



insideNewberry

To honor the past...inform the present...envision the future, *insideNewberry* is published quarterly by Newberry Community Partnership (NCP) as a service to the neighborhood to promote community pride and facilitate communication between residents, schools, civic organizations and businesses. NCP is a non-profit community-based organization established in 2006. Please support our sponsors who made this issue possible!

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insideNewberry

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Submit your stories

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Redevelopment Authority Puts Funds to Good Use in Newberry

On September 16, 2018, the Williamsport Bureau of Fire was called to a row home blaze on Mosser Avenue in Newberry. They saw flames shooting from the home on the west end of the row and heavy smoke was filtering into the other row homes. It was a dangerous situation, but the fire department successfully kept the fire contained to the west end unit. But extinguishing this fire is not the end of the story.

After a fire, property owners are expected to clean up, repair the damage, and then everyone goes back to their normal lives. Unfortunately, situations occur when this doesn't happen. Three of the four row units were soon made



shipshape, but the heavily damaged and scorched west end unit remained unlivable, vacant, and deteriorating.

City offices from 2018 through 2024 worked unsuccessfully to get the fire-damaged unit secured and repaired. Regrettably, not only was the owner unable to make repairs but the home also could not be demolished by the city because it was essential to the structure of the whole row-home edifice. It seemed the property was destined to be an eyesore and a detriment to the neighborhood.



But in 2022, the Slaughter administration budgeted over \$2 million in Federal CDBG-CV CARES Act funds to the Redevelopment Authority (RDA). For years before this influx of funding, the RDA, the Blighted Property Review Board, and the

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Redevelopment Authority...

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Codes Office have targeted blighted residential properties, ordering property owners to address failing conditions. Some homes were repaired through these actions, but many, like the Newberry end row house, languished and became worse. With the new funding, though, the mayor was soon able to order blighted properties with no positive action to be turned over to the Redevelopment Authority.

In addition to providing funding to acquire those blighted properties, the city administration created a Land Bank Authority. This authority can hold or "bank" property if needed or repair and return blighted properties to productive use. These newly empowered options gave the city a method to quickly address ongoing problems.

The Mosser Avenue unit is the first property targeted with all the pieces in place. The unit has been inspected and determined to be repairable. The RDA negotiated with the owner and finally acquired the unit in 2024. August Memmi, newly appointed Executive Director of the RDA, explained that contractors have gutted the interior and have already completed many planned renovations. The unit will have an open floor plan, two bedrooms, one and one-half baths, a new kitchen, and all-new heating and electrical. The

home should be advertised for sale sometime in October 2024, marketed by a local realtor. The RDA will require owner occupancy for this home; it will not be a rental unit.

Additional units on Market Street, Park Avenue, and High Street are in the acquisition process, but the first home acquired, rehabilitated, and sold will be a Newberry home. If you are interested in the property, you may contact August "Skip" Memmi at Amemmi@williamsportRDA.org.

A community is made up of people, but people need good structures to call home. The Mosser Avenue property story illustrates the slow but steady progress our local government has been making in building up the value of our local community. ~ Mary Rucinski



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Newberry FaceBook, Circa 1903

Facebook and other social media sites have become the “go-to place” to find out what is happening in the lives of family, friends, and persons in the community. However, it has been advised in recent years that the less information one posts about their whereabouts, the better and safer it is for everyone.

Yet over a hundred years ago, the newspaper would regularly print the goings on of people here in Newberry.

In the Nov. 5th, 1903, edition of *The Evening News*, page 5 had a list of what people in several towns across the county were up to. The section was entitled, “Brief Mention of What the People Are Doing in Hustling Lycoming County Towns Written for Readers of “The Evening News.” There were no pictures of their lattes, but their “status-es” were much like what is listed on social media today

Here is what the people of Newberry were up to back in 1903 in a simpler and safer time.

- William Harper, who is employed at Jamison City by the Pennsylvania Railway company, is spending a few days at home.
- Mr and Mrs. Joseph Quigle are spending a few days In Warrensville.
- Mrs Mary DuBeld is visiting at Shamokin
- Mrs. Isaac Sweltzer, wife of Engineer Sweitzer, has returned to her home in Corning.
- George Cochran will move from his farm to Williamsport. His son Stephen will work and reside on the farm.
- Mrs. Charles Hess, of Pottsville, [is] the guest of her brother, Remer Wertz.
- Mrs. James Lentz and sons Ed and James

returned home from Clearfield after visiting with her son Harry.

