



SOARING

A Publication of Mennonite Home Communities



HOLIDAY GREETINGS

Celebrate the Season with the Pastoral Staff of Mennonite Home Communities.

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CHRISTMAS MEMORIES

I Believe, I Believe!

- Denise Paterson,
HR Recruiter

I remember the first Christmas that my younger sister declared she knew there wasn't a real Santa Claus. My parents told her not to say it too loudly because Santa would hear, and she wouldn't receive any presents if she didn't believe in him. Christmas morning came and we all ran down the stairs to behold the wonders under the tree, and not one of the gifts had my sister's name on it. She stood in the middle of the living room sobbing, "*I believe, I believe!*" Of course my parents had gifts for her; they just weren't under the tree. We still enjoy many laughs together about that Christmas.

Now with my own kids, we have a tradition of selecting our tree during the first week of

December. Since my husband does not like caring for a live tree in the house, it falls on the rest of the family to take care of the tree if we want that wonderful pine smell throughout the house. So every year, while my husband is at deer camp, the kids and I go out together to select our tree. They love trying to guess which one dad would enjoy the most. Unadorned until my husband returns from his hunting trip, our tree is always proudly displayed in the living room until we can decorate it as a family. After the tree is trimmed, we listen to Christmas carols for the rest of the month. I love this time of the year; it really helps me to appreciate the wonder of the season!

The Christmas Story

- Andrea Sauder,
WCV Cook

Every Christmas since my daughter was old enough to understand, we wanted her to know the true meaning of Christmas, so we would read "The Christmas Story" together before opening any presents. As soon as she was old enough to read, she would read the story to us making it even more special.

The year of 2001 was a time of mixed feelings for my family. My grandmother was in and out of hospitals before going to a nursing home. Two weeks before Christmas, my grandmother became ill so we started to spend days and nights with her during that time. One evening, a nurse walked into her room with an angel figurine.

She gave it to my grandmother and told us it was never taken out of her home, but knowing how spiritual my grandmother was, the nurse wanted to share the angel with her. When the angel was plugged in, the light came on and it started to recite "The Christmas Story." We listened to the story together and my grandmother definitely heard it that day. Two days later, my grandmother passed away, but we knew her pain had ended, and she was above us with her angel wings.

I am so grateful for the nurse who shared her special angel with us, never knowing we had a tradition that has always involved "The Christmas Story." That year, my daughter read the story on her grandfather's lap and shared with everyone the true meaning of Christmas.



The Pastoral Staff of Mennonite Home Communities is featured in this holiday issue of Soaring. Each Chaplain shared a unique story from their life experiences on pages 4 and 5. Together with the entire staff of MHC, we wish you a season filled with joy and peace as you celebrate the true meaning of Christmas.

ANNUAL REPORT 2005



This year the pace of change seemed to quicken around Mennonite Home Communities. We saw changes in the Assisted Living regulatory arena that boggled our minds sometimes. We celebrated the completion of the Meadowvue renovation project and moved forward with anticipation as we started the Parkvue lobby project.

2004 - 2005 presented new opportunities for collaboration. The Lancaster Family YMCA and Mennonite Home Communities embarked on a journey that will provide a "state of the art" community health center. This will be a wonderful addition to the services provided to the residents and staff.

The financial strength of Mennonite Home Communities continues in a positive way. We are faced with changes in reimbursement and need to find ways to reduce costs wherever possible. The Lord has blessed us this past year and for that, we are eternally grateful.

J. Nelson Kling

..... *Statement of Revenue & Expenses*

Year Ended June 30, 2005

RESIDENT SERVICE REVENUE:

Gross billings for room, board and ancillary services	\$29,514,334
Amount written off for required contractual allowances and inability of some residents to pay	(2,332,353)
<u>NET RESIDENT SERVICE REVENUE</u>	<u>27,181,981</u>
Pennsylvania nursing home assessment	540,948
Other revenue	548,449
<u>TOTAL OPERATING REVENUE</u>	<u>28,271,378</u>

OPERATING EXPENSES:

Salary, wages and outside services	11,766,496
Payroll taxes and employee benefits	3,022,747
Food, medical supplies and other expenses	7,887,505
Pennsylvania nursing home assessment	179,110
Depreciation and interest	3,949,320
<u>TOTAL OPERATING EXPENSES</u>	<u>26,805,178</u>
<u>RESULTING IN A NET INCOME FROM OPERATIONS OF</u>	<u>1,466,200</u>

NON OPERATING REVENUE:

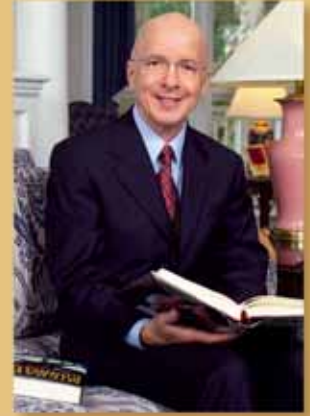
Unrestricted contributions	272,339
Income from investments and adjustment reflected from changes in market value	641,752
<u>INCREASE IN UNRESTRICTED NET ASSETS</u>	<u>\$2,380,291</u>



The Pastoral Staff provided these unique glimpses of Christmas through their eyes.

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Melvin Thomas
Director of Pastoral Care Services



A Joyous Interruption

The needle on the thermometer rested squarely on 102 degrees. I was sitting on a bus awaiting the five-hour ride to my home in the magical southeast Asian capital city of Manila. Exactly twelve hours earlier, at 4:30 a.m. I boarded a bus for this twice-weekly routine where I had the privilege of teaching three classes a day in a post-high school educational facility. It was two days before Christmas, however, no signs of the holiday existed in this poor, but serenely beautiful barrio.

I was very tired and began to feel sorry for myself. Everything around me seemed out of sync with the season. Inside the small lobby area I noticed a cluster of small children gathered in silent awe around an elderly woman. Before her on the floor was a small leafless and lifeless tree. This precious woman had placed a few "decorations" on the naked branches, much to the delight of the children. Standing back to admire her efforts, the children applauded politely while the elderly woman graciously bowed in dignity.

The engine on the bus roared to life, and as it pulled out of the Laguna Station, tears mingled with the perspiration on my face. Apart from snow, bells, carols, tinsel and lights, the generosity of a poor woman and precious children broke into my loneliness. This joyous interruption brought to mind the nocturnal announcement by angels to poor shepherds some 2000 years earlier of "good news of great joy for all people." And I was at peace.

CHRISTMAS...

Season of Hope and Celebration!

* See if you can locate Moose in this Newsletter.

Dorcas Martzall
Mennonite Home Chaplain



Christmas Musings

Besides the birth of Jesus, Christmas signifies family. To me, family is very important, not only on holidays, but year-round. I got married on New Year's Eve which was during the holiday season. Spending Christmas for 4 years in another culture helped me view Christmas in a new way. I didn't need cold weather, snow or a Christmas tree to celebrate Christmas. When my biological family wasn't near, the other missionaries became my family.

After our children were born, we created our own memories. Reading the Christmas Story on Christmas morning became a tradition. Our children enjoyed moving the figures of the cardboard crèche as the story was being read. Later we were blessed by the contribution of a ceramic crèche made by my sister, and is still in use today. Christmas stockings also became a highlight. Some years we did a Christmas project making or purchasing items or giving a monetary contribution to a charitable organization. One year we wrapped a box for Jesus and wrote on slips of paper, things we wanted to give to Jesus and deposited them in the box.

As our children married, we included their spouses in our Christmas traditions, sometimes asking them to read the Christmas Story. Then the grandchildren came along and I was again buying children's clothes and toys for Christmas. I feel blessed that our children and grandchildren know the true meaning and spirit of Christmas. My desire is that the legacy continues in my family to future generations.

