

OCCJ

Orthodox Christian JOURNAL®

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The official publication of the Fellowship of Orthodox Christians in America



MISSION WORK Spreading the *Good News*



COVER STORIES

- 12 The Fellowship's Own Missionaries: Spreading the Good News**
"Without our missionary grants from the Fellowship, we wouldn't have been able to serve..."
- 10 Mission Hotline Project: Outfits the Chapel at West Point and St. Stephen's Mission**
- 15 Mission Hotline Project: Life Blood of Missions**
- 15 Missions in Our Community**

FEATURE STORIES

- 16 Seminarian Families Express Thanks for F.O.C.A. Christmas Gifts in Record -Setting Year!**
- 18 The Web, the Church & the FOCA**
- 19 Finding Yesterday's Children**

DEPARTMENTS

- 3 President's Commentary**
- 4 Editor's Notes**
- 4 FOCA Highlights and News In-Brief**
 - National FOCA Calendar of Events
 - 2002 NJ District Christmas Seminarian Project
 - Auburn, NY Everything Goes!
 - Central PA District Convention News
 - St. Herman's Seminary Chapel Icon Fund
 - Nation's Capital In Full Gear!
 - Graduation Gift Pack
 - Orthodox Society of America
 - New Haven Chapter Honors Members
 - 66th Annual Novogodny Ball
 - 2003 "Gifts of Love" Drive Begins
 - Fellowship Fulfills Pledge
- 11 Colonists Start Packing Your Bags!**
- 21 Transitions**
- 22 Sports Corner**
 - Strikes, Spares and Stables
 - Bowling Form
 - F.O.C.A. Junior Olympics Sweepstakes
 - Huba Huba Burnin Hoops
 - Basketball Form
- 26 Kidz Corner** NEW!
- 27 Community Life**
 - IOCC Supports Effort to Stem Alcohol Abuse in Alaska
 - St. Vladimir's Seminary Site of OCMC Meeting
- Back Cover 2003 F.O.C.A. Junior Essay Contest!**

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The mission of the Orthodox Christian JOURNAL is to educate the membership of the Fellowship of Orthodox Christians in America, to showcase the talents of its membership and, in so doing, to propagate the Holy Orthodox Christian Faith.

PRESIDENT'S COMMENTARY

John Kruchok
37th National FOCA President

Mission Statement of the Fellowship of Orthodox Christians in America

The Fellowship of Orthodox Christians in America is a national organization of Orthodox Christians. ***Our mission is to proclaim, share and reveal our Orthodox Christian Faith through service, fellowship and example.*** We accomplish this by:

- studying the tenets of our Faith
- supporting, encouraging and promoting Orthodox Youth ministries
- supporting, encouraging and promoting the missionary growth of our church
- encouraging and promoting unity among all Orthodox jurisdictions
- establishing practical means for Orthodox Christians to form enduring friendships on local and national levels through networking
- providing educational, cultural, social and athletic activities for the people of our Orthodox Faith.

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Fall 2002 was a busy and most productive period for the Fellowship of Orthodox Christians in America with the culmination of the most successful 76th National Convention sponsored by the Central Pennsylvania District and the completion of the fall district conventions. It was gratifying to see so many districts increasing their activities for their annual conventions, highlighted by the two-day Ohio District event at St. Michael's, the New Jersey District dinner cruise around Manhattan and convention sponsored by Bayonne, "McFellowship Weekend" at McDonald's University sponsored by Trinity "O" Club and the Atlantic District Conference held on the University of Connecticut campus sponsored by the Hartford "R" Club.

The challenge of meeting needs of our seminarians was put to the test with support by many chapters who "adopted" seminarian families by providing financial and material resources. In addition, a record 90 seminarian children received a \$50 gift from the Fellowship on St. Nicholas Day. The F.O.C.A. will surely be put to the test with the recently announced 2003 "Gifts of Love" project, raising funds to purchase a new or previously-owned pickup truck for St. Herman's Seminary in Kodiak, Alaska.

As President, I continue to pursue improving communications. I had the privilege of addressing the Holy Synod of Bishops at the Orthodox Church of America Chancery during its fall meeting along with National Spiritual Advisor Fr. Eugene Vansuch, who also provided an excellent and comprehensive written report of our sincere commitment to the Church. Fr. Robert Kondratich, O.C.A. Chancellor, Youth Ministry Director Fr. Michael Anderson and His Beatitude, Metropolitan Herman continue to provide an extraordinary level of pastoral guidance and support to our organization through regular meetings and contact. I try to make our website, www.orthodoxfellowship.org a consistent source of updated information and have instituted a regular column on-line. Check it out and also find the OCJ on-line as well!

Following Great Lent, we all look forward to this spring's national sports tournaments including the National Basketball Tournament in Campbell, Ohio and the National Bowling Tournament sponsored by the New Jersey District. You can expect both events to be outstanding!

NOTE: The e-mail address jkocj@aol.com is no longer valid. Send all e-mails to me at john.kruchok@nbc.com. Thank you!

2003 Deadlines for the OCJ:

Summer Issue - April 15th • Fall Issue - July 15th • Winter - Oct. 15th

Send all material to our Editor:

Nicholas Ressetar, Editor

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WORD attachment articles work best within an E-mail: tsarnick3@aol.com

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NOTE: The OCJ is now on-line at: www.orthodoxfellowship.org

EDITOR'S NOTES

Nicholas Ressetar

Editor *Orthodox Christian JOURNAL*

Greetings from your new *Journal* editor! In May of 1927, a choir professor by the name of Vladimir Prislopsky at St. Alexander Nevsky Church in Pittsburgh began publishing an English-language periodical, *The Russian Orthodox Journal*, which would lead to the formation of the Federated Russian Orthodox Clubs (F.R.O.C.). For nearly 76 continuous years, the *Orthodox Christian Journal*, as it is now known, has served as the official publication of the largest lay organization in the Orthodox Church in America — the Fellowship of Orthodox Christians in America, with members also from other jurisdictions. And now Fr. Prislopsky's grandson, yours truly, follows in his footsteps and in those of the many distinguished *Journal* editors through the years. I'm more than a little humbled and excited, and I thank National President John Kruchok and the new Executive Board for the opportunity to serve.

We on the *Journal* staff intend to keep the *Journal* focused on what it has done best: informing the Fellowship members of activities, programs and events on all levels (national, district and chapter). This is our foremost priority. In the day of instant communication, a written publication may seem to some to be obsolete. Not the case. There will never be a substitute for a tangible writing, something that can be picked up and referred to months, even years from its arrival in the mail. For the Fellowship, the *Journal* is our official record and it will remain so.

But we also hope to expand the *Journal's* horizons beyond the Fellowship itself, filling the "gap" in Orthodox Christian publications by reporting on the customs & traditions of people in our parishes, the hi-tech age from an Orthodox perspective, topics of special interest to our young people & children, contemporary issues, sports and historical reflections among others. In that light, this issue features a look at the Fellowship's own missionaries, two young adults who received grants to serve on mission teams in Alaska & Kenya; a highly informative piece by Maryann Bascik on genealogy, with emphasis on Carpatho-Rusyns; a look at Orthodox-oriented websites by Matthew Hatrak; an update by Allison Steffaro on the very successful Adopt-a-Seminarian project; a review of several programs by President Kruchok; and a preview of upcoming sporting events by Ken Baron, our sports editor, and others. We're also introducing a "Kidz Page," with this edition featuring a Great Lent word search.

We want to create a dialogue between you, the reader (not all of whom are FOCA members), and the *Journal* staff. Let us know what you want to read and see. Submit your own articles or photos on appropriate topics. Feel free to e/mail us ideas for future columns. Many of this issue's articles ask directly for your feedback and contributions. Please respond! One special note: photos. We want more of them and are committed to improving the quality of their appearance in the *Journal*. Regrettably our new printer cannot accept digital photos (for now at least), so we ask for the sharpest prints possible. Remember when holding any Fellowship event to take pictures and share them with the rest of the membership.

Last, I wish to thank John Kruchok for serving admirably as *Journal* editor in recent years while juggling his national posts and I appreciate his mentoring of me as he continues to serve the *Journal* as managing editor while national president. Special thanks to Eugenia Wilson, our layout editor, whose tireless efforts result in the *Journal* getting into final form and actually being published and delivered to your homes. She too follows a family tradition of *Journal* involvement. And welcome and thanks to Pete Garman who becomes Business Manager, succeeding Mike Dorosh who held the post for many years. Thank you Mike.

Enjoy the Fellowship you find in these pages!

F.O.C.A. Highlights and News In-Brief

National FOCA Calendar of Events

- Feb. 20-22: **National Board of Trustees "Spring" Meeting**, Colonial Williamsburg, VA
- May 9-11: **2003 National Basketball Tournament** sponsored by the Campbell Sr. "O" Club, Campbell, OH; Contact Dr. James Lazor, chair, at (330) 394-1035 or Hapywdr@aol.com
- May 30-June 1: **69th National Bowling Tournament** sponsored by the New Jersey District, East Brunswick, NJ; Contact cochairs Greg Cimbolic at (201) 823-0794 or Michael Steffaro at (732) 698-1952 or michaelsteffaro@comcast.net
- July 20-26, 2003: **Junior Olympics**, St. Vladimir's Camp, Ohio
- July 25-26: **2003 National Summer Sports Tournament** sponsored by the Weirton "R" Club, Weirton, WV; Contact Dr. John Schultz at (304) 748-1223 or jpswv@attbi.com
- August 28-September 1: **77th National FOCA Convention** sponsored by the South River "R" Club, Colonial Williamsburg, VA; Contact cochair Michael Steffaro at (732) 698-1952 or michaelsteffaro@comcast.net

2002 NJ District Christmas Seminarian Project

The New Jersey District once again sponsored a Seminarian Christmas Project that helped to fulfill the wish lists of married seminarian families at St. Tikhon's and St. Vladimir's Seminaries. This year 11 parishes from the NY/NJ diocese and the NJ FOCA District along with 4 individual families adopted 26 families with a total of 51 children. The Seminarian families are asked to write



St. Vladimir's Seminary families helped by the NJ District Seminarian Project.

wish lists for their families and are then sent to the adoptive parishes. The parishes then fill their lists through a variety of sources. Some make a "giving tree" by placing ornaments with gift ideas on a tree for parishioners to purchase the item while others raise money through coffee hours or other means and purchase the items needed.

The project has a positive and lasting effect not only on the seminarian families but the participating parishes as well. When a parish takes on this type of project the positive results are two-fold: first, they are helping fellow Orthodox Christians get through a difficult (yet short) period in their lives and secondly, it is a project that the entire parish can get involved with during the Nativity Fast. The families correspond with the parishes from year to year and in many cases are able to visit and make lasting friendships.

It has to be mentioned that the welcome we get from the children when we bring our gifts is one that cannot be described. This year the children at St. Tikhon's had a gift for us; our visit came on St. Nicholas Day to which they sang to us "St. Nicholas the Saintly". This brought tears to many of the adult's eyes and reminded us why we were there and what being an Orthodox Christians is really all about.

If your parish would like to help a married seminarian student and his family, we have established a Seminarian Adoption program. The program is set up to ease the financial burden of

families attending seminary. We now have 8 parishes that have adopted 9 families from both seminaries. We still have three families that are anxiously awaiting adoption. If you are interested please contact Allison Steffaro at 732-698-1952.

Auburn, NY Everything Goes!

We hope our article will put a bit of warmth to you this last winter. Once again we wish our officers a successful 2003. Spiritual Advisor: Rev. Stephen Mack; President: Helen Kotyk; Vice President: Mary Rusinko; Secretary: Matushka Barbara Mack and Treasurer: Katherine Fallat. Best Wishes!

At this time we would also like to list all our members in 2003: Beverly Aversa, Johanna Donch, Nicholas and Katherine Fallat, William Gilfilian, William and Elizabeth Hryvko, John and Helen Kotyk, David, Rocco, and Julia Lupo, Reverend Stephen and Matushka Barbara Mack, Walter and Jennie Marko, Eugenia (Jean) Matviak, Laura, James, and Anne Perfield, Mary Rusinko, Matushka Julianna Speck, Joseph Speck, Veronica Thoryk, Stephen Tucker and Melissa Wilczek.

