

LOCAL NEWS

INSIDE OUT / *The story behind Staten Island's stories*

Wagner College bids adieu to Dr. Smith

Joseph D. (Joedy) Smith Jr., associate professor of religious studies, was feted at a retirement reception by **Dr. Richard Guarasci** earlier this month, after officially announcing he'll join the growing ranks of the leisurely.

According to **Laura Barlament**, the editor of the *Wagner Magazine*, where word of Dr. Smith's retirement will be featured, for the last 32 years, Dr. Smith has devoted himself to guiding and inspiring Wagner students as associate professor of religious studies, as well as faculty secretary for the honor society ODK.

Now, says he, he's getting organized to figure out what comes next in retirement.

He has had his books — about a thousand of them, he says — moved from his office in Parker Hall to a heated garage for storage, but Dr. Smith states that what he treasures most of all was his students and their accomplishments. Next to his phone sit copies of two papers by **Sarah Nehm '11**. She followed in his footsteps to Yale Divinity School, to which she received a full scholarship.

"What makes Joedy Smith a great professor is that he takes a personal interest in students," says Ms. Nehm, noting that he fostered her pursuit of her academic interests, helped her get her first publication in the *Wagner undergraduate journal* and recommended her for graduate school and scholarships. Ms. Nehm is in her third year of the program at Yale, working toward ordination in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

Between 1965 and 1979, Dr. Smith earned two master's degrees from Yale Divinity School, plus two more master's degrees and a doctorate in religious studies from Yale University.

Specializing in biblical studies, he also took courses in Greek and Hebrew at Princeton Theological Seminary, and spent two years studying at the Catholic University of Paris and the Sorbonne.

A native Floridian, he enrolled in Florida State University with the intention of



CAROL ANN BENANTI

becoming a bridge designer. But his general education courses in history, philosophy and religious studies redirected his course.

Dr. Smith gives credit to the many professors and scholars who influenced him, and he emulated them in his own work. "Faculty really are the ones who inspire the students in their careers and their choices," he says.

Ms. Barlament further explains that in recent years, his favorite courses to teach were ones focused on women's roles in the Bible, which proved to be an eye-opening experience for students.

"That's really rewarding, when students really discover something, when they really are using the right sources, thinking intellectually, and being challenged that way, and they can take ownership of discovery of something," he says.

"The number of students in ODK when I came here was in single digits. And when I left, we had accomplished so many things," he says. ODK conducted annual holiday drives to collect turkeys, toys, and canned food; by the time he stepped down as faculty secretary in 2006, they had provided more than 1,800 turkeys to needy families.

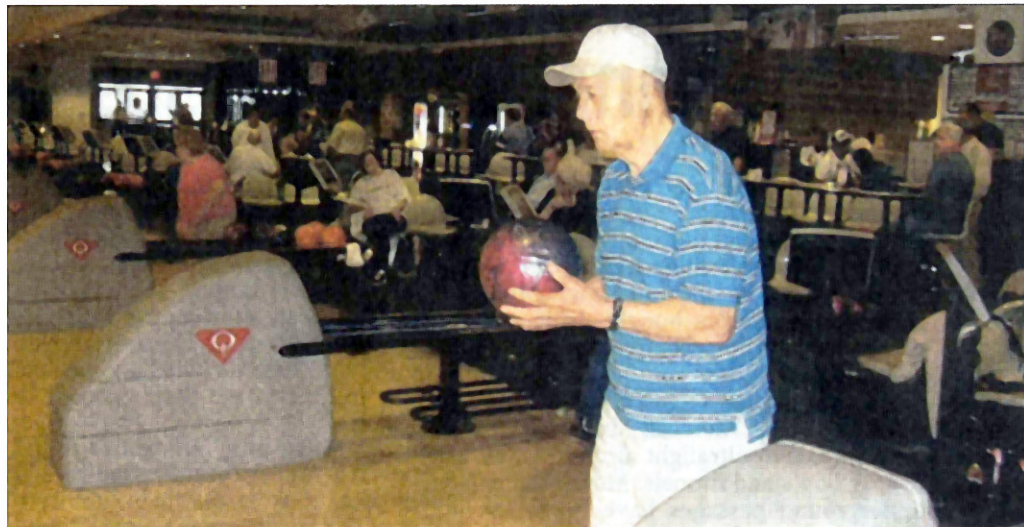
Dr. Smith received a number of awards for his work with ODK, including the Robert L. Morlan National ODK Faculty Secretary Award. And the Wagner ODK chapter received the organization's top awards for five years running, from 2002 to 2006.

