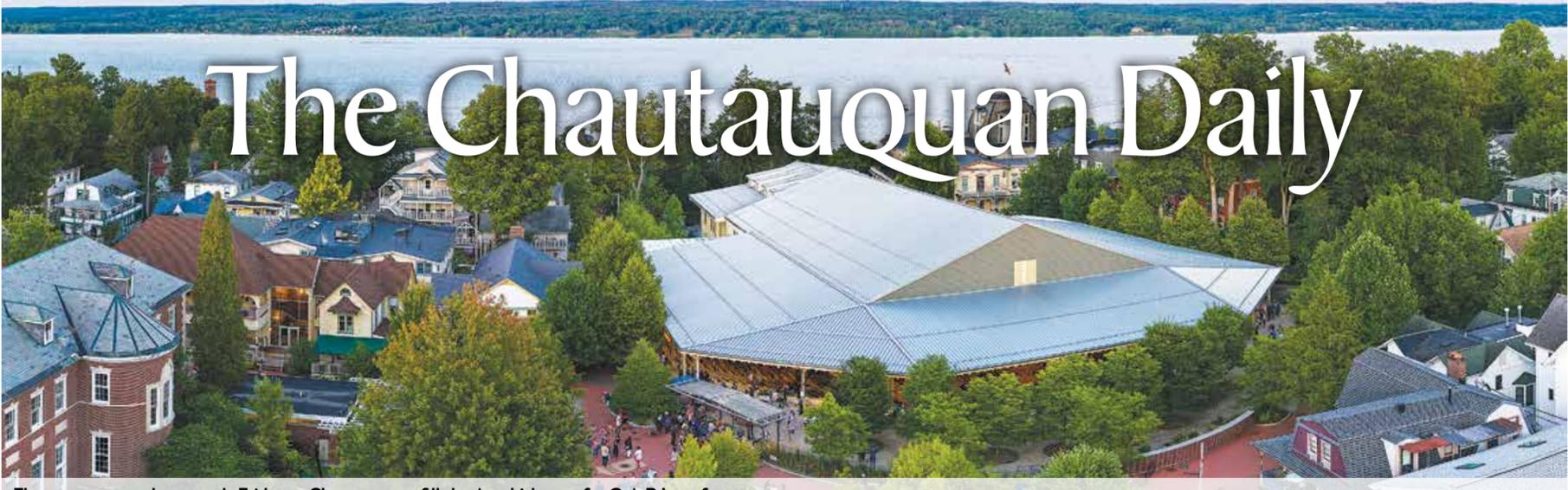


The Chautauquan Daily



The sun sets over the grounds Friday as Chautauquans fill the Amphitheater for O.A.R.'s performance. DAVE MUNCH / PHOTO EDITOR
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SWEET AS HONEY



Sweet Honey in the Rock to take Amp stage in final evening concert of 2025 season

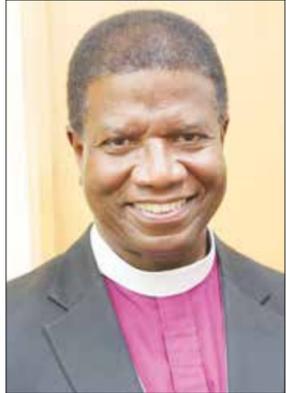
LIZ DELILLO
STAFF WRITER

Three-time Grammy-nominated African American vocal ensemble Sweet Honey in the Rock will sing out Chautauqua's 2025 Popular Entertainment Series at 8:15 p.m. Saturday in the Amphitheater.

Sweet Honey in the Rock was founded in Washington D.C. in 1973 with missions of em-

powerment, education and entertainment. An ambassadorial African American organization and a capella vocal ensemble, they have released over 20 albums, with their most recent studio album, *#LoveInEvolution*, released in 2016. In 2021, they co-wrote and performed *When Day Comes*, their first theatrical piece, in collaboration with Crossroads Theater founding director Ricardo Khan.

See **SWEET HONEY**, Page A4



SUTTON

Sutton to preach for final Sunday morning service

MARY LEE TALBOT
STAFF WRITER

"When Being Right Is Wrong" is the title of the Rt. Rev. Eugene Taylor Sutton's sermon for the season's final 10:45 a.m. Sunday morning worship service in the Amphitheater. Sutton, the senior pastor of Chautauqua Institution, has served as liturgist for the Sunday morning services all season.

Reflecting on what he might highlight in his sermon, Sutton wrote, "It's a pain to be around 'the world's foremost authority' on everything! We need more humility in these times when everyone thinks they're right. Authority is granted to those who serve, not based on what they say."

See **SUTTON**, Page A4

Season ends with final Sacred Song Service, closing Three Taps

MARY LEE TALBOT
STAFF WRITER

Rebecca Richmond, a Chautauqua writer and one of the founders of the Sandwich Poets at Chautauqua — a precursor to the Chautauqua Literary Arts program of today — in her 1944 poem "To Chautauqua - Moment of Farewell," wrote: "Sometimes I wish that I would love you less, For when the summer ends and I must go, Almost it is a rending of the soul - You are part of me and I of you."

It is that love of Chautauqua that feeds many people during the winter and fuels the excitement of arriving on the grounds as the season begins. The Chautauqua Assembly begins and ends with tradition, and the Sacred Song Service is part of that tradition.

See **SACRED SONG**, Page A4



DAVE MUNCH / PHOTO EDITOR

Trustee for Life George T. Snyder opens the 152nd Assembly with his Three Taps of the Gavel address "Don't Let Anything Go Unnoticed" June 22 in the Amphitheater.

In update to July 28 announcement of millions in deficits, Keogh lays out timeline for budget cut decisions

CODY ENGLANDER
STAFF WRITER

Three weeks after Chautauqua Institution Interim Chief Executive Kyle Keogh told the community that the organization was facing a \$4 million to \$6 million budget shortfall, he provided an update Monday via Zoom, sharing what he'd heard from the community in response, and what staff would be facing when the season ends.

He began by noting Chautauqua is coming off "the best week in a long time," with the weekend of Aug. 1 to Aug. 3 seeing three sell-out shows in a row from the Avett Brothers and two back-to-back nights of Laufey with the Chautauqua Symphony Orchestra.

"It filled Chautauqua,

and they were actually the best nights we've ever had at (the Athenaeum Hotel), which includes the bar, Heirloom Restaurant and other areas," Keogh said.

He cited shows like these as bringing in a younger audience to Chautauqua, a step toward getting a more diverse crowd on the grounds.

He noted no major operational challenges or interruptions for programming, even saying that the innovations to the calendar this year have yielded positive results.

"Special Studies has had its best year ever," Keogh said, and highlighted Week Seven's mainstage programming in particular. "Kwame Alexander as a host sort of harkened back to (theme weeks of) 'Roger

Rosenblatt and Friends,' but Kwame is a big name in and of himself, and so he actually innovated new formats right on the scene."

He noted other upsides the grounds saw this summer. Keogh believed that food service has improved on the grounds compared to previous years, seeing improved satisfaction. Week Nine also looked to be the best financial week of the summer, which he believed could be attributed to the 10:45 a.m. Chautauqua Lecture Series, which included Morgan Freeman.

Despite the end of the summer closing on a positive note, Chautauqua Institution has had issues with attendance since the pandemic.

See **WEBINAR**, Page A3

IN TODAY'S DAILY



EVOLUTION, COOPERATION & NUANCE

In season's final lecture, Al-Shamahi presents reasons for human dominion.

Page A8



HAPPY NEW YEAR

With Bryant Day, Chautauqua Literary and Scientific Circle welcomes in new reading year, themed 'Translation.'

Page B2



AN ARCHITECTURAL FEAT

Gardens & Landscapes' Teets takes 'Daily' behind the scenes of building to-scale Miller Bell Tower model.

Page B5



SATURDAY'S WEATHER

H 78° L 61°
Rain: 24%
Sunset: 8:05 p.m.

SUNDAY



H 72° L 56°
Rain: 24%
Sunrise: 6:34 a.m. Sunset: 8:04 p.m.

MONDAY



H 65° L 52°
Rain: 58%
Sunrise: 6:35 a.m. Sunset: 8:02 p.m.

ENTERTAINMENT



BRIEFLY

NEWS FROM THE GROUNDS

Friends of Chautauqua Theater news

Join Friends of Chautauqua Theater and the Bob McClure CHQ Play Readers for "Highlights from Our 2024-25 Season" at 10 a.m. Saturday in Smith Wilkes Hall. Additionally, a Celebration of Life for McClure is at 4 p.m. Sunday in Hurlbut Church. A reception will follow.

Twelve Step Meeting

There is a Twelve Step Meeting at 12:15 p.m. Sunday in the Marion Lawrance Room in Hurlbut Church.

Massey silent film 'The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari' to thrill Chautauquans

LIZ DELILLO
STAFF WRITER

Thematicizing authority, sanity, rebellion, perceived reality and human nature, "The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari" is a quintessential piece of silent film, horror and German expressionist cinema. Directed by Robert Weine and written by Carl Mayer and Hans Janowitz, it takes place during the Weimar Republic, following a hypnotist and his somnambulist within the dark, sharp and twisted visuals of German expressionism.

At 3 p.m. Sunday in the Amphitheater, Chautauquans can experience this classic first-hand with Joshua Stafford taking the bench for the Great Massy Movie presentation of "The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari."

A native of Jamestown, Stafford is an internationally renowned, award-winning organist, and the director of sacred music and Jared Jacobsen Chair for the Organist of Chautauqua Institution. He was unanimously named the Pierre S. du Pont First Prize Winner at the 2016 Longwood Gardens International Organ Competition.

The Institution began featuring silent films with Stafford on the Massey Memorial Organ as the final Amp performance several years ago. Often, the films were comedies, Stafford said, "which are a broad appeal, but the most difficult to play because of timing because you have to time all the gags (and) stresses right."

While Sunday's Massy Organ Movie selection is often regarded as the first horror film, it doesn't feature graphic violence and is more of a psychological thriller.

"Horror is a little more fun because you can be kind of moody with it. With 'The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari' being a German expressionist film, it has such a distinct visual style that it then informs the music," Stafford said. "You're just sort of creating this atmosphere, that the movie has already started for you, and then you get to create it

DAVE MUNCH /
DAILY FILE PHOTO

Jared Jacobsen Chair for the Organist and Director of Sacred Music Joshua Stafford performs the score to the Charlie Chaplin film "The Gold Rush" on the Massey Memorial Organ July 25, 2021, in the Amphitheater.

in that space."

Silent movies in the 1920s often featured the theater organ, developed for sound film specifically.

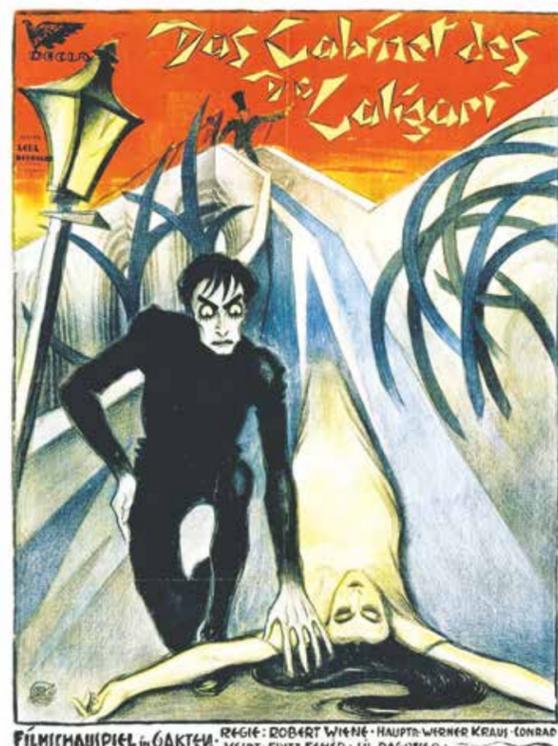
"I was not raised as a theater organist. I was raised a little more traditionally, and I did a lot of improvisation study, especially when I was in grad school, in the French cathedral tradition, sort of the Paris improvisation style," Stafford said. "... And I feel like that sort of style works better for a horror film than it does a comedy."

Shedding light on the improvisational element he's bringing to Sunday's performance, Stafford shared how he approaches that with film accompaniments.

"My tradition has usually been to sort of create my own sort of spread, to create themes for characters and then improvise from that," Stafford said. "For this particular film, I'm actually working off of an existing score."

Stafford is working with the score he's "pretty sure" is by Giuseppe Becce, the Italian film score composer who wrote the music for the movie's 1920 release.

"I feel like this is going to be a fun movie for using some really quiet ethereal effects, just some moments with the organ sort of rumbling quietly beneath what's



happening," Stafford said.

An improvisational silent movie accompaniment is a dynamic endeavor, especially with the sharp dramatization of horror and German expressionism.

"I always thought, playing a movie like this, it's never the same twice," Stafford said. "It's sort of the general idea of what you're doing — in the moment, whatever mood I'm in — but more importantly, whatever I'm getting off the audience. There's a lot of audience feedback that plays into the way I play a film, which is a really cool experience."

With movie screenings

with orchestral accompaniments growing in popularity, Stafford noted how accompanying silent films is "a unique art form."

"I think it was sort of lost for a while, but has had a real resurgence in recent years," Stafford said. "... It's really fun to rediscover these films that are sometimes forgotten, or at least films that audiences are unlikely to have seen before. And even if they have experienced silent films, like watching them at home, watching it with a pre-recorded soundtrack is not the same as experiencing it live in person."

Weekend at the
CINEMA

Saturday, August 23

EVERYTHING'S GOING TO BE GREAT - 6:00 Buddy (Bryan Cranston) wrestles with his over-sized showbiz dreams, while his wife Macy (Allison Janney) struggles to keep their family afloat. "A heartening drama and a great big smile of a comedy." -William Bibbiani, *TheWrap* (R, 95m)

PERFECT DAYS - 8:30 Hirayama (Kôji Yakusho) seems utterly content with his simple life as a cleaner of Tokyo public toilets in director Wim Wenders' deeply moving and poetic reflection on finding beauty in the everyday world around us. "It's all about finding the simple joys in your daily existence." -Christy Lemire, *Breakfast All Day* "A film to live your life by." -Donald Clarke, *Irish Times* (PG, Japanese w/subtitles. 124m)

Sunday, August 24

PERFECT DAYS - 5:45
EVERYTHING'S... - 8:45

Monday, August 25

EVERYTHING'S... - 6:00
PERFECT DAYS - 8:30

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NEWS

Tracing the roots of partnership caring for Chautauqua's tree canopy

PATRICIA BEAGLE
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

Visitors often remark about Chautauqua Institution's breathtaking grounds and spectacular trees. Some might be surprised to learn how much behind-the-scenes time and expertise supports the glory of this canopy.

Betsy Burgeson, supervisor of gardens and landscapes, leads a seasonal crew of over 30 individuals who maintain and improve the gardens and trees. Burgeson has been looking after Chautauqua Institution's landscape since 2015 and has 27 years of earth science, biology, master gardening and teaching experience. In addition to leading her team and providing frequent educational sessions for patrons, she can be found digging, pruning and removing invasive plants alongside team members.

"I have never seen a more dedicated, incredible group," Burgeson said of her crew. "They range in age from 14 to 75 and look out for each other. They are all willing to learn and have a desire to share knowledge and answer questions."

Burgeson also appreciates Chautauquans' curiosity and appetite for making a difference.

"They can't do that if they don't have the knowledge," she added.

Fortunately, Burgeson and her team have a strong partner in their fervent effort to maintain and restore our canopy: Chautauqua's Bird, Tree & Garden Club.

"The BTG is amazing in every sense of the word," Burgeson said.

BTG President Leslie Renjilian has taken arborist courses, serves as acting chair of the BTG arboretum committee and works to educate and fundraise in support of trees.

BTG members have affixed labels to 1,000 Chautauqua Institution trees. These are linked to self-guided walks and educational information through BTG's free Explore-CHQ app. This year, the ArbNet Arboretum Accreditation Program rewarded that effort by designating the entire 250 acres inside Chautauqua Institution's gates as the Chautauqua Bird, Tree and Garden Club Arboreta, a Level II arboretum.

BTG member Dennis McNair brought forward the idea to pursue this accreditation, and said following the rules associated with Level II increases protection of the arboretum. McNair led the four-year effort to obtain this prized designation.

"It's absolutely fantastic," said Burgeson. "We have already seen partnership opportunities with research students studying pine sawfly larvae."

Destructive insects pose a constant threat to the canopy — damage from the emerald ash borer, Burgeson said, led to the loss of 450 of the Institution's ash trees from 2015 to 2017. BTG pays for the treatment of the 20 surviving ash trees every other year to protect against the destructive green beetle, whose larvae tunnel under ash bark.

But now, an alarming insect threat is the hemlock woolly adelgid, or HWA, which Renjilian said first appeared on the grounds in 2021, near the Lunnery Arts Center at Alumni Hall.

"This aphid-like insect sucks the sap from hemlock trees," Renjilian said. "In summer, look for crawling black spots, and in winter, the branches may look flocked with white."

During a recent Tree Walk — which routinely attract 60 to 80 Chautauquans each week — Jack Gulvin, a forester in his 26th year as the BTG's naturalist, explained that native Eastern hemlocks were used by pioneers to make tea and tan hides. He

pointed out white flocking on needles, clear evidence that HWAs have been damaging Chautauqua's trees.

