

The Messenger

First Reformed Church of Scotia
224 North Ballston Avenue
Scotia, NY 12302

The Rev. Craig J. Hoffman

The Rev. Jan L. Hoffman

Volume 62, Number 8

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From
Craig's
Desk

Chautauqua

As you read this Jan and I will be at, or will be just home from, the Chautauqua Institution on Chautauqua Lake in western New York. We have acquired the habit of going there every year; this year, for the third year in a row, we've gone for two weeks. Some of you have asked what we do there and what it's like there, and those are hard questions to answer because Chautauqua is so unlike any other place that I know. But let me try.

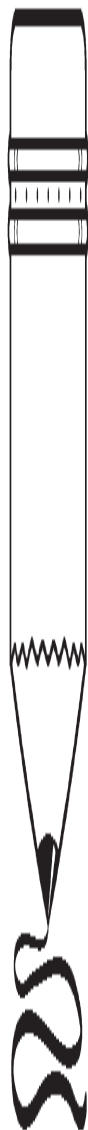
First of all, Chautauqua is a real community with its own streets, homes and fire department. Most of the homes are seasonal – the summer season is 9 weeks long. But some are occupied year-round. It's built on the western shore of Chautauqua Lake – a lake much like the Finger Lakes. That means the east-west roads rise steeply as you walk away from the water. You huff and puff when you walk, and “walk” is the operative word because car use is restricted. You walk wherever you go, and your calves complain for the first few days.

Second, Chautauqua is a center for public discourse, the arts and faith. Its roots go back 130 years when two forward thinking Methodists established a summertime community to help Sunday School teachers stay sharp. Over the years its evolved into much, much more.

Here's a sampling of what we're experiencing. We'll hear Jim Wallis lead worship every morning. Wallis is the founder and editor of *Sojourners*, and a member of that challenging community in Washington, DC that makes work with the poor part of Christian discipleship. A morning lecture is given each weekday in a 5,000 seat amphitheater. Among the people we'll hear in our weeks away are Elie Wiesel, a Nobel Laureate and survivor of Auschwitz; and E. J. Dionne, a columnist for *The Washington Post* whose op-ed pieces appear in our local Gazette. The themes for the two weeks of our stay this year are “The Ethics of Capitalism,” and “What Makes Us Moral: An Abrahamic Perspective.”

But its not all about the mind. Every evening is about the arts. We'll hear a very fine symphony orchestra multiple times with guest pianists, trumpeters, and flutists. We'll hear Gordon Lightfoot in concert, and a comedy show entitled “Donny Clay Will Show You the Way!” Donny Clay, a motivational speaker, is really Jason Alexander who played George Costanza on *Seinfeld*.

And we'll walk, relax, and read. Jan will sing each day with the auditioned Motet Choir and I'm going to take a drawing class. Talk to me when I get back. I've got pictures of Chautauqua on the computer on my desk. I'd be happy to show them to you. See you in August!



**Thank You
From The
Congregation**



Since we published the last issue of *The Messenger* we received the following thank you notes and letters. They are posted on the tack strip outside of Pastor Craig's office. Read and enjoy them there for yourselves.

- From Margaret Schermerhorn thanking Pastor Craig for visits and the church for flowers that were delivered.
- From Amanda and Bill Faulkner thanking the Prayer Shawl ministry for shawls for Amanda and newborn Micah.
- From Val Morehouse thanking Pastors Jan and Craig and Bob Atwood and Al Carter for their visits and cards during Frank Ostrander's illness. She also thanks everyone for the cards and sympathy about Frank's death.
- From Dot Brooks and Family thanking everyone for their cards and prayers during Ed's hospitalization. He will be deeply missed.

**Here Are
Milestones
In The Lives
Of Our
Congregation**

Here are some milestones in the lives of people in our congregation.

Congratulations:

- To Jessica DeBrita and Steve Goodspeed who were married in our sanctuary on July 11.
- To David White whose artwork is being displayed in the 74th juried Cooperstown Art Association's National Exhibition, July 17 to August 28, in Cooperstown, NY.

We express our sympathy to:

- To the family and friends of Frank Ostrander who died on July 10.
- To Dot Brooks and her family and friends on the death of her husband Ed who died July 16.
- To Eileene Fordham and her family and friends on the death of her husband Ron who died on July 17. We will celebrate Ron's life on Saturday afternoon, August 15 in the sanctuary. Watch for further details.

