

Michael Eisenberg, a Buckingham resident who is president of Devils Tower Sacred to Many People, stands on top of Devils Tower in Wyoming. The organization provides medical supplies and other necessities to the reservation.



Buckingham

Local attorney aids Devils Tower people

A Furlong resident is president of a new organization that helps Native Americans in South Dakota.

By **CHRISTINA KRISTOFIC**
STAFF WRITER

Michael Eisenberg didn't let a fear of heights stop him from climbing an 867-foot rock formation in northeastern Wyoming.

And he's not going to let 1,700 miles stop him from helping a friend and tribe of Native Americans.

Eisenberg, 46, of Buckingham, is the president of Devils Tower Sacred to Many People, a Wyoming-based nonprofit organization that helps all of the people who live near Devils Tower. The organization focuses specifically on providing medical supplies and other necessities to a health clinic on the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation in nearby South Dakota.

The attorney agreed to be president of Devils Tower Sacred to Many People after his friend and frequent climbing guide, Frank Sanders, asked him.

Eisenberg, who talks excitedly about Devils Tower — both the big rock and the organization built around it — is quick to say that his friend, Sanders, does much of the work for the organization.

"I act as president, which isn't much really," he said. "I give Frank as much support as I can — call as much as I can. I help decide what to do with the money. I'm trying to get publicity. I'm trying to make contacts wherever I can."

Sanders, 57, has lived near Devils Tower — and guided climbers up the large granite rock — since 1999.

The place has been special to him since his first climb in 1972. He's climbed the tower about 2,000 times.

In the decade that he's lived near the tower, Sanders has realized that it's not just special to him; it's also special to the neighboring rancher families whose ancestors moved to Wyoming in the late 1880s, and to several Native American tribes who include it in their oral histories. He started to reach out to his neighbors.

"The natives that I met here were, for the most part, good people. Not initially conversant, but if you engage them..." he trailed off. "And if they find out it's sacred to you, too, then you're embraced. Or at least I was."

Many of the Native Americans Sanders met were Oglala Sioux from the nearby Pine Ridge Indian Reservation in South Dakota — an area that received a lot of attention in the early 1990s for being the poorest place in the country.

Pine Ridge Indian Reservation is the poorest of the nation's approximately 300 Indian reservations.

Sanders said diabetes is rampant on the reservation, and chances are high that any-

FOR MORE INFO

www.devilstower-sacred-to-many-people.org

one who lives past the age of 40 will need treatment for it.

Life expectancy for people who live on the reservation is 52 for women and 48 for men, Sanders said, "So you could say that average life expectancy is 50. But trust me, by the time you get to 50 on that (reservation), you don't look good."

Pine Ridge, like most Indian reservations, also has high rates of infant mortality, suicide, drug and alcohol abuse, and domestic violence.

Sanders was frustrated with the conditions he saw and wanted to help.

Two years ago, he started buying and donating basic medical supplies — Neosporin, Band-Aids, gauze, medical tape and rubbing alcohol — to the clinic in Porcupine, S.D. He said the clinic receives no federal funding and relies entirely on donations.

"There were issues with vaccinations," Sanders said. "The feds pitch in for vaccines and hypodermics. But they were running out of rubbing alcohol to swab you down before you got your shot."

Sanders made frequent trips to the local grocery stores and Wal-Mart for supplies. And on his way out the door of each store, he'd stop at the manager's office and ask for an in-kind donation. He usually got it.

And in the midst of all this "do-gooding," as Sanders calls it, he was still running a bed-and-breakfast and guiding climbers up the tower.

That's where Eisenberg came in.

Eisenberg's wife told him to go on an adventure for his 40th birthday, and he decided he wanted to go climb Devils Tower with a friend. He went out to Wyoming and up the rock in November 2002 — and loved it.

He's been back — typically with his wife and one or all of his four kids in tow — about once or twice a year since then.

"I've climbed on every side, though not so much the West side because that's the harder side," Eisenberg said. "I'm an OK climber. I still enjoy it. I'm still scared of heights."

Sanders calls Eisenberg a "Devils Tower victim."

And with Eisenberg's love for the tower and experience as a lawyer, Sanders thought, Eisenberg would be a great help with the nonprofit he was starting.

