



Members of the 'Seneca Falls Seniors' at St. Patrick's Church Oct. 15 wave as the train departs from Sodus on its way to Newark for a fall foliage tour. S. John Wilkin/Staff photographer

## Seniors group melds fun, service

By Lee Strong  
Senior staff writer

SENECA FALLS — Riding a train to view fall foliage may not be some people's idea of a church-related activity, but that's not the case with the "Seneca Falls Seniors."

Members of the group out of St. Patrick's Parish rode the rails between Sodus and Newark Oct. 15. Since the group was established in January, 1993, members have also attended plays in Auburn and Elmira, taken in the races at Finger Lakes Race track, gone out to dinner or on picnics, and attended the Lilac Festival in Rochester.

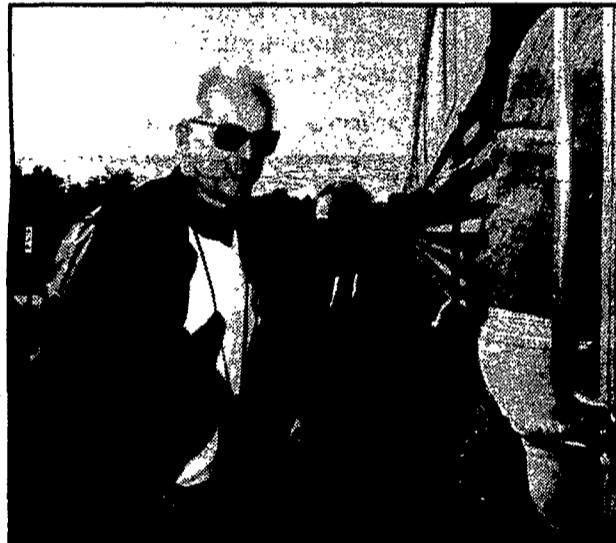
In addition to those social activities, the group has visited nursing homes to talk with residents, and in some cases accompanied them on trips to doctors; held bake sales to buy vestments for priests; put together Christmas and Easter baskets for the needy; and attended Mass as part of its monthly meetings at St. Patrick's Parish, 97 W. Bayard St.

"Our whole purpose is just to have fun and be helpful when we can," said Herb Wurstner, the group's president and founder.

Group member Chet Kuplinski was attracted by that combination of fun and service.

"I joined first of all for social reasons, and second because we do some good things for the community," Kuplinski said.

Wurstner noted that he formed the group mainly because of the lack of activities for seniors in the Seneca Falls area. He modeled it after a seniors



Herb Wurstner, president of the 'Seneca Falls Seniors,' is the first to board the train.

group started by a friend in Buffalo.

"I thought it was a good idea, so I started it here," he said.

The group's regular activity is a meeting on the second Tuesday of every month. After a business session — "our biggest agenda item is 'What are we going to do next?'" Wurstner quipped — the group attends Mass and eats lunch with Father David N. Gramke, St. Patrick's pastor. Some members remain at the rectory after lunch to socialize and play cards or board games. For each meeting, members also try to bring some canned or packaged food items to be distributed among the needy.

Pat Valenti, vice president, said that one of the things she's enjoyed about the group is that she gets to meet new people.

"I thought it would be a nice way to get to know some of the parishioners that I didn't know," Valenti explained. "This is a good way to get started."

At the same time, Valenti said, "I was ready to volunteer and get involved to help people."

Apparently other parishioners are also looking to meet people, have fun and perform good works, noted Joyce Zmuda, the group's secretary-treasurer.

"We are growing," Zmuda reported. "We get about two new members a month."

One of the reasons why some people initially hesitate to join the group, Valenti suggested, is they "thought it was going to be a work organization. You don't have to take any job or volunteer if you don't want to."

"There are all kinds of work groups in the parish," Wurstner acknowledged. "This was designed primarily as a social group."

But while the emphasis is on fun, members do share the desire to help others in many ways.

"I'm retired and I want to be involved, but I don't want to overextend myself," Kuplinski said. "This is one thing I think is a worthwhile thing to do."

"I have met people in the parish that I've never met before," Zmuda said. "I think (the group) brings you closer and gives you encouragement to want to do more."

## Kearney dedicates roadway to former instructor

IRONDEQUOIT — Since Bishop Kearney High School opened in 1962, its address has been listed as 125 Kings Highway S.

Beginning last month, another address for the school has been added as well: Sister Marcian Circle.

Sister Mary Marcian Rotonno, SSND, who served at the school from its founding until her retirement in 1992, returned to BK to be honored during a gathering which took place Sept. 28.

At the ceremony, the small roadway

which loops in front of the school was dedicated to Sister Marcian. The entire student body, faculty and staff attended — as well as Sister Marcian, who traveled back from Irondequoit from Wilton, Conn., where she



File photo

has been living at the School Sisters of Notre Dame motherhouse since she retired. Also attending were several members of Sister Marcian's family.

Sister Marcian, who turned 94 on Sept. 25, is a Rochester native who joined the School Sisters at the age of 21. She taught in Baltimore, Md., and Tampa, Fla., before coming to Kearney.

Sister Marcian taught chemistry, math, French and Latin until 1980. She served as an administrative assistant until retiring in 1992.

## Agency seeks volunteers to offer caregivers relief

ROCHESTER — Volunteers are being sought by Respite Cares!, an agency which provides relief to caregivers of the developmentally disabled, brain injured or people with Alzheimer's disease.

Those interested in helping should call Marilyn Curtis at 716/381-6550.

## Openings still available for Holy Land excursion

CORNING — Openings remain for a 10-day Holy Land ecumenical pilgrimage to be co-hosted by diocesan priests and deacons.

The excursion, scheduled for February of 1995, will include visits to many sacred places such as the Sea of Galilee, Capernaum, the Mount of the Beatitudes, Cana, Nazareth, Mount Carmel, Bethlehem and Jerusalem. A study program and lecture series will be conducted throughout the pilgrimage. Scripture scholars and archaeologists from the Jerusalem Center for Biblical Studies.

Those interested in going should write to Deacon Ray Defendorf of the Corning-Painted Post Roman Catholic Community, 60 W. Third St., Corning, N.Y., 14830; or call him at 607/937-5858.

## Craft vendors needed

IRONDEQUOIT — Original craft vendors are needed for the fourth annual Bishop Kearney High School Craft Sale, scheduled for Saturday, Nov. 19, at the high school, 125 Kings Highway S.

Those interested in selling handmade craft items should call Lynn Perry at 716/544-1923 for details. Proceeds will benefit Kearney's world-champion color guard.

## Lodging service provided through Cancer Society

ROCHESTER — Cancer patients and their families are invited to register for Hope Lodge, a service offered by the American Cancer Society for cancer patients and their families.

Hope Lodge is available free of charge. It provides comfortable, overnight accommodations consisting of a living room, full kitchen and library.

To learn more about this program, call the American Cancer Society's Monroe County branch at 716/288-1950.

## Library dedicated to two Nazareth alums

ROCHESTER — During an Oct. 4 ceremony, the library at Nazareth Academy, 1001 Lake Ave., was dedicated to two Nazareth alumnae: Mary O'Hara Cashman, class of 1896; and her daughter, Mary Elizabeth Cashman, class of 1932.

Significant recent upgrades have been made to the Nazareth library and media center, thanks to a bequest made for this purpose following Mary Elizabeth Cashman's death in October of 1992.

In addition to the library, the Nazareth Schools held a dedication on Oct. 18 for a new playground at Nazareth Hall Elementary School, 180 Raines Park.

Two anonymous donors were honored during the Oct. 18 event.