

# Avila News and Views

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

*Albany, NY*

*February 2025*

## FR. BOB LONGOBUCCO, BOARD MEMBER

By Tom and Ellen Fitzgerald



*Photo by Ellen and Tom Fitzgerald*

Fr. Bob Longobucco visited Avila on several occasions in January for Board meetings, an ecumenical prayer service, and our interview with him. He was ordained a priest of the Albany Diocese 26 years ago. Currently, he is the Vicar General of the Diocese, moderator of the Diocesan Curia, serves as Pastor of St. Kateri Tekakwitha Parish in Schenectady, and is vice president of the Diocesan Corporation as well as a member of Avila's Board of Trustees.

After graduating from high school on Long Island, he enrolled at the University of Albany, which he identified with a smile as the best Catholic university in New York based on its excellent campus ministry at the Newman Center, where he encountered many fellow students who became lifelong friends. After graduation, he was employed in the State Legislature for four years. At 26, he decided to enter the seminary for a career in the priesthood because "it just felt right." Those formative years became significant through encounters with priests like Fr. Tony Marone, Jack Molyneux, and Leo Markert, who helped him shape a prayerful discernment process leading to the call to the priesthood.

When we asked what the major tasks are facing the Avila Board members, he outlined four main targets: the tax situation with the City of Albany, creating a sustainable operation path for Avila, understanding retirement community research on sustaining a positive culture, and establishing funding for capital expenditures. He appreciates the information supplied by Kathleen for the Board's consideration and the need to support her efforts in planning for future improvements. He believes the best advertising and marketing tool is the current residents who have established a supportive and nurturing environment in Avila.

Fr. Bob hopes that residents understand they have the dedicated support of the Bishop and that the Board is working to achieve wholeness for each resident's health, social well-being, and spirituality. He expects the Board to continue communicating with residents and become even more knowledgeable about what residents need and desire in this outstanding retirement community.

We inquired again why he selected the University of Albany. With a great laugh, he responded that other Catholic colleges rejected his application (which we doubt). When asked what he liked best about visiting Avila, he quickly responded, "There are so many great features about this facility, such as residents' friendliness and sense of happiness, but I also find the chocolate chip cookies are delicious!"

When we finished our interview, Fr. Bob was off to his evening meetings at the parish, hoping he could squeeze in time for a quick dinner. We found him dedicated to his ministry and his participation in Board activities. We were grateful for the time he shared with us and for his talents and insights into the future of Avila. We thank him and many others who give their time freely to support our retirement community.

## MEET OUR NEW NEIGHBORS . . .

### SISTER AGNES CHIMBAYO, RSCJ

By Ray & Erin Teichman



*Photo by Ray and Erin Teichman*

Sister Agnes Chimbayo is the most recent member of the Society of the Sacred Heart of Jesus to become a resident of the Lodge at Avila. She is a native of the land-locked country of Malawi, formerly the British colony of Nyasaland, located in Africa south of Tanzania, east of Zambia and north and east of Mozambique.

She was raised in the Anglican faith in a family of ten children, becoming a Roman Catholic in her early 20s. Sister Agnes joined the Daughters of Charity Canossian, taking final vows in 1986. She worked as a nurse, midwife and in the dispensary. As a midwife, Sister Agnes delivered over 500 children. During her sabbatical in the United States, beginning in 1997, Sister Agnes expanded her formal education while reexamining her lifetime religious commitment to the Canossians. She began the process of transfer to the Society of the Sacred Heart in 1999, becoming a full member in 2003. She had spent 23 years with the Canossians and has since

been with the RSCJs for 22.

Prior to coming to Avila, she served as a chaplain in a Chicago hospital. She has done and continues to do podcasts for Radio Maria. At Avila she will serve as a chaplain, providing pastoral care to her fellow sisters.

We welcome Sister Agnes to Avila and look forward to getting to know her better.

