Leigh Ann Meinecke spins Romney wool inside the Wolcott Keeper's House on June 20. (Photo by Sheri Trusty)

Spinning a little education on Pioneer Day

BY SHERI TRUSTY

MARBLEHEAD - For a little while, it was the 1820s in Marblehead again. During the Pioneer Day event at the Wolcott Keeper's House on June 20, Leigh Ann Meinecke and Nancy Kovacs of the Black Swamp Spinners Guild of Northwest Ohio demonstrated vintage spinning techniques that were common to early settlers.

Meinecke showed a method called woolen spun using Romney wool that results in "warm and fluffy" yarn that is perfect for making socks and other cozy clothes, she said. Kovacs spun on a 1970s Ashford Wheel that was made in New Zealand. She demonstrated the worsted spun method that creates a much finer yarn that is popular for creating shawls and scarves.

"It's for things you would wear, as opposed to window curtains or other rough things," Kovacs said.

Both ladies have trained at the John C. Campbell Folk School in North Carolina, and now they enjoy sharing the craft with others at events like Pioneer Day. Kovacs presented a spinning demonstration at the Portage River Festival in Elmore on June 28.

"We both do a lot of educational things. I recently did a presentation on the History of Textiles," Kovacs said.

Although they like to teach, they also like to learn. Meinecke recently returned from a spinning class at the John C. Campbell Folk School, and Kovacs is working through an online course on prehistoric textiles presented by textile archaeologist Sally Pointer.

"Before there was wool and silk, people used things like grasses and flax," Kovacs said.

Kovacs has been spinning for about 12 years, but she has been passionate about creating with her hands her entire life.

"I've always been interested in making things," she said. "My mom tried to get me to play with dolls, but I would be outside making mud pies and serving them on Hosta leaves."

Meinecke and Kovacs encourage anyone with an interest in spinning or other early-settler skills to visit the John C. Campbell Folk School, which offers a variety of classes, from basketry and blacksmithing to scrimshaw and shoemaking.

They also encourage spinners of all levels to join the Black Swamp Spinners Guild which hosts meetings at Bernina Stitchin Post in Walbridge. The guild was established in 1977.

"We get people from all over Northwest Ohio," Kovacs said.

For more information on the guild, visit https://blackswampspinnersguild.godaddysites.com.

The Wolcott Keeper's House is owned by Danbury Township, and the Ottawa County Historical Society presents historical events at the house, like Pioneer Day, several times a year. Steve & Lisa Ball will perform a concert, "Summer Music at the Wolcott Keeper's House," on Saturday, July 11.

Pioneer Day was part of Ottawa County's celebration of America's 250th anniversary. For more information on America 250 events or on the Wolcott Keeper's House, visit www.ottawacountyhistory.org.

Firelands Symphony Orchestra will perform an Independence Day concert at the Marblehead Lighthouse. (Submitted photo)

Orchestra returns to Marblehead Lighthouse for July 4th concert

MARBLEHEAD - The Firelands Symphony Orchestra invites families, locals, and visitors to celebrate Independence Day at its Summer Pops Concert on Saturday, July 4, at 6 p.m. on the grounds of the historic Marblehead Lighthouse.

The free outdoor concert will feature the full Firelands Symphony Orchestra (Carl Topilow, Music Director), and Guest Conductor Dean Buck, performing a spirited program of patriotic favorites, marches, and beloved popular music selections for audiences of all ages. Joining the orchestra as guest vocalist will be Connor Bogart O'Brien, whose voice and performance are always a crowd favorite.

Set against the scenic backdrop of Lake Erie, the Summer Pops Concert offers a perfect way to celebrate the holiday with family and friends. Audience members are encouraged to bring lawn chairs or blankets, relax by the water, and enjoy an evening of live music in one of Ohio's most iconic settings. Following the concert, attendees can remain on-site to enjoy views of Cedar Point's fireworks display as it illuminates the lakefront sky.