This winter we are hosting a ziti dinner and a bake-less bake sale. On a monthly basis we continue with our 50/50 raffles and bake sales. In January we enjoyed fun, surprises, and fellowship at our annual Secret Pal Brunch.

As a fitting end to our article we salute the backbone of our families - Grandparents. It is no surprise that

because of their influence they have grandchildren and great-grand children who are involved in many outstanding endeavors. Let's begin with Helen and John Kotyk's granddaughters Lisa and Jenna. Lisa is a freshman at LeMoyne College and is involved in numerous extra curricular activities which includes white water rafting. Jenna is a high school junior who has a lead role in "Anything Goes." She, too is involve in many extra activities while keeping a great GPA Kay and Nick Fallat's granddaughter Kelly recently graduated Summa Cum Laude from Kent State University. She also received distinctive awards and scholarships as well. Ronnie Thoryk's grandchildren R.J., Julia, Alexandra and Rozana are kept busy, as well between boy scouts, girl scouts, flute and piano lessons. Julia Lupo has 16 grandchildren and 20 great-grand children ~ too numerous to mention all so here's a highlight of a few: Christian was recently featured in a business magazine for his achievements and Julia is receiving her MBA in May. Beverly Aversa's six are also busy. Dominika continues to earn awards for writing and acting in between the soccer team, school newspaper, ski club, dance and all her instruments. An original stage play she wrote and directed is being performed by a local elementary school. Noah is doing well both academically and athletically. His basketball team has been undefeated for 6 years. He helps his father coach baseball for his brother Nathaniel in his winter practices. Both Nathaniel and Makrina have won art and writing awards in elementary school and in the community. Luke is enjoying boy scouts and his many sports and Alexandra received academic, cheerleading, and horse riding awards.

Jean Matviak acts as our "Parish Grandmother" by looking after all our younger parishioners and giving them the much anticipated "smarties" candy. Joe Specks's grandchildren: Alexis is attending Nazareth College and Natalie is a high school student who will be traveling to the Republic of Georgia in

March. Nicholas graduated from the University of Miami and Aleksen just started college in Montreal. We would also like to mention Mary Rusinko's two well known nephews in Auburn: Bob who is a prominent musician and actor and Martin who is a prominent administrator in the school district. Once again Mary has too many nieces and nephews to list them all. Betty and John Hryvko also have too many nieces and nephews to mention so we will only present Michael and Joshua who are both doing well academically and enjoy sports.

As you can see we are blessed to have such wonderful grandparents. In closing enjoy the beauty and brightness of winter.

- Jaci Aversa &
Dominika Donch

Central PA District Convention News

District Convention: Sunday,
October 27, 2002

St. Mary's Orthodox Church in Coaldale, PA, was the site of the 72nd annual district convention of the Central Pennsylvania District. Hosted by the recently reactivated St. Mary's Junior "O" Club, the day began with the celebration of Divine Liturgy by Fr. Andrew Diehl, the host pastor, who warmly greeted convention participants in church and offered prayers for the Fellowship. A bountiful luncheon of halupki and other favorites (courtesy of Junior parents) was then served by the youth in the parish hall. Formalities were kept to a minimum as Gov. Nick Ressetar greeted the diners, including many non-Fellowship members who were encouraged to reactivate the senior chapter or join the district chapter-at-large. A patriotic gift basket was chanced off with the profits, together with proceeds from the dinner, going toward the OCA Christmas stocking project.

Convention sessions opened with prayer led by Fr. Daniel Ressetar, district spiritual advisor. A full complement of delegates and alternates were in

attendance from the district's eight senior chapters. All received a 40-page bound report booklet. Much of the program focused on the district's sponsorship of the 76th National FOCA Convention in Harrisburg/Camp Hill over the Labor Day weekend. Gov. Nick thanked all the chapters for coming together & working so hard over the past year and through the convention. He especially thanked Lt. Gov. Gary Lelo and the St. John's chapter for their tremendous work on the program book. Many expressed their thanks in person, by e-mail and over the phone for our efforts. National President John Kruchok's thank-you letter was read, Treasurer John Malinchok reviewed the preliminary financial report and Fr. Dan complemented the district on making the "Spirit of the 76th" a spiritually inspiring event, adding that both Metropolitans Herman and Theodosius and Bishop Nikon had expressed their gratitude. It was decided to keep the profits within the district for future programs and to hold an appreciation event next summer for those who worked on the convention.

National Spiritual Advisor Fr. Eugene Vansuch, the e-board's rep, extended greetings from the board and from His Beatitude. He mentioned that "our" national convention built on the success of the 75th as well as the 13th All-American Council in Orlando, noting that a quarter of all the AAC delegates were Fellowship members. Fr. Eugene also reported on the recent presentation he and John Kruchok made to the OCA Holy Synod of Bishops at their fall session on the F.O.C.A. and urged the district to support the "Gifts of Love" program for Alaska and the Adopt-a-Seminarian project. The delegates voted to contribute \$1,000 toward the St. Herman's Seminary icon project, \$500 to the seminarian children Christmas fund, \$450 to the Christmas stocking fund, and the district's FOS membership was renewed. Lt. Gov Lelo awarded the district scholarships to Kimberly Metz of Bethlehem (Matushka Prislowsky Memorial Scholarship) and to Brendan

Zindel of Alpha and Adam Franz of Minersville.

Membership has remained stable throughout our senior chapters while our junior membership, particularly the chapter-at-large, has steadily increased. Several parishes without junior chapters nevertheless assume the dues for their youth. John Dudash will endeavor to increase senior chapter-at-large membership in the next year. The 2003 district convention was awarded to St. Nicholas in Bethlehem. Officers elected are: Gov. Nick Ressetar; Lt. Gov. Gary Lelo; Secretary Alice Mallick (new); Treasurer Matthew Hatrak (new) and Fr. Dan will continue as spiritual advisor with Fran Vansuch and Barbara Roman staying on as junior advisors. After the installation ceremony, the convention closed with the traditional prayer, motto and circle of friendship.

St. Andrew's Day Observance

Fr. David Garretson, spiritual advisor of the South River "R" Club and the upcoming national convention committee, was the guest speaker at the annual St. Andrew's Day commemoration held on December 1st at St. John's Church in Alpha, NJ. Though the attendance was small, his topic on "God's Gift of Sexuality: An Orthodox Christian Perspective," was timely, informative and even provocative. A lively discussion and dinner followed. Many commented that his talk should be given again on a larger scale and published.

St. Herman's Seminary Chapel Icon Fund

Several representatives from St. Herman's Seminary in Alaska, led by Fr. Michael Oleksa, participated at a Christmas concert at St. Nicholas Church in Bethlehem (appropriately enough!) on December 19th. On behalf of the district, Fr. Eugene Vansuch and Lt. Gov. Gary Lelo presented them with a \$1,000 check to fund the chapel's icon of St. Andrew the First Called, the Fellowship's patron saint. Fr. Michael warmly thanked the district for its



Nation's Capital "R" Club gather for a Pot Luck meal.



On behalf of the Central PA District, Fr. Eugene Vansuch and Lt. Gov. Gary Lelo presented Fr. Michael Oleksa with a \$1,000 check to fund the chapel's icon of St. Andrew the First Called.

continued support of the seminary and the Diocese of Alaska and invited us to pay a visit.

Nation's Capital In Full Gear!

The busy autumn found the Nation's Capital "R" Club, Washington, DC, in full gear! The annual Pot Luck Supper was held in November, followed by the chapter meeting, coordinated by Marie Yanowsky, during which the chapter officers are elected. Outgoing President Eleanor Skuby thanked the chapter for their help, cooperation and generosity to Orthodox charities. Also retiring was Treasurer John Ihnat and chapter representative Walter Skuby.

Officers elected for 2003 calendar year are: President Walter Alesevich; Vice-President Danny Osolinsky; Secretary Chris Rowe; Treasurer John Slanta and Chapter Representative Lisa Morris.

End-of-year activities included the Divine Liturgy for St. Andrew's Day in November at St. Nicholas cathedral,

Washington, DC, followed by lunch at the Mongolian Grill in Bethesda, MD.

The annual Pot Luck Christmas Party and Gift Exchange took place December 27. Mr. J.D. Thomas chaired the event.

The chapter voted to send \$250 to the Seminarian Christmas Fund. A collection also took place at St. Nicholas cathedral for the fund.

Graduation Gift Pack

Each year, the Fellowship provides gift packs to high school and college members who are graduating. Chapters are asked to provide the names and addresses of graduates by May 1st to the coordinator of this project: Elizabeth Dutko, 626 Swallow Street, Edwardsville, PA 18704; Phone (570) 287-8513. Your timely cooperation is appreciated.

Orthodox Society of America

At its recent 26th quadrennial convention in Strongsville, OH, the following Fellowship members were elected to office: George Lichvarik, President; Margaret Hopkosky, Recording Secretary; and Nicholas Ressetar, 2nd Vice President. Organized in 1915 and now an official organization of the Orthodox Church in America, OSA provides fraternal insurance benefits to Orthodox and other Trinitarian Christians. For further information, contact the home office at 29510 Lorain Road, North Olmsted, OH 44070; 800-420-1470; or orthodox.society.org.

New Haven Chapter Honors Members

The New Haven "R" Club offers congratulations and best wishes to Stephen Swimmer, a middle school student at Wintergreen Magnet School in Hamden, upon receiving a commendation signed by President Bush and the Secretary of the Department of Education for his outstanding academic work. Stephen entered the seventh grade in September. Stephen is the son of James and Cheryl Swimmer and the grandson of Joseph and Barbara Pope.

Many members and their families attended the Orthodox Family Day Picnic at the Holy Ghost Park, sponsored by the Atlantic District FOCA. A great time had by all despite the rainy, damp weather.

Sunday, October 6, our parish honored Natalie Kruchok, along with Lydia Bolash, Anna Radin and Elizabeth Schaffeld, for their long, tireless enthusiasm and dedication to singing in the choir. They learned to sing when they were six years old, under the loving guidance of Mary Melnikoff, mother of Natalie Kruchok. Father Michael presented each one with red vase of flowers. Coffee and cake were served at the coffee hour, preceded by the singing of Many Years.

Our youth coordinator, Alexis Swan had a busy schedule for the children. November 16, lunch and holiday craft workshop was held. December 7, children and adults from throughout the area attended Vespers. Following the service, a caravan of cars drove to Lighthouse Point to view the Festival of Light. They enjoyed the beautiful display of lights and then returned to the Church hall for a Pizza Supper. The "R" club treated the youth of the parish and the adults went "Dutch treat". December 22, luncheon and Christmas Cookie decorating workshop was held.

We held our annual holiday luncheon on January 12th at the Rusty Scupper in New Haven. Following dinner, a short business meeting was held with the election of officers.

Congratulations to our newly elected FOCA officers. Spiritual Advisor, Father Michael Westerberg; President Natalie Kruchok; Vice-President Martha Asarisi; Secretary Jean Cherniavsky; Treasurer Toni Cherniavsky; Sports Chairman Martha Asarisi, District Trustee Barbara Pope, Youth Co-ordinators Martha Asarisi and Alexis Swan, Journal Correspondent /Publicity Barbara Ann Dixon, We extend our thanks to our outgoing District Trustee, Alexis Swan for a job well done.

On December 15, we all enjoyed a great potluck supper at the home of Stu & Robin Milberg in Westport.

- Barbara Ann Dixon

66th Annual Novogodny Ball

The 66th annual Novogodny Ball, sponsored by the FOCA's St. Stephen's Orthodox Christian Fellowship, was held on January 25th in Trevese, PA, near Philadelphia. Almost 300 Fellowship members and friends gathered for an



Colonial Dist. Gov. Walter Alesevich with Diana Haverlack at the Ball.

evening of dinner and dancing with proceeds benefitting Orthodox charities. Many juniors and other youth also participated. Established by the former Alpha "R" Club and hosted for the past 16 years by St. Stephen's, it is probably the oldest continuous Fellowship event (apart from national and district conventions). Paul Fedoronko was chairman. The Colonial District held a meeting earlier in the day.

