

PARISH VISITOR

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Celebrating **40** years
Come join us!

40th Anniversary Celebration Begins

Lutherans like to eat, so what better way to start a year of celebration than with a dinner. We celebrated the first event to mark Advent's 40th anniversary year on February 14. Our youth went all out to host a wonderful dinner. At the dinner Marion Knaus, Chair of the Future Directions Task Force, presented an anniversary banner to the congregation. We had two banners made. One is hanging on the balcony railing in the sanctuary. The second will hang on the outside wall of the church so everyone driving north on Don Mills Road can see it. We thank Lutheran Life Insurance Company for a \$500 grant toward the purchase of these banners.

Walter Rothenburger introduced the hanging banners he created with the Chi Rho monogram at our worship service on February 15. These were the first of four art pieces commissioned by the task force to mark the anniversary year.

Our next event is Pastor Huras joining us on March 7 to preach. As Advent's Pastor/Developer, he led the first worship service on February 3, 1963, and his invitation to preach will commemorate this event. Pastor Huras served Advent until 1978. We particularly invite our charter members and former members to attend this special service of celebration.

We are preparing a brochure detailing all our events and descriptions of the

other commissioned pieces of art. This will be available shortly. We encourage you to keep it as a reference for these occasions and also to give them to other friends and former members of Advent and invite them to join us when they can.

Our anniversary theme is paraphrased from Luke 10:2, "I send you out as labourers into the harvest." This theme was selected as we are all labourers in the field. Our many talents will be included during the year as we work together in outreach and celebration.

The task force has worked for the past two years researching a special project where we can show our outreach and ministry. At our annual meeting on February 15, the congregation approved a \$40,000 fund-raising effort over the next three years to raise \$30,000 for the NUC-TUCT project – a non-denominational 53-unit housing project at Yonge and Cummer to provide housing for low-income persons. We also approved raising \$10,000 to sponsor a refugee through CLWR.

We will produce a second brochure that includes photos of each of the stained glass and agate windows in the church. This brochure will give information about the donor, date of dedication, theme and a bit of background of the windows.

So, come and celebrate with us. Happy anniversary year. ♦

Peanut Shell



The time to celebrate is here. Starting with the youth-hosted dinner on Valentine's Day through to our final event scheduled for early 2005, this is a year of celebration for Advent. Please invite former members and friends to join you at our services and events.

The ELW is planning an interesting program for March 17. I'm sure they wouldn't mind if interested men also come to hear about the saints and sinners and have a chance to win a prize.

Forty is a common number this month. In addition to our 40th anniversary year, we are also in the season of Lent – a 40-day period leading to Easter. And a little birdie also tells us that our Pastor is celebrating his 40th birthday in early March. Is anyone celebrating their 40th wedding anniversaries?

We thank everyone for contributing to another successful soup supper on Ash Wednesday. We particularly thank the soup makers and those who brought other food for the dinner, set up and cleaned up.

We have a lot on our agenda over the next few months. We particularly have to think about how we will contribute to our special outreach projects – the NUC-TUCT project and CLWR refugee sponsorship. We need to do this in addition to our regular offerings. So in this season of Lent when tradition says to give up something, please consider donating the amount of money that would cost to the anniversary project.

Special thanks go to Bob Lageman for his work with our youth in presenting *Café 40* and their other projects. I've never seen such an excited group of youth at Advent. We'll see some information from Congregational Council in the *Parish Visitor* this year. Kristin Doak has been appointed to report on Council meeting discussions and actions.

So, the party has started – come and celebrate with us.

Judy



Celtic Saints of Ireland is Topic at ELW Meeting March 17

The next ELW meeting will be on March 17 – St. Patrick's Day. The topic of discussion will be the Celtic Saints of Ireland.

Carol Peck will speak about the *saints* and Olga Cosburn will speak about the *sinner*s, or the pagan Druids.

The Druids were a highly developed and educated people who ruled tribal Ireland. They worshipped nature – things they could touch like rivers, oak trees (which were sacred) mountains, the sun – especially the sun *Newgrange* which predates the pyramids by 5,000 years and is both a burial place and an observatory. Once a year on December 21, the winter solstice, a beam of sunlight shines dividing through the length of the long, narrow burial passage.

We were there on June 21, the summer solstice. I will never forget it.

