

Tapestries of Tuscarawas County



Volume 4

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“Zoar Town Hall”

by Peggy Hellem

*The personal views expressed in this magazine do not necessarily
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Preface

By Kim Jurkovic

Local History Librarian, Dover Public Library

“I think a lot of what I was taught, gathered, and learned is worth keeping. Heritage and ‘wisdom’ and simply family and local history enrich the one able to tap such information. As it is I wish I had garnered more from my grandparents and parents”

- Gary Gygaz, creator of Dungeons & Dragons

Welcome to the Fourth Edition of *Tapestries of Tuscarawas County*. This edition comes late as the world for the past 21 months has been dealing with the COVID-19 pandemic. The submissions for our latest edition actually span two years as the world closed, time stood still, and we seem to be missing a chunk of our lives.

I think this pandemic illustrated for us the importance and irrelevance of so many things. While the Dover Public Library was closed, many realized how much they missed the feel of a book and the contact with humans and friendly faces. We may have finally grasped what quiet or rambunctious moments with family really mean. Toilet paper and hand sanitizer, grocery clerks and those in the medical field, the internet and Zoom became our mainstays.

I think we can take some of our lessons from the pandemic and apply them to the importance of memories and local history. I admit, I spent a lot of time researching the Spanish Flu epidemic in 1918 to get a grasp on what was happening around us. We can

always learn from history. As this terrible virus affected especially our older generation, we recognize the value of their stories.

We thank all of the contributors to Volume 4 for sharing their pictures of Tuscarawas County. As we put each of them together, we create the Tapestry of Life here in the county. We appreciate your willingness to share the heritage and wisdom, these links to the past, so they will not be forgotten.

The Speckled Table

By Becky Soehnlen

The house I grew up in was old before my mom and dad ever bought it. Part of an eighty-acre farm in northern Tuscarawas county, it had already seen a couple generations before they purchased it around 1951. To me, growing up in it, I just remember a lot of inconveniences. There was no heat upstairs. Registers in the floor let any heat from the downstairs filter up, and it was not unusual to see a drift of snow on the windowsill after a cold night. Two of the bedrooms had no closets, and there was also a limited number of electrical outlets throughout, and extension cords streaked along the walls to provide light to dark corners. Even worse, the old plaster on the ceiling would occasionally crack and fall, leaving a large hole with the lath visible.

But for all its faults, it was a good house to grow up in. Our large family grew up and grew close, under the tutelage of our parents, simple hard-working farmers with strong values and strong work ethics. Almost all the food we ate was grown on the farm, and at mealtime, the kitchen table was always filled.

Looking back now, and remembering, it seems that old table was the cornerstone of our family. No one remembers where the table came from, or what kind of wood it was made of. Just under five feet long, it could be lengthened by two leaves that pulled out on either end, and that always stuck when pushed back in. There was a cross brace underneath steadying all four legs, and if you were lucky, your legs were long enough to rest on it during a meal. Now the brace and legs all showed wear and tear that antique dealers would probably say

The Speckled Table

showed it was genuine. I can vouch that all that wear is genuine. The table saw every breakfast, dinner and supper our family had. Mom would sit at one end, close to the stove and sink, Dad would sit at the other end, and we seven kids took up all the other spaces.

Around that table, our lives evolved. At the time, it was the center of a normal working day on the farm. Sitting around it, beans were snapped, corn husked, peaches and apples peeled, and afterward, the canned produce would sit lined up before being taken to the cellar for storage. Many a side of beef was cut up on the table, and, with a hand grinder screwed to its edge, hamburg was processed. Then we would wrap the hamburg in one pound packages that filled the freezer. My favorite memory was of the noodles my mom made. She would first roll out the eggs and flour into thin circles two feet across. Usually three or four filled the tabletop. There they would set until dry enough to be handled. Once dry, she would lay them on top of each other, with a dusting of flour between, and roll all of them up like a rug. Then she would cut them into thin strips, until there was a pile of noodles to dry. This was the most precarious time of the procedure, for we kids could get our fingers smacked for snitching a couple of the drying morsels. Mom's grandchildren, years later, would do the same.

But that table had other uses. It was not unusual to come home from school and find a six foot step ladder set on top of it, as Mom frequently painted the 12 foot high ceilings. Tons of school homework and projects were done on its top. It hosted decades of our family gatherings. Old yellowing photos show us gathered around the holiday table with a twenty-two pound turkey filling one end. As we grew older and our family expanded with spouses and children, the table, even with both leaves extended, simply wasn't big enough, so

an eight foot folding table would be lined up with it, extending into the living room. And when grandchildren arrived for mom and dad, the kids table was set up alongside, making the little ones an important part of our gatherings. And it's a wonder the table survived our raucous card games of War and Slapjack and Spoons.

Eventually, the old house became just too worn. The electrical system was faulty and fuses were always blowing, the old water pipes leaked, and the coal furnace was too dilapidated. So a new house was built, right next to the old, and one of the first pieces of furniture moved over to the new house was the table.

As the years went by, and the table became worn, you would have thought that it would have been stripped and refinished. But instead, Mom would simply cover it with colorful tablecloths, some made of simple oilcloth that could be easily wiped off, and others she hand embroidered herself for special occasions. But I am glad Mom never thought to have the table redone. For to do that would have been to erase the most sentimental thing about that table. And it goes back to living in that old house with its twelve foot ceilings.

Go ahead, throw back that tablecloth and look at the surface of that table, a surface not shiny or patina-ed with age, but speckled - with paint drops in many colors. It is paint that was not put on purposely, or to produce a work of art. For each of those specks is a sign of Mom, raising seven kids, and still finding time to make that old home presentable, despite falling plaster and cracked walls. For standing on a step ladder on top that table, and using a paintbrush or roller, every swish would make a swath that would spatter down and speckle that table top. There they are, all the colors that bring back memories—the different shades of green, from lime green to that horrible avocado

The Speckled Table

shade, the bright pink, the dark pink, and the whites and yellows. Some of the speckles are large, some nothing more than a dusting. But they are all there, to this day.

Just an old table, some would say, worn and with loose joints, wobbly and discolored, nothing that could be refinished and made presentable. But if I would ever end up living in a stately mansion decorated by a distinguished designer, I would insist that the table have its rightful place: in the kitchen, where hearty meals are served, where gatherings are made, and all the memories of family hang tight and fill the tabletop.

Culling Peaches

By Janet Ladrach

August 17, 2020

The five gallon bucket sits beside me,
more battered and gray than I.
I sort through the windfall peaches
from my granddaughter's tree.

The small, green, knobbly ones get chucked,
unless I find a patch of soft sweetness.
Then I slice it off and toss it into
the stainless steel pan.

Some fruits have split, from the fall.
Some have split and started to rot.
Others are as large and firm as bought ones.
A cut, a twist, and the pit comes out clean.

I perform this housewifely surgery,
channeling my Aunt Correeny, and her mother.
We sit outside, listening to the chimes,
I listen to a book as well.

I keep just the good bits
and time slides by like fresh
peach down my throat.

Growing Up Foodie

By Jeannie Manini Michel

During the stay-at-home days mandated by the COVID-19 coronavirus, many of my generation have turned to cooking for comfort and consolation. Most of us baby boomers fondly remember growing up in households where putting a lot of good food on the table was a matter of pride for our parents, who had lived through the depression and WWII when food was scarce. My dad always proudly told us how his dad made sure everyone at the table got at least a taste of the meat, no matter how little of it there was. Most Italian men of my grandfather's generation ate the meat and left the gravy for the wife and kids. And that was more practical than unkind: the rationale was that the man of the house needed a lot of energy to work and support the family; the wife and kids, not so much.

Growing up in a home where food was abundant and tasty, I was a "foodie" long before the term even existed. Both of my parents liked to cook, which was unusual for men of my dad's generation. That was a good thing - mom died suddenly in 1963 and dad was left alone to raise my brother and me. He taught me early on how to "get dinner on the table." Fortunately, I loved it - cooking was something I *got* to do, while cleaning and laundry were things I *had* to do. I still feel that way!

Dad bought our meat "by the half" from co-workers at the clay plant who also farmed and raised their own beef. I remember getting the freshly-cut meat in huge, galvanized metal tubs, wrapping each piece in freezer paper and labeling it on the brown tape used to seal it. The

hamburger was the best: whatever couldn't be cut into a nice roast or steak was ground together so it was really flavorful. And even though dad cooked meat really well-done, burgers somehow remained juicy and delicious.

Like most families, our holiday meals were always traditional: sauerkraut and pork for New Year's day; ham for Easter; burgers and dogs for the first cookout of the year on Memorial Day; turkey for Thanksgiving and again for Christmas.

The centerpiece of New Year's dinner was the sauerkraut and pork. Germans believe that eating sauerkraut on New Year's Day brings as much goodness and mercy as the number of shreds of cabbage in the kraut. The Pennsylvania Dutch and many other cultures believe that eating pork on New Year's Day helps to move ahead in the new year, since the pig roots forward. Who were we to disregard such delicious traditions?

Our kraut was baked in a huge pot with its hidden treasure, salamets, tucked in among the roast and spare ribs. Salamets are Alsatian style pork sausages seasoned with wine, garlic, pepper and a hint of nutmeg. When I was a kid, several butcher shops made them, and it was hotly debated whose were the best. They were made seasonally and always eagerly anticipated. They could be dried, and dad usually hung several strings of links in our basement's fruit cellar. He became concerned one winter when they started to disappear - he was afraid rats were getting in and carrying them off. My brother finally confessed: he was the big rat who'd been eating them when he went to the basement at night to take a shower!

