

*"...even there your hand shall lead me,
and your right hand shall hold me fast."*

Psalm 139:10



Photo by Heather Groves, hospice nurse



As you were, Lieutenant Colonel

Willow Brook recently lost one of its few remaining World War II heroes. Lt. Col. Charles Allen died one evening in March with a family member and

hospice nurse at his side. He was 102. Charles moved to an apartment at Willow Brook at Delaware Run in 2012 and later transferred to assisted living.

During World War II, Charles flew a B-24 bomber on missions over Europe. On his 7th run, a mid-flight change of targets added distance to the round-trip flight. They ran out of fuel over German-held territory in Yugoslavia and ditched the plane into a mountainside.

Charles and his ten-member crew survived their parachute jumps and were met on the ground by members of the Yugoslav underground, Tito Partisans who were helping

downed allied flight crews escape to safety. After a two-month trek on foot, he returned safely to his base in Italy. He went on to serve 30 years in the U.S. Air Force, with combat missions not only in WWII, but the Korean and Vietnam Wars as well.

On his 100th birthday in 2018, Charles fulfilled his wish of piloting a plane for one last time. With help from a friend who owned a plane, Charles taxied down the runway of the Delaware, Ohio, airport and took off. He flew over Delaware Run and commanded the plane as expertly as when he flew the B-24 in wartime.

A soft-spoken gentleman always, Charles struck up a friendship with 105-year-old assisted living resident, Ila Phillips. In the photo above, that's her hand clasping his arm the night before his death. We are going to miss Lt. Col. Allen something awful.

*Earth is the cradle of humanity,
but mankind cannot stay in the cradle forever.*

Konstantin Tsiolkovsky
1857-1935

The other night, well past sundown, Janet and I were sitting together on our back deck basking in the dim glow of a smiling crescent moon. We looked up and marveled anew that people like us actually walked on the face of that ancient orb, the primordial guardian of our nights, 53 years ago. It's true. Human footprints are up there, stamped into two and a half inches of stardust settled on the moon's surface over eons past. Well, actually, the prints are those of space boots that sheathed human feet, but still they are sure proof that once upon a time, we were there.

Those imprints represent the first time we stepped with gallant courage onto a galactic body not our own. In a fiery launch that sent us forth into the heavens, we broke the chains of gravity that lash us to earth and cued up the second chapter of the human story.

Since the beginning of days, the moon has been the mysterious object of naive speculation in our night sky. I remember in the 1950s sitting in a third grade science lesson hearing that the dark splotches on the moon's surface could possibly be lunar lakes and oceans. "Mares" the ancients called them, a Latin term meaning seas, for that is what they thought them to be. And as a child, we still believed that to be a possibility, though we were having our doubts. Turns out they are great floods of basaltic lava that long ago spilled out over the moon's face. My third grade class was dog paddling in a receding pool of ignorance about to be drained for all time.

Three cars back, I drove a Toyota Rav-4 for ten years, racking up 180,000 miles before I handed it off to my son. He pushed the odometer on up to 250,000. That's about how far away the moon is. Steve and I drove that car to the moon, or so I like to believe. Put in that perspective, the moon isn't so awfully far away. And if we humans put our resolve where our mouths are, we soon may be launching a manned mission to Mars, our planetary neighbor 39 million miles from

us at its closest approach. That's 150 times the distance from earth to moon.

Holy moly! A human journey there will be exponentially more difficult than our first venture to a destination beyond earth, but I'm sure hearing a lot of chatter about it. If we hadn't already done the moon thing, I would say, yeah right, tell me another good one. But those in a much better position than I to hold an enlightened opinion are saying yes, a manned journey to Mars is in the realm of the possible.

I don't know about you, but all this makes me feel dreadfully small. Yet as I go about my daily business, our earth seems so roomy. How is that? There are many coves and corners I have not visited and never will. Our planet is flush with mountains I will never climb, oceans I will never sail, and sprawling cities and unassuming villages I will never scout. Earth is vast, and yet it isn't. When viewed through a wide aperture, our planetary home is a mere grain of sand on a cosmic ocean shore. There are billions upon billions upon trillions of heavenly bodies out there, flung like pixie dust by the hand of God across the cosmos. Earth is but one pinpoint fleck in his awe-inspiring assemblage.

