

THE CATHOLIC COMMUNITY OF

— NAZARETH FARM —

THE ASSOCIATION OF VOLUNTEERS FOR CHRISTIAN SERVICE

THE MARCH NEWSLETTER

Hello to all! We sit down to write this newsletter in the damp stillness of the birth of Spring. The road up the hollow is consistently muddy with the pot holes growing larger each day. As staff we make time to relax and appreciate the gifts of creation that surround us. We just finished a high school week and prepare for four weeks of college students experiencing an alternative to the traditional Spring Break. We are anxiously and enthusiastically preparing for a great Spring and Summer. Nazareth Farm and its experience has obviously affected the lives of many volunteers. Our summer high school schedule was filled in four days reflecting the impact the experience has on young people. We are delighted with this as it continues to show the desire of young people to seek meaning for their life especially through service to others. The other side of the coin reflects a sadness as we are unable to accommodate everyone that applies. We are challenged to see God's call in it all! (That was a cute rhyme "call in it all").

In the spirit of community we thought that you would appreciate hearing from everyone on the staff, and thus the newsletter will have contributions from everyone.

THE SURPRISE OF SPRING

John Donnelly

There is a definite feeling of the approach of Spring here at the farm. The birds are singing, the buds on the trees are swelling, and the bulbs planted last fall are coming up. We have seen one flock of geese and we have even planted broccoli and cauliflower in our neighbor Ralph's greenhouse. We have been busy both here at the farm and at the worksites. On the farm we have leveled (with no connotation to demolish) the John of God Barn and the floors in St. Patrick's. Outfitting the workshop in the barn continues with the receipt of a cabinet bench saw and a jointer-planer. The Lord is continuing to gift us with skills and talents to use this equipment. We are also blessed to have a neighbor building cabinets for Lipscomb's home at Hope Land.

THE NEW KID ON THE BLOCK

David Hahn

I have been here since the beginning of February. Up until this past week I have been getting to know the other members of the staff, the people of West Virginia, and the routine of the farm. This past week however I was able to experience my first volunteer week.

Two high school groups, one from New York City, Fordham Prep, and another from Akron, Ohio, Archbishop Hoban visited the farm. At first the kids were kind of hesitant to open up and share their feelings. With time and the common ground of music, talent, and a safe secluded atmosphere they were able to drop their preconceived notions of one another and bond into a community of friends. At the worksites I saw a gleam in their eyes as they were able to use their energy to help someone in need. They saw the effectiveness and the accomplishments of working together.

By the time they left their attitudes had changed. Initially it was to get away from the daily grind and do something different. In the end they were learning about God through others and desiring to serve others in need. It was truly an amazing experience for myself, and I know for the young people from Fordham Prep and Archbishop Hoban.

NEWS FROM THE KNUDSEN KNOLL

Martha White & John Morgan

Many of the volunteers that may remember working with the Knudsen family will be happy to know that a permanent three bedroom home is in the making at the same sight. John Morgan and I, Martha White, began the work this week alongside Robert and Mary and the two high school groups. Mary and Robert were both very excited and filled with contagious energy that is brilliantly reflected in their children Dee Dee and R.C.

Due to pragmatics and a concern for stewardship we have thus far dismantled two older houses in order to reclaim the lumber. The reclaimed lumber is being used for the Knudsen home as well as for various projects here on the farm. We are very excited about this new process and hope that it will prove to be beneficial to our environment and our budget.

More to come in future newsletters!!

MOUNTAIN MAMA'S MECCA

Joan Donnelly with

Editorial by Mike

Many people journey to Nazareth just for the pure reputation of the fruits of the kitchen of Joan Donnelly. It goes without saying that she is a legend throughout the Nazareth Farm network for her scrumptious farm cooking day after day, meal after meal. In future newsletters a few of her secrets will be shared - stay tuned to BON APPETITE Nazareth Farm style.

Life on the home crew is going well. It was a challenge last week to keep seventeen high school boys fed. At the same time I really enjoy watching the pride of volunteers who have never-cooked before create a meal for a large group.

