



Photo: Nicole Garrett

Pictured above at last year's Fall Fest are (left to right): Village resident Eileen Stimpert, Life Enrichment Coordinator Julie Bardelang-Wolf and residents Phyllis Wood and Davie Esau.

Fall Fun at Willow Brook

Fall is in full swing here at Willow Brook, and that means plenty of outings and activities to enjoy with friends. One of our favorites is Fall Fest at Willow Brook Christian Village in Delaware. Set for Oct. 9 from 2-4 p.m., Fall Fest is an outdoor harvest event featuring bluegrass

music, petting animals and cider pressing, as well as contests including hog calling, seed spitting and a cook-off. As always, our Willow Brook Singers and Rainbow Families will sing and dance. Come enjoy pumpkin donuts and tasty treats with us!

For 41 years now, *Reflections* has been the quarterly chronicle of all things Willow Brook. We launched the newsletter in 1978, three years into my tenure as Willow Brook's leader. Its predecessor had been a mimeographed (google it young people) bulletin that was better than nothing, I suppose. For the past four decades though, every three months we have mailed *Reflections* out to thousands of friends, and now make it available online to who knows how many more.

Call me old school, but I am partial to the paper version, as opposed to the e-variant most ministries are going with lately. My personal experience with emailed newsletters, even those from organizations I care about, is that I will scroll through, catch a few headlines, maybe skim an article, then hit delete. Poof. Gone.

Our paper version, if it's not immediately banished to the round file, may take on a life of days or weeks, or even years. Someone who pulls it from the mailbox may scope a picture or two, browse a story, then lay it on the kitchen counter and put the groceries away. A spouse will come in and maybe read an article, then set it back down. A couple of days later, the first one will pick it up again and read a poem or maybe finish the article she scanned. In this way it is passed back and forth for maybe weeks.

Through the years, *Reflections* has faithfully circulated news of this Christian ministry. In the early days, it was by all accounts a bona fide newsletter, replete with conventional stories about expansions and health department survey results. Its pages held reports of our 13 construction projects (or is it 15 – I forget), including the one where we pulled the roof off a single-story assisted living wing, added two levels above, and replaced the roof above that. Through sunny days and driving storms, we persevered with this crazy project. Crazy, yes, but we got 'er done, and *Reflections* has the photos to prove it.

Nineteen years ago we converted *Reflections* from a newsletter to a journal. We began featuring resident- and staff-created poems and stories and photos. In this issue you can read a poem from our ribbon-winning "poet laureate," John Brinkerhoff, and a reflection on grief from resident Jim Mattox. These revelations of the heart share equal billing with the news of the day.

Since the first issue, I have contributed an essay, usually to be found on the inside front cover. The one you are reading is my 165th. From the get-go, I vowed to shun the time-worn format of the typical CEO's message – *Things are going really well here at Willow Brook; we're moving into fall and residents are doing lots of fun things; come and see us; oh, and please send a donation.*

Yawn.

My writings are poetic meditations on the soul of Willow Brook. One explained why I commissioned

A Golden Ribbon

by Larry Harris, CEO

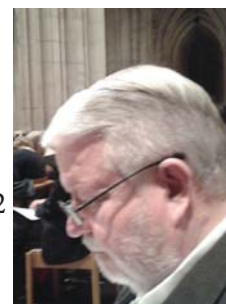
the plantings of thousands of trees on our campuses. In another I told you about a resident with a pet chicken. In another I confessed my broken heart at the death of our founder and my mentor, Frank Chappell. Likewise for a couple of civil rights icons it had been our privilege to serve in their last days. I have never shied away from writings about death. After all, we are running retirement communities and nursing homes where funerals are an all-too-frequent fact of life.

In keeping with our aspiration of *Reflections* as a journal, half my essays have nothing to do with Willow Brook. I told you about a little mouse that wintered with Janet and me one year – had the run of the house – and a spider named Charlotte whose web became Janet's lead Christmas gift for me, and my sorrow at leaving Burlington one year – a "second home" Janet and I adopted 20 years ago. My pieces have been known to reflect on the brevity of life, mean people, the heartbreak of Alzheimer's, a manger and a cross, the mindless pursuit of lucre, the mystery of love, and the pride of fatherhood.

Hands down the most difficult for me was when I told you about a car wreck I caused in 1970 that resulted in the other driver's miscarriage. A 49-year old woman is not walking the planet today because of my youthful carelessness.

Reflections is a golden ribbon that threads our beautiful story, and ties together all the joys, the celebrations, and the heartbreaks of 41 years. It is not your typical newsletter. Many of you have told me so. And it has been my high privilege to have collaborated with four editors on every page – all 1,312 of them.

