



Carolyn Alcorn-Simpson receives her second and final dose of COVID-19 vaccine at Willow Brook Christian Home.

Vaccines Bring Hope to Willow Brook

Sue McGarvey, nursing home resident at Willow Brook Christian Home, had waited a long time for this day.

Vaccination Day. Sue rolled up her sleeve to receive her second shot of the life-saving vaccine for the COVID-19 virus, the same virus that had taken the life of her beloved husband, Roy. He died in April last year when the deadly germs swept through The Home. Both Sue and Roy contracted COVID, but only Sue survived.

"I miss Roy most during my evening prayers,"

Sue said of the man who loved the Buckeyes and was nicknamed "Mr. Fantastic." She added, "I don't want to get sick again. My daughter, Pam, is a nurse practitioner, and she told me I should do whatever I could to get this vaccine."

Sue was one among hundreds of residents and staff at the three Willow Brook campuses to

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*Hope is the thing with feathers
That perches in the soul
And sings the tune without the words
And never stops at all.*

Emily Dickinson, American poet
1830-1886

I do believe our COVID fever is breaking. At last. The numbers are sure trending the right direction – new infections, hospital admissions, and virus deaths all are heading down, down, and down.

Within the three Willow Brooks, we appear to be shaking ourselves free of the pernicious bugs that have vexed us for a year. In fact, the Pfizer vaccine is flat out working a miracle for us. Through a series of CVS-sponsored vaccination clinics this winter at all three of our communities, more than 95 percent of residents rolled up their sleeves to accept injections of the life-saving antibody. With staff, it was less – some 60 percent. A fair number who declined had been sick with COVID in the past year and felt (hoped!) that they had natural immunity.

The vaccine has worked as advertised. Indeed, Willow Brook is a textbook study. Our outbreaks have been brought to a screeching halt. I mean, overnight they stopped – just like that. Since a year ago March, we have enjoyed only rare breathers when there were no COVID cases in our ranks, either residents or staff. Since early February this year, there have been none at all.

I don't want to stoke up a facemask bonfire in the parking lot just yet, but things are looking good.

The past 12 months for us have been, in a word, awful. Twenty-four residents have died. Does that not break your heart? Among staff, some 140 were hit with the virus. Some fell dreadfully ill, but all now are recovered. Nationwide, some 3,000 healthcare workers have died of COVID exposures at their jobs. I drop to my knees thanking God that none of my peeps has been in their number.

We have seen heroes rise up among us this past year – just ordinary people on my team who responded to the call and gave all they had. I am deeply moved

when I reflect on their sacrifices. And they all are just so humble about it. ("It was nothing. I was just doing my job.") Na-uh. It was *something*! They willingly put themselves and their families at risk each day and each night they walked unblinking onto a nursing floor or apartment wing that they knew to be "radioactive." They didn't know then how things would turn out, even though we made sure they were outfitted with PPE – the best our dollars could buy. We paid out many thousands in extra "COVID pay" – combat

pay, if you will, for their hazardous duty. But this small price is hardly proportionate

to their great risk, in my humble opinion. Nothing could ever be enough.

What a beautiful bunch of people! They have earned my eternal respect and thanks.

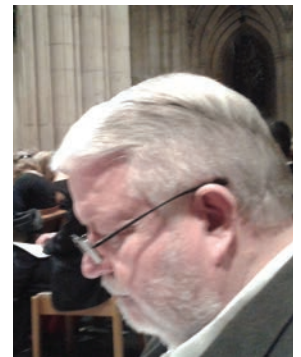
The past 12 months have been one long dark night at Willow Brook. A COVID cloud has shrouded our communities, inflicting sorrow and death we thought would never end. But dawn has broken. Our tortuous night of tears has given way to the light of a jubilant new day breaking in the east. Hope is wafting in on fresh spring breezes.

The vaccine has brought us deliverance. Thank you white-coated scientists and researchers; thank you volunteers in the clinical trials; thank you Pfizer,

Moderna, Johnson & Johnson and all the others; thank you Willow Brook residents and staff who presented your arms to the needles. I remember that Sunday morning last December watching on TV the FedEx trucks pull out of the Pfizer plant in Michigan as they set off down the yellow brick road. Salvation on 18 wheels they were. Janet and I had chills.

Now millions have been vaccinated. Billions more are cued and waiting. I do believe our COVID fever is breaking. At last.

