LASTING CONNECTIONS

NORTHAMPTON STYLE
Our theme this issue is love at, of, in and from Northampton Community College. We set out to look for couples who met here, either as students or as co-workers. We found many more than we would have guessed.

The articles here can only reprove the scores of connection stories we found.

Since we were dealing with relationships, it seemed appropriate to find out from an expert how different personality characteristics affect compatibility between two people. We didn’t have to look far. Virginia Gonzalez is a Northampton professor of counseling who uses a proven personality-profiling instrument to help match up individuals with career and management positions. Widely used in management development, the Myers-Briggs Indicator is looked at as one of the best methods of determining compatibility in the workplace. But Gonzalez says the Myers-Briggs profile can also tell a lot about our compatibility in all our emotional relationships.

When people fall in love, “it’s nice to have traits that are the same, but you end up with the same strengths, but also the same weaknesses,” she points out. On the other end of the scale are people who are living examples of the “opposites attract” truism. These opposite personality types sometimes settle into relationships that thrive on each partner complementing the other. Then there are others in which the early thrill from dynamic tension eventually becomes more tension than dynamism. “Often they can’t name what was so attractive, and now those things only seem annoying,” Gonzalez said. Counselors can use personality-profiling instruments to get at these issues and help couples get back on track by understanding each other’s habits and behavior. Personalities normally don’t change through life, and that isn’t necessarily bad, according to Gonzalez. All of us can be classified somewhere on the scale between “introvert” — people who get energy from within, and “extrovert” — people who draw energy from others. Introverts aren’t necessarily shy people, and extroverts aren’t necessarily bubbly talkative types. This fact is nothing new, but the Myers-Briggs survey can identify clear personality characteristics that blend in different ways to form predictable behaviors.

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When two people fall in love, “it’s nice to have traits that are the same, but you end up with the same strengths, but also the same weaknesses,” she points out. On the other end of the scale are those couples we all know that are living examples of the “opposites attract” truism. These opposite personality types sometimes settle into relationships that thrive on each partner complementing the other. Then there are others in which the early thrill from dynamic tension eventually becomes more tension than dynamism. “Often they can’t name what was so attractive, and now those things only seem annoying,” Gonzalez said. Counselors can use personality-profiling instruments to get at these issues and help couples get back on track by understanding each other’s habits and behavior. Personalities normally don’t change through life, and that isn’t necessarily bad, according to Gonzalez. All of us can be classified somewhere on the scale between “introvert” — people who get energy from within, and “extrovert” — people who draw energy from others. Introverts aren’t necessarily shy people, and extroverts aren’t necessarily bubbly talkative types. This fact is nothing new, but the Myers-Briggs survey can identify clear personality characteristics that blend in different ways to form predictable behaviors.

Some personality types like to plan their lives, while others thrive on spontaneity. This kind of personality difference can doom a relationship, or it can introduce interesting possibilities, according to Gonzalez. Couples who find themselves on opposite ends of this spectrum need to work out ways to get through their weekends without one or both becoming completely frustrated. But couples who are too similar in an area like this may have to watch out either for deadly boredom or complete chaos.

Some of the best, most enduring relationships are those where “we’re looking for somebody to round out the person we can’t be,” Gonzalez said. Yet we all know couples who are so alike in personality they clearly were made for each other.

On the pages that follow are life stories representing many different combinations of points on the complex personality spectrum. And these folks all have one relationship in common. Can you guess what that is?
African-American, Latino, Asian or Caucasian. At least for one evening it didn’t matter. A Celebration of Unity held in memory of Martin Luther King Jr. drew close to 300 people of all races to NCC earlier this semester for a performance that ‘titled The Lipkin Theatre with love,’ according to The Express-Times. Coordinated by Professor of Counseling Frank Stanton, and assisted by Marcia Theadford of the financial aid staff, the program included a performance by The Roxey Ballet; music by a gospel choir led by Associate Professor of English Sharon Gavin-Levy; a dramatic presentation written by Professor of English Robert Mundhenk and performed by students and staff; a keynote address by Dr John McCartney, a professor at Lafayette College who teaches a course called ‘The Black Experience’ at NCC; and the premier of a video produced by Mario Acerra, head of NCC’s Radio/TV program, to chronicle the experiences of Lehigh Valley residents who took part in the 1963 March on Washington.

Titled ‘Echoes of the Dream,’ the video has since been distributed to high schools, middle schools and public libraries in Lehigh, Northampton and Monroe counties. The King Center, established in Atlanta by Coretta Scott King, provided archival footage of the march for the video and has expressed interest in airing it on its website. The video is also available for viewing in the Paul and Harriett Mack Library at NCC.

HONORS & ACCOLADES

The Sales and Marketing Executives of the Greater Lehigh Valley has presented NCC with its President’s Award – an accolade given to an individual or organization that has a major impact on the community. NCC’s selection was a “no-brainer,” according to Tim Cain, chairman of SME’s board. “How many people can say they’ve never taken any training courses there; never served on a commit-tee with someone from the college staff, never eaten at the college’s restaurant?” he asks. “The college has been a part of all of our lives.”

Out of 158 adult literacy programs across the state, NCC was one of only three to be accorded ‘Q-Stamp Certification’ this past winter. The ‘Q’ stands for quality. A rigorous selection process included review of written records showing continuous improve-ment, benchmarking of performance against state standards, and an on-site visit. In the last decade NCC has become one of the largest providers of adult literacy and basic workforce development programs in Pennsylvania, serving close to 5,000 people each year in four counties.

NCC’s vice president for advancement, Sue Kubik, has been named ‘Professional of the Year’ by District II of the Council for Advancement and Support of Education. CASE is the largest association of educational institutions in the world. Close to 500 people attended the luncheon in Toronto where Sue received the award. In introducing her, Bill Lynerd, vice president for university advancement at the University of Baltimore described Sue as ‘an innovative leader, a knowledge-able professional, a caring mentor and a model of integrity.’ He compared her to a palindrome, saying: “No matter which way you look at her, she is a model of consistency and quality.”

Helene Whitaker was one of four women from the Lehigh Valley honored as a “Woman of Distinction” by Girl Scouts-Great Valley Council. NCC’s vice president for administration was singled out for her professional achievements and because she serves as a role model for girls and women. Lehigh Valley Magazine also featured Helene as one of 26 ‘Movers & Shakers’ in the region for her efforts to preserve farmland and recreational space and to enhance urban areas as co-chair of the Lehigh Valley Green Future Fund.

WHOS NEW

If you haven’t met her yet, stop by and say hello to Sherri Jones, NCC’s new director of the annual fund and alumni relations. A native of the Lehigh Valley, Sherri gained extensive experience in alumni and development work at her alma mater, Cornell University. A member of Phi Theta Kappa, she is a strong advo-cate for community colleges. She says the courses she took at Tomkins Cortland Community College and at Corning Community College prepared her well for Cornell. Prior to joining the staff at NCC in March, Sherri served as associate direc-tor of the annual fund at Muhlenberg College. She looks forward to getting to know many NCC alums in the months ahead and welcomes e-mail at sjones@northampton.edu.

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NCC’s Board of Trustees has approved promotions for three members of the fac-ulty. Effective July 1, Sharon Gavin-Levy will become a full professor of English, Sandra Del Cueto will attain the rank of associate professor of Spanish, and Anita Dickson will become associate professor of business administration.
CHANGE IS IN THE WIND
AS ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION BEGINS

BY MARY ANN LEONE, ’00

The wind that sighs before the dawn
Chases the gloom of night
The curtains of the East are drawn,
And suddenly—’tis light.
~ “La Vent de l’Esprit”
Sir Lewis Morris

The early everyone on campus has a
tale to tell about buffetting winds. In the early days, NCC’s
first president closed the
college after a windblast
knocked out an electric
transformer. There was also
considerable concern that
day that the faculty ‘offices’ (really just files
and stones) might be in peril.

“There is no wind like
Northampton wind” declares longtime
employee RoseAnn Palsi, Call Center man-
ger. There was an open-air patio on the
second floor of the College Center where
Student Activities is located today. If you
sat out there to eat, your lunch would
fly back onto your lap, and your hair
would be plastered to your head.

The winds are still
with us as we trudge
through mud
and stones amidst
construction pro-
jets. Despite these
challenges, enrollment
continues to grow. When the
college opened on October 2, 1967,
450 students were expected. More
than 800 showed up. Since then, more
than 200,000 have taken classes here and
close to 20,000 have earned certificates,
degrees or diplomas.

This year marks NCC’s 35th anniver-
sary. To commemorate the milestone, a
host of exciting activities are
planned, culminating in the
presentation of Community Fabric Awards
to individuals, businesses and
organizations who rep-
resent ‘threads’ that come
together to make a differ-
ence in the Lehigh Valley.
James Harper of NCC’s
institutional advancement
staff reports that the cele-
bration, scheduled for
October 26, has been in the
planning stages for over a
year. ‘There has been a lot
of community involvement,’ he says. Scott F. Fainor, presi-
dent and CEO of Nazareth
National Bank, and Robert
Wood, chairman of the
board of The Wood
Company, are serving as co-
chairs. The honorary chairs
are Hank and Joanne Barnett and Inez
and Ed Dooley, long known for their
good works in the community.

