

# GCU MAGAZINE

JOIN US IN CELEBRATING OUR



**GCU**  
SINCE 1892



CONVENTION OF THE FALC'S  
THE GREEK CATHOLIC UNION OF U.S.A.  
JUNE-1918 CLEVELAND, OHIO

# Anniversary

1892 February 14 2017

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**New Look!**  
The April issue will be sporting a new look. Don't worry, the stories will still be about our members and how they're doing good stuff!



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Phone: 1-724-495-3400  
1-800-722-4428

FAX: 1-724-495-3421

(E-Mail Address) info@gcuusa.com

(GCU Web Site) www.gcuusa.com

(Article Submission) bwahal@gcuusa.com

George N. Juba, President/CEO  
Deborah Tatro, Executive Vice President/COO  
Timothy Demetres/CFO  
Theodore M. Trbovich, General Counsel

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the April  
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**George N. Juba**  
President/CEO

February 14, 2017 marked the 125<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the GCU! Every organization is founded upon a vision and purpose for their existence. On February 14, 1892 representatives from fourteen independent fraternal lodges or brotherhoods along with six Greek Catholic priests met at St. Mary's Greek Catholic Church in Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania. Their goal at the time was to establish a national organization to band all of the independent religious-national brotherhoods into

one strong organization to meet the ongoing needs of Carpatho Rusyn immigrants. These needs included the spreading of love and friendship among the Rusin Greek Catholic people living in America, the giving of material and financial aid to members and their heirs in the event of death, the providing of the ways and means necessary for the education of their people

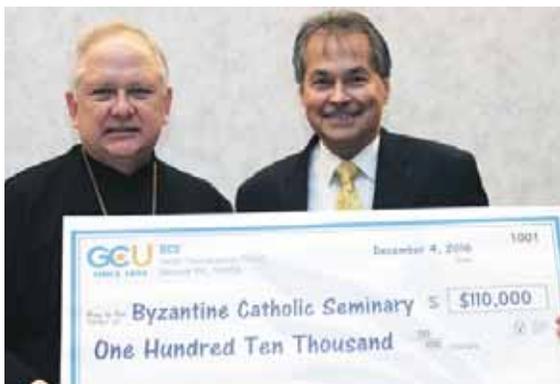
in national and religious requirements and of aid to churches and schools, and if financial conditions permitted, the giving of aid to the injured and indigent members.

Although modified over our one hundred and twenty-four years of history, this "vision" and "purpose" by our founders has stood the test of time continuing to be achieved and fostered each and every day. We see this through the life and annuity products offered by our Society in addition to the various fraternal programs sponsored on a national level by the GCU and by the officers and members of our local lodges and districts.

On this historic occasion, in addition to our Founders, we honor all of our past presidents and officers that have served our Society. Over the course of our history many challenges that were faced and overcome could have had an effect upon the future existence of the GCU. Such challenges included the Spanish Flu Epidemic between 1918 and 1919, the Great Depression in 1929, the re-rating of its members' policy premiums in the 1930's and two World Wars. Post World War II, executive officers faced many operational challenges attempting to create more efficiency. Those advancements included the adoption of a one fund

Continued on page 5

## GCU Donations Assist Byzantine Seminary and Project Bundle-Up



Archbishop William Skurla and GCU President/CEO George N. Juba with the GCU educational grant for the Byzantine Catholic Seminary.



From left: GCU Board member Barb Kushner, Membership & Community Relations Manager Stephanie Yackovich, Sally Wiggin of WTAE-TV in Pittsburgh and GCU President & CEO George Juba. The GCU group presented a check for \$2,500 to the WTAE-TV & Salvation Army's Project Bundle-Up.

On Friday, December 3, 2016, President Juba, Membership & Community Relations Manager Stephanie Yackovich and GCU National Director Barbara Kushner were invited to the WTAE TV studios for their annual telethon to raise money for Project Bundle-Up. This worthy cause is a combined effort of WTAE and The Salvation Army and it provides winter weather apparel to needy children and senior citizens from Erie, PA south to the

West Virginia state line and from Altoona, PA west to the Ohio state line. Most of those served are elementary school age students. The GCU donated \$2,500.<sup>00</sup> to Project Bundle-Up.

The charitable giving continued on Sunday, December 5, 2016 as GCU President/CEO George N. Juba presented Metropolitan William Skurla, Archbishop of the Archeparchy of Pittsburgh with the GCU's educational grant of \$110,000.<sup>00</sup>. The annual grant is for the SS. Cyril & Methodius Byzantine Catholic Seminary. The presentation took place at the Saint Nicholas Charity Dinner held at St. John Cathedral Center. With this year's presentation GCU donations, which began in 1961, now total more that \$3 million.



Far left: A group of happy participants from the St. Nicholas Charity Dinner.

At left: The seminarians of SS. Cyril & Methodius Byzantine Seminary performed 4 Christmas carols to the delight of the St. Nicholas Charity Dinner attendees.



## Great Lent is Coming!

As I write my thoughts for the *GCU Magazine* today, I see that in only a few days, Sunday, January 29, we will be commemorating the Sunday of Zacchaeus. Memories of the Birth, Circumcision and Baptism of Our Lord are still fresh in our minds, and now we are to turn our thoughts to the time of preparation for Great Lent.

By the time you receive this *Magazine*, we will already be counting the Sundays leading to Great Lent which for the Byzantine Church and the Eastern Orthodox Churches begins on Monday, February 27. Our brother and sister Western churches will be marking their foreheads with the ashes of burnt palms on Wednesday, March 1 this year.

Each of us will count our forty days of Great Lent in a different way—for the Byzantine and Orthodox Churches

counting Sundays, but not Holy Week ending with Lazarus Saturday on April 8; and for the Roman and Protestant Churches not counting Sundays but including Holy Week as part of the 40 day journey.

For all the churches this 40 days will symbolize the forty years the Israelites wandered in the desert in hope of reaching the Promised Land. Regardless of any difficulty that might be felt by us, it would be minimal compared to the long journey of the Israelites.

All of the churches will reach the greatly anticipated date of the celebration of the Resurrection of Our Lord on Sunday, April 16, 2017. This is truly as it should be with Christians celebrating this great feast together.

Prepare now to make the most of your preparation for Great Lent before that time arrives. And do your best to make the great 40-day time of fasting to be spiritually beneficial. May you all have a peaceful Great Lent and a spiritually beneficial Day of Resurrection!

Very Rev. Richard I. Lambert, GCU Spiritual Advisor

## Lessons in the Law

By GCU National Director Atty. John J. Urban

### This is What You Don't Need

Here's a scenario that happens all too often. You get a letter in the mail stating you need a certified copy of your house deed. The author of the letter states that for the bargain price of \$89, he or she will send you that certified copy - stat.

The thing is, you don't need a certified copy of your deed. That piece of paper has no value. Once your deed is filed with the court, it is a matter of public record and a certified copy isn't necessary. In most cases you already have your original deed, but if you really want a certified copy you can get one for about \$3.

If you can't find a copy of your deed, in most counties you can simply go online and download one for free.

Always be aware of someone who tries to sell you on the activity that's not appropriate for you. Opportunists are



everywhere. I had an 85-year old client suffering from dementia who was told by a local insurance agent to cash in an IRA and purchase an amortized annuity.

The problem is, that man wouldn't see a profit on his annuity for 20 years. Unfortunately, he couldn't cancel it without incurring a huge penalty. Now we're looking at legal action against the

insurance company that sold it to him.

Before you buy an annuity, get a second opinion from an attorney or your accountant.

To help you to do just that consult an attorney to review your documents and you can make an informed decision about how to move forward, whether it's buying an annuity, establishing a trust, or making a legal purchase.

## Interest Rates Effective February 1, 2017

**New Annuity Accounts.** The interest rates for all new GCU Annuity accounts effective February 1, 2017 are as follows. One-Plus-Four Annuity will earn 1.25%*APY*; Triple Advantage accounts will earn 2%*APY*; 5-Year Advantage accounts will earn 2.85%*APY* and Flex-8 accounts will earn 3.35%*APY*.

**GCU Option "A" Annuities.** Annual interest rates on Settlement Option "A" (interest only, minimum deposit

\$5,000) annuities is 1%*APY*.

**Please Note:** Total deposits into new One-Plus-Four, Triple Advantage and Option "A" Annuities are limited to \$100,000 combined per member, per calendar year. Total deposits into 5-Year Advantage Annuities are limited to \$500,000 and total deposits into Flex-8 Annuities are limited to \$1,000,000 per calendar year.

system, the consolidation of three branches, direct billing, the relocation of the Home Office and many other changes implemented to further strengthen the financial well-being of our Society. And yes, many financial challenges within the economic and investment markets were faced and addressed. Corporate improprieties such as Enron as a specific example, 9/11, the daily threat of terrorism, the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, a declining stock market, and a record low interest rate environment all had a major impact upon our financial markets and the financial performance of the GCU over the years. Most significant was the global financial crisis or “Great Recession” experienced in 2008 and 2009. We are thankful to all that have served our Society, making sound fiscal decisions in addressing the various challenges presented over our 125 year history—always keeping our members best interest at the forefront.

We also express our gratitude to those that have served as officers within their local lodges and districts which is the backbone of our fraternal programming. The GCU Museum located in the lower floor of our St. Nicholas of Myra Chapel houses so many fond memories of fraternalism in action and the engagement and commitment of our members to the GCU and its purpose. In reviewing these artifacts, the GCU seemed to be a part of the majority of our members’ weekly routine. But as we all know the only constant in life is “change.” Society has changed in general and we have been witnessing and are aware of the need to revise our current fraternal structure that will attract more of our members to participate in the fraternal aspects of our organization. We will continue to promote the Regional Lodge Structure to attempt to strengthen our current lodge system. We will also continue to support the many lodges and districts that are active in sponsoring various volunteer and fundraising events in support of their church and communities in addition to holding social events for their local lodge members.

New community outreach programs are in the process of being formulated in an attempt to attract more of our members as well as our agents to support the GCU’s fraternal efforts. We are most excited about our new GCU GoGive Program that we invite you to become involved in through your individual effort. We encourage you to participate in the many programs sponsored on a National Level and by your local lodge and district. Please access the GCU website – GCUusa.com – or contact our Fraternal Communications Department at 724-495-3400 for more details on the new GCU GoGive Program and the numerous events planned for 2017.

As I stated in several of my past articles and presentations, the GCU fraternal side of our business can only be

as strong as our financial side. I take pride in the fact the GCU has never been financially stronger than it is today! On February 14, 1892, the GCU began operating as a fraternal benefit society with \$600.<sup>00</sup> in assets. Total admitted assets for year end 2016 are projected to be slightly over \$1.55 billion with surplus surpassing \$105 million accompanied by an excellent net profit of over \$20 million. This is quite an accomplishment that our Founders and many administrations that have served the GCU throughout its history, would be most proud of. A full detailed year-end report will be presented by our Chief Financial Officer Tim Demetres in the 2017 April Annual Report issue of the *GCU Magazine*. Our sincere appreciation to our entire membership and agents for the support and confidence you have shown in our Society. Your commitment plays a most significant role in our financial success.

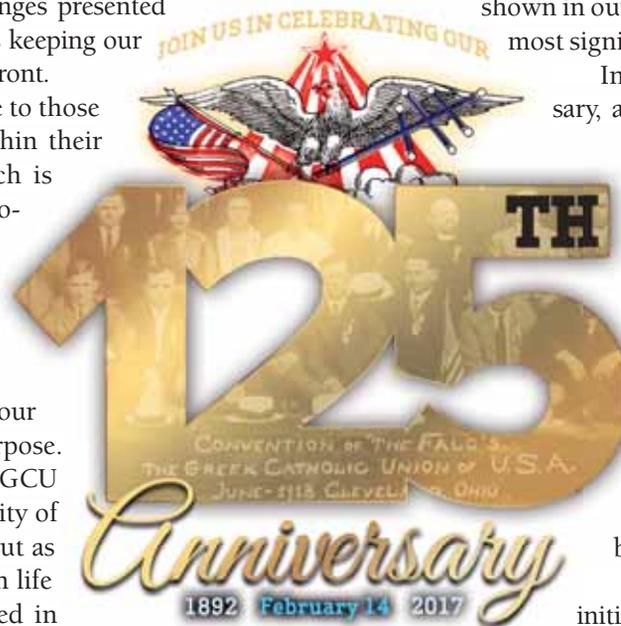
In celebration of our 125<sup>th</sup> Anniversary, a Gala will be conducted at Seven Oaks Country Club on Saturday, May 6. We invite each of our members to attend. Details of this event are presented on the back page of this issue. Additional celebrations are also being planned by some of our lodges and districts as well. Please consult the GCU website – GCUusa.com - or contact the Fraternal Communications Department for local celebrations being held in your area.

The unveiling of our new branding initiative is tentatively set to kick off in April and couldn’t come at a better time as we celebrate our 125<sup>th</sup> Anniversary. I am personally excited and am sure that you will be pleased with the new GCU’s new “look” as each and every touchpoint accessed by our current members, future members and agents has been redesigned including our website that will relate to all generations we serve within the life and annuity marketplace. For a preview of this exciting initiative, see page 24 of this issue.

In closing, yes we have enjoyed a great ride over the last 125 years but we must never become complacent and rest upon our laurels. We must constantly be aware of the “ifs” and “risks” ever so constant within the economic and financial markets to assure our society’s future success. As we have reached this most incredible milestone in celebrating our 125<sup>th</sup> Anniversary I am most fortunate and proud to be the President and CEO of our Society and to be a part of its history. I can assure you that your Board of Directors, executive officers and general counsel have and will continually make sound fiscal decisions in the best interest of our members and of the GCU!

Fraternally yours,

*George*





**Beaver, PA.** A Facebook post from the Beaver County Humane Society (BCHS) was all it took for a member to take action. After Sara Nagy read that the BCHS was in dire need of cat litter, she decided to create a litter drive and fundraiser to collect litter and monetary donations for the humane society. She has been a GCU member since 1997. She decided to use the GoGive! program to help her achieve her goals.

She made posters and delivered them to different locations asking for donations. She sent emails to family, friends and co-workers asking for help if they could. She ultimately made four trips to the BCHS to drop off donations of not only cat litter, but dog food, cat food, cash donations, gift card donations, coupons and more. The fundraiser ran from October 1-31, 2016. The BCHS was ecstatic for the donations and sent a very appreciative thank you card to Sara for her hard work.



Sara Nagy with the many donations that she gave to the Humane Society.



**West Mifflin Middle School PTSA Holiday Bash.** Kim Kolesar, Lodge 28, South Side-Pittsburgh, PA is active in her son's school PTSA. When they decided to hold a fundraiser to raise money to provide events and treats for the children throughout the school year, the GCU Go Give! seed money program popped into her head as a way to help out.

On the evening of Saturday, November 19, the West Mifflin Middle School PTSA held a Holiday Bash at the Skyview Fire Hall. Numerous fund raisers were staged with winners announced throughout the evening. The happy recipients received gift cards (with a dollar value of \$150 or more) from a variety of establishments: Get Go, Shop 'n Save, Target, Giant Eagle, Amazon, Kohl's, Walmart, Toys R Us, JCPenney, Dick's, Best Buy, Home Depot, Victoria's Secret, Sears, and Kmart. There were also walk-around prizes, a Chinese Auction, a delicious catered buffet, and a DJ providing music for listening and dancing.

Through GCU GoGive!, the \$250 seed money was used to buy all necessary supplies. This grant helped to realize a profit of \$4,840.

The money raised will be put into the WM PTSA account to be used for many activities for the children throughout the year, such as, book fair, Santa Shop, Polar Express Day, Fun Day, and more.



The crowd at the PTSA Holiday Bash.



Laurene Kristof with the men's clothing that was collected.

**Bradenville, PA.** Zoltan & Laurene Kristof, members of GCU Lodge 321 in Bradenville, have much to be thankful for: a large family, good health, and an active retirement. They also enjoy having parties. In thanking for their many blessings, the Kristofs have hosted Christmas parties for the homeless and the needy since 2010. Each year they have entertained between 40 and 55 people by sending out an invitation that reads "No hostess gifts. Please bring new clothes for the homeless."

In November, Laurene applied for GoGive! seed money that helped with purchasing food and supplies for the three parties scheduled for this season. Approximately 90 people enjoyed drinks, appetizers, dinner, and dessert. Almost \$1,550 in new clothing and cash was collected. Socks, hats, gloves, underwear, sweat suits, jackets, scarves, and fleece covers for men, women and children filled their den.

These items were given to a priest who ministers to the poor and homeless in Pittsburgh, Adelphoi Village and The Union Mission in Latrobe, and to the pastor of St. Mary's in Bradenville to be distributed to anyone who needs warm clothing.



Guests at one of the parties.

What is **GCU GoGive!** ?

Visit [GCUusa.com](http://GCUusa.com) to learn more

District 7 officers would like to thank all members who donated to the Bake-less Bake Sale. The matching funds event benefitted the Sisters of Saint Basil the Great at Mt. St. Macrina in Uniontown, PA. Thank you for your generosity.



The Westfield Community Concert Band with Elias Zavera (Santa hat) narrating "Twas the Night Before Christmas."

In keeping with the Christmas Season, two district members participated in the 26<sup>th</sup> annual Holiday Concert performed by The Westfield Community Concert Band. The concert took place on Thursday, December 15, 2016 in the Edison Intermediate School Auditorium in Westfield, NJ. While maestro Dr.

Thomas Connors lead the band, Elias Zareva, Lodge 254 member, narrated the almost 200 year old poem, *Twas the Night Before Christmas*. District 7 Athletic Director Michael Geles Jr., Lodge 665 member, is a clarinetist in the band. Both Michael Geles and Elias Zareva have

been band members for many years. Mr. Zareva served as the maestro for the Westfield Band for over 25 years. He holds the record for the number years anyone has served as bandmaster in the group's history. It was a beautiful event enjoyed by several district members.

## Lodge 860 Reports

**Detroit, MI. Children's Christmas Celebration.** Lodge 860 provided financial support for the annual ECF (Eastern Christian Formation) children's Christmas program at St. Nicholas Byzantine Catholic Church in Clinton Township, MI, on Sunday, December 18.



The children of the ECF program and their ornaments for the Jesse Tree program. At right is Evelyn Nagrant presenting her ornament for the Jesse Tree.



Following a pizza lunch, the children performed the Jesse Tree program, each child creating and presenting an ornament.

The children then sang seasonal hymns which inspired a visit from their patron saint, St. Nicholas.



The spirit-filled bishop gave each child a small icon as a gift.

**Annual Christmas Potluck.** This much anticipated and well attended annual ethnic event, was once again hosted by the Carpatho-Rusyn Cultural Society—Michigan Chapter on Saturday, January 7 at St. Nicholas Church in Clinton Township.

Lodge 860 repeated its annual monetary donation toward the cost of the event, which features some ethnic foods and showcases Rusyn folk music, including hymns and carols, by the Beskidy Folk Ensemble.

The celebration followed a Divine Liturgy which concluded with a Panachida for the deceased members of the Society.