### JOAN AND HARVEY FRIEDMAN

Interviewed by Pat Binzer

Joan and Harvey Friedman are longtime residents of the Capital Region. They enjoyed their home in Latham for many years but decided their lives were changing and it was time to seek a different style of living.

They visited many senior communities in the area and found that some apartments were too small. Others were not considered suitable for the furnishings they wished to move. Other communities did not offer full food service, which was a requirement for them. They were also giving up driving, so the availability of transportation to appointments, cultural events and shopping was also a consideration.

Avila had just the apartment they desired. It was large and could be renovated to accommodate their furnishings and artwork to create a new home. It also had full dining offerings, and transportation, among other services.



Photo by Pat Binzer

The Friedmans have led full and active lives throughout the years.

When Harvey was discharged from the Air Force in Alabama, he was ready to join a dental practice in Latham and begin their lives in the Albany area. He continued to grow professionally, developing a solo dental practice in Albany that thrived for over 50 years. He was highly regarded by his patients for his caring manner and professional expertise. He delighted in making sure his patients learned proper dental hygiene.

His community service work included volunteering dental services at St. Colman's Home for Boys. He was given an award of distinction for his contributions to the student body of University at Albany.

Joan went to the High School of Music and Art in New York City, to Emerson College, and to Columbia University where she received her master's degree in speech pathology and audiology.

Much of her adult life was given to community service, serving on many boards, including the Saratoga Performing Arts Center, the Ladies Auxiliary of Memorial Hospital, and Albany Institute of History and Art. She was a major fundraiser for the Double H Ranch for critically ill and terminally ill children in Lake Luzerne.

In 1989 Joan and two partners formed *Panoply Foods*, a brokerage to supermarkets. The company, now run by her daughter Robin, represents over 60 suppliers in several states. Joan still monitors the progress of the business.

The Friedmans have a townhome in Green Harbor on Lake George. It is enjoyed on many occasions by the entire family. They have had the opportunity to travel to Europe and Africa. They also enjoyed several riverboat cruises.

They have two daughters, Dr. Alison Sullivan and Robin Ginac and two granddaughters.

## ART AND JOAN JOHNSON

By Ellen and Tom Fitzgerald

In November 2024, Avila welcomed two new residents who joined our community, coming from Camillus, a suburb of Syracuse where they lived for 16 years. Art grew up in Vancouver, Washington, where he honed his interest in mathematics before teaching briefly at the University of Vancouver, Washington. During that stint, he attracted the attention of GE recruiters, who offered him a position at their facility in Syracuse. Joan lived her early life in the Cayuga Lake region at Union Springs. She, too, felt the call to teach when the Syracuse City District hired her for a middle school assignment.



Photo by Ellen and Tom Fitzgerald

Their lives crossed paths at, of all places, the Precision Repair shop while they waited for their respective cars to be serviced. Art copied her name and telephone number from the information form, hoping to get to know her. Subsequent conversations led to dinners, spending time together, and a marriage 62 years ago. They raised a daughter who is now living in Slingerland and a son who resides in Illinois. Their three grandchildren are a joy: two granddaughters aged 16 and 19 living in Slingerland and a grandson aged 22 living in Illinois.

After beginning his GE career in Syracuse, Art was transferred to Oklahoma City, OK, with his entire division. Joan continued her teaching career there but quickly realized the differences in resources between teaching in Syracuse, NY, and Oklahoma. Her new teaching location had no special education, music, or art teachers. Those assignments were the function of regular classroom teachers. Joan enjoys saying that the lack of a musical curriculum resulted in her sixth-grade class singing repeatedly the one song everyone knew, "Oklahoma." Joan also became active in the League of Women Voters and political campaigns during this time. Both recalled how emotionally moving a visit to the Murrah Federal Building, the site of the terrorist bombing in 1995, which has a statue of Jesus looking down at his open hands with an inscription stating, "And Jesus Wept."