Larry Harris, CEO
lharris@willow-brook.org

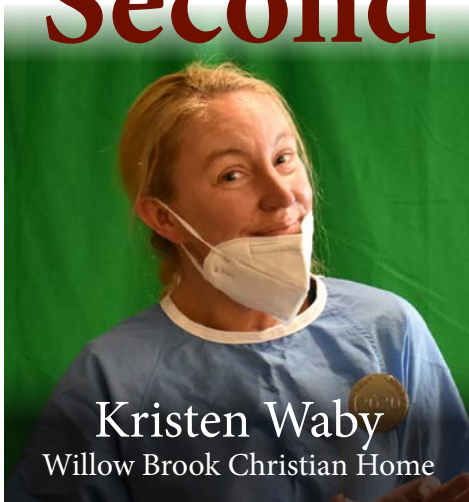


The Light of a Jubilant New Day

by Larry Harris, CEO

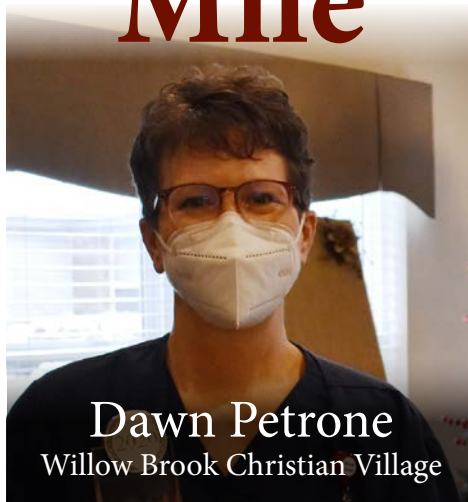
***The past 12 months for us
have been, in a word,
awful.***

Second Mile Award



Kristen Waby

Willow Brook Christian Home



Dawn Petrone

Willow Brook Christian Village



Tara Ross

Willow Brook at Delaware Run



*Kacy Meade, assisted living director
at Willow Brook Christian Home.*

Congratulations to the 2020 winners of the prestigious Second Mile Award for staff members whose service is deemed exceptional. Recipients are Kristen Waby (Director of Culinary Services, Home), Dawn Petrone (RN, Village) and Tara Ross (Wellness Nurse, Delaware Run). These devoted staff members have earned the love and respect of their colleagues and residents for their distinguished service to Willow Brook and for always going the extra mile to serve others.

Perfect Inspections!

Since Kacy Meade became director of the assisted living floor at Willow Brook Christian Home five years ago, all annual inspections from the Ohio Department of Health have been perfect – no deficiencies! The records at our other two assisted livings are near-perfect as well. Quality reigns supreme at Willow Brook, as the Health Department will attest.

In Decembers past, some 500 Willow Brook staffers and their guests have gathered for a rousing Christmas party celebration, with a live band, staff awards, and door prizes valued into six figures. Due to COVID-19, the party went virtual last year.

Emcees for the digital event were (l-r) Larry Harris, CEO; Amy Ranaletta, accounting department; Christy Turner, activities director (Home); and John Regalsky, village manager (Delaware Run).



Tribute Gifts

Memorial Contributions November 19, 2020 – February 21, 2021

Ray & Alice Andrews

John & Sue Dickman
David & Elizabeth Golden

Richard C. Atkinson

Carol A. Roden

R. Dean Bower

Corinne D. Esau

John Brinkerhoff

Lloyd & Alice Baker
John & Sue Dickman
Robert & Mary Holm
Grace M. Lang

Vada Brown

Grace M. Lang

John R. Burns, Sr.

Curtis & Genevieve Burns

Verila "Virgie" Bussman

Mark & Christine Bussman

Frances Carlton

April L. Jackson

Junior Chamberlin

Corinne D. Esau

S. Frank & Betty Chappell

Larry & Janet Harris
Karen Susenna

Gwenolyn Cloud

Craig Freshour
Jim Schmidt
Sandra Stewart
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Lisa Mack

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The Williams Agency

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Grace M. Lang

Dorothy "Jean" Dopkiss

Corinne D. Esau
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Douglas & Elaine Palmer
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Barbara & Lee Shaw
Donald & Amy Jo Sommers
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Jean L. Flahive

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Margery Forry

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Evelyn Winter

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Alexander & Elinor Heingartner
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Kathi West
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Melissa Scoville

