

# The Times of Halcott

## Spring Forward - Vol 94

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

### Spring

An invisible force  
like the magic lasso  
of a god on her horse  
tugs us round the last of  
the corners of the sun

An invisible force  
pushes water down the mountain  
on its underground course  
with thoughts of what amount to  
pour on the beetles in stun

An invisible force  
makes a shallow bowl shape  
as each bough bows to support  
a leafing canopy of maple  
and the sap is outrun

Down, down, down  
beauty races past the gravity  
our feet on soft wet ground  
of joyous spring calamity  
our vision blinded by full sun

If I tell you the silence in seeds  
rises up in rain with riotous life  
flying over the rainbow chard leaves  
And I wish upon the eagle in flight,  
warm breezes say winter is done

And we can see  
we can see  
we can see  
spring.

**CBN**

## **Our Enduring Catskills**

*(with grateful thanks for information received from Marilyn Bouton Gallant and Kathleen Bouton Mech)*

Our valley, situated as it is in a small fold of the Catskills, is quite frankly, a gem. Over the last 40 years that I have lived in Halcott, I have grown to treasure the moment I pass from Delaware County Rt 37 to Greene County Rt 3. At that point in the road my eyes behold a splendid view of our valley, from Crosby's flats where DiBenedetto cows range right up to Vly Mountain's peak. What a peek! I love, too, the richness of this valley's past that goes along with the physical beauty; learning how others worked and played here, what were their problems and joys, studying the spunk and can-do of former generations that all took place under the gaze of Vly's quiet grandeur.

In the mail the other day, came a "peek" at the Slauson family from Marilyn and Kathleen, whose great-grandfather was Orrin Slauson, born outside of Halcott in 1882 and married to Melissa Craft, born also not in Halcott in 1858. Our story begins in 1903, when the Slausons with three of their four children, (oldest daughter Stella had already married) Ella, Wilbur and Blanche and Orrin's niece Lula moved from what we today call Vega, over the mountain to Halcott Center. Lula's mother Polly had died soon after Lula was born in 1902 and Orrin and Melissa raised her as their own. Orrin took the job as manager of the Halcott

Creamery, then known as the Kingston Dairy & Ice Cream Company. They rented a house from the Morse family, 3/10ths of a mile from the creamery. Alan Reynolds thinks this may have been what came to be known as "Mike Morse's tenant house," the small yellow house on the turn of County Route 3 as it comes up the valley past the Elk Creek fork. If one were to walk up the hill from this house, he would end up at Turkey Ridge Rd.

Marilyn and Kathleen write that one day Orrin did walk up the hill behind his house to pick blackberries. He walked up on top of the mountain and came to a beautiful boarding house called the Mountain Star House. Orrin talked with the owners, Avery

and Annie Catherine (Lasher) Boughton and told them if their place ever came up for sale, he would be interested.

The Mountain Star House was built by Avery

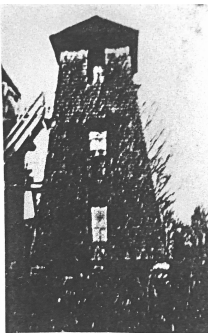
Boughton and run by him and his wife Annie Cat as she was known. They had worked hard to establish a successful boarding house. Orrin must have been emboldened by the blackberries, because that same winter he, Melissa and the children moved from a very small house to a very large house (!), renting the Mountain Star House on December 1, 1903. This seems an unusual time to take over a boarding house in the Catskills, the

***Dear Reader: If you feel like you know the two sturdy American faces on the masthead, you do! At least if you go forward several generations. Orrin Slauson was Russell Bouton's great-grandfather. His wife Melissa Craft Slauson was Sybil Peet Margaritis' great grandmother.***



most difficult season for getting around. One wonders how that winter must have been for them. The couple were young, in their forties, and they seemed to have persevered. In 1905, Avery Boughton died and two years later his wife Annie Cat sold the Mountain Star to Orrin in a signed deed dated November 11, 1907.