Speaking at a recent Chautauqua Property Owners Association meeting, Renjilian stated that the Institution's hemlocks are "fully infested." If left untreated, some now have a life expectancy of as little as three years.

Burgeson is equally concerned about the HWA pest, as hemlock trees "keep streams cool and have a huge impact on snow melt," she said. Burgeson engaged the gardens department in identifying 400 Institution-owned hemlock trees that must be treated to protect against the devastating insect. A certified professional treated 190 of the trees this year, and 200 more will be treated in 2026.

The Institution is not responsible for privately-owned trees, so homeowners may protect small hemlock shrubs by spraying needles with neem oil every spring and fall, Renjilian said — but for full-sized hemlocks, HWA treatment on exposed bark can be administered only by a certified professional, according to New York State law. Conditions must be perfect.

"Hemlocks are wind-pollinated, and the treatment must avoid nearby trees that are visited by pollinators," Renjilian cautioned. "... If the tree is beside or behind your house, it is yours. Your trees are probably infected."

Because it can be difficult to hire an arborist to care for one or two privately-owned trees, BTG is exploring the possibility of a community treatment plan that property owners could purchase. A BTG hemlock survey is available at chautauquabtgt.org and can also be found on the ExploreCHQ app. The survey will be open through Sept. 30 to enable BTG to determine whether there is enough interest in a spring 2026 community treatment plan.

Anticipating questions about cost, Renjilian said that "if you can wrap your hands around a tree, treatment will cost \$50 to \$60. If you can wrap your arms around it, the cost will be about \$250. Professional treatment on exposed bark can last for three to five years."

Yet another threat to Chautauqua's canopy is tree vandalism. In late July, gardens department members discovered considerable damage to a basswood tree on South Lake Drive at South, near the Youth Activities Center. Nearby, they also found large, improperly cut branches from the tree that had been thrown into the lake.

"Someone may have been trying to improve a view or lake access," said John Shedd, vice president of campus planning and operations. "It is prohibited to damage trees belonging to Chautauqua Institution. The minimum penalty for vandalizing a tree is \$5,000 and the maximum is \$10,000. ... On your own property, you may trim but may not remove a tree without the Institution's permission."

The first 50 feet of land along the shore belongs to Chautauqua Institution, except at Packard Manor, where the Institution owns 25 feet, Shedd said. Some trees close to roads also belong to the Institution, although distance is not the same on every street.

"These trees are Institution property for the enjoyment of the entire community," said Shedd. "If a tree is pruned incorrectly, it could die." For public safety and for tree health, he said, trees are trimmed during summer only in urgent situations.

To report information regarding acts of tree vandalism, Shedd advises contacting Safety and Security at



JOSEPH CIEMBRONIEWICZ / STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

The Gardens and Landscaping team works to remove pieces of a Chautauqua Institution-owned basswood tree on July 30 near South and South Lake. The limbs were cut in an act of arboreal vandalism by an unknown individual.



JOSEPH CIEMBRONIEWICZ / STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Above left, Bird Tree & Garden Club President Leslie Renjilian, left, and Supervisor of Gardens and Landscapes Betsy Burgeson hammer a stake marking the place where a new tree will replace a felled sugar maple Aug. 13 in Miller Park. Above right, a sign marks a red maple seeking a sponsor, near South Lake. At right, Hemlock Woolly Ageldid clings to a hemlock bough.

716-357-6225. To report an Institution tree that may need trimming or to verify whether a tree is owned by the Institution, the call should be to Campus Planning and Operations at 716-357-6245.

"We are happy to have a conversation about a tree, and if pruning is appropriate, we can put it on the list," he said.

At times, the Institution engages an arborist to address certain trees. "A ribbon around a tree means that tree health will be evaluated," said Renjilian. Unfortunately, when an aging tree becomes dangerous, it must be removed. A tree trunk painted with an X marks an unhealthy or unsafe tree that will be taken down.

"This year, we had to remove a big oak on South Terrace that was near power transmission lines," Burgeson said. "The removal cost for that tree was \$12,100."

BTG is helping to mitigate tree loss with a fundraising campaign to restore and maintain the canopy. To honor Chautauqua's 150th birthday, the organization initiated the 150 Trees for 150 Years campaign in 2024. Through the effort, BTG intends to plant 150 trees within three years.



BTG member Jean Fulkerson is leading the project, and hopes to bring attention to canopy stressors.

"Unfortunately, we have a lot of trees near the end of their lifespan," she said. "Growing zones are shifting from climate change. Sudden warmups followed by return to cold put a lot of stress on trees."

A \$1,500 donation to 150 Trees provides a new tree and supports canopy care. A \$1,000 donation funds symbolic "adoption" of a beautiful existing tree. New and adopted trees receive markers recognizing the honoree, and donors are encouraged to provide information about the person or group honored. That information will

be visible through the ExploreCHQ app. Donations of \$150 to support canopy care are also welcome.

Replacements are needed in many places where dangerous aging trees have been removed. One such location is lower Miller Park, where 10 new trees will be planted this fall.

See **TREES**, Page A4



**Unitarian Universalist
Fellowship of Chautauqua
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9:30 AM - Hall of Philosophy

Guest Minister: Reverend Neal Jones

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FROM PAGE ONE

SWEET HONEY

FROM PAGE A1

The ensemble marked their 50th anniversary in 2023, kicking off a three-year celebration both honoring its past and invigorating its future.

Currently, Sweet Honey in the Rock comprises vocalists Carol Maillard, Louise Robinson, Aisha Kahlil, Nitanju Bolade Casel and Rochelle Rice, with Romeir Mendez on upright acoustic/electric bass as well as American Sign Language interpreter Barbara Hunt.

In a 2023 interview with John Soltes in *Hollywood Soapbox*, Maillard shared how Sweet Honey in the Rock got started.

“When we first started out, we weren’t thinking we’re going to be a singing group forever,” Maillard told Soltes. “We all were doing our theater and acting careers, not trying to be a professional singing group. The singing group came out of the work that we were doing in our theatrical studies — music, dance, scene study, improvisation and stagecraft.”

Ensemble members take turns programming shows, Maillard said in her *Hollywood Soapbox* interview.

“Each person has their own style in how they want to engage the audience and tell Sweet Honey’s story and share the music and the messages,” she said

then. “Everybody has their own way of doing it, so it’s always exciting.”

The original intention for Sweet Honey in the Rock was to perform in the D.C. area, Maillard said in the same interview. Over 50 years later, they are an internationally acclaimed vocal ensemble, sharing a capella as well as African American music and culture.

“The fact that we’ve been here for 50 years blows my mind, and that’s the best way I can say it,” Maillard said in *Hollywood Soapbox*. “It blows my mind because I can’t think of a female group singing the kind of music that we sing, traveling the way we do. We’re not commercial, so everything is very basic in terms of how we get around and the places where we perform.”

The ensemble has performed all over the world, from Carnegie Hall to the Sydney Opera House — and on every continent, save for Antarctica.

Maillard and Robinson made up half of the original ensemble in 1973, alongside Mie Fredericks and founder Bernice Johnson Reagon.

“I was there in the beginning, and now I’m here years later,” Maillard said in *Hollywood Soapbox*. “... I hope there’s always going to be Sweet Honey in the Rock in the world.”

LIVING HISTORY



JOSEPH CIEMBRONIEWICZ / STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Lisa Bliss shakes Jon Schmitz’s hand after the Institution’s archivist and historian gives the summer’s final Heritage Lecture Friday in the Hall of Philosophy.

SUTTON

FROM PAGE A1

He continued, “It’s not about having the right answers but finding the right questions to ponder. Being curious is more life giving than being right. That’s why we come to Chautauqua — not to have our biases confirmed, but to expand our worldviews to ‘see’ the world as it is.”

Melissa Spas, vice president for religion at Chautauqua Institution, will preside. Kyle Keogh, interim chief executive for Chautauqua Institution, will read the scripture. The Chautauqua Choir, under the direction of Joshua Stafford, director of sacred music

and the Jared Jacobsen Chair for the Organist, will sing “Unless the Lord Build the House,” by Alfred V. Fedak and “Dear Lord and Father,” music by C.H.H. Parry, arranged by H.A. Chambers and text by John Greenleaf Whittier.

Sutton served as the bishop of the Episcopal Diocese of Maryland and canon pastor of Washington National Cathedral, where he directed the Cathedral’s Center for Prayer and Pilgrimage. He has also served as a college chaplain, parish priest and professor of homiletics and liturgy at Vanderbilt University Divinity School. A frequent leader of retreats focused on spirituality, nonviolence and

social justice, he has led multiple missions to South Africa.

He cofounded Contemplative Outreach of Maryland and Washington, an ecumenical network of churches and individuals committed to centering prayer and renewing the contemplative gospel for daily living. He is a prolific writer and has contributed to multiple books, including *The Diversity of Centering Prayer and Reclaiming the Gospel of Peace: Challenging the Epidemic of Gun Violence*. Sutton has been named by the Center for American Progress as one of “Fourteen Faith Leaders to Watch” for his faith-led efforts to promote nonviolent solutions to conflicts.

“

Being curious is more life giving than being right. That’s why we come to Chautauqua — not to have our biases confirmed, but to expand our worldviews to ‘see’ the world as it is.”

— THE RT. REV. EUGENE SUTTON
Senior Pastor,
Chautauqua Institution

THE CHAUTAUQUAN DAILY

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SACRED SONG

FROM PAGE A1

At 8 p.m. Sunday, the final Sacred Song Service of the summer will be held in the Amphitheater. The Rt. Rev. Eugene Taylor Sutton, senior pastor for Chautauqua, will preside. Melissa Spas, vice president for religion, and George T. Snyder, trustee for life of Chautauqua Institution, will be the readers.

The Chautauqua Choir will sing under the direction of Joshua Stafford, director of sacred music and Jared Jacobsen Chair for the Organist, accompanied by Owen Reyda, 2025 organ scholar. Stafford creates each Sacred Song Service during the summer season.

Like the first Sacred Song Service of the season, the Sunday evening service will be based on the 1903 *Chautauqua Hymnal and Liturgy*. A prayer by Thomas A. Kempis will be read as a litany. A statement by Lewis Miller, co-founder of Chautauqua from the introduction to John Heyl Vincent’s book *The Chautauqua Movement* reminds readers that Chautauqua was founded to be all-denominational and universal as to creeds.

“It was, at the start, made catholic as to creeds; not undenominational, but all-denominational, — a place where each denomination or organizations, as at the great feasts, brings

its best contribution which the particular order would develop as a consecrated offering for magnifying God’s word and work; and, when gathered, each to bring its strongest light, and with the lights blending and the rays strengthened and focussed, with square and plumb, with compass and sun-dial, with telescope and microscope, with steam-engine and telegraph, with laboratory and black-board, with hammer and spade, search out the deep and hidden mysteries of the Book,” Miller wrote from Akron, Ohio, in February 1886, fitting as many clauses and creative punctuation into one sentence as possible.

The music in Sunday’s service, from the opening “Day is Dying in the West,” to closing “Now the Day is Over,” and “Largo,” will also include the hymn “Break Thou the Bread of Life,” written by William F. Sherwin and Mary Lathbury for Chautauqua in 1877. The Chautauqua Choir will sing “The House of Faith,” music by Craig Philips and text by Carl P. Daw Jr. and “The Lord Bless You and Keep You,” music by John Rutter and text from Numbers 6:24.

Immediately after “Largo,” Snyder will give the Three Taps of the Gavel address to close the 152nd Chautauqua season. His title is “Did You Notice?”

TREES

FROM PAGE A3

“We will work with you to choose a tree and location,” Fulkerson said. “We would encourage friends, neighbors, or community groups to collaborate to plant or adopt a tree.” For example, BTG is grateful to the McClure family members who are planting a tree near Bratton Theater in memory of Bob and Sally McClure.

BTG provides annual support through tree plantings, treatment, endowment, maps, markers and education — Renjilian said in the first year of adoptions and sponsored plantings, BTG expects its tree spending to be at least \$32,000 — and works closely with Chautauqua Foundation.

Based upon contributions so far this year, trees donated to 150 Trees, along with some Tribute Trees given directly to Chautauqua Foundation, will lead to the planting of at least 31 new trees.

Renjilian is passionate about the importance of growing the Tree Fund within Chautauqua Foundation.

“Every tree donation and tree adoption through the 150 Tree campaign adds \$1,000 to

the Tree Fund endowment,” she said. “We need that fund to be so much larger.”

Debbie Moore, executive director of Chautauqua Foundation, expressed gratitude for BTG’s close collaboration and commitment to building the Tree Fund endowment, now exceeding \$100,000. The Tree Fund generates approximately \$4,000 each year for canopy care.

“This initiative is further strengthened by the Walter C. Shaw, Jr. Family Tree Fund, established by Andrew and Gayle Shaw Camden in honor of Gayle’s father,” Moore said. “Most recently, Caroline Van Kirk Bissell has taken inspiring steps to create her own endowment for trees with plans to begin funding it immediately as well as grow it further through a gift from her estate.”

Nurturing our shaded paths and leafy canopy for current and future generations will require the unceasing effort and support of many Chautauquans. Burgeson’s insightful words remind us that it is not too late to make a difference.

“People do not realize the importance of trees,” she said, “until they are gone.”

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NEWS

Keogh, staff hold final Forum Dialogues session of 2025 season

CODY ENGLANDER
STAFF WRITER

During the Week Nine Forum Dialogues session Monday in the Hall of Christ, Interim Chief Executive Kyle Keogh, members of the board's Financial Sustainability Working Group, and other executives at the Institution fielded questions and propositions about forecasted budget cuts scheduled to hit in the days and weeks after the season end. Monday's was the third town hall-style conversation following Keogh's announcements of the budget cuts on July 28, and the first since an update he gave earlier Monday.

Keogh recognized what has improved over the past year, focusing on ticketing and food services. The main issue continues to be lower-than-expected attendance levels, mainly from one-week ticket holders — which isn't helped by the lack of housing inside the Institution's gates.

"We think we've lost between 15 and 25% of our rental capacity," Keogh said.

He also hopes that philanthropy and endowments may be the future of certain aspects of the grounds going forward.

The Chautauquan Daily doesn't appear to be going away in print, though Keogh noted a price hike. He also noted that he's learned it's not just a job, but an educational program for young journalists, especially in the age of artificial intelligence.

Going forward, Keogh wants to continue to appeal to the younger crowd and diversify the age groups within the grounds.



JOSEPH CIEMBRONIEWICZ / STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Chautauquan Bob Schloss suggests that the Institution attempt to procure a river boat to moor on its shores as a means to address the housing problem during the Forum Dialogues session Monday in the Hall of Christ.

"We've done very well this year with the under-20 crowd," Keogh said. "Club has had one of its best years. How do we sustain that? How do we continue to evolve those areas?"

The first idea from community members was the suggestion to add campgrounds outside the Institution as a solution for housing. Keogh believes it's a bit of a risk. Most people want to stay inside the grounds, which this proposed idea doesn't offer.

A potential solution to the Chautauqua housing crisis is adding condos. The board has consulted with real estate developers about housing on the grounds.

Michelle Shader, a community member, suggested short-term economical apartment units.

Another community member, Jimmy Carroll suggested "mini" houses, described as "100-square feet on a slab with a community kitchen."

Those wouldn't have the proper density needed to solve the issue at large, Keogh said, though they may be good options outside the grounds. He proposed more denominational houses as a way to supplement accommodations.

He noted about 25% of single-week attendees stay at denominational houses. While it doesn't solve the entire issue, it does offer some housing and increases diversity on the grounds, another point of emphasis for Keogh. The main issue is the density on the grounds and where to develop.

The conversation then transitioned to programming, where Keogh stated there are no planned cuts to any "specific large area." He looks to cut around some of the edges, and pull back funding in certain areas.

Senior Vice President and Chief Program Officer Deborah Sunya Moore discussed the cost of larger evening acts.



JOSEPH CIEMBRONIEWICZ / STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Chautauquans give a show of hands to demonstrate who attended the "Pathway to Financial Resilience" community update webinar earlier Monday, prior to the Forum Dialogues that day in the Hall of Christ.

"A lot of these big artists might have the largest fees, anywhere from \$100,000 to \$250,000 for a night," she said. "Those are huge fees for Chautauqua."

However, Chautauqua makes that money back from parking, tickets, food and drinks.

"You might be surprised to know that where you make the least money or lose money, is on nights where we have a low- or middle-fee artist that might cost \$10,000, \$20,000 but it might have zero single ticket sales," Moore said, clarifying a point from an earlier Forum Dialogues about booking emerging artists.

A community member who did not state his name

brought up the idea of using the grounds for more conferences during the shoulder seasons, but Moore referenced the increasing lack of accommodations to host more conferences — especially during the winter months.

Keogh stressed philanthropy as an answer to some of the cuts.

"If we don't rely on philanthropy, we would need to increase our prices pretty substantially," he said.

Some ideas were suggested to innovate online. Packaging lectures together online was a proposed idea from an attendee who did not state her name. Moore stated that this could result in different structural contracts with

speakers, though it may be a future plan.

Another suggested idea was the reintroduction of the Food Festival — which has been announced as returning for two weeks in 2026 — from a community member who did not state her name.

Keogh closed the last of the season's Forum Dialogues by thanking those present.

"Thank you for taking the time and for your love for Chautauqua," he said. "This is a special place. It's a special place to me, to my family, to all of you. We have a great past, a good present, and probably an even more impressive future, if we all do this together."