"Gifts of Love" Drive Begins

The 2003 "Gifts of Love" drive, formerly known as "Heartbeat Sunday" is now in progress. Delegates to the 76th National Convention selected Alaska to be the recipient last September. They also approved a motion to rename the drive "Gifts of Love" to reflect a more generic charitable and humanitarian aid designation. Previous "Heartbeat Sunday" drives raised funds for Russia and Eastern Europe, addressed needs of needy Alaska clergy and families and most recently, Project Mexico.

F.O.C.A. National President John Kruchok and National Spiritual Advisor Fr. Eugene Vansuch met with His Grace, Bishop NIKOLAI, of the Diocese of Alaska to discuss specific needs. It was suggested that a new or previously-owned **pickup truck would greatly serve the needs of St. Herman's Theological Seminary.** The vehicle could be used for maintaining the seminary buildings and grounds and also help in transporting materials via ferry.

The National Executive Board approved the fund-raising project in its meeting in Weirton, West Virginia on November 2, 2002. It was noted that the F.R.O.C. raised funds for a van in 1985. The van has recently been replaced by a new vehicle.

Margaret Hopkosky, Past National Secretary, has been named as National Chairperson. Contributions should be sent to her at:

GIFTS of LOVE

Margaret Hopkosky
6474 State Road, I-16
Parma, Ohio 44134.
Phone: 440-842-2611

F.O.C.A. Fulfills Pledge to the Life-Giving Spring Retreat Center

Las Vegas, NV: Sunday, January 19th, Fr. Eric George Tosi, pastor of St. Paul the Apostle Orthodox Church, accepted a donation to the Life-Giving Spring R e t r e a t C e n t e r . Presenting the check and an icon of Christ with Children



is National Treasurer, Michael Bowan. Fr. Tosi represented Fr. Lawrence Gaudreau, the retreat center director.

During the plenary sessions of its 75th National Convention in Pittsburgh, PA, a motion was passed to contribute \$2,000 towards the sponsored renovation of a guest room within the Center. Earlier that year, the District Junior Advisor Workshop had been held there and the attendees praised the facilities and hospitality they experienced.

The Life-Giving Spring Retreat Center, overlooking Lake Mead, is a facility operated by the OCA's Diocese of the West. It was purchased in 2000 to be used exclusively as a retreat center for Orthodox groups and can be used for individual parish, deanery, clergy, choir and youth retreats. The Center can accommodate up to forty-one people, with expansion plans that include a free-standing chapel, library and bookstore.

The Center's website is www.lasvegasorthodox.com/RetreatCenter/

New Jersey District Off to an Exciting Start

The New Jersey District added a refreshing twist to the standard district convention routine this year, thanks to host chapter Bayonne #97, as we sailed along the Hudson River on November 1 in grand style aboard the Horizon. The Bayonne members promised us a magical night to kick off the 51st Annual NJ District Convention and they

Time is running short...
for application to the
2003 F.O.C.A. Scholarship Program,
national and district awards.
All applications must be completed by **March 31, 2003.**
You can get applications on-line at www.orthodoxfellowship.org
or contact Sandra Kapelan at the F.O.C.A. National Headquarters at 10 Downs Drive (Plains), Wilkes-Barre, PA 18705. Phone is (570) 825-3158 or e-mail: orthodoxfellowship@yahoo.com
Sandra is also our administrator so everything must be sent back to her during the submission process.

certainly delivered. Of course, all protocol was followed, beginning with the procession of officers, a prayer, the National Anthem, and our FOCA anthem. A special touch happened to be added, however, as we sailed past the incredible Empire State Building, illuminated in red, white, and blue, while the group proudly sang the National Anthem.

We began a new year for the district and a new state of mind. The 230+ guests in attendance at the banquet came from as far as central PA to join us in our celebration. We were able to wander around the boat, catching up with friends, dancing, and enjoying the beautiful sites of the Manhattan skyline. Later in the evening as we neared the Statue of Liberty, the group paused to sing God Bless America. It was a successful and fulfilling event.

Convention sessions were held on Saturday in Bayonne's Church Hall. In addition to the usual reports and orders of business conducted by Governor Michael Steffaro, two brainstorming sessions were held. One session led by the now Laura Johnson focused on **district activities** and set a full schedule of events for the upcoming year. Tentative dates are as follows:

- February 15 – Pre-Lenten Bowling Social at Parkway Lanes
- April 20 – Palm Sunday Service at Randolph
- May 3 – Spring Golf Outing at Mattawang course in Hillsborough
- June 14 – Family Miniature Golf at Pine Creek
- July 12 – Summer Outing
- September 27 – Fall Football Classic at Rutgers University
- October 4 or 11 – Fall Golf Outing at Southmore, Belle Meade
- October 19 – Fall Masquerade Party
- October 20 – Russian Cabaret Night
- November 23 – St. Nicholas/St. Andrew's Vesper Service

Many of our events such as Bowling, Miniature Golf, the Summer Outing, the

Masquerade Party, and the Football Classic are geared towards the entire family and Juniors are encouraged to attend. Additional events for the Juniors have been scheduled, including:

- February 22 – Ice Skating in Bayonne
- March 22-23 – Lenten Youth Retreat in Singac
- April 12 – Basketball Clinic

Also planned are a Parish Life Workshop and an Atlantic City trip, with details to still be determined.

The second break out session focused on the **Future Life of the District**, led by Peter Junda. A major conclusion drawn from this session was that we need to improve our external relations, as well as our internal communications. As a result of this session, the district created a Future Life of the District committee, which will bring topics of concern to three Trustees meetings throughout the year and allow members to share ideas on how to address these issues.

The New Jersey District is vibrant and the Executive Board is very excited about the upcoming year. The 2003 officers are: Fr. David Garretson, Spiritual Advisor; Michael Steffaro, Governor; Laura Johnson, Lt. Governor; Michael Kupec, Treasurer; Amy Barrett, Asst. Treasurer; Allison Steffaro, Secretary; Tamara Bacsik, Asst. Secretary; Rich Grunwald, Sports Director; Greg Cimboric, Asst. Sports Director; Immediate Past Governor, Anna Romanof-sky.

In building upon this wonderful experience, we would like to invite our friends from throughout the



organization, those who we already know and those who we have yet to meet, to join us at our district events.

In an effort to expand our horizons, meet fellow Orthodox outside of the organization, and spread the joy that we have found within the organization, we are reaching out to other Orthodox in our diocese and welcome them in joining us at any of our activities. If you are interested in joining us, please e-mail Governor Michael Steffaro at michaelsteffaro@comcast.net for details.

- Tamara Bacsik

Pittsburgh District Convention Notes

The 2002-2003 District Executive Board elected is: Spiritual Advisor: Rev. Thomas Soroka, of Chapter # 3 – McKee's Rocks; Governor: Serge Daniels, of Chapter # 156 – Three Rivers; Lt. Governor: Myra Oleynik, of Chapter # 109 – Canonsburg; Treasurer: John Rusinko, of Chapter # 109 – Canonsburg; Rec. Secretary: Dr. Michael Wusylko, of Chapter # 1 – North Suburban; Adm. Secretary: Mat. Annice Oleynik, of Chapter # 109 – Canonsburg; Imm. Past Gov.: Dr. John Schultz, of Chapter # 58 – Weirton;



Above) South River members sharing food and fellowship while sailing past the Manhattan skyline; Family and friends of the New Jersey District celebrate the 90th birthday of Mary Dubowchik of #44, Singac, NJ; **Left)** New Jersey Dist. Convention chair Marge Kovach with her daughter Danielle and mother Marge Cimboric.

Junior Advisors: Sonia Schultz, of Chapter # 58 – Weirton and Patty Lear, of Chapter # 5 – Ambridge; 2-yr Nominating: Greg Nescott, of Chapter # 1—North Suburban; 1-yr Nominating: Joe Mell, of Chapter # 3 – McKee’s Rocks

The District events planned for the year are: 2003 Snow Ball Dinner/Dance: Donora # 35 – Feb.16; 2003 Picnic Mtg/St. Andrew Celebration: McKee’s Rocks # 3 – June 30; 2003 District Convention: Canonsburg # 109 – October 19; 2003 District Golf Outing: Allison Park # 1 – August/September TBA

A new event the District will have is a District Folk Dance Night, which will be sponsored by Canonsburg # 109.

The District business discussed was:

- Website will be up soon – District agreed to cover monthly cost.
 - Continue to support repairs to Diocesan Pavilion
 - Still about \$ 1000.00 already pledged
 - Suggested to put in sound system
 - Continue to support Youth Activities in Diocese
 - Will pay for DJ at annual Orthodox Youth Dance at Ambridge
 - Will provide a copy of Youth Guidelines to all Parishes in the Diocese
 - Will offer to Archbishop that District will again plan and organize Family Day
 - Will contribute up to \$ 1000.00 to offset costs.
 - Will Sponsor Two Seminarians at \$ 25.00/month
 - One will be a Seminarian from our Diocese attending St.Vladimir’s
 - The other will be through the Adopt-a-Seminarian Project.
 - Will continue editorial and monetary support for *Newsline*.
- This year’s break out sessions included:

Membership & Growth

- Many ideas discussed to strengthen existing Chapters and form new chapters.
- Will appoint Committee to examine retention of 18-35 age group.
- Will continue to invite non-members to all District events but will give discount to District members.

Relations between Clergy and F.O.C.A.

- District will approach all Clergy in Diocese to address Concerns, input, etc.
- Will sponsor informal Dinner Gatherings with small groups of Clergy to encourage dialogue and possible new Chapters ♦

Fellowship Information

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 Wilkes-Barre, PA 18705
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 National Administrative Secretary
 Phone: (570) 825-3158 Fax: (570) 825-0136
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F.O.C.A. Mission HOTLINE Project: Outfits the Chapel at West Point and St. Stephen’s Mission

A set of white vestments with altar coverings was sent to the mission parish at the United States Military Academy, West Point, New York.

The chaplain of the Orthodox Chapel of St. Martin of Tours, United States Military Academy, West Point, NY, Fr. Joseph Frawley, thanked the F.O.C.A. Mission HOTLINE for their donation of the vestments, and stated: “Since we are not a parish with dues-paying members, we rely on donations such as yours to obtain furnishings and liturgical items for the mission Chapel...we are most grateful for your support.”

Dear Mission HOTLINE,

Glory to Jesus Christ! Thank you so very much for the vestments and altar server robes. This Pascha we will use them with great joy, as we have had no white for our altar servers. The green vestments are wonderful — we have had no green vestments at all, either. What a kind service you do for the Body of Christ!

Attached are our pictures, both of the white altar boy vestments and of the green priest’s vestments. Thank you again.

In Christ our true God,

+Father Mark Hodges

St. Stephen’s Mission, Lima, OH

442 South Charles St, Lima OH 45805-3365

(419) 224-8600 or <http://home.surge.net/orthodox>



Top & Right) Mission HOTLINE donations made to St. Stephen’s mission in Lima, OH; **Below)** Fr. Joseph Frawley, Orthodox Chaplain, West Point, NY, displays white vestment donated through the Mission HOTLINE.

The convention committee militia stands ready, the events are set, the colonial venues are waiting; all we need is a new supply of colonists- YOU!

