

The Sierran

— A Publication of the Sierra County Historical Society —
Member of the Conference of California Historical Societies

History Of The Holy Rosary Catholic Church

By Milt Gottardi & Adella Lombardi

The history of the present Holy Rosary Church building in Loyalton, California, begins in 1954 when the current church was built and then consecrated in 1955. The prior history of the Catholic presence in Sierra Valley and Loyalton region, however, goes much further back in time.

In the 1860's a Catholic Church was built near the Sierra-Plumas County line on County Road A-23 and a visiting priest from Downieville served it on occasion. This Church served Catholics in the northwestern part of Sierra Valley. The only remaining vestige of the Church is the Catholic cemetery overlooking the area where the Church was located. This cemetery, filled with mostly Irish deceased, attests to the faith of the early Irish community of Sierra Valley.

Devout Catholic

When the Catholic Church for the Valley was by the graveyard off A-23, the people had to cross the "slew" a wide area of the valley that was very wet as the water drained to join the Feather River. One young lady who went to the Antelope school and when in eighth grade the Superintendent of Schools gave her an efficiency test. She passed and she taught school there. She was Cesare Lombardi's teacher. She dressed very neatly and always attended Church so prim and neat on horseback. The boys wondered how she did this when they knew she and horse had to swim the slew. So they decided to find out. (so told) When she had to dismount the horse, she had a towel, she would undress, wrap her fine clothes in the towel. Mounting the horse she would hold the towel over her head she crossed the slew. When she reached the other side, she dressed and wen on to church. I believe she was a Myers.
-Adella Lombardi



Holy Rosary Catholic Church (1920)

Old Story Told By Many: Hooley's Funeral Circa 1914

My father Antone Dotta and Alex Guidici were two of the pallbearers for Hooley's funeral. The hearse (probably the one in the Loyalton Museum) was pulled by two black mares going from Loyalton Catholic Church to the graveyard in West Sierra Valley off A-23. After Mass the driver "Sims" had to cross the "slew" of the Feather River where the Steel Bridge is now. As he was going up the west side (it was kind of steep) and the horses pulled up. The casket came off and into the water!! The two pallbearers, Dotta and Guidici, told "Sims" if he would dance a "gig" on the casket they would help load it back on the hearse. Poor Sims had no choice, so he obliged. All having fun, loaded the casket and continued to the graveyard. It was also said they had an Irish wake the night before. -Adella Lombardi

History Of The Holy Rosary Catholic Church (Continued on Page 2)

— THE SIERRA COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY —

The Sierra County Historical Society is an organization of people interested in preserving and promoting an appreciation of Sierra County's rich history. The Society operates a museum at the Kentucky Mine in Sierra City, holds an annual meeting, publishes a newsletter and conducts historical research. Members are sent notices of Society activities, receive THE SIERRAN, and are admitted free of charge to the museum and stamp mill tour. If you would like to become involved in these activities or would just like to give your support, please join us!

MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION

Membership in the Sierra County Historical Society is open to any interested person, business or organization. Members need not be residents of Sierra County. Dues are due and payable each January for the calendar year.

Membership categories are as follows:

INDIVIDUAL	\$15.00
FAMILY & INSTITUTION	\$20.00
BUSINESS & SUPPORTING	\$30.00
SUSTAINING	\$50.00
LIFE (per individual)	\$250.00

Please send dues to the Membership Chair:

Lynn McKechnie, PO Box 294, Sierraville, CA 96126

SIERRA COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Office Address:

Kentucky Mine Museum

PO Box 260, Sierra City, CA 96125 (530) 862-1310

History Of The Holy Rosary Catholic Church (Continued from Page 1)

In Jack Bibb's excellent history of the Holy Family Catholic Church there is mention of a Father Kiely who journeyed to Loyalton from Reno to hold mass in 1888. There was no Catholic Church building at the time so Father Kiely no doubt celebrated Mass in the home of one of the Catholic Families of the Loyalton region.

The history of a Catholic Church in Loyalton actually begins when the Catholic community purchased the empty school building in 1908. The school building was remodeled with the interior addition of a choir loft, confessional booths, Altar and exterior belfry. This building stood on the site of the present Holy Rosary Social Hall and now stands in the Loyalton Historical Park: a gift to the City of Loyalton from the Catholic Community. A building to house the priest, if he should stay over night in Loyalton, was built behind the Church. The Priest's building had a bed, nightstand, wood stove, table and chairs and a washbasin with water from the well

on the property. The "out house" was a few yards behind to the northeast. These buildings were used by the Catholic Community until the present Holy Rosary Church was built and the old Church became the social hall until the present social hall was built.

