MURRAY BLOCK AND FR. LEO O’BRIEN HONORED

Murray Block and Fr. Leo O’Brien recently received Lifetime Achievement Awards from the Capital District Senior Issues Forum. These awards honor those past their 85th birthday who have made significant contributions in various fields.

Murray’s 69-year career in Higher Education began in New York City. He came to Albany in 1970 to become Deputy to the Chancellor of the SUNY system, serving under two of the most prominent Chancellors, Ernest Boyer and Clifton Wharton. Although he opted for early retirement, he was called back two days later. That started a long career of temporary assignments as interim President, Vice-President, Dean, or Director at a number of New York State colleges. When Murray retired from his position as Executive Director of the Leadership Center of Excelsior College, it was the 17th position in his long “retirement” career.

Excelsior College named the Leadership Center for Murray on his 90th birthday.

Father Leo O’Brien’s long career in Faith Based Service has been primarily with the Roman Catholic Diocese of Albany. He participated in the establishment of Chapel House, an interfaith gathering place for SUNY Albany students.

His years with Bishops Maginn, Broderick, and Hubbard as Chancellor and Vicar General included interfaith and ecumenical celebrations in education, music and prayer. Particularly enjoyable was a representative group that travelled to Israel, Rome and Geneva. As pastor of the church of St. Vincent de Paul, Father Obrien continues the good works of the Pine Hills Ecumenical Collaboration, and he also introduced the custom of pastor sharing pulpits. He continues today as Avila chaplain.
COMINGS AND GOINGS

We will sorely miss one of the founders of News and Views, as Eleanor Alland takes a well-deserved retirement. She has served ably in so many capacities since the inception of our newsletter.

Bob Dylong has also asked to be relieved of his photographer duties. We are so grateful to him for stepping in when we were without a photographer.

Although Morag Stauffer has not been active recently, we are not ready to say good-bye and consider her on sabbatical.

On the positive side, we are delighted to welcome the talented, experienced interviewer, writer and photographer Karl Gohlke back to the News and Views staff.

And a big hearty welcome to Interviewer/Writer Joyce Gibbs. The movers had barely left when she took on her first assignment.

HELP WANTED:
Illustrator
Interviewer/Writer

FROM JIM LEONARD

Squirrel came to visit
All trembly and staccato
Like the autumn leaves
Shaking with snow-fear

FR. KENNETH J. DOYLE
Interviewed by Karl Gohlke

Earlier this year and prior to his move into the Lodge in July, Father Kenneth Doyle celebrated the golden anniversary of his ordination. He had reached the mandatory retirement age which had been extended one year. He indicated that he was ready to “retire,” but was willing to serve the diocese as needed.

A native of Troy, NY, Father Doyle was called to perform many roles in a broad range of locations. It was his unique ability to engage with others, his “conviviality,” and self-effacing personality coupled with fidelity to the core principles of his faith that enabled him to perform well in varied roles and places.

Very early in his vocation, he was drafted by Bishop Edward Magin to join the editorial staff of the Evangelist and work in other positions in the communications and advocacy areas. He subsequently functioned in a lobbying capacity for the NYS Catholic Conference. Thereafter, he went on to be the bureau chief of the Vatican office for Catholic News Service. From Rome he went to Washington, DC, where he was the director of media relations for the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops.
Father Doyle returned to the Albany area in 1992 and was appointed pastor of the congregation currently known as Mater Christi. He served there until his retirement. While pastor, he also served the diocese as the Director of Communications, providing a weekly column for The Evangelist’s Catholic News Service. In his spare time, he served on the board and on committees of St. Peter’s Hospital, and on the Albany County Airport Authority. He currently chairs the Authority.

He is fondly regarded by the Sacred Heart sisters as he was the chaplain at the Kenwood/Doane Stewart school for 14 years. When the sisters learned of his plans to reside in the Lodge, they were the first to share the good news. Bishop Magin had tagged him “God’s paperboy”.

Emeritus Bishop Hubbard has known Father Doyle from childhood and called upon him for years as he was “… deeply trusted, has a brilliant mind and a humble, self-effacing personality.”

Father Doyle is an avid sports fan, golfer and admirer of fine horsemanship. Moreover, he is willing to help one and all. He says he selected Avila for his retirement home because of its convivial atmosphere. He has already set out to become engaged with its activities and fitness programs. He certainly will add to the assets in the community.