We really celebrated Easter when I was a kid. Anticipating new

clothes, candy-laden baskets and a festive dinner got us through deprivations of Lent: no sweets or snacks, meatless meals and often gloomy weather. In my mind Easter Sunday was always bright and sunny and smelled like ham! I can still picture that ham: diamond-scored fat glistening with a brown-sugar glaze, studded with cloves and topped with pineapple rings centered with cherries. Nowadays fresh pineapple is available year around, but then canned pineapple was a costly luxury we enjoyed only at Easter and Christmas.

Charcoal grilling was a novel cooking method when I was a kid, and we didn't do it often. If the weather was nice, dad dragged the grill out on Memorial Day and cremated "hamburgs" and hot dogs. I was more interested in the homemade potato salad, baked beans, and coleslaw side dishes that made this alfresco meal such a treat. The only dessert I remember having at a cookout was watermelon, chilled in that big, galvanized metal tub of ice water while we ate. It was a cold, crisp, sweet treat and we had fun seeing who could spit the seeds the farthest.

Thanksgiving was, and still is, my favorite holiday. What's not to like about a holiday where all you have to do is cook and eat? No worries about sizes, colors and the other trials of the upcoming natal season! My dad always bought a huge turkey and had the butcher cut it in half length-wise; one half for Thanksgiving and the other frozen for Christmas. Mom's traditional bread, celery, onion and sage dressing was my favorite side dish. (That little can of dried sage came out only at this time of year!) She made the dressing on Wednesday and it sat in a huge pan on the counter overnight. My brother and I would sneak into the kitchen all evening to snatch bites of it, while mom good-naturedly scolded "leave some for tomorrow!" I still make that traditional dressing, but with fresh and dried sage I've grown in my

garden. And I refrigerate it overnight!

Christmas dinner was a reprise of Thanksgiving with a few sweet changes. Instead of the traditional cranberry sauce, mom made a fruit salad with Red Emperor grapes, canned pineapple chunks, bananas and whipped cream. Like everyone of her generation who suffered through sugar rationing in WWII, mom loved sweets. Dad always enjoyed buying treats for the holidays: nuts, tangerines, dried figs, and always a pomegranate. He cracked open that exotic beauty and sat it on a plate; we all picked at it and stained our fingers until the last of the ruby red arils were gone. Mom started baking Christmas cookies right after Thanksgiving. The date and nut pinwheels were my favorite, then and now. "Christmas candy" was in plentiful supply too!

Sunday dinner always was a special meal, and daydreaming about it got me through many a long sermon. Attending Mass was mandatory and Saturday night was spent preparing for it: taking a bath, shining shoes, laying out good clothes, and getting to bed early because we always went to the 7:30 service. When we got home, mom, then later dad, immediately started cooking so we could eat at noon sharp.

The Sunday roast, beef or pork, or fall-apart, tender pan-fried chicken (can you tell which was my favorite?) was always accompanied by polenta and gravy. Unlike today's polenta which can include ingredients like broth, cream, cheeses, and herbs along with the cornmeal, polenta of the '50's and '60's consisted of cornmeal and water - period. Making the polenta was always the man's job, because it took a lot of muscle to continuously stir cornmeal into boiling water and come up with a consistent mass. This was turned out and "dished up" covered with gravy. I absolutely hated it, and mom didn't care much for it ei-

ther, so we had mashed potatoes too. We ate most of our vegetable side dishes in the Italian "insalata" style, in a vinaigrette dressing. I was 20 years old before I learned you could butter vegetables other than corn! Sunday dinner always included hot rolls; in those days we weren't concerned about "carbs"—"starches" filled out a meal and were considered essential for energy.

Sunday afternoons were spent visiting with relatives, and that's when the desserts came out—always cake: chocolate with caramel icing, yellow with chocolate icing, or angel food with fluffy frosting; and Jell-o, usually cherry or strawberry, sometimes with fruit cocktail or bananas incorporated. The percolator burbled away on the stove, and the women congregated in the kitchen while the men watched the ball game in the living room. We kids ran back and forth, trying to listen to whatever conversation seemed more scandalous, and usually got shooed outside to play; "Little pitchers have big ears!"

Good food and plenty of it were hallmarks of growing up in a rural community like the Tuscarawas Valley. That same bounty is still spread forth at church dinners/suppers. Attend one whenever you can; it will take you back to the days when meals with friends and family were events to be savored.

Even though I'm now blessed to be able to buy and cook whatever I want, whenever I want, I still cherish my memories of those days when some foods we currently take for granted were special treats for special occasions.

Tuscarawas County's Rich Mining History of the Early 20th Century

By Tom Adamich

Tuscarawas County was one of the top ten locations in Ohio for coal mining and other mining operations in the early decades of the 20th century. Not only were mines operated locally by Tuscarawas County residents, several major mine owners from other communities such as Akron and Cleveland had mining operations here. Additionally, there were numerous factories representing steel manufacturing, clay pipe manufacturing, and other industries that established and operated mines to provide fuel for their operations (either to power blast furnaces, kilns, and other manufacturing equipment or to provide additional fuel generation for supplemental, back-up electrical production).



Mining History

This photo shows the southern end of the Tracey Newton & Gibson Brothers Mine, which had its headquarters at 238 Park Avenue NW; New Philadelphia, Ohio. According to the *Industrial Commission of Ohio Bulletin* (1915), the mine was a key coal supplier and adjacent to the Reeves Coal Company Mines #1 and #2, which were located in nearby Canal Dover.

Earlier, in 1910, the area was part of the Stettler mine, which was operated by a predecessor to the Tracey Newton & Gibson Brothers Mine —the B. Gibson Sons Company.

Descendant Richard Gibson (longtime New Philadelphia insurance agent, now deceased) often told the story of his uncle, (one of the Gibson brothers' sons) who was involved in a mine explosion at the Stettler facility. He was temporarily blinded at the center of the mine (located close to what is today's Seven Mile Drive) but was able to crawl back to his homestead (located off Third Street NW, near the current Muskingum Watershed Conservancy District Headquarters and Midtown Dry Cleaners). Having traversed the hillsides as a youngster, he knew where several ravines and other topographical features were, so he was able to navigate by touch and smell to return to safety at home. He later recovered from the temporary blindness with no ill effects.

Below is an entry from Tuscarawas County Deeds describing the region of the Stettler/Gibson Mine, as listed in the November 29, 1926 edition of the New Philadelphia *Daily Times*:

“This conveyance grants to the said grantee for the consideration above named, all the coal in all the different strata of the same and underlying the above described lands, also the right and privilege to

construct and maintain necessary openings to the surface for ventilation. Also the right and privilege of conveying and transporting other coal through the entries in the coal herein conveyed. And reserving to the said grantors the surface of said land and all other rights and privileges excepting those coal conveyed, the ventilating shafts or openings, and the right to convey or transport other coal through the coal herein conveyed. Being the same premises conveyed to said Selah Chamberlain by Robert Sproul and Susanna Sproul. Hereby conveying to said Grantee and to his heirs and assigns forever all the stone coal underlying said premises, together with right of making sufficient openings for air in the surface thereof doing as little injury to said land surface as possible, and not to make said openings within two hundred and fifty feet of the house or barn thereon, together with the right of conveying through under said premises in and through the mines therein opened all the stone coal mined by said Grantee, his heirs or assigns, in order adjoining or adjacent premises. Five acres and thirty-four hundredths of an acre, being in the Northwest quarter of said Section, being the same premises conveyed to said Selah Chamberlain by Isaac Houk and wife, 128 acres of coal and 55 35-100 acres of coal. Recorded in Tuscarawas County-Record of Deeds Vol. 84, Pages 1 and 2.”

The description of the Tracey Newton & Gibson Brothers Mine – the B. Gibson Sons Company represents one of the numerous Tuscarawas County mining operations which were highly profitable and employed many Tuscarawas County residents.

As recorded in the Issue 39 of the *Annual Report of the Chief Inspector of Mines for the Year Ending*, there were 1,311,301 tons of coal mined in Tuscarawas County in 1912 and 1,387,026 tons of coal mined in 1913—ranking 7th in total Ohio production. Tuscarawas

County ranked second in Ohio for the number of pick mine employees in 1912 at 1,120 employees and first in 1913 with 1,028 employees (only Jackson County was comparable with 1,233 pick miners in 1912 and 1,027 pick miners in 1913, respectively).

In 1913, there were twenty-six mining operations, representing coal mining operations (which may have also supported power generation for steel, brick, and clay production, etc.). Large companies such as Pittsburgh's American Sheet & Tin Plate Company joined smaller firms like the R.G. & H.R. Brown Mine located at 426 Beaver Avenue in New Philadelphia; the Dover Fire Brick Company of Strasburg; the Evans Clay Manufacturing Company of Uhrichsville; George Markley's mine of Mineral City; John Mathias' Mine in New Philadelphia; the Novelty Brick & Coal Company of Newcomerstown; the Reeves Coal Company of Canal Dover; both the Robinson Clay Product Company, Akron and the Robinson Graves Sewer Pipe Company of Uhrichsville; the Royal Goshen Coal Company, F. Rufenacht Mine and H.C. Schneider Mine - all located in New Philadelphia; and the Williams & Seitzer Coal Company of Dennison, among others.

The list of clay producers in Tuscarawas County included five Uhrichsville, Ohio based firms—Advance Fire Clay Company; American Sewer and Pipe Company; Buckeye Fire Clay Company; Evans Clay Manufacturing Company; and Robinson Graves Sewer Pipe Company. The Dennison Sewer Pipe Company of Dennison joined the Dover Fire Brick Company of Strasburg, the Federal Clay Products Company of Mineral City, the National Fire Brick Company of Strasburg, and the Novelty Brick Company of Newcomerstown as leading county-based manufacturers. Both the Paul Clay Company and Robinson Clay Products Company (based in Akron) operated clay mines in Tuscarawas County.

