

News and Views *Avila*

A publication of the Resident Council at Avila Retirement Community

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A LABOR OF LOVE

By Rod Correll



Photograph by Rod Correll

Not many at Avila are aware of the 400 sq ft raised bed vegetable garden that exists here. It lies behind the bank of resident garages on the west side of our campus. This project, conceived by Bob Fazio in 2012 and installed by Avila staff shortly thereafter, is currently tended by Bob and three fellow residents, Millie Connolly, Sue Minnie, and me. Crops planted in 2020 consist of basil, string beans, broccoli, Swiss chard, chives, sweet corn, cucumbers, lettuce, peppers, rhubarb, rosemary, squash and last, but first in quantity, a large variety of tomatoes. Boasting rich, friable soil, good lighting conditions and an automatic watering system, it produces ample harvests. The four of us share most of the vegetables we plant but much of the crop of tomatoes is given away, to fellow residents, Avila staff and the Albany County Food Bank. The hours these four spend in their veggie garden is restorative, rewarding but also tiring. As they look towards the 2021 growing season, they are hoping there are others here at Avila, who will join them in their labors of love.

MISTAKEN IDENTITY

By Don Stauffer

Not so long ago I went with Susan Shipherd to the CVS on Western Avenue in Guilderland to pick up a prescription. We were wearing our masks of course, but I had forgotten to take off my sunglasses - the kind people wear after eye surgery. I was using my cane. While we were waiting at the pharmacy counter one of the pharmacists, looking rather alarmed, came over to Jackie, who was waiting on us. He asked her if she thought the blind man wandering around the store might need some help, since he was concerned about my safety. But Jackie, who knows me, could tell who I was even in my disguise, and she assured him that I was okay. The poor guy went back to work looking rather sheepish at the good laugh we had had for his good intentions.



Photograph by Susan Shipherd

PUSPA M. DAS

By Karl Gohlke



Photograph by Karl Gohlke

Puspa arrived at Avila in April, initially to provide some assistance and companionship for her mother, Bami Das, during the COVID-19 pandemic. She had visited Avila many times since her mother had moved in; and was impressed with the community nature of the residential setting and the cordiality of the residents and staff. It wasn't too much later that she had accepted her mother's invitation to join her living at Avila. They reside in apartment 108 in the Grand Lodge.

A native of Illinois, she has lived in several communities in the United States and other countries as her family moved following her father's professional career as a distinguished professor of physics. She had been educated in California, Utah, Paris, and England prior to arriving in Guilderland in the eighth grade. She is a graduate of Guilderland High School's bicentennial class of 1976. The Capital District has been her center primarily, with some professional stays in Rochester and Syracuse. Her travels with family and on her own have been to India, Hong Kong, Japan, the Middle East, Egypt, Europe, Russia, and all the former satellite countries. She has a collection of dolls from every country she has visited.

Puspa is a psychologist and has a full-time clinical practice in health psychology. She also sees individuals, couples, and families for general psychology issues. Since the pandemic, she has been conducting sessions through telehealth. She earned her undergraduate, masters, and PhD. degrees at SUNYA where she was the director of master's training in counseling psychology. She completed a postdoctoral fellowship in primary care family psychology at the University of Rochester Medical Center/Strong Memorial Hospital. She has worked in hospital settings in primary care and women's health including at the Syracuse VA Medical Center. She also has had experience in human resource management while employed at SUNYA.

Puspa's family has always been the core of her life. She and her siblings, and their families, have been very close and are a reflection of her parents' caring and loving lifestyle, and genuine generosity and friendliness with others. They have a genuine interest in others and the Avila social lifestyle. She will certainly add to that community culture.

KATHY DeLaMATER

With contributions from Maxine Koblenz

Hello to my new community at Avila! I am thrilled to be the newest resident on the 4th floor East! Maxine very kindly helped me to think about information that would enable all of you to get to know me, so here goes...

I was blessed to be married to a caring, gentle man for almost 50 years. I met John in my hometown of Syracuse during the summer before my final year of college. He was from the Troy area, but had been recruited from HVCC to work in the lab at Carrier Corporation there. We were married the following summer and moved to the Capital Region, and here we stayed, building a home in the western part of Guilderland where our girls grew to adult hood. John blossomed in his HVAC career and worked as a Carrier sales engineer for the last 20 years before his retirement.

