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Trips

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trips suit the Botsfords just fine.

Wine trails

Another favorite of the Botsfords is wine country tours — as they were with several other people.

The Finger Lakes region has more than 50 wineries and three lakes with major wine routes: Seneca, Keuka and Cayuga. Various wineries feature concerts, auctions, shops, dinners, children's activities and more.

Jacquie Dobson, director of the diocesan Office of Black Ministries, said her book club took a few cars down to Seneca Lake last year for a special wine tasting event.

"I plan to do it again this year," she said, explaining the scenery itself is worth the drive.

According to Teresa Stamp Knapp of Lakewood Vineyards, who also works for the New York Wine & Grape Foundation out of Penn Yan, the wineries have a sort of cosmopolitan draw.

"We get people from all over the world," she said.

While the adults enjoy the wine tastings, children may try grape juice of various colors, noted Mary Anne Krupsak, chair of the Finger Lakes Association and a parishioner of St. Mary's, Waterloo.

When friends visit, she usually takes them to a winery that also serves food.

"Most do an outdoor patio kind of thing; you can have lunch right in the vineyard," she said. "The aromas are wonderful, there are flowers to see, it's all just beautiful."

"Almost every one of the lakes has some special events going on, all summer long," she added.

But she also is a historic building buff. She especially enjoys driving past the old brownstones down South Main Street in Geneva and Route 14 along the lake near Hobart and William Smith College. Self-guiding walking tour brochures are offered for the college, at its alumni office, 615 S. Main St., and for South Main Street, through the Geneva Historical Society.

Similar self-guided walking tours are available in Seneca Falls, according to Fran Caracido, village planner and a parishioner of St. Patrick's Church.

While a lot of people visit because of the village's women's rights history and its National Women's Hall of Fame, tours, for example, highlight the development of the village and of 16 mills and factories that once used the falls to produce products from farm implements to cooking yeast.

Other Seneca Falls walking tours include

the St. Patrick's Church area, he noted, because it "was pretty much created" by an industrialist who donated land for the first Catholic Church in the village — St. Jerome's was later rebuilt as St. Patrick's. He'd recognized many of his workers, poor Irish immigrants, were Catholic, "not the most popular religion at the time."

The various tours are arranged through the Women's Rights National Historical Park Visitors Center.

Out in Brockport, west of Rochester, Father Roy Kiggins of Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary Church plugged Hamlin Beach, the village's historic Morgan-Manning House, as well as a "marvelous little attraction" at the old Mt. Albion Cemetery, "if you need a 10- to 15-minute diversion, off the beaten track kind of thing." The cemetery is at the eastern edge of Albion, off Route 31. He said to just keep driving up to the highest spot, noting, "On a good day you can see most of Orleans County."

Going south

Several diocesan parishioners sang the praises of the Southern Tier.

The Finger Lakes Association's Krupsak cited one possible day trip traveling west on Route 17 (exit 51) from Elmira.

"There's the National Warplane Museum," she said. "That's really beautiful. The airplanes there are vintage airplanes. They're also colorful. ... Driving along the way you pass several of the historic places that are in Elmira — the Mark Twain Museum, the Samuel Clemens Performing Arts Center. His wife (Olivia Langdon) was from there."

Denis Sweeney, marketing/communications director at St. Joseph's Hospital, Elmira, easily boasts about Elmira. He is a former tourism director for the Chemung County Chamber of Commerce and former president of the Greater Corning Area Chamber of Commerce.

He and his wife Cheryl, and children Paul, 7, and Molly, 5, have explored numerous sites in the state and across the border into Pennsylvania.

In Elmira, Sweeney noted, a 90-minute sightseeing/historical trolley ride from July through Labor Day starts at the chamber office and passes such sites as Elmira College and Mark Twain's study — in the form of a Mississippi riverboat plothouse — historic near-west side neighborhood Victorian homes, Harris Hill and the National Soaring Museum — where, he said, "you get a terrific view of Chemung Valley."

He also mentioned Taglewood Nature Center near Harris Hill and the Elmira Pioneers minor league baseball games.

And while people may take for granted

the beautiful golf courses, others don't.

"From what I understand, there will be people who drive up from New York City area because they can't get a laytime there," Sweeney said. They go to Soaring Eagles Golf Course at Mark Twain State Park, north of Horseheads, for example.

