

# THE WAYNE Dispatch

JUNE 2019

WMHS  
CLASS OF

# 2019



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Valedictorians left to right: Chloe Adama-White, Emilee Rose Baker, Joseph John Cherian, Adrianna Farmer, Fatima Herrera, Grace Charlotte Rose Lefler and Salutatorian Rebecca Michelle Booth.

## WMHS Class of 2019 Valedictorians

Wayne Memorial High School has announced six Class of 2019 Valedictorians and one Salutatorian.

### Valedictorians in alphabetical order:

#### **Chloe Adama-White**

Daughter of Lynn Adams  
Chloe is graduating with a  
4.31 Cumulative GPA  
She will be attending Tuskegee University  
Majoring in Animal Science and  
Pre-veterinary Medicine

#### **Emilee Rose Baker**

Daughter of Kristine and Jason Baker  
Emilee is graduating with a 4.0 GPA  
She will be attending the  
University of Michigan-Dearborn  
Majoring in Finance

#### **Joseph John Cherian**

Son of John and Sally Cherian  
Joseph is graduating with a 4.002 GPA  
He will be attending the University of Toledo  
Majoring in Pre-Pharmacy

#### **Adrianna Farmer**

Daughter of Patricia Farmer  
Adrianna is graduating with a  
4.11 Cumulative GPA  
She will be attending the  
University of Michigan- Ann Arbor  
Majoring in Microbiology

#### **Fatima Herrera**

Daughter of Saul and Maria Herrera  
Fatima is graduating with a  
4.09 Cumulative GPA  
She will be attending Carleton College  
Majoring in Biology

#### **Grace Charlotte Rose Lefler**

Daughter of Tisa and Richard Lefler  
Grace is graduating with a  
4.0 Cumulative GPA  
She will be attending Madonna University  
Majoring in Psychology

### **Salutatorian**

#### **Rebecca Michelle Booth**

Daughter of Sarah and Brian Booth  
Rebecca is graduating with a  
3.979 Cumulative GPA  
She will be attending the  
University of Michigan- Dearborn  
Majoring in Anthropology



## NEWS BRIEFS

### Concerts in the park scheduled

The 2019 Concerts in the Park schedule has been released. The concert series, presented by the Wayne Rotary Club, is held at the amphitheatre in Goudy Park on Wednesday nights at 7:30 p.m.

July 17-Major Woody  
(Rock, Dance, Alternative, R & B, Motown)  
July 24-Theo Gridiron  
(Pure Detroit soul)  
July 31-Live Bullet Detroit  
(A Bob Seger Experience)  
August 7-Rock Star  
(80s Hair Band)  
August 14-Steve King & the Dittilies (Variety)  
August 21-Power Play  
(Rock)  
August 28-Fifty Amp Fuse  
(Greatest hits of all Time)

Major sponsors: Beaumont Hospital, Mark Chevrolet, Wayne Downtown Development Authority

### Playscape build volunteers being sought

Beaumont has ordered a new Playscape for Rotary Park II from Miracle Playscapes. Miracle makes great equipment and is the manufacturer the majority of playscapes in Wayne and our surrounding cities come from.

On Friday, June 28, the Wayne DPW (Department of Public Works) will be preparing the ground at the park with a Bobcat and an auger while volunteers unload the playscape and move components to



Wayne Society Board Member John Mills speaks at the Wayne Rotary Club rededication of the Wayne Memorial rock at the Wayne Historical Museum on May 28, 2019.

the areas they will be installed at. Everyone will then get the posts dropped in preparation for assembly.

On Saturday, June 29, everything will be assembled. This will consist mainly of lots of lifting parts and bolting them together. This will be a collaborative effort between everyone participating.

The manufacturer recommends at least 16 participants to construct the particular model we'll be getting. Hours are not yet finalized, but it will likely be an all-day event both days. We just wanted to give everyone a heads up, so they could block these days out on their calendars should they want to participate. This event will be updated as more details are

finalized.