After a few years in Oklahoma, Art was transferred to the GE facility in Syracuse, where he remained until retirement. When they expressed an interest in joining a retirement community, their daughter took the opportunity to highlight Avila and its nearness to her and the grandchildren. They are now eager to embrace this new chapter in their lives, close to family, and new friendships.

We welcome Joan and Art and know that they will "fit in" to our culture of support for one another and friendliness.

## .. OU NEW STAFF MEMBERS ...

### SHAWN HALL

#### Interviewed by Pat Binzer



Photo by Pat Binzer

We welcome the return of Shawn to Avila. He is a newcomer to some residents, but a returning friend to those of us who have lived here for several years.

Shawn was previously interviewed in the May 2014 issue of *News and Views* when he first joined Avila, and again in July 2020, when he assumed the role of Avila CEO. Now in 2025 Shawn has returned to the area and rejoined the Avila family as he takes on the job of Avila's Chief Administrative Officer.

When he was asked what he liked most about being back at Avila, he responded: "What I love most about being back at Avila is being able to spend quality time and have engaging conversations with the residents and employees. Everyone here is so wonderful. Being able to interact with so many different perspectives and help out in various ways feels very rewarding to me."

Currently Shawn and his wife, Michelle (an optometrist), are living in Clifton Park, but they are hoping to purchase some property in the country before the end of the year. They have one son and

three daughters and are now empty nesters.

Shawn was born in Glens Falls, NY and grew up in Warrenville, NY, surrounded by wildlife and plenty of fishing, hiking, hunting and farming.

He graduated from Cobleskill High School and earned an associate's degree in applied science from Maria College. He graduated from SUNY Utica/Rome with a bachelor's in health administration. He became a licensed Physical Therapist Assistant and a licensed Nursing Home Administrator.

He enjoys spending quality time with his family. He and his wife look forward to visits from their children. He also enjoys being in the great outdoors, staying physically fit and riding his Harley Davidson motorcycle when weather permits.

When asked what he remembers most about his previous time at Avila, Shawn replied, "As I look back on my time here at Avila, I think the thing I remember most would be the moments when I've been able to make someone's day a little easier and enjoyable. Whether it's helping to solve a problem or just offering a friendly chat, those moments stick with me most. It is the little wins that make a job truly meaningful."

Now Shawn is once again filling in as a linchpin between the staff and residents, willing to take on any assignment that comes his way and doing it with a smile and expertise. Welcome home!

## GINGER MCGEE

By Erin and Ray Teichman



Ginger McGehee, the newest addition to Avila's marketing staff, is a native Virginian who came to Albany over 20 years ago. She is a graduate of the State University at Albany with a degree in social work. Her previous work experience includes senior living communities as well as jobs in sales and marketing. She also has experience working with memory care and assisted living facilities.

Ginger's daughter, Rilah, is a ten-year old budding actress who has had roles in school plays (*Aladdin*) and in a drama club (*Matilda and Footloose*).

Ginger loves dogs and is the proud owner of two beautiful animals, a bulldog, Ranger and a husky, Sheba. In her free time, she enjoys "hot" yoga in rooms at 110 degrees. Her favorite place to visit is Mystic, Connecticut.

She told us she is looking forward to meeting all the current Avila residents as she works with Marketing to fill our remaining available apartments. With her outgoing personality and infectious laugh, there

should be no problem accomplishing those goals.

## .. AND THOSE INDIVIDUALS WHO ENTERTAIN US

### JOE SORRENTINO

Interviewed by Rod Correll



*Photo by Rod Correll*

Joe Sorrentino and his band, with sometimes three, sometimes four musicians, have been entertaining Avila residents for over ten years. In the more than fifty gigs they've played in our Great Room, his group has built up quite a following. That's not surprising; my foot couldn't stop tapping, as I listened to Joe on the drums, and his sidemen, Crick Diefendorf, guitarist/vocalist and Jonathan Greene on clarinet, as they treated the audience to a program of "Antique Swing."