**Val Marszalec**  
Frat. Act. & Publicity Director



At left: Emily Marszalec receives her gift upon the knee of St. Nicholas who visited the children's Christmas party. Center: The children visiting with their spirited patron saint, St. Nicholas. At right: Members of the Beskidy Folk Ensemble singing a "thank you" song (an adaptation of a traditional Rusyn folk song) to the GCU for its co-sponsorship of the Carpatho-Rusyn Cultural Society.

## DISTRICT 15 NEWS

By ELIZABETH HARBIST  
& JOHN SCHWEICH

We have been very busy! In late fall we sent snack boxes to each District 15 senior award winner who is still in college/trade school. The snack boxes were delivered to the awardee's college/university just in time for final exam studying. We are proud of our senior awardees, and want them to know that we're thinking of them.



**Check Presentation.** On December 7, 2016 the Veterans Breakfast Club (VBC) held its fourth 2016 session at Seven Oak Country Club. That date marked the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the attack on Pearl Harbor and among the invitees were 40 students from Dutch Ridge Elementary School in Brighton Township, PA.

The students were invited to interact with and ask questions of the veterans. Ben Wright, the emcee, interviewed several men who were present at Pearl Harbor and requested that they give first-hand accounts of their experiences. Other veterans were asked to give recollections of when they first heard news of the attack.

At the conclusion of the event, John Schweich (pictured above) presented a check for \$300 from GCU District 15 to Todd DePastino, Executive Director of the VBC. This donation was meant as a reflection of the GCU's continued support of veterans' causes and projects.

**Christmas Brasstacular.** In early



Some District 15 members who attended and enjoyed the River City Brass Band's Christmas Brasstacular.

December forty District 15 members and friends attended the River City Brass Band's Christmas "Brasstacular" at Lincoln Park Performing Arts Center in Midland, PA. The musicians did not disappoint. From traditional Christmas carols to popular holiday songs, the brass band and a combined choir from local high schools entertained the crowd. We joined in with the singing, too. Tickets to this event were subsidized by District 15.

**Flight Trampoline Park.** Our annual Children's Christmas Party was on Sunday, January 8 at Flight Trampoline Park in Bridgeville, PA. Fifteen children enjoyed an afternoon of jumping and "flying," followed by a pizza lunch and cookie dessert. With gratitude for a Home Office grant, District 15 was able to cover the cost of the party and lunch and provide each child with a Christmas gift bag. In addition to small gifts from the Home Office, each child received a \$25 Target gift card.

**Sisters of St. Joseph.** District 15 members will spend Saturday afternoon February 25 with the retired Sisters of St. Joseph in Baden, PA. This annual event provides an opportunity to give back to the Sisters who served their parishes and communities as teachers, nurses and social workers. We will play bingo, sing songs, give away lap blankets hand-crocheted by Lodge 10 member Theresa Shuster, and enjoy cake and ice-cream. District 15 also provides a small gift to each of the sisters.

Upcoming District 15 Events include our Junior Bowling Tournament

scheduled for the afternoon of Sunday, March 12 at Center Lanes in Aliquippa, PA. District 15 children are invited to bring a friend for an afternoon of bowling and a pizza lunch. To register please contact Athletic Director, Bill Uram at 724-287-0689 or visit [www.gcuusa.com](http://www.gcuusa.com) + district/lodge at left then District 15. Please register your children/grandchildren early so that we plan accordingly.

**The District 15 Adult No-Tap Bowling Tournament** will be on Saturday, March 25. Bowling at Center Lanes in Aliquippa will be followed by dinner at Seven Oaks Country Club. This event has been growing in the past few years, and we look forward to this year's friendly competition.

**The Bunco Luncheon** to benefit the District 15 Senior Awards will be held Saturday, May 13.

**Still in the Planning Stages:** District 15 outing at Corks & Kegs at the Meadows in August.

Finally, District 15 launched a Facebook page in late autumn: GCU District 15. Check out our Facebook page for updates on district events, photos of past events and other topics of interest. In addition to the Facebook page, we are attempting to reach our members via email. If you are not receiving information about District 15 events, please contact us with your email so that we may add it to our emailing list. Be sure to "LIKE" our FB page, and keep us posted on news in your lodge to include in our posts.



Trampoline Park attendees.

**Farewell Children's Christmas Party.** On Saturday, November 19, 2016, members attended the final children's Christmas party that took place at St. Pius Church hall in the Carrick section of Pittsburgh, PA.

The season was celebrated with a Chick-Fil-A lunch plus homemade pirohi and haluski (made by our own St. Pius and St. John the Baptist parish volunteers) along with games, entertainment, and a visit with Santa Claus and St. Nicholas.

As the people entered the church hall, they received their table number assignments and had a chance to view the Chinese Auction table. Of course, it can't be a holiday party without playing the Left-Right game. One winner at each of the nine tables got to keep the presents in the holiday bags. At the conclusion of the game, tables were called to the buffet to enjoy lunch. As everyone finished eating, the poinsettia red velvet cake (made by St. Pius' Norma Langol) was cut and put out with the rest of the desserts.

Following lunch, Josh and Gab, a musical-comedy duo well-known by children, gave a 45-minute presentation of Christmas carols and other songs that captured the attention of all. Their award-winning show, with an anti-bullying message, has been done in over 500 locations across eight states. They now have their own television show.

Next came the announcement of the winners of the Chinese Auction. There were many prizes on the table ranging from Kennywood Holiday Lights tickets, gift cards, toys, Pitts-



The buffet line.

burgh Steelers merchandise, Christmas seasonal merchandise, Bath & Body Works, Columbia blankets, cookware, bronze wind chimes, DKNY perfume, and a Thanksgiving basket (complete with Giant Eagle gift card, side dishes and a turkey breast). A good mixture of people received prizes. Thank you to all the lodges and individuals who donated. You helped to make this event a success.

Last, as the group sang Jingle Bells, Santa Claus and St. Nicholas walked into the room. St. Nicholas walked around the room giving See's Candies chocolate coins to all adults and children. Meanwhile, Santa made his way

to his special chair. The children were called one-by-one to sit on his lap and receive their gift and goodie bag.

Thank you to all the district officers, lodge members, and St. Pius Church members who helped before, during and after the event. They all helped to make the day run smoothly.



Santa with Brent Kolesar (left), Emmanuel Revilak (center) and Angelino Kacmar (right).



The group of children.

## District 1 Says Good-Bye



Kim Kolesar

With mixed emotions, after 97 years District 1 has closed their books on December 31, 2016. After all expenses were paid, the remaining money was donated to Mt. St. Macrina - \$2,570.<sup>26</sup>

I have been the District 1 Fraternal Activities Director (and sometimes Publicity Director) since 1997 when I took over from Anna Mae Kolcun. I have thoroughly enjoyed planning all the social events for the adults and children over the years. There have been so many: ice skating parties, Lenten services, blood drives, Easter parties/Spring Flings, Hot Metal community dinners, mini-golf outings, Halloween hayrides, Christmas parties, summer picnics, afternoons at the winery, Spring teas, weekend bus trips, evening dances, Seven Oaks Holiday Brunches, Flag Day ceremonies and more. Some were so well attended that I planned them every year. Others were tried, changed, or omitted. Nevertheless, I am happy to say that I never had to cancel an activity due to lack of participation. Some of the participants were my "regulars," but I always managed to receive a few new people at each event.

I thank everyone who has attended the events over the years, volunteered to assist me (especially my co-officer Trish Roberts), or provided any type of donation (money, food, prizes) to help make all these events even more successful.

## DISTRICT 5 NEWS

By ILONA  
DOLINISH

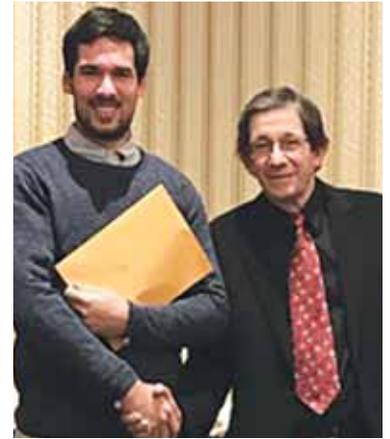
Our 49<sup>th</sup> annual Saint Nicholas Brunch & Scholarship Awards Program was held on Sunday, November 27, 2016 at the Radisson Lackawanna Station Hotel. Two scholarships were also awarded that day. Scholarship Chairperson Dr. John G. Evans presented a certificate and a check to Kyle Jasuta of Manhattan Beach, CA. He is a junior at Springfield College, Springfield, MA, where he is majoring in finance. He is a member of Lodge 17. The second recipient was Maria Batyko of Scranton, PA, an advertising major at Temple University, Philadelphia, PA. She is a member of Lodge 945. Unfortunately, she was unable to attend the ceremony.

The 2016 Fraternalist of the Year was also awarded at this event

Kyle Jasuta with Grandmother Madlyn Lesneski and Aunt Diane Notari.



2016 Fraternalist of the Year Mary Ann Evans being presented a clock by last year's recipient Michaela Mancak.



Dr. John G. Evans presenting scholarship to Kyle Jasuta.

to Mary Ann Evans. Mary Ann is a member of St. Mary's Byzantine Catholic Church in Kingston, PA and GCU Lodge 182. In the past, she held the national office of GCU Supreme Tribunal and was her lodge's secretary/treasurer. She currently holds the position of Lodge 182 treasurer. She is president of St. Mary's Rosary Society and an ECF teacher for the First Reconciliation Classes. She helps coordinate Lodge 182's and St. Mary's children's plays and Easter Egg Hunts, as well as the Children's' Christmas Pageant held annually in church on Christmas Eve. Michaela Ann Mancak, last year's recipient, presented her with a clock.

District 5 President Gina Keil opened the program with a prayer. Bob Suflita led us in the Hymn to Saint Nicholas, followed by God Bless America. Congratulations to both the Fraternalist of the Year and the scholarship recipients.

The celebration for the founding of the GCU, 125 years ago in Wilkes-Barre, PA took place at St. Nicholas Social Center, Old Forge,



Seated: Scholarship chairperson Dr. John G. Evans, 2016 Fraternalist of the Year Mary Ann Evans, John Evans, Laure and Jeff Marcin. Standing: Decorations chairperson Colleen Evans, Jason Marcin, Meghan, Dori, Marlene and Jonathan Williams.

PA on Sunday, February 12, 2017. This was a catered event, in conjunction with our first quarter meeting.

Hockey fans get ready for the matchup between our Penguins and Lehigh Valley. The game will be held on Saturday, March 18, 2017 at 7:05 PM. Please contact Ed Keil for details. The dates and arrangements are being finalized for our annual Jr. Bowling Tournaments. Information and applications will be forthcoming. The National Bowling Tournament is being held in Wilkes-Barre on May 19 & 20 this year.

Sincere sympathy is extended to the families of Monsignor John Sekellick and David Rohrbach, who passed away recently. Monsignor Sekellick served our district for many years, most recently being pastor of Holy Ghost Byzantine Catholic Church in Jessup, PA and St. John's Byzantine Catholic Church in Forest City, PA. He was an avid supporter of all our GCU functions. David Rohrbach, husband of Agnes Rohrbach, member of the GCU Greater Hazleton Regional Lodge could be seen at

our District events and joint events between our district and their regional lodge. They will be sadly missed. Blessed repose and eternal memory!

Best of health to all of our members in this New Year!

## Lodge 53 Fall Report

Wilkes Barre, PA. On Saturday, October 29, 2016 Lodge 53 and the Knights of Columbus, council 12325 sponsored a Halloween party for children and adults in St. Mary social hall.

An evening of dancing, food, refreshments, prizes and games provided enjoyment for all who attended this Fraternal Grant event.

A sincere "Thank You" to the Home Office for the give-a-ways, Fraternal Grant and Matching Funds programs this past year. They were greatly appreciated.

Marge Dorzinsky  
Secretary/Treasurer

# Lodge 15 Report & Update

Trenton, NJ. On an autumn day in October, we traveled to Delaware Park and Casino as our Matching Funds project. A great day even though some of us unfortunately fed the machines and horses. However, the trip had positive results and Lodge 15



Check presentation President Gregory L. Embley, Fr. Gregory J. Noga and Treasurer Thomas Petty.

presented a check to Father Gregory J. Noga for benefit of the church.

Now that we're starting a New Year, it's appropriate that the lodge makes a New Year's resolution, that being to increase activities and functions. Our meetings are held on Sundays following the 10 AM Divine Liturgy at Assumption of the Virgin Mary Byzantine Catholic Church in Trenton, NJ in the parish social hall at corner of Adeline and Beatty St. Trenton, NJ. We invite you, our members to come to the meetings to share and discuss your ideas. Dates for our 2017 quarterly meetings are: April 30, September 10 and November 26.

The officers rfor 2017-2018 are: President Gregory Embley, Secre-

tary Stephanie Hennessey, Treasurer Thomas Petty, Athletic Director John Kashner, Fraternal Activities and Publicity Marcy Embley, Auditors Joseph Bodnar & Mary Ann Biko and Chaplain Father Gregory J. Noga.

Several activities are in the planning stage for the Spring. A bus trip to the Sands Casino in Bethlehem, PA and a night at a Trenton Thunder baseball game is being considered. Do you have any ideas?

The GCU Volunteer Program has been changed to Community Service and Fraternal Fellowship. Community Service is defined as assisting those in need or improving the community-at-large. Fraternal social and support is defined as so-



Lodge 15 officers: Front row: Marcy Embley, Stephanie Hennessey, Mary Ann Biko and Fr. Gregory Noga. Back row: Gregory Embley, Joseph Bodnar, Thomas Petty and John Kashner.

cial, educational, cultural, religious, recreational and patriotic activities. I need to hear from our members if you're involved in these activities so I could report to the Home Office. These reports are needed every quarter; i.e. every quarterly meeting. Please contact me at 609-585-3758 or mail to: Marcy Embley, 59 Juniper Way, Hamilton, NJ 08619. The first report is due April 15, 2017. If you contact me with the information, then I will follow up with you each quarter. Thank you in advance for your support of this project.

Hope Mother Nature is kind to us this Winter. Have a Happy, Blessed, and Healthy New Year!

**Marcy Embley, Publicity**

## Lodge 15-GCU Grant Assists Pearl Harbor Remembrance



Pearl Harbor Day services were conducted on Sunday, December 4, 2016 by Holy Cross Post 417 Catholic War Veterans of Trenton, NJ in conjunction with the Mercy County Veteran Council.

The ceremony began with the Pledge of Allegiance and the singing of our National Anthem. The invocation was given by Chaplain Walter P. Kramarz. Guest speaker, retired Navy Captain Stanley Winowicz, presented a moving tribute and words of reflection. Captain Winowicz, during his active duty career, was responsible for



the establishment of the military mortuary located at Dover Air Force Base in Delaware. This facility received the remains of our service men and women killed in action overseas.

Captain Winowicz along with Mercer County Executive Brian Hughes placed a memorial wreath at the base of the flag pole. A second wreath was placed by the Carson family. Their father was a Pearl Harbor survivor who fought in the Pacific Theater until the end of the war. Mr. Carson has in his possession an original Thanksgiving Day 1941 menu from Pearl Harbor just days before attack.

A rifle volley salute was provided by the joint effort of Post 417 members along with the men of the Marine Corp League. Taps were rendered by bugler Walter P. Kramarz. Walter served with an Army medical unit and landed in Normandy, France a few days after D-Day 1944. He and his medical unit were awarded the French Medal of Honor in 2004.

A buffet lunch followed the ceremony. The event was free and open to the community. A GCU grant obtained by Marcy Embley, Lodge 15 fraternal activities director, helped to defray the expenses of Post 417.

Chaplain Kramarz recited the benediction and the 85 attendees were encouraged to remember Pearl Harbor – remember our veterans – pray for our veterans – support our veterans and troops – thank our veterans.

God continue to bless the USA.

**Tom Petty, Lodge 15 Treasurer**

## Lodge 47 Holiday Goodness

Binghamton, NY.

You may recall that in prior years, various local church choirs in the Binghamton, NY area got together to sing ethnic Christmas Carols as a combined group. Lodge 47 decided to do it again this year, but with a different spin.

On Sunday, December 11 the Holy Spirit Byzantine Catholic Church Choir, mostly composed of GCU Lodge 47 members, was one of a group of four choirs that assembled together at the Oxford, NY Veterans' Home to sing to US service veterans. Many traditional English and some Slavonic Christmas Carols were sung to an audience of almost 50 people.

At the conclusion, a local pastor led everyone present in a "Prayer For Peace," remarking he was sure that "many of veterans here today had seen their best buddies die for peace while in service to their country, and that now we should all pray for peace and unity in this current day and age."

It most assuredly was heart-rendering to see several of the veterans wipe away a tear as we sang for them and prayed together. It was really tough to tell who received more out of this visit, the veterans or singers.

**"Christmas Angel" Toy-Drive.** The project was chaired by Dottie & Robert J. Bakalar. They were ably assisted by their co-chairpersons who are all pictured below. We hung a picture of a Christmas tree on the vestibule bulletin-board of Holy Spirit Church. It was "decorated" with 30 Christmas Angels, all stating the age of a boy or a girl who was in need of a Christmas present. Lodge 47 members, as well as other parishioners of Holy Spirit



Holy Spirit Choir at the Oxford Veterans' Home.

Church, selected a specific Angel, and then went out and bought a nice Christmas gift for the child. These 30 gifts were subsequently collected on Sunday, December 4, 2016 at the parish St. Nicholas Dinner-Party, and the very next day, they were all given to the Binghamton, NY Salvation Army for distribution to needy children in the local area.

The project was heartily embraced by Holy Spirit Church parishioners as well as Lodge 47 members. Lodge members on the Christmas Angel Committee thoroughly enjoyed putting this toy-drive together for the underprivileged kids in our Binghamton area. The Salvation Army representatives who collected the presents were greatly appreciative of the very thoughtful gifts. Great job, fellow Lodge 47 members!

**Community Project.** On Monday, December 20, 2016, our lodge was involved in a "community project." The Holy Spirit Byzantine Catholic Church Choir was invited to sing English and Slavonic Christmas Carols after the conclusion of a goodwill, community dinner that was hosted by St. Michael's Orthodox Church (a church located just several blocks down the street from Holy Spirit Church). A free dinner was served for everyone who attended, in the "true spirit of giving" that

the Christmas Season inspires.

Eight Lodge 47 members attended and sang in a "combined choir" comprised of three other area churches for all of the

people who had dinner that evening. Members joyfully sang carols on the front steps of the altar at St. Michael's Church for an hour, to the enjoyment of all those present. Both English and Slavonic Christmas carol selections were reverently sung by this combined choir. It was heart-warming to see people of all different walks of life, different ethnic backgrounds, and varied ages get together under one roof in the First Ward of the city of Binghamton to honor the birth of the Infant Baby Jesus. Community fellowship was indeed on display that evening. In this complicated day and age, it is something we can never get enough of, in my humble opinion.

**Christmas Tree Ornament.** Lodge 47 decided to give away a small, wooden Christmas Tree Ornament to everyone who attended the Christmas Eve and Christmas Day Divine Liturgies at Holy Spirit Byzantine

Catholic Church. In years past, we had given out bags of candy to kids as a St. Nicholas "stocking stuffer." But this year, we decided that giving out a memento of a Christmas Tree Ornament depicting the Birth of the Baby Jesus in a stable would be a nice keepsake of Christmas 2016. So when parishioners came forward at the end of each Divine Liturgy for the Mirovanije anointing, they all received a Christmas tree ornament, compliments of GCU Lodge 47.

