

ECOC News

Ecumenical Community of Chautauqua

Spring
2015

Volume 9 Issue 1

A community of religious inclusion and compassion, providing hospitality and affordable accommodations, promoting dialogue, fellowship and growth.

Message from the Board

Ed Hann, President, Board of Directors



He had just retired as Superintendent of a rapidly-growing school district where he had overseen the construction of several new school

buildings. Thus he seemed ideal to elect in the church I was pastoring to chair the group responsible for our facilities. Until the morning he got up before the congregation and announced, "We have scheduled a clean-up day and I expect all of you to show up on time so I can give you the jobs you will carry out!" After wincing, I set a meeting with him to talk about the difference between an organization of employees and a community of volunteers.

Most of you know that difference, don't you? Whatever your profession or family obligations, you have also given of your time and talents to communities of faith, local boards and agencies, arts councils, school groups and many other voluntary services. These may not pay much, if anything, but they provide immense value to our lives.

Which may be why you come to the Ecumenical Community of Chautauqua. From its beginning as the Ministers' Union, this organization has been rooted in the willingness of one family and then many to offer themselves voluntarily to serve those who seek

our ministry. Oh, we now have some Staff members but the excellent work throughout the year of our Registrar and Managers and the summer service of our Hosts and Hostesses are grounded in their deeper willingness to give of themselves voluntarily to this service. And it is a true blessing for me to lead a Board of Directors, all of whom are volunteers, and who, with an Advisory Committee, a Capital Campaign team, other committee members and even those who have produced this Newsletter you are now reading, have given themselves freely to serve you.

Even your presence this coming summer is based on your willingness to serve others voluntarily. Yes, you have paid your fees but there are very few other accommodations in Chautauqua who ask their "customers" to wash their own dishes, tidy up their dinner tables and clean their own rooms before departing! It is this sense of voluntary service which truly makes us a "community."

And allows me to ask even more of you. While we each do our part to maintain our buildings during the Season, there is a great deal of work that must be done to move them from winter time rest to summer time fullness. Most of that work must be done by volunteers, by persons who care just like you. Please take note of the rapidly-approaching dates for Work Days mentioned in this Newsletter and choose when you can give of yourselves as volunteers to

ECOC. I won't tell you "to show up on time so I can give you jobs to carry out" but I do invite you to share in this special experience of community.

Then, within whatever weeks you attend as "guests," volunteer your names to me and to the others who will be part of this wonderful community with you. And may the God who voluntarily gave us Life and Creation and Chautauqua and the ECOC bless you, freely and abundantly! ■

New Mobile Site

Bob Tupaj, ECOC Webmaster

If you received a smart phone recently or just enjoy browsing the web on your favorite mobile device we have good news—the ECOC mobile site is now live! The mobile site features content from the ECOC website that is formatted for smart phones plus other handheld devices connected to the Internet. The site includes information on accommodations, map and directions to the Chautauqua Institution, a link to our Facebook page, plus more. In order to connect to the mobile site, go to <http://www.ecoc-chautauqua.org/mobile.html>. Feel free to send your comments or suggestions to me at rdtupaj@netzero.net. ■

Managers' Report



Nels and Lois Sandberg, Marge and Ed Johnston

Hello, ECOC guests and friends. We hope you all had a good off-season, and those of you affected by the harsh winter successfully survived it.

We've had a lot of activity at the ECOC this winter, especially improvements to the facilities. Be sure to read the property committee report for more details. The four of us met at the ECOC on April 20 to meet with our contractor, carpet installer, and electrician. The new connection of the Shaw and Bird-Werner third floors looks really great.

The Chautauqua amphitheater had a major problem this winter—a beam failed due to heavy snow on the

roof. The beam was on the ECOC side near the entrance to the seating behind the stage. There were about eight temporary posts reinforcing the roof on the ECOC

side, waiting for a permanent fix.

We have a great group of hosts and hostesses again this season.

Shaw building: Paul & Kathleen Kett, Don & Linda Burgard, and Jack & Mary Knepp.

Bird-Werner building: Tom & Jeannie Kerns, Mike & Michele Montford, and Carl & Sandy Williams.

Westervelt building: Craig Dolbeer & Deborah Hall, John & Kathy Woods, Mike & Carol Heinsdorf, Craig & Jan Hoffman, Carl & Sandy Williams, and David Bagshaw & Diane Mann.

