

News and Views *Ávila*

A publication of the Resident Council at Avila Retirement Community

Albany, NY

November 2018

200TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION



The Sisters of the Sacred Heart are celebrating 200 years since the first Religious of the Sacred Heart came to America.

In 1818 a French religious, Philippine Duchesne, left France to come to serve Native Americans. When she arrived with four other sisters the Bishop of St. Louis asked her to establish schools similar to those which had been founded in 1800, in France, by Madeleine Sophie Barat and her companions.

It was not until 1841 that Philippine was finally able to go to Sugar Creek, Kansas to the Potawatomi Indian tribe. She was not able to do much physically but spent considerable time in prayer. The Potawatamis called her "the Woman Who Prays Always."

From the original call of Philippine came many educational works established in the United States and Canada, the Americas, Africa, India, and the Far East. Today there are 2,200 Sisters serving in 41 countries.

The Sisters who live here at the Avila Lodge will celebrate this 200th Anniversary with a Mass at Teresian House on Saturday, November 17th at 2:00 P.M. Bishop Howard Hubbard will be the celebrant.

Residents at Avila are invited to attend.

SISTER MARIE BUONATO

By Karl Gohlke

Sister Marie Buonato recently joined her fellow sisters in residence at the Lodge after many years of service in a wide range of cities in a variety of states. Moving into Avila was significant as she was the representative for her order, the Society of the Sacred Heart, who was instrumental in the establishment of a retirement community for her sisters in the Avila community.



Photograph by Karl Gohlke

Sr. Marie was raised in Philadelphia, the second of six children in her family. She received her secondary education in a Sacred Heart school and entered the order prior to college. Thereafter, she completed undergraduate and graduate programs while a religious. For the next 40 years she was able to pursue her ministry in education as a teacher, counselor, principal, and administrator. Her assignments took her from Philadelphia to Boston, Providence, Miami, Chicago, Seattle, and Albany, as well as locations in Louisiana and Michigan. More than once she was asked to take assignments that were new to the order's past practices. As she relates, she enjoyed the opportunities and the challenges they presented.

She is very familiar with the Albany community and its broad range of resources. She has melded easily into the Avila lifestyle and is able to continue in her pastoral lifestyle. She engages easily with others and impresses as one who is quite comfortable in her place and life of service.

CARMELA "MILLIE," CONNOLLY

By Erin Teichman

Millie Connolly came to Avila from Syracuse in September and is still getting acclimated to her new home. After interviewing her for an hour it appears she has jumped into life here with both feet. She has become a regular at our bistro breakfast; is learning to knit; is taking bridge lessons; and is regularly playing Rummikub.

Born in New York City and raised in Queens, Millie married at 18, was widowed at 25 and raised her son, Dennis, and daughter, Kathy, with the help of family. She is now the loving grandmother of five and the great-grandmother of two. She also has maintained close connections with four of her grade school classmates.

Millie put herself through the Fashion Institute of Technology at night with her mother providing child care. It took seven years. She then pursued a 20 year career in the fashion industry while continuing to work on degrees in marketing and merchandising as well as taking additional business courses. Her work focused on developing uses for fabric which led to extensive travel to mills in the southern United States and Europe. A second career was working as a caterer which led to her spending a month on a farm in Tuscany to learn its cuisine.

While recovering from knee surgery, Millie built and furnished a doll house with assistance from her son who shopped for her. It took seven months to complete and now occupies a prominent place in her living room. Once she is settled and all boxes emptied, perhaps Millie will invite us to an open house of her "second home."

Welcome, Millie! We look forward to getting to know you better.



Photograph by Max Tiller

GEORGIANA PANTON**Interviewed by Murray Block**

Georgiana Panton is our friendly new neighbor in Apartment 308 in the East Wing. Although born in Albany, Georgiana's family moved to Syracuse when she was quite young. She grew up there and spent her college years in her new hometown. She earned an undergraduate degree at Syracuse University, and then continued for a Master's degree at their Maxwell School of Citizenship.

After completing her graduate studies, she was offered an internship in Governor Rockefeller's Office. This opportunity brought her back to Albany. She later became a

Program Assistant in the Governor's Office, and met and married Jim, who was on a Senate Research Committee. They built a house in North Greenbush and lived there for 53 years.

Georgiana has two children, four grandchildren, and one great-granddaughter. Her son is a geotechnical engineer; her daughter has an MD degree from Stony Brook and is now affiliated with a large health insurance company.