Christ Is Born! Glorify Him!  
Happy New Year to all!

**Bob Suflika, President**



Christmas Angel Toy Drive.



The Holy Spirit Byzantine Catholic Church Choir

Hazleton, PA. It is almost the end of January, and as I am writing this article—I cannot believe that there is no snow on the ground. Plenty of rainy days and very foggy days. Usually at this time of the year, the whole area is blanketed in white snow.

Hope you all had a very enjoyable holiday. Before you know it, we will be entering the season of Great Lent and lo and behold Easter will be here. A very Blessed and Happy Easter to all GCU members.

Our annual St. Nicholas Dinner was held at Capriotti's on December 11 and was a huge success. The food was delicious; service was great and the visit from St. Nicholas (Deacon Foran) and the 2 elves (Thomas Betterly & Tony Udovich) was the hit of the day. We had over 45 tricky trays that were chanced off.

Our guest was Mother Marija of the Byzantine Carmelites Sisters and she handed out prayer cards in honor of Bishop Michael Dudick and in his memory donated a beautiful Angel that Helen Demjanish delightfully took home. Mother Marija also spoke about Holy Annunciation Monastery and that they will be celebrating 40 years in 2017 at their present location.

Christmas donations were made to the parishes of the lodge and accepting were Fr. Jerome Wolbert, OFM of St. John's BC Church and Fr. Peter Donish of St. Mary's BC Church.

Our scholarship winner, Chris-



Fr. Peter Donish, Agnes Rohrbach, Fr. Jerome Wolbert, OFM and Msgr. Nicholas Puhak.



GCU'ers Ugly Sweaters Carolyn Kosciuk, Eileen Bunk, Carol Shemansky, Mary Ellen Fichter, Mary Lou Junas, Coleen Dubitsky and Claire Kaschak.

tian Nonnemacher, was also honored at the dinner; he could not attend due to the timing of the event.

The GCU'ers bowling league finished their first half of the season and congratulations are extended to the 1<sup>st</sup> place team for the first half—Team Cents-Marge & Rick Hoppey, Mary Ellen Fichter & Carolyn Kosciuk.

Our first trip of the season will be to the Sands Casino and then we are getting ready to go to Hunterdon Hills Playhouse to see "Born Yesterday." There are still seats available and if you are in-



Agnes Rohrbach, Helen Demjanish and Mother Marija.

terested, please give me a call.

Don't forget to mark your calendars; Sunday, March 26 is the Jr. Bowling Tournament and the Blind Doubles will be held on Saturday, April 1 at Bowl-Arena. Sometimes, due to circumstances beyond our control, dates and activities are subject to change. If you are in doubt about a meeting or an event, please give me a call at 570-454-4869. If you are computer savvy, check out the GCU website for updates.

It was with a very heavy heart that I finished writing this article, my husband David of 48 years passed away on January 21. He was my rock and salvation and also my assistant athletic director. May God grant him eternal memory and peaceful repose.

Till next time, take care and may God bless.



GCU National Director Dorothy Ann Foran and the elves & children at St. Nicholas Dinner.



St. Nicholas, Fr. Jerome and Monica Waschko with ECF students.

## Upcoming Activities

March 26—Jr. Bowling Tournament at Bowl-Arena.

April 1—Blind Doubles Tournament at Bowl-Arena.

April 9—Easter Egg Hunt at Lansford.

April 23—Easter Egg Hunt at Hazleton & Beaver Meadows.

April 29—Hunterdon Hills Playhouse Trip.

May 21—Second quarter meeting, SS. Peter & Paul in Minersville, PA at 2 PM. Note this is a new date & time.

## Lodge 164 St. Nicholas Celebration

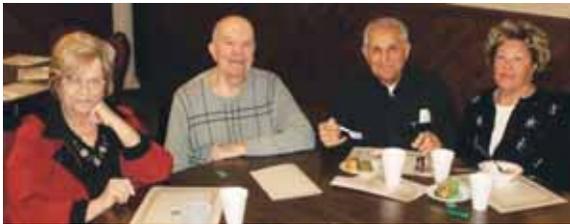
Youngstown, OH. Lodge 164 held its annual St. Nicholas Day and Christmas Party on Sunday, December 4. President Tom Sopkovich welcomed Fr. David Shortt, now a VA Chaplain in Cleveland, OH, and our Sisters of St. Basil the Great. Fr. Richard Lambert led the singing of the Hymn to St. Nicholas.

Members recited the Pledge of Allegiance before enjoying a delicious hot buffet meal. Following the meal, lodge members signed Christmas cards for 12 parishioners confined to home or assisted-living and nursing homes. The cards were donated by Secretary Diana Danko.

During the meeting portion of the celebration, it was agreed to send a check for \$125 to the GCU St. Nicholas Fund for the benefit of the SS. Cyril & Methodius Byzantine Catholic Seminary and a check for \$150 donated to St. Mary's Church for Christmas, presented to Fr. Lambert by Treasurer



The Welcome display.



Marge & Tom Hritz with George & Cathy Lutz.



Sisters Leocadia & Bernarda, Fr. Richard & Fr. David with Pat Sopkovich & Secretary Diana Danko.

President Tom Sopkovich and Fr. Lambert receiving a check from Treasurer Sharon MacDonald.



Sharon MacDonald and President Tom Sopkovich.

Twenty-seven edible door prizes were distributed to random winners. Following the door prizes, members closed the party with a prayer led by Fr. Shortt praying the "Our Father" and asking St. Nicholas to bless our members, our country and the GCU for all its activities.

Thanks were given to all the members who prepared the buffet and cleaned up after the party. Special thanks goes to Don Danko and Bob Democko, the bingo managers, and to all the members who worked hard all year for bingo, and all the lodge activities for the benefit of St. Mary's Church. Members were asked to remember in their prayers the family of Mary Puskar, a longtime GCU member who passed away November 29 and also any sick or confined lodge members. Thanks to Fr. Shortt for attending.

**Upcoming Events.** Soup & Sandwich Lenten event to benefit the Sisters of St. Basil the Great in Youngstown will start on March 1, 2017—Ash Wednesday this year. The Junior Bowling Tournament will be held on Sunday, March 26, 2017 at Camelot Lanes.

Dr. Tom Sopkovich, President



Paul Bach, Jackie Leson, Bill Campy, Bob Democko, Don Danko and Bill Kovachik.

## Lodge 665 Linden, NJ Update



Janet Susarchick presenting a matching funds check to Fr. Vitaley from the St. George's luncheon project. Pictured are Janet and Fr. Vitaley, and in the middle of them is his mother Magdalena. He is holding his daughter AnnaMarie, and his wife Mariana is holding their son Illia, along with parishioners from St. George.



On Sunday, November 20, 2016, St. Ann's Altar Society and Lodge 665 held a gift basket fund raiser. Pictured are members of the society: from left are RoseMarie Danko, Gregory Danko, Margita Geles, Ann Hertz and Barbara Twerdak.

# Lodge 340 Fourth Quarter Report

From Rahway to Flanders, NJ. GCU Lodge 340 members travelled to Flanders, NJ for a GCU Expansion Event on Friday, November 18, 2016. The hour long trip took members to Holy Wisdom Byzantine Catholic Church to help them with their Tricky Tray event. Lodge members were immediately put to work selling admission tickets, fundraising tickets and delivering prizes.

Over one hundred people were in attendance. They had great prizes including a Keurig Coffee maker, Michael Kors bag and a whole table filled with homemade baked goods all made by Maryann Kowzun. Janet Ayres was the number caller for the night. Ashley Kowzun was the events bell ringer, announcing the door prizes and making the evening a lot of fun. A beautiful variety of homemade cakes and coffee were served at intermission. Fr. Jack Custer, the pastor at Holy Wisdom Church, was there to help and support the Tricky Tray. Lodge 340 and Holy Wisdom Church members worked together as a group to make this Tricky Tray a very successful event.

**“The Path to Independence.”**  
On November 11, 2016 a group of Lodge 340 members visited The Seeing Eye Headquarters-“Path to Independence” in Morristown, NJ to conclude a year-long charity project. They were able to learn about the organization’s mission, as well as, walk the “Path of Independence.” The Seeing Eye’s mission is to enhance the independence, dignity and self-confidence of people who are blind, through the use of specially trained



Joan Gautreau & Dorothy Koenig busy counting tickets.



Margot Gumerlock delivering a prize as Janet Ayres points to the winner. At right is Ashley Kowzun announcing some door prizes.



Pictured in front of the Path to Independence Van are Gloria Ryan, Mary Bannworth, Joan Gautreau, Margaret Gumerlock, Melany Soper and Linda Cwiekalo with Katie Soper in front.



The engraved paver donated by Lodge 340.

Seeing Eye dogs. Lodge 340 donated over \$4,000.00 to the Seeing Eye from the fall of 2015 to the fall of 2016. The day ended with a great meal at the Famished Frog Restaurant in Morristown.

**Leigh Mary Bannworth to Wed Andrew Pskowski.** Mark & Mary K. Bannworth announce the engagement of their daughter, Leigh Mary Bannworth to Andrew Pskowski, son of David & Elizabeth Pskowski of Ridgewood, NJ. The couple met in 2014 at a mutual friend’s birthday party in NYC.

A graduate of Westfield High School and Philadelphia University, Leigh Mary is a Technical Designer for Tommy Hilfiger in NYC. Andrew is a graduate of Ridgewood High School and New Jersey Institute of Technology in Newark, NJ. He is an engineer at the Picatinny Arsenal in Wharton, NJ. Andrew is also a doctoral candidate in Biomedical Engineering at Rutgers University, New Brunswick, NJ.

Leigh Mary and Andrew are members of the Church of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary in Morristown, NJ. Leigh Mary is

a member of GCU Lodge 340 in Rahway, NJ. She is also a past recipient of the GCU National Scholarship award. A March 2017 wedding is being planned.

**Fourth Quarter Meeting.** Lodge 340 in Rahway, NJ celebrated the Christmas season with their fourth quarterly meeting and luncheon on Sunday, December 18, 2016 in the St. Thomas the Apostle Byzantine Church hall. The lodge had a very productive meeting with the election of officers for 2017. The Right Rev. Archpriest James G. Hayer was in attendance to receive the lodge’s Christmas donation to St. Thomas Church. Everyone enjoyed a festive buffet lunch. A calendar for 2017 was approved.

Mary Bannworth, President



Andrew Pskowski and Leigh Mary Bannworth



Treasurer Dorothy Koenig presenting Fr. Hayer with a Christmas donation with fellow lodge members.

## Lodge 321 Winter Report

**Bradenville, PA. Matching Funds Event.** On November 19 & 20, 2016 Lodge 321 hosted a Veterans and Parishioners Appreciation Weekend after the Liturgies at St. Mary's BC Church.

On Saturday night there was a pizza party, and on Sunday morning there was a continental breakfast. Attendees were asked for a FREE WILL offering to be made to the Church for the benefit of the Parking Lot Fund. With the event advertised in the church bulletin, 75 parishioners attended both events and socialized with one another.

Lodge 321 gave each veteran a flag lapel pin. The Home Office of the GCU sent a variety of giveaways—crayons and coloring books, and Frisbees for the children. Post-its, stylus pens, car chargers for electronic devices, and eyeglass cleaners were available for teens and adults. GCU membership information was also passed out. The event was very successful!

**Community Event.** The lodge requested a \$200 grant to benefit a local community cause through volunteering. The cause was a Community Thanksgiving Dinner held at the St. Vincent Grove in Latrobe, PA. For the past 20 years, the Bruno & Diana Holnander Family, their children,



Parishioners enjoying the pizza party.

and their grandchildren have hosted a free Thanksgiving Dinner with all of the trimmings for anyone who is alone in the Latrobe area. This event is advertised in Latrobe and in the St. Vincent Basilica parish bulletin where the family worships.

The celebration has grown, and this year the family cooked meals for about 150 people who ate in. They also delivered the same number of meals to shut-ins.

Preparations for the meal—including the collection of donations—began early. By Sunday before the event the turkeys and nonperishable food had been purchased. Perishable items were bought on Tuesday. Volunteers arranged the hall and set the tables on Tuesday. On Wednesday night the turkeys were stuffed and put in the ovens and roasters to cook. By the

time the doors opened at noon on Thanksgiving Day, everything was ready for the guests. Volunteers sat guests, served the meal and the dessert, played music, bussed tables, and distributed leftover food

and gifts that had been donated for the event.

In addition to the grant that was received, the GCU donated candy



Filling treat bags are Laurene Kristof, Susan Wajdic and Zoltan Kristof.

bars, coloring books and crayons, and GCU tote bags which were given to the dinner guests. GCU literature was also passed out to the attendees.

**St. Nicholas Celebration.** Lodge 321 applied for and received a \$200 grant to help to fund the St. Nicholas Day celebrations at St. Mary's Church in Bradenville, PA and St. Mary's Church in Trauger, PA. The Home Office sent treat bags, chocolate bars, crayons and coloring books. Lodge members shopped for "goodies" and filled treat bags for religious formation students in both parishes. Donuts and drinks were also provided for the students.

St. Nicholas visited with the children after the Liturgies on December 4, 2016. Rev. Joseph Borodach is the pastor of St. Mary's in Bradenville. Rev. Paul Alexander Schutt, OSB is the pastor of St. Mary's in Trauger.

**Laurene Kristof**  
Publicity Director



Publicity Director Laurene Kristof (at left) presenting a check to Bonita Sisak.



The Sisak family and Laurene Kristof (in back) after tables were set.



Above: St. Nicholas (Kyprian Wojciechowski) with students from St. Mary's Church.

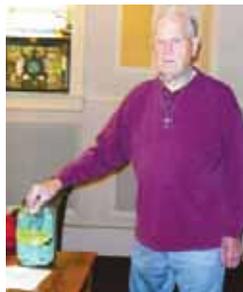
At Left: Students enjoying the treat bags.



## Lodge 62 Report

**Punxsutawney, PA. Thanksgiving Fund Raiser.** On Sunday, November 27 this fun event helped to raise funds for repairs to tombstones that were damaged by falling trees from a wind storm. Along with Matching Funds our event raised over \$500.

**Olive Wood Articles.** The lodge recently hosted a sale of articles made of olive wood in the Holy Land to build a Land of Peace Hospital to care for the poor and needy in the Holy Land and to provide scholarships to college students. We raised over \$500.



Mike Meko chooses the fund raiser prize recipient.



St. Nicholas (Mike Meko) with a few of the ECF students.



Articles made of olive wood.

Thanks to all who participated in this event.

**Breakfast with Santa.** On Sunday, December 4 ECF students and approximately 70 parishioners from SS. Peter & Paul Byzantine Church enjoyed breakfast with St. Nicholas. Thanks to a grant, the children received a gift from St. Nicholas. Shawn Daly, an ECF teacher, presented a program on the Life of St. Nicholas.

Lodge 62 would like to thank the GCU for the Matching Funds and the Fraternal Grant that helped to make these events a success.

Elaine Keromaus, Secretary/Treasurer

## Lodge 93 Holiday Spirit



**Northern Cambria, PA. St. Nicholas Party.** Lodge 93 helped to support the annual St. Nicholas party held at SS. Peter & Paul Byzantine Church, Patton, PA. Fr. Vasil Polyak celebrated the Divine Liturgy. After Liturgy everyone proceeded to the church social hall. We served light refreshments and presented a short video on the "Origin of Santa Claus/St. Nicholas," everyone sang the "Hymn to St. Nicholas." The children then met St. Nicholas and received treats.

**Christmas Party.** Lodge 93 sponsored the annual Christmas Party for all parishioners of both St. John's and SS. Peter & Paul along with lodge members and friends. A Divine Liturgy was celebrated by Fr. Vasil. An Italian festival in the social hall with a variety of pasta dishes was the main course with a variety of cover dishes and dessert. A gift exchange followed. Fr. Vasil then lead everyone in the singing of Christmas Carols. Thank you to everyone that helped make both events successful.

**Volunteer Recognition Awards.** Lodge 93 recognized lodge members and parishioners of St. John's Byzantine for their volunteer service to the church, lodge and community. Taylor Mihalow was recognized with the Volunteer Student Community Award. A thank you to the Home Office for their support of all of these events. .

John J. Katana, Secretary

## Lodge 77 St. Nicholas Celebration

**Lorain, OH.** Lodge 77 sponsored the giving of gifts by St. Nicholas to the children of the lodge and St. Nicholas Parish in Lorain. The St. Nicholas Day celebration took place on Sunday, December 4, 2016 following the Divine Liturgy. Each child received a GCU bag filled with treats and their choice of a toy. St. Nicholas was portrayed by Mr. Bruce Skibo.

Anne Dillon, Treasurer



## Lodge 390 Report

**McKees Rocks, PA. Angel Tree.** For many years Lodge 390 has sponsored the Angel Tree at Holy Ghost Church providing Christmas gifts to the children at Holy Family Institute and the Family Foundation in Emsworth, PA. This year the parish generously provide gifts for 50 needy families making sure the holiday was special for these children in our own neighborhood. A heartfelt thank you to all who joined in this endeavor.

Special thanks go to Barbara & Peter Stecko who took up the work of coordinating, wrapping and delivering all the gifts this year. This project was begun initially by Lodge 390's deceased Secretary/Treasurer Peggy Krulac. We are pleased that the project continues to help those in need during the Christmas season. This year the lodge also increased the power of the event by participating in the GCU Home Office Matching Funds program.

**St. Nicholas Celebration.** On



Peter & Barbara Stecko are pictured below with the Angel Tree gifts wrapped and ready to be delivered.



Sunday, December 4 the lodge sponsored the annual Holy Ghost St. Nicholas Day celebration. This annual event features a short performance by the students in Holy Ghost's ECF program, a party with gifts for



The Choir with St. Nicholas.

the students and a visit from St. Nicholas. The celebration highlights the role of St. Nicholas as the patron of the Byzantine Catholic Church and provides the opportunity to remind each generation that there is a real saint behind the tradition of Santa Claus.

This year's program featured a choral program with traditional Rusyn and English Christmas carols. The program ended with the singing of the hymn to St. Nicholas to mark his arrival in the hall. St. Nicholas came with presents for all ages and with photo opportunities



The Youth Group with St. Nicholas.

with the sainted bishop. The event concluded with a pizza social along with pot luck food and goodies brought by those participating.

**Steve Puluka, Secretary/Treasurer**

## Lodge 999 St. Nicholas Celebration

**Phoenix, AZ. St. Nicholas Dinner.** On December 4, 2016 Lodge 999 held its annual Saint Nicholas dinner. A professional singer/entertainer performed to the enjoyment of all. Cookies brought by parishioners and a chocolate fountain were also a big hit. The winner of the year-long membership drive was Theresa Montalvo.

**Joanie Mahar, Secretary**



## MORE FROM LODGE 644

BY JOHN  
KEBLESH

**Barberton/Akron, OH.** In the spirit of Thanksgiving Lodge 644 again initiated a fundraiser to help the Salvation Army as well as the Good Samaritan Hunger Center. For many years this has been a positive year-end activity for Lodge 644 and we are pleased to report that, including matching funds, our lodge donated a total of \$3235.<sup>00</sup> to these two organizations.