Contained within Issue 39 of the *Annual Report of the Chief Inspector of Mines for the Year Ending December 31, 1913* were reports of local mine-related fatalities, including the August 4, 1913 injury to Joseph Fait (classified as a Bohemian immigrant) at the Mullins No. 2 Mine in the Number 10 room on 4th left off the north face entry. According to this report, Fait was working with his brother when a stone that was twenty-seven feet and eight inches wide fell. The mine boss had instructed them to remove the loose stone for safety reasons and would be compensated extra for their efforts. The mine room was well-supplied with posts and caps (to hold the mine ceiling in place). However, a post had not been set where the stone fell.

Another 1913 mine death in Tuscarawas County took place in November 8, 1913 and involved William Emmett Stemple (identified as an American) who was thirty-five years old and the machine boss at the Reeves No.2 mine. Stemple was filling in for a trip rider, as the “regular man was off for the day.” The accident took place seventy-five feet from the door entering the 11 east entry of the mine. Stemple was on the front end of the motor and fell off - being pushed twenty feet. Stemple died that evening of trauma injuries. The entry describes him as a “practical man who had been employed by Reeves for ten years in various capacities”.

A report from Alex Smith of New Philadelphia, District Inspector of Ohio's Sixth Mining District (which included Tuscarawas County and parts of Coshocton, Carroll, and Harrison Counties), indicated mining work was steady in 1913 with the exception of the March, 1913 flood, one of the largest in Tuscarawas County history. According to Jon Baker's March 24, 2013 article in the *Times Reporter* describing the events, the effects of that flood led to the creation of the

Muskingum Watershed Conservancy District—a network of dams and reservoirs that control flooding in Ohio's largest wholly contained watershed.

Yet the magnitude of the March 1913 flood did not severely impact Tuscarawas County's 1913 mining operations or improvements to them. The report listed improvements to thirty-five Tuscarawas County mines, including nine furnaces, five fans, nineteen air shafts, nine second openings, six stairways, and one ventilating basket. In addition to these statistics, the *Ohio Sixth Mining District Report* included advice to miners and supervisors to be safe and follow sound mining practices to prevent fatalities like those that did take place during the year.

Later, local mine activities in Tuscarawas County continued to grow exponentially, as described in a 1917 issue of the *American Contractor* magazine. This included further coal mine development. This development continued into the Midvale and Barnhill areas during the late teens and early 1920s.

While specific physical and topographical evidence of Tuscarawas County's vibrant mine industry is difficult to find today, the individual and family histories of current residents whose families worked in the local mines or at the clay and brick production facilities remain as a vital source of information which, hopefully, will be researched and documented in some way by individual family members, families working together on genealogy projects, historians, and others interested in the richness of the topic's historical relevance to the area.

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Early Remembrances of Midvale, Ohio

By Shirley Edie Bitticker

The coal mines and the brickyards were the main sources of employment for the families living in Midvale. My father, William Byron Edie, relocated from a farm just south of New Philadelphia to work in both industries. The Edie family moved into Midvale from nearby Barnhill in 1941 when I was eight years old. The house that we moved into was purchased by our grandfather, James Edie, at an auction for the sum of \$750. My parents, William Byron and Mary Elizabeth Edie raised seven children in our home located on Maple Street. My brothers Dean, Jerry, Mike, and I were born in Barnhill, while Minda, Ginger, and John were born after we arrived in Midvale.

Our house was constructed in 1899 and sat very low, so Grandpa Edie had the Simmers House Moving Company raise it by laying 2 or 3 rows of blocks on the foundation. It was inhabited by several families previous to when we moved there in 1941. A couple and a single relative named Crossan and Boucher lived there when Grandpa Edie bought it; they then moved to a small place in Lock Seventeen.

My first memory of Midvale was of the time when I rode with my dad to pick up his paycheck at the old Midvale Number 4 Coal Mine where he was employed. He worked there continuously from the time we moved to Barnhill until the start of World War II when he went to work at the E. W. Bliss Defense Plant in Canton. I recall walking out to the old post office at Midvale where the "Victory Bus," driven by Chester Clum, would pick up the local workers in the evening and bring them home in the morning.

The Maple Street Neighborhood

Nearly everyone in town seemed to have a garden, and local families would contact the few farmers on the edge of town who had tractors to plow their gardens. Mr. Walker, who was a school bus driver, brought his tractor to our house and plowed our garden. Previous to the 1950s, nearly every household had an outdoor toilet. My father put an addition on our house, which included an indoor bathroom, in 1950. The house originally had four rooms; the new addition added two bedrooms, a large kitchen, and a bath. Dad also dug out the rest of the basement to include the area under the whole house.

As a child, we had plenty of playmates in our neighborhood, which included the DeMattio and Walker children. Summer evenings were times to get together and play kick the can, hide and seek, marbles, or whatever other games came to mind. I remember Danny LeMasters, who was a Boy Scout, took us on a hike to the hill behind our houses to show us the mulberry tree, the big rock, the spring, and where mine shafts were that we were told to avoid. We spent many hours hiking through the hills in the summer and sled riding in the winter.

My first summer in Midvale was in 1941; I got acquainted with the girls on my street who would be my classmates. I became friends with Almeda Lenarz, Joan Benedum, Stella Mae Walker, and later Priscilla Smith. Almeda's parents would allow her to have wiener roasts in their big field where the ice house has more recently been built. The neighborhood kids would gather there and enjoy those evenings with childhood games to follow.

One memory I have was going into Tom Watson's Bar regularly to

buy candy. He even had a platform built in front of the candy case for children to better see the choices. I noticed signs posted in the bar that stated "We Do Not Sell To Minors," and as I looked around, I thought most of the patrons in the establishment were miners. I went home and reported this to my mother and she set me straight on the difference.

Midvale Businesses

Our move to Midvale opened up a whole new world for an eight year-old girl because it seemed much bigger than Barnhill in the early 1940s. I started asking my older brother Dean about the town when I knew we were moving there because he had already gone to school at Midvale in the fourth and fifth grades. He had told me that Reiser's Store had ice cream cones. I remember Hazel Swinderman and Mary Thompson making plenty of cones for us. There were other clerks there over the years, but they stand out in my memory. Reiser's Grocery Store later became Stevenson's Grocery Store when Paul Stevenson, a long-time employee, purchased it.

Other businesses I remember were the Reem Walker's Grocery Store, where we shopped, and the Zip Marshall's Grocery and Gas Station at the corner of the road leading to Barnhill and opposite the Methodist Church. The Matthews and Gibbs Grocery was situated at the fork of Rutledge and State Street and Gene Wolf's Barber Shop was in the downtown corner building beside Reem Walker's store. Kenny Marshall's Meat Market was located across from the Church of God and Tom Watson's Saloon and Hardware Store was adjacent to the Church of God in the downtown area. Arnold Zontini's Bar sat on the southeast corner of the intersection of Rutledge and Royal Street, at the corner leading to our house. "Chalky" Voshall's Bar was located in his house on State Street leading to the back road to Uhrichsville, and

a beauty shop was in the front room of Marshall's home on Maple Street, which was later named Broadway Street. I remember getting a permanent there to start fourth grade, and the beauty shop closed shortly after.

The Midvale Post Office was previously located on State Street heading toward the Midvale School. There was an addition built on to the front of Dinger's home to accommodate the Post Office; members of the Dinger family served as postmasters for many years. On our walk to school, we would stop at the Post Office and warm up during winter.

The Polio Quarantine

A newspaper story from the *Daily Times* on 21 August 1944 tells the story of our sister Minda contracting polio. Doctors Miller and B. A. Marquand, county health commissioner, would come to our house to visit Minda, and on one visit, the son of Dr. Miller, who was in the service but home on leave, came along. He diagnosed Minda's illness as bulbar polio which attacks the brainstem controlling breathing. The physicians thought her condition to be grave, but our Aunt Arlene Covey, a registered nurse, contracted an ambulance and took Minda to Akron Children's Hospital. She tells me now that she almost had them turn around a couple of times because Minda's heart had stopped and her condition seemed hopeless. When they arrived at the hospital, Minda was put in an iron lung and treated by Dr. Hoyt. Our home was quarantined for two weeks with a red sign at the entrance. Minda survived after being in the hospital for six weeks with bulbar polio, pneumonia, and a kidney infection.

The Mysterious Midvale Robbery

One story which I recall that circulated throughout Midvale in the late 1940s centered around a mysterious robbery that occurred at Reem Walker's general store. Townspeople were baffled when it was discovered that a burglar had entered the store by breaking through the back door and stole a tidy sum of money. There were no leads in the case until people within the community began receiving magazines through the mail. Things just did not make sense to the people finding magazines in their mailboxes, because they could not remember subscribing to any of these publications. On investigation, it was discovered that Jimmy Walker wanted to win a magazine subscription contest that the school was sponsoring. The winner of the contest was to receive a train excursion to New York City, and little Jimmy wanted to win that trip, so he broke in to get money and make out subscriptions in townspeople's names. Jimmy got caught when he extended his benevolence a bit too far and subscribed a magazine to Reem, the store's owner. By this point, the mysterious robbery was solved, and I don't think Jimmy won the trip to the "Big Apple."