Let's cherish our planet and tend it as we would a lush garden of delicate flowers. And let's come to see our fellow gardeners – all 7 billion of them – as unique children of God, worthy of our respect and honor.

At once, we mortals have the demonstrated capacity for Mother Teresa-styled love, and a Nazi Holocaust. Let's sweep the hate and malice from our midst. It's not that hard people, if we will only try. Two thousand years ago God delivered to us a perfect example. We promptly crucified that example, but we were shown the way nevertheless.

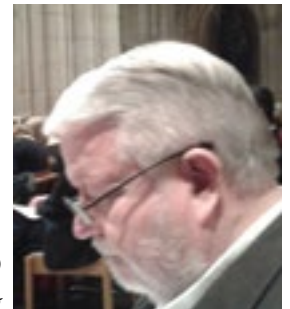
If we do load up a spaceship with ambassadors and send them over to Mars, let's take pains to export our love with them. Leave the meanness here. Let's not defile a second planet.

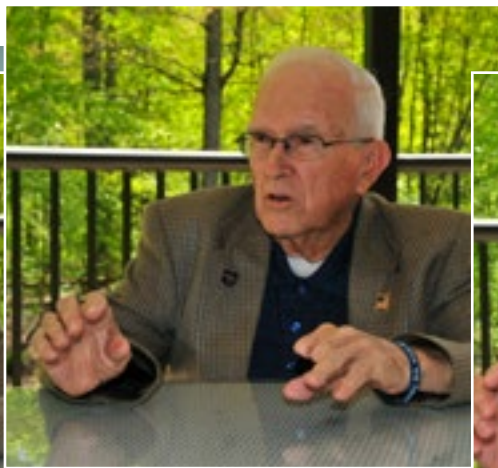
Pixie Dust

by Larry Harris, CEO

*...we mortals have the demonstrated capacity
for Mother Teresa-styled love, and
a Nazi Holocaust.*

Larry Harris, CEO
lharris@willow-brook.org





Leroy Bumpus

Willow Brook Board Member

Marks 50 Years of Service

This fall, Leroy Bumpus will mark his 50th year of service on the Willow Brook Board of Trustees. His tenure goes back to the founding of the ministry, having joined the board four months before the first community, Willow Brook Christian Home, opened its doors. We recently sat down with Leroy and asked him to reflect on a half century of service.

What led you to join the Willow Brook ministry in 1971?

In the fall of 1971, a wonderful friend, for whom I had a great admiration, David Myers, was serving as a Willow Brook trustee. He contacted me and asked if I would consider joining the board. Upon his recommendation, I said yes and the board approved me. I was honored to be given the opportunity to become a part of this outstanding ministry.

Reflect on those early days of Willow Brook.

In the 1960s, the board intended to build a senior care facility. Before we broke ground, a little 25-bed nursing home north of Columbus became available for sale. It was a better opportunity for us, given our limited resources. It had been a family-run operation, and it was obvious the main concern was profit, not the needs of the residents. I always said it was a little nursing home waiting for someone to love it.

It had lots of problems – plumbing in disrepair, well water that smelled of sulfur, and staffing issues.

We tackled them one by one and began to create a brighter future. David Myers served as a volunteer administrator until we hired Larry Harris.

Leslie Ward was instrumental in Willow Brook's founding. Tell us about his involvement.

Leslie was the original visionary for the Willow Brook ministry. He put together the original board in the 1960s and was deeply involved in those early years. He died in 1980, before our first expansion project at The Home, so he never got to see any of our progress. I have no doubt he would be thrilled beyond measure with the tremendous growth and service of the Willow Brook ministry.

In 1980, you had reservations about that first expansion project, when we expanded The Home from 25 to 50 beds. What if we hadn't taken that first step toward growth? Are you glad you were out-voted?

