

# OCCJ

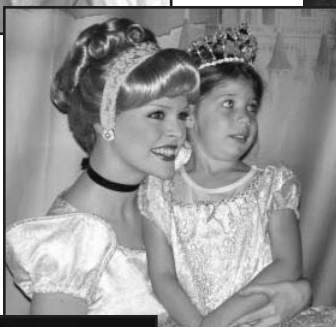
Orthodox Christian JOURNAL®

FALL 2008 volume 81 number 3

The official publication of the Fellowship of Orthodox Christians in America



## The FOCA Goes to Disney World for its 82nd National Convention



**Polly Walker Elected the 40th National President**

**Metropolitan Jonah  
New FOCA Spiritual Leader**

# CONTENTS

**OCJ**

Orthodox Christian JOURNAL<sup>o</sup>

FALL 2008

VOLUME 81 NUMBER 3

## FEATURE STORIES

- 5 Reflections on My OCMC Mission Trip to Alaska
- 7 St. Andrew's Orthodox Camp
- 8 Presenting the 2008 FOCA National Scholarship Winners

## COVER STORIES

- 10 82nd National FOCA Convention
- 13 82nd National FOCA Convention Photo Album
- 15 Calendar

## SPORTS CORNER

- 16 2008 National Junior Summer Sports Tourney Photo Album
- 17 2008 National Junior Summer Sports Tourney
- 18 Join Us For A Din-O-Mite Time Bowling in Din-O-Nine
  
- 18 Polly Walker, Our New National FOCA President
- 19 72nd Annual Novogodny Ball
- 19 St. Tikhon's Housing Project
- 20 Transitions
  
- 21 Kidz Corner: St. Maria Skobtsova
- 23 A Creative Arts Rally

## DEPARTMENTS

- 3 **President's Commentary**
- 4 **Editor's Notes**
- 4 **F.O.C.A. Highlights and News-In-Brief**  
Central Pa District Holds 78th Annual District Convention
- 4 Letter to Editor

**Back Cover:** 15th Annual OCA Christmas Stocking Project

**Visit Our Website:** [www.orthodoxfellowship.org](http://www.orthodoxfellowship.org)

### United States Postal Service Statement of Ownership, Management and Circulation

1. Publication Title: Orthodox Christian Journal 2. Publication No. 1524-7562 3. Filing date: 10/15/08 4. Issue frequency: 4 times per year 5. Number of issues published annually: 4 6. Annual Subscription Price: \$12 7. Complete Mailing Address of Known Office of Publication: 10 Downs Drive, Plains Twp., Luzerne Co, Wilkes-Barre, PA 18705-3899 Contact person: Sandra Kapelan, National Administrative Secretary; Phone: 570.825.3158. 8. Complete Mailing Address of Headquarters of General Business Office of Publisher: same as No. 7 above. 9. Full Names and Complete Mailing Addresses of Publisher, Editor & Managing Editor. Publisher: Fellowship of Orthodox Christians in America, Inc., address at No. 7. Editor: Nicholas D. Ressetar, 1510 Green Street, Harrisburg, PA 17102-2511. Managing Editor: Michael Schultz, 226 RIDC Park West Drive, Pittsburgh, PA 15275; Owner. Full Name: Fellowship of Orthodox Christians in America, Inc. Complete Mailing Address: same as No. 7 above. 11. Known Bondholders, Mortgagees, and Other Security Holders etc.: None. 12. Tax Status: The purpose, function and nonprofit status of this organization and the tax exempt status for federal income tax purposes has not changed during preceding 12 months. 13. Publication Title: Orthodox Christian Journal. 14. Issue Date for Circulation Below: Summer 2008 (August). 15. Extent and Nature of Circulation. Average No. Copies Each Issue During Preceding 12 months. a. Total Number of Copies: 1500. b. (1) Paid/Requested Outside-County Mail Subscriptions: 1423. (2) Paid In-County Subscriptions Stated on Form 3541: 0. (3) Sales thru Dealers, & Carriers, Street Vendors, Counter Sales & Other non-USPS Paid Distribution: 0. (4) Other Classes Mailed thru the USPS: 0. c. Total Paid and/or Requested Circulation: 1423. d. Free distribution by mail: (1) Outside-County as Stated on Form 3541: 0. (2) In-County as Stated on Form 3541: 0. (3) Other Classes Mailed thru USPS: 0. e. Free distribution outside the mail: 25. f. Total free distribution: 25. g. Total Distribution: 1448. h. Copies not distributed: 52. i. Total: 1500. j. Percent paid and/or requested Circulation: 98.27%. No. Copies of Single Issue Published Nearest to Filing Date: same as above. 16. Publication of Statement of Ownership. Publication required. Will be printed in the Fall 2008 issue of this publication. 17. Signature and Title of Editor, Publisher, Business Manager or Owner: /s/ Nicholas D. Ressetar, Editor. Date: 10/15/08.

## NATIONAL EXECUTIVE BOARD

SPIRITUAL ADVISOR

V. Rev. William Evansky

158 Pilgrim Drive, Sewickley, PA 15143  
HM: (412) 741-5008, frbill158@verizon.net

PRESIDENT

Polly Walker

8926 Pine Bluff Court, Eden Prairie, MN 55347  
(612) 384-6440, email: paw1776@aol.com

VICE PRESIDENT

Robert Steffaro

2212 Creekside Circle S, Irving, TX 75063  
Res - (972) 869-0149, Cell - (832) 483-1035  
email: pacergolf@aol.com

RECORDING SECRETARY

Becky Tesar

8205 Ivandale Drive, Parma, OH 44129  
Res - (440) 884-6662, Cell - (216) 978-8593  
email: rjtesar@sherwin.com

TREASURER

Michael Bowan

2100 Lincoln Park West, #9ES, Chicago, IL 60614-4713  
(773) 975-0160, e-mail: mickeybowan@mindspring.com

IMM. PAST PRESIDENT

Michael Steffaro

38 Beryl Street, South River, NJ 08882  
(732) 698-1952, email: michael.steffaro@sci-us.com

NATIONAL ADMINISTRATIVE SECRETARY

Sandy Kapelan

Fellowship of Orthodox Christians in America

10 Downs Drive (Plains), Wilkes-Barre, PA 18705

Phone: (570) 825-3158 Fax: (570) 825-0136

Office E-Mail: orthodoxfellowship@yahoo.com

website: www.orthodoxfellowship.org

To receive membership information contact  
the administrative office of the  
Fellowship of Orthodox Christians in America.  
CALL: (570) 825-3158

**OCJ**

Orthodox Christian JOURNAL<sup>o</sup>

is the official publication of the

Fellowship of Orthodox Christians in America

Send all articles, photos and information to:

**Nicholas Ressetar, Editor**

**1510 Green Street Harrisburg, PA 17102-2511**

E-Mail: [tsarnick3@aol.com](mailto:tsarnick3@aol.com)

EDITOR	Nicholas D. Ressetar
MANAGING EDITOR	Michael Schultz
LAYOUT EDITOR	Michael Schultz
SPORTS EDITOR	Kenneth Baron
COMMUNITY LIFE	Betty Slanta
PHOTOGRAPHER	Leon Sheean

**BUSINESS DEPARTMENT**

Business/Advertising Manager

Maurice Garman

528 Sycamore Drive

Campbell, Ohio 44405

*Please do not send one-of-a-kind photos to the OCJ,  
send a copy. Returned photos are not guaranteed!*

The mission of the  
Orthodox Christian JOURNAL is to  
educate the membership of the Fellowship of  
Orthodox Christians in America,  
to showcase the talents of its membership  
and, in so doing, to propagate the  
Holy Orthodox Christian Faith.

**Mission Statement of the Fellowship of Orthodox Christians in America**

The Fellowship of Orthodox Christians in America is a national organization of Orthodox Christians. ***Our mission is to proclaim, share and reveal our Orthodox Christian Faith through service, fellowship and example.*** We accomplish this by:

- studying the tenets of our Faith
- supporting, encouraging and promoting Orthodox Youth ministries
- supporting, encouraging and promoting the missionary growth of our church
- encouraging and promoting unity among all Orthodox jurisdictions
- establishing practical means for Orthodox Christians to form enduring friendships on local and national levels through networking
- providing educational, cultural, social and athletic activities for the people of our Orthodox Faith.

**Orthodox Christian JOURNAL** (ISSN 15247562), is published four times a year [Spring, Summer, Fall, Winter] by the Fellowship of Orthodox Christians in America, 10 Downs Drive, Wilkes-Barre, PA 18705-3899.

**District & Chapter News:** All copy must be typed and sent to the Editorial Office.

**Subscription Prices:** Single Copy, \$3.00 in North and South America; \$12.00 per year, \$20.00 for two years, in US and Possessions, \$14.00 per year in all other countries & Canada. **Orthodox Christian JOURNAL**© copyrighted 2008 by the Fellowship of Orthodox Christians in America. Reproduction in whole or part prohibited except by permission. All rights reserved. Title and ® trademark registered US Patent Office.

**PERIODICAL POSTAGE** paid at Wilkes-Barre, PA and additional mailing office.

**POSTMASTER: If undeliverable please send form 3579 to the Orthodox Christian JOURNAL at 10 Downs Drive, Plains Twp., Wilkes-Barre, PA 18705-3899.**

Printed in the United States by  
Sir Speedy Printing

226 RIDC Park West Drive, Pittsburgh, PA 15275

## PRESIDENT'S COMMENTARY

**Polly Walker**

*40<sup>th</sup> National FOCA President*

Greetings!

Since returning home from the National Convention in Orlando, FL our entire board has been very busy with several projects, finalizing department appointments and preparing our goals for the upcoming year. We have a new board that is very involved, not only in the FOCA but other areas of church life as well, and is extremely dedicated to the organization.

We remain 100% committed to the Married Student Housing Project at St. Tikhon's Seminary that is chaired under the capable leadership of Past President Michael Steffaro. There have been several conference calls with the project team and I

anticipate that our marketing materials will be distributed to parishes nationwide very shortly. We need every member's help with this project to make it a resounding success, not only financially but in spreading the word to others.

The Strategic Planning Committee has begun its work and an outline is already prepared. The future of our organization will be a major topic at our Winter Executive Board Meeting in November. Attendance at the various District conventions has been down this year and one of the areas we will be discussing is the current structure of the organization. Perhaps what has worked so well in the past is out of date and we may need to embrace new ideas.

I am pleased to announce that Fr. Michael Anderson, formerly Youth Director of the OCA, has accepted a position as advisor to the Youth Department. We all know of his wonderful talents in creating successful programs for our youth and young adults in the OCA and we are optimistic that he, along with the energizing chairs of our Youth Department, Dcn. Benjamin Tucci and Marge Kovach will be able to expand our youth and young adult programs to even more parishes across the country and instill in our young members a passion for our organization and the good works that we do along with emphasizing the fellowship with other Orthodox Christians.

