

DECEMBER 2021

# GCU

MAGAZINE

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George N. Juba  
President  
CEO

# Hope, Faith, Peace, Love...

**T**here are numerous “words” and “greetings” we hear and read over the course of the “Christmas Season”—Hope, Faith, Peace, Love, Good Tidings—the list is extensive. “Hope” is one word that is relative to each and every day of our lives. In the business world I often state that “Hope is Never a Strategy!” However, if there is a vision and plan behind that “Hope,” “Hope” is a great starting point. I liken “Hope” to “Vision” as “Vision” is the first building block of developing a “Strategy.” Examples of my thoughts are as follows:

### Spiritually

- **“Hope”**—In my afterlife is to enter the “Gates of Heaven.”
- **“Vision”**—To be in Heaven with my family and friends where there is no pain, no sorrow or suffering.
- **“Strategy”**—Glorify God and be Thankful for all that He has provided; Live a life full of love; Be a kind, respectful and caring individual; Be a patriotic citizen of our Great Country; Treat my fellow man like I would like to be treated; Be successful but yet modest in all that I do and Provide for my family.

### The GCU

- **“Hope”**—The GCU continues a path of financial and fraternal success.
- **“Vision”**—To have the GCU recognized as a progressive and well respected insurance and annuity carrier within the fraternal benefit system.
- **“Strategy”** – Continue to attract strong leadership at the Board of Directors, Executive Staff and Departmental Management levels; Continue to provide a pleasant and positive work atmosphere to attract talented support Staff; Be cognizant of the inherent risks associated with in the life insurance and annuity business sector; Be aware of the latest trends and new products within our industry; Provide exceptional service to our members and agents; Update our technology systems to be more efficient and enable our members and agents to access information electronically and develop a new fraternal framework to attract more members to participate in volunteer, fundraising and community events in support of the GCU’s Mission.

The examples of my “Hope” leads my thoughts to the Season of Advent and the celebration of Christmas. The birth of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, gives us all

“Hope” that He will provide to us guidance to inspire us with a “Vision” and “Strategy” in dealing with the trials and tribulations of life. As all of us have conversations within our mind with the Lord, he certainly provides to us the strength to deal with the various challenges we are faced with both within our careers and personal lives. We must also be thankful for all the joy and blessings bestowed upon us as well as many of our “Hopes” and dreams that are realized.

On February 14<sup>th</sup> of 2022, the GCU will be celebrating its 130<sup>th</sup> Anniversary. The Founding Members included representatives from fourteen lodges and six clergy that met on February 14, 1892 in Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania with a “Hope” a “Vision” and “Strategies.” As our publication “Opportunity Realized – The Greek Catholic Union’s First 100 Years” informs us, our Founders’ initial “Hope” was to spread love and friendship among the Rusin Greek Catholic people living in America; give material and financial aid to members and their heirs in the event of death; provide the ways and means necessary for the education of the people in national & religious requirements, provide aid to churches & schools and if financial conditions permit, give aid to the injured and indigent members. I am sure our Founders are looking down upon us with great pride and joy as we continue this “Path of Financial Success” that enables the GCU to further expand upon assisting other religious entities, organizations and individuals in need of financial support. It is no accident that the Patron Saint of the GCU is St. Nicholas of Myra, as the GCU emulates his passion of giving, not only at this time of year but throughout the year as various needs arise.

The “Hope,” “Vision” and “Strategy” presented above is our current focus with several other strategies in place to lead our Society on this continued path of success. We must always be cognizant of the current financial markets and changes within our society to adjust our strategies accordingly. There have certainly been many challenges presented over the course of the GCU’s history. This leads me to one of my favorite quotes made by our past President, Mr. George Batyko, during his address to the delegates of the 1988 Convention – *“We all know that on the same area and on the same day, one boat will sail*

CONTINUED

*south and another north, one will sail east and another west, which proves that it is not the wind, nor the gale, but the set of the sail that will determine the course of our future."*

Through the grace of God and our Patron St. Nicholas of Myra, we are fortunate once again to present to you the GCU's third quarter financial statements as we continue to grow our assets & surplus and achieve sustained profits. Our Chief Financial Officer, Tim Demetres, presents a detailed commentary on the 2021 third quarter results on page 4. Again, a sincere thank you to our members and agents that enables the GCU to continue on a path of financial success.

Once again, our thank you to the lodge and district officers and members for the several activities held this past year supporting the various needs of our Byzantine parishes and needs within our communities that were greater than ever under the COVID-19 pandemic environment.

Our heartfelt sympathy is extended to the family of Mr. Andy Zeedick who recently passed away. His wife Georgia, who was always by his side also recently passed. "Mr. Z"

wore the GCU on his sleeve as he was actively involved in local GCU lodge and district activities throughout his life. He also served on the GCU's Board of Directors and as National Vice President and was actively involved with Seven Oaks serving on the Men's Golf Committee. His smiling face and greetings will truly be missed. May God grant them both eternal rest and let perpetual light shine upon them!

In closing, my congratulations and thank you to our Board of Directors, Executive Officers, Department Directors and our entire Support Staff that has allowed for the GCU to experience another successful year! May the Birth of Our Lord & Savior and the joy of this holiday season provide to you and your family Hope, Faith, Peace, Love and Good Tidings during this Christmas Season! My best wishes for a safe and Happy Holiday Season and all the best for a healthy and prosperous New Year!

**MERRY CHRISTMAS!  
CHRISTOS RAZDAJETSJA!  
CHRIST IS BORN!**

*George*

## GCU Presents Annual Byzantine Seminary Educational Grant

On Sunday, December 5, 2021 GCU President/CEO George N. Juba presented Metropolitan William Skurla, Archbishop of the Archeparchy of Pittsburgh with the GCU's educational grant of \$125,000.<sup>00</sup>. The annual grant is for the SS. Cyril & Methodius Byzantine Catholic Seminary. The presentation took place at the Saint Nicholas Charity Celebration held at St. John Cathedral Center. With this year's presentation GCU donations, which began in 1961, now total nearly \$3.6 million.



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

# GCU Staff & Lodge Members Help with Project Bundle-Up Trip

On Saturday, November 13, GCU members & employees participated in the WTAE-TV and Salvation Army Project Bundle-Up shopping trip held at Boscov's Department Store in the Beaver Vally Mall in Monaca, PA. 10 needy children from the local area were given the opportunity to pick their own winter coat, boots, hat and gloves. It was a great day for the volunteers as well.



The group before shopping.



GCU Home Office staff members Gina Spickerman and Nicole Gailey (kneeling) help a brother and sister team.



GCU National Director Barb Kushner, WTAE-TV's official camera man and GCU member Patty Lebanik.



Zack & Athena Wahal shopping with their Project Bundle-Up girl.



Natalee Bringol & her husband Sonny Bringol with her twins Hannah & Zachary Terkel and their Project Bundle-Up kids.

# Third Quarter 2021 Financials



**Tim Demetres**  
Chief Financial Officer

**A**s the close of 2021 fast approaches, excitement abounds with the recent introduction of Aquila X, GCU's fixed indexed annuity product. A suitable alternative to our fixed deferred annuity for wealth accumulation and retirement planning. This product provides the protection of a fixed annuity with an opportunity to participate in equity-based returns. GCU continues to grow reaching \$2.4 billion in assets and \$198.7 million in surplus as of September 30, 2021, a new high-water mark.

Highlights of the year-to-date third quarter results are as follows:

Income before net capital gains (losses) totaled \$21.6 million compared to \$21.1 million reported in 2020. Net realized capital gains were \$148 thousand in 2021 compared to a realized loss of \$18 million in 2020 from impaired energy bonds. Net income after net realized gains (loss) was \$21.8 million in 2021 compared to \$3.1 million in 2020.

Total Assets increased \$171.8 million to \$2.373 billion at September 30<sup>th</sup> from \$2.201 billion at year-end 2020. The increase in assets reflects continued growth in invested assets from new business activity and positive cash flows. Due to the sustained low interest rate environment, we have been strategically focused on asset allocation and generating appropriate risk adjusted returns to support our life and annuity products. A key objective of this strategy is to complement our fixed income returns by modest-

ly increasing exposure to public equities and alternative assets (investments in LLC's and limited partnerships).

Liabilities grew commensurate with life and annuity sales and totaled \$2.174 billion as of September 30 compared to \$2.018 billion at year-end 2020. The \$155.8 million increase in total liabilities is due primarily to a \$130.4 million increase in life and annuity reserves, \$12.7 million increase in unsettled investment trades, a \$10.2 million increase in AVR, and a \$1.7 million increase in the IMR from deferred investment gains.

Total Income through the third quarter of 2021 was \$319 million compared to \$273.5 million in 2020. Life sales increased 75% from growth in our whole life single premium and final expense products. Annuity sales and exchanges increased \$35.6 million to \$224.1 million in 2021. Net investment income of \$83.6 million increased \$6.3 million from higher assets under management and make-whole premiums received on bond call and tender offers.

Operating expenses, before increase in reserves, totaled \$171.4 million versus \$142.8 million in 2020, an increase of \$28.6 million or 20%. Largely attributable to meeting the needs of our members, GCU paid \$26 million more in annuity benefits (death claims, full and partial withdrawals). Annuity exchanges decreased \$4.6 million. Commissions paid for the production of new business increased \$4.8 million commensurate with higher life and annuity sales. General insurance expenses were \$561 thousand higher in 2021 when compared to 2020. Pension expenses increased \$1.1 million due to employee attrition and pension distributions. The higher pension expenses were mostly offset by a decrease in the pension fund liability.

The increase in reserves totaled \$125.8 million compared to \$109.5 million in 2020. Reserve changes are primarily a function of premiums received, death and annuity benefits paid out, and interest accumulation.

Surplus grew to \$198.7 million as of September 30<sup>th</sup>

## Summary of Financial Statistics

<i>(000's omitted)</i>	<b>9/30/21</b>	<b>9/30/20</b>	<b>Change</b>
Total Income	\$319,031	\$273,527	\$45,504
Total Expenses	297,162	252,236	44,926
Income Bef. Real. Gains (Losses)	21,626	21,080	546
Net Income (Loss)	21,774	3,079	18,695
	<b>9/30/21</b>	<b>9/30/20</b>	<b>Change</b>
Assets	\$2,372,640	\$2,200,816	\$171,824
Surplus (Net Worth)	198,709	182,648	16,061
Asset Valuation Reserve	18,465	8,316	10,149
Interest Maintenance Reserve	22,803	21,124	1,679
Total Adjusted Capital (TAC)	217,324	191,114	26,210
Solv. Ratio by Total Adj. Capital	110.1	109.5	0.6

## Change in Surplus

<i>(000's omitted)</i>	
Beginning Surplus - December 31, 2020	\$182,648
Net Income	21,774
Change in Unrealized Gain/(Loss)	6,487
GCU Holding Company	(701)
Changes in Non-Admitted Assets	(1,350)
Changes in Asset Valuation Reserve	(10,149)
Net Change in Surplus	16,061
<b>Ending Surplus - Current Period</b>	<b>\$198,709</b>

compared to \$182.7 million at year-end 2020. The \$16 million increase in surplus is attributable to the additions of net income and the change in unrealized gains of \$21.8 million and \$6.5 million, respectively, reduced by the change in AVR (\$10.2 million); (\$1.4 million) increase in non-admitted software development costs; and (\$0.7 million) reduction for GCU Holding Company's net loss.

Total Adjusted Capital (TAC) was \$217.3 million as of September 30, 2021. TAC starts with surplus of \$198.7

million and adds back the asset valuation reserve of \$18.5 million and one-half the dividend liability of \$150,000. TAC is a financial strength measure closely monitored by rating agencies. The solvency ratios based on TAC were 110.1% and 109.5%, as of September 30, 2021 and December 31, 2020, respectively. These ratios reflect the consistency of GCU's excellent financial strength.