Georgiana had left her position in the Governor's Office to raise her family. She later returned to State service, first in the Civil Service Department and later in the Department of Motor Vehicles, from which she retired as Director of Personnel. Her husband left State service to become a management consultant. He later returned to State service, from which he retired. Jim died four years ago.

Georgiana is quite excited about her move to Avila. She finds everyone—neighbors and staff—very friendly and helpful. She is delighted to be here. She was also excited and looked forward to a month-long trip she took from September 30 until the end of October. She went with her daughter to China, with a few days first in Japan. And what was equally exciting is that there was a stop in the San Diego area to visit family, especially her great granddaughter, Mariana.

Welcome to Avila, Georgiana. We want to hear all about your wonderful trip when you get settled in Avila.



Photograph by Max Tiller

ELLIOTT MARINSTEIN HONORED BY COUNTY BAR ASSOCIATION

Elliott Marinstein was honored on October 18 by the Rensselaer County Bar Association as a recipient of their 2018 E. Stewart Jones Award for Elliott's service to the bar and his community throughout his distinguished career in Commercial Law. Mr. Marinstein is one of the longest actively practicing attorneys in Rensselaer County.

Photograph by Max Tiller

AVILA RESIDENTS ARE HONORED WITH LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT AWARDS

On Wednesday, October 10, 2018 three of our Avila residents were among 26 individuals who received Lifetime Achievement awards from the Capital District Senior Issues Forum for their contributions in the fields of business, education, faith-based service, community service, military service and care giving.



Photograph by Max Tiller

Paul Ward was recognized for his accomplishments as an educator. He taught history at middle school and university levels; advanced the study of African history; served as director of International Students; volunteered at the NYS Museum arranging historical collections. At Avila Paul has served on various committees, organized the book group and our monthly Protestant services.

Sue Hanson was honored for her faith-based service. She volunteers at the St. John/St. Ann Church soup kitchen weekly; is involved at Teresian House Nursing Home; does pastoral care, serves as a Eucharistic Minister, and also works in the gift shop. Sue also volunteers to help Avila residents keep emergency medical appointments or pick-up prescriptions.



Photograph by Max Tiller



Photograph by Max Tiller

Mickey Fleishman's contributions in the field of community service were also honored. She volunteers at Teresian House, St. Madeline Sophie and St. John/St. Ann Food Pantry. Mickey reaches out to new residents at Avila, organizing dinner tables nearly every evening. She brings great joy and enthusiasm for life to Avila and always looks out for the one left behind.

DIVINE INTERVENTION

By Al Staff

In my youth, I never thought about G-d or religion, even though I was raised by orthodox parents. Upon reflection, I saw my father accept the loss of three children as G-d's will. He made the best of every situation.

As we mature and live our lives, getting an education, getting a job, getting married, we are busy meeting life's challenges. Our thoughts are mainly on earning a living, progressing in our chosen careers.

While most of us attend religious services regularly, we pray to a G-d, who is everywhere. But do we ever see his presence? We accept his presence with no manifestation thereof. Do any of us think that we want to see evidence of his presence?

We do see the world around us rejuvenate itself season after season. Flowers grow; the earth is watered by snow and rain. Children are born as a result of our love for one another. But one can claim that is all nature.

I believe that two incidents in my life were the result of divine intervention. During World War II, I was rejected by the army because of a punctured ear. My older brother was a sergeant in the medical corps stationed in Sault Ste. Marie, Michigan.

One day, while doing an audit on a company situated on the banks of the Hudson River, I decided to walk to the nearby railroad station, to get a sandwich for lunch. While there, I do not know what possessed me, but I walked up the stairs to the railroad platform to look around me. As I was there, a train pulled up slowly. I noticed that it was a troop train. Sitting inside by a window, I saw my brother, who was being shipped overseas. I ran along the platform, hoping that the train would stop. It did not. My brother came home after four years. What were the odds that I would be sojourning on that platform at that precise time??

Years later, my wife and I were invited to a family function in New Jersey. My sister, who was a widow living in New Jersey, asked me if I could pick her up. On our way, I realized that I had never been at her house. I knew the address, but had no idea as to its location (before GPS). I exited the Jersey Turnpike onto another state highway, knowing that I would have to ask a local resident for help. Who do you ask?? I stopped at a local shopping center to question someone. The lady told me that I was two blocks from my destination. There, waiting at the curb, was my sister.

