

STONERIDGE

EARLY SPRING 2019

# *Living*

A STONERIDGE RETIREMENT LIVING PUBLICATION

## *Prismatic Hero*

EPIFANIO SALCEDO



# Quilting a life



The quilt top or cover may be of a single piece of fabric or made up of any variety of shapes sewn together forming a pattern or expressed in free form - the possibilities are nearly endless. The backing, which is generally unseen, is typically more functional and less ornate. It could, however, also serve as a "second cover" by having a complimentary design that would allow the quilt to be used at various times by simply flipping it over. When the three layers have been assembled and sewn around the edges, the top sewing gives the quilt its distinctive look. While partly functional, the sewing throughout the top generally follows patterns and styles that augment the overall look of the finished quilt and further express the quilter's artistic flair.

The StoneRidge Quilting Club at Poplar Run has a 30-year history that goes back to the former Grace Community prior to its acquisition by StoneRidge Retirement Living Communities in 2000.

The quilters come together on Monday mornings to socialize and work cooperatively on an ongoing project. Some of these projects come from people in the broader community who hire this top-notch club to complete a quilt they never finished; other tasks may involve sewing together of the layers, or even a start-to-finish project. The reasonable fees collected are put toward the purchase of supplies but have also been used in support of worthy causes in the community. For instance, the group donated funds toward the StoneRidge Benevolent Fund, the acquisition of a community grand piano, the Poplar Run Library, several Christmas charity funds, Operation Christmas Child, memorial funds and more. It would be fair to say that this longstanding group has touched many people in the community throughout the years.



The earliest known quilted garment may have been one that was made for an Egyptian Pharaoh in the Early Bronze Age. It was not until the Late Middle Ages, however, that quilted textiles began to appear more frequently.

One explanation for this may have been a direct result of the Crusaders who, upon their return from their campaigns in the Middle East, brought back quilted textiles.

The basic concept of quilting involves the sewing together of layers of fabric to form a finished product that is padded, thicker and more able to prevent the loss of heat. While various methods have been used over the years, the elemental quilt has three sections: a fabric top or cover, the insulating material and the backing material.



(L to R) Katie Mihalko, Pat Underkoffler, Mary Ellen Shearer, Lettie Shurskis, Doris Lausch and Carole Phillippi



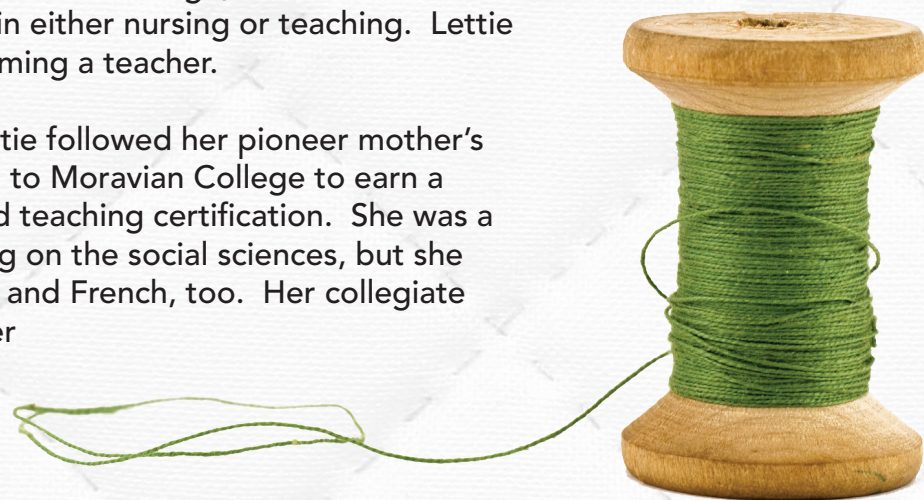
The present members of the quilting club include residents Doris Lausch, her sister Carole Phillippi, Mary Ellen Shearer, Lettie Shurskis, Pat Underkoffler and guest quilter Katie Mihalko, Lettie's daughter. All would agree that the heart and soul of the club is personified in Lettie Shurskis, who serves as their de facto leader. She carries with her the historical memory of the club and is the all-important "keeper of the checkbook." At StoneRidge Poplar Run and with the quilting club since 1999, Lettie has an impressive, near hundred-year life story that—like family quilts that are passed down from generation to generation—serves as a wonderful legacy to children, grandchildren and beyond.