Please be safe and have a Merry Christmas and happy holiday season! Tim

## GCU INCOME STATEMENT

### Nine Months 2021 vs. 2020

INCOME (000's omitted)	9/30/21	9/30/20	Change
Life Premium	\$ 6,786	\$ 3,881	\$ 2,905
Annuity Premium	210,821	170,376	40,445
Annuity Exchanges	13,293	18,175	(4,882)
Accident & Health	399	503	(104)
Subtotal	231,300	192,935	38,365
Net investment income	83,629	77,346	6,283
Amort. of Int. Maint. Resrv.	1,628	1,399	230
Commissions-Reinsurance	1,138	1,426	(288)
Other	1,335	421	914
<b>Total income</b>	<b>\$319,031</b>	<b>\$273,527</b>	<b>\$45,504</b>
<b>EXPENSES</b>			
Death Benefits Life	\$ 3,013	\$ 2,194	\$ 820
Annuity Benefits Paid	133,882	107,933	25,949
Annuity Exchanges	13,293	17,925	(4,632)
Surrender Benefits	378	430	(51)
Accident/Health Benefits Pd.	369	384	(15)
Commissions	11,613	6,788	4,825
General Insurance Expenses	7,006	6,445	561
Ins., Taxes, Licenses & Fees	381	421	(40)
Pension Expense	1,212	95	1,117
Int. on Contract & Dep. Accts.	204	173	31
Subtotal	171,352	142,787	28,565
Changes to Reserves	125,809	109,448	16,361
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>\$297,162</b>	<b>\$252,236</b>	<b>\$44,926</b>
<b>Net Gain/Loss Before Refunds</b>	<b>21,869</b>	<b>21,291</b>	<b>578</b>
<b>Refunds to Members</b>	<b>243</b>	<b>211</b>	<b>32</b>
<b>Net Gain/Loss After Refunds</b>	<b>21,626</b>	<b>21,080</b>	<b>546</b>
<b>Net Realized Gains/(Losses)</b>	<b>148</b>	<b>\$(18,000)</b>	<b>18,148</b>
<b>Net Income/Loss</b>	<b>\$ 21,774</b>	<b>\$ 3,079</b>	<b>\$18,695</b>

## BALANCE SHEETS

### September 30, 2021 vs. December 31, 2020

ASSETS (000's omitted)	9/30/21	12/31/20	Change
Bonds	\$2,191,446	\$2,015,625	\$175,821
Preferred Stocks	31,875	40,562	(8,687)
Common Stocks	31,957	26,707	5,250
Alternative investments	38,166	31,950	6,216
Cash/Short Term Invest.	30,058	54,663	(24,605)
Mortgages	3,823	3,449	374
Certificate Loans	514	574	(60)
Real Estate	15,561	481	15,080
Inv. Income Due & Accrued	28,412	26,134	2,277
Other	828	672	155
<b>Total Assets</b>	<b>\$2,372,640</b>	<b>\$2,200,816</b>	<b>\$171,823</b>

**Percentage Total Change Year to Year 7.8%**

## LIABILITIES

Life Reserve Fund	\$ 79,737	\$ 75,466	\$ 4,271
Annuity Reserve Fund	2,026,850	1,900,707	126,143
Accident Health Reserves	143	177	(35)
Employee Pension Fund	6,758	7,464	(705)
Symposium Reserve	127	127	—
Adv. Prem. & Fut. Ref. Resrvs.	369	356	13
Pending Investment Trade	14,426	1,730	12,696
Accounts Payable	1,081	961	119
Refund Accumulations	3,172	1,739	1,432
Asset Valuation Resrv.-AVR	18,465	8,316	10,149
Interest Maint. Resrv.-IMR	22,803	21,124	1,679
<b>Total Liabilities</b>	<b>\$ 2,173,930</b>	<b>\$ 2,018,168</b>	<b>\$155,762</b>
Surplus Fund	198,709	182,648	16,062
<b>Total Liabilities &amp; Surplus</b>	<b>\$2,372,639</b>	<b>\$2,200,816</b>	<b>\$171,823</b>

**Solvency Ratio by TAC 110.1% 109.5%**

*\*Adds AVR + 1/2 of dividend liability to surplus.*

*Financial information is unaudited and presented on the statutory basis of accounting. Totals may vary slightly due to rounding.*



Rt. Rev. Mitred Archpriest  
John S. Kachuba  
GCU Spiritual Advisor

# St. Nicholas of Myra

**W**e are at that time of year again, the time to joyfully celebrate the Feast of St. Nicholas and Christmas, the Incarnation of our Savior, Jesus Christ. Last year about this time I told you about the legends and miracles attributed to Saint Nicholas and why the Greek Catholic Union chose St. Nicholas as their patron. Who is this person named Nicholas? Where did he come from and what kind of person was he?

In the latter part of the third century Saint Nicholas was born in the village of Patara, in Asia Minor, on the southern coast of what is today Turkey. He was raised in a good Christian home by his parents, Theophanus and Nina. His uncle, who was the Bishop of Patara, realized that Nicholas was leading a holy life and had sufficient learning to

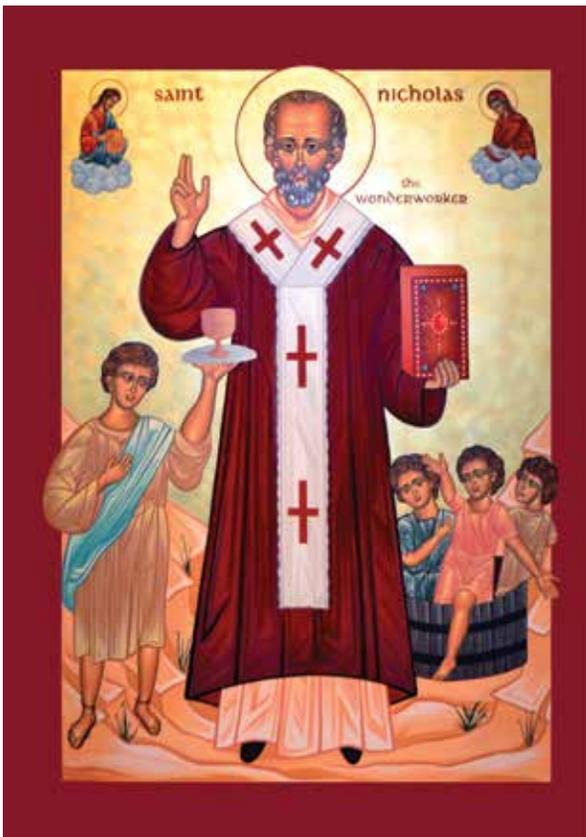
become a priest. His parents agreed and Nicholas was ordained a priest at the age of twenty-one. He led a simple life as a priest devoted to serving the poor and needy. When his parents died, he inherited their property, which he sold to help the poor.

Nicholas decided that he wanted to live a monastic life in the Holy Land. After a brief time, he returned to the city of Myra when the Bishop of that city died. A council to elect the new bishop could not agree on a candidate to be the next bishop. One bishop in a dream was told to stand at the doors of the church and select the first man who entered and make him the bishop. At Matins the next day, Nicholas was the first to come into the church. Nicholas, being a man of great humility wanted to refuse the appointment as bishop. There is a tradition that says Nicholas was so troubled about accepting the episcopacy that he only gave full consent on the day before his episcopal ordination, after having a dream. In this dream Nicholas saw Jesus Christ handing him a Gospel Book and the Mother of God holding a bishop's omophorion. Many popular icons of Saint Nicholas have Christ and the Mother of God pictured on each side of Nicholas depicting this dream.

Bishop Nicholas was a model of Christian living and leadership. He fulfilled his tasks as preacher, defender of the faith and provider of the poor. Saint Nicholas did not have an easy life as a bishop. Though he and the people were persecuted, Nicholas brought courage and spiritual comfort to them. In short, we can describe Nicholas, his life, and his ministry with these three actions... Nicholas served his church and his people as their **PRIEST**, their **PROVIDER**, and their **PROTECTOR**.

Today we try to live our Christian lives in a world that increasingly appears to be a world without God. We can turn to St. Nicholas, our Patron Saint, for inspiration on how we might become more like him—he lived his life focused on God and his fellow Christians. Is that not the basic message of the Gospel: to love God and to love our fellow human beings?

Nicholas lived to an old age and died on December 6, 343. Let the life of St. Nicholas influence the way we live so that we can gain "greatness through humility and wealth through poverty." (*Tropar of St. Nicholas*) O Holy Father Nicholas, pray to God for us!





Atty. John J. Urban

# Lessons in the Law

## Do You Really Need a Trust?

**R**egardless of how much wealth you've accumulated over the years, you probably want to keep your money, your house, and your belongings protected. Many people reach a certain age and consider establishing a trust to do just that. But what exactly is a trust?

The first question I ask when a client comes in to see me with the intention of establishing a trust is, Why? I want to know why they think they need a trust, and I ask them if they understand what a trust really is and how it functions. Most people have been told by a friend, a family member, or even another attorney that they need a trust, but they don't even know why they need one. The truth is, they probably don't.

A trust is a document that's similar to a will. A trust does not go through probate court and you maintain control as the trustee until you are no longer able to manage your affairs or you die. With a will, your executor does the same

thing. Trusts are used for specific reasons, such as providing for special needs children, the purpose of controlling distribution of your estate over time, or for those who have large amounts of wealth.

Many people assume that a trust is the only way to avoid probate, but there are other ways to do that.

Since wealth caps have changed in recent years, very few people have the assets to justify a trust. On a basic level, a trust offers protection where no other exists. But for most people, a will, powers of attorney for healthcare and finances, and a living will may be enough. Everyone's circumstances are different. You might need a trust, but you probably don't.

Trusts are expensive. Before you spend the money, let's find out if you really need one.

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## GCU Home Office Hours of Operation & Holiday Schedule

The GCU Home Office (800.722.4428) is open Monday through Friday 8:30 AM to 5 PM EST.

The Call Center (855.306.0607) accepts calls Monday through Thursday from 8:30 AM to 7 PM EST and Fridays 8:30 AM to 5 PM EST.

***The Home Office will be closed on Friday, December 24 & Monday, December 27, 2021 in observance of the Christmas Holiday and Friday, December 31 & Monday, January 3, 2022 in observance of New Year's Day.***

5400 Tuscarawas Road, Beaver, PA 15009



# Giving

## St. John's Byzantine Catholic Church Parish Expansion



Volunteers making the piroghi dough.

**Scranton, PA.** St. John BC Church made piroghi's on August 10 & 24 and October 5 & 12, 2021—a total of 426 dozen cheese and potato piroghi. This is the flavor that their customers like the best.

An average of 18 workers came each of the 4 days to make the dough, prepare the filling and pinch.

The piroghi's were then flash frozen. Each day the volunteers were treated to a light lunch. The piroghi were sold for \$8.<sup>50</sup> per dozen, with some saying just keep the change. The project provided an opportunity for the volunteers to enjoy friendship and camaraderie, while raising necessary funds for the upkeep at St. John. The parish is grateful to all those who volunteered, including friends from other churches, those who purchased the piroghi and the GCU who provided Matching Funds for this project.

**Joanie Roskos**



The piroghi workers.

## St. Nicholas BC Church Parish Expansion

**Dunellen, NJ.** St. Nicholas Byzantine Catholic Church was extremely busy this autumn making pierogies. The St. Nicholas Pierogie Team got together on October 1<sup>st</sup> & 2<sup>nd</sup> and on November 19<sup>th</sup> & 20<sup>th</sup> to make 425 dozen pierogies in the church hall. The team consisted of 71 people. There were parishioners, former parishioners, friends, a knitting group and Fr. Jim Badeaux, pastor at St. Nicholas Church. Everyone had a good time helping out under the direction of the organizer, Michael Majorczak. All the pierogies were sold, realizing a profit of \$2,865.<sup>00</sup> to benefit the church. This was a GCU Matching Funds project.