Fundraising brings to mind a very important member of Lodge 644—Sonia Cutlip who celebrated her 95<sup>th</sup> birthday on November 20. St. Nicholas Parish honored her with



Sonia Cutlip

a large birthday cake. Sonia has lived in Barberton and been a member of St. Nicholas Church for her entire 95 years. She was eleven years old when her father passed away and as a result she left school to help her mother. Sonia had, and continues to have, a knack

for fundraising which has been her lifelong means of helping St. Nicholas Church as well as the needy of the community. She was blessed with five daughters, seven grandchildren and five great-grandchildren. Along with her parish she has been very active in the GCU; in fact, Sonia assumed responsibility for Lodge 125 in Barberton and was very active attending District 3 meetings as well as three national conventions. When Lodge 125 was consolidated into Lodge 644 she was a great factor in raising funds at St. Nicholas for our lodge activities. Even after becoming a member of Lodge 644 she continued to be active eventually retiring to simply enjoy membership. God bless this special lady!

## Lodge 697 Halloween Party

**Weirton, WV.** On Sunday, October 30 the children of St. Mary's Byzantine Catholic Church in Weirton enjoyed a small party to celebrate Halloween following Sunday Liturgy. They enjoyed gifts of snacks and treat bags. The children thoroughly enjoyed the treat bags this year. Some of the children had fun exchanging favorite treats of theirs with favorite treats of their friends.

The children were very appreciative of all they received in their treat bags thanks to the grant from the GCU. The children were given candy, school supplies, and even a glow stick so they could be safe when they went trick or treating!

**Rachel Lahita-Shank**  
Secretary/Treasurer



## Lodge 10 & 994 Work Together to Assist Less Fortunate



George Seech, Marianne Harbist, Georgia Zeedick, Suzanne Juba, Irene Miller, Martha Seech, Mary Ann Popovich, Diane Ketterer, Dorothy Peterson, Mary Elizabeth Olack and Kathy Kapaldo.

**Aliquippa, PA.** On Tuesday, November 29, 2016 members of GCU Lodge 10, along with members of GCU Lodge 994, served dinner to the less fortunate at the House of Prayer Lutheran Church's Manna Dinner. The two lodges have been joining together for the past few years both financially and physically to participate in this community event. Manna is a free meal served to any member of the community who wishes to attend. Manna feeds not just the body but the mind and spirit and no one is turned away. We also gave the children in attendance coloring books and crayons donated by the Home Office.

**Kathy Kapaldo, President**

# Lodge 17 Wraps Up 2016

Old Forge, PA. Lodge 17 conducted a food drive and a used eye glasses collection during the month of November. Collection boxes were placed in four area churches for both collections—St. Nicholas Church, Old Forge, PA; St. Mary's Church, Taylor, PA; St. Michael's Church, Pittston, PA and St. Nicholas Church, Swoyersville, PA. The food was distributed to three different locations—The Greater Pittston Food Bank, Pittston, PA; The Salvation Army, Scranton, PA and St. Francis of Assisi Soup Kitchen, Scranton, PA.

Eyeglasses were donated to the Old Forge Lions Club. The glasses will be refurbished and distributed to underdeveloped areas. These collections were used as our community matching funds projects. The matching funds will be given to the Old Forge Police Department to be used for purchase of bicycles, the Outreach Ministries program at St. John the Evangelist Church, Pittston, PA for the Health Clinics, and the Taylor, PA Senior Center. Thank you to all those who generously donated.

The annual St. Nicholas Feast Day Celebration was held on Sunday, December 4, 2016 at St. Nicholas Social Center, Old Forge. Church members and guests from St. Nicholas and St. Mary's attended. All enjoyed a catered luncheon, a visit from St. Nicholas, and a basket fund raiser. A DJ entertained the children with games and songs. Guests were asked to bring a donation of baby items for St. Joseph's Center. GCU Lodge

At right is some of the food collected for the Food Banks. Below are 96 pairs of eyeglasses collected for the Lions Club.



Ed Keil with the food to be distributed to the Greater Pittston Food Bank.



17 members assisted parishioners with decorating the hall for this event, coordinated

the basket fund raiser, and provided supervision for the children's games. Some of the games included Musical Chairs, Pin the Nose on Santa, a Hula Hoop Contest, Ornament Toss, Shirts stuffed with Balloons, and Freeze Dance. Thank you to the GCU Home Office for the chocolate candies, calendars, and the grant for this event.

The lodge held its **Appreciation Luncheon and Recognition Awards Ceremony** along with the 4<sup>th</sup> Quarter Meeting on December 8, 2016 at Lucca's Restaurant in Taylor. The lun-

cheon was held for lodge members who have helped out with our various projects throughout the year. This was our second year for the Recognition Awards. The recipients will have their names engraved on a plaque that will hang in St. Nicholas Social Center. The recipients are recognized for their

service to the lodge in the past. This year recipients are Mike Matso, Dolores Mokay, John Argonish, and George "Futzie" Argonish.

Upcoming events include the Lenten Vespers Social Hour, March 12, 2017 at St. Nicholas Church, where the lodge is assisting with the food for this event and St. Nicholas Ham Bingo on April, 2, 2017. Hams will be awarded as prizes instead of money. Bingo begins at 1 PM with the kitchen opening at 12 NOON. Lodge 17 will be assisting with the kitchen and basket fund raiser at this matching funds event. Please come and support both of these activities.

**Ed Keil**  
Secretary Treasurer



At left: Mike Mokay and Fr. Eduard Shestak standing with Lodge 17's recognition plaque bearing Mike's mom's name, Dolores Mokay. At right: First row: Fr. Eduard Shestak, Pani Oksana Shestak, Betty Ann Gatto, Madlyn Lesneski, Alice Dolinish, Linda Mokay and Jill Walton. Second row: Gina Keil, Ilona Dolinish, Michael Mokay, Ed Dolinish Jr. and Ed Keil.



The children with St. Nicholas and Fr. Eduard Shestak.



Children with GCU t-shirts stuffed with balloons.

## Lodge 28 Holiday Happenings

**Southside-Pittsburgh, PA. Food & Toy Drive.** Lodge 28 conducted its annual toy and food drive from the beginning of October through mid-November. All food and toys collected received a monetary value. This amount qualified for community matching funds (over \$600). This money will be donated to the St. Cyril of White Lake Food Pantry at the Holy Assumption of St. Mary Orthodox church located on the South Side of Pittsburgh. This will enable them to buy the food and supplies most needed by the people who visit the pantry.

We donated the toys collected to two charities. First, half went to "Operation Toy Drive" which takes the toys and distributes them to families of the military in VA hospitals. The other half then went to the fourth annual Abbey Ralston Toy Drive. The parents of Abbey hold this event in memory of their infant daughter who lived only 16 days. They are working this year in conjunction with Christ the Redeemer Church in Canonsburg, PA. Dozens of families requested help, some with simple things such as books or basic clothing.

We donated all the food collected to both the Greater Pittsburgh Food Bank in McKeesport, PA and to the South Hills Interfaith Ministries. Numerous families in the South Hills receive services through SHIM, many of which are Nepali refugees.

We felt that by donating to several worthy causes, we were spreading the joy among more in our communities.

**Holiday Party.** The morning of Saturday, December 17 started with a bad ice storm that stopped traffic. Luckily, early afternoon brought warm enough temperatures to melt the ice. This allowed everyone who signed up for

the Lodge 28 double party to attend. It was both a Christmas party for lodge and church members and a party celebrating Father Tom Schaefer's 10 year anniversary as pastor of St. John the Baptist. Holding it on a Saturday evening allowed more time to socialize. On Sunday mornings, Father Tom has to run between two parishes for Divine Liturgies.

After Saturday's Liturgy with communal confession, everyone started arriving at the church hall. As they entered, they could pick up their seating assignments. Once people found their tables, Father Tom blessed the food, and Cantor Kevin Beres sang the traditional hymn "Heaven and Earth." Immediately prior to eating, attendees played the Left-Right game and a winner at each table received a prize.

Next, Sojourn Catering provided a delicious buffet dinner of chicken piccata, crab cakes, pasta, salad and rolls. A red velvet sheet cake with poinsettias (made by St. Pius' Norma Langol) honoring both Father Tom and Lodge 28 was cut for dessert.

Lodge member JoAnn Garofolo provided the entertainment for the evening. JoAnn is a one-woman band. She set up on the stage and played keyboards, sang Christmas songs, and played polkas on the accordion for dancing. She also orchestrated the "broom dance" with the lucky winner receiving a prize.

The Chinese Auction fundraiser had many wonderful gifts: Farberware 12-piece cookware, Enjoy coupon book, Pampered Chef items, gift cards, holiday items and more.



Chinese Auction table.

the table. He was a good salesman providing tickets and change while trying to drum up more sales. Many lucky people won the gifts or the door prizes that

were awarded afterward.

Everyone had a good, fun time and offered many compliments on the evening.

**Lodge Receives Youth Volunteer Help.** Baldwin High School juniors, Lodge 28 member Sarah Pavlick and her schoolmate Mimi Mullens wanted to apply for acceptance in the National Honor Society at their school. Part



Karen, Brent, Mimi and Sarah outside St. John's church.

of the prerequisite was ten hours of volunteer service that needed completion by January 10. Sarah came to our lodge asking if we had any suggestions. Immediately, the thought was to clean St. John the Baptist Church. The church does not have a janitor, so it does not receive regular cleaning, besides during Helping Hands Day. Much to our delight, Sarah said she would be interested and asked if any of her friends needed hours.

On Tuesday, December 27 during Christmas vacation, both girls spent three hours at the church performing a variety of hard work: sweeping and mopping the church hall, mopping under the pews of the church, dusting, and taking out the trash. The girls were very thorough in their cleaning; they went slowly and methodically so as not to miss a spot.

After completion of their work, we rewarded them with a pizza lunch. Thanks so much Sarah and Mimi, we appreciate it!

**Kim Kolesar, Secretary/Treasurer**



Ten-year old lodge member Brent Kolesar single-handedly oversaw

## Andrew Gans Celebrates 100<sup>th</sup> Birthday

Andrew Gans of Castle Shannon, PA celebrated his 100<sup>th</sup> birthday on October 31, 2016 by first attending Mass at St. Anne Church, celebrated by Fr. Michael Caridi. A celebration in his honor was on Saturday, November 12



with his children, Andrew Gans (Sandi) of Mt. Lebanon, PA; JoAnn Mortimer (Keith) of Castle Shannon; Judy Shremshock (Michael) of West Virginia and Dr. Michael Gans (Carissa) of Upper St. Clair, PA along with nine grandchildren and their spouses.

Andrew was born October 31, 1916 in the small mining town of Conifer near Brookville, PA. He is the tenth of twelve children born to George & Mary Gans, who immigrated to this country from Slovakia in the late 1800's. Although there remain only a few homes and a cemetery in Conifer, Andrew continues to make visits to see the graves of his siblings who died in the great pandemic of 1918-19. The last of his entire family and spouses, he is respected by the remaining nieces and nephews as the family patriarch.

When the mines closed in the Conifer area, his family moved to New Kensington, PA where he was raised and graduated from New Kensington High School. During WWII Andrew served in the South Pacific in the Battery B 745<sup>th</sup> Anti-Aircraft Artillery Gun Battalion.

In 1951 he married Angeline Iacopino at St. Vladimir's Byzantine Catholic Church in Arnold, PA. Andrew worked

for ALCOA at the New Kensington works for nearly 35 years and later Pa-percraft in Blawnox, PA. He enjoyed singing in the church choir and was a member of the Holy Name Society.

In 2009 Andrew and wife Angeline

of 65 years moved to Castle Shannon to be near their children and now attend St. Anne Parish.

Andy loves music (classical & ethnic) as well as being an avid reader. He is an ardent supporter of Pittsburgh sports teams but of the three the Pirates would be his favorite. He watched the Pirates and the Steelers play at Forbes Field as well as the Penguins when they were the Hornets. Among favorite things is to attend the annual replay of the 1960 Pirate World Series Game 7 on October 13 at the left field wall that still remains in Oakland, PA.

His secret for his longevity would be his daily beer at dinner time (along with another when he can sneak it). He is a proud grandfather to nine grandchildren who live in the Pittsburgh area and also Connecticut, Maryland and West Virginia. His proudest times are being with the entire family especially during the Christmas and Easter holidays.

Andrew was overwhelmed by over 100 birthday cards from family and friends. He received cards from President Obama, the PA State Legislature as well as from his favorite Pittsburgh teams, the Pirates, Steelers and Penguins.

Mr. Gans is a member of GCU Lodge 52 in Upper St. Clair, PA.



Tom Dowlin, Lisa Anderson and Stephanie Yackovich collect and pack up toys and food to be delivered to the Salvation Army and Food Bank.

## GCU Home Office Shares Holiday Goodness

The GCU Home Office staff collected more than 40 toys for the Salvation Army's Treasures for Children program and almost 200 items for the Greater Pittsburgh Community Food Bank. Fraternal Coordinator Lisa Anderson, Graphic Designer Tom Dowlin, and Membership and Community Relations Manager Stephanie Yackovich delivered donations to both gracious organizations. The Salvation Army's Treasures for Children and the Greater Pittsburgh Community Food Bank serve local families. The Greater Pittsburgh Community Food Bank serves nearly 360,000 people annually!



## Duquesne University Alumni



GCU Legal Counsel and Secretary of the Duquesne University Law School Alumni Association Theodore Trbovich, Esq. is shown with Maureen Lally-Green, Esq. Interim Dean of Duquesne University School of Law and First Catholic Slovak Ladies Association President Cynthia Maleski, Esq. All are graduates of Duquesne University School of Law and were attending a holiday reception for its alumni.

## Patricia and John Kutzfara Wed 25 Years



Pat & John Kutzfara

Silver bells were ringing on November 30, 2016 for John & Patricia Kutzfara celebrating their 25<sup>th</sup> wedding anniversary. They attended the Archieparchial Anniversary Liturgy and Dinner at St. Elias Church on Sunday, September

11. Then came a “surprise” brunch in their honor at the Georgetown Centre in Pleasant Hills, PA on Sunday, October 23. Eighty family and friends attended. All but one member of the wedding party was able to be there.

A Thanksgiving Eve Liturgy at St. Mary’s Church in Monessen, PA with Patricia’s brother Fr. Stephen Wahal celebrating, was prayed for the couple. John and Patricia were married at St. John Chrysostom Church (Russka Dolina) by Fr. Regis Dusecina. Both are active members of Lodge 255. They are the proud parents of John, Jacqueline and Daniel.

May God grant them many more healthy and happy years together.

## New Altar Server Thomas Rubish

During the Sunday Vigil Divine Liturgy on Saturday, December 17, 2016, Father Frank Firko installed a new altar server, Thomas Rubish, during a ceremony at Holy Ghost Byzantine Catholic Church in McKees Rocks, PA. The older brother of Thomas, Paul Andrew, who became an altar server two years ago, was privileged to assist Fr. Firko with the blessing of each article of clothing to be worn by his younger brother.

After the vesting ceremony, Thomas then proceeded to the altar area where he and his brother continued serving with the other altar servers for the remainder of the Liturgy. Relatives from Uniontown, PA and Hinckley, OH came to witness this happy event. Thomas is the son of Paul & Roberta (Kraft) Rubish of McCandless Township, Pittsburgh, PA and along with his family, is a member of Lodge 57.

Congratulations, Thomas!

Bernie Karoffa, Lodge 57 Publicity Director



Photo at left: Paul & Roberta (Kraft) Rubish with their sons, Paul Andrew & Thomas Rubish. Photo at right: The newly installed altar server, Thomas Rubish and his brother, Paul Andrew with their pastor Fr. Frank Firko.

## Lodge 336 St. Nicholas Celebration



Euclid, OH. Lodge 336 members enjoyed a St. Nicholas Celebration held on December 3, 2016. Lodge Treasurer Irene Chinchar presented a check to Vivian Freeland. Vivian is an active volunteer at Edna House and is the person who submitted our check and delivered all of the household items that we collected.

Patti Comai, President



# GCU

Investing in the Goodness  
of Community



# New Logo. New Tagline. New Opportunities for GCU.

The look of GCU is changing. Soon, when you receive communications from us, you'll see a brand new logo and a new tagline designed to take GCU into the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

## Why the Change?

Times have changed and so has GCU. We believed it was time to rebrand GCU with a new look and a more contemporary tone. The goal of the rebranding is to differentiate us from other fraternal... build a more emotional connection with you, as a member... and better point to the proud history that has guided us to where we are today.

## What's in a Logo?

In our new logo, you'll see a sense of boldness and confidence that speaks to GCU's longevity and strength in the marketplace. We are still "GCU." That sentiment is emphasized as our new logo pays tribute to our proud history through inspiration from past logo designs and unique, ownable typography. We are now much better positioned as a modern financial organization that's still deeply connected to its heritage and charter.

## Investing in the Goodness of Community.

The GCU rebrand includes a new tagline or "slogan" to accompany our redesigned logo. "Investing in the goodness of community" is at the heart of who we are and the reason why we are important to our members.

In contrast to impersonal big banks or other fraternal organizations that focus only on selling products, we aspire to a higher goal. Our tagline speaks to our unflinching commitment to the communities and parishes we have served over the years and will continue to serve for generations to come.

**In contrast to impersonal big banks or other fraternal organizations that focus only on selling products, we aspire to a higher goal.**

## OUR NEW WEBSITE

Coming this spring, a new GCU website will provide the tools you need to secure your financial future, give back to your community and stay updated on all things GCU.

Stay tuned!

## Lodge 109 St. Nicholas Luncheon & Theophany Dinner

Lyndora, PA. Lodge 109 kicked off the holiday season with a parish luncheon on Sunday, December 4, 2016 to celebrate St. Nicholas Day. The tureen luncheon came



Parishioners line up to sample the variety of foods at the tureen dinner.

immediately following the morning Liturgy and was attended by 50-60 parishioners and friends.

It was a fitting beginning to the season with the church hall of St. John's decorated for Christmas and with carols playing in the background.

Lodge 109 provided chicken, rolls and beverages to compliment the casseroles, desserts, and salads brought by those attending. Treats were given to the little children by the "Holy Father, Nicholas" and his female counter-

part, Helen Meaders who is as giving as Saint Nicholas himself when it comes to the children of the parish. The GCU Home Office also provided coloring books and colored pencils, definitely appreciated by all. We also wish to thank the GCU for the fra-



St. Nicholas visits with Reverend Abbot Leo Schlosser, pastor of St. John the Baptist Byzantine Church of Lyndora.



Some of the parish children pose for a picture with St. Nicholas portrayed by lodge member, Rick Reeder.

ternal grant which paid for the food and for the floral centerpieces that we gave as door prizes.

To conclude the festivities, Bobbi Diller (Ellie Tarcha's daughter) was delighted to hear her name as the prize recipient.

**Theophany Tureen Dinner.** On Thursday, January 5 Lodge 109 coordinated the annual Theophany Tureen Dinner at St. John the Baptist Byzantine Catholic Church. The lodge provided the fish, bread rolls, punch and coffee for the 50 plus members and families of parishioners who attended after the evening services.

