



SPRINGS ETERNAL: Luigi Battuello, left, of Troy, carries away two wine jugs of water from the Spring Avenue spring recently. Barbara Baker, above, of Wynantskill, fills a gallon container from one of six spigots. Spring drinkers claim the water tastes better and is healthier than tap water. (Record photos by Mike McMahon)

They come from all around for the 'pure water'

Spring Avenue spring draws a crowd

By IAN CLEMENTS
Record Reporter

TROY — Helen Freckleton of Selkirk travels 30 miles for a glass of water.

But it's not just any glass of water; it's water from the Spring Avenue spring.

"I make all my coffee with it. I do all my cooking with it, the water (in Selkirk is impossible)," said Freckleton, a 72-year-old former Griswold Heights resident.

"It's well worth the ride down to get it," she said. "We know what we're getting is pure water."

Freckleton, who filled a five-gallon plastic container, is not alone in her devotion.

Come to the hillside on a weekend and you may have to wait in line for a spot at the six spigots.

Regulars say the water may flow slowly in dry times, but it never stops.

"I come down in the winter," said Marjorie Darrow of Melrose. "It may be colder than hell, but I come down anyway."

Barbara Baker of Wynantskill said she has chatted at the spring

with residents of Saratoga Springs, Ballston Spa and Albany.

Many of the spring drinkers are country folk who don't like the taste of well water.

Among them is M. Andrew Dwyer Jr., a Troy native, Poestenkill resident and Rensselaer County Court judge, who stops at the spring every week or two.

Price is another lure. "It doesn't cost anything," said Helen Krause of Eagle Mills, who used to buy water at the supermarket.

Though some people say the spring water is healthier than tap water, that assumption is not supported by Dennis M. Carroll, a public health engineer for the county Health Department.

"If you live in Troy, you should be drinking Troy water. It's a good supply," said Carroll.

Though tests are not required, Carroll said the department has the spring water tested twice monthly because so many people drink it. Spring Avenue's is the only roadside spring tested in the county.

Carroll said Albany's Bender Hygienic Laboratory tests the wa-

ter for nitrates, chlorides and coliform bacteria, a high level of which might indicate pollution or human or animal waste.

Of the 24 samples taken in 1988, only one had too much coliform. The next sample showed an acceptable level, said Carroll, who noted that high levels sometimes occur because of testing errors.

The City of Troy is taking no chances, however.

In 1987, the city placed beside the spring two yellow signs telling drinkers the city does not guarantee and shall not be responsible for the quality of the water.

The signs protect the city in the event someone sues Troy, said City Manager Steven Dworsky.

Dworsky admitted he has tried the spring water, but maintained, "Nothing's better than good 'ol Troy (tap) water."

Carroll said the spring water quality improved after 1966 when city crews built a new spring basin to keep out surface drainage.

The crews were helped by Dominic Capano of Green Island, whose name appears in the masonry above the spigots.

Capano, who died in 1986, was a General Electric Co. machinist who installed a pipe at the spring in the 1940s, said his widow, Velda Capano.

Also in the masonry are the names of Anna and Joseph Chuckrow, who owned a poultry and egg business in Troy.

The Chuckrows' children donated funds in their parents' memory for rehabilitation of the spring, said Joseph Chuckrow, a grandson of Anna and Joseph Chuckrow.

Outstanding leaders

HONOR VOLUNTEERS: Regional area residents volunteers and leaders honored for outstanding service to the Mohawk Pathway Council and its association.

Area residents serving as volunteers with the Mohawk Pathway Council of Burnt Hills, Scotia, Chertsey, Betsy Ryan of New York, Scudder and George of Schenectady and name of Galway.

Area residents serving as leaders were Scotia, Mary DiPaola, Park, Sherry Dickson, Sue Ward, and Shirley Harward and Linda Sterdam.

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dy. Schohar

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