Linda Lupton

Richard Lupton

Marjorie Lyden

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Tony & Teresa Heald
Thomas & Pamela Keifer
Jeralynn Klasik
James & Pauline Kossow
Fang Yao

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Grace M. Lang

Annabelle McCreary

Corinne D. Esau
Lucretia M. Wellman

Evelyn Messina

E. Frederick & Joan Manter

Myles Nelson

Douglas Vrona

Edward Pawlik

Edward Pawlik

Mary Pfeiffer

Priscilla Lord

Florence Poulson

Thomas & Sara Poulson

Gene & Emma "Maude" Prince

Benjamin Harris & Christina
Barry

Larry & Janet Harris

Rebecca L. Harris

William Reidenbach

Grace M. Lang

Mary C. Roden

Carol A. Roden

Don Rost

Thomas & Sara Poulson

Beverly Rowe

Josephine G. Bichsel
Rosemary Coe
Mariella C. Dunnan
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Keye & Cathy Simpkins

Mary Kay Sheets

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Mary Kay Sheets continued

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Elvena "Tommie" Stranahan

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J. Richard & R. Marlene Swisher

Francis "Buck" Stultz

Robert & Mary Holm

Corrine Snyder-Poulson

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Francis & Nancy Ryneearson

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Phyllis Wood

Donald & Amy Jo Sommers

Diane Yothers

Dianne L. Almendinger
John & Sue Dickman
Grace M. Lang

Nicki V. Zanetos

Lisa Mack

Tribute Gifts made to honor the living

Beatrice Croston

Emily S. Dietz

Larry & Janet Harris

Robert & Linda Gaffey

Betsy Johnson

Kathi West

Anna Lasley's 100th Birthday

Corinne D. Esau
Melissa Scoville

Connie McNeal

James & Pauline Kossow

Ken & Genevieve Peterson

Jane Moore

Roger A. Pickens

David Ashmore

Robin Weier

Judith L. Earich

Alter Ego

By John Brinkerhoff

We are the same,
but nothing alike.

When one shoves roughly forward,
the other is disappointed by his weakness.

One can be fierce and unforgiving,
the other, kind and embracing.

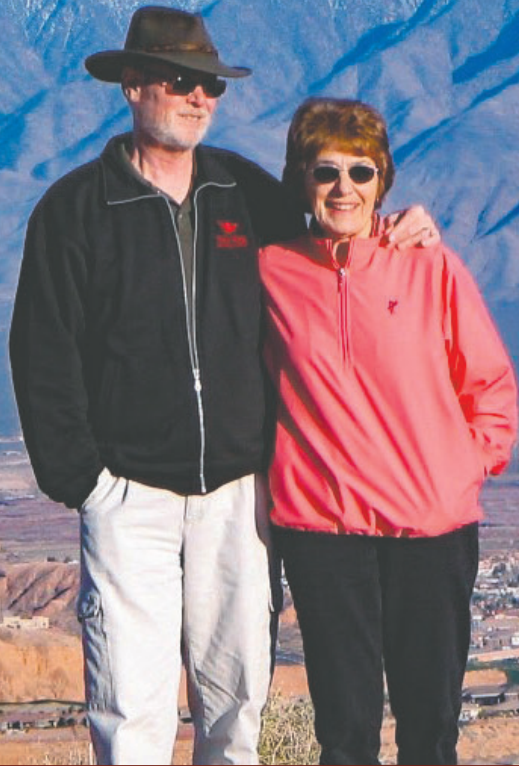
One can be rude and resentful,
the other, prayerful and obedient.

We don't know which is real,
and which is the practiced pretender.

Is one an author of wreckage,
or a guardian of righteousness?

Perhaps one exists to conceal the other,
or both are imagined as what each wishes to be.

No matter. In the end, a glorious transformation
will absolve one of us of his secrets,
while the other wanders in gloom, eyes cast down,
looking for a place to rest in Judas' field.



Remembering John

Willow Brook lost its "Poet Laureate" last fall. Delaware Run resident John Brinkerhoff died November 23, a victim of lung cancer, with complications of COVID-19. John and his wife, Jan, moved to a twin-single home at Willow Brook at Delaware Run in 2016.

"John had an eye for life's daily dramas, both great and small, and an astonishing ability to convert those insights into writings of amazing impact,"



observed CEO Larry Harris.