WEBINAR

FROM PAGE A1

"Our long-term attendance will not meet our objectives," Keogh said. "This is actually the first year in a long time we've actually seen attendance decline slightly from last year."

Compared to 2019, the grounds are down 13% in overnight or long-term patrons. There is a decline of 190 people per day at Chautauqua since 2019 — not dramatic, and recoverable, he said.

Heading into the 2026 Summer Assembly, Keogh and the board of trustees have four goals: focus on the nine-week season, invest \$4.2 million in annual capital preservation, maintain an adequate cash balance and position Chautauqua to attract and retain the best talent, including the next president of Chautauqua.

Plans have been put in place already to achieve these goals and attempt to draw in new guests.

"We're going to reduce the staff housing use next year inside the gates," Keogh said. "That does two things. One, it lowers our costs, because it's very expensive,

as you know, to rent inside the Institution. And two is, it frees up that space to get part of those 190 people back that we need."

One of the decided cuts is the Grounds Access Pass. Originally introduced after the start of the COVID-19 pandemic, Keogh said it was a work-around — and more affordable — option for patrons that also prevented a crowded Amphitheater. The office in Washington D.C. will also be closed as a cost-saving measure.

Lastly, while nothing is official, Keogh said he and the board are eyeing reductions in personnel, expenses not directly related to program, and certain investments aligned with both demand and philanthropy.

"Some of the areas, like the symphony, like the theater, like the opera, you'd usually expect 50% to 70% of the revenue required for that to come from philanthropy, and right now we get some portions of that, but not anywhere near that level," Keogh said.

He spoke on short-term areas of focus, noting off-season work hosting conferences and weddings, both profitable areas.

Next, an area of focus the Institution will look at is the return rates of new Chautauquans. Seventy-eight percent of new Chautauquans don't return, but 20% do. One of the ways to retain new Chautauquans is with housing — and the Institution has limited spaces to house newcomers.

"Between 2015 and 2025 our rental capacity declined 15% in terms of the buildings, and 27% actually fewer units to rent," Keogh said.

Moving staff off grounds will help, as well as the creation of a subcommittee on the board dedicated to solving this problem. He noted a potential long-term solution, hoping to add condo-style housing on the grounds.

The target for budget cuts, he said, remains \$4 million to \$6 million, and he's heard community support for shuttering the D.C. office and discontinuing the Grounds Access Pass. He's also received feedback that the Institution's IDEA (inclusion, diversity, equity and accessibility) work is a priority, and reported that philanthropy for that department has already been pledged.

Keogh has also heard the community's response to The Chautauquan Daily's projected \$170,000 deficit, and the sentiment expressed has been that readers want to continue the print edition of the newspaper — but this means an increase in subscription costs and ad rates.

Keogh closed with a discussion of Chautauqua's mission going forward, and

an outline of next steps. The Chautauqua Institution Board of Trustees has its quarterly meeting Saturday, in which trustees will receive a report on the 2025 season. According to the presentation, "broader/deeper staff engagement" will happen between Monday's webinar, in the final week of the season, and Sept. 5, the week immediately following.

The board of trustees will have a special meeting on Sept. 13, and staff will have a 2026 budget before the board for preliminary review in early November.

Community updates should be expected in early October, mid-November, and again in mid-December after the board's final approval of the 2026 budget and the \$4 million to \$6 million in reductions.



2026 SCIENCE PRESENTATIONS

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Go to YouTube and search: Chautauqua Science Circle
To keep informed about all of our science events please check our website - chautauquascience.com

Thank you Chautauqua for 21 years of a transformative experience.

Thank you Chautauqua for providing a place to find purpose in life and life in purpose.

Thank you Chautauqua for an environment where extraordinary friendships can be found and fashioned.

Dear Chautauqua — you were hard to find, even harder to leave, and will be impossible to forget.

Roger and Judy Doebke

NEWS

Dear Chautauquans,
As the final words and melodies of the 2025 Summer Assembly echo through our grounds and hearts, one sentiment rises above all: deep and abiding gratitude.

Gratitude for your presence, your passion and your unwavering belief in Chautauqua's mission. This season has been a tapestry woven with your ideas, your energy, and your love — for learning, for community and for one another. And that's before we even begin to speak of the extraordinary programming that shaped our nine weeks together.

We extend heartfelt thanks to the speakers, artists, preachers and teachers who guided us through conversations that were both timely and timeless. To our staff — who curated, supported and stretched alongside us — we offer deep appreciation. And to our recreation teams, who reminded us that caring for the body is as vital as nurturing the mind and spirit, we say thank you.

I also want to ask the entire community to join me in offering a special word of thanks to our leadership groups: the Chautauqua Institution Board of Trustees, Chautauqua Foundation Board of Directors, Chautauqua Hotel Company Board of Directors, and the executive team, all of whom have stepped up in extraordinary ways this summer to buoy Chautauqua during a unique period of transition. Whether it is Trustee for Life George Snyder stepping in to open and close our Assembly by delivering the Three Taps of the



From the Interim Chief Executive

COLUMN BY KYLE KEOGH

Gavel Addresses, Tim Renjilian offering the Bestor Society Address, or trustees, directors and executive team members helping to host special programs and events, we have all gotten to know our organization's leaders in a slightly different way this summer, and I know we have enjoyed this shift. Who knows? Maybe we've created some new traditions, soon to be cherished!

As we turn the page toward 2026 (and yes, even 2027), our planning continues with your voices at the center. Please

share your ideas at 2026.chq.org — your input is essential to shaping what comes next.

Before we say goodbye for the season, we invite you to join us for a special post-season concert on Sept. 5, featuring Bonnie Raitt and Jimmie Vaughan & the Tilt-A-Whirl Band. This event marks the beginning of a new pilot initiative to enhance the Amphitheater experience with food and beverage concessions — including beer and wine — available in and around the venue. We're approaching this thoughtfully, with community dialogue guiding our steps, and we'll share what we learn as we consider future possibilities.

We're also navigating important changes to ensure Chautauqua's financial resilience for generations to come. Updates will be shared through email, webinars and our Community Portal at chq.org.

Whether you call Chautauqua home year-round, are preparing to return next summer, or split your time between communities, please know this: You are part of something enduring and extraordinary. We look forward to staying connected throughout the year and to the next moment we can lean fully into Chautauqua's mission — together.

With gratitude, anticipation and all the best,
Kyle Keogh
Interim Chief Executive

Author David Brooks has offered compelling insights on how to live a purposeful life — emphasizing deep commitments, character formation, engagement with “thick communities” and service to others. He argues that meaning is found through deep relationships and the ability to “see others deeply and be deeply seen.” I've been reflecting on purpose a lot lately, so I thought I'd write about it for this season's closing column.

When I first interviewed at Chautauqua, I felt a profound sense of being “called” to this place. It was clear to me that I would have the opportunity to engage in meaningful, purpose-driven work. My higher calling — or life's purpose, as some might say — is to gently and thoughtfully help transform communities to become more inclusive, diverse, equitable and accessible: IDEA. I believe I've played a small role in moving Chautauqua along that path.

My late mentor and I had a tradition of meeting the week

From the IDEA Desk

COLUMN BY AMIT TANEJA

Finding Meaning & Purpose: The Chautauqua Way

after graduation to reflect on the highs and lows of the academic year. He encouraged me to intentionally identify and appreciate the moments where I found meaning and purpose in my vocation. He would ask me to recount no fewer than five examples that nourished my professional soul. I'd like to share a few of those Chautauqua moments with you.

One early moment was a two-hour mobility scooter ride alongside Terrie Vaile Hauck. Experiencing Chautauqua from the perspective of someone who relies entirely on a scooter to access spaces and events transformed my thinking. Terrie began as a vocal critic, but our relationship evolved — she became a mentor, a friend and a champion of my work. I cried deeply when I learned of her passing earlier this year.

Another moment of affirmation came from pain. After a challenging incident left an artist feeling unsafe and othered, I sat with him to process his experience. We sat on the floor, his tears releasing not only the hurt from that moment but also the weight of past trauma. As a former college dean, I've had many such conversations with young people. Somehow, I knew what to say and how to be present — to be a bridge over troubled waters. These moments are difficult, but they are

also sacred. They remind me of the gift of human connection. There are countless stories like these. I feel vocational purpose when a patron tells me he was considering not returning because he could no longer hear lectures — until the new ListenWifi technology changed everything. Now, he can't wait to come back. I share the joy of a new patron of color who described his first visit as a “magical day.” I see the pride of a parent watching her neurodiverse child bloom at Boys' and Girls' Club. I hear the booming voice of a blind patron singing hymns in the Amphitheater, finally able to participate thanks to braille access. In each of these moments, I quietly think: What a gift to have played a small part in making this moment possible.

Let me be clear — I didn't write this column to pat myself on the back. I wrote it to share a personal ritual of reflection I engage in at the end of each season. These stories feed my soul and affirm my calling to be here. More importantly, I wrote this to invite you into your own practice of reflection, gratitude and meaning-making.

What are your Chautauqua moments that remind you that you are called to be here? What transformed you this season? What acts of service did you engage in? Where did you “see” others, and where did you “feel seen”? Where did you find meaning, purpose, joy and human connection? I hope you had many of these magical moments — and that they lead you to say, as I do: I am called to be here.

Until we meet again,
Amit Taneja
Senior Vice President for Community Relations
Chief Inclusion, Diversity, Equity and Accessibility Officer

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<p style="text-align: center; font-weight: bold;">PENDING!</p> <p style="text-align: center;">30 Howard Hanson Avenue 6BR 4 Full BA 1 Half BA \$1,375,000</p> <p style="font-size: x-small;">Beautifully custom-built home tucked into a peaceful cul-de-sac in the desirable woodlands district of the Chautauqua Institution.</p> <p style="font-size: x-small;">Listing Agent: Karen Goodell</p>	<p style="text-align: center; font-weight: bold;">PENDING!</p> <p style="text-align: center;">11 Roberts Avenue Unit#GA 2 BR 2 BA \$290,000</p> <p style="font-size: x-small;">Nestled in the heart of Chautauqua Institution's iconic Bestor Plaza, this charming garden-level apartment at The Longfellow offers comfort, style and unmatched convenience.</p> <p style="font-size: x-small;">Listing Agent: Mary Ann Bianco</p>	<p style="text-align: center; font-weight: bold;">UNDER CONTRACT</p> <p style="text-align: center;">35 Miller Park 1BR 1BA \$214,900</p> <p style="font-size: x-small;">Welcome to Unit 35 at the Arcade - a charming, architecturally rich retreat located steps from historic Miller Park, the lake, and the best of Central Chautauqua.</p> <p style="font-size: x-small;">Listing Agent: Heather Shea-Canaley</p>	<p style="text-align: center; font-weight: bold; font-size: 1.2em;">TIMESHARE INTERVALS FOR SALE</p> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around;"> <div style="width: 30%; text-align: center; vertical-align: top;"> <p style="text-align: center;">20 Elm Lane Unit#A3 Interval 7 3BR 2BA 1 Week</p> <p style="font-size: x-small;">Listing Agent: Deborah Rowe</p> </div> <div style="width: 30%; text-align: center; vertical-align: top;"> <p style="text-align: center;">20 Elm Lane Unit#B2 Interval 10 & 11 3BR 2BA 2 Weeks</p> <p style="font-size: x-small;">Listing Agent: Deborah Rowe</p> </div> <div style="width: 30%; text-align: center; vertical-align: top;"> <p style="text-align: center;">20 Elm Lane Unit#A2 Interval 8 & 9 3BR 2BA 2 Weeks</p> <p style="font-size: x-small;">Listing Agent: Tena Dills</p> </div> </div>		

FEATURED VACATION RENTALS

<p style="font-size: x-small;">Northshore B2 20 Elm Lane 2BR 2.5BA Parking</p>	<p style="font-size: x-small;">44 South The Outfield Inn 1st Base 2BR 1BA Parking</p>	<p style="font-size: x-small;">Colonnade Cottage 3B 9 Simpson 1BR 1BA No Parking</p>	<p style="font-size: x-small;">19 South 19 South 4BR 2BA Parking</p>
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Riley Gaines

Week 1, June 29, 2026

The first week of the 2026 season is devoted to **"Icons and Instigators: Women Who Change the World."** We can think of no one more important than Riley Gaines who captivated ABC audiences during her visit last year. Through her tenacity and eloquence she changed the landscape of women's sports forever.



Jonathan Turley

Week 3, July 13th, 2026

George Washington University Law School Professor, Legal Scholar, Writer, Commentator and Legal Analyst in Broadcast & Print.



Robert Woodson

Week 6, August 3rd, 2026

Founder and President of the Woodson Center, Community Development Leader and Author. In 2020, Woodson Launched the Center's "1776 Unites" campaign to counter the 1619 Project.



Josh Kraushaar

Week 7, August 10th, 2026

D.C. Political Analyst with a Track Record of knowing Election Trends. Author of Axios Weekly Sunday Sneak Preview Newsletter. A Political Analyst for Fox News and Editor-in-Chief of "Jewish Insider"

Special Note: At the invitation of the Chautauqua Institution Administration, Jason Riley, WSJ editorial board and weekly columnist and ABC 2022 speaker, will make his 10:45 am platform debut during week 2.

THINK, ENGAGE, BE INSPIRED

Check our website for updates on additional 2026 speakers

www.abcatchq.com



LECTURE

In season's final lecture, Al-Shamahi presents reasons for human dominion

GABRIEL WEBER
STAFF WRITER

Like they say, "The winner takes it all," and the loser goes extinct?

At 10:45 a.m. Friday in the Amphitheater, Ella Al-Shamahi closed out the Chautauqua Lecture Series for 2025, and its Week Nine theme of "Past Informs Present: How to Harness History." Al-Shamahi is a National Geographic Explorer, paleoanthropologist and evolutionary biologist whose research has focused on Neanderthals.

Clips of her new show "Human" — premiering Sept. 18 on PBS — showed Al-Shamahi investigating the story of humanity's evolution and opened up the lecture refuting the idea of humans' predestined greatness.

"We were not the greatest species of human. We were not the fastest, not the strongest, not the smartest. We were just the latest in a long line of other humans. In fact, some would call us the underdog. And yet, in the space of just a few thousand years, look around — we are the only ones left and the most dominant form of life on this planet," Al-Shamahi said. "How on earth did this happen? They say that history is written by the victors. What if the others didn't just lose? What if they went extinct? This is our story, the story of Homo sapiens. But then again, folks, there really is no one left to refute it."

Al-Shamahi finds two big problems with the image of human evolution typically presented to the public: the lack of women involved and a linear march forward that isn't indicative of humanity's fascinating nuance.

Al-Shamahi compares the world of our ancestors to *The Lord of the Rings*; when humans first turned up on the scene 300,000 years ago, we shared Earth with at least six other species of humans — but Al-Shamahi believes that number is just the tip of the iceberg. A team of archaeologists found an unexpected skeleton at least 70,000 years old on the Indonesian island of Sulawesi; while the skeleton belonged to an adult, it came up to only about 1 meter and 6 centimeters tall.

"This was a bomb shell of a discovery. (The adults) were the size of a 4-year-old child and lived on the island, only



They say that history is written by the victors. What if the others didn't just lose? What if they went extinct? This is our story, the story of Homo sapiens. But then again, folks, there really is no one left to refute it."

— ELLA AL-SHAMAH

Palaeoanthropologist,
Evolutionary Biologist,
National Geographic Explorer

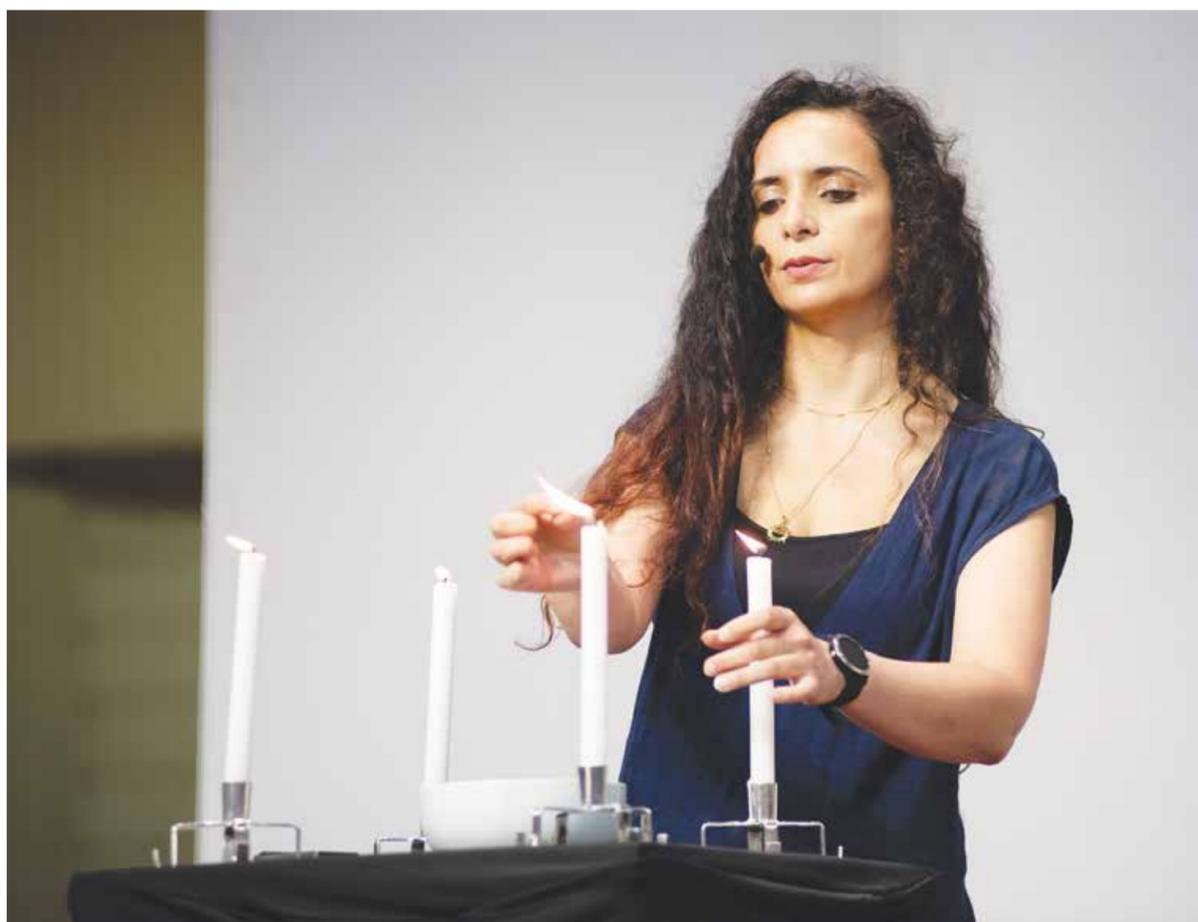
on this island in Indonesia with giant Komodo dragons, giant storks taller than me and giant rats," Al-Shamahi said. "Just imagine it. In our world, there were once humans the size of penguins hunting elephants the size of cows. When I say it was like *Lord of the Rings*, I am not kidding. It was fantastical, only it was real."

