

Cluster Chronicle

"A community of Episcopal congregations sharing the love and power of the Risen Christ in our communities through worship, evangelization and apostolic service."

Will named a National Merit Scholarship semifinalist

Mechanicsburg High School senior Will Boeck, of Our Saviour, took the college assessment PSAT/NMSQT as a junior and placed in the 99th percentile, the top one percent, of the 1.5 million students in the United States who took the test. That alone is something to celebrate. But there's more. That qualified him as one of the country's 16,000 National Merit Scholarship Program semifinalists---697 from Ohio.

In an interview with the Springfield News-Sun, Will said he was proud, happy and a little surprised, but eager to represent his school in the competition. He said he plans to enroll in a four-year college majoring in math or music, and the scholarship would be helpful.

According to the News-Sun article, about 95 percent of the semifinalists will become finalists and half of the finalists will win one of the 7500 scholarships offered. Funded annually by corporations and colleges, scholarships total \$30,000 and range

from \$2500 to \$10,000, some renewable.



Will Boeck

Now Will and Mechanicsburg High School will each submit detailed applications. Applicants must have an outstanding academic record, document achievements, write what is called a self-defining essay, be recommended by a high school administrator and submit confirmation of extra-curricular activities, church and community service and

personal character from teachers, coaches, advisers, church and community leaders.

Will's extra-curricular activities are a blend of school, church and community service. He is a member of high school cross country and swim teams, jazz, pep, concert and marching bands, a Boy Scout, a member of the National Honor Society, student council and Quiz Bowl team, volunteers at a food pantry and Our Saviour's Community Meal program and works part-time at a local pizza shop.

As noted, semifinalists are chosen from PSAT/NMSQT scores. In case these acronyms aren't familiar, here's what they mean. SAT, the first test offered in 1926, means Scholarship Aptitude---later changed to Assessment---Test similar to an IQ (intelligence quotient) test, to determine a student's readiness for college.

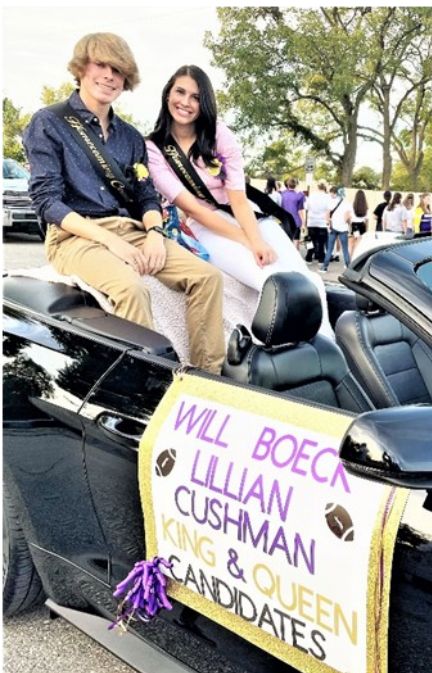
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Scholarship (from page 1)

It did not test what was already learned, but the student's natural capacity to learn. Then the test became known as PSAT/NMSQT---Preliminary Scholarship Assessment Test or National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test. It covers English grammar, writing and usage, United States and world literature, social studies and history and various areas of science and math.

Scholarship winners won't be announced until next spring. But from our knowledge of Will, his character, academic and extra-curricular accomplishments, his love and support of Our Saviour, the Mechanicsburg community and his family, Will is a winner from any point of view.

Homecoming royalty: Will and Lilly Cushman ride in the Mechanicsburg homecoming parade.



Miracles in the making



The miracle of the Covid-19 vaccine is not based on a few months of research, or even a few years. According to those who track medical science, the world was able to develop these vaccines so quickly because of decades of previous study and experiment. And they utilized knowledge and techniques proven by even earlier research. Also, manufacturing capabilities are much faster now and enormous funding allowed firms to run multiple trials in parallel, speeding up a once lengthy process.

Scientists believe in miracles. The Covid-19 vaccine is just such a miracle, a whole new concept of disease control and prevention. You know that the basis of all vaccines is the principle of immunology. The first vaccines exposed the body to a dead or weakened form of the disease which mimicked a real or natural infection and caused the human immune system to rapidly produce antigens to fight the disease. Those antigens protected the body against real infection.

But, for the first time since the typhoid vaccine in 1980, the vaccines developed for Covid-19 did not include even a tiny piece of the virus. Instead, international research teams developed a substance they named mRNA. The "m" stands for messenger. mRNA can be customized or coded for a particular disease, in this case, Covid-19. It does not include the virus or any portion of it and will not give you the disease!

When injected into body cells mRNA directs them to produce specific proteins. These proteins then tell the cells how to create antigens for the disease, in effect, manufacturing their own vaccines. It is believed that mRNA has the potential to be customized to make vaccines for malaria, pneumonia and influenza.

God, in his mercy, has endowed creation with unlimited possibility. Let us, like scientists, believe that nothing or no one in creation is insignificant or irrelevant, that success and failure are equally useful and that all effort, even our own, may enable yet another miracle.



Sharon, center, and Mary Neal, right, approve Paddy's placement of the new sign.