What made me exit the Turnpike at that exit? There is no such thing as luck...G-d takes care of fools!!!!

LET'S GO GREEN!

By Mary Bardwell

At the last Town Hall meeting it was suggested that we bring our own containers and/or totes to carry home our leftovers. This would result in a great reduction of recyclables in the trash rooms and would also make the dining room tables look more presentable.

Avila would lead the way for other residential facilities to do the same and participate in saving the environment. Every little bit helps.

Let us begin!

THE SCALA SANCTA

By Ray Teichman

The Scala Sancta or Holy Stairs is a sacred Christian relic located in Rome, Italy. It is believed that Jesus Christ walked on the Holy Stairs at the time Pontius Pilate passed judgment of death on him and then had him scourged and crucified. About 326 C.E. St. Helena, the mother of Emperor Constantine, the Roman ruler who granted toleration to Christians, brought the stairs back to Rome. The Scala Sancta is currently located at the entrance to the church of St. Lawrence next to the basilica of St. John Lateran in Rome. They are made of white marble but are encased in a protective wooden framework. The steps have been a Christian pilgrimage site for centuries, and there are replicas of them located in various countries around the world.



Photograph by Ray Teichman

On a recent visit to my sister, a member of the Congregation of St. Joseph, Kalamazoo, Michigan, I was pleasantly surprised to learn that there is a Scala Sancta in a room behind the Holy Family chapel in the sisters' mother house in Kalamazoo. The replica consists of 28 wooden stairs several of which contain artifacts of stone, wood and flowers brought from the Holy Land when the stairs were constructed during the first quarter of the last century.

Pilgrims are supposed to ascend the stairs on their knees saying a prayer on each one. History says that Martin Luther climbed the stairs on his visit to Rome in 1510. When he finished he supposedly expressed doubt about whether the relic was beneficial. Wikipedia tells us that Charles Dickens

described pilgrims ascending the stairs as "ridiculous" and "unpleasant." Those who believe in the spiritual efficacy of relics, of course, think otherwise. However, for those of you planning a trip to Rome please note that the stairs are closed until January, 2019.

DOLLY SHAMLIAN THOUGHT THIS POEM WOULD BE OF INTEREST TO OUR READERS. THE AUTHOR IS ANONYMOUS.

*One or the other must leave,
One or the other must stay.
One or the other must grieve,
That is forever the way.
That is the vow that was sworn,
Faithful 'til death do us part.
Braving what had to be borne,
Hiding the ache in the heart.
One, howsoever adored,
First must be summoned away.
That is the will of the Lord
One or the other must stay.*

MEMORIES PRESERVED ON PAPER

By Alice Begley

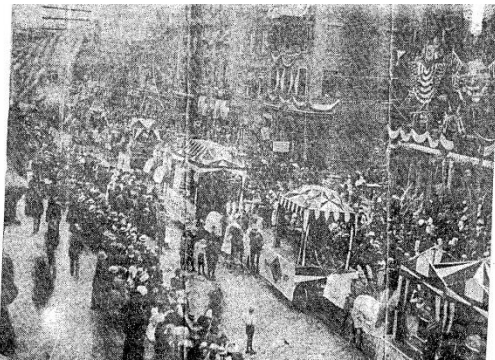
A September 7, 1929 issue of the Albany Knickerbocker Press announced a "retirement" from Washington, D.C. "U.S. Will Retire Carrier Pigeons in Favor of Radio" read the headline.

The action retired 400 of the 800 birds in service to the United States. The action was going to replace the retired pigeons since all naval planes were to be equipped with radios. Even the loft pigeons worked from were to be dismantled. Are there any readers who can remember when there was no radio in the house or car anywhere?

Another timely message was printed in that same paper. Automobile owners and operators were informed of and alerted to a new law that became effective September 1, 1929. It was known as the New York State Automobile Financial Responsibility Act - car insurance. Readers were being notified that they would be unable to operate their cars or risk losing their certificates unless they had it.

One of the advertisements in the issue advised that readers with a son could "send him back to school in a Steefel Suit"- a new Fall two-knicker, smartly tailored suit that will pass inspection for Sunday dress and resist the "wear and tear of the school yard" at \$16.95. Steefel' Brothers was on State Street in Albany and considered one of the high-quality men's stores.