The Community Fabric Awards reflect
the creative vision of the founders.
Thanks to the ingenuity of The Wood
Company, the menu for the black-tie
event will be an exact replica of the actu-
al Academy Awards dinner in Hollywood.

An early (c. 1970) group of environmental studies students
battling the famous wind during field study.

NCC will have its own
‘movie clips’ too, with a
video of the winners being
shown before the sumptu-
ous repast.

The awards selection
committee is comprised of
individuals and representa-
tives of organizations who
were honored during NCC’s
50th anniversary; including
Patricia Chila, project director
of the Hispanic American
Organization; Daniel Cohen,
Esquire, chairman of the board
of ProfeCi of Easton; Joel
Dischinat, co-owner of G&J Mobil Pit
Stop, Inc.; philanthropist Marlene O.
‘Lanny’ Fowler; Cindy Glick, director
of community relations at Just Born, Inc.;
Timothy J. Holt, director corporate rela-
tions for Air Products and Chemicals, Inc.;
James Kostecky, director of corporate sup-
port programs and executive director of
the Bethlehem Steel Foundation.

Construction begins on the Collage Center in 1970.

Earl Page, professor of history
and sociology, recalls when he came for an
interview in 1971. ‘The first person [I
saw] was a woman, the second was black,
and the third was Hispanic, and I
thought, I can teach here.’

Page still believes in the benefits
of a community college and its accessibili-
ty. Of the students he says, ‘They are a
mixture of valedictorians, undecideds,
and those forced to come by their par-
teins, and who later blossom. Many times
they leave and then come back more
motivated.’

In the months ahead, the community is
invited to join alumni, students, faculty
and staff in enjoying the 55th anniversary
festivities on a beautifully refurbished
campus...on the wings of the famous
Northampton wind.
He said, she said

“[NCC students] are a cut above other college students because they are more serious. They want to be there and many are working.” — Larry Melley in an interview with Madeleine Mathias of The Morning Call regarding his experiences in completing his degree (and competing in tennis) for NCC at age 77.

“Norman was the one who instilled in me the sense of being artist. He also gave me a sense of how seriously you have to take acting to succeed. It’s a lesson I carry with me every day.” — Michael Bentt who plays Sonny Liston in the movie “Ali,” speaking of Norman Roberts, his former acting professor at NCC, in The Morning Call.

"Hold onto [your dreams] like a bulldog holds onto its steak." — Assistant Director of Financial Aid Marcia Theadford, offering students advice during a program in which she and other staff members talked about some of the challenges they have faced in their careers and personal lives.

"Justice exists in society when human beings are bound together by a mutual recognition of rights and mutual cooperation for the common good." — Dr. John McCartney, describing Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.’s vision of a just society at the “Celebration of Unity” held at NCC.

“I usually pray just for myself. Lately I’ve been finding myself praying a lot more for others.” — Becky Olsen, president of NCC’s Christian Fellowship, quoted in The Chronicle of Higher Education, in an article describing the impact the events of September 11 had on college students across the country.

DIGITAL ART INSTITUTE TAKES SHAPE

To be or not to be? Sometimes it’s hard to tell.

On the computer screen in Ira Greenberg’s office, a propeller begins to turn on a model airplane. As the blades rotate faster and faster, the plane takes off, performs a dizzying series of stunts, lands, and glides slowly to a stop.

Greenberg didn’t videotape this scene in his backyard. Like a modern-day Gepetto working in pixels instead of wood, the associate professor of art built the virtual plane and gave it life using a sophisticated software package called ‘LightWave 3D.’ (To see the animation, click on www.iragreenberg.com/mp.)

Starting this spring, artists and other professionals who were born too soon to be exposed to this technology in school will have a chance to learn how to use it in intensive weekend training sessions conducted in NCC’s state-of-the-art graphics lab.

“Introduction to LightWave 3D” and ‘LightWave 3D Intermediate’ will be the first two courses offered at NCC’s new ‘Digital Art Institute.’ Classes in other advanced graphics programs may follow, according to Tom Shillea, who directs the college’s art programs.

The institute is expected to attract artists, designers and teachers from all over the northeast who want to update their skills, but who have had trouble finding training that fits into their work schedules. “There will be very little lecture,” says Greenberg. “Most of the instruction will be hands-on.”

Unlike many other training programs, the Digital Art Institute will bridge the fine and commercial arts. It also will be open to professionals in other fields. “The applications for this software are diverse,” Greenberg explains. “Not only can it be used to create special effects for television and film and illustrations for the publishing industry, it can allow architects to walk a client through a photo-realistic building before construction begins, it can enable law enforcement officers to simulate a crime scene, and medical researchers to depict the inner workings of a cell.”

“It is the most mature tool I’ve ever used,” says Greenberg. New to the faculty this year, Greenberg served as director of new media for H2O Associates in New York City before coming to NCC. He holds a master’s in fine arts from the University of Pennsylvania and a bachelor’s in fine arts from Cornell.

To see samples of artwork generated in LightWave 3D, go to www.newtekpro.com. For more information about NCC’s Digital Art Institute, visit www.digitalartinstitute.com.

BY HEIDI BRIGHT BUTLER

He said, she said

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What is it about academia that makes it a breeding ground for love connections? If you think about it, it makes perfect sense.

After all, in college, you spend hours upon hours of your life on campus. You eat there, study there, perhaps even sleep there. You’re enjoying the best of academic and leisure pursuits. You have the rare opportunity to meet a variety of new people, many with similar interests and goals, and many whose views and interests you’ve never encountered.

Chances are, you know a couple who met and fell in love at college. Or perhaps you can count yourself among the fortunate who have Northampton to thank for more than an education. Here are a few stories from some of the lucky ones:

While it’s impossible to know just how many love connections were made at Northampton, it’s safe to say that Cupid has struck many times over the past 35 years. Many relationships that began at Northampton — perhaps in the classroom, or over a cup of coffee in the cafeteria — have continued to thrive. A group of former Northampton students wanted to share their love stories — in their own words. Look for them in these blue boxes, throughout the issue.

Maria (DelGrosso) Frey, ’81 & Jeffrey Frey

Maria DelGrosso was excited about the opportunity to have her 15 minutes of fame. It wasn’t often that a college student had the opportunity to be on the radio — especially to support a cause she believed in.

Back in 1980, as a student assistant in Northampton’s public information office, Maria was asked by her supervisor, Sue Kubik, if she would represent Liberty High School in a new series of ads to promote the college. DelGrosso was asked to help recruit a male student to represent Freedom High School graduates. “Sue gave me a list of men from Freedom and I began leaving messages,” Maria said. “Jeff just happened to be the first person to call back.”

Kubik did a preliminary interview with Jeffrey. “She came in and told me he was really cute,” Maria said.

That March, on recording day, Maria and Jeff would meet for the first time.

“It was love at first sight,” Maria said, smiling.

Jeffrey agreed: “Well, we came from rival high schools,” he said with a chuckle. “When I met her in the public information office, I thought she was attractive right away. Things just went from there.”

Fortunately, they hit it off, enjoying every minute of the experience. They watched each other record their memorized scripts, and had time to sneak in some casual conversation as well. Because they had spent a lot of time talking the day they made their radio spots, Jeffrey said he had no trouble making the first phone call to Maria to ask her out.

The radio experience continued to give them laughs for a long time.

“When we were dating, we’d be driving in the car and hear each other on the radio. We both thought that was really funny,” Maria said.

“Maria was one of those special students — the engaging one with a spark and a warm, caring manner,” Kubik says. “When she and Jeff got together you could sense there was something special there, so we were delighted for her and later, as we got to know Jeff, for the two of them.” Kubik, now Northampton’s vice president of institutional advancement, says she and the others on staff “took special pride in knowing we played a small part in bringing them together.”

Jeffrey proposed to Maria on Halloween night in 1981 (her ring was a ‘treat’), and the Freys were married in 1982. Their three children, Andrew, 13, Rebecca, 9, and Peter, 4, often ask them to repeat the story of their meeting.

Maria, who currently serves as Northampton’s bursar, says she is full of constant reminders of their courtship.

“Jeffrey was a baseball player, so when I walk by the gym I still get a little twang,” she said.

Maria and Jeffrey Frey, in a photo taken at Northampton (coincidentally!) on the anniversary of their first date.

Shawna Gibbs, ’95 (early childhood) and Andy Gibbs, ’91 (criminal justice) of Ardley, Pa.

I met my husband, Andy at the college in 1993. We were both in the Presidential Ambassador Scholarship Program. Because we spent so much time together through the scholarship, we were able to get to know each other and become great friends. We dated throughout college and were married in 1998. We just celebrated the birth of our son in December of 2001.
Sheyla Rivera-Ramos, '99 & Wilfred Ramos, '99

One day in July, family and friends of Sheyla Rivera and Wilfred Ramos received a nondescript manila envelope in the mail. When they opened it, they saw something quite unexpected—a wedding announcement and framed photo of the happy newlyweds. The couple told no one about their wedding date—even their parents were in the dark.