CLAIRE AND GEORGE STAHLER

Interviewed by Wilbur Shapiro

The Stahlers returned to Albany after an eight year stay in Tucson, Arizona. They went to Arizona to escape New York State’s winter weather. Claire and George met in Albany High School and have strong roots in Albany by way of Stahler-owned businesses: The Stahler Bakery and Stahler Funeral Home. Claire’s father was a Vice President at the National Commercial Bank and Trust Company. Also, their son, George teaches 4th grade at Albany's School 20. In May 2016 the time had come for them to return to the Albany area and to join the retirement community at Avila.

The Stahlers were married in August 1960 at St. Andrew’s Episcopal Church in Albany. They have three children: George 3rd (mentioned above), Carolyn (a teacher at Grand Canyon School in Arizona) and Beth (a physical therapist in Nashua, New Hampshire). The Stahlers have seven grandchildren, the youngest is a senior in high school.

George “the elder”, graduated from Union College in 1959 with a Bachelor’s Degree in Civil Engineering. He received a Master’s degree in Transportation Engineering from RPI in 1974. His working career with the State of New York spanned 41 years. During the first part of his career he worked for the Department of Transportation designing highways and carrying out special projects. One project that was particularly exciting and challenging was working with the Organizing Committee planning the 1980 Olympic Winter Games in Lake Placid. This assignment required a move to Lake Placid in 1977 where, subsequently, Claire and George lived for 25 years. In 1980 George transferred to the Department of Environmental Conservation. He worked in the Region 5 Solid Hazardous Waste Management program until his retirement in 2001 George was in the Army Reserve Medical Corp from 1959-1965.
Claire received a Bachelor’s Degree in Home Economics from Russell Sage College in 1959, and a Master’s Degree in Education from SUNY Albany in 1966. Her first teaching assignment was in Home Economics at Bethlehem Central High School. While living in Lake Placid, Claire taught Child Development Vocational Education. Her last assignment before retiring in 1999, was teaching basic living skills to at-risk adolescents at FEH (Franklin, Essex, Hamilton) BOCES in Saranac Lake. Claire always considered the raising of their children to be her primary occupation and her major focus during her working years.

Throughout their married life the Stahlers were involved in numerous volunteer activities. They devoted considerable time to the Episcopal Church, Hospice, AFS (American Field Service), a student exchange program, winter sporting events in Lake Placid, and other community programs. In addition to launching AFS in Lake Placid, they hosted two students: Silke from Germany and Pekka from Finland. These two experiences developed into life-long affectionate relationships.

The Stahlers travelled extensively for work and pleasure. They travelled to Olympic related sites in Austria, Finland and Canada in preparation for their roles in the Lake Placid Olympic Games. Other travels took them to England, France, Germany, Switzerland, Italy, Ireland, Mexico, Turkey and many areas of the United States including Alaska.

Claire and George enjoyed getting out onto Adirondack lakes, into their garden, and participating in life-long learning programs.

The Stahlers have a wealth of experiences to share, and are a welcome addition to the Avila community.

AVILA OUTREACH: How It All Got Started

Sr. Betty Shearman (as told to Ellie Howell)

Sister Betty Shearman remembered the time before the Presidential Elections in 2008 when we heard the same inflaming personal attacks to which we were subjected this year. She wanted to find some way to do some good in the world; that would help others, make people feel better, and in a small way counteract the climate of hostility.

Sr. Betty began to talk with others. While talking to Susan Shipherd she heard that St. John/St. Ann’s had a Food Pantry that was directly helping people secure fresh produce. She went with Susan and began by sorting fresh fruit, vegetables and bread. She supervised the bread table where the amount allotted to each person depended on the size of the family to be fed. Susan also delivered food to shut-ins on Wednesdays, but Sr. Betty was not able to do that.

She continued talking with others at Avila and found many that said they would like to do something too. Among them were Karl and Beth Gohlke. The three of them consulted Avila Administrators who thought it was a good idea to look into a volunteer outreach effort. The Gohlkes were aware of places around Albany that worked directly to help others. They visited many of those places but soon realized that transportation would be a problem.