My elementary teaching career began in the East Greenbush district right after our marriage, but it only lasted for a short time there as we were blessed with two daughters, and I was able to stay at home with them through their formative years. I returned to teaching in Guilderland when the girls were older, and taught 4th grade for 13 years at Westmere elementary before retiring in 2002.

John and I enjoyed "island" travel over the years ... Bermuda and Hawaii twice, Antigua, Aruba, and Saint Thomas. We loved Cape Cod and visited there every year. Our final loved island was Anna Maria island on the Gulf Coast of Florida where we spent two months each winter for 10 years.

Saint Madeline Sophie parish was our community for 42 years, and I was so happy to be able to serve in several ministries and various leadership roles during that time. I am grateful that some of my "church family" is here at Avila and we can enjoy more time together.

I am also acquainted with some residents who have been a part of UAlbany family as my children are all employed there. Our oldest daughter, Christy (Doyle), is director of university events, and lives in Delmar with her husband Dan, and our two amazing grandsons. Dan is director of annual giving at UAlbany. Lisa, our younger daughter, is an assistant dean of the school of social welfare, living close by in Guilderland. Seems like UAlbany surrounds me! Our grandsons are smart, energetic, and very empathetic individuals, which makes me immensely proud. Sean is 11, beginning middle school this year, and Evan, nine years old, will be in 4th grade.

When my husband was diagnosed with cancer in 2018 and treatments in just months proved fruitless, we talked about my future. I already felt like Avila would be a good fit for me, and he urged me to follow through with joining what we knew was a community of friendly people and with amenities that would enhance my life as I would move forward alone. It was, indeed, the best path for me, and I am already feeling like Avila is my home and that I am finding a new family within which I hope to flourish.

Thank you for helping me to become another caring member of this community, and I look forward to meeting more of you!



Photograph by Max Tiller

ANDREA EDWARDS AND DAVID DITTON

By Ray and Erin Teichman

After overcoming some difficulties caused by the pandemic, Andrea Edwards and David Ditton moved to Avila this past July into cottage 14.

Andrea is the daughter of Laurel Edwards, a long-time Avila resident who currently lives next door at Daughters of Sarah. David is a retired New York State trooper. Both are natives of Guilderland who first met while Andrea was attending high school and David was serving in the U.S. Navy. They each went their separate ways for several years; but were reunited as the result of an internet posting some years ago and have been together since.

Andrea moved to New York City after high school where she attended Wagner College on Staten Island; then worked for the Bulova Watch Co. in Manhattan as a sales rep. After ten years she returned to Guilderland and began working for Thompson Learning, a textbook publisher, as an editor and proofreader. During that time, she also graduated from St. Rose with a master's in communication. Andrea has a brother, Scott, living in Colonie.



After high school David joined the Navy. He trained at Great Lakes Naval Station, Chicago; and was stationed at the submarine base, New London, CT. After his discharge he worked six years for the Guilderland Police Dept., then served 17 years with the New York State Police. Following retirement, he drove a truck for Light and Power, a company that set up lighting systems for various performance venues around the country. David also bought and rehabbed foreclosed properties. He has a daughter, two grandchildren, a brother, Bob, (also a former State trooper) who is deceased; and an older brother, Len. Dave has enjoyed scuba diving but currently turned to golf for outdoor exercise.

Both Andrea and Dave have traveled at home and abroad, enjoying resorts in the Caribbean and Europe.

We welcome them and look forward to getting to know them better.

JOE AND ROSEMARY KEHOE

By Ray and Erin Teichman

Rosemary and Joe Kehoe are an engaging couple who have recently moved to Avila from Clayton, NY on the St. Lawrence River. Their presence among us is owed largely to their friendship with current Avila resident Joe Shapiro and his late wife, Pat.

Joe graduated from Niagara University with a degree in economics, then served 23 years in the United States Air Force where he trained in hospital administration; then another 9 years as a hospital administrator in Margaretville, and 13 years in Joe's home town, Clayton, NY. After retiring he built and rehabbed houses. Rosemary trained as a nurse at Faulkner Hospital in Boston, MA and, following her marriage to Joe in 1955, used her training to work as a part-time nurse and full-time mother and homemaker to seven children, six daughters and a son.

