please do that before you bring them. As well, please remove that silly plastic wrapping from magazines before you put them in the paper bin. Yes, we know the old signage on the bin says no magazines, but that was then and this is now. However, that plastic just can't be recycled with the magazines. All paper and magazines should be in paper bags or even cardboard boxes; please don't just throw loose paper into the bin. If you do, Kip will have to pick the loose pieces out of the bin to put into bags.

There is a bag fastened to the side of the plastics bin where you can place your plastic shopping bags. Please place them into the bag, not into the bin.

And please don't just toss your old plastic Princess Barbie House or broken floor lamp behind the electronics shed. If you do, someone else will have to clean up your mess. And by the way, there are 7 cameras on site to capture every angle of the Recycling Center, so when you put that bag of trash into the plastics bin, someone will definitely see who you are.

To review a few of the rules:

- *No microwavable plastic dishes
- *No terra cotta planters (they recycle wonderfully when smashed into your dirt!)
- *No automotive parts
- *No paint cans unless they are **empty** and dry

Source separated recyclables such as; appliances, batteries, cans, household corrugated cardboard, paperboard, newspapers, glass, scrap metal, soft plastics,

tires, magazines, glossy paper, 20 lb. propane cylinders

***NO STYROFOAM ANYTHING**

There is a new bin for "white metal appliances", meaning washers, dryers, anything that does not have refrigerant, so no refrigerators or freezers. There is an electronics shed - but please no dry cell batteries, no cathode ray tubes, and no TVs or computer monitors with broken glass.

FLASH! In a new decision by our Town Board, with the advice and input from Kip, **beginning JULY 1ST**, garbage bags will now cost \$2.00 a bag to dispose of, payable directly to Kip Johnson. There will be no more tickets necessary. Kip continues to graciously accept garbage at the town Shed every Sunday morning from 10 till noon. And now the tedious extra step of purchasing tickets has been eliminated. **PD**

A Man of His Time: Matthew Griffin

Editor's Note: In the summer issue of 2013, we ran some excerpts from the diary of Matthew Griffin, of Griffin Corners (later to become Fleischmanns), who wrote during the 1840s and 50s. Like others of his era, Matthew Griffin tried his hand at many enterprises, the most constant of which seem to be that of a grocer and that of a lawyer. The transcribed diary, submerged in a slow deluge of successive laptop computers, finally resurfaced this spring. It is not art, it is not particularly attractive prose. It is, however, a slice of the times: terse, descriptive only rarely, filled with life, death, the price of flour, the weather, all jumbled together. More intriguing is that it is a slice of history from our area. New York State

during these years was heavily embroiled in national wangling of presidential politics, yet these epic struggles rarely surface in the rural life of Matthew Griffin, first concerned more with anti-rent warriors and then with commodity prices. The original hand-written copy is torturous to transcribe and often there are guesses in brackets with question marks. It is interesting to read. One senses that during these years of our country, men had no time for the leisurely examination of their feelings, no interest in celebrating their inner thoughts. All was action and reaction; life itself seemed to be the adversary. It was filled with winners one minute who were losers the next. Sober survivors like our Mr. Griffin slogged along with his head down against the wind, always accepting the hardballs of life, always prepared to defend himself as he could. Sympathy was a luxury that was seldom indulged.

Griffin Diary excerpt from p.489-492:

During this time [Spring, 1846] the weather was warm for the season and grass came forward finely. I got back to Delaware [County, Griffin Corners] on the 17 of April and brought my family down in the Stage [to Rondout where Mr. Griffin had invested in a grocery-type store] on the 23 day of April. When I got home in Delaware I found my family all well excepting MB my youngest son. He was complaining as he had been for 6 months. We all arrived safe to Rondout. The little boy was not quite as well for a day or two. On Sunday the 26th he grew worse. I called in



