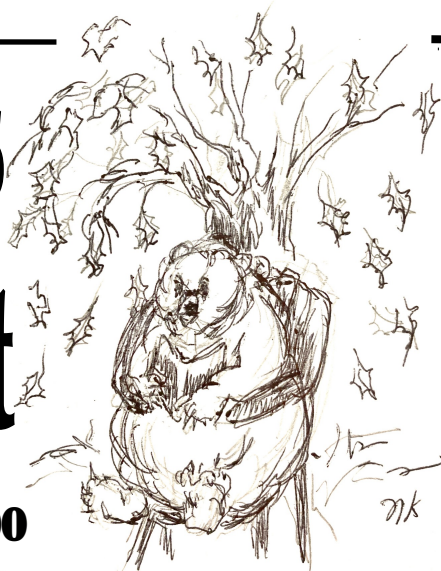


The Times of Halcott



Autumn 2021 Vol 96 of 100

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

School Days Again *Pattie Kelder*

Louis Crosby was the school bus driver for my generation and the previous generation. "You want to walk?", was the stern admonition as the bus slowed to a crawl and Louis' glaring eyes held those of the offender in the rear view mirror. This ultimatum happened infrequently, and tended to follow moving the bad actor to a seat closer to the front of the bus. Louis really could evict a passenger because he was a contracted driver, not a school employee. He did, indeed, put at least one high school student off the bus, my own father! Dad was a practical joker to the core (never malicious), but he must have crossed the line that day. Some one gave him a ride, so when he got home before the bus arrived, the jig was up. Still, Dad was as honest as the day is long. He would have told his mother what happened anyway.

My own school bus experiences include peering down from my

grandmother's bedroom window one morning at the age of four, feeling left out as the bus drove by, and being consoled that soon it would be my turn for a ride. The day of my kindergarten play, I was dressed in Larry Johnson's cowboy outfit. The jeans didn't permit me to lift my leg high enough to make the first bus step. After repeated attempts, Louis nearly fell off the driver's seat laughing. After what felt like an eternity, he reached down to haul me up the extra couple of inches.

There were also a few unfortunate incidents. Unruly high school students knocked me down while boarding the bus one afternoon, leaving me with a cracked front tooth. Worse, a flying comb caught Ginger Tait in the eye another afternoon, leading to the loss of sight in that eye.

Although seats were not assigned, we always sat in the same seats with the same seat mates. Gloria Sadowski says I would fall asleep on her shoulder on the way home the first couple of years. Later in

elementary school I recall boarding the bus at the end of the day with a migraine. Poor Louis had some cleaning to do after the noise and motion of the bus caused me to toss my cookies. Throughout my elementary years, Evelyn drove the smaller feeder bus up Elk Creek and also through West Settlement from



"the store" (Virgil Streeter's house) to Lib Parker's (intersection of present day Bruce Scudder Road and Delaware County Route 37). The "big bus" would stop to pick up or drop off passengers at those locations. Near Christmas time, Evelyn, who was a member of the Ladies Aid Society, would distribute the "pieces" we were to memorize and recite at the "Christmas Tree", the previous generation's name for the Christmas Program at the Grange Hall. I believe it was at the time of the school merger that Louis purchased a larger "big bus" and soon after, retired Evelyn and the "little bus".

His bus garage, with around four bays, was located just above the Crosby cemetery and opposite the Crosby barn. Folks would chuckle while driving by because the new bus was so long the back end stuck out! Around this time, when there were no more little students on Turk Hollow and Bouton Road, we had to start walking to the Y by the bridge to catch the bus. If I was

late, I would run down the icy hill while Louis called out, "Don't run, Pat!" (It must have reminded him of waiting for his own daughter, Juanita, who was sometimes late getting to the bus.) In time, Town Supervisor Shirley Bouton had a lean-to erected at the Y so students wouldn't have to stand out in the weather while waiting for the bus.