Archaeology is like a jigsaw puzzle in that there are different techniques like stones, fossils, DNA and bones to parse out where we come from geographically. The Out of Africa Theory maintains that humans first evolved in Africa, then migrated to other areas.

"It turns out that all of us from outside of Africa, we can trace our ancestry to about 10,000 people who left Africa 60,000 years ago. Only, we started as a species 300,000 years ago. So did we never leave Africa? Turns out we left Africa loads. We kept trying to leave Africa and populate the rest of the world — only it never took," Al-Shamahi said. "We were constantly going locally extinct outside of Africa. It was like we hadn't cracked the code of how to exist outside of Africa when so many of the other species had."

Al-Shamahi referenced a time when Neanderthals and humans lived together at the same time under the same mountain in Israel in two different caves. Only one species went extinct.

"The only possible explanation in my mind for why we kept leaving Africa and disappearing, not being able to get a foothold, is that those other species were formidable," Al-Shamahi said. "They



JOSEPH CIEMBRONIEWICZ / STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Ella Al-Shamahi, palaeoanthropologist, evolutionary biologist and National Geographic Explorer, lights candles as an example of tribal ritual as she delivers the final morning lecture of the season Friday in the Amphitheater.

were incredible competition. And that doesn't suit us, does it? In the way we tell our story, we paint ourselves as the pinnacle of human evolution, as if we arrived on the scene and were immediately us. But actually, that's not the case."

When Al-Shamahi entered a Neanderthals' cave and saw adult and children handprints on the walls, she immediately burst into tears. This could serve as evidence of art, or juvenile delinquents, or spirituality or even warnings — like the hand on stop signs.

"I personally think those handprints are all of the above. They're the ground zero of all of it. The handprints with time become the Sistine Chapel, religion, Banksy. Those handprints, with time, become road signs," Al-Shamahi said. "Isn't it hard to not be impressed with these other human species? We have done them dirty in the way we have talked about them. In fact, there are a lot of paleoanthropologists today that will tell you, if we were to line up all of the other species of human and you were to ask who was going to make it, I will be honest with you, I would not be putting the money on us."

However, something started to change about

100,000 years ago due to two big adaptations: a change in brain organization as seen by skull shape, and sheer numbers. The combination leads to cumulative culture, the idea that every single generation builds upon the previous generations' science, art and technology.

"More people allows for more specialization. And what do you think fosters the kind of cooperation which our species is famous for? Something when you might not guess — tribalism. Tribalism fosters cooperation," Al-Shamahi said. "Tribalism is all around us."

Ritual is one way that humans cultivate shared meaning that bonds us to our tribes. This kind of bonding is a part of what makes leaving tribes so hard; Al-Shamahi recently started talking about her own experience leaving her creationist tribe when she found herself believing in evolution as a college student.

"That reaction that I had to leaving my tribe, crying my eyes out about it, was the correct response. As somebody who studies human evolution, that is a response that was baked into us," Al-Shamahi said. "It's not supposed to be easy to leave your tribe. It's not supposed to be good. It's supposed to

be hard. Because your tribe keeps you alive."

Dancing is another way humans bond with one another, even through social media trends. There was a study done where strangers participated in a silent disco, dancing together for just a few minutes; at the end, the dancers really believed the others were "their kind of people" — even imagining them to have the same political beliefs.

"If you really want to bring two people together, one of the best things you can do scientifically is to play music and get them to dance together. It's incredible. Tribalism can be beautiful. It brings us together. But tribalism is marvelous for the in-group," Al-Shamahi said. "It can be an absolute disaster for the out-group."

When Al-Shamahi was looking to conduct a project on the Yemeni island of Socotra, she had significant problems getting there. A flight into the Yemen mainland would have landed the team in an Al-Qaeda stronghold, a private charter required high level clearance, and a cargo ship would have sailed through pirate waters.

"It is a tragedy for science and these places if we're not doing research there. It's what you call low-hanging fruit," Al-Shamahi said. "This is the golden age, in my opinion, of paleoanthropologists; the discoveries being made by colleagues are mind boggling."

The discovery of a tiny finger bone of a Neanderthal turned out to actually be a discovery of a whole new species of ancient humans — the Denisovans. The mutation that allows Tibetans to exist at extremely high altitudes actually comes from mixed-species breeding with the Denisovans.

There are many different theories as to why the other species of humans went extinct. Numbers were a big part of Homo sapiens' ascendancy as it meant a replenishing source in Africa and the ability to invent better technology.

"Numbers are a pretty unsexy answer to why we made it. I will give you one more answer. It goes back to us crossing to Australia. No other species of human had ever crossed to Australia. If you think about it, it is an insane act we did. Our ancestors looked out to an open ocean with no idea what was on the other side," Al-Shamahi said. "Using rafts, because we hadn't invented boats, they went out and sailed into the open ocean. It was an act, in my opinion, of pure madness, and it was not done by just a few people. It was done, we think, by hundreds of the first Australians."

Al-Shamahi finds that time is who we are. It offers perspective on the true adaptability of humanity while contextualizing the balance that has historically been respected.

"I do not know what to make of our species. On the one hand, our ancestors were so inventive. They were so resilient and creative; it's hard to not be impressed. It's impossible to not be impressed. And we should be incredibly grateful for them," Al-Shamahi said. "Truthfully, if they hadn't been so successful, would we really be here? On the other hand, our success is so extreme that it constantly seems to be at the expense of those around us. Other human species and, as we can see today, other animals. I don't know what to do with that."

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GEORGE KOLOSKI / STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Daily readers before a performance by the Chautauqua Symphony Orchestra July 31 in the Amphitheater.



DAVE MUNCH / PHOTO EDITOR

Parker Smith reads the Daily Aug. 6 amidst the floral colors of Odland Plaza.



TALLULAH BROWN VAN ZEE / STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Don Friedman reads the Daily on Library Day, July 31, at the Smith Memorial Library.



VON SMITH / STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Hubert and Rose Spears, who have been visiting Chautauqua for 35 years, share a copy of *The Chautauquan Daily's* weekend edition during the final Art in the Park of the season Aug. 3 in Miller Park.

Thank You To Our Readers

Each June, editors Sara Toth and Dave Munch welcome a new batch of student interns to the newsroom of *The Chautauquan Daily*. Many in the group, selected from leading journalism programs across the country, have just set foot on the grounds for the first time. On that first day of orientation, we tell them that this is a newspaper unlike anything they have encountered before — due to the richness and diversity of the programming they will cover, yes — but also because this newspaper has a readership unlike any they have ever served. We open that first day by explaining that Chautauquans love this newspaper. We tell them that no one besides their parents — and, of course, their editors here — will engage more deeply with the stories they write, the photos they take and the pages they design.

You, the readers, have never failed to live up to that promise. Each summer you welcome the *Daily* staff with open arms; you greet them as they walk to and from their assignments, welcome them onto your porches and into your homes, and invite them not just to cover this community, but to be a part of it.

Former *Daily* interns will go on to work in newsrooms around the country. To them, the name Chautauqua will always evoke memories of the place where they did some of their best work, where they built the foundations that have carried them on to the positions they hold now, and where a community of astute and engaged readers made their summer at Chautauqua a uniquely formative experience.

As we close out the final hours of the *Daily's* 149th season, we look forward to celebrating our sesquicentennial next summer with you, the readers. Next June, a new cohort will walk through the newsroom doors, and again the promise will hold true that their summer at the *Daily* will be unlike anything they have experienced, because of a readership that is uniquely Chautauquan.

Thank you for reading. 🐛



DAVE MUNCH / PHOTO EDITOR

The Acrobats of Cirque-Tacular troupe members James Ryan, left, and Harold Moeller read the *Daily* article previewing their performance Aug. 5 in the Athenaeum Hotel Lobby Lounge following their performance in the Amphitheater that evening.



DAVE MUNCH / PHOTO EDITOR

Nick and Sandy Stupiansky read the *Daily's* coverage of *Ida by Lamplight* and *Sitcom* while waiting for the performance to begin Aug. 8 in Elizabeth S. Lenna Hall.



JOSEPH CIEMBRONIEWICZ / STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Dottie Harnish reads the *Daily* before Robin Wright's morning lecture Aug. 13 in the Amphitheater.



DAVE MUNCH / PHOTO EDITOR

Julie Osborn reads the *Daily* Tuesday on Bestor Plaza after attending Morgan Freeman's Chautauqua Lecture Series presentation.

LITERARY ARTS

Bryant Day welcomes in new reading year, themed 'Translation'

SUSIE ANDERSON
STAFF WRITER

Last weekend, 12 bells and four books rang in the new reading year for the Chautauqua Literary and Scientific Circle.

At 11:30 a.m. on Saturday, a crowd of Chautauquans gathered outside the Miller Bell Tower to commemorate a new reading year and celebrate the recent graduates from the CLSC.

The ceremony includes a reading from a poem, call-and-responses related to the power of reading and, perhaps most importantly, the reveal of the very first CLSC reading selections for the year.

Originally held in the fall, the celebration commemorates William Cullen Bryant, an early proponent for the Chautauqua Literary and Scientific Circle, which was founded in 1878.

"Bryant encouraged the CLSC that Chautauqua should not just exist here within the gates in what was then a two-to-three-week season, but instead project outward," said Jordan Steves, the Emily and Richard Smucker Chair for Education.

The ceremony opened with Alumni Association of the CLSC President Pat McDonald reading from a poem by Mrs. Grace Livingston-Hill-Lutz — an annual tradition — and Chautauqua's Motet Choir led the crowd in a song reflecting on the joys of reading.

Steves announced the

2025-26 CLSC vertical theme: "Translation."

"Translation is more than a rendition of words from one language to another," he said. "Translation invokes how we convey meaning to one another, person-to-person, country-to-country and page-to-page."

In 2026, Chautauquans are encouraged to explore what it means to translate globally, locally and personally in a year that celebrates America's semicentennial.

Managing Director of Literary Arts Stephine Hunt unwrapped the first book, *This is the Only Kingdom: A Novel* by Jaquira Díaz, selected for a CLSC Unbound webinar scheduled for mid-November.

"We started the CLSC Unbound program this past spring, and the goal is to extend the CLSC reading year, extend our list of books and, of course, extend the reading experience beyond the gate via Zoom webinar," Hunt said.

Díaz's novel follows a mother and her child in the wake of a murder, set against the backdrop of a working-class barrio in Puerto Rico. In an immersive and moving portrait of family, Díaz delivers a love letter to mothers, daughters and the communities that build them.

The second selection was for Week One in 2026: Anna North's forthcoming *Bog Queen: A Novel*. In a week themed "Icons and Instigators: Women Who



Managing Director of Literary Arts Stephine Hunt reveals the CLSC Unbound selection, *This is the Only Kingdom*, by Jaquira Díaz, during last weekend's Bryant Day celebration at the Miller Bell Tower.

TALLULAH BROWN VAN ZEE / STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Change the World," the novel follows a forensic anthropologist's discovery of a body in a bog in northern England, quickly absorbing her into a tumultuous history that links two young women across a landscape more complex than they could have ever imagined.

North will return to Chautauqua after presenting her novel *Outlawed* for the CLSC in the 2022 summer season.

For Week Five's theme

"Art and Artists Against the Odds," the CLSC selection is *Feeding Ghosts: A Graphic Memoir*, by Tessa Hulls. Across three generations of Chinese women, Hulls traces reverberations of Chinese history in a novel that explores grief, exile and identity.

Growing up with her grandmother, a journalist during the turmoil leading up to the 1949 Communist Victory, Hulls bears witness to mental illness and trauma that plague her grand-

mother and mother while carrying the love that ties the three of them together.

In addition to the CLSC selections, Hunt revealed a CLSC Young Readers selection for Week Six, commemorating America's 250th anniversary: *Rebellion 1776: A Novel*, by Laurie Halse Anderson. The middle-grade historical fiction novel follows a girl struggling to survive the smallpox epidemic, the public sphere of inoculation and the seething Revolutionary War.

The ceremony closed with a call-and-response from Steves, a celebratory song with the Motet Choir and the ringing from the Miller Bell Tower 12 times in honor of the 12 books required to graduate from the CLSC.

"All that humankind has done, thought, gained or been, is lying as is in magic preservation in the pages of books," Steves read in the call-and-response. "They are our chosen possessions."

Hall of Philosophy mosaic restoration efforts see more success in 2nd year

SUSIE ANDERSON
STAFF WRITER

As Chautauquans walk into the Hall of Philosophy any number of events — from the Interfaith Lecture Series or the Chautauqua Literary and Scientific Circle presentations during the summer, to a wedding or gathering in the off-season — they will notice a new shine beneath their feet. Fourteen of the 51 historic class mosaics of the CLSC have been restored, marking the second full year in a five-year repair plan to preserve a unique part of Chautauqua's legacy.

"It's an encyclopedia on the ground, and it's telling you the history of Chautauqua," said Karen Paul, vice president of the CLSC Class of 2000.

Each mosaic embedded into the floor of the Hall of Philosophy represents a CLSC graduating class — often depicting its symbol, plant and motto — dating back to the earliest days of Chautauqua's reading program. The Class of 2000, the last to be memorialized in the floor, is now spearheading the campaign to repair the integral part of CLSC history.

Paul has partnered with Ryan Boughton — Associate AIA Member and the Institution's administrator of architectural and land

use regulations and capital projects manager — and local artist Denise Stebbins to breathe life back into the mosaics. Since the inaugural "Pioneer Class" of the CLSC graduated in 1882, the wear and tear of activity on the site has resulted in 37 of the 51 mosaics needing repair.

The project began in 2000 under the guidance of CLSC Class of 2000 President Tom Rowe, who worked on repairs for 17 years until his health began to decline, and the Institution oversaw minor repairs for the next seven years. Initially a \$10,000 endowment, the efforts of Paul and community members have garnered \$51,000 across 250 people to work toward the goal of completion. Anyone interested in contributing to the cause can do so at donorbox.org/the-mosaic-project. That funding will be used not only for artistic restoration, but also for surrounding concrete repairs and protective sealing to prevent further damage.

Paul emphasized that the community has rallied to the cause, inside and outside the gates. From community members such as Ruth Nelson selling T-shirts and tote bags decorated with mosaics to Jamestown Kitchen and

Tile generously gifting Paul free tiles, the community has risen to the cause.

The repairs are more than tilework — they are a preservation of Institution history. Stebbins herself was married in the Hall of Philosophy. Paul recalled a time in which Stebbins spent an entire night retiling a mosaic, with her husband holding up a flashlight at 11:30 p.m. in advance of a wedding the next morning.

"I've learned so much by working with an artist," Paul said. "She is so particular."

The effort of tile-matching and acquiring tile is no easy feat. Paul shared that she has reached out to over 100 public and private companies in an effort to find proper fits for a largely unknown tile history.

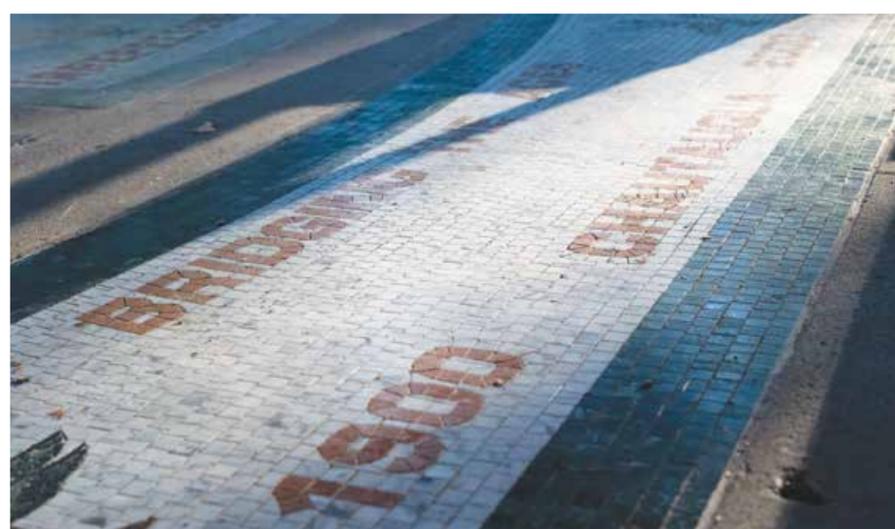
"We had no record of where any tiles came from," Paul said.