Holy Rosary in Loyalton, from 1885 to 1912, was part of the Truckee Parish and for a brief time under the direction of Reno, Nevada. Mass was not celebrated on a regular schedule, but only when a priest made periodic visits to the town. On these visits the priest heard confessions, celebrated Mass, conducted First Communions and married couples. One of the Priests making these visits was Father Hogan.



1924 - Charlie, Alice, Steve, & Francis Guidici - First Communion

In 1929, the parish of Holy Family Church of Portola, California, was established November 10, by Right Rev. Robert J. Armstrong, Bishop of Sacramento, California. Loyalton was made part of the parish as a "Mission Church." The first priest to be assigned to the newly formed parish was Father Patrick McTague, a graduate of All Hallow College in Dublin, Ireland, ordained June 20, 1926. Father McTague worked to establish the new parish and to offer a regular schedule of church services to the people of Loyalton and Sierra Valley.

Father McTague served the parish until 1937 when Father McGoldrick was assigned to the parish. He served the parish from 1937 to 1946. During Father McGoldrick's stay, he was assisted by Father Michael Myles from 1944 to 1946. The two men stayed in Portola, but served the

History Of The Holy Rosary Catholic Church (Continued on Page 3)

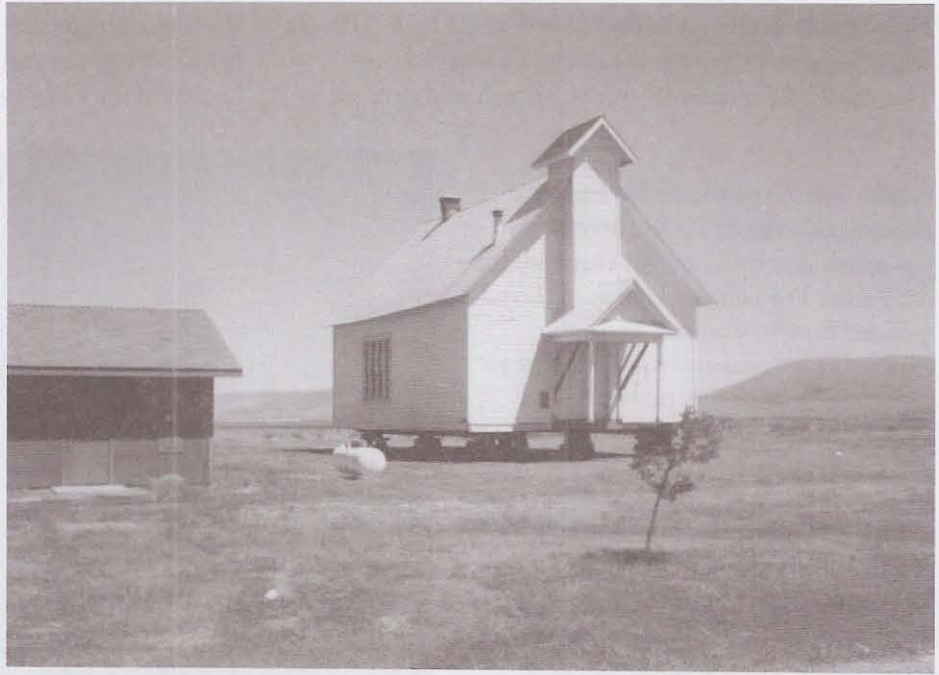
History Of The Holy Rosary Catholic Church (Continued from Page 2)

Catholic Churches in Portola, Quincy, Greenville and Loyalton.

Father McGoldrich was succeeded by Father Scaeffler who served the Parish from 1946 to 1954. Father Schaeffer began the first drives to raise money for a new church in 1953.

Father Thomas O'Brien followed Father Schaeffer as Priest of Holy Family Parish and worked tirelessly to build a new church in Loyalton. The Church was completed in 1954 and consecrated in 1955. The Church was built by Jim Davis. Flannagan designed the Church and donated time and finances for the completion of the Church. The Altar railing was locally constructed and the *pride* of the Church. The statues of the Blessed Virgin and of St. Joseph and the Christ Child were taken from the old Church and installed in the new church where they remain to this day. Bonnie White served as the first organist of the new church and has remained a faithful organist for over *fifty years* providing beautiful music.