DELICATE DEMOLITION

Dave Dominick

At the house demolition site, the highlight of the week was the transformation of Dorothy Edgell, the owner. Even though she lives only a few miles from the farm she knew very little of us. Initially Dorothy was very hesitant as she thought the volunteers were convicts from the Salem Youth Home. However after a few days Dorothy started to open up to the volunteers and staff to the point where she learned more about the mission of the farm and was happy to socialize. The culmination of the transformation was her loving gesture and thoughtfulness to bake brownies for the Friday crew.

FROM ASHES TO LIFE: A MESSAGE FOR LENT

Jim Lupie

During this last week John Donnelly, myself, and the volunteers from Fordham Prep and Archbishop Hoban High School had the opportunity to help Helen Goodlin. Helen's house burned to the ground in August; she had no insurance. We began cleaning the site and were soon joined by two men, Wayne, Helen's brother, and John. John was a friend from Michigan that was passing through when he learned of Helen's misfortune. John stayed and his attitude is best reflected in his comment, "they need help and I am available to give it." I thought it was wonderful, and a beautiful example of the Gospel being lived out. Most of the week was spent saving lumber, building an outhouse, digging pits, and burying garbage. It was a good experience seeing what fire could do, the destruction it can cause, and the joy that God can bring despite desperate circumstances. I learned what needs to be done to survive a fire when you have nothing left.

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THE APRIL NEWSLETTER

We write this Newsletter in the middle of HOLY WEEK; no, it is not our penance! You will be receiving it after Easter. It is difficult to write as much will happen in the next few days that we would like to share. Time is tight and this is a priority for us; so, we chose to write now and not wait three weeks.

The most beautiful time of the year in many ways is upon us as we see God patiently erupting in nature, liturgy, and our own hearts. We pray for you that God might touch and pierce your heart this Easter season. We pray that, "God may look beyond your faults and see your need." We pray that you may become a "Radical Lover," a lover like Christ. We pray that we all may have the courage to, "Talk the Talk and Walk the Walk." We pray that you find peace in your heart and radiate that peace to all you meet. Remember you are creation of God; remember you reveal part of God to others just by being you. Remember God needs you.

THE SURPRISE OF SPRING

John Connelly

As the beauty of Spring unfolds it is easy to see God's handiwork and majesty around us. The daffodils are in bloom and the peonies have grown a foot in the last week. There is one litter kittens with another expected shortly. The gardens are plowed and the planting of broccoli, cauliflower, and cabbage has begun. We're also waiting for the potatoes to come up. We look forward with great expectation to the blooming of the dogwood and red bud as indicators that God is blessing us with another sign of the wonders of nature.

MARATHON MARCH MADNESS

Martha White

The four weeks of March, March 1st through March 31st, has been appropriately titled, "Marathon March." From the beginning until the end in beautiful sunshine, chilling rains, and even a snow storm the undying energy and spirit of the volunteers kept us on our toes, ready to work and have lots of fun.

The progress at all the sights was amazing. There is now electricity at Helen Goodlin's, Dorothy Edgell's house is on its last planks, and the footing and piers are in place at Knudsen's. At Knudsen's we individually carried up a steep and muddy hill over sixty, eighty pound bags of mortar and concrete mix and one hundred cinder blocks for the footing and piers; it was a chore. With all the arduous work accomplished, lasting friendships made, stronger community formed, and especially the special guest appearance by Wayne Venezia, friend and board member, the month, Lent, and Marathon March was complete.

TIME AWAY AT UNITY ACRES

Jin Lupis

With the month complete the staff deserved a break for quiet time, reflection, and rejuvenation. During the first week in April the staff and I took a trip to Unity Acres in Orwell, New York. Unity Acres was founded twenty-three years ago by Fr. Ray McVey. The Acres is a place for homeless recovering alcoholics to live and work. There are approximately 120 men living at The Acres. There are basically two rules: No drinking and no fighting. The men prepare their meals and use their talents to do a variety of things to keep the place in shape. Fr. Ray along with a great staff of volunteers keep the place running. It survives strictly through donations. The men are allowed to be themselves and do their own things. If they do not want to partake in the activities of The Acres there is no pressure to participate. I feel that The Acres provides a great opportunity for the people who live there to get their lives back on track through the help of their own community. Fr. Ray is planning to move on from direct leadership of The Acres to create a similar experience to Nazareth Farm there on the property of Unity Acres.