His poetry was featured in many editions of *Reflections*. One of his final writings, *Alter Ego*, is presented here. It is with great sadness that we submit this as his final entry into our journal's pages.

"I am missing John more than I can say," says Harris. "Willow Brook and the world are diminished. We have lost a beautiful mind."

THE PEDESTRIAN

Staffer's Video Game Takes Off

Willow Brook's own Joel Hornsby has hit the bigtime in video game creation. He and two of his friends developed a video game that has grown legs. *The Pedestrian*, a seven-year project of the trio, has reached an accumulation of YouTube video views well surpassing 10 million. It has been released on PlayStation and computers, with releases set for Switch and Xbox. The game's popularity is soaring!

Joel is Willow Brook's social media director, with responsibility for the Willow Brook website, as well as the ministry's presence on Facebook and other social media. His partners in the game's development are brothers Jed and Daniel Lackey, both former Willow Brook staffers.

They started pursuing their dream in a bedroom of the Lackey household when they were barely into their 20s. After raising over \$30,000 dollars with a Kickstarter campaign, they converted a garage into their

studio where they spent many days and late nights perfecting the game.

Before *The Pedestrian* launched, it was featured at several major gaming exhibitions, including SXSW in Austin, PAX East in Boston, and GDEX in Columbus, where it swept Best in Show awards in all categories, and was nominated for Gamer's Choice.

To engage Joel in a conversation, you would never know he is a gamer's legend in the making. So humble, he always has an "awe shucks" response to his admirers. Says Joel, "We were just doing something that was fun to us, and it looks like it has turned into something."



Social Media Coordinator, Joel Hornsby (top),
Jed and Daniel Lackey (right)



During COVID-19 quarantine, residents had to get creative with their entertainment. To bring joy, Delaware Run resident music group, The Outsiders, recorded a Valentine's Day concert for all to enjoy. The 35 minute concert was played on the in-house TV station on our campuses.

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receive the Pfizer vaccine this winter.

More than 95 percent of Willow Brook's residents chose to get the shots at Willow Brook's vaccination clinics, administered by CVS. Fewer employees took advantage of the opportunity, with rates varying from 52 to 76 percent. Says Willow Brook CEO, Larry Harris, "For reasons I cannot comprehend, some staff members turned down their opportunity for deliverance. This is a real head scratcher for me, but it was their choice."

"You're not just getting the vaccine for yourself; you're getting it to protect others, too."

Still, many staffers were eager for the shots. Zach Hull, Ethan Shroat and Scott Schreiber, servers in the Water's Edge Restaurant at Delaware Run, were so determined to get the vaccine, they drove back the 60 miles to Delaware from Indian Lake, where they had gone for a week to fish and hike.

"This is something we had to do," said Shroat, age 18. "You're not just getting the vaccine for yourself; you're getting it to protect others, too."

At Willow Brook Christian Village, apartment resident Davie Esau got the vaccine. "I signed up right away," said Esau, a retired nurse. "I'm so grateful to the scientists who have worked on the vaccines."

Back at Willow Brook Christian Home, Sue McGarvey feels that Willow Brook is more prepared for COVID battle now.

Last spring, when Roy and Sue got sick, tests essentially were not available, and Willow Brook had to scramble frantically to get personal protective equipment for staff. "It was a scary time," said Harris. "We were flying blind."

In fact, when Roy died, his obituary carried this poignant message: "In lieu of flowers/contributions, the family requests that you write your congressman and local politicians and encourage them to provide COVID-19 testing for our most vulnerable populations and their caregivers."



Jacob Coy, nursing aide at Willow Brook at Delaware Run, receiving his first dose of the COVID-19 vaccine.



Sue McGarvey and her Roy

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Willow Brook at Delaware Run

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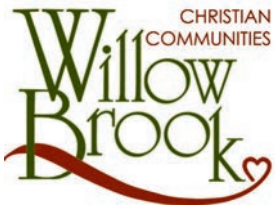
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Spring peeks out like a curious doe
Happy to see winter go
Goodbye, freezing days
Hello, sunny rays
-Becca Camp,
Server at Willow Brook Christian Village



*Photo by Joyce
Stambaugh, resident of
Willow Brook Christian
Village. Since moving
in 25 years ago, she
has snapped more than
50,000 photographs of
wildlife behind her home.*

