

## All is Well

by Larry Harris, CEO

All is well, all is well.  
Angels and men rejoice.  
For tonight darkness fell,  
Into the dawn of love's light.

Michael W. Smith  
1957-



A few Christmases back, Janet and I agreed to stop buying gifts for each other. Okay, maybe a token or two, but just little somethings. I already have a wee present for her, all wrapped and tied, that I will place under our tree – and no, I'm not going to tell you what it is. I believe it's true what they say – two people can keep a secret if one of them is, shall we say, expired. So I'm not telling. And besides, Janet will be reading this over your shoulder, so to speak, and I do want her to have a *bit* of yuletide suspense come Christmas morning.

Little somethings. Two Christmases ago Janet fulfilled her half of our pledge to a preposterous extreme when she gave me a little sandwich bag with what appeared to be

from *All is Well* page 1

a pinch of sticky, dirty cotton candy in it. She had wrapped it in Christmas paper about as well as one can wrap a plastic baggie, pressed a label to it, and left it under the tree.

Turns out it was a wadded spider's web. Charlotte's web it was. At least that's what we had called it all summer long.

We like to sit on the front porch on summer evenings, and we had watched a little introverted spider spin and tend a web on the doorjamb. Janet named her Charlotte. (E.B.

White, you hearing this?) All summer and into the fall we watched her capture moths and all manner of winged arthropods. She ate well, for she had exercised the excellent judgment to engineer her web beneath a coach light that was a homing beacon to insects from all corners of our yard.

Charlotte was shy. If we peered too close, she would dive behind a little piece of molding on the door, and venture out only when she thought we had left. She died at first frost, as we knew she would. That day, silly as it may seem to you, a tiny piece of our hearts died with her.

Unknown to me, Janet had packed her web into the baggie. On Christmas morning, after she told me that no, it wasn't cotton candy at all, I laughed until there were tears in my eyes.

So (almost) no gifts on Christmas morning. That's our pact. We prefer to take the cash we would have spent on garments and gadgets and shiny distractions that our kids would only have to cart off to the thrift store someday, and instead give it to a cause where some good may accrue – Faith Mission, The Sierra Club, Doctors Without Borders, a sojourner who has fallen on hard times.

We have come to see that the best present we could ever give each other is to wake up on Christ-

mas morning still breathing and laughing and loving, thus confirming that we survived another year. That's a gift above any price.

So each Christmas Janet and I express thanks for the seasons God has granted us. Goodness knows in my career I have seen up close the unappeasable grief that comes at the death of a life partner. Rivers of tears have flowed through the halls of Willow Brook in the aftermath of loss. Soon enough, one or the other of us, too, will be pressed to whisper a final goodbye. Until that time, we will celebrate each day gifted to us.

You know you are coming to accept your inglorious place in the universe when none of the things you want for Christmas can be bought in a store or ordered online. Anymore, Janet and I take joy and even some measured hope in the simplest things – a steaming cup of huckleberry coffee sipped by the tree; the welcome company of people and purring animals and spiders that share our humble corner of the planet; a dazzling sunrise cast across a frozen Christmas morning, one as brilliant as the daybreak that surely greeted Mary and the new-born Christ child on his first dawn.

*You know you are coming to accept your inglorious place in the universe when none of the things you want for Christmas can be bought in a store or ordered online.*

Love came into our dark and hateful world two thousand years ago by way of a Bethlehem stable. Just imagine, what if that child had never come? What if the forces of darkness had crushed him in his manger, leaving us to wander this world in blindness, lost and stumbling, never finding our way

through this fever dream we call Life?

Christmas is a time to ponder this alternate reality that never came to be. Let the glittering lights and heartbreaking Christmas hymns remind us – Jesus *did* come. He walked among us for a while. He paid our debt. All is well.

Merry Christmas, my friends.