I would like to also thank the committee of the Orlando Convention, especially those other members that stepped forward to help out our chairs, Neena Malinich and Lara Mangiarelli, for a magical time at DisneyWorld!

May you and your families have a blessed Christmas and may the New Year bring you health, peace and prosperity and a revitalized effort to our organization so that we may once again grow in numbers, continue to do good works for our beloved Church and most importantly share in Fellowship with one another!



### **2009 Articles Deadlines for the OCJ:**

**Winter due December 15th**

*Send all material to our Editor:*

**Nicholas Ressetar**

**1510 Green Street Harrisburg, PA 17102-2511**

**Phone: 717-761-2121**

WORD attachment articles work best within an E-mail:  
**tsarnick3@aol.com**

*Please do not send one-of-a-kind photos to the OCJ, send a copy. Returned photos are not guaranteed!*



## EDITOR'S NOTES

**Nicholas D. Ressetar**

Editor, *Orthodox Christian JOURNAL*

Hello and welcome to this special national convention issue of your *Orthodox Christian Journal*! As always, our fall edition features coverage of the Fellowship's big event of the year "the 82nd at the Contemporary Resort at Disney World in Orlando, FL" the convention sessions, social events, liturgical services and more are here. Yes, Mickey Mouse and Cinderella made appearances on site and we have their photos as well as many of you with them. Thanks to Leon Sheean and Father Andrew Jarmus for the pics and a great job on the convention Lara, Neena, Faith and all those who helped out!

We highlight our newly elected Madame President Polly Walker with her impressive bio and message, and offer her our congratulations and know that she will serve us well as the 40th national president and the 4th woman to serve in that capacity. One of Michael Steffaro's last acts as president was to announce this year's national scholarship winners, and we're proud to present their photos and activities. Congrats and keep up the good work! Ron Osedach, president of the new Jacksonville chapter, fills us in on his OCMC trip to Alaska. And in youth, Deacon Benjamin Tucci and Laura Johnson report on the 2008 national junior summer sports tourney held at Ohio's St. Vladimir's Camp and Sonia Kraftician writes about St. Andrew's Camp in upstate New York.

Kidz Corner has a two-page story on the spiritually-uplifting life and death of St. Maria Skobtsova of Paris taken from the OCA Department of Christian Education's new downloadable activity book entitled "Saints in Times of Trouble" available at oca.org. Please save this article because our next issue will have a follow-up crossword puzzle. Youth are invited to participate in a creative arts rally next May in Minneapolis during the b-ball tournament B see the flyer on the inside back cover. And remember to support the 15th Christmas stocking project.

On a personal note, I want to thank Metropolitan Herman for all that he has done for the FOCA/FROC throughout his long and dedicated ministry. He truly has been a "life" member and his presence in our Fellowship will be missed more than many appreciate. Have a blessed Christmas season and we'll return next year. Till then ..... enjoy the Fellowship you find on these pages!

---

### LETTER TO EDITOR

2 September 2008

Dear Michael Steffaro and the Fellowship of Orthodox Christians in America,

Christ is in our midst! Thank you for your kind and generous gifts to the Orthodox service members. Father Eugene deploys next week and will begin distributing the packets of religious items to the troops, especially those serving overseas. May our Lord and Savior bless each and every F.O.C.A. member with good health and many years! Thank you for your continued service and prayers. With love in Christ, Father Eugene and Toni.

## F.O.C.A. HIGHLIGHTS AND NEWS-IN-BRIEF

### CENTRAL PA DISTRICT HOLDS 78TH ANNUAL DISTRICT CONVENTION

Members of the Fellowship's Central Pennsylvania District gathered for their district convention in Bethlehem, PA on October 25, 2008. Hosted by the St. Nicholas "O" Club, the convention was warmly welcomed by Father Dimitri Oselinsky who together with his Matushka, were also delegates. Also a delegate was Matushka Frances Vansuch, wife of the late National Spiritual Advisor Father Eugene Vansuch. Spiritual Advisor Father Daniel Ressetar led the opening prayer and Governor Gary Lelo distributed the report booklet and presided over the sessions.

After an extended discussion, delegates unanimously adopted the following resolution: "That the FOCA re-evaluate the official affiliation with the Orthodox Church in America for the purpose of bringing Orthodox Christians from other jurisdictions back into the FOCA" in order to increase membership and grow the organization. Also, the American "O" Club of St. Clair and the SS. Peter & Paul "R" Club of Minersville announced their intention to merge with a new name to be decided. Receiving the Matushka Anne Prislopsky scholarship of \$1,000 was Laura Hadginske of the Harrisburg "O" Club and Cassandra Rogers of the Minersville chapter won the district scholarship of \$1,000. Donations were made to the Christmas stocking project, the St. Nicholas seminary fund and the Guatemala orphanage. Elected as officers were Gov. Gary Lelo, Lt. Gov. John Dotsey, Treasurer Lisa Pascuzzo, Secretary Nicholas Ressetar, nominating committee Matushka Valeria Hatrak (2-year) and Jean Semanco (1-year).

Following sessions Father Dan led the installation of officers ceremony in the church assisted by Father Dimitri. Prayers were also offered for Past National President Michael Dorosh, who underwent open-heart surgery the day before (just after finishing the convention program book). Members then departed for their homes.

## Reflections on My OCMC Mission Trip to Alaska

By: Ron Osedach

Glory to God!

I was recently blessed to be on an OCMC mission trip to Kodiak, Alaska. The mission consisted of two teams; one to provide love and support for youth at Ouzinkie, Alaska (about a 30 minute boat ride north of Kodiak on Spruce Island); the second team to provide love and support for youth at Old Harbor, Alaska (about 70 miles south of Kodiak on Kodiak Island). For the first few days, both teams were housed at St Herman's Seminary on Kodiak, where our gracious host, Fr. Innocent Dresdow, rector at Holy Resurrection Cathedral near the seminary provided all logistical and spiritual resources necessary for the two camps.

I can say that I was immediately impressed with the friendliness and hospitality that the Alaskan people extended to us during our two week trip. Because of the dangerous nature of their fishing livelihood and oftentimes harsh weather conditions, dependency on one another is deeply ingrained in their culture. Because of the seeds of Orthodoxy that were planted by St. Herman in 1794, respect and love for each other is ingrained in their culture to an even higher degree. It was heartening to see the church filled with local Orthodox, both young and old, during the many services that were held while we were there.

The camp I was at in Ouzinkie consisted of about 20 youth from both Kodiak and Ouzinkie. Because there is a church and priest in both Kodiak and, more recently, Ouzinkie (Fr Ivan), the youth in these areas are exposed to Orthodoxy more consistently than those of Old Harbor. The history of Orthodoxy in Old Harbor is, unfortunately, more disconnected. While there has been an Orthodox Church there for many years (Three Saints Orthodox Church), a priest has not always been available. Currently there is no Orthodox priest to provide for their spiritual growth and education. Consequently, their exposure to Orthodoxy has been somewhat sporadic.

It was intended that each mission team give lessons on the Sacraments, in addition to providing arts and crafts activities (i.e.: making prayer ropes, prosphora, and bead crosses) and outdoor games. Lessons on the Sacraments were successfully presented at the Ouzinkie camp, but because of the lack of consistent religious training of the youth at Old Harbor, that mission team decided to teach them "Our Father" instead. By the end of the six-day camp at Ouzinkie, many of the youth that were originally skeptical about attending had become completely engrossed in the activities and spirit of the camp. Based on the emotions displayed by the

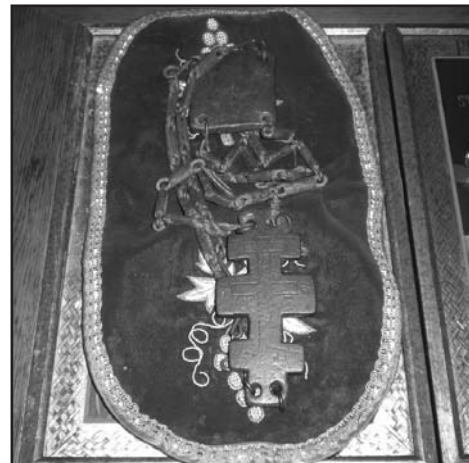
youth on the last day of camp, I would say that they definitely felt loved and supported. Based on the emotions I experienced on the last day of camp, I feel I had been blessed more than the youth I went there to love and support.

After camp, we returned to St. Herman's Seminary and had four days to continue to experience Alaska, and to see Orthodoxy in practice on a day to day basis. The highlight of this experience was a pilgrimage to St Herman's grave on Spruce Island to celebrate Divine Liturgy and venerate the holy sites there, and attending a Hierarchical Liturgy with Metropolitan Herman at Holy Resurrection Cathedral, Kodiak. At that service I was able to tearfully venerate St. Herman's (open) relics there, the very cross he used to bless his parishioners with, and the heavy set of chains and cross he wore in secret around his shoulders for many years under his monastic cassock.

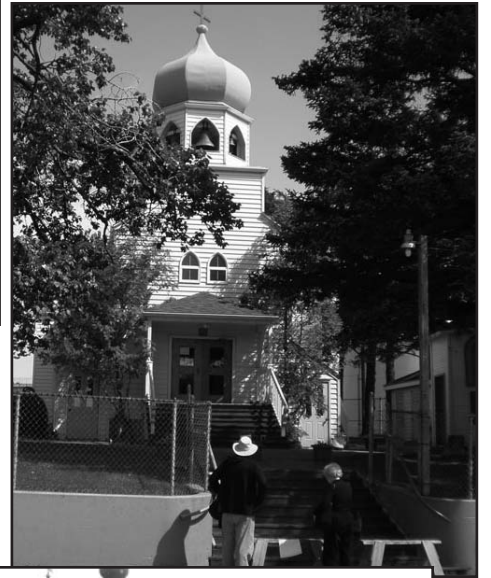
It was quite obvious to me that the emotions I felt while visiting these loving people was due to the Orthodoxy being lived by them on a daily basis. I feel sad when I think of all Alaskan people still out of reach of the wonderful gift of Orthodoxy God has given us. Where Orthodoxy was not as prevalent I could see signs that the wonderful Alaskan culture was being tested by outside influences, such as the Internet and TV. Then, as if to offset that sadness, I was enlightened seeing an elderly lady, obviously in her 90's, reverently sitting in a chair in a back corner of Holy Resurrection Cathedral, singing shaky off-key responses to the Akathist service to St. Herman. That is one of the more beautiful memories I have. It is just that purity of devotion to her faith that I could see in the Alaskan people I met. May God preserve it!

I recommend a visit to Alaska wholeheartedly, be it a mission trip sponsored by OCMC or just a vacation to this cradle of Orthodoxy. It is difficult for me to put into words emotions written on my heart when I was there. However, I do know that for them to have the opportunity to show you their hospitality, and commune with you in the spirit of Orthodoxy would be a wonderful thing for you all ("Where two or three are gathered in My Name there I shall be also").