One morning, the bus met Hilton Kelly's truck hurrying around the first curve at the top of Lake Switzerland. It was a tight fit, and the side mirrors of both vehicles got tangled. Louis growled at Hilton and we all moved on. The outcome was never revealed, but I suspect Hilton had to buy a new school bus mirror! Around 1970, Louis started contracting his route out to Herb Finch part of the year so he and Evelyn could winter in Florida. He must have retired a few years later.

Seasonal Rewards

Are we ready for autumn? Perhaps it is because of my advancing age, but I feel a bit resentful that the lifespan of our gentle weather seems to be getting shorter and shorter every year. Am I prepared for the hunkering down? The pulling out of turtlenecks, the dusting off of snow shovels, the snow tire wrangle, the pulling up of tomato skeletons from the browned garden? I feel cheated that my tomatoes are in the midst of ripening just as the first frost hits.

Not that my whining is totally justifiable. After all, we do live in a four-season destination. So what delightful rewards can I come up with to help assuage the loss of summer? Let me count the ways: Cozy fires again. And hot soup. Knitting wool projects.

Putting the garden to bed. Goodnight, garden. I love the rich rewards of gardening, the sprouting of seedlings in February, points of emerald brightness against the black soil; then the tender and tedious nursing of new plants through the surprise spring frosts; the smooshing of slugs after (another) rain; the harvests of lettuce, chard, beans, tomatoes, and yes, dare I admit, zucchinis. (Check out the recipe for zucchini butter in this issue). But a very material reward of gardening is clearing, tidying and preparing the beds for the spring. When I gaze out at the vegetable garden under a blanket of snow, the final reward of the year is that the garden is ready for next year.

Apples! It's so interesting to remember that in my younger days, apples usually came in two ways: Red Delicious to eat raw, and Granny Smith to make pies with. Macs were in there, too. Today, an impressive array of varieties rewards the shopper. Early, mid, late with exotic names like Ruby Frost, Red Rome, and (oh, my, so good) HoneyCrisp. Jonagolds! Well, apples really deserve a TTOH article all their own.

Finally, (for me) relief from the unspoken pressure of "another" beautiful day. Growing up, I was scolded and shoed outside by my mother on summer days. Indoor pursuits were actively discouraged. "Don't waste the beautiful day!" As our weather grows less and less friendly toward outdoor activities, my guilt subsides and I reside thankfully by my fire, sipping soup and starting a new knitting project. These are my rewards for autumn. **IK**

Helpful Hint: Skunk Away

Mix 1 quart hydrogen peroxide, 1/4 cup baking soda, and 2 teaspoons Dawn dish detergent.

Rinse dog (or person).
Sponge on mix. Wait 20 minutes.
Rinse again.
Repeat as needed.

Life Along the Five Roads Over the Mountains, *continued* **Pattie Kelder**

The mystery of finding five old mountain roads (see Part 1) has been partially solved. Alan Reynolds reports that a road did, indeed, go over the mountain at the head of Elk Creek. However, settlers did not make a steep ascent/descent from northeasterly Condon Hollow. Instead they arrived by way of an easier grade from the southeast, which intersected Route 42 on the back side of Halcott Mountain. The juncture was at a pull off by the retaining wall that is below the crest of Deep Notch on the Bushnellsville side.

The mystery of the Johnson Era proposed road over the mountain (see Part 2) was solved by two articles in the Windham Journal entitled "New Road To Link Halcott With Co." (February 9, 1967) and "New Road to Join Halcott And Lexington" (February 16, 1967). These articles announced completion of a survey for a new road by the county engineer. Funding was to come from the State and Federal Governments. The six mile road connecting Greene County Routes 2 (Lexington) and 3 (Halcott) would have had a 9% grade and would have followed the old Halcott Mountain Road for about 2 ½ miles. An 8 – 9 mile alternate route was also laid out to achieve a lesser grade of 6%. Neither a winding road over the ridge from Turk Hollow nor the flagged route further west through Bouton fields matches the final proposal described above. Perhaps all old routes were initially considered when planning the unbuilt

new road.