My background is in banking, and that tended to make me financially conservative. My concern was just that, not the essence or the worthiness of the project. My ability to visualize 15 or 20 years ahead is not the best. But there were those on the board who were able to, most notably Frank Chappell, George Wellman and Bill Pittman. I am glad they prevailed, but a board needs all types to be successful.

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Charles D. Allen

Glenn & Sara Beaber
John & Sue Dickman
Dottie Knight
Robert & Nancy Rietz

Ray & Alice Andrews

Terrie Winnett

Richard C. Atkinson

Carol A. Roden

Jack Barkhurst

Mariella C. Dunnan
Corinne D. Esau
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Douglas & Elaine Palmer
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Alice Thomas

Frank & Nancy Rynearson

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Max Wildermuth

Jayne W. MacKay

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Corinne D. Esau

Virginia M. Wuertz

Dianne L. Almendinger
Lois Dale
Delaware Women's Club
John & Sue Dickman
Dottie Knight
Karma Wuertz

Dave Yohn

Carol Yohn

Nicki V. Zanetos

Lisa Mack

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made to honor
the living

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Douglas & Janice Swanson

Lorraine Howell

Greg & Peggy Tidwell

Dana Slingluff

John & Audrey Hall

Village Assisted Living Renovations

Our Reflections readers get the first glimpse of the room renovations at Willow Brook Christian Village's Centrum Assisted Living. Updates include new entryways featuring kitchenettes complete with



Centrum assisted living resident, Janet Marshall, fills her watering can in the new kitchenette sink.

a refrigerator, new cabinets and counters, and a sink. Bathrooms are also being completely redone with a new shower and vanity as well as new fixtures and flooring for greater handicapped accessibility.



Solstice

by Cathy Courtice, Director of Community Relations

Is it too much to ask
for strawberries and sunshine
after a season of dark despair
masked by loneliness, clinging to hope?

And what of embraces, and your
beautiful face? Isn't it strange
that I must get to know you all over again,
after seeing only your eyes these many months?

Yes, technology has saved us,
and yet...

I've grown tired of my own company;
I want to sit next to you.

We have lived through this
-the lucky ones-
and we have also not lived,
the great paradox.

Now, the days stretch ahead
and we feel something like optimism
or maybe faith,
and hand-in-hand,
We Rise.



Solstice was written by our new Director of Community Relations, Cathy Courtice.

One of her favorite quotes is by Parker J. Palmer: "...every journey, honestly undertaken, stands a chance of taking us toward the place where our deep gladness meets the world's deep need."

Save the date!

Join us on **October 2nd**

for the

2021 Leaves & Lattes

5k run/walk fundraiser.

Money raised will go to the Willow Brook Ministers Fund. The fund offers financial assistance to retired ministers of the Churches of Christ who wish to reside at Willow Brook.

Register online at

tinyurl.com/LeavesLattes

J. Christopher Jones

1959-2021

Willow Brook is mourning the death of trustee Chris Jones, who died this spring.

We are missing him so much...



Bob House: Engineering a Life

Willow Brook at Delaware Run resident, Bob House, reminisces while looking at a photo of himself as a young man. Bob built computers in the 1950s, decades before they were a fixture of American life.

The next time you use your computer, think of Bob House, a 94-year-old resident of Willow Brook Delaware Run. Bob used his experience as an electronics technician in the United States Navy in World War II to build a storied career in electronics engineering and academia.

A native of Wellsville, Ohio, Bob was 17 when he enlisted. After the war ended, he served in the Naval Reserve and attended Ohio University where he earned both a bachelor's and master's degree in mathematics. However, his greatest accomplishment was meeting and marrying his future wife Polly, who lived across the street from him, and with whom he would spend 70+ years. (Polly passed in 2018.)

