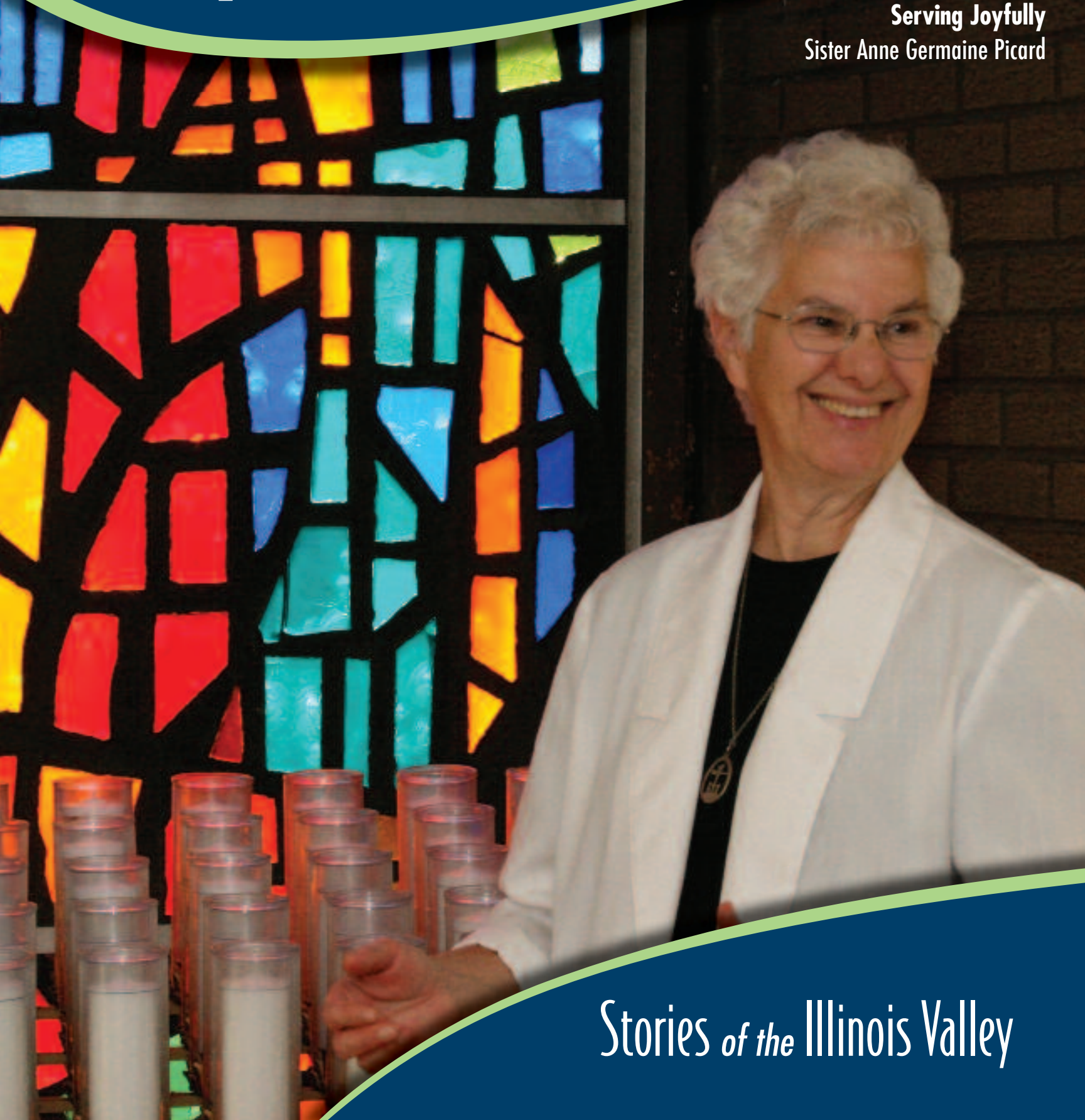


Spirit

fall • winter | volume five | issue two

Serving Joyfully
Sister Anne Germaine Picard



Stories of the Illinois Valley



Weekend Warrior Injury?

Lifting, painting, moving, building, fixing...

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Fall Winter Spirit



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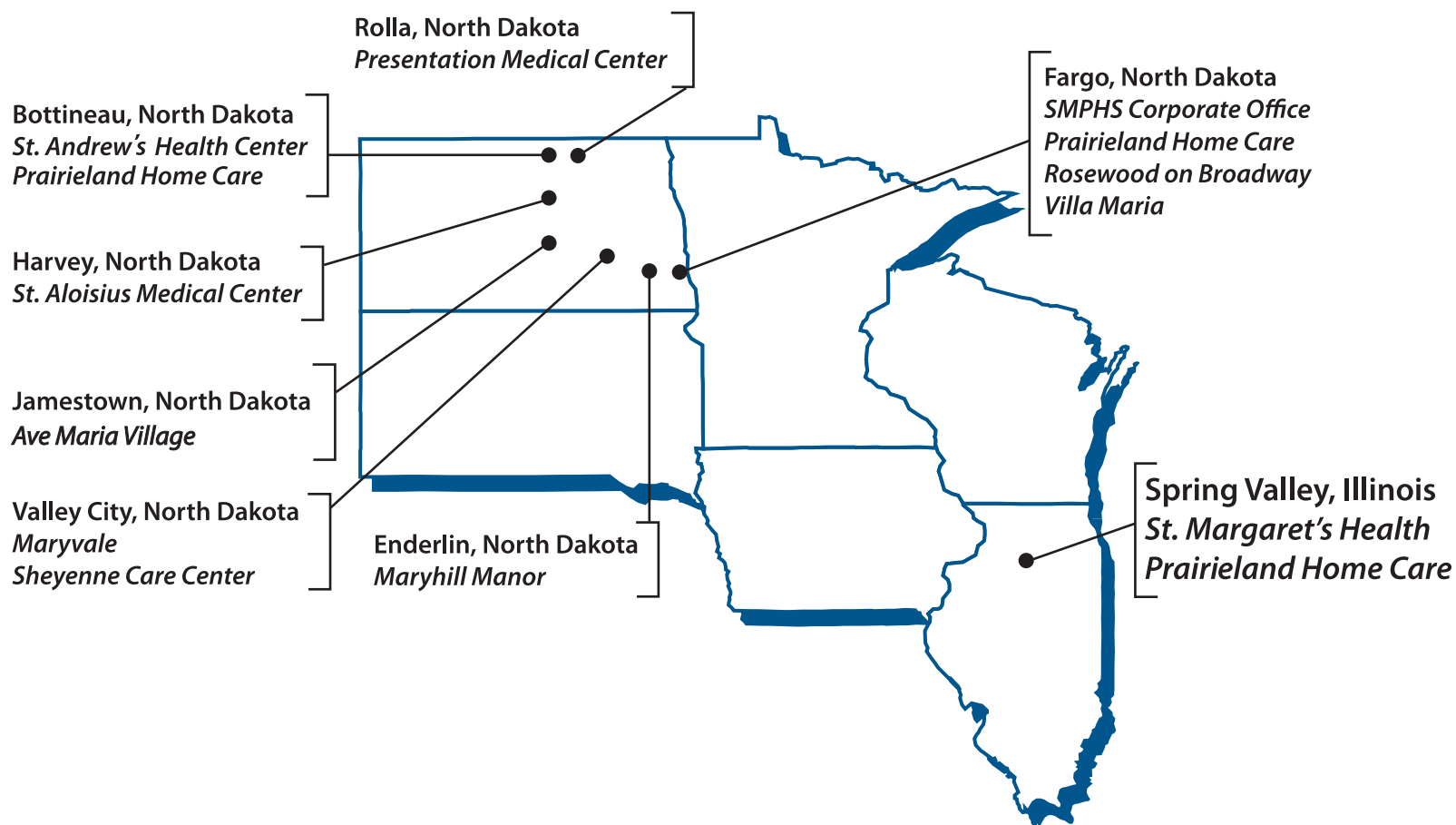
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Contact St. Margaret's Health for further information.
600 East First St., Spring Valley, Illinois 61362
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Enjoy Spirit



Spirit of Reminiscing

*"If you carry your childhood with you,
you never become old."—Tom Stoppard*

As fall arrives and another year winds to a close, we are entering a season of nostalgia—a time for remembering gratefully those things that have brought us comfort and joy through the years.

In this issue of *Spirit*, you'll have the chance to meet Kim and Jason Kotecki, a young married couple who are dedicating their lives to helping other adults reclaim the joyful spirit that stems from embracing childhood ideals, such as curiosity, playfulness and a sense of wonder.

You'll also get to know several men who have turned their boyhood passions—for trains, model building and art—into creations that delight, entertain and educate others.

In addition, you'll be introduced to the concept of a vocation and what it means to follow God's call for your life, through the stories of Sister Anne Germaine Picard and Father Ronald Margherio.

During this season of thanks, we would also like to take a moment to acknowledge those men and women who answered the call of duty and are serving in our nation's military, like Illinois Army National Guard Staff Sgt. Jack Graham, of Streator, who is pictured (page 34) waiting to meet his family for the first time after returning from Afghanistan just three hours earlier.

And, as we prepare to commemorate the 100th anniversary of a tragic mining accident that had a lasting impact on the Illinois Valley, we remember how the Sisters of Mary of the Presentation, our sponsors, played a vital role in caring for the victims and their families. You can read their story on page 32.

Take time to recall the past and enjoy the present.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Tim Muntz".

Tim Muntz, *President & CEO*



St. Margaret's Health

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All Aboard

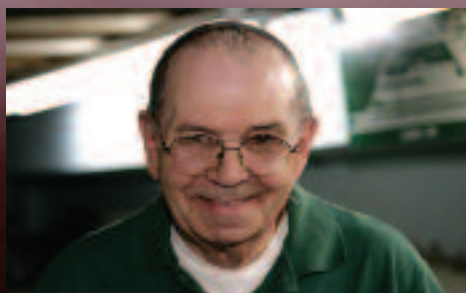
Avid model railroader caters to fellow enthusiasts through his Spring Valley store.

Surrounded by shelves packed with miniature locomotives, railcars, track, scenery kits and other diminutive railroad accessories, Marion Brasher is in his element. Fascinated with trains since childhood, Marion has turned his lifelong hobby into a full-time business—a model railroader's paradise called the Valley Roundhouse.

After 60 years of model railroading, there isn't much that Marion doesn't know or can't figure out about the art and science of the hobby. From operational problems to tricky landscaping issues, Marion—known as “the answer man”—can usually help customers find a solution for their model railroading dilemmas. “Chances are, I've been down that road and probably hit the same bump,” he explains.



Marion Brasher



His shop is housed in the building where his grandparents once operated Frecchio Market. It's across the street from the building (currently home to Spring Valley Bar and Grill) where Marion grew up, in an apartment above his parents' dry-cleaning business. It was in that building's coal bin that young Marion set up one of his first train layouts. "I moved out the leftover coal one wheelbarrow-full at a time," he recalls.

Marion's interest in trains began before he even started school. He remembers accompanying produce delivery drivers to the rail sidings, where he watched the trains come through and even got to climb in the engines, on occasion.

When it came to selecting a career, however, Marion chose education. Before retiring in 1998, he spent 30 years introducing students at Hall High School to welding, electricity, drafting and other industrial arts. Besides teaching at the high school (his alma mater), he taught driver's education at St. Bede Academy.

Summer vacations from teaching were spent traveling across the country—by rail, of course. "When I get on a train, I can put all my thoughts behind me," he reflects. "And you meet all kinds of people."

The skills he perfected in the classroom dovetailed nicely with his hobby. As he notes, "Model railroading is a creative medium. It incorporates carpentry, art, electrical and engineering. There's a whole mess of things you have to know to do a good job. There are so many different facets, you can't get bored with one thing."

For a time, he kept store hours after school, but since his retirement, he has devoted all his time to his hobby shop. Though the sign in the window advertises a midafternoon opening, Marion actually arrives early in the morning so he can spend time tweaking the layout he has built in the basement.

There, he has fashioned a portion of the now-defunct Rock Island Line, circa the 1960s. It meanders past warehouses christened for friends, such as Wickhorst Industries, Kujawa Bros. Engineering or Hahn Electrical Supply, and realistic-looking grain bins fashioned from PVC pipes and caps. A replica of the Spring Valley Depot, which no longer exists, dominates another section of the layout,

elbowing a replica of the bridge that spans the Illinois River, atop which model cars head toward a distant, painted horizon.

From a control panel, a "dispatcher" can track all the trains on the layout. Colorful waybills line the tabletop, identifying the cabooses (green), locomotives (salmon) and cars (yellow) as well as their contents, their originating points and their destinations.

When putting together the layout, Marion drew inspiration from his experience. "I model what I've seen. In my day, boxcars and tankers and hoppers made up trains," he explains.