Doctor Wales who administered some light medicines and thought it was not necessary for him to call again. On the 28th I sent for him again. He administered and told a like story again. For 2 days, he was to appearance easier and better. On the 1st day of May I became alarmed and called upon a physician who attended to him carefully and he continued to grow worse until the 4th of May when death came to his relief. Since that time we have enjoyed good health. The boy was buried in the Presbyterian burying ground at Rondout. His disease was a derangement of the bowels and an inflammation of the head caused much no doubt from his [teething?]. He was one year 9 months 24 days old and truly an extraordinary promising child. Thus man may appoint but God in His all wise providence can disappoint. Since that time I visited Delaware. On the 20th, 21st & 22nd, I was in Middletown. The weather had been fine, fruit had put forth finely and all nature looked promising upon those days. However the wind was strong in the N. West and a smart frost was on the ground each of the aforementioned mornings. So much so I think the fruit in Delaware is completely destroyed. We have a light frost at Roundout not sufficient however to kill fruit, although it was injurious some. The weather this spring with this exception has been fine and grain and grass I presume never looked better.

May 27: The frost before alluded to did not as was expected damage the fruit but little. The crops during the spring and summer never been fairer for an abundant harvest. The competition in Roundout is

much closer than I had expected. I do not find the business as good as I expected. I have however paid out some 5000 dollars for [groceries?] the 28th day of March. Business now as the most of people are in haying is extremely dull. The smallpox was brought from Philadelphia in the spring by a young man who was a lumber- man and took in Delaware County in my old neighborhood. There have been 6 or 7 deaths with it. I have done but little at the law business since I came here. The weather has been unusually warm during the summer. The 1st of July the thermometer stood 90 to 100 degrees in the shade. Axidents are frequent here. Persons often get drowned in the [Hudson] River. Since the vote came off no reference to the License question. *[Could this refer to an attempt to regulate alcoholic beverages? The American Temperance Society was formed in the 1820s. Methodists, of whom Griffin was one, felt that alcohol was evil, beginning with John Wesley.]* The people have to appearances drank still worse if possible. Crops of grain and grass is better than I ever seen them before. My family is usually well except my wife. She is quite unwell and has been 10 days. So much so she is unable to keep about. Tis now as late as July 31st and people are not through cutting their grass. Many places of oats are cut and come in fine. The weather is so uncommonly warm now that a man will sweat freely sitting in the shade with a coat on. We have plenty of showers so the dry weather has not injured grass or crops during the season. From negligence and other causes I have delayed writing since the date to now Dec 16, 1846. I however now proceed to give a short description of past events from frail memory.

The weather from 1st August to the 1st of October has been fine and crops came in in abundance. Hay, oats came and buckwheat. The potato crop however as heretofore is poor owing to the rot which is becoming common almost through Europe as well as in America, New York State especially. Business has not quite met my expectations in Rondout. The principle business through the summer has been in the Flour Speculation. The flour market opened at \$5.00 and continued to decline gradually in price until in the fall and then commenced going up. Competition ran high, We usually sold 2/ profit on the bid but sometimes at 12 1/2 and sometimes at 6 which paid a small profit. In October it got to \$4.12 and suddenly advanced to \$5.8/ 1/2 in Albany which was an advance of moment. Held its price for 5 or 6 weeks owing to the foreign call; suddenly fell to \$5 and 5.12 1/2 and continued at that standard until after the close of navigation. .. [Mss] Pork ranged about 10 to \$10.75. Mackerel No. 1 8 to 10. No.2 \$5.57 to \$6.25. No. 3\$4.34 to \$5.25. Sugars has been unusually high since 15th of June. N. Orleans at 8 1/2; Havana 8 to 9 1/2. Dry goods has been rather falling off since 1st of May.