To prevent further gaps in knowledge, Paul and the others are consciously cataloguing details about the tiles to help with future maintenance. Boughton emphasized the importance of the shift.

"Moving forward, we'll have all the information — products, specs, tile types — and Karen's also compiled the history behind a lot of the mosaics," he said.

Paul is working with *Daily* reporter and author Mary Lee Talbot to compile the history of the mosaics into a book, adding a literary dimension to the artistic restoration.

The Hall of Philosophy, a National Historic Landmark and included on the National Register of Historic Places as part of the Chautauqua Historic District, is one of Chautauqua's most beloved and iconic structures. The restoration is not merely aesthetic, but a reflection of the community's commitment to preserving its shared heritage. "With restoration proj-



HG BIGGS / CONTRIBUTING PHOTOGRAPHER

Fourteen of the 51 historic Chautauqua Literary and Scientific Circle class mosaics in the Hall of Philosophy have been restored as of this year.

ects like this that have been fully grassroots-led by enthusiastic community members, it really shows how much this community cares about the place and how much they want to support things that mean a lot to everybody that comes here," Boughton said.

As the project aims for completion in 2028 to celebrate the 150th anniversary of the CLSC's creation,

Paul has given lectures throughout the summer to update Chautauquans on the progress and been approached by ushers to compliment the difference that has been made.

"I think it's brought a lot of awareness to people who never before stopped to look at the mosaics," she said.

Alongside the physical restoration, the Institution's grounds team

has changed its approach to maintenance — washing the floor by hand and avoiding placing benches on them to reduce damage. Looking to the future of the project, Paul expressed gratitude to the community members involved and the Institution.

"We couldn't have done the project without Chautauqua helping us," Paul said.



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LITERARY ARTS

ONE LAST QUESTION

What's on your nightstand?

SUSIE ANDERSON
STAFF WRITER

Throughout the summer, Chautauqua Literary and Scientific Circle authors encouraged readers to grow — in perspective, empathy and understanding. As the 2025 reading season comes to an end, they have offered a final gift: the opportunity to grow an off-season reading list.

At the end of each *Daily* interview with CLSC

authors, they were asked a simple but revealing question: What are you currently reading?

Ranging in genre and content, the CLSC authors shared a variety of reads that are currently sparking their interests. Here are a few of the selections that found a home on the nightstand of the authors who shared their words with Chautauquans this summer.

JONATHAN EIG

Author, *King: A Life*

Austerlitz, by W. G. Sebald
Crux, by Gabriel Tallent

"I'm reading *Austerlitz* by W. G. Sebald, which is a fictional story connected to the Holocaust. It's just really incredibly moving to me," Eig said. "And I got an advanced copy of Gabriel Tallent's new novel, *Crux*. I think next year, next summer, a lot of people in Chautauqua are going to be talking about this amazing novel."

DAMON YOUNG

Editor, *That's How They Get You: An Unruly Anthology of Black American Humor*

Luster, by Raven Leilani

Young said he is currently re-reading fiction while writing his first fiction novel. He said he made the mistake of not reading as much while writing his first collection, the memoir-in-essays *What Doesn't Kill You Makes You Blacker*.

"I didn't read anything during that, and I realized kind of afterwards how dumb that is, because that's how we breathe and live and think," Young said. "We have to be reading, right? And taking a viable part of my experience of life away from myself is dumb."

GEORGE SAUNDERS

Author, *Liberation Day*

100 Great Operas And Their Stories: Act-By-Act Synopses, by Henry W. Simon

"Well, it's funny. I am reading a book called *100 Great Operas*. It's an older book, and it's just a collection of 100 great operas," Saunders said. "... So it's really been fun to look at that and think, 'Oh, I wonder if I could just write a libretto or write an outline of a novel or an opera and see how that works.' So it's just kind of a guilty pleasure just to pile through 100 synopses, basically."

ELIZABETH CAMARILLO GUTIERREZ

Author, *My Side of the River*

The Cost of Being Undocumented: One Woman's Reckoning with America's Inhumane Math, by Alix Dick and Antero Garcia

CAT BOHANNON

Author, *Eve: How the Female Body Drove 200 Million Years of Evolution*

The Burning Earth, by Sunil Amrith

"My nightstand is covered in scientific papers," Bohannon said. A recent judge for the 2025 PEN awards, Bohannon enjoyed several books from the selections.

"(*The Burning Earth*) is a history of ideas project, about how human beings have always manipulated our environments to concentrate power among some groups and not others," Bohannon said, "and (Amrith) did it really well."

NANA KWAME ADJEI-BRENYAH

Author, *Chain-Gang All-Stars*

Maggie; Or, A Man and a Woman Walk Into A Bar, by Katie Yee

"I knew you were going to ask me that," Adjei-Brenyah said. "... I read the first 10 pages today, and I can already tell it's a great book."

KEVIN NGUYEN

Author, *Mỹ Documents*

Nothing More of This Land, by Joseph Lee

"(Lee) is Wampanoag, and he grew up on Martha's Vineyard, so he goes around the country and talks to Indigenous communities," Nguyen said. "Similar to not knowing about Japanese-American incarceration, I had never thought about Indigenous groups on Martha's Vineyard before it became the place where the Obamas vacation. So it's kind of a memoir and reporting."

STEFAN BINDLEY-TAYLOR

Author, "Bread, Meat and Water," winner of 2025 Chautauqua Janus Prize

Lady Chatterley's Lover, by D. H. Lawrence

"That's a good question. Funny enough, it's a strange one," Bindley-Taylor said. "I just finished reading *Lady Chatterley's Lover* for the first time. And it was great. I had a great time with it."

NAOMI SHIHAB NYE

Author, *The Tiny Journalist*

Bard, Kinetic, by Anne Waldman

Nye is a friend of Waldman's and recently read with her at the Poetry Society Summer Festival.

"Anne is a brilliant writer. So this is her memoir, but what I love about it is that it involves so many other poets and the time in which she grew up and all this interesting poetry action," Nye said. "And when it's someone you know and you say, 'Gosh, I didn't know that she did that.' I woke up last night at 3 a.m., and I was reading it again. I couldn't stop thinking about it."

E. ETHELBERG MILLER

Author, *the little book of e*

A Biography of a Mountain: The Making and Meaning of Mount Rushmore, by Matthew Davis

"It's a fascinating book," Miller said. "I don't have to interview Matthew until late October, but that's one of the books I have on my bed."

ELIZABETH O'CONNOR

Author, *Whale Fall*, winner of the 2025 Chautauqua Prize

The House on Via Gemito: A Novel, by Domenico Starnone

"It's a fantastic novel," O'Connor said. "It's about an Italian family in the 20th century, from the Second World War to now. And it's just really moving and really beautifully written. I think he's a really masterful writer."

DEBRA MAGPIE EARLING

Author, *The Lost Journals of Sacajewea: A Novel*

North Woods, by Daniel Mason

"There are many books on my nightstand," Earling said. "I do have ones that I would definitely recommend. I love the book by Daniel Mason, *North Woods*. I think that's just an astonishing book. He just offers such a unique patch of land, and I love that."



ILLUSTRATION BY LAURA QUISENBERRY / DESIGN EDITOR

LITERARY ARTS

HOW CAN HISTORY HARNESS US?



GEORGE KOLOSKI / STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Debra Magpie Earling admitted that she threw readers into the darkness with her book.

"The *Lost Journals of Sacajewea* is a very difficult book," Earling said Thursday afternoon in the Hall of Philosophy. "It's a difficult book for many reasons because I don't give you a glossary. I throw you in."

Earling's sophomore novel, *The Lost Journals of Sacajewea*, was the Chautauqua Literary and Scientific Circle selection for Week Nine's theme of "Past Informs Present: How to Harness History."

While Earling included a primer, describing her unconventional use of capitalization and faded text, launching the reader into the thick of things was intentional. When researching Lewis and Clark for the bicentennial of their exploration, Earling found few mentions of Sacajewea, all of which identified her as a teenager or older.

"Non-Native historians — they have no information or no true documents to prove this — say that Sacajewea was born in 1788, which conveniently would have made her 16 years old, which is still very young, when they arrived and she was pregnant," Earling said. "But I don't believe them."

In reality, Earling imagines that Sacajewea would have been 10 or 11 when she was captured. Her age is one of the many contested mythologies surrounding the translator and guide, another of which is her supposed lack of understanding of French and English.

"I think about survival," Earling said. "When you have to survive something, the language comes to you so quickly, doesn't it?"

While Earling described literary muses coming to her while she slept, she called upon Chautauqua audiences to embrace the muses that surround them every day.

"There's a spirit in this place that has long been here. You feel it when you arrive here," Earling said. "And if you don't believe it, just take off your shoes and step on the earth itself."

Earling compelled audiences to recognize the stories that live within them and the environment they interact with every day. She highlighted that the experience of storytelling is not unique to any one community, but instead connects all humans.

"I had a student come up to me and they go, 'Well, I wish I were Native because then I'd have a lot of stories,'" Earling said. "Wake up. All people have stories."

In a subversion of the week's theme, Earling asked not how Chautauquans might harness history, but how history harnesses them. She described the necessity of sharing stories and connecting with one's past in order to look to the future.

"We have stories that are powerful. Tell your stories to your grandchildren. Tell your stories to your children, tell your stories to your neighbor and to your community," Earling said. "If you had a storytelling circle, that would be a good thing." — Susie Anderson

The Chautauqua Community Poem

'WARNING FOR WHAT IS TO COME ...'

Week Nine

Past Informs Present: How to Harness History

What is a message that you want to be heard by those in political offices? What are you worried about? Are their parallels that you have noticed in current events to past ones? How can we use history to mold our paths for something better? In your entry please start or include this phrase in your entry: Warning for what is to come ...

Chautauquans, we're writing a poem together. We want to hear your thoughts, read your words, feel your feels about the lectures, about what you've learned or liked, or been inspired by, about what's been on your mind and what's being talked across the grounds. So, each week, we will give you a prompt then invite you to submit an original poem, or meaningful thought or phrase (10-30 lines max) by 5 p.m. Thursday each week, responding to the week's theme. Then, we will select lines or words or stanzas from some of your submissions and combine them into one single community poem. The final poem, representing the combined work of multiple contributors, will be read at Summers on the Steps at 12:15 p.m. Fridays at the Literary Arts Center at Alumni Hall. Here, the Daily is pleased to present the Community Poem from Week Nine:

"Warning For What Is To Come"

Tonight I hear the warning
In the silence, can feel
Whole species disappear

Can spy the words
That have been censored

Or watch the artifact
Turn memory keeper
Rub against the grain of whims

Blind to truth
We watch our collective history
Disappear

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I find there to be
No Socrates

Only defeathered angels
On the ground

Removing the cotton
From my ears

I heard their muffled
Cries:
Dogma won't do—
Only the doggedness
Of love
Can save you now

Contributors: Octagon Bookstore, Fred Dahl, Martha McGovern, David Walsh, Lisa Williamson
Edited by: Camille Carter, Liana Lopez, Ayaana Nayak

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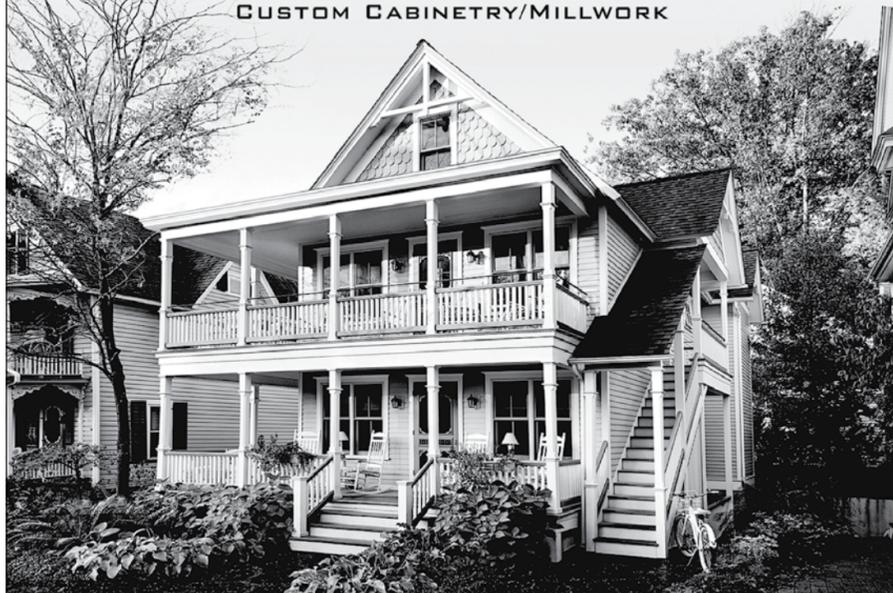
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COMMUNITY

Gardens & Landscapes crew member Teets building to-scale Bell Tower

JULIA WEBER
STAFF WRITER

Mark Teets, an employee in Chautauqua Institution's Gardens and Landscapes department, found a pastime in making miniatures. What first started as building fairy garden miniatures for his granddaughter has since morphed into a series of intensive miniature architectural feats. His latest? The historic Miller Bell Tower.

When he initially set out on this mission, Teets said he wanted to recreate a recognizable feature of the Institution. At first he considered replicating the Athenaeum Hotel, but wanted to opt for a less intricate structure. After some debate, he settled on the iconic bell tower for his project.

"I was looking at the Miller Bell Tower, and I said 'I don't know.' I decided to do it," he said.

Teets got the dimensions of the bell tower and set to work. First, he had to scale the building down to a manageable size — set to be 6 feet tall by the time it is complete. He said that while the measurements aren't exactly to scale, he works to make the miniature versions as close in resemblance to



GEORGE KOLOSKI / STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Mark Teets works on his scale-model of the Miller Bell Tower Tuesday in his home workshop. Teets lays each brick by hand, and makes them in bulk with rubber molds. He plans for the final model to be about 6 feet tall.

their full-size counterparts.

"If you look at the real one, you see there's a lot of unique characteristics. The colors of bricks, the size of bricks, some bricks are very skinny," he said. "Mine is the same way."

Teets had never worked with brick in miniatures before, and he had to learn how to make his own in the right proportion when scaled down. He said he relied on tutorial videos of how to

make standard-size bricks — and a healthy dose of trial and error — to come up with a successful method.

Teets said one of the challenges he has faced in creating the miniature bell tower so far has been navigating the curvature of the door frames and window arches. As he continues building the tower, he'll need to figure out how to install the bells in his miniature to resemble the original's structure.



"If you look at (the bell tower) very closely, the top part is very intricate," he said. "I'm going to try to maintain the integrity as much as I can."

He said that while other artists who make miniatures sometimes conduct extensive planning before they begin making the structure, his process is much more organic. He said while he makes mistakes sometimes

because of this, he appreciates seeing the variations in form on the real bell tower.

"(My process is) basically all in my head, but sometimes I make mistakes because of that," Teets said. "When I thought that, I looked at the tower, and I went, 'Look at all of those 'mistakes' that are on this thing.'"

Teets has been asked on occasion why he makes miniatures and, in partic-

ular, why he felt inspired to recreate Chautauqua's bell tower. He put it simply: "I do it because it's fun. I just enjoy it."

For Teets, Chautauqua is a place of community, and he appreciates that it feels "almost like a family." He said he enjoys the community's engagement and shared sense of purpose.

"I like it," he said. "I love it here, I do."

For CVFD Auxiliary, spirit of volunteerism is spark of giving back

PATRICIA BEAGLE
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

Thirty energetic members of the Chautauqua Volunteer Fire Department Auxiliary support the brave men and women of Chautauqua Volunteer Fire Department throughout the year. Some are spouses of firefighters, and others are simply motivated to serve the community.

Auxiliary President Amy Snyder, an 18-year member, explained that the Auxiliary's mission is to assist CVFD members whenever possible and to assist the community in times of disaster. Members must live within the 17.5-square-mile fire district for more than six months of the year. "They are also required to help with at least half of the Auxiliary's events," Snyder said — and some of their work is unscheduled. "When there is a fire, we make sandwiches and bring food and drinks for the firefighters."

The Auxiliary does extensive fundraising to help the CVFD to purchase firefighting and emergency care equipment. During the Summer Assembly Season, the Auxiliary holds chicken barbecues every other Sunday — in 2024, those four Auxiliary-run barbecues brought in \$15,000, Snyder said — and they help with the five Sunday barbecues run by the CVFD.

"The firefighters need backup for their barbecues because they could be called to an emergency at any moment," Snyder said.

Mary Houstead, a 17-year member, leads the Auxiliary's chicken fundraisers. She has the tricky job of deciding how many dinners to order for each one.