He also uses ideas culled from attending model railroading conventions and meeting with other hobbyists. Marion's skills earned

him a distinction as Master Model Railroader #370 from the National Model Railroad Association in 2006.

As the best-stocked hobby shop within 90 miles, the Valley Roundhouse draws customers from southern Wisconsin through central Illinois and all the way to the Mississippi River. Marion specializes in the most popular tabletop models, but also stocks a wide variety of parts and accessories. "I think of this as a hardware store," he says. "You never know what people will ask for, so I carry a bit of everything."

Model railroading appeals to all ages, but seems to ebb and flow through the years, notes Marion. "Under 16, the hobby is supported by mom and dad. Over 16, the hobby goes by the wayside because of cars, girlfriends and jobs, and then they go to work or to college," he observes. "But later, when they're married, they're no longer footloose and fancy free, and staying home is number one. That's when they ask mom if she kept their old model trains, and that's when they come to see me!"

Marion says the hobby allows for a lot of self-expression. "Model railroading is about creativity. There's no right way or wrong way. If we (the builders) are satisfied with it, it's good."

After all these years, he's still fascinated by model trains and delights in refining his craft. "I tell people it's like when you go to a play," he says. "You look at the stage and what do you see? A set. It may look real, but it's just paint on a flat wall. That's what we model railroaders do, try to create an illusion."

"Model railroading is about creativity. There's no right way or wrong way. If we (the builders) are satisfied with it, it's good."



A photograph of a miniature Christmas village scene. In the foreground, a white sign with black text reads "Christmas FUN RUN". The sign is flanked by two small figures of Santa Claus. To the left, there's a small evergreen tree and a candy cane. In the background, there are various miniature buildings, including a house with a red roof and a blue house, and a small car. The scene is lit with warm, yellow lights, creating a cozy holiday atmosphere.

Winter Wonderland

For most folks, Labor Day weekend is marked by barbecues and back to school, but for Jim Collins, it's beginning to look a lot like Christmas. Before the first autumn leaf has fallen, Jim heads down to the basement of his LaSalle bungalow, where he drapes the bookshelves in fabric as a backdrop for his extensive collection of scale-model buildings and accessories and erects three tiers of display platforms.

Jim spends about three months creating an idyllic holiday village scene, complete with an amusement park, circus and year-round skating pond. Neighborhoods of snow-capped Victorian homes line the tranquil streets, windows glowing warmly. Quaint shops, including a druggist, a candy store, banks, grocers, a newspaper and a radio station, are situated around traditional town squares. The village is served by at least seven railroads and an interurban trolley, with excursion rides supplied by a paddle-wheel steamboat.

The ooh-and-aah inspiring layout is Bedford Falls meets Disneyland and Santa's workshop meets Department 56. Visitors are amazed when they enter the 20- by 12-foot room and see the detailed scene that rivals a department store window display.

The collection started when Jim and his wife, Mary Kay, married in 1983. With their union came the merging of Jim's boyhood train set and the Christmas village Mary had inherited from her

grandparents. With every anniversary, holiday and special occasion, the couple added new pieces to their joint collection, including popular scale villages from companies like Hawthorne and Department 56.

Jim's original Lionel train came into his family when he was born and was set up only during the holidays. Even then, Jim was not allowed to play with it. Perhaps that's why, even as the size and intricacy of his village layout has grown, Jim has always allowed handling and touching.

For a time, Jim and Mary displayed their collection in the family living room, but it eventually outgrew the space. Though a friend suggested removing the furniture to make way for the village, Mary quickly vetoed that idea. That's when Jim took over the basement.

For a few months each winter, the basement room becomes holiday headquarters. Getting the village ready requires months of preparation. Jim spends hours crawling on his stomach assembling, placing and wiring the layout, all the while bumping and banging his knees, elbows and head in the tight space. He starts at the rear of the layout and works forward.

To get in the spirit, he watches classic seasonal films. "Every year when I set up, I play every Christmas film, from 'Elf' to the Grinch to 'The Bishop's Wife' and 'A Christmas Carol.' And, of course, 'It's A Wonderful Life,'" he says.

"We're standing there talking and, the next thing you know, they stop in mid-sentence and they're on their knees bent over the village, completely lost in the details."

Jim Collins spreads Christmas cheer with his heartwarming holiday village display.



The village contains hundreds of buildings and several train layouts. Though Jim has lost count of the number of buildings, he notes that, at one point, he had some 500 trees, many of which have been felled to make way for the burgeoning village.

As word spread about the village, Jim has shared his passion with guests, visitors and even schoolchildren. Adults who see the collection seem to be even more delighted than the youngsters. “Kids love it, and they always pull mom and dad down to come take a look, but the neatest people are the adults,” says Jim. “They hit the doorway and become 5 years old. We’re standing there talking and, the next thing you know, they stop in mid-sentence and they’re on their knees bent over the village, completely lost in the details.”

Jim says his two grown sons “appreciate the family tradition, but they don’t want to inherit the collection.” Dan, 24, lives with his wife, Melissa, in Mahomet, Ill., and Mike, 22, recently graduated from dental college. Each year while they were growing up, the boys got to select a car to add to the train sets. During their teenage years, they were a bit embarrassed by their parents’ hobby, but Jim says their friends liked to come over and play with the set.



The Christmas village tradition was interrupted for two years following the April 2004 Utica tornado. The tornado leveled Starved Rock Bait & Tackle, a shop that Jim had opened 18 years earlier in downtown

Utica. “I thought I’d be in the bait shop all my life and they’d find me there when I dropped dead,” he says.

He now is head of housekeeping at Grand Bear Lodge in Utica. After all those years as an entrepreneur, he found himself back in the workforce and rebuilding his life, with less time to spare for rebuilding his village. “I had a new job and no time. I had to rebalance my time,” he says.

Eventually, the lure of Christmas magic brought him back to his hobby. In the movie “It’s a Wonderful Life,” it took an angel to refocus George Bailey on the joy of life in Bedford Falls. For a few weeks each year, Jim gets to play angel for a fascinated audience, offering them a glimpse of holiday memories and fantasies, reminding them of a time when hearts are cheerful, and demonstrating that happiness can glow through the windows of a little plastic-and-ceramic village.



Dogsledder and horsewoman Lori Windows finds joy in the outdoors and interacting with animals.

Enjoying the Ride

Aboard her dogsled pulled by four Northern-breed canines, Lori Windows glides over a blanket of snow coating the Hennepin Canal trail. In her imagination, she's thousands of miles away from the Illinois Valley, a musher in Alaska's legendary 1,100-mile Iditarod Trail Sled Dog Race.

Lori breathlessly describes an ideal run: "It's 35-below and the wind is whipping my face and whipping the sled into the canal and I have to pick it up and put it right."

Though some might find those conditions unappealing, Lori is in her element. "I should have been born 150 years ago," she reflects. "That's how much I love raw nature."

Lori, who is also an award-winning endurance horse racer, took up dogsledding as a hobby in 1999, after working as a volunteer helping to care for the dogs in the Iditarod. That's when she got to meet mushers she'd only read about, interact with the dogs, and ride on a long sled trip. She liked it so much, she volunteered again in 2002.

As a child, Lori loved the television program “Sergeant Preston of the Yukon,” which featured the adventures of a mounted policeman and his sled dog Yukon King during the 1890s Gold Rush. She developed an early love of dogs in general and sled dogs in particular. Her first dog, however, was a somewhat smaller breed—a dachshund.

Her childhood fascination with dogs and other animals translated to a career working as a veterinary technician, first with large animals at the Indianapolis Zoo and later at small-animal veterinary clinics.

Once she decided to try dogsledding, it took her about seven years to hone her mushing skills and train an assortment of dogs. Convincing the dogs that their duty was to pull a sled and rider took some doing, and she laughs as she describes her early attempts. First, she used a child’s wagon rather than a sled, but it was unstable and uncontrollable. Then she outfitted a wooden ironing board with wheels and a backboard. She could steer it, but it had no brakes.

“I couldn’t travel more than two miles in any direction from my house without encountering a sizable hill,” she says. “I wore the tread off several pairs of boots and nearly broke my ankle trying to slow down. Helpful friends suggested I carry an iron to throw out as an anchor.”

In 2006, Lori and her husband, John Engstrom, purchased a farm west of Wyandot that’s ideal for her outdoor pursuits. Besides a barn for her seven horses and mules and six acres for her animals to roam, it offers easy access to the Hennessey Canal trail, which runs right along the property’s edge.

Today, she has a team of four sled dogs, some of them rescued from situations of abuse or neglect. Each bears the name of a famous Iditarod musher, several of whom Lori has come to know personally.

Eventually, she purchased a dogsled and her dogs learned how to pull as a team. As she sees it, sled dogs “embody everything about life that is glorious. They meet challenges and accomplish goals with strength, endurance, teamwork and that great intangible—heart.”

Long before Lori got into dogsledding, she had a passion for horseback riding, an interest that also stretches back to childhood.

As a teen, she began to buy horses, break them in, and find them homes. During her endurance races, in which a rider and her mount try to beat the clock and nature, traveling courses up to 100 miles, she envisions herself a cross-country rider on the Pony Express. Over the years, Lori has logged some 40,000 miles and won several national championships.

She says she inherited her adventuresome spirit from her father. She calls him “an adventurer at heart who never got to live out his adventures.” Instead, he managed to treat his children to experiences he never had, including trips to Yellowstone and a Kentucky horse farm.



“Sled dogs embody everything about life that is glorious.”

Though the endurance races can be quite grueling and learning to drive a dogsled took persistence, one of Lori’s greatest challenges came during an ordinary horseback ride in March 2008. Her mount stumbled down a hill and rolled over on her, crushing her leg. The horse regained his footing and galloped away. Cold, wet, and in pain, Lori dragged herself a half mile to the nearest road to find help. The accident might have crippled her and could have ended her competitive career, but when she got to St. Margaret’s Hospital, orthopedic surgeon Dr. Paul Perona was able to repair her shattered leg.

Knit together with pins and screws and hobbling on a walker left Lori feeling bitter, and she admits she alienated herself from loved ones. “She was depressed,” recalls her husband, John. “She’d always been so active that this was the worst thing in the world for her.”

She credits John’s love, the devotion of her animals, and the support of friends who refused to let her give up for speeding her recovery. She recalls her dogs, which love to run, adapting to her slower pace. “They walked beside me, looking up at me as if to say, ‘if this is the speed we’ve got to go, we’ll go with you.’”

She began attending church, and sermons against pride and overachieving fell harshly on her ears. But the music was soothing and the pastor became a friend. Eventually, a message of hope sank in.

Meanwhile, the bone healed and she began riding again. By June, she was back to racing, though at slower speeds and for shorter distances. Her injury and recovery gave her a new perspective on the value of the outdoor sports she loves. “I’m still driven to win, but I realized I enjoy the ride so much more than winning,” she says.



Bishop Hill Colony offers visitors a sampling of Swedish immigrant culture.



Home Swee Home

Around the last curve of a county highway just west of Galva, a quaint 19th-century village rises from the prairie. Century-old brick buildings surround Bishop Hill Colony's picket-fenced square, over which a grand clock tower presides.

At first glance, the four-sided clock on the historic Steeple Building seems in need of repair—each face is missing a minute hand. However, there's a story behind that—one of many this town, founded in 1846 by Swedish immigrants, has in store for visitors.

"It's the only known one-handed clock," says Mike Wendel, administrator of the Bishop Hill Heritage Foundation. As he explains it, the industrious Swedes who moved here seeking to create a religious utopia saw no use for recording minutes.

Between them, Wendel's group and the Illinois Historic Preservation Agency maintain the half-dozen original buildings in Bishop Hill's historic district, which has been designated a National Historic Landmark. The village offers much to explore, from museums and shops to authentic dining and special events.

Bishop Hill was originally founded as a communal society by followers of charismatic religious leader Erik Jansson, who fled Sweden due to religious intolerance. At its zenith, the population reached 1,000 and the settlement included 12,000 acres. The colony

produced most of what it needed, and marketed its fine linen, furniture, wagons, brooms and farm products to the region, until disbanding in 1861.

By the 20th century, Bishop Hill had become similar to many other small towns in rural Illinois. Descendants of the original settlers continued to farm nearby. By the 1950s, the Colony Church and the central square were turned over to the state, and restoration began on colony buildings in the 1960s.

All of the historic buildings that remain once served as communal dwellings, including the three-story brick Steeple Building. Built in 1854, the Greek Revival-style, building, which now houses the Heritage Foundation offices, archives and museum, has served many purposes over the years, including hotel, school and bank. A stop at the museum provides a great introduction to the birth and evolution of the colony.

