



THE GEORGIAN REPORT



St. George's Church Schenectady, NY

June 2010

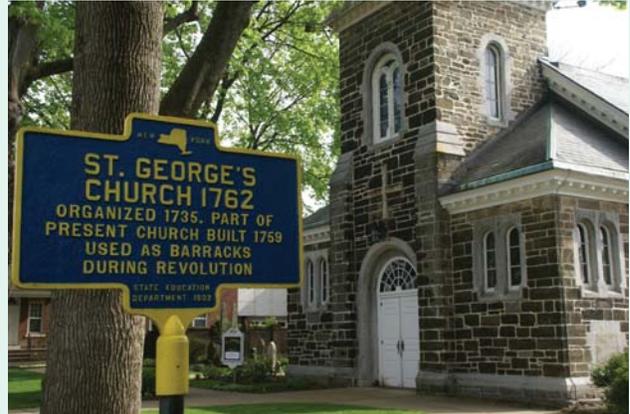
GROUNDS AND GARDENS



The grounds of St. George's are in "tip top" shape thanks to our tireless garden committee and the extra-added services of Mary Claire and a group of young people from Schenectady Community YouthBuild of Northeast Parent & Child.

Together, we laid bricks; planted and weeded; put down mulch; and accomplished a month of work in just one week.

Pictured above are Nicole Lopez and David Agron, who are "supervised" by our own Rick Forshaw. David, in particular, was cited for being on-site every day, punctually; for taking direction well, working cooperatively with others, and being a self-motivator.



An Apple Blossom Tree was planted in the Memorial Gardens in loving memory of former Georgian, Shirley Burris. (L-R) Shirley's daughter Anne Burris, Susanna Sherwood - who donated the tree - and Fr. Paul Blanch, posed after the official blessing and dedication.



A GEORGIAN EASTER



No matter how many times we experience it, Easter Week surprises us with its range and depth of emotion. This year our preparation through Lent and the Lenten course helped us understand more thoroughly why suffering is important, and why Christ's Resurrection is the basis of our faith. We attended Stations of the Cross on Saturday mornings.

We began Holy Week with a traditional Palm Sunday parade from the Great Hall into church. During our parade there was laughter from the children, clutching as many palms as they could hold, as there must have been during Jesus' triumphal entry into Jerusalem. On Maundy Thursday there was self-consciousness while Fr. Paul washed our feet, as the apostles must have felt when Jesus washed theirs. At the end there was stunned silence as acolytes stripped the altar and an all-night vigil of prayer began, the altar tended by a succession of loyal Georgians. On Good Friday there was deep prayer as we imagined the

suffering endured by Jesus. Finally, at the Great Easter Vigil and the Easter Feast, the holy fire was relit and the party began with food and drink in the Great Hall.

After forty days of Lent, we celebrated the resurrection of Christ with song and fellowship. Don Ingram's music and direction of the choir through Darke's beautiful Mass in F reaffirmed the glorious end of three days of mourning. White lilies decorated the altar, incense was thick, and the congregation sang out, "Jesus Christ is risen today! Alleluia!"

joan pearson

St. George's Annual Easter Egg Hunt was held on Sunday, April 18th after Mass. Six children hunted on a beautiful day in the Memorial Gardens - with Trevor Weakley finding the Alleluia egg and winning the Lamb Cake as made by Kathleen Todt and her mom,



OUTREACH

Sam Wengrovius and **JJ Moran** will share a \$2,500 scholarship from St. George's to represent us as part-time interns in SICM's summer internship program.

Sam, son of Jeff and Barb, is a recent Union College graduate who still finds time to be a thurifer on selected Sundays. "I am looking to find out what it is like working in the public service sector. I am interested in work that is not only fulfilling to myself but also to my community," Sam wrote on his application. Regardless of his plans for the fall - whether a fulltime job or graduate school - he feels this internship will be a rewarding experience to include on his resume.



JJ, son of Bob and Jane, is a junior at Schenectady High School and regularly serves at Sunday worship. "I feel I can be a valuable part of the program," he wrote on his application, citing his interest in working with children and ability to be a good listener. JJ participated in the '09 summer lunch program and January's Bethesda House potluck. This is his first work experience and fits in with plans to pursue a career in criminal justice/community service.



All young Georgians (16-23) received materials for the SICM summer intern program.