**Mary Bannworth**

## St. Jude Roman Catholic Church Parish Expansion



Lt. Don Johnson with K-9 Officer Toney.



Parish members with Lt. Don Johnson, K-9 Officer Toney and pastor at both parishes Fr. David Misbrenner (in tan shirt).

**Columbiana, OH.** Our Lady of Lourdes and St. Jude Roman Catholic parishes held their annual picnic on Sunday, September 12 at the East Palestine City Park Community Center. Lt. Don Johnson and K-9 Officer Toney were invited to attend. Lt. Johnson gave an informative presentation and allowed Toney to demonstrate her talents. All in attendance enjoyed learning about Toney and what a K-9 officer does. A donation was made by the parishes to the East Palestine K-9 Unit. The winners of the St. Jude annual raffle were also drawn at the picnic. The winners were John Petcovic—\$1,000.<sup>00</sup>, Michael Williamson —\$500.<sup>00</sup>, Evelyn Bailey—\$200.<sup>00</sup>, Nancy Felger—\$100.<sup>00</sup> and Judy Bellino—\$50.<sup>00</sup>. Each year the raffle benefits the church upkeep and winter heating bills. Thank you GCU for the Non-Byzantine Parish Expansion Matching Funds for the raffle income.

**Chris Chamberlain**



## St. Mary's BC Church Parish Expansion

**Bradenville, PA.** On Saturday, October 30 and Sunday, October 31, after the Divine Liturgies, Lodge 321 hosted two Welcome Back Socials for the parishioners of St. Mary BC Church. The purpose of the socials was to raise money for the church's Maintenance Fund. On Saturday, 36 parishioners had coffee and cake.

On Sunday morning, five

"Saints" attended the Liturgy. They were St. Gabriel the Archangel, St. George, St. John the Baptist, St. Lucia and St. Peter. The students who portrayed these saints were Devon & Blake Shetler, Luke & Ellie MacDonald and Mila Almanza. Fr. Athanasius Cherry spoke about the significance of each saint and the children explained the symbols each carried. After



The "Saints".

the Liturgy, 58 people had donuts, coffee and juice while enjoying each other's company.

The GCU Home Office provided giveaways for everyone and Lodge 321 provided Giant Eagle gift cards for door prizes.

The total money donated to the Maintenance Fund



Parishioners enjoying coffee and cake.

exceeded \$17,000.00 and received a GCU Match of \$5,000.00.

Lodge 321 would like to thank the GCU for the Matching Funds and the parishioners of St. Mary's for their generosity.

**Laurene Kristof |**

Lodge 321 Fraternal & Publicity Director

## Sacred Heart BC Church Parish Expansion

**Livonia, MI.** For over ten years, the Ladies of Sacred Heart have supported their parish with a Tea and Fashion Show. The money raised has gone to various projects needed by Sacred Heart Byzantine Catholic Church. This year, due to staffing issues with the store that was to supply the fashions, there was no fashion show. To replace the fashion show, a contest of "What is in Your Purse" was held with many prizes awarded. The guests were asked for items such as a diaper pin or a concert stub over five years old. The first person to produce the item won the prize. The ladies and their guests enjoyed a great luncheon and won many nice prizes from including 56 baskets filled with goodies. The profit from the event will be going toward the cost of replacing the church's aging heating system—parts are no longer available for the system installed in 1967.

**Marianne Nagrant**



Guests Katie, Evelyn & Sara Leonard.



Some of the baskets that were won.

## Ss. Peter & Paul Parish Expansion



Ss. Peter & Paul volunteer crew.

**Tarentum, PA.** We were finally able to gather together at Ss. Peter & Paul BC Church for our wonderful nut roll sales project, which has been sponsored here for decades.

It was nice to come over and meet new people and enjoy great company and conversation. There were some volunteers not even from the parish family who enjoyed coming to help.

It is a good way to reach out to the community as well. Our rolls are popular and loved by many in the area.

Unfortunately, this project was canceled last year because of the pandemic. People near and far have missed the rolls and were excited to have them back.

Faithful of Ss. Peter & Paul and other crew members are glad to make this "sweet" effort for the customer's Thanksgiving and Christmas celebration.

A much more important part is that Jesus himself unites the hearts in one and inspires them to serve the community through this project. That is why it is so popular and appreciated by the local community. Isn't it wonderful?

A very special thanks to GCU and other sponsors for their help and support.

**Fr. Vasyi Polyak**



## Stockings for Soldiers and Veterans

**McMurray, PA.** The Lexington Court Garden Club “Stockings for Soldiers and Veterans” Project. Thank you for making this project possible with the very generous GCU GoGive! grant.  
**Donna Danchisko**



## The Hazle Township Fall Festival & Trail of Treats

**Hazle Township, PA.** The Hazle Township Fall Festival & Trail of Treats was held October 23 & 24, 2021. A total of about 50 vendors participated between both days. The event included a reptile exhibit, petting zoo, Wilkes-Barre/Scranton Penguins mascot Tux, scavenger hunt for treats, balloon twisting, a photo booth, costume contest, DJ booth, pumpkin decorating, pumpkins of thanks craft, prize wheel, Nerf arena, tricky trays, a food drive and more.

Thanks to the generosity of the GCU GoGive! program, over \$2,000.00 was raised to benefit community service initiatives and scholarships with the Miss Greater Hazleton Scholarship Organization.

**Sherri Homanko**



## A Little Something to Warm Your Heart

**Aliquippa, PA.** The St. Helene's Guild women's group of Ss. Peter & Paul Ukrainian Catholic Church has worked hard to serve the community through craft and kindness. By creating a project named "A Little Something to Warm Your Heart," the St. Helene's Guild ladies focused on warming cancer patients undergoing chemotherapy in treatment rooms usually kept very cool.

The Guild sewed and donated fleece blankets to the Allegheny Health Network Cancer Center in Monaca, PA. Realizing that such needs abound in other situations, the ladies crocheted lap blankets for donation to multiple nursing homes in the area, determined to keep the legs of wheel-



Crocheted lap blankets.

chair-bound residents warm. Seeking to make the same efforts for wheelchair-bound people in their homes, the Guild ladies reached out even further, connecting with Meals-on-Wheels to identify, donate, and gain delivery of hand-made lap blankets.

The group's efforts were made possible with the help of GCU's GoGive! program grant money, resulting in the donation of 20 fleece blankets and 40 lap blankets. The grant money purchased fabric, yarn, ribbon and materials for gift tags and packaging. The "A Little Something to Warm Your Heart" project warmed both body and heart by letting people know that others truly care.

**Andrea Jo Roby**



Fleece blankets.

Invested in Education



**2021-2022 GCU Scholarship Programs**

Applications for scholarships **MUST** be completed and submitted online in one session by 11:59 PM EST on December 31, 2021



# District 5

Regrettably, for the last 2 years, due to COVID-19, District 5 canceled the annual meeting and St. Nicholas Scholarship Brunch.

**Fall Helping Hands Day** | The district did have a few volunteers help out the Carmelite Sisters at Holy Annunciation Monastery in Sugarloaf, PA with their fall cleanup on October 9. Work included removing the annual flowers and cutting down the perennials with the help of the Greater Hazelton Regional Lodge volunteers. Grass was also mowed. Volunteers were treated to pizza, the Sisters' special cookies and Klondike bars.

## UPCOMING DISTRICT 5 EVENTS

### Wilkes-Barre/Scranton Penguins Hockey Game

**Saturday, March 19, 2022**

**6:05 PM**

**Opponent is the Syracuse Crunch**

Mohegan Sun Arena  
255 Highland Park Blvd.  
Wilkes-Barre Township, PA 18507

Ticket includes lower-level seating behind the goal, a St. Pat's themed rally towel, hot dog, chips & a soda.

Contact Ed Keil at 570-954-6379

### Annual Golf Tournament

**Saturday, August 6**

**8:30 AM Shotgun**

**Captain & Crew Format**

**Pig Roast & Prizes to follow**

Sugarloaf Golf Club  
18 Golf Course Road, Sugarloaf, PA 18249

Contact Ed Keil at 570-954-6379



Mari Sue Rayno, Gina Romancheck and Gina Keil working on the flower beds.

**With Sympathy** | Sympathy is extended to the family of Helen Bereznak who passed away on October 5, 2021. She was an active member of District 5 involved in so many activities over the years. Blessed repose and eternal memory!

May you have a very Blessed Christmas and a Happy, Healthy New Year! Please stay safe!

Ilona Dolinish | Fraternal & Publicity Director

# District 7

**Annual Golf Tournament** | The rain held off as 37 golfers attended the 2021 GCU District 7 Annual Golf Tournament at Greenpond Country Club in Bethlehem, PA on Saturday, August 28. First place went to the team of Ed & Gina Keil, Anthony Shaver and Chris Wilson of District 5. Second place was taken by the team consisting of Steve & Dan Bachovin, Rob Thisot and Don Green. The third place winners, which required a tie breaker, was claimed by Evan, Brad & Mark Wilkins and Melissa Wilkin Schmitt. Thanks to all who came out and helped make this a successful event. See you next year on Saturday, August 27, 2022!



Golfers ready to go out on the course.



Rich Kleinert, Edward Geles, and John Hoffman.

**Zoom Meeting** | On Sunday, January 23, 2022 at 3 PM (Eastern Time) District 7 will hold a Zoom Meeting to discuss upcoming events.

Please RSVP Mary Bannworth at [bannworth1@cs.com](mailto:bannworth1@cs.com) if you would like to have the link to the meeting emailed to you.

The district asks that you also consider becoming an officer. The office of

secretary or secretary-treasurer may be open. A successful candidate should be detail oriented with computer skills.

The district would love to hear your ideas for events and/or your comments. Please send them to Steve Bachovin at [sbachovin@comcast.net](mailto:sbachovin@comcast.net).

Hope to see you there!

## Commercial Pierogi Machine Wanted

| St. Nicholas Byzantine Catholic Church in Central NJ is in search of a used commercial style automatic pierogi machine—please contact Mary Bannworth at 908-447-9212 or [bannworth1@cs.com](mailto:bannworth1@cs.com). Thank you.

**Mike Geles** | Athletic Director

**Mary Bannworth** | President

# District 15

**District Board Officers** | Since District 15 did not have an Annual Meeting in November, according to guidelines from the Home Office, current district officers will remain in office until the next required Annual Meeting – hopefully, November 2022. However, we do have two changes: District 15 Athletic Director Bill Uram announced his retirement effective December 31, 2021. Bill, who recently celebrated his 80<sup>th</sup> birthday, served the district for many years. Always pleasant and attentive to every detail, Bill was a wonderful officer who could be counted on to get the job done well! Also retiring after many years serving District 15 is Auditor Irene Miller.

Irene has been a proud GCU member and committed officer for many years. We are very grateful to both Irene and Bill for their dedication and service to District 15. Best wishes to both Irene and Bill for continued blessings!

Two appointments were made to fulfill the terms vacated by Irene and Bill. Paul Lebanik will serve as an auditor along with Mike Spanik. Timmy Seech was appointed to fulfill the athletic director position, but subsequently accepted a land tech position with NiSource in Columbus, OH. With his relocation to Columbus, Timmy could not fulfill the duties of athletic director, and resigned – before he even started. District 15 certainly

wishes Timmy, a 2018 Senior Award recipient, much success in his new job. The athletic director position is open at this time. If you are interested in serving District 15 as athletic director, please contact Elizabeth Harbist: [etharbist@yahoo.com](mailto:etharbist@yahoo.com).