Orrin, among his many talents was a builder and constructed a water tower beside the boarding house. Lumber for the tower was sawed by son-in-law Marshall Bouton, Ella's husband. The tower was high enough for water helped by a gasoline pump to be piped throughout the four-story house. Little walkways connected the tower to the house at each level. A staircase ran all around the inside of the tower and in the center was a dumb waiter sort of gizmo to haul the guests' baggage up to their rooms. Genius.



The Mountain Star Boarding House

must have been a very grand presence in town. Perched on Turkey Ridge Road, sitting on 234 acres, it commanded a splendid view. Alas, it exists today only in pictures. Marilyn and Kathleen gave us the copy of a brochure put together probably around 1900, printed by Avery Boughton and used by Orrin Slauson as well, that reads as follows:

"This house is beautifully situated on a high hill amongst a large park of maples [*planted by Avery Boughton, first owner*]. Splendid scenery in all directions. Positively free from malaria or mosquitoes. Good spring water. Piano and baths [*intriguing to put these two comforts together*], also telephone, contracting with Western Union Telegraph, in the house. Excellent trout fishing. Roads fine for bicycle riding. Cuisine unsurpassed. Plenty of fresh milk and eggs. Carriage meets all expected guests. Can accommodate fifty. Terms reasonable. References from New York, Brooklyn and Jersey City. Access from New York to this House is by the West Shore Railroad to Kingston, or Hudson River Railroad to Rhinecliff, or Albany Day Boats to Kingston Point, or Night Boats to Rondout, thence by Ulster & Delaware Railroad to Fleischmanns."

Marilyn and Kathleen add: Families traveled by train from New York City, arriving finally at the Fleischmanns Railroad

Station. A driver, horse and carriage were waiting there. Each family brought a large trunk which held clothing and necessities for the summer. [*Hence the convenience for staff of the water tower dumb waiter!*] The mothers and children stayed at the boarding house all summer long while the fathers traveled to the City to work during the week, returning to their families on the weekends. This was a popular way for families to spend their summers. Orrin's wife Melissa and daughters prepared delicious and nutritious meals for their guests; berries were picked in the summer plus the family took care of a large garden, the source of many fresh vegetables. Orrin and family plus his hired man William German made maple syrup every spring, a wonderful delicacy for both the Slauson family and their guests. Square dances were held upstairs over the wagon house.

It is interesting to think back on these times. They serve as a bridge between the 1830s of Matthew Griffin when it took up to two days to travel to Kingston and today when a car can cover the distance from New York City to Halcott in three and half hours. Modern conveniences such gasoline engines to bring water into the house must have been absolute fantasy to Matthew Griffin; and then standing in Orrin Slauson's shoes looking forward, what would he have thought about zoom calls and youtube? Boarding houses were one method devised by our forebearers, trading on the pristine beauty of the valley to survive. They are not mentioned in the Griffin diaries and they seemed to have faded out of business by the late 1950s and 60s. Other ways to make a living from the beauty of our surroundings had arisen by then. But

the enduring comfort for me in all of this is that the Halcott valley, like a mother hen with her chicks, has held the times of each era and continues to produce people strong enough to face the vagaries of their day. From the history of this small fold in the Catskills, one catches a peek into our unique American flavor: a strength made up of quiet practicality and frequent ingenuity running like a silver thread through our history. It gives me a sense of unshakable optimism.