### Book signing event

Books on the Avenue, 35622 W. Michigan Ave., will be hosting a book signing on Saturday, June 8, 4:00-6:00 p.m. Come celebrate the release of *The Silence of Silver* and support your local authors! Join authors Bridget Leanne and Carl Joseph Cascone for a meet and greet and book signing. Copies will be available for sale. *The Silence of Silver* is a story about the strength and love of the Plata family while they deal with an accident that leaves their father and husband stuck within himself.

### Police community meeting

There will be a Police Community Meeting on June 13 at 7:00 p.m. The meeting will be held at Wayne City

Hall. Residents will receive information about crime trends and safety. Residents will also have the opportunity to ask questions.

A representative from Crime Stoppers of Michigan will be at the meeting to discuss their organization as well.

### Knit and crochet night

The Wayne Public Library is starting a casual monthly knitting and crocheting night! Bring any of your knitting or crocheting supplies and enjoy a casual meet-up with fellow crafters. Knit and Crochet Nights run from 5:30-7:30 p.m., but you're free to drop in at any point during that time to get to know other attendees and to work on your projects. This is an adult program, but teens are welcome to join in as well! The library is located at 3737 S. Wayne Rd.

### Family game night

The Wayne Public Library, 3737 S. Wayne Rd., will be hosting Family Game Night on June 5. The festivities start at 5:30 p.m. Try out a new game or challenge your family members to a classic! There will be a wide variety of board games—favorites like Monopoly, Connect 4, Parcheesi, and Clue—as well as some new games you might not have experienced yet! Drop in for a few minutes or stay for hours. All ages are welcome!

### Charity car show

The Wayne Masonic Lodge, 37137 Palmer Rd, Westland, invites you to their 2019 Charity Car Show. All cars are welcome. The entrance fee is \$15 which includes a goodie bag and a t-shirt. All proceeds go to

See **Briefs**, page 10



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# Two elementary schools go to war with each other

By Carolyn Marnon

"Penny Wars was the best time I've ever had with a fundraiser," said Hoover Elementary School parent liaison Jessica McMahon. "I had no idea it would lead us to collect over \$1,000 in only two weeks or the amount of fun we had while running it! The name of the game really is sabotage."

The Wayne Police Department was the beneficiary of the fundraising competition held between Hoover and Roosevelt Mc-Grath elementary schools. Charles D. Hallman, Roosevelt-McGrath Principal, presented what he called "a Happy Gilmore-sized check" for \$2,460 to Police Chief Ryan Strong at the May 7 city council meeting.

For the past two years, Hoover and Roosevelt Mc-Grath have both been chosen for the police department's Shop with a Cop program. The schools wanted to give back to the cops. After the check presentation, Chief Strong publicly recognized Sergeants Hughes and Perez for keeping the program rolling.

According to Roosevelt Mc-Grath parent liaison Jillian Boston, "Penny Wars has been around for a very long time. I started doing it at Roosevelt-McGrath about 5 years ago. The first year we raised money for Angels of Hope. I am not sure who originally came up with the idea; however, I saw it on Pinterest. We collected donations over 10 school days. All forms of money were acceptable. The pennies counted as positive points for the class and anything else was negative. So if a student brought in 25 pennies and someone else put a quarter in their bucket then they lost 25 pennies. So silver and paper denominations were considered 'sabotage.' At the end of each day I would write the class totals up so they could figure out who to sabotage the next day."

"Roosevelt-McGrath won between the schools," Jillian said. "We brought in \$1,382 and Hoover brought in \$1,078. The winning school gets to decide on something silly for the losing principal/parent liaison to do. As for the classes, the class that brought in the most pennies won a pizza party, which was Mrs. Hoover's 2nd grade. The class with the largest negative amount won



Charles D. Hallman, Roosevelt-McGrath Principal, Jillian Boston, and Jess McMahon present Wayne Police Chief Ryan Strong a check to the Wayne Police for two thousand four hundred sixty dollars from Penny Wars between Roosevelt-McGrath and Hoover Elementary Schools.

a popsicle party and that was Mrs. Hess with -220.84. I am not sure if Hoover is doing anything like that though."