Their children live in the eastern United States: Janet and Karen in the Albany area; Judy in Binghamton; Amy in Columbus, OH; Cindy in Champagne-Urbana, IL; Patricia in Lancaster, SC; and Stephen in Cary, NC. Rosemary and Joe have 12 grandchildren and 2 great grandchildren.

Travel has been a large part of their lives. While Joe served in the Air Force, they moved 12 times. One move took them to Morocco for three years and another to Turkey. In both cases they were accompanied by their children, who had their educational horizons greatly expanded as a result.

They have been on over 40 Road Scholar tours. Their memorable tours include those to Australia and New Zealand where they became knowledgeable concerning Polynesian culture; Central and South America as far as Peru where air sickness ruined their chance to visit Machu Picchu; and travel in the footsteps of Lewis and Clark.

When home, Joe enjoys journaling and Rosemary is a volunteer knitter for World Vision



Photograph by Max Tiller

SISTER PATSY REISS

By John Wagner

When Sister Irma Patricia Reiss joined the Avila community in July 2020, it was somewhat of a home coming. As a child, Patsy had lived in Manhattan, Bronxville, Larchmont, and Port Chester. She joined the Society of the Religious of the Sacred Heart of Jesus (RSCJ) here in Albany, where she entered their convent in Kenwood.

Sister Patsy's association with these nuns began in grade school where she attended several schools run by the Society. She went to high school at the Academy of the Sacred Heart in Greenwich, Connecticut. The staff there recommended that Patsy go to Barat College in Lake Forest, Illinois, a college named after the Society's foundress (Saint Madeline Sophie Barat). Patsy earned a degree in English literature at Barat. On graduation, she joined the Society, entering the novitiate program at Kenwood.

After taking her first vows at Kenwood, Sister Patsy attended the Society's Manhattanville College in Purchase, New York, where she received a master's degree in English literature. Sister's initial teaching assignments then took her to grade schools in Rochester and Buffalo, New York.

In 1972, the next phase of Sister Patsy's life began. She was transferred to her alma mater, Barat College. The community of nuns on the staff there needed a younger person to be the "Nun in Residence" (a dorm mother). Thus started a 32-year career at Barat. At first, her responsibility was to live in the female dormitory and to minister to the needs of the students. After a while, Sister Patsy became the only nun on campus and her role expanded to include that of spiritual leader. Her Monday midnight prayer services attracted students of various faith traditions. A firm believer in women's rights, she espoused the use of inclusive language in speech as well as in liturgical prayers.

The Society had several high schools in Japan and many of their graduates came to Barat for their college education. Sister Patsy made many good friends among these women and so Barat sent her to Japan to represent the college at their alumnae reunions. There were several such trips, lasting from two to six weeks. This deepened Sister Patsy's love of the Japanese people and their culture. Later, in recognition of her full-time service at Barat, Sister was given a six-month sabbatical which she spent in Japan.

When Barat College closed in 2005, Sister Patsy was asked to become the "Nun in Residence" at the Woodlands Academy of the Sacred Heart, a girl's high school on the campus with Barat. Her summers at Woodlands were enhanced by brief visits to California to volunteer at the Society's facility for elderly nuns. When that facility encountered a staffing problem, Sister Patsy was asked to stay for a year. It was four years before she could return to Woodlands. She remained there until last June, the close of the 2019 - 2020 academic year.

Sister Patsy is vivacious and has an engaging personality. Her Barat students said that she had a gift for listening and the ability to make you feel comfortable. Her firm belief that each one of us is lovable and her ability to be truly "present" for you made Sister Patsy an ideal "Nun in Residence."

Welcome to your new residence!



Photograph by Karl Gohlke

MICHELLE URBAN

By Wilbur Shapiro



Photograph by Max Tiller

Michelle joined the Ávila Community in August as our new Marketing Coordinator, replacing Geri Curtin who retired. Michelle comes to Ávila from NYU Winthrop Hospital in Long Island where she was a financial advisor for pediatric and adult oncology patients for the last 13 years. Prior to that she worked at NYOH in Latham, also as a financial advisor for oncology patients. Now at Ávila, Michelle is eager to assist and welcome new individuals to our community.

She is a native of the Albany area who grew up in Latham. She is the proud aunt of a niece and nephew and enjoys spending time with her family and friends. She also loves traveling, particularly to beach destinations.