Larry Harris, CEO
lharris@willow-brook.org



Releasing Grief, 71 years later

by **Jim Mattox**

Let me take you back to a day in 1934. I was seven years old and lived with my parents, three sisters and two brothers in Virginia, where my father operated a little country bank. When it was time for my oldest sister to return to college, my oldest brother offered to drive her, and my mother and another sister went, too.

I was in class in first grade when someone walked into the room to speak to my teacher. The teacher let out a loud scream and ran from the room. A few minutes later another person came in and said, "Jimmy Mattox, I want you to go to the principal's office."

My sister was in the office, waiting for me, and the principal said, "I'm taking you home." It turned out he didn't take us home; he dropped us at our neighbor's house.

We saw my father sitting on the front porch with my brother on his lap, and both of them were crying. My sister and I ran to them. My father took us up on his lap and told us that there had been an automobile accident. My mother, brother and two sisters had all been killed.

The next day, there was a big funeral. It happened so fast because the car had caught fire in the accident, and my family members were burned. They couldn't preserve the bodies, so they needed to bury them.

Two days later, I tried to talk to my sister about the accident. She said, "Shh. Daddy will hear us, and he'll start crying again." That was a message to me: don't

talk about it.

And I didn't, not for 71 years. By then my father had died, and I had found his newspaper clips about the accident, and the sign-up sheet of the 1,000 people who attended the funeral. It was emotional reading, but I didn't talk about it. Then one day I was in the church office, and a lady asked me about my family.

Suddenly the vision of my Dad sitting on that front porch sobbing hit me. I broke down and cried like a baby. I cried so loud, people in the next room came in to see what was going on.

Once I told that story, everything became more natural. I still tear up a bit, but this is something I don't intentionally hold onto. So my advice is:

Don't hold it back. Express your feelings, talk about it.

Now I'm 92. It's been 14 years since I broke down. My life, I'm just wondering how I would have been different had I released this pain a long time ago. Once I had expressed it, then I was able to talk about it.

Jim Mattox, a resident of Delaware Run, shared his story at a Willow Brook GriefShare support group. He encourages anyone suffering a loss to attend.



*Jim Mattox,
Delaware Run Resident*

My life, I'm just wondering how I would have been different had I released this pain a long time ago. Once I had expressed it, then I was able to talk about it.

GriefShare is a caring group of people who will walk alongside you through one of life's most difficult experiences, the death of a loved one. At Willow Brook, you don't have to bear this sorrow alone. Please join us.

Willow Brook GriefShare groups meet the fourth Monday of the month

- 10:30 a.m. at Willow Brook Christian Village
- 4:00 p.m. at Willow Brook at Delaware Run

Tribute Gifts

Memorial Contributions

May 13 – August 26, 2019

Richard C. Atkinson

Carol A. Roden

Kenny Belcher

Helen J. Reppart

Helen Burner

Corinne D. Esau

John R. Burns, Sr.

Curtis & Genevieve Burns

Lois “Jeanne” Busch

Bruce & Barbara Reiersen

Frances Carlton

April L. Jackson

S. Frank & Betty Chappell

Larry & Janet Harris

Karen Susenna

Gary Cormany

Bud & Azelene Bond

John Boyer

Bruce & Barbara Reiersen

M. Sharon Snyder

Robert & Cheryl Stickrath

Genevieve Crandall

David & Mary Kay Geiger

Charles & Peggy Woods

Nancy DeTray

Lisa Mack

Genevieve “Genny” Fisher

Corinne D. Esau

Dorothy Florance

Corinne D. Esau

Vivian Gaskalla

Ohio FAIR Plan Underwriting

Association

D. Jeannine Hall

William & Jean Baskwill

Joan Lee Eckhardt

Robert & Mary Holm

Margaret Roberts

Audrey & Alberta Harris

Larry & Janet Harris

John T. Hayes

Karen S. Hayes

James E. Jackson

Mitchell & Dyana Welch

Manuel L. Johnson

Mariella C. Dunnan

Corinne D. Esau

Manuel Johnson, continued

Douglas & Elaine Palmer

Helen J. Reppart

John “Jack” McGraw

Helen J. Reppart

Aldyth B. Meyer

Judith Meyer-Clancy

Richard & Cynthia Schlichting

Myles Nelson

Corinne D. Esau

Dorothea M. Patterson

Ohio FAIR Plan Underwriting

Association

James Patterson

Cindy Taylor

Georgianna “Jo” Pierce

Robert England

Corinne D. Esau

Arlene Palenshus

Bruce & Barbara Reiersen

Helen J. Reppart

Willow Brook Christian Village

Residents Advisory Council

Evelyn Winter

Jack A. Pore

M. Jane Pore

Florence Poulson

Thomas & Sara Poulson

Gene & Emma “Maude” Prince

Larry & Janet Harris

Rebecca L. Harris

Don Rankey, Sr.

