

# ECUMENICAL COMMUNITY OF CHAUTAUQUA



NEWSLETTER

Fall 2019

Volume 13, Issue 2



## Make Love Your Aim

*Rev. Nathan Day Wilson, ECOC Board President*

I remember when I realized that “cogito, ergo sum”—that is, “I think, therefore I am”—was less important than “amo, ergo sum”—that is, “I love, therefore I am.”

A student at the Ecumenical Graduate Institute in Switzerland, I was nominated by my 51 classmates from 32 different countries to preach at a worship we were to lead at the Ecumenical Centre. The worship leader was a woman from Rwanda named Mary. Mary was a physician educated and trained by the Red Cross. We developed a close friendship working together on this worship, the focus of which was reconciliation.

I put considerable thought into the issue of reconciliation. I interrogated the Bible. I investigated times when restitution necessarily accompanied reconciliation. I inspected the nuances that led some to seek retribution and reject reconciliation.

When Mary and I met, I told her what I learned. She listened politely. We found points of agreement and difference, and then Mary asked, quietly, if she could share something with me.

During the Rwandan Civil War, two of Mary’s children, her husband, both parents, and two siblings were killed by the opposing tribe. But since Mary was a physician sanctioned by the Red Cross, she had to provide care for any injured person even when she knew they were from the

tribe that murdered her family.

She said, “Nathan, I had to trust God’s reconciling power. I had to give God’s love all the room in my heart, and save nothing for hate. I had to. Otherwise, I could not live with myself.”

That’s when I realized that it’s not thinking that gives us meaning, it is loving.

Don’t get me wrong. I’m all for rigorous thinking. In fact, I posit that love liberates and never limits it.

But as 1 Corinthians suggests, “If I can fathom all mysteries and have all knowledge but do not have love, it profits me nothing.”

That’s why I’m glad to be part of the ECOC. We, at our better times, model this kind of inclusive, welcoming love. It’s not just because we are nice. It’s who we are. Even more, it reflects whose we are.

In a time so divided by allegiance to false gods such as money and power, by acts of lovelessness and hatred, and by lines drawn between people according to worldly standards, our witness to God’s intended wholeness is needed now more than ever!

“Make love your aim.” Indeed.

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*Wilson is president of the ECOC Board of Directors. Follow him on Twitter: @nathandaywilson. Email him at [ecocnathanwilson@gmail.com](mailto:ecocnathanwilson@gmail.com). ■*



# Managers' Report

*Kathy and John Woods*

The season ended in early September this year. The ECOC stayed open for an extra long weekend as we rented several rooms to one of our longtime guests for a family wedding.

With the help of a few dedicated volunteers we packed everything away to be ready for the winter. Our water is being shut off and the winter curtains for the porches are being put up.

We have a list of projects for next year that we have been getting estimates for, including carpeting and flooring in some of the bathrooms.

We have made a few trips to the buildings this fall to do some work and check on things. We stripped some wall-paper and did some painting. We also had a tree stump in front of the Shaw building removed. We have purchased some new sink/vanity combinations to be installed in the spring. We are attempting to replace all sinks that have separate hot/cold water spigots.

For those of you thinking of volunteering for Work Weeks in 2020, the dates are June 2 to 3, June 20 to 25, and August 30 to September 5. We wish you all a good winter season and look forward to seeing you next year. ■

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# Search Update

*Ellen Neches, Personnel Committee Chair*

The ECOC is very fortunate that Kathy and John Woods have volunteered to be managers for the entire 2020 summer season and we are very happy to take them up on their offer.

In the meantime the Personnel Committee has identified a couple that we hope to phase in for summer 2021, with some involvement during summer 2020. ■



# Registrar's Message

*E. Carol Maxwell*

The 2020 Accommodations Information Packets have been prepared and will be mailed from Chautauqua the last working day of December, 2019, to all guests who have stayed with us during the past five (5) years (2015–2019). PLEASE be sure to READ the YELLOW information sheet as there have been some changes.

If the last time you stayed with us was 2014 or earlier and you would like to receive the 2020 lodging information, select one of the following methods: 1) Email the Registrar: [ecocregistrar@gmail.com](mailto:ecocregistrar@gmail.com); 2) Call the Registrar (716) 581-3659; or 3) Beginning January 2, 2020, access the information on our website, [www.ecoc-chautauqua.org](http://www.ecoc-chautauqua.org).

Also, please let us know promptly if you have a new home address, a new email address or a new telephone and/or mobile phone number. Thank you.