Part 3: Life on Present Day Bouton and Mead Roads

Alan also recalls Halcott being known as West Lexington when first settled. No one traveled to or through Griffins Corners (Fleischmanns). Folks came over the mountains in summer to farm and returned home for the winter. Once permanently settled, roads improved. The narrow circa 1900 dug way connecting the mouth of Mead Road to the mouth of Turk Hollow was no longer adequate by the 1950's, so that stretch of Co. Rt. 3 was dynamited. Ward Reynolds put his snowplow on his Farmall tractor and pushed the rock debris over the side toward the stream, thus widening the road on both sides.

In the late 1800's and early 1900's, dynamite was commonly used to move rocks and streams in order to increase agricultural land. When Hurricane Irene (2011) funneled rising creek waters through the dug way, they shot out across Donald Bouton's flat, just missing the corner of his new shed. Donald remarked that the water was following the original course it took before his father, Marshall, moved it. (He made no mention of dynamite.) There is evidence of other shifts in Halcott watercourses, including the stream opposite the Reynolds house, as well as the stream along Co. Rt. 3 from Elk Creek Road to the highway department. Alan says the long flat farmed by Chris and Judy DiBenedetto behind the Grange Hall is several feet lower right down the middle.

Across time, farmers have commonly

rented other farms for hay, additional pasturage, barn space, housing for hired hands and the like. The Mead Place at the upper end of Mead Road was one of them. In the 1940's, after Darwin and Iris Faulkner stopped farming it, the Boutons began using the Mead Place. Besides berry picking in the wonderful blackberry patch, Kathleen Mech recalls going after the cows. Her mother drove the girls, their dad, and Queenie up Mead Road where Carson, like Alan Roberts and other side hill farmers, would call a version of, "Co, boss; Co, bossie!" [Pronounce co like go & boss like "bah humbug".], and send the farm dog "way up" after the cows. As a teenager, Russell tried to hay it for his dad, but the fields were too



rocky for a tractor. Instead, Alan Roberts mowed with his team of horses. By then, the Mead Place had become the Westlake Place. Bodily injury was averted in a subsequent house fire and the

house was rebuilt.

In the 1950's, a NYC Police Officer named McGarry bought the narrow, steep, streamside farm just below the Westlake Place and stored Model A's (or T's) in the barn. In time the barn collapsed on the cars. Tim Johnson says Mrs. McGarry's Christmas card to his parents always read, "Feel free to use the farm [and, in exchange,] to pay the taxes". They used it primarily for maple syrup production. Tim, while in his teens, skidded the farm's 10 x 12' granary building up to his father's pines to use as a little cabin. He had to

remove it from deteriorating stilts first. Eventually, the farm sold at auction in NYC for more than it was worth.

The farm below McGarry's belonged to Alan and Blanche Roberts. He farmed with horses, continuing to mow (rhymes with wow) loose hay in the barn long after other farmers switched to tractors and baled hay. (Barns often had earthen ramps connecting roads or driveways to the second story so hay could be unloaded from wagons more easily.) In between chores, Alan did part time roadwork. This included standing on the back of a cold, slow moving sand truck to shovel sand on snowy roads, periodically pounding on the truck cab to get somewhat deaf Charlie Ploutz to adjust his speed. Later, Road Superintendent Paul Finch paved Mead Road from Ward's barn up to Alan's barn. The pavement was hard on the horses, though, so the road was regraded over the macadam. Floods in 2011 washed the edge away, revealing gravel on pavement from 35 years earlier.