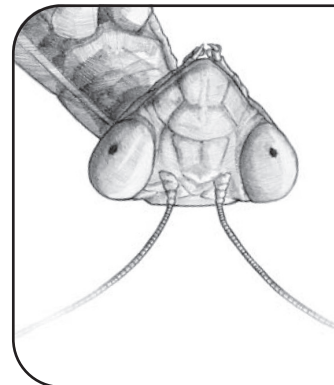
- Mrs. Harry Metzger is moving her household goods to Williamsport, where she will reside.
- Harry Watkins has returned from Shamokin.
- Joseph Duffield is reported quite ill at the Erie Soldiers Home.
- Howard Cramer is out for a ten days’ hunt.
- Edward Foster, of Corning, is spending a few days with his mother, Mrs. Thomas Kenney.

What this provides us, like with social media, is a snapshot into the everyday life of the community, the ebb and flow of life that is often humdrum, but ties us together and makes our community what it is. ~ Don Smith

OUR HOME PAGE...

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The Legacy of Mothers: Five Newberry Women Remembered

A number of years ago, I wrote an article about Newberry moms and the important role they played in our lives, our neighborhood, and our community. This article is dedicated to the five Newberry moms in the block-and-a-half area where I grew up, beginning in the early 1960s: Mrs. Theresa “Babs” Esposit, Mrs. Sarah “Sal” Hostrander, Mrs. Louise Hoffer, Mrs. Joanne Mazzante, and my mom, Mrs. Sophia “Sophie” Ross. Of note, these mothers were always addressed as “Mrs.,” even into our adulthoods. They raised us to be respectful in that way, and we gave them that respect.

Between them, these moms raised 25 children, and they instilled in us their values, expectations, and traditions. Church was one of those very important traditions. We attended weekly Mass and Holy Days of Obligation, received all our sacraments, and could quote the Baltimore Catechism from cover to cover (especially the Esposit children who attended Catholic schools!). Participation in our schooling was also something these moms valued. They attended PTA meetings—some serving as officers. They worked the baked bean dinners at the (then) Roosevelt Junior High School and the school festivals at Jackson Elementary. They made sure that homework was completed and chores were done before we were allowed outside to play. Who we are and what we do today is a result of their love. They were our Village.

Mrs. Hoffer was the quietest of the group. Most of her children were older and had their circle of friends. But they would watch over us while we played in the alley between Dove and West Fourth Streets. Mrs. Hoffer would invite us to “come sit on the swing and chat,” offering fruit and the occasional popsicle. She passed in 2004 and left us with a legacy that nothing was impossible if you had faith and perseverance.

Mrs. Hostrander loved to talk. She would tell us stories about her “younger” days and her travels. She was the only mother who had a garden, and she would gift us with the best leaf lettuce – instructing us that it had to be eaten on a sandwich

of white bread, mayonnaise, and salt. Her recipe for Pizza Burgers is in the first Ross Family Cookbook. One of my earliest memories of Mrs. Hostrander was the day she made the girls in the neighborhood skirts of giant catalpa leaves from the tree in their backyard. She also created beautiful ornaments and baskets from beads and safety pins. Many of us have at least one of her creations that we were gifted for showers or weddings. She passed in 2008 and left us with a



legacy that life should be filled with fun and creativity.

My mom was the “my house is your house” mom. Our home was always filled with neighborhood kids

and moms. There was always a birthday, First Communion, or graduation to be celebrated, along with numerous house parties attended by all the other moms and their kids. (Hey, kids, what did you do with all that stuff your moms bought from Tupperware, Home Decorator, and Princess House?) Summertime brought picnics and tables filled with treasured family dishes. Mom never batted an eye when an extra child or two appeared at the dinner table. And on drive-in movie nights, there would be any number of (unseatbelted!) kids in the rear of the station wagon. Mom passed in 2014 and left us with a legacy of faith and the importance of family and friends.

Mrs. Mazzante was the “larger than life” mom. Her laugh was contagious, and she spoke her mind. She wore bright colors and stood out in every crowd. She would be found in the kitchen at church functions, and her orders were obeyed. Her son Tom was our brother from another mother. He and my brother Tom were inseparable, and their antics would bring deep sighs and eye-rolls from Mrs. Mazzante. She passed in 2015 and left us with a legacy of tolerance and being who we were rather than who people expected us to be.