The concert is free and open to the public thanks to the generous support of the Randolph J. & Estelle M. Dorn Foundation, the Albert G. & Olive H. Schlink Foundation, and the Ohio Arts Council.

"Our summer concerts have become a treasured tradition for our community," said Carl Topilow, who curated this concert program. "There is something truly special about gathering at Marblehead Lighthouse to celebrate our nation through music while enjoying one of the most beautiful locations on Lake Erie."

For more information about the Firelands Symphony Orchestra and its free summer season, visit the Firelands Symphony website at www.firelandssymphony.com.

Perch with a view: St. Mary Byzantine to host summer fish fries in Marblehead

Volunteer Samantha Lee, granddaughter of St. Mary parishioner Elaine Roth, serves a perch dinner at St. Mary Byzantine Catholic Church. (Photo by Jane Danchisen Pittman)

BY JANE DANCHISEN PITTMAN

MARBLEHEAD - Delicious Lake Erie yellow perch, cod, shrimp, and chicken tender dinners are back by popular demand at St. Mary Byzantine Catholic Church in Marblehead on Friday, July 10 and Friday, August 14 from 4 - 7 p.m. Lakeview dining and takeout dinners are prepared to order and include pierogi or french fries, cole slaw, and rolls and butter. Dinners range from $12 to $22. Ala carte items are available. Homemade desserts and tickets for raffle baskets may also be purchased.

According to Father Joseph Repko, perch is the biggest seller because it is Lake Erie yellow perch. He noted that St. Mary parishioner and area chef, John "J" Bou-Sliman, oversees food preparation. Proceeds benefit the St. Mary Marblehead Building Fund. Father Repko also announced that 2027 will be a milestone year for the parish.

"We will celebrate the 50th anniversary of the dedication of the church and the 130th anniversary of the parish," he said.

St. Mary Marblehead was founded in 1897 and has had three locations in the village. It is the oldest Ruthenian parish in the Eparchy of Parma. Ruthenians are immigrants from the Carpathian Mountains in what is now eastern Slovakia, western Ukraine, and southeast Poland – the homeland of many area residents. The current church was dedicated in 1977 by Bishop Emil Mihalik. The first Divine Liturgy was celebrated on Christmas Eve 1976 by Father Frank Korba.

While Byzantine Catholics are in full communion with the Pope of Rome, they trace their heritage to Byzantium, capital of the Byzantine Empire (present-day Istanbul). The Byzantine Church is similar to the Russian Orthodox Church in liturgy, sacraments, and church traditions.

St. Mary Marblehead has many ongoing activities. The annual Fall Craft Show will be held Saturday, Oct. 10, and features vendors, food, and music. Rentals of two lakefront halls are available for wedding receptions; graduation, anniversary and birthday parties; family reunions; retreats, and more. The church's newest cookbook, "All things New," is for sale for $20. The title is a reflection of the Scripture when Jesus said "Behold, I am making all things new" from Revelation 21:5. The ethnic cookbook is a compilation of 300 recipes from three cookbooks that were published decades earlier. It is dedicated to the Ladies Aid Society for their many years of service. The cookbook preserves family recipes for future generations and includes favorites like beet horseradish, paska (Easter bread), and nut and poppy seed bread.

St. Mary Byzantine Catholic Church is located at 505 E. Main St., adjacent to the historic Marblehead Lighthouse. Divine Liturgy is celebrated Saturdays at 4 p.m. and Sundays at 10 a.m. All are welcome! For more information, visit stmarymarblehead.com or contact Father Repko at frrepko@ameritech.net or 419-967-7398.

Congratulations to Kristen Stewart who was chosen among 178 entries as the winner of the ***Find Dino Contest in The Beacon!*** Dino was hiding in the ad for *The Three Legged Dog* on Page 8.

Kristen wins **6 VIP Passes to African Safari Wildlife Park!**