Virgil Streeter remembers Alan butchering cows and selling sides of beef. Farmers, including Alan, would call Virgil's dad at the store whenever they had calves for sale. In one stop, the calf man could find out where to go without chasing all over town. The calves Smith bought for Virgil to raise came from Alan. As children, my sister and I frequented the Roberts farm, where we enjoyed Blanche's marvelous cooking. We got our milk there, as well as strawberry apples and currants. My sister encountered her first fresh meadow muffin, ankle deep, in their pasture. Son, Walter, was filming us with his new 8 mm camera. Poor child!

At a culvert between the Roberts and Reynolds farms, Vly Road went up across the fields to the Bouton sap house, where it veered south to go straight down past the cemetery.

Donald once told me the early Post Office was located at that southerly bend in Vly Road. Russell says its foundation is between Stacey and Teddy Johnson's house and the sap house. The Bouton siblings all recall seeing the beautiful old mailboxes it housed. Russell says the track of Vly Road is still visible because the cows traveled it and it was too steep near the stream to have been plowed for crops. He, Alan Reynolds and Virgil all remember an old hotel foundation on the now overgrown Butler Flats, way up Vly Mountain from the Bouton farm, on the left before the top.

Gloria Sadowski believes the land from the cemetery all the way up through the Bouton and Mead farms was owned by Jacob Turk in the mid 1800's. An 1867 map shows his name on my grandmother, Libby Kelder's property opposite the cemetery; the church was built on a corner of that same piece. An old photograph shows he owned the house opposite the church, which was later purchased by Gloria's grandparents, Darwin and Iris Faulkner. Since water for that house was piped down from the big spring he owned above the Bouton farm, it is reasonable to think Jacob Turk owned everything in between. Gloria believes he must have deeded over the land for the cemetery, too. Map and stones show it predates 1867. Marilyn Gallant told me her great Grandfather, Roswell Bouton, built the stone wall between the cemetery and Faulkner residence. To my eye, the tight, straight stone walls in front of the Bouton farmhouse and church bear the same signature.

Darwin and Iris moved across from the church when the children were little. Younger son, Earl, had a heart murmur and couldn't walk far to school. Their new school was just across the road, right next to the church! Work done on their house included converting the woodhouse into a kitchen for Iris. Darwin also

dug the ditch behind the church to keep things dry. Perhaps that's when he noticed bee activity. Virgil says he loosened a piece of siding and popped it out periodically to harvest honey. He also says Darwin continued to hunt on the Mead Place, taking a big deer every year. Virgil, however, was never successful there.

From the Faulkner house, Iris was the first to see the moon rise over Bouton Road. In later years she always called Kenny Williams to report seeing a full moon. (Interestingly, Kenny now reports Halcott weather to CBS 6.) Iris showed the Sunday School children Darwin's framed discharge papers. By starting under age, he served in both World Wars and had *two* honorable discharges. This was especially remarkable, given the amount of target practice he elicited gathering intelligence in the Balloon Corp (WWI) and as a biplane wing walker (WWII). Marilyn reminded me that Darwin moved Thee Mabey's shop up between the apple tree and the Hardenburgh Patent line on his place sometime in the 1950's. Donald told me he rode around the corner on the roof to hold up the electric wires during the move. About that time, Darwin and Marcia Faulkner, Jr. started building by the Turk Hollow Bridge. The family lived in the chilly basement while the house was being built.

After the one room schoolhouses closed, the buildings became private residences. Donald and Shirley Bouton bought School #2 next to the church where sister-in-law Dot Bouton had taught for about nine years. The house was too small for a family, so a second floor was added. Mary recalls sharing her bedroom whenever widowed relatives came

to stay. Grandparents, Marshall and Ella Bouton, lived next door up in the little house. Carson and Dot Bouton lived on up in the corner farmhouse, which had been rebuilt after a fire by Marshall's father, Roswell, in 1920. Lumber came from the dismantled Commercial House in Arkville. Donald said whenever the end of Carson's house became weathered, the stenciled name of the former business showed!