The 2003 National Convention committee is ready to provide you with a weekend of "Southern Hospitality". By the time you are reading this you should have already received your convention information package full of all kinds of information to make your stay an unforgettable one. (If you have not, please log on to our web site at www.williamsburg2003.org)

Once you arrive at The Woodlands Hotel, "The Williamsburg Welcome Wagon" at our Thursday night Open House will acclimate you into the 18th century and give you a feel of colonial life living in Virginia. After sessions on Friday, experience a night at our "Yankee Pub" fun for the entire family with a variety of "colonial entertainment"; so just sit back and enjoy a fun filled evening with family and friends. Saturday afternoon is free to explore the historic grounds or join us on a guided tour of Carter's Grove plantation. This is open to all juniors and seniors. We have 400 seats reserved (for two dining times) at the colonial taverns for Saturday night. Please see your ticket order sheet to make reservations. (They are on a first come basis for both seatings). Also scheduled for Saturday are private guided Historic Lantern tours before and after dinner. On Sunday, the Banquet and Ball will be held in the famous Williamsburg Lodge. Then on Monday we will send you off back into the 21st century with a farewell luncheon.

If you have family members who are not attending sessions we have planned a Southern Tea Party for the ladies as well as Garden Tours for Friday afternoon. If you are a young colonist -ages 8 and up there are plenty of things planned. On Friday we will spend the entire day exploring Jamestown and Yorktown. Saturday morning we will spend time with young colonials at the historic Powell house playing 18th century games and making colonial crafts. We will check out the militia drill going on and maybe get a few volunteers to participate. As for our smaller colonists (those 8 and under) there will be arts and crafts and other activities for them all day Friday and again on Saturday morning while their parents are in sessions.

While visiting the sites at the Colonial Williamsburg Foundation please make time to visit Merchant Square located in the middle of the town. Here you will find colonial interpreters walking around the brick-lined streets while you shop for unique colonial items. There are numerous places to purchase colonial reproductions, silver pieces, fine wines, crafts, toys and books. There are also places to eat and rest. It will surely be an historic shopping trip.

If the Colonial Williamsburg Foundation does not have enough for you, there is Jamestown, Yorktown and Busch Gardens only minutes away. We are hoping that our guests come before the convention or stay after (the rates are good 3 days prior and 3 days after) to enjoy all the sites the area has to offer. Room rates at The Woodlands are \$99, which includes continental breakfast daily, free parking and the opportunity to purchase a Freedom Pass good for one year at a reduced rate.

Extensive information on room reservations, tickets have been mailed. Please make your room and ticket reservations early, deadline for ticket purchases is July 1, 2003! We can't wait to see all of you in Williamsburg. We are sure that by joining us you will truly be a part of history, (FOCA history, that is). ♦

Williamsburg the Place to Be in 2003

**Colonists Start
Packing Your Bags!**

**August 28th- September
1st Williamsburg, Virginia**

**It's Going to
Be a
Revolutionary
Good Time!**



Top) Convention committee meets with Colonists from Williamsburg; **Bottom)** Other committee members entice conventioners to attend the 77th National FOCA Convention.

The Fellowship's Own Missionaries: *Spreading the Good News*

"Without our missionary grants from the Fellowship, we wouldn't have been able to serve on Orthodox Christian Mission Center (OCMC) short-term mission teams last summer. Thanks so much for your support and prayers."

...these words of gratitude were expressed by John Diamantis of State College, PA and Katerina Maillis of Lancaster, PA, each of whom received \$1,500 mission grants from the F.O.C.A.'s mission program last year. John spent two-and-a-half weeks serving in Alaska in July/August 2002 and Katerina worked in Kenya in August 2002. Both attended Holy Trinity Church in State College where Fr. John Reeves, OCA Church Growth director, is pastor, while at Penn State.

The national convention body at Saw Mill Creek, Ohio in 2000, recognizing the Fellowship's programmatic emphasis on missionary work, voted to award grants to those interested in serving on OCMC mission teams. While preference naturally is given to F.O.C.A. members, the award may be made to any qualified Orthodox Christians particularly in a year, like last, where no one from the Fellowship applied. The first grant was given to Amy Barrett of the South River "R" Club, South River, NJ, who worked in Romania during the summer of 2001. What follows are the respective accounts of John and Katrina, told in their own words and photos.

Alaska

John Diamantis, originally from Mt. Pocono, PA, graduated with a psychology major in May 2002. "I thank God and the Fellowship for everything — it was one of the best things that ever happened to me." His OCMC team consisted of 11: 4 adults, 3 teens and 4 children from Arizona, Florida, California, New York, Wisconsin and other states. Led by Fr. Dimitri Vincent, a Romanian priest in Michigan, they met at St. Herman's Seminary in Kodiak for an orientation and then traveled by bush planes and boats to rural, outlying villages whose only formal connection with the Church occurs in the summer. Some 96 churches are served by only 23 priests. Their mission: to teach the Orthodox faith to the native peoples of Alaska.

"Originally I was prepared to teach on advanced levels —

liturgy, history, theology — and I spent much of the early summer reading and studying. But when we arrived in the villages, I realized that the people had only a very basic understanding of Orthodoxy and a few even had some incorrect beliefs, such as thinking we 'worshiped' icons," according to John. The team spent time with adults, young adults, teens and children, teaching them the fundamental tenets of the Orthodox Faith that many understood from within. Soon, however, John said that the mission members were learning from them. "They taught me what living the faith really means, from how they approached the chalice at Holy Communion to their respect for elders and their respect for God's creation."

In a striking example of this innate faith, John pointed to the time in the liturgy when the priest comes from the altar with the chalice holding the Body and Blood of Christ. "The people literally draw near, as the priest says, rushing forward and surrounding him. They know and understand that it is truly the Body and Blood of Christ, even though they may not comprehend the Mystery intellectually." One older woman, whose head was covered in brightly-colored native clothing, turned around before taking Communion, looked at everyone

in church and with a face of "absolute fear and joy" asked for forgiveness. John felt that this was the perfect attitude or mindset for partaking of the Eucharist, having a holy fear of Christ but joyful at the opportunity to receive.

The mission team visited 4 villages. At Crooked Creek the people saw their priest, Fr. Nicholas Larsen, only once a year: he blessed homes and performed baptisms and weddings while they were teaching. "In the Church of Alaska," John found, "the people may lack resources but they have a deeper

understanding of the Faith. But we — with all our books, Internet access and churches — don't always have that same profound understanding although in the lower 48 we are so blessed by God." The challenge for us, he added, is not to take our Orthodoxy for granted but always to

Below) Bishop Nikolai visits Alaskan villages; Metropolitan HERMAN visits Spruce Island.



remember why we are in church and to use all our tools to teach others.

Why is it so important that mission teams visit Alaska? The Alaskan Orthodox are under attack by other Christian groups, particularly Protestant. A large camp operates near the Bering Strait and the Protestant “missionaries” arrive in the villages by helicopter, teaching the people that Orthodoxy is wrong and taking their children back to the camp. They are much better funded, needless to say, and have greater resources. “Our own Orthodox people need us to support them,” John said, “and by the Grace of God they will maintain the Faith.”

Although the young people especially are under outside pressure, secular and religious, to turn from the Orthodox Church, John observed that the village elders have preserved a tremendous oral tradition, passing down Orthodoxy from their ancestors, and that they feel strongly Orthodox and American. “I could see the difference between how we as Orthodox missionaries were treated by villagers and how those who were trying to steal their faith from them were treated. They sensed that we were helping them in an authentic, sincere way, and had no separate agenda.” Their hospitality was overwhelming to the team members, who were invited into their modest homes and shared in their limited provisions. “We were treated like royalty, and the villagers’ hearts and souls were bright with the love of Christ.”

As John and his fellow team members prepared to leave Alaska, he couldn’t help feel a sense of inadequacy, asking “Was I a good guest? Did I offer them words of wisdom? Did I share with them a part of the Orthodox Faith?” He left feeling optimistic for the Orthodox peoples of Alaska, inspired by several miracles he personally observed, including healings and an icon of the Theotokos which, after a person had accused others of worshipping it and slashed it with a knife, started to bleed. “Thanks again, Fellowship members, for your support. I wouldn’t have been able to go otherwise,” concluded John.



Left) Youth gather with Missionaries;
Right) Missionaries greet villagers after Liturgy.



OCMC assisted building this Orthodox parish in 1987. This building is used as a school, a village meeting hall and parish.

Kenya

The FOCA’s other missionary was Katerina Maillis, who

graduated with an art education major from Penn State in December 2002 and is now teaching in York, PA. “Thank you so much for your extremely generous contribution to the 2002 summer OCMC Kenya mission team. With the Fellowship’s donation, I along with an outstanding team was able to assist the Kenyan Orthodox in the construction of an eight-room secondary school and offer Orthodox teachings to the local communities. Enclosed is an article that tries to convey in some small way the prayerful experiences that we had as a team in Africa.”

“*African Fruit*: There is so much to say about our mission to Kenya and truly no words to describe our weeks there. Every aspect of the trip was perfect, every detail a blessing. Before we even set foot in Africa God brought together a team of gold. Answering the call to the ends of the earth, this team of

individuals came together for a common purpose: to serve as ‘one in Christ Jesus.’ (Gal 3:28). We were united in Christ and thus formed a bond as a family. Every member came as an individual contributing a unique personality along

with different talents and gifts and offered them to God. We were blessed with an incredible team leader, Fr. Gerasimos of Holy Cross Seminary, who above all led the group by his prayerful example and service to our Lord. He worked harder than anyone. On a given day he would be found in his long, black cassock digging, pounding, loading, moving, hauling bricks, rocks, cement

and dirt beside us every step in the hot African sun.

“We didn’t know what to expect when we arrived in Chavogere, but the welcome we received from the Kenyan Orthodox was one none of us will forget. Within the first few minutes of our arrival I knew that this mission would be unlike anything I had ever experienced. As we approached the village, it seemed as if out of nowhere hundreds of people began to swarm around our van while playing the drums, clapping, dancing and singing. The sight was overwhelming! Not knowing where to turn first, I glanced out the left window. With that glance, as if in a movie, time shifted into slow motion and I beheld the biggest, brightest smile my eyes had ever seen. This smile was filled with a pureness of heart, was given

with warmth and it radiated so much joy. My eyes began to dance from girl to boy and from man to woman. With each beat a similar smile was given. The Kenyans' faces lit up with the same simple joy and we were illumined. We were made to feel at home. We came to Africa as strangers but we were greeted as brothers and sisters.

"Walking along the dirt roads of the villages, we continued to be greeted joyfully but we also found great poverty. Most people lived in mud huts with no water, electricity or luxury whatsoever. Most couldn't afford shoes. Malaria overtook the villages by day and we heard the sound of the burial drums throughout the night as people 'fell asleep in the Lord.' So many times I would try to relate to their poverty and suffering. I found that trying to put myself in their shoes (or lack thereof) was useless. My heart became saddened. I wondered how such afflicted souls lived life continually offering praises to God. I heard Christ's words echoing in my heart: 'How hard it is for those who have riches to enter the Kingdom of God!' God Himself opened my eyes to the true wealth of Africa. I remembered the words of Mother Gavrilia who after a mission to Africa said: 'Africa has the greatest treasure . . . the barefooted and hungry Christ. . .'

The Kenyan Orthodox shined as a light exposing my own spiritual poverty. They effortlessly gave love, gave of themselves, gave of their material and spiritual gifts. They lived as Christ instructed, 'Freely you have received, freely give.' (Matt. 10:8). Whatever they did have they gave with the fullness of their hearts. Everywhere we went we were generously presented with the fruits of the earth (usually bananas!). And at the same time the Africans unknowingly presented us with the sweetness of much greater fruit: the fruit of the Holy Spirit.

"The love and dedication that the Kenyans have for God amazed us all. Toddlers and elders alike walked 6 miles to



Top) Kenyans would travel miles by foot to wait in line to seek treatment from OCMC team doctors; **Middle)** Fr. Gerasimos leads the OCMC team in preparing the ground for the future school; **Bottom)** Older students would gather for Bible studies.

get to church on Sunday morning for the 8 a.m. matins service. Most of the churches were constructed of mud, topped with flimsy tin roofs. But God allowed the poverty of the churches to be transformed into structures of beauty. In a strange way, the humble churches

seemed to glorify God. While standing in the midst of the faithful, I looked beyond and noticed beams of light streaming down onto the altar. My eyes were led upward to the holes in the roof. I stood and beheld God's light shining through the cracks. The rays touched His people all around me as they sang, "now lay aside all earthly cares. . ."