They decided to stay local. Teresian House was close by, as was Daughters of Sarah. Both facilities needed volunteers to serve as friendly visitors and a myriad of other tasks. Ideas quickly expanded beyond thinking about the needs of the people who live nearby to include those here at Avila.
The original group became the Avila Resident Council Outreach Program. Among the first of Avila’s needs to be recognized was meal delivery for folks returning from a hospital or rehab session. That would save them the cost of delivery as well as provide a visit from a friend. Emergency transportation to a pharmacy or a last minute medical appointment was soon added.

It didn’t take long for Avila residents to suggest other in-home areas needing a little support. Added to the list of Outreach Committees were Country Store Volunteers, Home Visitors, Low Vision Aides, On-Deck Pool Watchers, Computer Support, servers at St. John’s/St. Ann’s Welcome Table among others. Probably the biggest overall Avila effort involves our two Avila-wide Clothing Drives each year.

After serving on the Outreach Committee for the Resident Council for a few years Sister Betty felt it was time for her to let someone else take over. She is still the person to go to for ideas, inspiration and guidance. She remains its top supporter advocating for additional areas where she and others see a need arise.

PROTESTANT SERVICES

The Protestants of Avila Group are pleased to announce that the Rev. David McMillan will lead the monthly Protestant Service replacing the retired Rev. Alfred Siegel. They are also delighted that Pat Healy has offered to provide organ accompaniment for these services held in the Great Room on the first Friday each month at 1:00 p.m.

FAREWELL, DEAR FRIENDS

Evelyn Schwedock

My past ten years at Avila  
Were special as can be.  
The residents and caring staff  
Gave so much help to me.

I didn’t want to leave  
Though it was the thing to do.  
But all things seem to be going well  
And we can start anew.

I want to say goodbye –  
It’s really been a pleasure.  
There are so many memories  
For me – it’s been a treasure.
NAVIGATING THE HOSPITAL AND AFTERCARE INSURANCE MAZE

Karl H. Gohlke

Before you have a health emergency where you are transported to a hospital, it is advisable that you and anyone who may assist you while you navigate your hospital stay, to familiarize yourselves with the basic rules governing Medicare coverage for your care at the hospital and thereafter.

Hospitals have learned to minimize their financial risk exposure by withholding the admissions of patients under Medicare coverage if they can use other types of insurance the patient may have. They utilize what is termed “observation” to classify the period they are evaluating the patient before formally “admitting” the patient. Although you may actually be on an inpatient floor, you will not be eligible for inpatient Medicare coverage until you are “admitted.” You will be considered eligible only for outpatient schedules for insurance and self-pay forms of payment. Hospitals may not keep you in “observation” status more than 48 hours or more than two midnights.

The primary reason the hospitals follow this course is that the federal government will not reimburse them if the patient requires readmission for any complications for an earlier episode that was paid from Medicare inpatient coverage.

Patients have a right to know their status and the hospitals are obligated to inform them. Moreover, patients have the right to appeal any determination if they feel they are not being treated properly or being discharged prematurely. It is very important that the hospital provide a written plan of care which the patient is able to follow prior to being discharged. This plan should take into consideration the patient’s ability to receive the appropriate level of care in his own residence or some other residential setting, albeit considered a rehabilitation or nursing home. Medicare coverage will only cover those patients who were covered by Medicare prior to discharge from the hospital.

You may obtain more information on these rules before you need help by contacting the senior citizen’s help line (1-800-342-9871) at the NYS Office for Aging or at NY Statewide Senior Action Council patient’s rights Medicare helpline (1-800-333-4374). These organizations will also provide you with information on what resources, financial and other, are available to enable you to receive professional level treatment and care in your own residence rather than some other residential setting.

HOW I CAME TO LIVE IN HOLLAND

Lucian Weiner  (Clare Weiner’s son)

As with much in life, best-laid plans often evolve into a form that only faintly resembles the original intent. So it was when I returned to the United States in 1994, after a four-year entrepreneurial venture in the former East Germany. It had been an exciting period from the opening and eventual 1989 demolition of the Berlin Wall that had separated the two Germanys since 1961. It was a period of history that I felt created opportunity, and I was determined to be a part of it.