Also in the 1929 Knickerbocker Press, a small boxed classified ad read, "For Rent" ...Two offices in hotel: heat, light, janitor services for \$40.00 per month. Douglas 86 State St.



Another story treasure with picture was a grand parade that took place in Albany celebrating the city's bicentennial on July 19, 1886 at the corner of State and Pearl Street. Nowhere near that size crowd shows up these days!

An old 1899 Republican Canvass Book from the neighboring town of Guilderland's Election District #5 shows the result of the October 14th to 17th canvass: Republicans 94, Democrats 84, Prohibition 8 and Doubtful 41. The total was 222.

Last, but certainly not least, is a document dated and signed by James F. McKown, administrator of the Estate of John McKown (deceased) for the sum of \$1.00 on April 27, 1878 for six shares of stock on the Great Western Turnpike.

That document was also signed by J.A. LaGrange, Justice of the Peace. James F McKown was the son of John McKown and grandson of William McKown, seventeenth Supervisor of the Town of Guilderland from 1813 to 1834.

LEAVING YOUR LEGACY (continued)

Murray Block

In the last issue of *News and Views*, I suggested writing short memoir pieces concerning the things you would want your family and friends to know about you. Now, I am recommending one way you can share, with your family and heirs, the "things" you have accumulated in your life that mean much to you. In my case, I have been most fortunate in being able to pursue a childhood dream -- travel.

At the age of nine or ten, I dreamed of visiting India and China. Geography was my favorite subject. I preferred reading maps to books! This dream was fulfilled when Uncle Sam sent me off to both India and China when I was in the US Army Air Corps in World War II. The rest of the world had to be seen on my own. I have visited over 200 countries and been to all the continents. China was my first love and I have been there seven times. In my travels, I have accumulated many interesting things from various civilizations, ranging from expensive old Chinese porcelain ginger jars, to a hand-carved ceremonial stick I was given by the Mud Men tribe living in the remote mountains of Papua New Guinea. Many of the things I have collected have interesting stories behind them, which I want my heirs to know when these possessions become theirs.

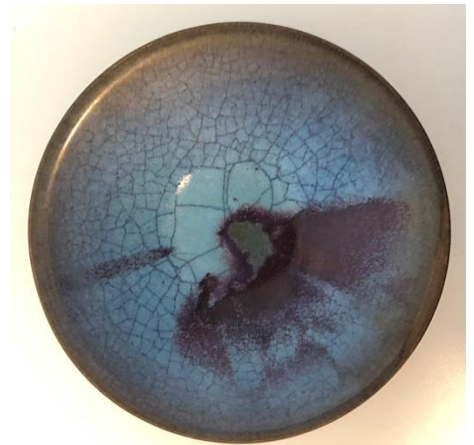
I have just completed a project that catalogs all of my worldwide "stuff." I have pictures of 133 world items. I have written up brief descriptions of each item - not only what it signifies, but also any human-interest story that may be attached to that acquisition. I will have a booklet of numbered pictures and stories for each of my children and grandchildren. A few of these "stories" are below, along with their respective pictures, to give some idea of how you can share your "legacy".



The photograph at left is part of a matched pair of Chinese porcelain ginger jars. According to the chops on the bottom of these jars, they could date to around 1820. They are considered "matching" because the figures on them, although the same, are facing each other. Many years ago, an appraiser said they were worth from \$5,000 to \$10,000 for the pair. I got them for a pair of my G.I. pants in old Beijing in 1945 or 1946.

Bargaining for this plate in a shop in Xi'an was a great experience. It was in 1993 and Paul and I were near the end of our Silk Road trip. Paul had promised to bring back a Buddha

for Kiva, so we went into this gift shop to find one. This "crackled blue porcelain" plate caught my eye. I picked it up to see if there was a "chop" on the bottom, which, of course, was a signal to the owner to rush up to me. There was no chop, so it was not an antique. The owner said: "You like? Ming Dynasty! I give you seventy dollar." I put on a feigned look of disapproval and answered in halting Mandarin Chinese: "*Bu shr Ming. Shr shinde. Wo gei ni shr kuai.*" ("It is not Ming, It is new. I give you ten dollar.") He looked at me in surprise and asked where I learned Chinese. I explained, in Chinese, that I was with the Army Air Corps during the war, and learned it then. He quickly called the other salesclerks to come to us, and explained to them that I was an American airman who served in China and I could speak Chinese. They were all smiles. Then the owner turned to me and switched to English: "You Flying Tiger. You save China!! I give you -- ten dollars." I did not explain that I was not a Flying Tiger. They were volunteers who flew missions for China before the US got into the war. The closest I got to a Flying Tiger is that our branch of service (the US Army Air Corps, 25th Division) took over the Flying Tigers after Pearl Harbor and incorporated their symbol into the shoulder patches we wore. In any case, being a "Flying Tiger" got me the "\$70 **Ming** plate" for \$10.