For the staff it was a great time to retreat, to become involved in other's sufferings, and reflect on our own relationship with God. Fr. Ted, Chairman of the Board of Directors, accompanied us and led us in our times of reflection. All seven of us slept in a trailer together while at The Acres. It was good for all of us as we were able to in some small way connect with the situation of many of the people with whom we work; tight quarters with little space for privacy.

MOUNTAIN MAMA'S MECCA

Jean Donnelly

During our very busy March one of the favorite meals was Wednesday morning's breakfast casserole -

6 slices of bread Butter
1 lb. Ground Possum Meat 1 tsp. of salt
1.5 cups shredded Sharp Cheese 6 eggs beaten
2 Cups Half and half or evaporated milk

Butter bread on both sides. Place bread in greased 9' x 13' pan. Cook meat until browned; crumble and drain. Spoon over bread slices and sprinkle with cheese. Combine eggs, milk, and salt. Mix well and pour over cheese. Cover and chill overnight. Remove from refrigerator 15 minutes before baking. Bake uncovered at 350 degrees for 45 minutes. Of course we do this times 4-5 depending on how many we have each week. If Possum is out of stock you may substitute pork sausage.

ADIDAS ADIDAS ADIDAS

Mike Abrahamowski

In early February I received a phone call from Patty Dubar, Youth Minister in Meedham, NJ, saying, "Mike, could you use a ton of new athletic clothing." My response was, "Definitely!" Patty said, "I'll have the Adidas company send it to you then." Three weeks later we received literally a TON, yes, 2000 pounds, of clothing. Talk about kids in a candy store; we were like a five year old on Easter Morning. We had a spontaneous fashion show and everything. The clothing was samples, old stock, and slightly damaged articles from their warehouse. We distributed it free of charge to people throughout the county through our food distribution network. The people were ecstatic. Everywhere we go we see kids and adults wearing Adidas sweats, shorts, shirts, shoes, and jackets. One kid wore the clothing to his school pictures! he looked quite dapper I may add. ADIDAS WE THANK YOU; PATTY WE THANK YOU!

VEHICLES: "A Lenten Sacrifice"

David Dominick

Since you heard from us last there have been many interesting things happening here at The Farm. I think the most interesting has been the sacrificing we've had to make as a result of our vehicle situation; Lenten irony. I never imagined it to be this bad. Our American Eagle has not worked since I do not know when. We got it fixed, so we think, then something else goes wrong. The big green truck has been nothing but problems since last summer. We just put another engine in, and we are trying to work out the myriad of bugs that accompany the situation. Thank God the other two are working; maybe I should not have said that. Seriously it has been hard especially without the green truck. It has made the work at some of the worksites difficult as the demand for hauling is great. For myself at the demolition site it has postponed the completion of the job for at least a week as I was unable to move material. I guess all we can do is continue to do as we always do; making the best with what we have much like the people with whom we work. More would be nice though.

WISH LIST

We will arrange transportation if that is a concern. We need the following items:
A half or three quarter ton pickup; we have some money if you have a connection.
Good Vacuum Cleaners Dependable Riding Mowers and Push Mowers

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JUNE NEWSLETTER

CHRIST IS RISEN and so we have proclaimed through this glorious Easter Season. Beginning with Holy Week we have experienced God in a multitude of ways which we will share with you in this newsletter. It all began with the sacrificial Stations of the Cross over eight miles of hills accompanied by three hours of cold rain. It continued with a magnificent Easter celebration of mass, food, and games with new and old friends from all over the country including the Demastus's and the Knudsen's. The liturgical culmination was highlighted by the Visit of Fr. Dave (Pichette) and his powerful Pentecostal Prayer and Mass. We continue to thank God for continuing to live at The Farm in such visible grandeur and positive presence.

GRADUATIONS GALORE

Robert (Robbie) Cottrill celebrated commencement exercises from Doddridge County High School on Sunday June 6th.
Michael Dudley and Amy Perrine graduated from 8th grade and will enter high school next year.
Dee Dee Knudsen graduated from Kindergarten with straight A's.