“We had our bridal pictures taken early,” Wilfred explained. “We went to the courthouse, got married, and went to the post office. Then we sat back and waited for the phone calls.”

It was a happy moment in a relationship that didn’t start out well. In fact, it nearly didn’t start at all. Sheyla had been planning to attend the Monroe Campus, but when she couldn’t get into a class she wanted, she began to attend the Main Campus. She fell in love with Northampton, and became involved in several student activities. In 1997, a mutual friend suggested Sheyla meet Wilfred. Wilfred and Sheyla would be a good match, and she proceeded to arrange a blind date. One Monday morning, Sheyla waited for Wilfred in the cafeteria, but he never showed. While many women might chalk it off to a guy not worth pursuing, Sheyla had a strong urge to meet the man who had just let her down.

“I was really upset, so I went to the financial aid office [where Wilfred was working] and asked for him,” she said. “When I saw him, I said, ‘My name is Sheyla Rivera and you stood me up. Now that you know me, you can’t stand me up.’”

As she walked away, Wilfred called out for her phone number.

Ever since their first date, when Sheyla says Wilfred ‘let her win’ at racquetball, they’ve been best friends. They approach life as a team: they took turns putting each other through school, and worked toward buying a house. Wilfred went on to receive a degree in individualized transfer studies, then transferred to DeSales to earn a B.S. in information technology. Sheyla, who studies CAD, is currently attending Moravian.

The couple credits Northampton with changing their personal and professional lives.

“The reason I was delayed going back to school is because I tried to find an environment like Northampton—I would have never left,” Sheyla said.

Tiffanie (Wood) Jones, ‘98, and Lenwood Jones, ‘99 (both funeral service) of Philadelphia

We were both in the mortuary science program, and both lived on campus. We became friends since we had some of the same classes together. We were married May 6, 2000, and we are both working as funeral directors in Philadelphia. I work with my family at Wood Funeral Home in Philadelphia and Lenwood works for Savin Funeral Home in North Philadelphia. We are also the proud parents of a baby boy, Myles Carlin, born February 1.

Ann (McGinley) Gralski, ‘95 (education) and Bill Gralski, ‘75 (life science) of Harrisburg

My husband and I attended NCC in the mid 70’s where we met and fell in love. We will be married 24 years this April. We have 3 children, Laura 22, and Christopher and Maggie, both 17.

After graduating from NCC, Bill went on to the University of Pittsburgh where he earned a bachelor’s degree in life science. From there he went to Penn State where he earned a master’s degree in environmental pollution control. He is now a registered professional engineer and works for an engineering firm in Harrisburg.

I went on to receive a bachelor’s degree in elementary education from Indiana University of PA. After 16 years as a stay at home mom, I returned to the work force as an instruction aide at a local elementary school, where I work with students who have learning disabilities.

Kathy (Fogel) Henderson and James W. Henderson of Lehighton

My husband James and I met at NCC in 1977. He was a computer science major and I was a commercial art major. I was riding on NCC’s equestrian team and was at Hob Nob Hill taking a riding lesson when he and a friend of his stopped by. He had dared his friend, who had never been on a horse, to join the team. My husband, who had ridden before, realized that he was missing out on a lot of fun, and decided to join the team also.

When I first met Jim, I didn’t like him at all. I thought he bragged too much. But the more I got to know him, the more my opinion changed. He was president of Phi Beta Lambda and convinced me to join. I was also the secretary of the student senate. At that time, the senate offices were in the same building as the frat’s office along with the offices of other student organizations. We shared a common area, so I saw Jim often in passing. One day, I was in the senate office doing paperwork when Jim came in. We started talking and before I knew what happened, he had backed me up against one of the filing cabinets and kissed me. Then he left! I was so shocked, I just stood there for a minute. I realized then and there that he was the one for me.

After that, we did everything together from attending frat conventions to horse shows. Our love for each other grew and in 1979, Jim presented me with an engagement ring. We were married in 1980 and left the church in a carriage pulled by a white horse. This year we will be celebrating our 22nd anniversary. We have one son, James IV, who is 5 years old.

When I think back, I can’t believe how fast time has passed and how much NCC’s campus has changed and grown. NCC certainly enriched my life in more ways than just an excellent education! By the way, although regretfully we did not get our diplomas from NCC, Jim is now a senior Internet analyst. I am a part-time secretary for Concern. I belong to the Carbon County Art League and exhibit my art work in different shows.
Pauline Pettit jokes that her life is like a screenplay. She's probably not too far from the truth.

In 1994, one of Pauline's first classes at Northampton was journalism. With that came the responsibility of putting out The Commuter, the student-run newspaper. Pauline was looking for a story just days from her deadline, after the one she had been chasing for weeks didn't pan out. She was desperate, and fresh out of ideas.

English professor and former student newspaper advisor Jim von Schilling strongly encouraged her to do a profile on a student who was undergoing treatment for leukemia. She resisted at first — the subject was just too heavy.

"I really didn't know much about cancer, and I was nervous about taking on something I didn't know about," she explained.

"Several times I looked for other stories, but nothing came up."

She called him, and he was resistant. He had been interviewed by several reporters from area newspapers and he was tired of it. But she was persistent, pulling every excuse out of the hat (including the fact that she needed it for a class final grade) until he finally relented.

They were set to meet in Laub Lounge. When Pauline arrived, the student, Matthew Pettit, was sitting among a group of his friends. She recognized him from a fundraiser poster but he had no idea what she'd look like. She slid in nearby to wait for him to finish.

"As I tuned in, I realized he was talking about me. He was telling his friends about some girl who called him, giving them details of our conversation," she said. "At least he was pretty nice about it."

After Matthew's friends left, Pauline introduced herself. "He was shocked — he was expecting a tall blonde," the petite brunette said with a chuckle.

Pauline and Matthew went outside to conduct the interview at a bench outside College Center. The two made an immediate connection because of their joint Asian heritage. From there, they discovered they had more in common; both of their fathers were Vietnam veterans who met their wives during the war. They ended up talking for a while, getting to know each other through their life stories.

After she did the interview, Pauline was thinking about Matthew. She discovered that he couldn't drive and decided that he needed to get out, so she decided to visit him at the house where he was staying to be close to campus. A fast friendship developed.

As the months passed, Pauline learned about cancer firsthand, including the emotional and physical tolls it took on Matthew's body. She visited him in the hospital, where Matthew stayed for weeks at a time. She brought pictures to remind him of all he triumphed over. A network of her friends prayed for him.

"I began to realize that our relationship had grown beyond just being friends. We were more like a family," she said.

The transplant Matthew received was a great success. Doctors, who had given a grim statistic regarding his survival, were thrilled with the outcome (Matthew has been in remission for six years). As the years passed, the couple hit some rocky times, but stayed in touch. After Matthew passed the five-year mark in his remission, a major milestone in cancer recovery, he ventured to China for a month to visit Pauline, who had moved there to teach, and their son Austin, now 4.

Other people who met at NCC, hung out at the house, but we became good friends. He transferred to the University of Dayton, and I transferred to Lehigh. It was not until we ran into each other between our junior and senior years at Dayton and Lehigh that we found out our personal lives had changed since NCC and we started dating.

We were married in 1976 and have two sons. Our oldest son, Trevor, graduated from NCC in 2000 and will graduate this May from Lehigh University with a B.S. in mechanical engineering. Our youngest son, Ryan, will graduate this May from NCC and transfer to Lehigh University. Both of them have appeared in the NCC television ads and Trevor has been on the NCC billboards throughout the valley.

We have always stayed close to NCC and have been active in the Alumni Association (Paul is a past president). NCC has proved invaluable to our entire family. Since graduation we have taken numerous other courses at NCC to continue to widen our horizons. This semester, I am taking a computer course.

Other people who met at NCC, hung out at the house and married in our same time frame include Dennis Parsons and Debbie Gaertke who live in Bethlehem and Doug Lindner and Sue Uheroth who live in Saugerties, N.Y. We are still in touch with both of these couples.

Pauline (Rice) and Matthew Pettit with fireworks, a Chinese symbol of celebration.
Sometimes what starts out as a bad day can end up bringing about one of the best days of your life.

Joseph Fink, ’98, who was working as an aide in Northampton’s library, had one of those days during the spring of 1998. ‘It seemed nothing was going right,’ he explained. Little did he know just how much that day would turn around — he was about to meet his future wife.

Amy Kissel, ’99, was in the library doing some work and the two became fast friends. They started talking on the phone (‘for months on end,’ according to Kissel), and a friendship blossomed.

Romance was on Fink’s mind first. He decided to test the waters after he heard her tell a relative, ‘I love you’ while they were talking on the phone. Even though Fink knew the sentiment wasn’t directed to him, he seized the opportunity: ‘I love you too,’ Fink ventured.

‘There was about five minutes of silence, and then Amy said she’d call me tomorrow,’ he remembered. ‘Two weeks later, she told me she felt the same way.’