Georgians continue to support the SICM Food Pantry with weekly donations of non-perishable items. A grand total of 539 pounds of food was delivered from St. George's in 2009. Chocolate-



based items were requested in honor of the successful "Christ and the Chocolaterie" bible study that was offered during Lent. For the summer months, parishioners will be encouraged to bring in different pasta shapes (remember, last year, the emphasis was on beans with 19 varieties counted.)

Georgians will again be helping the SICM summer lunch program. Two volunteers per day are needed for the week of August 2-6 to serve lunch at New Creation of Christ church in the Mont Pleasant area. A sign-up sheet is in the narthex.

Six cell phones were delivered to the YWCA on April 1st.

Lighthouse meal service continues one weekend a month, with Jim Wingate and Amy Machold alternating this outreach with Alice Pumbo and Judy DeLong. Additional cooks are always welcome.

Has a lightbulb gone off in your head? Do you have an idea about supporting a local nonprofit organization? Contact Outreach Chairperson Alice Pumbo, who is always on the lookout for new projects.

THE RECTOR WRITES

People within the congregation and beyond have commented recently on my activity and keenness to see St. George's thrive, at times they even dare to say "...slow down Father Paul and take it easy." This is helpful for me, as I do tend to overwork, and yet I am also aware that the task of ministry is one that brings many demands, and such demands cannot easily be put off. I believe that there is a sense of urgency about the task of rebuilding St. George's, for times have changed, and the modern world no longer accepts the Gospel message easily, if it ever did!

There are a great many people who sing the praises of St. George's, and many who talk about its glorious past, but we good people, are charged with the building up of St. George's right here and now in 2010.

Over the last few years in England we have been aware that there are many people who would love to return to the worshipping life of the Church, but they just get disconnected somehow, and often all it takes is a kindly word of invitation to get those good folks back in the pews, and taking their full part in the worshipping life of the People of God. The same is true of the USA in every sense; we cannot afford to be complacent. One of the ways in which we have attempted to remedy this is by inviting people back to Church with a personal invitation. This idea is also widely used in the USA, and like the UK, has enormous benefits.

This year, I would very much like St. George's to be a part of what is now a growing and truly International movement for Church growth - it is called...**Back to Church Sunday**.

This year 2010, **Back To Church Sunday** falls on **September 12th** and we shall be issuing invitation cards to regular members of the congregation to send out or personally hand out to former members, lapsed families and, of course, any neighbors or friends that you think might respond to this personal invitation.

According to a survey of participants, Churches who participated in Back to Church Sunday on average saw a **19% increase in their weekend attendance. We must participate in "Back to Church Sunday" and give every member a reason to extend a church invitation!**

Back to Church Sunday is specifically designed to increase church attendance by creating a special Sunday church worship event and then empowering all church members with the outreach tools they need to invite neighbors, friends and loved ones back to church.

The Statistics: "Most Americans have been to church

and yet only 20% are regular attendees." - *The American Church in Crisis*. "82% of the unchurched are at least somewhat likely to attend church if invited." - *Dr. Thom Rainer*. "Only 2% of church members invite an unchurched person to church. 98% of church-goers never extend an invitation in a given year." - *Dr. Thom Rainer*.

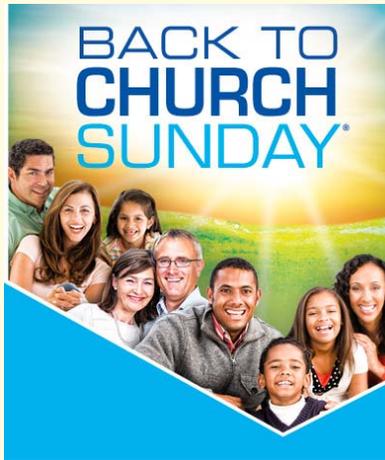
"Four percent of formerly churching adults are actively looking for a church to attend regularly (other than their previous church.) 6% would prefer to resume attending regularly in the same church they had attended. The largest group, 62%, is not actively looking, but is open to the idea of attending church regularly again." - *Scott McConnell, Lifeway Research*.

Life in America as we all know has changed greatly over the last twenty years, with massive changes in technology, global politics, lifestyle choices and family dynamics. But one constant has been the proportion of adults in the population who are now totally un-churched. During this period there have been noteworthy shifts in religious behavior, but the percentage of adults who have steered clear of churches has remained stable since 1990.