Michelle is excited to have returned to the Capital Region to be near her family, as well as joining our community here at Ávila. Her engaging personality, energy and passion for our community will continue to make Ávila the amazing place it is.

(Shortly before he died, Paul Ward submitted the following article to *News and Views*.)

MEMORIES FROM KENWORTHY AVENUE

By Paul Ward

My first memories of growing up in Glens Falls began in the summer of 1933. We moved from Hudson Falls to Glens Falls to 26 Kenworthy Avenue when I was almost five years old. The house was on the west corner of Kenworthy and Mason Streets. It was a two story double flat wooden clapboard house with a slate roof built circa 1900. We rented the 1st floor flat for \$25 per month. There were porches on the front and rear of the house with an outside icebox on the back porch that required ice two or three times a week.

The first school I attended was the old Ridge Street School on the corner of May and Ridge streets (site of the present fire station) located about one mile from our house. The three-story school had an auditorium on the 3rd floor seating 700 persons for assemblies and receptions. By 1933, however, the auditorium level was condemned and so our end of the week assemblies were held on the 1st floor hallway. In 1937 a new elementary school, Jackson Heights, was constructed in a suburb of the city. I began 3rd grade that year in what was and is a beautiful school.

There were a lot of kids in the neighborhood. Thus, my brother Tom and I found plenty of things to do and friends to do them with.

Cowboys and Indians were a favorite pastime played mainly in the "pole" lot (a vacant lot next to the White's house that was used at one time by the phone company to store telephone poles). Spring and summer sandlot ball games were regularly held across the D&H railroad tracks behind the Adirondack Dairy on Ridge Street.

With events building towards World War II (i.e., the Spanish civil war and the Japanese invasion of China) we often played with 5 & 10 cent store lead soldiers, tanks, airplanes, etc. We were "told" that if you were Protestant then you favored the Spanish Republican side of the civil war and Catholics were with Franco and the Nationalists! There were also neat "war cards" graphically depicting those early conflicts and pictures of famous Indian chiefs that you received when you bought a packet of penny gum at the local "mom and pop" store. We pitched these cards or on occasion pennies against the porch or a handy available wall.

My allowance at the time was fifteen cents a week that was invariably spent Saturday afternoon at the Empire Theatre on South Street. There ten cents would admit you to a double feature (almost always two cowboy films), news, cartoon, a serial episode, previews of coming attractions and sometimes a Pete Smith Specialty or the March of Times feature. After the movies you would blow the remaining nickel on a double dipped ice cream cone at the corner Dutch Creamery.

On Main Street there was a Pepsi Cola "plant." This plant consisted of an oversized garage behind a residential house. Some of the older kids were employed to work on a couple of labeling machines (hand operated) and assist mixing the ingredients in various tanks for the beverage. Sometimes too much or too little syrup would be added in the bottles and we would be able to buy the defective soda for twenty-five cents a case. You may have remembered the Pepsi radio ditty:

Pepsi-Cola hits the spot,
Twelve full ounces, that's a lot!
Twice as much, for a nickel too,
Pepsi-Cola is the drink for you!



We always had to come home at night when the streetlights came on. When visiting a friend in the neighborhood, you never went up to the door to knock on the door or ring the bell, but rather stood outside shouting your friends name: "Billy, Billy" etc., until he came out or his mother would come to the door saying he was not home or could not come out!

Every May we made May baskets out of empty cottage cheese cartons and colorful crepe paper with wrapped wire handles that were filled with candy. These were placed on the doorknobs of friends' houses, where you would ring the doorbell and run so they couldn't see you. Everyone had a bike (with balloon tires; no shift gears) and we would use them to go everywhere. We often rode our bikes to Dunham's Bay, Lake George (11 miles) and one time as young teenagers we rode to the Saratoga battlefield, a 38-mile round trip.

Every summer my mother would get two weeks' vacation and for as long as I can remember we would travel to Hadlock Pond near Fort Ann, just off the farm-to-market road (route 149) then with a dirt surface. We had a 1930 Chevrolet sedan to get us there. We usually rented a camp called Roxanne, named after the proprietor's daughter. The rent was \$8 a week and located right on the pond. It had no electricity or indoor plumbing. My parents cooked our meals on the kerosene stove. These were most enjoyable days swimming, fishing, catching tadpoles and frogs, and going to Green's Pavilion for the Saturday night square dances.