**Attendance
Reported**

We report our monthly worship attendance to encourage you to faithfully gather on the Lord's Day, and invite others to join you.

	<u>2009</u>	<u>2008</u>
July week #1	148	143
July week #2	141	156
July week #3	178	153
July week #4	137	119
July Average	151	143
YTD Average	226	235

**Family
Finances
Reported**

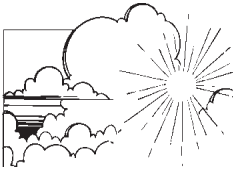
Each month we report our giving. Here's how we gave in June.

<u>GIVING</u>	<u>2009</u>	<u>2008</u>	<u>Change</u>	<u>% Change</u>
July	\$17,941	\$23,936	(\$5,995)	25%
Total for the Year	\$175,828	\$174,627	\$1,201	less than 1%

**Donate
Flowers From
Your Garden**

This year our Worship Council invites all you gardeners among us to place arrangements of fresh flowers from your gardens in the sanctuary on the Sundays of August in time for our 10:00 worship. (Our 8:00 worship is outdoors) Please call Kathie in the church office to arrange for a date. We need to know by Monday of the week you will be donating so that the standing order with our florist can be cancelled in a timely way.

Church Looking Into Solar Energy



Your consistory has identified three goals that we want to pursue in our congregation:

- Encourage hands-on missions as part of our response to Christ
- Encourage each of us to go deeper into the spiritual life as disciples of Christ
- Become a greener congregation

Pursuant to the last goal, become a greener congregation, your consistory asked a local firm, Adirondack Solar, to make a presentation about the possibility of reducing our electricity usage by installing a photo-voltaic system at our church. The people from the firm made a presentation on Monday evening, July 13. As a result the consistory acted to form a committee to investigate this matter further. Furthermore, they acted to open this committee to interested members of the congregation. If you are interested in actively investigating the installation of a photovoltaic electrical generating system for the church, please contact Pastor Craig Hoffman, 370-4751.

Front Steps Will Be Replaced

The stone steps in front of our sanctuary have deteriorated significantly since they were first built nearly 60 years ago. Salt for melting ice and the freeze-thaw cycles of upstate New York winters have damaged them beyond repair. They need to be replaced, and later this month they will be. Your consistory has entered into a contract with the Quay Construction Company to remove and replace them with new reinforced concrete steps, colored to match the existing limestone foundation. The approximate cost for these repairs will be about \$14,000. These funds will be available from our Building Fund. (Read about the Building Fund in the Dutch Fair article found elsewhere in this month's issue of *The Messenger*.)

Church Picnic To Be Held At Railroad Club

Save Sunday, August 2 for an after-church picnic on the grounds of the Adirondack Live Steamers in Wilton, New York. The Adirondack Live Steamers is a club of hobbyists that build and operate fully-functioning scale model steam and diesel electric locomotives. These trains are not like what you see in people's basements. They are large enough to sit and ride on, and there is more than a mile of track winding through forested land, over trestles, and through tunnels.

We'll pass out driving directions after worship on August 2, and also arrange carpools. It's a 45-minute drive to the ALS site. Or you can pick directions up from the church office. There are picnic tables on the grounds. Bring your own table service and a picnic dish to share. We'll plan to eat at 12:30.

Mark your calendars and join others in your church family for our Sunday, August 2 Church Picnic.

Ice Cream Social & Brass Quintet Planned

Our Congregational Care Council has planned an ice cream social for Sunday, August 23, at 7:00 on the plaza in front of the church. Come hear *The Route Fifty 5*: a brass quintet. They will entertain us while we enjoy ice cream sundaes. The members of the quintet are Judson Hoffman and Ben Edwards, trumpets; Ryan Pangburn, trombone; Kara Pangburn, French horn; and Barret Germain, tuba. They play a variety of styles of music, from popular to upbeat classical. Bring your friends and neighbors.

Canning Club Meets Again

Our church has launched a new group called "The Canning Club." They have already gathered once in our church kitchen to make strawberry jam. Two more sessions are planned for this year's growing season.

- Saturday, August 23 we'll can stewed tomatoes.
- Saturday, September 27 we'll put up applesauce.

Amanda and Bill Faulkner are coordinating the supply lists. Please sign up on the bulletin board outside Pastor Craig's office. Bill and Amanda will provide you with a list of supplies that you need to bring. All are welcome at any time for any session; no two groups are the same. We meet in the church kitchen at 9:00 on Saturday morning.

