

At 100 years young Angie's dream of being a Railroader comes true!!!

By Michael F. Cavotta

If you come from Collinwood, we all embrace the concept of being a Railroader. It stems from the common bond of graduating from CHS and living in the general Collinwood area. Rarely does a heartwarming story such as Angie Laurich come to our attention.

Angela was born on August 19, 1916 to Adolf and Mary Gole, the youngest of 7 children and lived on Sylvia Avenue in Collinwood. Times were difficult growing up for everyone. She and her three sisters had to share not only household duties, but a sofa to sleep on in the living room. She began school at Memorial Elementary on E 152 and then went to the newly constructed Longfellow Elementary on E. 140th. As was customary in those days after completing 6th grade you went to Collinwood for middle and high school. During the depression Angie, while in the 10th grade, at the age of sixteen had to drop out of school to help her family financially. Not getting graduating as a Railroader has always haunted her.

It was 1932 when Angie took a job at Waterloo Department Store, working 60 hours per week for \$6.00. There were no malls in those days but many 'Mom and pop' dry good stores were in just about every neighborhood. They sold the essential clothing like socks, underwear, work clothes, shoes, and linens. If you wanted to go to a real department store you went downtown Cleveland where there were many big department stores such as the May Company, Higbees, Baileys, Sterling Linder Davis, Halle's to name a few. You paid cash for your purchases but later they had a 'charge a plate' for each store. These were plates with raised letters that the sales clerk ran across a pad and the amount was entered by hand. If you made a purchase of at least \$3.00 the item was delivered free of charge. May Company also had a savings feature called eagle stamps. For every purchase you received and collected these stamps until you filled a book and then returned to the store to get a credit voucher for purchases. Some other stores and gas stations also gave these stamps. To get to downtown Cleveland, you had to take a bus because most people didn't have a car.

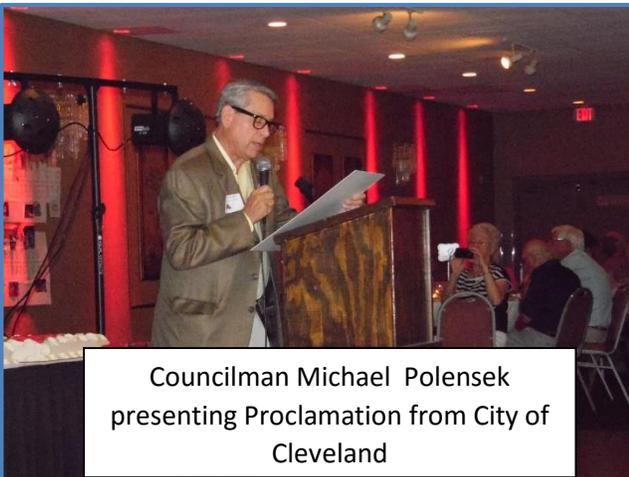
That same year she met her future husband, John Laurich, who lived on Saranac with his six sisters and brothers. They were married in 1936 at St. Mary's. Angie and John lived with her sister until they could afford to rent their own home on Saranac. In 1941 she began work at the GE Cleveland bulb plant where she retired after thirty seven years in 1978. In 1952 they moved into a new bungalow they purchased on Mohican where Angie still lives. She enjoys playing cards with her friends, bowls weekly on a league and enjoys gardening.

On July 23rd, 2016, surrounded by 170 of her family and close friends which included two daughters, seven grandchildren, thirteen great grandchildren and two great great grandchildren, Angie celebrated her 100th birthday. An evening of "*This is your Life, Angie*" was kicked off by Councilman Michael Polensek who presented a proclamation from the City of Cleveland. That presentation was followed by President of the CHS Alumni Association, Michael Cavotta, who informed Angie that while CHS graduated 71 students on May 23rd, 72 names were called.....Angie's among them in the form of a proclamation from the Cleveland School Board. Michael further commented that, "*a diploma does not define a railroader.....it is what is in*

your heart that counts." Angie certainly qualifies and was presented a lifetime membership to the Alumni Association, making her Railroader status finally official. Along with the Membership comes a white Railroader hat to be worn during her gardening. You could always tell the good guys those days, they always wore white hats!!!!



Angie surrounded by her family



Councilman Michael Polensek presenting Proclamation from City of Cleveland



President of CHSAA presenting Angie with membership card