I inherited my brother's afternoon (Glens Falls Times) paper route when I was 11 or 12. I would get my papers at "Beanie" Smith's mother's home on Upper Glen Street where I would fold the papers and then head off. There were only 63 customers and I had to pedal almost ten miles to complete the route. Because it was such a long route, I was paid one-and-a-half cents out of the three cents of paper instead of one penny per paper. Thus, I earned 95 cents a day, if my customers paid on time!

MUSIC THAT WILL NEVER DIE

By Aris DeNigris

As I began to print the material for the movie, "To Kill a Mockingbird," it suddenly flashed through my mind, as an amateur bird watcher, that I've seen and heard that bird. And since I was lucky enough to have grown up in the southern part of our country where they originally made their presence known in the 19th century, they were pretty much taken for granted. Someone had made the tongue in cheek remark that, if mockingbirds could talk, they'd have a thick southern drawl.



They began nesting in the 20th century and expanded their range to Ohio and the upper Midwest. They are robin sized small birds with a grayish color above and whitish below, with two white wing bars and a long tail. Even though they are small, they are aggressive and make their presence known when other birds come near their territory.

They are known and welcomed as they mimic the songs of other songbirds. Their vocal songs are long series of phrases, with each phrase repeated two to six times before shifting to a new sound before new sounds are mimicked. Both males and females sing. They are beautiful additions to our environment. They have at least 250 songs in their repertoire.

There's a story about a woman who was dying and played beautiful music on her piano until her death. A mockingbird sat by her window listening and when the woman died, that bird flew through her neighborhood singing the music she had played. I believe that is why Harper Lee titled her book "To Kill a Mockingbird." It would be a travesty and a sin to kill one.

WATERPOWER AND COHOES

By Steve Rotter

Early in the 19th century, a village bearing the name "Ga-Ha-oose" (meaning "place of the falling canoe") grew up on the south bank of the Mohawk River, and became the Village of Cohoes. The Mohawk and the Hudson Rivers converge just above the Village of Cohoes and produce millions of gallons of water that spill over an 86-foot drop called Cohoes Falls. In 1620 all of Cohoes and Van Schaick island were part of the estate purchased by Killian Van Rensselaer from the Dutch West India Company and the Mohawk Indian tribe. This estate was named Van Rensselaer Manor and the vast amount of territory is now New York's capital district of Albany, Troy and Cohoes. Van Rensselaer turned over his water rights to the river and land adjacent to the river at the proposed site of a dam to be built by the Cohoes Power Canal System so they could build a dam above Cohoes Falls. So begins the story of waterpower in the city of Cohoes and the construction of Harmony Mills and many smaller mills for cotton and knit goods.



One of America's earliest cotton factories started here in 1811—the Cohoes Manufacturing Company. Textiles would define the city of Cohoes after the start of this mill. Raw cotton brought up the east coast from southern states was processed, spun, and knitted or woven into white cotton calico and fine cotton muslins. The white calico was shipped to Newburgh to become printed fabric and then shipped to warehouses in New York City.

In 1831 Egbert Egberts, father of the knitting business in the United States, financed two gentlemen, the Bailey Brothers, to devise a power knitting machine and establish Cohoes' first knit factory to run with power looms.

Thus was born a new industry in the US and Cohoes became a major knitting center. The woolen mills specialized in consumer knit goods, while the cotton mills mass produced cloth. An 1891 map of Cohoes shows about 25 to 30 knitting mills, located mostly in the northern part of the city, that produced hosiery, wool hats, gloves, and other knit items.

Peter Harmony, a capitalist from New York City, founded Harmony Manufacturing Company. When this mill opened in 1837, it employed 250 people and contained 3000 spindles. In 1853, the Harmony Manufacturing Company became Harmony Mills. In 1880, 4,800 people were employed at five mills of the Harmony Mills complex, 5,650 looms were in operation and 258,000 spindles. It was nicknamed the "Spindle City" due to the vast number of spindles in the mills. The largest mill was Mill #3 built in 1872 and stretching 1100 feet and 5 stories high. It was the largest in the world at the time and became the model cotton producing plant in the country. Its finely articulated façade and mansard roof with central tower make it an attractive architectural building. Mill #3 processed almost 700,000 yards of cotton goods per week in the 1870's. This was a gigantic operation that consisted



of a jute mill and a bag mill as part of the complex. Cotton textiles had a high demand in New York City, England and Europe and by 1850, Cohoes had become a textile center.

