

# News and Views *Avila*

*A publication of the Resident Council at Avila Retirement Community*

*Albany, NY*

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## NEW RESIDENT HONORED

### Murray Block

Pat Binzer recently received a "Third Age Achievement Award" from Senior Services of Albany. She was one of ten honorees recognized for contributions to the Capital Region in their "Third Age of Life." Her service has been in the areas of health and human services.

She was a co-founder and active member of the Capital District Senior Issues Forum for more than 15 years; a long-time member of the Albany County Department for Aging Advisory Committee; and a member of the Albany County Long-Term Care Council. She also served as a state-certified ombudsman for senior housing facilities for more than a decade. Pat and husband, Hank, continue to be active supporters of the University at Albany School of Social Welfare Internships in Aging Program.

The *Third Age Achievement Awards* are designed to pay tribute to residents of the Capital Region who have made significant contributions to our communities in their "third age." The award was created to dispel the myth that getting older always means slowing down. It highlights the activities, achievements and creativity of individuals over the age of 60.

*Congratulations, Pat!*

## SENIOR CHORUS HONOREE



Photograph by Max Tiller

One of Avila's own, Janet Gelzsheimer recently received a Certificate of Appreciation from the Bethlehem Town Supervisor, Bethlehem Senior Services, and the Bethlehem Senior Chorus. The Certificate read:

"In recognition of dedicated volunteer service to senior citizens through singing and performing. The time and talent you have shared is an inspiration to everyone in the community."

Thanks for all you do, Janet.

## CARLO AND MARY LAUKO ALLEROT

We are happy to introduce Carlo and Mary Allerot to our Avila community. Both are native New Yorkers; Carlo, born and raised in Queens; Mary, in Binghamton. IBM brought them together as their jobs led them to a number of IBM locations – Kingston, Endicott, New York City, and Owego. They married in 1966 and celebrate their Golden Anniversary this year. Their daughter Francine lives in Voorheesville.



Photograph by Max Tiller

## MARY BARDWELL

Interviewed by John Wagner



Photograph by Bob Dylong

Mary Bardwell of Delmar grew up in the Bensonhurst section of Brooklyn. Her husband was a lawyer in Albany. Mary Elen Scacco was supposed to be named Mary Helen, but somehow the H didn't make it to the birth certificate. Her parents chose to accept the new name and seem to have started a family tradition. Mary's oldest daughter is also a "Mary Elen."

Mary remembers taking a five cent subway ride to the beach at Coney Island. She graduated from St. Brendan's High School and went to St. John's University where she earned a B.A. in English. Mary then went to St. John's Law School, where she was one of only five women in the class. It was there that Mary met Tennyson ("Ten") Bardwell, a classmate and a Coast Guard veteran. A casual friendship

grew into something more after a dance social. Mary and Ten went to the dance with separate dates, but once there, they danced only with each other, much to the chagrin of the dates with whom they had come.

Love blossomed and soon Mary and Ten were married. Mary had to drop out of law school as they could not afford to pay two tuitions. But her life was soon filled with children, seven of them! The children grew up in the Albany area, but are now scattered around the country. Mary Elen lives in Connecticut and is a retired teacher. Loretta, a nurse, works in Albany. Virginia lives in Connecticut and is a Professor of Communications. She and her husband also have a real estate business. Tennyson, the oldest son, lives in New York City and is a movie director with two films to his credit. Joseph, a computer programmer in San Francisco also dabbles in film making. Betty is a social worker in Alabama who specializes in addiction therapy. Paul is part owner of a Clifton Park LED lighting business.

Mary has 21 grandchildren and seven great grandchildren. There was a large family gathering at Avila in July to celebrate Mary's 90th birthday. Her actual birthday is in October, but July was when the families could get together.

Mary's family came from Sicily. Ten had both Dutch and English roots. His parents were in vaudeville and took their act across the country, including such venues as Proctor's Theater. Mary wonders if her husband used this heritage in his role as a trial attorney. Her sister-in-law will visit Proctor's this summer to tell the staff about her parents' involvement in vaudeville and their experiences at Proctor's.

The Bardwell name is well known in England. There is a town called Bardwell and a nearby church has a stained glass window of a Sir William Bardwell. Outside, in the church cemetery are several tombstones for other Bardwell family members. Mary has a copy of the Bardwell family crest hanging on her apartment wall.

In the 1960s, Mary and Ten moved to Albany where he joined the law firm later known as Carter, Conboy, Bardwell, Case, and Blackmore. Earlier, Ten had rented an apartment in East Schodack. When he picked up Mary, and drove her to her new home, this "big city girl" began to wonder where in the world he had brought her when they passed a sign that warned of "Cattle Crossing"! It turned out that there was indeed, a farm just across the street from their apartment.