Lodge 109's next project will be the pre-Lenten celebration of Fasengy on Sunday, February 26. Following the 10 AM Liturgy at St. John the Baptist, coffee & doughnuts will be provided by the lodge. A Founders' Day Liturgy will be offered that morning in memory of the deceased Lodge 109 members.

**Janet Uram**  
Secretary/  
Treasurer



The Musko family join Deacon Paul and Sandy Simko for dinner on the eve of the feast of Theophany.



Helen Meaders dines with fellow parishioners at the candle-lit dinner on Theophany eve.



Louis Pocchiari (front left) and Cory Milkovich share a laugh with John Baycura and his sister at the dinner.

### IMPORTANT CHANGES TO REPORT TO THE GCU IT ONLY TAKES A PHONE CALL!

Help us to keep your account information current. Please contact GCU Member Services at 1-855-306-0607 with any of the following changes:

- ❖ Marital Status                      ❖ Address Changes
- ❖ Banking Changes for Deposits or Withdrawals
- ❖ Request for IRA Minimum Distributions



## Lodge 816 Wraps Up 2016

DuBois, PA. As we said goodbye to 2016, Lodge 816 members recalled participation in many activities. The end of year was a busy one. From September to December, we had maintenance projects, calendar sales, and services for shut-ins. Our lodge participated in the annual District 4 Recognition Banquet and Basket Fund Raiser. We hosted the annual inter-parish Halloween Party at Nativity Parish and were pleased to have thirty-eight guests in attendance.

Along with collecting food for our local Reynoldsville, PA food pantry, we prepared and distributed Thanksgiving food baskets.

To help Nativity Parish prepare for Christmas, we held our Christmas decorating party/meeting on December 4 and began the process of decorating the church. Care for the poinsettias continued into January of 2017.

**Helen Boboige, Sec./Treasurer**



Lodge 816 members prepare and decorate (inside & out) Nativity Church.



Many of the volunteers and helpers from lodge 52 at the Taste of Heaven event.

Bethel Park, PA. The "Taste of Heaven" cookie sale was a great success again this year. On Saturday, December 3, 2016 there was a large crowd waiting outside St. Gregory Church hall when we opened the

doors at 8 AM. We have become well known for our "Great Cookies." We had 30 different varieties of cookies, nut rolls and candy. Everyone is looking forward to next year.

**Rosemary Tomko, Publicity Director**

## Lodge 52 "Taste of Heaven"



St. Nicholas Celebration.

## Lodge 252 St. Nicholas Celebration



At left: Pastor at St. Nicholas Fr. Mykhaylo Farynets, his wife Maryna and son Andrew. At right: Michaela Revilak sitting on St. Nick's lap with Theresa Swindler in the background.



Youngstown, OH. On December 17, 2016, we sponsored our annual celebration for our Patron Saint Nicholas. There was a visit by St. Nicholas for the children and dinner guests. Traditional sweets and small toys were presented to them.

The evening included a performance by the Revilak family, formerly of Slovakia. There was folk music and dance in the Slavic tradition.

**Theresa Swindler**  
President



Revilak Family

## N

## "Christmas on the Prairie: 2016 – Promotes St. Nicholas Tradition" Lodge 271 Supports 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual Event

Orland Park, IL. Annunciation Byzantine Catholic Church in Homer Glen, IL held its third annual "Christmas on the Prairie" event Saturday, December 3. Catherine Baranko, coordinator and youth leader, said the outdoor day is designed to teach about St. Nicholas, the patron saint of children, and to showcase "the man behind the myth."

The event included music, crafts, baked goods, education and evangelization. There were four folk musicians playing throughout the day. Children had plenty of activities from a prairie tour that included stations where the teen youth group performed skits to explain the life of St. Nicholas, an icon making craft

area, a hands on candle-making area, and culminating with the appearance of St. Nicholas himself and rides on his horse drawn sleigh. A choir of teenagers sang carols. The event included a fund raiser for the first time this year where prizes included a St. Nicholas icon, books about St. Nicholas' life and pysanky, which are decorated eggs.

The event was open and free to all visitors to the church. Rev. Father Thomas Loya, pastor at Annunciation, commented "This is about who we are. St. Nicholas is part of the riches of our church." Father Loya added the church wishes to spread the message of charity and share the spirit of St.



St. Nicholas approaches in his horse-drawn sleigh.

Nicholas, the church's patron saint, with the community.

Lodge 271 has been a main sponsor of the outdoor event since its start in 2014 as well as having its members volunteer in preparation and during the day's activities.

**Robert Palasz**, Treasurer



A group at one of the stations on the prairie.

Folk musicians entertain the visitors with a variety of rustic tunes.



## Lodge 442 Reports

Boardman, OH. Fourth Quarter Update. Our October "Month of Sundays" mini fund raiser benefitting the Infant Jesus of Prague Byzantine Catholic Church and Grounds Maintenance Fund was very successful. Congratulations to our winners: Milan Kraven, Janice Hartzell, Bill Bates and Edna Belletto. Want more opportunities to win? Join us for our next "Month of Sundays" coming up this spring to be held in May 2017.

Our "Toys for Tots" Drive kicked off on November 6 and ran through December 6, 2016. Our church vestibule was a month long drop off point. Once again, our members and parishioners gave generously. Special thanks to Ret. Marine Al Kozak.

GCU members joined the Byzantine Social Club of Infant Jesus of Prague Church for fun, food and socializing at their Annual Christmas Party on Sunday, December 4. The lodge donated a prize for their fund raiser.

Many lodge members also joined parishioners for Christmas decorating of the church. Infant Jesus of Prague Church is renowned for our beautiful holiday decorations that celebrate the joy of the season.

The **Children's Christmas Party** was held on Sunday, December 11,



Children's Christmas Party.



Toys for Tots toy drive.



Parish Christmas Party.



2016. Bad weather and the flu did affect attendance but fun was still had by all. Fun, food and a special visit from jolly, not so old St. Nicholas was the highlight of the party. Thank you

to St. Nicholas' helpers, parents and grandparents who brought the kids.

The annual **Christmas Bake Sale** was only a one day event this year, on Sunday, December 18. Bad weather and flooding in the church vestibule did not dampen spirits. A big thank you to the "bucket brigade" for helping us to soldier on! A special thank you to Maryan Farynets and her "kitchen elves" for donating their time and excellent baking skills. All baked goods were sold but more will be available for Palm Sunday for our upcoming Easter Bake Sale on April 9.

**Upcoming Activities.** The Youngstown Area Junior Bowling Tournament will be held on Sunday, March 26 at Camelot Lanes in Boardman, OH. Our Easter Candy Day for children will be held Sunday, April 9, 2017.

Easter and springtime will be here sooner than we think. Of course, that means we will be looking for "helping hands" to get our beautiful church grounds back in shape and blooming.

Thank you everyone who supported our activities, participated and continue to grow membership in the GCU.

**Elaine Chachko**  
Activities Director



Christmas decorating.



Christmas bake sale: Elena Slemons, Mary Novak and President Tillie Chachko.



Christmas bake sale: Bernie Litwin, Rosalee Kraven and Activities Director Elaine Chachko.

## Lodge 211 Assists Fire Department with Fundraiser

Eynon, PA. Lodge 211 members helped support the Eynon Sturges Hose Company's annual Chicken BBQ. GCU National Director Greg Vladika was chairman of the event.

Lodge members assisted in preparing the meals along with selling dinner tickets and fundraising tickets. Many Lodge 211 members donated baked goods and baskets for the fundraiser prizes.

Total money raised with the addition of GCU Matching Funds was over \$13,000.<sup>00</sup> profit. The funds will help the Eynon Sturges Hose Company with purchasing new equipment and paying down debt.

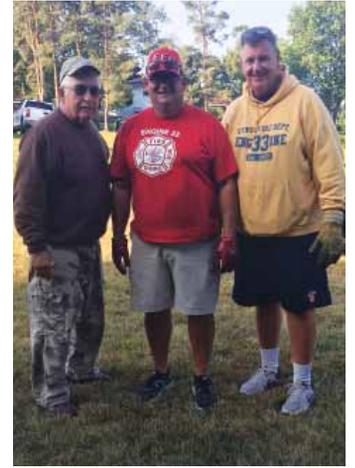
A special thank you to Lodge 211 members Carlo Salvador for making



Dan Hart, Lodge 211 President Alice Mizerak, Eynon Sturges FD President Donnie Cirba, Crystal Vladika, Greg Vladika, Paul Suche, Mike Vladika, Lisa Vladika and Joe Vladika.

the brine and helping clean and cook chickens, Lisa Vladika for organizing the kitchen staff and handling the kitchen duties, and Crystal Vladika for being chairperson of the fundraising tickets.

Gregory Vladika



Carlo Salvatore, Greg Vladika and Mike Vladika.



The children gathered around St. Nicholas.

## Lodge 20 St. Nicholas Celebration



Lodge officers President Steve Bachovin, Vice President Liz Kleinert and Secretary/Treasurer John Morenko, presenting the check (\$3,130) to our pastor Father Higgs.



Members of the Lodge 20 together for a photo to celebrate the day.

Philadelphia, PA. December 18, 2016 was a special day at Holy Trinity Byzantine Catholic Church. St. Nicholas himself presented gifts to 14 children in attendance. Lodge 20 sponsored the event and also provided a coffee social for the adults and children. Thanks to the GCU for providing the lodge with a Fraternal Grant. A special thanks to Jerry Hanuscin for playing the part of St. Nicholas.

Thanks also for the Matching Funds of \$1,500.<sup>00</sup> which were added to the profit of \$1,630.<sup>00</sup> from our Ethnic Dinner held in the fall. The officers of the lodge presented a check in the amount of \$3,130.<sup>00</sup> to Father Ed Higgins.

John Morenko, Secretary/Treasurer

# Lodge 69 Finishes a Busy 2016

**Pottstown, PA. Chinese Auction.** Parishioners donated gifts of at least \$10 to be auctioned off. Each person attending paid \$5 for admission and tickets for the fund raisers. Extra tickets were available for purchase.

The big prizes were part of separate events. Some of these prizes were bought and some donated.

We also sold tomato pie and soft pretzels. Our supporters donated desserts and all who attended received bags, pens and calendars. Everyone had a great time.

**Breakfast.** Our annual GCU breakfast was an informational one this year. Sales agent Randy Baden from the Pittsburgh area came to speak and answer questions about the GCU.

Members helped set up and cooked the breakfast that attendees enjoyed.

**St. Nicholas Celebration.** Our St. Nicholas Day celebration was a pot luck. The School of Religion children put on a play, there was a cookie walk, and a visit from St. Nicholas. Lodge 69's Gene Harding presented our pastor Fr. Nick DeProspero with a check from the GCU for proceeds made at the Chinese Auction.

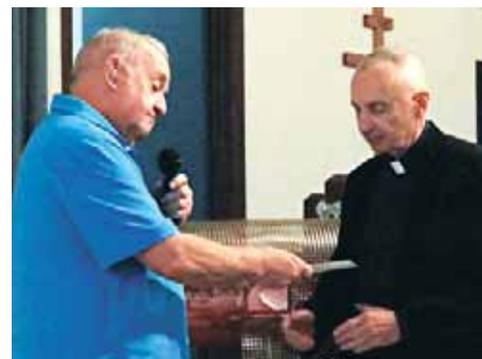
Nancy Harding  
Secretary



Above is Kathleen Kulp and Nancy Harding collecting admission money. At left and below are those in attendance and the youth volunteering to deliver the items to the buyer.



Breakfast with GCU sales agent Randy Baden (left).



Check presentation to Fr. Nick DeProspero from Gene Harding of the proceeds made at the Chinese Auction.



The St. Nicholas celebration was enjoyed by the young and the young at heart!



## Lodge 288 Update



The Veterans and the many children who participated in the program.



### Clairton, PA. Veterans Breakfast.

A breakfast was held on November 13 to thank local veterans for their service. They brought artifacts from different war eras to share in a display. Many interested attendees were able to ask questions and learn from the displays. Marianne Lassige and Carolyn Nista opened the program with a brief history of Veterans Day and introduced the children who proceeded to explain the meaning of each word in the "Pledge of Allegiance" during a ceremony. They invited everyone to join in singing "God Bless America." A delicious brunch satisfied everyone who enjoyed sharing experiences and fellowship.

**Oglebay Trip.** A field trip to Oglebay planned with matching funds by Sharlene Lazar included a stop at the Russell Stover candy outlet for some early Christmas shopping. Next stop was Cabella's where everyone enjoyed the beautiful displays of mountains and animals. Some took time to listen to the educational tapes with the displays, while others did some shopping. Then the group was on to Oglebay for a delicious buffet luncheon and a visit to the indoor zoo. A bus tour of the light displays capped off a wonderful day of experiences. Thanks to Sharlene for a trip well planned!

**Food Drive.** A food drive held during December by Lodge 288 in collaboration with the local Rite Aid store collected canned and dry good

donations during December. Volunteers delivered them to the Clairton Emergency Food Bank in time for Christmas handouts. Matching the donations, was a check sent to the food bank from the GCU Home Office to purchase additional groceries for families in need.

**St. Nicholas Celebration.** The celebration on December 11 saw the children participating in a Jesse Tree program in church, collecting gifts for shut-ins, making homemade greeting cards and visiting with St. Nicholas after breakfast. The children sang to St. Nicholas to encourage him to come to the party. Each child received candy and gifts, a gold coin from St. Nicholas and an ornament from the lodge. We presented a matching funds check to the Ladies Guild to help with the St.

Nicholas celebration.

**Recycling Drive.** A greeting card collection drive held during January and February benefited St. Jude's Ranch. St. Jude's Ranch for Children, recycles the used greeting cards and creates new holiday and all-occasion greeting cards. Recycled cards are sold to support the programs and services for abused, neglected and homeless children, young adults and families. Customers receive fun, "green" holiday or other occasion cards they can feel good sending to their friends and loved ones, and the children at St. Jude's Ranch receive payment for their work and learn basic job skills and the importance of recycling.

Trish Roberts, Vice President



Oglebay Trip.



Participants who participated in the St. Nicholas program.



Robin King from Rite Aid and Trish Roberts with food Drive items.



Preparing gifts for the St. Nicholas celebration are Mary Lou Salago, John Kohan and Sonya Gotera-Gardner.



Matching Funds check presentation to Ladies Guild.



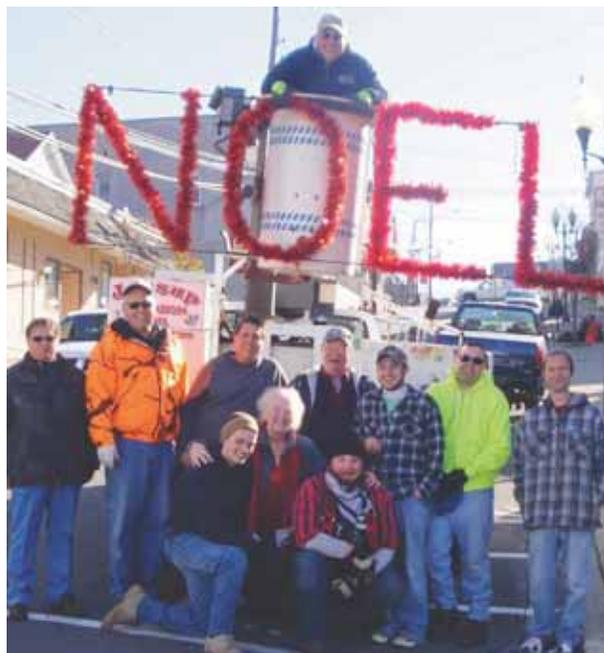
## What's New in Lodge 92

Jessup, PA.  
The members of Lodge 92

were certainly busy this past holiday season. In November, members of the lodge helped with Jessup's Operation Noel which is responsible for the decoration of Church Street in Jessup, PA with Christmas lights. Lodge members Michael Mancak, Ronald Mancak, Timothy Keller, and Gary Pezak all participated in bringing the holiday spirit to the town of Jessup.

On Friday, November 25, members of Lodge 92 took a break from

their holiday shopping to spend some time with residents at the Lackawanna Health and Rehabilitation Center. Michaela Mancak, Supreme Tribunal member Gregory Barkowski Sr., and Ellie Barkowski, with help from a Home Office grant, brought dinner and dessert for a group of residents at the facility. Michaela Mancak also made up bags of goodies to pass out to all the residents. The visit was initiated by Daniel Banicky, a member of Holy Ghost parish, who for the last ten years has spent his Friday nights with the



Lodge 92 Operation Noel. In bucket, Gary Pezak. Left to right: Bobby Wasilchak, Ken Marchegiania, Jeff Vanston, Ronald Mancak, Chris Naticchi, Mario Naticchi and Tim Keller. Kneeling: Josh Mancak, Michaela Mancak and Michael Mancak.



Above is Greg Barkowski welcomes everyone to the Lodge 92 St. Nicholas celebration. At left: St. Nicholas and Michaela Mancak at the St. Nicholas celebration.

residents at LHRC. Mr. Banicky is an active member of Holy Ghost parish as an Altar Knight. His weekly visits are expected and well accepted by all of the residents.

Finally, on December 6 the lodge held its annual Saint Nicholas Day Children's Party in the hall at Holy Ghost Church. Guests were treated to a concert performed by the La-Salle Academy children's choir and enjoyed pizza, hot dogs and refreshments that were

provided. A basket fund raiser along with GCU matching funds provided a donation to the American Cancer Society for Breast Cancer Awareness. The party was capped off by a visit from St. Nicholas who distributed chocolate coins to all in attendance.

Next on the lodge's agenda is the annual Ethnic Dinner planned for Sunday, February 26, the Sunday prior to Lent beginning. Lodge 92 would like to wish all members of the GCU a very blessed, healthy and prosperous 2017.

Mark Barkowski, Publicity Director

## Lodge 255 Christmas Parties

Greenfield-Pittsburgh, PA. Adult Christmas Party. Friday, December 2, 2016 at Westwood Country Club were the date and location for the lodge's annual Christmas Party. Thanks to Kitty Cherevka and John Niskach for planning the event.

Kids' Christmas Party. The annual Christmas party for our youth members was held on Saturday, December 10, 2016. The event took place at St. John Chrysostom Church hall in Greenfield-Pittsburgh, PA. Special thanks to Jennifer Gula for planning the event.



## News from the Big Apple

New York, NY. St. Nicholas Day was celebrated on December 4, in conjunction with Deacon Nick Daddona's 28<sup>th</sup> year as a deacon. Bishop Michael Dudick ordained Nick Daddona as deacon. Father Strand presented Deacon Nick with a special icon of St. Nicholas of Myra. Fr. Philip OSBM from the monastery in Glen Cove, NY assisted with the Liturgy. A pot luck lunch followed. The children were very excited to see St Nicholas. Those who needed it were very pleased to use the new stair lift to get to the church hall. We wish Deacon Nick Daddona many more healthy and happy years at St. Andrew Church.

On the sixth Sunday of Advent, which is the pre-feast of the Nativity, we lit the red candle which stands for Holy Communion. Symbolism: Christ, who was born in Bethlehem and who will come again at the end of time, comes to us now in the great sacrament of Holy Communion. Parishioner Marie Turner celebrated her 7<sup>th</sup> birthday by lighting the candle.