Larry Harris, CEO  
lharris@willow-brook.org





*Cherith resident Muriel Morrison and Santa, AKA Wes Jordan, have a little heart-to-heart before Christmas festivities begin at The Village.*



*Home nursing assistant Kay Kilgore is about to retire after spending 30 years at Willow Brook Christian Home. A true professional, according to CEO Larry Harris, Kay has faithfully served the residents under her care, and we wish her a wonderful new life in her retirement.*



### **Honor Flights give Memories to Last Forever**

*Two sets of veterans joined the nonprofit group Honor Flight on a couple of recent Saturdays. Neighbors and staff gathered at 4:00 a.m. to give a rousing sendoff to a daylong trip to Washington, DC. Police, firefighters and sheriff's deputies were their honor guard, escorting them through the county enroute to the airport. Crowds greeted them in Baltimore and they were bussed into the District for a full day of visits to war monuments. Throngs of strangers welcomed them upon*

*their return to the John Glenn Airport in Columbus, bringing many to tears. It was a satisfying day, especially for the women who said it was the first time they had ever received such recognition and respect. Everyone returned with memories they will carry with them forever. The men: Jim Perkins, Warren Shively, and Dana Brush. The women: Lucille Barkley and Alma Eshelman.*



# *Tribute Gifts*

## Memorial Contributions

### September 28 - November 18, 2016

**Richard C. Atkinson**

Carol A. Roden

**Warren Bailey**

Grace M. Lang

**Helen C. Baker**

Phil & Sue Loechler  
Thomas & Judy Price

**Frances Carlton**

April L. Jackson

**Joseph Caudy**

Roger & Jane Sagar

**Margaret Caudy**

Roger & Jane Sagar

**Mary Ellen Cerrato**

Bruce & Barbara Reiersen

**Michael Chucta**

Teresa J. Ryan

**Dorothy J. Dale**

Joy D. Lackey

**Nancy DeTray**

Lisa Mack

**Helen DiSalvo**

Mariella C. Dunnun

**Ed Flahive**

Michael & Judith England

**Jean L. Flahive**

Michael & Judith England

**Charles Gerhart**

Rebecca L. Gerhart

**Marilynn Graebner**

Grace M. Lang

**Margaret V. Harper**

Ed & Stephanie Harden

**Shirley M. Harper**

Ed & Stephanie Harden

**Audrey & Alberta Harris**

Larry & Janet Harris

**John T. Hayes**

Karen S. Hayes

**Carl Hertwig**

Joy D. Lackey

**Elmer J. Hogue**

John & Sue Dickman  
Pamela Holliman & M. Heyduk  
Grace M. Lang  
Bruce & Barbara Reiersen  
Patricia S. Stephens

**James E. Jackson**

Mitchell & Dyana Welch

**Louise Kannapel**

William D. Ahonen  
Josephine G. Bichsel  
Corinne D. Esau  
Donna J. French  
Lavonne F. Horman  
Philip Mark  
Arlene W. Palenshus  
Douglas & Elaine Palmer  
Helen J. Reppart  
Lois K. Smith  
William & Rosemary Warner  
Village Residents  
Advisory Council

**Walter A. Kimball**

R. Bud & Olivia Davis  
Ben F. Lark  
Jack & Jane Pore

**Lydia Landis**

Linda A. Raber

**Thomas J. Lasley**

Thomas & Kathryn Brod

**Mary Law**

John Law

**Georgia Leffler**

George & Lynn Ankney  
Glenn & Dolores Bryant  
David & Dagmar Cianelli  
Larry & Juanita Davis  
Delaware Run Residents  
Association  
Joe & Rosalie Krohn  
Grace M. Lang  
William & Cathy Ostarchvic  
Bruce & Barbara Reiersen  
John & Arnell Rein

**Stephen C. Mintos**

Bruce & Barbara Reiersen

**Willey Nice**

Delores V. Lallathin

**Naomi Orosz**

Phyllis M. Wood

**Richard Park**

Cleveland Hgts Church  
of Christ

**Florence Poulson**

Thomas & Sara Poulson

**Emma "Maude" Prince**

Rebecca L. Harris

**Gene & Maude Prince**

Larry & Janet Harris

**Jean Quelette**

Brian & Patricia Quelette

**Elizabeth S. Raber**

Linda A. Raber

**Mary C. Roden**

Carol A. Roden

**Don Rost**

Thomas & Sara Poulson

**Jane W. Rutan**

Kate E. Oliphint

**Mark E. Ryan**

Teresa J. Ryan

**Belvadell Sindlinger**

William & Jean Baskwill  
John & Sue Dickman  
Mariella C. Dunnun  
Bruce & Barbara Reiersen  
Lois K. Smith  
Brian A. Wade

**Corrine Snyder-Poulson**

Thomas & Sara Poulson

**John Taylor**

Corinne D. Esau

**George F. Wellman**

Lucretia M. Wellman

**Marian A. Wenger**

William D. Ahonen  
Mariella C. Dunnun  
Corinne D. Esau  
Donna J. French  
Helen J. Reppart  
Lois K. Smith  
Village Residents  
Advisory Council  
Evelyn Winter  
Phyllis M. Wood