Coincidentally, Christine Chesire, a faithful **TTOH** contributor recently sent this story about what it is like to visit our valley today:

### **The Many Personalities of the Catskill Mountains**

*Christine Chesire*

As I sit in suburban Philadelphia and write this article, it is raining. As the droplets pelt the layer of snowpack on the ground, the inevitable thaw will happen and that means that spring is near. Spring is that wonderful renewal period that brings us lovely crocus and fragrant daffodils, abundant greenery where there once was frost, and bright buttercups as yellow as the sun. And just like daylight-savings-clockwork, all of these things remind me of one of my favorite places on earth, the Catskill Mountains. For over twenty years now, my husband and I have been making the trek up the New York Thruway to the Kingston interchange and meandering west on route 28 to our ultimate destination of beautiful, scenic, Halcott NY. My preparation for the trip always begins with a store run and a stockpile of items, some of which I may not be able to find in close vicinity upon my arrival. The car is

also loaded up with backpacks for hiking, hiking boots, netted masks to keep away the black flies and of course, my husbands fishing gear. The fast moving and pristine waters of Vly Creek are one of my husband's favorite places to fish. For me, simply looking at Vly Creek and its tributaries calms me down. After a long week of work and a traffic-filled journey from Pennsylvania, there is nothing like it and my camera is chock full of photos of water glistening in the sun and of videos of water streaming over rocks. Pure, fast moving water is a true treasure of both Halcott and the entire Catskill region. Our journey by car up the thruway is not all bad. One aspect that I

do not want to neglect to write about is the anticipation. There is something to be said about "having something to look forward to". Most times if we leave Pennsylvania in the late afternoon, it is dark by the time we hit Newburgh. Often times during our car ride, I will pop a "Dead Can Dance" CD in the vehicle's CD player. The haunting voices of the band's Lisa Gerrard and Brendan Perry set the mood for our arrival at one of the most haunting and mystical places on earth. The cool, crisp night air mixes with the towering, tall mountains on either side of us to let us know that we are entering the wilderness where we are no longer in control.

***In every spring issue of TTOH, there is a letter from the Halcott Community Fund asking for your help in bearing the costs of printing and mailing this quarterly newsletter. Over the years, we have been humbled by your loyal support. Last year, when Covid hit, we were unable to have a Halcott Fair, our major source of funding. And yet, we still received donations. We are thankful!***

The mammoth mountain rules here and we are hopelessly and willingly servile. Over the years, my husband and I have hiked trails too numerous to mention. Most recently, we did a winter hike at the Slide Mountain East Branch Trailhead outside of Phoenicia. After a hike (usually in the five to seven mile range), we like to reward ourselves with a dinner in Pine Hill, Fleischmanns, Phoenicia, Andes, or Margaretville. The local area eateries always do such a nice job with food. It is always so delicious. During the four seasons, the Catskills has so much to offer. Even though folks can snow tube and ski in the winter and bear witness to burgundy and orange foliage galore in the autumn, my favorite times

of year in the mountains are definitely the spring and summer seasons. This past Summer, we rented a kayak in Hudson, NY and if you can believe it, we had the Hudson River to ourselves. We rented the kayak from outfitters in a small park just outside of the center of town. We launched the boat and kayaked toward a lighthouse. In the distance we could see the Rip Van Winkle Bridge. It was the hottest day of the Summer in this region, but the temperature was quite comfortable on the waters of the mighty Hudson. Another adventure we took part in during the summer of 2020, was ziplining at Hunter



Mountain. What an exciting, adrenaline pumping experience ziplining can be! The staff was extremely friendly and

helpful and during Covid, everyone was wearing masks. This experience is definitely pricier than hiking for free along New York State owned trails or even kayaking or canoeing, but it is worth the experience. I will pass along the disclaimer that gliding on a cable, from tree to tree, fifty feet up in the air is not for everyone. At my second tree stand, I landed to find a woman sitting there and telling the staff that she had had enough. She asked them if someone could please take her down. As for me, I was determined to make it to the end. And after our treetop-grazing, over-the-gorge sailing, rush of blood through our systems was over, my husband and I enjoyed a cold beverage at a Hunter, NY eatery. And of course, we sat outside to enjoy more of that clean Catskill air. Other activities we have enjoyed over the years include picking dandelions in the fields of Halcott and making multiple batches of dandelion wine, picking raspberries, blackberries, and blueberries (when each are in season), baking, and of course, eating delicious homemade pies. In 2015 on a Memorial Day weekend hike, we came across some morel mushrooms. I still have the picture of my husband proudly holding up his prized possession. We brought them back to the family in Halcott and my talented

sister-in-law made a savory stir-fry with our fungi find as only she can do. Quite honestly, some of my favorite times in the Catskills are times spent with family, at the end of the day, when we are all together eating, laughing, and talking. There is nothing like a fantastic home-cooked meal on the deck, on a warm day, at the Halcott home.