A Taxi Cab Delivered the Sad News

My future husband, Bill Bitticker, had picked me up after school on the evening of 10 March 1950 and took me home intending to come back that evening to go somewhere. In the meantime, I went upstairs to change into blue jeans and wash the windows. While up there, I heard the knock on the door and listened to what it was about. I heard the man say that he had a telegram for dad, but did not hear anything else right away. I hurried downstairs where my dad was reading the telegram while mom was leaning against the refrigerator looking sad and scared. I looked over dad's shoulder to see what it said and started to cry when I got far enough to tell what had happened. My brother William Dean Edie had died from a gunshot

wound while serving in the U.S. Air Force in Japan. Mom also began to cry once she was aware of Dean's death, telling me later she still thought perhaps Dean had just been hurt until I said that he had been killed. A driver from the Boyer Taxi Cab Company in New Philadelphia had been given the job of making the delivery; later the cab driver said he did not want to deliver the telegram, knowing of the devastating message.

Industries, Schools, and Churches in Midvale

The main industries in Midvale were the coal mines owned by Robert Rutledge, Evan's Brick Plant, and the Royal Sewer Pipe Company. Many people moved to Midvale to work in these industries. African Americans from the South were brought here to work at the Royal Sewer Pipe Company and a settlement called "the Royal" was built to house them. There was a large tenement house where most of them lived, a bar called the Dew Drop Inn, and for a while, the African Americans operated their "separate but equal" school. On the other end of town on State Street, leading to Uhrichsville was a former brick school in which several African American families lived. There had been, before my time, another school called the Plains School, a large white frame building located between the Midvale Speedway and the present school. Children from the western end of town went to the Plains School, while children from the eastern end of town went to the Brick School. When Midvale School was built in 1917, and the high school was added in 1918, all children went there and the Plains and the Brick Schools ceased to exist.

There was a Catholic Church, which had its beginnings in 1939 when the congregation celebrated their first Mass in the miner's hall behind Kenny Marshall's Meat Market. Later, St. Paul's Catholic Church constructed a new brick building on Route 250 just outside of town.

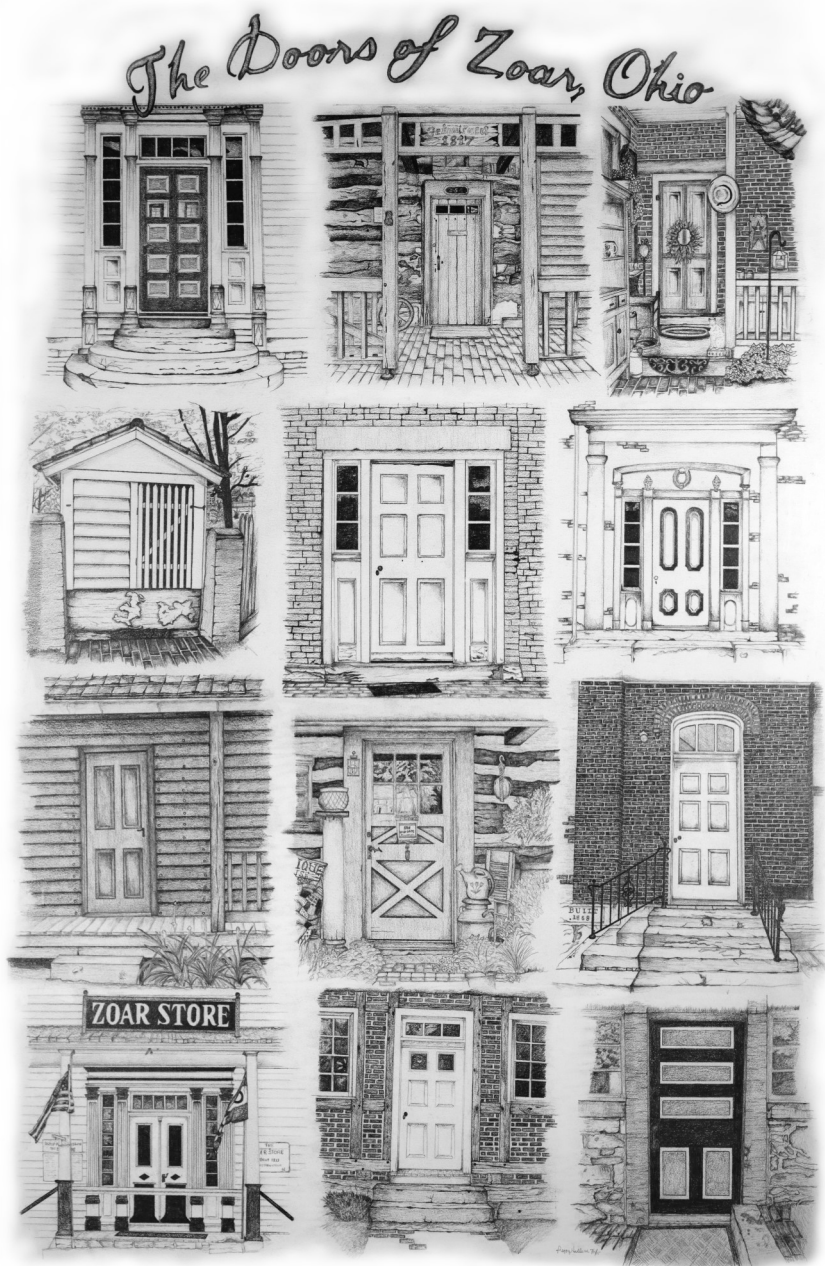
When the Route 250 bypass was built in the 1960s, the church building was moved across the road near the intersection that enters Midvale off of Route 250. When I was in high school, some of my classmates who were Catholic transferred to St. Mary's School in Denison.

Epilogue

The people who inhabited the village of Midvale, as I look back, came from various backgrounds, but that was not apparent to me as a child. Many came in search of employment. It was a great community to live in with plenty of excitement to share with friends and family. I'm sure there are many other good memories to relate, but this gives an idea of what my childhood in Midvale was like. I remember our townspeople fondly, and it is still one of my great joys to meet up with them and reminisce about our hometown.

"Doors of Zoar"

By Peggy Hellem



Runaway "Strad"

By Ted Frank

The orchestra musician had just completed rehearsal in the historic town hall at Port Washington. Among them was Gilbert Roehm, the orchestra conductor who later became the conductor of the Tuscarawas County Philharmonic Orchestra.

The time, probably in the 1930's.

After chatting in the hall's parking lot, the musicians packed up their vehicles and headed home. Roehm lived at Wolf and headed that way on Wolf Road. At the edge of town, he had to make a sharp right turn.

Roehm was an accomplished musician, particularly on his valuable violin. But instead of putting his violin and case inside his car, Roehm put it on top. When he made the sharp turn, the case rolled off onto the road.

A short time later, Howard Frank, youngest of six brothers, took the same road to his home on what was later named Frank Road, which is about half way between Port and Wolf. Howard spotted the violin case in the road, stopped, picked up the case, and went home.

Next morning, he went to work at a nearby clay plant, taking the violin with him. During a work break, Howard got the violin out. One of his co-workers, Red Reichman, could "fiddle with a fiddle" and began playing "Gone Up Cripple Creek" and "Turkey In the Straw."

After work, Howard headed back to Port where he heard that the search was on for a missing violin and that anyone with information should go to the local grocery store.

"I hear you are looking for a violin, and I have it," Howard said at the store.

Gilbert got his violin back, but it was reported that he could never play a concerto in "D minor" because Red "fiddled with the Strad."

There is no proof the violin was a rare Stradivarius made in Italy, but Howard always said it was a "very valuable" one.

(This story was told to Howard's nephews in their 70's. Howdy was in his late 80's and died in 2009 at age 98. There were variations.)

Right Calf, Wrong Barn

By Richard Ladrach

Playing tricks for Halloween has probably gone on in T-county for as long as... well who knows. In recent years it seems to have devolved into throwing eggs, spray painting various objects and other unimaginative forms of vandalism. Stories of Halloween pranks that I heard of growing up seemed more creative and took some planning. They were not malicious or destructive. Some from the time of my father's youth come to mind, though when they were brought up I was told, in no uncertain terms to not even think of doing anything of the sort. I would get caught and would be in "all kinds of trouble," and "bring shame to the family."

Dad didn't think of or commit these things on his own. Oh no. There was a group, the size and membership of which varied from episode to episode. Kids from neighboring farms, fellows that Dad went to school with or played ball with, made up the cast of characters. The Gang of Four in this particular episode, brothers Lewis and Alvin Laubscher, Kenny Zimmerman and of course my father Paul Ladrach, was all made up of farm boys from around Ragersville. These "deviants" all came from well known and respected families and would themselves take their places among the pillars of the community. I had no idea who these four were until the calling hours for Dad's funeral when I mentioned this caper to Lewis Laubscher. There was a slightly embarrassed grin and a little chuckle. Then his eyes lit up and he shook with suppressed laughter as he remembered the antics of his youth. This was followed by a confession and the naming of names and the filling in of some details.

To appreciate this caper you need to know a little about the “victims,” both of whom, by the way, were related to my father. One was Reuben Dummermuth (my great-grandmother's maiden name was Dummermuth) a dairy farmer who lived on Rocky Ridge Road. Reuben was by most accounts opinionated, outspoken, industrious, and a stickler for all things being done correctly. The other was Gilbert Ladrach. Gilbert lived maybe a half-mile from Reuben on Crooked Run. Also a dairy farmer, he was hardworking, less outspoken and a little less of a stickler, but his farm was always well kept and attractive.

I don't know exactly when my father's little group hatched their plan, but on one Halloween night in the late 1930s, with a degree of stealth which would have made any British Commando of the era proud, they slipped into Reuben's barn. They made it past the obligatory farm watchdog and into a barn full of livestock. Once inside they found a calf and for all intents and purposes, stole it.

Now a few hundred questions come into my head. I mean, first off how did they move the calf? Calves don't necessarily just follow you. If they become scared, well let's just say they have a loud noisemaker. Again, how was there no commotion to wake Reuben? It boggles my mind!

