

# ECUMENICAL COMMUNITY OF CHAUTAUQUA



NEWSLETTER

Fall 2020

Volume 14, Issue 1



## Message from the President

*Rev. Nathan Day Wilson, ECOC Board President*

Dear ECOC,

I hope grace and peace are finding space in your life alongside the seemingly ever-present change and uncertainty.

While I missed being together at Chautauqua this summer, I enjoyed our virtual kitchen table chats. They were filled with the insights and inspiration I expect from you.

The potential beauties of online programming include its reach (far and wide) and its cost (low), so we decided to offer more programs this off-season. I hope you'll attend and invite others. They will be an easy way to introduce people to the ECOC.

The first program, which will be held on October 1 at 7pm, looks excellent and is very needed! It's called, *If We're Better Together, Why Are We So Far Apart? Depolarization in an Age of Division*. How timely, huh?

Michael McGillicuddy, our presenter, leads workshops throughout the nation. In his words, "too often we regard The Other... the other party or race or region or religion or gender or generation... as a threat rather than as a neighbor. In this workshop, we begin with an understanding of why we are choking on outrage and conclude with an exploration of key remedies to polarization. This presentation will include dialogue as well as a Q&A component. A resource listing and table topics for further discussion will be available at the conclusion. Participants may find it beneficial to invite someone whose world view doesn't square with theirs to participate."

I want to emphasize something about the topic that may concern you. This session will not be about issues or politics as such. It will be more interesting than that. Michael and I have discussed, and we agree, that we do not want anyone feeling targeted because of their politics.

To participate, email me at [ecocnathanwilson@gmail.com](mailto:ecocnathanwilson@gmail.com) and I'll send you the information for computer and telephone access. This opportunity will not be limited to those who have computer technology.

Other exciting programs are on tap: brain development at any age, for instance, and the promises and pitfalls of interfaith relationships. Stay tuned!

I'm glad we are part of the ECOC. In a world so divided by acts of lovelessness and hatred, by allegiance to false gods such as money and power, and by lines drawn between people according to worldly standards, any witness to God's intended wholeness is needed now more than ever!

– Nathan Day Wilson ■

### **If We're Better Together, Why Are We So Far Apart? Depolarization in an Age of Division**

Thursday, 1 October, 7–9pm

To register, contact Rev. Nathan Day Wilson at [ecocnathanwilson@gmail.com](mailto:ecocnathanwilson@gmail.com). ■



# Managers' Report

*Kathy and John Woods*

It has been a very quiet “season” and it took some getting used to, with only about five people here.

We have been working on different projects every week—a couple of larger ones but mostly smaller. Our large group of volunteers understandably could not come this season. The few folks who came signed a waiver to be here. Also many states were on the quarantine list for Chautauqua, making travel here prohibitive. We have four folks in residence with us who have done a fantastic job keeping the ECOC in good shape for opening in 2021.

We really missed seeing everyone. Having this break to do some extra things will make getting back together all that more special.

Sincerely,  
Kathy and John ■



Photo courtesy of Olivia and Victoria Woods.

*Our volunteers this season, from left to right: Diane Andrasik, Kyle Doershuk, Aimee Doershuk, and our registrar E. Carol Maxwell. Not pictured are Holly Martineau and Francis and Emma Bachman. ■*



# Registrar's Message

*E. Carol Maxwell*

Last spring, after the Chautauqua 2020 in-person season was cancelled, ECOC Board President Rev. Nathan Day Wilson asked all guests what they wished—a refund of their deposit, a gift to the ECOC or a split between the two. To date, those gifts have totaled \$21,673.42; we also received an additional \$1,558.00 in donations. Thank you, guests, for your generosity!

December 2019 was the last “snail” mailing of the ECOC’s yearly Accommodations Information. As of this moment, the procedure this fall will be:

- We will send an email message in mid-December to remind guests that the 2021 Accommodations Information will be available on the ECOC website starting on January 2, 2021.
- The Reservation Request Form and ECOC Policies Acknowledgement Form can be printed and mailed, along with the required room deposit and voluntary up-keep gift, to: Registrar, c/o E. Carol Maxwell, PO Box 208, Warren, Ohio 44482-0208.
- Those ECOC guests who do not use email should call me at 716-581-3659 to request a USPS mailing of the information. Online reservations are not available at this time.

Be safe, stay well, VOTE—and know that our hopes and prayers are that we will all re-gather at our beloved Ecumenical Community of Chautauqua next summer.

Blessings to everyone,  
E. Carol, Registrar ■

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 four new members to the ECOC Board of Directors: David Abrams, Renee Andrews (Assistant Treasurer), Aimee Doershuk and Pastor Jeff Kane. They join board members Bob Dargel, Rev. John Dickey, Debra Gentry (Secretary), Rev. Wayne A. Gnatuk, Rev. Dr. Mary Kitchen, Rev. David Matthews, Pastor Dora Odarenko, Carolyn Spicer Russ (Vice President), Linda Shaw (Treasurer), Rev. Nathan Day Wilson (President), and Beth Bucher Woolever. We thank retiring board members Rev. John Jackson, Ellen Neches and Alyson Cook Stage for their service.