Across the square, sporting a similar rooftop steeple, sits the Colony (or Bjorklund) Hotel. Besides housing families, it hosted travelers and included a barroom and a ballroom. One of the oldest buildings in the village, a church dating from 1848, is just down the street. Though the frame exterior is unadorned, the second-floor sanctuary—reached by two steep exterior stairways—speaks eloquently of the colonists' devotion to worship. Families lived in the ground-floor rooms that now feature furniture and artifacts.

"It's a real chance to step into history," adds Wendel. "There's something about this place: it still has a lot of life. So much has happened here."

On the south end of the square sits the state-run Bishop Hill Museum, which houses a collection of paintings by folk artist Olof Krans, a colony resident who captured village life vividly in his work.

After taking in the museums, visitors can sample the tastes, aromas and sounds of this Old World village, which includes galleries and gift shops that sell Swedish crafts and imports as well as restaurants offering Swedish and American cuisine and baked goods. Depending on the season, one might encounter artisans demonstrating 19th century broom making, weaving, quilting or pottery making.

Martha Downey, historic site superintendent, says year-round events and activities at Bishop Hill allow visitors to travel back in time and experience a different culture. Agriculture Days, or Jordbruksdagarna, were celebrated in September with traditional 19th century harvest activities and demonstrations, music and vintage baseball. During the popular Christmas Market, or Julmarknad, (Nov. 27-29 and Dec. 5-6), Swedish folk characters roam the village, Swedish food specialties are available for tasting, and handmade wares and folk art are available for sale. Children can indulge in Swedish customs and crafts.

During Lucia Nights, Dec. 11-12, young women dressed in white serve coffee and sweets in the museums and shops. In Sweden, white-robed girls wearing a crown of candles still wake their families on December 13, carrying trays of Lucia buns. They honor the medieval saint who carried sustenance to the hungry during the dark winter and remains a symbol of light and

hope. Bishop Hill buildings are lit with a single candle in a window, and the park Christmas tree is lighted.

Tourists discovered this picturesque setting in the 1950s, and today, the village attracts nearly 100,000 people a year, from throughout

Illinois, the Midwest and beyond. Some even travel from as far away as Sweden to trace their roots. For Swedes, Bishop Hill is a significant stop on a heritage tour. "It was the beginning of a mass migration, which saw 2 million Swedes come to America over the next 70 years," notes Downey. "The migration here predates even Minnesota."

Downey and Wendel say a visit to Bishop Hill not only offers a peek at the past, but also allows guests to relish the seasons, from delighting in the spectacular fall colors to strolling the snowy winter streets.

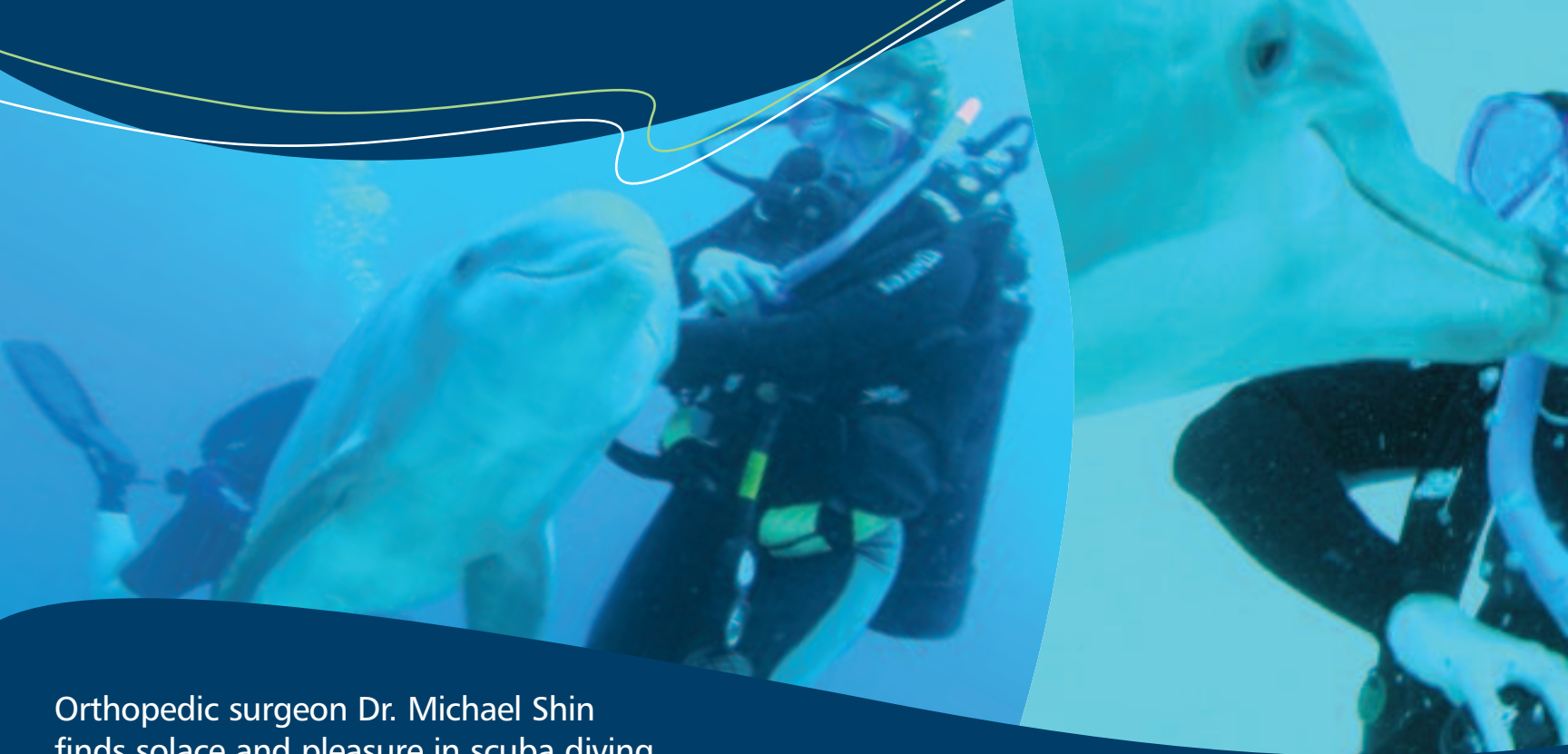
"So much of the original fabric of this little village has been left here (in the original structures)," says Downey. "I just love the look of this place. In the fall, the trees are gorgeous. In the winter, after a fresh snow—no place looks like this!"

"It's a real chance to step into history," adds Wendel. "There's something about this place: it still has a lot of life. So much has happened here."

For directions, museum hours and a current schedule of events, go to www.bishophill.com or www.bishophillartscouncil.com.



Undersea Adventures



Orthopedic surgeon Dr. Michael Shin finds solace and pleasure in scuba diving.

Several snorkeling trips in Florida and the Bahamas left Dr. Michael Shin eager to experience more of the ocean's treasures. "There were so many times that I caught myself thinking, 'If I could just go down there to see that,' or 'I wish I could get just a little closer,' or 'I wish I could stay down and watch that a bit longer,'" recalls Dr. Shin of the beginnings of his interest in scuba diving.

Before he could take his first dive, however, he needed to learn the sport. In 2004, during his residency at Rutgers University in New Jersey, Dr. Shin took scuba lessons in order to become PADI (Professional Association of Diving Instructors) certified as an open-water diver.

Since then, Dr. Shin, who has a practice in orthopedics and sports medicine, and his wife, Kristie, who is also PADI certified, have experienced dives in Cancun, Mexico, and the Bahamas. One of their favorite experiences included an open-water dolphin dive in Grand Bahama Island. As part of the dive, they were able to interact with trained dolphins on the ocean floor. "The dolphins did tricks—they

would spin you around like you weighed nothing and let you pet them, and they would leap out of the water like at Sea World," says Dr. Shin, noting that it was unique to watch from an underwater perspective.

Another more intense experience took place the following day, also in Grand Bahama Island. During an easy 40-foot one-tank dive, Dr. Shin and his wife noticed a man with a fancy camera taking a lot of photos underwater. Then, Dr. Shin spotted a 7- to 8-foot reef shark in the distance. Though there aren't many things that scare him, Dr. Shin is terrified of sharks. He attributes it to his boyhood days of watching Discovery Channel's annual "Shark Week" programs, which were apt to bill the creatures as "perfect killing machines."

On this day, Dr. Shin decided that he could keep his eye on one shark, but soon there were seven sharks, ranging in size from 4 to 10 feet in length. After learning these sharks were part of a "shark dive" and were fed when divers were in the area, Dr. Shin mustered the courage to swim close enough to one of the sharks to snap a photo.

For more information about scuba diving,
visit the PADI web site at www.padi.com.



In addition to the incredible sights of the undersea world, Dr. Shin also appreciates the sensory experience of diving, including the feeling of weightlessness underwater. “It is quite the dichotomy when you compare the moment right before you dive in, when you are on a boat rocking back and forth, with 50-80 pounds of gear on and walking clumsily with flippers, to the moment that you are gliding underwater, nearly weightless, spinning and diving,” he says.

Looking ahead, Dr. Shin says that he would like to dive in Grand Cayman, Belize, and Cozumel, once he becomes a more experienced diver. Diving during a manta ray migration in Grand Cayman, diving with sea turtles and whale watching off of Los Cabos, Mexico, are all on his wish list.

Dr. Shin encourages anyone who is interested in scuba diving to take the time to obtain the proper training. “It really is a great hobby, but do it right and go to a reputable, certified course with good instructors,” he says.

“The dolphins did tricks—they would spin you around like you weighed nothing and let you pet them, and they would leap out of the water like at Sea World.”

Before beginning lessons, he adds, it is a good idea to undergo a complete physical to make sure you are healthy enough to participate. He notes that certification requires water skills, such as treading water for 10 minutes and swimming 200 yards. “It is pretty physically demanding, so check with your doctor to make sure that you are able to do that,” says Dr. Shin, who also notes that someone with inner-ear problems may have trouble equalizing ear pressure underwater.

For those able and willing to try this deep-sea adventure, Dr. Shin believes it does have some medical benefits. “I think that any activity that you enjoy that gives you some physical exercise and also allows you emotional gratification has medical benefits,” he says. “There is something about getting out and meeting new people, seeing amazing things about the world we live in, and getting a little exercise that really make a person healthier, both physically and mentally.”



Community Calendar of Events

FINE ARTS

Stage 212

November—"Bleacher Bums"
January—"A Talent for Murder"
April—"Social Security"
Stage 212, LaSalle
815-224-3025

Book Mouse Toddler Time

Nov. 21, Dec. 19
Book Mouse Bookstore, Ottawa
815-433-7323

Illinois Valley Symphony Orchestra Concerts

Dec. 12-13—"The Nutcracker,"
LaSalle-Peru High School Auditorium
Mar. 13—Featuring the 2010 Young Performers Competition winners, Ottawa High School Auditorium
May 7—"Beethoven's 7th," IVCC Cultural Centre, Oglesby
Visit orchinfo@ivso.org for more information.

Legacy Girls—An Andrews Sisters Musical Show

Nov. 11
Starved Rock State Park Lodge, Utica
815-220-7386

Holidazzle

Nov. 13-Dec. 31
Follies Theatre, Utica
815-667-7008

Uptown's Playlist Theater

Romi Mayes - Nov. 4
Steve Forbert - Nov. 20
Willie Nile - Jan. 29
All shows start at 7:30 p.m.
Advanced tickets are available at Uptown Grill.
Visit www.uptowngrill.com for new shows offered monthly or call 815-224-4545.

Christmas at the Museums

Dec. 13
Mendota Museums
815-539-3373

Holiday Craft Show and Flea Market

Dec. 13
Bureau County Fairgrounds, Princeton
815-875-2905

Old-Fashioned Christmas Service

Dec. 13
St. Peter's Danish Evangelical Lutheran Church, Sheffield
815-454-2850

Illinois Valley Symphony "Toast of the Town"

April 16
Knights of Columbus Hall, Ottawa
Visit orchinfo@ivso.org for more information.