"Peace filled my heart and then at the time of communion I was once again overcome with joy. The familiar drums began to play, hands came together clapping, and loving voices sang praises to our Lord. Sure these were the poorest churches but in them worshiped the richest people I have ever encountered. After fasting and such a long journey so early in the morning, they didn't miss a beat. Somehow they were all the more energized. The joy that I spoke of as they welcomed us to their villages carried into and multiplied during the Divine Liturgy as they welcomed Christ into their hearts. With fear, love and joy they approached the holy chalice so that they ' . . . may receive the King of

all.'

"The Kenyan Orthodox send their greetings and love to all of you. They ask that you remember them in your prayers as they will remember you as brothers and sisters in America. We felt your prayers throughout our entire journey. Without a doubt, the members of the F.O.C.A. made my participation in this mission possible. Thank you with all my heart — your generosity is so greatly appreciated! God bless!"

The Fellowship's OCMC mission grant program is administered by the office of the National Spiritual Advisor, Fr. Eugene Vansuch. F.O.C.A. members especially are

encouraged to apply. For further information and to apply, please contact Fr. Daniel Ressetar, Mission Coordinator, at 5501 Locust Lane, Harrisburg, PA 17109; (717) 652-1825; frdanhbg@aol.com. ♦

F.O.C.A. Mission HOTLINE Project: Life Blood of Missions

Interest in the Orthodox faith is at an all time high! Orthodox missions are opening in all parts of the country. The Fellowship of Orthodox Christians in America (F.O.C.A.), an arm of the Orthodox Church in America (OCA), has pledged to assist these missions with their needs through their mission statement to "...support and encourage the missionary growth of our church...", but we need your help!

The F.O.C.A. Mission HOTLINE Project, a mission project of the F.O.C.A., is a church article exchange or donation project of the F.O.C.A. that serves as a "broker" of church articles from established churches to mission parishes requiring such articles. The F.O.C.A. Mission HOTLINE Project maintains a "wish list" of church articles.

If your church finds excess or duplicate church articles, e.g., chalices, processional fans, Gospel covers, blessing crosses, clergy vestments, winding sheets (Plaschanitza or Epitaphios), let the F.O.C.A. Mission HOTLINE Project know of the availability of the excess church items.

If your mission is in need of items, provide the name of your mission, address, and the list of what is required to the F.O.C.A. Mission HOTLINE. Your "needs" will be placed on the F.O.C.A. Mission HOTLINE "wish list". When church items become available that match your mission needs, the items will be sent to your mission.

The F.O.C.A. Mission HOTLINE began in 1948; the HOTLINE reactivated 18 years ago. Since then, the HOTLINE has served over 55 mission parishes from all canonical Orthodox Christian jurisdictions. The HOTLINE depends on established Orthodox parishes to assist the mission parishes with their needs.

If your parish has excess church articles or anticipates excess church articles becoming available, and are willing to arrange for a donation to a mission parish, please contact the F.O.C.A. HOTLINE at slanta@erols.com, or F.O.C.A. Mission HOTLINE Project, 6610 Cypress Point Road, Alexandria, VA 22312. ♦

Missions in Our Community

by Matthew Vansuch

Being a good steward of our community requires us to expand our mission beyond the Orthodox Church and into our own community. The Church teaches us that we are to respect God's creations and be good stewards of the earth. By stepping outside of the Orthodox "box," we truly fulfill our mission to serve others. Simply showering groups with money may temporarily soften their situation, but giving one's time, talent, and effort is even better.

I'd like to share with you several ideas that don't require a tremendous amount of organization or work yet will reap far greater benefits to you and the people you help.

1. Sponsor a Mission/Organization: Choose an Orthodox mission church or another needy organization as your "adopted" sibling for the year. If your church has coffee socials after Divine Liturgy, take a free-will offering that will be sent to that group. This can be done monthly, or maybe you'll have several events throughout the year and then send the money to the group afterwards. Always remember to prominently display information about your project and the group you're sponsoring at each event so that people know why they're being asked for money. Our chapter has been doing this for several years, picking a different mission each year.

2. Angel Tree: Work with a local elementary school or shelter to provide needy children with Christmas presents. One of our parishioners organized this project this past Christmas, and over 70 children received presents; there weren't enough angels to meet the number of parishioners who wanted to participate. If you would rather de-emphasize the presents, you can always buy clothing and/or educational items.

3. Warm Hands Reading: A Cleveland radio station sponsored this project to collect and distribute gloves, scarves, and hats to needy children. Books were also collected and handed out. Even a book collection would help the elementary schools or libraries, which are facing severe budget constraints.

4. Habitat for Humanity: Across the country, this organization works with the local community to eliminate substandard housing. While you may think of the massive events to build a single home in a short time, they run smaller projects all the time. Use their website (<http://www.habitat.org>) to find projects in your area.

5. Lot Clean-Up: If your church is located in a city or you drive by an empty lot filled with garbage on your way to church, then why not take a morning and help clean it up. You should contact the city to find out who owns the lot and to present your idea to them. They might be able to help you. Plant trees or grass, and a dump can be turned from an eyesore into much-needed green space.

6. Give Water a Hand: This group shows how to get your youth group involved with cleaning up the environment and helping protect the earth's limited water supply. Visit their website at <http://www.uwex.edu/erc/gwah/> for more information and an activity packet.

These are just a few ideas, but the best ideas are the ones that fit your community! Project America has a website (<http://www.project.org>) with information on community service ideas and organization tips to make your project a success. Contact local service organizations, like the Rotary or Optimist clubs to see if they are sponsoring any activities in which your chapter can participate.

If you have any other projects that your church or chapter has done, please let the OCJ know! It should be our mission to serve the Church and others. ♦

Seminarian Families Express

Thanks for F.O.C.A. Christmas Gifts

in Record-Setting Year!

A record \$4,500 was distributed to 41 seminarian families on St. Nicholas Day, representing \$50 gifts to each of 90 children from St. Herman's, St. Tikhon's, St. Vladimir's and Christ the Savior Seminaries. Thanks to all who contributed to this expression of love to those who make sacrifices to pursue church vocations. Contributions are still being accepted to make up a shortfall in this record-breaking distribution year. They can be sent to **Michael Bowan, National Treasurer at 2100 Lincoln Park #9-ES, Chicago, Illinois, 60614.** According to Michael, the breakdown is as follows: St. Herman's Seminary, 9 families, 24 children; St. Tikhon's Seminary, 20 families, 40 children; St. Vladimir's Seminary, 11 families, 24 children; Christ the Savior Seminary, 1 family, 1 child. Here are excerpts from some of the mail we received:

"It is with sincere gratitude that I have received the St. Nicholas Day gift that the FOCA has so generously provided to our three children. I was filled with emotion when I read your words about the sacrifices which seminarian's children must make all year long in order that their fathers may attend to the Lord's work. The gifts for the children for which the money was intended have been purchased and distributed, and of course they were delighted. However the most important gift the children received was the example of Christian Love which the members of the FOCA have given. The children will never forget that, I can assure you. Glory to God for those generous members of the FOCA who have contributed to this cause. Mat. Valerie and I, along with our children, Alexei, Anna and Matthew, would like to wish all of you a blessed Nativity season." *Deacon Stephen Kaznica*

"On behalf of my family please accept our gratitude for the \$50 gifts to our children. Seminary life for a family is a constant financial struggle and that is felt more than ever during the Nativity



Top) The Bushelli family—Elizabeth, Sophia and Julian; Bottom) The John Oliver family—Anastasia and Genevieve.

season. It's loving gifts such as these from the faithful that encourages seminary families to continue to make the sacrifices necessary in order to serve the Church in the future. Thank you for the investment!" — *Innocent, Christine, Shelby-Lane and Emmelia Dresdow*

"Quyana Cakneg! (AK. Yupik) Thank you very much. FOCA, thanks to you Joachim and Alexander will be extra joyful this season. And it is of great honor to share with you the love of the celebration of the Nativity. The gifts will make a difference to both Joachim (8) and Alexander (3) when celebrating the Feast of St. Nicholas the Wonderworker. Joachim has been having a hard time understanding why he cannot get what he desired the most, like he did before

we came to St. Herman's. Your generous gift will enlighten him as it does us, especially to know that his prayers have been answered. Again, thank you very much for the generous gift that will help touch hearts with love and joy from God's loving mercy. We will keep you in our prayers. Quyana! — *Elia, Anna, Joachim and Alexander Larson, St. Herman's Seminary*

"Glory to Jesus Christ, Glory Forever! It is with deepest gratitude that Marie and I would like to acknowledge receipt of your most generous Christmas gift for our son Alex (age 8). We are members of chapter #30, an active club in the metropolitan New York area. Your gift was unexpected and indeed a wonderful surprise! Once again I would like to express our sincere thanks to you and the devoted members of FOCA for their outreach ministry to seminarians attending St. Tikhon's Seminary, your efforts do not go unnoticed! May our newborn Savior richly bless you and the members of FOCA for their Christian love, dedication and witness!" — *V. Rev. Lawrence Bacik*

"I am writing you to thank you on behalf of my children for your most generous gift on the occasion of the celebration of the feast of St. Nicholas the Wonderworker. When I opened the envelope from your organization placed in the mailbox at St. Tikhon's Seminary and found your check, I was stunned beyond belief. This past semester has been a bit rough for my entire family, both financially as well as on an emotional level, and the monetary gift you provided them will go a long way towards providing them with a nice gift during this holy season. My children, Rebecca, Nicholas, Sarah and Rachel send you their love and appreciation and wish you a blessed Feast of the Nativity of Our Savior in the Flesh. Christ is Born! Glorify Him! May Our Lord, God and Savior Jesus Christ bless you and all your endeavors and may you be blessed to continue the good work you do on behalf of the FOCA. Attached please find a photo of my children, I thought you should have it to show their smiling faces and the love they have for

you for all your generosity and kindness.
— *Rev. Deacon Mark Oliver*

“My wife and I would like to say thank you very much to you and your wonderful organization for your kind and generous gift to us of \$50 for a Christmas gift for our son. It came to us as a great and happy surprise, and provided help also. It likewise is simply heartening to know that an organization such as yours exists, and that we have such family in Christ, though we have never met. Our son Isaac was born on December 4th, just two days after you sent your letter to Fr. Miloro. Thank you again.” — *Seminarian Matthew Baker, Christ the Savior Seminary*

“...we thank you and all the tireless supporters of FOCA for the gracious gift you gave our children in the spirit and memory of St. Nicholas the Wonderworker. It will, indeed, help us meet the needs and desires of our family this Blessed Nativity Season.” — *David and Catherine Arnold and girls*

“...thank you FOCA for the generous gift to our children on St. Nicholas Day. What a big help!” — *Dn. James, Karen, Emma and John*

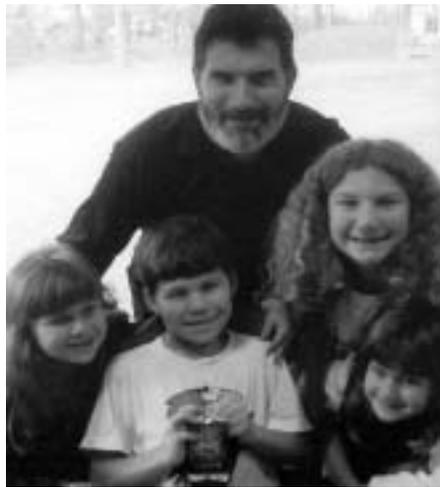
“On behalf of my family, I would like to thank you for remembering us once again as we draw near to the Feast of the Nativity of Our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. The support is greatly appreciated and is received with humility and love. May Our Lord bless all of you as he has us” — *John Baker and family*

“Our family wishes to thank you very much for your kindness this Nativity. Luke and Mary had a wonderful Christmas thanks to your generosity. I pray that you all have a Blessed New Year full of many of the Lord’s Blessings.” — *Ambrose, Christy, Luke and Mary Arrington*