When the children no longer needed a stay-at-home mom, Mary became active in volunteer work. She volunteered at the Red Cross for more than 25 years, rising to the position of Head of Volunteers. Mary was also active politically and became the Vice Chair of the Albany County Republican Committee. She is still a member of the Scripture Study Group she led for many years. Mary suspects that she has been through the entire Bible at least twice.

Until Ten's death twenty years ago, he and Mary travelled extensively in Europe, Africa, Asia, and Australia.

Mary is physically active, often playing golf at the Albany Country Club where she also coordinates the Bridge Club activities. With her interests in crosswords, Scrabble, Bridge, and knitting, Mary is finding many opportunities to enjoy her new Avila home.

## PAT AND HANK BINZER

Interviewed by Murray Block



Photograph by Bob Dylong

Patricia (Pat) and Henry (Hank) Binzer met when they were 14. Pat grew up New Lebanon and Chatham in Columbia County. Hank's early years were spent in Ozone Park, Queens. By the time he was 14, his family had settled in Chatham—and the two have been inseparable ever since. Early in their marriage, the Binzers lived in the Stockade area of Schenectady, and later moved to Chadwick Square in Glenmont, where they were active in the civic affairs of that community.

Both Binzers are graduates of SUNY institutions. Hank started at Mohawk Valley Community College in Utica, and earned baccalaureate and graduate degrees in Education at the University at Albany. Pat completed her undergraduate degree in education at SUNY New Paltz and did her graduate work, including the Ed.D. at the University at Albany. Hank also served in the U.S. Navy.

They have had long and gratifying careers in education. Pat was a kindergarten teacher, and later served as Director of Reading and Language Arts at Mohonasen and Shenendehowa School Districts. In addition, she was Interim Director of the Schenectady Museum.

Hank was a member of the Albany Business College faculty and also taught Accounting at the University at Albany. Later he was appointed Supervisor of School Business Management at the State Education Department.

Their daughter and son-in-law live in New York City. The Binzers have traveled to France and Germany. And Hank, during his Navy service had the opportunity to spend time in pre-Castro Cuba.

Among their many volunteer activities are: Capital District Senior Issues Forum (Pat was a co-founder and is still an active member); Chatham Education Foundation (Hank was Treasurer and is still active); and the Albany Institute of History and Art (Pat is on the Board). She recently received the Third Age Award for her volunteerism (see special article in this issue.) Hank currently serves on two Resident Council committees - Finance and Dining.

We welcome these friendly and active new neighbors!

## **JOYCE AND PHILIP GIBBS:**

**Interviewed by Eleanor Alland**

Joyce was born in Bridgeport, Connecticut, and attended school there. She married soon



Photograph by Max Tiller

after married and had five children. After her divorce, she moved to Altamont, to begin a new life for herself and her children. She went to work at the famous Highland Farms Restaurant, which is located on the hill on the Berne-Altamont Road. Here she met Philip, and they were married in 1969. Joyce later attended Bryant and Stratton College, on Central Avenue, while working at Taft Furniture as office manager. She enhanced her knowledge of computers, communication skills and bookkeeping. Joyce's last job, before retiring in 2002, was at the Dominican Spiritual Life Center in Niskayuna.

Philip was born in Albany, graduated from Vincentian Institute in 1960, and Siena College in 1964 with a B.A. in Math. His mother, Velma Shufelt, lived at Avila when it first opened. His grandparents lived in Knox. His next three years were spent with the US Army, including a tour in Vietnam, with an honorable discharge as a Captain.

After his discharge, he returned to Highland Farms where he had lived, and he met Joyce, who was working for his mother. Joyce and Philip have a son together and Phil adopted Joyce's five children. Of course, their 25<sup>th</sup> wedding anniversary celebration was held at Highland Farms. Phil worked as a Budget Analyst for the New York State Department of Transportation. He retired in 1996.

They are enjoying 17 grandchildren, 12 great-grandchildren and this September will welcome their first great-great grandchild. On Tuesdays and Fridays they take care of two of their great-grandsons in their Avila apartment. The boys will be two and three years old in July. The real challenge is to keep them busy and happy by playing games, teaching them words, colors, anything that will keep them interested.

Another member of the family is their loyal, loving dog, Misti, a longhaired Chihuahua, who turned 15 on June 19<sup>th</sup>. She is a cherished pet who demands their attention.