We welcome new hosts John and Kathy Woods (with children Olivia and

Victoria), and Craig and Jan Hoffman. The Woods family have been perennial work week volunteers. Jan Hoffman just completed serving a 5-year term on the ECOC board last year, and Craig and Jan are retiring this June from a 21-year shared ministry at First Reformed Church of Scotia, New York. You can read more about these hosts on page 4 of the newsletter.

Registrar E. Carol Maxwell has completed our registrations and we are at this point almost full. E. Carol is retiring this June as Executive Assistant of the North East Ohio Network, completing a 32+ year career in disability and children services. This will allow her to be with us as full time registrar this summer.

Our first work week is from Thursday May 28 to Monday June 1. We encourage you to join us for some work and fun together. We have jobs for all skill levels—all necessary to allow us to have a successful opening. Bottom line, our volunteers help us keep room costs down, for both professional cleaners and carpenters. Because of the importance of volunteer help, we offer priority for room registrations to these special people for the next season.

We will again welcome the Shaw family for their valuable work time and reunion the first week of June. Other work times are June 20 to 26, August 31 to September 3, and September 8 to 10. If you haven't signed up to volunteer when you sent in your registration, email us at ecocmanagers@gmail.com.

In closing let us say how honored we are to be managers of the ECOC, and how proud we are to be part of an organization with its mission. We very much look forward to seeing all of you who volunteer and/or stay with us this summer.

Sincerely,

Ed, Marge, Nels, and Lois ■

From the Registrar

E. Carol Maxwell



ECOC Friends,
Happy Spring!!

With a total of 450 lodging opportunities for 2015, we are 94% full for the 2015 nine-week summer season!

By the way, it's not too late to make a reservation! There are still rooms available Weeks 1, 7 and 9 (but there are wait lists for Weeks 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 and 8). If you are interested in reserving a room, send a request to me at

ecoregistrar@gmail.com.

Twenty-one new guest families will join us this summer. A family of six from Hollidaysburg, Pennsylvania, is the lucky recipient of the Ministers' Union Scholarship, and will be joining us Week 1.

We look forward to everyone's arrival this summer. Please REMEMBER, the new **CHECK-IN TIME** on Saturdays begins at **2:30 pm!** See you soon!

E. Carol, Registrar ■

Property Improvements

Pastor David Matthews and Jeff Vreeland, Co-chairs, Property Committee

We all can be forgiven a touch of pride at the continuing property improvements that are being made at ECOC.

Property upgrades at ECOC fall into two major categories:

I. "Securing the Future" Campaign

This is our current ongoing Capital Campaign. The Board of Directors approved this for the years 2014, 2015 and 2016. The generosity of our friends and ECOC family continues to be a great blessing. As the funds are received, as weather allows and as legal permits are obtained, the plan continues to unfold. The primary focus of the Campaign is safety. A new fire escape egress route from the third floor of the Shaw into the Bird-Werner with a direct route to the fire stairs is now complete. On the Shaw third floor two rooms have been made larger and a second bath has been added.

Included in the plan is the addition of a new outside fire escape to the north (Medical Building) side of the Bird-Werner, the removal of the old wooden fire stairs on the porch, and widening the Bird-Werner porch. Electrical lines will be removed from this side of the building and will be placed underground. This will allow the eventual removal of the current internal stairs in the Bird-Werner and the creation of additional bath facilities.

We are blessed to have the expertise and commitment of Jeff Vreeland, a Board Member, who is directing our current building projects. This is the third Capital Campaign over the last ten years. Previous campaigns saw major renovations in our kitchens and our new fire stairwell and elevator (dedicated to Ed and Marge Johnston). Please continue your support of this worthwhile campaign and thank you for your support up to this point.

Contributions can be made to ECOC with a note "Securing the Fu-

ture." Mail to: ECOC, c/o Robert P. Boell, 412 Arlington, Media, PA 19063-6006. (*During Season the contribution can be mailed or personally delivered to ECOC.*)

II. Ongoing Building Improvements

These improvements are funded from the Annual Budget, and supported by upkeep gifts, hospitality gifts, room rents, bequests and other gifts. They go on year after year under the direction of our amazing managers, Nels and Lois Sandberg and Ed and Marge Johnston. What would we do without them! They direct the ongoing work of contractors and volunteers and do much of the hands-on work themselves. There is continuous upgrading of rooms, carpets, paint, plumbing and electrical services.

Currently new carpeting is being replaced in all rooms, hallways, and stairways of the second and third floors of the Shaw. Exit signs and emergency lighting is being upgraded. LED lights will be added. The list goes on.