Housing was now a need for employees. Workers' tenements were built on several streets near the mill, consisting of three and four storied brick row houses in the Greek revival style for the period. Additional housing was met by the purchase of 70 acres on a hill to be named "Harmony Hill ". Eight hundred tenement houses were built, along with five large boarding houses for single or unmarried workers. Rent was deducted from the workers' salaries. Harmony Hill was a self-contained town that had its own police force, garbage collection, street paving and repair crew.

One of every four residents of Cohoes, regardless of age, was employed by the company. The work force in the textile mill consisted mostly of women and children and contained two substantial ethnic groups—Irish and French Canadians. Most mill hands went to work early in the day and labored for 10 to 12 hours straight amid deafening noise, choking dust, lint, and overwhelming heat and humidity. Workers could also be severely injured or killed on the job when fingers, limbs or clothing became entangled in the rapidly moving machinery. The typical mill worker was a young unmarried Irish girl between the ages of 15 and 25. Children were required to go to school, but most stopped when they reached the age of 10 or 12 due to the need to support the family.

In 1880, the average young male made 75 cents for a 12-hour day while an unskilled boy made only 30 cents for a day that lasted from 6am to 6.30pm. People worked an exhausting week, but labor unions were on the way to change all of this.

A typical working family at the Mill was the Patrick Dillon family. "Patrick Dillon and his family probably left Ireland with his wife, Ellen, and their six children during the potato famine. The arrived in New York around 1850, added three more children during the decade, and at the outbreak of the Civil War, lived in a four-room company tenement at 4 Willow Street, in the heart of the Harmony Hill community. Four members of the family worked full time.

Every morning before six o'clock the 45-year-old head of the household left for work as a day laborer. His two eldest sons, Michael and William, twenty and eighteen respectively answered the six o'clock chime of the Harmony Mills bell. Patrick, his sixteen-year-old son, joined his father as a day laborer. Mrs. Dillon was occupied at home. Mathew, age fourteen, and the twelve-year-old twin girls did not yet work and only the six-year-old boy attended school. Mrs. Dillon gave considerable attention to the baby and a three-year-old daughter. In addition, Mrs. Dillon was again pregnant." (*to be continued*)

ACCLIMATING AT AVILA

By Rod Correll

*It's been a year since we arrived at Avila
We've found a home and no longer are travelers
It's been a long journey but now we're at rest
And getting to know y'all, that really adds zest.*

*We'd started to meet folks and get well acquainted
But COVID appeared and our efforts got tainted
No bingo on Mondays and cards three days later,
No movies or lectures in the Grand Lodge theater.*

*There is more we can do as things get back to normal
So long as we're masked and to rules are conformal,
Staying six feet apart getting milk from the fridge.
We now eat in fours and can play bocce and bridge.*

*While the pandemic has lengthened our acclimation
We're happy, feel welcomed and without hesitation,
Say though this place perfect will never, ever be,
Our lives here will surely have enhanced quality.*

*Our days at this point are definitely numbered
But our good faith efforts will not be encumbered.
We'll reach out to others, make friends, and tell stories,
And go forth uplifted, relieved of our worries.*

*Let's do it together then, let's laugh and let's smile
That's really not hard though it may take us a while.
Let's cherish each day and then live another
We've nothing to lose when we bond with each other.*

FIGHTING THE BUREAUCRACY (Part I): FROM HOSPITAL TO NURSING HOME

By Fred Seltzer

It has been suggested to me that it might be helpful to residents of Avila if I described the difficulties in getting my wife, Elane, back home to Avila after her visits to the hospital and then to a nursing home. Elane spent about six weeks in St. Peter's Hospital during two stays, and about 14 months in Kingsway Nursing Home during the period 2017-2018, returning to Avila in July 2018.

If you must stay in a hospital, first try to make sure that you are in "admitted status," and not "observation status," since the latter might reduce your insurance payments. Also, make sure that you are getting your required medications. The hospital did not carry one of Elane's prescriptions and would not, or could not, order it. I had to bring it from home. Get to know all the aides, nurses, and doctors treating you. If you are moved to a different room, all of these might change, which can be confusing.