Alethea Beatrice Cliff came into this world on November 12, 1920, as the first of five children to Dorothy and Joseph Cliff; four brothers followed of which one survives today. Since she was a little girl, she was called a shortened form of Alethea, "Lettie," and today, most

people have no idea of her actual first name. Alethea has its Greek root the word "aletheia" which is translated as "disclosure or truth." In Greek mythology, Alethea is the daughter of Zeus, while Aesop Fables has her being crafted by Prometheus, known for his intelligence and as a champion of mankind.

From a short discussion, it becomes clear that Lettie's household was one where education was respected and encouraged. Considering the time, this was a progressive view. In fact, her mom was a true maverick having graduated from Moravian College in 1918, when college was not an option for most and certainly less so for women. Lettie recalls that her father insisted that she go on to college after high school. This was simply preparation for an uncertain future. "Suppose she never married? Or, what would happen if she did marry and her husband decided to leave her or passed away prematurely?" Joseph Cliff wanted to be sure his daughter would be independent and be able to take care of herself. To that end, it was important that she have the tools to do so, and that meant more education. The thinking of most at the time was that a woman should marry and raise a family. In the rare chance that she went beyond her secondary education, it would most likely have been to study more practical and domestic fields such as sewing and cooking. During the 1930s, however, as more women did go on to college, most of them prepared for careers in either nursing or teaching. Lettie set her mind on becoming a teacher.

True as her name, Lettie followed her pioneer mother's example and went on to Moravian College to earn a bachelor's degree and teaching certification. She was a good student focusing on the social sciences, but she enjoyed mathematics and French, too. Her collegiate career also utilized her



well-rounded athletic ability in field hockey, basketball and other sports. Lettie graduated in 1941 (Her graduation photo is opposite top left.) with the intention of teaching social studies, but a shortage of mathematics teachers and discovery that she had enough credits to be certified in that field, resulted in a change of subjects. During her career, Lettie taught mathematics for a total of 15 years for the public schools of Williamstown, Hatfield and Salisbury, PA. Her tenure was divided because she took an extended leave in order to raise her family.

In 1946, Lettie married Sigmund Shurskis, who was of Lithuanian descent and worked as a laboratory technician for DuPont. As with Lettie's first name, few people ever knew that "Sigmund" was her husband's first name. In his case, he disliked his first name so much, that early in his education he changed it to "Joseph." Together the Shurskies had three children, Katie, James and Karl, and three grandchildren. Joseph passed away in 1994.

Quilts carry with them family memories and help us connect to times, places and people from our past. They typically become cherished textile artifacts and provide us with an interesting analogy for life. The quilt that each family makes is as unique as life itself. A lovely top that is shown to the world in all its glory, providing cover from the elements – warmth when it's cold and comfort from knowing the connection it gives us to our past. Lettie's life has been quilted with the pioneer spirit passed down from her mother, a passion for learning, a love of God, a commitment to family, and a firm foundation upon which future generations may stand.

# Enjoying Life ... Your Way



Most people hear the words “retirement living” and roll their eyes. Images of rocking chairs and knitting may come to mind, but that is not what retirement living means to us at StoneRidge Retirement Living Communities. It means living the active lifestyle you love without the hassle of home maintenance.