Cindy Taylor

Clara G. Ratigan

Bruce & Barbara Reiersen

Mary C. Roden

Carol A. Roden

Don Rost

Thomas & Sara Poulson

Florabelle “Flo” Rower

Laurie Almstead-Campos

Corinne D. Esau

Joseph & Constance Krucky &

Family

Thomas Rountree

Thomas & Sandra White

Patricia Willman

Richard “Dick” Singer

Corinne D. Esau

Arlene Palenshus

Douglas & Elaine Palmer

Helen J. Reppart

Willow Brook Christian Village

Residents Advisory Council

Evelyn Winter

Lawrence “Larry” Smith

William D. Ahonen

Corinne D. Esau

Arlene Palenshus

Douglas & Elaine Palmer

Helen J. Reppart

Willow Brook Christian Village

Residents Advisory Council

Evelyn Winter

Theodoric “Ted” Smith

Bruce & Barbara Reiersen

John Stout

Mariella C. Dunnan

Corinne D. Esau

Norma Hagloch

Helen Nally

Arlene Palenshus

Helen J. Reppart

Donald & Amy Jo Sommers

William Warner

Evelyn Winter

Corrine Snyder-Poulson

Thomas & Sara Poulson

George F. Wellman

Lucretia M. Wellman

Dwight W. Welsh

Bruce & Barbara Reiersen

Robert Whisman

Corinne D. Esau

Arlene Palenshus

Douglas & Elaine Palmer

Helen J. Reppart

Hilda Wick

Corinne D. Esau

Max Wildermuth

Jayne W. MacKay

Nancy M. Wilson

Bruce & Barbara Reiersen

Don Wuertz

Glenn & Sara Beaber

Lois Dale

Helen J. Reppart

Nicki V. Zanetos

Lisa Mack

Tribute Gifts
made to honor
the living

Barbara England’s birthday

Laura England

Robert England

Harry Humes’ Birthday

Corinne D. Esau

Alan Johnston and Heather

MacLaughlin

Lois Dale

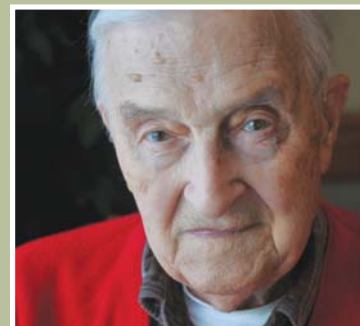
William A. “Bill” McCartney

Angela Schwartz-Mead

Genevieve Peterson

Lois Dale

This issue is in memory of Ronald Dill, former resident of Willow Brook Christian Home. The Home was built on Dill’s family farm, which his grandfather purchased in 1893.





Tacos are Tops!

A winner once again! Willow Brook Christian Home took first place for its appetizer at The Taste of Worthington, a food festival sponsored by the Worthington Area Chamber of Commerce.

Chef Eric Radcliff (left) and Bill Kutanon helped prepare the winning dish: duck confit street tacos. That makes 11 years of first-place wins. So proud of Team Home!

Snapshots of Willow Brook's History

As a little girl in Vinton County, Ohio, Marie McMasters rose early to gather eggs for breakfast on her family farm. Now she sits down to scrambled eggs prepared every morning at Willow Brook Christian Home.

Servers know to bring her hot coffee too, but few know that McMasters, 95, was one of the original supporters of The Home.

Back in early 1970s, when the Home was just a dream, McMasters and her husband, Beryl, donated money to make the nursing home a reality. They were inspired by Leslie Ward, an elder at their church in Columbus (now the Northland Church of Christ). Ward saw a growing need to care for the elderly.

"Leslie came to our house and asked us about what type of nursing home was needed," she says. "We told him it should be very clean and very cheap."

When The Home opened in 1972, McMasters volunteered alongside leaders Frank and Betty Chappell. "I helped Betty Chappell's mother do hair for the residents," she remembers. She joined church members who led Bible studies and hymn singing at The Home.



Marie McMasters enjoys her regular chats with Dana Slingluff, Willow Brook chaplain. She was one of the early supporters of The Home.

"It's just like home cooking," Marie says of the tasty food at The Home.

"We were one of the very first groups to volunteer, and our church continues to this day." In fact, McMasters attends every week.

When Marie and Beryl needed a helping hand, they knew where to go: assisted living at The Home. Beryl passed away in 2017, but Marie carries on. As for her early vision for The Home, she says, "It's very clean, but not so cheap because of all the nursing home regulations."