Be well, enjoy the changing seasons and take care. ■



*A huge thank you goes to Lois & Nels Sandberg and Toni & Joe Goldfarb for helping E. Carol with this year's mailing. ■*

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](http://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](mailto: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 1928 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.

# Meet Your New ECOC Board Members

We introduce three new members to the ECOC Board of Directors: Debra Gentry, Rev. Wayne A. Gnatuk and Rev. David Matthews. They join board members Bob Dargel, Rev. John Dickey, Rev. John Jackson, Rev. Dr. Mary Kitchen, Ellen Neches (Secretary), Pastor Dora Odenko, Carolyn Spicer Russ, Linda Shaw, Alyson Cook Stage (Vice President and Treasurer), Rev. Nathan Day Wilson (President), and Beth Bucher Woolever. We thank retiring board members Pastor Jean Hansen, Rabbi Goldie Milgram and Michele Montford for their service.

## Debra Gentry



Debra lives in Nashville, Tennessee, and works for PYA, a public accounting company, as director of the Title Insurance Services Group.

A widow, she was married to Rev. Roger Sledd, who introduced her to Chautauqua. She has two wonderful step-daughters.

She has stayed at the ECOC since 2003 or so and currently serves on the board's Development Committee. She says about the ECOC, "The most valuable thing for me is the conversations. I have heard and participated in some of the most interesting conversations, from which I learned and grew, both in faith and in friendship."

Debra loves to read, knit and talk. Her current volunteer work is with her church.

## Wayne A. Gnatuk



A retired minister, Rev. Wayne A. Gnatuk most recently served on the Presbyterian Church (USA) national staff in Louisville. Now he is board chair

for the Kentucky Religious Coalition for Reproductive Choice and President of the Henry Clay Philatelic Society. Wayne and his wife, Carole, live in Lexington, Kentucky. His hobbies include stamp collecting, cooking, needlepoint, and reading.

Wayne began staying at the ECOC as a child, and has stayed there every year since 1985. Back in the late 1990s, he served on the ECOC board for one term.

Wayne says he values most "the ECOC's friendly community atmosphere, its inexpressiveness, and its proximity to the Amp."

## David Matthews



Rev. David Matthews is a retired Lutheran pastor (ELCA). His ministry began when he and his wife Barbara worked together in an Arab

Mission Orphanage in Lebanon. He has served as pastor in several churches in the Pittsburgh area and as the Director of Counseling Services at a church-related agency. Barbara is a retired business education teacher. The couple has two children and several grandchildren; they spend winters in Bonita Springs, Florida.

The Matthews family has been staying at ECOC since 1978. Pastor Matthews previously served two partial terms on the ECOC board. He says he is "honored to serve the mission of the ECOC, which has become close to the heart of our family." ■

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## Property Committee Hard at Work

*Bob Dargel, Property Committee*

Several building projects are planned for this winter. We plan to improve fire safety by installing smoke detectors in the Westervelt and Bird-Werner attics, installing fire-protective wallboard on the west end in the Westervelt attic, and placing Class K fire extinguishers in the kitchens.

For the comfort of our guests, we will be remodeling the Bird-Werner third floor small bathroom, putting a temperature control valve in the Bird-Werner first floor bathroom, and completing the installation of new flooring in the Bird-Werner second floor small bathroom. While these projects are relatively small this year, they are a part of our ongoing program to maintain and improve the ECOC. ■

## Many thanks...

Thanks to your generous donations to our Hospitality Fund, we were able to purchase furniture for the Bird-Werner's first and second floor porches, some luggage racks, and several new bedspreads and quilts. We added ice machines and automatic paper towel dispensers to all three kitchens, and new sink faucets in the Bird-Werner and Shaw kitchens. ■

### In Memoriam: Jared Jacobsen

The entire Chautauqua community mourns the sudden, unexpected death of Jared Jacobsen, the much beloved organist and coordinator of worship and sacred music at Chautauqua since 1996. He was killed in a car accident in Ohio on August 27, 2019. You can see videos of Jared and read the Institution's tribute to him at [chq.org/jared](http://chq.org/jared). ■

## Ecumenical Community of Chautauqua

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## ECOC Calendar

December / January	Registration forms sent
February & March	Confirmations processed
June 2 to 3 June 20 to 25	Spring Work Weeks (two options)
June 24	Spring board meeting
June 27	Season begins
August 30	Season ends
August 31	Annual board meeting
August 30 to September 5	Fall Work Week

## Who Pays for the Improvements at the ECOC?

*Carolyn Spicer Russ, Development Committee Chair*

The beautiful porches, the incredible new steps in the Shaw, the every-year improvements in the bathrooms, the continually evolving safety features—they contribute enormously to the comfort and sense of security we all feel when we make our annual trek to Chautauqua's ECOC.