Think about when you go on vacation. You most likely have an itinerary of scheduled events and attractions. You have places picked to dine and times for relaxing. Retirement living within our communities is much the same...it's like a vacation every day. You can be as active as you like with the planned events from our team of activities professionals, or you can choose to enjoy the amenities that each community offers. You may be getting together with friends or hopping on the bus to shop. The choices are abundant and completely yours.

What you won't be doing is mowing the grass, shoveling the snow or worrying about what happens if the roof leaks. You'll have options for delicious chef-prepared meals and full kitchens to cook in, but only if the mood strikes you. You can garden, gab with friends or get in the car and go. Retirement living is about freedom. So put the rocking chair in the corner and get ready live life to the fullest. At StoneRidge Retirement Living, you retire on your own terms and enjoy life...your way!

## Memorabilia 60 Years ago...

# 1949



On October 1, at the conclusion of the Chinese Civil War (1945-1949), Revolutionary Communist leader Mao Zedong proclaims the Peoples Republic of China. At that time, the population was just over 500 million. Today, sixty-years later, it has nearly tripled to 1.4 billion.

The North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), a defense pact intended to protect Europe from aggressive Soviet advances, was established in April, 1949. The treaty also assured U.S. influence in the region, which bolstered the status of the United States at the start of the Cold War. The pact originally included 12 Western nations: the United States, Belgium, Great Britain, Italy, France, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Denmark, Canada, Portugal, Norway and Iceland. A few years later, the Soviet Union countered with the Warsaw Pact. Pictured is General and Mrs. Hastings Lionel Ismay, 1st Baron Ismay, who was a British Indian Army Officer, diplomat and chief military assistant to Winston Churchill during WWII. He was the first Secretary General to NATO from 1952 – 1957.



Lucky Lady II was a U.S.A.F. B-50 Superfortress that became the first plane to circumnavigate the world nonstop starting and ending at Carswell Air Force Base near Fort Worth, TX. It was assisted by three in-flight refuelings and made the journey in just over 94 hours. The flight required a double crew with three pilots that rotated shifts every three to four hours. The aircraft's crew was each awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross. Pictured is the Lucky Lady II as she was about to begin a nearly four-day mission.

# Broccoli Cheddar Quiche



# Culinary Landscape

## INGREDIENTS



1 10" frozen  
pie shell



¼ cup  
of diced  
fresh onion



2 tablespoons  
of butter or  
margarine



8 ounces  
of fresh broccoli  
florets, blanched



½ cup  
of shredded  
cheddar cheese



6 eggs



3 teaspoons  
of all-purpose  
flour



1 ½ cups  
of milk (whole or  
reduced fat)



¼ teaspoon  
of salt



Ground white  
pepper to taste

## INSTRUCTIONS

Preheat oven to 375 degrees and partially bake the pie shell for ten minutes. In a saucepan, melt butter, add diced onions and sauté until tender. Add broccoli florets, cheese and mix well. Spread mixture in pie shell. Combine eggs, milk, flour, salt and pepper until well blended. Pour the egg mixture into pie shell and bake for 25 to 35 minutes or until a knife inserted into the center comes out clean. Allow quiche to stand for a few minutes prior to serving.

Chef Nikki Steger of Church of God Home, a StoneRidge Retirement Living Community in Carlisle, shares a quick breakfast, lunch or dinner idea that can easily adapt to whatever ingredients you may have available. "Now that the weather is getting warmer, you'll want to be spending less time in the kitchen and more time outdoors," she shared. "This quiche can easily be assembled, baked and on the table in less than an hour. It pairs nicely with a green salad with fresh herbs. Enjoy!"

# Prismatic Hero



A ray of light passing through a prism casts a wide spectrum of colors that easily fills the room. Myriads of deep-colored light shafts bursting through a single piece of glass. A prism has many facets and it casts dizzying, swirling colors; yet, it is one glass.