When these statistics are projected across the aggregate adult population, the numbers are staggering. An estimated 73 million adults are presently unchurched. When teens and children are added, the total swells to roughly 100 million Americans. To put that figure in context, if the unchurched population of the United States were a nation of its own, that group would be the twelfth most populated nation on earth.

Please, will you help St. George's to be a more welcoming, warm and missional minded Church here in Schenectady? Can you dare to personally invite a family or a person to join with us on **Sunday September 12th at 9am** for our Parish Mass and then to share lunch with us afterwards in the Great Hall?

Fr Paul F Blanch



JUNIOR WARDEN'S REPORT

In May and June, several projects were successfully addressed: (1) The Great Hall roof was completed; (2) Damaged and missing slates on the church roof were replaced; (3) The leak in the priest's sacristy has been fixed; (4) Work has begun on the Sexton apartment; (5) Grounds work continues - look around at the labors of the garden committee: Rosemary Pannone, Barb Wengrovius, Rick Forshaw, and Mike Thiessen.

There is still much to be done, and we will do it. We can all be proud of the St. George's we, with God's help, are creating.

ralph fusco

SALUTING ST. GEORGE'S VOLUNTEERS

Pastoral Care is the thread that keeps Georgians connected. For the housebound or in an assisted living/nursing facility, visitations and cards show that they are not forgotten. Ten Georgians are currently seen on a regular basis. As an appointed Eucharistic Minister, Jim Wingate brings communion. Fr. Paul is also a faithful, welcome visitor with his genuine compassion and concern.

JIM WINGATE assumed Pastoral Care ten years ago and has a good handle on what is needed. "We talk, they listen. They talk, we listen," he laughed, adding that visitations are a way of 'checks and balances' to make sure no noticeable changes occur - especially in someone living alone. "If so I notify clergy to contact a family member." A Georgian since 1976, Jim held many leadership positions but prefers doing grunt work (schlepping stuff in his truck) and cooking for Lighthouse meals (his Outreach brainstorm.)



JOYCE KAPUSTA brings youth, energy, a pleasant personality, and a different face to weekend visitations. At her first Start-Up Sunday



three years ago, Joyce signed up for this ministry. Although working full-time and caregiver to an elderly parent, she said, "It's not a major burden for me. These people look forward to our visits. I enjoy seeing them enjoying us!" Joyce is a member of the Altar Guild and current Vestry clerk.

NANCY ANGUS is responsible for electronic cards being emailed to those with access to a computer. She also sends out cards via snail mail. Nancy feels that receiving a card is even more meaningful to someone who cannot attend church regularly. "A card shows that we're thinking of them," she offered. Confirmed at St. George's in the late 1940's, Nancy continues to be active in church projects.



WENDY MADELONE sends get well, birthday and anniversary cards to parishioners. "It's an honor to be able to do something for others," she explained. "Between a full-time job and family, I can't commit to outside activities like visitations. This I can do evenings and weekends from home." As a child of St. George's, Wendy has been involved in everything from Chi Ro to her special ministry of the former book shop.

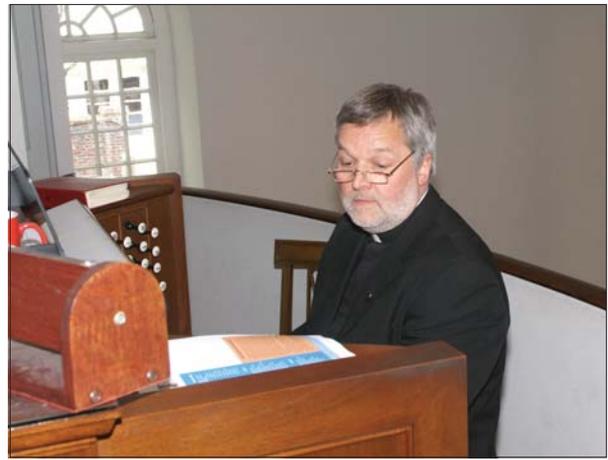


JOAN BESSARAB is an indispensable member of the weekday visitation team. During her 36 years as a Georgian - parishioner, leader, "people" person - she knows our congregation. "Those we visit need love; we need to show we care," she said. "It's as rewarding for me as I hope it is for them." Although camera shy (which is why her picture does not appear here), Joan's lovely face is welcomed by every visitation she makes.