They did have Celtic gods, but they did not look on these gods as their creator, but as their ancestors. Many

Celtic gods were worshipped in the triune form.

You will have to come to the meeting if you want to hear more about the Druids and everything on the Saints.

Although St. Patrick's Day is such a festive day for the Irish, we cannot join them in celebrating with their national drink. The one that has a book of records named after it.

We can, however, win a small triune paperweight by correctly answering all three of the following questions:

1. What is the slang word for a pint of Guinness (think shape of glass and color of contents).
2. How long do you train before you can successfully pour a pint.
3. To do it to perfection, as the professional bartenders do, how many seconds does it take to pour it?

There aren't too many of us – so anyone can hand in an answer.

We hope to see you there.

Olga Cosburn

All About Our House



- New sinks in the ladies washroom at long last.
- The days of Mickey and friends are limited – Abel Pest Control is on the scene.
- The sound system equipment is nearly at hand. Security measures have been put in place and hopefully all is going well and will be in order soon.

Not too much more to report but hopefully this will supply something for the newsletter.

Fran Brandes
Property Chair

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Worship Service at 10:00 a.m.
Sunday School & Adult Forum 9:00 a.m.
(September–June)

The *Parish Visitor* is produced
for our members and friends.

Judy Baribeau, Editor (416) 264-4527

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Advent Lutheran Church

www.adventlutheranchurch.ca



A Word from Pastor Mike

A History of Lent and Its Ashes



Lent derives from the preparation of candidates for Baptism. By the middle of the fourth century at Jerusalem, candidates for Baptism fasted 40 days, and during this period the catechetical lectures of Cyril of Jerusalem were delivered to them. The length of the fast was suggested by several biblical prototypes: Jesus' fast at the beginning of his ministry in Matthew and Luke's gospel; Moses' stay on Sinai; the 40 years in which the Israelites, newly freed from slavery, existed in the wilderness before arriving in Canaan; and Elijah's fast on his way to the mountain of God.

After the Edict of Toleration issued by Emperor Constantine in 313 CE and the legalization of Christianity, the period of preparation for Baptism became a general period of preparation for all Christians for Easter. The length of the fast was 36 days – six weeks (not counting Sundays because Sundays were always feasts celebrating the resurrection). This total of 36 days was thought of as a tithe or a tenth of the 365 days of the year.

In sixth-century Rome four days were added to the beginning of Lent to match it with the biblical number of 40 days, and by the end of the seventh century, the 40-day Lent had become general in the West. (The eastern church has an eight-week Lent, because they exclude Thursdays and Saturdays as well as Sundays.)

The first day of Lent, Ash Wednesday, was originally a day for the expulsion of penitents from the church, the beginning of a time of temporary excommunication while they purified themselves. In the fourth century those undergoing church

discipline had to endure several stages of excommunication and reinstatement: there were weepers, who stood outside the church door asking the prayers of those who went in; hearers, who were allowed in the narthex; kneelers, who were required to kneel with the standing congregation; standers who stood with the congregation but who had to leave before the Communion. Several years might be spent in each of these stages.

In succeeding centuries, however, this public penitence was joined to Lent; and those Christians who had gone astray and desired to repent were placed under discipline for forty days. The time was called quarantine, which means forty, and is still the word we used today when we separate something and purify it not unlike Norton Disk Doctor placing in quarantine any virus that comes in through the Internet. For penitents in the early church, during quarantine they were admonished not to do again whatever bad they had done, were prayed for, given the laying-on of hands, and expelled from the church before the Eucharist. They were allowed to come back as regular members at the communal meal only at Easter.

As early as the third century Tertullian mentions ashes as an external sign of public penitence. In the ninth century the imposition of ashes together with the reading of seven penitential psalms were added to the rite of expulsion of penitents from church during Lent, and the day came to be known as Ash Wednesday. By the eleventh century, the discipline of public penitence had thankfully almost completely disappeared and Lent was

accepted by the church as a time for everyone to receive ashes and undergo penitence. (This is something like Luther's priesthood of all believers, but in the reverse: sort of a rag-and-bone shop of all believers.)

In our modern day ashes are prepared for this service by burning palm branches from the previous Palm Sunday festivities. These ashes are then mixed according to tradition with olive oil so that they adhere to our skin and can be recognized when drawn in the shape of a cross.