"I look at the weather, what's happening on the grounds, and I talk to people to find out how the bookings are," she said. "I ended up doing this job because nobody could make a decision about how much chicken to order. I can decide, and I am usually spot on."

As members prepared for the final Auxiliary barbecue of the summer, held last weekend, they laughed when asked what has changed over the years. Some told stories about the old days when the dinners were less frequent, and women had to pluck the remains of feathers from raw chickens.

"The women used to boil chickens and then the



JOSEPH CIEMBRONIEWICZ / STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Amy Snyder, president of the Chautauqua Volunteer Fire Department Auxiliary, hands chicken meals to customers during the Auxiliary's chicken barbecue on Aug. 10 at the CVFD Fire Hall on Massey.

men barbecued them," Diane Gleason remembered. "(Vice President) Marilyn Scarpino's mother used to make the potato salad."

Houstead recalled that the late Carolyn Murray, a past president, used to stir up business by walking around in a chicken costume.

"Thankfully, the location of that costume is unknown," she sighed — Murray had expected Houstead to be the next chicken mascot.

These days, the Auxiliary uses signs to publicize the fundraisers, but the best advertisement for the barbecues may be the enticing aroma that blankets the grounds well before noon on Sundays. Known for their delicious marinade, Chiavetta's Barbecue prepares the chicken on site. An experienced Chiavetta's grill specialist named Mike explained that each half-chicken portion weighs 1.5 pounds. Once the charcoal is hot, he can cook 500 pieces in two hours.

A line of hungry Chautauquans forms 30 minutes before dinners start flying out the door at 11:30 a.m. Chautauquans Harvey and Barbara Feldman have a strategy of arriving early, because the front of the line is in the shade. They come every Sunday, and last year purchased fire blankets to support the Auxiliary, as well. Jerry O'Connor of South Carolina raved about the marinade: "The chicken at home is not as good. Here, they do it right. It's pretty incredible."

Meanwhile, a kitchen assembly-line team of eight fills cardboard clamshells with chicken, baked beans, coleslaw and rolls. CVFD member Doug Ireland helps the Auxiliary every week. He has the special role of bringing cartloads of hot chicken from the grill to the kitchen.

"By the end of the season," he confided, "I can't look at another chicken!"

Outdoors, an Auxiliary front-line team sells the dinners along with CVFD bags, T-shirts and fire blankets. Two kitchen runners restock the front lines with steaming hot meals. This well-oiled machine can sell 500 dinners within 90 minutes.

The Auxiliary keeps busy with fundraising activities throughout the year. Each May, members prepare homemade baked goods, jams and other treats. On Saturday of Memorial Day weekend, the group holds its bake sale on the porch of the Colonnade. Favorite finds include Sylvia Faust's chocolate chip cookies, Scarpino's delicious pies, and unusual sweets crafted by Michele Jones and Diane Gleason.

In October, the Auxiliary celebrates National Make a Difference Day through a fund drive for the Mayville food pantry. Members collect thousands of dollars each year by asking friends and neighbors to support the effort. Cash donations allow the pantry to make bulk purchases of most-needed items.

Every December, the Auxiliary decorates the Fire Hall for the holidays, complete with wreaths, lights, a Christmas tree and an eye-catching firefighter Santa suit handmade by member Carol Minnerly. They generously sponsor one or two families within the fire district by providing wrapped gifts and gift cards to Tops Friendly Markets to ensure a memorable holiday dinner.

The Auxiliary's famous annual Christmas bazaar draws patrons from across the region to the Fire Hall on the first Friday and Saturday in December. Scarpino, who runs the fundraiser, proudly shared that the 2024 event raised \$9,000 in support of the CVFD.

The bazaar is a spectacular place to shop for bargain-priced unique artwork, craft items, decorations, housewares, home furnishings, jewelry, books and puzzles. Offerings include new and gently used quality clothing, one-of-a-kind treasures and gift certificates donated by Chautauqua Institution. In addition, the bazaar includes another mouth-watering Auxiliary bake sale.

Faust, a past organizer of the bazaar, said that various area businesses and generous individuals donate lovely gift baskets, and shoppers can take chances on favorite items by purchasing basket raffle tickets.

Many hands join the effort to obtain, sort and price



JOSEPH CIEMBRONIEWICZ / STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Mary Houstead, left, participates in an assembly line putting together meals during the chicken barbecue. Houstead has run the barbecue for what she estimates is 10 years.

bazaar donations, and the Auxiliary is already collecting items for this year's event. (To make a donation, contact any Auxiliary member. All proceeds support the CVFD.)

What motivates these tireless volunteers to provide so much service? For 15-year volunteer Marsha Butler, "it is a joy, and it helps Chautauqua. I love the camaraderie and being a part of it." Shirley LaMancuso, who has been volunteering for 22 years, said that "you not only help the firemen, you also help the community." Mary Ugoletti, whose

husband is a firefighter, has been involved for three years. "I love it," she said. "It is a nice year-round community of friends."

Houstead shared words that echoed the sentiments of so many members: "I just love the community the Auxiliary provides, the camaraderie, the hard work and fun. What a dedicated group they are — so supportive of the whole community inside and outside the grounds! ... The one thing I can't give up is the fire auxiliary. If somebody needs something, we put a chain out there, and it gets done."



MUSIC

A GRANDE GERSHWIN



JOSEPH CIEMBRONIEWICZ / STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

At left, pianist Aaron Diehl joins the Chautauqua Symphony Orchestra and Music Director and Principal Symphonic Conductor Rossen Milanov to perform George Gershwin's Concerto in F on last Saturday in the Amphitheater. Diehl was the first to play a new Steinway Concert Grande, the "Gershwin D," donated by Ann and Bob Fletcher through the Fletcher Family Foundation in celebration of the 100th anniversary of Gershwin's Concerto in F, composed in one of the practice cabins right here on the grounds of Chautauqua. Above, Diehl receives applause from the audience after the performance.

Celebrating memorable musical moments in season's chamber series

Chautauqua Chamber Music is a beloved series that provides exquisite moments in an intimate setting. The 2025 concerts have been standing-room-only performances, with audiences pouring onto the porch of Elizabeth S. Lenna Hall, all made possible by a beloved Chautauquan's enduring support and commitment.

"The Kay Hardesty Logan Foundation has given us the gift of preserving deeply moving experi-

es of music so close you can breathe in every note," said Chautauqua Institution Senior Vice President and Chief Program Officer Deborah Sunya Moore.

Chamber music is a core and long-established program within Chautauqua's musical DNA and Kay Logan was — and through her foundation, continues to be — its champion.

Marty W. Merkley, Chautauqua's former vice president and director of programming

and now the president of the Logan Foundation, recalled Mrs. Logan's favorite saying: "I don't teach music, I use music to teach." And her philanthropic commitment remains vital to keeping music alive and making a difference.

"She believed in paying it forward no matter what the situation, both professionally and personally," Merkley said.

Kay was a professional musician — first a student at Chautauqua in the 1950s — an ardent advocate of the

arts and arts education, and loved performing in orchestras and chamber ensembles. She believed that chamber music was an essential part of the training of musicians. The presence of chamber music for the students and the public was always a passion of hers. The Logan Chamber Music Series was especially important to her.

"Kay would be thrilled with the variety of the programming, the quality of the artists on the Monday

series, and the inclusion of the Chautauqua family of musicians on the Saturday series," said longtime friend Suzanne Shull.

Upon her passing in 2016, the Kay Hardesty Logan Foundation began the process of endowing the series to ensure its longevity.

"In the current financial climate, however, it is increasingly important that on-going funding from supportive Chautauquans be added to the endowment

to secure chamber music's presence on the grounds," said Merkley.

As we toast a stellar season of memorable performances, we acknowledge chamber music at Chautauqua needs more champions. Before the curtain rises on the 2026 season, designating a gift to the Kay Hardesty Logan Fund Endowment or creating your own chamber music endowment will help you share your passion for chamber music in a most lasting way.

Three Tenors have nothing on three brothers in Motet

MARY LEE TALBOT
STAFF WRITER

Chautauquans are used to having different generations in the same family continue a family legacy — sailing, golf, ushering at Sunday worship, carrying a banner for the Chautauqua Literary and Scientific Circle's Recognition Day parade.

But, it is not often that three siblings carry on a family tradition at the same time. For Rob, Dave and Eric Nickeson, that tradition is singing in the Motet and Chautauqua Choirs.

Earlier this season in Week Two, all three brothers were in the Motet Choir. Rob, a retired pedi-

atric rheumatologist from the Tampa, Florida, area; Dave, a retired internist from Galveston, Texas; and Eric, a retired healthcare finance accountant who lives in Chautauqua year-round, were among the choir's members — a group that ranges in size depending on the week.

Rob and Dave started singing with the Motet in the late 1980s; Eric started around 1998. Eric has become involved in the Community Music Project in Jamestown, in both the CPM Chorale and the Chamber Choir, and he sings with the Community Choir in Fredonia. That choir is joining

other choirs in London in June 2026.

Their family bought a house at the corner of Hurst and Andrews in 1961 and their father, Robert Nickeson, an ophthalmologist, sang in the Motet Choir in the 1980s. Their mother, Jean, sang in the Chautauqua Choir. Their sister Betsy sang in the Chautauqua Choir; sisters Carol and Nancy play piano; and sister Priscilla is a graphic artist.

"Singing is so rewarding," Eric said. "It is a pleasure to blend with other voices. The Motet is like a family, even though different members come and leave at different times."

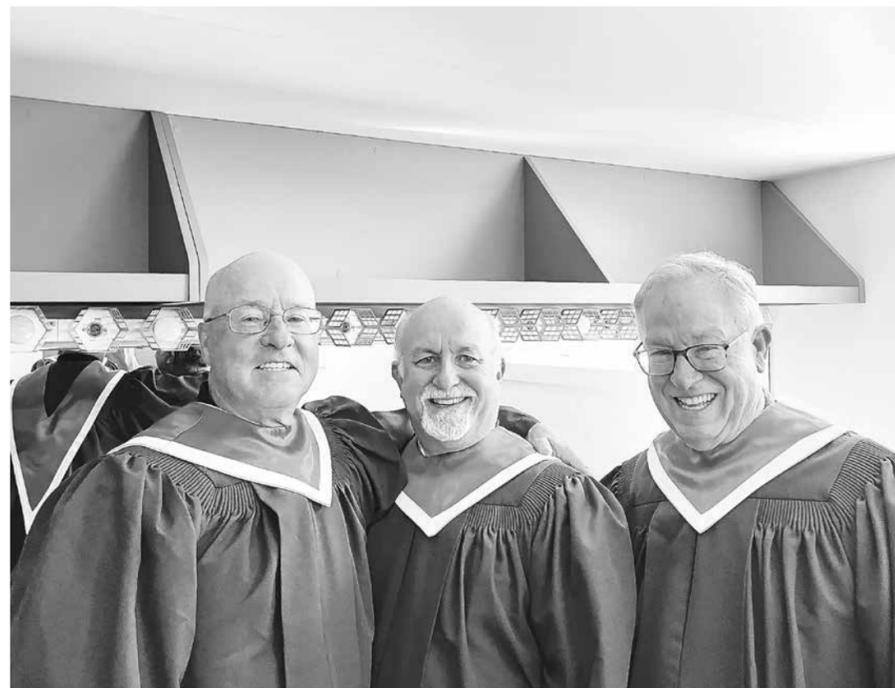


PHOTO COURTESY OF NICKESON FAMILY

From left, brothers Eric, Dave and Rob Nickeson all performed with the Motet Choir in Week Two.

THE POWER OF THE BLUES



GEORGE KOLOSKI / STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Members of the Ground Zero Blues Club and Morgan Freeman's Symphonic Blues Experience perform during a masterclass on Wednesday in Norton Hall.

THEATER

In 'The Witnesses,' themes from antiquity offer lessons for modernity

REVIEW

ERIC GRODE
GUEST CRITIC

It's the end of the world, and the five survivors (for now) at the center of C.A. Johnson's *The Witnesses* feel ... bereft, horny, aggrieved, wistful, wary, resentful and resolute. And very chatty.

Johnson's flavorful if narratively overstuffed dystopia, which is receiving its world premiere at Chautauqua Theater Company, opens in the middle of a monologue in the middle of a weekly support group. Led by a no-nonsense former doctor named Millicent (a shrewdly understated Nedra Marie Taylor), the group features virtually the only survivors of an unnamed plague within a four-block radius. Each has experienced unimaginable horrors in "this backward version of a world," each has displayed at least a few of the symptoms that will eventually kill them, and each has cause to discuss one or both of these things at some length.

Two members are looking to talk their way into Millicent's heart: the love-struck philosopher Emmanuelle (Fig Chilcott) and the erudite John (Daniel Pearce), who hopes to amend for a decades-old mistake. Rounding out the group is the 17-year-old Tori (Alicia Pilgrim), the sole survivor of her family, and Caleb (a refreshing Nicholas Byers), who hopes to cross state lines and visit his young daughter before his worsening condition prevents travel. (The characters' freedom shrinks as their illness "levels up,"



DAVE MUNCH / PHOTO EDITOR

Chautauqua Theater Company Guest Actors, from left, Nicholas Byers, Alicia Pilgrim, Nedra Marie Taylor, Daniel Pearce and Fig Chilcott perform during a rehearsal of C.A. Johnson's *The Witnesses* in Bratton Theater.

one of many convincing world-building touches in Johnson's script.)

Recent works of post-apocalyptic fiction like *Mr. Burns, a Post-Electric Play* and *Station Eleven* have used the act of performance as a way for characters to give purpose to and make sense of their rapidly fraying world. Johnson and Producing Artistic Director Jade King Carroll achieve a similar goal but in a more oblique manner: Here the acting out is confined to the emotional and

intellectual poses struck in the support group. This is a group where last names suffice when discussing James Baldwin and Toni Morrison, one where "support" frequently devolves into verbal attacks, one where the imminent dissolution of the group seems to come up for discussion every week.

But it is also a group anchored by what Caleb describes as "resilient-as-fuck women who kept building their days." Johnson's writing is at its

strongest when it shows the effort that Millicent puts into maintaining some level of stability within the group, even convening it next to one character's deathbed, while simultaneously trying to make sense of her own messy personal life. (You-Shin Chen's scenic design and Amith Chandrashaker's lighting design play a strong role in conveying both the characters' atomized surroundings and the forces that have pulled them together.)

Johnson overlays this

end-times tale — each session ends with the mantra "Till next week or not at all" — with her share of nods to Greek drama. News about John's lineage leave him stumbling blind like Oedipus, while Tori buries her dead brother with the conviction and anger of a modern-day Antigone. By the time John parses the etymology of the word "martyr" from Greek, where it originally meant "witness," it becomes clear that this long-dead civilization still has plenty to teach us — if

we care to learn.

Does she harbor similar hope for our own civilization? A jolting lurch into melodrama at the very end of *The Witnesses* would appear to cast some doubt. In this backward version of a world, even steps toward liberation can look and sound a lot like the makings of a Greek tragedy.

Eric Grode is a longtime freelance theater critic and reporter for The New York Times. He currently teaches arts journalism at Syracuse University.

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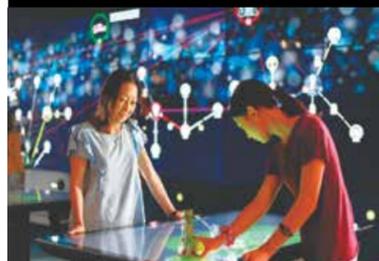
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10-year-old Chautauquan Fiona Sacks advertises her lemonade business on Aug. 8 from the Bestor Plaza fountain, with the help of her father, Randy Sacks. Fiona's lemonade was fully handmade with real sugar and lemons (again, with help from her father, who made the trip to the grocery store).



Siblings Felix and Henry Roantree-Bull revel in their profits after selling Gatorade to passersby July 8 on the Vincent Brick Walk.



Handmade origami creations, from 9-year-old Rafa Fraser, are displayed with various prices July 11 on Bestor Plaza.



Hand-drawn Chautauqua-themed art pieces sit on display July 23 along the Clark Brick Walk en route to the Hall of Philosophy.

Open for business

PHOTOS BY VON SMITH

Chautauqua's youngest small business owners spend the summer showcasing their entrepreneurial spirit



Felix and Henry get bored of running their Gatorade stand on Vincent, as Felix dips into their supply.



Brothers Ellis, Finn and Avery Larson advertise their lemonade business with their little cousin Ollie Hopkins-Pugh, second from right, July 6 on the Vincent Brick Walk. The kids donated half of their earnings to Moms Demand Action, a grassroots organization advocating for gun control in America.



From left, new employee August Schultz, full-time employee Issy Kane, new employee Brooke Schultz, manager Anagrace Vitters, and full-time employee Kiki Kane advertise their hand-drawn art sent to Chautauquans heading to the Interfaith Lecture Series July 23 along the Clark Brick Walk. The young entrepreneurs had spent all winter break planning for their startup business.



Young entrepreneur Max Barendfeld of Pittsburgh talks with his grandfather, David Barendfeld, while running his handmade paper airplane stand during Friends of Chautauqua Visual Arts' first Art in the Park on the summer on July 6 in Miller Park. Max originally had \$7, but spent it on a plush octopus from one of the vendors. He hopes his new business venture can make enough money to buy more.



