



To Celebrate 80 Years We'll Party, Dine, Dance & Dance

"80 years is something to really celebrate," Shirley Davis says, "... to feel good about."

That opinion led her to lobby the church anniversary committee earlier this spring for an Anniversary Dinner Dance rather than a big name speaker. "This time," chimed in **Mary Jones**, "let's have fun!"

With that in mind, "The important thing everyone needs to know," **Louise Stroude** said, "is that the program will be short, very short. There's time for dancing." Louise chairs the anniversary committee, so she should know. Dinner will follow a brief program and then "the dancing can begin!" laughs **Mary Jones**.

In fact, there will be nearly three hours of music for dancing. The Reunion Band, known in our community for their willingness to play what dancers want, will play during dinner and again for dancing. "All the way till midnight," assured Shirley, who knows the band well and signed them for this event.

"We've also contracted with a place that's ideally set up for this kind of celebration," Shirley beamed, "the St. Petersburg Country Club."

When the anniversary committee met last Thursday with Sr. and Jr. Wardens, **Greg Duckett** and **Joyce Corn**, they were ironing out some details and making final assignments.

"With everybody doing their jobs, this will be successful." Greg believes.

"It's the tickets right now. We really need to push the tickets," **Inez Ford** told the group. Our contract with the country club specifies that minimum of 100 meals will be served.

"But we haven't reached that magic number yet," added Joyce.

As everyone around the conference table in Ford Hall reviewed the event's menu, the consensus was that the dinner sounded delicious: "Chicken Piccata with French Lemon Butter," which Louise explained means chicken breast with lemon and capers, Garden or Caesar salad, rice and "delicately seasoned vegetables."

"Oh, please. If they would just skip the adjectives," **Judy Krug** moaned, "I might be able to recognize the food."

And the menu's *piece d' resistance*: Key Lime Pie. "I just couldn't resist it," remembered Louise from the time when menu selections were made. "We had to have their Key Lime Pie!"

The program will have a Master of Ceremonies to keep everything moving according to schedule. "We've asked **Michael Griffin** to do that," said Louise. Joyce reported that **Fr. Kerr** and **Canon Neal** will offer prayers and blessings and **Fr. Whitlock** will make brief remarks about St. Augustine's.

And "In the black community, you always read the church history," emphasized **Mary Jones**.

So there will be a history, "but it will be short, entertaining even to our guests, and innovative," promised Judy. She's working on the presentation with Louise, **Michelle John** and **Tom Krug**.

Letters and flyers describing our 80th party were mailed to every parish in the Clearwater, Mannasota and St. Pete deaneries, so we're hoping to celebrate our anniversary with friends. After she and Inez had addressed the invitations, Louise said, "I took them directly to the main post office. I just wanted to make sure they got out promptly."

There were also letters to businesses like funeral homes, and to neighboring churches. Our hope is that they may support us by purchasing tickets or becoming one of the contributors listed in our program booklet.

And to help our members sell tickets, the committee decided to spend some money on promotion. Shirley will prepare an ad to come out next Friday in the *Weekly Challenger*.

"Good things are going to happen!" Greg said with real confidence.

Jasters Make Contributions to Library Started Here 5 Months Ago

Cities have libraries. Big churches have libraries. But small congregations like St. Augustine's?

Yes, its happening here too, and the bags of books **Fr. Lee Jaster** and his wife, **Margaret**, carried in this morning are evidence.

Those bags are full of volumes with titles like *The Power to Heal* by Francis McNut and *Reason to Live, Reason to Die* by John Powell. **Leo Battaglia**, **Henri Nouwen**, **John Wesley** and **St. Francis** are also represented.

The books come from the personal libraries of both Margaret and Fr. Lee.

"Some of Lee's books are marked up," Margaret said, almost apologetically.

"All the better," **Judy Krug** responded. "When I'm reading a book someone has made notes in, I feel like I'm having a conversation -- not just reading."

Fr. Whitlock said before leaving on vacation that he also had some books to donate.

Where will this growing library be housed? And which book lovers among us will shoulder the responsibility for maintaining it? All those decisions still lie in our near future.

For now, these books and pamphlets from Fr. Lee and Margaret will be added to the three reference books **Virginia Ryan** gave our parish last spring. "I think a church like yours needs a library," Virginia said then. Obviously, the Jasters agree.

Maybe this partying thing is in this church's blood.... Our patron saint liked to party big time, you know. And so does this congregation. Always has. Maybe, somehow, we got some of Augustine's DNA. Anyway, that might be the best explanation for why this time, to celebrate our parish anniversary, there will be no big name guest speaker. And we're not going to get all serious about it. At this celebration we're going to eat and drink, be merry and we're going to dance the night away. Who knows, maybe St. Augustine's spirit will be there at the Country Club, dancing right alongside us. Watch for him! Wouldn't that be a kick! Now be sure you have your ticket for this Anniversary Party -- and tickets for your friends as well. Augustine just might need a dance partner or two. Remember, he did a lot of partying before he became a saint! And so may we all!

Yes, Those Chairs Are New

Has our vestry gone on a buying spree?

New cushioned brown chairs today are gracing the Parish Hall: they have replaced the noisy and ragged old folding chairs we've had for so many years. In addition, there are several new folding conference tables that will replace some so ugly they were held together with duct tape.