Among others assisting this ministry - Fr. Wampler bringing communion, and Ib Bartlet making crosses out of palms for Lenten visitations.

If you know a Georgian who would benefit from Pastoral Care, please bring it to the attention of either Jim Wingate or Fr. Paul.

ST. GEORGE'S HOSTS A.L.L.



Seventeen students from ALL (Academy of Lifelong Learning) at Empire State College spent an enlightening afternoon at St. George's on Tuesday, April 20th. The purpose of their visit was "an experience in architecture" but they all agreed that they received so much more.

From Senior Warden, David Kennison, they learned about the history of our church, including detailed information on its architectural background. From Rector Fr. Paul Blanch, they learned about St. George's liturgy; had comparisons between the Anglican Church in the United States and the Church of England; were treated to an impromptu organ concert; and even watched a "fashion show" as Fr. Paul demonstrated the various vestments worn by the Episcopal clergy on specific days

George Riebel, a Saratoga architect who works with the college, contacted St. George's last year after browsing our website. A site visit was predetermined and his class showed up with curiosity and enthusiasm. "This was the best tour I've had in the seven years I've been doing it," he said at the conclusion of the afternoon, which lasted 3 and 1/2 hours and including walking our campus grounds. Chatting with members of the group afterwards, it was evident that Fr. Paul had won them over with his theological knowledge and personal charisma. The consensus of opinion was "....he's a gem!" Several even returned that weekend to partake of our Patronal Festival activities.

TIMBER FRAMER'S GUILD EXAMINES ST. GEORGE'S



For the first time in its 25 year history, the Timber Framers' Guild - an educational organization dedicated to preserving and promoting the craft of timber framing, with 1500 members in 16 countries - held their annual Symposium in Schenectady, a city especially known for its historic Dutch architecture. St. George's, itself renowned as one of the finest examples of restored colonial church architecture in the country, was one of 6 scheduled stops in the Stockade area on Friday, May 21st.

David Kennison, followed by photographer Bob Paska, led groups through a summary of St. George's history and onward to a personal tour of the church attic and steeple. No mean feat, over 80 people climbed up a narrow wooden ladder from the choir loft to the dark confines and stifling heat of the church attic, examining the original massive hand-hewn timbers, mortise and tenon joinery, all fastened with wooden pegs, circa 1700s. As yet undaunted, a continual flow of people climbed ever upwards to the top of the vaulted ceiling and through a hatch to the church's copper roof. Clambering across the roof, they dropped through an access door to the base of the bell tower. In the tower, more steps lead to the bell floor, where they examined the timber frame techniques from a later period in the 1800s, including the massive Meneely bell, cast in 1842. Some hardy souls even climbed the high timbers within the spire. Dirty and hot, they emerged with a smile on their faces.

While David "roasted" in the upperbelly of the church, Fr. Paul stayed on the cool terra firma of St. George's churchyard, discussing our past, present and future with many interested Guild members. By their accounts, St. George's was the highlight of their weekend. The day also brought a wonderful reunion as Will McSwain, son of our 17th rector, is a TFG member and carried warm, enthusiastic greetings to everyone.

*lynn paska
david kennison*

EPISCOPAL EDUCATION

PASCHAL CANDLE

We have just recently come through the season of Eastertide, comprising the 50 days after Easter. From the Holy Saturday Easter Vigil liturgy until the end of the Mass on Pentecost, there is a tall and exceptional candle, the Paschal Candle, always present and always burning. What is it really and why is it there?

The word "Paschal" comes to us from the Latin, Greek, Aramaic and Hebrew and means "of or pertaining to Easter (or Passover)." So our Paschal candle is an Easter candle and that meaning is extraordinarily profound.

The paschal candle signifies the light of Christ in the world and his presence amongst his people, "...the true light which lighteth every man that cometh into the world." Fire has always been a sign of God's presence, from the burning bush on Mount Sinai, to the pillar of fire leading the Israelites in the exodus, to sacrificial fires on the altar of the temple in Jerusalem.

For Christians, the symbolism of Christ's triumph over the darkness of sin and death is paramount. This symbolism is apparent at the Easter Vigil when the new fire is kindled and blessed. The priest inscribes the Paschal candle with the cross, an *alpha* and *omega*, and the current year, saying "Christ, yesterday and today, the beginning and the end. To Christ belongs all time and all the ages; to Christ belongs glory and dominion now and forever. Amen." Christ is present among us now and throughout eternity. Five grains of incense imbedded in wax nails are inserted, representing the five wounds of Christ on the cross - the nails in his hands and feet and the spear in his side.