Part of what attracted Kissel to Fink, she says, was his kindness. She recalls a time when the couple was in the library together. Reaching to check his email, Fink dropped a very heavy book bag directly onto Kissel’s hand. She had to make a serious effort not to drop her thumb. ‘I thought I ruined my chances,’ Fink said. But what it showed Kissel was just how much he cared, after attending to her every need and apologizing repeatedly. ‘That’s when I knew I loved him,’ she said.

Just after midnight one New Year’s morning — at 12:03 a.m. to be exact — Fink proposed by hiding a ring under the couch. Kissel accepted. When they discovered that the anniversary of their meeting would occur on a Saturday in 2002, they decided that it was meant to be their wedding day.

After their April 27 nuptials, they plan to revisit the campus to have some wedding photos taken.

‘We were looking for a place to have some outside photos taken, so we decided to choose a place that was significant to us,’ Kissel said. ‘It works out perfectly because the location is between the ceremony and reception.’

Fink and Kissel will marry this spring.

BY JAMES L. JOHNSON, ’89

In the early 1980s, Bruce Palmer, ’77, went technosurfing for love. Kind of. ‘PG’s were still in their infancy back then,’ says Palmer, an NCC Foundation Board member and college Trustee. ‘I went to a place in Wescosville called Matchmaker without the dot com. They just used written questionnaires and index cards. After screening, a date was arranged by mutual consent over the phone and you met face to face.’

The method worked out perfectly because the location is in the library together. Reaching to check his email, Fink dropped a heavy book bag directly onto Kissel’s hand. She had to make a serious effort not to drop her thumb. ‘I thought I ruined my chances,’ Fink said. But what it showed Kissel was just how much he cared, after attending to her every need and apologizing repeatedly. ‘That’s when I knew I loved him,’ she said.

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‘We were looking for a place to have some outside photos taken, so we decided to choose a place that was significant to us,’ Kissel said. ‘It works out perfectly because the location is between the ceremony and reception.’

Kissel, who works as a nurse’s aide at Gracedale County Home in Nazareth, has returned to Northampton to continue her education, with a major in nursing. Fink graduated from Moravian in December 2000, and is now serving as music minister at Our Lord’s Ascension Polsich National Catholic Church, Bethlehem.

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With Internet users expected to hit 377 million people by 2003, it seems like cyberdating is here to stay. If the thought of a tailor-made mate revs your modern, online personal ad offers the chance to find someone based on criteria you input. And if it’s shyness that keeps you off the dance floor, the online dating services allow you to connect without worrying about tripping over your feet, or your tongue. Message boards mean the luxury of tweaking your worst words into witticisms before hitting that submit button. Along with elaborate screening processes, electronic matchmakers also post you looks and hobbies, so you can select or reject the color of their eyes or the quirkiness of their smile without the slightest commitment.

While you’re out there trying to score points though, don’t forget what your mother taught you: be polite; don’t be pushy! Tone of voice and body language won’t be there to help you in the ether world. Come on too strong and your pitch may wind up in the recycle bin. Heidi Muller, relationship correspondent for the Webzine, AskMen.com, offers advice based on common courtesy: ‘Pushiness is unattractive in the real world and even more so in the wired world. The same rules of etiquette that apply offline are valid online. Remember to be courteous and respectful.’

Before scanning your own image into a JPEG, you should also be sure to weigh the costs against the pros. While the anonymity of email is a boon to overcoming the restraints of shyness, it can also allow for a lot of personality polishing. At its most harmless, people might lie about their athletic prowess, or about that new promotion they hope will attract a new admirer. So do beware: once you’re out there, you’re out there for the whole world to see.

When it comes down to it, finding romance in the 2000’s isn’t all that different from way back in the 1900’s. You just meet a whole lot more people, a lot faster. The search to complete ourselves with the love of another is as old as the human heart. True love? Only time will tell if you’ve found your soul mate. The right one lasts a lifetime. Bruce and Judy Palmer can tell you that.
Food as Love

By James L. Johnson, ’89

There is an Asian proverb that runs something like this: In hell, people starve because their hands are chained to six-foot-long chopsticks. Heaven is the same; but in heaven, people feed one another. As this sketch of the realm of eternal reward suggests, mutual nourishment is a good thing. Indeed, in our residence on earth, much energy is devoted to the care and feeding of one another. The dining ritual is as old as the feast of Lupercalia, the Roman precursor to Valentine’s Day, where an orgy of food was matched by the behavior of the attending couples. That sexy side of mealtime lives in cookbooks full of aphrodisiacal recipes.

Eating is included in everything from celebrations of friendships to shy, first romances to “5th wedding anniversaries. Food is one of the ways we say I love you. The connection between food and love seems difficult to deny,” says Elizabeth Boden, instructor of sociology at NCC. “One of an infant’s primary concerns is being fed. She wants, and hopefully receives, not only food but food given by the caregiver in a tender way, with affection. With love that’s important. Feeding is one of the first experiences of life. Establishing a trusting bond in that pre-language state can be a powerful beginning to a mature and caring adulthood.”

If so, it is a feast that continues throughout our childhood, on a daily basis with the family meal. Robin Fox, university professor of social theory at Rutgers University, in his essay, Food and Eating: An Anthropological Perspective, says that along with satisfying our physical needs, eating is a “profoundly social urge.” Learning to break bread with others is an important ritual. As early as age two, children may have developed basic ideas about the meanings of food. When it comes to romantic love, it doesn’t matter if you are a heavily spiced lover or you are a tofu fiend, or whether you dine with chopsticks, forks or grossy fingers. In the search for your significant other, just keep the adage in mind: the way between the stomach and the heart is one of the truest roads to paradise.

Robin Fox takes Chef Duncan Howden, employed it as a method of seduction: candlelight, professional waiters, table-side cooking. And exotic foods, like oysters and truffles.

Whether you are planning that crucial impression-setting first date, fanning the smoldering logs of romance, or even reaffirming the love of a long-affianced friend, Pitotti suggests you do so with some intentional time on your hands. “Expect to spend a least a couple of hours when you fine dine,” he continues. “An intimate dinner lets you forget all the hubbub and mishmosh of the hectic lives we lead. It’s not just about not having to cook, it’s about time to appreciate one another’s company.”

Sharing your hero/him that you care enough to slow down your time together is only part of the romantic cuisine scene. The backlit menus and ceramic-tiled walls of fast food beaneries don’t do much to flutter the pulse. Managers of these establishments across the globe. The newcomer is assessed, and in...
The Bartholomews Jim (standing), Andrew (left), Matthew (right).

BY JAMES HARPER

This question gets asked many times: “Why did you decide to attend Northampton Community College?” Jim Bartholomew, currently executive vice president of Embassy Bank and a 1973 graduate of NCC, responds to the question in his no-nonsense way; “because I wanted to go there.”

Not only did Bartholomew graduate from Northampton, but in ensuing years he served as president of the alumni association and also as a member of the foundation board. He’s also the proud recipient of the NCC Alumni Association’s Community Service award.

In turn, Jim’s son Matthew graduated from Northampton in December of 2001, majoring in general studies and achieving the academic distinction of Phi Theta Kappa. Matthew continues his education at Moravian College, majoring in sociology.

Andrew, a younger son, currently a senior at Bethlehem Catholic High School, will be attending Northampton in the fall of 2002. His time at Northampton will continue the successful Bartholomew legacy: “I see how near Northampton worked out for my older brother,” Andrew says. “He’s looking forward to the next two years as ‘a chance to experience college life, and help me find out what I want to do. I think Northampton is a good place for me to get my feet wet for what it’s like to be in college.’” (An older son, James, who is now a first lieutenant in the Army, did all his academics at Bloomsburg University, a fact just whispered among the Northampton legacies.)

In reflection, Jim Bartholomew knows that there was more to his choice of Northampton than simply wanting to enroll. Cost of education was a factor, and, he says, “I was not able to figure out what line of work I wanted to be in.”

Many high school graduates believe staying in close proximity to home has a lot of advantages. After Jim moved on to Northampton from Bethlehem Catholic High School, he decided to “go west” for new experiences. At Northampton he majored in business administration. That led to pursuit of a bachelor of science degree from Upper Iowa University. Graduate courses in bank management followed at both the University of Virginia and Bucknell University.

Northampton gave Jim the initial understanding of what the discipline of study at the college level was like: “I remember the teachers at NCC were very accessible; he states. “It opened me up to meeting kids from other schools and from other places. It was overall just a very good experience.”

The changes at the college are positive, he notes. “There is a growth in student diversity and there is a closer working with the four-year universities. I also like the expansion of the non-degree programs and the high population of adults that take advantage of all Northampton has to offer the community.” Jim says that he continues to be impressed that Northampton is able to maintain a cost level that allows kids to attend school, especially those who may not be interested in a four-year program. Jim and Gina Bartholomew have been married 26 years. In that time, Gina has watched Jim’s progress in the banking industry, to today’s responsibilities in a new venture with Embassy, a bank that opened its Lehigh Valley doors only late in 2001. Embassy’s first permanent location in the valley is currently under construction. This move follows 10 years at PNC Bank, where Jim had responsibilities in both business and private banking as a senior vice president.