Because the mountains are home to an abundance of life, we have been fortunate to come across so many creatures both elusive and not-so-elusive. We have seen and picked up bullfrogs, leopard frogs, box turtles, orange salamanders, green salamanders, and wood toads. We have seen mink, deer, bear, and bobcat. One of my favorite sightings was along 28 after the Shandaken Day Festival. I was leaving the festival and just as I pulled my car unto route 28, a porcupine decided that he was going to sashay across the road, presumably on his way to wherever he was going. I am here to tell you that nothing stops traffic like a porcupine and his quills.

From the skiers at Plattekill and Belleayre, to the hunters during buck season stopping for a bite to eat in Arkville, to the artists at the playhouse in Phoenicia, to the musicians in the center of town in Woodstock, the Catskills have so many wonderful and versatile personalities. Most exciting to me is that we are coming up on the time of year when the tadpoles will soon be swimming in the ponds, the hummingbirds and the swallows will be returning to our skies, and the days will be getting longer. What a magnificent and tremendous time to visit one of the most magical, majestic, and gorgeous places on earth, the mountains where it is

said that Rip Van Winkle slept for twenty years. While asleep in that deep forest, I wonder if he dreamt, just as so many of us dream, of spending endless time in the Catskill Mountains.

## **The Pageantry of Dairy Cattle Sales**

Families involved in farming or ranching will often say that their vocation is more than just their life's work; it is also their lifestyle.

Indeed, farms are often home place as well as workplace and

generally everyone in the family pitches in to help out. Most farm families are so passionate about their work that even their leisure activities center around agriculture with trade conventions, seminars, visits to other farms,

shows and sales often serving as much anticipated vacation destinations. These activities away from the relentless responsibilities involved in running agricultural enterprises refresh the participants and farm business alike with innovative ideas, personal connections, and maybe even some new labor-saving equipment or outstanding animals to add to the herd or flock. Over the years we have been able to attend many different outstanding events but perhaps one of the most exciting, enjoyable day trips is in attending sales whether to buy new animals



or just to observe and learn. In this article we will look more closely at the “pageantry” of purebred dairy cattle sales.

Dairy sales are held throughout the year but those catering to specific buyers such as 4-H kids or other people looking for cattle to show during the coming year tend to occur in the early spring. Some sales take place on farms whereas others are held at fairgrounds or other such settings, often as part of a big show or breed convention. Quite a few sales,

such as the Holstein Harvest at Cornell University or any of the many county Holstein club calf sales, are annual events that draw a loyal following of both buyers and sellers. This type of sale is often part fundraiser and learning experience for the sponsoring club as much as a good venue to purchase quality cattle year after year because club members assist sale managers with everything from running the concession booth to helping with the grooming and

care of the sale cattle. At the Cornell sale, for example, dairy club students sell delicious lunch items and baked goods throughout the day in addition to bringing homemade pies that are auctioned off for very generous prices to a hugely supportive, appreciative audience with those funds going to the Cornell University Dairy Science club {CUDS} for educational club activities. Furthermore, the students do an expert job of making the cattle look absolutely beautiful. Attending and buying cattle at an auction does require a little homework albeit an enjoyable kind. Generally, a few weeks