Hoover parent liaison Jess McMahon relates in an email "Jillian Boston and I had tossed around the idea of having a fundraiser competition between our two schools at previous parent coordinator meetings, as we are so close in distance and want to involve our students in helping our community. When Jill suggested a Penny War and explained how easy and fun it is, I was sold on the idea. We offered a pizza party for the class with the highest points at the end, but one student's grandmother stepped in and offered to help throw a school wide pizza party with the Belleville Police Department, where her son is an officer, to show their support for the amazing work our students put in for this fundraiser! It was a fabulous surprise. The class that won was Mrs. Carroll's class, who was the front

runner for 5 days before getting pushed down to second to last and came back for an astonishing win at the last minute. It was anybody's game and they played it so well!"

"Shop with a Cop is a fantastic program that gives to families in our area that need help with food and holiday gifts," she continues. "It is a program that is run on donations,

and in some past years has not had enough put into it to host at all. This year, we wanted to give back and help strengthen the bond between our schools and the community that already does so much for us. It's also a great way to teach our students that we can care for others in small ways and they still add up to big things."

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## NEWS BRIEFS

### News Briefs, Continued from page 4

benefit Rainbow Girls and Demolays. The Car Show is on Saturday, June 8 from 9:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m. There will be raffles, prizes, music, a food court and a live auction. For more information, call (734) 721-7950.

### Hell from the Heavens

Come listen as author John Wukovits shares the story of WWII's greatest kamikaze attack. Nothing could have prepared the crew of the USS Laffey for the moment when the small ship was targeted by no fewer than twenty-two Japanese suicide aircraft for eighty minutes. But the Laffey somehow survived, and the gutted American warship limped from Okinawa's shore for home, where the ship and surviving crew would be feted as heroes. Mel Gibson has signed on to direct the film adaptation of this book, starring Mark Wahlberg. John will be at the Wayne Public Library on Tuesday,

June 18, at 6:30 p.m.

### Historical museum events this summer

#### June 13 – A Historic Walk down Monroe Street

7:00 p.m. Presenter Tyler Moll will show pictures as we take a virtual walk down historic Monroe Street and back up Newberry street. There will be a free live walking tour with pictures June 20 and 27 at 11:00 a.m. Tour begins at the museum.

#### June 15 – Paint Pour

1:00-3:00 p.m. Join us at the museum for a fun painting event where you layer colors in a cup and pour them on a canvas to make fun and funky modern art. All paint, supplies and canvas provided. Tickets \$30, more canvasses available for additional fee.

### Firefighters charity BBQ

Join the Wayne Firefighters for

their 3rd Annual Wayne Firefighters Charity BBQ on Saturday, June 22 11:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m. The event is held at the fire station, 3300 S. Wayne Rd. Cost is \$5. Advanced tickets are not necessary. Firefighters will be serving up your choice of hamburger or hot dog, chips, drink and dessert. There will be a bounce house, face painting, ice cream and more! If you have questions, call Fire Administration (734) 722-1111.

### Kite building and decorating

Come to the Wayne Public Library, 3737 S. Wayne Rd, on Tuesday, July 2 from 1:00-2:00 p.m. for a kite building and decorating workshop for children ages 4-11. Take the kite home and enjoy hours of flying!

### Family fun day

The Wayne Historical Museum will be hosting a Family Fun Day on

Saturday, July 13, 10:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m. at the museum, 1 Towne Square. There will be children's crafts, games and activities, classic cars, museum tours, food and refreshments and entertainment by Harmony Town Barbershop Men's Chorus.

