

Reelers-Rangers Reporter
#4 (4-1-21)

Beth Benson: Hey dancers! Even though it's springtime and everyone is getting vaccinated, please don't let down your guard! My son is Covid positive. He will be okay, but had a fairly bad case of it and is still sick as I write. I am now in a 14-day quarantine and getting tested. (I will update on my status.) Stay healthy, wear a mask, and wash your hands!!

Bonnie and Charlie Van Stone: Thanks for keeping us all in touch! Charlie finally had his back surgery on February 4 – a little more involved than what I had anticipated! He is pain-free, however, and recovering nicely. Other than that, we've pretty much been home recuperating.

Donna Poyer and Mike Szekula: Hi Rangers and Reelers! Mike and I have been well and we did okay through all those ferocious snowstorms this winter. On March 20, I was the happiest person in all of New Jersey because I got to hear "peepers," the tiny tree frogs that herald spring. We will surely have cold days and frost in April and perhaps a snowstorm ... but winter's back is broken and spring is really here. Av, that was quite a response to my writing in a previous newsletter that I have the cleanest home in the county. Now that I'm back to work driving a school bus, I can pass the crown to anyone. Our school, Tewksbury Township in Hunterdon County, has not closed because of Covid ever since it opened right after Labor Day. We are on a five-day schedule, but still only half-days. And just to "fill in" some of the days where I have extra time, I took a job cleaning and being a companion to Francine Leshnowar's sister, Vickey. I am, however, looking forward to retirement and wishing it was closer than it is. How many of us are looking forward to traveling to Jackson,



Mississippi, where we can all enjoy square dancing to many callers at the National Square Dance Convention? Oh, and other great news – I'm a great-grandma! At first, I didn't think I could be old enough, but it's true. Paisley Renee was born on February 15, and mom and daughter are doing very well. Stay well and remain healthy!

Margaret Otterburn: Even as a new member (January-March 2020 Reelers class), I really enjoyed the weekly lessons and miss them. For me as clergy, life continues to be very busy. Every week, worship services continue by livestreaming. There are lots of Zoom classes and lots of outreach opportunities – weekly for needy mothers with infants and monthly doing the dinners at the homeless shelter. Family – all well; I am so thankful. This area is beautiful; I also walk a lot. Love to all. Blessings.

Barbara and Jay Ten Eick: Happy Easter and happy Passover. We went square dancing here in Florida, where everyone has had their vaccinations. There are no snacks, so dancers bring their own drink plus hand sanitizer, and they wear masks if they want to. It was different, but FUN. We will be in New Jersey for our granddaughter's wedding on May 22. Stay well.

Helen Jacobson: My wonderful brother, Larry Jacobson, passed away in March. I am overwhelmed with grief, but will recover at some point. Swimming at the YMCA has been very therapeutic for me.

SINGLE SQUARE DANCERS OF THE USA (SSDUSA) is holding its 50th and final DANCE-A-RAMA over Labor Day weekend, September 3-5, in Des Moines, Iowa: Mainstream through A2, DBD hall, and rounds II-VI. Callers are Jack Pladdys (Ohio), Tom Davis (Ohio), Tim Tyl (Texas), and Travis Cook (Kentucky). Cuers are Phyllis and Doug Burdette (Ohio) and Bonnie Lawrence (Indiana). [I have flyers.](#)



I enjoyed a terrific day ice fishing with Mark, Lise, and Bob. (I'm on the right.)

Francine and Bob Leshnower: Francine and I are both well. We have received our two shots as of March 13. We miss you guys and of course square dancing. Hoping to see you in a square soon! Yellow Rocks. ☺ ☺

Lise Greene and Mark Bippes: (*Mark*) I'm thrilled to have gotten the windows and three-quarters of the siding installed in the Lake Shawnee Habitat for Humanity project before my surgery last week. It was for a small hernia that I've had for years and decided to get patched while life is moving slower. Recovery is not as fast as hoped, but I'm gradually improving. (*Lise*) On the recommendation of the Stollers, we found a great way to spend winter evenings. Although neither of us has ever been a TV watcher, we got hooked on *The West Wing* series via DVDs from the library. It's fascinating to see how politics are handled behind the scenes in our nation's capital; even though the series began a couple of decades ago, it feels like today. Happy news: We have a new grand-niece, born on my father's birthday, and Mark and I just received our second vaccinations, yay! I led a seven-mile hike for my outdoor club (TriState Ramblers) on a gorgeous day in March, and it felt so great to enjoy nature without a heavy jacket after the long winter.