All of this is to say that this season of Lent is extraordinarily rich in symbolism, rooted in ancient customs and practices. As far back as the eighth century BC in Jewish tradition, those who were mourning publicly would wear sackcloth and dust themselves with ashes to appear humble before God. Christians held on to this symbol and elaborated upon it to recognize our total dependence on God in life. Ashes are still used today at the graveside where the words, "dust to dust and ashes to ashes" are spoken at the time of burial. The scientists among us know that ashes are simply carbon, and carbon is the fundamental building block of life on earth. It is also the stuff that the stars, planets, comets and galaxies contain in abundance.

So this little smear of ashes on our foreheads reminds us that, we, poor, contrary, sinful creatures (but nonetheless, creatures who carry inside of us an image of what it means to be good and true and noble – or at least better than we are, and in need of penitence), are kinfolk with the plants, animals, earth and even the stars. All of which comes from the generous hand of God. ♦

Away

We

Go...



Marion Knaus (right) thanks the Youth Group for their work in presenting *Café 40*.

We have now officially started the celebrations for the 40th anniversary of Advent Lutheran Church. Ironically, the forty days of Lent have just begun, too. Perhaps we should all take the time during Lent to reflect both on our past at Advent and on what we will do to celebrate and serve during our 40th anniversary. Assuming everything works out, I hope to have the Advent Youth, with help from a few other members, provide a drama presentation for the Good Friday message. I plan to write much more about it for the April *Parish Visitor*, so for now you'll simply have to wait.

Stewardship during our Anniversary Year

For most Christians, Lent is a time of reflection and sacrifice. We ask each other, "What will you be giving up for Lent?". Alternatively, we could apply a positive twist and ask, "What will you be giving for Lent?". One of the objectives of any "fast" is to use the time or resources that one is denying oneself in some sort of ministry or service to others. If we take this positive outlook, then, for example, we can use the time we do not watch television for prayer, or reading to someone, or working in a food bank, or driving someone without transportation, and so on. Similarly, if we "fast" from a favorite food, we can use the money not spent on it as a special offering for a cause that appeals to us.

Looking at our actions during Lent from this perspective allows us to openly practice stewardship. Whether we recognize it or not, as Christians, all of us have been blessed by God. Every one of us has at least one spiritual gift we can share and use to extend the Kingdom of God. Many of us have additional skills, monetary or material abundance, and/or valuable life experiences we can also share.

Support Advent's Outreach Projects

Perhaps during our 40th anniversary year, especially considering the community outreach projects we have defined as part of our anniversary celebration and service, it is an ideal time for the people of Advent to more openly practice our stewardship. If we do choose this path, then we must understand that it is appropriate to tell both others and ourselves what we are doing.

The one catch to this "publicity", whether corporate or personal, is recognizing the motivation behind it. If we openly demonstrate and publicize our stewardship as a response to what God has blessed us with, including our external salvation, then we are on the mark, so to speak.

If, on the other hand, we demonstrate and publicize our stewardship to draw attention either to Advent or to us as individuals, then we have missed the message. Jesus teaches on this topic during the Sermon on the Mount, and the sixth chapter of Matthew captures his words quite well.

Similarly, Paul talks about encouraging stewardship from the church at Corinth in his first letter to them (refer to I Corinthians 8:1-15). One key point Paul makes is the importance of giving of oneself. In fact, he notes that giving of oneself is the highest or most important method of giving, above the actual gifts (or amount of the gifts) of material wealth. Finally, as a last reference on giving and the motivation for giving, recall the example of the widow's offering in the temple (Luke 21:1-4) told by Jesus.

The point I encourage each of us to consider in prayer is not only what should we give during our 40th anniversary year, but why should we give. Advent will only have one 40th anniversary year. It is not only a chance for celebration, but it is an opportunity to reach out through our actions to encourage, to serve, and to both spread and practice the Gospel message.

I send you out

In closing, I want to call attention to the Bible verse the Future Directions Task Force team has chosen as our 40th anniversary Bible verse. It is a paraphrase of Luke 10:2, "I send you out as laborers into the harvest." This verse seems to capture perfectly our opportunity and our mission during our 40th anniversary year celebration. May Almighty God grant each of us the strength and courage to fulfill this mission.