Joyce's interests include exercising in Avila's pool, Bingo, and Texas Hold 'em Poker. She also knits, crochets, plays computer games, and makes greeting cards on her computer.

Philip enjoyed making model ships, dollhouses, and furniture for his family. Joyce proudly pointed out some of the pieces that were brought to their new apartment. He is a Eucharistic Minister at St. Madeline Sophie Church in Guilderland and at Ellis Hospital. Philip is also a Lector at the Church.

Their travels include many trips to Ogunquit, Maine, cruises to the Caribbean and to Nova Scotia, and visiting family members who live in Albuquerque, NM, and in Garner, NC.

Avila welcomes this very interesting couple, and we all wish them a pleasant and friendly life in our community.

## RUTH AND CURTIS MANASSE

### Interviewed by Wilbur Shapiro

After 68 years of living in a house in Albany, Ruth and Curtis decided it was time to move on. They considered retirement communities in Florida and Albany before selecting Avila because it offered the best living space.

Curtis attended City College of New York but his education was interrupted by the Second World War. He enlisted and served two years in the Army. Upon his discharge, Curtis went into business.

Curtis and Ruth wed in 1948. They have three sons, five granddaughters and two great-granddaughters. They are very proud of their children. Oldest son, Gary, is an accountant. Jeffery is a doctor specializing in gastroenterology, and Neil is a businessman.

Curtis and Ruth have vibrant personalities, are good conversationalists, and a welcome addition to Avila.



Photograph by Max Tiller

### From Joe Shapiro

#### FOR A RASCAL

"Let us prey," sounds fine  
Our eyes' disbelief  
For(e)seeing otherwise.

#### RATIONALE FROM NATURE

Since peas in the pod  
Share the same facility  
Then we must also

## SIEGELS FETED BY AVILA RESIDENTS

Karl Gohlke



Photograph by Karl Gohlke

Avila residents including CEO Francis Foley honored The Rev. Alfred Siegel and his wife, Lois, at a reception following the Protestant services on July 1

After leading the monthly services for eight years, Rev. Siegel is reducing his ambitious work schedule. He has also served Teresian House, the Albany VA, and a number of other congregations for a number of years.

## TAKE MY HAND

*Norman Greenfeld*

*Oh, Lord my God, you take my hand  
And lead me down the path,  
And yet for all the good you do,  
My heart is filled with wrath.  
Oh, Lord my God, see what I see,  
Look at the facts of life,  
The world is fraught with agony  
The air is filled with strife.  
The trail of harmony is lost  
In defeat and sacrifice  
Our history comes with tragic cost  
You want me to pay the price.*

*Spring brings new life into the world,  
Fruit trees blossom, birthing mankind's pleasure  
God listens, grieves, involved in man's affairs,  
Creation's meaning is mankind's treasure.  
God takes my hand in His and I am spoiled.  
Shall I resign myself to God's dominion?  
Shall I campaign against it?*

*Oh, Lord my God, help me to understand.*

## SOUTH END WELCOME TABLE

### Mickey Fleishman

The St. John/St Ann Outreach Center on 4<sup>th</sup> Street and Franklin used to be a firehouse adjacent to the public pool which has since closed. On the inside, the building has been nicely reapointed as a dining area to serve South End residents who need a good meal.

The room is about the size of Avila's lobby. Ten round tables each seat six people. Hot food is served from three metal containers which are on a large table in one corner. Next are the table for beverages and another for bread, peanut butter, jelly, creamers and cake pans. The day we were there they served chocolate and lemon frosted cupcakes.

The round tables were neatly set up with a napkin holder, salt and pepper shakers, a breadbasket and beautiful red and white roses which had been donated. Servers were at each table.

There were 15 volunteers from different organizations (ten from Avila) having coffee and fresh baked cookies before it was time to serve lunch.

We work the third Tuesday of each month. On May 17 Sue Hanson drove and picked up Joan Doyle, MaryEllen and me at 10:30.

We brought our own aprons and were urged to be friendly and kind and to feel free to talk with the guests. Meals are always served on real china plates with silverware. Plastic ware is only used in emergencies. After the guests finish eating and leave the table, we replace the placemats for the next guests.

Around 11 o'clock people began to line up. The Center opened about 11:30 a.m. A man stood by the door and welcomed each guest, giving directions as to where to be seated. Volunteers started moving. They filled plates with meat loaf, mashed potatoes and green beans and brought them to each table.

Next we served the beverages and lastly dessert. Guests can ask for seconds but not thirds. However, they can ask for peanut butter and jelly sandwiches and extra slices of bread.

Those who come to the Center are mostly young and middle aged men; few women and children. Most people are well behaved.