### Space stories

Children of all ages and their families can come to the Wayne Public Library, 3737 S. Wayne Rd, on Tuesday, July 16, at 3:00 p.m. to listen to stories and sing songs about space, planets and the universe.

### Rocket and bubble fun

The Wayne Public Library, 3737 S. Wayne Rd, will be hosting Rockets' Red Glare and a Universe of Bubbles on Saturday, June 29, at 3:00 p.m. Come celebrate the 4th on the Plaza by seeing how far your rocket can go and then filling the sky with bubbles. Snacks are provided and children of all ages are welcome.

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# Officer Chad Colwell Wayne's police officer of the year

By Carolyn Marnon

Wayne Police Officer Chad Colwell was recently named Wayne's 2018 Police Officer of the Year. Officer Colwell was hired as police officer by the City of Wayne in December, 2015.

As a member of the Road Patrol, Officer Colwell consistently works hard without complaint. Highly motivated, he is well-respected inside and outside the department. He is looked up to by his peers and supervisors and is well-known in the department for his vast knowledge of criminal laws and relevant court cases.

Officer Colwell has taken a strong interest in training his fellow officers by becoming an emergency vehicle operations instructor and field training officer.

Officer Colwell was recognized for his quick thinking and bravery while responding to an armed robbery at a local drugstore. It had been determined that the suspect had fled on foot; Officer Colwell pursued the



Wayne's 2018 Police Officer of the Year Chad Colwell (holding plaque) next to Police Chief Ryan Strong with some of Wayne's finest officers.

armed suspect on foot and safely apprehended him. The suspect was arrested; the gun used in the robbery was recovered.

Officer Colwell received resolutions from the City Council and Wayne County Commissioner Al Haidous. Police Chief Ryan Strong stated, "Officer Colwell is truly de-

serving of the title and honor of Wayne Police Department Police Officer of the Year."

Officer Colwell has also received a Meritorious Service Award, the highest award in the Wayne police department for the same incident mentioned above. He says he feels great about the awards. "Training and

learning from the more senior officers" is what helped him get to this point in his career. "I feel appreciated."

## Officers receive awards

At the June 4 City Council meet-

See **Police**, page 14

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# Sale of bonds to save taxpayers money and put additional funds into building updates

Wayne-Westland Community Schools is proud to announce the successful sale of its 2019 School Building and Site Bonds in the amount of \$64,770,000 as authorized by the voters of the School District on November 6, 2018. Together with the bond premium generated from the bond sale, the District was able to exceed their first series construction fund deposit goal with a fund deposit just under \$69.8 million.

This means that the amount available for construction came in at \$625,941.25 higher than the budgeted amount. This is good news as this means that there is an additional \$625,000 available for improvements above the budgeted amount.

Also, the actual bond interest rate came in much lower than the estimate. That means that the total bond payments are \$13,167,163.45 lower than the budgeted amount. This means taxpayers will pay less than originally anticipated over the course of the bond.

Dr. Shelley Holt, superintendent, worked with the District's municipal advisor, Baker Tilly Municipal Advisors, LLC to secure these rates.

She said, "I'm a teacher who be-

"We are so proud that we are able to be good financial stewards and sell our bonds at the most advantageous time.

The District and our community will benefit from the fiscal responsibility and the improvements to our schools that the bond funds will allow us to complete."

**Superintendent Dr. Shelley Holt**

came a business woman and superintendent. This bond sale is a testament to all teachers and people anywhere that we can do anything we set our minds to when we get the right people on our team working towards a common goal. We believe in Wayne-Westland!"

The 2019 School Building and Site Bonds, representing the first series of bonds pursuant to such authorization, will be used for the purpose of remodeling, equipping, re-equipping, furnishing, re-furnishing school buildings, athletic fields and other facilities for safety and security, energy conservation and other purposes; acquiring and installing instructional technology equipment and infrastructure in school buildings and other facilities; construction of additions to existing school buildings and athletic field houses at

both high school sites; preparing, developing and improving sites at school buildings, playgrounds, athletic fields and other facilities and the purchase of school buses, and paying the costs of issuing the Bonds.