After graduation, Bob worked for the U.S. Navy programming computers. He was then hired by the Air Force as an electronics engineer and later as the project scientist for the first Air Force computer which was built by General Electric. Bob's career turned toward academia when he was hired by Penn State University to help build its first computer. While he was there,

**“I didn't leave any job...
because I got bored.”**

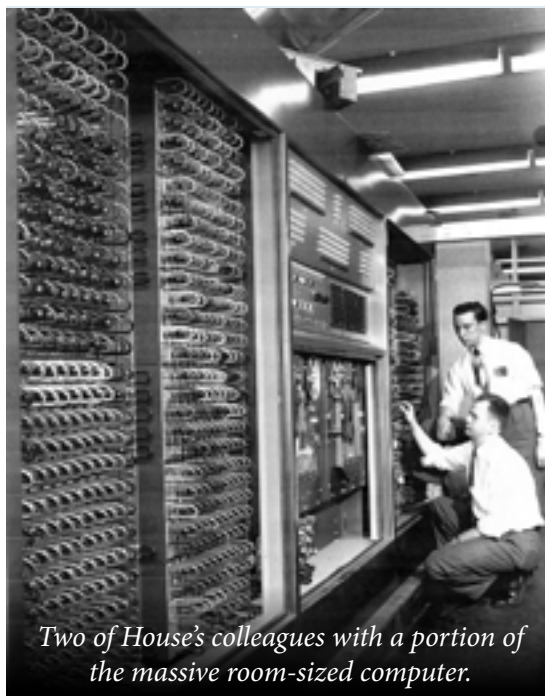
he also received his doctorate in electrical engineering.

He then went to work in Columbus at Battelle Memorial Institute where he spent 16 years. In 1975, he landed at Vanderbilt University where he spent 42 years as a professor, dean of the graduate school, and was honored as the Orrin Henry Ingram Distinguished Professor of Engineering Management.

His work also took him to Brazil, Costa Rica, Ecuador, India and Japan. In Brazil, he was part of a group of engineers and professors that helped shift that country's fuel source from gasoline to alcohol fuels (ethanol), giving it independence from foreign oil. Says Bob, “I didn't leave any job I can remember because I got bored.”

When you ask how things have changed since his hands-on computer days, Bob chuckles and says, “I have two grandsons with Ph.D.'s in computer science and when they talk to me about their work, I can't understand a thing they're saying!”

Perhaps Bob's greatest aptitude, though, is how he interacts with people. Spend just a few minutes talking with him, and we know you'll agree.



Two of House's colleagues with a portion of the massive room-sized computer.

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Since that first little project, we have undertaken some rather grand expansion projects. I haven't lost one night's sleep over what we were doing.

Your mother lived at Willow Brook Christian Village many years ago. Reflect on her experiences there.

After my father died, Mom came to me, knowing I was on the board, and said she was thinking of selling her house and moving to Willow Brook. I was reluctant, thinking she needed to give it more time. But she persisted and made the move. She was absolutely pleased. She made new friends and was very happy she had made the decision to move.

What challenges do you see ahead for Willow Brook in the next 50 years?

The challenges must begin with maintaining our mission, "In the spirit of Jesus our Lord, Willow Brook seeks to enable older adults to live to their fullest potential by providing housing, facilities, and services delivered with compassion and love." To meet this challenge we must remain financially sound and



Leroy's wife Juanita has been his constant companion for 64 years.

flexible to adjust to changing needs of our residents and ever-changing government regulations.

Willow Brook has earned a reputation for quality. Our restaurant dining sets us apart, among other aspects of our programs. We have a long record of positive inspections from government authorities and all sorts of accolades. I am happy to have been a part of things for half a century.



We've become so used to seeing people in masks, we forget that "behind every mask there is a face, and behind that a story." (Marty Rubin) Wouldn't the world be a kinder place if we all considered this? Pictured above (left to right) are the masked faces of Akih Inchoo and Claudine Mbikang, aides at Willow Brook Christian Home. Both are immigrants from Cameroon.