Linda and Rick Murphy: Not too much new in the Murphy household. We are simply going to work and coming home – doing our best to stay healthy. Linda gets her second Pfizer dose on April 4. Rick and Cynthia get theirs on April 18. Perhaps Mother's Day will be closer to "normal" than last year. We enjoyed the couple of sunny, warm days at the end of March and look forward to the sunny, warm days ahead (along with those April showers to get the flowers blooming).



Ed Crowley: Santa Claus has left the island (check out Tom Hanks's beard in *Cast Away*). I have been studying calling with Tom Miller. Still substitute teaching at McAuliffe Middle School; my class is cooking. I am planning on going to the National Convention in June with Katie and the grandkids. I miss my square dance students and their angels and hope to be teaching in September. I have a Zoom account if the group would like to try a virtual meeting.

Bob Turner: Reelers news – Callers have been booked for Reelers dances on first and third Friday nights in the 2021-2022 season, with Ted Lizotte kicking it off on September 17. Get out (or online) and practice! In addition, Mary Pickett, our cuer, is booked for the upcoming dance season. She will also resume round dance lessons prior to squaring up. Personal news – My daughter, Courtney, got engaged on March 27 on the beach in Point Pleasant. It was a BIG surprise. I'm currently taking donations to pay for the 2022 wedding, LOL. As for me, after being stuck for more than a year in New Jersey during the Covid pandemic, I'll be driving south later this month to parts unknown to play golf and have fun with old friends. Being fully vaccinated, I hope to do some square dancing in both Florida and Texas.

Ann Lovatt: John is still in the Homestead Rehab in Branchville. He would welcome cards. The address is 129 Morris Turnpike, Newton, NJ 07860 (room 212-D).

Kathy Fetch: On March 20, a beautiful day and the first day of spring, I celebrated another birthday with flowers, gifts, and cards from friends. I also enjoyed an outdoor lunch at Panera with a friend who brought along a cabinet I had bought, which her husband assembled for me.



Another friend and his mom surprised me with the gift of a memorial plaque for Ken's gravesite; what wonderful people. The next day I got my second Pfizer shot, and everything went well with just a few minor side effects.

Jeanne and Inars Gruntals: Our crocuses are blooming, the Canada geese are squabbling on the pond behind our house, and we've gotten our second Covid shot. We have been so impressed with the organization at the mega site in Rockaway Mall – great order and all the workers are so pleasant. Happy spring!

Cathy Feenstra: I wish I could say I was doing many interesting things, but with this quarantine, life is pretty boring. I did lots of sewing (15 crib-sized quilts for Project Linus), knitted a few hats and a kid sweater, and went with my husband nearly every weekend to our house in the Adirondacks, where they had just slightly more snow than we had. We shoveled and did some snowshoeing. I am currently cleaning out my filing cabinets and old textbooks (ho hum), and prepping my gardens at two houses. After being on six lists, we finally got notified by Atlantic Health System and got our second shot on March 29, so I scheduled a trip to see my son and family on April 20 – it's been a full year with only Zoom. And now we can go inside to our favorite restaurant! I really need some square dancing.

Trevor Johnson: Teaching, got both shots, going on long walks with attractive ladies, that sort of thing.

Local Student Julie Gerber Named Candidate In U.S. Presidential Scholars Program

Julie Gerber, a graduating senior at Morris Hills High School and Academy for Science, Math & Engineering (AMSE), has been named one of more than 4,500 candidates in the 2021 U.S. Presidential Scholars Program. The candidates were selected from nearly 3.6 million students expected to graduate from U.S. high schools in the year 2021. Inclusion in the U.S. Presidential Scholars Program is one of the highest honors bestowed upon graduating high school seniors. Scholars are selected on the basis of superior academic and artistic achievements, leadership qualities, strong character and involvement in community and school activities. The U.S. Presidential Scholars Program was established in 1964 by Executive Order of the President to recognize some of our nation's most distinguished graduating seniors for their accomplishments in many areas: academic success, leadership, and service to school and community. It was expanded in 1979 to recognize students demonstrating exceptional scholarship and talent in the visual, creative, and performing arts. In 2015, the program was expanded once again to recognize students who demonstrate ability and accomplish-