before the sale, catalogs outlining the sale offering and particulars will be made available by mail as well as online. These catalogs will show pictures and pedigree information for each animal consigned so prospective buyers can study the offering to determine which might fit their herd goals. Interested parties can also contact the sellers or sale personnel with any further questions prior to sale day. Once at the sale site, buyers will have the opportunity to view the cattle up close and in person. Usually, sale cattle are tied in similar fashion to how you would see them at a fair except that sale cattle will be grouped according to age: calves tied next to one another, cows next to one another, and so on, in order to make evaluations of the animals more convenient. For a few hours before the sale starts, the cattle area is a flurry of activity with buyers toting catalogs sizing up their favorite animals while often sleep-deprived barn crew students put the finishing touches on cattle they have so diligently kept spotless throughout the night hours. Sellers pay a consignment fee (usually a percentage of the sale price) so every effort is made to ensure the cattle look their best at all times. This countdown to the start of the auction is also the time for prospective buyers to finalize their thoughts about which animals to bid on and perhaps what they want to spend—otherwise it's just too easy to get caught up in the excitement and bidding in the heat of the moment! As sale time nears, the barn begins to empty of people viewing the cattle as they take places up near the sale ring where all of the action will take place. Soon a hushed muffle mixed with a palpable excitement fills the crowd as the auctioneer

begins to welcome everyone. Finally, it's sale time!

Once the sale begins all of the sale team works hard to keep things running at a quick but smooth pace.

Many people have worked diligently for months to bring a sale to fruition so much effort goes into helping to bring a good price for each animal sold. One by one, in their designated sale order, the cattle are led into a usually beautifully decorated sale ring. As each animal comes into the ring, the auctioneer and sometimes someone designated to read the pedigrees will talk about the offering at hand to add information not presented in the catalog as well as with the hopes of spurring more interest before the bidding commences. Once the bidding starts, several ringmen stationed around the sale ring watch for people trying to place bids. Some people bid by waving their hands, catalog, or buyer's number card while others place bids more subtly with a slight nod or wink. Of course, if someone is not interested in bidding it is best to avoid any appearance of intention to place a bid. At one sale I worked in California a lady was busy waving to a family member across the sale ring while an animal was being sold. One of the ringmen thought she was placing bids and when the gavel came down she was declared the winning bidder. The embarrassed, sorrowful lady explained that she was merely trying to get someone's attention and the sale people were, thankfully, very understanding and actually rather amused at the situation





and the animal in question ended up going to the right home. In any case, the bidding can become quite frenzied as each new bid is accompanied by an outcry from the ringmen to the auctioneer, pushing the price upward. This back and forth may go on for a bit especially when a highly coveted animal is on the auction block. Also, it is possible to phone in bids during the sale which sometimes adds to the intrigue of a bidding war. Eventually, all of the buyers except one reach their spending limits and the gavel comes down signifying that the bidding is over for that animal

leaving a happy new owner and perhaps the other contending bidders looking ahead to the next offerings yet to be sold in the hopes of placing the winning bid on an animal they want.

As the sale draws to a close, buyers begin heading for the manager's table to settle up their bills and, if necessary, to make arrangements for trucking the cattle to their farms. Again, the barn becomes a hive of activity as people say their goodbyes and begin

leading their newly purchased cattle to awaiting trucks or trailers for the ride to new homes. One of the sweetest sights is seeing young kids proudly leading their new calves to their family's trailer. Undoubtedly so many great dreams are being birthed during that moment!