Joe, for over 30 years a well-loved high school teacher, comes from a musical family, several members of whom played instruments for their own enjoyment and sometimes professionally. It didn't take long for Joe to succumb and try his hand, to join a band and later, to form his own group. Today, at the age of 92, Joe takes a back seat to the lead performers he enlists to play with him. He no longer stars. Energetic solo riffs are part of his past but his passion for the music he plays lives on and is infectious. When his

name is posted on future Avila calendars come have a listen. If you're like me, you will be captivated!

### THE LINUS PROJECT

By Clairese Russell



*Photo by Tracy Momrow*

**Enjoy sewing?** If you can sew a straight line, your help is needed! Here at AVILA a group of residents meet every Wednesday to make blankets for the Linus Project.

**What is the Linus Project?** It is a national non-profit organization founded in 1995 with a mission to provide comfort, love, and a sense of security for children who are seriously ill, traumatized or otherwise in need.

**Interested?** Visit a meeting on Wednesdays at 1pm on the 4<sup>th</sup> floor West area near the elevators. This resident inspired chapter has made 200+ blankets for children in the Albany area during the past four years. Can't make a meeting? Call Marilyn at 673.

## FOCUS FEATURE: AVILA'S FINE STAFF

*"And my sincere thanks. These wonderful folks have been a huge help to me. I came to Avila from the Washington, DC area, so Albany and the Capital Region are all new to me. 'Thank you' seems an inadequate phrase to fully express my heartfelt appreciation for all that they do-from shuttle rides to those unending doctor appointments."*

*Margie Gertzman, Cottage #16*



*"The mystery is solved! Residents were pleasantly surprised to find small medallions attached to individual doors before the start of the Holidays. Ellen and I were very pleased with this kind gesture but could not identify who was kind enough to prepare and attach the medallions to the doors. We now know that the evening receptionist, Diane Holzsehuh, is the one who took the time to attach the medallions to the doors. Thank you, Diane, for your kindness, making Avila Proud."*

*Tom and Ellen Fitzgerald*

*"A very great thank you to all the maintenance staff who have been out in the cold cleaning the snow off the cars and shoveling between them. It certainly helps keep my elderly self from freezing"*

*Erin Teichman*

*"Thanks to Devin for his help with my phone requests/questions as at this time my health has prevented me from leaving her apartment to come to the front desk."*

*Joyce Gibbs"*

*"Time again to thank the staff for cleaning cars and moving cars to help us during the snow falls we've had. I had an 8:30 appointment one morning and felt sure I would have to clean the car but when I got to the parking lot, our wonderful two Toms were already there.*

*The landscaping crew has also done a great job clearing and salting sidewalks, parking lots and the roadways."*

*How fortunate we are! Thanks to everyone.*

*Rose Ann Schaeffing*

*"My thanks and "hats off" to the amazing Snow Removal Team at 'Avila! These folks are amazing! They are here at all hours, and it is very comforting. I am a Southern native, and I feel very safe in this Community in the Albany winter weather!*

*I want to thank Gordy and his Team as well for making our Community so safe during this winter. I have no doubt that the amazing snow removal is due to Gordy's management!"*

*Margie*

*Gertzman*

# NEWS AND VIEWS CELEBRATES 20<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY ISSUE

By Tom and Ellen Fitzgerald

Avila residents eagerly look forward to receiving their next issue of *News and Views*, which is published in February, May, August, and November. Reading the 12-14 pages, we learn about new residents, events, celebrations, staff recognition, poetry, and motivational stories. Its publication requires time and effort from several residents who write, photograph, edit, and duplicate before it reaches our hands.

For this special 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary edition, we interviewed Lynn Altonin and Erin Teichman, the co-editors of *News and Views*, to highlight its beginnings, growth, content, and appeal. Lynn and Erin are supported by eight editorial staff residents who prepare articles, pictures, and generally map out the content of each edition.