## Former District 15 President Passes Away

| Andy Zeedick passed away on Thursday, November 18. Andy served the GCU in many capacities over the years, including President of District 15. His leadership, kindness and sense of humor made everyone feel welcome and important. “Andy will be remembered for his love and devotion to his wife, [Georgia, who passed away earlier this year], and children; his welcoming and generous

CONTINUED

## District 15 CONTINUED

attitude for all he met; his legendary interactions with students; his sense of humor in all situations; and his golf scores." Andy is survived by his son John and daughter-in-law Karen; daughter Danielle; and granddaughter Linnea. A Funeral Liturgy was held at St. Gregory Byzantine Catholic Church in Upper St. Clair, PA on Tuesday, November 23. Vicnaja pamjat. A full obituary appears on page 36.

## UPCOMING DISTRICT 15 EVENTS

### District 15 Senior Award

Request Applications by January 28, 2022

Completed Applications & all materials due by February, 28, 2022

Awardees will be honored on April 9, 2022

Contact Kathy Kapaldo at kkapaldo@comcast.net for more information or an application

### Jr. Bowling Tournament

**Sunday, March 20, 2022**

**12 NOON Lunch with Bowling to follow**

Center Lanes, 3084 Brodhead Road, Aliquippa, PA  
Contact Kathy Kapaldo at 412-951-8331

### Adult No-Tap Bowling Tournament

**Saturday, April 9, 2022**

**2 PM**

Center Lanes, 3084 Brodhead Road, Aliquippa, PA  
Dinner to follow at Seven Oaks CC

Contact Elizabeth Harbist at 412-913-1446

**Senior Awards Applications are Now Available** | District 15 high school seniors planning to attend college, university or trade school are eligible to apply for a District 15 Senior Award. Application materials are available by emailing Kathy Kapaldo: kkapaldo@comcast.net. The deadline to request an application is January 28, 2022. The deadline to submit all application materials is February 28, 2022. Please note that the high school senior – not a parent or grandparent – must contact Kathy via email. Application materials will NOT be sent by regular mail. Local awardees and their parents will be recognized on April 9, 2022, at a dinner at Seven Oaks Country Club.

### Remembering Neighbors and Elderly This Holiday Season

| Please remember your elderly neighbors and shut-ins as the long winter days approach. The holiday season can be especially difficult. Retirement and nursing home residents appreciate a visit, phone call or card. There are also many elderly people living independently – probably some in your neighborhood – whose day would be so much brighter with a little extra attention from you. In the spirit of fraternalism, please reach out to those senior citizens living alone or in communities.



**Play It Forward** | In its 11<sup>th</sup> year, Play It Forward Pittsburgh 2021 provides gently used toys and books to under-served children in the Pittsburgh region. Once again GCU District 15 members will be volunteering on Saturday, December 18 from 11 AM-1 PM. Play It Forward is held at the David L. Lawrence Convention Center at 1000 Ft. Duquesne Blvd. Families register in advance and are assigned a 2 hour window to “shop” on one of the Shopping Days. So many families have been struggling, and this is a wonderful way to help families with children and make use of unwanted toys. Gently used toys are being collected through December 13. If you can spare a few hours on December 18, please contact Laura Seech 412-580-8159 and Laura will include you in our GCU D15 Team of Volunteers.

May you and yours enjoy a Blessed & Merry Christmas and a Happy & Prosperous New Year!

Elizabeth Harbist | President

# Lodge News



Lodge President Karen Valko with this year's Operation Christmas Child boxes.



Children receiving Operation Christmas Child boxes.

## Lodge 7

WHITE PLAINS, NY

### Operation Christmas Child

Once again, GCU Lodge 7 participated in Operation Christmas Child. Gift boxes are filled with goodies and essential hygiene items for donation to poor children all over the world. Pictured is Lodge 7 President Karen Valko dropping off 20 boxes collected by the lodge at a donation site. Shown above are some of the recipients enjoying their gifts!

Debbie McDonnell | Secretary-Treasurer

## Lodge 10

ALIQUIPPA, PA

### Manna Community Meal

On Tuesday, November 23, 2021, members of GCU Lodge 10 helped to pack over 185 meals for the Manna Community Meal. This community meal has been in existence for over 10 years and Lodge 10 has participated in serving meals to the community for about 10 years. Previous to COVID-19, the members served a hot meal to however many community members attended. Since COVID-19, Manna has instead had to change their operation from indoor dining to an outdoor drive-up distribution. The lodge members packed the meals in an assembly line and then Manna members distributed them outside. Lodge 10 packed chicken, macaroni and cheese and vegetables purchased from Beyond Parsley Catering for 185 people along with cookies. Manna also distributed 60 frozen turkeys and all of the side dishes needed for a delicious Thanksgiving meal that was donated by Kimisis Tis Theotokou Greek Orthodox Church of Aliquippa.

Manna Community Meal has also benefited from the GCU's Food Bank donation that helps to provide the paper products needed for their weekly food distribution. The House of Prayer's Pastor Mike and his Manna crew are grateful for these donations.

Kathy Kapaldo | President



Laura Seech, John Harbist, Tim Seech, Kathy Kapaldo, Elizabeth Harbist, George & Martha Seech and Mary Elizabeth Olack.



Assembly line to prepare meals.

## Lodge 17

OLD FORGE, PA

### Non-Perishable Food Collection

Lodge 17 will be collecting non-perishable foods for the needy. Boxes have been set up in St. Nicholas Church, Old Forge and St. Mary Church, Taylor, PA. A collection of used eyeglasses is also being held with boxes located at both churches.

### Matching Funds Events

Lodge members are also assisting Matching Fund activities at St. Mary Church. Their Annual Turkey Bingo was not held, instead a fundraiser with cash prizes and Christmas Cookie Sale took place. The drawing was held on Sunday, December 12. Thanks to all who purchased tickets.

The pre-order only Christmas Cookie Sale at St. Nicholas Church Hall was held on Saturday, December 18. Cookie varieties included Anise, Italian Wedding, Chocolate Chip, Peanut Butter Kiss, Nut Rugala, Thumbprints, Linzer and many more. Thanks to those who purchased cookies.

May you all have a very Merry Christmas and a Healthy & Happy New Year!

Ed Keil | Secretary-Treasurer



Just some of the many tables filled with pasties.

## Lodge 53

WILKES BARRE, PA

### Pastie Sale

Members of Lodge 53 and St. Mary BC Church Wilkes-Barre held a pastie sale to help with costs of the parish. Over 300 pasties were made and sold. Everyone said how much they enjoyed them. We are looking forward to selling them next year!

John Marko | Secretary



Members at the Pray for America.

## Lodge 57

BROWNSVILLE, PA

### Praying the Rosary for America

A group of sixteen participants from several local churches in the Uniontown, PA area gathered in October to pray the Rosary and sing Marian hymns for the intentions of America and world peace at the Lourdes Shrine at Mt. St. Macrina. Encouraged by the organization, America Needs Fatima, other groups also met at various sites in the area. Light refreshments and religious items were given to the participants.

Attending this event and helping with some of the activities were GCU members Genevieve Marszal and Bernadette Karoffa (Lodge 57), Bonnie Balas (Lodge 81) and Gloria Rubish. Veronica Dirda from St. Mary's Assumption Byzantine Catholic Church in New Salem, PA organized the event. Similar prayer events will be planned in the future.

Bernie Karoffa | Publicity Director

## Lodge 66

WHITING, IN

### 4<sup>th</sup> Quarter Meeting

GCU Lodge 66 held its fourth quarter meeting on Sunday, November 14, 2021 at St. Michael Byzantine Church in Merrillville, IN. Members enjoyed beefy vegetable soup with barley, then a salad followed by a luncheon of turkey with gravy, yams, French green beans with mushroom soup and for dessert pumpkin & apple pies.

During the meeting GCU Lodge 66 Secretary-Treasurer Peter Baranko introduced Sue Holrun president of St. Nicholas Apostlelate and Mary Ann Malyj their treasurer, to the members. Mary Ann gave a summary of how they disburse funds to help 10 poor families and donate food to the poor. In October St. Nicholas Apostlelate held a fall fund raiser to help the poor. They forgot to ask GCU Lodge 66 to request Matching Funds from the GCU Home Office. Secretary Treasurer Peter Baranko and Veronica Kodak agreed to match the funds from their lodge funds. From past experience they expected a profit of \$1,500.<sup>00</sup>, which Lodge 66 could do. However they earned \$2,308.<sup>00</sup> profit. Peter sent an email to GCU Home Office explaining what they would do. GCU Home Office offered to match the \$2,308.<sup>00</sup>. Lodge 66 then increased the amount another \$200.<sup>00</sup> to \$2,500.<sup>00</sup>.



Lodge members and guests gathered together for a photo at the luncheon. From left: Ester Botsko, Gary & Jeanne Lazar, Yolinda & Dean Thesis, Paul Kaderabek, (guests - Mary Ann Malyj, Sue Holrun, Shirley Yurkanin, Mary Liczak) Peter Baranko, Veronica Bodak, Ann Libak, and Bridget Bowman.



St. Nicholas Apostlelate check presentation. From left: Secretary-Treasurer Peter Baranko, President of St. Nicholas Apostlelate Sue Holrun, Treasurer Mary Ann Malyj, and Lodge 66 President Veronica Bodak.

### Doing Good

During the meeting Peter Baranko gave an update on his volunteer work in making healthy soup for shut-ins and the sick in the Whiting IN area, where he delivers soup to about 15 people every Wednesday.

Peter Baranko | Secretary-Treasurer



Assembly line.



The finished rolls.

## Lodge 69

POTTSTOWN, PA

### Bake Sale

Orders were taken and supplies were donated by St. John the Baptist BC Church parishioners and GCU members for the parish nut roll sale. Baking was done in the church hall on November 12-14. Customers were called when the orders were ready for pick-up.

Nancy Harding | Secretary

Mary Beth Bartko



Rosary members at Lourdes Grotto at Mount St. Macrina.



Car Show.

**Parish**

The 15<sup>th</sup> Annual Car Show was held at St. John Church on Sunday, September 26. The event was very well attended with around 100 vehicles entered. GCU participants were Stephen Petruska, the event organizer, Bonnie Balas, Rich & Marcia Harrer, Bryan Ponzurick and Cathy Phillips. Much appreciation to GCU for the Fraternal Grant.

On October 1 at Vespers and Liturgy for the Patronage of Mary, Father Ron Larko blessed an icon of "Our Lady of the Sign" which was written by Wayne Hajos and donated by Mark Jesko. Stephen Petruska served as the cantor for this service.

The day of the 39<sup>th</sup> Annual Carpatho-Rusyn Celebration, Sunday, October 31, St. John parishioners were deeply saddened by the passing of pastor, Father Ron Larko. The planned event took place, even though the parishioners were given the news that morning. Through the week prior to the event many Lodge 81 members prepared holubki,

**Lodge 81**

UNIONTOWN, PA

Lodge 81 members were involved in an Autumn filled with many rewarding community and parish activities.

**Community**

St. John parishioners Bonnie Balas and Paulette Mehalik attended a Rosary on October 16 at Lourdes Grotto on the Mount St. Macrina grounds. This Rosary commemorated the anniversary of the Fatima apparitions and was led by members of Lodge 57.

On October 17, Joan Bridges and Bonnie Balas attended the St. Nicholas (Brownsville) Food Festival to lend support to their fellow GCU members who planned the festival.

A community food giveaway was held at the Uniontown Mall parking lot on Saturday, November 20. Gerry Dorobish, along with members of the Ladies of Charity gave out about 300 food boxes to the needy for Thanksgiving meals. Local community businesses and local Roman Catholic Churches organized the event. Gerry also continues her service to the Mount St. Macrina Religious Gift Shop.

Mark Jesko and Bonnie Balas delivered food items to the City Mission which were collected by St. John ECF classes. The canned goods and nonperishable items were well received by Dan Sochko, Bonnie's cousin and City Mission employee, and Debbie Dopleheuer, property manager. The collected items will be used at a Youth Secure Shelter which houses youth ages 14-22, who are aging out of foster care with no home and also for boys in trouble.



Members at Brownsville Food Festival.



Bonnie Balas with Dan Sochko for City Mission food collection.