Anyhow, they eventually got the calf to Gil Ladrach's barn. Again, the commando bit. They did not disturb the dog, the cows, chickens or what the heck have you. The calf was placed inside the barn in a pen with a couple of other calves. Our miscreants left, unseen and unheard. They vanish into the night.

Daybreak the next day, Reuben goes to his barn and proceeds with the morning chores. At some point he would naturally take the calf to

its mother. No calf. A search commences and certain details are noticed. Yep. Someone came into the barn and took the calf. The sheriff must be called and Reuben heads to the nearest phone, which happens to be at, you guessed it, Gilbert Ladrach's. Gil is still in the barn finishing up the morning chores when Reuben walks in and starts to explain that he needs to use the phone and why. Suddenly he notices his calf. He looks at Gilbert and says, "That's my calf," and identifies the animal in question as his very own calf-napped critter.

At this point, and I don't know how anyone knows for sure, but according to my sources Gilbert looks at Reuben and says, "Ya know, I had an awful time finding a cow for that calf."



Hikes to the Old Stone Quarry

By Thomas Bitticker

Growing up in the Saltwell Valley offered many advantages for several adventurous young boys during the 1960s. This neighborhood, situated about three miles north of Dover and adjacent to the Seven Mile Drive that proceeded to New Philadelphia, teemed with history. The Saltwell Valley was named for the first successful salt well in Tuscarawas County. The well was drilled by the Goshen Oil & Coal Company on the Waddington farm in 1866. A group of local men organized the company with the intention of striking oil. Instead of finding oil in paying quantities, the well gushed forth with saltwater when it reached a depth of 900 feet. Salt being more valuable than oil during the nineteenth century prompted these investors to construct salt works near the well. The name of the company was changed to Go-

Hikes to the Old Stone Quarry

shen Oil, Coal, & Salt Company following the discovery of the salt. The nearby Ohio and Erie Canal was utilized to ship salt to other markets outside of the local region.

Other industries such as coal mines, gas, and oil wells, and a stone quarry flourished in the vicinity. Dover industrialist, Jeremiah Reeves, owned coal mines nearby to power the Reeves Manufacturing Company. He was the driving force for the construction of the Reeves Aerial Tramway to transport coal to his manufacturing company in Dover from his mines in Fairfield and Goshen Townships. The tramway utilized overhead buckets, which were suspended on a cable and powered by an electric motor. The system loaded at the Reeves Number 4 mine in the Saltwell Valley, then crossed Seven Mile Drive and descended into the Tuscarawas River valley before reaching its destination at the manufacturing company in Dover. The tramway operated from 1922 until it was dismantled in 1938. The bases of the towers dot the landscape along its three-and-a-half-mile route that crosses Seven Mile Drive and runs along the Tuscarawas River. These concrete remnants served as a source of intrigue as well as a playground for the youngsters in the Saltwell Valley.

It was common for the youngsters of the neighborhood to take day-long hikes to explore these areas of interest. Before the days of the cell phone, parents believed that their children would heed the warning to "stay out of trouble"—advice that was often acknowledged by the children, but not always followed. The boys of the Saltwell Valley were typical of other youth of the 1960s era; we could adhere to the "come home before supper" rule because our bellies would prompt us to, but the "stay out of trouble" rule was open to interpretation.

One such adventurer from the Saltwell Valley who pushed the enve-

lope for exploration was Chris Zurcher. He was a hunter and a trapper who hiked far and wide in search of game. He was a relative of the Waddington family who had settled in the valley during the mid-1800s when it was known as "Reed's Run." Property deeds and a road traversing through the valley carry the same name. Chris knew local lore that was passed down through family generations. His quest for excitement and historical knowledge of the region caused me to accompany him to remote locations, just for the thrill and adventure of what we might discover. Areas of interest often included caves, huge rocks, abandoned houses, lakes, abandoned coal mines, etc., all the places that your parents warned you to stay clear of. We often visited sites that I later learned were of historical interest. Some of these sites included the "Canton Ford," which was known to us as a place for crossing the Tuscarawas River without being swept downstream, or the "Federal Spring," which was a curious outcropping of rock and a spring that we passed by regularly. Both locations were instrumental to the Native Americans, early military expeditions, and pioneers as they traveled through the Tuscarawas Valley.

Before embarking on a day-long hike, it was customary to make a stop at Millie's Market for some needed supplies in the form of candy, soda pop, or Hostess fruit pies. The market, operated by Ray and Mildred Dinger, was the local gathering place in the Saltwell Valley where the latest news was discussed. The kids of the neighborhood referred to Ray as the "Mayor of Dingerville." The locality did not have an official name, nor was it under the jurisdiction of a municipal government headed by a mayor. Everyone knew the score, and besides Ray was happy to have the unofficial title.

I remember one particular adventure when my brother, Jeff Bitticker, along with Mike Gilland, and I embarked on a trip to the "big city" of

Dover. We planned on following the railroad tracks that ran next to the White Bridge and along the east side of the Tuscarawas River. Along the route, we visited an abandoned stone quarry, saw an island in the river, climbed on a stopped train, and managed to take a tour of a railroad caboose. We probably forgot what we intended to do once we reached Dover.

The “Old Stone Quarry,” as it is often referred to, is located in Goshen Township adjacent to the Tuscarawas Branch of the Cleveland & Pittsburgh Railroad. This local beauty spot was known to the Native Americans due to its proximity to the Tuscarawas River which was utilized as a major transportation route. The stone quarry was in operation before the completion of the Cleveland & Pittsburgh Railroad in 1854. During the latter part of the 1800s and into the 1900s, the quarry was a treasure trove of scenery and a destination for picnics. While there, I recalled seeing many names chiseled into the sandstone and always wondered why so many people frequented the quarry and left their mark. Later, I learned that the Tuscarawas River was used quite extensively for recreation and that the island we saw was Rock View Island, which attracted many tourists, hence the carvings. Local family histories related stories of island visitors utilizing railroad spikes to carve their initials into the sandstone at the former quarry. I decided to make a return trip to the stone quarry in 2017 to relive the experience. More than a half-century has passed since I first saw the carvings, and though the ravage of time has deteriorated some of the them, many are still visible. This nostalgic trip allowed me to capture some images that many visitors have previously experienced. It is a bygone era, the railroad is gone, and the island has few visitors, although the previous ones have left their mark for future generations to wonder why.

Legend has it that this location, known as Stone Quarry Hill, was the scene of at least four deaths according to C. H. Mitchener in his 1876 work titled: *Historic Events in the Tuscarawas and Muskingum Valleys*. The first three fatalities occurred in 1779, following a confrontation between a Native American Mingo Chief, his Caucasian wife, and a Creole squaw from the Moravian Mission at Schoenbrunn. Mitchener describes the Creole squaw as "being of great beauty, who gave the missionaries much trouble by her lasciviousness." The Mingo Chief and his wife went to the Schoenbrunn Mission Village to hear David Zeisberger preach a sermon. While there, the Mingo Chief could not resist the charm of the Creole squaw, and the two fled to the bluff overlooking the Tuscarawas River (which later became known as Stone Quarry Hill).

The Chief's wife noticed their absence and tracked them to the bluff, where a physical confrontation took place, and all three fell over the edge. Their bodies were discovered in the Tuscarawas River and taken to Schoenbrunn but were buried outside of the Christian Cemetery as a consequence of their actions. This tragedy was communicated by Captain Henry Killbuck to General Abraham Shane of New Philadelphia. To add more credibility to the legend, Mitchener reported that, "during the summer of 1875, a farmer named Hensel, while digging for ore, found on one of his hills, not over a mile and a half from New Schoenbrunn, the skeleton of a giant Indian, with the skull broken in, and by his side the bones of one or two females."

The fourth death occurred at the Stone Quarry Hill around 1856 when a man named Compton fell from the ledge during the nighttime. The surrounding beauty of the old stone quarry and the peaceful river belie the events that were reported to have occurred here in the distant past.

The beauty of the old stone quarry attracted the attention of a major movie studio headquartered in New York City. A February 10, 1910, edition of the *Daily Times* reported that J. A. Stoutt of the Biograph Moving Picture Company was in New Philadelphia making plans to have some pictures taken showing scenes in this locality.

“Accompanied by Harry A. Ackey of the Theatorium, they spent Thursday looking over the scenery along the [Tuscarawas] River bank and near the canal. They also went to the stone quarry just north of Canal Dover. Mr. Ackey wrote to the Biograph company some time ago telling them of the wonderful opportunities for pictures near here. He said that the scenery was magnificent and could be used as a background to great advantage. ‘The Lock-Keeper’s Daughter’ is to be the subject of the film and a lock along the canal will be the background of the picture. A company of Biograph players will come to this city in the spring to pose for the film. Mr. Stoutt seemed quite pleased with the project and said that this sort of scenery was just what the company had been looking for.” The Biograph company was perhaps the best known of moving picture makers before Hollywood studios became famous. For some unknown reason, the movie never materialized, but the stone quarry remained a local attraction.

Presently, the surroundings of the Old Stone Quarry have taken on a different appearance from the days when it was an active quarry, or during the heyday of Rock View Island. The railroad tracks that once hauled passengers and freight to Pittsburgh and Cleveland have been removed and the railroad bed is now overgrown with trees and covered with fallen rock. The site is on private property but can be viewed from a watercraft while navigating the Tuscarawas River. In the future, this historical scenic area may be experienced by a multitude of hikers, cyclists, runners, and equestrians utilizing the Ohio &

Erie Canalway Towpath Trail. The section of the trail from Camp Tuscazoar to New Philadelphia is scheduled to be completed in the next couple of years. The trail will pass near the Old Stone Quarry, the Canton Ford, Rock View Island, and the remnants of the Reeves Aerial Tramway. Armed with some historical background and imagination, one may be able to visualize these sites as you bring them back to life in the “back pages” of your mind

Samuel's Journey

By Tammie Taggart

Although this story is true, I changed the names to protect their identity.