Fr. Derrick came by to meet volunteers and stayed to lend a hand.

Epiphany welcomed lots of community meal guests

For the first time in many months, all the food prepared for Epiphany's Sept. 19 Community Meal was distributed!

Usually serving from 5 to 6 p.m., volunteers that evening were obliged to bring in the new curbside sign and put CLOSED and an explanation on the Kenton Street door about 5:30 when the last of the forty boxed suppers was claimed.

The luscious, one-dish meal of chicken and noodles was prepared by Amy Forrest Catering of Mechanicsburg. It was accompanied by a big, buttered, home-baked biscuit and a selection of cookies: everybody's favorite chocolate chip provided by Heather Angus and soft, chewy oatmeal-raisin from Paddy Barr. Bottled water is always available for the asking.



Arms full of cookies, Julia is greeted by Laura, center, and Mary Neal.

Taking stock of the unusual food situation, the committee found that while there were more guests than usual, the number of meals each had requested was also considerably higher. "Ordering meals each month is really informed guesswork," said meal supervisor Paddy Barr, "and demand can be hard to predict." Some things may

be unpredictable, but you can count on Epiphany volunteers to once again be on duty from 5-6 p.m. at the church's Kenton Street door October 20---the third Wednesday of the month---with a delicious supper from Mercy Memorial Hospital, one of the program's most generous, consistent sponsors. See you there!

Thank You from The Fetz Family

Dear Cluster Family:

We continue to be grateful for your generous welcome as we begin our common ministry. On our first Sunday, you greeted us with enthusiasm before and after the service. The festive coffee hour at each congregation was simply superb. The goody basket full of local products was the perfect gesture in welcoming us home. And thank you for wearing your nametags so we can get to know you by name! It's a joy to serve among and with you.

With gratitude,
Fr. Derrick, Jamie and Mari

Looking ahead



Celebration of Holy Baptism on November 7

The Feast of All Saints (typically transferred to the first Sunday in November) is one of four feast days particularly appropriate to celebrate the Sacrament of Holy Baptism. We hope incorporate this sacred rite into our worship celebrations on All Saints' Sunday this year at Our Saviour and Epiphany. If you are interested in being baptized or have an infant or child you wish to have baptized, please contact Fr. Derrick (derrick.fetz@gmail.com or 937-653-3497). Fr. Derrick will meet with candidates or their parents prior to November 7.

Litany of Remembrance on All Saints' Sunday, November 7

As part of our celebration of All Saints' Sunday, we will remember all who have died in the past year. In addition to giving God thanks for the Cluster's saints who have entered into glory, we will remember others who are important to you. You may submit the names of those who you wish to remember and who have died over the past year to Amy Boeck in the Cluster Office (nmvec@ctcn.net or 937-653-3497). The Book of Remembrance will still be available at both churches.



Rev. Melody Williams

A fond tribute

We are deeply indebted to Rev. Melody Williams who for years past has graciously filled Cluster pulpits during extended planned transition periods and after a last-minute, Saturday night call. She has most recently officiated at Sunday worship and Eucharist since the departure of Fr. Charles in August. The pandemic had closed church doors during his tenure, but as conditions eased and vaccines became available, modest in-person services were resumed. Rev. Melody's gifts of adaptability and improvisation were put to the test, interpreting

and adjusting to changing Diocesan restrictions. Rev. Melody gave and received an affectionate farewell September 12 but returned October 3 to sub for Fr. Derrick who celebrated Homecoming at Our Saviour that day. Au revoir, Rev. Melody, God be with you 'til we meet again.



Around the Cluster



Fr. Derrick continues to visit the sick and home-bound members, including Dorothy Headlee, the oldest member of our Cluster.



Clockwise from top right: Fr. Derrick merges scripture and literature; Mari and Jamie admire coffee hour treats; Fr. Derrick and Ed Hardin at the buffet; the Fetz family cheers on the home team; Mary Neal welcomes Anthony Ehresmann, former Epiphany member



Centuries of change

Jerusalem Greer, author of September *Forward Day by Day* devotionals, finds Paul's first century comments about a new way of life equally true in the 21st century. Paul's First Corinthians' epistle speaks plainly: "For the present form of this world is passing away." Ms. Greer believes that Paul anticipated Jesus' return and the creation of the Kingdom of God on earth.

Christianity did gradually strengthen and spread, supporting Christ's followers during centuries of great physical, intellectual and political change. Archeologists and historians have produced evidence of human and animal life on this planet thousands of years before Christ, surviving in vastly different environments, living at the mercy of forces of change.

A new radar technique found fossilized human footprints several feet below the surface of White Sand Desert in southwestern United States. Carbon dating confirms a human presence there (adults and children) at least 30,000 years ago, before the Ice Age, now hidden under the accumulation of centuries.

Photos of recent 21st century change show "ghost forests," acres of dying pine trees along New Jersey's Atlantic coast, victims of the saltwater flowing inland as melting arctic ice raises ocean levels.