Would he recommend a Northampton education? “Sure,” he says. “my children are proof positive. How you express yourself within a school is how you can say ‘there is no problem in getting the most out of this setting.’”

The Rutts Are In A Groove With Northampton

BY JAMES HARPER

How many people from one family can make Northampton their ‘educational home?’ The Robert Rutt contingent may hold a legacy record. Bob himself, Bob’s wife Patty, Bob’s youngest brother, Dave (who met his Northampton graduate wife during classes) and Bob’s father Kenneth, have all attended NCC. A daughter, Amanda, has applied to Northampton but has not yet decided on her 2002 fall plans.

Bob completed a bachelor of arts in physics from East Stroudsburg University in 1974. He took a reverse path from most NCC students, he enrolled at Northampton after he completed his undergraduate degree. What’s the story?

“Easy to follow,” says Robert Rutt. “I graduated in 1974 when jobs were even tougher to find than they are today. After ESU graduation, I started as a computer operator but was not seeing a great future. He always had an interest in serving as a volunteer fireman, so in 1976 he decided to enroll in Northampton’s new fire technology program.

“At that time,” according to Bob, “lots of volunteer fire company guys came to Northampton as a group.” Soon some of the paid firemen enrolled, particularly those looking to advance to lieutenant or captain. Bob notes: “Northampton provided the basic skill sets to work with.” He soon began teaching as a fire school instructor himself.

In addition, he made a later decision to enroll for two full semesters at NCC for more computer skills. That became a significant turn in his career direction. He emphatically says, “Career Placement at Northampton was the significant help to my re-employment.”

Computer technology provided him with a new job opportunity and today Bob is information systems chief for S & L Plastics in Nazareth, a firm specializing in plastic moldings and extrusions.

Bob is currently serving his first year as a member of the Pen Argyl school board and just stepped down as assistant chief of the Plainfield Township fire department. Although, he adds, “I still drive the truck and man the hoses.” At one time, he was a conductor/brakeman for the WK&S scenic railroad in Kempton.

How about those other family members? His father Kenneth retired from General Public Utilities (GPU) at the age of 62 and decided he needed more education. He enrolled in adult education classes at Northampton, focusing on math, English and computer programs. Patty Rutt, with a master’s degree in education, ran her own day care center for some years. She decided, however, that she needed to enroll in Northampton’s early childhood education classes and, in fact, worked in the college’s day care center for awhile.

Dave Rutt completed Northampton’s tourism program as did his wife, whom he met in class and eventually married. After employment at a number of Holiday Inns, Dave decided to stop moving around. Today he is in an information technology position in central Pennsylvania.

Bob and Patty have two children, their daughter Amanda, who is on the verge of high school graduation and their son Adam, a Pen Argyl eighth grade. Both children have strong musical interests, singing, playing in the school orchestra, jazz bands or whatever comes their way.

When asked his view of today’s Northampton Community College, Bob Rutt is definite. “It is a positive place,” he says. “It has evolved with the Valley and has been extremely responsive to the community’s needs.” He views Northampton as “an early adapter to employment trends,” mentioning the dental assistant and funeral programs in particular. “Northampton does not sit back,” he concludes. “I see the school doing nothing but continuing with positive improvements. That includes the physical facilities as well as the education it provides.”
1997 Lynda Smith is lead cook for Arria Assisted Living in Bethlehem. She and her husband, Tom, live in Bowmanstown.

1999 Kimberly Davis is a senior auditor at PricewaterhouseCoopers in Northampton.

1997 Richard M. Bauer of Bethlehem is a programmer/business support analyst at NCC. Richard has a bachelor’s degree from Muhlenberg College.

1996 Ernest John Barbic is an operations consultant at Johnson & Johnson data processing. Ernest and his wife, Julia, live in Bethlehem with their two children, Mark and Kristen.

1991 Curtis A. Kemmerer is computer technician for Vista Bancorp Inc. in Phillipsburg, N.J. She and her husband, James, live in Bath with their two daughters, Vanessa and Alyssa.

1990 Carola L. (Fulop) Molchany was a programmer/business support analyst at NCC to East Stroudsburg (earning a B.A. in biology) and then came back to tutor. I was a student, tutoring Introduction to Philosophy. He overheard me talking about Greek philosophers and decided this could give him a way to introduce himself. He came up to me in the library and said there was a book he thought I should read – “Zen and the Art of Motorcycle Maintenance,” which has many references to Greek philosophy. (I went on the become a librarian and a poet, so recommending a book to me in the library was a sure way to catch my attention!) I read the book, and we started having long conversations in the cafeteria.

In April of 1987, we attended a classical pianos concert at NCC’s auditorium, and later that evening, as he was driving me home, Wayne told me he was in love with me, and I was happy to be able to tell him I felt the same way. We were married in June of 1992, and will be celebrating our 10th anniversary this year.

Wayne’s sister Gail attended NCC for graphic design, and my sister Kate, also attended NCC before going on for a master’s in ESL. (Kate is now a professional assistant for NCC’s ESL program.)

1997 Margaret Almon & Wayne Stratz

I met my husband in the fall of 1986 while tutoring at Northampton’s tutoring center. Wayne had transferred from NCC to East Stroudsburg (earning a B.A. in biology) and then came back to tutor. I was a student, tutoring Introduction to Philosophy. He overheard me talking about Greek philosophers and decided this could give him a way to introduce himself. He came up to me in the library and said there was a book he thought I should read – “Zen and the Art of Motorcycle Maintenance,” which has many references to Greek philosophy. (I went on the become a librarian and a poet, so recommending a book to me in the library was a sure way to catch my attention!) I read the book, and we started having long conversations in the cafeteria.

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Wayne’s sister Gail attended NCC for graphic design, and my sister Kate, also attended NCC before going on for a master’s in ESL. (Kate is now a professional assistant for NCC’s ESL program.)
registered dental hygienist at North Hunterdon Dental Associates in Clinton, N.J. She and her husband, Samuel, live in Belvidere, N.J.

1996 Alison K. Sensenig works as a dental hygienist for Dr. Michael H. Cohen. She lives in Stevens with her husband, Fred and their son, Ethan.

1998 Michele (LaBar) Leon is a dental hygienist with Dr. Robert Vandragt in Traverse City, Mich. She lives in Traverse City, Mich. with her husband, Christopher.

EARLY CHILDHOOD

1990 Nicole A. Preletz and Matthew J. Griffin ’95 (emergency services) were married December 28, at St. Cyril and Methodius Catholic Church in Bethlehem. Nicole is a child development specialist for NORWESCAP Early Head Start in New Jersey. Matthew is an operations manager for Kistler O’Ruten Fire Protection. The couple lives in Bethlehem.

1991 Rhonda Lee Geiselman is a second grade teacher at Lincoln Elementary School. Rhonda received her bachelor’s degree from Misericordia College. She and her husband, Scott, live in Easton.

1993 Donna Marie Fantasia and Dean Michael Davidson were married September 22, at St. Annie’s Catholic Church, Bethlehem. Donna is a graduate of East Stroudsburg University. She is assistant director of the Knowledge Learning Center. Donna and her husband live in Bethlehem.

1994 Kendra Cristin Johns and Julian Earl Kirk were married July 7 at St. Luke’s Catholic Church in Stroudsburg. Kendra is employed as a director/pre-kindergarten teacher for Wise Little Wonders Inc. in Brodheadsville. Kendra and Julian live in East Stroudsburg.

2001 Celena Kay Finney and John Edward Nelson Jr. were married July 28 at Christ Lutheran Church in Easton. Celena works in the early childcare center at NCC. The couple lives in Wilson Borough.

ALUMNI NOTES

CUPCAKE CHEMIST

BY JAMES L. JOHNSON, ’89

Alan Pitotti ’95 handles his baking creations with the tender loving care of a chef. From just the right blend of chocolate and sauce for a filled mousse to the right plate for presentation, his desserts are born with the glinting precision of science.

“We don’t even call them recipes in baking,” says Pitotti. “We call them formulas.” While recipes in cooking often allow some wiggle room (a pinch of salt more or less won’t ruin the soup), baking is unforgiving. Everything needs attention to detail. “Aesthetics too,” says Pitotti. “How it looks is as important as how it tastes.” Pitotti loves the intricate demands of his trade; it was one of the things that drew him to it. As Hotel Hershey’s assistant pastry chef, he’s got a lot of demands to please.

The life of a chef, especially at a major hotel like Hershey’s, is anything but boring. During peak season Pitotti and his staff of 10 work their sweet magic to a packed house nearly every night. “From late May, early June,” says Pitotti, “when Hershey Park’s open, we’re busy — right on through to October.” Conferences, holidays, long weekends and regular local events fill the restaurant’s months when the park is closed. “We tell our externs just out of school that there’s a better love than this,” says Pitotti, “because when their friends are out partying, they’re going to be working their tails off here.