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Willow Brook Christian Village

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**Assisted Living • Independent Living
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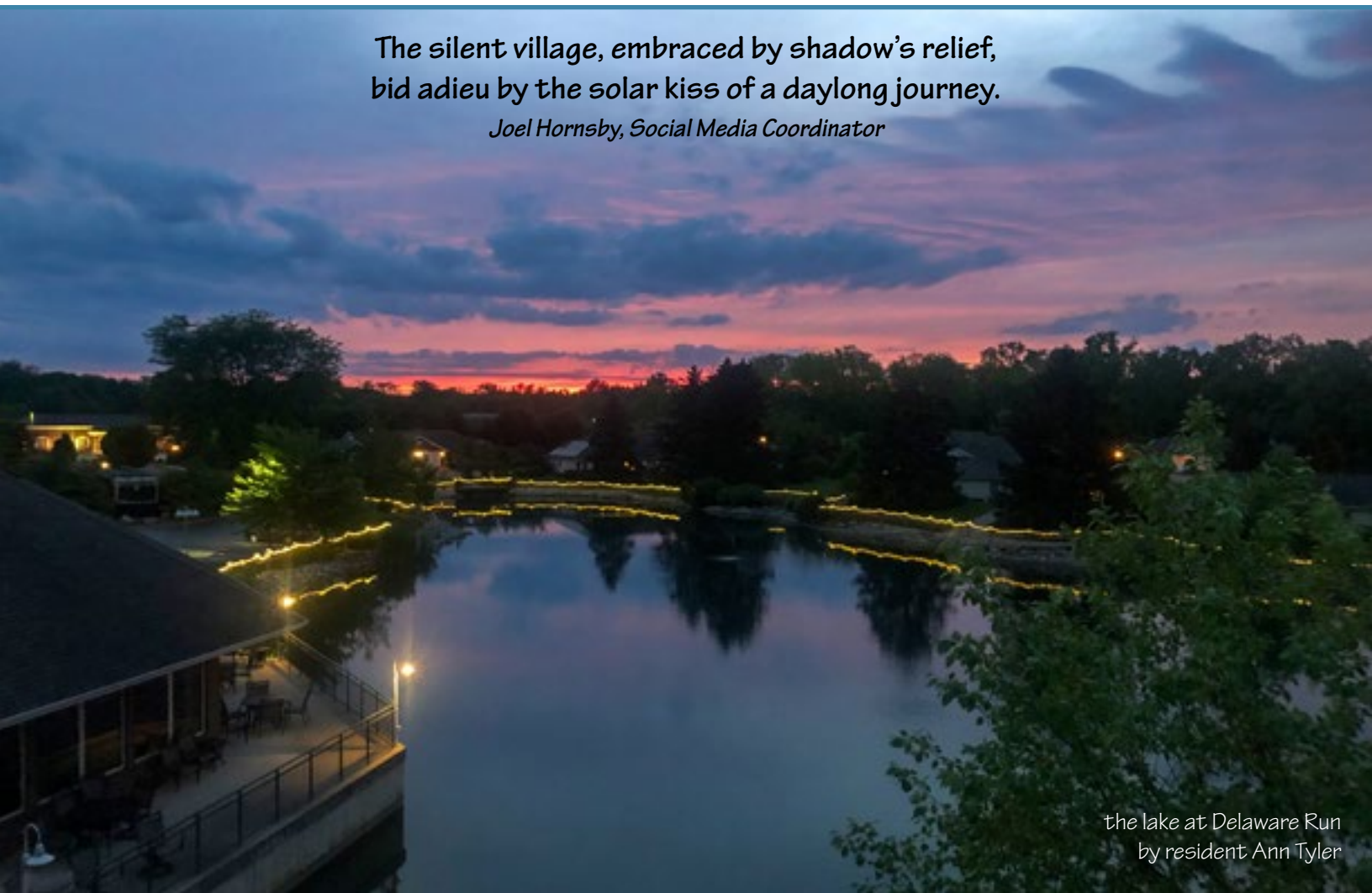
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*The silent village, embraced by shadow's relief,
bid adieu by the solar kiss of a daylong journey.*

Joel Hornsby, Social Media Coordinator



the lake at Delaware Run
by resident Ann Tyler