The Paschal candle is now lit, the first candle to carry the flame from this sacred fire, and carried in procession into darkness, symbolic of the darkness of a world without God and the darkness of the tomb. With the light, the Risen Christ, the Light of the world has come!

As the candle is carried into the dark church, so Christ lights our way out of darkness. The candle is lifted high

with the chant of "*The light of Christ.*" Yes, the Risen Christ is present in our midst, with and for us. The chanted Exsultet proclaims "*All you who stand near this marvelous and holy flame, pray with me to God the Almighty for the grace to sing the worthy praise of this great light: through Jesus Christ his Son our Lord, who lives with and reigns with him, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God...*". Gradually we enter into the reality that Christ is risen and is present among us.



Later, the paschal candle is plunged three times into the water of the baptismal font with the words "*Now sanctify this water, we beseech thee, by the Holy Spirit,*" reminding us of the power of Christ in our baptism.

Throughout the 50 days of Easter, the paschal candle stands near the altar as a symbol of resurrection. It is lighted for each liturgy on each day.

After the Day of Pentecost, the paschal candle is placed near the baptismal font as a visual reminder that in our baptism, we are crucified and resurrected with Christ. The candle is lighted at each Baptism, and small baptismal candles are lighted from it for presentation to the newly baptized, this as a visual reminder of the integral connection between Baptism and Easter.

At funerals, the paschal candle is lighted and placed at the head of the casket. In a visual way, the paschal candle visually proclaims the message of Romans 6:3-5: "*Do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? We were buried therefore with him by baptism into death, so that as Christ was raised from the dead by*

the glory of the Father, we too might walk in newness of life. For if we have been united with him in a death like his, we shall certainly be united with him in a resurrection like his."

The Paschal candle - new fire, light, birth, baptism, death and resurrection.

david kennison

WHITE DRAGON SALE



Alice Polumbo



Barbara Wengrovius, Chris Henry

The Annual White Dragon Sale in March was a day of community camaraderie and parish profit as Rosemary Pannone reported an intake of \$1,026 after expenses.



Margaret Gruener

CHILDREN'S MASS



A very special Children's Mass took place on Mother's Day in the Holy Family Chapel (following our Rite I Solemn Mass at 9AM.) Fr. Paul officiated at this shorter, more casual Rite II Mass that incorporated a homily on the readings of the day. Halsey Brown provided music appropriate to families with younger children on his guitar. Afterwards, everyone enjoyed a pizza lunch in the Great Hall.

SUNDAY SCHOOL

St. George's realized \$853 from our Milk Cartons Collection. Thanks to our enterprising young children in Sunday School for the idea, and our parishioners for embracing this project with such generosity.



- SENIOR WARDEN'S REPORT -

Over time, I have come to believe that St. Luke got it slightly wrong. In 12:34, he makes it sound so simple, "*For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.*" Maybe that's true in some circumstances, but what about for those of us whom God has already called? I'm thinking of each of us who are *in the world, but not of the world*. In other words, we who embrace Jesus as our Lord and Savior and who believe and have strong faith in God. Would any of us at St. George's truly classify ourselves in any other way?

So what should St. Luke really be saying to us? To my mind, it's "*For where your **heart** is, there will your **treasure** be also.*" No, I am not trying to launch our 2010 stewardship campaign before its time, although this phrase has overtones of stewardship throughout. Rather, it is a question to us all - *where is your heart?*

It has become terribly difficult in today's world to put God first. So many distractions, so little time - parties, sporting events, childrens' school activities, dinners, second homes, vacations, even extra sleep on Sunday morning - the list never ends. We fall into the habit of pushing God into the cracks of our lives - when and if it is convenient. But God calls us to make him first - first for our time, first for our giving, and most certainly first on the Lord's Day when we are bidden to gather together as a parish family for worship. If God is that important to us, how could we even consider anything else? Why are we not all at St. George's for one precious hour on Sunday? Where is our commitment to our church and to our God? Back to our friend Luke 12:20 - "*But God said to him, 'Fool! This night your soul is required of you; and the things you have prepared, whose will they be?'*"

We are halfway through 2010 - a year of new beginnings, new growth and a new outlook. I entreat you to make the rest of this year a new start in your personal pledge to renew your covenant relationship with God and with each other. After all, *where is your heart?*

with great affection, david

- TREASURER'S REPORT -

Tax rates will be going up in 2011 unless Congress changes the current law. This suggests it is time to make sure we are maximizing the tax advantages of our giving. Of course St. George's would like you to give more, but that's not what I am talking about here.