Returning home my family has been usually well excepting my wife's health before spoken of. She was delivered of a daughter on the 2nd day of September after which she some recovered and has been quite well since. and is now in good health and the child also. The 2 oldest boys one 12 and the other 10 years old and the 2 girls have attended school during the summer and made rapid advances in learning. I have kept a cow

and horse during the summer. Have been up to Delaware several times during the summer. Tried to make some collections but found money matters tight and hard in that quarter. My sister Ellis came from Dutchess County and spent the summer with me until December and then returned which was quite a favor to myself and family under all the circumstances. I mentioned myself and family being well. I have been in good health most of the time. I left for Delaware sometime in September. Got to Middletown, felt unwell. Before I left grew worse and then came in company with D L Walker my former partner and was under the necessity of hastening back. Got him to drive my horse. Arrived home of Wednesday. Did not get about again until the next Wednesday. Had a torpid infection of the liver. My constitution was yellow. Every part of me. My urine even would color cloth , etc. Since which times I have been in good health. Whilst I was thus confined to my room I heard the unpleasant news of the death of my oldest brother, Eli W. Griffin, a resident of Fishkill, Dutchess County. He was taken with an infection of the liver and lived but a short time. Left a wife and 4 children. He was 50. 1 or 2 years old, much esteemed and respected by all who knew him. Thus God calls to himself in all ages and men of all rank as seemeth good to him calling upon us to “be you also ready for in such an hour as you think not the Son of Man Cometh...”

What is an LFA?

The Halcott Town Board invites you to attend a public meeting to learn about our Local Flood Analysis (LFA) project. An

LFA is a two-step process where engineers are hired to analyze the causes of flooding in a defined area of the town, to identify how flooding can be avoided in the future, and then, with the approval of the Town Board, to design solutions to address these problem spots. Residents who live within the boundary areas of the proposed LFA are asked to come to the meeting to help identify chronic flooding spots that they are aware of, and to suggest possible fixes. Bring photos, videos and other examples of past disasters.

The LFA covers a swath of properties and parts of properties running roughly from just beyond the Greene County line, up the valley, taking in a few hundred yards of County Route 1, ending above the intersection of Turkey Ridge Rd; it continues on County Route 3 to about the middle of the Margaritis property, crossing the stream and running up Judd Hill, over and down to follow Elk Creek Rd up to a little beyond the Townsend Hollow turn-off. Properties on both sides of the roads are included. The map of proposed boundaries for the LFA is posted on our website at www.townofhalcott.com and I will happily send a digital copy to anyone who would like one. Email me at inneskas70@gmail.com. Unfortunately, the map is in color and a small black and white version that could be printed here would be useless.

Although not all properties are within the study area, all Halcott residents are invited. A presentation on the LFA process will be provided and, using large scale maps, the public will have a chance to provide input on their flooding experiences.. The LFA study is funded through the Delaware County Soil & Water Conservation District and the

NYC DEP. Once the Town has agreed upon the areas that need attention, projects can be proposed to the Catskill Watershed Corporation for funding.

Gardeners, Arise! *Alex Brock*

The Halcott Community Garden is starting its ninth season on the edge of the Vly Creek with high hopes that it will be our best yet. Please find application for membership on the town website using the search bar or contact Alex at whalenbrock@yahoo.com for more information. The garden is open to all.

Our short term goals are to build the garden to provide garden plots to Halcott and its environs for producing food & flowers for personal use while establishing a structure to the garden and its membership that supports the long term goals of

- fostering community support both within the town and in the region for locally grown, fresh, nutritional food.
- providing education on good garden practices and landowner stewardship for long term environmental sustainability.
- creation of a beautiful town center for public gatherings

Save the date for a gathering to explore the use of pesticides and best practice to protect pollinators and the environment on **Friday June 28th, 6 pm** at the Grange Hall. Featured speakers are Ryan Trapani from the Catskills Forest Association, Donna Peterson from Cornell Cooperative Extension Greene & Columbia Counties, and local student

scientist Kevin Johnson who will share information from his recent research on the use of neonicotinoids and their effects on bees. Bring a baked good or beverage to share for Q&A after.