*Kathleen and Russell Bouon
gathering eggs.*

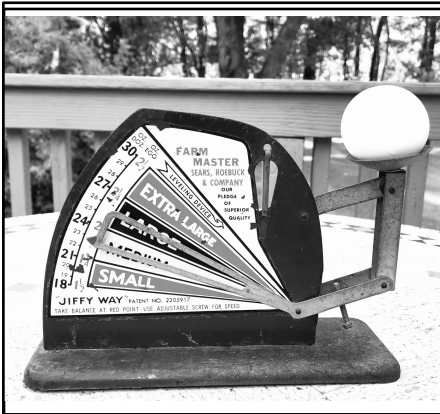
During the 1950's, Marshall and his sons all farmed together at the end of Bouton Road. Marshall's many enterprises included raising chickens, making maple syrup, running a cider press, setting up his sawmill on site, corn cutting and thrashing with an old steam engine, curing hides for leather, and selling fertilizer. In addition

to teaching, Dot took over raising the chickens, perhaps up to 500, in the four room chicken house. Kathleen remembers helping her gather/candle/weigh eggs and pluck/dress chickens butchered by her parents for boarding houses. The family often had picnics in the potato patch after church on Sundays when Russell was three or four. Marilyn, Kathleen and Russell really enjoyed growing up on the farm.

Chickens

Kathleen Marie Bouton Mech

Many memories come to my mind about raising our chickens. Dad would buy



little yellow chicks in the spring from Walter B. Rich at the Hobart Poultry Farm in

Hobart, NY. We would keep the chicks in our kitchen in a box near our warm wooden stove. We had a heat lamp, a water feeder and a feeder for mash. In a week or so, when the chicks grew bigger, we would transfer them to the breeder house or more commonly known as the chicken coop. Then when they became pullets (young hens), we would move them into the long hen house where scratch feed was also given and they would start to lay eggs. What a time we had gathering their eggs. It took a great deal of courage to put my small hand under a cackling White Leghorn chicken trying to scoop up her eggs that she was sitting on. Therefore, we would wear a glove so when the chickens pecked at our hands, it would not go through. The chickens were not always in the best disposition when we were taking their eggs. When we brought the eggs in the house, the work had just started. All the eggs had to be washed clean and placed on an electric egg candler to make sure there were no blood spots and that they were good eggs. We then would weigh each egg on our egg scale to determine if the egg was a small, medium, large or extra large egg. Into the egg cartons, the eggs would be packed and were then ready to sell. Mom, my sister, Marilyn and I would sell eggs to local people in Halcott Center plus the hotels on Wagner Avenue in Fleischmanns.

We always had fresh eggs to bake breads, rolls and cakes from scratch. I especially remember Mom's Angel Food Cake recipe which took 12 eggs.

The chickens had freedom to go in and out of the chicken coop in the day time. Towards dusk, the chickens would start roosting in the nearby apple tree. We had to round them up and get them back in the coop before dark. There were predators, gray foxes, which could have easy access to the chickens. Chickens cannot see very well in the dark so it was up to our family to try to reach them with long poles to get them out of the trees and get them back into the chicken coop.

I remember Dad killing the chickens on a tree stump while Mom held them. We would take the chickens into the barn and dip them into scalding hot water to loosen the feathers in order to pluck the feathers out easily. We would then singe the chickens with a rolled up burning newspaper to get any further tiny feathers or hairs. The next step was to bring the chickens into the house where my mother would start the process of cleaning them. I helped my mother do this task. Sunday dinners would be chicken with biscuits and gravy. I will never forget taking care of our chickens.

Halcott Community Garden News

Season 2022 Seedling & Plant Sale



Greetings Halcotteers, community gardeners & friends of our small but mighty

town. The community garden has been busy with planning for a seedling & plant sale to benefit the garden over the Memorial Day weekend next spring 2022. We are currently looking for hardy perennial plant donations from those of you who may have some in need of fall dividing or perhaps you may like to share a favorite you would like to see more of in our valley. We will be ready to receive your bare root offerings at the garden by mid September.