It was 1924 in Dennison, Ohio and a young man, Samuel, his wife, Elizabeth, and young son, David, lived in a rented house on Miller Avenue. Samuel was working in the Dennison Railroad yards and times were good. He had enough to take care of his family and was interested in opening his own business. He decided to open a confectionary store in the Thornwood Park neighborhood. He lacked the start-up money so he approached the Tuscarawas Finance Company for a loan. He received a loan for \$950. With that, he opened a small confectionary store. It was a lot of work, working in the Dennison Railroad yard at night in the railroad workshops and running the confectionery during the day with his wife.

Elizabeth was working hard every day and taking care of their young son. After a few months she fell ill and had to be taken to Columbus for care: her condition was very serious. Her husband was left at home to care for the confectionary store and work his job at the railroad shop. It soon became too much to handle and the confectionary had to be closed. With that, the loan funds would have to immediately be repaid. (\$950 dollars in 1924 would have been equivalent to \$14,850 in 2021.) There was no way to pay the money back on his railroad salary.

Elizabeth was now at home recovering ,and it looked like she would make a full recovery. Samuel was agonizing over this financial problem. It wouldn't take very long until the finance company would be contacting him for payment. About three week s later, Samuel received a letter from the finance company for foreclosure on his loan. He was in a panic. He couldn't even make a payment on the loan.

Samuel was the third of four children. His father, Manuel, who was from Sugarcreek, Ohio, was killed in a mine collapse twenty-five years before in Dover, Ohio, when Samuel was just three years old. His mother, Marilyn, who was of Polish descent and from Milwaukee, Wisconsin, had remarried and had two more children. All of his family lived nearby in New Philadelphia, Ohio. Elizabeth's family was from Stonecreek. She was the second child of three. Her father had just passed away the year before, leaving her mother alone in the house in Stonecreek. David was the only child of Samuel and Elizabeth.

Samuel was still working his job at the railroad workshop. A month later, after work he was walking home, and he was approached by his neighbor, who came outside and said that the sheriff was looking for him. Samuel was scared. What should he do? He decided to leave. In the dark of the night, he packed up all he could carry in travel bags for his family and bought tickets at the train station for the first train out of town early in the morning. He had no idea where they were going, just away from here, as far as those tickets could take him. He couldn't be put in jail.

In 1925, an article in the newspaper reported that Elizabeth's mother had filed a petition with the court. She was named in a lawsuit with the Tuscarawas Finance Company for payment of a debt that she was

Samuel's Journey

a co-signer on. She claimed that she had never cosigned for a loan and fought to have her name removed from the documents. The loan was taken out by her son-in-law, Samuel. It is not known if she was successful. She died in 1926.

His brother, Carl, later told his mother that Samuel had left because he owed money and that the sheriff was looking for him. That is the last they heard from Samuel. No calls or letters were ever received and his mother was still hoping to see him again before she passed away in 1965, but she never did.

In 1971, over fifty years after his disappearance, his youngest step-brother, Ray, received a letter from Samuel. He told him that he was in Portland, Oregon and wanted to see him. Ray and his wife, Helen, got on a Greyhound bus and rode all the way to Portland to visit Samuel. Helen said it was the best trip of her life because she was able to see a lot of the country she'd never visited.

When they returned, they told stories of their visit. It seems that Samuel and his family went to Columbus, Ohio for several years after leaving Tuscarawas County. They had changed their names to Daniel and Elizabeth Carpenter. In 1938, he heard of the good job market in Washington state and so they moved to Washington. It took several days to travel there by train. After a few years, the family moved to Portland, Oregon, where they raised their son into adulthood.

In the late 1960's, it became necessary for them to have a marriage license, which they didn't have with their current names, probably to file for Social Security benefits, so they went to the courthouse and got married again so they had the document they needed. From all accounts, they led a quiet life, never in contact with their families at

all until their letter to Ray.

Elizabeth died in 1985 and Samuel later died in 1989; they are buried in Portland, Oregon. Their son, David, graduated from high school there and entered into the Army. David became an engineer for the railroad after his time in the service. He later married and had a son, Jim, and daughter, Sandy. Many grandchildren still live in the Portland area. We are not aware if they know the story of Samuel or not.

A page on Ancestry has been set up with a notification to them should anyone begin a family search with the Carpenter name so that the story can be told to them of the relations left behind in Tuscarawas County, Ohio.

Dreamers and Doers

By Susan Cramer Stein

I grew up in Dover, a small town in Tuscarawas County, Ohio. Growing up in a rural area, playing outside from dawn until dark, would have been perfect for most of the kids I grew up with. I was different.

I tend to dream. A lot. I dream in bright vivid colors and sometimes, not always, in another language. I dream about people that I see on a regular basis and people I have only passed on the street. I dream emotionally. As a small child, I would dream of interacting with wild animals and walking among skyscrapers.

What I really love are the dreams that I have when I am awake. These dreams often become images and they happen intentionally, passionately and continuously. They never turn off.

I suppose it's only natural. I grew up around dreamers. My mentors were dreamers. My dad was a dreamer. He believed that the world was not shaped by the way things are... but by the way things could be. In turn, it taught me to believe in endless potential. In endless possibility.

The last vacation with my Dad before he passed away was to Washington, D.C. Being a history buff, he wanted to pass it on to us.

I loved it! Completely and entirely. I found it to be inspiring and beautiful... but most of all it taught me one of the greatest lessons of my teenage years.

I roamed the streets. I stood before monuments. I read the stories, ran my hands over the stone and the markers and soaked in the atmosphere. At my first glance, I fell in love, because I saw a city built by dreamers. Their visions were larger than life. Larger than the way things were. As time went on, as I saw, read and felt more, I came to the realization that perhaps I had it all wrong. I was actually in a place built by DOERS. People that took those dreams and made the effort to make something of it.

I have had over forty years to think about this trip and the thoughts and feelings it has stirred within me. Sadly, dreaming will be the best most of us ever do and that simply isn't enough. We are more than the visions and hopes we keep to ourselves. We are more than the way things are. We are... what everything could be.

Dreaming is an amazing thing. I love being a dreamer. I love looking at the world for what it could be. Dreaming gives hope, gives life. Dreaming gives us wings, but it doesn't make us fly. Dreaming doesn't demand courage or risk. It doesn't require that we stare fear in the face and move forward regardless.

Dreaming doesn't build cities.

Eight years ago I gave up on one career to pursue the dream. I wanted more than what I had. I took that dream and started looking at it differently. I looked at it for what it really was... a new beginning.

It was the beginning of who I am. The beginning of something bigger. The beginning of doing.

It was time to build the city.

The Jewel

By Maria Susan May

“When did you realize?” asked the young woman,
nervously scanning the revolving circle—
glazed and variegated hues,
blurring in their turns,
painted horses spinning by—
for her daughter, her first-born:
adventurous and always independent.

“When did you realize?” the young woman quizzed her mother,
“that as soon as we tasted the thrill of the ride,
even then, so young,
we were beginning to search,
still straining,
to break free, to explore, to leave you behind,
tentatively, but courageously?”

“When did you realize?” she asked a third time,
now devouring the shimmering images,
glimpsed in every slow turn,
ravenous eyes, as if never having seen the old carousel,
vibrant with color, caramel brown and faded candy-apple red,
this irresistible ride churning out one calliope melody after another.
She watched for glimpses of uncontainable joy on her child's face,
waving proudly each time she passed,
“that this summer's eve pastime was really just life,
life—temptingly beckoning us onward,
to experience the anticipation, the thrill,
the backdrop of high and lows, the up and down play of our lives?”

“When I stood beside you, *myself* as a young mother,
one arm loosely around your waist,

ready to catch you if you slipped,” replied the older woman,
eyes beginning to glisten now with tears from cherished ancient
memories,
infusing her own vision and heart,
racing to the front of her mind, clear
as if the decades which had passed had been just yesterday.
“Eager even then to introduce you to the magic of this enticing spin-
ning jewel,
watching your chestnut brown hair whip behind you in the breeze
and the beauty of dusk—
streaking pink and cranberry orange—
your eyes shining with exhilaration at every turn,
reflecting the old bulb lights of the merry-go-round.”

“When I stood beside you on that slow-moving cacophony,
summer's cool breezes and the din of children's voices,
enveloping us in a whirl of painted ponies,
I swayed with the music, watching your fear dissolve into unexpected,
yet unabated pleasure.”

“When I stood, watching you hold tightly to that glazed, painted
mare,
feet too short to reach the stirrups.
And, with that face of joy that only a child knows,
you fearlessly let go with one hand,
laughing,
and asked me, ‘What's next?!’”



"Tuscora Park"
By Peggy Hellem

Only Once

By Janet Ladrach

It is time for the evening performance.
Uptight in her gray green sheath,
she waits til the light slants.
As she loosens her collar,
a trace of perfume escapes. Lemon?

Then a stop motion swirl
of white skirt.
Hesitant, erratic,
and agonizingly slow,
she knows how the reveal will go.

A tremble, a slight bow
and she blinks awake.
Now in full flower, she poses
in her white dress, as all eyes drink her in.
Observers sniff her.

She stares where ever her gaze lands.
It has begun, this long nocturnal work
of being beautiful
for just one night.