My prayer for the Alaskan people is that God continues to sprinkle the seeds of Orthodoxy in those areas where none exist, and that their culture survives the tests of outside influences. It is too precious to lose. Please join me in this prayer, and for missionaries everywhere!  
Glory to God!







# St. Andrew's Orthodox Camp

by Sonia Kraftician



Glory to Jesus Christ! Glory Forever!

St. Andrew's Orthodox Camp is located in upstate New York on the shore of beautiful Oneida Lake, about fifty miles southeast of Lake Ontario and twenty miles northwest of Syracuse. At the request of the camp's executive director Daria York, my husband Bill Kraftician and I spent a week there this past July helping out with various activities. It was my first camp experience ever but Bill is an alumnus of St. Andrew's, having worked as counselor and art director in past years.

For me it was a combination of fun and work. I spent a good part of two weeks preparing material to teach a religion education class. I decided to present the Beatitudes, a subject I felt needed some study, given the fact that it's sung at all Liturgical services. Little did I know that I would be teaching in the "little house on the prairie," a one room school house with students ranging from seven to seventeen in addition to a couple of older camp counselors. And, from time to time the kitchen chef and the camp groundskeeper would stop in, hoping to catch up on some aspect of Orthodox teaching. Given this situation, I was surprised and pleased at the attentiveness and intellectual curiosity of the students. In retrospect, it would appear that the subject offered some part of itself to everyone, regardless of age.

Bill, on the other hand, came armed with all the equipment necessary for a full week of arts and crafts, Ikon making, slide presentations and liturgical music for choir rehearsals. Not to mention extra supplies in case of rain. When we left home, our car was so laden with materials plus personal gear that the rear-end barely missed scraping the road.

Like Heathcliff in "Wuthering Heights," we arrived in the dark of night in the midst of a raging rain storm. There was no electricity in our building. We lit candles, dried ourselves out and settled down for the night. The next morning with the sun everything was bright and renewed. The camp air is fresh and clean, the grounds are spacious and well maintained. The entire camp is surrounded by a forest of tall, mature trees. It's truly a beautiful and healthy setting and an ideal location for a children's camp.



Every morning and evening the church bell rang summoning the campers to prayer services. John Kozak, would remove his activities director hat and don his Readers hat. Under John's direction, the campers took part in the readings and under Bill's direction, participated in the choir. On Saturday, Fr. Nicholas and Mat. Larissa Finley drove up from Farmington, Connecticut. Fr. Nicholas served evening vespers and Divine Liturgy Sunday morning. During the Liturgy we were treated to a memorable moment when two girls from Poland sang "The Cherubim Hymn." Their harmonies were nothing less than exquisite. Bill said they didn't require much coaching with the music, just a little assistance with the text.

How was the food? Given the abundance of farms in the area and chef Natasha Rogozensky, who was intent on making sure that the campers had wholesome, nourishing and appetizing meals, we all looked forward to mealtime. Every meal was a treat of home-made gourmet dishes. We owe Natasha a vote of thanks for all her hard work and dedication to making mealtime a delightful experience. And from what we could see, the campers ate all their vegetables and kept the fruit bowl empty, needing constant refilling. Natasha made doubly sure every child ate all their meals plus as much extra as they wanted. Just like mom!

At this time we're contemplating another summer at St. Andrew's Orthodox Camp. Perhaps next year we'll stay a bit longer. The camp is open for a full six weeks. From our perspective, we understand the need for such a venue, where this may be the one and only opportunity given to some of our children who have had minimal exposure to the Orthodox church and Orthodox church schooling. Additionally, not every church offers church school, making the religious education and the Orthodox environment offered at this camp especially important. And just to mention, returning campers (and instructors like us), have the double pleasure of meeting old friends and, of course, making new friends, friendships that may perhaps last a lifetime.



For more information on St. Andrew's Camp, please contact Daria York at [saintandrewscamp@aol.com](mailto:saintandrewscamp@aol.com).

I'm sure she would be delighted to hear from you and from what I understand, there's always a need for counselors.





# Presenting the 2008 FOCA National Scholarship Winners

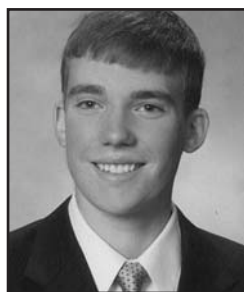
At the recent 82nd convention in Orlando, President Michael Steffaro announced the winners of this year's national FOCA scholarships. The Fred Lewis was awarded to the top overall point applicant (\$1,000), seven Fekula scholarships were presented (\$1,000 each), and there were two Klimkosky scholarships awarded (\$500 each). No Mischa Michaelson seminarian scholarship was awarded because no seminarian applied. Congratulations to the winners and to all who applied! Parents and grandparents are urged to have their children apply and to spend more time and effort on the applications.



## **David Lecko:** **the Fred Lewis Scholarship**

The highest point total was achieved by David Lecko of Madison, IL, a member of the Nativity of the Virgin Mary Church and its chapter #171-J. He is now a freshman majoring in computer science and electrical engineering. For five years he was the head altar server at his parish and was also a reader and dance group performer. David also established the church library and built its computer network, and was the Junior chapter president for five years. In high school, he was in the marching, symphonic and jazz bands and was drumline captain. David was an Eagle Scout and received the Alpha Omega award, and he was involved in many community service projects, including "scouting for food" and tutoring.

## **The Klimkosky Scholarships**



## **Gregory Fedorchak**

Gregory, of Endicott, NY, is currently a sophomore majoring in engineering. His church activities at SS. Peter & Paul Church included altar server, Sunday school student, teaching assistant/substitute, and Junior "R" Club member of #43-J. Gregory also participated in the Orthodox basketball league, performed in church yolkas and other youth activities such as the annual Mets game/picnic, hockey games, pizza parties and movie nights. His Junior activities involved chapter breakfasts, bowling tournaments, writing holiday cards, putting together Easter baskets for shut-ins, and dying Easter eggs and making pussy willow/flower pins. During his freshman year, Gregory participated in the young entrepreneur club and the leadership engagement program.



## **Alexandra Oleynik**

From Canonsburg, PA and a member of St. John's Church and its chapter #109-J, Alexandra is a freshman majoring in communications. She is a reader, sings in the parish choir, participates in the diocesan family day and has attended three All-American councils and initiated the secret prayer pal project during great lent. Alexandra served as Junior "O" Club president and secretary, and attended five national basketball tourneys (all-star in 2002) as well as church camp and Junior Olympics. She also received a news award from a video teachers festival, was a member of the homecoming court, a citizen of the month, and played varsity lacrosse (WPIAL champions and all-state player) and field hockey. And Alexandra was a librarian's/teacher's aide, children's hospital winter carnival volunteer and Red Cross certified babysitter.



## **Kimberly DeFrancesco**

Kimberly is a member of #30-J, Passaic, NJ, and a freshman majoring in nursing. Her church activities included helping serve food at breakfasts and with giving gifts at the Chinese auction. She served as president, vice president and treasurer of the Junior chapter. Active in athletics, Kimberly played varsity softball, basketball and soccer and was vice president of the biology club, group leader of the heroes and cool kids, member of the national honor society, and a peer tutor. She also volunteered at a New Jersey food bank.



## **Sarah Kochan**

A member of St. Nicholas Church and its chapter #20/32, Mogadore/Akron, OH, Sarah is a junior majoring in vocal music education. She has served as district Lt. governor and secretary as well as chapter treasurer, and participated in meetings, retreats and soup lunches. Her church activities included reader, choir member, children's choir director, camp counselor, youth dancer, two or more college group, and Real Break participant. In college, Sarah is a member of Sigma Alpha Iota service fraternity (and participates in its service projects), the choral union, opera production, Ohio Collegiate Music Educator's Association, American Choral Directors Association and the Organization of America Kodaly Educators.





**Anna Kasperowitz**

Anna, a member of Holy Trinity Church and chapter #222-J, Randolph, NJ, is now a freshman majoring in history and secondary education. In her parish she has been a member of the choir, assistant church school teacher, and church school student. Anna was vice president and treasurer of her Junior chapter and participated in the Xmas stocking project, Super Bowl gyro sales, lenten retreats, Thanksgiving Day baskets and youth day, and served meals, bundled palms and cleaned the church kitchen; she also attended district and national conventions. Anna was in varsity fencing (A strip), national history and book clubs, color guard and honor academic programs. And she was active in Girl Scouts (Alpha Omega, gold and silver awards), tended a food pantry, renovated a teen center, created a mural for veterans on Memorial Day and a pamphlet for young teen girls on interesting books (which was displayed at the local library), and created/performed a play for kids.



**Stephen Gaydos**

A member of the Cleveland "R" Club, #4/6, and St. Michael's Church, Stephen is currently a freshman majoring in engineering. He graduated from church school, served as an altar boy, was a member of the pre-teen club and served food at the annual yolka. Stephen was president of the Junior "R" Club, a member of its bantam boys and Junior boys basketball teams, winning two championships, and participated in their Halloween brunch (Xmas stocking project), the poor man's reverse raffle and cleaned the church at Pascha. He played high school football and baseball, and his baseball team won the state championship in 2006. Stephen was also in the national honors society, a scholar athlete, the German club, a DARE role model and marched in the 2006 Macy's Thanksgiving Day parade. In community service, he made lemonade for the city's rib burn off and managed tents for the chamber of commerce's homecoming days.



**Scott Cahayla**

Scott, a junior majoring in pharmacy, is a member of chapter #66, Passaic, NJ. His parish activities included altar boy, church yolkas and Sunday school. As a Junior he played in the national basketball tourneys for six years as well as bowling tournaments. Scott is on the college golf team and in high school was the varsity golf captain and also played varsity basketball. He was in the national honor society, the

Spanish honor society, the model congress and on the yearbook staff. Scott volunteered in the Philadelphia tree planting and helped the blind play golf at a local school.

**The Klimkosky Scholarships**



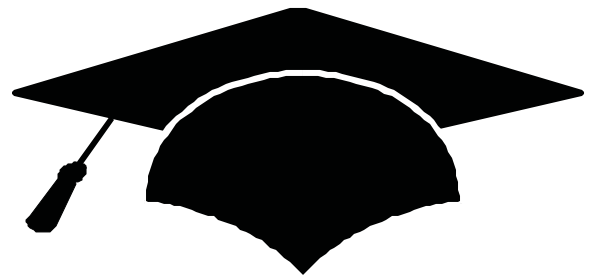
**Laura Hadginske**

A member of Christ the Saviour Church, Harrisburg, PA and its "O" Club, #199, Laura is now a sophomore at Loyola U. in Baltimore majoring in speech-language pathology. She sings soprano in the parish choir and was secretary of the Junior "O" Club, assisted with bake sales and yard sales, and participated in a bowling trip and a lock-in. In college Laura is in the chorale and work study, and volunteers for the care-a-van (making sandwiches for the hungry) and beans & bread, assisting with a meal program. High school activities included the band, chorus, the national honor society, the French honor society, Tri-M music honor society and Project Harmony. And she volunteered with the local library and York Little Theater, and was a member of the youth advisory board of the county United Way.