ment in career and technical fields. Annually, up to 161 U.S. Presidential Scholars are chosen from among that year's senior class, representing excellence in education and the promise of greatness in America's youth. If circumstances permit all Scholars are invited to Washington, DC in June for the National Recognition Program, featuring various events and enrichment activities and culminating in the presentation of the Presidential Scholars Medallion during a White House-sponsored ceremony. A distinguished panel of educators will review these submissions and select approximately 600 semifinalists in early April. The Commission on Presidential Scholars, a group of up to 32 eminent citizens appointed by the President, will select the finalists, and the U.S. Department of Education will announce the Scholars in May. If circumstances permit, scholars will be invited to Washington, DC, for several days in June to receive the Presidential Scholars Medallion at a recognition ceremony and to participate in events and activities.

Julie Gerber is the daughter of Janet and Alan Gerber.

Janet and Alan Gerber: This month, it's all about our kiddo! Julie was nominated for the prestigious Presidential Scholars Program – we are SO proud of her! Thank you to Jean and Inars and Gay and Bill, who mailed us the newspaper clippings from [Black River News](#) and [Observer-Tribune](#). Julie has been accepted to the mechanical engineering programs at Bucknell, Embry-Riddle, New Jersey Institute of Technology, Rochester Institute of Technology, Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute, Rowan, Stevens, SUNY Binghamton and Stony Brook, The College of New Jersey, and we are still waiting on a couple more. It is so hard to decide! But decide we must.

The Chester pickle ball nets are back up! I've had so much fun playing with Karen, Av, Cindy, and Dave. Check it out – we'll have you playing in no time.

Karen Hartman: Hello everyone! Just want to wish you all a very blessed Easter or Passover. I have been well, except for a nasty bout with an unidentified bug. But I've had both vaccines, and hope that all our members are healthy and virus-free. It will be wonderful to see you all again when we can square dance together! Enjoy the spring!

Nancy and Jim Anderson: We found a place for next year in Florida within the same development in Nokomis where we spent two months this year. We will be there from January 10 through April 10, 2022. Nancy really likes it: one-mile bike ride to the beach, 20-yard walk to a heated pool, and Jacuzzi where we usually went every night a couple of hours before bedtime. It really relaxes us, and makes it easier to fall asleep. As a veteran, I was able to get both vaccine shots at the VA clinic in Tampa, a little over a one-hour drive north. I had heard that the second shot can have more side effects than the first, especially for people like me who had Covid-19 previously, and that was certainly the case with me! It really hit me hard for two days, almost as bad as what I experienced last April. Nancy's daughters have scheduled her vaccinations in New Jersey. We took the auto train coming down to Florida, but drove back to see two of my three daughters in West Columbia, South Carolina. My doctor talked me out of an artificial ankle, so I finally made the decision to have my right ankle fused on April 22 in New York City. It will be four months before I can put weight on that foot, but I guess the timing is right given that square dancing has not yet resumed. On another topic, I've had lower back problems when I drive for a few hours and found a lumbar support vibrator that plugs into the car's cigarette lighter. It is wonderful! If you know anyone with similar problems, give them my [email address](#), and I will send them information.

Helen and Bruce Haskell: Happy spring to our Reelers-Rangers friends! What a winter it was. The only plus was that with all the snow, we were able to pile up quite an igloo for the grandkids to play in. Of course, it was much more fun for us to watch from the window than actually partake of the “escape the polar bear” game, LOL. Helen spent Saint Patrick’s day cooking corned beef with all the potatoes and cabbage that goes with it for any of our kids who were interested. I was happy to wear green, but that was about as Irish as I could get, so a steak dinner was more enjoyable for me! We hope the weather will cooperate so we can have family over for Easter, with a few sweaters to make a backyard gathering possible. Enjoy this beautiful time of year! Look for those early blooming crocuses. And if they are out, then the daffodils that Helen enjoys can’t be far behind. And when the daffodils come, the golf season can’t be far behind. All things in their time! Stay well and take care. Hoping to see you in a square soon!

