

SENIOR LIFESTYLES

Cluster celebrates the 'Evelyn Scherbyn era'

By Kathleen Schwar
Staff writer

CLIFTON SPRINGS — After 30 years as a church office mainstay, Evelyn Scherbyn is almost apologetic describing her current role for the St. Felix/St. Francis Church Cluster in Clifton Springs/Phelps.

"I pretty much come and go as I please," she said. "That doesn't sound very good. But that's the way it is."

It hasn't been her style to "come and go" as she pleases. She's been a steady resource for the cluster since 1968, except for a few years when she worked at the Clifton Springs Hospital.

At the end of June, "the Evelyn Scherbyn era" — as tagged by the parish's former pastor Msgr. John F. Duffy (1976-83) — will come to an end.

Scherbyn acknowledged she looks forward to simply enjoying Mass — "to go to church and love God."

She compared this transition in life to having raised three sons and the relief parents feel when their children become responsible for themselves.

Scherbyn first became parish secretary at St. Francis Church, Phelps. She also took on management of the cemetery for about 10 years and religious education as well, primarily as coordinator over the years. Her jobs became more complicated when the parishes began clustering several years ago, she noted.

"Basically, she's the all-purpose person," said Father Edward J. Dillon, cluster pastor. "We call her the education czar," he added, explaining she has worked to motivate parishioners at all levels to learn.

Scherbyn has worked under five pastors (and three bishops and three popes, as well). She remembers how it all started: "I asked Father (William J.) Riefer if he needed help, and he hired me," she said.

Scherbyn converted from Methodism while attending Rider College in Trenton, N.J., about 50 years ago. She said that she appreciated that everything was "black and white" in the Catholic Church back then. However, she also said she has been com-



Greg Francis/Staff photographer
Evelyn Scherbyn, retiring religious education administrator for the St. Felix Church (Clifton Springs) and St. Francis Church (Phelps) cluster looks forward to leaving duties behind, "to go to church and love God."

mitted to keeping up with changes since the Second Vatican Council (1962-65) and attended classes the Capuchin Franciscans ran in Geneva.

Msgr. Duffy, retired in Syracuse, sent a letter read at an April 24 retirement party at the Phelps Hotel — a place where the honoree and her husband of 40 years, Bill, once cut the rug to jukebox jitterbugs.

The former pastor referred to the Energizer batteries bunny commercials, writing, "Now Evelyn Scherbyn, to me, really typifies that quality of persistence. She had to put up with all the characters that the Bishop of Rochester has sent to Saint Francis of Assisi Parish in Phelps. (And I include myself in that illustrious group!)"

"They all had their individual personalities," Scherbyn commented. But perhaps her happiest 10 years, she added, were during Father Anthony Calimeri's leadership as St. Francis pastor (1983-93). "He just made you feel you were important and did good."

But throughout the years, she has enjoyed her fellow parishioners, she added.

"What has kept me going was the people," Scherbyn said. "The people have been absolutely wonderful."

She's kept many a confidence, and that won't change when she's fully retired, she noted.

Some, she said, "would talk things over with me, would unburden, even though I said you have to talk to Father. You learn confidentiality."

At times, she felt parishioners' frustrations; she recalled. When Mass times were changed, for example, "one parishioner came and threw her envelopes on the desk and said that was it, she was through with church."

Still, Scherbyn maintained, "I never felt them demanding."

Her secretarial successor, Lisa M. Burns, said Scherbyn's best advice to her has been, "Basically, listen."

She then paid a compliment that put a big smile on Scherbyn's face: "She was very organized. I think I've kept everything the way she had it."



The Shire at Culverton

ADULT HOME

- SUITES, PRIVATE AND SEMI PRIVATE ROOMS
- 24 HOUR MEDICAL SUPERVISION
- COMPLETE DIETETIC SERVICES
- TRANSPORTATION
- SOCIAL ACTIVITIES
- UNIQUE TEMPORARY STAY

"A TRADITION OF LOVE
AND CARING"

467-4544

2515 Culver Rd.
(Just South of Keeler Expressway)



A QUIET OASIS IN THE HEART OF GREECE



LONG POND APARTMENTS

Walking distance from the largest mall east of the Mississippi, plus churches, restaurants, a senior center, doctors, a hospital, supermarkets, and other amenities in the



neighborhood make ours the best location. Larger - Than - Most apartments with expansive grounds & parking make ours the best value. Come see a helpful rental agent today.

Senior Discounts

225-3510 or 723-9714

Free Heat & Hot Water

When Interest Income Counts,
It's time to call Gen-see.

8.51%
Annually

Earn More,
Worry Less

Go with experience
you can trust...

Because Gen-See cares about your retirement money!

For 23 positive years .
GEN-SEE investors have
done better for 5 great reasons:

- Regular monthly checks
- No fees or commissions
- Low minimum initial investment
... \$5,000.00
- High yields and capital growth
- Guaranteed rate of interest for term of Certificate



Make a fresh start...RIGHT NOW! 8.51% annually.

Call 1-800-507-4393



Gen-See Capital Corporation