By 1994 I had sold the toy wholesaler-ship which I had created with a friend in East Germany, I now needed to find a real job. Trading Treasury bond futures at a Wall Street bank had been my specialty before the entrepreneurial detour, so it seemed the logical place to which to return.
In the interest of relaunching my financial markets background with a fresh twist, my updated resume reflected a combination of my newly acquired Eastern European experience with my past government bond trading background. I rebranded myself as an Emerging Markets Specialist, a rapidly growing market genre at the time.

However, there was a problem. “Emerging Markets” was a nascent market niche at the time and there weren’t many players deeply involved. In the summer of 1994, those markets were going through a rough patch of growing pains, and none of the U.S. banks were hiring. It must have been after more than 20 interviews—with no job offers—that I was interviewed by the largest Dutch Bank—ABN Amro.

At the time, I did not even know how to pronounce the name correctly, but I would soon learn. In a sea of rejections, this Dutch bank was building up its Emerging Markets and sales group. The interview went surprisingly well, but the New York head of the group made it clear to me that the positions they were looking to fill were based in Amsterdam, Holland. Despite the fact that I’d recently returned from four years in Germany, and was looking forward to returning to America, I was in no position to reject their offer to fly me to Amsterdam for a daylong battery of interviews.

The interviews went well. I received an offer, and I was once again employed. There was a three-month probationary period, during which either the bank or I could walk. My three-month contract was eventually replaced with a three-year contract, and I spent 15 years at the bank. It has now been 22 years since I came to Holland. I have grown to love and still live on the canals of Amsterdam.

The real reason I stayed so long is that, on my very first day at work in Amsterdam—way back in 1994—I laid eyes on the woman I would eventually marry and with whom I would start a family - Marion. It took me a couple of weeks to engineer the "chance meeting by the coffee machine", but determination won in the end.

We now live on the Herengracht Canal in the center of Amsterdam with our 17-year old son, Julian. And after all these years, my mother, Clare, still asks, "When are you coming home?"

---

**OCTOBER WINDS**

Joyce Gibbs

*October winds blow*
*Scattering leaves to and fro*
*Gently resting them on the ground*
*Making barely a sound.*

*Brown, red, yellow ones, also green*
*Such a sight to be seen*
*out come the rakes*
*Raking...raking...a long time it takes.*

*And God in all His Glory smiles*
*at all the leaves strewn for miles*
*In a short time they’ll all be gone*
*And Winter’s morn shall once again dawn.*
WHAT’S IN A NAME?

Peter Kunker

How often have you – or someone you know – said, “I’m really good at remembering faces but terrible at remembering names.”

Take heart! It is not a weakness in you. It’s the way our brains are designed. We might use the same word – “remember” to describe our ability to place a name with a face. But in fact we are describing two different psychological processes. RECOGNITION and RECALL.

There IS a part of the brain called the Fusiform Face Area which is dedicated to the recognition of faces. We are experts at recognizing faces, and do this easily and automatically. When we look at a person all we have to do is know whether we have seen them before or not. There is a lot of machinery in the brain dedicated to face recognition.

Unfortunately we do not have a corresponding brain region for remembering names. What we do have is a region in the brain dedicated to remembering words. And aren’t names like words?

Recalling names (words) is harder than recognizing someone you have seen before because we have to search in our memory to retrieve them.

Trying hard to remember doesn’t necessarily help. However - and surely you have heard this before - if you repeat the name of the person you are meeting, or form an association or build an image around the name, you are creating hooks of memory to help you remember that elusive name.

So if I do not remember your name (nor you remember mine) the next time we meet, we are not being rude. We know the information is in there somewhere. We just can’t get to it just yet.

YOUR LIFE EXPECTANCY

Fred Seltzer

I was an actuary and statistician for Metropolitan Life Insurance Company in Manhattan for more than 30 years. As part of my responsibility in the Statistical Bureau, I studied death rates associated with many diseases and occupations for various population groups. The results were published in a monthly Statistical Bulletin.

In May 2016, The Society of Actuaries and the Academy of Actuaries (I was a founding member of the latter) published an Actuaries Longevity Illustrator www.longevityillustrator.org.

To use the Illustrator you simply enter birthdate, age, age you want for illustrations, sex, smoking status, and health condition to get tables and charts showing chances of living to various ages or living a specific number of years. As an example, here are the findings for a hypothetical couple with a husband (A) age 85 and a wife (B) age 80.