Most would describe StoneRidge Towne Centre resident Epifanio (e-pē-fah'-nē-o) Salcedo as tall and broad, strong and courageous, valorous and handsome, too. In his military and police work, he was called upon for hazardous duty performing dangerous jobs that required him to be sharply focused. Often the lives of others depended upon him, and most would agree that his actions would easily be classified as heroic. Upon meeting him, one is easily impressed with his large, yet well-proportioned size. The prism of his life shows us a man who is impressive on so many levels.

Just turning that prism again reveals an Epifanio who is soft-spoken, deeply compassionate and possessive of a caring faith deeply rooted in his Christian upbringing. In meeting him, one would be immediately taken with his friendliness, genuineness and the care that you know he feels. In the dangerous work he was asked to perform, he was steady and even-keeled and people could rely on him.

Epifanio is taken from the Latin, "epiphanies" and from the Greek, "epiphanious." The Greek root word is "epiphaneia" meaning an appearance, manifestation or revelation. The Feast of the Epiphany is celebrated on January 6 by Orthodox Christians throughout the world in commemoration of the visit of the magi to the baby Jesus after his birth in Bethlehem. With this visit, another facet of the nativity story is made known - Jesus the Christ is revealed (epiphaneia) to the gentiles. This message affirms that the promise of salvation is truly for all people.



Epifanio Salcedo, Jr. (his friends and family call him "Epi") was born in 1953 in Manhattan, NY into the middle of a large family of brothers and sisters, 15 to be exact. Despite the fact that they had a full house and table, there was still room in their hearts and home to adopt two cousins, one from their mother's side and one from their father's, whose families had experienced difficulties. The Salcedos were devout Catholics and this love of God can be easily seen in Epi. As a youngster, he was fun loving and loved to play tricks on everyone. His younger brother Miguel affirmed that everyone called Epi "Big Bear" – big, capable, but lovable as well. Another slight turn of the prism further reveals that Epi is also a musician. He plays congas and assorted percussion, and was even in a Salsa band.

Military service was an expectation in the Salcedo family. Epifanio, Sr., was a career military man having served in the Panama Canal Zone. Seven of his sons also followed into military service: four in the Army, one each in the Navy and Marines, and Epi in the Air Force. Epi's mother, Leonor (Lugo), also had a brother, William Lugo, who fought in the infantry in North Korea and was wounded and later died in combat. He was awarded many medals for his service.

Epi began his military service as an Air Force Medic during the Vietnam War and, including his time in the Air National Guard after his discharge, he served a total of 37 years. He was expecting to go to Vietnam, but since two of his brothers were already fighting there, he was not permitted to go. "The Sole Survivor Policy" was enacted in 1948 after a horrific incident that occurred on November 13, 1942. All five Sullivan brothers, natives of Waterloo, IA, were killed when their cruiser, the USS Juneau, was torpedoed by the Japanese submarine. Since that time, the military is reluctant to send members of the same family into the same combat zone. Epi was deployed to serve at Little Rock Air Force Base (AFB) in Arkansas. It is here where a series of fateful events occurred that had lasting effects on Epi and on the lives of many others.

Little Rock AFB is the primary C-130 Hercules training base for the Department of Defense for tactical airlift and aerial delivery training for all branches of the military. Epi's medical work included several rescue and recovery efforts after plane crashes, and in just nineteen months, there were three C-130 Hercules that crashed on or near the airbase causing major injuries and deaths. In another instance, several planes had crashed into a housing unit, and, while tending the injured, Epi was hit in the head by the tip of a plane as it swung out-of-control on the tarmac. Surprisingly, he was not knocked out but immediately jumped up thinking that the base was under attack. His first instinct was to run to the base day-care center to make sure his two young sons were all right. When he was sure his boys were safe, he ran back to the scene and, like many times before, tended to the injured