Food Pantry Needs For August

Every week in the bulletin we publish the food most needed by the Schenectady Inner City Ministry Food Pantry. Below are the items needed in August. Please place your donations in the container in the narthex or in the one outside Brink Hall. What a great offering we would give if **everyone** brought the weekly item!

We have received a note from the director of the program, Gail VanValkenburgh, who asks that we include dry mixes, tuna helper, potato dishes and noodle mixes in our summer donations. Children are out of school and are eating more food at home during the summer months. The food program always needs baby formula (Enfamil w/iron) and cash donations.

There is **always** a big need for brown paper bags as well as monetary donations. Donations are used to purchase milk certificates and other items available at the Regional Food Bank for just 16 cents a pound. Make out your check to the First Reformed Church of Scotia and put "SICM Food Pantry" on the memo line.

- August 2: Peanut Butter
- August 9: Dry Mixes – potato/noodle
- August 16: Canned Meat
- August 23: Canned Pasta
- August 30: Macaroni & Cheese

Book Group Lists Fall Selections

Join other readers in your church family at 7:15 on the third Tuesday of the month (except for a summer recess) for a discussion of a good book, and what that book may show us about our faith or about the world in which we live out our faith. There is no need to sign up. Just get the book, read it, and join in. Here's the schedule:

- Read a good book this summer while our Book Group is on recess.
- Tuesday, September 15: Jan Hoffman and Sunny Baldwin lead a discussion of *Hunting for Hope*, by Scott Russell Sanders – the book that was the basis for this summer's Camp Fowler theme. This is the story about a father and his son who go on a hike to try to restore their relationship. Christians are called to be people of hope. How do we remain caring and hopeful to our youth?
- Tuesday, October 20: Carolyn Norris leads a discussion of *Traveling Mercies*, by Anne Lamott – the story of her coming to faith. This book will tie in well with our pastors' fall preaching themes of Voices of Faith.

CRTC Offers Course On Islam & Religions Overview

Last month's Pastor's Letter focused on The Bible and the Qur'an. Following up on that letter, we want you to take opportunities to find out more about Islam.

To learn more about Islam, you can take a course at the Capital Region Theological Center (CRTC). On Saturday morning, October 31, from 9:00 to noon there is an opportunity to learn from one of the area's religious leaders, take a tour of a mosque, and have dialogue with a Muslim leader in our community. The cost is \$45.

There is also a World Religions Overview offered that same day, Saturday, October 31, from 12:30 – 5:00. Brother Linh Hoang, OFM, PhD and professor at Siena College, will help you gain an understanding of our neighbors and the world with this comprehensive overview. The cost is \$50 if you register by October 2; otherwise the cost is \$60.

For more information or to register, go to the CRTC website, www.capitalrtc.org or see the flyer posted on the bulletin board outside Pastor Craig's office. Notice the variety of courses offered. The CRTC is for everyone, not just ministers or church leaders.



Helpers Needed To Get Ready For Fowler

We need Christian Ed Helpers on the Monday evenings of August to help us prepare for our week at Fowler and for the start of Sunday School. There's something that a person of any age, 4 to 100, can help with. We need to cut fabric, sharpen pencils, gather supplies, wash nursery toys, and tend to other odds and ends.

We'll be here every Monday evening in August from 6:45 to 8:15, except August 17 when we'll be at Camp Fowler. Come on over for all or part of the time. We'd love to see you!!

Adopt Fowler Staff For Scotia Week

We've had many people involved at Camp Fowler this summer, "Hunting for Hope." Take a look at the Fowler Friends bulletin board outside Pastor Jan's office. At least 30 of our youth attend as campers, and we have provided many volunteer workers and counselors as well as full-time staff. It is a joy to hear stories of our campers and their families, for camp is an adventure in growing our faith, no matter our age, no matter the weather! Take a card from the bulletin board and mail it to a camper or staff member. They have to kiss the moose if they receive 3 pieces of mail while at camp!



Pastor Jan and Sunny Baldwin will lead another "Scotia Week" at Fowler, Aug. 16-22 for youth who have finished 3rd, 4th, 5th and 6th grades. By working together for a week at Fowler our congregation makes a significant impact on the lives of the more than 100 kids who attend camp that week.