**Max Wildermuth**

Jayne W. MacKay

**Willow Brook Christian**

**Village Residents who are Deceased**

Dana & Shirley Brush

**Nicki V. Zanetos**

Lisa Mack

### Gifts were made in Honor of

**Marilyn A. Laubacher**

Grace Lackey

**Evelyn Winter**

Thomas & Judy Price



*The background photo is in memory of Herman Slayman, longtime resident of Willow Brook at Delaware Run.*





*Delaware Run activities coordinator Grace Lackey was recently married to her love, Zoran Lozanovski, out under the changing leaves at the Village pond. All eight of the Lackey siblings have shared their love and talents as staff members of Willow Brook: Grace, Faith, Hope, Joy, Charity, Daniel, Ezekiel, and Jedidiah.*

*Two, Faith and Hope, recently left us to become missionaries in Japan.*

## **Willow Brook Christian Communities**

*Delaware, Ohio*

### **Willow Brook Christian Village**

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

### **Willow Brook at Delaware Run**

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

*Worthington, Ohio*

### **Willow Brook Christian Home**

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Columbus, Ohio 43235  
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*Teri Ryan, editor*  
[www.willow-brook.org](http://www.willow-brook.org)

## **The Snowflake**

*by Joy Lackey*

Born in heaven a cloud for your bed,  
As sparkles and glitter anoint your dear head,  
Your heart is innocent clean and white,  
Upon this dark and dreary night.

A nip in the air says time to go  
You hold your breath and jump below,  
Down on the wings of the wind so bold  
To a town fast asleep in the cold.

You dance and fly with grace so fair,  
Swirling and twirling upon the air,  
With no one else like you you're one of a kind.  
In your shimmering prisms a rainbow you'll find.

Landing softly upon the cold earth,  
Your heart is filled with exuberant mirth,  
Joined by your friends you cover the ground,  
Hushing the world with a silent sound.

The sun comes up to say hello  
to a world washed clean with snow,  
melting your heart with a golden ray.  
Oh, you have had a most glorious day!



*Delaware Run personal care attendant Joy Lackey was inspired to write this poem after a weekend ski trip*



I put a roll in the bun warmer, set the rear burner on “low.” Then I empty the frozen contents of the Birds Eye “Voila!” bag into the casserole dish, and put it in the microwave. It’ll be done in twelve minutes. I’ll eat most of it, then finish it for lunch tomorrow, on Christmas day.

What irony. For sixty-three years of married life we donated to MADD—Mothers against Drunk Drivers. Then just three months ago she’s hit at an intersection by a drunk running the red light. She lingered for two days, but her injuries were too severe.

I knew this Christmas would be hard, but had no idea of the intensity of the agony. It hurts. It hurts *physically*.

Halfway through my meal, the phone rings. Oh no. Who on earth calls a lonely old man on Christmas Eve? I consider not answering, but decide answering it is the best way to get rid of it. It’s Susan, my next door neighbor. “Good evening, John, we’re going to the Christmas Eve service and would love to have you join us. It’s at seven-thirty, so we plan to leave at about —”

“No thanks, Susan, I’d — I’d — rather stay home. I’ll find some nice music on the radio.”

“The music at church will be wonderful — the children have been practicing —”

“Susan, for heaven sakes! No! I’d rather be home tonight!” And I abruptly hang up. I stand for a moment, then walk slowly back to the table, annoyed with myself. This is not who I am — lashing out like that. I’m even more miserable now. I sit; slowly finish my meal; put the leftovers in the fridge. In the living room, I turn on the radio.

“ - I’ll be home for Christmas, you can count on me, please have - ” No-no, I can’t take this! I rummage through my CD collection, find a Bach Christmas Cantata, put it in the CD player. This magnificent music moves me to a different place — my tears flow, due to the music, due to my grief, due to my awful behavior tonight. A scrambled blend of emotions.

The next morning I arise at nine. After a quick shower, I fix a breakfast of cold cereal and coffee. I’m still dejected, still remorseful over my treatment of Susan.