Pitotti is no stranger to the hard work he asks of young recruits. He’s paid his dues to get to where he is. Fortunately, his work has always been his passion. “I used to enjoy putting off my homework and helping my mom make dinner,” says Pitotti. “When we found out that NCC had a culinary arts program, my mother encouraged me to try it. I loved it from the start.”

Pitotti credits Chefs Duncan Howden and Scott Kalamar for teaching him the fundamentals of his culinary expertise. “I went on to the CIA (Culinary Institute of America),” Pitotti continues. “I would have been hugely intimidated to have gone right from high school. Northampton’s program was a great stepping stone.” After graduation Pitotti worked at the Inn of the Falcon, where he fell in love with things sweet. His degree from the CIA is in baking and pastries.

Pitotti has been with Hotel Hershey for nearly a year and a half; long enough to have experienced the major holidays, some of them twice. Valentine’s Day, not surprisingly, has the hotel’s candlelit circular dining room, with its curved expanse of windows overlooking a formal garden, packed. The room, actually a semi-circle, was built for romance. Milton Hershey, the founder of Hershey and a major benefactor to the area, insisted architects design a room without corners or pillars. “He didn’t want there to be a bad seat in the house,” says Pitotti. “Even on the busiest nights, lovers of all ages have a view of the garden’s twin reflecting ponds and lighted fountains.

Indeed, at Hotel Hershey romance hangs in the air. honeymoons are a staple of Hershey romance. “We do have our share of proposals,” says Pitotti. “Which can sometimes be a challenge. One guest asked for a special way to give his girl a diamond ring. We came up with a chocolate box with chocolate truffles inside, along with the ring. The man got down on one knee and proposed right there in the dining room. It turned out great.”

The staff at Hotel Hershey never shrinks from a challenge. Take Friday nights. Once a week, Hotel Hershey invites diners to its Chef’s Table, a unique gourmet experience that keeps the staff on their toes and tests their creativity to the max. “It’s six full courses, three flights of wines and no planned menu,” says Pitotti. “The chef creates everything on the spot, just for you!” For Pitotti and his fellow dessert pros it is a night to showcase their art. “We love doing Chef’s Table,” says Pitotti. “You have to walk into the refrigerator and start pulling stuff off the shelves and come up with something fantastic. It’s a really neat feeling to create something new that way!”

EDUCATION

1970 Wenda Moselle is a retired English/Drama teacher. Her interests include her family, her heritage, poetry, and literature. Wenda’s poem, “Pray,” has been recently published. She is also known for her award-winning recipes, stories and her love of trivias contests. Wenda lives in Phillipsburg, N.J.

1975 Donna K. Ackerman works for John C. Pritman, Inc. as an assembler. Donna received her bachelor’s degree from East Stroudsburg University. She and her husband, Edward, live in Bath.

1973 Kathleen R. (Marilla) Schaeffer is a substitute teacher in the Easton Area School District. She received her bachelor’s degree from Shippensburg University. Kathleen and her husband, Edward, live in Easton with their two children, Brad and Audra.

1969 Michael William Sandbrook is retired from Lehigh Portland Cement Company. He received a bachelor’s degree from the University of New York. Michael and his wife, Kay, have one child, Douglas. They live in Saugettes, N.Y.


1997 Tina L. Negri and Michael J. Pisceschi were married June 17 in Messiah Lutheran Church, Bethlehem. Tina is employed by Agere Systems. The couple lives in Bethlehem.

ELECTRONICS TECHNOLOGY

1977 Walter H. Niedermeyer, a retired firefighter for the City of Allen town, is the mayor of Statington. He and his wife, Mary, live in Statington.

FIRE TECHNOLOGY

1987 Stephen J. Ruggiero and Holly Lynn Cocchia were married May 16 in St. Elizabeth’s Catholic Church, Pen Argyl. Stephen has two NCC degrees: general education, 1986; and funeral services, 1987. He is a funeral director and the owner of Bueroo & Ruggiero Funeral Home in Pen Argyl. He and his wife live in Pen Argyl.
Therese (Sterner) Wescott, '91 (liberal arts) & Scott Wescott, '91 (biological science) of Nazareth. Scott and I met in January 1990. We were enrolled in an 8 a.m. trigonometry class together. I was not thrilled at the prospect of such an early class, but after he walked in, I decided to stay enrolled. Scott was not in class for a few days due to a death in his family. I had never spoken to him, but when I saw him sitting in the lounge one morning before class, I volunteered my notes that he missed. The rest is history.

Scott was on the baseball team but lived in Saylorsburg. The commute was too great to go between class and practice time. He would spend the hour or two in between with me at my parents’ house in nearby Bath. We dated each other solely throughout NCC and afterwards.

In 1990, Scott graduated with a biology degree and I received a liberal arts degree with honors. We both went onto ESU. (I enrolled a year after Scott because I took a year off to work at NCC and gather money.) I graduated from ESU magna cum laude with a B.S. in speech pathology, and Scott graduated with a B.S. in biology. He was accepted to Widener University for a master’s in physical therapy. I got a position as a speech therapist for a school district near Widener.

In 1994, after Scott graduated, we moved back to the area. We were married August 15, 1998, and now reside in Nazareth. We built a home on an acre of land and have a dog that we spoil rotten. Scott is a physical therapist in Bangor and I am a speech-language pathologist for North Penn School District.

INTERIOR DESIGN

1990 Valerie May (Miller) Grant and her husband, Keith, live in Wendell, N.C. Valerie is a homemaker and the mother of a daughter, Emma.

LEGAL OFFICE

1994 Joseph Dotta and Stefanie Cruz were married on May 12 in Our Lady of Mount Carmel Catholic Church, Roseto. Joseph is employed by New Jersey Transit. The couple lives in Bangor.

Karen Lynn Morgan and John H. Schulties were married December 22 at Paradise Valley Assembly of God in Paradise Valley. Karen is assistant manager for Fashion Bug in Stroud Mall, Stroudsburg. The couple lives in Hacketstown, N.J.

1997 Jessica L. Bartholomew and Brian H Trauger were married September 29 at the Whitefield House in Nazareth. Jessica is employed by Dieter Brothers Fuel Co., Inc. The couple lives in Bethlehem.

GENERAL STUDIES

1994 James C. Williams is regional director of marketing at GenAmerica Financial. He received his bachelor’s degree from Lehigh University. James and his wife, Lynn, and their two children, Emily and Erin, live in Macungie.

1985 Clare M. Persing is an educator/coach for the Bethlehem Area School District. She received her bachelor’s degree from Moravian College, and a master’s degree from East Stroudsburg University. Clare and her husband, Thomas, live in Tpton.

1994 Cindy T. Yavor is a travel agent/NASCAR promoter at Clark Travel in Whitehouse, N.J. Cindy has three degrees from Northampton: her other two are in hotel/restaurant management and education, all in 1994. Cindy lives in Center Valley.

1995 Melissa Cesanek and Brian Bauman were married October 15 in Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary Catholic Church, Northampton. Melissa is employed by Rosenbllth International. She and her husband live in Northampton.

2000 Mary Stockman-Smith and her husband, Dave, have two children, Garrett and Tara. The family lives in Bethlehem.

LEGAL ARTS

1994 Gregg & Sheila (Stiles) Eagan of Lakeview, N.Y is a certified legal real estate secretary/coach for the Bethlehem Fatality Team. We both attended Freedom High School for two years at the same time but in different grades — we had some of the same acquaintances but never crossed paths until we met at NCC.

We were married on April 16, 1993, and we have three beautiful children, Dwight, 5 Adele, 3, and Chase, 1. We live in Lakeville, N.Y, outside of Buffalo. Gregg was in the engineering program at NCC and finished his degree at the State University of New York at Buffalo. He received his bachelor’s degree in engineering science in 1995. He is now a manager of process engineering at Nanocor Corporation in Niagara Falls, New York. I was enrolled in the early childhood education department at NCC until we were married and moved to Buffalo in 1993. Now, I am a stay-at-home mom.

We have family in Bethlehem that we visit often and every time we pass NCC we tell our children “that’s where Mommy and Daddy first met.” We have also brought our children to Springfest in May. We both enjoyed attending NCC and are extremely thankful that we met there.

MEDICAL BILLING SPECIALIST

2000 Sherry B. Cornell is a billing coordinator at VIPG Internal Medicine in Allentown. She and her husband, Richard, and their daughter, Erin, live in Easton.

2000 Kelly Reibman is a certified professional coder at Hillcrest Physician Services/Warren Hospital in Washington, N.J. Kelly has one daughter, Meagan. They live in Nazareth.

MEDICAL LAB TECHNOLOGY

1976 Lucia M. Knerr is a scientist at Orasure Technologies in Bethlehem. She and her husband, James, and their son, Andrew, live in Bethlehem.

LIBERAL ARTS

1991 Shelly Lynn (Cory) Kemmerer is a legal real estate secretary at Newman, Williams, Mishkin, Corveley in Stroudsburg. She and her husband, Carus ‘91 (accounting), live in Saylorburg.