Speaking of "property,"—what would we do without our dedicated volunteers? There are at least a million things that have to be done just before the season begins and at the end of the season. That is not too much of an exaggeration! This year the need for volunteers to get things ready for the season will be extra demanding as we also need help with clean-up and other items related to the remodeling. Any hours or days you can volunteer are much appreciated. For those who volunteer at least eight hours our appreciation extends to placing you in a priority category for your 2016 room reservation. See the Manager's Report in this newsletter for more information about Work Week dates and how to sign up.

Thanks again to all of you, our Family at ECOC, for your generosity of hospitality, friendship, funds and volunteer hours. ■

Securing the Future

Bill Brockman and Bob Boell, Capital Campaign Committee Co-chairs

Many ECOC guests responded heartily to the "Securing the Future" capital fund campaign which began January 1, 2014, and continues through December 31, 2016. Some made pledges to be paid out over the three years. Others made one-time gifts. In the article to the left, you will read of the improvements already begun.

Early this year the Development Committee sent 800-plus letters to the ECOC community, guests current and past, seeking additional support from those who made one-time gifts in 2014, and support from those who had not yet made a gift or pledge. Responses to that mailing are now coming in. The Committee on behalf of all ECOC guests is grateful. It is important to continue our mission of providing affordable housing and unmatched community living.

As of this newsletter mailing, gifts and pledges total \$267,367.43. Updates are regularly posted on the web site: www.ecoc-chautauqua.org/

The Fall newsletter listed those for whom gifts/pledges were given in memory or honor of. The latest additions to that list are: **In Memory of:** Helene Werner (former Manager), Winifred Barnes; **In Honor of:** Bob & Jean Boell, Sue Brunner, Jack & Pat Westwood (who made a gift in an amount totaling their combined ages), Rev. Heather Elkins, Don & Joann Brower, and Carolyn Volk's 85th birthday. ■

2015 Work Weeks *We Need You!*

SPRING (any time during this period)
May 28—June 1 and June 20—26
FALL (any time during this period)
Aug. 31—Sept. 3 and Sept. 8—10

Ecumenical Community of Chautauqua

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716-357-3814 (Summer)
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ECOC Calendar

May 28 to June 1 & June 20 to 26	Spring Work Weeks (anytime during period)
June 24	Spring Board meeting
June 27	Season begins
August 30	Season ends
August 31	Annual Board meeting
Aug. 31 to Sept. 3 & Sept. 8 to 10	Fall Work Weeks (anytime during period)

Meet Our New Hosts

Jan & Craig Hoffman



The Hoffmans live in Scotia, New York, just west of Schenectady, and have two grown sons and a golden retriever. They served

together as pastors of the First Reformed Church of Scotia for over 21 years, and will retire the end of this June.

They first came to the Chautauqua Institution about 35 years ago. As part of their call as ministers, they were given one week in time and salary for continuing education, so were able to come to Chautauqua about every three years or so.

Jan was a member of the Board of the ECOC, and just finished her five-year term in 2014. She enjoys singing with the Motet Choir, and Craig likes to take drawing classes. They both love the daily routine of worship, lectures, walks, reading on the porch, and the evening entertainment.

Kathy & John Woods



The Woods family first came to the ECOC ten years ago, when they received a Family Scholarship from Chautauqua Institution, and they chose the ECOC because of the price. It was a great experience, especially for their two daughters. They have participated in numerous Work Weeks, and say they really appreciate "the sense of community and value the ECOC brings to Chautauqua as the low-cost housing option."

The family lives in Warren, Ohio, where John is an insurance agent, specializing in health insurance, and Kathy is a work-at-home mom. They volunteer at their church and at their daughter's school. Daughter Olivia just graduated from high school, while Victoria will be a junior. John says he enjoys his daughters, reading, golf and skiing, and Kathy enjoys her family and travel.

The Ecumenical Community of Chautauqua Newsletter is published twice a year, in spring and fall, and mailed to interested guests. It is also available on the ECOC web site: www.ecoc-chautauqua.org.

Editor and layout: Marcella Klein

To submit articles or photos, or notify us of an address change, email mklein5@rochester.rr.com

The Ecumenical Community of Chautauqua (ECOC), a not-for-profit corporation with a 501(c)(3) designation, was founded in 2003 to provide low-cost housing for clergy, religious workers and lay people of all faiths.

The Ministers' Union (MU) was founded in 1929 to provide low-cost housing to clergy, clergy families and religious workers attending Chautauqua Institution.

The MU and ECOC share many values, but are separate corporations with separate boards of directors.