FESTIVALS

Festival of Lights Parade

Nov. 27
Washington Square, Ottawa
1-888-OTTAWA-IL

Light Up Streator Festival

Nov. 28
City Park, Streator
815-672-2055

MORE FUN

Trips Through IVCC

Dec. 2—"A Christmas Carol":
Chicago
Dec. 9—Discover Chicago's Vaudeville Past and Present: Chicago

New Year's Eve Party-Only Package or Overnight Package

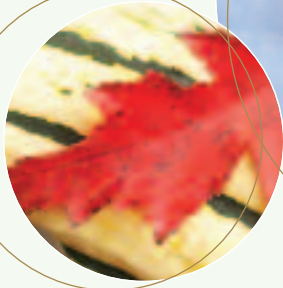
Dec. 31
Starved Rock State Park Lodge, Utica
800-868-7625, ext. 386

Bridal Expo

Jan. 3
Starved Rock State Park Lodge, Utica
800-868-7625, ext. 386

Sled Dog Demo

Feb. 21
Starved Rock State Park Lodge, Utica
800-868-7625, ext. 386



OUTDOOR FUN

Starved Rock Walkers' Club
Thursdays in November and
December
Starved Rock State Park Lodge, Utica
815-220-7386

**Meditation Class at the Hegeler
Carus Mansion**
Tuesdays in November and
December
Hegeler Carus Mansion, LaSalle
815-224-5891

T'ai Chi Class at the Mansion
Tuesdays in November and
December
Hegeler Carus Mansion, LaSalle
815-224-5891

Canal Boat and Trolley Tour
Every Friday through November 13
Starved Rock State Park and
Volunteer Canal Boat, Utica/LaSalle
800-868-7625, ext. 386

Canal Connection 10K
Nov. 1
Utica
815-223-8988

30th Annual Turkey Trot
Nov. 26
Holy Family School, Oglesby
815-223-7922

Jingle Bell Run/Walk for Arthritis
Dec. 5
Baker Lake, Peru
815-224-2799

COMMUNITY EVENTS

Utica Fire Dept. Fish Fry
Nov. 24
Utica Fire Station
815-667-4113

Christmas in the Valley
Nov. 7
Spring Valley
815-664-2753

Veterans' Day Parade
Nov. 8
Utica
815-667-4111

Large Indoor Winter Garage Sale
Nov. 14
Bureau County Fairgrounds,
Princeton
815-875-2905

**North Central Illinois Model Train
Fair & Farm Toy Show**
Nov. 21
Bureau County Fairgrounds,
Princeton
815-875-2606

**Christmas at the Weber House
and Garden**
Dec. 1-31
Weber House and Garden, Streator
815-672-8327

**Christmas at the Lodge with the
Prairie Singers**
Dec. 4
Starved Rock State Park Lodge
Restaurant, Utica
815-220-7386

Christmas Parade
Dec. 5
Peru
815-223-0061

Santa's Holiday Open House
Dec. 13
Oglesby
815-883-3389

Breakfast with Santa
Dec. 19
Starved Rock State Park Lodge, Utica
815-667-4211, ext. 386

Christmas Parade
Dec. 19
Utica
815-667-4111



Comrades in Caring



Duane Carpenter



Lee McCullough

Friends share a passion for building affordable homes for low-income families.

They call themselves “Batman” and “Robin,” but this dynamic duo of do-it-yourselfers flies around the world putting up houses, not taking down criminals.

Retired teachers Duane Carpenter of Granville and Lee McCullough of Peru share a passion for helping others and have devoted their time and talents to the LaSalle, Bureau and Putnam Counties Habitat for Humanity chapter, an affiliate of the

international nonprofit, ecumenical Christian organization that helps people in need to build or renovate homes.

The pair assumed the superhero monikers after Lee (Robin) joined Duane (Batman) on the Habitat chapter board and discovered that their personalities fit together as seamlessly as brick and mortar. “I thought he should be Batman because he’s taller,” says Duane, with a smile.

The partnership works because they each bring something different to the table. “There are some things I’m good at and he’s not, and vice versa,” explains Lee. “Between us, we’ve taught thousands of students and, in the different towns we’ve lived and taught in, we’ve gotten to know a lot of people.”

These are connections to which Habitat can turn to fill its needs, says Lee, who has brought his fund-raising skills to the organization.

Volunteerism has become an essential part of both men’s lives. Duane has assisted with Hurricane Katrina relief and is part of a volunteer effort to assist stranded bikers at the huge annual motorcycle rally in Sturgis, S.D.

Though it might be difficult to envision this quiet, unassuming grandfather on the back of a roaring Harley, Duane waves it off nonchalantly. Retirement has taken him on an uncharted course, but he’s relishing the experiences that come his way. “I’ve done more living since I was 50 and retired,” he says. “I’ve seen more of life, gotten more fulfillment.”

It didn’t start that way—in the first six months after he retired, he took it easy, but found he was bored. So, he set about finding some volunteer opportunities he thought he’d enjoy. “In the beginning, I thought I was sacrificing to God to do this, but I get so much joy out of it, it’s not a sacrifice,” he says. “It’s an awesome, rewarding experience.”

“He’s got a servant’s heart,” says Lee, who has also filled his second half of life with helping others.

Lee is active as a volunteer for his church and organizes charity golf outings for children and adults. The former shop teacher and do-it-yourself builder calls Habitat an ideal fit for his skills and interests. “I like the creative part of building. My skills match very well what Habitat does.”

Habitat creates affordable housing for eligible families. Most of the single-story houses are just over 1,000 square feet and contain two or three bedrooms. Some are outfitted to accommodate a family member with a disability. Volunteers build the houses, which are funded by individual and corporate donations (St. Margaret’s Health is one such sponsor). Selected families must make a nominal down payment, pay closing costs, make a monthly mortgage payment, and contribute 250 hours of sweat equity. Their mortgage payments go into a fund to build more houses.

This year, the local Habitat chapter completed its eighth and ninth houses, in Princeton and Spring Valley. Homes in Granville and Ottawa are currently under construction. Previously, three homes have been built in Streator, two in Ottawa and one each in Mendota and Bureau Junction.

The recent home crisis hasn’t hit local Habitat families, which Lee attributes to the diligence of past selection committees in choosing responsible families. Duane notes that the charity is not a giveaway program; it targets the working poor who struggle to make the jump from renters to homeowners. “They’ve worked hard for years, but can’t make it on their own,” he says.

Habitat projects benefit more than just the individual homeowners because Habitat families contribute to the tax base, shop and do business in their local community. “We’re building for people who are paying back,” says Duane.

Duane and Lee’s involvement in Habitat doesn’t end at the county line. Over the last few years, they’ve traveled to Costa Rica and Chile in Central America and Tajikistan (west of China and north of Afghanistan) on international missions for the organization, braving earthquakes, hurricanes, pest swarms and rainy seasons during their trips. In Costa Rica, Hurricane Wilma left them stranded beyond their departure date, so the group rented a van and toured the countryside.

In addition to braving natural and manmade disasters and witnessing the beauty of foreign lands, they have enjoyed interacting with other volunteers and the families that they would help.

In Tajikistan, the volunteers helped families move from areas devastated by mudslides. Though the country is about 90 percent Muslim, and terrorist groups were operating in the region, Duane says most people were friendly and appreciative. “They were amazed that we would come halfway across the world to help them,” he says.

They have encountered villages with the most primitive living conditions, with families living in dirt-floor shacks walled with tin. Volunteers spend a week digging septic systems, pouring foundations or erecting houses, usually following one group of volunteers and preparing for another group to arrive after they leave.

“We’ve made friends from all over the world,” says Lee. The men frequently reunite with other Midwest or Illinois volunteers they have met on their trips.

As Duane recounts his adventures and the connections he’s made with fellow volunteers, his voice sometimes chokes with emotion. “You come back really energized,” he says. “When you first go there, you’re strangers, but by the time you leave, you’re a family.”

For more information about the local Habitat chapter, call 815-434-2041.

“When you first go there, you’re strangers, but by the time you leave, you’re a family.”

In the Moment

Artist Grazio Barratini creates works that reflect his enthusiasm for life.

It seems that Grazio Barattini was meant to be an artist. Even as he has explored other creative pursuits, he's been continually drawn to painting. He finds joy in the freedom of expression afforded by a blank canvas, a variety of art media and the continually changing world around him.

As a grade-schooler in LaSalle, Grazio signed up for guitar lessons and then found himself entranced by instructor Sharon Angelo's artwork. With her encouragement, he took up the paintbrush as well. Rather than following a lesson plan, Sharon taught him to have fun with art and to learn by doing. "She would just set up a smaller canvas next to hers, and she wouldn't tell me how to do anything; she would just give me the basics," he recalls. "She was just open to creating."

In college, Grazio studied film and cinematography at Columbia College in Chicago, but found the business side of filmmaking unappealing. Though he still aspires to make a film, he wanted to return to his roots. As he puts it, "(Filmmaking is) brutal for someone who just wants to be creative. After school was done, I just knew I wanted to paint and draw for a while."

He returned to the Illinois Valley and began working as an artist. Interestingly, he found his studies had an influence on his artwork. "Cinematography and art really do compliment each other," he explains. "I've always thought that films were just paintings that were given a time frame."

Today, 26-year-old Grazio creates a variety of paintings and drawings, often blurring the line between abstraction and realism. There is no media—from watercolors and acrylics to permanent marker and pencils—that's he's afraid to try. He finds inspiration everywhere—in the work of other artists, the tools he uses, the events of the day, a book, or even music. "It sounds so romantic, but it's true," he says. "It's in totally random stuff."

When it comes to the creative process, Grazio believes that there are no mistakes. That attitude helps him embrace the unexpected in his work. "Everything is salvageable," he explains. "Everything has some value. Getting a creation from beginning to end is different every time. Really, if you embrace a mistake, it can just become a quality. I think I go through that once in every painting."

As Kurt Vonnegut relates in his book, *A Man With No Country*, "The arts are not a way to make a living. They are a very human way of making life more bearable ... Practicing an art, no matter how well or badly, is a way to make your soul grow."

Like Vonnegut, Grazio also believes everyone should explore their creativity, even though some might find it intimidating to be confronted with a pen and a blank piece of paper. "Literally, anyone can do it. Just admit it to yourself—admit that there are no rules. There's nothing to lose. Just flip it over and write on the back! Just do. Just make something out of now," he enthuses.

While Grazio may live in the now, he also looks toward the future. Though the Illinois Valley allows him the space he needs to grow as an artist, it can be difficult to find an audience. While he currently does most of his work on commission, he'd like to own a gallery someday.

No matter where his creations take him, though, his parents, Gilbert and Michelle, are very proud of him. "He is a true artist," Michelle says. "He lives it, breathes it and studies it. And, as a parent, if your kids are truly happy, then it makes your job easier."


Creating is the best part of Grazio's vocation. "I literally get to wake up every day and do what I want. I am an artist. I just want to create as much as I possibly can before I die."

"The arts are not a way to make a living. They are a very human way of making life more bearable ... Practicing an art, no matter how well or badly, is a way to make your soul grow." - Kurt Vonnegut



Grazio was a featured artist at St. Margaret's Annual Artisan Showcase & Art Auction. Contact him at graziobarattini@gmail.com.





*"I please myself with the graces of the winter
scenery, and believe that we are as much touched
by it as by the genial influences of summer."*

—Ralph Waldo Emerson

Not Just kidding Around

Kim and Jason Kotecki encourage others to live more abundantly by embracing childhood ideals.

Between balancing the demands of career and family, paying the bills, running a household and maintaining your health, being a grown-up can seem like all work and no fun. However, Kim and Jason Kotecki believe you can mitigate the stress of what they call “Adulthood” by approaching life with childlike enthusiasm.

The Madison, Wisconsin-based couple, who hail from the Illinois Valley (she grew up in Ottawa, he in Peru), have built a business, Kim & Jason, around helping folks to rediscover their childhood values through motivational seminars, books, comics, and a Web site that includes a weekly TV show, blog and an online store.

Their “escape adulthood” mantra is firmly grounded in faith, says Jason. “It all stems from Jesus’ admonition that we should become more like children and also his idea that we should live life

abundantly,” he says. “I believe Adulthood drains us of our passion, causes us to miss out on the best parts of life, and keeps us from becoming the people God created us to be.”

Kim and Jason met as teens while Christmas caroling with a group of friends. Shortly after that, the two arranged to meet with a mutual friend. Though the friend didn’t show, Kim and Jason spent hours talking. “I knew there was a real connection between us,” remembers Jason, who decided Kim was a keeper when she expressed appreciation for the cute comics he drew for her.



Kim, too, felt an instant affinity for Jason. “I knew Jason was ‘the one’ when I quickly discovered that I could be silly and 100 percent childlike around him, without having to filter myself. He welcomed my playfulness and joined right in.”

They went on to attend the same college and eventually married, in 2000. Those “sappy little drawings” Jason made for Kim evolved into a comic strip about the adventures of two 5-year-olds, and led to the launch of the Kim & Jason business. A friend encouraged Jason to write a book about the childlike ideals he’d been incorporating into the comic, and that first book, *Escape Adulthood: 8 Secrets from Childhood for the Stressed-Out Grown-Up*, was released in 2005.

At about that time, Jason began doing some speaking, first in schools talking about cartooning, and later in churches talking about the themes in his book. “The message really resonated with people, and now we speak all over the country—to churches, businesses and associations—about using these strategies from childhood to achieve life balance, stress less, and have more fun,” he says.