## David Abrams



David Abrams and his wife Barbara have been coming to the ECOC from their home in Orlando, Florida, for about 10 years. A native of upstate

New York, he had never heard of Chautauqua before being invited by his friend James Cook.

David is a consumer rights attorney who practices in State and Federal Courts. He is also a registered nurse and a former synagogue president.

For David, the ECOC is that rare place where people from different communities can be together and recognize their common experience. As a board member he envisions expanding the diversity and inclusivity of the ECOC community.

## Renee Andrews



Renee Bergmann Andrews spent 35 years as a corporate financial analyst. Retired now, she tutors students for Bar/Bat Mitzvah at her

temple, teaching them how to chant from the Torah scroll in Hebrew. From 2015 to 2018 she was President of the Hebrew Congregation of Chautauqua. Renee has also served on the Electoral Board for her city since 2003 and is a frequent speaker on election issues.

Renee and her husband Bill live in Falls Church, Virginia, near Washington DC; they have four children and six grandchildren. She enjoys singing in the Chautauqua choir and sponsoring two voice students through the Connections Program.

## Aimee Doershuk



Aimee owns a custom quilt business, and teaches quilting classes. She and her husband David have three children and live in Streets-

boro, Ohio. A lifelong Chautauquan, Aimee has been staying at the ECOC for more than 25 years.

Last year she and her son Kyle were hosts in the Westervelt. Instead of hosting this year, they spent the summer working on projects at the ECOC with other volunteers.

Aimee values the ECOC for the "friendships, fellowship, community and affordable accommodations." She serves on the property and nominating committees and looks forward to helping the ECOC be around for her kids and their kids to enjoy.

## Jeff Kane



Jeff L. Kane is a Lutheran (ELCA) pastor serving at Lutheran Campus Ministry and is an associate chaplain and development officer in Syracuse,

New York. Before seminary, Pastor Jeff worked as an ER nurse, in IT and for Lutheran Social Services of New England.

In 2012, Jeff was invited to be the chaplain at the Chautauqua Lutheran House, and he has been returning ever since. He especially enjoys sitting on the porch of Shaw with a cup of coffee, listening to the lectures.

Jeff is married to Pastor Katie Yahns, who has also served as chaplain at the Lutheran House. When not at Chautauqua, Jeff enjoys cooking, cycling, tinkering with technology, and outdoor ministry. ■

## Help Close the Gap

*Bob Boell, Development Committee*

With no income from guests this past season, the ECOC is running a deficit for its ongoing expenses. A number of people turned over their deposits as gifts, which helped immeasurably. Thank you!

We could close the gap further if other guests decided to make one-time gifts. If we averaged \$100 per household, the ECOC would be in great shape to start the 2021 season. Use the enclosed envelope to remit your donation and be sure to mark your check "Close the gap." Or you can give online at [www.ecoc-chautauqua.org/make-a-donation/](http://www.ecoc-chautauqua.org/make-a-donation/), under the "General Operation and Upkeep" category. We all pray for a "real" Chautauqua season in 2021.

## Volunteer Wanted

Can you help? The Development Committee is looking for a volunteer with graphic arts skills who could help us with our materials. Interested? Contact Chairperson Carolyn Russ, [attorney.russ@gmail.com](mailto:attorney.russ@gmail.com). ■

## Ecumenical Community of Chautauqua

P.O. Box 988  
25 Roberts Avenue  
Chautauqua, New York 14722  
716-357-3814 (Summer)  
716-581-3659 (Winter)  
www.ecoc-chautauqua.org

## ECOC Calendar

January 2	Registration forms posted on web site
February & March	Confirmations processed
June 23	Spring board meeting
June 26	Season begins
August 29	Season ends
August 30	Annual board meeting

*Note: Spring and fall work weeks will be announced in the spring issue.*

# Morris Family Leaves Bequest for ECOC



This summer the ECOC received a generous bequest of almost \$25,000 from long-time guests Wayne and Marilyn Morris.

The couple learned about Chautauqua in 1960, and the following year they packed up the kids and drove the 1,000 miles from the Kansas City area for their first visit of many. They brought the children for about five years, staying four weeks each summer. Then they returned every year between 1987 and 2008. Mrs. Morris died in 2008, and her husband in 2019.

In his informal memoirs, Wayne recounted, "The Chautauqua experience became such an important one to all of us. We returned there for four more summers and

stayed at the Minister's Union, where we worked for our housing. By singing in a small motet, we also earned our gate ticket. Chautauqua became a very important part of our lives. It was a favorite memory of our children, they told us."

Their daughter Melinda Kearney recalls how her parents were life-long learners who embraced every aspect of Chautauqua. They especially enjoyed the amphitheater lectures, concerts and worship services, as well as simple pleasures like family bike rides and ice cream at the Refectory. They loved sharing the community kitchens and porches at the ECOC, and felt that the ECOC enriched their Chautauqua experience.

Because the years spent at the ECOC were so meaningful for the whole family, the Morrises were happy knowing that their bequest could help the ECOC continue to grow, and that their legacy could live on in this way. ■