**Natasha Exler**

Natasha belongs to Holy Ghost Church in Ambridge, PA and its chapter #5-J. In college she is a psychology freshman. Her parish activities included lay ministries, church school, the Christmas yolkas and she assists at coffee hour. Natasha has been president, secretary and treasurer of the Junior chapter, and has assisted at grave watches, decorating the church at Christmas, and participating in various fundraisers. Her volunteerism includes membership in SADD and an office runner. She has also made Christmas gifts for shut-ins.



## 82ND NATIONAL FOCA CONVENTION DISNEY'S CONTEMPORARY RESORT, ORLANDO, FL AUGUST 28 - SEPTEMBER 1, 2008

Sponsored by the Longwood "O" Club, Chapter #251, the Fellowship's 82nd annual convention – with the theme "Don't Be Late in 2008" – convened at Disney's Contemporary Resort over the extended Labor Day weekend, just steps from the Magic Kingdom. Hundreds attended based on rooms booked and amusement park tickets sold. It was a convention big on fun, kids and fellowship.

On Thursday evening, August 28th, members and friends gathered for the "It's a Small World" welcoming reception. Father Jason Vansuch led a Disney-oriented trivia contest and prizes were awarded. And then "Mickey Mouse" himself appeared, much to the delight of the conventioners who got autographs and posed for photos.

### FRIDAY, AUGUST 29TH: BEHEADING OF ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST

The convention's first day began with an early morning celebration of the Divine Liturgy by National FOCA Spiritual Advisor Father William Evansky and OCA Communications Director Father Andrew Jarmus on the feast day of the Beheading of St. John the Baptist. Michael Stenko directed the choir as he would the entire weekend. Perhaps 85 attended. Father Bill preached on the existence of evil in this world, as exemplified by those who beheaded St. John. "Why commemorate such an evil event," he asked, "when we want Pascha every day?" God strengthens us by the difficult times. "What if just one person stood up to Herod and told him to do the right thing?" He concluded by saying that it was a beautiful thing to start our convention with the celebration of the Divine Liturgy. Special memorial prayers were then offered for the departed Father Eugene Vansuch, past national spiritual advisor, and condolences were extended to Matushka Frances Vansuch, his wife, who was present. Father Bill said: "We know that Father Eugene stands with us today in the Church Triumphant. I was remembered of him when I opened all the suitcases containing the liturgical items for the convention. He was a great help to me as national spiritual advisor, we all looked forward to his participation in the conventions, and he will be missed." Memory eternal was intoned.

The first plenary sessions followed. The processional was led by Ted Gregory bearing the American flag, Harold Krivell with the St. Andrew's icon, Andrew Zelinsky of Campbell with the All Saints icon and consisted of the national board of trustees and past national presidents. Father Evansky led a brief prayer service. The national and FOCA anthems were sung, and National President Michael Steffaro called to order the 82nd national convention at 9:30 a.m. Immediate Past President Dr. John Schultz was appointed acting secretary (in the absence of National Secretary Kathy Lazor, who was excused) and read the roll call. Lara Mangiarelli extended her welcome on behalf of the host chapter, the Longwood "O" Club. She especially thanked those who helped their small chapter on the convention committee, including Bill & Joan Dupkanick (tickets), Taisia Zupancic and family of Canonsburg (registration), Becky Tesar (program book), and Marge Kovach & Lissa Molchan (junior activities). CP&O Director Carol Deerson gave several announcements. And a welcome was given to the clergy present: Father Andrew Jarmus, Father Theodore Boback, Past National Spiritual Advisors Fathers John Steffaro and Daniel Ressetar, and Father Jason Vansuch, as

well as to Past National Presidents Andrew Cvercko and Joseph Baldowski.

President Steffaro asked delegates to review the 82-page report book and entertained questions and updates. Upper New York State Governor Faith Malinich pointed out that the Syracuse chapter is active again. Treasurer Michael Bowan distributed updated financial reports and commented on the national administrative building in Wilkes-Barre and the illness of National Administrative Secretary Sandy Kapelan. *Journal* Editor Nick Ressetar said that the summer issue was emailed last Friday and will be in the mail soon, and thanked Father Jarmus for promptly posting it on the OCA website. Recommendations were then assigned to two breakout sessions: finance led by Mr. Bowan and sports/other headed by Robert Steffaro, national sports director. The assembly recessed for the breakout sessions.

Upon reconvening, Ron Osedach, president of the new Jacksonville chapter, stated that all is God's money and how it is used is to benefit those for whom it is intended. He mentioned that he was on a recent OCMC missionary trip and in Kodiak, Alaska there is a St. Innocent Academy for troubled youth led by Father Paissius. We should support charities such as this. Father Boback gave an update on the 2007 Gifts of Love project: 600 kits for Orthodox members of the U.S. armed forces were sent to chaplains – a sample kit was passed around. Over \$11,000 was collected and \$5,200 remains in the account. President Steffaro thanked Father Ted for leading this effort and all those who contributed and helped; a decision will be made in the future on how to disburse the remaining funds but they will go to benefit our men and women in uniform. Vice President Polly Walker announced that next year's "Celebration of Faith" contest will also include an arts rally in conjunction with the national basketball tourney in Minneapolis in May 2009.

Chapter awards were presented by President Steffaro, who welcomed St. Justyn the Martyr "O" Club of Jacksonville, FL, #253, as a new senior chapter and the St. Mark Junior "O" Club of Bethesda, MD, #229-J, as our newest junior chapter. St. Stephen's OCF in Philadelphia had the best numerical gain among senior chapters and the St. Mary Saints in Minneapolis increased the most among juniors. Congratulations! Marge Kovach next presented the preliminary report of the nominating committee and temporary chair Joe Baldowski asked for nominations from the floor. The auditor's report was presented and approved, and there were no proposed amendments to the constitution or by-laws.

Allison Steffaro addressed at length the seminarian assistance project, which has raised well over \$100,000. Father Michael Dahulich, St. Tikhon's Seminary dean, thanked the Fellowship for its support which, for example, helped the child of a seminarian diagnosed with cystic fibrosis by paying travel expenses for treatment in Philadelphia. We have 20 new students this year (4 more but there was no room for them); three-quarters are married, including 2 families with 5 children. Three husbands came to the seminary alone and are living in the dorm, leaving their wives and children at home. One day, one of these men will become a priest and will come to your parish, he said. All of the seminarian assistance funds go directly to the families – nothing to the seminary itself. This is an investment in the future of the Church, and we



must have a future when the problems of the Church are resolved. He stated that we have students on welfare and food stamps, and some children receive state health insurance. "What you do for the seminaries – St. Herman's, St. Vladimir's and St. Tikhon's – you do for the Lord!" President Steffaro thanked Father Michael and noted that he is our greatest ambassador, "talking up" the Fellowship wherever he goes. Sessions adjourned just before 1 p.m. as conventioners were anxious to go to the parks or to the hotel pools. Later that evening, some attended the spectacular "Grand Illuminations" show at Epcot, with fireworks, lasers and music as well as dessert along the lake.

SATURDAY, AUGUST 30<sup>TH</sup>

Sessions opened with the celebration of a Trisagion memorial service by His Grace, Bishop Tikhon, OCA Diocese of Philadelphia and Eastern Pennsylvania, assisted by Father Evansky. Remembered were those Fellowship members who departed this life since last year's convention. Bishop Tikhon then addressed the assembly: "Glory to Jesus Christ! It is a great joy to be with you in this large room of 'the kingdom.' I'm not sure whether this is the kingdom the Lord has prepared for us. But how wonderful it is that in the Church, we have the opportunity to transfigure that which is around us. Here at Disney, where I've been as a child, we can have a certain type of happiness but when we gather, we transform it and become the Body of Christ. The goal of the FOCA is to live the life of Christ and to help the Church grow. I am here on behalf of His Beatitude, Metropolitan Herman who, because of health concerns, is unable to attend. I bring his blessings and ask for your prayers for his successful back surgery. I hope that our prayers will be heard and that he will be healed. [Note: Metropolitan Herman was forced into retirement just a few days later.] I offer my prayers to you. Continue the good work you have been doing for many years in building up the Heavenly Kingdom."

The convention assembly turned to consideration of the actions from the breakout sessions. In finance, delegates approved the following: the 2009 Gifts of Love project for the "Warm the Children" program in Russia or the Hogar Orthodox orphanage in Guatemala, with the national executive board to choose after research (motion in breakout session by Michael Stenko); \$5000 was allocated for five William Fekula scholarships to be awarded in 2010 (motion by Anne Cvercko); the allocations for unearmarked funds for the St. Andrew's appeal (formerly the United Fund) were at 30% Juniors/youth ministries, 35% Fekula scholarships and 35% outreach/seminarians – the housing project was added to the list of earmarked funds (Mary Gulash, #73, moved & Marge Warren, #17, seconded); that we rent the national administrative building with the exception of a room for FOCA archives and the sale of the building be revisited in the future if the benefits of rental diminish (Anne Cvercko moved, Larissa Rusnak seconded). Delegates defeated a proposal to fund the OCA summer youth intern at \$3400 and took no action on a proposal to reduce the yearly number of *Journals* from 4 to 3.

From the sports/other breakout session, the following action was approved: \$5000 allocated from the Sutyak Sports Fund for the national basketball tournament (motion by Karen Nichols); the Junior banquet tickets for the national bowling and summer sports tournaments to be paid by the fund (motion by John Ihnat); the South River "R" Club to sponsor a national soccer tournament, ages 10 and up (Feb. 14-16, 2009) under the national sports department (Rosemary Zemlansky moved, Andrew Zelinsky seconded); "use 2009 as a beta test to migrate to content management system program for the FOCA website" (Father Steffaro moved, Chris Walker seconded); up to \$4000 allocated from the Sutyak

Sports Fund for the national junior summer sports tournament; and up to \$500 in expenses allocated from the fund for the soccer tourney. No action was taken on proposals to keep the bowling and basketball tourneys at least 3 weeks apart or to move the convention banquet to Sunday afternoon after liturgy (discussed with a favorable response).

Treasurer Bowan pointed out that some 24 chapters did not participate in this year's St. Andrew's Fund and asked why? He stated that we must re-dedicate ourselves to our charities as members and chapters. Midwest District Gov. Todd Walker spoke on the need for more scholarship applicants and that better attention be paid to the applications by those applying. President Steffaro then moderated a wide-ranging, spirited discussion on the St. Tikhon's Seminary married student housing project undertaken by the FOCA.