+Fr. Ron Larko and Mark Jesko with icon.

halushki, pirohi and kolbasi which were offered for take-out. Lodge 81 members lent a hand to the take-out event by helping patrons get their orders and runners Bryan Ponzurick, Stephen Petruska, James Mihalko and Paul Rubish (Lodge 57). Gerry Dorobish, Cathy Phillips (Lodge 18) and Bonnie Balas did upstairs food sales. Richard & Marcia Harrer did the cashier sales in the social hall. Gerry, Bonnie and Marcia donated raffle items and many baked good items. The public response was overwhelming and every bit of food and baked items were sold. Many



Rich Pikulsky, Bonnie Balas & Mike Patishnock.

thanks to GCU Home Office for providing Parish Matching Funds for this fundraiser.

A Divine Liturgy on November 6 was sponsored by Lodge 81 for the living and deceased veterans and active personnel of the parish. This was done in place of a Flag Day/Veterans Day activity unable to be held due to COVID-19. On Veterans

CONTINUED



Thanksgiving food collection from ECF students.

## Lodge 81 CONTINUED

Day at pirohi making, some veterans were present to help. They were commended for their service to the country and recognized by those in attendance.

The ECF teachers who are also Lodge 81 officers held a Thanksgiving Service with their ECF classes. The student response with food donations was overwhelming with bags and bags of food items. These items were given to the City Mission Youth Program previously mentioned. Students also decorated an "Angel Tree" with names of needy children of the community.

At the quarterly meeting held on Sunday, November 14, those in attendance made motions and agreed to make holiday donations to the following groups: Sisters of St. Basil, St. Nicholas Virtual Charity, St. John Church, Sparkle (Salvation Army), and the City Mission. Lodge 81 is looking forward to the Nativity season and the arrival of their new pastor, Father Vasyl Symyon.

**Bonnie Balas** | Vice President & Publicity Director

## Lodge 92

JESSUP, PA

### Annual Stuffed Chicken Breast Dinner

On November 7, 2021, Lodge 92 held their 14<sup>th</sup> Annual Stuffed Chicken Breast Dinner to benefit Holy Ghost Byzantine Catholic Church. It was a huge success!

The lodge served over 475 dinners. After the dinner was over, Lodge 92 donated 50 dinners to needy families in the area. Thank you to all the businesses and individuals for their generous donations. Looking forward to next year's 15<sup>th</sup> Annual Dinner.

**Michaela Mancak** | Secretary-Treasurer



Lodge & church members who helped prepare the chicken dinner. From left: Tim Keller, Melissa Hughes, Mark Pegula, Michaela & Michael Mancak, Georgette Duchak, Mary Lou Ritzco, Ronald Mancak and Margaret Esgro.

## Lodge 93

NORTHERN CAMBRIA, PA

### Fall Fest Basket Raffle

Lodge 93 and St. John BC Church parishioners welcomed the community to the annual Fall Fest Basket Raffle. The fundraiser was a 2-day walk through event



Basket auction.



Pat Strittmatter & Walter Rogal.



Parishioner Sandy Ferrence selling tickets.

on October 2 & 3. Mask wearing supporters of the fundraiser had 66 fun and interesting baskets to peruse. The wrapped and sanitized gifts included holiday decorations, food, housewares, electronics, toys, games, pet items, lottery tickets and cash. A featured basket was a \$200.00 Amazon gift card that attracted many entries.

In addition to the basket raffle—homemade apple, cherry, peach and rhubarb pies were available for purchase. The pies were boxed and ready to go.

Basket preview and early ticket dropping was available during the week and after Liturgies. Lucky prize winners were notified of curbside pickup times. Thank you to the workers that volunteered to deliver the beautiful crafted gift baskets.

Lodge 93 and the parishioners at St. John are thankful for the GCU Parish Matching Funds program.

Connie Strittmatter | Secretary-Treasurer

## Lodge 109

LYNDORA, PA

### Holupki & Haluski Sale

On Saturday, November 6 Lodge 109 held a food sale at St. John the Baptist Church featuring holupki and haluski, which was a complete sell out.

Advantage was taken to use the Ladies Guild's annual rummage sale as the venue for the event. As people shopped for a hidden treasure, they did not need to worry about what was for dinner.

Lodge members and parishioners spent two days prior to the sale preparing the cabbage, meat, rice, noodles, etc. to get ready for an early start on Saturday when customers were lined up out the door.



First Row: Betsy Sychak, Helen Musko, Lee Kradel and Suzie Curzio. Second Row: John Pocchiari, Paulette Hutnick, Stephanie Dano and Liz Pocchiari—volunteers who helped make the food for the sale.

Thanks to all those who showed up to help in whatever capacity as well as the GCU Home Office for matching the profits from the sale.

Janet Uram | Secretary-Treasurer

## Lodge 151 NEW YORK, NY

### Annual Breast Cancer Luncheon

The annual breast cancer luncheon was replaced by a raffle this year. We had approximately 27 baskets—many were wine and dine. The dine were certificates to restaurants in the area. The winners were very happy. A representative of Adelphi Breast Cancer support group and Hotline,

Nina Foley attended and was ecstatic about the money the lodge donated. The people at the Seasons and GCU members contributed to the \$3,500.00 profit which was matched by the GCU. A special thank you to all who supported this community fundraiser.



Selling raffle tickets at the Seasons.



Halloween at St. Andrew.

### Halloween at St. Andrew

Halloween was a special day at St. Andrew BC Church. Parishioners Cathy & Dennis Walsh brought candy to share with the parishioners. Some people including Cathy wore Halloween customs which looked scary and great. Thank you, Cathy, for making Halloween a special time.



Religion instruction class at St. Andrew.

### St. Raphael's Partnership With the Lodge

With the first day of Fall, lodge members were reminded how St. Raphael's in Long Island City, New York always "leaves" us with words of Christ, "I was hungry and you fed me. I was thirsty and you gave me drink. Inasmuch as you did it to one of the least of these my brethren, you did it to me."

Lodge 151 members, Treasurer Christine Hulak and Ann Kandratino have nurtured a wonderful partnership with St. Raphael's food pantry and the GCU for many years. This partnership began when Christine Hulak, a high school teacher in the neighborhood, had her students play Santa Claus and collect and wrap Christmas presents for the children of St. Raphael's. The extraordinary team of volunteers lead by Richard always greets us at the doors of St. Raphael's to bring down the many bags of donations—GCU string backpacks for students, coloring books, crayons, notebooks, pens and pencils, properly accessorizing students for a good school year, GCU bags for adults to carry their donations home, clothing, household items. Richard introduced us to the extensive food distribution for over 200 people twice a week—hundreds of food bags are prepared for the next day along with all the donations prepared on behalf of the GCU. (We thank GCU members MaryEllen Kandratino, Marilyn Cofnuk, James Hulak and Barbara Embriano for their recent donations.)

Lodge 151 presented a check for \$100.00 to the volunteers for a pizza luncheon on behalf of GCU Lodge 151. Bon appetito! (They expressed their thanks for all their "pizza luncheons"—a wonderful time was always had by all!)

Richard introduced the lodge to the new pastor, Father Paul Kim, who warmly thanked the GCU for their overwhelming generosity to St. Raphael's, caring for its parishioners and its community, being a partner in mission showing God's love for people through actions!

### Candle Lighting Service

On November 15, St. Andrew Church celebrated the First Sunday of the Candle Lighting Service for the Christmas Fast. Each week parishioners will light a candle to commemorate the feast day of a saint or a group whose lives were important in the fulfillment of God's plan for our salvation. Father Daddona blessed the children who will help light the candles every week and learn its importance through Sunday school.

CONTINUED



Fr. Vladyslav Budash and his family receive the Matching Funds check from Lodge 151 President Marge Russell.

## Lodge 151 CONTINUED

### Parish Expansion

Fr. Vladyslav at the Church of the Resurrection in Smithtown, NY, was very happy and graciously thanked the GCU and Lodge 151 for Parish Expansion Matching Funds. It was a beautiful day and the luncheon-picnic was a huge success. Marge Russell presented the check to Fr. Vladyslav and took a picture with him and his family.

### With Deep Sympathy

Lodge 151 is saddened by the passing of its long time officer Vinny Panchuk who died on September 29. He is survived by his wife, lodge Vice President Emily Panchuk, daughter, secretary of the lodge, Marie and son, Greg. The funeral mass was

held at Our Lady of Hope in Middle Village and burial was at Saint John's Cemetery. Eternal Memory. His obituary appears on page 37.

We wish everyone a very Blessed and Merry Christmas and a Happy and Healthy New Year.

Marge Russell | President

## UPCOMING LODGE 164 EVENTS

### 1<sup>st</sup> Quarter Meeting

Sunday, January 9, 2022

Following the 10:30 AM Divine Liturgy

St. Mary's Assumption Social Center  
356 South Belle Vista Avenue, Youngstown, OH 44509

### Founders' Day Brunch

Sunday, February 13

Following the 10:30 AM Divine Liturgy

St. Mary's Assumption Social Center  
356 South Belle Vista Avenue, Youngstown, OH 44509

### 2<sup>nd</sup> Quarter Meeting

Sunday, April 3

Following the 10:30 AM Divine Liturgy

St. Mary's Assumption Social Center  
356 South Belle Vista Avenue, Youngstown, OH 44509

### Mother's Day Bingo Fundraiser

Sunday, May 8

Doors open at 5 PM

Bingo begins at 6:30 PM

St. Mary's Assumption Social Center  
356 South Belle Vista Avenue, Youngstown, OH 44509

## Lodge 164

YOUNGSTOWN, OH



Officers for 2022 from left to right: President Dr. Tom Sopkovich, Fraternal Director Jackie Leson, Chaplain Fr. Richard Lambert, Auditor Karen Muransky, Treasurer Sharon MacDonald, Auditor Don Danko and Secretary Diana Danko.

## Lodge 254

HILLSBOROUGH, NJ

### Blessing the Children & Teachers

On Sunday, September 12 the children of Saint Mary Byzantine Catholic Church began the new year of Eastern Christian Formation (ECF). In attendance were many of the children along with the ECF Coordinator Julie Klikus, ECF teachers and Deacon Nick Sotack. There was a special blessing from Father James Badeaux at the end of the Divine Liturgy. The ECF program has good attendance and is very successful in the parish. The classes are held between the two morning Sunday Divine Liturgies. Besides the main reason of learning about their religion, the students enjoy many activities in the program. They also make new friendships and so do their parents!



Some of the parish children, many GCU members, of the ECF classes of Saint Mary Byzantine Catholic Church receive blessings from pastor Father James Badeaux.

### Local Food Bank Donation

GCU Lodge 254 collects and distributes food donations to the local food banks before Thanksgiving and before Christmas, as well as, throughout the

year. The GCU food chest is located in the church hall and is filled regularly with generous food donations.

Elizabeth Pentz | Publicity Director



Pictured left to right, Donald & Paola, Biagio & Laura and Melissa & Ronald. Standing in front of them are their children, young GCU members, who also were in attendance and celebrated with their parents on this happy occasion. They are all parishioners of St. Mary BC Church in Hillsborough.



GCU members Julie Klikus, the ECF coordinator, and daughter Grace gather up the ECF students' food donations for the Thanksgiving food drive.



GCU member Richard Emiliano gathers and packages the food items before Thanksgiving for delivery to the local food banks in the community.

### Annual Marriage Jubilee Celebration

The Annual Marriage Jubilee Celebration took place on Sunday, September 26 at Saint Mary BC Church.

The Divine Liturgy began with the procession of many clergy and Bishop Kurt. The magnificent church choir sang throughout the Divine Liturgy and a dinner followed in the parish center.

The church showcase displayed many photos of the young brides and grooms on their wedding day of years ago. It was wonderful to see a full church of married couples along with their families celebrating their wedding anniversaries.