"There is a lot," Sweeney said. "If you're not into outdoor activities, there's museums. If you're not into shopping, there's sports."

About 45 minutes south of Corning is Wellsville, Pa., and "Animal Land," where children enjoy feeding the animals. Also, the Grand Canyon of Pennsylvania lies 10 miles west of Wellsville on State Route 660.

Corning resident Deacon Ray Defendorf is another big fan of area attractions, from the Corning Glass Center and the Rockwell Museum of Western art in Corning to a monastery.

"Here's the big scoop: It's not a factory town anymore," he said.

Corning Glass has been the third largest tourist draw in New York state, next to New York City and Niagara Falls, according to several sources, and still ranks high.

On June 19 the center will open a major new "glass innovation center." The center's museum has 30,000 items representing 3,500 years of glass making, and promotes the industry, art, teaching of glass-making.

Beyond Corning is Mount Saviour Monastery, about halfway to Elmira, north off Route 225.

"Mount Saviour is a wonderful place to go," Deacon Defendorf said. "They have sheep out in the fields. You can go with the monks to pray the Liturgy of the Hours. My wife Pat and I go for compline often in the summer, 8:15 p.m. It's night prayer. They do it with a harp and you can participate...It's just a nice experience."

Benedictine Brother James Cronen of Mount Saviour said people are welcome to visit the chapel and book shop, and also to attend the 9 a.m. Mass or 6:30 p.m. vespers.

"Unfortunately there isn't any place here to get a meal," he said. But guest houses are available for private retreatants.

Brother Cronen added that east on Route 17 just past Elmira is a monument to Major Gen. John Sullivan and a little knoll and benches to mark Newtown Battlefield site of the Revolutionary War.

Although Elmira had a prisoner of war camp for Confederate soldiers during the Civil War, that site in the city is less well-marked. However, 3,000 graves of Confederate soldiers who died in the camp can be seen at Woodlawn National Cemetery in Elmira, where Mark Twain also is buried.

Within an hour's ride of the monastery, Brother Cronen noted, is Robert H. Tre-

man State Park, just southwest of Ithaca off Route 327.

Gorgeous falls

From Rochester, Ithaca is roughly two hours, Father Heyman noted. But it is well worth the drive.

"Folks come down here for all the state parks — Tremen, Taughannock and Buttermilk Falls," he said. "They're spectacular. Buttermilk is this huge mountain with water falling over it (when it rains). You can walk up to the top about two miles."

"Taughannock Falls is an ancient gorge from Trumansburg to Cayuga Lake. The gorge was made by a glacier. There are trails all through there too, it's just gorgeous. The state park is at the end of Taughannock Falls."

Beside the state parks, Cornell University's Cornell Plantations, 2.5 miles north of Ithaca on Routes 79 and 366, is interesting, he said. The site is along the Cascadilla and Fall Creek gorges and has trails, botanical gardens and an arboretum.

But Ithaca doesn't claim all of the Finger Lakes' 1,063 waterfalls. Busloads of visitors come to Watkins Glen at the southern end of Seneca Lake to visit the world-famous gorge at Watkins Glen State Park during the summer, said Kathy Decker, secretary at St. Mary of the Lake Parish of the Schuyler Catholic Community.

"You can walk up to the glen and down," she said, or go up by shuttle taxi and walk back down.

Visitors also come for Watkins Glen International Road Racing and Captain Bill's Lake Cruises.

Best of all, however, she said, "We have a lot of falls. You need to come when it's rainy. After a lot of rain they just come tumbling down."

"The whole place is just loaded with these falls and little springs. ... When it's heavy rain you can't see across the road, there's such a mist coming from Aunt Sarah's and the other falls. Kids just go crazy. They love to see it."

As summer basically kicks off with Memorial Day, Krupsak likes to remind people that Waterloo is regarded as the birthplace of Memorial Day.

"It's probably the only place that has a parade on the real Memorial Day," she said. That begins at 2 p.m. Sunday, May 30.

Some key telephone numbers and Web sites:

- Finger Lakes Assn.: 315/536-7488, 800-KIT-4-FUN; www.FingerLakes.org.
- New York Wine & Grape Foundation: 315/536-7442; www.nywine.com.

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