In preparing to sell the 2019 School Building and Site Bonds, the School District, working with their municipal advisor, Baker Tilly Municipal Advisors, LLC, requested that S&P Global Ratings, acting through Standard and Poor's Financial Services LLC ("S&P") evaluate the School District's credit quality. S&P assigned the School District the underlying rating of "BBB+" and stable. The Bonds were also qualified through the State of Michigan's School Bond Qualification and Loan Program which further enhanced the District's Bond rating to "AA" and sta-

ble.

"We are so proud that we are able to be good financial stewards and sell our bonds at the most advantageous time. The District and our community will benefit from the fiscal responsibility and the improvements to our schools that the bond funds will allow us to complete," said Holt.

The School District's financing was conducted by the Michigan investment banking office of the brokerage firm, Stifel, the municipal advisory firm, Baker Tilly Municipal Advisors LLC and the law firm serving as bond counsel, Miller, Canfield, Paddock and Stone, P.L.C. The School District's 2019 School Building and Site Bonds, were sold at a true interest rate of 2.99% with a final maturity of 2043 (a repayment term of approximately 25 years).

Brodie Killian, Managing Director with Stifel states, "Wayne-Westland Community Schools' Bonds were sold at an opportune time in the bond market. The District was able to enter the bond market after a recent decline in interest rates. The financing met the goals of the District and resulted in a cost of borrowing that was considerably lower than originally anticipated."

## Downtown Days coming August 9 and 10

Downtown Days is moving to August. Downtown Days will be held in Veterans Plaza at 34841 Veterans Plaza Street, next to the Wayne Public Library in historic Downtown Wayne on Friday, August 9 from 11:00 a.m.-9:00 p.m. and Saturday, August 10 from 9:00 a.m.-9:00 p.m.

Wayne Main Street has sought to build upon the success of previous Downtown Days by increasing the number of activities occurring throughout the weekend, with a focus on art, sales, markets, and live music. "Wayne Main Street is excited about the changes we have made in this year's event, with the new loca-



tion of Veterans Plaza, and all-day entertainment. We feel that we will be offering Wayne a unique family-friendly experience filled with music, food, and good times," says Paul Sposite, Board Member of Wayne Main Street and Chair of Downtown Days.

Some of this year's highlights include:

- A Flea Market/Community Garage Sale with vendors featuring antiques, collectables, art, and other unique offerings.
- On Friday, August 9, the Detroit Institute of Arts will be hosting a free Drop-In Workshop for kids.
- The third annual Window on

Wayne Photography Contest, presented by Helium Studios.

- Art-O-Motive returns for a second year with decorated car hoods from talented artists.

- Live musical performances throughout the weekend.

A full schedule of events will be available at [downtownwayne.org/downtowndays](http://downtownwayne.org/downtowndays) in the coming weeks.

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# Longtime Wayne resident celebrates her 90th year

By Carolyn Marnon

Wayne resident Irene “Virgie” Mack celebrated her 90th birthday last month after being honored with a resolution by the City Council at their May 7 meeting. After City Clerk Tina Stanke read the resolution, Virgie seemed surprised when she commented “I did all this?” Wayne resident John Van Stipdonk led the audience and city council in singing a rousing round of Happy Birthday to the upcoming nonagenarian who attended the meeting with her son, Milt Jr. and his wife, Judge Laura Mack.

Born in Detroit on May 22, 1929, Virgie was the 2nd of three children born to Roy G. Johnston and Mary Waits. When she was 15, her parents divorced. Her mother, Mary, held various jobs to put food on the table. Mary befriended some actresses at the Fox Theatre who gave their cast-off clothing to her to make clothing for Virgie and her siblings. Daughter-in-law, Laura Mack, (who is the 29th District Court Judge for Wayne), commented that “Even though they were poor, they were always clean and well-dressed.”