JOSEPH CIEMBRONIEWICZ / STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Smith Memorial Library Director Scott Ekstrom conducts the annual Kazoo Chorale Thursday on the steps of the Smith. Maestro Ekstrom led Chautauquans in performances of everything from The Beatles and the Rolling Stones, to the Star-Spangled Banner. Originally part of the annual Library Day celebration, the Kazoo Chorale was split off into its own event post-pandemic — because sometimes, you just need more kazoos.

THE BIG SHOT

COMMUNITY



BRIAN SMITH / DAILY FILE PHOTO



DAVE MUNCH / DAILY FILE PHOTO



BRIAN SMITH / DAILY FILE PHOTO

Above left, the Rev. Joan Brown Campbell laughs with a parishioner on Aug. 18, 2013, backstage in the Amphitheater after the conclusion of Campbell's final Sunday Morning Worship Service as director of the Department of Religion at Chautauqua Institution. Above center, Campbell joins hands in prayer with the Rev. Jesse Jackson and the Rt. Rev. V. Gene Robinson following their morning lecture conversation on Aug. 17, 2018, in the Amp. Above right, Campbell reacts to the congregation at the conclusion of her final sermon in 2013.

JOAN BROWN CAMPBELL

The Rev. Dr. Joan Brown Campbell, at the tender age of 93, passed peacefully on March 29, 2025. It was the final chapter of an extraordinary life.

Joan was born in November 1931, in Youngstown, Ohio. She graduated from Boardman High School and attended the University of Michigan, graduating with a degree in speech and English. She earned the honor as top woman debater at the university. She met and married Paul Barton Campbell, who was studying law at the University of Michigan Law School. Their first child, Jane Louise Campbell, was born in 1953 in Ann Arbor.

Jane became a successful and dedicated politician and public servant. She was elected to several prominent offices, culminating in her election as the first and to date only female mayor of Cleveland, in 2001. She is currently the president and CEO of the United States Capitol Historical Society and resides in Washington D.C., and Cleveland.

After finishing their education at Michigan, the couple moved to Shaker Heights, Ohio, and Paul joined the firm of Squire,

Sanders and Dempsey in Cleveland, where he stayed for 45 years and became a senior partner. They had two more children. Their first son, Paul Barton Campbell Jr., recently retired as a senior head of the International Baccalaureate Organization, overseeing IB's work with schools, school districts, governments, and universities in the Americas.

Their youngest child, James W. Campbell, M.D., is a beloved family practice doctor with a specialty in geriatrics. He recently retired after a long career serving patients in Cleveland. He was the director and founder of the Metro-Health Senior Health and Wellness Center and a professor of medicine at Case Western Reserve University.

While raising her family, Joan's faith led her to become deeply involved in social issues in the Cleveland area. Her home became a crossroads for various activists, particularly those involved in the quest for racial justice and the end to the Vietnam War. Amongst many other causes, Joan worked hard to help Clevelanders elect the first Black mayor of a major American city, the Honorable



MILESTONES

IN MEMORIAM



We can all dream impossible dreams, we can all beat unbeatable foes, and we can bear with unbearable sorrow and roam where the brave dare not go. And yes, my friends, the world will be better for this. Amen."

—THE REV. DR. JOAN BROWN CAMPBELL

Morning Worship Sermon,
Sunday, Aug. 18, 2013

Carl Stokes, in 1967.

After she and Paul divorced in 1974, Joan devoted her energies to the ecumenical movement. At age 49, the National Baptist Church, the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King's denomination, was

first to ordain Joan to Christian ministry. Soon after, the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) recognized her ordination. She was later also ordained by the American Baptist Church. She was the first woman to serve as the

assistant executive director of the Greater Cleveland Interchurch Council. She was the first woman to serve as the executive director of the U.S. office of the World Council of Churches. She was the first ordained woman to serve as the General Secretary of the National Council of Churches of Christ in the USA. She was the first woman to serve as the director of religion at Chautauqua Institution.

In these various roles, the Rev. Campbell participated in several high profile causes and events. She led a delegation to meet with Pope John Paul II, to present His Holiness with a copy of the New Revised Standard Version of the Bible. She was part of the delegation led by President Bill Clinton to attend the funeral of Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin of Israel. Along with her friend, the Rev. Jesse Jackson, she traveled to Belgrade during the Balkan wars and negotiated the release of imprisoned American soldiers, working with the Serbian Orthodox Church. She and Carl Sagan, the renowned astronomer, helped co-found the National Religious Partnership for the Environment. She served as an election observer when

Nelson Mandela was elected as the first Black president of South Africa. She was the only woman in the procession of over 200 clergy at the enthronement of Desmond Tutu as the archbishop of the Anglican Church in South Africa. Towards the end of her tenure at the National Council of Churches, a young Cuban boy named Elian Gonzalez survived a shipwreck and ended up in the home of relatives in Miami. Working with the Clinton administration, the Cuban government, and the Cuban churches, she helped negotiate Elian's safe return to his family in Cuba.

Archbishop Tutu called Joan "a woman of courage and compassion. She helped put an end to the evil of apartheid."

She won numerous awards. Amongst them was the Walter Cronkite Faith and Freedom award from the Interfaith Alliance. She has been inducted into the Ohio Women's Hall of Fame and the Ohio Civil Rights Hall of Fame. She has received 14 honorary degrees from institutions as diverse as Wake Forest University, St. Bonaventure University, and Monrovia University in Liberia.

See MILESTONES, Page C3



THE GOW SCHOOL

Founded in 1926, The Gow School is a college-prep boarding and day school for students in Grades 5-12 and Post-Graduate year with dyslexia and other language-based learning differences. Gow was the first school in the nation to offer this type of education and remains the best.

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RELIGION

Revelation is warning, not roadmap, preaches McLaren

“Our readings were from Revelation, the last book of the Bible and one that many people believe was written while on LSD,” said the Rev. Brian McLaren. “It’s filled with ugly, bloody violent stories of collapse of ecosystems, collapse of economic systems, collapse of religious traditions, collapse of civilizations. Nightmarish monsters arise that do seem a bit hallucinogenic. Unless you read the news.”

McLaren preached at the 9:15 a.m. Friday morning worship service in the Amphitheater. His sermon title was “Apocalypse as Tradition Disrupter,” and the scripture readings were Revelation 21:9-12, 22:1-5.

The book of Revelation deals with two types of literature: apocalyptic literature and the literature of the oppressed. Some think that Revelation is a road map to the end of the world. “I think that is a mistake. This literature is a warning to people that if they keep going in the current trajectory, here is what to expect,” McLaren said. “The purpose of apocalyptic literature is not to predict, but to prevent.”

Think of Jonah when he got to Nineveh and preached destruction — the people repented, even if Jonah was disappointed that they did.

McLaren said the literature of the oppressed flourishes during an authoritarian regime. “If you speak against an authoritarian leader or regime, they will hunt you down and they will punish you. They will drive you out of business, call you an enemy of the state, imprison you, banish you, disappear you, torture you, or kill you.”

He continued, “Here’s the dilemma: If you know that that’s what they do to you if you speak up and you decide then to remain silent, in a sense, you become complicit with the regime. You obey them. You lose your voice voluntarily, which means to some degree you lose your integrity and to some degree, you lose your soul.”

In the literature of the oppressed, the regime is not attacked directly but through a story about a literal monster who rises out of the sea and destroys people. “Or in contemporary terms,” McLaren said, “instead of telling a story about a president who doesn’t want to tell the truth about climate change, you make a movie about an asteroid that’s coming with a president who says ‘don’t look up.’”

This is called “speaking the truth slant.” Revelation is not predictions about the end of the world, but is telling the people what the Roman empire was like for everyone but the elite.

Where does the new Jerusalem come from, he asked the congregation. “It comes down from heaven to earth. It is not an evacuation plan, but a transformation of bringing the values of heaven to the corrupted, polluted earth.”

He continued, “People in power don’t like apocalyptic literature because it signals the end of the economy that has made them rich, the end of the class system that has



MORNING WORSHIP

COLUMN BY MARY LEE TALBOT

put them at the top, the end of the political and military system that has given them the power to exploit the poor and the earth.”

If this exploitation is not challenged, the earth begins to groan and the people begin to groan. These groans become prayers and these prayers say, “If there is a God out there, set us free from this corrupt, decadent, power hungry, money grubbing, suicidal system,” McLaren said. “And eventually, that system will fall — because all systems in overshoot eventually do fall. And all the king’s horses and all the king’s men can’t put them back together again.”

Eventually things will be better, as the death of what is corrupt becomes the birth pangs of something new.

What does better look like, McLaren asked the congregation. “There is a big wall. Lots of people like big walls, but this wall has 12 gates that are always open. People are welcome — but not their greed and lust and hate and bigotry and racism and all the rest. People welcome, corruption excluded.”

Inside the gates there is no temple, “which might be a surprise for those of us in the prayer business,” he said. The Garden of Eden did not have a temple because everything was good and sacred and God’s presence was there. The tree of life is there to help people maintain the balance of caring for each other and caring for the earth.

“That vision of a desired future becomes a lure, it becomes a magnetic force that draws us forward, even when the world around us seems to be falling apart,” McLaren said. “A tradition without a vision of a desired future, a tradition without a vision that makes us yearn for and dream for something even better, leaves us stuck in the status quo. It feels like you found yourself in a parking lot with no exit. A European philosopher quipped not long ago that ‘for most people today, it’s easier to imagine the end of the world than the end of capitalism.’”

A new tradition, a tradition fulfilled that draws people forward, helps us see what it was we really loved about the current tradition in a new way, he told the congregation.

“What we loved was the treasure without the packaging,” he said. “It wasn’t the hymns and organs, it was the beauty to which they introduced you. It wasn’t the architecture, it was the sacred community and belonging that you experienced within the architecture. It wasn’t the words of the liturgy or the sermons, it was the wordless reverence and transcendent awe of the sermons that lead us — like a trail through the woods in the Grand Canyon and suddenly you come and your feet are at the edge of something vast and splendid and glorious.”

McLaren continued: “It wasn’t the stories that told you about the past, it was the way those stories inspired you to show up in the present and to move into the future. It wasn’t the dogma about which you debated, it was the life-changing encounter with the living light, the encounter with the bush that burns but isn’t consumed. The experience in you of a spring of living water bubbling up within your own heart.”

Tradition succeeds only when it helps us see that it is not about itself but points to the source, points to the great love that is our source and destiny, he told the congregation. “We are in this living tradition together. And God is with us as we move forward. Amen.” McLaren received sustained applause and a standing ovation.

The Rt. Rev. Eugene T. Sutton, senior pastor for Chautauqua Institution, presided. Evans Nyamadzawo, one of the Abrahamic Program for Young Adults coordinators this summer, read the scripture. The prelude was “Lebhaft, Op. 58, No.3,” by Robert Schumann, performed by Joshua Stafford, director of sacred music and Jared Jacobsen Chair for the Organist, on the Massey Memorial Organ. The Motet Choir sang “The Secret of Christ,” music by Richard Shephard, text from Isaiah 42:14-16, Revelation 22:1-3 and The Pilgrim Prayer (based on Colossians 4:2-4) by the Rev. Canon Derrick Walters. Stafford conducted the choir and Brett Miller, a student at Eastman School of Music, provided accompaniment on the Massey Organ. The service ended with “Tocatta,” from Symphony No. 5 by Charles-Marie Widor, played by Stafford on the Massey Organ. Support for this week’s preaching and chaplaincy was provided by the Robert D. Campbell Memorial Chaplaincy and the Daney-Holden Chaplaincy Fund. Many thanks are extended to Annie Leach, Alicen Roberts, Ori Edgar, Elizabeth Schoen, Evans Nyamadzawo, and Nia-Hyatt Eldosougi for writing this column on days when Mary Lee Talbot was absent. The Motet Choir gave Joshua Stafford a small token of thanks that contained these words: “I encountered Josh Stafford at three, / Where were at Twelve-thirty? / Spitting consonants, shaping phrases, / and breathing, if at all, in very odd places, / all for reluctant precious few praises, said s(he)...For putting the zip in our choir/ Staffords the man of the hour! / We’re all on his team / Though he threatens to scream / If we screw up his “current of power.”

Many thanks to the entire worship team.

Hebrew Congregation celebrating 65th anniversary at Chautauqua

Jewish Life at Chautauqua: Origins and Growth

The Jewish presence at Chautauqua Institution is a vibrant and evolving story of faith, education and commitment to social justice. From its modest beginnings to a rich summer community, the Hebrew Congregation of Chautauqua has become a spiritual and cultural anchor at Chautauqua while spearheading a meaningful Holocaust initiative that resonates far beyond the lake.

Though Jews may have been part of the broader Chautauqua milieu from its earliest decades, it wasn’t until 1959 that the first organized Jewish worship took place on the grounds. Two music students from Buffalo, seeking Shabbat services, reached out to Rabbi Julius Kerman from Jamestown, who agreed to officiate a Saturday morning service. About 35 people attended that inaugural gathering in

the Hall of Missions.

Officially established in 1960, the Hebrew Congregation of Chautauqua has shaped Jewish life on the grounds for over six decades. In 2025, the congregation celebrates its 65th anniversary — a milestone marked by a special Buffet Dinner & Celebration on Aug. 17, 2025 — honoring 65 years of worship, education and community at Chautauqua.

When the Chautauqua administration initially denied use of the Hall of Missions in the early years, Bishop William Crittenden intervened, and services were moved to Hurlbut Church, where they continue to this day.

Despite periods of leadership uncertainty in the late 1980s and early 1990s, volunteers like Eva Rosenberg and Rebecca Lister maintained services and programming until the congregation regained stable leadership, thanks to com-

munity support and tzedakah contributions.

Over six decades, the congregation has grown into a well-attended summer institution offering Friday evening Kabbalat Shabbat, Saturday morning Torah Study and services, Shabbat’zza pizza potlucks, Sunday evening lectures and social events for residents and visitors alike. The Shirley Lazarus Speaker Series, named for its founder, brings nationally renowned speakers — often exploring Jewish themes and history — to Chautauqua County each summer.

The Holocaust & Social Justice Education Program

A signature initiative led by the Hebrew Congregation is the Holocaust and Social Justice Education Program, designed to bring Holocaust awareness, human rights and empathy-building to students and educators in

Chautauqua County.

Every year, freshman to senior high school students and their teachers participate in workshops, symposia and a culminating three-day educational trip to Washington D.C., where they visit the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum and other meaningful sites. The congregation underwrites transportation, lodging and programming costs, supported by donors such as the Theodore and Pauline Cohen Trust and individual contributions.

Teachers like Leigh Anne Hendrick and Emily Dorman, both longtime educators and program founders (with Hendrick named a Museum Teacher Fellow in 2005), lead the program with passion. They also help integrate Holocaust and social justice themes into curricula across participating schools, ensuring that lessons reach students beyond

the formal classes.

In 2023, 96 students from seven schools traveled to Washington D.C. for the program. Students attend lectures throughout the year and partake in student symposia — recently centered on the crisis in Ukraine — and an award component, the Anne Frank Humanitarian Award, honoring students who act as “upstanders” promoting empathy and activism.

Former participants reflect on the transformation: one alum noted the program “open(s) our eyes ... since we’re in such a privileged community,” while another shifted her academic and professional trajectory toward peace and security studies inspired by her experience on the trip.

A Legacy of Faith, Education and Engagement

From its humble origins with four dozen worshippers,

the Hebrew Congregation of Chautauqua has grown into a cornerstone of Jewish summer life at Chautauqua Institution — offering spiritual services, cultural enrichment and community connection each year.

Meanwhile, its Holocaust and Social Justice Education Program stands as a vital bridge between history and modern responsibility — empowering young people to remember, reflect and respond. Through education, reflection and action, the congregation ensures that Jewish presence at Chautauqua is both rooted in tradition and forward looking, uplifting both local community and broader society.

To learn more or support the Holocaust and Social Justice Education Program, visit the Hebrew Congregation’s website or the program portal at <https://chqsocialjustice.org>.

Baptist House

Our weekly service is at 9:30 a.m. Sunday at the Baptist House.

Chautauqua Catholic Community

Weekend Mass is at 5 p.m. Saturday in the Hall of Philosophy. There will be no Sunday Mass on the grounds this weekend.

Chabad Jewish House

Rabbi Zalman Vilenkin leads the Chabad Jewish House Community Shabbat Service at 9:30 a.m. Saturday in the Zigdon Chabad Jewish House.

Christian Science House

“Mind” is the subject of this week’s lesson at the 9:30 a.m. Sunday service in the Christian Science Chapel. Our Study Room is open 24/7 for reflection and prayer.

Disciples of Christ

The Rev. Richard Hull, president of the board of the Chautauqua Association of Disciples of Christ, presides at the 9:30 a.m. service Sunday at the Disciples of Christ Headquarters at 32 Clark. His sermon title is “Why Are We Here” and the readings are Psalm 111 and Mark 1:21-28.

Episcopal Chapel of the Good Shepherd

The Rev. Joseph Kozlowski, supply priest of the Western New York Diocese, presides at services of Holy Communion at 7:45 and 9 a.m. Sunday in the Episcopal Chapel of the Good Shepherd.

Food Pantry Donations

Hurlbut Church is accepting nonperishable food items for the Ashville Food Pantry. Donations may be dropped off any time at the



INTERFAITH NEWS

COMPILED BY STAFF

Scott entrance of Hurlbut Church.

Hurlbut Memorial Community Church

A Service of Songs, Prayers, Communion & Meditation is at 8:30 a.m. Sunday in Hurlbut Church.