Treasurer Bowan reported that as of now, we have \$130,000 in pledges and have received \$30,000 in monies. Explaining that he holds a monthly telephone conference with the committee, President Steffaro stated that he is "amazed where we are at this point. I see the glass as half full. Only about 45 people have pledged \$130,000. And we have also received funds from a foundation and are seeking others." Father Dahulich told delegates: "I can't tell you how grateful we are at the seminary to Michael and his committee. The students have hope and are also grateful. Despite the climate in the OCA, the Lord is still calling young men to serve His Church. The future of the OCA is to serve the Lord and His people. Thank you!"

Stating that his parish has had a negative reaction to the project, Peter Zelinski asked whether the seminary has ever been audited? Why is the cost of the project so high? How would students be assigned to the buildings? He added that there are "issues of credibility and trust, and that the OCA situation 'clouds' the entire project." In response Father Dahulich asserted that the seminary has been audited for at least the past 5 years and that accreditation requires the audit. That the seminary has not been audited is a "false rumor", and he promised to post the audit on the seminary website. Ted Gregory indicated that he used a cost of \$145 per square foot, which is the highest Northeast price possible. This is to include construction and site work and to account for delays in getting the project started. President Steffaro said that our goal is to get \$300,000 in funds before applying for grants.

Mr. Zelinski again stated that it is "important to get all the information out there." Father Dahulich replied that on the issue of trust, "the FOCA is handling all the money. Every check I get I immediately send to the FOCA treasurer. Not a single check goes to the seminary." Karen Steffaro suggested that an overview of seminary funding might help everyone understand how the seminary operates. Past National President Mike Herzak, a seminary board member, said that the seminary, monastery and bookstore are separate entities. Expressing disappointment that collected funds are not greater by now, he warned that it would be an embarrassment if we do not build at least one building and asked how was the project being promoted? President Steffaro responded that so far, promotion has mostly been within the FOCA through a direct-mailing of the brochure, in the *Journal* and on the website; he hopes to now go national through the TOC and will contact Father Jarmus for ways to promote it on the OCA website and other ways.

Mr. Herzak urged the Fellowship to dedicate itself to this project and get at least one building done: "Failure is not an option. Delay only means higher costs down the road." Matushka Carol Steffaro mentioned that perhaps Father Dahulich could send mar-

ried seminarians to parishes to make the appeal on a regular basis: “our church is in crisis but the Holy Spirit will work through us.” Father Michael replied that he could certainly ask the seminarians to do this and would cover their expenses but they need to be invited to make this happen. Nick Ressetar asked that parishes consider making a \$15,000 pledge and that the FOCA chapter coordinate this as a parish-wide project. Christ the Saviour Church in Harrisburg sent in \$5,000 a few weeks ago as the 1st of three payments; the “O” Club spearheads the project and the entire parish and its organizations and individuals are involved. Surely our larger parishes could make similar commitments, he added.

Bishop Tikhon took the podium and expressed his wish “to address some of the concerns raised. As rector of St. Tikhon’s Seminary, I extend my gratitude to you for undertaking this project. A lot has been said about the national church, but there is no such thing. We are a local church. We may have a national church administration, but the church is a local church. At the diocesan level is the life of the church. The FOCA’s life takes place locally, at the parish and district levels. The church’s real life is local – we must clarify this at the upcoming All-American Council. Christ is the Head of the church, the church is hierarchical and we must put our trust in Him. Next week the Holy Synod of Bishops and metropolitan council will meet to consider the report of the special committee. Nothing goes wrong with Christ – things do go wrong with bishops and the people. If we trust Christ, then we can trust each other. The FOCA has offered that sacrificial love for many years, and your efforts are recognized by the rest of the church. If we have Christ, the Holy Eucharist, the divine services, then we have it all, even if we are old, sick, dying. Thank you for your good works and may God bless you all.” Bishop Tikhon then personally pledged \$1,500 to the seminary housing project, a gesture met with applause and the singing of “Eis polla eti despota.” Sessions then adjourned for the day. Later that afternoon Bishop Tikhon celebrated vespers in the convention chapel.

Saturday evening brought the “Hoop Dee Doo Revue” at Disney’s Pioneer Lodge located at the Fort Wilderness hotel. Two-hundred fifty conventioners enjoyed all-you-care -to-eat vittles and an entertaining Western-style musical comedy revue. Participating in the revue were Walter Deerson (“WALTER, WALTER .....!”), little Andrew Deerson, Peter “Injun” Ilchuk, and the most angelic Father Jason Vansuch. It was a very amusing night to say the least. Many returned to the Contemporary hotel by boat across the lake.

#### SUNDAY, AUGUST 31st

The convention’s liturgical highlight was the celebration of the Divine Liturgy by Bishop Tikhon, serving as a priest, attended by about 300 worshipers. Assisting were Fathers Evansky, Boback, Jarmus, Steffaro, Ressetar and Vansuch as well as subdeacons Peter Ilchuk and John Schultz. Junior altar servers included Matthew Stahoviak, Jeremiah Hoydich, Zach Hoydich, Patrick Laushell, Timothy Stahoviak and Paul Stenko. Directing the choir was Michael Stenko and President Steffaro read the Epistle.

Father Dahulich’s homily centered on the message of Christ’s love and forgiveness: “Since the beginning of time, man has sought the forgiveness of sins. Christ’s ministry began with forgiveness. His first miracle, the healing of the paralytic, involved forgiveness, and the sacraments are mostly for forgiveness and repentance. Christ Himself forgave repeatedly – Peter, Saul (Paul), Zaccheus, and He forgave the Righteous Thief in the last moments of His earthly life. The only limit that Christ places is that we forgive others in turn. God gave us the greatest gift – His only-begotten Son, and Jesus Christ has the right to expect us to

forgive others. A condition for forgiveness, however, is that we forgive others, which is not easy when you’re hurt, disappointed, angry. Even on the cross, when dying and being taunted by the crowds, Christ asked His Father to forgive them. We need to forgive so that we can be forgiven by God and by others; it is necessary for our spiritual and physical well-being. Metropolitan Anthony Bloom was told by his spiritual advisor that if you don’t forgive men their trespasses, God won’t forgive you yours. The trademark of Christ is love, and forgiveness is part of that love. The Lord’s love forgives us again and again. Tomorrow is the beginning of the Church New Year, and on this eve let us forgive from our hearts those who have angered us, disappointed us and betrayed us. Why? Because the Lord commands us. Let us take the Gospel and truly live it!”

In his message, Bishop Tikhon said: “Father Michael reminded us of our struggle for repentance. But the church offers us help. The divine liturgy is the supreme example of that help. ‘Blessed is the kingdom . . .’ – the promise of the Kingdom should inspire us in repentance. The divine liturgy is a beautiful means to that end. It is remarkable that we can bring the liturgy to Disney World and celebrate in this ‘earthly’ kingdom. Orthodox Christians – in spite of our weaknesses – can put together a wonderful choir and we can make ‘real’ the Kingdom with liturgical music and iconography regardless of where we are. Thank God for bringing us together this weekend and for the good works of the Fellowship in this country and for the building up of the Kingdom in our hearts, parishes, dioceses and the national church.” His Grace then honored Past National Presidents Andrew Cvercko and John Schultz with icons, and many years was intoned for all.

The free afternoon was spent at the parks, swimming, various receptions, and the young adults held their annual volleyball game in the wind-swept sand along the lake. Juniors then held a pool-side pizza party and a “no-name birthday” party was celebrated by older Juniors.

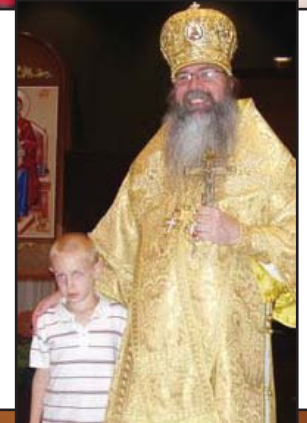
That evening was “Cinderella’s Banquet and Ball.” Introducing the toastmaster, Father Jason Vansuch, was Lara Mangiarelli, convention co-chair, and he began his remarks with a moving tribute to his late father, Father Eugene, who was to have been the MC. Father Jason then introduced the “Hoe Down” heroes to much applause (and laughter) as well as guests and dignitaries, ending each segment with the Disney phrase “See you real soon!” National Administrative Secretary Sandy Kapelan was honored for her many years of service to the Fellowship and deservedly received a standing ovation.

His Grace once more addressed the banquet assembly: “The card in our hotel rooms says ‘Find Out the Secret’ at Disney vacations. Well, I have a secret to reveal. At Disney World we’ve all seen the many characters – Mickey & Minny Mouse, Goofy, and so on. There are ‘people’ inside those characters! (Sustained laughter). I say it jokingly but in a serious way – it is important to remember the person in the church. We forget sometimes that persons are created in the image and likeness of God. This convention reminds us that we are persons. The difficult job of the toastmaster is to recognize all the persons who are to be recognized. Each of us is valuable in the sight of God. The FOCA is an organization that reminds us we are persons and a community of persons. This is my first time at a national convention, and it is a very great joy and blessing to see the love that you have for each other and for Christ’s church. As we continue to live in Christ, remember the reality of the living person. Not to criticize the world of Disney, because the magic can be ‘fun’ but we have to keep in mind the reality behind it. That reality is our Lord Jesus

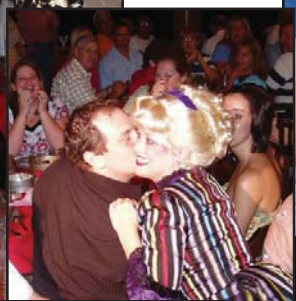
continued page 15



# 82ND NATIONAL FOCA CONVENTION PHOTO ALBUM









Christ, and what we must do is to find Him and to share Him with others. That is what this wonderful organization has done, like the St. Tikhon's project, for so many and for so many years. I appreciate the hard work of Michael Steffaro, Father Bill and the entire board. I ask that you continue to pray for the Holy Synod and for me."

President Steffaro then delivered his speech, which is reproduced separately in this issue, and announced the national scholarship winners. Dancing started just after the banquet's conclusion. About 25 Fellowship kidz (girls 12 and under) came to the ball after a "Magical Makeover," complete with a tiara, professional hairstyle and children's make-up. And the surprise was the visit of "Cinderella" herself, who signed autographs and posed for pictures behind a backdrop of her castle.

**Monday, September 1st: Church New Year's Day & Labor Day**

The final plenary session opened early Monday morning. Anthony Schultz of the national sports department reviewed the sports tournaments for the next several years. The entire Stenko family made an entertaining presentation for next year's convention in Hartford, CT over the Labor Day weekend. And the 2010 convention was awarded to the Pittsburgh District with Dr. Schultz as chair – it will probably be a Labor Day convention and may be at the Hilton. Treasurer Bowan presented the 2009 budget and it was approved.