Since then, he’s written several other books on the topic, including the latest, *There’s an Adult in My Soup*, which debuted in September. Although the daily comic strip was retired in 2007, Jason has been working on a new, full-color Kim & Jason project.

As a boy growing up in Peru, Jason enjoyed art, but he aspired to become a superhero or a visionary filmmaker like George Lucas. Though neither of those dreams came to pass, Jason believes that he has achieved the essence of what he admired about both of those vocations: “When I dig deep and examine why I wanted to achieve those dreams, it becomes clear that I wanted to help people and to inspire and entertain them, using my creativity as a catalyst.”

Kim also dreamt of work that would involve helping others and caring for those in need—in her case, she hoped to someday be a mother and a veterinarian. After graduating from Northern Illinois University, Kim spent five years as a kindergarten teacher before leaving teaching to focus on the Kim & Jason business full time. With the birth of the couple’s first child, Lucy Ruth, in December 2008, she added the title of “Mom” to her resume.

Becoming parents hasn’t altered their mission, but has added a new dimension to it. “Lucy’s presence in my life has opened my eyes to the juggling act of parenthood. It has lit a passion within me to help other parents figure out the alignment of their demands, in order to put family first and still live a stress-free, abundant life,” says Kim, who hopes to develop e-books and materials offering tips and inspiration to busy parents.

Both Kim and Jason believe that, in these challenging economic times, it is more important than ever to embrace a more childlike spirit. Jason notes that doing so allows us to choose joy in the face of the “doom and gloom” stories in the media. “It also allows us to look at the world with new eyes, seeing opportunities that we might otherwise overlook,” he says. “A childlike perspective also helps us focus on what’s really important in life, such as the memories we create with the people we love, which more often than not, have absolutely nothing to do with money.”

Despite their work, Kim and Jason aren’t exempt from Adulthood themselves. At those times, they find humor and prayer to be powerful antidotes. “My faith gets me through it,” says Kim. “Typically, it’s a simple little prayer for strength or patience, during one of those moments when you think you cannot continue to press on.”

Though running a business isn’t always easy, and has required a lot of faith and persistence, Jason says he wouldn’t have it any other way. “God has certainly blessed me with some wonderful talents, and I’ve worked hard to develop those gifts and follow my passion,” he says. “I know of no better way of nurturing your spirit than waking up each morning knowing that you are doing what you were created to do: use your talents to make a difference.” Adds Kim, “I believe we

are all called to an adventurous journey, if we’re open to it. God has something awesome planned for each of us, and it’s up to us to move forward in faith or stay back in fear.”

Fall into Fun

Fall is Kim’s favorite season and fall activities are the source of many happy childhood memories, such as jumping into a pile of crunchy leaves and roasting marshmallows in the fireplace. She encourages you to make it a point to delight in a few of these fall favorites:

- Listen to the crunch of dry leaves underfoot.
- Marvel at the gorgeous palette of foliage.
- Collect tiny treasures, like acorns or a particularly pretty leaf.
- Pile on the mini marshmallows and relish a cup of cocoa on the first chilly day.
- Snuggle into a bed made with the softest flannel sheets.
- Fill a dish with Halloween candy, just for you. Candy corn or pumpkins, anyone?



If you’re looking for ways to Escape Adulthood, and live a life with less stress and more fun, join Kim & Jason Nation at www.KimandJason.com.

Through his work at St. Bede Abbey and St. Bede Academy, Father Ronald Margherio, OSB, encourages those of all ages to listen for God's call. Though most might define "vocation" as a call to the religious life, Fr. Ronald notes that the word, which comes from the Latin for summons, can also refer to other callings.

He notes that everybody has a vocation—whether married, single or religious. "God is calling every one of us to live His plan for us," he says. "It is not always

going to be easy, but if people look at it from the perspective that they are cooperating with God's plan instead of just pushing along and doing their own thing, I think things will go more smoothly and they will be happier and more at peace."

Father Ronald, who currently serves as chaplain for St. Bede Academy and as director of vocations for St. Bede Abbey, both in Peru, says that his vocation story started in his boyhood home, with parents who placed an emphasis on spiritual matters. During his formative years, he also had an early introduction to the Benedictines. His home



Following **God's path**

"Listen...
and attend...
with the ear
of your heart."

- St. Benedict



"Having a community and community *prayer* is important for me."

parish was St. Benedict in Ladd, and Benedictine Sisters taught the religious education classes. As a high school student at St. Bede Academy, he admired the monks who were his teachers. He began to consider a career in teaching and, during his senior year, started to sense that he had "some type of call" to religious life. "I didn't get knocked off my horse like St. Paul," he says. "It was more subtle."

He talked to Abbot David Duncan about joining the community, and, with the encouragement of his parents, followed Abbot David's advice to attend Loras College in Dubuque, Iowa. He visited the community during school vacations and summer. At the age of 20, he began his novitiate. It was the beginning of his life of work, prayer and obedience.

The year after his novitiate, he headed to Manchester, N.H., to finish his undergraduate education at St. Anselm College, earning degrees in philosophy and biology. Then he returned to St. Bede to work as a prefect and teach biology. When it was determined that he was a candidate for priesthood, he traveled to Rome to study theology for three years at the College of San Anselmo, then spent a year at the Catholic Theological Union in Chicago. Once ordained, he came back to St. Bede to teach and work in the boarding school.

After earning a master's degree in school administration, he served as the academy's assistant principal for several years before moving into the position of head of school/superintendent, a post he held for more than a decade. As he followed God's call and the direction of his community, he gained experience and skills that he never expected. "I've never had a job I wanted, but I have always had I job I enjoy," says Fr. Ronald, who admits that, had he chosen his own path, he would never have considered administration or fund-raising. "Others often see things that one doesn't see in oneself," he observes. In his current role, a good part of his time is spent at the school interacting with the students—presiding at Mass, leading prayer services and retreats, or meeting with groups to discuss Scripture during the lunch period.

When he's working as vocation director, he's fielding inquiries from those interested in the community or seeking to find out more about monastic life. Fr. Ronald has found that many of the men interested in entering the monastery are much older than he was at the time he joined. Some, like Brother Anthony and Father James, have raised families before receiving their "second calling." Right now, his focus is on attracting more 35- to 45-year-olds. Fr. Ronald believes that, when it comes to religious life, "the reasons why one joins and the reasons why one stays can be very different." For him, community prayer and living are two of the reasons he enjoys being a monk. "I like the fact that there are other people, that you are not on your own. Having a community and community prayer is important for me," he says.

There are currently 26 monks in the abbey community, less than half the number there were when Fr. Ronald professed his vows. However, he is encouraged that may change. "We are seeing, among students and society in general, a resurgence of interest in spiritual life," he says.

Father Ronald spends time talking to young men and women about religious life during retreats and visits to Newman Catholic Student Centers at campuses located within the Peoria Diocese. "Some of them have never met a nun or a monk, so it helps to get out there," he says. Interacting with youth or leading them on retreat at a monastery might not have an immediate payoff, but, says Fr. Ronald, it may plant a seed. "Maybe none of them will join, but they can be an ambassador—perhaps they have a friend who might have a vocation, and they can share with them about their experience or impressions of religious life."

He hopes that people listen to their hearts to discern their own vocations and make a point to support the vocations of others. "We have lost that in our culture," he says. "We need to pray for vocations. By example or prayer, be encouraging to other people."



Orthopedic surgeon Dr. Paul Perona makes life more comfortable and restores active lifestyles for those with hip and knee problems.

Renewed
MOBILITY

The realities of the aging process come to each of us in different ways. For those dealing with age-related hip and knee problems, there is great comfort in knowing that fellowship-trained orthopedic surgeon Dr. Paul Perona is on staff at St. Margaret's Health. Advances in technology and procedures, paired with Dr. Perona's highly specialized skills, can alleviate discomfort, making it possible for those with hip and knee problems to enjoy favorite activities once again.

So what are the signs that someone might need hip or knee surgery? Pain and loss of function are two key indicators. According to Dr. Perona, because of varying perceptions of pain, not everyone has the same experience. Dr. Perona notes that some patients with severe arthritis have little pain, while others have a lot of pain. When it comes to function, a sign of trouble might as subtle as a change in their step or a newfound struggle to put their ankle on top of their knee. Compared with the pain, function is a much more important symptom when determining whether a patient needs surgery. "When a person is limited because their loss of function frequently affects activities of daily living, they become good candidates for surgery," says Dr. Perona.

The experiences of two of Dr. Perona's patients illustrate both ends of the spectrum. Brad Rogers of Bloomington found that a high school basketball injury had come back to haunt him later in life, when discomfort in

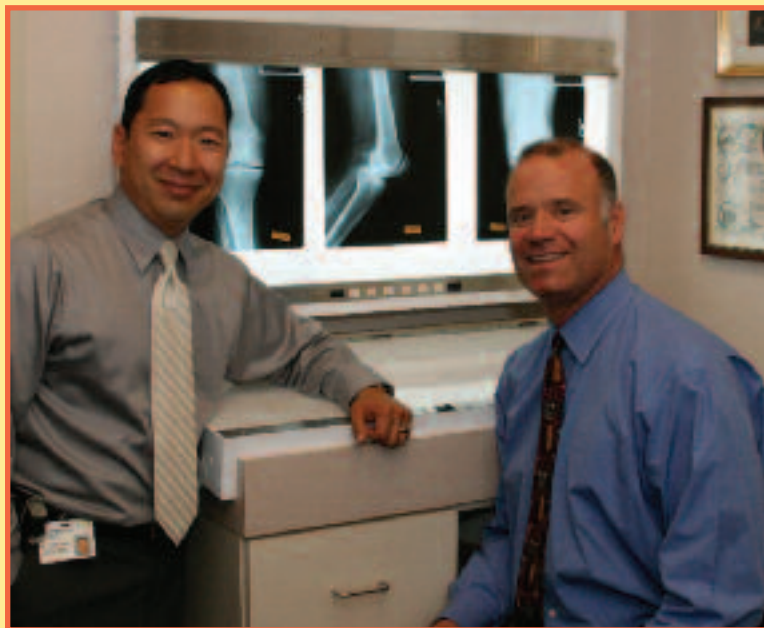
his knee kept growing—to the point where even walking became painful. Ottawa resident Terry Tonielli had spent years refereeing local school sports like soccer, basketball, softball and volleyball. For a lot of those years, Terry says, he experienced knee pain, but would mostly "grin and bear it."

As time went on, both Brad and Terry sought out relief through injections and painkillers, but eventually the discussion turned to the possibility of surgery. Brad sought the advice of a friend in the business of supplying knee replacement parts, who told him the key to success would be having a great surgeon and following through with physical therapy. This industry insider recommended Dr. Perona. Terry also did a lot of research and spoke to a lot of people before deciding to go to Dr. Perona. For Terry, the expertise and Fellowship training of Dr. Perona meant that when it came time for him to mentally prepare for surgery, he was "completely confident and comfortable."

Joint replacement is just what it sounds like. Portions of the bone and cartilage are surgically replaced. The first generation of joint replacements have lasted somewhere between 15 and 20 years, but technological advancements have led to joint replacements designed to last even longer. For people who have

been around long enough to have a replacement wear out, there is a surgical procedure called 'joint revision.'

A specialist in these procedures, Dr. Perona began his education at St. Bede Academy in Peru and earned a Bachelor of Science degree at



Dr. Paul Perona (seated) welcomes new Orthopedic Surgeon Dr. Michael Shin to the medical staff at St. Margaret's.



The suit Dr. Perona is wearing is called a Toga suit, which completely encases surgical staff to prevent infections during joint replacement or joint revision surgery.

Photo on left: Gary Windy of Ottawa was back on the links quickly following knee replacement surgery.

University of Notre Dame before heading to Loyola University Chicago Stritch School of Medicine. After graduating from medical school, he stayed at Loyola to complete his six-year residency in orthopedic surgery. Dr. Perona then took an additional year to complete a fellowship in adult reconstruction at Sharp Memorial Hospital, University of California at San Diego. During the fellowship year, Dr. Perona trained under a well-respected senior surgeon and performed close to 400 surgeries.

One of his colleagues, Dr. Brett Keller, a Bloomington, Ill.-based orthopedic surgeon, says, "Dr. Perona is an excellent total joint surgeon and a huge asset to the community. He is a leader in the field of knee and hip replacement and has assisted me with the care of complex revisions cases. He is leading the way in some of the latest technologies in total joint replacement."