Eisenberg said Devils Tower has become very special to him, and so has Sanders.

"I know I probably should and will adventure into other areas. I want to go to Joshua Tree (Calif.) and Moab (Utah)," he said. "I haven't yet because I'm still having so much fun at the tower. There's so much I haven't done there yet — or seen. And if there's something I can do with a good friend, I'd rather do that."

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Frederick W. Austin

Frederick W. Austin died Thursday, Feb. 19, 2009. He was 77.

Born June 26, 1931, he was the son of the late Frederick and Mildred Austin.

He was a 1950 graduate of Bartram High School.

A U.S. Air Force veteran, he enlisted in 1950 and served with the 4th Fighter Interceptor Wing in Korea and Japan, and was honorably discharged in 1954, at the rank of staff sergeant.

He was employed with the Philadelphia Inquirer for 6 1/2 years, working along side of his dad, brother, Jim and several uncles. He moved from Pennsylvania to Florida in 1968 and lived in Fort Lauderdale for 34 years. In Florida he worked with the Hertz Corp. and Bab Co., retiring in 1996. He moved to the Tampa area in 2001 and returned to Pennsylvania in 2005.

He is survived by his brothers, James F., Robert J., and Joseph J. Austin and Jack Keates and their wives. He also is survived by his uncle Furman (Pete) Austin and many nephews, nieces and cousins.

Relatives and friends are invited to his viewing from 10 to 11 a.m. Tuesday at Our Lady of Good Counsel Church, Second Street Pike, Southampton. Funeral Mass will be celebrated at 11 a.m. Interment will be in Valley View Cemetery, Bath, Pa.

James J. Mc Ghee Funeral Home, Southampton

Deborah L. Dearden



Deborah L. (Black) Dearden of Quakertown passed away peacefully Friday, Feb. 20, 2009, at home with her husband, Rob, and her children, Lindsay and Robbie by her side. She was 48.

She and her husband, Rob Dearden, were married 24 years.

Debbie graduated from Pleasant Valley High School in Monroe County, Pa.

She was employed at Penn Engineering and Manufacturing for 27 years.

She enjoyed long hikes with her dogs and loved family gatherings. Nothing was more important to Debbie than family. She was an amazing mother and role model for her children. Those who knew her loved her dearly. She was a voice of reason and an endless source of knowledge. Debbie's greatest gift was that she taught us all how to live life, regardless of the circumstances.

Deborah is survived by her mother, Deborah (Parmer) Detweiler of Sellersville; and her sisters, Sherry Braunsberg of Quakertown, and Sandi Hannum of Philadelphia.

A celebration of Debbie's life was a private matter for the immediate family.

"You can shed tears that she is gone, or you can smile because she has lived. You can close your eyes and pray that she'll come back, or you can open your eyes and she's left. Your heart can be empty because you can't see her, or you can be full of the love she shared. You can turn back on tomorrow and live yesterday,

or you can be happy of tomorrow because of yesterday. You can remember her only that she is gone, or you can cherish her memory and let it live on. You can cry and close your mind, be empty and turn your back. Or you can do what she'd want: smile, open your eyes, love and go on."

Contributions may be made to German Shepherd Rescue, 9012 Cargill Lane, Philadelphia, PA 19115.

Jeffrey A. Naugle Funeral Home, Quakertown

William J. Happ Jr.



William J. Happ Jr. of Doylestown died suddenly Thursday, Feb. 19, 2009. He was 80.

He was the beloved husband of Geraldine Hamilton Happ for 54 years.

Born in Doylestown, he was the son of the late William J. and Anna Mae Lyons Happ.

After graduating from Doylestown High School in 1947, he served in the U.S. Naval Reserve. Bill joined Doylestown Fire Co. 1 in 1948 and cherished his 60 years of service. He was honored to serve as a trustee and president of the fire company.

In 1955, Bill became president of E. M. Happ Contractors, which later became Happ Contractors Inc. The firm was the recipient of the 1987 Central Bucks Chamber of Commerce Business Achievement Award. Bill was dedicated to his work at Happ Contractors and never considered retiring.

In 1968, Bill was named a director of Doylestown Federal Savings and Loan Association, and later a director of Third Federal Savings Bank. Bill was a member of the Associated Builders and Contractors, the Loyal Order of Moose and American Legion Post 210.