You can be part of that week, even if you're not going to camp. Help support the staff as we adopt them for the week, August 16-22, and give healthy and not-so-healthy treats. Bring your contribution to the box outside the church office. Some ideas are: canned soda and seltzer, cookies, single-serving snacks, phone cards, and light-hearted fun things. Lynn Makrin is coordinating the project and will deliver the goods to camp. Call her for more information, 280-6444.

Thank you to all those who volunteer and make our camp the great place that it is.

Sunday School Begins Sept. 13

The Sunday School portion of our Christian Education program begins on Sunday, September 13 after our summer recess. We offer Sunday school classes for students age 4 through senior high each week. These learners leave the sanctuary at 10:30 for their own time of learning Christ's way. Classes end at 11:15. We divide our Sunday School year into three terms. We are recruiting teachers for the fall semester. If you are interested in teaching, please call our Coordinator for Christian Living, Sunny Baldwin at home, 374-9276, or at church, 370-4751.

Sunday School for 4-year-olds through 3rd graders uses a method of Christian Education called Children in Worship. This method helps our youngest disciples learn and engage our rich heritage of Bible stories. It also helps them appreciate worship and the sacraments.

The rest of our Sunday School classes use the *Seasons of the Spirit* curriculum published by an international and ecumenical team. *Seasons of the Spirit* uses art and music as well as group activities to teach and illuminate. It is a lectionary-based curriculum which means that Sunday School classes use the same lessons that are likely part of worship that day. This creates an opportunity for several generations in a family to talk about Sunday's lessons together later that day or week.

Table Talk is a time of adult study that meets from 11:30 to 12:15 in the Lakehill Room, following worship. Table Talk will resume on Sunday, October 4. It will be led by Pastor Craig Hoffman and will go into more depth on the people the pastors are preaching on this fall in their spiritual autobiographies sermon series, Voices of Faith. Everyone is welcome.

Greeters Needed For Children's Worship Center

Our Fall Christian Education staffing is nearly complete, but we are looking for a few more people to round out our teams. We especially need Greeters for the Children & Worship Center. A Greeter does not need to prepare any lessons, but must be willing to sit beside the children and help them listen during the Bible stories. It's a wonderful way to hear the Bible stories yourself in a new way.

Being a teacher or greeter is an opportunity to pass our faith along. Please contact Coordinator of Christian Living, Sunny Baldwin, or Pastor Jan Hoffman if you would like more information or to volunteer.

Joan Nicole Prince House Holding Fundraiser

The Joan Nicole Prince home is a community home for the dying, located right here in Scotia. The home has cared for 45 terminally ill patients free of charge. The home is temporarily closed for lack of funding, but there's a fundraiser scheduled for Friday afternoon and evening, August 7, from 5:00 – 8:00. The fundraiser is called *Art for the Home*. Tickets are \$25 per person. Get them at the door, or online at www.artofdavid.com or www.joannicoleprincehome.org. A special offering of original oil paintings by noted local artist, David Arsenaault will be available. The event will be held at the Mohawk Golf Club, 1849 Union Street in Schenectady. See the flyers posted on bulletin boards.

Youth Groups Begin September 13

We have two youth groups in our church this program year: one for 4th and 5th grade youth, and one that combines Middle School and High School youth. Both groups will meet for the first time on Sunday, September 13, to get ready for the church's Dutch Fair, when we manage the Kiddie Fair. Our younger-aged youth (FROGS) meet on the first and third Sundays of every month. Parents take responsibility for events. Sign up on the sheet on the Youth Bulletin Board.

Nursery Needs Volunteers

Nursery for infants up to four years old will be held during our 10:00 worship services in the Nursery Room beginning Sunday, September 13. Will you sign up for September or October? Call Coordinator of Christian Living Sunny Baldwin, 374-9276, or Pastor Jan Hoffman, 370-4751.

The Nursery is often the first place new-comers visit. Please help us make sure people are welcome there.

Parents: To help make sure we know everything we need to know to keep your child safe, we'll ask you to fill out a registration card before leaving your child in the nursery.

Explore Spirituality Thru Discipleship Project

During the summer there are still great opportunities to explore our spirituality. The Discipleship Project Bulletin Board outside the pastors' studies can help you find them. The cards are on the Discipleship Project Bulletin Board can motivate and guide you. Here are a few ideas you'll find there:

- Do a "Wild Card" activity: Read a Christian focus book, visit a labyrinth, or find a retreat. You name it. Just write it on the back of "Wild Card" and put in the "credit earned" envelope.
- Spend time at Camp Fowler. There are services every Sunday morning at 10:30 that you are welcome to attend. Brunch is served afterwards, for a small contribution. Or you can spend a week at Camp Fowler. What better way to "Hunt for Hope!"
- Try out the Church Sampler. Visit 3 different churches while you're away on vacation.
- If you can't get to a Sunday service, check out the Boght Art Center, 583 Boght Road, Cohoes, NY 12047 (phone 518-785-ARTS or see their website, <http://boghtarts.org>) for weekday worship. Other churches also offer weekday services that you might want to try.