Over the years we have been fortunate to have purchased a few good cattle at auction. Some came as young calves, others as mature cows when we first started farming. The memory of the sale day that brought them here is etched on our hearts. Happily, several of these gals still have descendants in our herd. The old Gina cow, discussed in a previous TTOH article, probably left more offspring than any other cow we ever purchased. She came from a herd dispersal at the old Welches sale barn in Edmeston, NY. One of our last sale purchases was a calf that

came out of the Cornell sale just a couple of days before hurricane Sandy blew through. I still remember the concerned attitude of the farmers attending the sale as they left at sale's end for their farms while hoping for the best in terms of what the storm would bring. That calf we bought that day grew into a fine cow and she gave us several good daughters. As for future sale purchases, there are no plans right now but no doubt some of us will attend a few sales "just to look". JD

**The Relic Hunt is coming!**  
**The Historical Society of the Town of Middletown (HSM) will sponsor the Fifth Annual Relic Hunt by members of the Nor'easters Metal Detecting Club June 5-6, 2021 at locations in and around Fleischmanns. We are looking for property owners who are willing to allow detectorists to hunt for traces of the past beneath the sod. We hope you'll agree to participate in this fun, often revealing event! Please contact Diane Galusha at 586-4973, or [history@catskill.net](mailto:history@catskill.net) to let us know if we can add you to the roster, discuss specifics of your property or answer your questions about the event itself.**

**Thank you for your support!**

## **PASSAGES**

Judy and Luis Diaz write: Another patriot is gone. On December 26, 2020, **Frank Guerra** lost his battle with serious illnesses at the age of 58. He was a proud member of the New York Port Authority police for 28 years.

He also served in the Air National Guard. He was one of the first to be at Ground Zero on September 11, 2001 to aide in the recovery of those who perished that tragic day. Frankie climbed three stories and wrote NYPA Guerra on the cross that is now on display at the 911 Museum in New York City.

Frankie leaves his wife Elvia, daughter Dalia, mother Martha, his sister Diana, brother Kevin, a niece and five nephews. He was laid to rest next to his father, Frank Sr., in Florida National

Cemetery in Lakeworth, FL. Frankie was a true patriot who was taken from us way too young. Rest in Peace, dear friend.

### **Proud We Are!**

*[Excerpts from the Catskill Daily Mail article sent to TTOH by Phyllis Skidmore. Thank you, Pastor Phyllis!]*...

The Catskill Center for Conservation and Development has announced the appointment of Margaret (Peg) DiBenedetto as their new Chairperson. Peg has been with the Board since 2014. Ruth Reynolds, Peg's mom was the first employee of the Catskill Center and Peg remembers stuffing envelopes for membership on the kitchen table as a youngster. She says, "The Catskill Center is in my blood. I've been involved from its inception, and I am honored to have this opportunity to serve in such an important capacity."

Peg was born here in Halcott, attended Margaretville Central School and got a Bachelor's Degree in Biology and Ecological Sciences from the State University College at Oneonta. She worked for over 20 years in land management for the DEP (New York

City Department of Environmental Protection), a job that allowed her to tramp the Catskills up and down, round and about, performing boundary maintenance as well as monitoring Conservation Easements. Peg has also watched the bald eagle nests on the Schoharie Reservoir as part of her job. This is only a part of her many and impressive qualifications to become Chair of the Catskill Center. Like most Halcott people, she's quite modest and doesn't know about this article; I'm not sure she'd like it. What the newspaper article does not mention is Peg's amazing breadth of interest.

She's a faithful writer for this newsletter and a publisher, having provided the ISBN numbers for our bound editions of The Times of Halcott.

She's a master eagle watcher, catcher, releaser.

She's a tireless worker for victims of disaster relief and aid projects, her current one being "ShoesForKids."

She's a board member for Catskill Neighbors, an effort started by our Ralph Darmstadt to reach out to our in-community elderly.

She has a magnificent husband Michael, and a delightful brood of grandchildren each of whom is destined for great things.

And did I mention that she's a wonderful friend? Peg, you make us proud. And a little breathless.



# The Times of the Halcott United Methodist Church

Spring 2021 *Pattie Kelder, Correspondent*



## **The Times of the Halcott United Methodist Church**

### **Pastor Debb and Bill Judisky**

Both Bill and Pastor Debb contracted mild cases of Covid virus in mid-January. Two weeks later, Bill worsened, passing away on February 1<sup>st</sup> at the age of 70. A large man even from birth, Bill could be seen wearing shorts and a light jacket in winter. He loved Jesus and he loved people. His background was in music ministry. Here in the Upper Catskills Larger Parish, he found a niche encouraging worshippers, taking part in prayer ministry, sharing his sense of humor and lending a helping hand as needed. He is widely missed.