1990 Valerie May (Miller) Grant and her husband, Keith, live in Wendell, N.C. Valerie is a homemaker and the mother of a daughter, Emma.

1994 Amanda Alphonse (Powers) Beatty and her husband, Joseph, live in Burlington, N.C. Amanda is a writer.

1994 Joseph Dotta and Stefanie Cruz were married on May 12 in Our Lady of Mount Carmel Catholic Church, Roseto. Joseph is employed by New Jersey Transit. The couple lives in Bangor.

Karen Lynn Morgan and John H. Schulties were married December 22 at Paradise Valley Assembly of God in Paradise Valley. Karen is assistant manager for Fashion Bug in Stroud Mall, Stroudsburg. The couple lives in Hacketstown, N.J.

1994 David M. Sitbon and Lisa Valente were married October 6 at the Whitefield House in Nazareth. David is employed by Orasure Technologies in Bethlehem. He and his wife, James, and their son, Andrew, live in Bethlehem.

1990 Valerie May (Miller) Grant and her husband, Keith, live in Wendell, N.C. Valerie is a homemaker and the mother of a daughter, Emma.

GENERAL EDUCATION

1977 Gayle Francies Hendricks is a graphic designer at Lafayette College in Easton. Gayle lives in Bethlehem.

1980 Jamie Scott is a photo marketing manager at Rite Aid Corporation in Trevose. He received a bachelor’s degree from Edinburg University. Jamie and his wife, Lori Ann, live in Allentown, with their son, Daniel.

1982 Robert S. Gellock is a writer. He and his wife, La Rue, and their two children, Mechelle and Monica, live in Nazareth.
It has every year. From then on we knew we were in love. We were married in 1997, and have a daughter, Gina, who will be 2 in May. We currently have a house in Bethlehem.

Our first technical date was at the Winter Social that the social activities club Saucon Valley Animal Hospital. She lives in Raleigh, N.C.

Carol was a member of student senate and the president of both CHARTS and Christian Fellowship. She is a nurse at St. Mary’s Quakertown Hospital. She and her husband, Mark, and their son, Parker live in Easton.

Our family live in Nazareth.

Our family live in Nazareth.

Would you believe it? My husband and I met in our history class in 1992. He was in the advertising design program so he needed to take the class and I had to take an elective. We were also both members of the Christian Fellowship club and I was a member of student senate and the president of both CHARTS and Christian Fellowship.

Our first technical date was at the Winter Social that the social activities club Saucon Valley Animal Hospital. She lives in Raleigh, N.C.

The family live in Nazareth.

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...AND COLLEGE MAKES THREE

BY SUE KUBIK

J
aron and Ken Kochey would say that things in life have a way of coming full circle. Their life together seems to bear that out. They were introduced to each other on a blind date in December of 1964, which was arranged by Tom Zern, a colleague of Sharon’s at B.F. Goodrich, Valley Forge, who knew Ken through the Naval Reserves. At the time, Ken was a student at the University of Florida. Ken and Sharon engaged in a long-distance romance for less than a year and were married in November of 1965. Their early life together took them to Washington D.C., back to the University of Florida, where Ken got his doctorate, and finally to the Lehgh Valley. Thirty-six years later, sitting for this interview, they had just returned from a trip they took to Yellowstone with, you guessed it; Tom and Helen Zern. While they maintained a good, if sometimes distant friendship throughout their working years, the Kocheys and the Zerneis have become even closer as couples retired.

Dr. Kenneth Kochey was among the earliest staff members hired at this new, upstart college which came to be known as Northampton Community College. Sharon, his wife, was in the college’s first graduating class. They speak lovingly of the “early Northampton years.” Out of necessity, the college became the focus of their existence.

If you ask Sharon if it was difficult being a student at a college where her husband was an administrator, she will tell you that it was sometimes awkward, but that the college was so small that most students knew a lot of the faculty and administration personally. And the college staff became a family, in the Kochey’s words, because just about everybody who was hired came from someplace else. The hard work of getting a new college started led to long nights and often week-end socializing with colleagues became a natural outgrowth of spending so much time together. There were card parties, progressive dinners and gatherings at local bars and restaurants. And, try as they might, Sharon recalls that, “no matter what we were doing, conversation always returned to the college.”

Because everybody hired for the developing college was to the early summer of 1995, where Pat takes “matter what we were doing, conversation always returned to the college. Fast forward to the early summer of 1995, where Pat takes

BACK IN THE DAY … CO-WORKERS NOW LIFE PARTNERS

BY MICHAEL E. NAGEL

A visitor to Ron and Pat DíSefano’s home feels instantly at ease. Ever inviting, the house speaks warmly of its owners and their passions, for gardening, travel and most significantly, for each other. They are obviously a couple; she watches him as he speaks; his eyes twinkle as she fills in the blanks. They seem to delight in each other’s company and their warmth and connection fill the entire home.

The first question of course, is how they met: “Which time?” asks Ron. “Well,” says Pat, “I usually ask if they want to know about the first time or the second time we met. We worked together at Northampton for 29 years. I started in the Library in November of 1970 and Ron started in chemistry in May of 1971.”

Ron recalls that his appointment was approved by the board on April Fool’s Day of 1971. “I was excited and did not take the timing as a bad omen,” he said.

As colleagues, did their paths cross very often? They may have served on committees together, though neither remembers for certain. They did serve together on the Executive Board of the AFT, Northampton’s faculty union. “I was secretary,” said Pat, “and Ron was treasurer.” In their first life they were colleagues, little knowing the twist that fate was about to take.

Tragedy struck when Ron’s first wife, Dorene, was stricken with cancer in 1993. She passed away in the fall of 1994. The Dorene DíSefano Dental Hygiene Scholarship was established by her friends and colleagues in memory of her life and her many contributions to the dental hygiene profession.

“I assure him I would have come, if I had known about it,” said Pat. “I think we were more interested in each other,” says Pat. They have other dating stories, like the time Pat left Ron at CelticFest to go home and show her farm, which was up for sale. By the time she got home, the prospective buyers had cancelled. Pat, knowing that Ron did not have a sweater, drove back to Bethlehem with one for him (from Wind Gap!).

Pat and Ron were married in December of 1995 in front of friends, family and a fireplace at Magnolia’s Vineyard in Gutsville. They retired together in 2000 and have enthusiastically embraced this newest period in their lives. In their church, they are dedicated community volunteers, working at Musikfest, Christkindlmarkt, Celtic Classic and the Kutztown PA German Festival. They also enjoy biking, gardening and travel. A safari to Tanzania and Kenya, with Pat’s daughter, her husband and his parents, beckons this fall.

They get back to Northampton on occasion and Pat, who retired from the library, was pleased to see the transformation at the dedication of the Mack Library last year. Ron is in the process of building a model railroad layout and he and Pat have corresponded on a number of household projects including the completion of their sunroom and basement, all from an impressively equipped basement workshop.

“If I could pass something on to people, it would be to say that sometimes positive things can happen and they can be right in front of your nose,” said Pat. "Both of us had down periods, but when we saw each other that May, we came to believe that there was a light ahead for both of us.”

Ron agrees. “Things can seem cloudy, and suddenly the sun comes out,” he said, as they both shared a smile.
A NETWORKED RELATIONSHIP

BY MICHAEL E. NAGEL

Talk about networking! Karen and Tim Brady bring a whole new meaning to the idea. ‘I was working on the network implementation, which involved training college staff during the day,’ said Karen. ‘Tim was at that time the night shift maintenance supervisor, so coming in for training during the day was a problem. I ended up training him while I worked late on Fridays.’ Prior to this, they certainly knew each other as colleagues after all. Karen has worked at Northampton almost continuously since she graduated almost 28 years ago while Tim boasts 26 years at the college, mostly in physical plant. Both agree; however, that their relationship evolved out of those Friday training sessions. For their first date, Tim cooked lunch for Karen on her birthday. ‘Chicken, rice and some vegetable,’ recalls Tim, who seems to be the detail person in the relationship, although he tends to talk in a spare, almost off-hand manner. Time revealed and reinforced similarities; they discovered they both were regulars at Long Beach Island for vacations, both are animal lovers (dogs & cats) and both had a bent for public service.

Their courtship was brief but, as Karen, who tends to be a bit more effusive points out, ‘we’d known each other for a long time.’

Married in 1990, they have, among their wedding photos, a picture taken on campus, with Keystone Hall as the backdrop. ‘A reminder of the connections,’ explains Tim. Among the connections is Jessie Valek, Karen’s daughter and a Northampton Community College graduate, just like her mother.

The Bradys are atypically busy, even by today’s standards. Karen is pursuing a master’s degree in business administration with a concentration in computer information science, and is ‘about halfway there,’ she says. Karen is also secretary to the Northampton County Ambulance Association, which plays off her involvement in the Bethlehem Township Fire Company. She has worked on the ambulance and served as the fire company’s photographer; an involvement originally inspired by her curiosity as to why Tim’s past role as president of the fire company took up so much time.