Bob Lageman

Annual Meeting Highlights



(L-R) Chair Fred Roth, Secretary Carol Peck and Treasurer Heinz Weltner listen to discussion at Annual Meeting

There was standing room only as we crowded into the Fellowship Hall for our Annual Meeting on February 15. We needed a quorum of 44 and 63 members were present at the start of the meeting. This report gives an overview of the meeting.

The minutes of the annual meeting held on February 2, 2003, were adopted with the change in the Treasurer's Report of the Mortgage being down to \$20,347.16 from \$38,917.22 in the previous year. The minutes of the September 28, 2003, special congregational meeting related to same-sex marriage were adopted as distributed.

We celebrated that our mortgage was paid off during 2003.

We noted that financial expenditures should be reported in the appropriate reporting area, not where they can fit because another area had funds. This referred to reporting payment for the supply pastor on New Year's Eve as coming from the Youth account.

At annual meetings we thank various members for their dedicated work during the previous year. We particularly thanked Heinz Weltner for his diligent work as Treasurer for the past year – and many previous years – and Bill Wesioly for serving as auditor for many years. Alfred Schurr was thanked for his many years as Financial Secretary. Claus Brandes will be taking over this position. We thanked Fred Roth for his leadership as Chair during the past year, and he in turn, thanked many support people for their service.

Reports

Pastor Mills commented on the statistical section in his report, particularly the statistical adjustment of a decrease of 106 people in baptized membership. This is attributed to the revised way our national church has requested statistics. Many of these names have been transferred to our responsibility list. Our actual membership is 262, an increase of 10 reported a year ago.

In her Property report, Fran Brandes reported that representatives from Advent, Fairview Church of God, Worldwide Church of God and Grace Chinese recently met to make plans for more security for the sound system. We hope to have the new system in place shortly. We were reminded to keep the exterior door locked when we hold meetings as it appears both thefts of the sound system occurred while the building was unlocked. We've also contracted for a monthly mouse control service which will increase the budget by \$600.

Special Motion

This year marks the 40th anniversary of our congregation. We approved the following motion to raise funds to support NUC-TUCT, a housing project for low-income people:

The congregation of Advent Lutheran church sets for itself a non-binding goal of raising up to \$40,000 over the next three years to be applied to the congregation's 40th Anniversary Projects. Funds are to be allocated as follows:

- \$30,000 toward the Newtonbrook Housing Project
- \$10,000 toward the Refugee Sponsor Program.

Elections

Elections are a significant part of every annual meeting. There was one position to fill on Congregational Council and Kristin Doak was elected to a three-year term. Claus Brandes and Judy Baribeau were nominated to be the lay delegate to this year's Synod Assembly. The meeting decided that the person with the highest votes would be delegate and the second person would be alternate. Prior to the vote, the nominees were asked to indicate how they would vote on the Reconciling in Christ resolution presented at the 2002 Assembly. Claus Brandes was selected as delegate.

In other elections Gabi Schickedanz was elected to a three-year term on the Endowment Fund Committee and Martin Arnett was elected by acclamation as the congregation's representative on the Mutual Ministry Committee.

Budget

The final item of business on the agenda was approval of the 2004 budget. Two changes were made to the proposed budget: (1) the addition of \$600 to the property budget and (2) a motion was approved to remove for 2004 \$4,000 for the playground. The budget was approved at \$149,750.

Pastor Mills closed the meeting with a prayer. ♦



Youth group is busy serving tables at Valentine's Day kick-off dinner.

The Advent youth spent most of January and February preparing for the 40th anniversary kickoff dinner. We spent much time planning the menu, the decor, and the shopping, determining who would do which jobs, creating tickets and advertisement literature, selling tickets, doing the actual shopping, and working with parents on the actual cooking. All of that was before the actual day of the dinner – Valentine's Day.

Preparing the dinner was lots of fun

We had lots of fun on Saturday preparing the rest of the food on the menu, seating and serving all of our guests, and cleaning up. Well, maybe cleanup was not so much fun, but we had lots of help with it. By all accounts, the 40th anniversary kickoff dinner was a smashing success. We, the Advent youth team, are honored and blessed to be a part of it.