St. Andrew's had a very successful bake sale. Parishioners worked hard preparing and cooking for the sale. Anthony Guzewicz efforts helped to make the bake sale very profitable. Cathy & Dennis Walsh brought Sinbad, our mascot, to promote the sale. Everyone loved him.

For the second year in

a row GCU teen Jack Lalley and the St. Joseph's Hockey team won the Hockey tournament in Rhode Island, NY. Captain Lalley was very instrumental in their win. Congratulations!

We also congratulate Eleanor & Peter Dietz who celebrated their 64<sup>th</sup> wedding anniversary on January 6. We wish them many more healthy and happy years.

Assunda Kovalcik passed away on Sunday, December 25, 2016 at JFK Medical Center in Edison, NJ. She is survived by her husband Richard, sons Richard Jr. and Andrew and sister-in-law Barbara Kovalcik. Eternal memory and blessed repose.

Our first quarterly meeting will be held in conjunction with our celebration of the GCU's 125<sup>th</sup> anniversary on Sunday, February 26. The GCU was formed on February 14, 1892. We will share some fun facts about the history and give out prizes. It will be held at St. Andrew's Church in Westbury, NY after the



Deacon Nick Daddona, Fr. Strand and Fr. Philip OSBM. At right is one of our youths showing off our new stair lift.



9 AM Liturgy. For more information call Marge at 516-307-1016. We hope you will join us.

Our matching funds luncheon for a Byzantine church in our area will be held on April 30, 2017 at the Annunciation of the Blessed Virgin Mary B.C. Church on Underhill Avenue in Flushing, NY. There will be Liturgies at 9 & 10:30 AM with the luncheon beginning at 12:30 PM. The cost is \$25. We will have a full luncheon, a speaker and fundraisers. For more information call Chris Hulak at 646-465-3141. We hope to have a nice turn out of GCU members.

Marge Pajer-Russell, President



Children's St. Nicholas activities.



Marie Turner lighting the candle on the day of her 7<sup>th</sup> birthday. She is with Fr. Strand and Cantor Ed.



Workers at the bake sale. At right: Sinbad our mascot at the bake sale.



## Lodge 316 Holiday Activities

Phillipsburg, NJ. Lodge 316 was very busy this holiday season. On December 18, the lodge joined with SS. Peter & Paul Church to host a St. Nicholas Celebration for church members and friends. Over 40 people attended, including 15 children. After a delicious breakfast, Nick Kavcsak and Ed Chando led the guests in singing the St. Nicholas hymn. The children were thrilled when St. Nicholas appeared and visited with each of them. Santa Claus also came with gifts for all the children. Everyone agreed that it was a wonderful way to start the holiday season. Thanks to the GCU Fraternal Grant Program which helped support this activity.



The week before Christmas found GCU members Ann Wilkins and Bill Kravchak visiting lodge members Mike & Marge Osifchin, Ann Svachak, Helen Casey, Mary Mellick and Ed Chando. They took this opportunity to deliver a poinsettia, homemade cookies, and warm wishes for the holiday season. They all enjoyed visiting with each other and sharing stories and good will.

Kathleen Meddaugh, Sec./Treasurer



## Lodge 268 Update



following Divine Liturgy. We had a delicious buffet. A special thank you to Suzanne Albaugh for all her hard work. Prizes were given out. Karen Lloyd and Jeannie Roberts lead Christmas Carols. While singing Jingle Bells Santa came. Each child sat on his lap and told him what they wanted for Christmas. He gave each of them a treat bag and photos were taken. Everyone enjoyed the afternoon. A big thank you to the GCU for the grant.

Lodge 268 had a bakeless bake sale to buy gifts for 20 children from the Mingo Food Bank. Each child received a top, pants, sweat shirt and socks.

Helping with the shopping was Carla Gasser, Jenny Burrier and

Heather Carmichael.

Lodge 268 also helped a 14 year old boy with CPRS. Complex Regional Pain Syndrome is a rare debilitating nerve disease that is caused by an injury. The pain from CPRS is ranked as the most excruciating form of pain that exists today.

His mother wrote a beautiful thank you note.

"We are blown away to receive such an amazing gift of kindness and generosity toward therapy to help heal his body. We are so grateful for the GCU wanting to match your donation. We are very grateful to our Catholic family."

Lodge 268 would like to thank

the GCU for the matching funds that helped so many.

Sara Gasser  
Publicity  
Director



## Holiday Cheer from Lodge 302

**Brecksville, OH. Tuscan Sunday Supper.** On October 23 the Cathedral of St. John the Baptist Family Fellowship of Parma, OH and Lodge 302 hosted the annual Tuscan Supper at the Cathedral's Social Hall. The event was attended by over 125 guests who enjoyed a dinner that featured a secret sauce recipe and homemade mini cannoli.

The afternoon was full of fund raisers, quick grabs and other selections with the proceeds benefiting St. Mary's Hospitality House of Cleveland and the St. John's Cathedral general improvement fund. Guests enjoyed the music of Father Mike and Phil who were asked back by an overwhelming demand. They filled the hall with Italian and ethnic Carpathian music that brought many guests to their feet heading toward the dance floor.

Lodge President Judy Weitzel briefly spoke on the benefits of financial planning and what the GCU has to offer both socially and financially. This was very beneficial since we had many families in attendance who are at different stages of life, and more important, the youth who heard how the GCU is focusing more on their generation.

It was nice to see Retired Bishop John and many of the area clergy in attendance. Their support followed by all the faithful and the GCU are why events like this continue to care for the community and its parishioners.

**Pot Luck & Children's Party.** The annual St. Nicholas pot luck and children's Christmas party was held on Sunday, December 4 at St. Joseph's Byzantine Church. Lodge 302



Tuscan Sunday Supper.



Jean Karaffa and Judy Weitzel presenting Fr. Bruce Riebe with a check for St. Joe's Capital Improvement Fund.



and the Home Office donated items for the children's gifts bags. This is always a fun and well attended event and both children and adults enjoy the arrival of St. Nicholas.

**Holiday Fund Raiser.** Lodge 302 held two holiday Fund Raisers on December 4 and December 18 with proceeds to benefit St. Joseph's Capital Improvement Fund. The first, a giant Children's Christmas stocking was filled with an abundance of toys and goodies. Congratulations to the Master's family, a family of ten children who took the stocking! The second was a basket of cheer filled with numerous bottles of spirits and wine, beverage gifts and snacks. The basket recipients were John & Linda Greifenstein. Jean Karaffa and Judy Weitzel presented Fr. Bruce Riebe with a check for \$1,359.<sup>46</sup>. Lodge 302 thanks all the volunteers from our officers to our membership who helped to spread the holiday cheer and made these events and donations possible!

**Adult Game Night.** Game Night will be held on Saturday, March 11 (adults only) at St. Joseph's Activity Center. Doors open at 5:30 PM. A light dinner with refreshments will be served in celebration of GCU's 125<sup>th</sup> anniversary. GCU members/friends are asked to bring their favorite games. Come and enjoy a night of camaraderie and fun!

Don't forget to "Like" us at [www.facebook.com/GCU Lodge302](http://www.facebook.com/GCU Lodge302) and view more photos and event information.

Diane Richey, Publicity Director



Jean Karaffa and Diana Simpson display the Holiday fund raiser prizes and the Masters family winning the giant stocking.

### Lodge 302—2017 Events Calendar

**Saturday, March 11**—Twelfth Annual Game Night for adult members and guests at 5:30 PM in St Joseph's, Activity Center, Brecksville, OH.

**Sunday, April 9**—Easter Egg Hunt-12 NOON, St. Joseph's Church Hall, Brecksville, OH.

**Sunday, April 30**—Second quarter meeting, St Joseph's Church Hall immediately following 10:30 AM Liturgy.

# Lodge 625 Happenings

Conemaugh, PA. As part of our quarterly "giving tree" campaign for 2016, Lodge 625 delivered over 224 pounds of food to the St. Vincent de-Paul Food for Families Warehouse. President Paul Yackulich, Jr. and Secretary/Treasurer Georgia Lehman delivered the items to Christopher Lehman, SVPD warehouse worker.

As part of our second matching funds request, the lodge held a gob sale and the proceeds were matched by the Home Office. With the chicken dinner and gob sale including matching funds, the lodge had profits of slightly over \$2,800.00 which were distributed throughout the community. During the month of December the lodge visited 14 different community organizations and distributed the funds raised from these two events. The lodge also provided a \$200 check to Father Robert Oravetz to support the Military Chaplains fund.

Lodge 625 also has a very busy 2017 planned and has already been busy during the first part of January. We hosted a New Year's Day coffee and donut social for the members of



At left: Food collection presented to Christopher Lehman, Food for Families warehouse worker and above is some of the food collection at the church prior to delivery.

the lodge and parish family following Divine Liturgy on January 1. On January 15, the lodge held its first fundraiser of the year with a sub and soup sale. Proceeds from this event will help support lodge activities throughout the year.

As we move forward in 2017, the lodge will host a Founders' Day breakfast for members of the lodge and parish family in celebration of the 125<sup>th</sup> year of the GCU. Our first quarter meeting will be held February 26, 2017 at 10:15 AM following Divine Liturgy. As we move toward spring, on March 19, our lodge will be holding another fundraiser, our Spaghetti Dinner.

Also on the schedule of events is our annual Easter Party/Hunt for our lodge children which will be held April 9 with the time yet to be set. Any lodge member wishing to know more can contact Paul Yackulich Jr. or Georgia Lehman. Our annual lodge bowling party is scheduled for April 30, at the Richland Lanes in Johnstown, PA. All members and family are welcome to attend. Registration is requested.

As a reminder, members of Lodge 625 who have email addresses are asked to send an email to the lodge email address so that we can compile a distribution list to keep members informed of upcoming events and activities. The email address is: [GCUlodge625@yahoo.com](mailto:GCUlodge625@yahoo.com)

**Georgia Lehman**  
Secretary Treasurer

More photos appear on Lodge 625 Web Page.



Jackson Twp. Senior Center, presented to Center Manager Amy Gallo.



Habitat for Hounds, presented to President Valerie Kasper.



Conemaugh Fire Company, presented to President "Skip" Grove.



St. Vincent DePaul Family Kitchen, presented to kitchen manager Greg Karcher.



Back Packs for kids, presented to project coordinator Katie Kovacic.



Veronica (Honey) Sokash, keeping up with the dishes and Paul Yackulich, Jr. serving up soup at the soup/sub sale.



## Lodge 945 Goings On

**Dunmore, PA.** The holiday season was a very busy time for our lodge members. Our year end projects included Feed-A-Friend campaign in November and ended with the Christmas Angel program in December. Both events were organized in collaboration with St. Michael the Archangel Byzantine Catholic Church parish family.

The lodge began November by providing beverages for the parish feast day celebration.

Throughout November collections were held for the Feed-a-Friend project which benefitted the Keystone Rescue Mission and included donated foods along with monetary donations. In addition, St. Michael's Thanksgiving church collection was contributed to this project. Including GCU Matching Funds, we are happy to report that more than 300 food items and \$2,185.<sup>00</sup> were presented to the mission. Thank you to lodge members and St. Michael's parishioners for their generosity and Rev. Robert Lozinski, pastor of St. Michael's who promoted and sup-



Topsy Zayac and George Kofel with a Gino Merli Veterans Center volunteer accepting Angel Tree Christmas gifts.



George Kofel accepting Thanksgiving Day collection from Father Robert with lodge members Boris, Brandon & Cheryl Shihinski, displaying non-perishable foods collected.

ported our activity. Many thanks to Boris, Cheryl & Brandon Shihinski, Chris Zayac and George Kofel for packing the canned goods and getting them into cars to be transported.

The Lodge 945 and St. Michael Church annual St. Nicholas gathering was on Sunday, December 4, 2016 following the 9 AM Divine Liturgy in the church's social hall. Our lodge fully funded the celebration which included a visit from none other than St. Nicholas. We utilized a GCU grant to provide sweet treats and beverages for the young and old alike. St. Nicholas provided gifts for the children. We thank St. Nicholas (Boris Shihinski), Father Lozinski, Topsy Zayac, Betty Salva and Chris Zayac for their assistance in providing a very nice event for all in attendance.

Angel Tree tags were displayed for the taking the weekend following Thanksgiving. St. Michael's parishioners once again unselfishly participated as the Angels were dispersed within two weeks. A total of 55 gifts were purchased, gift wrapped and delivered to the Gino Merli Veterans Center in Scranton, PA. To everyone at St. Michael's who assisted in carrying the gifts out to cars for delivery, you know who you are, Thank you!

In addition to our events, we held our fourth quarter/annual meeting. Activities for the new year were discussed and annual monetary donations were voted on. Officers for 2017 include President Paul Dunda, Vice President Betty Salva, Secretary-Treasurer Sharon Kofel and Auditors



St. Nicholas celebration at St. Michael the Archangel Church, Dunmore, PA.



Presentation of monetary donation to Mr. John Gleason director of the Keystone Rescue Mission. Shown are mission representatives, Father Lozinski, Mr. Gleason, National Director George Kofel, Topsy Zayac and Lodge President Paul Dunda.

Myron Fedor & Brandon Shihinski. Lodge members also attended the District 5 annual scholarship dinner and participated in the district organized Helping Hands Day at Holy Annunciation Monastery.

The annual Epiphany banners were available at St. Michael's beginning on the Feast of Epiphany on January 6. Any lodge member wanting a banner should contact Sharon Kofel at 570-561-5696 or GCU-Lodge945@gmail.com.

Our first quarter meeting is scheduled for Sunday, March 12, 2017 immediately following the 9 AM Divine Liturgy at St. Michael's. Members are encouraged to get involved. Your input can make a difference to someone.

We would be remiss in not acknowledging Sharon Kofel who once again planned and organized the activities reported here. Thank you Sharon for sharing your talents and expertise for seeing the events through. We look forward to your next inspiration.

Elsie Kolcun, Publicity Director

## Lodge 994 Honor & Memory Tree



The honor and memory tree that was displayed at Seven Oaks Country Club.

Beaver, PA. During the 2016 Christmas season, Lodge 994's Honor & Memory Tree occupied its familiar corner in Seven Oaks' lobby. Hanging on the tree were specially designed name ornaments remembering those who have passed or honoring those who are still with us.



For more than five years, the tree has served as a lodge fundraiser for local organizations, and this year raised \$650.00 from donors. Through the GCU matching-funds project, Lodge 994 will send \$1,300.00 to the 501(c)3 nonprofit organization Canines for Vets. Heading up this annual project was lodge president Mary Batyko.

Georgia Zeedick, Publicity Director

## Lodge 386 Celebrates St. Nicholas



Pittsburgh, PA. St. Pius X parish in Carrick-Pittsburgh and Lodge 386 had their annual St. Nicholas Day Dinner on Saturday, December 3.

The event was a benefit for the St. Paul Monastery's Food Bank located in Southside-Pittsburgh, PA. We asked all attendees to bring a food item.

The event started with appetizers

then a delicious pork & ham dinner for the adults and chicken fingers & fries for the kids. Guests enjoyed table games, music and of course a visit from St. Nicholas himself.

Many thanks to the GCU Home Office for giveaways and for the grant that made this event again this year to make it a success.

Beth Gulyasy, Secretary/Treasurer

**Announcing the GCU 2017 Art, Photo & Video contest!**  
This year's theme is: **"For Goodness Sake"**

Need some inspiration? Brainstorm:  
How do you show goodness to others?  
What do you care about?  
What's your passion?  
Who would/do you help?

**Art**

If you're 12 or younger, enter your artwork!  
-submission must be original on paper or art board - maximum size 12" x 18"  
-include short description of your art, name, age, address, phone number and email on the back of your submission

**Photo**

If you're age 13 - 23 enter your photo or video!  
-send photo submissions to [events@GCUusa.com](mailto:events@GCUusa.com)  
-videos must be at least 30 seconds, maximum of three minutes  
-include short description, name, age, address, phone number and email with your submission  
-photos or videos that include identifiable people require a model release. \*Find the model release and exact directions for submitting your video below.

**Video**

**Deadline April 3, 2017**

**NEW THIS YEAR! If you're age 23 - 99+, enter your video!\***  
Winners in each category will receive a gift card of their choice!  
For age categories and more rules, visit [www.GCUusa.com](http://www.GCUusa.com)  
One entry per member. All contestants must be a GCU member for one year.  
Membership and age is determined as of March 31, 2017.

## Lodge 81 Holiday Activities

**Uniontown, PA.** Lodge 81 members strive to be active within the St. John Parish and also in the Greater Uniontown Community. Many of the events were focused on children... that's what makes Christmas a special time.



Bonnie Balas serving the needy on Christmas.

**St. Nicholas Children's Celebration.** The event was held on Sunday, December 4, as most of our GCU officers are also St. John catechists, the St. Nicholas event was centered around the ECF Program. Lodge 81 officers helped with this wonderful event in their own ways. Marcia Harrer developed an interactive skit which James Mihalko narrated, while the high school students engaged the younger children in this lively activity. Gerry Dorobish and other catechists assisted the children in craft projects and making cards which were to be distributed to those in Mount Macrina Manor. Bonnie Balas prepared a treat bag for each child which included an icon/prayer card of St. Nicholas, chocolate gold coin and small chocolate St. Nicholas. The highlight of the event was a visit from St. Nicholas, who was portrayed by Rich Mattey. Mr. Mattey greeted each child and gave them well wishes. Stephen Petruska and Father Ron helped to vest Mr. Mattey who greatly resembled the real St. Nicholas. The event was enjoyed by all who attended.

**Christmas Craft/Bake Sale.** Members of Lodge 81 are an integral part of this annual event, they not only donate, but also support the event. Ann Kormanik, Marcia Harrer, Janet Gaydos, Bonnie Balas, and many parishioners donate their special-



Children's activities at the Christmas Craft and Bake Sale.



ties. Many members from other GCU lodges and parishes St. John the Baptist (Scottdale, PA) and St. Nicholas (Greensburg, PA) came from afar to support the event. The event was very successful and profits helped pay for the repairs made to the tower of St. John Church.

**Community Library Program.** On Saturday, December 17, the annual Children's Christmas Program was held at the Uniontown Public Library for the children of the community. Lodge 81 largely sponsors this event through a mini-grant. The grant paid for the performers of the "Stage Right" who gave a musical performance about Santa Claus. Nearly 70 children and their parents attended the program which was greatly enjoyed by all. Bonnie Balas helped serve the cake/refreshments, Gerry Dorobish also served and assisted the children with a craft project, and Stephen Petruska passed out gift bags to each child which were provided by the GCU Home Office. Many thanks GCU.

**Singing at the Monastery.** On Sunday, December 18, the lodge officers who also serve the parish as ECF teachers, went with their classes to the Mount Macrina Monastery. The chapel rang with enthusiasm as the ECF students, who had practiced for several weeks, sang carols for the Sisters. The Sisters thoroughly enjoyed their singing and spent time socializing with the children and their families in the dining area. The Sisters provided refreshments in appreciation, and the students presented the Sisters with a monetary donation for Christmas.