The Wedding Jubilee included three siblings celebrating with their spouses-Donald Pentz, Laura Como and Melissa Tyminski celebrated their wedding jubilees.



Pictured is Cathy Risdon, GCU members +Bill Kendrach and Mark Gasser. It is with a heavy heart that we say that Bill died 10 days later. Eternal memory.

## Lodge 268

MINGO JUNCTION, OH

### Improvements to Parish Church

On November 3, 2021, lodge members had a new refrigerator delivered to the church social hall. This year's projects included fixing the roof, replacing the sidewalk in front of the church and painting the kitchen in the social hall. Thanks to the GCU for the Matching Funds. Members also did a fall cleaning. A hoagie lunch was served.

### Keeping Kids Warm This Winter

Lodge 268 purchased nine children's winter coats for Hills Poverty Committee. The members will also be purchasing socks, underwear and shoes along with a donation to help with food. Thanks to the generous GCU members and the GCU Matching Funds to support this project.

Carla Gasser | President



GCU members Josh Kendrach, Cindy Pitoff, Sara & Carla Gasser and Angie Kendrach.



Members showing off their artwork from the painting with a twist.

## Lodge 302

BRECKSVILLE, OH

### Painting with a Twist

On Thursday, September 30, a total of 12 women had a good time painting a simple scarecrow sketch during the two hour event. Some attendees were Lodge President Judy Weitzel, along with her 23-year-old granddaughter, Ashley. Athletic & Fraternal Activities Director Jean Karaffa (wife of National Director Michael Karaffa) also was present. Various talents filled the air with laughter, jokes and much fun. The instructor, Daniella, reassured all that our paintings would come out well and they did! The lodge sponsored a similar event in 2019 and it has become a favorite one to attend. The biggest challenge? Where to hang the paintings once the participants got home! The lodge plans to sponsor another painting event in the Spring of 2022.

CONTINUED

## Lodge 302 CONTINUED

### Trunk or Treat

On Sunday, October 31, Lodge 302 sponsored Trunk or Treat and a Halloween Social at St. Joseph BC Church.

Approximately 25 children participated in Trunk-or-Treat, going car to car (20 cars in all) for treats and the lodge provided each child with a bag with candy, coloring book/ crayons and Halloween fun.

After Trunk-or-Treat, everyone gathered in

the hall for a social which included donuts, cupcakes, cookies, apples, coffee, juice and apple cider. Leftover donuts and treats were delivered to the First Responders at the Broadview Heights Fire Department.

Many thanks to Carolyn Liggett, Diana Brashear, Bonnie Ciresi, Judy Weitzel and Barb Zaborowski for their help with making this event a success.



Kids at the Trunk or Treat event.



Lodge President, Judy Weitzel, presenting donation to Deacon Robert Cripps, Coordinator of the St. Mary Hospitality House.

### Banner Sunday

The weekend of November 20<sup>th</sup> & 21<sup>st</sup>, Lodge 302 along with the parishioners from St. Joseph Byzantine Catholic Church participated in a Food Drive to support St. Mary Hospitality House which operates out of Holy Spirit Church in Parma, OH.

The lodge has been doing this fundraiser for several years now and this year's collection was by far the largest ever! Several teens from the parish assisted Fraternal Activities Director Jean Karaffa, load up President Judy Weitzel's car on Sunday afternoon—a stuffed trunk and backseat!

Judy Weitzel delivered the collected items along with a check for \$200.<sup>00</sup> to the Hospitality House before Thanksgiving.



Judy Weitzel's trunk full of donations.



2022 Lodge 302 Officers.

### Lodge Officers take Oath for 2022

At the November 14, 2021 meeting, all current officers agreed to serve again for the 2022 calendar year. National Director, Michael Karaffa (at left), administered the oath.

### Looking Ahead

Watch for these events in 2022: Game Night, Easter Egg Hunt, Painting with a Twist, Memorial Day Service, Trunk-or-Treat, Banner Sunday and the St. Nick Potluck. Mark your calendar for these meeting dates: February 6, May 22, August 7 and November 6, 2022.

Christine Bratnick | Publicity Director

Jean Karaffa | Fraternal Activities Director

## UPCOMING LODGE 302 EVENT

### 1<sup>st</sup> Quarter Meeting

Sunday, February 6, 2022

Following the 10:30 AM Liturgy

St. Joseph Byzantine Catholic Church  
Activity Center  
8111 Brecksville Road, Brecksville, OH



Andrea Sheesley, Veronica Melcotti and Beth Nedrich.

## Lodge 401

NANTY GLO, PA

During the month of September GCU Lodge 401 sponsored two events in the St. Nicholas Church hall.

### Annual Flea Market

September 10 & 11 was the annual flea market. Veronica Melcotti spearheaded this successful event. Thank you to all who volunteered to help with the setup and packing up of unsold items and to Millie Fenchak & Shirley Oblinsky for manning the kitchen to sell gobs and sandwiches.

### Basket Party

The second GCU sponsored event during September was the annual church basket party held September 25 & 26. This was a walk-through basket party. Participants purchased a ticket that gave them 25 individual tickets to place in the bags of the gifts that interested them. Members of the St. Nicholas Church Ladies Guild also helped with the event. Lodge 401 extends a sincere thank you to all the volunteers, & patrons and to the GCU Home Office for the Matching Funds.

Eugene Ostinowsky | Vice President



Shirley Oblinsky and Mellie Fenchak.



Claire Lorince and Michael Komishock presented a check to the director of the Beaver Meadows Food Pantry Jennifer Barnasevitch.

## Greater Hazleton Regional Lodge (GHRL)

HAZLETON, PA

Once again Mother Nature is playing havoc with Northeastern PA. One November day the temperature is 70 degrees and the next day it is below freezing. Long before we know we will be seeing the skiers delight, snow, well that is how NE PA is.

### GHRL Calendar Fundraiser

For the month of September, the proceeds from the GHRL Calendar benefited the Beaver Meadows Food Pantry and Catholic Social Services. A total of \$1,538.<sup>00</sup> was raised and was matched by the GCU as a community fundraiser.

Proceeds were sent to Catholic Social Services and a presentation was made by Claire Lorince and Michael Komishock to Jennifer Barnasevitch director of the Beaver Meadows Food Pantry.

Thanks to all for making this fundraiser a huge success.

### Fall Helping Hands Day at Sugarloaf, PA

Saturday, October 9 started off with rain and was very dismal but lo and behold the sun came out and the day cleared for the many outside workers.

Fr. Scott Boghossian had Liturgy at 8 AM and at 9 AM Mother Marija came

CONTINUED

## GHRL CONTINUED

out and designated volunteers to different areas to help out with the chores.

There were some minor roof repairs, the clearing of the field that was full of plants during the summer, flower beds were cleaned out and flowers cut back for the coming seasons and shrubbery was trimmed. There was lawn mowing & edging to do and cleaning up of rocks that were in the field.

For volunteers who could not do outside chores, there were 1,000 boxes to make for the baked goods sale and 2 volunteers unwrapped 25 pounds of Hershey Kisses for the Sisters' cookie baking.

A surprise visit was made by Fr. Gregory Noga, he had stopped by to pick up some goodies and stopped in to say hi and gave us all a blessing.

There was fresh coffee and cookies for the workers during the morning and then it was time to have lunch. Mike Komischock prayed grace and of course along with lunch were more homemade cookies for all to devour.

Presentations were made by District 5, GHRL and individuals to Mother Marija. Some of the group then went to see the horses and the cows.

Mark your calendar for the summer date for Helping Hands Day—**Saturday, June 18, 2022**. Hope to see you there—it is always great to lend a Helping Hand and help beautify the area!



Rick Hoppey and Agnes Rohrbach making presentation to Mother Marija.



Marge Hoppey, Heidi Holenowsky, Ted Sherrock, Claire Lorince, Ann Marie Betterly making boxes and Rev. Gregory Noga.



Trays of meatballs for the spaghetti dinner at St. Michael Church.

### Matching Funds

The Matching Funds project for September was a huge success. A donation of \$1,538.00 was made to each of the following: Beaver Meadows Food Pantry and Catholic Social Services. The next Matching Funds event is for the month of December and the benefactor will be St. Mary's BC Church in Hazleton for church renovations.

St. Michael's BC Church held a spaghetti parish fundraiser dinner on Sunday, November 7 and had a cookie walk and bake sale the weekend of December 11 & 12 as another parish fundraiser.

### Anniversary Congratulations

Congratulations to John & Anna Timcho who celebrated 55 years of marriage on October 30. May God bless and grant them many many more years. They are active members of St. John's BC Church in Hazleton.

Here is wishing the entire GCU world a very Blessed and Merry Christmas and hopefully a Joyous, Healthy and Happy New Year! Remember to keep Christ in Christmas.

If there are any questions at any time, please feel free to give me a call at 570-454-4869 or you can email me at agnesr@ptd.net.

Until next time, take care and May God Bless!

Agnes Rohrbach | Secretary & Activities Director



Rick Hoppey, Tom Katchur and BP Romancheck cutting down branches. Mark Kokinda and Mike Komischock cleaning up the vegetable garden.

### Looking Ahead

Even though a lot of people have received their COVID-19 vaccines, this past year still has been a hassle to come up with different activities. Hopefully, 2022 will be a lot easier to do some planning on different trips and shows. Let's all keep fingers crossed and hope for a better 2022.

Please remember to keep in your prayers all that has been lost due to this dreaded pandemic and also keep in your prayers all the people we have lost due to the pandemic and those who have been devastated by natural disasters.

Hopefully, when GHRL has its meeting in January a list of activities will be ready to be handed out to everyone. Until then, if you are computer savvy, check out the GCU website, as activities become available, the Home Office will update the site.

## UPCOMING GHRL EVENT

### 1<sup>st</sup> Quarter Meeting

Sunday, January 30, 2022

2 PM

St. John BC Church Hall  
5 E. 20<sup>th</sup> Street, Hazleton, PA 18201

This time allows the different pastors to be able to attend the meeting.

## Central Pittsburgh Regional Lodge (CPRL) GREENFIELD, CARRICK & SOUTHSIDE-PITTSBURGH, PA



Group photo at Duda's Farm.

### Hayride At Duda's Farm

On Saturday, October 2, fifteen participants (10 adults and 5 children) spent a day on Duda's Farm in Brownsville, PA. The picnic was ready to start at noon, but was delayed a few minutes as it took time to round up the kids. They were having a fun time exploring the farm, seeing the animals, riding on the slides and playing in the corn pit. While this was going on, all adults got a chance to guess the total cost of the Halloween basket. The winner got to keep the basket.

After lunch and s'mores by the fire pit, the games began. The Left and Right games for adults and children lead off. Next, the kids got to pick a variety of candy from the hay. They were all very polite when picking; there was no elbowing or overzealousness. Then, the adults got to search in the hay for potatoes, onions, four varieties of apples and pears. Door prizes were also awarded to lucky winners.

Following the games, the group took off on a hayride. Although the farm was extremely crowded and the line for the hayride was long, the CPRL group boarded the next tractor. While enjoying a ride through the farm, a stop was made in the pumpkin patch. Each person got to pick their own pumpkin. As an added treat, Patty Niskach personally gave each child a Halloween gift.

It was another fun year at the pumpkin patch hayride—the weather was perfect, sunny and in the 70's. Come out and join the fun when CPRL does it again next year.

### Annual Steeler Tailgate

The Annual Steeler Tailgate resumed without a hitch on Sunday, October 31 at St. John Chrysostom. BC Church. The event was a huge success, achieving parish Matching Funds and a Steeler win made for an even better day!



John & Patty Niskach presenting Fr. Miron the Matching Funds check from the Steeler Tailgate event.



Steeler Tailgate volunteers.

### Annual Meeting

The annual meeting was held Sunday, November 21 at St. John Chrysostom. Lodge members enjoyed lunch from Armstrongs Restaurant, reviewed business from 2021 and started planning for 2022. The 2021 golf and bowling winners were honored as well as presenting Fr. Miron with the matching funds from the money raised from the Annual Steeler Tailgate.