Father Patrick Corkell, who served from 1961 to 1967, had the responsibility of initiating the changes ordered by



Moving Old Church to City Park.

Vatican II. The Altar railing had to be removed and it was saved from destruction by making it the railing for the walkway that connects the Church to the social hall. Parishioners became readers, the choir was moved from the choir loft to the front of the Church and the Altar was turned around.

Father Bernard Burns served Holy Rosary from 1967 to 1998. A 30-year reign began with many baptisms, weddings, First Communions, Confirmations, and the first RCIA. Social activities were held in the old church/ social hall.

It became evident that this social hall was inadequate for the needs of the parish. Father Burns began to raise money for a new social hall. The old church was moved to the City Historical Park in 1984. The Priest's house was moved to the backyard of what is now Marianne and Mike Moore's home and the "out house" was long gone. The work on the new hall began in 1984 and it was dedicated in a grand celebration in 1985.

Father Burns endeared himself to the Holy Rosary Parish, as well as the Sierra Valley community and Holy Family Parish. He treated Holy Rosary and



Father Burns & Milt Gottardi with first shovel full of earth breaking ground for new social hall.

History Of The Holy Rosary Catholic Church (Continued on Page 4)

History Of The Holy Rosary Catholic Church (Continued from Page 3)

Holy Family as one and gave himself fully to all. All were sad to see him leave for his beloved Calvin, Ireland. Thankfully, he returns to visit the parish and gave so much.

Father Glen Dare succeeded Father Burns from 1998 to 2004. He took on the parish accounts and got them paid off. Father Dare enjoyed our area (loved golf and Sunday donuts). With the Diocese of Sacramento rule for Priest to stay only six years in a parish, Father Dare retired.

Father James Walsh followed Father Dare in 2004 and has been a very busy priest. He has added a Wednesday 12:10 Mass in Loyalton, Spanish at Sunday Masses, started a RICA class and has made changes in the administration committees to help in the responsibility or the success of the Church.

With much appreciation to Jack Bibb for giving us permission to use many of the facts from his study for "A history of the Holy Family Catholic Church in Portola."



The interior of the New Church - now fifty years old.

Early Hospital Care in Sierra County

By Virginia Lutes

Early in the history of the Sierra County the County Board of Supervisors recognized the need for a county hospital to supply medical care and food to those unfortunate citizens in need. In 1854 the first official act made to provide for those in need of health care came in the form of the appointment by the court of sessions, on the eighth of May, 1854, of two Downieville physicians, Doctors T.R. Kibbe and Cyrus D. Aiken, to care for the indigent sick. In 1855, the Board of Supervisors appointed a resident physician in each of the three supervisor districts, to take care of the medical needs of the indigent sick of the county. Dr. Alenby Jump, district No. 1, with a salary of \$700; and Dr. W.E. Rust in district No. 3, with a salary of \$500. Annual changes were made in the physicians until 1858, when it was decided to have one physician in charge of the whole county. All of the counties indigent sick were to be under the care of this physician. This physician was a young man, Dr. E. Bryant, and his title was County Physician. This person was responsible for the care of the sick, and he was required to report to the Board of Supervisors.

In November 1858, the decision was made that a county hospital would be needed. A house on Jersey Flat (Commercial Street) in Downieville was fitted for a county hospital. What was known as the Fetter building remained the County Hospital until 1880. Dr. Bryant served in this position until 1862, when Dr. Thomas R. Kibbe was appointed. He served for two years. Dr. Alenby Jump then served six years until the appointment of Dr. G.C. Chase in 1870 through 1873. Dr. Jump and Dr. Chase were both reappointed, serving two years. Dr. Jump was again selected to serve as county physician for the fourth time in 1877.