I was told that for many of these people it is the only meal of the day. We served 200 meals in one and a half hours. When we left I was tired but felt I had accomplished something worthwhile. I wanted to go back again.

Back at Avila I had a dinner reservation in the dining room. My dinner consisted of selecting one of three choices of salad, two choices of soup, and one of eight entrées. Our society is separated so much from one group to another. I feel so lucky to have all I have, and want to share something with those who need help.

"You have been a refuge for the poor, a refuge for the needy in his distress..." Isaiah 25:4



I decided to change calling the bathroom the John and renamed it the Jim. I feel so much better saying I went to the Jim this morning.

## THE SNOB CLUB

Murray Block

Among my earliest memories are daydreams of traveling the world. When other kids read comic books, I pored over maps. When I could get to a globe of the world, I would twirl it slowly and observe the vastness and variety of the many countries. The exotic names piqued my desire to travel: Mozambique, Timbuktu, Borneo, Burma, Tibet, Tanganyika, Celebes.

Naturally, geography was my favorite subject, and I do not ever remember receiving less than 100% on a geography test, or getting less than an A in Geography on any report card. I loved the frequent "geography bees" conducted by Miss Agnes Regan, PS 75's Doyenne of Geography. The entire class would stand around the perimeter of the room while this tall, buxom, grey haired lady would shoot questions to us in rapid succession. You had to come up with the correct answer immediately or be commanded to take your seat. I was almost always "the last man standing." When I graduated from PS 75 at the age of 12, Miss Regan awarded me the gold medal for Excellence in Geography.



My dreams of traveling the world included seeing all the 48 states in our own country. At the age of seven, I was delighted with my first foray into what I thought took me out of New York State. My mother and I were on the subway from the East Bronx to the Lower East Side to visit her older sister. At one point in the long ride, I looked up and saw a long name on the walls of the station at which we were stopped. It was not a number like the previous stations, but a long word: PENNSYLVANIA. Pennsylvania! My second state, I thought. I now had only 46 more to get to! Of course, we had just passed Penn Station at 34 Street and Seventh Avenue.

Joining the US Army Air Corps did give a boost to my visiting a number of U.S. states and then a number of countries in North Africa, as well as India and China. This only whetted my appetite to see much more. In my adult life, I was able to chalk off all 50 states and many countries on all seven continents. Along the way, I discovered the Travelers Century Club. You can join if you have visited 100 of their listed destinations. Their list contains every official country in the world, plus locations that are part of countries, but have either political or geographic separation. For example, Alaska and Hawaii are separate points in their listing, as are Scotland and Wales. Using this formula, the TCC lists a total of 322 destinations. The number changes when political shifts are made, like the breakup of Czechoslovakia. Your membership gets upgraded for each 50 additional destinations. When TCC members get together they brag about the number they have achieved. I have even met one fellow traveler who completed every location on the list. Of course, he was very rich and could afford to charter planes to the most remote islands on the TCC list. When I had no response to my wife's question, "So what did he get to see on this remote and isolated island?" she said, "You belong to a club of snobs."

This snob reached 100 TCC destinations with Uruguay, on a cruise around the southern half of South America; and 150 at the Seychelles on a cruise in the Indian Ocean. When I reached 196, I bemoaned the fact that travel to out of the way places was getting next to impossible. Neuropathy and the high cost of reaching remote parts of the globe were my enemies.

"I will never make 200," I sadly announced.

"Yes, you will. I guarantee it," my son, Paul, said encouragingly. "Just leave me a list of the four places you wanted to visit, and I will take your ashes there! And be sure to leave enough money for travel expenses."

I did not have to take Paul's offer. By chance, I am now at 201! When I decided to take my granddaughter on one more trip, I found an easy Caribbean cruise that included three of the four TCC destinations I had not yet visited. That brought the count up to 199. And then the TCC listed Prince Edward Island separately from Canada - do not ask me why. That made 200. And this year, the Sinai was listed separately from Egypt, since it is in Asia, and Egypt is in Africa. A precedent existed with European Turkey being a separate destination from Asiatic Turkey. And I had been to the Sinai on my last trip to Egypt. I am now at 201! Yes, dear wife, I **AM** a snob.

Mmmmm----I wonder if Paul would make a deal for 250? With all the weight I've been gaining, having enough ashes for the next 49 should be no problem!

