

# spotlight on members



Spotlight on Members gives us the opportunity to hear about what our members are up to today, as well as how they found their way to the NHA Health Program. If you're interested in sharing your own story, we'd love to hear from you. Please email essays of around 500 words, and one or two photos, to [info@healthscience.org](mailto:info@healthscience.org).

## Helen McGreevy: Living History

Lockport, NY

by Mark Huberman

On August 4, 2019, my wife Wanda and I had the opportunity to visit with one of the true treasures of the NHA: 96-years-young Helen McGreevy of Lockport, New York. Helen is not only one of the oldest members in our association, but also one of the warmest and most radiant.

For years, I had been exchanging letters and talking on the phone with Helen, but I'd never had the opportunity to meet her. She was always giving gift memberships in the NHA to friends and members of her family.

She would call me regularly to rail about the never-ending push for immunizations, which she considered so dangerous and so unfair, and was always challenging me with the question, "What are we going to do about them?"

My wife, Wanda, and I happened to be in Buffalo, New York, at a wonderful one-day, plant-based event put on by Tim Kauffman, and when I realized that Lockport was only about 20 minutes from Buffalo, I called Helen to see if we could pay her a visit. To my delight, she said yes, and we had the pleasure of being greeted and hosted by Helen and three of her nine children: Joe, Francis, and Michelle (or "No. 8," as she described herself!).

Helen is both history and NHA history personified. The home in which she still lives and in which she raised her children was built in 1880—just two blocks from the home in which she was born! She not only has followed the Natural Hygiene lifestyle for well over 50 years, but she is a witness to some of the richest parts of our history. She attended some of our earliest conventions with her children, went to lectures by Dr. Herbert Shelton, took her daughter to see Dr. Christopher Cursio, and became close friends with Dr. William Esser, frequently visiting his legendary Health Ranch in Lake Worth, Florida, with members of her family.

Helen told me that she first learned of Natural Hygiene "from an old guy who used to bring her organic potatoes" and gave her a copy of *Dr. Shelton's Hygienic Review*. It just made sense to her,

and she states with pride that she "hasn't eaten meat in 57 years." She says "I had a lot of faith in Dr. Shelton," whom she considered both a great writer and speaker. She recalled his "frequently being on the radio in New York City," where he had a big following. She claims that "They wanted him to promote supplements, but he wouldn't do it, and that's when he packed up and went to Texas to open his own place." She described him as being "very staunch and uncompromising in his views."

She especially admired Dr. Esser, about whom she first learned in *Dr. Shelton's Hygienic Review*. She visited his home many times and became good friends with his wife and children. Two of her children, Tom and Kathy, actually worked at his Health Ranch. She considered Dr. Esser an especially kind man and claimed that he "would help anybody, and if people didn't have money, he would never turn them away and would give them food." And speaking of food, I especially remember him having "the best mango trees I ever saw."

She also respected Dr. Cursio and recalled his traveling all over the country and speaking to big crowds. She remembers taking her daughter, Michelle, to see him because she wasn't digesting food well. Dr. Cursio put Michelle on blended salads, something she continues to enjoy to this day.

Helen remembers me as a child at NHA conventions and knew my parents from their active involvement in the organization and the health food store they operated in Youngstown, Ohio.

Helen spoke admiringly about her late husband, Tom, to whom she had been married for 44 years. He served for over four years in the military and obtained his education on the GI Bill. She claims that "We didn't have any money, but he saw that the kids all got an education, and he got the kids interested in music and sports. He built a pool in the backyard and put in a basketball court, and that helped make [our] house a place for everybody to come."

Helen especially beams with pride when talking about her children. She boasts that she has "lots of thinking people in this family." She considers herself blessed to have 20 grandchildren and 30 great-grandchildren, with whom she makes every effort to keep up. Her goal for all of them is that she "just wants them to think and investigate for themselves." And her only demand for them "is to do the right thing."

Her children recalled their mom as always being adamant about diet and that their breakfast in the morning was typically "raw cashews and oranges." She baked her own whole wheat bread, and their dinners were always steamed vegetables and potatoes. The one thing she did all over was butter—but it was real butter.


They humorously recalled what happened when they got sick. "When our cousins got sick, they got ice cream and ginger ale! But if we got sick, we got nothing! So, if any of us got sick, we wouldn't tell Mom, because then you couldn't eat anything. Instead we would say, 'No, I feel good, Mom—I'm good!'"

Helen still keeps up with our health movement and enjoys each issue of *Health Science* magazine. She admires the writings and TV appearances of Dr. Joel Fuhrman, whose books she considers "totally Natural Hygiene."

When asked about her health, Helen conceded that she suffers from some macular degeneration, "but other than that I'm pretty good." She noted with pride, "I've told the kids that my mother always told us we had good hearts in our family."

When asked to what she attributes her longevity, Helen said, "It's the kids that keep me going. They're good." They come here, and they bring the grandchildren and the great-grandchildren; it's been a great life.

She remains strong in her religious convictions and claims, "You can't beat Jesus's method: Love God and love your neighbor, and that means do good by him."

Her children say that there is no doubt that they have all been influenced by their mom. We should all be so lucky to have a mom like Helen McGreevy! 



Dr. Esser and Helen



Helen with Mark Huberman



Joe, Helen, Francis, and Michelle.