By 1880, the County acknowledged the necessity of a new structure for the County Hospital. The site was on Zumuwalt Flat at the northeastern end of Downieville. The building was situated on the North Fork of the Yuba River, and was completed in the fall of 1880, and occupied by mid December. The following is a description

Early Hospital Care in Sierra County (Continued on Page 5)

Early Hospital Care in Sierra County (Continued from Page 4)

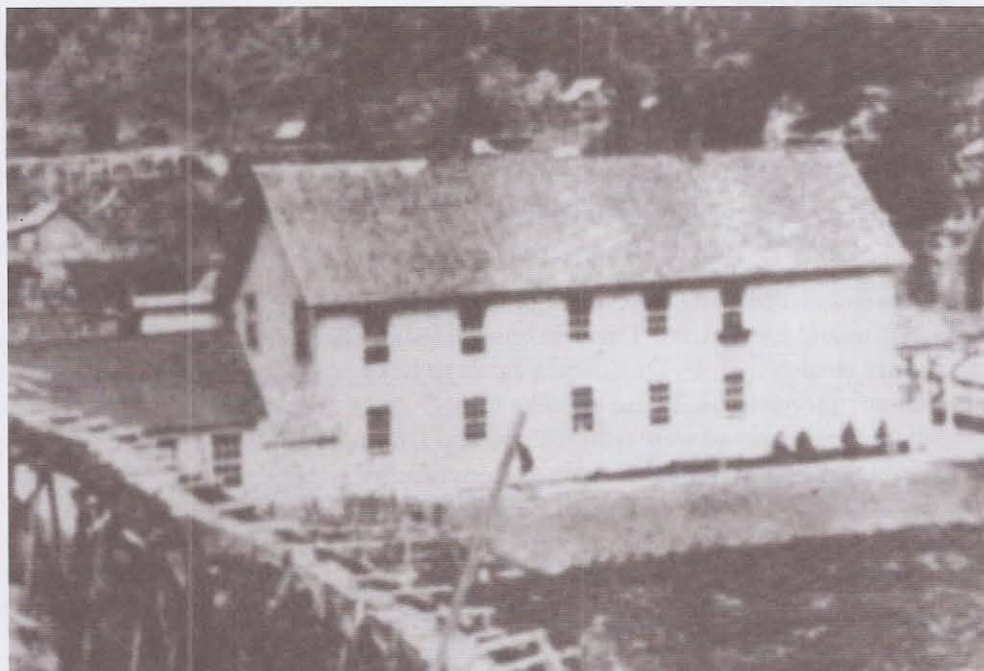
in Fariss and Smith, "History of Sierra County, 1882": "The main building is 24x46 feet in size, with two stories. The dining-room forms an addition 24 feet in length by 14 feet in breadth, and the kitchen another addition. The building is very neatly finished both inside and out, and is surrounded by well-kept grounds subject to constant improvements. The institution is admirably conducted under the management of Dr. Jump, and provides accommodation for twenty-six patients, though the average number furnished with attendance for the last four years is fourteen at a time. The cost to the county for maintaining patients during several years has averaged eighty cents per day for each patient. During 1881 forty-nine persons were cared for. Four of these died during the year, twenty-five were discharged, and one sent to the state insane asylum at Napa. On the first floor of the main building is a receiving-ward, with bathroom and a small room for the incarceration of unruly patients. Up-stairs there are two wards and a steward's room. The institution is certainly a credit to Sierra County."

The new hospital was managed by a steward; the first in 1880, was Jason Campbell. Succeeding him was Joseph Quinn in 1904; then by his son Joseph. The younger Mr. Quinn served as steward for many years until 1940. Following this extended tenure, Mr. Quinn was succeeded successively by Mr. and Mrs. Hatch, Mr. and Mrs. Dietrich, and Mr. and Mrs. Harold Moeglin, the latter of whom managed the hospital until it was closed.

The following printed in the "Mountain Messenger, Downieville":

January 13, 1912 "Ordinance No. 97...A Hospital Poll Tax of One Dollar (\$1.00) is hereby levied on each male person over the age of twenty-one years of age and under the age of fifty-five years, found in the county of Sierra during the year 1912."

August 17, 1912 "Four additional patients entered the



Sierra County Hospital located on Zumwalt Flat in Downieville in the early 1900's - photo courtesy Kentucky Mine Museum

County Hospital at this place this week. They were Julius Beese from the Little North Fork, John F. Leary from Sierra City, Antone Nevis from Scales and Willis Brooks from Sattley."