A strong work ethic was instilled in Virgie and her brother, Leroy, and sister, Ionia (aka Dolores) as they had to clean the house, shop for groceries and cook at a young age. It wasn’t all work though as they were able to swim in Belleville Lake and dance to the big bands of the day.

Sitting in a chair in her living room, wearing black pants, a floral blouse and black sweater, Virgie puts on red lipstick before she speaks and then places it on the table next to her chair. She has so many memories to share.

One of Virgie’s special memories happened when she lived near the Willow Run Bomber Plant. She says she remembers laying in the field on her back and waving to the pilots who were flying bombers out of the plant, headed to Europe. She remembers that they always waved back.

Virgie remembers when the Rouge River wasn’t polluted. She remembers tobogganing down the nearby hills. The high school was called Wayne High and she participated in the Glee Club and the Quill and Scroll Club. One time, she and



Wayne resident Irene “Virgie” Mack in 1945.

some other girls went to school with curlers in their hair because there was a dance later that night. They got in trouble and had to take the curlers out. Virgie also liked to ride motorcycles. Milt had a motorcycle.

Virgie met her husband, Milton L. Mack, while attending Wayne Memorial High School. (Milton died several years ago). A few days after graduating in 1948, they were married. They bought their first and only house on

Glenwood Street in 1953. Virgie says the brand new house was \$13,500. When they bought the house, Glenwood was a dirt road and there was a farm across the street where Uht Funeral Home now stands.

Virgie had two small children at home when Milton was diagnosed with tuberculosis and had to recover at Maybury Sanatorium for several months in 1956. The company Milton worked for at the time continued

to pay his salary while he was in the sanatorium for about nine months and then for a bit while he recovered at home. His fellow employees contributed their overtime pay to the family. Virgie is very grateful that she didn’t have to worry about how she was going to pay the bills. Since she had no extra money, she cleaned houses for others and made clothing for her kids. They went on to have two more children to round out their family: Milton Jr., Robert, Theresa and Marie.

“She was a fantastic mother,” says Laura. Virgie took the two boys on the bus to Tiger Stadium one day. She’d take the bus to the Olympia with Milt to attend hockey games. At that time, she says you could walk around Detroit, have something to eat, and enjoy yourself.

Eventually becoming a seamstress while she stayed at home, she ended up making dozens of wedding and wedding party dresses in her home. Her “business” started when she was asked to make a veil in a different color for a wedding. Someone saw it and through word of mouth, her reputation grew. “I didn’t like to say no” because she always wanted to help people out. She remembers having bridesmaid dresses lined up in her living room. One time, a bridesmaid was not coming to the house for her fitting. Virgie called her up and the girl’s father said the girl had a 46 bust. Well, Virgie made up the dress and guess what? It fit! Virgie says she always got to see her “artwork” when she went to the weddings.

As the kids grew older, Virgie went on to work outside the home. She worked at Washington School for 21 years. She says she was one of the first para-pros in Michigan. Some instructors came from Wayne State University to teach lessons on how to handle children. There was no other special training for the job. When she started working, there were no benefits; later, she was able to become a member of the teacher’s union.

Her faith is important to her. When she married Milton, she had to convert to Catholicism. She took to the religion right away and became

See **Birthday**, page 15



# Board of Education approves closing three schools



In August 2021 Hoover Elementary School will close.

At their May 21 meeting the Wayne-Westland Community Schools Board of Education voted to accept the recommendation from the Demographics and Utilization subcommittee to close three schools over the next three years.

The recommendation was approved in a 6-0 vote.

In August 2020 Marshall Upper

Elementary School will close. This will reallocate \$10 million of Bond funds to other school buildings in the District. Marshall will potentially be repurposed to house existing district programs.