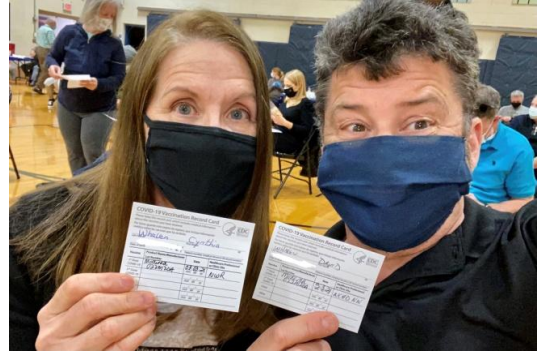


Irene and Hal Stoller: I enjoyed all the snow and the opportunity to do more cross-country skiing than I have in many years, but I am happy to see the daffodils and forsythia blooming as a sign that spring is really here. Though we are vaccinated, we are still being cautious in our activities. I have been lucky enough to find outlets for some of the endeavors that I enjoy. Our local food pantry is accepting certain kinds of home-prepared food, so I made a bunch of Irish soda breads and other breads and baked goods for them. My sewing machine is being put to good use by making NICU gowns to be donated to hospitals for preemies as part of a family friend’s Girl Scout Gold Award project. I go for walks most days, either with my “walking buddy” neighbor or Hal or both, and we still do a lot of Zooming. We are learning a new tap dance routine on Zoom and hoping that we will be able to perform what we have learned at some point soon. We are enjoying the fun virtual square dance lessons twice a week with Karin and Greg, though we still often have a lot of trouble determining where those elusive phantoms are standing.



Arlene and Tom Simansky: Hello to everyone and hope you are doing well. Tom and I are fine and trying to stay safe. We just got our second vaccine shot, which we are happy about. The last few days down here in Florida we’ve had really hot weather, which I enjoy because I like being in the community pool and going to the beach. There is square dancing, but we have not gone because you have to wear a mask and bring your own drink and snacks. I just cannot see myself dancing with a mask. We will be back in New Jersey at the end of May. The five months down here have really gone fast, and we did not miss the snow at all. (The picture was taken near Disney World.)

Cindy and Dave Whalen: Dave continues to work from home and Cindy enjoys getting to spend time with our grandson. We're both very excited to be immunized and able to visit with our parents over Easter. To celebrate Cindy's 60th birthday in April, we rented a cabin in Virginia and plan to spend a week hiking and exploring Shenandoah National Park.



Donna Brady: Just a quick note from Florida. I have been keeping busy with my gardening and working on various projects on my computer, including organizing those many photographs on my cell phone. I've been able to walk at least three or four times per week in local parks and in my 55+ community. I highly recommend an online dance exercise class that meets on Friday mornings and a line dancing class on Wednesdays, both through AARP. Some square dance clubs have opened. But most of my in-person activities, including square dancing with the Ocala Twirlers and line dancing, are on hold because not everyone is vaccinated. I am getting my second dose on April 3 and being cautious because Florida is "open for business," and others are not as careful as I am. I have been keeping in touch with New Jersey friends via daily phone calls and hope to be back by the end of May after the arrival of my passport (the post office will not forward it). Like many others, I want to travel once this pandemic is fully under control. Hope all of you are well; Kelly the cat and I are fine. I'm afraid I will need to take Plus lessons all over again ... bet many of you are in the same boat, so we can relearn the steps together. Looking forward to seeing everyone. Yellow Rocks!

Gay and Bill Grier: Hi all. Bill and I hope you are all doing well. By the time this newsletter comes out, we will both have had our vaccines and hope you're on your way to finishing up as well. I am scheduled for a partial cornea transplant on April 6. I'm so thankful that it's finally scheduled. Bill will keep Jeanne and Inars up-to-date on my progress and advise the club for us. Thank you for keeping me in your thoughts and prayers. We miss you all! Happy spring and Yellow Rocks!



*And finally, to repeat Beth's recommendation from the first newsletter entry above:
"Stay healthy, wear a mask, and wash your hands!!"*