Labyrinth

The Labyrinth is available throughout the week to all Chautauquans and friends. It is located next to Turner Community Center. It is accessible through the Turner building or through the

Turner parking lot if arriving via Route 394. Bus and tram services are available to Turner. Remember your gate pass.

Lutheran House

The Rev. Jeff Laustsen of Zion Lutheran Church in Stratford, Ontario, Canada, presides at a service of Holy Communion at 9:30 a.m. Sunday at the Lutheran House. Jeffrey Nelson will serve as pianist. Communion is served in individual sealed cups. The Lutheran House is located on

the Brick Walk at the corner of Peck and Clark, near the Hall of Philosophy.

Mystic Heart Meditation

Carol McKiernan leads Silent Meditation/Centering Prayer at 7:15 a.m. Saturday in the Hall of Philosophy.

Presbyterian House

The Presbyterian Association thanks all guests, staff, board members, volunteers and visitors for a great 2025 season. Blessings upon all Chautauquans for a safe and healthy year. See you next summer!

Religious Society of Friends (Quakers)

Our service is at 9:30 a.m. Sunday in the Quaker House on 28 Ames. Church of the Wild is at 4 p.m. Sunday in the Burgeson Nature Classroom.

Unitarian Universalist

The Rev. Neal Jones is our guest minister for the service at 9:30 a.m. Sunday in the Hall of Philosophy. His message is “The Discipline of Joy.” “Still” Bill Moran, American folk music vocalist and guitarist, is guest soloist.

United Church of Christ

Our Worship Service is at 9 a.m. Sunday in the UCC Randall Chapel.

United Methodist

The Rev. Ted Anderson returns to Chautauqua for the 9:30 a.m. worship service Sunday in the United Methodist House Chapel. Join us at 8:45 p.m. Sunday on the porch for a Three Taps Ice Cream Social.

Unity of Chautauqua

Our service is at 9:30 a.m. Sunday in the Hall of Missions.

CLASSIFIEDS

ROOMS FOR RENT

SHOULDER SEASON ROOMS at 10 Pratt (Reformed Church House) Aug 29 - Sept 6. Info at cuccs.org.

» ON THE GROUNDS

WIFI

The network is called "CHQ Guest" and is available throughout the Institution grounds.

DINING

Tally Ho. 5 PM til 7:30 PM. Buffet Dinner \$24.95 or Ala Carte Menu. Featuring Grilled Steaks... Maryland Crab Cakes... Rack of Lamb... Fresh Salmon Filet Shrimp Cocktails... Our Stuffed Cabbage. Broiled Atlantic Haddock... Dessert and Salad Bar included. TAKE OUT BUFFET \$10.95 per pound.

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» ON THE GROUNDS

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A full-service post office is located on Bestor Plaza. During the season, the lobby is open weekdays 7 a.m. to 5:15 p.m.; the window, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. On Saturdays, the lobby is open 7 a.m. to noon; the window, 10 a.m. to noon. Closed Sundays. (716) 357-3275

ANSWERS TO THIS EDITION'S PUZZLES ON PAGE C3

CROSSWORD

By THOMAS JOSEPH

- ACROSS**
- 1 MP's color
 - 5 Steak choice
 - 10 Singer McLachlan
 - 12 Without aid
 - 13 In a way, informally
 - 14 In the area
 - 15 Letter after zeta
 - 16 Track act
 - 18 Convent resident
 - 19 Fine point
 - 21 Competes
 - 22 Put right
 - 24 Desert spot
 - 25 Like some accountants
 - 29 Farm building
 - 30 Minks' cousins
 - 32 Avenue liner
 - 33 Cycle starter
 - 34 Puppy sound
 - 35 Criminal handle
 - 37 Wed in secret
- DOWN**
- 11 Animal's area
 - 17 Sound omission
 - 20 Squirrel's prize
 - 21 Drop in
 - 23 Korean War time
 - 25 Radio show format
 - 26 Royal fur
 - 27 Pal of Piglet
 - 28 Blinds alternative
 - 29 Trounces
 - 31 Wasn't frugal
 - 33 Manual reader
 - 36 Get on
 - 38 Gloss target



Yesterday's answer

Reid-Babcox Fund supports closing sermon from Sutton

The Marie Reid-Edward Spencer Babcox Memorial Fund is providing support for the Rt. Rev. Eugene Sutton, who will preach at the 10:45 a.m. ecumenical service of worship and sermon Sunday in the Amphitheater. The Babcox Fund was first established in memory of Mrs. Babcox, who died in 1962. After Mr. Babcox died in 1970, their children, Reid B. Babcox and Mrs. Hugh F. Bell, changed the chaplaincy to a memorial for both parents. Mr. and Mrs. Babcox's

lives exemplified the Chautauqua ideal, and both were devoted to Chautauqua.

Mrs. Babcox was a life member of the Bird, Tree & Garden Club, the Chautauqua Women's Club and Chautauqua Literary and Scientific Circle; a member of the YWCA Committee; and an active participant in the Chautauqua Conferences of the National Federation of Music Clubs. She was an honorary trustee of the Chautauqua Congregational Association. As a

member of the YWCA World Service Council, she visited many YWCAs abroad.

As a young man, Mr. Babcox was unable to attend college after his father's sudden death. His success as a salesman prompted an invitation from Harvey Firestone to become advertising director of the Firestone Tire and Rubber Company. Ten years later, Mr. Babcox established Babcox Automotive Publications, a firm still operated by members of the family.

Mr. Babcox received na-

tional acclaim when he received his bachelor's degree from the University of Akron at age 84. The university also honored him at that time with a doctorate of humane letters in recognition of the influence he had exerted over students and faculty alike during his four years of study. Mr. Babcox was so deluged by mail from people of all ages who were inspired by his significant achievement that the university provided an office for his correspondence.

A SUMMER OF DIALOGUE



VON SMITH / STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Chautauquans from different faiths and backgrounds discuss capitalism in America during a Week Five session of the Chautauqua Dialogues on July 24 in the Disciples of Christ House. The Dialogues are small-group facilitated conversations focusing on the theme and lectures of each week — and on how to talk across difference — held at denominational houses and other locations across the grounds.

At right, Barbara Belle, left, facilitator Cathy Digel, center, and Carol Revilock participate in a Chautauqua Dialogues on July 23 in the Lutheran House. Below left, Caroline Lane introduces herself during a July 10 session at the African American Heritage House. Below right, Joanne Huskey, left, listens to Dean Shostack, center, while he discusses a point with facilitator Susan Laubach July 24 on the porch of the Everett Jewish Life Center. Chautauqua Dialogues have been a staple of the summer — and grown in size and importance — for 15 years, first established by Lynn Stahl and Roger Doebke, who is stepping down from his role at the end of the season.



JOSEPH CIEMBRONIEWICZ / STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER



TALLULAH BROWN VAN ZEE / STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER



GEORGE KOLOSKI / STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

A XYDLBAAXR is LONGFELLOW

One letter stands for another. In this sample, A is used for the three L's, X for the two O's, etc. Single letters, apostrophes, the length and formation of the words are all hints. Each day the code letters are different.

8-23 CRYPTOQUOTE
X G K Y P M S K Z L K J J G C M S J
O L J Y K Z J X C A T K J X P C L J Y K
G O Q K L C X F K X M K O Z L K S X C

OJU. — LOLEF YFLK LKYGOMM
Yesterday's Cryptoquote: MEN CAN STARVE FROM A LACK OF SELF-REALIZATION AS MUCH AS THEY CAN FROM A LACK OF BREAD. — RICHARD WRIGHT

SUDOKU

Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Concepts Sudoku increases from Monday to Sunday.

			1	9				
	9	2	5			1	8	
	8	3	2			7		
8	4		3			6	1	
			2					
9	2							
			7			1	6	
5					3			
		6	9		4			

Difficulty: ★★★★★ 8/23

4	6	2	5	7	3	8	1	9
1	9	3	8	6	2	5	4	7
7	5	8	9	1	4	3	6	2
8	3	4	7	9	5	6	2	1
5	2	7	6	3	1	9	8	4
9	1	6	4	2	8	7	3	5
2	7	1	3	8	9	4	5	6
6	8	5	1	4	7	2	9	3
3	4	9	2	5	6	1	7	8

Difficulty: ★★★★★ 8/22

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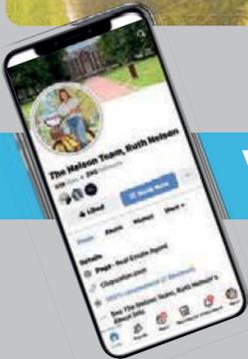
“Farewell, until we meet again.”
– Ruth



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PROGRAM

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SATURDAY
AUGUST 23

- 7:00 (7-11) Chautauqua Farmers Market. Massey and Miller
- 7:15 Chautauqua Mystic Heart Meditation Program. Leader: Carol McKiernan (Silent Meditation/Centering Prayer.) Hall of Philosophy
- 9:00 (9-3) Art Exhibit. "The West Branch of the Neversink Under Threat Under Stress." Hovey Brock. Smith Memorial Library
- 9:30 Chabad Jewish House Community Shabbat Service. Rabbi Zalman Vilenkin. Zigdon Chabad Jewish House
- 10:00 Season Highlights. (Programmed by Friends of Chautauqua Theater and the Bob McClure CHQ Play Readers.) "Highlights from Our 2024-25 Season." Donations accepted to benefit Roe Green Theater Center programming endowment. Smith Wilkes Hall
- 1:00 Memorial Service Honoring the Life of the Rev. Joan Brown Campbell. Hall of Philosophy
- 2:00 **THEATER.** Chautauqua Theater Company presents the world premiere and CTC commission of *The Witnesses* (formerly *Tell Me You're Dying*). (Reserved seating; purchase tickets at Main Gate Welcome Center or Visitors Center ticket offices and one hour before curtain at Bratton kiosk.) Closing Performance. Bratton Theater

- 2:00 **Public Shuttle Tour of Grounds.** Fee. (Purchase tickets at Main Gate Welcome Center.) Leave from Main Gate Welcome Center
- 5:00 Catholic Mass. Hall of Philosophy
- 6:00 **Cinema Film Screening.** "Everything's Going To Be Great." Fee. Chautauqua Cinema
- 6:15 Chautauqua Choir Rehearsal. Anyone interested in singing for Sunday worship must attend one rehearsal. Fletcher Music Hall
- 8:15 **AMPHITHEATER SPECIAL. Sweet Honey in the Rock "Celebrating 50 Years."** Amphitheater
- 8:30 **Cinema Film Screening.** "Perfect Days." Fee. Chautauqua Cinema

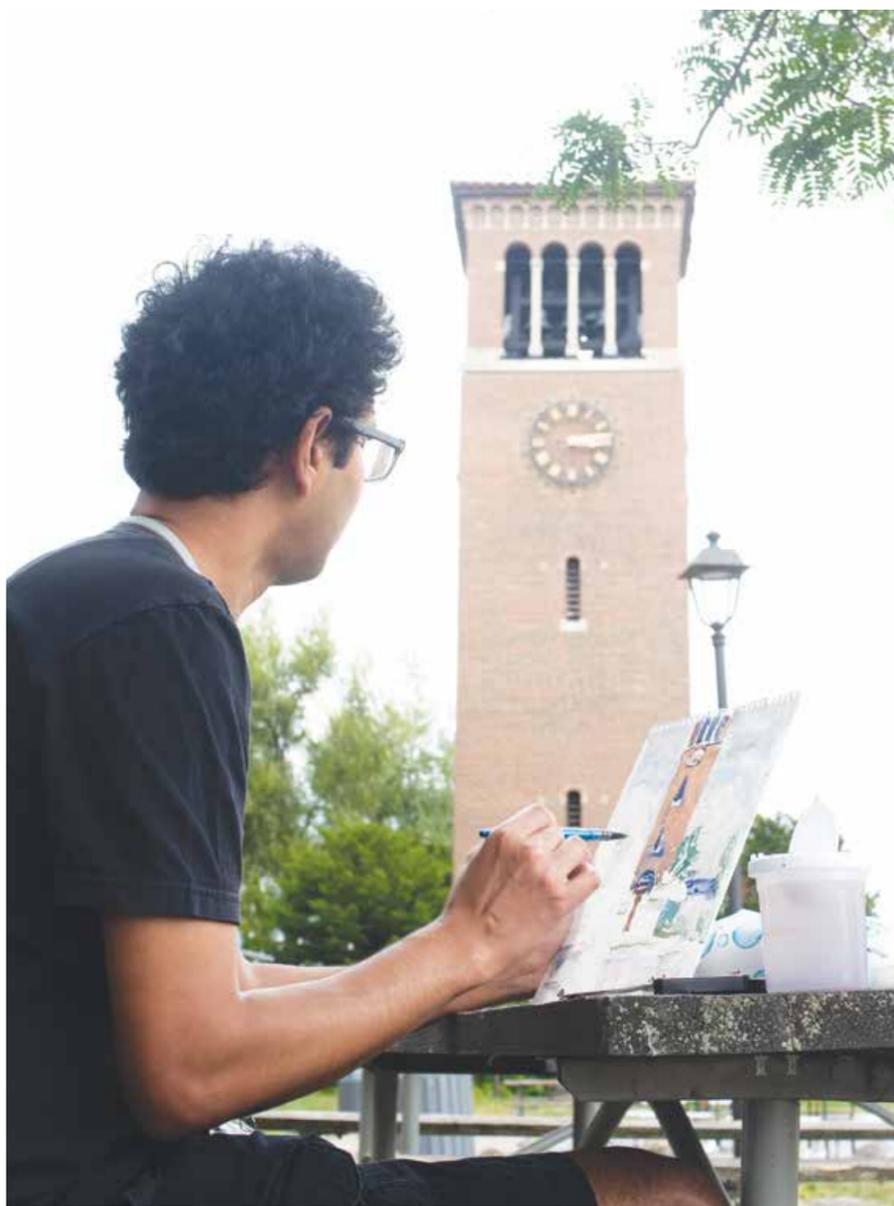
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SUNDAY
AUGUST 24

- 7:45 Episcopal Holy Eucharist. Episcopal Chapel of the Good Shepherd
- 8:30 Songs, Prayers, Communion & Meditation. Hurlbut Church
- 9:00 United Church of Christ Worship Service. UCC Randell Chapel
- 9:00 Episcopal Holy Eucharist. Episcopal Chapel of the Good Shepherd
- 9:30 Religious Society of Friends (Quakers) Service. Quaker House, 28 Ames
- 9:30 Services in Denominational Houses
- 9:30 Unitarian Universalist Service. Hall of Philosophy
- 9:30 Christian Science Service. Christian Science Chapel

- 9:30 Unity Service. Hall of Missions
- 10:45 **ECUMENICAL SERVICE OF WORSHIP AND SERMON.** Bishop Eugene Sutton, senior pastor, Chautauqua Institution. Amphitheater and CHQ Assembly
- 12:00 (12-3) Art Exhibit. "The West Branch of the Neversink Under Threat Under Stress." Hovey Brock. Smith Memorial Library
- 12:15 Twelve Step Meeting. Marion Lawrence Room, Hurlbut Church
- 1:00 Porch Chat. (Programmed by the African American Heritage House.) Athenaeum Hotel Porch
- 2:00 **Public Shuttle Tour of Grounds.** Fee. (Purchase tickets at Main Gate Welcome Center. This tour is wheelchair accessible.) Leave from Main Gate Welcome Center
- 3:00 **AMPHITHEATER SPECIAL. The Great Massey Movie.** "The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari." Josh Stafford, Jared Jacobsen Chair for the Organist. Amphitheater
- 4:00 Church of the Wild. (Programmed by Quaker House.) Burgeson Nature Classroom
- 5:45 **Cinema Film Screening.** "Everything's Going To Be Great." Fee. Chautauqua Cinema
- 6:30 LGBTQ+ and Friends Reception. Athenaeum Hotel porch
- 8:00 **SACRED SONG SERVICE.** Amphitheater
- 8:30 **CLOSING THREE TAPS OF THE GAVEL.** "Did You Notice?" George T. Snyder, trustee for life, Chautauqua Institution. Amphitheater
- 8:30 **Cinema Film Screening.** "Perfect Days." Fee. Chautauqua Cinema
- 8:45 Three Taps Ice Cream Social. United Methodist House Porch

ON THE QUARTER HOUR



JOSEPH CIEMBRONIEWICZ / STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Pittsburgh-based artist Sayak Mitra paints the Miller Bell Tower Tuesday near the Pier Building. Mitra, whose work has been exhibited across the country and in his native India, was visiting his wife, who was on the grounds as part of Chautauqua Visual Arts' two-week resident artist program.

God Be With You Till We Meet Again

God be with you till we meet again;
by His counsels guide, uphold you,
with His sheep securely fold you;
God be with you till we meet again.

Till we meet, till we meet,
till we meet at Jesus' feet;
till we meet, till we meet,
God be with you till we meet again.

Text: Jeremiah E. Rankin
Music: William G. Tomer
Tune: GOD BE WITH YOU



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Saturday	8/23	-	6:00
Sunday	8/24	-	8:45
Monday	8/25	-	6:00

EVERYTHING'S GOING TO BE GREAT
PG 103m

Saturday	8/23	-	8:30
Sunday	8/24	-	5:45
Monday	8/25	-	8:30

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NR 124m
www.chq.org/things-to-do/chautauqua-cinema

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