McMasters marvels at how much the Home has grown. "I really enjoy it here. The care is very good, and so is the food. It's just like home cooking." She relishes her eggs, bacon and raisin bread every morning. Just like back on the farm.



Mary Holm of Willow Brook, co-chair of LLI steering committee

Seniors Head Back to School

Who says “Back to School” is just for kids? This fall, 250 seniors in Central Ohio enrolled in the new Lifelong Learning Institute at Ohio Wesleyan University in Delaware, Ohio.

Willow Brook is playing a big role in this initiative, launched to create stimulating ways for older adults to continue learning and growing. The program is offering 10 courses this fall, including one by John Lindeboom, director of culinary services at Willow Brook Christian Village. His class, “Veg Centric – Trending Now: Cooking with Seasonal Vegetables,” filled up immediately and takes place at The Village.

Delaware Run residents Bob and Mary Holm are co-chairs of the steering committee of community and university representatives who are creating the institute. Chief Executive Officer Larry Harris and Delaware Run residents Wayne Moore and Norm Weston also serve on the committee. The OWU program is patterned after an institute at the University of Dayton. For details, visit www.owu.edu/lli.



Willow Brook residents submitted a record 75 entries to LeadingAge’s Art & Writing Show. Three residents took home ribbons at the state show in Columbus. Pictured from left are Brenda Spradling, Peg Simone, Maria Roslan and Irene Blaszkowiak.

WILLOW BROOK CHRISTIAN COMMUNITIES

Worthington, Ohio

Willow Brook Christian Home

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

- Rehabilitation
- Skilled nursing
- Long-term care
- Assisted living

Delaware, Ohio

Willow Brook Christian Village

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

- Retirement living
- Assisted living
- Rehabilitation
- Skilled nursing
- Memory care
- Long-term care
- Adult day services

Willow Brook at Delaware Run

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

- Retirement living
- Transitional living
- Assisted living
- Memory care
- Medical offices

Reflections is published quarterly by

Willow Brook Christian Communities

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

Erin MacLellan, Editor
Joel Hornsby, Designer

not for profit • Church of Christ
www.willow-brook.org



Savvy Senior's Nightly Date with Facebook

Anna Frances Lasley, 99, Willow Brook Christian Village resident, loves to use Facebook as a way to keep up with her friends and family. Lasley makes sure to set aside time at 8 p.m. every evening to use the public computer and log onto her favorite social media platform.

Beyond Golden: a poem of love

By John Brinkerhoff

Fortunes have always been measured
by the weight of silver and gold,
or the cold, hypnotic dazzle of cut and polished stones—
the currency of countries and kings.

But consider the value of holding hands as we walked
and talked quietly about ambitions and dreams,
and how we did not notice the hours slipping by,
so surprised were we two becoming one.

Set on the scale the worth of each child's tears and smiles
while we watched the seasons fly away from us,
knowing, of course, that they would do the same one day.
We prayed for their return with children of their own. Remember?

Now, time has brought us together again, and slowed once more,
to restore our days through memories and laughter among friends,
and free us to explore places and passions long since set aside—
simply for the pride of having done all we could or wished to do.

This is the time for counting, and when I look at you and you at me,
we see the immeasurable wealth stored in our hearts,
and realize that this life we have shared, you and I,
no king could ever buy.

John Brinkerhoff, Delaware Run resident, wrote this poem for Willow Brook's upcoming Beyond Golden celebration, which honors couples married 50 years or more. He was inspired by his wonderful marriage to his wife, Jan. Couples from the community will celebrate this annual event on Oct. 12 with music, food and fellowship at Delaware Run.

We Did It Yet Again!

We are grateful to readers of *The Delaware Gazette* for voting Willow Brook best retirement community, best assisted living and best nursing home in Delaware County. In an era where new facilities are opening all the time, and people have many choices, we are honored to be voted the best.



Reflections

Willow Brook Christian Communities
100 Delaware Crossing West
Delaware, Ohio 43015

Address service requested

Please call 740-201-5688
with address updates.



NONPROFIT ORG
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
DELAWARE, OH
PERMIT #102

A drumroll, please...

For Caleb Richardson, a server at the Water's Edge Restaurant at Delaware Run. A freshman at Ohio State University in Columbus, Richardson was chosen for the one open position on the 32-member drum team in the celebrated OSU marching band. It's rare for a freshman to make the band, and he beat out many upperclassmen.

His supervisor at work, Shelly Stewart, is proud of Richardson's success.

"It's really well deserved," says Stewart, dining room supervisor and event manager. "Caleb works very hard and is full of determination. He's outgoing and friendly to all of the residents and staff, and we're very happy for him."

Wishing Richardson all the best in the next four years!