There will be pre-mixed potting soil and pots available at the garden on the farm side access road under a blue tarp. We ask that you plan to use this soil and the pots provided to avoid spreading unwanted weeds and use plant tags to identify species and a brief description of origins of the plant. Tales of the how, when and why a plant found itself in your garden are highly encouraged. We will plan to overwinter the pots heeled in at the community garden and protected with mulch so are looking



Native Prairie Coneflower; first flowering summer 2021. Started from seed approx. 2018 by gardener Eric Rosen. Though this perennial was slow to blossom, the showy 5ft tall spread has been well worth the wait. [Editor apologizes that you can't see the gorgeous yellow.]

for hardy varieties only.

There is a sign up sheet for donations available on our Halcott Community Garden blog along with applications to become a member of the garden.

halcottgardeners.blogspot.com or you can contact Alex Brock directly with any questions. 845-254-6101; whalenbrock2@gmail.com

Life Then

Halcott History Bits and Pieces

Continued from the Summer issue of TTOH, these are some interesting facts from a booklet on Halcott published in 1972.

A Halcott Health Club was begun by Willa Belle Streeter (another remarkable name) in 1946. They provided 'chestmobile clinics', diabetes detection, polio clinics, and also awarded a \$100 scholarship to "any Halcott girl studying for a nursing career."

There was a Halcott Ladies' Aid Society, dedicated to raising money for the Halcott Church. The Grange hosted lively and raucous square dances on Saturday nights. Donald Bouton's Town Clerk Minutes reported the following:

- 1862: Plank for bridge \$5.26
- 1866: Poor Master (later changed to Welfare Officer) \$2.00
- 1871: Desk for Town Clerk's Office \$25
- 1876: Ballot Boxes \$1.50
- 1877: Collected "Dog Money" \$27.45
- 1878: Collected Taxes \$170.50
- 1904: Amount Claimed for Killed Sheep \$286.43 (Amount Paid \$45.57)
- 1909: Town Clerk and Supervisor Salaries (Annual) \$10.00

Highway Superintendent each day worked \$2.52 and a half cent
1910: Vote: no money raised for clearing roads

of snow

1914: Vote: Highway snow removal by labor system

1926: Car hire for Assessor \$15.00

1938: Voting Machine \$680.00

1940: Fire Protection \$125.00

1954: Town Budget \$12,904.70

1976: Town Budget \$23,161.34

(2021: Town Budget \$313,869)

Donald's Farming Report recounts that in 1875, there were 1,465 head of cattle, 146 horses, 7,138 apple trees, and 391 residents. In 1860, the population of Halcott was 504. In 1948, there were 35 dairy farms. In 1951, 27 dairy farms. In 1976, there were 4 dairy farms, 137 dairy cows, and 199 residents.

In 2021, the Town of Halcott has approximately: 2 dairy farms (cow), 1 dairy farm (goat), 270 head of cattle, 150+ chickens, 25 goats, 10 sheep, 5 horses, 1 donkey, and 252 people, plus the COVID influx - 30 more? **PD**

Helpful Hint: Natural herbicide

Mix 1 gallon vinegar

2 cups Epsom salts

1/4 Dawn dish detergent

Apply to leaves of unwanted plant.

Helpful Hints for Bored Kids:

Homemade Playdoh

Mix 1 cup flour, 1 cup salt, 1 tablespoon oil, 2 tablespoons cream of tartar, 1 cup water, a few drops food coloring.

Cook at medium heat, stirring constantly for 2 minutes.

Place in front of bored child.

Homemade Finger Paint

Dissolve 1/2 cup Ivory Snow flakes into 1 cup of liquid starch and 6 cups of water. Add food coloring.

Place in front of child bored with playdoh.