Our altar will soon get handsome new brass candlesticks in several sizes and a new brass stand for the altar missal. Shortly thereafter we expect more hymn books, prayer books and new choir robes.

They *are* all new to St. Augustine's anyway.

No, the vestry has not lost its sense of stewardly restraint. In fact its members have been exercising a cautious diplomacy over at the cathedral in selecting items that won't be kept by the church and certainly will not survive the wrecking ball and bulldozers..

"Of course some items will be stored and re-used in the new buildings," noted St. Peter's administrator **Pam League**. She's in charge of the disposition of the residue from years of church activities. "Many older members are laying claim to things with nostalgic value."

Some items entrusted to St. A's will not be available until after September 15th when the cathedral is hosting ceremonies for the installation of our new bishop.

Our Junior Warden, **Joyce Corn**, has negotiated the donation of one of the cathedral's good spinet pianos for our Parish Hall and several nice area rugs for Ford Hall's porch. She also hopes we can disassemble a small marble altar and use it here in an outdoor setting.

"We sure gave attention to their commercial kitchen equipment," Joyce said, "but it just did not seem like a good fit for us."

The buildings being razed are large, with many rooms and a myriad of uses. Some items in them are still being sorted and tagged.

LET THE RAINS COME NOW!

Those daily downpours are challenging to temporary fixes. St. A's has replaced almost all its roofs. But two flat ones, notoriously troublesome, had never been professionally maintained. Drip-pans and buckets were being rushed into the ladies' restroom and the Vesting Room. It all smelled musty and the ceiling stains were growing larger.

So this past week, the church facilities specialist and the parish financial officer decided to bring in the pros.

"In a day and a half it was done," **Joyce Corn** said, with obvious relief.

"There was a time when we would have used buckets for months," **Tom Krug** said, "until someone could break free from his daily job to get up there and patch things." That had to change.

"We leaned on everyone a few years ago to do the work around here. And people came through. But we are a little slower now, older, busier elsewhere maybe."

Tom and Joyce believe that what this church has done to turn this facility around is amazing, "We all did a great deal and we earned a lot of people's gratitude," Tom said. "But we don't have to do it all anymore. Hiring handymen, electricians, concrete specialists and roofers just makes good sense.

Church members seem to realize this now. More and more people have continued to make regular commitments to the building and maintenance funds, so this kind of professional work is now fiscally possible.



Cynthia's CORNER

CYNTHIA ALLEN IS 9

AS YOU ALL KNOW, ST. AUGUSTINE'S 80TH BIRTHDAY IS COMING UP. WHAT BETTER WAY TO CELEBRATE IT THAN SEEING WHAT 80 YEAR OLDS ARE REALLY LIKE?

I THINK THAT PEOPLE 80 AND OLDER DON'T USUALLY HAVE MUCH MOBILITY.

BUT ST. A'S HAS A LOT OF MOBILITY. WE HAVE PEOPLE COMING IN FROM ALL OVER, SOME ALMOST FROM OUT OF THE STATE. NO MATTER HOW OLD OUR CHURCH IS, WE'LL STILL HAVE A LITTLE KICK.

WE HAVE PEOPLE VISITING FROM NEAR AND FAR, AND THEY'RE STILL VISITING TO THIS VERY DAY.

SO NO MATTER HOW OLD YOU ARE, AT LEAST YOU CAN DO SOME THINGS.

Friday Lewis' Mom, Laura Clowers, Is 100!

Not ninety-eight or ninety-nine, mind you. She's already done those; but one hundred years old on August 17th.

Laura Clowers was born in Jones County, Georgia, in "nineteen aught seven" to a family that eventually had seven children – all of whom she has out-lived. Most of her life was spent in Macon, GA where Laura is respectfully known as "mother of the church," meaning the Church of God in Christ.

Two years ago, she moved to St. Petersburg to live with **Lewis** and **Mary Clowers**. "She didn't come willingly or easily," remembered Mary. "But maybe it's her independence and stubbornness that's kept her alive all these years."

RETRACTION. Last week a Men's Club report here attributed to **Lewis Clowers** an opinion on club fund raising. Lewis called to say that my notes from that meeting were not correct: he certainly does support a Men's Bible Study, but not in lieu of ongo-ing club fund raisers. We regret the error. *Tom Krug.*

Lewis e-mailed President Bush six weeks ago asking him to send Laura a centennial birthday greeting from the White House. "They do that, you know," he says as he tries to stay optimistic that it will arrive on the appointed day.

Of course, there will be a birthday party. Laura's well-loved church will host it on Saturday, August 25th. People are coming from all around but the only family members present will be her son, **Lewis, Deborah Flanagan**, her granddaughter and **Aliya Flanagan**, her great granddaughter, plus nieces and nephews. "That's what happens when you live to be a hundred," explained Mary. "Every one else is dead."

You may send your birthday greetings to: **Laura Clowers, 2690 Mikol Terrace South, St. Petersburg, 33712.** Be sure to get them to her by this Friday – she's been waiting a hundred years!

This weekly newsletter is about recognition and nixing hearsay, about candor, spiritual attitude and, yes, unashamed cheer leading. Members Judy and Tom Krug are the project's co-editors. Some 65 parishioners are essential to the effort. We think of this publication as the first draft of our congregation's recent history. Issues are available each Sunday after the church service and also online at www.staugstpete.org, our web site for church-shoppers.