2021 golf and bowling winners who were honored.



Beth Gulyasy presenting a check to Anne Danchenka from the St. Pius rummage sale.

**Kim Kolesar** | Trustee  
**Melanie Basl** | Publicity Director

# Southeast Pittsburgh Regional Lodge (SEPRL)

CLAIRTON & MUNHALL, PA

## First Day of School Kickoff

On Sunday afternoon, August 22<sup>nd</sup>, families from Ascension of Our Lord Byzantine Church met at the Family Funscape Miniature Golf course in Elizabeth, PA. It was a great way to kick off the upcoming first day of school. Teams were made up of families. After completing the course, the lodge provided a picnic lunch and drinks. Carolyn Nista and Trish Roberts presented trophies to the “hole-in-one” winners, Henry Dufalla, Julia Tomkowicz and Nicholas Tomkowicz. The teams points were tallied and a winner for each age group received Chick-Fil-A gift cards.



Golfers Henry Dufalla, Brent Kolesar, Julia & Nicholas Tomkowicz.



Henry & Alexandra Lassige folding coats. Agnes Borsh, Andrea Harhai, Anna Marie Miller and Carol Lawson sorting clothes. Rita Hilla, Agnes Borsh and Patty Bovee with hand knitted articles made by Bonnie McTaggart and her friends from Florida.

## Coats, Hats & Glove Drive

Ascension Church collected coats, hats and gloves for adults in need and homeless shelters. Items were sorted, folded and delivered to the Intersection in McKeesport, PA, Light of Life in Pittsburgh and the Mantle Mission in West Newton, PA. As a Matching Funds events, each organization also received a check to help with meals for the holidays.



Joan Berchok, Helen Sowko & Carla Matyasvsky.

## Annual Picnic

Ascension Church held their annual picnic on Sunday, October 3. The Matching Funds event featured basket raffles, bingo games and share the wealth drawings. Those attending brought delicious covered dish foods to fill the buffet table. Hot dogs, hamburgers and kolbassi were hot off the grill and donated by Dean & Tammy Maksin. More than 30 gift baskets were donated along with gift cards from different venues as prizes. Fresh potted mums were given away as door prizes.



Veterans at St. John's Cathedral with Fr. Andrew Deskevich.

## Honoring Our Veterans

Veterans were recognized at St. John's Cathedral and Ascension Church on Sunday, November 14. In Clairton, the children led parishioners in a flag ceremony and Fr. Ivan Mina invited veterans to the altar for a special blessing on Sunday. Each veteran

received a “thank you for your service” card and an Eat-N-Park Restaurant gift card from the lodge. Fr. Andrew Deskevich also invited veterans to the altar for a blessing at Liturgies on Saturday and Sunday. Both churches passed out cookies to all in attendance

and each church is collecting socks, t-shirts and personal care items that will be delivered to the VA hospital in December.

Trish Roberts | President  
Patty Bovee | Treas. & Fraternal Publicity Director

## Clothing Drive

The SEPRL once again had a tremendously successful clothing drive during the month of September.

The lodge was able to pack bags for the Steel Valley Middle and High School Caring Closet for students in the district in need of warm clothing.

Bags of men's and women's clothing that still had the tags on them were also donated to the Free Store in Braddock, PA and to the Mantle House Mission for the homeless.

The remainder of the clothing was donated to the St. Vincent de Paul Society. Thanks to all of the parishioners and friends who gave so generously. A special thank you to Bonnie McTaggart who sent two boxes of hand knitted hats, scarfs, afghans, etc.



Lodge members who helped make the Slavic Dinner a success.

## Lodge 625 Happenings

CONEMAUGH, PA

### Annual Slavic Dinner

Lodge 625 was busy during the month of October preparing for the 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Slavic Dinner held October 31, 2021, at Holy Trinity Byzantine Catholic Church. This event was part of community Matching Funds and the lodge is grateful to the Home Office for providing the opportunity to give back to the local community. Through the Jackson Heritage Festival and the Slavic Dinner with Matching Funds we will be distributing \$10,000.<sup>00</sup> to community organizations during the month of December. The following are some of the organizations that will

receive a donation this year: The Sisters of Great Basil, The House of Prayer, both in Uniontown, Highland Health (local free medical clinic), The Johnstown Family Kitchen, several food pantries and fire companies to name a few.



The officers of Lodge 625

want to wish all the GCU Family, a very Merry Christmas and a Blessed, Happy New Year.

Members of Lodge 625 who would like to be added to the email list are asked to send an email to: [gculodge625@yahoo.com](mailto:gculodge625@yahoo.com) or you can like us on Facebook—GCU Lodge 625.

Georgia Lehman | Secretary-Treasurer

## UPCOMING LODGE 625 EVENTS

### Annual Christmas Eve Social

Friday, December 24, 2021

Following Divine Liturgy at 9 PM in the parish hall

### 3rd Annual Cash Bash

Sunday, April 3, 2022

## Lodge 945

DUNMORE, PA

### Matching Funds

GCU Lodge 945 held a Community Matching Funds event to benefit Sherwood Youth Association, Dunmore, PA during their Summer Festival. Lodge members who are also members of SYA that volunteered their services in making the 3-day event a success included George Kofel, Myron Fedor, Susan & Chris Brace and Paul Dunda.

George Kofel | Fraternal & Publicity Director



Susan Brace and GCU Vice-Chairman/Secretary of the Board George Kofel present a \$5,000.<sup>00</sup> Community Matching Funds check to Sherwood President Matthew Fedor and Myron Fedor.

## Lodge 999

PHOENIX, AZ

### Laugh4Hope Family Comedy Night

Laugh4Hope is a family friendly comedy night that supports Life Choices Women's Clinics and it's mobile unite, the HOPE Mobile. The 2021 event was smaller than pre-COVID-19 events but 320 guest and 20 volunteers enjoyed this years event.

### Oktoberfest

Saturday, October 16, 2021, St. Thomas the Apostle Byzantine Church in Gilbert, AZ held its annual Oktoberfest. This was the biggest ever with 140 tickets sold! GCU



Joanie Mahar at Laugh4Hope Comedy Night.



One of the families enjoying Oktoberfest activities.



Oktoberfest volunteers.

Lodge 999 assisted the parish with GCU Matching Funds.

The night began for many with Divine Liturgy at 5 PM followed by a delicious German dinner of bratwurst, sauerkraut and potato pancakes. The amazing and energetic kitchen staff worked so

hard—thanks for their great efforts.

Throughout the night people surveyed the silent auction made up of beautiful religious items and creative baskets donated by parishioners. Children had the opportunity to win items in the children's raffle. Many bought tickets for the 50/50 fundraiser as well. Congratulations to all the winners and thanks to those who donated items. The Oktoberfest included lively dancing, a fire pit and outdoor games as well. Good fellowship and fun were enjoyed by all.

The event raised funds through meal & drink ticket sales, raffle ticket sales and the silent auction. All food and drink were generously donated by parishioners this year, so the total expenses, for prizes and décor, was \$150.<sup>00</sup>. The event raised a net profit of \$2,615.<sup>00</sup>. Thanks to the GCU for the Matching Funds and Lodge 999 for their assistance.



Oktoberfest fun and games.

Joanie Mahar | President

Kris Forbes | Oktoberfest Chairman

# For Your Information

## Available

### Carpathian Cookery Cookbook

Having sold nearly 18,000 copies, the cookbook has entered its 20<sup>th</sup> printing and 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 \$28.<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, call 724-438-6027 (M-F 9 AM-3 PM please leave a message) or email [carpathiancookery@gmail.com](mailto:carpathiancookery@gmail.com).



## GCU Home Office & Seven Oaks Staffs Participate in Salvation Army Treasures for Children Program

The GCU Home Office and Seven Oaks staff purchased Christmas gifts for the children for the Salvation Army Treasures for Children program. Once again the staff was abundant in their holiday giving. Thanks to all who participated in making kids happy this Christmas.





A JOINT FRATERNAL EVENT FOR  
FCSU, GCU, NSS & SCS MEMBERS



*Brookgate Lanes*

14950 SNOW ROAD  
BROOK PARK, OH  
216-676-4325



**2022 NATIONAL BOWLING TOURNAMENT  
CLEVELAND, OH  
FRIDAY, MAY 13 & SATURDAY, MAY 14, 2022**

LODGING



**CROWNE PLAZA**

7230 Engle Road  
Middleburg Heights, OH 44130  
440-243-4040

Block Code:  
**SNB**



# Deceased Members

(Lodge-Member-City-State)

- 8344 Rita B. Ator, Orangeville, PA  
 271 Raymond F. Baker, Eden Prairie, IA  
 8344 Barry P. Baldwin,  
 East Stroudsburg, PA  
 994 Deloris Barney, Aliquippa, PA  
 8344 Marion E. Beck, Beaver Falls, PA  
 8344 Jean Benamati,  
 Northern Cambria, PA  
 860 Joseph Benko, Washington, MI  
 271 Irene P. Billek, Geneva, IL  
 8344 Evelyn J. Bradt, Russellton, PA  
 8344 Louise R. Brennen, Coraopolis, PA  
 235 Wayne Bristol, Canton, CT  
 10 Deborah Brocklebank, Aliquippa, PA  
 164 Dorothy Brown, Girard, OH  
 CPRL Gary M. Brown, McKees Rocks, PA  
 336 David R. Bubonics, Wickliffe, OH  
 SPRL Robert J. Butella, West Mifflin, PA  
 8344 Flor Caraballo, Kintnersville, PA  
 93 Marian Centurione, Pittsburgh, PA  
 8344 Claudette Clinkscales, Struthers, OH  
 8309 Suzanne Conte, Kissimmee, FL  
 8344 Anna M. Cook, Jeannette, PA  
 8344 Sylvia Core, Point Marion, PA  
 8344 Margaret K. Cosgrove, Boise, ID  
 8359 Alice L. Crankshaw, Statesville, NC  
 8358 Jean Crawford, Fort Atkinson, WI  
 994 Angelo Cupani, Beaver, PA  
 8344 Iva M. Davidheiser, Douglasville, PA  
 8358 John H. Davis, Green Bay, WI  
 NPRL Theresa Davis, McKees Rocks, PA  
 8344 Douglas Dawson, Bloomsburg, PA  
 GHRL Emily Degenhart, Hazleton, PA  
 164 Elsie Dietz, Daytona Beach, FL  
 8309 Jeremy D. Erdek,  
 Palm Beach Gardens, FL  
 401 Lois Fallet, Cassandra, PA  
 211 Margaret Fedorchak, Greenfield, IN  
 10 Amelia Fronzaglia, Aliquippa, PA  
 8344 James Gabeletto, Smithfield, PA  
 8359 Deborah Gailey, Reidsville, NC  
 8344 Francis J. Gallo, Pottsville, PA  
 8335 Irene Geusic, Williamston, MI  
 77 Frank Giamboi, Lorain, OH  
 164 Edward M. Gladysz, Brookfield, OH  
 8309 Patricia Godfrey, Weeki Wachee, FL  
 15 Mary Golini, Egg Harbor City, NJ  
 8344 Edward Gomery, Pottstown, PA  
 250 Irene Gordon, Warren, MI  
 8315 Myong Kim Guidotti, Highland, IN  
 CPRL Patricia Handyside, Glenshaw, PA  
 8344 Evelyn Harding, Sewickley, PA  
 8344 Virginia L. Harmon, Ford City, PA  
 8313 Kathryn M. Hawes, Chicago, IL  
 8344 Ray J. Heiser, Orwigsburg, PA  
 8358 Ray L. Henning, Altoona, WI  
 8344 Patricia Hirsch, Johnstown, PA  
 644 Michael Hlivko, Akron, OH  
 8344 Rosa Houston, Pittsburgh, PA  
 8344 Norma J. Howarth, Indiana, PA  
 8344 Freda L. Hudspath, Ellwood City, PA  
 8344 Gladys C. Hughes, Bolivar, PA  
 8344 Joseph Ianniello, Altoona, PA  
 8358 William G. Jahnke, Marshfield, WI  
 8344 Robert Karwoski, Sewickley, PA  
 CPRL Mary Kautzman, Pittsburgh, PA  
 994 Melba Kipilo, Sewickley, PA  
 8344 Alex Kovach, Masontown, PA  
 8344 Dorothy J. Krehnovi, McDonald, PA  
 319 Leonard Kuchinski, Cadillac, MI  
 8344 Ruth R. Kyle, Pittsburgh, PA  
 8344 Ronald R. Lehr, New Oxford, PA  
 994 Irene Lemasters, Hookstown, PA  
 8344 Dolores Leseman, Pittsburgh, PA  
 8344 Barbara Lewis, Roaring Spring, PA  
 93 Robert D. Long, Johnstown, PA  
 999 James M. Mattaliano,  
 Port Barrington, IL  
 GHRL Ronald J. Matty, Danville, PA  
 8344 Richard D. McLean,  
 Laughlintown, PA  
 8327 Lloyd H. Menk, Mankato, MN  
 8324 Kathleen Mihalic, Baltimore, MD  
 8344 David Miles, East Brady, PA  
 8344 Roy Miller, Lehighton, PA  
 10 Robert Monit, Beaver, PA  
 17 William Morris, Old Forge, PA  
 8309 Marguerite A. Morse, Naples, FL  
 8344 Mildred D. Moss, Media, PA  
 8344 John Nadzam, Erie, PA  
 10 Vincenza Nocera, Rochester, PA  
 8344 Mark S. Noecker, Cressona, PA  
 999 Ronald Oberle, Congress, AZ  
 401 Michael Ostinowsky, Ebensburg, PA  
 8344 David E. Patton, Freedom, PA  
 15 Pauline Paulick, Powell, OH  
 GHRL Monica Pavlick, Hazleton, PA  
 8327 Joan T. Peterson, Clear Lake, MN  
 994 Nicholas S. Plodinec, Beaver, PA  
 442 Mary K. Prest, Brookfield, OH  
 8344 Lois A. Preston, Beaver Falls, PA  
 109 John N. Prokopchak, Potomac, MD  
 GHRL Elizabeth L. Racho,  
 Beaver Meadows, PA  
 CPRL Christopher Ribarchak,  
 Pittsburgh, PA  
 8341 Larry D. Roberson, Youngstown, OH  
 8344 Stephen Rodick, Girardville, PA  
 93 Sandra Romano, Duncansville, PA  
 20 Joan Roncase, Phoenixville, PA  
 8344 Alexander Rudnitsky, Narberth, PA  
 401 Doris Ruffley, Center Valley, PA  
 SPRL Alice Scheetz, McKeesport, PA  
 8344 Karen L. Scheller, Evans City, PA  
 8358 Patricia A. Schultz, Lena, WI