As I finish the last of the coffee, I hear faint music. Did I leave the radio on last night? Then as the music grows louder,

I realize it’s coming from outside. I open the door and before I know it, carolers — neighbors and folks

from my church, including kids — are streaming into my living room, singing non-stop. There’s ten; no, twelve, fifteen carolers crammed into my house! They finish with a rousing “We

wish you a Merry Christmas!” It’s not the Mormon Tabernacle Choir, but it sounds wonderful to me! I’m so choked up I can’t thank them.

Susan, who is among them, stays behind, holding a gaily wrapped package. She takes my hand. “It’ll be a long journey,” she says, “usually a year, but often much longer. We all want you to know that you are and always will be a very special member of our neighborhood, and we will help you through this journey as best we can.” Then with a “Merry Christmas!” she hands me the package.

Overwhelmed, I slowly tear it open. It’s a homemade document titled “*Fifteen Dinners and Recipes*,” with a list of fifteen names, each with a date, one each month.

Susan explains. “Once a month, one of us will invite you to his or her home, prepare a dinner, showing you each step in the process, then serve you and the family members; and you will receive a copy of the recipe.”

I am incredulous, speechless. Finally — *Finally* — I sense the vague possibility of future healing and connection with life.



Tom MacLaughlin, resident of Willow Brook at Delaware Run, regularly contributes his fiction writing for Reflections





Jim Bargar,  
Village Resident



## Footprints

Go to any Ohio State Park, Columbus Metro Park, or Delaware County Preservation Park and you will see the footprints of Village resident Jim Bargar.

A landscape architect, Jim spent his career designing parks. He joined the Ohio State Parks after graduation, and “Looking back, it was the best move I could ever have made,” he says.

He planned the state parks at East Harbor and Lake St. Mary, Catawba Island, Delaware, Mohican, Kelley’s Island, Indian Lake, and more.

He knows the land. “You have to walk the area,” he explained. “Your goal is twofold: to preserve natural areas and then to make it possible for people to enjoy them. You need roads, parking, trails, and shelters.”

Jim later became the chief landscape architect at Columbus and Franklin County Metro Parks. He designed Highbanks, Slate Run, Innis Woods, Chestnut Ridge and Sharon Woods parks and contributed to upgrades at several others. Jim retired in 1986.

Retirement lasted for three years, until Jim was recruited to help develop a park system here in Delaware County. He was appointed a parks commissioner and continued until 2014.

Preservation Parks now has grown to eleven sites on nearly a thousand acres. “I would say that the Delaware Preservation Park System is now one of the best mid-sized systems in the state of Ohio,” he stated with a note of modesty mixed with pride.

Jim’s beloved Roxie, with whom he had eloped many years before, died in our Passages memory care



## Chef John Honored

John Lindeboom,  
Corporate Director of  
Culinary Services

Willow Brook’s top chef, John Lindeboom, was named Outstanding Director of

Culinary Services at the Ohio Assisted Living Association’s annual convention in October.

Sixteen years ago, John changed the food culture at Willow Brook. He introduced “restaurant-style” dining to retirement communities in central Ohio, freeing residents from steam tables and cafeteria trays. They began to select their meals from menus or the daily special and then have those meals served to them at tables in the campus restaurants.

John turned to fresh local produce for his menus and has inspired his staff to create recipes that offer variety, freshness and quality.

His experience in the restaurant business began at his father’s restaurant, *Peasant on the Lane*, in Upper Arlington, where he started making salads in the pantry for his dad and moved up to cooking luncheon meals before entering culinary management positions.

He oversees Willow Brook’s restaurants, which are open to the public and offer some of the best Sunday brunch buffets in Delaware.

Winners of this award are selected by a board committee of the Ohio Assisted Living Association.

center, and Jim lives in an apartment at the Village. While he misses Roxie and a daughter who was killed by a drunk driver 30 years ago, he is enjoying his five remaining children and life at Willow Brook.

He says his greatest professional satisfaction came from designing the Columbus Metro Parks and walking the land as he planned. Jim chose Willow Brook as his home because of the trees and natural setting.

But at Willow Brook Jim discovered he got even more. “Eight of us men have ‘our table’ in the Courtyard Restaurant,” he explained. “We talk, and laugh, and carry on. It feels like we are in a family, and I like that I am a part of that family.”

Once again, Jim is leaving footprints, this time in his retirement home.

# Reflections

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**Patient fall of snow affirms  
the serenity and beauty  
of our Blessed Season.**

by Marilyn Schroeder, resident of  
Willow Brook at Delaware Run

*The pond at Willow Brook Christian Village  
Photograph by Lauri Mosher, Office Manager*