Pastor Debb recovered from Covid but has decided to retire and move closer to her family. She, too, loves Jesus and the people of her churches. Tall like Bill, she has been seen helping out with the Bake Sales at the Halcott Fair and reading scripts at Community Christmas Programs. Pastor Debb's upbeat presence at worship will be missed. She very much appreciates everyone's prayers at this difficult time.

### **Worship and Pastoral Care**

This year, the winter worship hour is 5:30 p.m. In-person worship is available most Sundays. A virtual worship service is posted to the Halcott UMC Facebook page shortly after 1:00 p.m. Around Easter Sunday (TBA), we will return to the 9:00

a.m. worship hour. Please call ahead to inquire. For a few months we will have guest preachers. Hopefully a new pastor will be in place starting July. Meanwhile, for pastoral needs, you are encouraged to contact our other Parish Pastor, Donna LeRoy, at [drl28027@yahoo.com](mailto:drl28027@yahoo.com) or 607-652-2459.

### **Ministry News**

We keep looking for safe fellowship and ministry opportunities. The Prayer Chain is currently active continuously— how may we pray for you? Bake Sales haven't been allowed – thank you for financial contributions on Election Day. Children couldn't pack relief packages – we are finding activities for them to do at home. Noon Lenten Luncheons can't happen in person – ask for a Zoom invitation instead.

### **Church Dinners**

Eventually Covid restrictions will ease. We are exploring safe ways to offer take out church dinners. Watch for details and tell others.

### **Virgil Streeter**

After Genell died last year, Virgil moved back up north. He grew up in Halcott some 90 years ago and now resides at Wanda Wright's in Dunraven. He looks forward to sitting outside the former Halcott store/gas station/Post Office this summer (intersection at Routes 1 & 3) and waving to passers-by. Meanwhile, he would like to chat with Halcott friends and neighbors at 586-1144.

## **Glory**

The warm, spring sunshine on snow this morning is blinding, but welcome. Thank God for eyes to behold another of His gorgeous days, and sunglasses to protect them! Did the angel who rolled away the stone of Jesus' tomb look brighter than the sun to the Roman soldiers standing guard? Quite possibly. They all but passed out before running away.

Is anything *more* brilliant? I remember Saul was literally blinded on the Damascus Road when the resurrected Jesus confronted him for persecuting the faithful. The Light of His Glory must outshine the sun.

We don't need to fear blindness from His Light, though. We will have new bodies in Heaven, including new eyes equipped to bask in His Glory. How wonderful!

## **The Path to the Cross**

Jesus had many opportunities to avoid the cross. Why did he go? Consider a few reasons:

**He loves us.** "As the Father loved me, I too

have loved you. Remain in my love." (John 15:9) *How do we love Him back?*

**He calls us His friends.** "Greater love has no man than this, that he lay down his life for his friends." (John 15:13)

*How do we befriend others for Him?*

**He knows we need Him.** "Moved with pity, Jesus stretched out His hand and touched him." (Mark 1:41) *Do we know He needs us to be His hands and feet to others?*

**He knows we get lonely.** "Jesus said, 'Surely I am with you always.'" (Matthew 28:20b)

*How do we thank Him?*

**He doesn't want us to worry.** "Look at the birds: they neither sow . . . nor gather . . . your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not of more value than they?" (Matthew 6:26)

*How do we trust Him?*

**He wants to erase our fears.** "The angel said . . . 'Do not be afraid . . . Jesus, who was crucified . . . is not here; he has risen.'" (Matthew 28: 5-6)

*How do we live confidently as Easter people?*

***Spring 2021***

*The Times of  
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