In addition to his wife, Bill is survived by a son, Andy Happ, his wife, Ellen, of Doylestown, a daughter, Laurie Chauvin of Belle River, Ontario; grandchildren, William and Grace Happ of Doylestown; sisters, Theresa Roney of Doylestown and Katherine McCormick of Harrisburg; and brother, John Happ, his wife, Doris, of Cave City, Ky.; as well as many cousins, nieces and nephews.

A funeral Mass will be celebrated at 11 a.m., Tuesday, Feb. 24, at Our Lady of Mount Carmel Church, 235 E. State Street, Doylestown, where friends may call after 10 a.m., prior to Mass. Interment will follow Mass in Doylestown Cemetery. There will also be a viewing from 7 to 9 p.m. Monday at Reed and Steinbach Funeral Home, 2335 Lower State Road, Doylestown.

In lieu of flowers, memorial contributions in Bill's name may be made to Doylestown Fire Co., P.O. Box 208, Doylestown, PA 18901 or Doylestown Hospital, 595 W. State Street, Doylestown, PA 18901.

Reed and Steinbach Funeral Home, Doylestown
www.reedandsteinbach.com

Liam Thomas Keenan

Liam Thomas Keenan died suddenly Thursday, Feb. 19, 2009.

He was the beloved son of Dana (Callaghan) and John Keenan; brother of Ian and Tessa Keenan; cherished grandson of Josephine and Steven Callaghan and Concetta and John Keenan. He also is

survived by aunts, uncles and cousins.

The family will receive relatives and friends in the chapel from 10:30 a.m. Tuesday, followed by a funeral Mass at 11 a.m. in Sacred Heart Chapel at Immaculate Heart of Mary Parish, 819 Cathedral Road (off Ridge Ave.), Philadelphia, PA 19128.

In lieu of flowers, donations in Liam's name may be sent to Make A Wish Foundation, 5 Valley Square, 515 Township Line Road, Suite 103, Blue Bell, PA 19422.

Clare McIlvaine Mundy Funeral Home, Philadelphia

Kathryn H. Patonetz

Kathryn Helen "Kay" Patonetz died peacefully at St. Mary Manor in Lansdale. She was 89.

She was preceded in death by her husband, Joseph Basil Patonetz, in 1986.

Born Dec. 8, 1919, Kay was the daughter of the late Michael and Marie (Havrilla) Kohut. She grew up in the Schuylkill County area of Pennsylvania and lived most of her life in Glenside, where she raised her family.

She was an avid gardener, growing and sharing remarkable plants from her garden in Glenside.

Kay was devoted to family and took great pleasure in the events of her siblings, children, and their extended families. She was a caring mother, doting grandmother, devoted sister, and kind friend. She recognized the importance of education in enhancing the lives of her children and grandchildren and encouraged them to seek every opportunity to further their educations.

She is survived by a large and loving family, including four daughters, Eleanor Shiller (Ronald) of Warminster, Elaine Whelan (Charles) of Lederach, Martha Turnbull (Bruce) of Ithaca, N.Y., and Kathryn van den Broek (Mark) of San Diego, Calif.; her son, Joseph of Woodbridge, Va.; and her 10 grandchildren, Ron Schiller Jr. (Alan Fletcher), Paul Schiller (Rhonda), Chad Whelan (Trine Syverinsen), Christie Whelan-Hartmann (Mike), Kenneth Turnbull (Brit), Douglas Turnbull (Megan), Kristen van den Broek, Keith van den Broek (Rochelle), Courtney Patonetz and Brittany Patonetz. She is also survived by nine great-grandchildren, Zachary Schiller, Matilda and Nora Syverinsen-Whelan, Brianna, Ruth and Adam Whelan-Hartmann, Blaise Turnbull, Kayana van den Broek and Peter van den Broek; and many nieces and nephews. In addition to her parents, Kay was preceded in death by a twin brother, Michael Kohut and seven other brothers, Louis, Frank and Andrew Kohut, and Paul, Steve, John and Joseph Orihel, and one sister, Ann Orihel Hancarik.