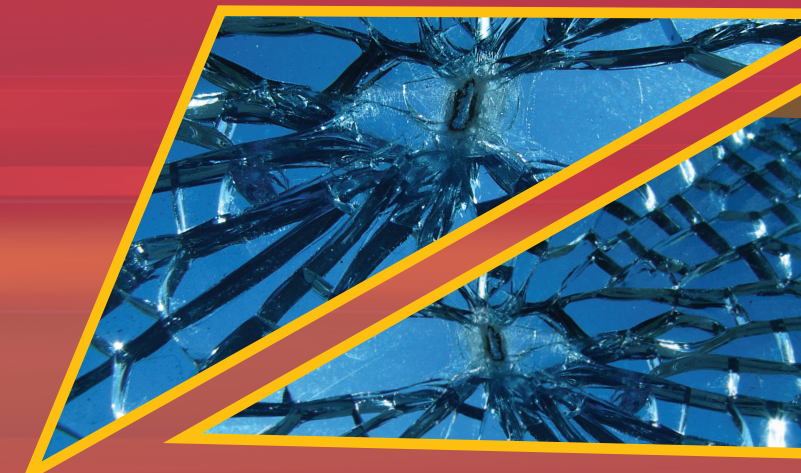
and recovered the dead. These crash sites were often closed for days at a time while the gruesome collection of body parts went on as Epi and other medics worked on their hands and knees looking for human remains. He could never have expected that all of this was advanced training for another historically important task he would be called upon to perform in the future.

After Epi's USAF service commitment was met, he joined the Air National Guard and returned to New York City with his sons to settle near family and work as a police officer for the New York City Police Department (NYPD). In his tenure with the NYPD, Epi worked in precincts at Harlem and lower Manhattan and even delivered four healthy babies before their mothers could get to the hospital. His service in the 1st Precinct in lower Manhattan along with his patrol partner, Jerome Dominguez, is now part of American history.

It was a Tuesday morning, and it was shaping up to be a lovely day. Since a cold front had moved through the area the night before, the sky was clear and deep blue, providing a dramatic backdrop for what was about to happen.

While on patrol, Epi and Jerome entered what he described as a surreal scene. "It was all happening so fast, it was difficult to process and at the same time everything seemed to be slow motion," Epi shared. "Were they making a movie?" Surely, this must be the explanation for this chaos.

It was September 11, 2001, and, just as New Yorkers were settling into a new workday, Epi and his partner watched as the two jumbo jets deliberately crashed into both towers of the World Trade Center. "I watched helplessly as people jumped out of windows from high up in the building to escape the fire and smoke," Epi shared. "There



was panic everywhere along with many people who needed help. We did what we could to work through the carnage; it was very difficult." Epi knew that this time, we really were under attack.

The United States Air Force Security Forces, the air-force military police, along with scores of forensic teams worked the crime scene for the next nine months. Federal, state and local criminal investigations were underway to learn what they could about the bombs, why the buildings fell so quickly and, most importantly, to recover the dead. Since the NYPD worked along with the Security Forces, Epi was quick to volunteer to assist in the recovery effort. He worked diligently on his hands and knees alongside his fellow airmen for nearly two months collecting and bagging remains from the scene. Unfortunately, Epi's partner, Jerome, died in the terrorist attack along with 400 other police officers and fire personnel. The recovery effort cleared a total of 1.8 million tons of wreckage from the site. However, of the 3866 victims, the remains of 1113, including Jerome Dominguez, have never been recovered.

Epi's work with the Special Forces did not end with 911. He volunteered for active service for three years with the Special Forces and received the high honor of being made an honorary member of the United States Air Force Security Forces. On the medallion he was presented, it states, "SSGT Epifanio Salcedo, Jr. distinguished himself in the performance of outstanding service to the 105th Security Forces Squadron after the events of 11 September 2001. SSGT Salcedo selflessly volunteered for active service for three years, putting his country and the 105th SFS before all else in his life. He has truly helped the 105th SFS through volunteering for numerous tours of duty, always serving the squadron first, and for that we thank him."