Zucchini Butter

Carrie Bradley Neves originally sent this recipe around to some of us. The version she sent, found on www.thkitchn.com/zucchini-butter-toasts-recipe-23198758 calls for spreading the jam/butter on crusty bread, sprinkling with toasted hazelnuts and fresh basil. I have made the jam without the nuts or basil, and served in a bowl together with fresh bread and gazpacho for a light summer lunch. There were no leftovers.

If your lifestyle forces you to make it and then refrigerate, I will tell you that it loses its brash green color, but tastes just as yummy. Carrie wonders if it freezes. If anyone has success doing this, please let us know. There is nothing nicer than a whiff of summer experienced during a snowstorm.

Ingredients:

2 lbs zucchini, more or less

1/4 cup olive oil or butter if you prefer

2 minced shallots, garlic, or combination of both

Salt & pepper

Instructions:

1. Coarsely grate the zucchini. Let it drain in a colander for 3 to 4 minutes or until you are ready to cook. Sprinkle with some salt to hasten the process. Squeeze the water out of the zucchini by wringing it in a clean cloth towel.
2. In a deep skillet, heat the olive oil/butter. Sauté the shallots briefly. Add the zucchini and toss. Cook and stir over medium to medium-high heat until the zucchini reaches a spreadable consistency. If you scorch the bottom, turn the flame down! (And scrape those

bits into the jam for added flavor.)
The zucchini will hold its bright green color and slowly caramelize into a nice vegetable jam.

3. Enjoy on toast, or as a side dish.
Recipe keeps well and can be stored in the refrigerator for about a month.

Helpful Hint: For Swimmer's Ear

Mix equal parts distilled vinegar and rubbing alcohol.

Put 1-2 drops in offending ear, 3x/day.

Helpful Hint: Best Waffles Ever

Mix 3 eggs, 1&3/4 cup milk, 4 Tablespoons soft butter, 2 cups flour, 1 teaspoon salt, 2 teaspoons baking powder.

Bake in waffle iron.

Place in front of hungry family. (*Ed. Note: don't forget the maple syrup*)

PASSAGES

Celebrating Virgil Streeter, Our Oldest Halcotter

-Virgil Streeter (who shared a birthday with the late Ward Reynolds) turned 93 early in June. He was most appreciative of the shower of birthday cards from friends and neighbors. He also enjoyed a back yard birthday party hosted by Karen Archibald and Barbara Fairbairn behind his house in Halcott.

Virgil has always been good at getting to know his neighbors, so this was an opportunity for the new ones to meet the old ones. His party covered all the bases . . . good company, good eats, nice breeze, shade on a hot day, and (not least) entertainment! Virgil's 1 ½ year old great grandson wore himself out pushing Grandpa's relater walker non-stop around the yard!

Snowbirds, Al and Joan Doubrava, have now settled their wings, making Florida their

permanent home. They will definitely be missed. Al summered here as a child, and they built their Halcott home in 1980. They moved here full time in 1994 and have been volunteering ever since. Al was active in the Fleischmanns Fire Department for 20 years. He spent several years each as Chief of Fire Police and President. As a multi-term member of the Halcott Town Board, he helped Ted Randazzo with the 911 numbering in town. For many years, Joan worked on fundraising projects for the Margaretville Hospital Auxiliary and served as its Vice President. She was also a long-time member of the Catskill Mountain Quilters Guild. Their prospective home buyers are part of the extended Randazzo family. We wish them well.

Town Turnover

On November 8th, Halcott voters will elect a new supervisor. Alan White, our leader since 2016, is retiring in order that he may spend more time making cheese. Thank you, Alan! Both the Democrats and the Republicans have asked Yukari Day to run as our next supervisor. Thank you, Yuka! She has agreed to a job that can be demanding and is essentially volunteer. But this job is also very rewarding. Halcott is small enough that we fly under the radar for daily operations. But as one of the over 900 towns in New York State, we are required to adhere to the same mandates as our big brothers. Most towns hire professionals to attend to these regulations. Yuka will have a small team of workers (also paid volunteer-level wages) who will attack these chores with her. Thank you, team! It is a group of residents who work together for the love of our town. In Halcott, the concept of "public office" has retained the old-fashioned flavor of "public service."