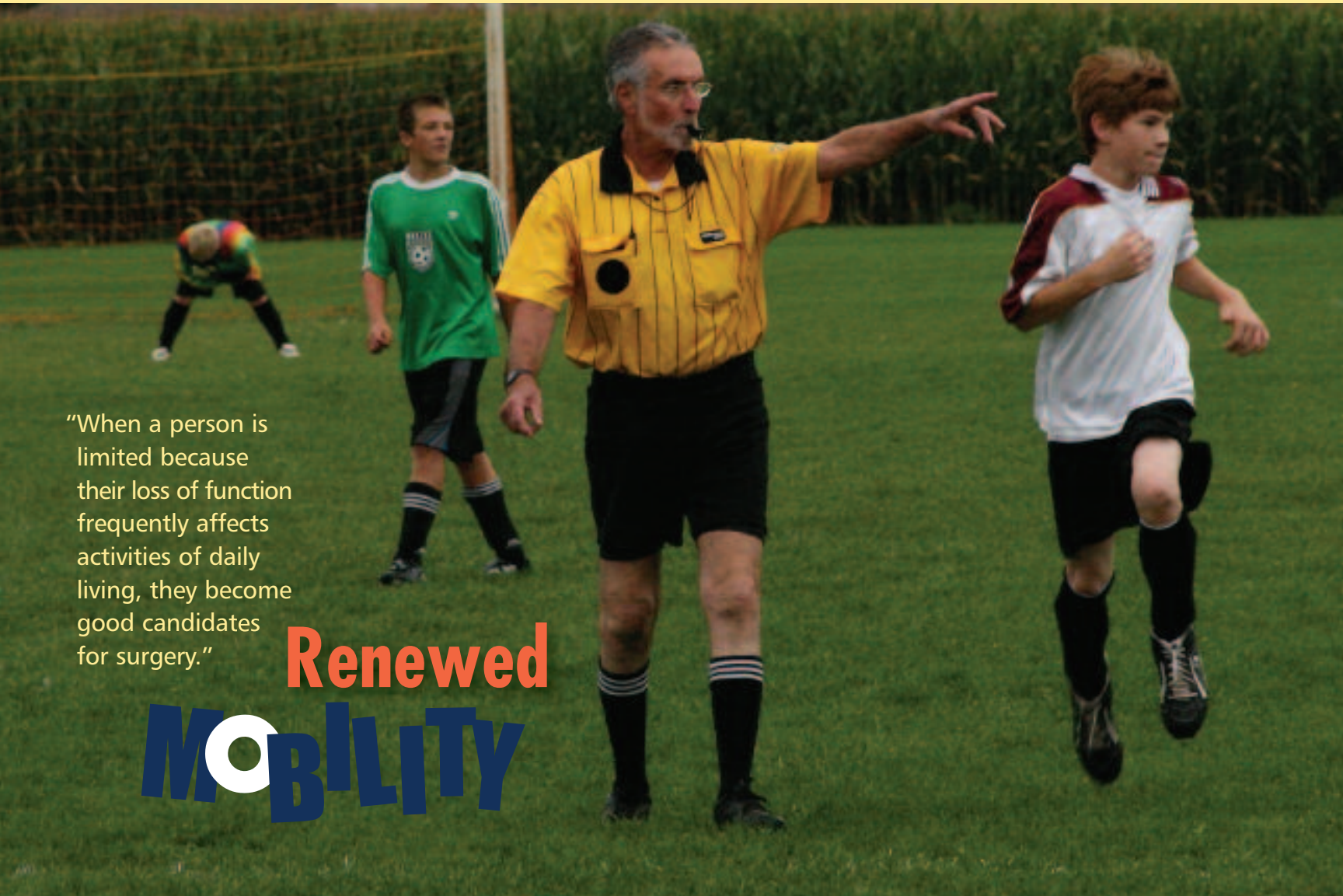
Dr. Perona's skill and experience ensured surgery went smoothly for both Brad and Terry. About five days after his partial knee replacement, Terry began a five-week regimen of physical therapy. Not long after that, he was back to refereeing, and says he was amazed at how quickly he was back in the game. As for Brad, just one week after his total knee replacement, he started a rehab program three days a week for six weeks. After about four weeks, he was able to walk an entire mile without joint pain; within eight weeks, he was back on the golf course. Brad says that, in addition to being a skilled surgeon, Dr. Perona is "a great guy, down to earth, comforting, and took the time to answer my questions."

Although no one can halt the aging process, it helps to know that those with hip and knee problems can achieve a better quality of life through the efforts of a specialist like Dr. Perona.

Photo below: Terry Tonielli was back refereeing soccer shortly after a partial knee replacement.

"When a person is limited because their loss of function frequently affects activities of daily living, they become good candidates for surgery."

Renewed
MOBILITY





St. Margaret's Living Center

"Home . . . with the Comforts of Care"

Under Our Wings

St. Margaret's Living Center offers you convenience and security in your senior years. We provide a very special home for you without the burdensome tasks associated with owning your own house.

Security In Our Care

The Living Center provides you with the security of knowing that your health is in good hands. With St. Margaret's Hospital as your neighbor, you can rest assured that the highest quality medical care is only seconds away.

Bread Of Life

St. Margaret's Chapel is an integral part of the Living Center. It is available to provide you with daily spiritual renewal and development.



St. Margaret's Health

Living Center

SMP Health System

600 East First Street • Spring Valley, IL

For information call the Living Center Coordinator at (815) 664-1434.

Angels of Mercy

In the aftermath of the devastating Cherry Mine Disaster, the Sisters of Mary of the Presentation cared for and consoled the victims and their families.



In November 1903, seven nuns from the Sisters of Mary of the Presentation traveled from their home in France to Spring Valley to staff a new hospital intended to serve area coal miners. Little did they know that, just six years later, they would be called upon to play an important role in caring for those affected by the nation's worst mining disaster.

At first known simply as "The Miners' Hospital," it was later named St. Margaret's, in honor of founder Father John Power's mother. In the early years, the building was sparsely furnished and included only a five-bed ward and a private room. The Sisters often gave up their own beds for their patients.

At the time the hospital was founded, there were few laws governing the protection of miners, and accidents and deaths were common occurrences. However, nothing could have prepared the nuns for the scope of the tragedy to come.

The nearby village of Cherry had grown up around the St. Paul Mine, which had been created to supply the St. Paul Railroad steam locomotives. The mine was considered one of the most modern—and safest—in the nation.

But on the afternoon of November 13, 1909, as workers at the mine were transporting a cart of hay to the underground mule stables, a dripping kerosene torch set the load on fire. The fire spread rapidly, trapping 400 miners and eventually leading to the deaths of 259.

While attention

understandably was riveted on attempts to rescue the men and boys trapped deep underground, the devastation did not stop at the surface. Wives, mothers and children agonized over the men's fates.

Daily they surrounded the rescue workers at the mineshaft, weeping, begging, praying, and berating the company that they blamed for the fire and insufficient recovery efforts. Below ground, men wrote letters to loved ones as their lives flickered away.

Many of the women spared little time worrying about their futures, distressed as they were over their men. Rescue efforts continued for weeks, and the bereaved women paraded through what one Sister called "the field of the dead" that was the morgue tent, hoping, yet fearing, to identify the body of a loved one.

"It was very heartrending," wrote one of the Sisters, "to see these poor women when they recognized the bodies of their husbands. ... Often the women could not recognize their loved ones from physical features which were horribly unrecognizable, but by some object found on their person or by the (ID) number suspended at the waist."

One week after the fire began, everyone rejoiced over the surfacing of the so-called “eight-day” men who had survived in an air pocket. The mine was sealed to tamp out the fire, perhaps effectively sealing the fates of any miners who remained alive. When it was reopened, recovery efforts continued until September 1910, 11 months after the fire. At least two of the Sisters would make the daily trek to Cherry until the last bodies were recovered.

Many of the miners’ wives and families became victims themselves because they were left with no means of support. In these days before Social Security, workman’s benefits and government aid, the women’s livelihoods were buried with the miners.

It was to the families that Sister Gilbert, Sister Marie Antonin, Sister Simon, Sister Marie Alexis and Sister Marie de Nazareth

ministered. Srs. Gilbert and Marie Alexis were among the original seven nuns to come in Illinois in 1903.

Since they had arrived knowing little English, the sisters could relate to the frightened and anguished wives who were recently immigrated Slavs, Poles, Italians, Swedes, Austrians or Lithuanians.

“Never have I witnessed such chaos; there was nothing in the house—no bread, no meat, no milk, nothing but a small bar of soap.”

Bereft of extended families a

continent away, “the wives were there all alone, no support, nothing,” summarizes Ed Caldwell, a recognized Illinois Valley expert on the Cherry Mine Disaster.

One Sister who had been assigned to do laundry and cleaning for a family that included four children, ranging in age from 6 months to 8 years, recounted: “Never have I witnessed such chaos; there was nothing in the house—no bread, no meat, no milk, nothing but a small bar of soap.”

In all, about 160 widows and nearly 400 children were affected by the calamity. About \$500,000 (from the company and raised through relief efforts) was awarded as compensation to the families.

The Sisters played an integral role in assisting the families through that first long winter, caring for their daily needs and doling out the relief funds. Mother Magdalen, Superior, wrote to her superiors in France of the esteem in which the Sisters were held: “The company of the railroad came insisting that the same Sisters remain with the families... The priest from that area also requested that the Sisters be responsible for distributing the donations coming in for families in need. The Sisters themselves had rolls of bills which they carried... to give families along the way.”

Without the nuns’ help, Caldwell is convinced, “families would have died.” In a town founded on coal, home heating supplies were scarce. Clothing and food shortages were rampant, and only the relief efforts, including donations of money, food, clothing and other items

from both local and national sources, fended off hunger and destitution that winter.

After the tragedy, some of the widows returned to their native countries, but others remained, convinced that America, despite all they had just experienced, still held promise. The mine limped on for another few years before shutting down, a victim of changes in the industry that swept mining from northern Illinois.

The disaster had an impact greater than the devastation to miners and their families within the tiny community—it prompted the state legislature to establish stricter regulations for mine safety and to pass a workman’s compensation act.

The Sisters’ mission to provide compassionate care for the Illinois Valley community, put to the test a century ago, continues today through St. Margaret’s Health and SMP Health System.

A Centennial of Remembrance

Though a century has passed since the tragedy at the St. Paul Mine, the area has not forgotten about the lost miners and their families. The village of Cherry will mark the 100th anniversary of the Cherry Mine Disaster with events during the weekend of November 14 and 15, including the unveiling and dedication of a new memorial. Other existing memorials include Miners’ Memorial Cemetery outside of town, where the United Mine Workers erected a 14-foot granite monument in 1911, and the Cherry Library, which holds a scale model replica of the mine site, mine memorabilia, photographs, and the letters trapped miners wrote to their loved ones.



In addition, visitors to the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library and Museum in Springfield will have the opportunity to learn more about the events of that long-ago November through the temporary exhibit “The Flames Caught Us: Cherry Mine 1909,” which will run from Nov. 1, 2009, through Mar. 31, 2010. Much of the exhibit is based on original and new source material donated by Princeton resident and Cherry Mine expert Ed Caldwell. To kick off the exhibition, there will be an author roundtable on Nov. 7 at 6 p.m., featuring commentary from several authors who have written about the disaster. For more information, visit www.PresidentLincoln.org.



Buon *Appetito*

The Bernardi family restaurants have offered a warm welcome and flavorful fare to generations of Illinois Valley residents.

Two of Toluca's landmarks are best seen after dusk, when the neon signs outside the two Italian restaurants brighten up the village's main street, their glowing chefs enticing diners to stop for a savory meal. To the delight of area residents and visitors alike, both Mona's and Capponi's have been dishing up pasta for more than 75 years.

By day, the two restaurants lie in the shadow of Toluca's third landmark, a large slag heap that is the lone reminder of the coal mine that attracted immigrants to the town, including Mona's founder Nildo "Mona" Bernardi and his parents.

While still a boy, Nildo emigrated with his parents from Italy. After settling in Toluca, his father opened a grocery. While the mine flourished, Toluca was a thriving town of 6,000 residents and boasted several churches, general stores and taverns, a hotel, a butcher shop, a grade school and two newspapers.

By 1933, when Nildo established what would become his landmark restaurant, the mine had been closed for nine years and the population had dwindled. He borrowed \$125 to buy a beer parlor (a debt he paid off three years later) and expanded the menu to offer chicken and spaghetti to his patrons.

The restaurant drew its name from Nildo's second passion—music. He played the saxophone and clarinet and formed Mona's Harmony Kings, who performed throughout the Illinois Valley in the late 1920s and early 1930s. The group's name was inspired by Nildo's theme song, "Oh Mona," and Nildo came to be known as Mona. Later, he would frequently entertain his restaurant patrons with an impromptu solo.

His instruments are displayed in one of the dining rooms at Mona's, along with other memorabilia, including the restaurant loan papers, family photographs and mementoes from the family's favorite baseball teams.