Epifanio Salcedo, son, father, grandfather, friend, "Big Bear," prankster, percussionist, and prismatic hero, we thank you, too.



# Literati

Spring  
William Blake (1757-1827)

Sound the flute!  
Now it's mute.  
Birds delight  
Day and night;  
Nightingale  
In the dale,  
Lark in sky,  
Merrily,  
Merrily, merrily, to welcome in the year.

Little boy,  
Full of joy;  
Little girl,  
Sweet and small;  
Cock does crow,  
So do you;  
Merry voice,  
Infant noise,  
Merrily, merrily, to welcome in the year.

Little lamb,  
Here I am;  
Come and lick  
My white neck;  
Let me pull  
Your soft wool;  
Let me kiss  
Your soft face;  
Merrily, merrily, we welcome in the year.

# Provider of Hope



Ronald Barger came into this world with promise and hope on September 29, 1952, in the Wyckoff Heights section of Brooklyn as the only child of Henry and Ruth (Paterson) Barger. "I've got good news," the doctor said, and, after a brief pause, he continued "and I've got bad news."

"The good news is you have a beautiful six-pound, eight-ounce baby boy. The bad news is he has Spina Bifida (SB), and we are not expecting him to live more than 48 hours." Ron's parents swallowed hard, and for the moment, time stood still.

While Ron survived these first few days, much of what his parents learned from the doctors in the weeks and months that followed centered around phrases such as "he'll never be able to walk," "he'll need constant care" and "he'll need to be institutionalized." Wondering if this was for real, they took a collective deep breath and whispered one of many prayers to God – a God they knew well.

It was well over three months, through the Christmas holidays and into the New Year, before they were able to bring Ronald home. The expectation of a limited life and uncertain future was the typical assessment many years ago for those diagnosed with SB. Because of this, it was generally viewed as a pediatric disease. With advances in medicine, however, many with SB are living long, full lives. Ron's life has certainly shown that to be the case. Now at 66, he is a resident at Church of God Home in Carlisle where he has lived since May of 2018. In recent years, osteomyelitis led to the loss of his right leg and half of his left foot left, so Ron typically spends much of the time in bed or in his specialized wheelchair.

As you can imagine, Ronald experienced deep emotional and spiritual valleys as he pondered what life would bring his way. He would be quick to tell you about a period in early adulthood that some would describe as a "dark night of the soul." Writer and philosopher Joseph Campbell, who explores religion and mythology, gives us the positive thought that "the dark night of the soul comes just before revelation. When everything is lost and all seems darkness, then comes new life and all that is needed." This has been Ron's experience: from enduring a period of dark struggle to learning how to soar on eagles wings. Despite the limits of his physicality, his academic accomplishments are notable, and Ron truly soars while delving into the rich thoughts of God.

Ron's mother had intended to continue working after her son's birth, but she set that all aside to stay home with Ron and to advocate for him in school and with his pediatrician. Joking with Ron, she would

sometimes tell him, "I traded the insurance company for you!" Ron's father Harry, as he was better known, loved people and was ordained in 1941 in the Baptist Church. Ron recalls the many people to whom his father ministered. "They remember him fondly as a pastor, and many told me "Your father always made us feel like he knew us for years." I envied that in my dad."

After graduating from Grover Cleveland High School in Queens in 1970, Ron worked with his dad doing mission work with the Children's Bible Fellowship. Ron was so impressed with his father's work. "He had a great way of lighting up the room. He was not a great orator, but he had a genuine pastor's heart and an extraordinary way of connecting with people." Harry passed away in 1978 from a heart attack at the age of 54. Ruth died in early December 2018 at age 98.

Ron continued his education at the City University of New York and the C.W. Post campus of Long Island University, but he never completed his degree. Seeing his interest in ministry and the Bible, Harry suggested that Ron consider attending Bible College. He explained, "Considering I was a preacher's kid (PK), aside from the very basics, I really knew very little about God or the Bible. I also knew that being a PK did not give me a "get out of jail free" card either. It became obvious that I had to consider all of this for myself and come to my own understanding of who God is and how I should respond. The more I engaged in my studies, the more I enjoyed it and the more my appetite grew."