As ECOC friends, you know very well who pays for the improvements. All of us do. The ECOC does not receive grants or gifts from wealthy outsiders; those of us with extra funds donate so that those of us without extra funds can still enjoy Chautauqua at the ECOC's intentionally low rates. The Development Committee wants to make donating as easy, interesting, and satisfying as possible.

■ **Donations by check**—No more needs to be said; we've been doing that for years.

■ **Donations by credit card**—Yes!!! The website ([ecoc-chautauqua.org](http://ecoc-chautauqua.org)) now allows you to build up your credit card points, delay the reckoning, and solve your end-of-the-year generosity impulse right on the website. Check it out.

■ **Donations by beneficiary designation**—Name the ECOC as a beneficiary of IRAs, 401(k)s, investment accounts, life insurance policies, and of course your will. You can feel good about yourself right now, and your family will remember your generosity later.

■ **Donations by required minimum distribution**—You can request that RMDs from your IRAs go to the ECOC. The ECOC gets the money, and the RMDs don't count as income for tax and Medicare purposes.

■ **Donations in memory or honor**—Consider making a gift to the ECOC to honor or remember an important person in your life. Donate in honor of that wonderful host or house manager who made life so much easier for you. Or make a donation in memory of people important to the life of this organization, like Tom Kerns, long-time and much loved host who passed on in June.

People who raise money like to say that we should give until it feels good. Here's to your year as a donor who feels good! ■

# Thank you, Shaw family!



**Clockwise from front left:** Rodney Cook, Randy Wagner, Mike Crick, Fritz Werner, Theresa Wright, Pete LuPiba, Christina Garman, Jim Shaw, Charlene Werner, Kris Kealey, Paul Kealey

It's time for all of us at ECOC to thank the Shaw family for their many years of hard work on our behalf. The entire family comes for about a week every June, and work all day, every day, to help get the buildings ready for the season. Sometimes 60 or more people come, from babies to elders over 80, to work together and celebrate a family reunion.

Long-time guest Jean Boell remembers one Shaw family reunion/work party. She describes it this way: *"For five days, they cleaned, landscaped, laughed, built, repaired, laughed, painted, sewed/mended, laundered, set up kitchens, laughed, sang, played games, plumbed, laughed, told family stories. Did I say they laughed a lot? And they ate! One work crew was dedicated to fueling these work dervishes by preparing and cleaning up after a large lunch and dinner each day."*

Former managers Lois and Nels Sandberg recalled both hard work and lots of fun: *"The family was led for MANY years by Nancy Kealey. She and sister Marilyn would be driven to Chautauqua by some of the younger members. Every inch of the car was filled with food, fabric and work supplies, including Marilyn's sewing machine."*

*"An incredible amount of work got done. With years of experience and a variety of talents they helped us get ready for opening day. Then each night after dinner there was entertainment—stories of former gatherings, games or once a musical program by the children. We were privileged to be invited to join the fun!"*



**Front table, left to right:** Alex Crick, Mike Crick, Anna Crick, Paul Kealey, Kris Kealey. **Back table, left to right:** Jen LuPiba, Fritz Werner, Charlene Werner, Pete LuPiba



**Seated:** Bonnie Waxman. **Standing, left to right:** Karen Werner, Marlene Raynor, Paul Kealey, Coleen Kealey, Patricia Wagner, Kal Waxman

Current managers John and Kathy Woods consider their help invaluable. *"From our first year as managers, we were absolutely blown away by the amount of work the family members do. They work most of the day, taking breaks for meals and fun at night. Their skills range from cleaning and sewing to plumbing, painting and putting up walls. They are one of the ECOC's greatest assets, saving us hundreds of dollars every season. Thank you, Shaw family, for all that you do."*

Jean Boell adds, *"For the Shaws, this work time IS Chautauqua. And we summer folk are indebted to their labor for, and love of, these buildings, and all they represent to the people who inhabit them."* The Shaws rarely stay at the ECOC during the summer, but if you happen to see one of them, be sure to give them a huge thanks for all their work on our behalf!