



REFLECTIONS

SUMMER 2010
VOLUME 32 NUMBER 2



Clark and Ruth Berkbondt, of the assisted living center at Willow Brook Christian Home.

Life never grants a do-over. If it ever did, I'd be the first in line to place a bid for one to recast a summer morning in North Carolina forty years back. Actually, just five seconds of that morning would do the trick, for those seconds were the ones that mattered when someone's life was on the line.

Those five seconds have proved to be the worst seconds of my life, when my carelessness, my needless haste, and my youthful delusion of invincibility robbed someone of her life.

Come, I'll take you back with me to that day.

It was a sunny morning that hadn't yet worked itself up to the full heat of the day. I was at the wheel of my white '57 Chevy, tacking down a zigzaggy road in the Blue Ridge Mountains where I was spending the summer between my sophomore and junior years of college. Popcorn puffs of sun-battered clouds drifted above me in a sapphire sky.

It was a beautiful morning.

I just referred to the surface under my tires as a "road," but that's an exaggeration. It was really a primitive gravel path, at most 1/2 lanes in width, that replicated each bend of a creek rushing down a hollow. Gravel it was. Sly, treacherous, devious gravel. It was those pernicious little stones that brought about my undoing that morning. The rutted, pockmarked roadbed may as well have been paved with roller bearings when, in full panic, I stomped the brake peddle. Oh, I slammed it hard, I did. Nearly stood up on it one-footed. The locked wheels

tried in vain to grip something with adhesion, but the gravel just rolled up under the tires and greased my appointment with doom.

I hadn't seen her approach. I couldn't have. Just as I



Larry Harris, CEO
lharris@willow-brook.org

Even Now

by Larry Harris, CEO

entered a tight blind curve from above I caught sight of her old Ford pickup chugging up from below. My speed and level of caution were too much and too little for a winding mountain lane. I was twenty and in a hurry for no reason other than my youth. I was careless, and someone paid with her life.

It wasn't the young woman whose truck I depreciated that day. Turns out she was seven months pregnant. At the moment of impact, she struck the steering wheel hard. Three days later, she gave birth to a lifeless baby girl.

Life is cheap in America. I read the mind-numbing dispatches in the back pages of the morning paper that chronicle the lethal consequences of our wretched wars. I rant at our collective tolerance for 15,000 alcohol-induced road deaths each year. In our urban centers on Saturday nights, handguns pop like firecrackers, resulting in 9,369 corpses last year.

And each year well over a million unwanted babies are aborted – each as perfectly formed as that North Carolina baby of my past. Throw-away miniature humans are snuffed before they draw the first breath of life, just like that.

But I don't participate in any of those deaths. They weigh on someone else's conscience, or not. The baby whose death I *did* participate in, though, was very much wanted, anticipated, and loved.

I wasn't present to hear the mother's grief when her baby came, but I have to believe it was severe. Hardly a day has passed then to now when I haven't thought of that mother's cries, and the baby, the little girl, the graduating high schooler, the bride, and now the mature woman about to enter her middle years, who never came to be.

Somewhere today on a North Carolina mountain there lives a woman, now wrinkled and gray, preparing to mark the birth forty summers past of a daughter that never was. Maybe she'll remember the day with a secret tear, and an ache in her heart that even now, after all these years, still remains.



The Secret Life of Fred Durant

Willow Brook Christian Village maintenance worker Fred Durant openly admits that he's a daredevil. After work, he may head off to the Columbus Zoo to swim with the sharks, or hop aboard his two-seat "powered parachute" to soar 3,000 feet over his hometown of Delaware, Ohio.

He started scuba diving at the Zoo's 88,000-gallon Discovery Reef aquarium 13 years ago, as part of the volunteer feeding program. Hungry sharks, stingrays, and 120 other types of marine creatures greeted him with mouths watering, so to speak. He now is part of the scuba cleaning crew, spending Saturday mornings among his aquatic friends scrubbing algae off the Reef's rocks and coral.

Then five years ago Fred earned an FAA license to pilot a parachute plane. Sitting on what looks like a

engine, five-foot propeller, and open parachute behind him, he lifts off from his backyard. He has flown his spindly craft as high as 5,501 feet above the open fields and woodlands around his home.

So the question comes, "What happens if that dinky little engine conks out at 5,000 feet?"

"Not a problem," replies Fred. "With the parachute, you just float back to earth for a gentle landing."



*Fred Durant
Village maintenance worker*



To Honor and Remember

Memorial Contributions

through June 18, 2010

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 David & Elizabeth Maril
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 Willow Brook Residents
 Brigitte S. Chase
 Claire Young
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Scenes of Summer



Even in the summer Elizabeth Raber enjoys the hand-crocheted lap robes donated by Tom & Doris Ebbert and Jennie Ecker at Willow Brook Christian Village.



Photograph from Keith Vettters

Pauline Shively, Doras Ross, and Estelle Horvath, from Willow Brook Christian Village, enjoy golf cart rides around a park with bus driver Keith Vettters on a trip to Nevada, Ohio.



Photograph by David Chappell

Bob Shaw shakes maracas during the weekly Zumba Gold classes at Willow Brook Christian Home.



Photograph by Ken Peterson

Chef Marc Dullin presides over an aromatic but smoky grill at Delaware Run's Independence Day celebration.



Willow Brook Singers John and Audrey Ott and Larry Wenger were among the many entertainers at Willow Brook Christian Village's ice cream social.