We also owe a tremendous amount of thanks to a number of people. First, everyone who bought tickets and came to the dinner. Second, to the ELW for allowing us to use some of their dishes and utensils. Third, to the chicken cacciatore cooks – Evelyn Arnett, the De Silva family, and the Mills-Shantz family. Fourth, to Fran Brandes for providing and arranging the beautiful flowers that adorned *Cafe 40*. Fifth, to all the parents who got the youth to Advent so we could

Youth Cooking



put the dinner on. Sixth, to all those who helped with the clean-up after our second sitting: Mercy De Silva, Fred Roth, Reg and Sally Sawh, Colleen Shantz, and Pastor Mike Mills.

Lastly, I want to give a special thank you to Colleen Shantz for all her help in the kitchen during the dinner. She was instrumental in a number of areas in the preparation of this dinner. We would never have been able to successfully host the dinner Saturday without her guidance and organization. Thank you to everyone.

Youth Group assists congregation in many ways

We have been doing a couple other things, too. The youth have continued assisting in worship and teaching Sunday School. We will be helping with the ELW Day of Renewal on February 28. We will be discussing our Spring 2004 activities over the next couple weeks, so now is a perfect time to get involved with the youth if you are interested.

Youth Leader or Co-leader Needed

On a completely different note, most of you are aware that I (Bob) am now in the new job search process. I am hoping to get a new job either in Canada or the USA. On the chance that I do end up leaving Canada, and therefore my family at Advent, one thing I would like to begin is enlisting someone else to act as the youth leader or co-leader. Advent is truly blessed with some outstanding youth, and my prayer is that Advent

continues to provide them with an opportunity to display their gifts, along with growing spiritually. I ask that anyone who is interested in working with our Advent youth please let me know.

Working with Youth is a Challenge and a Joy

I will tell you that anyone working with youth needs to keep a few things in mind. First, the adolescent years are arguably the most challenging any human being faces. The physical, intellectual, emotional and spiritual change/growth at this time in one's life is at its greatest. My experience with the Advent youth and the other youth groups I have worked with is that one must be flexible and patient. The youth leader is not simply an organizer or chaperone. The youth leader needs to be able to have fun and "play along" with the youth, while at the same time being able to define the boundaries of acceptable behavior. The youth leader needs to be supportive of the youth and needs to recognize the growth opportunities that happen during the fellowship activities and sharing as a small group.

Personally, I am honored and consider myself blessed to have been able to be a part of the life journey of so many youth. If any of you have an inkling for it, now may be the perfect opportunity. I certainly encourage anyone with even a slight interest to pray deeply about it.

Until next time, the youth and I ask God's blessing on all the people of Advent throughout this season of Lent.

Bob Lageman

Congregational Council Selects Officers and Chairpersons

Congregational Council selected the following persons as officers and chairpersons of the various functions at its February 16 meeting.

Officers

Chair	Fred Roth
Vice-Chair	Fran Brandes
Secretary	Kristin Doak
Treasurer	Heinz Weltner
Financial Secretary	Claus Brandes

Chairpersons

Caring Conversations	Fred Roth
Christian Education	Walter Rothenburger
ELW	Brit Missirlian
ESO	to be confirmed
Finance	Martin Gangadeen
Mutual Ministry	Bernd Brandt
Parish Visitor Liaison	Kristin Doak
Playground	to be confirmed
Property	Fran Brandes
Stewardship	to be confirmed
Worship and the Arts	Carol Peck
Youth	Priyan De Silva, Mihiri De Silva, Chloe Shantz Hilkes

Adult Discussion Group March – April 2004

Following are the scheduled topics and dates for the Adult Discussion Group for the winter/spring session. Please attend as many as you are able. These sessions are held on Sundays at 9:00 a.m. – the same time as Sunday School classes for the children.

- **March 7** – Lectionary Study, Genesis 15:1-12, 17-18/ Philippians 3:17-4:1/Luke 13:31-35 – Claus Brandes
- **March 14** – Lectionary Study, Isaiah 55:1-9/I Corinthians 10:1-13/ Luke 13:1-9 – Olga Cosburn
- **March 21** – Lectionary Study, Joshua 5:9-12/II Corinthians 5:16-21/ Luke 15:1-3, 11b-32 – Olga Cosburn
- **March 28** – Lectionary Study, Isaiah 43:16-21/ Philippians 3:4b-14/John 12:1-8 – Fred Roth
- **April 4** – Lectionary Study, Isaiah 50:4-9a/Philippians 2:5-11/Luke 22:14-23:56 – Fred Roth
- **April 11** – Easter Sunday, no class
- **April 18-June** – To be determined ♦

Email

We are trying to add everyone's email to our contact list so that we can reach you quickly when we need to distribute information on short notice and mail would be too slow, or we can't reach you by phone. Please forward your email address to me at gandjbaribeau@rogers.com or to Pastor Mills at milshntz@istar.ca.