Lynn served as layout editor from 2012 to 2018 when she and Erin became co-editors. Don Layton and Lore Scurrah were the early editors when *News and Views* grew from a black and white, two-page, cut-and-paste, offset printed publication of the Residents' Council to its present form with color pictures and graphics that appeal to today's readers. Lynn reports that each issue usually requires 20-30 hours of her time to organize and print issues. Erin commented that the co-editors always look forward to feedback from residents about the articles and pictures they enjoyed, information about new residents, and other articles that "catch the fancy" of residents. Both felt they were willing to give their time, knowing that the newsletter enriches residents' awareness of each other and current Avila "news and events." Prospective residents frequently request copies to better assess if Avila's social life and culture suits their needs and interests. The publication has also been placed on Avila's website to acquaint larger audiences with the positive features of living at Avila.

The editorial board meets six weeks before publication to organize interviews of residents, Avila Board members, and staff, and to generate ideas for articles, pictures and descriptions of Avila events and poetry.

Residents who might be interested in joining the editorial board to suggest or author short articles are welcome to contact Lynn or Erin at any time. The editors and editorial board members are delighted by *News and Views'* growth over the last twenty years, pleased by the positive reception each issue receives from readers, and encouraged by the value it serves in our community. Residents also look forward to the continued growth of this publication. When Lynn was asked jokingly, "Have you started planning for the 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary edition?" She responded, "Yes, of course, if my eyes hold out." *News and Views* represents such a valuable tool in Avila's life, we all sincerely hope Lynn's eyes **Do** hold out,

and we can look forward to many more years of reading pleasure. (Photo : Members of the *News and Views* editorial board gather to discuss the next issue (seated, left to right), Pat Binzer, Lynn Altonin, Erin Teichman, and Rose Ann Schaeffing, (standing) Tom and Ellen Fitzgerald ."



Photo by Tom Wahl

## COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEE

By Tom and Ellen Fitzgerald

One research recommendation about successful aging is the spirit of volunteering to serve others. One of the eight committees that operate at Avila in support of our residents is Avila Community Services. Under the leadership of Barbara Flynn, the committee members meet on the fourth Thursday of each month to discuss the ongoing need for volunteers in and outside of Avila. New opportunities to support our community are always welcomed and encouraged.

What are some of the volunteer opportunities that exist for residents? Several require a small but essential time commitment, such as bringing paper bag donations to the Craft Room, sitting at the pool while others swim, and supporting clothing and food drives. Yes, although these smilingly small tasks require a little time, they reap meaningful rewards for volunteers and the people they serve. Several other activities organized by this committee ask for more time commitment, such as the one-hour per week services at our Country Store, responding to residents' needs by serving as Floor Representative, assisting with Open House activities, helping at the annual Yard Sale and clothing drives or posting Avila Proud Resolutions. The bottom line is that residents need to participate in service to others for personal growth, as well as community well-being. The Community Services committee not only provides such opportunities for each of us, but it also welcomes your suggestions.

After reading this list of activities organized by this committee, I am sure you can find a way to serve others in and outside this community. You may also be moved to join this committee as it continues efforts to organize volunteer opportunities in support of Avila residents. Please stop by the Craft Room on the fourth Thursday of the month to see some of the good work Avila committees do for all of us!

## AN ART FULL PARISIAN APARTMENT

By Ray and Erin Teichman

In May 2022 Erin and I spent two glorious weeks in Paris with our daughters, Amy and Margaret. The apartment, located on the Ile St. Louis behind Notre Dame, was owned by art dealers residing in Belgium and was chock full of art including a portrait of a woman by Marie Laurencin, French Cubist painter and printmaker; a print by Roy Lichtenstein; a sketch by Camille Pissarro, and a white ceramic dog, Puppy, by Jeff Koons which sat on a pedestal at the corner of the living/dining room. We quickly learned to give Puppy a wide berth because we discovered he was worth \$15,000. Above the fireplace was a very large photo of boxes by Shilpa Gupta from her "There are no explosives in this room" series. There were other art pieces throughout the apartment; however, we were unable to identify the artists.