Photo left: Capponi's and Mona's have served as family meeting places since they opened in the 1930s.
Staff Sgt. Jack Graham of Streator waits for his first family dinner since arriving back in the U.S. from Afghanistan.



Two more generations of Bernardis have filtered through Mona's, and—after 1965 when Nildo bought out his competitor down the street—through Capponi's as well.

Of Mona's six children, Mike and Jerry remained in the restaurant business, with Jerry eventually overseeing the family's pasta-making business, which subsequently sold to Windsor Foods and continues to be offered under that label today.

Since 2001, the company has expanded to include three other restaurants that operate under the family name—Bernardi's in Washington, Bernardi's North in Dunlap and Bernardi's II in Pontiac.

Mike, 61, and his son, Tony, 39, now run the Toluca restaurants. His daughter, Stephanie, 37, manages the expansions outside Toluca. Mike and his wife, Cynthia, also have a third child, Nick, who is not currently part of the restaurant business.

The successful formula cementing all five restaurants, says Mike, has been “the food and the love of the business.” Adds Tony, “It's been our personalities and the service that has built relationships.”

Though the Toluca restaurants are a good hour's drive from their principal customer centers of Peoria and Bloomington, the Bernardis don't consider the distance a liability. “For years, people would drive from 75 to 90 miles away to visit these two places,” notes Mike.

So, when the family wanted to branch out to new locations, they sought out sites outside central metropolitan areas, such as Dunlap and Washington, both growing communities on the fringe of Peoria.

None of the new restaurants competes with the originals, but they capitalize on the family brand, the fabulous Bernardi fare that had sustained not one, but two, successful restaurants operating just a block apart.

Speaking of the successful new sites, Tony says, “We like to be a drive-to location, a destination point. We're not just an eatery that you stop at on the way to grocery shopping ... it didn't scare us to put a restaurant somewhere that is good enough for people to go out of their way for.”

Tony, who joined the family business while still in his teens, enjoys knowing Mona's has been a fixture for 76 years. “I'm seeing kids come on dates that I used to put in high chairs,” he says.

Through the years, clientele have been particular about the menu. A spinach-filled tortellini didn't fly, nor did pizza. “Chicken and pasta—when people come here, that's what they want,” observes Mike. Yet the place is packed every third Thursday as patrons line up for polenta, an old Italian recipe of corn meal topped with stew.

Tradition extends beyond the menu, Mike says, pointing to an extended family of employees that includes some staff or managers who can count 25 or even 40 years with the team. “The best steak in the world is not worth a darn if you haven't got good service,” he says.

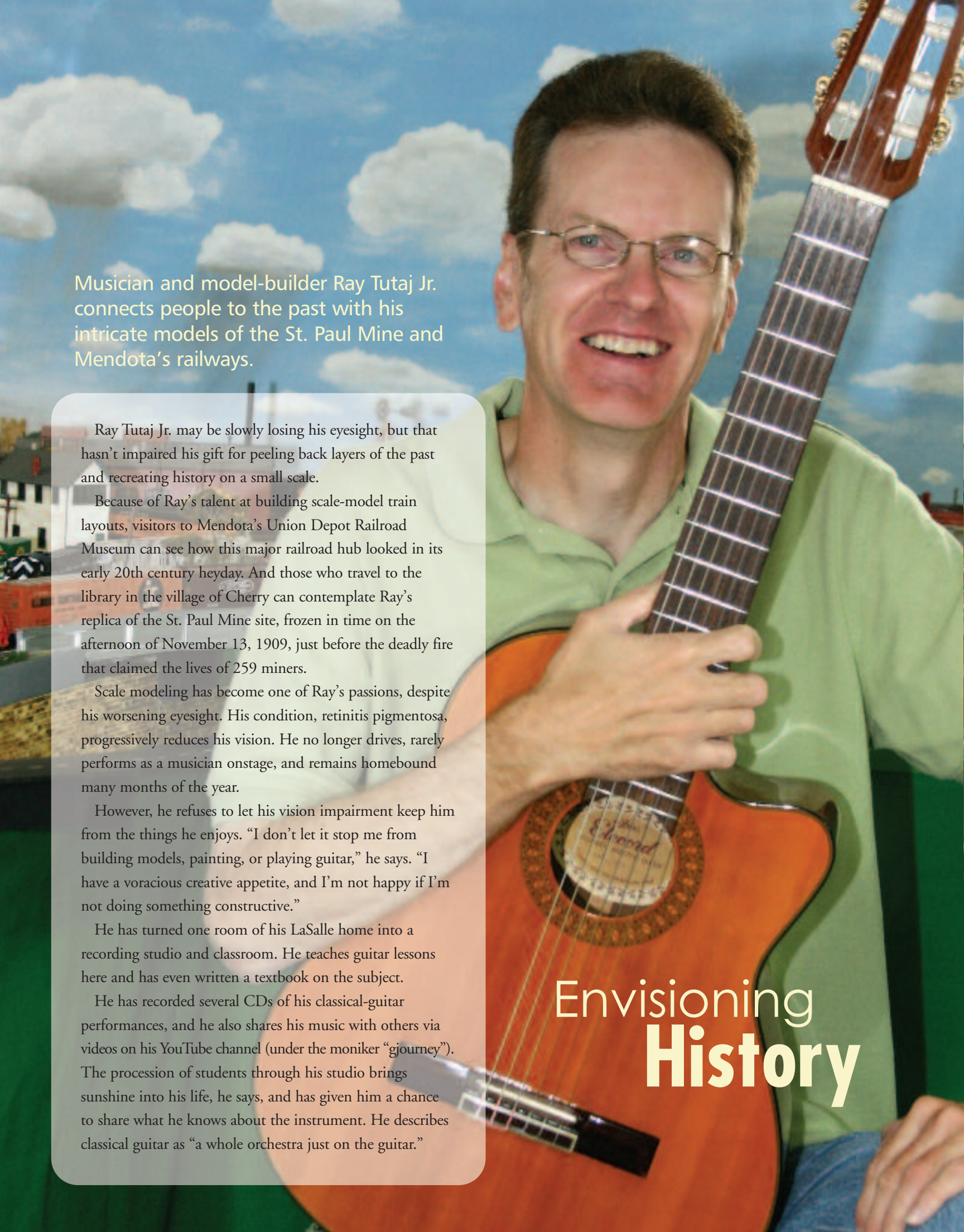
It isn't only their pasta that makes the two restaurants a staple in their community. Capponi's has raised more than \$140,000 over the last 14 years for the local fire department, and Mona's has been hosting a similar event to benefit the ambulance service. “It's important in a town this size to be involved. Everybody is your neighbor,” says Tony.

Ultimately, “the restaurant is all about family,” Tony says, glancing around at the empty dining room but envisioning a typical evening. “There are half-a-dozen boosters and high chairs on a given night—it's an affordable, family place to come.”

Mike speaks proudly of staying strong and true for 76 years. “We're about the only business left in Toluca,” he says, adding he hopes to be around to celebrate the restaurant's 100th anniversary.

So deep is the Mona's/Capponi's tradition, in fact, that when something upsets the schedule, people notice. When Jerry died not long ago, both restaurants closed in tribute. “Normally, one of the restaurants is always open, but both were dark for two nights. It was frightening, like the whole town had gone black,” Mike recalls.

“For years, people would drive from 75 to 90 miles away to visit these two places.”



Musician and model-builder Ray Tutaj Jr. connects people to the past with his intricate models of the St. Paul Mine and Mendota's railways.

Ray Tutaj Jr. may be slowly losing his eyesight, but that hasn't impaired his gift for peeling back layers of the past and recreating history on a small scale.

Because of Ray's talent at building scale-model train layouts, visitors to Mendota's Union Depot Railroad Museum can see how this major railroad hub looked in its early 20th century heyday. And those who travel to the library in the village of Cherry can contemplate Ray's replica of the St. Paul Mine site, frozen in time on the afternoon of November 13, 1909, just before the deadly fire that claimed the lives of 259 miners.

Scale modeling has become one of Ray's passions, despite his worsening eyesight. His condition, retinitis pigmentosa, progressively reduces his vision. He no longer drives, rarely performs as a musician onstage, and remains homebound many months of the year.

However, he refuses to let his vision impairment keep him from the things he enjoys. "I don't let it stop me from building models, painting, or playing guitar," he says. "I have a voracious creative appetite, and I'm not happy if I'm not doing something constructive."

He has turned one room of his LaSalle home into a recording studio and classroom. He teaches guitar lessons here and has even written a textbook on the subject.

He has recorded several CDs of his classical-guitar performances, and he also shares his music with others via videos on his YouTube channel (under the moniker "gjourney"). The procession of students through his studio brings sunshine into his life, he says, and has given him a chance to share what he knows about the instrument. He describes classical guitar as "a whole orchestra just on the guitar."

Envisioning
History

His passion for railroads began in childhood, when he seized every opportunity to ride amusement park trains, play with scale-model sets or watch the real thing. By the 1960s, when Ray was growing up in Mendota and LaSalle, the big era of rail transportation was over, but Mendota's rail yards still bustled with traffic and Ray was lucky enough to have a front-row seat.

"Those were the first trains I ever saw," he says. "I was obsessed with them. I think it was their power. Being little and looking at a massive machine—it was enormous! From an artistic point of view, I admired the beauty of this method of transportation."

friends back home that Mendota was proposing a museum honoring its rail transportation history. In the 1870s, 39 passenger trains stopped daily in town, serving three railroad lines going to all points of the compass. Museum founders envisioned housing their new facility in the last remaining section of Union Depot (the bulk of the structure was torn down in 1942).

Over the next three years, using contemporary photographs and other research, Ray adapted and expanded his scale model to include familiar landmarks and sections of downtown. Just before the museum was set to open in 1997, Ray packed up the 29- by 12-foot



When his family moved to Nevada, he figured the railroads would always be back home in Mendota. "But when I returned, they were gone," he lamented in the pages of *Model Railroad* magazine, which featured his Mendota and Cherry layouts eight years ago.

The familiar railroads may have disappeared but they were not forgotten, and Ray, a history buff, was determined to bring them back. "If you build it in 3-D, there you are; you will be able to see what it looked like and feel like you lived there."

While he was building a scale model of his beloved Mendota crossing at his Las Vegas home in the mid-1990s, he learned from

model and the rest of his belongings in a U-Haul and headed back to the Midwest—this time, to stay.

His parents were horrified that he'd cross the country with no prospects for employment, but his grandmother, Ruby L. Smith, proved a rock of strength and inspiration. "We would just sit and talk about spiritual things. She had a gift of wisdom. She saw things differently than other people. I cherished the moments and the talks with her," says Ray. Ultimately, he came to the conclusion to follow "what you believe in the hollow of your gut. Abraham went out on faith, and so did Ray."

Ray's Mendota model "is the high point of a visit" to the Union Depot Railroad Museum, says Shirley Pierson, director of the museum complex. "Kids, no matter how old they are, love it." Railroad buffs have even compared the Mendota display to the one at the Museum of Science and Industry in Chicago, she says.

The original model has been expanded by volunteer Jim Carrow, and the museum has supplemented its display with models donated by Dave Beck—including replicas of the full-scale working cars, which visitors can climb aboard outside.

Almost immediately after completing the Mendota model, Ray offered his talents to the village of Cherry to replicate the Cherry Mine layout. The project (measuring 4- by 16-feet, with a 6-foot section for the slag piles) took a year-and-a-half.

"When you looked at it in that realistic light, it came to life."

He spent hours building the "tipple," an elevated wooden structure where the coal was washed, sorted and tipped into rail cars, covering the Styrofoam slag (or waste) piles with actual sifted slag gathered from hills around Cherry.

Ray began to wonder if he'd lost his mind to take on such detailed work again, but he was drawn to the story. He knew he'd achieved his vision when he hauled the completed model outside to photograph it, and the sky overhead and the sunlight's play on the display took his breath away. "When you looked at it in that realistic light, it came to life," he says.

Thanks to Ray's perseverance and attention to detail, when generations of visitors to Mendota and Cherry look at the models, they can see the grand era of railroads or the long-gone coal mine come to life before their eyes.



The Village of Cherry Library and Village Hall

Located on Illinois Route 89 in Cherry.

Open Saturdays, 9-11 a.m., and weekdays by appointment. There will be extended hours on the weekend of the Cherry Mine Disaster anniversary.

For more information, call 815-894-3338.

Mendota Museum

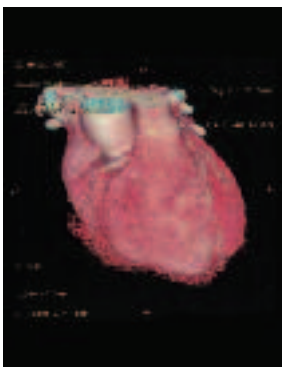
The Union Depot Railroad Museum is located at 638 Main Street in Mendota. The museum is open Saturdays and Sundays, noon to 4 p.m., from Labor Day through Memorial Day, with extended hours in the summer. **For more information about the museum, call 815-539-3373.**

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St. Margaret's Health

St. Margaret's Hospital

SMP Health System



Serving *Joyfully*

Sister Anne Germaine Picard works to help others discern their vocations, drawing upon her faith and her 50 years of experience.