“Thank you for the \$100 to our children, James and Connor. Your kindness, consideration and generosity has blessed us” — *Nicholas and Ester Carr, St. Tikhon’s*

“We just received the money you sent for our family for Christmas, and we are deeply grateful. Our years at Seminary are challenging, but having the support of the Fellowship is a great

encouragement to us. Our little girls, Anastasia and Genevieve are growing so fast that it is hard to keep up with them and all of their needs. We will use the money you offered to buy them some snow boots and winter clothes as well as a few “fun” gifts for Christmas. Thank you and may God Bless You abundantly for your kindness and generosity.” — *John & Lara Oliver and family*



The Mark Oliver family; (L-R) Rebecca, Nicholas, Sarah and Rachael

“Thank you so much for the \$100 we received for our children. David and I (as well as little John and Nicholas) are so appreciative and grateful for your thoughtfulness in this season. May God bless your organization. I am sure you have touched so many lives.” — *David, Heather, John and Nicholas Sommer*

“Thank you so much for your generous gift for our children. We really appreciate the thoughtfulness and kindness of everyone. Have a Wonderful Nativity! — *Fr. Deacon Harry, Mat. Carrie, Harry, Alexis and Elizabeth*

“We would like to express sincere gratitude for your gift to your family. No doubt, your charitable offering will greatly help our family, particularly during this season for preparation for the Nativity of Our Lord. While we find our time at Seminary to provide numerous blessings, this time can also provide a number of various challenges. We receive strength to overcome these challenges through support within the

Church from people like you. We ask for your prayers.” — *Mark, Sophia, Anna and Nina*

“Thank you so much for your attention and support during this holiday season. Our children greatly benefit from the kindness of the FOCA! May the Lord God remember you and all others involved in this generous gift of love forever in His Kingdom!” — *Daniel and Magdalene Miller*

“Thank you for your generous Christmas gifts for our children Julian and Sophia! We appreciate all the prayers and support you have given for our family and for St. Vladimir’s Seminary. Have a Merry Christmas and a Blessed New Year!” — *Noah, Elizabeth, Julian and Sophia Bushelli*

“My wife, children (Hannah and Nina) and I thank you for the Christmas present of \$100. I believe we have grown in love for the Lord by coming to St. Tikhon’s, and hopefully have become more useful to the Lord. But it certainly has offered some challenges. We appreciate you thinking of us during this Nativity of the Lord. God Bless you.” — *Deacon Athanasius Shaw*

“Thank you for your Christmas gift to our daughter Emily. We got her some extra presents due to your generosity. May you have a Blessed Nativity and prosperity in the new year.” — *Dn. Milan, Maureen and Emily Medakovich*

“Thank you for the Christmas present that made it possible for our daughter Flora to have a festive Nativity. We are also thankful and encouraged by your support and thoughtfulness.” — *Fr. Dn. Walter, Nancy and Flora*

“We are truly grateful for your generous gift to our family this Nativity season. It was a great help to us. We would not be able to remain at seminary without the generosity of people such as yourselves. God’s richest blessings on you all” — *The Dehling Family, St. Tikhon’s*

REMINDER!

This current and the past two
OCJ issues are now
on-line at:
orthodoxfellowship.com

The Web, the Church & the FOCA

By Matthew Hatrak

Everywhere you look today you see technology being used. Whether it is for work or for personal use, it seems one cannot do anything without using a computer or finding some way of connecting to the worldwide web, also known as the Internet. Even the Orthodox Church has found many ways of using today's technology to educate the vast number of Christians that are in the world. Before we look at the different uses of technology, I would like to provide you with some basic terms and lingo that will help you understand how computers work. First of all it is not just one big computer to which we are connecting, but rather a wide range of computers. This wide range of computers is called the World Wide Web, better known as WWW. When we type this into our computer, we are telling the machine that we would like to find information out on the web. The second thing concerning the web that we need to focus on is the part that comes at the end of a web address and that is the .com, .gov, .edu, etc. This part of a web address tells the machine exactly what type of organization is providing this information to us. To a non-computer person, this may seem like no big deal, but you really have to be careful not to make a mistake when typing in this part of a web address. The information that falls between the www and the .something is the name of the organization or the person who is hosting the site. When you put all three of these parts together, you have created a Universal Resource Locator, better known as a web address or URL. Now that we have a little better understanding of some of the key terms necessary to use the Internet, let's turn our focus to how we can use this technology to educate and help Fellowship members and others.

One of the biggest ways that technology is used today is email. Through mail we can send a letter or note to someone in a matter of seconds. By

using email we can communicate a lot faster than in the past. The biggest plus to using email is that it is free to send this type of message. Besides email, informational websites are available to educate people by providing information for them to read. Almost every organization that is in existence today has a web address. Through these web sites people can be informed of up to date changes in an organization as well as follow up on different activities that are available for people. One of the biggest sites on which we as members of the Church can focus our attention is the official site of the Orthodox Church in America, WWW.OCA.ORG. From this site, you can find out all of the latest happenings in the national church. A key element of this site is the FOCUS curriculum that is used by almost all of the parishes in the OCA. From this connection or link, you can find out any updates or additions to the curriculum. There is also a link that allows you to search the directory of the OCA to find a particular parish or priest that you may want to contact or visit. You can also click to learn more about the seminaries and monasteries that are part of the OCA. You can also click to see other organizations that the national church supports.

One of these important links for Fellowship members will take you to the official site of the FOCA, WWW.ORTHODOXFELLOWSHIP.ORG. Most sites also provide you with links to additional sites concerning the same topic. So as you can see, from one website, you can find your way to a whole new avenue of information. But using technology is not limited to the Internet. There are a vast number of different software programs available that a person or group can use to produce educational material.

One of the more popular sets of programs used is the Microsoft Office Suites. From this set of programs, an organization can produce brochures to

promote your parish, chapter, district or other group. You can design an informational slide show that can be shown at church or Fellowship functions or be used to educate people about your group. Also, within this set of software is the program that is used to produce the above-mentioned websites. With this software package, you can do a variety of activities to educate or enhance your organization.

Technology plays a large role in educating and informing a large number of people at one time. Next time you see a web address or someone says to you, "check out this site", you will have a little better understanding of what they mean.

Some key websites of interest for Fellowship members and Orthodox Christians include

- WWW.OCA.ORG (Orthodox Church in America)
- WWW.STOTS.EDU (St. Tikhon's Seminary)
- WWW.SVOTS.EDU (St. Vladimir's Seminary)
- WWW.ALASKANCHURCH.ORG (OCA Diocese of Alaska)
- WWW.ORTHODOXFELLOWSHIP.ORG (FOCA)
- WWW.RUSSIAN-ORTHODOX-CHURCH.ORG.RU/EN.HTM (Orthodox Church of Russia — English or Russian)
- WWW.IOCC.ORG (Int'l Orthodox Christian Charities)
- WWW.OCMC.ORG (Orthodox Christian Mission Center)
- WWW.GOARCH.ORG (Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America)
- WWW.ORTHODOXNEWS.COM (news service of Orthodox Christian Laity, Inc.)
- WWW.HOLYMYRRHBEARERS.COM (OCA Monastery for Women) in Otego, NY)

Matthew Hatrak, treasurer of the Central PA District and a member of the SS. Peter & Paul R" Club, Minersville, PA, is a computer instructor in

Continued / Web on pg. 21

Genealogy has become a very popular hobby in the United States recently. It is the second most popular topic on the Internet, and the third most popular hobby in the U.S. The ease of communicating and doing research over the Internet has certainly contributed to its popularity. Looking up family history is very easy if you are Irish, Italian, English, French, German, or almost any other nationality that one can think of, but for many of us who belong to the FOCA the task is a little more challenging. I am talking about those of us whose ancestors came from "Austria-Hungary". We are a group whose ancestors lived on land that had been taken over by many political groups, the borders kept changing and they never had their own country. Many scholars argue about where our people originated from, where their language came from, and what nationality we are. To simplify this matter I will just say that if your ancestors said that they were from Galicia or Austria-Hungary, chances are that they were from the Carpathian Mountain region of what is now southeastern Poland, northeastern Slovakia, or western Ukraine. Our people called themselves by many names - Rusyns, Ruthenians, Rusnaks, Austrians, Lemkos, etc. Until about five years ago I considered myself "a kind of Russian" or maybe "Slavic". I've since come to learn that I am not Russian - although my religion is Russian Orthodox. I am not Ukrainian - although my European relatives live in Ukraine. And, I am not Polish - although my ancestors' villages are in Poland. My understanding now is that I am Carpatho-Russian or Carpatho-Rusyn. Having gone that far into this issue, I will leave the rest of the nationality debates to the scholars.

I hope to give those of you who are interested in genealogy some tips on how you can find out more about your ancestors of any nationality - with some extra information for those struggling to

FINDING YESTERDAY'S CHILDREN

By Maryann Dubowchik Bacsik

search for their Carpatho-Russian/Carpatho-Rusyn ancestors. Before we begin I have three warnings: 1) be open-minded with the information that you see. Many mistakes have been made on official and unofficial documents with dates, ages and names. You many have to be a little creative in your interpretations and become a sleuth; 2) Document where you find your information so that you can go back and recheck those facts if you need to; 3) be careful - genealogy is addictive!

Your immediate goal should be to find the following information on your immigrant ancestors:

1. Full Name
2. Date of Birth
3. Ancestral Village

Here are some American resources that will help you find this information:

1. **Family Members.** This should be your beginning point. Ask your relatives questions about what they remember of family stories and family history. Ask them if they have any documents in their possession that would give facts and clues about the generations who came before them. Ask to see any pictures they may have. If there is black paper glued on the backs of pictures you can scrape it off with a razor blade without damaging possible writing. Don't wait to interview your relatives - do it now. They are your most valuable resource. Information in record books will be there tomorrow - your relatives might not be.
2. **Church Records.** Your church books are an excellent source of information. The church records often list the ancestral villages in their baptismal, marriage and death registers. They may also give the names of the parents of the immigrants. Find out

where your immigrant ancestors worshipped and contact the priests in those parishes to research their archives. Many of the old records will be in Latin and Church Slavonic/Russian. You may need some help to translate them. Also ask to see old church anniversary books for pictures and clues.

If you are lucky enough to have ancestors who attended Holy Resurrection Russian Orthodox Cathedral (Wilkes-Barre, PA) their records were microfilmed by the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (LDS). The records go from the 1880's to 1933. The microfilm number is 1671291. You do not have to be a Mormon to view their microfilms. The cost of renting any of their microfilms for viewing at their facilities nationwide for about a month is only \$3.75 per film. You can check their directory on-line for their microfilm holdings at familysearch.org and go into their library collection. They have many records of our villages in Poland and Slovakia microfilmed as well.

3. **Vital Statistics Certificates.** Begin your search for birth, marriage and death certificates at the town hall archives where the events took place. Sometimes they give the place of origin in Europe for these individuals. Old marriage license applications often list the parents' names.
4. **Naturalization Records.** Immigrants were eligible to seek US citizenship after being a resident in the US for five years. The Applications for Naturalization give information about the date of arrival, ship, place of birth and date of birth for the immigrant. Unfortunately naturalization papers are usually only found for

males. Early on the spouses would automatically become a citizen with their husbands. Naturalization records are usually found in the county courthouse where the immigrant resided, or in the US District Court closest to his residence.