**Christmas Dinner.** On Christmas Day, Bonnie Balas volunteered at a Christmas dinner which was held at the Ivory Ballroom for those who were needy and alone for Christmas. Homeless and needy children and adults were treated to a ham dinner and also received gifts. Bonnie has done this for a few years and finds this a worthwhile way to give to the community's needy. She and Debbie Klink, a St. John parishioner, also took meals to those who serve the Uniontown community and had to work on Christmas such as police, firemen, and those on call for emergencies.

**Super Salesperson.** During the holiday season Gerry Dorobish volunteered at the Mount Macrina Religious Gift Shop. Gerry not only assists with sales, she is on call when Sister Ruth Plante needs her. She is very dedicated helping at the gift shop and serves each customer with a smile.

Our quarterly meeting was held on Sunday, February 12 after Divine Liturgy. The lodge discussed their upcoming big event – the 12<sup>th</sup> Egg Eggstravaganza.

Bonnie Balas, Publicity Director



St. John ECF students and catechists at the monastery.



St. Nicholas with ECF Children.

# Lodge 401 Update

Nanty-Glo, PA. GCU Lodge 401 sponsored the 3<sup>rd</sup> annual Thanksgiving food drive at our parish, St. Nicholas of Myra Byzantine Catholic Church. Lori Bender and Bev Chekan provided grocery bags with a stapled list of food items needed to complete a Thanksgiving dinner. Twenty bags were taken and filled by parishioners and returned to the church.

On November 15<sup>th</sup> Chuck Simmers from the Interfaith Community Food Pantry along with Steve Bender and Eugene Ostinowsky of St. Nicholas church, loaded the groceries onto the bed of Chuck's truck.

Steve also presented Chuck with a \$200 check from the lodge to assist with expenses and needs at the Food Pantry.

The lodge extends a special thank you to all those who participated in this worthy cause.

Our annual St. Nicholas Day celebration was held on December 4, 2016 following the 11 AM Sunday Liturgy at our home parish of St. Nicholas Byzantine Catholic Church. For the second time the dinner was catered which gave all parishioners a chance to relax and enjoy the festivities. Following the dinner St. Nicho-



Steve Bender (right) presents a check from the lodge to Chuck Simmers from the Food Pantry.

las stopped by to greet everyone and share some gifts with the children. Everyone joined in to sing O Kto Kto Nikolaja Lubit (O Who Loves Nicholas the Saintly). Lodge 401 purchased two icons to be used as prizes. One icon was of the Nativity and one of St. Nicholas. Special thanks to the Ladies Guild of St. Nicholas Church, the GCU Home Office and GCU Lodge 401 for their assistance in making this event memorable and successful.

A check was presented to Deb-



Debbie Drug from the Senior Center accepting a check from Vice President Eugene Ostinowsky.

bie Krug, Manager of the Nanty-Glo Senior Center. The \$200 check is to assist with costs for special events, entertainment and craft supplies. The Senior Center re-opened October 6,



Food items collected at St. Nicholas Church.

2016 after being closed down by the former county commissioners as a cost saving measure.

On Sunday, December 18, 2016, lodge members Steve Bender, Marina Sell and Eugene Ostinowsky prepared and distributed treats to each of the patients and staff at the St. Stephen's

Living Center in Nanty-Glo, PA. Accompanying them was Fr. Robert Oravetz, their parish priest. Christmas stockings were used as treat bags and contained fruit, a small nativity set, a Christmas card and various items provided by the GCU Home Office. Our heartfelt visit concluded with the singing of Christmas carols with the residents.

Gene Ostinowsky, Vice President



Marina Sell with a St. Stephen's Living Center resident.



Fr. Robert Oravetz with the Fenchak & Ford Families and Shirley Oblinsky.



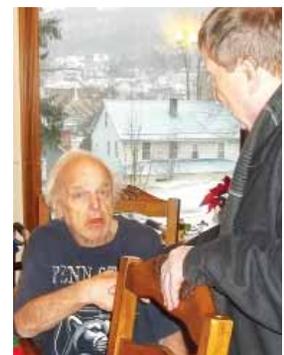
Collin & Josie Nedrich, Ella McQuay, Jackson Ford, Nathanael Sell, Nicholas O'Toole and Matthew Sheesley.



St. Nicholas with Ella McQuay and Lori Bender in the background.



Marina Sell (left) and Fr. Robert Oravetz (right) helping residents at Stephen's Living Center



## Parish Expansion Events

Gilbert, AZ. The Oktoberfest and Silent Auction at St. Thomas has been ongoing for at least 18 or 19 years. The purpose is for parishioners and friends to socialize, have fun eating delicious food, dance, and bid on wonderful donated items either from parishioners or businesses in the community. By doing this, we end up also educating others about our beautiful Byzantine Catholic community in Gilbert. It is also held to raise needed funds for our church of St. Thomas and benefit outreach in our community. This year, we nearly sold out of all our tickets. The German food was delicious! We had great items to auction including gift certificates to regional restaurants and stores. One of our parishioners is an artist and she provided some of her dinnerware she had decorated with floral painting. We love her work! German music and American country music played in the background. All in all, we had a fun evening!

*Submitted by  
Joanie Mahar*



Lansford, PA. On December 16, 2016 St. John's Byzantine Catholic Church held their annual Christmas pirogi, halushki, cookie and nut roll sale in the church social hall. It was a tremendous success! St. John's thanks the GCU for their assistance in obtaining matching funds for this project.

*Submitted by Susan M. Seaver*



Scranton, PA. St. John's Byzantine Catholic Church, Scranton, held their Christmas pirohi fundraiser December 9-11 in the church hall. Thirty three volunteers made 514 dozen potato/cheese pirohi for the holiday season. The parishioners of St. John's have about six fundraisers a year, with the pirohi sales

being the most popular. The days working are very enjoyable and provide great companionship for everyone. On December 11 the workers were treated to a Christmas dinner donated by a friend of the parish. The catered meal included roast beef, sweet and sour chicken, chicken strips scampi, roasted vegetables, mashed potatoes, salad and ice cream. The dinner was a gathering for celebration and relaxation. The fundraisers are to help with parish expenses. Thanks to all who participated.

*Submitted by Joan M. Roskos*



Nesquehoning, PA. St. Mary's Byzantine Catholic Church held its annual St. Nicholas Festival on Saturday, December 3 in the church hall. The kitchen supplied ethnic foods to eat in or take out. Ethnic music was provided throughout the day by parishioner Ed Kusko on his accordion.



Other festivities included a basket fund raiser of 70 baskets, bake sale and grab bags. The highlight of the event was a visit from St. Nicholas, who greeted all. The festival is an annual occasion for parishioners, community residents, and residents of surrounding communities to gather and socialize.

*Submitted by Rev. Dr. Vasyly Chepelsky*

Monroeville, PA. On December 6, 7 and 8, the Church of the Resurrection once again held its annual Christmas roll and cookie sale. This included nut rolls, poppy seed rolls, apricot rolls and 25 different Slovak cookies. Approx-



mately 25 members and a few friends from our neighboring Roman Catholic parishes worked long hours to produce over 400 rolls. It was such a successful sale

(sold out) that we added a second baking day on December 13 to fill additional orders. GCU members who participated included Judy Schall, Jim Silvestri, Bob Bartko and Ruzena Kokal.

*Submitted by Thomas Oslick Sr.*



**GCU** SINCE 1892

CONTACT US

5400 Tuscarawas Road  
Beaver, PA 15009

Phone: 1-800-722-4428

FAX: 1-724-495-3421

Website: [www.gcuusa.com](http://www.gcuusa.com)

Email: [info@gcuusa.com](mailto:info@gcuusa.com)



## CATHERINE MAE OLEKSA

Catherine Mae Oleksa, (Kitty), 87, of East Taylor Township, PA, a member of Lodge 625, went home to be with the Lord on Monday, January 23, 2017. She passed away peacefully in her sleep at home. She is the daughter of the late Michael Husla and Anna (Konitsky) Krawczyk.

She is a former employee of Bestform, Glosser Brothers and Penn Traffic where she worked until the '77 flood closed the Penn Traffic downtown store. After the flood she became full time housewife, mother and grandmother. She was a judge of elec-

tions in East Taylor Twp. and enjoyed playing bingo, pinocle and most of all spending time with her family. She was member of St. Mary's Byzantine Catholic Church in Johnstown, PA.

Catherine was a wonderful wife, mother, grandmother and friend who will be deeply missed. Surviving are her loving and caring husband of 68 years George and the following children: George M., married to Robin (Piechnik), Gary S., married to Nancy (Diamond), GCU National Director David A., and Kevin J., married to Christine (Williams); grandchildren Tracy married to Wayne Nardecchia, Melinda married

to Carlos D. Perez, Brian married to Kimberly (Kaiser), Anthony, Nicholas and Michael; numerous great-grandchildren; sister-in-law, Frances Husla; nieces and nephews.

In addition to her parents she is also preceded in death by her sister Irene (Husla) Henderson, brother John Husla and step-father Joseph Krawczyk. Catherine was the last surviving member of her immediate family.

The Divine Liturgy of Christian Burial was celebrated at St. Mary's Byzantine Catholic Church by Msgr. Raymond Balta. Burial was in Holy Trinity Church Cemetery.

Eternal memory and blessed repose.

## MSGR. JOHN T. SEKELICK J.C.L

Rev. Msgr. John T. Sekelick J.C.L, a member of GCU Lodge 211, a priest of the Eparchy of Passaic, NJ, judicial vicar and pastor of Holy Ghost Church in Jessup, PA and administrator of Saint John the Baptist Church in Forest City, PA, fell asleep in the Lord on Friday, January 20, 2017 in Scranton, PA, after a brief illness at the age of 73. He was born on September 18, 1943 in Philadelphia to John D. Sekelick and Veronica Verbosh Sekelick. He was baptized and chrismated at St. Nicholas in Minersville, PA.

He served as an altar server at his hometown parish Sts. Peter and Paul Byzantine Catholic Church Minersville. Monsignor attended Cass Township Schools, Nativity B.V.M High School, Pottsville, PA. He graduated in 1965 from Duquesne University and Byzantine Catholic Seminary of SS Cyril and Methodius Seminary in Pittsburgh, PA where he was awarded his B.A Degree. He lived at the Russicum in Rome, Italy, and received his theological training at the Gregorian University, Rome, Italy. He was granted a Bachelor of Sacred Theology Degree from the Gregorian in 1969. He received an Advanced Graduate Degree in Licentiate of Canon Law (J.C.L) at the Catholic University in Washington DC in 1978.

He was ordained to the priesthood on July 13, 1969 at the Cathedral of St. Michael in Passaic, NJ by Bishop Michael J. Dudick. His first pastoral assignment was as assistant pastor of St. John the Baptist in Hazleton, PA July 30, 1969. Other pastoral assignments included Holy Spirit Church, Mahwah, NJ (1973-1976); studies at Catholic University in Washington, DC (1976-1978); pastor of Sts. Peter and Paul Church in Elizabeth, NJ (1978-1987); St. Mary Church in Wilkes-Barre, PA and administrator to St. Michael in Glen Lyon, PA (1987-1999). His Solemn Investiture as Chaplain to his Holiness Pope John Paul

II (which carries the title of Reverend Monsignor) took place on Sunday Nov 6, 1988 at St. Michael's Cathedral in Passaic, NJ by Bishop Michael Dudick; and pastor of Holy Ghost Church in Jessup, PA and administrator of St. John the Baptist Forest City, PA (1999-2017).

He was active in youth ministry serving as Youth Director in the Hazleton Deanery; Vicariate Director for Youth Activities in New Jersey/Passaic District; Dean of the Northeast Pennsylvania Deanery; Judge on the Matrimonial Tribunal of the Eparchy of Passaic; Judicial Vicar for the Eparchy of Passaic; Diocesan Director of Family Life. Monsignor wrote a column titled "Seasonal Reflections" published regularly in the eparchial newspaper Eastern Catholic Life. He was an active member of the Knights of Columbus, the Canon Law Society of America ("CLA"), the Eastern Regional Conference Canonists and served as the Chaplain to the Pennsylvania State Sheriffs' Association in Jessup, PA.

Monsignor Sekelick is predeceased by his Father John D. Sekelick. He is survived by his Mother Veronica Verbosh Sekelick, sister Irene and her husband John D. Gombola of Chantilly, Virginia, sister Therese and her husband Bret Bennett and their two children RJ and Valerie of Dallas, Texas and numerous aunts, an uncle and an abundance of cousins.

First Night of the Priestly Funeral Service and Divine Liturgy were conducted in Holy Ghost Byzantine Catholic Church, Jessup. A second viewing took place in SS. Peter & Paul Byzantine Catholic Church, Minersville. The Divine Liturgy and conclusion of the Service of Christian Burial for a Priest was on January 25, 2017 in SS. Peter & Paul Byzantine Catholic Church. Immediately following, interment took place at SS. Peter & Paul Parish Cemetery, Llewellyn, PA.

Eternal memory and blessed repose.

# ✚ DECEASED MEMBERS ✚

		<i>(Lodge-Name-Residence)</i>			
182	Shirley Alles, Kingston, PA		83	Anna M. Morelli, Warren, PA	
83	Louri Areford, Uniontown, PA		83	George Mosebaugh, Lexington, NC	
8358	Eunice R. Audette, Brookfield, WI	53	John Havrilosin, Wilkes Barre, PA	83	Mary Mowrey, Liberty Boro, PA
83	Lucille Back, Uniontown, PA	83	Helen M. Heim, Ligonier, PA	83	Silvia Muresheski, Apollo, PA
28	Richard A. Ballog, Homestead, PA	15	Irene Heyesey, Whiting, NJ	83	Maria Murray, Danville, PA
17	Margaret Baron, Scranton, PA	83	Lydia Mae Hixenbaugh, Morgantown, WV	83	Peggy Murrays, Wilmington, DE
665	Michael Begala, Mahwah, NJ	83	Mary Ann Hlad, Latrobe, PA	601	David Neff, Columbia, SC
83	Frank F. Belmont, Oakdale, PA	384	Corinne M. Holdinski, Detroit, MI	83	Cindy Nelson, Warren, PA
83	Dorothy Beres, Pittsburgh, PA	83	Anna Hornick, Johnstown, PA	83	Betty Noble, Pittsburgh, PA
83	Joann Betzler, Sewickley, PA	130	Philip L. Howard, Kissimmee, FL	600	Mary Novak, Minersville, PA
83	Janice Bielek, Pittsburgh, PA	340	Anna Hozeny, Metuchen, NJ	182	Julia O'Boyle, Pittstons, PA
258	Stanley G. Bingle, Fombell, PA	83	Irene Hrabolowski, Pittsburgh, PA	900	James O'Keefe, Stevens Point, WI
83	Margaret Bishop, Chalfont, PA	21	Toni Hyatt, Ontario, CA	83	Paul Olenic, Butler, PA
83	Mary Bobick, Mesa, AZ	83	Frances Hyla, Niagara Falls, NY	386	John Olsen, Gibsonia, PA
83	George Bodnovich, Brownsville, PA	83	M Louise Illig, Ebensburg, PA	390	Barbara Olson, Oakdale, PA
83	Fay Bollinger, Verona, PA	66	Carolyn E. Isterling, Indianapolis, IN	83	Helen G. Olszowka, Oil City, PA
8309	Beatrice Bower, Baltimore, MD	83	Dolores R. Jakubowski, Pittsburgh, PA	2	Pearl Ondo, W. Homestead, PA
83	Helen E. Breisch, Cumbola, PA	83	Edna M. Jenca, Pittsburgh, PA	83	Ann Palermo, Pittsburgh, PA
83	Rose Marie Burns, New Salem, PA	255	Donald Jerich, Cheswick, PA	83	Mary Palmisiano, Apollo, PA
83	Alene E. Campbell, Chicora, PA	83	Rose Joll, Mount Bethel, PA	83	Frank Panetta, College Station, TX
83	Marie L. Campbell, Indiana, PA	83	Edwin Jones, New Kensington, PA	900	Cynthia L. Patrick, Slinger, WI
316	Andrew Chando, Woodbridge, VA	83	Elizabeth Jozefov, Duquesne, PA	83	Mary Pennys, Freeport, PA
57	Roseanne Cherup, Fredericktown, PA	10	Manuel J. Kaffenens, Aliquippa, PA	83	Esther E. Persin, Delmont, PA
83	Barbara J. Chester, Warren, PA	83	Eileen R. Kanel, Pittsburgh, PA	900	Jane Peterson, Sun Prairie, WI
255	Pauline Chope, Pittsburgh, PA	83	Anna Kania, Pittsburgh, PA	83	Paula Petro, Coraopolis, PA
994	Eddie Ciani, Freedom, PA	151	George Kanuck, Lancaster, VA	8358	Virginia A. Pfeiffer, Janesville, WI
83	Fred C. Cleaver, Orangeville, PA	83	James Keil, West Chester, PA	83	Elizabeth L. Platt, Houston, PA
83	Helen Cocores, Stroudsburg, PA	665	Genevieve Kelly, Lakewood, NJ	83	Frank Pleva, Duncansville, PA
8344	Essie M. Cogdill, Warren, PA	83	Matylda Kenneweg, Conneaut, OH	2	Samantha Pliska, McKeesport, PA
83	Mary F. Colberg, Kittanning, PA	83	Barbara A. Kimmel, Orwigsburg, PA	83	Margaret O. Pracko, Blawnox, PA
8358	Robert S. Cook, Green Bay, WI	254	Steve Klastava, Scotch Plains, NJ	999	Paul J. Prokopchak, Phoenix, AZ
83	Verda M. Corbett, Ligonier, PA	255	Margaret Koblik, Freedom, PA	600	Mary Puhak, Hazleton, PA
182	Alvin Crawley, Wapwallopen, PA	302	Robert J. Koellner, Burke, VA	83	William Raichle, Hatboro, PA
83	Adeline T. Cruz, Stroudsburg, PA	83	Joseph Kohan, Wilkes Barre Township, PA	83	Michael J. Rainski, Tarentum, PA
57	Helen Cunningham, Charleroi, PA	83	Amelia Kolar, Johnstown, PA	66	Gerald A. Rebeck, Naperville, IL
83	Richard J. Cupelli, Morgantown, WV	994	Vera Konetsky, Pittsburgh, PA	83	Ruby B. Remaley, Murrysville, PA
83	Allene L. Curry, Cranberry Twp., PA	18	Charles J. Kormanik, Mc Clellandtown, PA	83	Elaine A. Renwick, Brockport, PA
994	Ella Mae Dapollonia, Midland, PA	83	Michael J. Kovach, Beltsville, MD	83	Mary Reynolds, Pittsburgh, PA
83	Doris E. Davis, Ligonier, PA	10	Marcella Kowalsky, Ambridge, PA	83	Phyllis Richey, Stroudsburg, PA
384	Marie Dean, Medford, OR	93	James Krawchyk, Koppel, PA	816	Julia Roman, Reynoldsville, PA
83	Pauline DeFazio, Pittsburgh, PA	252	Edward Kraynak, Youngstown, OH	255	Julia Roman, McKeesport, PA
83	Bernard J. Denniston, Chicora, PA	83	Stanley F. Kukla, Oil City, PA	994	Joseph Romanchak Jr, Pasadena, MD
8358	Judith A. Dickson, La Crescent, MN	83	Richard Labuda, Johnstown, PA	83	Mary Rzewnicki, North Apollo, PA
271	John Dikkeboom, Midlothian, IL	900	Gilbert Lasee, Marshfield, WI	92	Andrew Safko, Peckville, PA
83	Frances R. Dillon, Pittsburgh, PA	83	George Laudeman, Pottsville, PA	225	Anna Samok, Palmerton, PA
255	Anna Druga, Murrysville, PA	83	John F. Lauricia, Canonsburg, PA	8358	Thomas Sartor, Winneconne, WI
83	Melvin Eiche, Birdsboro, PA	83	Robert H. Law, Pittsburgh, PA	255	Elizabeth Savchak, Pittsburgh, PA
10	Edward Eiler, Aliquippa, PA	10	Anthony Loschiavo, Tucson, AZ	83	Florence M. Scalise, Warren, PA
83	Catherine Fetterman, Ringtown, PA	83	Angelo M. Lozito, Wexford, PA	83	Richard Scalise, Warren, PA
83	James B. Fink, Hastings, PA	28	Diana Lucas, Munhall, PA	8358	Jeanette Schoessow, Portage, WI
386	Patricia Fitzgerald, Pittsburgh, PA	384	Mary H. Lukas, Templeton, CA	164	William Schoppy, Youngstown, OH
8344	William A. Flaig, Williamsburg, PA	83	Judith Macosko, Highlands Ranch, CO	255	James T. Schragl, Pittsburgh, PA
83	Jean Ann Flynn, Zelienople, PA	302	Dorothy Maier, Parma, OH	900	LuAnn Schramm, Sheboygan, WI
83	Carmella A. Fonslick, Shenandoah, PA	83	LaVerne S. Mals, Strabane, PA	83	Walter M. Schuffert, Midland, PA
83	Thelma E. Fosnot, Hershey, PA	83	Thomas Marcoc, Trafford, PA	83	Helen Scott, McKeesport, PA
83	Marilyn F. Foster, Blaudon, PA	83	Francis E. Marflak, West Mifflin, PA	83	Pauline Seben, York, PA
28	Christine Fuga, West Mifflin, PA	83	Esther Ruth Marshall, Indiana, PA	271	Lucille Senko, Joliet, IL
182	Anna Gajewski, Dover, PA	83	Margaret W. Mazanetz, Charleroi, PA	8309	Richard R. Shaffer, Cocoa, FL
83	Audrey Gardner, Dillsburg, PA	83	James C. McCanna, Indianola, PA	8358	Ronald J. Sheeran, Bristol, WI
83	Frank Gigliotti, Monessen, PA	81	Bernadette McCarty, Uniontown, PA	340	Paul Shubeck, Millington, NJ
994	Mary Gilbert, Aliquippa, PA	47	Roseann McGrady, Trumansburg, NY	225	Helen Sidor, Whitehall, PA
697	Mary L. Giles, Weirton, WV	83	Alice McNutt, Springdale, PA	390	John Sidun, Livermore, CA
17	Romaine Gillow,	83	Dorothy Mekovich, Parma, OH	83	William Simon, Seward, PA
	North AbingtonTownship, PA	83	Mary Metro, N Huntingdon, PA	10	Allen J. Skrypak, Dunnellon, FL
83	Roseanne T. Gottschalk, Pittsburgh, PA	109	Clara Michailenko, Baden, PA	83	Emily R. Sloan, Erie, PA
644	Helen Gray, Akron, OH	83	Bernice H. Miller, Pittsburgh, PA	2	Dolores Smochko, McKeesport, PA
83	Alyce Grubbs, Ambridge, PA	83	Eugene E. Miller, Slatington, PA	390	Virginia Sovyak, Coraopolis, PA
945	Catherine Guzinski, Shenandoah, PA	83	Jean Miller, Pittsburgh, PA	83	Richard D. Sprecker, Beaver, PA
83	John M. Harrison, Chicora, PA	83	Gilbert Millstine, Pueblo, CO	252	Mary Stanislav, Canfield, OH
83	Rita Harrison, Pittsburgh, PA	211	Michael R. Mizok, Newton, NJ	94	Betty Jane Stasko, Clairton, PA
83	Mildred Hassick, West Newton, PA	83	Bernard L. Mont, Mountaintop, PA	255	Anna Stefanik, Plano, TX