Around the age of 13, while preparing for the Sacrament of Confirmation, Sister Anne Germaine Picard, SMP, read the story of St. Joan of Arc, and felt certain she was called, like St. Joan, to be a soldier for Christ. “Her story deeply touched me, and she has been my faith companion all these years,” says Sister Anne Germaine, who has been working to win souls for Christ throughout her nearly five decades of religious life.

Since last December, Sister Anne Germaine has been living in Princeton and serving as Vocation Director for the Sisters of Mary of the Presentation. Prior to that, she’s served in varied roles, including as an X-ray technician, religious education teacher and hospice chaplain.

Growing up on a farm near the Canadian border in Dunseith, North Dakota, young Marie Anne Picard had no intention of becoming a Sister. The fourth of 13 children, she envisioned herself the wife of a farmer, living on a ranch surrounded by a white picket fence and raising children of her own.

She was raised in a family of faith—her parents were dedicated to the Church and cultivated the same dedication in their children, taking time to pray together as a family and making sure that farm chores were scheduled around attending Mass and devotions.

During high school, she was a boarder at the Notre Dame Academy in Willow City, North Dakota, which was run by the Sisters of Mary of the Presentation. During a retreat day in her junior year, she recalls listening to a priest say that her life was not hers, but belonged to God. After that, she began to seek time in the chapel to pray for God’s will in her life. “I would picture my dream of living on a ranch, and ask God to put a good man in my life, but I would always add, ‘But Lord, if you want me to be a Sister, I will,’” she recalls.

On a May afternoon of that year, Sister Anne Germaine, who worked at the school to earn her room and board, was wheeling a milk cart through the lunchroom when the school principal, Sister

Mary Patrick, called out to her: “Marie Anne, have you thought about joining us in August?” She immediately responded, “Yes!” Though her answer took her by surprise, she says, “a deep peace and joy broke inside of me.”

The following year, she began her three-year novitiate. On August 17, 1960, she made her profession of vows. Since then, whether serving in youth ministry or in a hospital setting, she has remained focused on sharing Christ’s love with others of all faiths. “I had a deep zeal in my heart to be a warrior for Christ, and so many times, I have been able to bring people to Baptism,” she says. “As a celibate woman, I have been generative to God.”

Over the years, she’s been surprised at how her personal gifts and talents have been called forth by the SMP community and the Church, leading her to embrace new roles and opportunities. Her current position allows her to journey with those who are searching to discern where God is calling them, whether that’s to religious life or a different vocation. She also hopes to work with local parishes in developing spirituality programs for women.

Sister Anne Germaine points out that religious life is holistic, noting that, in addition to serving others and spending time in contemplative prayer, it’s also about engaging in spirit-renewing activities, such as enjoying daily nature walks or fellowship with others.

“For me, my religious vocation has been the greatest gift God has ever given me, outside of Baptism,” she says. “God is stretching me to do His will in many ways, and if I had it to do all over again, I would still say, ‘Yes!’”

For more information about the Sisters of Mary of the Presentation, contact Sister Anne Germaine Picard, SMP, by phone at 815-915-2096 or by email sisterannegermaine@gmail.com.

“My religious vocation has been the greatest gift God has ever given me, outside of Baptism.”

St. Margaret's Hospital Events



SCREENINGS/CLINICS

Cholesterol Screenings

St. Margaret's DeAngelo Resource Room:
Second Wednesday of every month, 7-9 a.m.
Second Saturday in January, April and July, 7-9 a.m.

Free Blood Pressure/Blood Sugar Screenings (every month unless otherwise indicated)

- DePue Library, second Tuesday, 8:30-9:30 a.m.
- Hennepin Bank, first Thursday, 8:30-10 a.m.
- HyVee, second Monday, 9-10 a.m.
- Ladd Bank, first Wednesday, 10-11 a.m.
- Liberty Estates, second Thursday, 9-10 a.m.
- Oglesby Library, third Thursday of odd months, 10:30-11:30 a.m.
- Putnam County Senior Center, second Tuesday, 10-11:30 a.m.
- St. Margaret's DeAngelo Resource Room, first Wednesday of odd months, 7-9 a.m.
- Wal-Mart, third Wednesday, 9-10 a.m.
- YMCA, fourth Tuesday, 8-10 a.m.

CLASSES

(All classes are held in St. Margaret's First Floor Presentation Room, unless otherwise noted.)

Babysitting Clinic

Dec. 30th, 8 a.m.-1 p.m., St. Margaret's First Floor Presentation Room
\$20 fee, includes lunch
Call 815-664-1613. Registration required.

Diabetes Education Classes

Classes meet once a week for four weeks.
Different topics will be covered each week.
Each participant receives a free glucometer.
For more information, call 815-664-1613.
November 2, 9, 16, 23, January 4, 11, 18, 35
February 1, 8, 15, 22, March 1, 8, 15, 22

- Week 1:** Overview of Diabetes, Complications and Monitoring
Speaker: Pat Schummer, RN, MS
- Week 2:** Nutrition and Diet
Speaker: Marilyn Csernus, MS, RD, LDN
- Week 3:** Medications
Speaker: St. Margaret's staff pharmacist
Stress Management
Speaker: Pat Schummer, RN, MS
- Week 4:** Exercise and Activity
Speaker: Candy Ference, exercise specialist
Foot, Skin and Oral Care
Speaker: Pat Schummer, RN, MS

Medication Review Program

Discuss all types of medication with Doctors of Pharmacy on the fourth Tuesday of every month, from 11:00 a.m.-noon. Call 815-664-1613 for more information.

CPR Instruction

CPR Education is given on the evening of the first Tuesday of every month.
Call 815-664-1613 for more information.

CHILDBIRTH EDUCATION

- **Prenatal/Lamaze Classes:** Classes meet for four consecutive weeks, from 6:30-9:30 p.m., and start on Monday, Nov. 2. They are held in St. Margaret's First Floor Presentation Room.
- **Sibling Classes (for 3- to 8-year-olds whose mom is expecting a new baby):** Class is held Dec. 5, at 10:00 a.m., in Room 309, St. Margaret's Hospital.
- **ABC Prenatal Classes (for pregnant women in their first and second trimester):** Class is held Nov. 30, at 6:30 p.m., in St. Margaret's First Floor Presentation Room.

To register for all childbirth preparation programs, call St. Margaret's Family Birthing Centre at 815-664-1345 or 815-223-5346, ext. 1345.

SUPPORT GROUPS

(All support groups meet in St. Margaret's First Floor Presentation Room, unless otherwise noted.)

Grief Support Group

Third Tuesday of each month, 6-7 p.m.

Parkinson's Support Group

First Monday of each month, 1:30-3:30 p.m.

Rebound (Breast Cancer Support)

Third Monday of each month, 7-9 p.m.

Turning Point (HIV/AIDS Support Group)

Third Wednesday of each month, 6 p.m.
Location not disclosed for confidentiality purposes.
For more information, please call 815-664-1613.

Visions (Blind and Visually Impaired Support Group)

First and Third Thursdays of each month, 12:30-2:30 p.m.

SPECIAL EVENTS

St. Margaret's Foundation Phil Dirt and the Dozers Dance

Saturday, Oct. 31, 7 p.m.
Celebrations 150 in LaSalle
All proceeds from this event will assist in purchasing the dietary and nutritional software system.
For more information, call 815-664-7260.

Auxiliary Bake Sale

Tuesday, Nov. 10
St. Margaret's Upper Lobby

St. Margaret's Gift Shop Christmas Open House

Saturday and Sunday, Nov. 14 and 15
St. Margaret's Upper Lobby

Girl Talk

Thursday, November 12, 5:30 p.m.
St. Margaret's First Floor Presentation Room
Call 815-664-1613 for more information.

American Red Cross Bloodmobiles

Tuesday, Nov. 24
Tuesday, Jan. 19
Tuesday, Mar. 23
11:30 a.m.-5:30 p.m.
St. Margaret's First Floor Presentation Room
Walk-ins welcome, or call 815-664-1613 for more information.

Nut & Candy Sale

Tuesday, Dec. 15, 8 a.m.-3 p.m.
St. Margaret's Lower Lobby

Auxiliary Scrub Sale

Thursday and Friday, Feb. 11 and 12
St. Margaret's First Floor Presentation Room

St. Margaret's Foundation Sweetheart Dance

(Featuring The Nightshift Orchestra)
Saturday, Feb. 20
Call 815-664-7260 for more information.



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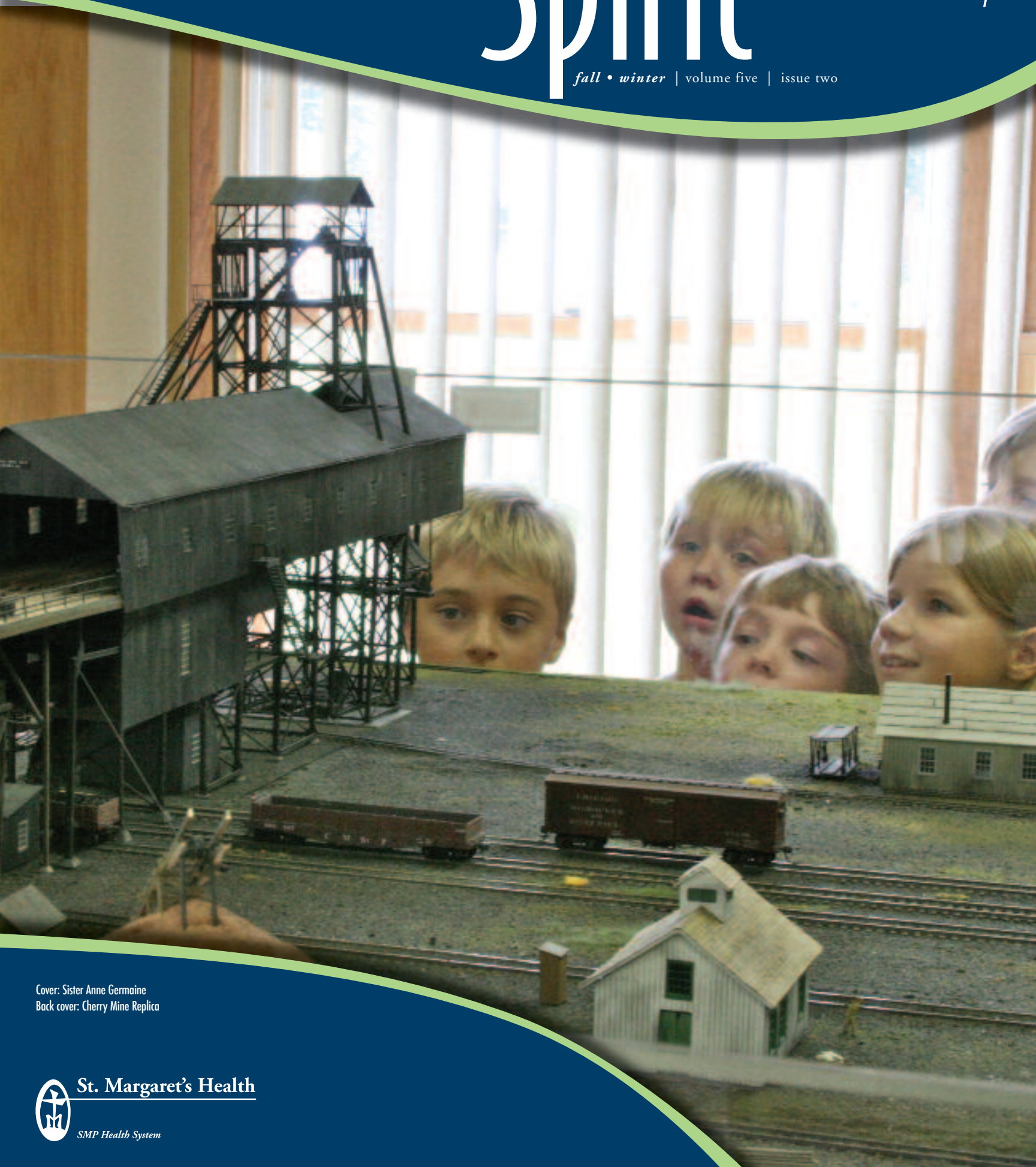
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Spirit

Stories of the Illinois Valley

fall • winter | volume five | issue two



Cover: Sister Anne Germaine
Back cover: Cherry Mine Replica



St. Margaret's Health

SMP Health System