Marge Kovach then moved to allocate \$3,400 to Father Michael Anderson as a Juniors consultant (he had served as Junior director for a number of years before being assigned to a mission in California). Mike Herzak expressed the strong need for a renewed youth program as the OCA has "dropped the ball." After much animated discussion, the motion was defeated. Father Boback moved to retain a youth consultant at a minimum of \$2,000 for 2009. Mike Herzak pledged this amount on behalf of himself, St. Michael's Church and its Cleveland "R" Club, #4/6. The motion carried after more debate.

Mr. Herzak next moved that the executive board establish a strategic planning committee to oversee a top-to-bottom review of the Fellowship structure. Nick Resselar noted that some organizations (like the LCBA) have introduced an "e-branch/chapter" system in which members are organized on-line. Ron Osedach urged that the committee contact bishops and priests to ascertain the reason for the lack of support. There is a need to rebuild the Fellowship in light of the decline in membership, Larry Skvir stated. Mr. Herzak asked that this task not be left at the executive board level but that outsiders be consulted. President Steffaro responded that the current executive board has always discussed the need to revitalize the FOCA. After more discussion, the motion was passed.

Convention action turned to the election of national officers. Mr. Baldowski acted as temporary chair and Marge Kovach read the list of nominees. Polly Walker was nominated for president with Father Steffaro making her seconding speech. Past National President Michael Dorosh seconded the nomination of Robert Steffaro for vice president (who had to leave early in the morning because of Hurricane Gustav). Becky Tesar of the Cleveland "R" Club was nominated for recording secretary and Mr. Herzak seconded. And Mr. Bowan was renominated for treasurer. All the officers were elected unanimously. Congratulations!

Stock awards were made. Treasurer Bowan gave an update on the seminary project fund. An additional \$6,000 was collected during the assembly (total of \$36,000) and \$15,000 more in pledges (total of \$150,000). Father Evansky offered some closing reflections: "Wherever I go there is a common theme and a sense of frustration on so many levels because we care so much. There is an enormity of good people in our church and in this

Fellowship. Remember two words: 'gracious assertiveness.' Don't be pushy. I hope you will take these words to heart." Father Resselar met Past National President and Life Member John Daniluck (age 94) in Indianapolis in July and read a message of greetings from him. Carol Deerson congratulated the Longwood "O" Club, especially Lara Mangiarelli and Neena Malinich, and those who assisted them on a very successful convention.

The installation of officers ceremony was led by Father Evansky and each officer addressed the convention. In his farewell to the board, Dr. Schultz stated that "we are alive and well and will be here for a long time to come." Polly Walker said that she was humbled by the Fellowship's confidence in her and promised that her motto would be change. Becky Tesar, noting that she was a scholarship winner, thanked everyone for their trust. And Mr. Bowan simply said "many thanks again." Father Steffaro offered thanks on behalf of his brother, Bob. Mr. Steffaro, now immediate past president, thanked the members for a great 2 years as president and expressed gratitude to "Johnny" Schultz, who was carried off the stage (in a chair) by the past national presidents present. Many years was sung, newly-elected President Walker led the reciting of the FOCA motto ("Pray, Study, Toil, Be Temperate"), and the circle squeezed hands. And the 82nd national convention entered the history books at about 11 a.m. "SEE YOU REAL SOON!"

## FOCA CALENDAR 2009



- Sunday, January 18: 72nd Annual Novogodny Ball, Radisson Hotel, Trevoze, PA
- February 19-22 "Spring" National Board of Trustees meeting, Hartford, CT
- February 14-16: National Soccer Tournament, South River, NJ
- Monday, March 2: Great Lent begins
- March 31: FOCA National Scholarship deadline
- Sunday, April 19: HOLY PASCHA
- May 8-10: National Basketball Tournament & Celebration of Faith Arts Rally, Minneapolis, MN
- May 15-17: National Bowling Tournament, Phillipsburg/Alpha, NJ
- Sunday, June 7: Pentecost
- July 24-25: National Summer Sports Tournament, New Tripoli/Allentown, PA
- September 3-7: 83rd National FOCA Convention, Hartford, CT

**For updates and detailed info, visit  
[www.orthodoxfellowship.org](http://www.orthodoxfellowship.org)**

# 2008 NATIONAL JUNIOR SUMMER SPORTS TOURNEY Photo Album

Photo #	Category	Winner (L)	Runner-up(R)
214	Girls 14-17 yrs	Ashley Miller	Natalia Hutnyan
220	Girls 10-13 yrs	Stephanie Johnson	Marina Memorich
217	Boys 14-17 yrs	Geno Kennedy	Paul Lukos
218	Boys 10-13 yrs	Luis Rivera	Paul Rogozenski
221	Sportsmanship 14-17yrs.	Ashley Miller	---
195	Sportsmanship 10-13yrs	George Clark	---



# 2008 NATIONAL JUNIOR SUMMER SPORTS TOURNEY

by Deacon Benjamin Tucci

This year's national junior summer sports tourney ran from July 13-19 at St. Vladimir's Camp in Farmdale, OH, which is owned and operated by the FOCA's Ohio District. Camp director again was Deacon Benjamin Tucci of St. Mary's Cathedral, Minneapolis. Thirty-seven youth and 13 staff came from Michigan, Illinois, Indiana, Ohio, Pennsylvania, New Jersey and Minnesota. It was a week filled with fun, fellowship, sports competitions, religious education and worship services.

Archbishop Job made a visit to our camp this year and spent time with our youth on Friday. Religious education that day consisted of a dialogue between him and the tourney participants. His visit made the week very special and we were blessed to have him. Serving as spiritual advisor was Father Emil Hutnyan, who came prepared with more "Fun with Father" stuff than could possibly be used. The week's theme was "What's Love Got to Do with It?", a study series of the OCA's youth department. Father Emil also celebrated the Divine Liturgy on Friday morning and was available all week for private confessions and counseling. Thank you Father!

The St. Vladimir's Camp and its staff were very supportive in making sure we had everything we needed for the week. The cooks especially were fantastic – great food! Thanks so much for making our week enjoyable, safe and fun.

During the tournament, the youth had many activities to keep them busy. Some of the highlights for the week were:

- \* youth teams designed their camp t-shirts (best t-shirt design won)
- \* each day began and ended with prayers in the "on site" chapel
- \* sports clinics were offered so that the youth learned basic skills in order to compete in the competitions
- \* hay rides, camp fires and campfire singing
- \* swimming
- \* canteen and free time
- \* team events
- \* sports competitions (football, baseball, soccer, basketball, swimming & track events)
- \* religious education sessions and choir practices
- \* talent show
- \* ethnic dancing practice
- \* camp dance
- \* day excursion to the Skate Zone with laser tag team events
- \* Divine Liturgy

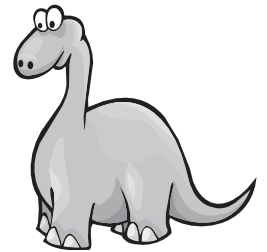
Once more this year we had a great tournament staff. It was well-organized and always concerned about the safety and care of our youth. A very special thanks to Laura Johnson, head counselor, counselors Marge Kovach and Lissa Molchan, Melanie Clark, sports clinic counselor/lifeguard, and Tracy Rusnak, nurse. Other staff included Greg Berezniak, John Memorich, Andrew Zelinsky, Bill Dupinsky, Anna Memorich, Alex Petroski and Alex Norris.

Thank you to the Fellowship and the John "Lefty" Sutyak Sports Fund for making sure that the tournament continues as it is an excellent experience for our youth and will help them continue to connect to the life of the church. If you are not a camper or have never attended a week at an Orthodox Christian camp, it is hard to imagine how powerful an experience it is. During a week together, our youth learn about their faith and create strong bonds of friendship that continue throughout their lives. May we continue to be blessed with the experience of the Junior summer sports tournament. Thanks again FOCA for the support. I feel proud to be part of an organization that continues to offer quality youth programming in this time of our church. Many blessings!



## JOIN US FOR A DIN-O-MITE TIME BOWLING IN DIN -OH-NINE!

May 15 – 17, 2009



Are you ready to throw rocks (er..., bowling balls) at the sticks (er..., pins)?

We're heading back to Warren Lanes in Phillipsburg, NJ where they are ready to help us have a fun time. They have forty newly refurbished lanes waiting for the FOCA to attack like a *T-Rex* going after a *Triceratops*.

The Comfort Inn in Bethlehem, PA, with 133 rooms that have microwaves and refrigerators will accommodate our bowlers. Rooms will be \$75 per night; ask for the **FOCA Bowling Group #3846 by April 24, 2009**. Their number is **610-865-6300**. Don't forget or you might be sleeping outside with the *cavemen* around that new invention, the *fire*!

St John's Orthodox Church in Alpha will hold Vespers at 5:00 p.m. on Saturday night as well as Divine Liturgy at 9:30 a.m. on Sunday. Join us in this wonderful *ancient* Tradition.

The banquet will be on Saturday night at the Almond Tree Manor which is literally minutes away from the church. Cocktail hour will begin at 6:00 with the banquet beginning at 7:00. What will the members of St John's Senior "O" Club *hunt and gather*? Could it be a roast leg of *Stegosaurus*? You'll have to be there to find out!

---

## POLLY WALKER, OUR NEW NATIONAL FOCA PRESIDENT



Congratulations to Polly Walker, the 40th national president of our Fellowship and the fourth woman to be elected! For the past 35 years Polly has been married to Todd, the Midwest District governor, and they have four sons: Alexander and daughter-in-law Sarah, Nicholas, Zachary and Christopher, all of whom are active FOCA members; and one granddaughter, Grace, age one.

After attending the University of Minnesota-Duluth and the University of Washington, Polly graduated from the Metropolitan State University in St. Paul, MN with a B.S. in accounting. She is both a licensed registered accounting professional and realtor in the state of Minnesota, and for the past twenty years has been manager for a CPA firm specializing in small business tax and accounting as well as for a payroll processing bureau. Polly is also owner of

Bookkeeping & Accounting Services as well as Memory Eternal (genealogy services).

Polly and Todd are active communicants and members of St. Mary's Orthodox Cathedral in Minneapolis where she has been financial administrator, church choir and Pan-Orthodox choir member, substitute choir director and church school teacher. A delegate to All-American Councils and diocesan assemblies, Polly is currently an auditor for the OCA Diocese of the Midwest. And she has served as camp director for St. Mary's Pan-Orthodox camp and St. Mary's OCA camp as well as a counselor at other Orthodox camps.

A longtime member of St. Mary's "O" Club, chapter #94, Polly most recently served a two-year term as national FOCA vice-president and is the Midwest District immediate past governor and had been district treasurer. She was previously a member of the St. Spiridon "O" Club in Seattle, WA, the Salem "R" Club in Salem, MA and reactivated the Kenosha "O" Club in Wisconsin. Polly has also been treasurer for the 1997 Minneapolis national convention as well as the past two national basketball tournaments held there and the upcoming 2009 tournament. And she was an active Junior member and chapter treasurer.