## *PANOPLY*

*Jim Leonard*

*Infant trees in median,  
On Washington Ex  
Are leafing*

*In back  
Four hanging baskets  
Of yellow and  
Fuchsia and blue  
And white  
And thriving*

*In front  
Two blue bells  
Struggle to remain  
Upright*

*As do I*



## DID YOU KNOW?

### Susan Shipherd

Not only does our Avila kitchen staff prepare great food, they are also attentive to the environment. They scrape all excess food scraps and unfinished meals into Empire Zero containers. Empire Zero empties these containers and takes the contents to commercial composting sites where everything – including bones, shells, seeds, nuts and paper products is composted at extremely high temperatures.

This reduces the amount Avila must pay for trash removal. Since there is so much less trash, fewer trash pick-ups are required.

Don't feel guilty if you can't finish your meal. You may be helping the farmer who purchases the compost to grow the produce for your dinner next year.

## LILIES OF THE LODGE



Photograph by Fran Foley

Thank you Eleanor Miller, Edith Collopy, Janet Hudecek, Beth Gohlke and Norma Hoffman for giving us so much floral beauty and joy.

## *PATHETIC FALLACY*

*Jim Leonard*

*Two mourning doves came and sat with me  
As I sipped my "dark and stormy."  
One part dark rum two parts ginger beer  
Lots of lime juice and ice.*

## TUESDAY ART

Instructor Edward Dyer  
(via Eileen Nolfo)

The setting was another time and place at a quiet Florida senior condominium community. Each Tuesday morning a group of us "would be artists," predominately watercolorists, would gather at the clubhouse to attempt reproducing on paper what others had done. A few attempted original work with varying degrees of success.

Several persons could always be counted on to arrive early while others could never be accused of such carelessness. With one eye to the task they slowly unpacked paints and palettes, and filled containers with clear water, preparing to take on that element of fear. The other eye kept watch for the opportunity to ease into comfortable social connections that often matured with the turning of calendar pages. We generally knew all thirty or so group members yet often found ourselves looking for the arrival of our "favorite" friends. At those moments smiles met smiles and hugs were normal. Tuesday morning was coming up sunshine again.

We sat around eight person tables that comfortably accommodated three or four painters, sometimes more aptly called "hobbyists." Painter or hobbyist, it all added to the personality of the group and humor was near the top of characteristic behavior descriptors. The four *Ladies of the Round Table* regularly were fun disruptors with their resounding outbursts of enthusiastic laughter.

There was definitely a pronounced group affinity toward thrift when it came to using paint and purchasing almost worthless, inexpensive paper that was more inclined to repel rather than receive paint. Tube paint was squeezed or dabbed from tube to palette as if it were a most painful and sinful process. Combined with adherence to the smallest of brushes the work was worthy of being within monastery walls.

But serious intent and delightful spirit carried each day and often produced better than paint-between-the lines results. Sometimes two names were signed to a work of art because a person call "fix it" had helped rescue the painting. These individuals often developed a closer, more personal relationship.

There was the indelible deeper side to those fleeting minutes of shared painting – subjective relationships that form a higher, richer level of shared understanding and respect. The bonding touched heart and soul in such a delightful remembered manner. Art was the beautiful glue that allowed us to forever hold this wonderful sharing in the corner of the heart. Tuesday Art.



### WANTED: ILLUSTRATORS

**WE NEED YOU!** Although we have a very talented *News and Views* staff, we have no artist or illustrator. Pictures add so much to each issue. It is a part-time job with no money but lots of appreciation and glory.

PS to photographers: Please share any Avila candid shots which your neighbors would enjoy. Call Lore – x531

## MAH JONGG

*Evelyn Schwedock*

*At 12:30 each Saturday  
No matter what the weather  
Our dedicated mah jongg group  
Is sure to get together.*

*We start the Charlestons with high hopes  
Our hostess becomes East  
We hope to get some needed tiles,  
A couple of them at least.*

*We pick some dragons, winds and dots  
Some flowers, bams and cracks.  
If lucky we will pick some jokers  
To put onto our racks.*

*Although we have a lot of fun  
When our mah jongg game is played,  
We fell improvements could be had  
If changes would be made.*

*The present way we play our game  
It's very evident,  
When following the mah jongg rules,  
We've not been diligent.*

*So from now on we'll not accept  
Excuses any more.  
We'll follow all the rules, but not  
As loosely as before.*

*If one of us needs thirteen tiles  
And has fourteen instead  
The game for her is over, for  
Her hand's considered dead.*

*The same applies when we discard  
A tile we do not need.  
Let's call the tile its proper name  
This rule we'll try to heed.*

*If a discarded tile is covered  
After it has been thrown,  
We feel it cannot then be called.  
This too, we can't condone.*

*So if we follow our new rules  
We'll all have fun galore.  
And our new game will prove to be,  
Much better than before.*

