

50 the Meadian



*A newsletter published periodically for families, friends and residents of St. Anne's Mead
Celebrating 50 Years of Providing Loving Care*

NOVEMBER 23, 2016

Thanksgiving: The Meaning Behind the Word

Thanksgiving is a special time for everyone and each of us has our own reason to be thankful. Here is what the holiday means to St. Anne's Mead.

T is for the **time** we have together.

H is for the **heartwarming** stories about friends, families and the memorable events that residents share about their lives.

A is for our hard-working **associates** who truly care that the residents are comfortable, in good spirits and occupied with past-times that are fun, enjoyable and educational.

N is for the **new** memory care unit (MCU) that will be converted from an unused assisted living wing.

K is for the **kindness** of families and friends who help residents get the most from specially planned and day-to-day routines and activities.

S is for the **Saint** in St. Anne, mother of Mary and our namesake.

G is for the **generosity** of hundreds of people who have contributed time and money to help make St. Anne's Mead better every year.

I is for all the **individuals** who, over the past 50 years, have done what they could to help make St. Anne's Mead a success.

V is for the **volunteers** who provide hundreds of hours of service each year that make our jobs easier and our residents' lives richer.

I is for the **invitations** we extend to everyone, of any faith, to come in and talk to us and see why St. Anne's Mead sets the standard for providing loving care to its residents.

N is for the **nativity** scene that goes up this week to celebrate the birth of Christ.

G is for the **goodness** in people's hearts that never fails to surface when a cry goes out for help.

What is your favorite memory of Thanksgiving?

Despite retail promotions of Christmas coming as early as October, Thanksgiving Day remains the Number One holiday, cherished most by families who gather together to give thanks and count their blessings.

For the residents and staff at St. Anne's Mead, the third Thursday in November brings to mind times when aunts and uncles, moms and dads, grandparents, and cousins of all ages came together to share stories of the past year, rehash events of other years and partake of a traditional turkey dinner with all the fixings.

For resident **Marge Steinbacher**, “a little alcohol added to the stuffing inside the bird” gave it a standout flavor but readily admits “there really wasn’t enough in there to worry about.” What she remembers most about the day is how nervous she got when the family gathered for dinner and it was time for everyone to say what happened during the year that made them grateful. “We all had to say something but I never felt that what I had to say was worthy enough. My family respectfully disagreed, of course.” Marge also reflected on the deer hunting season that is so closely associated with Thanksgiving in Michigan. It was a time when Marge Steinbacher’s father, like other men in and around Sault Sainte Marie, took off work to go hunting. “Mom would always ask him when he came home what he got, and he would always say, ‘I got back,’” says Marge.



Clockwise from top left: Preston Hill, Lisa Bitterburg, Mickey Swart, Don Olsen, Marge Steinbacher, and Michelle Mitchell.

Lisa Bitterburg, dining services aide, recalls when she and her parents were living in Eastern Tennessee where 40 of her closest kin would gather. Each family brought a dish and Thanksgiving was “a low pressure day,” the one time when all could get together. “We tried to do it more often, but it always worked out that we could only be at the same place at the same time around Thanksgiving.”

Social worker **Michelle Mitchell** and her family made Thanksgiving a special day not just by watching football on TV but by actually choosing sides and playing their own games “in any kind of weather,” says Michelle. “It was the one holiday when everyone who could would come to Granny’s house to watch and play football and enjoy a great dinner at 4 o’clock.”

For resident **Don Olsen**’s family, Thanksgiving was a time for talking. “Usually, we had about five couples at the table and we would talk about anything and everything,” says Don. While he and his wife hosted

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most of the time, one year they decided not to cook but to eat at a local restaurant. “We did it mostly for convenience, but it made no difference,” says Don. “We all got to eat a great meal and we still made time to talk,” says Don.

Resident **Mickey Swart** fondly recalls the holiday as a time when her whole family would get together not just two couples at a time like during the rest of the year. They will not be celebrating the holiday at home this year, however. The kitchen staff here at St. Anne’s Mead will do the honors serving the Swart family in one of the lounges. “I was afraid a restaurant would be too confining. Here we can have a nice table set up for our turkey dinner and still be able to move about comfortably,” she says. The common areas, such as the library or the lounge with the the big screen TV, will be available to them as well as for other residents and visitors.

The most memorable Thanksgiving for **Preston Hill**, director of dining services, was in 2008, when scores of neighbors, friends and family members came to the house and brought all kinds of food. Unfortunately, it was not a time for partying, but it was not really sad either. People came to pay final respects to Preston’s dad who had just died from cancer while in hospice. “Dad’s death came as no surprise, so we all had a chance to think about what we wanted to say to celebrate his life. We had a lot of food and it was a day of remembrance and thankfulness that I won’t forget,” says Preston.

50th Anniversary Gala An Historic First Step Toward New MCU

“Planning and preparations for our Golden Anniversary were extensive and exhausting,” says Jane Collins, Executive Director, “but in the end it was well-worth it. People have been freely commenting on the great time they had socializing, enjoying the food, bidding in the silent auction and the opportunity to be among friends and families of St. Anne’s Mead. It was a great start to our capital campaign.”

The evening was both a celebration of 50 years of continuous operation and the start of a capital campaign aimed at converting an unused wing into a fully-equipped and staffed Memory Care Unit (MCU). It also was an occasion to recognize five individuals for their parts in the success of St. Anne’s Mead. Pat Ballard was honored earlier in the year with the Lifetime Volunteer Award. Recipients that night were Dottie Darling, Diamond Award; Craig Hammond, Leadership Award; Donna Hartwig, Community Award and Barbara Carley, Outstanding Service Award. The big news of the night, was announcement of a capital campaign with a goal of \$750,000 to convert the 300 wing into an MCU. A more in-depth report of the campaign will be featured in the December year-end issue of *The Meadian*.



FAB FOUR Receiving plaques of accomplishment during the gala dinner were, clockwise from top left: Craig Hammond, Donna Hartwig, Barbara Carley and Dottie Darling who along with the late Pat Ballard was honored earlier this year.

Worth Repeating

Here's what they're saying about St. Anne's Mead

"Thank you for caring. Thank you for sharing your lives with those who don't remember you. Thank you for all those mentally-exhausting days because you devoted them to patience (patients). Thank you for all the extra things you do. Thank you for watching over my friend. Thank you all for caring."

-- Leslie Price, friend of resident Margaret Vinton who passed away June 27, 2016

STAY CONNECTED



Be sure to check our Facebook page for photos, videos and comments.

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Our Mission

St. Anne's Mead mission is to provide compassionate and professional health care and supportive services to seniors in a safe, secure, and loving home.

In keeping with our faith-based traditions, we endeavor to serve the unique needs of individuals and their families while preserving dignity and enriching lives.