A Good Table

A good table in summer is a magical thing. In 1981, as soon as Willie and Alena agreed to sell us Griffins, Tony and I went out and bought a round oak kitchen table. The process of purchase was intriguing. One Saturday morning, we visited a small garage-type workshop in northern Virginia, filled with wood shavings and unfinished table tops. It was a far cry from Macy's or Wayfair-you've-got-just-what-I-need. I was a bit dubious, but impressed when the two owners sat us down and explained that first we had to choose the table top. Why? Because with oak, the grain of the wood pieces, laminated tightly together, made each top different. So we chose. And then we had to choose the table leaf that would go in the center for "really large dinners." So we chose again. Next a pedestal. This was OUR table, after all, and the carpenters were forcing us to own it, piece by piece. It was a good feeling. We were told to come back in two weeks to check the stain color. Two weeks later, back among the wood shavings, we liked the stain. In another two weeks, the table top, leaf and pedestal were packed into our nervously rented U-Haul for the trip up to our new home in the Catskills. Remember, oak: very, very



heavy. But we were young and the only damage incurred during the journey was a burning smell as we toiled up Pine Hill.

From the time that the top was screwed to the pedestal and the leaf tucked into a corner for “really large dinners,” this table has become a center of operations in our life. It has a force like gravity pulling visitors from the kitchen door to a seat beside it. In winter, guests are reluctant to track in snow or mud or yuck, but summer has no such constrictions. And at a table, there is a relaxation, an establishment of equality that is remarkable.

Anything happens. You can learn much at a kitchen table. I remember Ward Reynolds often dropping by. How surprised I was when he would look up, turn from the table, from the conversation every time a vehicle drove by. “How strange,” I thought. “Why does he do that?” Today, I realize how much can be gathered from seeing a neighbor drive by. “Ah, so they’re not working today!” “Gee, I wonder if all is well with them?” “There goes Cindy helping Russell with the hay.” (But it’s also true that today there are many cars I don’t recognize!)

I remember Bob Johnson at the kitchen table, describing to me exactly how to get to a patch of wild strawberries he discovered while haying. How many years have I sat with Jenn Bouton at the table, making plans for the Halcott Fair? And the meals we have shared at this table! Family birthdays, holiday celebrations, pop-up parties just for fun – a good table invites reasons to sit down to it.

A good table also invites a central clutch of flowers to adorn it and throughout

the season, my garden has given generously to my kitchen table, from daffies to Golden Glow, with lilies of the valley, peonies, roses in between. One also learns from flowers on a table: lilies of the valley give off a heady, smiley aroma. Peonies give off ants.

I remember sitting at the table with my kids, so that I could look through the kitchen door out to the barn across the road. All summer long, every evening at dinner, I would remark how beautiful the light was on the barn. They tease me to this day about the “light on the barn,” but I think that the slant of the summer sun on a place that you watch daily, gives one a sense of comfortable familiarity, something rare in the lives of very mobile, very big city folks.

Different summers brought different kitchen table memories. The summer after Hurricane Irene hit, the table was a meeting place for FEMA representatives, gathered to help guide the Town of Halcott through the difficult passage of getting funding for our losses. Papers were scattered so heavily across the table, you could not see the precious oak grain.

Although our table makers gave us strict instructions on its care, after 30 years, the finish was gummy, dark and now a very different color from the table leaf. In the summer of 2015 or 16, Scott Gould lovingly refinished the top. With both the kitchen and the front doors open, the summer light pours onto the table, reflecting softly off the finish. The light connects the table with the new green world right outside. This year, as I sit at my table, I can watch a robin feeding her little ones in the tree beside the porch. A good table in summer is a magical thing. **IK**

**SEE
YOU AT
THE FAIR**

PASSAGES

Stan Siegel died April 6th, just two weeks after the 2019 spring issue of *The Times of Halcott* went to press, and just a few months after his dear wife Adele passed away. Stan, like Adele, was a beloved legend in town, an artist wrapped inside a disciplined heart. I loved Stan's passion for anything he believed in. This perfectly articulated ardor showed most poignantly in his art, his enviable and meticulous detail in his work. Years ago, when a group of Halcott people gathered to make wine, Stan offered

to design the label. Each year was to feature a different Halcott house of one of the participants. We only managed to bring out two years' worth of very indifferent wines. The best part of the wine was Stan's label, an intricate rendering of a Halcott house. I believe the Benedettos' house was on the first edition; the second proudly bore a beautiful drawing of the Griffin/Kasanof house. Stan was a gentle, loving man and as with the recent loss of his beautiful wife Adele, Halcott is the poorer without them. IK

Vendors with tee shirts to totes; crafts to coffee mugs; cheeses to choose; all manner of stuff. Come and see!