We are warned to prepare as change in atmospheric conditions---be they from natural or human causes---will be devastating. Some believe it is already upon us. Increases in the number and violence of storms and flooding, drought fueling vast wildfires, earthquakes and reactivated volcanos threaten rural and urban life, including the food supply. Viral epidemic exploded into a global pandemic and is still taking lives.

But the human capability to improvise and imagine and create has likewise burgeoned, finding new ways to live with reality. Ms. Greer concludes that we can trust that the love of God will not alter or pass away and that the human capacity to give and receive love will survive.

Cluster congregants are no strangers to change. Their endless capacity to give and receive love has breathed life into the work of Our Saviour and Epiphany for parts of three centuries of change. We can never be grateful enough for these open doors and open hearts, fulfilling Paul's vision of God's kingdom on earth.

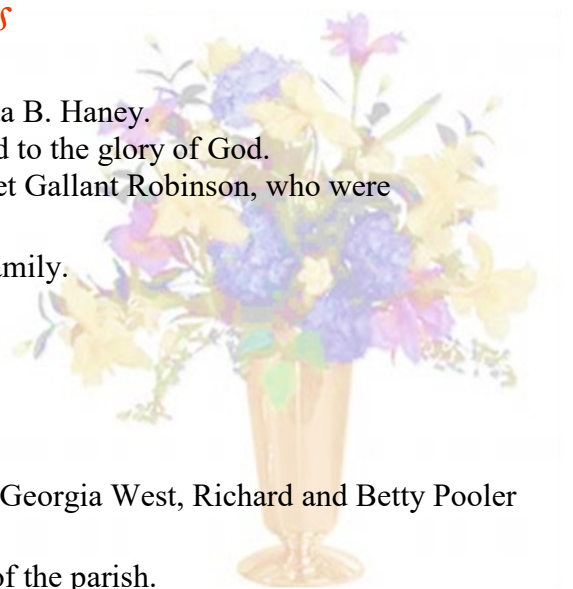
October altar flower donors

EPIPHANY

- Oct. 3 Sharon Applegate, in loving memory of her mother, Wanda B. Haney.
- Oct. 17 Mark and Shary Stadler, in memory of Roberta Risting and to the glory of God.
- Oct. 24 Sally Johnson in memory of her parents, John and Margaret Gallant Robinson, who were married in October 1926.
- Oct. 31 Ed and the Rev. Nancy Hardin, in thanksgiving for their family.

OUR SAVIOUR

- Oct. 3 Susie Westfall, in memory of family and friends.
- Oct. 10 Sam Zook, in memory of Harriet Jane Morse.
- Oct. 17 Penny and Roland Guy, in memory of Betty Guy.
- Oct. 24 Rev. Tim and Mrs. Becky West in memory of Clifton and Georgia West, Richard and Betty Pooler and Robert West.
- Oct. 31 Episcopal Church Women in memory of all the deceased of the parish.



Community meal offers enchilada entree

Americans have enthusiastically incorporated Mexican food into the American cuisine. Enchiladas, one of the favorite dishes, headed the menu for Our Saviour's September Community Meal. For the uninitiated, an enchilada consists of a rolled corn tortilla, stuffed with chicken or meat and sauced with chili.

Oasis Food Pantry provided this spicy main dish and Our Saviour added black beans and corn, pears, Kay Keller's chocolate brownies and a selection of sweets: chocolate and pumpkin cakes and chocolate chip and snickerdoodle cookies baked by Our Saviour's good friend, Keri (Mrs. Bill) Purk.

More than 65 people feasted on this hearty supper, boxed and distributed by Our Saviour regulars: Todd and Amy Boeck, Emily Rozmus, Greg Kimball, Jodi Compton, Dusty Hurst and Gary Lantz. Lending a hand were Mari, Jamie and Rev. Derrick Fetz. Mari's youthful energy was soon engaged in taking and returning food orders to guests on wheels. Thanks to Fr. Derrick for the pictures.

The monthly supper begins to regain some of the pleasant social exchange that made the first shared meals at Our Saviour so appealing. But committee and guests are alert to the lingering risks of Covid-19 and mutants and make every effort to assure the safety of the program.

Top: Dusty keeps an eye on a very large pot of black beans. Below, Amy does kitchen duty and also coordinates the meal program.



Above, Greg adds seasoning to Emily's roaster of corn. Below, a young volunteer fills fruit cups.





Pilot program needs volunteers

Heather Robison, Transportation Community Liaison for Catholic Social Services (CSS) of the Miami Valley, announces a new initiative aimed to provide transportation for individuals in our community without access to a private vehicle or public transit. To this end, CSS is recruiting volunteer drivers in each area; those who could offer at least two rides a month to medical appointments, employment, food shopping and errands. Volunteers must have a good driving record, a valid Ohio driver's license, proof of insurance and agree to attend required training sessions. They will receive mileage reimbursement.

You can make it possible for people to maintain independence, continue employment and get proper health care. For more information or to volunteer for this venture, please contact: RideConnect@cssmv-sidney.org or call 1-833-289-0227, ext. 1195. Thanks in advance from Heather, Catholic Social Services and those who will be blessed by your kindness.

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*Changing seasons
confirm God's constancy*