Tim serves as a Bethlehem Township Commissioner, past president of the Board of Commissioners, and the Township’s Emergency Management Coordinator. He recently participated in the successful negotiation for a new police contract and is an accomplished organist as well.

As for the dogs, even here we find a Northampton connection, alas born of tragedy. ‘I had to put my Dalmatian, Mack, to sleep after 16 years,’ said Tim, ‘and I was crushed.’ Karen had also struggled with her cat. ‘I spent three days with my cat at the veterinary hospital, during which I met two graduates of our vet-tech program,’ says Karen. While thinking about ways to remember Tim’s dog, we hit upon the idea of establishing an endowment at the college to support the vet-tech program, and the Karen and Tim Brady Scholarship Endowment, which benefits the vet-tech program and its students, was born. Two dogs, Pete, a golden retriever and Dottie, the Brady’s newest Dalmatian, now grace the family along with three cats (Rusty, Sneaky & Mulligan).

Most days, at around 12:30 PM or so, Tim and Karen can be seen having lunch together in the cafeteria in College Center. ‘With our schedules, it sometimes is the only time we can get together,’ said Karen. ‘And our time together is important to us,’ said Tim.

DONOR SPOTLIGHTS

THE R.K. LAROS FOUNDATION — A LEGACY OF CARING FOR THE COMMUNITY

BY MICHAEL E. NAGEL

The roots of the R.K. Laros Foundation run deep and reach far beyond Bethlehem, its home base of operation.

Founded in 1952 by Russell K. Laros, the foundation was part of a natural evolutionary step for this early entrepreneur, who operated silk mills in a region stretching from the Lehigh Valley into the Scranton, Wilkes Barre area. The current Sure-Fit building opposite the Bethlehem YMCA is a former Laros Silk mill. Even before establishing the foundation, Russell Laros and his wife, Helen were well known philanthropists in the community, focusing their giving on causes that enhanced the community, exhibiting a particular concern for those individuals who had slipped past society’s safety nets, even in those early days.

The Laroses had relatives on the Main Line in Philadelphia, which, when combined with the communities where they had silk mills, resulted in the foundation supporting charities throughout much of Eastern Pennsylvania. ‘The foundation’s early records show that Mrs. Laros was the driving force behind their giving,’ said Elizabeth Mowrer, the foundation’s current secretary. ‘She made a number of $5 and $10 contributions to various charities, which really set the agenda for the generations to come.’

Later, her daughter took over for her and helped continue the foundation’s focus on improving the quality of life in the community.

As the silk boom began to contract, so did the scope of the Laros’ business and the foundation became more distinctly Bethlehem. ‘Mr. Laros graduated from Lafayette College, and so the foundation supported Lafayette, St. Luke’s Hospital, Lehigh and later Moravian,’ said Mowrer. ‘As our geographic focus shifted, so did our funding priorities.’

While true to R.K. Laros’ vision, the current trustees, who number ten, are not afraid to revisit how the foundation responds to that vision. ‘We don’t make gifts just because we have before, and the trustees are always looking for ways to break new ground,’ said Mowrer. ‘They’ve done bricks and mortar, but they are always looking for new and different opportunities and they are not afraid to take a chance, even though not every project turns out as we hoped.’

Examples of local projects supported by the foundation include the Laros auditorium at St. Luke’s Hospital, the renovated dining room at Northampton Community College and a family health center at Donegan Elementary School in Bethlehem. The foundation coordinates its efforts with the United Way and other community service agencies like New Bethany Ministries and South Side Ministries.

‘We also made a grant to Meals on Wheels so that they could buy new coolers,’ said Mowrer. ‘It seems like a minor issue to some, but without those coolers, Meals on Wheels can’t serve the community.’ The Laros Foundation also supported a scholarship at Northampton Community College in the nursing program.

As for Mowrer, serving as the secretary to the foundation brings other, perhaps unexpected perspectives. ‘Three of R.K. Laros’ descendants, his son, grandson and nephew, none of whom live in the Lehigh Valley, are among our 10 trustees,’ Mowrer said. ‘Like all of the trustees, they have a deep appreciation for and concern about this community, and it’s heart-warming to see how much of themselves they pour into this process. The parents of one of our trustees met at Laros silk mill. His father was a security guard who has since passed away, but his mother was and is thrilled that he serves on the board. This truly is a family concerned with the community!’
Amidst candlelight, long-stemmed red roses, chocolates and a tantalizing menu featuring tenderloin of beef and twin-stuffed lobster tails, 170 guests enjoyed this year’s Valentine’s Day version of Classical Cuisine, February 15. The annual affair, which raises funds to benefit the culinary arts and hotel/restaurant management program at the college, began in 1995. And, since its inception, the event has been underwritten by R&R Provision Company of Easton.

R&R Provision Company was started in 1934 when two meat company salesmen, Russell Genua and Ralph Evely, decided to go into business for themselves. Genua put in $100. Evely sold his car and used the proceeds to buy a truck. Together they traveled to Philadelphia, purchased $100 worth of meat and began selling it from store to store. Today, R&R Provision Company is not only a distributor, but also a processor of a variety of beef, pork, lamb and veal products. The company employs 65, specializes in custom cuts and quality service and attends to more than 3,000 accounts within a 60-mile radius. Its main customers are independent restaurants, hotels and institutions.

Evely and Genua have long since retired. The business is now owned by the Rogers family: Dick, son Rick and daughter Cathey Fainor. Dick has been in the business for 42 years. He became a part owner in 1975 and eventually bought out his partners, gaining complete ownership in 1994. Rick joined the company in 1990, Kathy in 1994.

Throughout the years, Dick has seen a lot of changes in the business: the advent of restaurant chains, a reduction in customer loyalty and mergers in the food industry. But one thing that hasn’t changed is his company’s commitment to customer service. Rick says that it’s not unusual for the company to get a call for a custom cut of meat at 8 a.m. and have it on the delivery truck that same day. The ability to respond quickly to customers’ special requests is a distinguishing characteristic of this company that sets it apart from some of its competitors.

“We pride ourselves on our service,” Dick explains. “We try to take headaches away from restaurant owners. Everything we give them is ‘ready to go.’”

R&R’s relationship with Northampton Community College predates Classical Cuisine. It began when Chef Duncan Howden joined the college staff in 1988. Chef Duncan takes his CULA 115, “Meat, Poultry and Fish Cutting” class to R&R to give them what he calls a “real life” look at a true meat cutting operation. “R&R is one of the few houses that still breaks down carcass meat,” Duncan explains. “That means they have the expertise and facilities to take whole quarters of beef and process them into fabricated cuts.”

“During my own apprenticeship in 1978, I was introduced to products from R&R,” Duncan elaborated. “Since then I have been dealing with this company and have always found them to be a ‘cut above’ the other companies in the area.”

We salute those selfless individuals and organization whose contributions are making dreams come true at Northampton Community College. Every year hundreds of people become a part of the college through our donor recognition programs.

We’re proud of the company we keep.

Northampton Community College

LAUREATE SOCIETY
The Laureate Society is a giving society for members whose cumulative giving to the Foundation exceeds $50,000.

CORNERSTONE SOCIETY
The Cornerstone Society is a giving society for individuals who have given, or have caused to have given, $10,000 or more during a three-year period to the Northampton Community College Foundation.

HERITAGE SOCIETY
The Heritage Society was established in 1990 to recognize those individuals who have provided for the future of Northampton Community College through bequests, trusts, life insurance policies or similar provisions.

GIFT CLUBS
The following gift clubs exist within the Annual Fund to recognize annual giving levels:

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<tr>
<th>Gift Club</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Trustees Club</td>
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<td>Benefactor’s Club</td>
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<td>Associates Club</td>
<td>$250 - $499</td>
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<tr>
<td>Chairman’s Club</td>
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<td>$125 - $249</td>
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<tr>
<td>President’s Club</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sustaining Club</td>
<td>$1 - $124</td>
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For information on making a gift to Northampton Community College or to join one of our giving societies, please contact Michael E. Nagel, Senior Planned & Major Gifts Officer, at (610) 861-5449.
HAPPENINGS

APRIL
8  Cooking demonstration by Chef-in-Residence Tom Hannum, 6 p.m.
8  Poetry reading by Juan Delgado, 11 a.m., Monroe Campus
9  Poetry reading by Juan Delgado, 11 a.m., Main Campus
11 Awards ceremony for winners of Kraus Drawing Competition, 11 a.m.
12 Opening of spring theatre production, "The Rover," 7 p.m.
12 Casino Night to benefit the Alumni Scholarship Fund, 7 p.m.
24 Administrative Professionals/Secretaries Teleconference, 11:45 a.m.
29 Opening of Student Art Exhibition

MAY
2  Student Awards Convocation, 3:30 p.m.
4  Women's Chorus Concert, 8 p.m.
5  Springfest, Noon-5 p.m.
11 Collegiate Singers Concert, 8 p.m.
20 First summer session begins
23 Commencement, 6:30 p.m.

Visit our web site at www.northampton.edu
For additional information and details, please call the Information Center at 610/861-5500.