We would also like to save some money as well as getting your *Parish Visitors* to you sooner by email. Please let me know if you would like to receive your newsletter electronically.

Thank you.

jb

Please bring your used toner cartridges to church and place them in the recycling box in the narthex.



**Evangelical
Lutheran
Women**

Coming events

- Everyone is invited to the World Day of Prayer Service on March 5, 2:00 p.m. at St. Timothy's Roman Catholic Church, 21 Leith Hill Road. The theme was written by women from Panama.
- Our regular monthly meeting will be held on March 17 with Olga Cosburn nd Carol Peck presenting the program on the Celtic Saints of Ireland (see Page 2).

Evelyn Arnett

Websites of Interest

The Eastern Synod and National Church each have vast websites of information available to all members of our church – and the world. Because of cost constraints, much of the information on the websites is not distributed in print to everyone or every congregation. However, there is a wide variety of information on these websites. Please review these sites regularly to check for new information about our national church, synod and worship areas. Each of these sites is informative and links to many other sites of interest.

- ELCIC National Website: www.elcic.ca
- Eastern Synod Website: www.easternsynod.org
- Worship Website (Lift Up Your Hearts): www.worship.ca
- ELCA Website: www.elca.org ♦

People and Events Summary

Worship Services and Meetings

Worship services are held every Sunday at 10:00 a.m.

Sunday School and Adult Discussion groups meet Sunday mornings at 9:00 a.m.

Men's Breakfast Group – meets at 9:00 a.m. the first Saturday each month at the Wexford Restaurant, northeast corner of Lawrence Avenue East and Warden Avenue.

ELW News – See Pages 2 and 7.

Seniors Group meets Tuesdays March 9 and 23, 1:00 p.m. at the church.

Wish List

■ We could use a change table in the crying room. If you have one you are no longer using or wish to donate a new one, please let Pastor Mills know.

NEWS HIGHLIGHTS

Baptism

■ Welcome to Virginia Ling and her father Chi Wang Ling who were baptized on February 22.

Welcome

■ to Jenny Persaud who is a new greeter.

We remember

■ those who are ill – Steve Wesioly.

Thank you

■ to Pastor Norman Hennig who led our worship service on February 15 while Pastor Mills attended the Faith, Worship and Ministry committee meeting of the Anglican Church of Canada.

■ to Adele Buckley for providing the photographs in this issue.

■ to the ESO Committee, soup makers and everyone who brought food for the Ash Wednesday Soup Supper.

■ to Rosemarie Gardow for her donation toward the construction of a kneeler for the sanctuary.

Please remember to turn the ringer off on your cell phone while we worship.



March 2004 Volunteers						
Volunteers assist with the worship services. The <i>Parish Visitor</i> lists those who have agreed to assist each Sunday as a reminder and a thank you for serving. In addition to the areas listed below, please sign the Flower chart for Sundays you wish to donate flowers. If the flowers are for a special occasion, please indicate it on the chart.						
Altar Care	Greeter	Assisting Minister	Reader	Ushers	Counters	Coffee Hosts
March 7 Elizabeth Lancia	Alfred Schurr	Gabi Schickedanz	Hildegard Weltner	Carol Peck & Olga Cosburn	Kristin Doak & Fran Brandes	Mills-Shantz family
March 14 Elizabeth Lancia	Hilton Beharry	Peter Buckley	Indira Beekie	Michaela Ehring & Chris Moeglich	Martin Gangadeen & Carol Peck	Gangadeen family
March 21 Elizabeth Lancia	Yvonne Cumberbatch	Erika Schurr	Ashley Gangadeen	Joan & Arie Fox	Walter Rothenburger & Fred Roth	Khan family
March 28 Elizabeth Lancia	Jenny Persaud	Fred Roth	Martin Gangadeen	Hildegard & Heinz Weltner	Fran Brandes & Brit Missirlian	Sally & Reg Sawh