In August 2021 Hoover Elementary School will close. This will reallocate \$4.7 million to other school buildings in the District. Hoover will

also potentially be repurposed to serve the community.

In August 2022, if needed, Walker-Winter Elementary School will close.

The reason the District had to consider closing schools is because of the trend of declining student enrollment. In November 2018 voters in the community approved a \$158 million bond. To qualify for the bond funds, the schools must operate at

80% capacity.

In April 2018 the Board of Education approved a grade level re-configuration to move to K-5, 6-8 and 9-12 grade and to close three buildings beginning in Fall 2020.

From December 2018- April 2019, the Demographics and Utilization subcommittee collected data, held focus groups with stakeholders, and created a recommendation to present to the Board of Education.

## POLICE, Continued from page 11

ing, several awards were given by Chief Strong to members of the police department. Two Meritorious Service Awards were handed out. Officer Chad Colwell received one for his actions in the armed robbery at the local drugstore.

After a brutal homicide last year, Officer Michael Talmadge observed and was able to apprehend the suspect and help to keep the community safe as a result.

Officer Kyle Talmadge was given a Commendation Award for his actions after a brutal assault occurred. Two other officers also received Commendations. Officer Arndt apprehended a suspect in an incident where four people were injured during a brutal assault. Lt. Schmidtke

was able to get a cold case involving a 2001 sexual assault closed.

## Police department receives community partner award

First Step, whose mission is "to eliminate both domestic and sexual violence and to provide comprehensive services to individuals and families impacted by these crimes," presented the Wayne Police Department with their Community Partner Award last month at the 2nd annual You Are the Light Gala. According to First Step staff, the award was to recognize "the Wayne Police Department and its leadership for their professionalism and for interacting with survivors with compassion and understanding." Police Chief Ryan Strong and Mayor John P. Rhaesa were on hand to receive the award.



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## Birthday, Continued from page 13

more dedicated than her born-Catholic husband. She's been a member of St. Mary's for over 70 years. Until recently, she taught catechism there for 40 years. She tried to leave teaching several times before, but there was never a teacher to take over. When they were able to get two teachers not long ago, she was out of there! She still helps out when she can at the church.

Laura, her daughter-in-law, says "She's very spunky. She's willing to try anything." Virgie pipes up "I'll try anything!" She has a kindle, an iPad, a computer and is learning Alexa (Amazon's virtual assistant). She's not a big traveler, but she has been to Canada (Milton was from Canada) and last year, she travelled with Milt Jr. and Laura to Italy.

"We didn't think iPhones. We were just lucky if we had a dollar to buy a loaf of bread, a bottle of milk," said Virgie when asked about her youth.

Reflecting back on her life in Wayne, Virgie recalls urban renewal and the devastation it caused in Wayne. "It was the worst thing to do to Wayne," she said referring to the



Irene "Virgie" Mack with her son Milt and Lara Mack.

split of Michigan Avenue. She recalls the parking structure by the library was built to bring businesses to the

area. She remembers Lazar's, ("they had everything!") the dime store, the old library. When the road split, the

decline started. "It ruined Wayne!"

Virgie tells a story about her early demise. One day, UHT Funeral Home had the name "Virgie Mack" on their outside board announcing services for the deceased. Friends saw it and thought she had died. Turns out there was another Virgie Mack in this small world.

Virgie recently attended the All-City reunion for the high school. She says there were about 7-8 of her classmates there.

This energetic woman, who laughs and smiles often, still gets out in the community. She meets with her union friends once a month and meets with a group of people she worked with every Wednesday to have fun. She has collected Hummels and Precious Moments. She has some figurines that she made. "I go from one collection to another," she says. She still knits, crochets and sews.

About 90 people who love Virgie came together to celebrate her 90th birthday at a party held at Wayne Tree Manor. All five of her grandchildren were there. Seventeen of her 19 great-grandchildren were able to attend. Virgie had a great time!



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