Our daughters had scheduled visits to the Louvre, Versailles, Giverny, the Eiffel Tower and the Cluny museum. These together with visits to the Carnavalet (city museum of Paris), Victor Hugo's home and the Pantheon constituted the principal sites of the stay.

At the Eiffel Tower we enjoyed a glass of champagne on reaching the top as well as breathtaking views of Paris followed by a picnic lunch on the Champ de Mars.



*Photo by Ray and Erin Teichman*

Toward the end of our Paris visit we explored the Pantheon. Our girls accompanied Dad on a climb of 203 steps to the top for a panoramic view of the city.

The trip to Giverny, the home of Impressionist Claude Monet, was a real treat. We arrived by train on a very bright, sunny day and were transported by trolley from the station to the site. The gardens were gorgeous and the pond a pretty site though not as full of lily pads as one thought. Margaret had particularly looked forward to the visit and was not disappointed. Monet's Japanese print collection was most impressive. Though they were copies, his studio was filled with paintings by his fellow 19th century artists, Manet, Renoir, Cezanne, Sisley and Pissarro.

Perhaps we should entitle this "an artful Parisian visit."

## AVILA LIBRARY

By Rose Ann Schaeffing



Photo by Ellen and Tom Fitzgerald

Mary Lee, a career librarian, has generously given of her time to be our librarian for the last four years. When she started, she worked with Gloria Herkowitz who was serving as librarian at the time. They worked together to weed the collection and reconfigure the shelves. Thanks to this teamwork the library is now well-organized and user friendly. Mary now works to expand the fiction area to keep it current. She would also like to diversify and expand the non-fiction area. She also stays aware of the choices of the Avila book club and considers the need for large print books. Mary would like to remind all of us to return borrowed items in a timely manner so we can all enjoy the full benefits of the library.

The funds for the purchase of new items come from a monthly stipend from a generous resident benefactor. (As all residents benefit from the library, perhaps the administration should consider allowing for a library budget in the future.)

The library is another example of what we have at Avila because of people who, like Mary and the benefactor, are generous with their talent, time and funds. Come to the library to take advantage of all that is there as well as to chat with Mary. She is a fountain of knowledge on books and local and area history and culture. Thank you to Mary and the benefactor who make it possible.

## AVILA STRONG

By Tom Fitzgerald

When we discuss Avila's unique culture, we usually identify our support and concern for one another. You saw the beautiful notice near each elevator, reminding us that December is an ideal time to engage in daily acts of kindness for our fellow residents. Tracy Momrow, from our Marketing Office, prepared this display. We thank her for this appropriate reminder that as we perform acts of kindness for one another, we continue to make our home **Avila Strong**.



Photo by Ellen and Tom Fitzgerald

Many of you send notes to other residents, call others to check on their wellness, send Christmas and holiday cards, and prepare small packages of cookies/candy for other residents. Each of you do this not out of obligation but from a growing sense of care, support, and kindness for others here at Avila.

Tracy, your posting identified December as a month filled with daily opportunities for kindness was appreciated and meaningful for all of us as it continued to build **Avila Strong**. Thank you from all of us.

## ENGLISH COUNTRY DANCE

By Rose Ann Schaeffing

Melanie Axel-Lute has been involved with English Country Dance for many years. She is a member of the Capital English Country Dancers and participates in their regular dance programs. Melanie is a caller and regularly calls at various groups on the East Coast. She also is a regular at dance camps and dance weekends.

Now she offers her expertise to any interested Avila residents on the first and third Tuesdays of each month. The dances she teaches are low impact, no partners needed, nothing fancy. Anyone who is able to walk fairly briskly and unaided can do these dances —no dance experience is necessary. Even folks who claim to have two left feet can do this! It is non-percussive, relatively slow and not hard on feet or joints.