If you have ideas for the fall, please speak to Sunny Baldwin, CCL. We'd love to hear your ideas.



Communion Next Served On August 2

We next celebrate the Lord's Supper on Sunday, August 2. The Communion Thanksgiving offering received that morning will be given to our Deacons' Fund. The Deacons' Fund is used by the Pastors or the Board of Deacons for local needs or emergencies. We recently used Deacon Fund money for tickets for special needs children to attend the Shriners Circus; and for Amvets, a local organization that helps veterans, providing transportation to appointments as well as needed toiletries and clothing. At the end of the year, we distribute any funds over \$1,500 to local missions.

Designate your Communion Thanksgiving Offering either by using the special envelope in your box of offering envelopes, or by using the special offering envelopes available that Sunday morning in the pews.

Join Us In Making Music



Music is one of the joys of our Church. We are blessed with such gifted people who lead our choirs and instrumental ensembles. Our music program begins in September after a summer recess. In it there are opportunities for you to enjoy music with others and support our worship of God. There's a place for you. All of our choirs and ensembles are open to members and non-members alike.

- Our **Sanctuary Choir** is for high school, college and adult singers. You do not need to read music to join the choir, for anthems are rehearsed far enough in advance so even non-readers have time to learn them. The Sanctuary Choir rehearses in the sanctuary on Thursday evenings at 7:30 beginning September 10. Rebecca Shepherd is the director. Call Rebecca at 393-9862 to find out more.
- The **Youth Music Group** is for youth, 4th grade on up. The Youth Music Group rehearses Sunday mornings from 11:15 to 11:45 in the Rainbow Room, Room 15, right after Sunday School starting September 20. The Youth Music Group will learn and prepare music to support our worship, and will also learn handbell skills. The Youth Music Group will be led by John Hoffman and Tee Munson. Call John, 727-2626, or Tee, 895-9097, to find out more.
- Our **Cherub Choir** program for children, K through 3rd grade is expanded this year. This year children and young people in our Cherub Choir may also ring our choir chimes and play our Orff instruments. The Cherub Choir rehearses Sunday mornings from 11:15 to 11:45 in Room 8 right after Sunday School starting September 20. Diana Ackner and Judson Hoffman are the directors. Call Diana, 381-1695, for more information.
- Our **Te Deum Bell Choir** for high school ringers rehearses Sunday mornings before worship from 9:00 to 9:40 in the Bell Room beginning September 20. John Hoffman is the director. Call John at 727-2626 to find out more.
- Our **Morning Bell Choir** for adult ringers rehearses Thursday mornings from 9:00 to 9:45 in the Bell Room beginning September 17. This group reaches out to local nursing homes, and is especially suited for new ringers. Terry Paulson is this bell choir's director. Call Terry at 374-0004 to find out more.

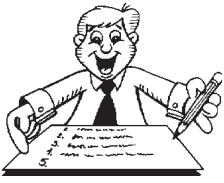
MOM For August Is City Mission

Our Mission of the Month for August is Schenectady City Mission, 425 Hamilton Street. City Mission serves our city and county in a variety of ways, providing emergency shelter for the homeless, serving meals, providing shelter, education and clothes for mothers and children, and offering clothes and household needs at thrift stores. Go to <<http://www.citymission.com>> for more information.

Give to our Mission of the Month by using August's yellow envelope in your box of offering envelopes. Some of you may be able to have your gift to City Mission matched by your employer or your former employer if you're retired. If so, be sure to follow your employer's requirements for matching funds.

Volunteers Still Needed For Dutch Fair

We're looking forward to our 61st annual Dutch Fair on Saturday, September 19. For more than 60 years our Dutch Fair has enabled us to invite our community onto our campus, serve many by providing a way to get inexpensive clothing and household goods, and also to raise money to help maintain and improve our facilities.