Mrs. Esposit was the mom who was most like a family member. She was always present, both in good times and bad, bringing with her a feeling that everything was going to be okay. She, too, was very active in her church, managing the kitchen and serving on committees. She was the

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The Legacy of Mothers...

(Continued from page 4)

first mother to have a swimming pool, and we spent many hours there soaking up the sun and having fun. I remember her rule: no swimming without a bathing suit or swim trunks. One day, my brothers Frank and Tom showed up to swim in shorts and shirts. Mrs. Esposit came out and told them to go home and change, and they did – into suits belonging to my sisters! I can still hear her laughing! When my mom came home from a very long stay in the hospital, Mrs. Esposit came over every day for coffee, often bringing mom's favorite glazed sour cream doughnuts. She passed this year – the last of the Fabulous Five – leaving us with a legacy of kindness and generosity.

I like to think that these moms are looking down on us and congratulating one another on motherhood well done. These moms were much loved and are deeply missed by all those whose lives they touched. I believe there are only two of the 25 living in Newberry now. Several have joined their Heavenly Mothers; others are still in the Williamsport area; and others have moved to other states. We who are still on earth communicate both in person and via social media, and the "remember whens" are the best parts of our conversations. And though their era has ended, the legacies of these mothers will go on.

~ Betsy Ross McCoy

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Newberry Community Partnership would like to thank the Polish Club for their continued support of our organization and all the good things they do for the residents of Newberry, Jaysburg, and the City of Williamsport.



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League of Women Voters Announces Art Competition

The League of Women Voters of Lycoming County is pleased to inform you that we are currently holding an art competition titled The Power of Every Vote. We offer two \$400 awards for original visual (can include photography, mixed media, digital, 3D art) and for written work such as essays and poetry. The competition is open to high school seniors and will be judged according to the relevance to the League's mission as stated below.

The League of Women Voters of Pennsylvania encourages informed and active participation in government, works to increase understanding of major public policy issues, and influences public policy through education and advocacy.

The League does not support or oppose any political party or candidate but does take – and always has taken – stands on issues its members have studied. Through a rigorous study and consensus-taking process that is initiated by our grassroots membership, we take positions on governmental, social, and environmental issues.

Through research and advocacy, the League seeks to encourage Pennsylvanians to actively participate in government. For a full list of League positions and policy priorities, refer to the pa.lwv.org website.

The competition officially begins on September 24th and the submission deadline is October 29th. To make the process more efficient, we are contacting Lycoming County schools to request that they allow their students to submit their entry to a designated school staff member that will act as a liaison with the League and the winners will then be notified through that staff person.

This is the LWV of Lycoming County's first experience with a competition, and we are very excited to offer this opportunity to local students. The winners' information will be posted in *Inside Newberry*, among other locations, pending parental permission. Please feel free to contact us with any questions, concerns or guidance at lwvlyco@gmail.com or 570-360-9702. ~ *Caroline Balliet, President, League of Women Voters of Lycoming County*

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The support group welcomes new members.
For additional information, call the WECCC office at the number listed above.*

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UPCOMING EVENTS

OCTOBER 2024

- 14 MONDAY Columbus Day (Federal Holiday, Banks Closed)
- 31 THURSDAY Halloween (Observance)

NOVEMBER 2024

- 1 FRIDAY All Saint's Day (Christian)
- 3 SUNDAY Daylight Savings Time ENDS (Turn your clocks BACK one hour)
- 5 TUESDAY Election Day
- 11 MONDAY Veteran's Day (Federal Holiday, Banks Closed)
- 28 THURSDAY Thanksgiving Day (Federal Holiday, Banks Closed)
- 29 FRIDAY Black Friday (Observance)

DECEMBER 2024

- 1 MONDAY Cyber Monday (Observance)
- 6 FRIDAY St. Nicholas Day (Christian)
- 7 SATURDAY Pearl Harbor Remembrance Day (Observance)
- 9 MONDAY Feast of Immaculate Conception (Christian)
- 11 WEDNESDAY Newberry Christmas Tree Lighting
- 21 SATURDAY December Solstice (Season)
- 24 TUESDAY Christmas Eve (Christian)
- 25 WEDNESDAY Christmas Day (Christian)
- 26 THURSDAY Hanukkah (Jewish)
- 26 THURSDAY 1st Day of Kawanzaa (Observance)
- 31 TUESDAY New Year's Eve (Observance)

JANUARY 2025

- 1 WEDNESDAY New Year's Day (Federal Holiday, Banks Closed)



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