Marilyn Laubacher, of Willow Brook at Delaware Run, gets in a little exercise, thanks to the Wii game donated by Gayle Moe. She is coached by care assistants Cassie Doyle (partially hidden) and Ti Baker.



MUSIC ON THE MEZZANINE

Broadway – ‘50s - Dixieland - Barbershop
Classical – Jazz

Name your favorite music and it is probably part of Willow Brook's *Music on the Mezzanine* series at Delaware Run. Then add a rootbeer float, peach shake, or other refreshment and some fun and interesting neighbors from across Delaware, and you have our newest musical gift to the community. Coming up: the Steve Harper Trio and friends (August 26), Tom Bartha's acoustic guitar (September 28), and Pete Mills and Nancy Gamso on the sax and clarinet (October 21) All the concerts are at 7:00 pm. Watch upcoming *Reflections* and our web site for more dates. It's free!

Creativity Abounds

The talents of people who live at Willow Brook, no matter what their level of care, are becoming legendary. They brought home 20 ribbons at the regional level of AOPHA's Art & Writing competition on June 24.

AOPHA is the statewide association of not-for-profit organizations providing health care, housing, and services to older Ohioans. Residents of the three campuses entered more than 50 pieces in this year's event.

Nine individuals or groups won first place ribbons in the fine art 1, cooperative, special cooperative, 3-D, special fine, large quilted, small quilted, cooperative writing, and prose fiction categories.

Second place ribbons were received for fine art 2, wearable, large quilted, and cooperative writing.

Third place honors went to "our" residents for photography, special cooperative and special 3-D art projects.

Four people brought home fourth place ribbons for fine art 1, cooperative art, special fine art, and small quilted projects.

Winners will go on to the state competition the first of September in Columbus.

We're so proud!

Willow Brook Christian Communities

Delaware, Ohio

Willow Brook Christian Village

100 Willow Brook Way South
Delaware, Ohio 43015
Phone: (740) 369-0048
Fax: (740) 369-7034

- Independent twin-single homes & apartments
- Assisted living
- Alzheimer's care
- Skilled nursing & rehabilitation
- Heritage Day Health Center adult day care
- The Courtyard Restaurant

Willow Brook at Delaware Run

100 Delaware Crossing West
Delaware, Ohio 43015
Phone: (740) 201-5640
Fax: (740) 201-5740

- Independent twin-single homes & apartments
- Assisted Living
- Memory Care
- Corporate offices
- The Water's Edge Restaurant

Worthington, Ohio

Willow Brook Christian Home

55 Lazelle Road
Columbus, Ohio 43235
Phone: (614) 885-3300
Fax: (614) 885-8476

- Skilled nursing & rehabilitation
- Assisted living
- The Grapevine Grill

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Teri Ryan, editor

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*Helen Reppart
Willow Brook Christian Village*



*Ruth Deitsch
Willow Brook Christian Village*



*Dianne Almendinger
Willow Brook at Delaware Run*

They Share their Gifts of Love

Helen Reppart, Ruth Deitsch, and Dianne Almendinger are women of many gifts. They have many, and they give many.

Their unselfish willingness to share the gifts they possess with everyone around them earned them the 2010 Gift of Love Award, which was presented to them at the volunteer reception in the Terrace Room of Willow Brook Christian Village this spring, and we thank them again in this issue of *Reflections*.

Helen is an organizer and a leader. She was a driving force behind the establishment last year of Willow Brook Christian Village's "Gathering Place" coffee, snack, and gift shop. She recruits, trains, organizes and schedules volunteers to staff the Gathering Place, and assembled its first inventory in her home. She has also almost singlehandedly presented the annual Senior Sharing Time inspirational program for seniors each October.

Ruth Deitsch makes buckeye and other jewelry and then sells it to pay the expenses of an evening out at a concert or other event for Willow Brook Christian Home residents who would otherwise not be able to go due to a lack of funds. She did this more than once last year.

Dianne Almendinger, an award-winning artist and professor, has led the groups welcoming new residents, organizes social activities, and teaches art classes for residents of Willow Brook at Delaware Run.

Senior Sharing Time:

People in your Life

People come into your life for a reason, a season, or a lifetime, says Senior Sharing Time's organizer Helen Reppart, and that is the theme she has planned for the annual day of inspiration. It will be held in the Terrace Room of Willow Brook Christian Village on October 12.

Save the date on your calendar and watch for more information in the next issue of *Reflections*.



Reflections

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They're Stars!



Thirteen staff members from Willow Brook's three campuses were named AOPHA "Stars" this Spring. AOPHA is the association of Ohio not-for-profit senior housing and services organization to which Willow Brook belongs. The folks pictured above were nominated by residents, family members, and their colleagues. A luncheon was held in their honor in Columbus. Pictured above they are from left to right back row: Sharon Sipek (nurse, Willow Brook Christian Village), Randy Southwick (maintenance, Delaware Run), Beth Hamilton (nurse, Village), Kacy Meade (nurse, Willow Brook Christian Home), Rutha Merry (culinary services, Village), and Darshann Eiland (nurse aide, Home). Front row: Shy Broughton (nurse aide, Delaware Run), Heather Meadows (nurse, DelawareRun), Brigitte Chase (housekeeper/PCA, Delaware Run), Vicky Boley (culinary services, Village), Sherry Place (program assistant, adult day care, Village), and Amber Gregory (nurse aide, Home). Nurse aide Lindsey Robinson, from Willow Brook Christian Home, is not shown here, but is pictured on page 4.