There is a 57% chance that the husband (A) will live to age 90, and a 52% chance that his wife (B) will live to 90. Looking at it another way there is a 57% chance that A will live five years and a 52% chance that B will live ten years. The chance of both husband and wife living five years is 45% or that either one of the couple but not both living five years is 91%. Similarly, the chance of both husband and wife living ten years is 12% and that either one but not both living ten years is 63%
The graphs in the *Illustrator* enable you to obtain similar information for other probabilities of living to a certain age or living a certain number of years. These probabilities are used in financial planning as people who live to advanced ages may outlive their savings.

For more details and definitions and to find your own personal chances consult the *Longevity Illustrator* online. Remember that your genes, educational level, occupation history and financial condition can affect the longevity results which are based on Social Security and Society of Actuaries data.

---

**FAMILY LORE**

*Wilbur Shapiro*

*Prior to presenting family anecdotes*

*Introductions are necessary so that we may quote.*

*The father is Evan an impetuous man*

*He sired a pretty healthy clan.*

*Mother is Sylvia an intelligent tactician.*

*With five siblings at times she was a magician.*

*The oldest was Anna, the most intelligent.*

*She seemed to always know what was relevant.*

*The oldest brother was Henry, who cared not for school.*

*He was a hard worker and nobody’s fool.*

*The twins William and Alan were six years behind.*

*They came next in the children’s line.*

*Last but not least came the youngest, Myron,*

*After thirteen years, quite a span.*

*In total that makes up the family tree*

*Except for the dog whose name was Frisky.*

*None of the stories are psychological*

*Nor is the order necessarily chronological.*

*There is no particular timespan to simulate;*

*The tales are happy memories for the family to relate.*

*The stories that follow could be either fact or fiction*

*They are told in a language of poetic diction.*

*The author’s intent is not to decoy,*

*but to give the reader a chance to enjoy.*

(Previously published in *The Anecdotal Odes of Wilbur Shapiro*, the author has generously allowed News and Views to share these charming family tales with you. You’ll learn more about them in future issues.)
We were treated to Gary Stamm’s outstanding impersonation of FDR as he discussed the role of civilians in World War II. Afterwards we enjoyed the recollections of many in the audience, too. Our own Max Tiller took this wonderful picture of Mr. Stamm as FDR.

70TH ANNIVERSARY; GE FLIGHT TEST CENTER

In 1946, right after World War II, the General Electric Company built a large hangar to continue the research on rockets. With the Research Center in nearby Niskayuna, they were able to do all the tests on materials that would eventually become rockets. On August 6, 2016 retired GE Flight Center employees were honored at the 70th anniversary dedication of a new exhibit, the replica of the original test site, at the Empire State Aero-Sciences Museum at the Schenectady County Airport.

Pictured from left to right are Congressman Paul Tonko, GE Flight Test Center employee Roger Farley, GE Malta Rocket Test Center photographer Max Tiller, Assemblyman Angelo Santabarbara, Town of Glenville Supervisor Christopher Koetzle and Assemblyman James Tedisco.
Youth is not a time of life...it is a state of mind.

Nobody grows old by merely living a number of years - people grow old by deserting their ideals.

Years wrinkle the skin but giving up enthusiasm wrinkles the soul!

Worry, doubt, self-distrust, fear and despair – these are the long years that bow the head and turn the growing spirit back to dust.

EXOPLANETS

John Wagner

Planets that orbit a sun/star other than our own are termed exo-solar planets or "exoplanets". They are a relatively new addition to our catalogue of heavenly bodies. Prior to 1990, there was only speculation that such objects might exist. But in 1995, an exoplanet was detected orbiting a star in the constellation Pegasus. With more advanced equipment, the list has grown to more than 3500 exoplanets. Just last July, an exoplanet was detected orbiting Alpha Centauri, the star which is closest to our Sun.

The Hubble space telescope has provided some spectacular images of our universe, but nary a one of an exoplanet. Such planets shine by reflecting light from their star; this light is weak and by the time it gets here, it is too faint to be seen. Thus the search for exoplanets requires indirect methods.