WAYNE'S WORLD Jim Lupie

On June 8, 1992 Wayne's World came to Nazareth Farm, Center Point, West Virginia, LIVE. Mr. Wayne "Gabby" Groves celebrated his 88th birthday. We had a bash complete with music, cake and a complement of energetic volunteers. We had a wonderful time honoring one of The Farm's best friends. For the past two and a half years Wayne has been a regular at the Farm each Wednesday and Friday evening. He has shared countless stories and has inspired many young people with words of wisdom. Wayne has so impacted young folks that one volunteer was inspired to write and have published a full two page article complete with a song (it's sung to the tune from the "Beverly Hillbillies"):

Here's a story about a man named Wayne,
He lives in West Virginia in the sunshine and the rain,
Proud to be 87 and living in the hills,
His life has been up and down, peaks and spills.
He talked from the heart about marriage and pain,
"Travel," he said, "My girl, learn the land!"
He offered to me wisdom and his hand,
How could I forget? I will always remember Wayne.
Copied from STUDENT, ILLUSTRATED, written by Elaine Jenkins.

FAWN FRIENDSHIP AND FAWN FAREWELL Rose Ratzki & John Morgan

We felt honored as well as humbled to celebrate the birth and the death of our orphaned fawn, Norman Freeway. Robert Knudsen found him abandoned on their hill after the mother had been spooked away, and gave him to The Farm to raise. His soft almond eyes, spindly legs, and beautiful spotted fur captured all our hearts and also brought out the mother and father in each of us. Norman had a captive audience his entire day for the four days he was with us. We especially thank God for gracing us with Norman which must be one of God's most beautiful creatures. We thank Norman Freeway wherever you are for the smiles, the laughs, and the tears. The staff at The Farm would like to thank the groups from St. Patrick's of Merna, St. Anne's of Oswego, St. Matthew's of Champ Aign, and Blessed Sacrament of Walpole, Mass. who were with us during this beautiful experience in life from May 24th to May 30th. Our celebration of God's creation of Norman will forever live on in our hearts.

GRASSROOTS GARDENING John Donnelly

One of the many positive aspects of life at The Farm during the spring and summer is the garden. God continues to bless the vegetables and fruits. We are now eating strawberries as they mature into that juicy, sweet marvel so good to taste. The early broccoli and cauliflower are forming heads and will be ready in about a week. Almost everything is planted and even the squash is up. Again we praise the bounty of the Lord.

FOUNDER CELEBRATES 25 YEARS
Dave Dominiak

A few weeks ago I had the privilege of attending Fr. Dave Pichette's 25th Anniversary Celebration as a priest, and also his 20 year Anniversary of serving the people of Appalachia. It was a privilege as I experienced him in a most beautiful way; sharing himself through the mass and his homily. It was a time of recounting and reflecting; recognizing the many roads walked and appreciating the hours of prayer and meditation to see God's hand in the walk. It's true that God definitely has blessed Fr. Dave. His gifts are great and his dreams are magnificent. He has taken those visions and made them reality. He has made them reality wherever he has gone, whether it is here at The Farm, at Seton H.S., or at a parish like St. Ambrose. He has done it with the young and the old, the rich and especially the poor. What I noticed most that evening was the blessing that God bestowed on us through Fr. Dave by allowing him to touch our lives so deeply and by making a difference in the lives of others.

MOUNTAIN MAMA'S KITCHEN
Joan Donnelly

Another favorite and often requested recipe from the kitchen is the Apple Butter. Take one, two, three, or four number ten cans of applesauce. Put them in a roasting pan and bake at 250 for twelve to fourteen hours. We put it in the oven after supper and can it after breakfast the next day. In the morning add honey, cinnamon and nutmeg to your taste and process in pint jars.

KNUDSEN "KNEWS"
Martha White

Through the months, the progress on the new Knudsen home has been amazing though in the beginning tedious work had to be done. Examples range from digging up stumps for a level driveway to hauling lumber by hand up a "cliff" to digging footers for the foundation. All was more than appreciated after seeing the rapid progress made in the last two weeks on the house. It was a great sight to behold when Dee Dee and R.C. were running on the completed floor! I wonder what they will do when the walls go up?

A NEWCOMERS PERSPECTIVE
Liz Dowling

As I look around me watching the bonfire and listening to the volunteers sing away at a James Taylor song, I know why I came to this place. The peace and tranquility that is found in this simple life cannot be duplicated anywhere! It is an amazing thing to watch as 35 people laugh and joke around as if they had known each other for years. But that is what happens here. It is because of this that I feel the presence of God is so overwhelming when you just let yourself open your heart to the wonders of nature and the wonders of humankind.

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