Buying this porcelain "thing" was much fun. In our 1985 trip to China, which Estelle organized, and I was the "Leader," we had a number of friends and relatives travel with us. My cousin, Alberta, was included, and Paul joined us at the last minute when someone got sick and had to cancel. The trip included several days in Hong Kong (then in British hands). One of the days in Hong Kong we were all taken to the nearby Portuguese colony of Macau. Paul, Alberta and I were walking near the old cathedral where only the front wall is left standing. Loads of pushcarts were there, selling anything and everything. Alberta noticed this porcelain piece hanging on a hook. "What an interesting tea pot," exclaimed Alberta. The vendor rushed up and emphatically said: "No tea pot!" I asked in Chinese what it was. The answer, in English, was most descriptive: "Man sick hospital use." I translated for Alberta and Paul: "It's not a teapot; it's a pee pot!" Alberta immediately bought it, and I asked if the vendor had another. She came out with a batch of them. Both Paul and I each bought one, as I remarked: "She probably got loads of them cheap after the plague." It has been in one of my bathrooms ever since 1985.



This wood carving is a souvenir-sized rendition of life-sized people of Sulawesi (Celebes), one of the major islands that make up Indonesia. The Toraja people bury their dead in caves dug into the many mountains and hills in their land. They also bury many valuable possessions with their dead owners. Although the caves are sealed, many were broken into and valuables stolen. So, they carved out huge balconies in front of the burial caves, and make life size figures of the dead, that stand with outstretched hands to ward off the would-be robbers. These figures are fitted out with clothing. Each year, after the harvest, families visit their dead and bring new clothing for their effigies. It is eerie to ride along the mountain roads with hundreds of effigies of the dead lining the mountainsides with hands outstretched to welcome you. The

souvenir shop also had life size effigies for sale, but they would not fit into my suitcase!

This wooden figure with nails protruding from the body is from the special market in Lome, the capital of Togo, in West Africa, where you can buy almost any kind of charm or trinket to ward off evil spirits. This one sticks nails into your "enemy" and thus protects you. I could not get an answer to my question about the significance of the white stone in the belly, but I am sure it protects the owner. Or do you rub the stone to make the genie appear to grant three wishes?



Artificial intelligence is no match for natural stupidity.

Give me ambiguity or give me something else.

Today a man knocked on my door and asked for a small donation towards the local swimming pool, so I gave him a glass of water.

COLLOQUIALISM

By Wilbur Shapiro

*Wilbur served on a Carrier during the Korean War
The war was winding down, so live action was not in store
Rigorous training was the Navy's option
Continuous flight maneuvers was the selected adoption*

*One of the ship's ports was Yokosuka, Japan
A naval base for repair and maintenance according to plan
On one such occasion, the engineering officers had liberty
And five selected to explore Japanese society*

*The five were Wilbur, Red, Chuck, Gabe and Benjamin
They rented motor scooters, each with two cycle engines
They traveled the Japanese roads obeying the traffic rules
They all did well without the benefit of school*

*After an hour or so, a break was the decision
They rested at a café, refreshment they did envision
Wilbur ordered a vanilla sundae rather than a brew
Red thought that sounded good and said 'Make it two'*

*Chuck also liked the idea and uttered "Make it three"
"Make it four", Gabe said to maintain harmony
Benjamin thought, "What the heck, Make it five"
They were thirsty and hungry and a sundae would thrive*

*The waitress did her best to avoid confusion
The orders were clear; there should not have been delusion
When Wilbur's sundae came he savored the cream
But Red was given two sundaes; this was somewhat extreme*

*Chuck was given three sundaes in disbelief
And Gabe had four, this was pure grief
Benjamin topped them all with the jackpot
He was given five sundaes, which was sure a lot*

*The crew was shocked at the ice cream inventory
This surely was a comical story
They all laughed heartily at the ice cream situation
It was beyond belief and imagination*

*The men shared all the sundaes and the cost
And they considered it worthy; the sumptuous taste was not lost
It was time to get on the scooters and return to the Carrier
But they learned a lesson about the language barrier*

GPS (GLOBAL POSITIONING SYSTEMS)

John Wagner

A Global Positioning System (GPS) is a satellite-based radio navigation system that provides information about the geophysical location of a receiver, located on or near the surface of the Earth. This worldwide system is owned by the United States government and operated by the U.S. Air Force at no cost to its civilian and commercial users. When combined with today's cell phone technology, modern GPS systems offer the variety of services we associate with our smartphones.