5. **Federal Census Records.** There are Federal Census records for 1900, 1910, 1920 and 1930 that can now be viewed. Some states, such as New Jersey, took state census records in 1905 and 1915. The National Archives offices have the Federal Census Records on microfilm, but you may be able to find them closer to you than that. Check with your local library or county historical society to find them. The LDS Family History Centers also have census records on microfilm and can be ordered for \$3.75 each. Census records are interesting to go through, especially for the boarders who lived in the houses. Many times you will find extended family or in-laws living with your ancestor or next door. These records will tell you when your ancestor arrived in the US, their occupation, how long they were married and who their children were, along with other information – depending on the census year. *Ancestry.com* has a website that you could pay for to see census records on-line.
6. **Social Security Index.** Once you have your immigrant names and ballpark dates of birth or death you can go online for free at *rootsweb.com*, *familysearch.org*, or *ancestry.com* to search for your ancestors. You can request a copy of the immigrant's Social Security application, but that will cost \$27.00 per record.
7. **Cemetery records.** Cemetery records and records kept by funeral directors can sometimes uncover cause of death, parent's name, and even maiden names for your female ancestors.
8. **Ships Records.** The ships manifests

are an excellent source of information on immigrant ancestors. Depending on the year of arrival, the information could include the age of the immigrant, if married or single, village where they came from, nationality, race, and to whom and to where in the US they were going. Also records beginning about 1906 list a relative they are leaving behind in Europe. Usually the father is listed. If the mother is listed that may be a clue that the father had already passed away. (Clues are just everywhere!) These records can be viewed at National Archives offices. An easier way to look up passenger manifests is at the Ellis Island Database (*ellislandrecords.org*). This is a free database of 24 million digitized records. You will have to register to see these records, but registration is free and easy online. As you probably have found out already, because of the language problem, our people had many mistakes with the spellings of the names and incorrect dates and ages. A fellow by the name of Steve Morse developed a method of finding hard to find individuals with his one-step system. It can be found at <http://www.jewishgen.org/databases/EIDB/ellisshort.html>. Try both his gray form and white form. Here you can search the database by village and/or name. You can also search by a "sounds like" method rather than an exact spelling. This may take a longer time but be patient. The results are worth the wait. If you are interested in setting up a website for your ancestors' village this can be very helpful. You can also search a village such as "Pielgrzymka" by typing in just the first few letters of the village "Pielg" since the spellings of the villages are also quite varied!

Now that you have established your immigrant ancestors' names, approximate birth dates and their villages of origin, here are some resources to help you find more information about your

European ancestors and hopefully delve back a few generations:

1. **The Carpatho-Rusyn Knowledge Base.** *Carpatho-rusyn.org*. You can surf through links to many sites with a wealth of information about your Galician ancestors, their history and their land. Two very helpful links at this site are under "Reference Areas". "Genealogy" gives you a list of people who are researching particular families and villages who you might want to link up with. Right under that is the "Resource Guide to Lemko Villages and Surnames." Hopefully by now you know the name of your ancestral villages. You can now find them on this list. Click on the village and you will see a list of people who owned land in that village in the year 1787 from the Austrian Cadastral Records. It is very exciting to see your name on a list dating back as far as 1787. This page will also tell you if the LDS had microfilmed the records from that village. If you are lucky and they did, that page will give you the microfilm number. Unfortunately this website has not been updated in a very long time, but it is still an extremely valuable resource.
2. **Jewishgen Shtetlseeker.** *Jewishgen.org/ShtetlSeeker/*. Once you know the name of your villages, you will want to know exactly where they are on today's maps. This website will tell you exactly where your village is, and what villages are within a specific radius of your village.
3. **LDS Family History Library.** As mentioned above, the Mormons have done extensive research in genealogy and have microfilmed their holdings from Poland and Slovakia among other places all over the world. Look at their website at *familysearch.com* to find out if your villages have been microfilmed by them.
4. **Churches.** If there is still a church in your ancestral village you can try

writing to the priest there to see if they have their old church records. If they do not, do not be discouraged. Two sets of records were kept back as far as 1787. In most cases you can find your village records in the civil records.

5. **European State Archives.** The Polish State Archives records directory is located at Archiwa.gov.pl/index.eng.html. Information about the Czech Republic and Slovak state archives can be found in links from cyndislist.com/Czech.htm. The Polish Genealogy Society of America has a website at pgsa.org with a very helpful site for writing letters in Polish at pgsa.org/letter_eng.htm.
6. **Maps.** Maps of the Lemko area and other parts of Poland can be found at lemko.org/maps100/index.html and Jewishgen.org/ShtetlSeeker/. For maps from the Czech Republic and Slovakia again refer to cyndislist.com/Czech.htm.

RELATED WEBSITES:

The Carpatho-Rusyn Society - www.carpathorusynsociety.org
This non-profit organization founded 8 years ago is promoting awareness of

Carpatho-Rusyn culture. They have over 1400 members with chapters across the country. They have many very interesting programs that welcome non-members as well as members. They also have two tours planned. One is a 14-day Lemko Homeland Tour that will focus on Lemkovyna between Krynica and Sanok. The itinerary also includes visits to Lemko villages and churches in the Magura Forest and Bieszczady Mountain Regions, Auschwitz, Wieliczka Salt Mines, Krakow and a Lemko Vatra (folk festival). Another tour scheduled is the Rusyn Cultural Tour to Eastern Slovakia

The New Rusyn Times - www.carpathorusynsociety.org/publication.htm This is a very informative newsletter published by the Carpatho-Rusyn Society six times a year. It is an excellent source of information on genealogy and Rusyn history and customs. It also includes Rusyn news from America and Europe, including information about our churches.

The Galicia Genealogy Mailing List - (hosted by former FOCA member from Syracuse - Laurence Krupnak). www.topica.com/lists/galicia

The Rusyn Genealogy Mailing List

- www.groups.yahoo.com/group/rusyns
The Carpathian Connection - www.tccweb.org/

The Carpatho-Rusyn Knowledge Base - www.carpatho-rusyn.org

Lemkos - www.lemko.org

Slovak and Carpatho-Rusyn Genealogy - www.halgal.com/

Russian Brotherhood Organization - www.rbo.org. The very informative RBO records from 1920 - 1960 may once again be put online. Check their website in the near future.

Carpatho-Rusyn Genealogy Web Site - www.rusyn.com. If I can be of any help to you please contact me at efrosenia@aol.com. HAVE FUN! ♦

Web / from pg. 18

Allentown, PA and the brother of Anthracite District Governor Gregory Hatrak. He can be reached at MHatrak@earthlink.net.

READERS: Do you have a favorite website you'd like to share with Fellowship members and Journal Readers? If so, share it with us by email to tsarnick3@aol.com (to the Editor) and we'll publish it in the next issue. Be sure you have the correct URL (address) and write a brief description or review. ♦

TRANSITIONS

ENGAGED, Fr. John and Barbara Matusiak of #226, Wheaton, IL, announce the engagement of their daughter Juliana to Eric Meng. Wedding day is set for October 12, 2003. *Congratulations!*

ENGAGED, Greg and Sue Jankowski of #226, Wheaton, IL, announce the engagement of their son Michael to Jennifer Mackey. Wedding day is set for August 31, 2003. *Congratulations!*

BIRTH, Benjamin Michael, son of Andrea Hancher Zart, Harrisburg "O" Club, #199, and Michael Zart, in November. Many Years!

MANY YEARS, Mary Yurkowsky Dubowchik of #44, Singac, NJ, celebrating her 90th birthday! Mary is the mother of the Maryann and Wally

Bascik family. Family and friends from the New Jersey District gathered to celebrate her milestone! *Congratulations!*

DECEASED, Mary Dotsey, the wife of the late Joseph Dotsey, founder of the Harrisburg Sr. "O" Club, #199, passed away on December 5, 2002. She is survived by her children, John and his wife, Jean, Paul and Susan, members of #199. *Memory Eternal!*

DECEASED, George Brozina, a Past Midwest District Gov., passed away on January 8, 2003. The funeral was held on, January 11, at Archangel Michael Church, 8301 S. LeClaire Ave., Burbank, IL. Cards of sympathy can be sent to the Family of George Brozina, 5236 S. Francisco, Chicago, IL 60632-2246. Donations can be

sent to the church in his memory. *Memory Eternal!*

DECEASED, Dora Dworak, 90, member of the Hartford "R" Club for more than 50 years, fell asleep in the Lord on Sunday, January 26, 2003. Dora was active in all aspects of parish life at All Saints Church in Hartford, and a "regular" at monthly chapter meetings. *Memory Eternal!*

TRANSITIONS is for current FOCA members only.

Send all transitions info to:

Nicholas Ressetar

5501 Locust Lane
Harrisburg, PA 17109

(717) 652-1825

WORD attachment announcements work best within an E-mail:

tsarnick3@aol.com

SPORTS *corner*

As part of our expanded sports coverage and to gain commentary from our readers, we welcome feedback regarding topical issues, particularly covering youth sports. In future issues, we will discuss: specializing in sports vs. playing multiple, seasonal sports; travel team commitments vs. recreational teams; tips for coaching your own child; injury issues; etc.

One matter that is a serious and conflicting concern that many parents face is the scheduling of youth sports, particularly travel, or select, teams that play on Sunday mornings. Many of these teams, because of field use constraints, conflicts with other sports, need, in the opinion of those program co-coordinators, to schedule practices and games that conflict with Sunday worship. Weekday alternatives may not be an option for these programs.

As a parent who supports a child's athletic development, particularly if the child is naturally gifted and interested in the sports, how do we handle Sunday conflicts with Divine Liturgy and Sunday School in these programs? Can there be a balance, or is the situation all or none?

This is a growing concern among parents and their children, and your opinions are welcomes.

E-Mail your comments to me at kbaron@yesinvest.com or mail to me at 338 Landi Court, Wyckoff, New Jersey 07481.

Thank you for your interest,
Kenneth Baron
Sports Editor

REMINDER!

This current and the past two OCJ issues are now on-line at: orthodoxfellowship.com

STRIKES, SPARES AND STABLES

May 30-June 1, 2003

Mark your calendars for the weekend of **May 30-June 1** and check out Mapquest on your computers for **Mid-State Lanes** and the **Hilton Hotel in East Brunswick, New Jersey** for the 2003 National FOCA Bowling Tournament. Co-Chairmen Greg Cimboric and Michael Steffaro and their committee are planning an outstanding weekend of activity and fellowship and the typical hospitality of the New Jersey District will prevail. Orthodox Christians who are not members of the Fellowship are also welcome to attend and participate.

Singles and Doubles bowling ("*And they're off!*") will be held on Friday at 3 and 6:30. An open house ("*Into the Backstretch*") will be hosted by the Committee on Friday evening. Team bowling ("*The Clubhouse Turn*") will be on Saturday. Depending upon the number of teams, everyone will either bowl at 10 AM, or shifts at 9 AM and 12 Noon. That will give everyone time in the afternoon to shop locally or relax at the hotel prior to heading North up the NJ Turnpike for the Saturday evening event,

The world famous Meadowlands Sports Complex is located close to New York City in East Rutherford, NJ. Home to the Football Giants and Jets as well as the New Jersey Nets Professional Basketball team, the Complex also has the Meadowlands Race Track. For those interested in an exciting evening ("*At the head of the Straightaway*"), we have reserved a private tented area track side for the entire evening. Unlimited hot dogs, hamburgers, chicken, salads, beer and soda will be included in the \$30.00 price per person, adult or child. Unfortunately, you'll have to bring your own betting money, but any smaller



losses might be reimbursed at the awards brunch on Sunday.

Divine Liturgy will be held at St. Peter and Paul's Church in South River, with NJ District Spiritual Advisor and host parish priest Father Daniel Garretson celebrating. Immediately afterward, a sumptuous brunch ("*The Winners' Circle*") will be provided in the Center next door to the Church. The early time will give travelers an opportunity to return to the highways by mid-afternoon.

Lodging will be provided at the Hilton Hotel which is right off the NJ Turnpike at Exit 9 in East Brunswick. The hotel has a restaurant, pool, work out facilities and a sports bar. Room rates are \$83.00 per night and the deadline for reservations is May 1.

All of the scheduled weekend events are in very close proximity with the hotel a quick 2.3 miles from the alleys via highway and the Church and Hall also are close by.

The entry form is included in this *Journal* and additional information will appear and be updated periodically under the Bowling link at the organization's web site at www.orthodoxfellowship.org.

Ad forms and additional information will be mailed to chapters and individuals and your financial support will be greatly appreciated.