A gathering of family and friends will begin at 10 a.m. Wednesday, Feb. 25, at St. Mary Manor followed by Mass in the chapel at 11 a.m. Interment will be in St. John Neumann Cemetery, Warrington Township.

Kay cherished the visits and calls from family and friends. Kay and her family have been grateful for the compassionate and professional care provided by the staff of St. Mary Manor.

In lieu of flowers, donations will be gratefully accepted in memory of Kay by St. Mary Manor, 701 Lansdale Ave., Lansdale, PA 19446, for the quality care of future residents.

James J. McGhee Funeral Home, Southampton

Robert H. Snavelly

Robert H. Snavelly of New Britain passed away Friday, Feb. 20, 2009, at his home. He was 79.

Born in Lebanon, Pa., he was the son of the late Harry T. and Anna C. Philips Snavelly.

He was the beloved husband for 58 years of Virginia "Ginny" (Breuninger) Snavelly; loving father of Mark R. Snavelly (Connie) and Paul R.

Snavelly (Dawn) of Chalfont; brother of Christine Loose of Martinsburg, Pa.; grandfather of Alisha, Christopher, Megan, Danielle and Kevin; and great-grandfather of Ryan.

Mr. Snavelly was a U.S. Army veteran serving during the Korean War.

He was formerly the Mayor of New Britain Borough for 22 years and was recently honored as Mayor Emeritus for his years of service. He also served on the Borough Council for 20 years. He was a retired employee of Philanthropic Mutual Life Ins. Co., retiring in 1994, as vice president and treasurer, after 33 years of service.

He was a member of the New Britain Baptist Church for 45 years, where he was a trustee, the Sunday school superintendent, founder of the Men's Fellowship and coordinator for the New Britain Baptist Food Larder.

He was an avid hunter and Philadelphia sports fan.

Most of all, his children and grandchildren were the love of his life.

Relatives and friends are invited to attend his funeral service at 11 a.m. Wednesday, Feb. 25, at The New Britain Baptist Church, Route 202 and Tamanend Avenue, New Britain, PA 18901. Friends will be received after 9:30 a.m. Wednesday until time of the service in the church. Interment will be in Whitemarsh Memorial Park, Prospectville.

In lieu of flowers, the family requests donations be made to the above church in memory of Mr. Snavelly.

Decker Funeral Home, Warminster
www.deckerfuneralhome.com

David L. Snow III

David L. Snow III, a 42-year resident of Doylestown, passed away after a brief illness surrounded by his family on Friday, Feb. 20, 2009. He was 83.

He was the beloved husband for 59 years of Jean C. Snow, who passed in 2007.

Born in Philadelphia on Jan. 19, 1926, he was the son of the late David and Caroline Weckman Snow.

Dave was raised in Philadelphia and later attended Ursinus College. He went on to receive a degree in aeronautical and aerospace engineering from Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute in Troy, N.Y. Subsequently, Dave joined the Budd Co. of Philadelphia, where he enjoyed a 38-year career as a quality control engineer.

Dave also served his country with honor and pride as part of the U.S. Navy during World War II.

Dave was a direct and considerate man who went on to enjoy a rich life in retirement. A devoted husband, father, grandfather and great-grandfather, he maintained a keen interest in his pursuit of things regarding aviation, automotive and woodworking.

Dave was fondly known to those who loved him as Papa Dave.

Surviving are four sons, Bruce D. Snow, his wife, Angela, of Valparaiso, Ind., Brian D. Snow, his wife, Catherine, Eric S. Snow, his wife, Beth, and David L. Snow IV, his wife, Maggie, all of Doylestown. Additionally, he is survived by his two sisters, Carol Brook of Florida, and Dorothy Schillinger of Ocean City, N.J. He was the loving grandfather of eight and great-grandfather of two.

Relatives and friends are invited to attend his memorial service at noon on Thursday, Feb. 26, at Reed and Steinbach Funeral Home, 2335 Lower State Road, Doylestown, where friends may call from 11 a.m. to noon prior to the service. Interment will be private at Forest Hills Cemetery, Somerton, Pa.

In lieu of flowers, memorial contributions in Dave's name may be made to Doylestown Hospital Hospice, 595 W. State St., Doylestown, PA 18901.

Reed and Steinbach Funeral Home, Doylestown
www.reedandsteinbach.com