The history of GPS began in 1957 when the Soviet Union launched Sputnik, the world's first artificial satellite. Several scientists at MIT (Massachusetts Institute of Technology) discovered that they could track the position of the satellite using the Doppler shift¹ in the frequency of its radio signal. This raised the question of whether the reverse was possible: could signals from a satellite be used to locate an object on Earth?

The U.S. military was very interested in such a possibility, viewing it as a matter of national security in the Cold War era. They convinced Congress of this view and received authorization to spend the enormous amount of money needed to develop and build such a system. The first system was developed by the U.S. Navy in 1963. The Navstar used satellite signals to update the inertial navigation systems in submarine-based intercontinental ballistic missiles. A submarine could determine its latitude and longitude to an accuracy of about 100 meters, good enough considering the size of the blast radius of a nuclear weapon.

The U.S. Air Force also needed height information to guide its aerial weapon systems and this led to the development of the original GPS. The first of the initial satellites was launched in 1978. The first GPS slowly became operational, but was available only to the U.S. military.

But in 1983, a Korean passenger airliner was shot down when it accidentally flew into Soviet airspace. The U.S. government responded by making its GPS available to commercial airliners and a second set of satellite signals was added for non-military users. A set of improved satellites was completed in 1995 and this system was made available for general civilian use. Advances in semiconductor technology soon made possible hand-held GPS receivers and in 2004, Qualcomm tested a GPS receiver built into a cell phone.



The early systems provided accuracy adequate for military users, but augmentation systems make current receivers much more accurate. The position determined by a smartphone is usually accurate to within 16 feet and may be as low as 3 feet.

The current configuration of our GPS has three major elements: a "constellation" of satellites, a ground control system, and a smart receiver with its assortment of computer applications. The constellation has four satellites in low earth orbit over every 60 degrees of longitude. This spacing of 24 satellites assures that at least four satellites are visible from a receiver any place on Earth. Each satellite has solar panels to power the on-board electronics which include at least four atomic clocks. Current models use radio signals at two different frequencies to

enable higher accuracy.

¹ The Doppler shift refers to the change in pitch or frequency of a signal which depends on the speed with which the source of the signal approaches or retreats from the observer. For example, the driver at a grade crossing will hear the train whistle change pitch as the locomotive goes past.

The ground control system has three components: monitoring stations (16 sites that track the satellites and monitor their performance), a master control station (to determine satellite positions and any necessary corrections and to synchronize the system's clocks), and 11 antenna sites that send commands and program updates to the satellites. The current location of each satellite is maintained at the master control site, which makes these locations available to receivers from a variety of local sites.

Today there are many commercial GPS receivers. Most common are those in today's smartphones and automobiles. Many of the consumer applications rely on highly detailed digital maps such as those provided by Google. With its GPS location and such maps, a receiver can provide a driver with directions to his destination. Also, another computer application can identify nearby movies, restaurants, hospitals, etc. By tracking GPS-equipped cars on the Northway, the State Transportation Authority can alert drivers to the location and likely time delay of congestion ahead of them.

Special receivers are available for specific applications such as farming and emergency transportation. Receivers like those used in surveying are large and expensive. They use the two frequencies from each satellite to reduce the error in the position estimate to well below a centimeter. New receivers are being designed to also utilize signals from the new GPS being created by China, Russia, and India.

WARM AND COZY

By Sally Tiller

*When the nights are long
And the weather is cold
And my body aches
And I feel old
I like to get into my favorite chair
And watch a little TV
So I look for a program
That I would like to see
Now that I have time for myself
I grab my favorite quilt
And get nice and cozy
Without feeling any guilt
With all that done
The room is so quiet there is not a peep
Then guess what?
I fall asleep*



Have a Happy Thanksgiving!