In addition to Melanie's expertise, several experienced dance "angels" come to Avila to join our dancers for the sessions here. Their participation makes it easier to learn and relax. The music is from Handel, Purcell, Playford and more. Melanie is generous with her time and enjoys sharing her love of dance with her fellow residents. Everyone is invited—come to dance or just to watch and enjoy the music.



Photo by Ellen and Tom Fitzgerald

## PRESENTATION BY SR. MARIA CIMPERMAN

By Tom Fitzgerald



Photo by Ellen and Tom Fitzgerald

On December 20, Sister Maria Cimperman, RSCJ, visited Avila and agreed to present her observations and insights concerning the 2024 Synod of the Catholic Church in Rome. Her title questioned "How does the Synod influence the lives of all people of faith?" An enthusiastic audience of 45 residents and visitors were captivated by her insights and reflections about the Synodal process of questioning, reflection, and decision-making. Sr. concluded the session by stating that the document produced and approved by the 400 delegates focused on moving toward more accountability, transparency, and discernment within the Church. Those in attendance expressed an interest in further discussions and meetings at Avila to address the Synod recommendations. (Pictured are Fr. Leo O'Brien, Sr. Nance,

Sr. Maria, and Sr. Joan.)

## SINCE OUR LAST ISSUE . . .

Commentary and photos by Tom and Ellen Fitzgerald.

Seven teams of residents use their creative skills to build gingerbread houses before residents vote on their favorite



in anticipation of two significant events this holiday season, the display cases depict both Hanukkah religious symbols and the Bethlehem manger scene awaiting the birth of the Christ child. Avila residents representing each religious group welcome this opportunity to enjoy together this season of the year."



Under the direction of Barbara Merritt and accompanied by Mike Shore, 12 residents produced the "new" version of the *Twelve Days of Christmas* for the staff luncheon and the Thursday wine and cheese gatherings in December. Fr. Jim Kane, Ellen Fitzgerald, Arline Dederick, Rod Correl, and John Wagner are in costume and enjoying themselves."



The annual tree lighting took place on December 5<sup>th</sup>, and a large Avila crowd attended. Two new residents, Art and Joan Johnson, were honored to be asked to add large ornaments to this year's tree. "

Ring in the New Year, 2025, and reminiscing about the Old Year, 2024, at the New Year's Eve Party was an immense success with lively music, decorations, delicious food, and flowing conversations. Residents left the party feeling the pleasure of friendships and support provided by this Avila activity."



Three Board members met for the fifth time with residents in January to discuss the developing situation with the City of Albany and Avila's tax assessment. Pictured following the meeting are, from left to right, Chairperson Ken Raymond, Attorney Michael Costello and Board member, Chris Cary.

## *WHAT ARE WE WAITING FOR?*

*By Patricia J. Binzer*

*It's still winter.  
Are we waiting for spring?  
We will get more snow  
But we don't shovel anything.*

*The days have gotten longer.  
We've had more sunny days.  
We wake up in the morning  
and enjoy those first full rays.*

*Are you waiting for a reason  
to put that smile on your face?  
Try saying, "Good morning"  
to all the human race.*

*Make yourself a promise  
to like the face you see  
When you look in the mirror,  
"Hi! You look great to me!"*

*Look into your closet  
for something fresh to wear.  
Clothes bright and colorful.  
Do something with your hair.*

*What's on today's schedule  
that you might like to do.  
Monopoly or Rummykub  
Just to name a few.*

*Invite a friend to dinner  
or even lunch will do.  
Order something different  
A new sandwich or a stew.*

*If you are one of those folks  
who likes to go out in fresh air,  
Put on your coat and do it,  
Just to see what's there.*

*Our Fran keeps thinking  
of fun things for us to do.  
Maybe you should try one  
or perhaps even two.*

*So here we are just waiting  
Not sure of what's in store  
It's up to us to fill our lives  
So we can enjoy it even more*

# *SPRING WILL BE HERE SOON*