December 21 1912 "Taken With Pneumonia - Peter Lavezzola brought Ah Keong; better known as Cal Dodson, down from the Third Divide to the County Hospital on Tuesday. Cal has been mining on the East Fork for some time past, and contracted a severe cold which later turned into pneumonia, and as there were no facilities for taking care of a sick man at the camp he was brought to the Hospital. When he arrived there he was spitting blood quite freely and upon examination Dr. Murphy found that one lung was quite badly affected. He is receiving the best care and at this writing is a little better."

In 1913, Henry Quigley, Clerk of the Sierra County Board of Supervisors placed a notice in "The Mountain Messenger", concerning the intent of said board to purchase the land where the hospital was located.

This County Hospital provided care to many Sierra County residents until the late 1950's when expanded medical care throughout the county and adjacent areas made it unnecessary to maintain a county hospital. In 1961 the building was sold by the county.

Some Early Epidemics In The County

By Virginia Lutes

Quarantine! Smallpox! Scarlet Fever! Diphtheria! Tuberculosis! Influenza! Chilling words that describe some of the illnesses that were not unknown to early people of some of the communities within Sierra County.

In December 1887 smallpox broke out in Sierraville, Loyalton and Sierra City. This was considered by the County Health Officer, Dr. Alembry Jump to be of epidemic proportions. Those unlucky enough to be afflicted and exposed were quarantined and Dr. Jump set up local boards of health to try to contain the disease. The Sierra Valley Health Board consisted of: A.D. Church, H.K. Turner, Jared Strang, E.L. Case, D.B. Keyes, T.F. Battelle, and George Wood. These men met in Sierraville on January 8th to adopt resolutions: "Resolved that all stage proprietors running stages between this Health District consisting of the Fifth Supervisor District of Sierra County and Sierra City, be notified not to bring or cause to be brought any passengers by horseback, stage or any other conveyance from said Sierra City into said Health District until further notice." This resolution, the quarantine and other measures proved to be effective in controlling the spread of this dreadful disease. By the end of February, the quarantine had been lifted.

1902 brought with it a few cases of smallpox in Sierra Valley and Sierra City. Dr. Clayton was the County Health Officer, and he appointed Dr. Coates health officer in the valley, and Dr. Lavery health officer in Sierra City. By early February smallpox had been controlled and quarantines were relaxed in late February. Unfortunately, in January of 1903 again cases of smallpox were diagnosed in Loyalton and Sierraville, and again quarantines were promptly implemented preventing the spread of the sickness. The following notes taken from *The Sierra Valley Record*, Sierraville:

March 28, 1903 "Loyalton has diphtheria, smallpox, Scarlet Fever and Measles. We regret to learn this, but the authorities have adopted strict quarantine measures and the diseases will probably not spread." "All public meetings have been stopped in Loyalton by order of the board of health." "Several cases of scarlet fever have developed in the past week. The Battelle

cottage on West 2nd Street, the Pratt residence in Harvey addition and the M.E. parsonage have been placed under quarantine. The Counter case is still undecided although the family are maintaining quarantine regulations."

April 4, 1903 "A case of smallpox developed last week in the Taylor house west of town. The situation in Loyalton has materially improved" "A new case of scarlet fever developed in the Lewis house near the Valley House yesterday."

The February 10, 1912 issue of "*The Mountain Messenger*" reported "We learn that the public school at Sierra City has been closed for the past few days, on account of the prevalence of diphtheria in a couple of families at that place. At this writing the sick are reported as rapidly improving, and the school will doubtless reopen Monday."

Rabies was prevalent in the spring of 1916 in the coyotes of Sierra Valley, no human cases were discovered, but dogs, cattle and horses were bitten by the rabid coyotes, and some were put down by the owners rather than take the chance that they would go mad.

The Great Flu Epidemic of 1918-1919 did not leave the locals unscathed. Forest City suffered most, with almost half of the population becoming seriously ill. Nine deaths occurred in less than a month. Meanwhile in March of 1919 there were twenty cases in Loyalton. The Loyalton Health Officer Leonard Ede ordered the schools closed until the number of cases decreased.

Sources used for the above two articles which were not quoted include: James J. Sinnott volumes *Sierra County History* and *Newspapers from Sierra Valley Museum Loyalton and Kentucky Mine Museum Sierra City*.

It may be of interest to the reader how many physicians were in Sierra County during this period of history. In future issues of "*The Sierran*," some stories of early day physicians and dentists will be featured.



Petroglyphs in the vicinity of Gold Valley date back 1500-4000 years.