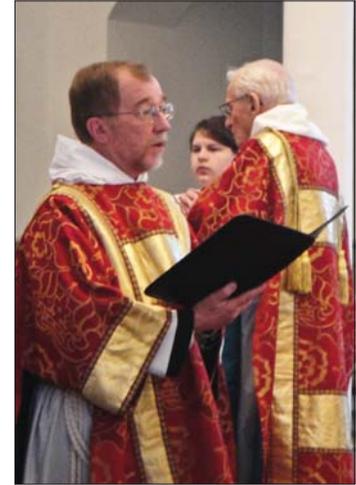
If you own common stock that has appreciated in value, you can donate that stock to the church instead of giving cash. There is a substantial tax advantage if you give this way. Here's how it works:

| <u>Cash gift \$2,500</u> | <u>Gift of common stock</u> |
|--|------------------------------------|
| Advantage: \$2,500 tax deduction | Advantage: \$2,500 tax deduction |
| Disadvantage: If you have to sell appreciated securities to raise the cash for this gift, you might pay as much as \$600 in taxes for that sale. | No additional tax to pay. |

From a practical standpoint, there is another way to think of this. When you are reviewing your portfolio, and there is a stock you have decided to sell, gift that stock to the church and use the cash you otherwise would have donated toward a replacement investment. This net effect is a lower tax bill.

jonathan pearson

PATRONAL FESTIVAL WEEKEND



Do other churches have Patronal Festivals like ours? I wondered this while enjoying Solemn Choral Evensong on the Friday night of our Feast of St. George the Martyr. During Fr. Vang's evensong sermon I learned that we have celebrated St. George only since 1988, his first year at St. George's. How far we've come since then! Our first festival consisted of the bishop's blessing, lots of tartans and bagpipes, and a parade through the Stockade after Sunday mass. This year we enjoyed a weekend of celebration, starting with a magnificent Friday Evensong with the Gentlemen and Boys of the Cathedral Choir, directed by Woodrow Bynum, Saturday organ concert by Dr. Lawrence Roff of First Presbyterian Church, and Sunday mass with tartans of St. Andrew's and the Schenectady Pipe Band and a parade through the Stockade. Did I mention the parties? One after Evensong and another after mass.



As Fr. Paul reminded us, our St. George is also the patron saint of England. We all know that America was colonized under the English flag and that St. George's was founded by English colonists in 1735. It makes sense that colonists would dedicate their church to a familiar saint; therefore we are one of many churches around the world dedicated to St. George.



A successful weekend needs a lot of planning, and we recognize those most visible: Amy, Chris and Mike for organizing food; Don and the choir for the music; David and Dan for organizing the acolytes; Donna for attending to arrangements; and Fr. Paul for tireless enthusiasm. Our patronal weekend reminded us of our roots in colonial Schenectady, and that we are always a bridge between the past and the future.

joan pearson



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The Georgian Report

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- VISITATIONS -

For nearly 40 years, if you wanted to know the third ingredient in the recipe for Dragon Stew or what was the name of someone's grandchild, you simply called Rosemary VanDerhoof. She was Fr. Kirby's right hand person. Involved in every aspect of St. George's activities, Rosemary was indispensable to the life of the parish. Even after "retirement," she was involved in almost every activity St. George's offered. She ran the rummage sale, cookbook, and more other projects than anyone can remember. To say that she was a "doer" is an understatement.

Following in her footsteps, her son Peter and wife Patty (aka Trish) are active members of St. George's; her granddaughters Leah (who lives in the Stockade) and Lindsey (a college senior next year) are all frequent visitors to Rosemary who recently moved to the newly renovated McClellan Campus (the former St. Clare's Hospital.) She had been living next door to Peter and his family, but a serious fall last year necessitated this move. Should you want to send a card or visit, her room number is 306.

St. George's has been very fortunate to have wonderful and outstanding secretaries/administrative assistants, and Rosemary VanDerhoof was clearly one of the best.

jim wingate