The Times of the Halcott United Methodist Church

Autumn 2021 *Pattie Kelder, Correspondent*



The Times of the Halcott United Methodist Church

New Pastor

A funny thing happened on the way to retirement. Pastor Debb Judisky could not find housing. At the same time, no pastor was available to take her place. Put these together and the old pastor becomes the new pastor. *Welcome back, Pastor Debb!*

Newsworthy Notes

All are welcome to **worship** at 9:00. **Prayers** continue. **Cards** go out. Sadly, we must remain cautious so are not yet holding **church suppers**. **Cookbooks** are still available. Children were given **VBS in Bag** activities to enjoy at home. They are safely assembling **Health Kits** for people displaced by disasters.

Church Building Concerns

For some time, we have noticed expensive structural problems which need to be addressed. We can't apply for grants, seek matching funds and engage contractors until an engineer can determine the scope of the project. If anyone can suggest people to approach or grants to investigate, we would be most grateful.

God's Good Medicine

In recent months, individuals and nations have been ailing in different ways. Many of the world's ills are serious, so it's easy to feel weighed down by the stress of it all. Yet, remedies do exist. Many of them

are prescribed by the Great Physician.

How does God want to help us find balance? For starters, he wants us to trust Him. Too often we think we have to go it alone. How silly to think we can do what God can do! Just hand over the reins. Do your part and let Him do His. Work with Him; don't try to replace Him.

*Parched travelers who made it through the desert on the westward trail would eventually find a note on a pump handle. It read something like this: "There's a bottle of water buried in the sand at the base of this pump. [Imagine the crazed digging, the intense craving for just a sip.] Use **all** of it to prime the pump and you will get plenty of water. Don't, and you will perish. [Signed] Desert Pete. P.S. Don't forget to refill the bottle and bury it for the next traveler."*

Stop worrying. Easier said than done? Jesus tells us anxiety doesn't increase one's life span (Mt. 6:27). Anxiety doesn't solve any problems, either. It just makes matters worse. Remember the old saying, "sick with worry"? Try taking a load off and "Cast your cares upon Him." 1 Pet. 5:7.

"Many things about tomorrow, I don't seem to understand; but I know Who holds tomorrow, and I know Who holds my hand." (from I Know Who Holds Tomorrow by Ira Stumphill). As Jesus said, "Come to me all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest."

Don't dig the rut deeper. Old habits die hard. Be vigilant. Monitor your behavior. Don't dwell in the rut.

A man kept falling off the proverbial wagon every time he rode into town. No matter how long he had been sober, he always ended up in the saloon after stocking up on supplies. An old timer noticed that the man habitually tied his horse outside the saloon. His advice? "Change your hitching post!"

Pray. Whatever the problem, whoever has need; there is always something you can do to help. Prayer also helps those who pray, not just those in need. By taking our minds off ourselves, it reminds us of the Source of all help. And that helps us to experience peace. Mom's refrigerator magnet says, "A day hemmed in prayer seldom unravels."

Guard your thoughts and words.

Jesus wants us to renew our minds to be more like Him (Rom. 12:2, Eph. 4: 23). He wants our conversations to encourage and uplift others, not overwhelm them with further stress (Prov. 12:25). How do we accomplish this?

"Rejoice in the Lord always . . . Have no anxiety about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which passes all understanding will keep your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus . . . Whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is gracious, if there is any excellence, if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things (Eph. 4: 4-8).

Autumn 2021

The Times of
Halcott
813 Route 3
Halcott Center,
NY12430

Std Postage
PAID
Kingston, NY
Permit 151