Trip To Gold Valley Yields Ancient Treasure

By Bill Copren

Members of the Sierra County Historical Society took a great trip on the first day of the first real autumn month of this year. The trip was announced at the societies annual meeting in September and was advertised across the county thanks to Secretary, Virginia Lutes.

The members, including President, Bud Buczkowske, Vice President, Bill Copren, alternate board member, Jim Buckley, Kentucky Mine Museum Curator, Anne Eldred, and Anne Rosemier met at the Bassetts Station early on the Saturday morning. The weather predictions called for high winds and possible rain in the late afternoon. Luckily, this prediction did not materialize until late in the day as the group was coming out of the back country.

From Bassetts we drove into the back country past Packer Lake, Packer Saddle, Butcher Ranch to the distant turn-off to the Empire Mine and to Gold Valley. This road was so rough and rocky that we left most of the vehicles at this point and loaded everyone into two pickups. President Bud rode in the back of a pickup with his trusty dog. Once into Gold Valley we picked up the Downieville-Johnsville Trail along Pauley Creek. It was a beautiful Fall

morning as we left the vehicles and started up the trail to Hawley Lake. We walked for an hour or so to the Lake where we all ate our picnic lunches. Once lunch was finished we walked down to the petroglyphs. The USFS sign explains the glyphs are from 1500 to 4000 years old. They have been vandalized with graffiti since 1870 when they were discovered by gold miners. However, the vandalism has not destroyed the glyphs which cover a series of flat slopping stones totaling about half an acre in area. There are many glyphs of unknown meaning but some are identifiable. There are two of big horn sheep, and some fertility signs. The most unique is a trail of 20 or more cloven hoof prints carved into the rock reaching from the very bottom to the very top of the rock face. The prints may be signs of elk, or perhaps, bison. They are too large to represent deer prints. There are smaller, apparently deer prints on the south side of the formation.

After spending an hour or so at the petroglyphs and taking numerous photos, the group hiked back down the trail to Gold Valley. On the way back, one of the pickups broke down temporarily, but due to the backcountry experience of Jim Buckley made it up the Gold Valley road to the ridge top in two-wheel drive. It was a great day for all.

The Sierran

Sierra County Historical Society
P.O. Box 260
Sierra City, California 96125

2005 Kentucky Mine Museum Schedule

The Kentucky Mine Museum historical park will open for tours on Memorial Day weekend and run Thursday through Sunday from 10 am to 4 pm until Labor Day weekend. Tours will be given at 11 am and 2 pm each day. Special tours for large groups can be arranged by calling Anne Eldred, Museum Curator, at (530) 994-3514 or (530) 862-1310 (the park). Laurie Unland will be another Curator available during regular hours.

THE SIERRAN

WINTER 2005

Successful Annual Meeting

The Annual Meeting of the Sierra County Historical Society was held at the Sierra County Historical Park and Museum, the Kentucky Mine in Sierra City on September 11, 2005. President Bud Buczkowske presided over the business meeting, which was very short so that the members could enjoy lunch and complimentary cake and punch. Our two fine employees kept the Museum open for this past season, Anne Eldred and Laurie Unland lead tours of the Mine and grounds, assisted by Vice President Bill Copren. Members were free to visit the museum at their leisure. Joleen Torri has joined the board for the next two years (and hopefully much longer.) Joleen is from the Sattley/Sierraville area, and graciously hosted our annual meeting a few years ago at the Strang Ranch. We know that Joleen will make a great addition to the Board, welcome Joleen!

Bill Long, a very long time board member has decided to "retire" from this position. Bill has been a valuable asset

to the Sierra County Historical Society, and we very much appreciate all of his efforts for the many years that he served so conscientiously.

Edwin Shotzberger of Goodyear's Bar and Virginia also left the board, we thank you Edwin for serving for the past two years.

The officers for the upcoming year will remain the same:

President - Bud Buczkowske
Vice President - Bill Copren
Secretary - Virginia Lutes
Treasurer - Milton Gottardi
Membership Chair - Lynn McKechnie
Maren Scholberg
Suzi Schoensee
Sherie Allen

Remember To Pay Your 2006 Dues

Individual.....\$15.00
Family & Institution.....\$20.00
Business & Supporting\$30.00

Sustaining.....\$50.00
Life (per individual)\$250.00