8344	Rose Anne Sellers, Johnstown, PA	<i>GHRL—Greater Hazleton Regional Lodge</i>
8344	Jean Semmel, Slatington, PA	<i>CPRL—Central Pittsburgh Regional Lodge</i>
109	Richard W. Sertik, Chicora, PA	<i>SPRL—Southeast Pittsburgh Regional Lodge</i>
8344	Grace Shaffer, Bloomsburg, PA	<i>NPRL—Northwest Pittsburgh Regional Lodge</i>
8344	Lois R. Shober, Pottsville, PA	<i>PSRL—Pittsburgh South Regional Lodge</i>
8309	Sandra J. Shotts, Apopka, FL	
8344	Audrey Sirochman, Kittanning, PA	
8313	Michael A. Sorensen, Cary, IL	
8358	Terrill P. Stewart, Madison, WI	
8309	Juliet M. Stone, Inverness, FL	
8344	Norma J. Stott, Latrobe, PA	
250	Callie Sudzina, Bargersville, IN	
8344	Marcella M. Swider, Lafayette Hill, PA	
8344	Helen M. Thomas, Auburn, PA	
109	James O. Thompson, Butler, PA	
8358	Catherine F. Truszynski, Oak Creek, WI	
CPRL	George Tunder, McKees Rocks, PA	
8344	Naomi Turzan, Beaver Falls, PA	
17	Mary Vilchock, Lyndhurst, NJ	
8344	Robert E. Ware, Souderton, PA	
8344	Loretta Willis, Indiana, PA	
53	Irene Winsock, West Wyoming, PA	
271	Jessie Wootton, Montgomery, IL	
69	Mary A. Yaculak-Long, Pottstown, PA	

# Remembrances



**Andy Zeedick**  
Former National  
Vice President

Andrew Zeedick, age 90, of Mt. Lebanon, PA and formerly of Greenfield-Pittsburgh, PA passed away on Thursday, November 18, 2021. Andy is survived by his children, Danielle and John, and his granddaughter, Linnea. He was preceded in death by wife, Georgia, his parents, Andrew & Anna (Cipa), and his brother, Bernard, all of Pittsburgh.

Born on June 7, 1931, Andy grew up in lower Greenfield and attended J.M. Logan and Greenfield elementary-middle schools and graduated from Taylor Alderdice High School in 1949. Of Carpatho-Rusyn descent, Andy maintained the traditions of his Byzantine Catholic faith and Rusyn culture throughout his life. He was a member of the Carpatho-Rusyn Society, the Western Pennsylvania Slovak Cultural Association, and was a past president of the Russian Nationality Room at the University of Pittsburgh along with his wife. He attended the University of Pittsburgh for his bachelor of science degree in biological sciences and graduated in 1954. Andy played basketball for Pitt for two years.

In 1954, Andy was drafted into the US Army during the Korean War and served two years in the medical corps at Fort Sam Houston, San Antonio, TX. In the Army, Andy was assigned as medical-surgical technician and instructor of anatomy and physiology for combat aid personnel. After his military service, he completed his Master's degree in secondary education at the University of Pittsburgh in 1958 and finished his first year of

teaching at Peter's Township High School as a biology and general sciences teacher.

Andy then accepted a teaching position in biology at Mt. Lebanon High School. Andy also was the men's assistant basketball coach early in his career at Mt. Lebanon. He became a guidance counselor in 1964 until his retirement in 1992. In recognition of his time and dedication to the education and success of his students, Andy was awarded "Counselor of Distinction" by the Allegheny County School Counselors Association (ACSCA). He was a member of the ACSCA board.

His students were a large part of his life and he leaves behind generations of cherished students. He spoke often of their achievements and shared many great stories about them. He frequently relayed stories about his homeroom Class of 1964.

Andy formed many close bonds with faculty over his years at Mt. Lebanon. Andy asked that Coach Dick Black be mentioned as thanks for his many decades of friendship and their shared commitment to the success of student-athletes.

Andy and his wife, Georgia, were among the founding members of Seven Oaks Country Club in Beaver and he was a lifetime member of the GCU. Golfing since he was very young, Andy enjoyed many years as the winner of several flight championships and tournaments at Seven Oaks Country Club. He entered his first contest as a junior in high school and continued playing for over six decades. He also served on the Seven Oaks Golf Committee. Andy noted that the "real fun of the events was the camaraderie. Singing and eating and sharing fellowship after the game

was what really counted" when interviewed for the book, *Opportunity Realized*, a history of the first one hundred years of the GCU.

He served on the GCU Board of Directors. In 1988, Andy was elected GCU National Vice President. After his tenure as National Vice President, he was president of GCU District 15. As a nephew of the GCU's first medical advisor, Dr. Peter Ivan Zeedick, his service to the GCU in several positions was especially important to him.

After his retirement, Andy remained active in the Air Heritage Society of Beaver Falls, PA. He maintained several memberships in education-related societies including the Mt. Lebanon Retired School Employees Association, Allegheny County School Counselors Association, the Pennsylvania Association of School Retirees-Pittsburgh Chapter, and the Pennsylvania State Education Association. Andy also continued his support of the military by serving as greeter at many events for the Veterans Breakfast Club of Pittsburgh.

Andy will be remembered for his love and devotion for his wife and children, his welcoming and generous attitude for all he met, his legendary interactions with students, his sense of humor in all situations, and his golf scores.

A Funeral Liturgy was celebrated at St. Gregory of Nazianzus Byzantine Catholic Church in Upper St. Clair, PA. Interment followed at Calvary Cemetery in Pittsburgh.

Eternal memory and blessed repose.

## Vincent Panchuk

Mr. Vincent Panchuk passed away on September 29, 2021 at the age of 89.

Born on September 24, 1932 in East New York Brooklyn to Polish and Ukraine immigrants the youngest of 3 sons. Vincent excelled through high school and was able to join the US Army Reserves.

Vincent began working for the US Postal Service as a letter carrier and was involved in the National Strike of 1970 where he was working at Branch 36 - which was the branch that led the strike. The Strike had resolved with the help of their union and the Postal workers who now have better working and living conditions because of them. Vincent was very happy and proud to work as a letter carrier and retired in 1998 after 35 years.

Vincent met and married his wife Emily Ann in 1973 and had two children Marie and Gregory and settled in Middle Village Queens NY.

Vincent was involved in the GCU

with the NYC bowling at Bowlmor and also the Traveling League with Lodge 151. Vincent had been involved with the GCU Lodge 151 and their parish activities.

Vincent was involved with Saint Mary Byzantine Catholic Church and his neighborhood church Our Lady of Hope Roman Catholic in Middle Village where his children went to grammar school and they attended mass.

After retirement Vincent and his wife traveled both in the US to many states sightseeing and with their time share as well as to Alaska, Hawaii, The Caribbean, River Cruises in Europe, European land tours and cruises which they loved. Vincent had enjoyed spending time with family and friends. Vincent will be remembered fondly by his family and friends as a generous life loving man and will be greatly missed.

Eternal memory and blessed repose.

## William J. "Bill" Kendrach

William J. "Bill" Kendrach, 84 of Mingo Junction, OH passed away peacefully on Saturday, November 13, 2021 with his family by his side.

He was born October 6, 1937, in Steubenville, OH a son of the late Mike & Gertrude Kendrach.

Bill retired in 1998 from the international Mill Service in Mingo Junction. He served his country in the US Navy. Bill was a very active member of the Saint John the Baptist Byzantine Catholic Church in Mingo Junction. He was also a member of the GCU Lodge 268.

In years past, Bill enjoyed boating on the Ohio River with family and friends. Bill was an avid car enthusiast, handyman and enjoyed tinkering in his garage. He loved socializing with his neighbors and feeding the stray cats. He was always there to help his children, grandchildren, nieces and nephews with car repairs. He most enjoyed spending time with his family especially his grandchildren.

Surviving are his wife of 62 years Margaret (Bodnar) Kendrach, whom he married on July 11, 1959; six children—Carla (Mark) Gasser, William Kendrach, Joanne Kendrach, Cindy (Matt) Pitroff, Mike (Angie) Kendrach, and John (Paula) Kendrach and four grandchildren—Sara Gasser, Josh (Allyssa) Kendrach, Jacob (Traci) Gasser and Kash Kendrach.

Eternal memory and blessed repose.



Announcing the  
**GCU**

**2022**  
**Art & Photo**  
**Contest!**



This year's theme:  
**"Invested in...  
My favorite  
vacation  
spot!"**



**Deadline:**  
**April 4, 2022**



**If you're 12 or younger, enter your artwork!**

Submission must be original on paper or art board  
maximum size 12"x18"

Include short description of your art, name, age, address,  
phone number and email on the back of your submission.

**If you're age 13-UP enter your photo!**

Include short description, name, age, address,  
phone number and email with your submission.  
Photos that include identifiable people require  
a model release.

The model release form is available for download at  
[GCUusa.com/events](http://GCUusa.com/events).