The first of these methods was used by a pair of astronomers, Michel Mayor and Didier Queloz, at a French observatory. They noticed that a star in the Pegasus constellation appeared to shift back and forth a bit. As they puzzled over this recurring behavior, they wondered if the star was moving around an orbit. If there was a planet nearby, its gravitational pull would cause the star to orbit their common center of mass. Such motion of the star would produce a Doppler shift in the absorption lines¹ in its spectrum; as the star moves away from us, the lines would shift toward the red end of the spectrum. As it approached us, the lines would be shifted toward the blue end. These frequency shifts can be converted into radial velocity (the velocity along the line of sight). To confirm their theory, they used a spectrometer to analyze the light from the star for several orbital periods (the time required to complete an entire orbit). By analyzing this varying radial velocity and measuring the star's brightness, they were able to determine the mass of both the star and its planet. In 1995, they announced this first discovery of an exoplanet orbiting a Sun-like star.

This method works best if the orbits are being viewed "edge-on". Although such a configuration is somewhat rare, it is frequent enough that 596 exoplanets have been found using this method. The radial velocity method provides strong confirmation that a star has an orbiting planet, but it is not a very efficient way to find such stars.
Using this method, a spectrometer must be devoted to the study of the light from a single star for many days in order to detect if any Doppler shift is present. A more effective method to search for candidate stars was developed over the next decade: the transit photometry method.

Again, consider a planet circling its star in such a way that we here on Earth view it "edge-on". Once every orbit, the planet will pass between Earth and the star, blocking some of the star's light. The dimming caused by this "transit" can be measured photometrically. By comparing the star's intensity at different times one can detect a transit event and a possible exoplanet. NASA developed a telescope that could view a region of the sky and record the intensity of each of the stars in its field of view. This Kepler spacecraft, launched in 2009, had a 95 mega-pixel camera that could simultaneously monitor the intensity of 145,000 stars. Recording their intensity at frequent intervals created data files that were analyzed by computer to identify stars worthy of a search for Doppler shifts. As of September 16, 2016, this method, combined with the radial velocity method, has led to the detection of more than 94% of the verified exoplanets. "The Discoveries of Exoplanets" by Wikipedia presents the historical record.

In their search for extraterrestrial life, astro-biologists are interested in Earth-like planets with liquid water on the surface and an atmosphere with complex molecules. This leads to the concept of a "habitable zone", a range of orbits which would allow water to exist in its liquid form on the surface of a planet.

The results of the two search methods, together with known facts about the stars, can help identify exoplanets in this habitable zone. The radial velocity data gives an estimate of the mass of the planet. The transit method gives an image of the planet's size. Together, these estimates determine the planet's density. A high density means a rocky, Earth-like planet while a low one indicates a gas giant like Jupiter. To meet the requirement that the planet have liquid water on its surface, it must lie in the habitable zone, a range of orbits determined by the luminosity of the star and a model based on the Earth-Sun relationship. The data provided by these methods enables this determination.

The transit method also provides information about an exoplanet's atmosphere. During transit, some of the light from the star will pass through the planet's atmosphere (if it has one). The atmosphere will leave its mark in the form of new absorption lines in the star's spectrum. Comparison with the star's spectrum when the planet is out of sight can identify such new lines, giving some description of the planet's atmosphere.

About 350 exoplanets appear to be located in the habitable zones of their stars. Exoplanets in such a zone are considered the most likely places to find intelligent life. Activities of the SETI Institute (Search for ExtraTerrestrial Intelligence) have focused on them and radio signals (such as the "Teen Age Message", a recording of music) have been directed at several exoplanets detected by the Kepler space telescope.

The Kepler mission focused on a small part of the night sky, about two scoopfuls of the Big Dipper. It would take about 400 Kepler missions to cover the entire sky. It has been estimated that there are between 100 and 400 billion stars in our galaxy and about as many other galaxies. This may lead us to think of ourselves as small creatures on the third planet circling an average star in one of the spiral arms of our galaxy and thus sound very insignificant.

But I believe that the Creator of this vast universe, the God of Abraham and Jacob, told our ancestors that He would be their God and they would be His people. Thus, perhaps, we are not so insignificant, after all.

---

1Light from the core of a star must pass through gaseous layers which absorb energy at different wavelengths, leaving small gaps or lines in the spectrum.

2This water requirement may be relaxed due to the discovery of subsurface oceans of liquid water on moons of Jupiter and Saturn. The result would be an expansion of the habitable zone.