



Al Skramstad Is New Office Manager At St. James UCC



Allen (Al) Skramstad makes copies as part of his duties at St. James United Church of Christ in Barnesville. Skramstad is the new office manager. As such, he performs the duties of secretary and also handles the financial end of the church business. Al was retired but wanted something part-time to fill his time. Each day is a new learning experience for Skramstad.

By: Karen Carpenter

Starting a whole new occupation can be daunting. Learning new things keeps the mind sharp no matter at what age the new adventure begins.

St. James United Church of Christ in Barnesville hired a new church secretary. Allan (Al) Skramstad began his duties as office manager December 1, 2018.

He replaces Dar Hines who

officially retired December 31, 2018. She served in the position for the past 20 years beginning in 1998.

Skramstad will also serve as financial secretary.

While traditionally the office position has been held by a woman. Skramstad commented, "it sounded like a position that I might be qualified for."

Skramstad is retired but wanted

something part-time to fill his days. He works 20 hours a week at St. James answering phones, making the weekly deposits and preparing bulletins, as well as the monthly newsletter.

He began at one of the busiest times in the church calendar. First Christmas and then annual reports are due. Among Skramstad's duties is to get the reports compiled, copied

and ready for the annual meeting in January.

Some the financial work can be done from his home in West Fargo, ND.

"I like detail and working with numbers," said Skramstad. "Everyday is a learning experience and that is the way I look at it, I am not a know it all. I am working at learning all the idiosyncrasies."

"Detail and attention to the little things, is one of the skills that I am still working at for the church."

Al and his wife, Merron (Kay), have three adult children. They lost a daughter in 2002 to an automobile accident. The couple has eight grandchildren. All of their children and grandchildren reside in the Minneapolis area.

Skramstads have been residents of West Fargo since 1996 and of the Fargo Moorhead area since 1969.

Skramstad owned a small business, Aviation Instructor and Management Seminars, Inc., (AIMS) which conducted weekend aviation training.

He still teaches weekend aviation classes, about six or seven a year and also some flight instruction classes as well. Skramstad has been a licensed pilot and flight instructor since the mid 1980s.

Prior to retirement Skramstad was a tenured associate professor of aviation at the University of North Dakota where he worked for 17 years, retiring in 2008.

Skramstads have been members of Hope Lutheran Church in Fargo since 1983. "All of our children went to Sunday School and were confirmed there," said Skramstad. "Two of our daughters were married there and our deceased daughter went through her funeral service there."

Skramstad spent four and a half years serving as a member of West Fargo Public Schools.

The couple has owned a seasonal summer home on an area lake since 1981. "We enjoy our children and grandchildren visiting during the summer, water skiing, fishing and other outdoor activities."

"Three granddaughters and a grandson like to fish and many times will do better than their grandparents," exclaimed Skramstad.

The commute to Barnesville does not bother Skramstad. "I commuted from West Fargo to Grand Forks for 17 years. I only missed work about a half dozen times due to inclement weather, outside of the flood in 1997," he said.

Skramstad is fairly familiar with Barnesville since he and his family members have been coming to Potato Days for several years. The family also passes through on their way to the lake.

"I enjoy fishing with my wife and several of our grandchildren," said Skramstad. "Surprisingly, my granddaughters enjoy fishing more than the grandsons, with the exception of one grandson. When he comes to the lake, his first question is when can we go fishing."

"I also enjoy a fall hunting trip with my son and two son-in-laws to North Central Montana where we have some very good family friends."

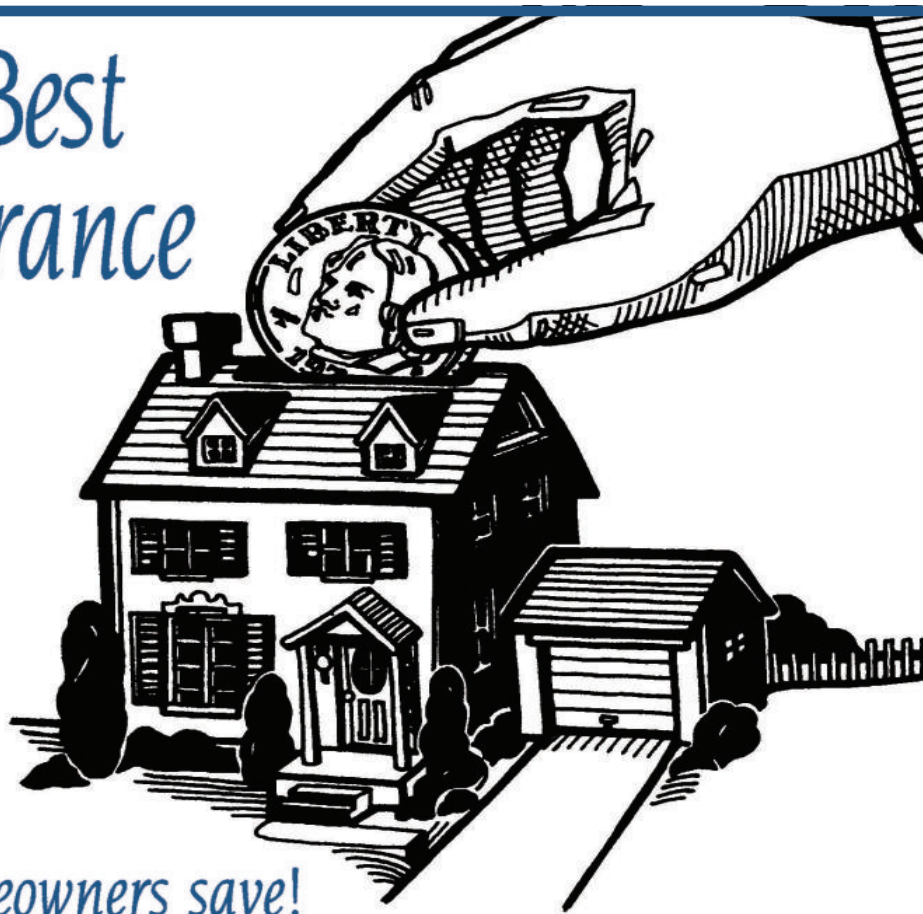
"St. James is a small congregation which makes my job a lot easier starting at the busiest time of the church year. I enjoy the people I work with. Everybody pitches in with the 'we are all family' attitude," concluded Skramstad.

When the occasion arises, stop by St. James UCC, and welcome Al Skramstad to Barnesville.



Al Skramstad and his wife, Merron (Kay) reside in West Fargo, ND. He commutes five days a week to work at St. James United Church of Christ as office manager. He is in the office from 9:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m. Skramstad also does some of the financial work from his home.

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