Regarding the discipline of biblical studies, Dr. Smith encourages everyone to dig into the newer scholarship. "The study of Hebrew Scriptures, the Old Testament and the New Testament is constantly evolving and becoming more re-



Dr. Joseph D. (Joedy) Smith Jr., left, associate professor of religious studies, was feted at a retirement reception by Dr. Richard Guarasci, president of Wagner College.

PHOTO COURTESY OF ANNA MULE



Not only is Carl J. Fishette an avid bowler, the 96-year-old plans to return to the links.

efined," he says. "There are more manuscripts out there that we are getting a better and better understanding of."

ATHLETIC SENIOR

Carl J. Fishette has taken to the sport of bowling as a duck takes to water.

At 96, the illustrious senior knows full well that the age-old form of recreation is an aerobic exercise that helps burn calories and works muscle groups — those not usually targeted — and one of those extracurricular activities that works well for those advanced in age.

What's more, when you stop to think about it, it has psychosocial benefits, strengthens friendships and helps create new ones.

As a point of interest, Carl is one of 13 children — seven boys and six girls — and he's number 10.

Ask Carl about what factors contribute to his longevity and he's quick to proclaim that during his younger years, he was a vegetarian and adds that perhaps it's the strong genes of his mom — since most of his brothers and sisters lived into their 80s and 90s. Carl has another sister who's a mere 91.

"I'm still trying to be as active as possible," says he, before adding that he bowls three times a week at Showplace Bowling, Travis, and uses the fully equipped gym two or three times a week in the Park Lane building at Seaview where he resides.

Moreover, Carl has also taken to the gentlemanly

game of golf and is waiting patiently for his rotator cuff to heal in order to take to the links — just as much as before.

Born in the Canarsie section of Brooklyn on May 17, 1917, Carl moved to Staten Island when he was 90.

A four-year U.S. Navy man who enlisted in early 1942, right after Pearl Harbor, Carl was a flight engineer aboard several Navy blimps that conducted anti-submarine patrols along the Atlantic coast searching for German U-boats.

When he was discharged from military service, he enrolled in Brooklyn College and became an insurance broker with an office in Manhattan.

He later bought into an Auto School in Queens and



Jodi Pulice has been named Real Estate Person of the Year by the Greater New York chapter of the Institute of Real Estate Management.

managed to develop a lucrative insurance business while providing driving instruction to new students — all this until his retirement at age 90, when he transferred the business to his son.

REALTOR HONORED

Jodi Pulice, founder and president of JRT Realty Group, Cushman & Wakefield's strategic alliance partner, has been selected to receive the Real Estate Person of the Year Award from the Greater New York Chapter of the Institute of Real Estate Management.

IREM is synonymous with education, ethics and excellence in real estate, and the committee unanimously agreed that Jodi, a longtime leader and advocate of minority female-owned businesses, was well-deserving of the award.

IREM members and guests will honor Jodi at their Annual Awards Dinner on Jan. 23 at The Water's Edge in Long Island City.

Congratulations to Jodi on the prestigious honor.

CELEBRATIONS

Birthday greetings to **Judith Driscoll** and her daughter **Beth**, **Jasmine Mercado** and twins **Sebastian** and **Ilirian Popinara**, who are now all of 1 year old.

It's wedding anniversary time Friday for **Laura** and **David Balsamini**, who celebrate their fifth and for **Lynn** and **Terry McHugh**.

Saturday is birthday time for **Marie Font** of Dongan Hills, who's proud to admit she turns 78, for **Robert Wiese** and for **Angela Commissa Frisone**.