Ron completed his bachelor's degree in theology from Trinity Bible College (IN) in 1998 and received a Master of Sacred Literature from Trinity Theological Seminary in 2008. He enjoys the research that allows him to look behind the text, to consider the original language and the historical and cultural context in order to uncover a fuller understanding of a passage. His final project involved a study denying the Pauline authorship of the New Testament book of Hebrews. He has completed the necessary course work for his doctoral program in theological studies at Bethany Seminary (AL) and is working on his dissertation. The fascinating focus of this study is Ron's attempt to form a theology of suffering and to examine the biblical response to it. Ron is also a licensed chaplain who is working toward ordination.



Given his circumstances, one may wonder what ministry looks like for Ron, but ministry opportunities often present themselves right at his doorstep. Ron loves to bless team members, other residents or whomever God brings his way. It is clear that God is powerfully using Ron's unique physical circumstances to reach people who are in similar situations and feel that no one truly understands. Recently, someone who works with Ron was looking downcast and distracted. "When I asked how she was doing, she broke down and shared that she has a child at home who is quadriplegic. She knew that I knew what this was like for her, and I was able to talk with her in a way that few others could. I listened and then reminded her of God's great love for her and her child."

From a life that seemed hopeless at birth, contrasted with the love and compassion Ron now shares with others is astonishing; the hopeless has become a provider of hope. What a transformation from a chasm of dark despair to soaring with the love of God. Carl Jung, founder of analytical psychology, reminds us, "There is no coming to consciousness (awareness) without pain. People will do anything no matter how absurd, to avoid facing their own soul. One does not become enlightened by imagining figures of light, but by making the darkness conscious."

**"...One does not become enlightened by imagining figures of light, but by making the darkness conscious."**

## Just Two Degrees of Separation

The connection between a well-known 20th-century American gangster and the daughter of a U.S. Airman who grew up in France is a fascinating one. Patty Bryant's paternal grandfather operated a speakeasy and ran pirated liquor for notorious 1930s bootlegger Jack "Legs" Diamond. It was postwar, prohibition was the law and an economic depression was looming. People did what they had to do to survive. While Legs Diamond died when his enemies found him in a rooming house in Albany, NY, Patty's grandfather survived this precarious work and went on to marry, raise a family and profess his Christian faith.

Patty's Baptist mother brought her and her sisters to church, read her Bible daily and often spoke of her faith in God. Her father's military career took him and his young family to live in France for several years before moving to South Carolina and then Indiana where they settled. Patty finished school there and later married Rodney Finster. Together they dedicated their lives to working in youth ministry. "We absolutely loved working with the youth," she shared, "and when we were in Mishawaka (IN), we had over 100 teens in our youth group each week." Patty and Rod led several cross-country youth missionary trips including a memorable one to Reynosa, Mexico to visit the Josiah and Bethany Children's Home that was founded by contemporary Christian musician and songwriter, the late Keith Green and his wife Melody. There they served by helping wherever there was a need. On another trip to attend a youth conference in California, the traveling group made stops at churches throughout the country where they presented a children's program of skits, singing and a sermonette.



Patty works as a receptionist at Schoolyard Square in Pine Grove. Together Patty and Rod have one daughter and one grandson.



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*StoneRidge Retirement Living is the parent company of four retirement communities in South Central Pennsylvania. These communities include StoneRidge Towne Centre (717.866.6541) and StoneRidge Poplar Run (717.866.3200), both in Myerstown, Church of God Home in Carlisle (717.249.5322) and Schoolyard Square in Pine Grove (570.345.4075). Visit us online at [www.StoneRidgeRetirement.com](http://www.StoneRidgeRetirement.com).*