The New Jersey District is looking forward to a large turnout and a great weekend is planned for everyone. We hope to see you there. ♦

Go to
[http://www.orthodoxfellowship.org/files/Bowling/
2003bowlingFormB.pdf](http://www.orthodoxfellowship.org/files/Bowling/2003bowlingFormB.pdf)
**for the official
Bowling Application Form.**

Hunka Hunka Burnin Hoops

MAY 9 - 10 - 11 ,2003

"GREAT BALLS OF FIRE.

Campbell #27 sponsors the **2003 FOCA NATIONAL BASKETBALL TOURNAMENT....**

"YOU KNOW YOU'RE GONNA LIKE IT". We're "ALL SHOOK UP" finalizing plans for a poodle-skirtin', Elvis lurkin', thunderbirdin', **HUNKA HUNKA HOOPS A BURNIN....**weekend that you will never forget.

"It's Now or Never"The time is right to meet your Friendly Foe and enjoy the Orthodox Fellowship. "Return to Sender"....entry forms, housing info, directions, Souvenir purchase and all other information can



be obtained by visiting our web site, linked through the FOCA web site.

Hot-Roddin to Campbell will be easy as the main "Heart-break Hotel" will be the **Holiday Inn Metroplex**,

directly off of Interstate 80 in

Youngstown, Ohio. Hotel rates are \$79.00 plus tax for a single, double, triple and/or quad. Reservations can be made by calling (1-888-447-0606). To receive the discount rate, please state the group name **FOCA Natl. Basketball Tourn. 2003**. Deadline for reservations will be **April 18, 2003**.

It should be noted at this point that any Jrs. being housed in the hotel should have at least one adult chaparone; per room, as stated in the Jr. guidelines. We will strongly uphold this rule. In home housing by our parishioners will also be available.

"Be cool Daddy-O".....We'll start off the festivities at our "Soda Shop Open House" Friday evening, May 9th, at the Metroplex where we will all get reaquainted and enjoy an Ice Cream Social.

"LOVE ME TENDER, LOVE ME TRUE".....All Saturday games will be at Y.S.U. Just a short distance from the hotel, the competition will begin at Youngstown State University. Don't forget your "Blue Suede Shoes".

Win or lose, following the games, don't be "CRYIN' IN THE CHAPEL" as you all join us for Vespers at St. John the Baptist Orthodox Church in

Campbell, Ohio...just a skoot down the road.

"LET'S GO TO THE HOP"..... and awards banquet a few blocks from the church at the St. Lucy's Parish Center. There will be "A WHOLE LOT OF SHAKIN GOIN ON", when we introduce our version of "American Bandstand".

"You Ain't Nothin But A Hound Dog".... if you don't attend, Sunday, for Divine Liturgy, Dunk-in Diner Brunch and the Championship games, (to be played in the brand new Campbell schools).

"Don't Be Cruel"..... Help support the Basketball Tournament by purchasing souvenirs as follows:

Poodle Skirt Doll (\$35.00), Elvis Record (\$20.00) or a Guitar (\$10.00).

Additional information or questions should be directed to the Tournament chairman, Dr. Jim Lazor.... 330-394-1038 or E-mail at Hapywdr@aol.com ♦



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• **F.O.C.A. Junior Olympics Sweepstakes** •

• One youth will win a free week at the •

• 2003 Junior Olympics to be held July 20 •

• - 26, 2003. This is a value of \$160.00. •

• Winner will be announced at the **2003 •**

• **National Basketball Tournament** •

• **Banquet.** Winner need not be present. •

• **All applicants must be between the •**

• **ages of 10 - 17 years.** •

• **Name** _____ •

• **Birthdate** ___/___/19__ **Age** _____ •

• **Address** _____ •

• **City** _____ •

• **State** _____ **Zip** _____ **Apt.** _____ •

• **Phone** (_____) _____ •

• **E-Mail** _____ •

• **Gender (circle one) M / F** •

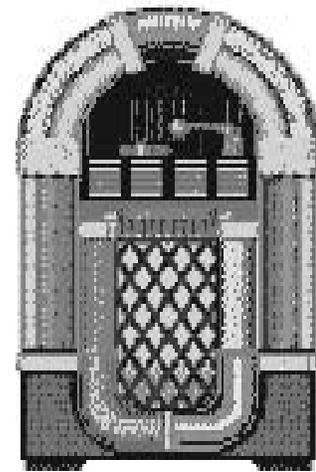
• Mail this entry form to: •

• **John Schultz** •

• **RD # 3 Box 40 Lyons Road** •

• **Weirton, WV 26062** •

•.....



Go to
[http://www.orthodoxfellowship.org/files/Basketball/
2003basketball_Entry_Form.pdf](http://www.orthodoxfellowship.org/files/Basketball/2003basketball_Entry_Form.pdf)
**for the official
Basketball Application Form.**

Hi Kidz,

From Matushka Theodora Ressetar

This new section is geared to the youngest of family members and those young at heart!

The words in this Word Search are all taken from the Sundays of Great Lent up to Pascha and also include some of the Saints that the church commemorates during this time. See how many you can find-up, down, sideways and backwards. Have a Blessed Great Lent.

C	F	S	T	G	R	E	G	O	R	Y	K
M	O	B	C	X	F	K	E	D	S	E	G
L	H	N	O	H	K	I	T	T	S	T	L
O	R	C	M	E	A	T	F	A	R	E	P
S	A	M	A	L	A	P	O	N	F	R	K
R	Q	Z	K	O	H	I	R	N	O	C	S
S	T	M	A	R	Y	L	G	U	K	R	T
N	H	O	J	T	S	E	I	C	S	E	P
T	Z	U	P	H	K	I	V	I	P	D	A
R	I	Y	A	O	L	R	E	A	K	D	T
Y	G	H	S	D	F	B	N	T	D	A	R
E	J	T	C	O	S	A	E	I	K	L	I
P	Y	H	H	X	E	G	S	O	R	N	C
S	M	L	A	P	D	D	S	N	D	A	K
K	R	J	U	D	G	M	E	N	T	E	W

ANNUNCIATION
 CRETE
 EGYPT
 FORGIVENESS

GABRIEL
 JUDGMENT
 MEATFARE
 ORTHODOX

PASCHA
 PALM
 PALAMAS
 ST. GREGORY

ST. JOHN
 ST. MARY
 ST. PATRICK
 ST. TIKHON

IOCC Supports Effort to Stem Alcohol Abuse in Alaska

Baltimore (IOCC) - The U.S. Program of International Orthodox Christian Charities is addressing the "scourge" of alcohol abuse in Alaskan communities.

The program, launched by the OCA Diocese of Sitka and Alaska, calls for the training of fourth-year seminarians in substance abuse counseling. IOCC's support will build the capacity of the diocese and St. Herman's Orthodox Theological Seminary in Kodiak, Alaska, to combat the problem.

"Substance abuse is a widespread problem for people of Alaska which the Church confronts daily," said His Grace Bishop Nikolai of the Diocese of Alaska. "Last year, we extended our seminary program and further developed the capacity of Orthodox Christians to undertake effective and meaningful action against this cause of suffering."

St. Herman's Seminary has contracted with Joseph Lind of the South Central Foundation in Anchorage, one of the largest native health corporations in Alaska, to provide the training. IOCC's support will help pay for the training.

One of the priorities of the U.S. Program is to identify and strengthen domestic Orthodox initiatives, making them sustainable over the long term, said U.S. Program Director Robert Pianka.

"This is an example of how IOCC's U.S. Program applies in the United States the skills it honed over 10 years of working overseas," Pianka said.

"Through the Orthodox institutions and faithful in Alaska, we can respond to the call to help people in need," he added. "We are obliged to build an effective, permanent capacity against this scourge, and we urge all Orthodox to join this partnership."

With the training, and eventual certification, priests will be able to offer professional substance abuse counseling in rural communities that are otherwise outside the reach of treatment programs. The Diocese of Alaska has 87 churches and chapels served by 25 priests, and covers 586,000 square miles.

Orthodox priests are uniquely

positioned to reach and work productively with the large, isolated population of Alaskans in need of drug and alcohol treatment, said Mary Ann Khoury, author of an IOCC needs-assessment in Alaska.

"The native clergy really need to have this training so they can work with the people in the community, Orthodox and non-Orthodox," said Ms. Khoury, director of the DUI Victims Center in Wichita, Kan. "Substance abuse is just a huge need, and (the clergy) would be very crucial player in the treatment of the problem."

According to a recent study by the Alaska Division of Alcoholism and Drug Abuse, Alaska has more alcohol-related deaths per capita than any other U.S. state. Among the obstacles to treatment cited by abusers was the lack of nearby treatment facilities.

The fourth-year seminarians will receive their training in Anchorage, where they can engage in field work with hospitals, prisons and missions accessible from Anchorage. The goal of the program is for seminarians to obtain certification as substance abuse counselors, which they can use over the course of their careers as priests.

To learn more about IOCC's programs in the United States and beyond, please visit www.iocc.org.

St. Vladimir's Seminary Site of Orthodox Christian Mission Center Meeting

The board of the Orthodox Christian Mission Center (OCMC) met at St. Vladimir's Seminary from November 12-14 2002, to plan for short-term mission teams, projects and programs for 2003. Their plans included discussions on board development with, long-range planning, the Capital Campaign and short and long-term missionaries

The OCMC embarked on the first phase of the Capital Campaign, which has a goal to raise six million dollars for support in two key areas: first, funds that will endow the programs and ministries



OCMC member and OCJ Associate Editor Betty Slanta in front row.

of the Mission Center, and second, funds to secure property and develop a permanent facility for the training and support of expanded missionary activity; pledges for the campaign already total \$2.5 million.

The OCMC accomplishments include:

- Sent over 35 long-term missionaries world-wide
- Sent more than 800 short-term missionaries and over 70 teams to 21 countries
- Conducted 25 building projects
- Gave support to 240 indigenous Orthodox clergy in 12 countries
- Offered over \$1.4 million in philanthropic support, worldwide

St. Herman Seminary in Kodiak, AK, is a recipient of Agape Canister funds for their Drug and Alcohol Counseling Education Program and was recently granted \$8,000 towards the transportation of indigenous student travel for the seminarians. (See previous article.)

During the Summer of 2003, the OCMC will send short-term mission teams to Alaska, Albania, Guatemala, India, Romania, Uganda and to Ghana.

The OCMC Medical Mission Committee distributed an inaugural newsletter for the Orthodox health care professionals.

To learn more about the OCMC or to participate on a mission team, please visit the OCMC website <http://www.ocmc.org>. ♦



RECYCLE!

Use This Issue To
Encourage New
Membership

POSTMASTER - If Undeliverable

Please Send Form 3579 To: *Orthodox Christian JOURNAL*. 10 Downs Drive, Plains Twsp., Wilkes-Barre, PA 18705-3899

HEY JUNIORS!

*WE REALLY WANT TO KNOW WHAT YOU THINK AND HAVE THE
PERFECT WAY FOR YOU TO TELL US...*

THE 2003 F.O.C.A. JUNIOR ESSAY CONTEST!

Here's the topic:

"My Favorite Bible Story"

There are four age categories:

10 – 11 (250 words*)

12 – 13 (300 words*)

14 – 15 (400 words*)

16 – 18 (500 words*)

***Suggested minimum length of the essay**

Essays will be judged on originality, quality of the writing and grammar.

Winners will be announced at the National Convention.

A \$200 savings bond will be awarded to each category winner.

All entrants will receive a gift certificate to Barnes & Noble just for entering.

THE DEADLINE FOR SUBMISSION IS JULY 1, 2003.

**Please make sure you include your name, age, chapter number,
phone number and address on your essay.**

All submissions should be mailed or e-mailed to BOTH:

Marissa Hedge

30 Laura Lane

Morristown, New Jersey 07960

973-401-1852

Mhedge@castleventures.com

AND

Marge Kovach

8 Ginesi Drive

Clark, New Jersey 07066

732-815-9765

mjkovach@comcast.net

If you have any questions, please call or e-mail Marge or Marissa....*Good luck!*