Our first Dutch Fair was held in 1949 because our sanctuary on Church Street had burned to the ground several years before, and we needed money to build a new one. That need for a sacred place set aside for worship gave rise to the idea of a Dutch Fair. Ever since then our Dutch Fair has helped provide goods and a good time for people in our community, as well as provide funds to maintain and improve our church's buildings. Still today, all the money raised at our Dutch Fair goes into our Building Fund, which provides funds for major maintenance and capital improvements.

The Dutch Fair is a full day of activity and a major service project for our congregation. In addition to the clothing and house wares that many have come to rely upon, we offer baby furniture and toys, a Christmas shop, delicious home-baked goods, used books, used jewelry, house and garden plants, crafts, a silent auction, fast food, cider and donuts, and an evening meal.

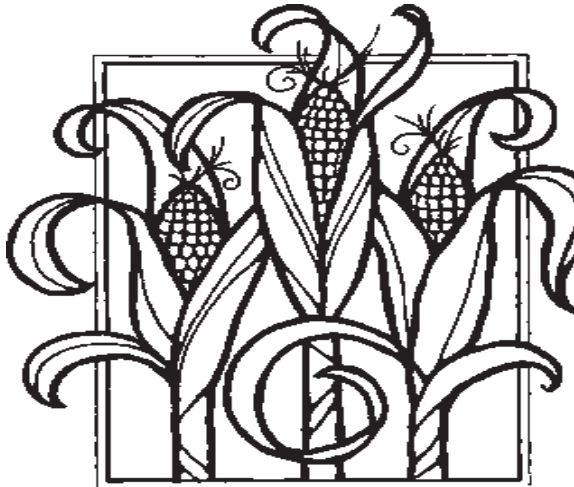
Saturday, September 19 is an important day for our church. Its success depends on each of us. If you haven't already stepped forward to volunteer, won't you do so now? We need help setting up on the Friday evening before, help breaking down Saturday afternoon, help setting up and serving dinner, and volunteers to help in a lot of our booths. Volunteering not only helps your congregation, it also gives you an opportunity to work with others in your church and build relationships with them.

It's easy to find out just the right task for you. Just call any of our three Dutch Fair Chairpeople, Lee Poremba , 381-9609; Richard Doyle, 399-6135; or John Lehman, 355-53010. They are anxious to hear from you.

Please note the following items from our booth chairs.

- Silent Auction items are needed. Please only donate usable items that have a sale value of at least \$20. Hand crafted items and cash donations to purchase auction items will be gladly accepted. Call Vida Durnford at 399-2022.
- Plants are needed for the Plant Booth. Dried items such as bittersweet and Japanese lanterns are also needed. Call Carol Arnold at 393-4968 with questions.
- Please note that Books **does not** want encyclopedias, magazines or Readers Digest Condensed Books. Books should now be brought to the church, not the Green Shed.
- We **do not** want computer equipment. It does not sell!

September Anniversaries



Steve and Kathie Balsler	4
Michael and Mary Jane Crowley	5
Frank and Jeanne Plemenik	7
Don and MaryLou Erdman	10
Mike and Patty Marré	20
Walter and Nancy Pfuntner	24
Jordan and Jenna White	24
Ed and Linda Naumowicz	26
Sky and Dot Stewart	27
Brian and Jennifer Westervelt	27
Bill and Amanda Faulkner	28
Stan and Betty Beran	29

September Birthdays

Vida Durnford	1	Ruth Beck	18
Pat McConnelee	1	Marion Keohan	20
Sarah Schermerhorn	3	David Schalekamp	20
Quinn Antonakakis	3	Donald Crawford	21
Kevin Wentworth	5	Gordon Durnford	21
Kristen Faubion	7	Carolyn Habiniak	21
Marian Gilgore	7	Karen Trbovich	21
Joshua Rosenberg	8	Bill Faubion	22
Brian Schaefer	8	Amy Hoskinson	23
Lucille Wassmansdorf	8	Karen Wentworth	23
Ron Willis	8	John Pierce Jr.	24
Kevin Oaks	9	Margo Snyder	24
Ken Benedetto	11	Joanna Clark	25
Doug Shaw	11	Trudi Thun Ertel	25
Phyllis Bornt	14	Cheryl Miller	25
Fran Landry	14	Kurt Ahnert	26
Debbie Rosemarino	14	Allison Atchley	26
Dave Walsh	16	Frank Skofstad	26
Andrew Oaks	17	J.D. George	29
George Squires, Jr.	17	Michaela Salamone	30
John Ackner	18		

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