## EUGENE "GENE-O" JULIUS KOVACS *District 11 & Lodge 250 Sergeant-at-Arms*

Eugene "Gene-o" Kovacs, 69, entered eternal rest on January 1, 2017 at his home in Fraser, MI. He was born on August 27, 1947 in Detroit, MI. A proud veteran, Gene-o served his country in the Army with two tours in Vietnam.

Gene Kovacs served as longtime sergeant-at-arms for both District 11 and Lodge 250. He attended many National Bowling Tournaments throughout the years.

Gene-o was a truly selfless person who never hesitated when someone asked him for help—from family, to friends and neighbors—no matter what the task he was always willing to lend a hand. Everyone knew Gene-o by his contagious laugh that often followed one of his many jokes.

He loved cars especially the classics. The Dream Cruise, a classic car event held annually on the third Sat-

urday of August in Metropolitan Detroit along Woodward Avenue, was his favorite time of year. He would polish up his 1978 Ford Mustang and cruise down Woodward until late in the evening. He was also the devoted pet parent to Storm his Pitbull-Lab mix.

He leaves behind his brother Leonard Hempel, niece Paula (Steve) Burguron, great-nieces and nephews Nicholas, Savannah and Chelsea. He was also the dear brother-in-law to Gloria Jean Kovacs, and godfather to many.

The Office of Christian Burial with Divine Liturgy took place at St. Nicholas Byzantine Catholic Church, in Clinton Township, MI, celebrated by Father Joe Repko. Interment was in Resurrection Cemetery.

Memorial contributions may be made to Detroit Dog Rescue or your favorite veteran's charity.

Eternal memory and blessed repose.

## SUE KOVALCIK

Assunta "Sue" Kovalcik, born May 7, 1933, passed away Sunday, December 25, 2016 at JFK Medical Center, Edison, NJ. She was born in Manhattan and resided in Brooklyn where she graduated from Fort Hamilton High School, moving to Edison over 10 years ago. She worked in banking and later as a teacher's assistant. She was a member of Evergreen Senior Citizens Club and the St. John Vianney Senior Citizen Club, both of Colonia, NJ.

She was predeceased by her parents Joseph and Concetta Costantini and her daughter Susan Kovalcik

(1982). Surviving are her husband of 59 years Richard Kovalcik; her sons Richard Kovalcik Jr., and Andrew Kovalcik and his wife Allison; her brothers Paul Costantini and his wife Patricia and Joseph Costantini; three loving grandchildren who were her world, Kelly Sue, Christopher and Kyle; and several nieces and nephews.

Sue was a member of GCU Lodge 151.

A Funeral Mass was held at St. John Vianney Church, Colonia. Interment at Green-Wood Cemetery, Brooklyn, NY.

Eternal memory and blessed repose.

## DAVID A. ROHRBACH

David A. Rohrbach, 74, of Hazle Twp., PA passed away Saturday, January 21, 2017 morning at Lehigh Valley Hospital-Hazleton. Born in Hazleton, PA he was the son of the late Staff Sgt. David A. and Louise (Greco) Rohrbach and was a member of Queen of Heaven Parish at Our Lady of Grace Church, Hazleton.

He was a 1960 graduate of Hazleton High School, an Army veteran during the Vietnam War and was a member of the American Legion, Hazleton post. He retired as a supervisor from Tobyhanna Army Depot after 30 years. He was a member of the Greek Catholic Union and was the assistant athletic director of the former District 6. Prior to his illness, he enjoyed golfing, bowling, and going to the casino.

Surviving are his wife of 48 years, the former Agnes Kuklis; sister Linda Kochinsky and her husband David, McAdoo; two nephews, a great niece, and cousins. Preceding him in death, in addition to his parents, was his sister Cheryl Rohrbach.

A Mass of Christian Burial was celebrated on January 25, 2017 in Queen of Heaven Parish at Our Lady of Grace Church. Burial was in Our Lady of Grace Cemetery.

Eternal memory and blessed repose.

## ✝ DECEASED MEMBERS ✝

164	James Stemock, Port St Lucie, FL	83	Emil F. Verosko, Ellsworth, PA
83	Nancy Stoffan, Mahanoy City, PA	271	Anna Volf, La Grange, IL
15	Evelyn Stroh, Langhorne, PA	83	Jane M. Walters, Latrobe, PA
83	Teresa M. Strzyz, Pittsburgh, PA	255	Jeffrey Warner, Pittsburgh, PA
83	George L. Thomas, Saltsburg, PA	92	Helen Wartko, Dickson City, PA
288	Lorraine Tiberio, Clairton, PA	83	Alta M. Watson, Indiana, PA
83	Peter Timko, Eddystone, PA	83	Wanda Welling, Canton, MI
255	Patricia Torkos, Pittsburgh, PA	66	Richard Wells, Merrillville, IN
235	Ruth Torony, Southbury, CT	316	Rose Wentz, Freehold, NJ
18	Barbara Trainor, Lancaster, PA	255	Mary Wojtaszek, Pittsburgh, PA
8344	Marie C. Truesdale, Brockport, PA	83	Nevin Woodside, Oakmont, PA
83	Bobbie Tucker, East Orange, NJ	83	Hazel Work, Northern Cambria, PA
83	Joan Marie Turek, Roswell, GA	10	Thomas Yasolsky, Aliquippa, PA
8358	Joyce Udelhofen, Lancaster, WI	10	Ann Yates, Beaver, PA
151	Michael Uminski, Carmel, IN	182	Mary Zigmont, Endicott, NY
442	Joseph Vanyo, Mineral Ridge, OH		

# GCU & SCS 2017 NATIONAL BOWLING TOURNAMENT



## CHACKO'S FAMILY BOWLING CENTER

**Friday - Saturday, May 19 - 20, 2017**

**Deadline to make hotel reservations is  
Friday, April 14, 2017**

Not in a League? Just Bowl for Fun?  
JOIN US!

*Details to follow!*

Applications are now available on our web site: [www.gcuusa.com/whats-new.html](http://www.gcuusa.com/whats-new.html)

195 Wilkes-Barre Blvd  
Wilkes-Barre, PA 18702  
570-208-2695  
[www.chackosfamilybowlingcenter.com](http://www.chackosfamilybowlingcenter.com)



**Best  
Western**

*0.6 miles from lanes*  
77 E Market Street  
Wilkes-Barre, PA 18701  
570-823-6152  
Mention "GCU Bowling for a rate  
**\$99 per room, per night plus tax**



**Holiday Inn**

*4.1 miles from the lanes*  
600 Wildflower Drive  
Wilkes-Barre, PA 18702  
570-822-2011  
Mention "NBT" for a rate of  
**\$109 per room, per night plus tax**

## GCU National Jr. Bowling Tournament Dates for 2017

### District 4-Saturday, March 25

at Richland Lanes starting at 1 PM.  
Contact Athletic Director Paul Yackulich Jr. at 814-539-3174

### District 11-Saturday, March 25

at 5 Star Lanes starting at 1 PM.  
Contact Athletic Director John P. Minarish at 586-246-6859

### District 15-Sunday, March 12

at Center Bowling Lanes starting at 12:30 PM  
Contact Athletic Director Bill Uram at 724-287-0689

### Greater Hazleton Regional Lodge-Sunday, March 26

at Bowl-Arena starting at 1 PM.  
Contact Athletic Director Agnes Rohrbach at 570-454-4869

### Youngstown Area Lodges-Sunday, March 26

at Camelot Lanes starting at 1 PM.  
Contact Elaine Chachko at 330-755-6243



Visit [www.gcuusa.com](http://www.gcuusa.com)  
Fraternal News  
To print your application

## EVENTS

**Mount Saint Macrina House of Prayer. Lenten Morning of Prayer.** Saturday, March 18, 9:15 AM -1 PM. Includes lunch. Presented by Rev. Joseph Raptosh. Offering is \$35. Registration due March 14, 2017. The Sacrament of Reconciliation will be offered. **Lenten Day of Prayer.** Sunday, March 19, 1:15 PM-5 PM. Includes supper. Presenter will be announced. Offering \$35. Registration due March 15, 2017. The Sacrament of Reconciliation will be offered. **Healing Retreat.** Saturday, March 25, 9:30 AM-3:30 PM. Includes lunch. Presented by Rev. William Kiel. Offering \$35. Registration due March 20, 2017. The afternoon will conclude with a Healing Liturgy. **Men's Evening Out.** Thursday, March 30, 7 PM -9 PM. Presented by Rev. Don Bolls. Offering is \$20. Registration due March 24. **Spiritual Reflection (*Laughter Is The Best Medicine*).** Saturday, April 8, 10 AM-1 PM. Includes lunch. Presented by Becky Johnen. Offering \$30. Registration due April 4. **Women's Discernment Retreat.** April 21-23, 2017. Friday 7 PM-Sunday 11 AM. Presented by Sr. Barbara Jean Mihalchick, OSBM. Offering is \$130-Commuters \$105. Registration due April 17. **Candlelight Dinner for Married Couples.** Thursday, April 27, 2017. 6:30 PM-8:30 PM. Includes Dinner, Music and Presentation. Presented by Pastor Ken and Thelma Walls. Offering \$60 per couple. Registration due April 21. **Iconography Workshop.** May 5-7, 2017. P PM Friday-1 PM Sunday. Includes supplies. Presented by Marylyn Barone. Offering \$230-Commuters \$205. Registration due April 28. The participants will write an icon of the Guardian Angel on an 8x10 gesso-covered board.

**12<sup>th</sup> EGG EGGSTRAVAGANZA...** Sunday, April 2, 2017 from 12 NOON-5 PM will be held at the St. John the Baptist BC Church Social Hall, 201 E. Main Street, Uniontown, PA. The event is sponsored by GCU Lodge 81, local egg artists, and the St. John's Ethnic Craft Club. Nearly 2 dozen egg artists will be demonstrating, displaying, and selling their particular art. In addition to the egg artists, there will be an Egg Bazaar featuring egg dyes, beeswax, tools, books, videos, and pysanky kits for sale. Traditional items used in ethnic Easter baskets will also be available. There will also be Easter crafts for sale made by the St. John's Ethnic Craft Club. Traditional Easter basket covers will also be on display. There will also be an explanation of Easter foods for blessing, and Paska Bread design making. A parish bake sale will include long rolls (nut, apricot, poppyseed, cottage cheese), paska bread, decorated medovniki, small nut rolls, cookies, homemade candy, and many more delicious goodies. Visitors can try a hands-on workshop to learn how to decorate eggs. There will be a Children's Corner featuring egg-related crafts, storytelling, cookie decorating, and a jigsaw puzzle area. Several fundraising events will also take place. A Lenten Luncheon Menu, including St. John's "famous" pirohi, halushki, pagach, pirohi pizza, and soups and more will be available for purchase. There is no admission fee. Door prizes will be awarded throughout the day. Handicapped accessible. For further information, please call 724-208-6771 (M-F 6-8 PM).

### AVAILABLE

**Lenten Prayer Reflections and Visit of Uzhorod Seminary Choir Performance CD's & DVD's...** Eastern Christian Publications has several books available for purchase

featuring reflections on the Lenten season and the upcoming Feast of the Resurrection. To order the publications please visit [www.ecpubs.com](http://www.ecpubs.com) or write to Eastern Christian Publications, PO Box 146, Fairfax, VA 22038-0146. They also have available CD & DVD recordings of the Uzhorod Seminary Choir from their 2016 visit to the United States. To purchase CD's and DVD's please call 703-691-8862 to order by phone or online at [www.olfoundation.net](http://www.olfoundation.net).

**Carpathian Cookery Cookbook...** has entered its 18<sup>th</sup> printing, having sold over 16,000 copies. This cookbook was requested by the Library of Congress to be in their ethnic cooking collection. The 330-page cookbook has a new look and features a protective plastic cover. The book includes sections on Christmas and Easter customs and recipes, traditional Rusyn and Slavic foods, other ethnic dishes, and many other tried-and-true recipes of St. John's parishioners. There is a variety of paska bread and kolachi (filled roll) recipes, as well as meatless dishes and Lenten recipes, suitable for the Great Fast, as well as the Pre-Christmas Fast. The cost of the cookbook is \$14.<sup>00</sup> plus \$4.<sup>00</sup> postage and handling (\$18.<sup>00</sup>). If ordering from Canada, please send a \$27.<sup>00</sup> U.S. Postal money order payable in U.S. dollars to reflect the difference in the exchange rate and postage cost. To order please send a check or money order to: Ethnic Craft Club, St. John Byzantine Catholic Church, 201 E. Main Street, Uniontown, PA 15401, or call (724) 208-6771 (M-F 6-8 PM) for more information. You may contact us at: [carpathiancookery@gmail.com](mailto:carpathiancookery@gmail.com).

## 2017 GCU Golf Events

### GCU Golf Classic

Friday, June 16 at Seven Oaks Country Club



**SCS/GCU  
Golf Event**  
Friday, August 18-  
Sunday, August 20

Treasure Lake in DuBois, PA  
Hotels—Fairfield Inn and Hampton Inn  
Cost will be \$285 which includes: practice round, 36 hole tournament, prizes, Friday Hospitality, Saturday Banquet and hotel (based on double occupancy).



**3<sup>rd</sup> Annual  
GCU Charity  
Golf Scramble**  
Saturday,  
September 23

Seven Oaks Country Club  
Beaver, PA  
This year we will be raising money for  
Variety-The Children's Charity  
For information call 800-722-4428 Ext. 3924

# GCU

# 125<sup>TH</sup>

CONVENTION OF THE FALC'S  
THE GREEK CATHOLIC UNION OF U.S.A.  
JUNE-1918 CLEVELAND, OHIO

## Anniversary

### SATURDAY MAY 6, 2017

**GCU Home Office & St. Nicholas Chapel**

**Open House — 10 AM - 3 PM**

**Moleben**

*(Invitation Only)*

4PM - St. Nicholas Chapel

**Celebratory Dinner**

*(Limited to 270 Guests)*

**Seven Oaks Country Club**

4:45 PM - Cocktails & hors d'oeuvres

6 PM - Dinner

Cost - \$30

*(A portion of all ticket sales will be donated to selected charity)*

Tickets will be issued on a first come-first served basis. Payment must accompany request.

A commemorative booklet with a brief history and photos will be published.

Patron ads are available:

Platinum—\$100 & up

Gold—\$75 - \$99 Silver—\$50 - \$74

Bronze—\$25 - \$49 Copper—\$24 & less

All ad money will be distributed to several charitable organizations

Please make checks payable and mail to: GCU 125<sup>th</sup> Celebration, 5400 Tuscarawas Road, Beaver, PA 15009

*Credit Card payments available call 1-800-722-4428 Ext. 3810*

#### DINNER

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

No. Tickets \_\_\_\_\_ X \$30 = \_\_\_\_\_

#### AD BOOK PATRON

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

Platinum  Gold  Silver  Bronze  Copper

Messages limited to one line of text. Patron ad copy below (please print).

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

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