Come dawn, hustlers arrive
to drain the last of her clear crisp scent.
A cleaner comes
to find a limp yellow dress,
flung across a dusty green chair.

August 5, 2020 Inspired by moonflowers at the side of our house.

Getaway

By Patricia M. Albrecht

With my age still in the single digits, I met someone who would become my best friend and mentor. Ann Werner lived down the street from me in Coon Rapids, Minnesota, with her four siblings, artist mom, and father who worked for the city.

All of the kids in the neighborhood flocked to the Werner house. There were wood floors, musical instruments, art everywhere, a library of books, and unique cups to drink from in the atmosphere that was exciting and welcoming. Ann's mom put together carnivals, plays, obstacle courses, and special holiday parties for everyone throughout the year.

Creativity burst inside me when I spent time with Ann. We would sit in the back of their station wagon with pillows and read book after book. I read one side of the page, and Ann would read the other. We would draw on every piece of paper we could get our hands on. The most memorable times; however, were writing books. Ann's father had a home office in addition to his city office. Every week, until I would sadly move away six years later, Ann and I would retrieve papers from her father's office trash, turn the printed side away from us, staple the pile together, and write stories. Most of the time, they were spinoffs of the main character —Cheap—who was a dog in charge of all the animals in the forest. Ann instilled in me a love for books, art, writing, and music. Ann played the flute and piccolo, often with her mother at the piano.

It was difficult for me to leave that close-knit neighborhood, but my mother had several surgeries and medical issues, and we lost our

dream home. We moved away from my best friend and the Werner house I loved so much.

I continued reading, writing, and doing art pieces over the years. When I had a family and an eventual move to Ohio, daily activities tried to crowd out my creativity time. With eight in the home, there were too many loads of laundry, endless meals to prepare, and a huge garden that always needed tending.

I look back now, and wonder how I managed to find time for my writing. I do remember staying up well into the night or sometimes even being behind a locked bathroom door with manuscript papers strewn about. For several years, we had just enough money to keep us going. But, there was one thing my six children and I always looked forward to every week—library time. Each child was allowed to get as many books as their age. The younger ones didn't mind. Everyone was in charge of their own books and, of course, had to carry them as well.

I cherish those times of excitement when everyone was able to find just the right books for their unique interests—books that took us to places we would most likely never be able to afford to visit, stories of people across the globe, information on careers they might want to be involved in someday. The library was my escape as well. One building, lots of reading nooks, quiet, calm, and the world at my fingertips. For special nights, the opportunity was available to rent the movie projector and spend the evening watching the classics. The most waited for event was the book sales where, with a small donation, we could bring all coveted books home and actually keep them.

Today, many decades later, I can easily go to not one but several li-

brary locations. I can purchase as many books as I want any time of the week. Everything is on the internet and close at hand. I have been told several times—why not just read a book on your phone or laptop? Nothing, to me, replaces the excitement of holding the actual book in my hands. The smell and feel of books—books that take me back to those days reading in the station wagon with Ann Werner. Days that are very close to my heart.

I continue to write as well, finding it strange that as a busy mom I got so much more writing done than now when I have all the time in the world. Back then writing and reading were my escape that helped me through difficult times.

I've lost contact with Ann. She was always very shy and private. But, I am pretty confident she is still reading, writing, playing music, and doing art pieces. She has no idea how much she impacted my life at such a young age and instilled in me such a love for books.

The Little Old Lady of My Dreams

By Tammie Taggart

I have to tell you the story about my dream, because it scared the daylights out of me!

I was in my late thirties, my kids were about all grown and beginning lives and families of their own. I went to bed one night and I had an awful dream.

In the dream I got out of my car at the rear of my house in Dennison. I parked in a carport that was on the back of the property. My house was set on a corner, with a sidewalk that ran in front and down the side. Walking down the sidewalk was a little old lady. She was small, probably in her late eighties. She was hunched over a bit and walked with a cane. I had hardly noticed her as I gathered my things from the car and started toward the house.

She was walking down the sidewalk toward me and she was yelling at me, "You never take me anywhere, you never do anything with me."

I was confused, I didn't know this woman! Never saw her in my life! For some reason, she scared me to death! The desire to run away from her was strong!

I walked up the sidewalk to the deck on the back of the house, but the stairs were missing! I couldn't get in, I put my knee up on the top of the deck and scrambled to get up. I tried to get in the back door, but it was locked. I fumbled for the keys so I could get in and escape

this crazy old lady.

I finally got into the house and I could still hear her, just as loud as I could outside. She was still yelling, “ You never take me anywhere, you never do anything with me!”

I opened the kitchen window, and I yelled back at her, “I don't know you! You're not my family, go away!” but she continued to yell back at me, repeating her request over and over, then, I would bolt up awake in the bed.

Oh man! What kinda dream was that? I was glad it was over. I went on about my day trying desperately to forget about it.

A few days later, I had the dream again. Same location. I was trying to enter the house but this time the back door was gone, I had to go all the way to the front of the house. I was closer to the angry old lady than I ever wanted to be! My guts shook with fear. Then when I finally got on the porch, I yelled back at the little old lady, “I don't know you, I'm not your family!”

But she continued her rant, “ You never take me anywhere, You never do anything with me!”

Over the next several weeks, I continued to have this dream. Each time there was an obstacle blocking me from getting into the house. One time, my son came out and offered me a hand up on the deck that had again lost its stairs and became too high for me to scramble up on. And each time the dream scared me just as much as the first time I had had it.

We were having a baby shower at the house for my first grandchild, and

family had come over to the house. My mom was there, and I told her I was having this horrible recurring dream and she asked me to tell her about it. I told her about this little old lady and how she kept screaming at me from the sidewalk, "You never take me anywhere, You never do anything with me." I explained to her the trouble I was having getting into the house each time I had the dream and how much it scared me. I told her that I didn't know the lady, never saw her before in my life! I didn't know why she wasn't asking her own family to take her places.

My mother looked at me and said, "The next time you have the dream, ask the little old lady where she would like to go."

I said, "Why would I do that?"

She looked at me and said, "Because you are the little old lady, you think you are getting old, so ask the little old lady where she wants to go!"

I looked at her, I was shocked! Me? The little old lady? Really? My mom pointed out that because I was becoming a grandmother for the first time, at the ripe old age of thirty-eight, that I was afraid I was getting old.

I sat there staring at her. Why hadn't I seen that? Seemed so obvious now that she pointed it out. So I decided the next time I had the dream, I would ask my "little old lady" where she would like to go. I never had the dream again. But, I never forgot it either.

I am now fifty-nine, my dear mom has passed and I have never forgotten this dream or the words of my mom. I now know when I am a

The Little Old Lady of My Dreams

little old lady I would like to go to see the ocean and go to Williamsburg, Virginia, so I don't have to scare my younger self in the future.

July 16, 2020

By Janet Ladrach

After dark we broke
free from the house.
Barefoot in my summer robe,
I saw an active sky.

It was like the neighborhood
came out to sit on porches
or flit around chasing cousins.

The space station was a cool
dude cruising across the sky,
right through the Big Dipper.
Places to go, horizons to see.

Now and then a streak of meteor
zipped by, in a challenge to play tag.

Off in a corner waited the comet,
head down, tail up. Just hanging.
Wanting someone to throw a ball.

What was that? High random flashes of yellow.
Close. Then far. Then gone.
And we two, in the midst of fireflies,
On top of our world.

--Comet Neowise. Named for Nasa's Near-Earth Object Wide-field Infrared Survey Explorer which discovered the comet in late March of this year. Once it disappears from view it will not return for 6,800 years.

The Gift of Welcoming: Paying it Forward

By Sherrel Rieger

It was a sad October day. It was a day that will be forever seared in my memory. It was the death of an infant. It was the first burial of an indigenous Mayan in our community. It was a day when everything made sense to me, that clarified and cemented my purpose in my community at this time. It was a day that made my journey even clearer. It was the day that I understood the importance of everything that I had lived through prior to this day.

A solemn mass at St. Joseph's Catholic Church. The procession to Calvary Cemetery on State Route 39. The white tent. The rows of chairs. The freshly dug hole. The tiny casket. The mother, barely able to stand, silently suffering the loss of her first-born child. The father standing stoically beside his wife. The grieving neighbors and relatives. The priest. The two men who had dug the grave standing a short distance away waiting to close the grave back up.

We stood in shock and grief, barely comprehending the words of comfort spoken by the priest. When the last words of comfort were spoken, the priest moved slowly away from the grave to allow the family to approach one last time. The parents and the family stood still as if frozen in place, staring into the grave.

The gravediggers patiently waited for the family to leave the cemetery so that they could finish their solemn duties. But the family did not leave the grave side. They were not ready to leave the side of the infant that they had known only for a few short weeks.

The situation became awkward. The priest approached me and asked me to encourage the family to leave. It was at that moment when I realized what my purpose was on that day. My role was that of a "cultural broker." I had information about Latino funeral practices

and I needed to share that information now.

Americans and Latinos have different expectations at the end of a funeral. In the United States the family leaves the gravesite and attends a luncheon prepared by the caring hands of the ladies at the church. At this point, after the family members are no longer there, the men in charge of the cemetery's upkeep put the dirt into the grave covering the casket . After smoothing out the dirt , they place the flower arrangements on top.

Latino families linger at the graveside. Their business here is not finished. It is their custom to be vigilant beside the grave until the last shovel full of dirt has been carefully patted down and the flowers arranged on top of the fresh mound of dirt. Then and only then does the family leave the cemetery.

How did I know this pertinent information?

I had just returned from Mexico in August where my family (by marriage) had laid my sister-in-law, Orfa, to rest. In a way, the day of her funeral was a beautiful day. She had lost her battle with cancer and was now at peace. Everyone who loved her was there to say good-bye to her.