Beer Garden

Welcome to the 2019 Halcott Market Fair!
July 20, 2019; 12 to 6PM at Halcott Grange Hall

Kids' fun!

Baked goods from Halcott United Methodist Church

Strolling Magician

Free Popcorn!

grilled hotdogs, chips, cold drinks

Kids' fun!

Kids' fun!

YUM!

\$10 Dinner 4-6PM BBQ Chicken and the works; Kids under 5 eat free

Kids' fun!

The Times of the Halcott United Methodist Church

Summer 2019 *Pattie Kelder, Correspondent*



Happy Spring! Tired of the rain yet? Yeah, me too. My name is Deborah Judisky, also known as Pastor Debb. At the end of this month, I will have been the pastor at the Halcott United Methodist Church for three years. That's really difficult to believe. In some ways, I feel as if I have been in this area for a very short period of time. However, at other times it feels like I've been here forever. Let me explain, the people in Halcott are some of the warmest and most welcoming I've ever had the pleasure of meeting. I love spending time with residents at the Halcott Fair and the Christmas celebration. So in one way, I feel I've known everyone forever. However, I haven't and that is evident when someone mentions an event or person from long ago. They don't realize I don't remember! It's a tribute to me because they feel comfortable speaking to me and a tribute to them because they have such a wealth of knowledge.

However, the best part of my time here is when I enter the church. I feel such a spiritual presence like I've never felt before. The spirit of the Lord is definitely in that small building on the hill. Of course, it helps that I have been

so warmly welcomed by all the congregants, but the presence of the Lord is so strongly felt.

And the congregants have been most welcoming from the very start. The first day I saw the church, Jamie invited me to go in to see the interior. From Pattie supplying the Communion elements, to Jenn, Jamie, Jackie, Bobby and Pattie being members of the various committees, thank you. And most of all, Pattie and Ruth for all of their assistance in every worship service, from the bottom of my heart, I thank you.

Please, join us on Sunday mornings at 9:00 for our worship service. Everyone is always welcome. Oh, by the way, on **June 30**, the church will host a parish-side worship service at 10:30 a.m. The members of all five churches in the parish will be attending, with a dish-to-pass luncheon following at the Grange Hall. Come join us, any Sunday, and feel the warmth and Spirit I always feel.

Deborah Judisky, CLM
Pastor Halcott United Methodist Church
Upper Catskill Larger Parish

Memories of a Halcott UMC Picnic

Jamie Bouton & Sybil Margaritis

Jamie: One of my most favorite memories of the Halcott church, happened to be captured on an old home movie.

Every so often, I dust off the cover and slip the old VHS into the machine and delight that I have such a treasure.

Ralph Merante was pastor of the church at the time & there was a gathering held on the adjoining back lawns of the church & my grandparents, Donald & Shirley Bouton. I'm not sure the year, 1992? I do know there were short-shorts, tube socks & a lot of funky hair (I was the proud owner of a shoulder length mullet, yikes!) There was a pie-eating contest, tug-of-war, badminton games, potato sack & three legged races for both kids and the adults. (Mike & Peg DiBenedetto left their competition in the dust!) There was a square dance that was called by dear Hilton & Stella Kelly.

The video shows my uncle, Tom Roberts and my beloved father, Dennis -- both of whom, left us way too soon-- trying to keep up with food demands on an assortment of charcoal grills, but smiling the whole time. Picnic tables and folding chairs full of friends and neighbors eagerly sharing stories & the laughter could be heard throughout.

The afternoon concluded with an announcement of more singing and fellowship to take place inside the church. It was fun day!

Sybil remembers the day as well and adds: Claretta and I were in charge of helium balloons; I was dressed up as a clown, red nose and all. Shirley Bouton sat at a sign-in desk welcoming all and asking them to sign a guest book. Johnny Steinfeld, son of Lillian and Paul and a professional magician entertained the crowd with his magic. And there was no RAIN!

Summer 2019

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