And there's more! Polly is currently CFO of the Carpatho-Rusyn Society and on the board of directors of the Minnesota Rusyn Association. In her spare time she enjoys antiques and genealogy. Best wishes to Polly, Todd and the Walker family and many years!

St. Stephen's OCF, Chapter 82  
Philadelphia, PA

cordially invites you to attend their gala

72nd ANNUAL NOVOGODNY BALL

Sunday, January 18, 2009

Radisson Hotel

Trevose, PA

Doors Open - 7:00 PM

Music Option - 5:00PM

Dinner Option - 5:00 PM

A Semi-formal for the Benefit of Deserving Charities

For additional information & required reservations,  
please contact Lisa Lelo at lmlelo@verizon.net or 215/248-0158



**St. Tikhon's Seminarian Housing Project**

I/We Pledge to give to the St. Tikhon's Seminarian Housing Project. (Please circle one)

- |                    |                                |                                    |
|--------------------|--------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| <b>Benefactor-</b> | \$5,000 a year for three years | (\$500/month for 10 months a year) |
| <b>Founder-</b>    | \$2,500 a year for three years | (\$250/month for 10 months a year) |
| <b>Supporter-</b>  | \$1,000 a year for three years | (\$100/month for 10 months a year) |
| <b>Donor -</b>     | \$500 a year for three years   | (\$50/month for 10 months a year)  |



\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Donor

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_ Please bill me monthly for three years

\_\_\_\_\_ Please bill me yearly for three years

\_\_\_\_\_ Please bill me for the full amount pledged

\_\_\_\_\_ My employer will match my gift, enclosed  
is my company's matching gift form

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

**Please send pledge form to: Michael Steffaro  
38 Beryl Street  
South River, NJ 08882  
732-698-1952 • michaelsteffaro@comcast.net**

**Checks made payable to the F.O.C.A.  
or St. Tikhon's Theological Seminary**

# Transitions

**DEPARTED:** Eleanor (Jankura) Skuby of Springfield, VA, fell asleep in the Lord on October 2, 2008. The wife of the late Vladimir (Walter), who died last year, she was a member of St. Nicholas Russian Orthodox Cathedral in Washington, DC where funeral services were held. Eleanor was also an active member of the Nation's "R" Club and participated in many national conventions together with her husband, always singing in the choir. Survivors include her sons, Mark Skuby, St. Stephen's OCF, and Coast Guard Capt. Timothy Skuby, and several grandchildren. She was interred at Arlington National Cemetery next to her husband. Memory eternal.

**SURGERY:** Recovering from open-heart surgery is Michael Dorosh, past national president and past Central PA District governor. Cards may be sent to him at 4535 Charles Street, Easton, PA 18045. Get well soon, Mike!

**THANKS:** Kathy Lazor, past national recording secretary, would like to extend her thanks to all those who sent her cards, flowers and greetings during her illness this past year and for all your prayers. She reports that she remains in complete remission. God bless and many years!

**DEPARTED:** Ann Stenko, 85, passed away on August 4, 2007. Ann was an active member of the Holy Annunciation Orthodox

Church in Berwick, PA where she sang in the choir for many years. She was a member of the Ladies Halo group and for many years was membership secretary of the Berwick Russian Glee Club. She co-owned Stenko's skating rink and bowling alleys for 50 years. Ann attended many conventions and bowling tournaments over the years with the "Berwick Girls", and she was well known for making Christmas cookies and liked to crochet and play cards. Surviving are a brother Frank & wife and her sister-in-law, Marian Stenko, and five nephews, including Michael Stenko & wife of Hartford, CT. May her memory be eternal. Submitted by Joan Kost.

**DEPARTED:** Nicholas Shark, the husband of Marion (Manya), fell asleep in the Lord on November 6, 2008. He was a member of the South River "R" Club, #167. Funeral services were held at Holy Resurrection Church in Wayne, NJ and burial was at St. Tikhon's Monastery cemetery. Condolences may be sent to the family at 9 Grosuner Court, Jackson, NJ 08517. Memory eternal.

**BIRTHDAY:** V. Rev. Dr. Michael Kovach, Harrisburg "O" Club, #199, celebrated his 90th birthday on November 21st (his name's day on the old calendar). Cards may be sent to Father Michael at 528 Oak Ridge Drive, Millersville, PA 17551-2018. Mnogaya lyeta!

## WILLIAM LICHTAZ

Past national treasurer; past governor, Atlantic District; past chair and co-chair of two national conventions; past president, All Saints Orthodox Church, Hartford. Left this earth for a better place on September 20, 2008.

### Remembering My Father

My father was given a chance to live more than once. Upon marrying my mother he discovered the state had no birth certificate for William, only for his deceased brother Peter. On another occasion, a sudden illness prior to an Air Force test flight left him in the infirmary and his plane decimated in a nearby orchard.

As with all of us, I believe my father was given this life so that he may give back to the world. This he did on the earthly realm, the human realm and the spiritual realm.

My dad showed his love and gratitude for all God's creation, from critters and plants to humanity and the church. Bill was a steward of the earth and he inspired many of us to do the same, from the tiny butterflies and hummingbirds for which he made beautiful gardens to the gladiolus he hybridized, dutifully digging up the bulbs each fall and meticulously placing them in hand constructed trays to be stored in his mother's basement. My dad grew vegetables to feed his young family and pruned Babushka's orchard, keeping it healthy and bountiful for decades. When he moved to Florida he had to learn about an entirely new ecosystem- growing without water, something so plentiful in southern New England. He shared this newfound knowledge volunteering with the Master Gardeners of Ocala County.

My dad had an innate connection with animals, wild and domestic, often pointing out birds by their song, befriendng stray cats and dogs. In Florida, he delighted in sharing with visitors the local Rainbow Springs State Park where he volunteered. My dad lived by the quote I found beside his bed "People will follow your footsteps quicker than your advice." I know many family members followed his footsteps on this path.

My dad was a true humanitarian. While he was blessed with three children of his own, I think he had a secret competition with Jerry Lewis to see how many other kids he could help. From children's hospitals, Cystic Fibrosis, Muscular Dystrophy, the

Mansfield Children's Home to Christmas shows for Hamilton Standard, Traveler's Men's Club, church bazaars and conventions, my dad volunteered countless hours making other people smile. As he told the Hartford Courant once "The wrinkles on my face will come and I can't stop that. But the volunteer work will help stop the wrinkles from forming on my heart"

My father was a steward of the spirit, inwardly and outwardly. His impulse for volunteering came from the spirit within him. Outwardly, he was a benefactor and president of All Saints Orthodox Church in Hartford, Ct, and served the FROC (Federated Russian Orthodox Clubs) in a multitude of ways. He then moved to Florida and helped build another church. He spent hours organizing, planning, overseeing the operations of the church, always ready to help out in any way.

My dad was a kind and gentle soul who would rather walk away from an argument than start one. His ability to listen, offer articulate, thoughtful ideas, coupled with his humility and strong beliefs made him sought out as a leader. Indeed he served the Church, the FROC/FOCA, the American Softball Association, Clowns of America, Traveler's Clown Troupe and the Traveler's Men's Club in various capacities.

Like his siblings, Bill was a talented athlete and graceful dancer. He was a recipient of scores of awards and trophies, many of which he re-titled and reused in competitions with underprivileged youth. He was also a balloon sculptor and performance artist, writing and directing skits, serving as MC, designing costumes and making up faces. He was a mesmerizing storyteller, especially when you got him talking about growing up on Robert's Street and all the shenanigans he and his brothers and sister would get into. One of his greatest gifts was his sense of humor. His humor and endless jokes balanced his inner sadness. How peculiar it was that he chose to emulate Red Skelton and Emmett Kelley Jr. by portraying a "sad" clown.

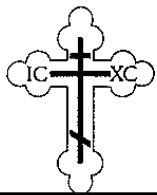
It was in his last month that I witnessed his greatest sadness. The form of Parkinson's from which my father suffered took away his most precious gifts: movement and humor. During his last three weeks of life, he could not move, swallow or talk.

Know that he is now at peace, probably causing a ruckus in heaven with his brothers, Uncle Pete and fellow clown, Tony. I am certain that he would like to be best remembered with a laugh.

MAY HIS MEMORY BE ETERNAL

Bill is survived by wife, Dolores of Dunnellon, FL; Julianna, Carbondale, CO; Christopher, Boston, MA; Jonathan, Gainesville, FL. Submitted by Julianna Lichtaz.





# St. Maria Skobtsova

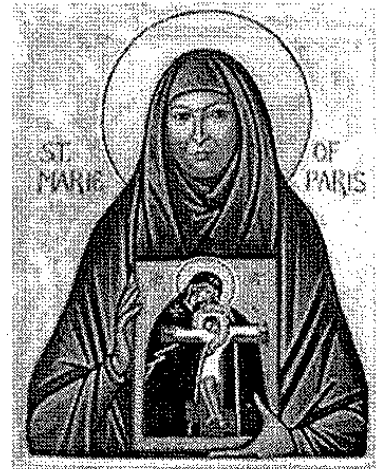
Venerable Nun-Martyr, St. Mary of Paris, Ravensbruck

Would you be willing to hide young children in trashcans to provide them with a safe place to live? This was one of the many unselfish acts of Mother Maria of Skobtsova. Elizaveta Pilenko was born into a very rich family on December 8, 1891 in Riga, Livonia, present day Latvia. At the age of 15, after the unexpected death of her father, her mother moved the family to St. Petersburg. Elizaveta was so distraught after his death that she became an atheist, and aimlessly wandered the streets of St. Petersburg. A cousin took Elizaveta to her first poetry reading, in an effort to help her deal with feelings of anger and grief. It was during this time that she wrote her first two free verse poems, which resulted in the publication of her first volume of poetry, *Scythian Potsherds*, four years later.

At the age of nineteen, in 1910, she married her first husband, Dmitri Vladimirovich Kuzmin-Karavaev, but in a short time the marriage ended. (Many years later, Dmitri would become a **cardinal** in the Roman Catholic Church.) By 1913, the marriage had collapsed, and Elizaveta's mother moved the family to Anapa, in Southern Russia. In the fall of 1913, her first child, a daughter, Gayana, was born. When Elizaveta was twenty-seven, she became mayor of Anapa. During her mayoral term, she was arrested and tried for being a Bolshevik. During the trial she met Daniel Skobtsova, who presided as judge. After her acquittal, she fell in love, and married Daniel. Due to political turmoil, her family decided to flee the country. The first stop in their journey was the country of Georgia, where their first son, Yuri, was born. The journey continued to Yugoslavia, where a daughter, Anastasia, was born. After five years, their journey culminated in Paris, France.