First, the family assembled in a large chapel at the cemetery. Then we proceeded to the gravesite. As we stood at the graveside, we held on to each other and comforted each other. It was actually the first interment service that I had attended even though I had lived 11 years in Mexico. It was my daughter's very first experience at the death of a close relative. We were all together which made it more bearable. The family had hired a trio of musicians that played Orfa's favorite hymns and songs. The beautiful music opened the floodgates of our tears. We cried openly and freely. There were words of reminiscing, soft laughter through the tears.

We stepped up to the open grave and threw flowers on top of the cas-

ket. We took a step backwards and the groundskeepers stepped forward. We watched in silence as they shoveled the dirt back into the grave. After the last wreath of flowers was placed on top of the grave, we all clapped for a full minute and then gathered together for a family picture in front of the grave. Only after seeing that our loved one was tucked safely away under the blanket of earth did the family feel that we could leave this holy ground.

These memories came rushing back as I stood with the family in Calvary Cemetery. I realized why the family was not leaving. I shared this valuable information with the priest, who was grateful to learn about this, especially since this funeral was our first cross-cultural experience. He quietly instructed the groundskeepers to go about their business, which they did quietly and respectfully. When the mother was satisfied that her beloved infant son was at rest and would not be disturbed, she allowed herself to be accompanied to the car. We all left.

My own personal experience in a foreign country had prepared me to help others who found themselves grieving in a foreign country. In that one moment at the cemetery in Dover, the purpose of my life's journey became clear to me. Everything I had lived prior to this brought me to this moment. I am so grateful for all the experiences I have lived through because it has allowed me to be an encouragement and a comfort to others.

So what has my journey looked like?

My story begins as so many stories do - I was born and raised in Dover, Ohio. Nothing remarkable about my childhood. Stay-at-home mom, working dad, 2 brothers, 1 sister, an inside dog, an outdoor cat, a pony. Survived pneumonia when I was a year old. Was a bookworm and took piano lessons. Was the 8th grade spelling champion. Loved French and Spanish classes in high school. Had a lead role in the high school musical my senior year. Had a part-time job. Had only traveled to Canada with my family as a child. Led a pretty pre-

dictable (and safe) life.

After high school, I followed my older brother to The Ohio State University and my world opened up. The naive girl from Dover with no travel experience and very little exposure to cultural diversity began meeting people from all over the state, the country and the world. As an usher at Mershon Auditorium, I attended many cultural programs. I can say I really enjoyed studying and learning new things. My anthropology class was so exciting. My freshman year, I went to every football game in the “Horseshoe” and even to the Rose Bowl. That was an adventure! My first airplane ride and my first view of the ocean! After my freshman year, I usually sold my football tickets to other students and I went to the library on Saturday afternoons. Even with all the opportunities in Columbus, I rarely had the courage to venture off-campus. Little did I realize that one of my biggest adventures was just around the corner.

I began my master’s program in Spanish but I lacked fluency in the language and familiarity with the culture, which kept me from really understanding the literature I was reading. Against my parents’ wishes, I enrolled in a summer program at Universidad Iberoamericana in Mexico City in 1976. I found myself living in a boarding house and navigating public transportation to get to and from school. I was enchanted by the new culture that surrounded me. I loved the sunny mild climate, the wonderful fresh fruit and, of course, the people. They were so friendly and helpful (except for a few men who couldn’t resist whistling at the brown-haired “gringa” wearing bell bottoms and clogs). Very soon after I arrived in Mexico City, we girls at the boarding house got invited to a party. You guessed it. I met a boy and over the course of the summer we fell in love (although my mom claims I fell in love with the culture, not him). I returned to OSU to finish the final year of my master’s degree. During that year, constant letters were sent back and forth between Mexico City and Columbus. I earned my diploma in the spring and began looking for jobs. I guess I didn’t look too hard (or I was too picky).

I turned down one job - travel around the state interpreting in meetings over labor disputes. If you recall, I had led a pretty sheltered life, so driving around the state as a young single woman did not seem like a safe thing for me to do. Besides, being in a room with people arguing in two languages was not all that attractive. I decided against that.

So, after graduation, I moved back to my parents' house in Dover. Shortly after that, I packed my suitcase and headed to Mexico City to see what would happen. A lot happened. I ended up staying for eleven years. I rented a room in a boarding house and taught English. After 3 years, I married my "novio" Jairo. I continued teaching English until our daughter Rebeca was born. The years I stayed home with her were filled with singing, knitting, reading, cooking, and cleaning.

Even though my husband and I had agreed that my most important job was to raise our daughter and take care of our home, when Rebeca entered pre-school, I became restless not knowing exactly where to pour my energy. As an American female who had worked since I was 14 years old, my self-worth had always been tied to my success as a student and later as a teacher. I insisted that I could take care of my responsibilities on the home front as well as hold down a job. I went back to teaching at a prestigious bilingual high school only to discover that I couldn't manage working outside the home and taking care of my family. I stopped teaching.

Besides my personal quest for other fulfilling activities, there was an underlying cultural difference that I didn't fully understand until it was too late. My husband felt that when other people saw that I was working they assumed that he was not a good provider. We both knew that wasn't true but I didn't truly understand the pressure he was feeling. In the end, that cultural difficulty proved to be insurmountable for me. I felt I was losing myself and so I decided to leave.

My daughter Rebeca and I returned to Dover in 1988. During our first years here, I had to buy tortillas in a package at the supermarket and make my own tacos at home. In order to keep holiday traditions alive for my daughter, I had to bake my own Day of the Dead bread on November 1 and my own King's Bread (you know, the one with a tiny plastic Baby Jesus in it) on January 6. We celebrated our own Candlemas on February 2. I had to dig out my hymnal and accompany myself on the piano while singing my favorite songs in Spanish.

In 1988, very few people in Tuscarawas County spoke Spanish. Even so, recognizing that my language ability could be useful, I gave my contact information to the State Highway Patrol and Union Hospital in case there was ever a need for an interpreter. For the first couple of years, I was rarely called. Around 1994, my phone started ringing off the hook. The number of immigrants coming from Guatemala to Tuscarawas County was steadily growing and they needed help. They needed a liaison, an advocate, a cultural broker. So did the agencies and organizations that were trying to help them make their way here in this country. That was me!

By day I was a Spanish teacher at Dover High School and by night I was a mom and an advocate for the new immigrants to the area. It was a balancing act to be sure, one which my daughter might claim was unbalanced at times (most of the time). I knew firsthand what it was like to be a foreigner in a foreign land and how much I had appreciated the helping hand that people had extended to me when I needed it. I couldn't ignore the calls for help.

The eleven years that I lived in Mexico had prepared me for a life of service in my own backyard. When I left my Mexican family, I was in a lot of pain. I felt such sadness and such disillusion at my own failure to preserve my marriage. I owe a great debt of gratitude to the Ramirez family who took me under their loving wings. They patiently corrected me while I learned the nuances of the language. They lovingly guided me through the social norms of their society so I wouldn't embarrass myself. They bravely got in the car when I first

started driving in the largest city in the world. We loved, laughed and cried together.

Just as my middle class Mexican relatives had taught me about their language and culture, the indigenous Mayan immigrants have taught me so much about theirs. I have heard and read about the horrific acts of genocide that took place in their recent history. I have a clear understanding of the life of poverty in their villages and the constant threat of gang violence. I try to imagine what I would do if I lived in a country where there is no opportunity for a better life. Would I risk life and limb to travel 3,000 miles to come to the “land of opportunity”? I have come to understand their struggles and to appreciate their determination.

We have laughed and cried together. We have shared many moments of joy together: births, first communions, birthdays (and the special “quinceanera” party when a girl turns 15), weddings, church foundations and anniversaries, independence day festivities, holiday celebrations (including “posadas”). We have proudly watched their children win handwriting contests, shine on the soccer field and on the wrestling mat, and walk across the stage to get their diploma.

We have also comforted each other in times of strife and sorrow: illness, depression, funerals, discrimination, harassment, job insecurity, immigration hearings, ICE raids, and political uncertainty.

Over the years, I have not only developed close relationships with my Latino brothers and sisters, but also with many other members of our community with whom I work closely in order to serve the Hispanic community here in Dover and New Phila. When working with such groups as Hispanic Ministries of Tuscarawas County, Miguete, Camp Imagine If, and ONE, I am grateful to have met so many kind and knowledgeable people who are dedicated to supporting our immigrant neighbors here in Tuscarawas County. I feel humbled and privileged to work with them toward our goal: to empower the Latinos so that they can attain the “American Dream” that they have sac-

rified so much for.

My immigrant neighbors left their villages out of necessity and made the long dangerous journey to the United States in order to make a better life for themselves and their families. But the truth is that because they are here, I have a better life. I have more color, more flavor, more faith and more friends. Thanks to them, I can now visit the “tienditas” in the area to buy fresh tortillas, clothing, and specialty spices. I can enjoy their food at restaurants and taco trucks. I can buy authentic breads, including the special holiday breads and “tres leches” cake. I can attend a church service in Spanish.

Had I not spent eleven years immersed in the Latino culture, I would not be the person I am today. My entire life - personal and professional - was shaped by those years I spent in Mexico City. I would not have met so many talented and caring people if I had not made this personal journey.

And yet, my journey is only MY journey. Every person has a journey that has brought them to this place and time. Who knows where this journey will take us or where it will end? I suppose we just have to keep putting one foot in front of the other (hopefully our best foot) and see where the road takes us. I am grateful that my path has taken me to so many interesting places and has introduced me to so many wonderful people. I hope that my future experiences give me as much satisfaction as my journey so far.

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