Should you need to stay in the hospital for a long period, try to get as much physical therapy as possible, since your leg muscles might atrophy. Also, if you need multiple surgeries, make sure that someone speaks to the anesthesiologist to try to get minimal sedation. Too much sedation may cause loss of cognizance.

Watch the hospital bills carefully. I had occasion to deal with both our insurance company and the hospital billing department. I also had to speak to Medicare about coverage. It is helpful to have a family member or friend keep up with these details, as they are important.

When you enter a nursing home get to know your aides, nurses, and doctors, as you will be dependent upon them. A friendly, caring aide is a godsend. It is helpful if you can get relatives and friends to visit frequently, so they can also gauge the care you are receiving. If things are not up to standard, complain to the appropriate department.

Medicare covers part of your hospital costs and up to 100 days in a nursing home, but after that you may have to pay a daily rate of \$400 or more in the nursing home. You can see how a cost of \$400 per day (\$12,000/month or \$150,000/year) can quickly deplete your savings. If you cannot afford these costs, you may have to go on Medicaid. Speak to the social worker in the nursing home for advice.

While you can apply for Medicaid yourself, we used a lawyer, which can be expensive. Medicaid looks back five years over your checking account and other financial records. Then, if you qualify, you are required to spend down from your savings and income. Though we didn't pay \$12,000 a month, we still had to pay more than \$3,000 per month from our pension and social security payments.

To qualify for Medicaid, we had to answer many financial and medical questions and send forms to Albany County Social Services. This involved sending forms to Elane's doctors to prove that her medical condition qualified her for Medicaid. I found the clerk at the Medicaid office helpful and friendly.

In New York State, an individual on Medicaid also must use an agency to supervise their care, other than the nursing home. I was presented with a list of agencies, from which I chose Fidelis Care. I should have done more research since both the social worker and I found them difficult to deal with.

In a future article, I'll discuss the trials and tribulations of the process for bringing Elane home.

CONVICTIONS

By Joe Shapiro

In 1936, during the depths of the Great Depression, New York City was engulfed by petty crime. To deal with an overload of convictions for misdemeanors and such, a special Sentencing Court, limited to determining punishment, was established. Imprisonment up to one year or less or conditional suspension were discretionary.

According to an attorney who was present, some 600 cases had been scheduled. Bedraggled defendants shuffled by in a continuous stream.

About 300 hundred had already been processed. The wary magistrate looked up. Before him appeared a gentleman, neatly suited, with tie and pleated handkerchief, and polished shoes.

The following occurred:

Magistrate: Upon review, I sentence you....

Defendant: If it please the Court, may I make a statement for your Honor before sentence is passed?

Magistrate: Certainly! But keep it brief.

Defendant: I implore the Court to consider that I have a wife and five children. I am gainfully employed as a chef at the Waldorf Astoria. If Your Honor accords the probation, I can continue as a chef, earning an income. Otherwise, my family would be bereft, and have to go on welfare and be a burden to society.

Magistrate: What you tell me is persuasive but does not appear in your record. I have no means to confirm what you tell me. I must proceed. You assert that you are a chef at the Waldorf Astoria. Tell me, how would you make Baked Alaska?

Defendant: First you take the fish....

Magistrate: I've heard enough. Six months. Next case.



WHAT DOES THE NEWS AND VIEWS LAYOUT EDITOR DO?

By Lynn Altonin

We are looking for someone to eventually take my place as layout editor of *News and Views*, which is usually published four times per year. The following is a brief description of what I do.

Articles are emailed to me, and are immediately formatted, using preset formats (fonts, sizes, spacing). Even though the articles have been edited, they are double-checked for how numbers are presented, grammar, etc. This takes 15 to 20 minutes per article. They are then sent out to be proofread.

If photos are not sent with the articles, then I search Google or Bing to find appropriate free graphics to accompany the article. This ordinarily takes about 20 to 30 minutes per article.

When everything has been proofread and corrected the articles are copied into the main newsletter. Things may have to be moved around to fit properly, so the graphics are not added until all the articles have been incorporated. When I am satisfied that everything is in the proper order, the headings and photo captions are added. It takes four or five hours to accomplish this. The entire newsletter is then saved to a flash drive in *pdf* format, which is used to print out *News and Views* on the Avila color printer.

Does this sound like something you might be interested in doing? If yes, please let me know.