Three years after they arrived in Paris, Anastasia died of **influenza**. The stress of her daughter's death caused Elizaveta to dedicate her life to the needs of others. With the advice of her bishop, in order to take her monastic vows, she asked Daniel for a divorce. An ecclesiastical divorce was granted, and she professed her monastic vows in 1932 with the guarantee that she would not live in a monastery. She took the name Maria, after St. Mary of Egypt. Being keenly aware of the needs of society, she founded a social service group called Orthodox Action, which met the needs of the "whole" person. She opened a house for the less fortunate and lonely of Paris. This was just the beginning of her many unselfish acts of kindness. The house provided rooms for the homeless, and many times Mother Maria, because of the lack of space, would sleep by the boiler. One of the rooms was used as an Orthodox chapel, in which Mother Maria painted the icon screen. Divine Liturgies were held on Wednesdays, Saturdays and Sundays. So many needy people flocked to the house that it soon became too small, and another building was acquired in 1935, serving more than 22,991 meals that year to those less fortunate.

In World War II, when the Nazis took Paris, the house founded by Mother Maria on the rue de Lourmel became a shelter for many Jews. She was assisted in her work by a young priest, Fr. Dimitri Klepinin, as well as her son Yuri and her mother Sophia. They helped Jews escape, and provided them with necessary documents. On one terrible occasion, the Nazis gathered a huge crowd of Jews into a stadium with little food or water. Mother Maria worked with local trash collectors to get a few children into trash cans and out of the stadium to safe places.



## Quote

At the Last Judgment I will not be asked whether I satisfactorily practiced asceticism, nor how many bows I have made before the divine altar. I will be asked whether I fed the hungry, clothed the naked, visited the sick, and the prisoner in his jail. That is all I will be asked.

- Mother Maria Skobtsova

## Date Died

March 31, 1945

## Commemoration Date

July 20

Because her selfless acts went against the extermination plans the Nazis had for all Jews, Mother Maria - prisoner 19263 - was arrested, and along with two hundred other women spent the last two years of her life in the Ravensbruck concentration camp. In order to record the deaths at the camp, she would **embroider** the names of those tortured on a special cloth, to be displayed in the church at Lourmel. Many times she would trade the bread she received so she could have the thread she needed for her embroidery. She never complained, and often she would bargain for the other prisoners. She believed the daily Eucharist gave her the strength she needed to help others.

Two months before her death, on January 31, 1945, Mother Maria was transferred to Jugendlager, Youth Camp, a kilometer away from Ravensbruck. It was here that no fewer than 50 people died of "natural" causes on a daily basis. The camp was also equipped with a gas chamber that had a capacity of 150 prisoners. Even in the midst of death, Mother Maria worked on her last embroidery project. It depicted the Mother of God with a crucified child in her arms. Mother Maria felt it would help her to leave the camp alive. On Good Friday, in 1945, Mother Maria was selected for death. (Some say she offered herself in exchange for another prisoner.) On the eve of Easter, Mother Maria died in the gas chamber as a martyr.

## References

- Sergei Hackel, *Pearl of Great Price - Life of Mother Maria Skobtsova 1891-1945*.
- Jim Forest, *Silent as a Stone: Mother Maria of Paris and the Trash Can Rescue*
- Bonnie Michal, *Mother Maria Skobtsova - A Saint of Our Day - St. Nina Quarterly - Volume 2*
- Skobtsova <http://www.orthodoxwiki.org/Maria>.
- Grigori Benevitch, *The Saving of the Jews: The Case of Mother Maria Skobtsova*
- Icons of Mother Maria  
<http://incommunion.org/articles/resources/st-maria-skobtsova/icons>

## Troparion *(Tone 4)*

You became a bride of Christ, O venerable Mother,  
And offered your body and soul to Him as a living sacrifice.  
You exposed the evil side of humanity's ways  
By allowing the light of the Resurrection to shine forth from you.  
We celebrate your memory in love.  
O Martyr and Confessor Maria  
Pray to Christ our God that He may save our souls.

## Kontakion *(Tone 6)*

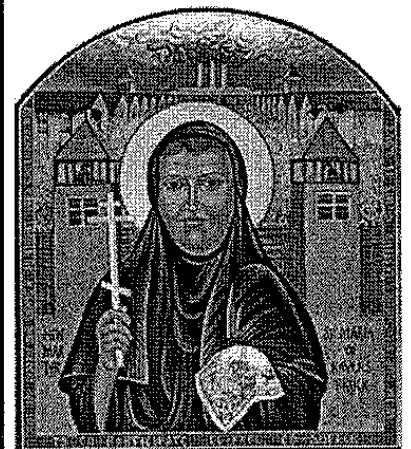
You became an instrument of divine love, O holy martyr Maria,  
And taught us to love Christ with all our being.  
You conquered evil by not submitting yourself into the hands of the destroyer of souls.  
You drank from the cup of suffering.  
The Creator accepted your death above any other sacrifice  
And crowned you with the laurels of victory with His mighty hand.  
Pray fervently that nothing may hinder us from fulfilling God's will  
Because you are a bright star shining in darkness!

## Key Terms

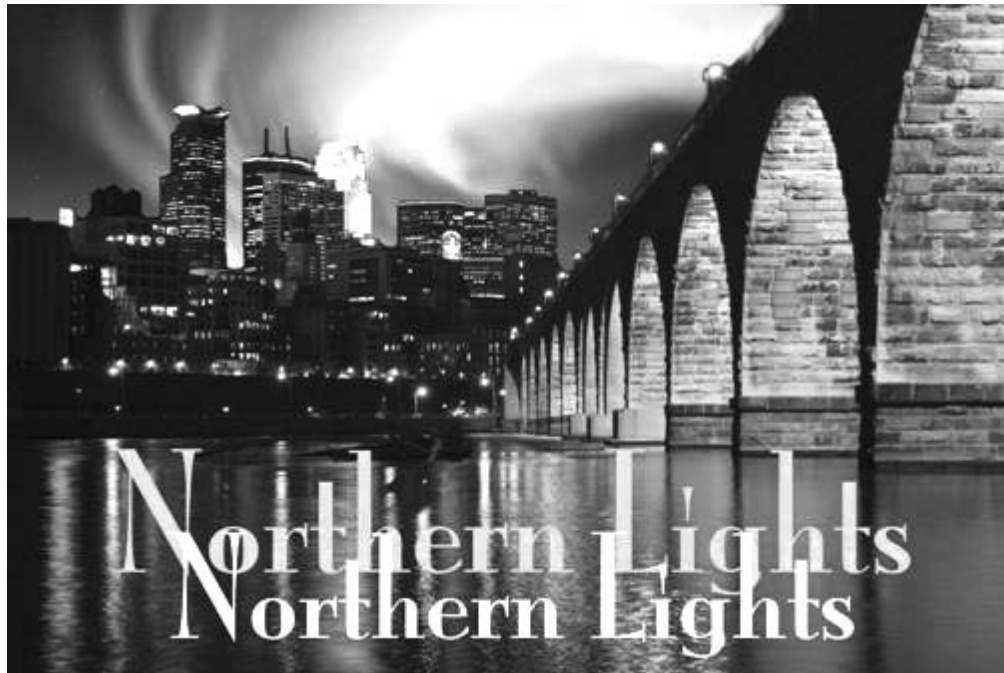
**Embroider:** To decorate fabric or other materials with designs stitched in strands of thread or yarn using a needle. Embroidery may also use other materials such as metal strips, pearls, beads, quills, and sequins.

**Cardinal:** A senior ecclesiastical official, usually a bishop, of the Catholic Church

**Influenza:** Commonly known as the flu; an infectious disease







Join us for  
**A Creative Arts Rally**  
**For Youth Grades 6th – 12th**  
**May 8 – 10, 2009**  
**Historic Northeast Minneapolis, MN**  
Minneapolis' Arts District

Join fellow Orthodox youth for a weekend of learning about art in its various forms at the Northern Lights rally at St. Mary's Cathedral in historic Northeast Minneapolis. The event offers youth a chance to enhance or explore their creative, artistic side. The rally will correspond with the Fellowship of Orthodox Christians in America's (FOCA) basketball tournament weekend and is a part of the annual Celebration of Faith Creative Arts contest.

**Activities include:**

- **Exposure to music** (choral and/or instrumental)
- **Religious/sacred art** (iconography and church architecture)
- **Photography**
- **Literature**

Youth will explore the basic aspect of light as it appears in art form and have hands on experience working on art projects.

**Interested?**

Please contact  
Deacon Benjamin Tucci  
612-781-7667

**[youthdirector@stmarysoca.org](mailto:youthdirector@stmarysoca.org)**

**Rally Location:**

St. Mary's Orthodox Cathedral  
1701 5th St. NE  
Minneapolis, MN 55413

Details and registration forms will be posted on [www.orthodoxfellowship.org](http://www.orthodoxfellowship.org).

**See you in Minneapolis May 8-10!**

*Sponsored by the Fellowship of Orthodox Christians in America (FOCA)*



**RECYCLE!**

**Use This Issue To  
Encourage New  
Membership**

**POSTMASTER - If Undeliverable**

Please Send Form 3579 To: *Orthodox Christian JOURNAL* • 10 Downs Drive, Plains Twp. • Wilkes-Barre, PA 18705-3899

**ATTENTION:** All FOCA Senior and Junior Chapters, and FOCA Supporters



# *15th Annual OCA Christmas Stocking Project*



**Help brighten the holidays for needy children in Albania, Belarus, Georgia, Mexico, Poland, Russia, Slovakia, Ukraine and families of US flood victims.**



*Assembled at the Retarded Children's Vocational Training Center in Freeport, NY*

### **3 Simple Steps to Participate!**

**1) ORGANIZE AN EVENT**  
 Fundraising ideas:  
 Spaghetti / Pizza dinner  
 "Bake It Ourselves" Bake Sale  
 Hoagie Sale  
 Car Wash  
 Parish Brunch / Luncheon  
 "Ice Cream Sunday" Social  
 Bowl-a, Bike-a, Sing-a-thon  
 "Hire-a-Kid" for a Day  
 Handmade Ornaments / Icons  
 Flea Market Concession  
 Paper Stocking Sale

**2) MAIL YOUR SUPPORT TO:**  
 OCA Christmas Stocking Project  
 c/o Arlene Kallaur  
 P.O. Box 675  
 Syosset, NY 11791-0675

Make checks payable to:  
 The Orthodox Church in America

**3) SEND PHOTOS OF THE EVENT**  
 Photos can be sent via mail or e-mail  
 to: [arlene@oca.org](mailto:arlene@oca.org) for posting to the  
 OCA's website.

Log onto [www.oca.org](http://www.oca.org) and visit the  
 Photo Gallery (Miscellaneous Events)  
 to view past projects and photos from  
 recipients.