Mim Cruz
Woodcrest Villa Chaplain



An Unexpected Christmas Tradition

In an effort to keep things simple for our Christmas gathering, my extended family exchanges "White Elephant" gifts. These recycled presents tend to be worth more in laughs than usefulness. We have great fun, when it is our turn to pick a gift from the pile. Each trying to figure out which of the brightly wrapped packages holds the Moose.*

Moose, an ugly little figure made out of what appears to be shellacked moose droppings and pipe cleaners, first showed up at our gift exchange about 13 years ago. The Alaskan native created lots of laughter when first discovered inside the gift wrap. The recipient certainly didn't want to keep him, so Moose returned the next year, disguised once more as a lovely present. Moose showed up regularly at our gatherings. Gradually, those who would bring him back started getting creative. One year he showed up displayed in a lovely winter garden. Another year he was accompanied by his own picture album, portraying Moose as a world traveler, pictured in front of various famous landmarks. Last season, Moose arrived with a female companion. Now, instead of Moose being the gift people try to avoid, he has become the most popular gift among the younger generation.

Moose has become an unexpected Christmas tradition that gently reminds us it isn't always the most expensive present that provides the greatest joy, and laughter is a gift that never goes out of style.

Dennis Ernest
Mennonite Home Chaplain



Memories of Christmas

I have a confession to make; I don't especially like Christmas. I did as a child. It's pretty easy to like Christmas when you can focus on presents, a long vacation from school and lots of good food. But as an adult, I give presents instead of receiving them, there isn't much vacation, and I'm old enough now that I have to watch what I eat.

As a minister for the past 30 years, December is a very busy time trying to make Christmas a special time for others, usually at the expense of my own family. I have memories of being away from home every night in December at rehearsals, meetings, special services, etc., and having no time to create and participate in family traditions of my own. One year my wife, daughter and I went out to get a Christmas tree as we always did. We brought it home and set it up, but waited to decorate the tree until we were all home — that never happened. Soon, Christmas was over and there was the tree, still undecorated and dead. It reflected, to some extent, how I felt about the Christmas season.

But what I love about Christmas is the music unique to this time of year. As a singer and choir member, early fall marked the beginning of work on Christmas music. Our weekly rehearsals were a good time to be reminded of the real meaning of Christmas and the joy that is ours because our Savior was born. Christmas is about a God who loves us so much that He sent His Son, the one perfect gift that has changed my life, and this world, forever.

Volunteer Opportunities

Christmas Giving

We absolutely love it when someone offers to donate Christmas gifts for our residents. Here are some ideas that would be greatly appreciated: Snacks, Lotions, CD's, Slippers, Sweaters, Stationary...Your kindness means the world to others!

Our Special Volunteer Wish List

We are always in need of special people that are willing to volunteer their time in any way. Some of our volunteers are here weekly and some once a month. We need everyone. If you have a few spare hours and would like to make a difference in someone else's life, please call me.

Thrift Shop Clerks

Our Thrift Shop is open on Tuesdays & Fridays from 7:00 am – 3:00 pm. We are in desperate need of help, four hours a day, once or twice a month.

Country Store Gift Shop

If you enjoy decorating, I am looking for someone to assist with the window displays, or cover one or two shifts a month as a clerk.

Wheelchair Transport

We are in dire need of volunteers to transport residents within the home to physical therapy, beauty shop and chapel services. This would be either in the morning or afternoon, once or twice a month.

Anyone interested in any of our volunteer opportunities, please call Kathy Maule at 390-7971. Thank You!

THE VOLUNTEER CONNECTION

"Volunteers are people who remember to do the things to make other people happy, who take the loneliness out of the alone by talking to them, who are concerned when others are unconcerned, who have the courage to be a prophet and to say the things that have to be said for the good of all." (1) Henry and Marian Leaman are perfect examples of this belief within their own neighborhood as well as Mennonite Home Communities. They both have touched the lives of many around them through countless hours of volunteerism at church and local organizations.

Their time together started in 1944 when Henry met Marian at a party while playing the game "Wink." Soon after their first meeting, Henry was drafted in WWII and spent 21 months in civilian public service as a cook preparing daily meals for up to 180 men. In September of 1947, Henry and Marian married and have just celebrated their 58th wedding anniversary this past month. Over the years together, they raised 7 children including a set of twins. All of their children are now married and happily provided the Leaman's with 18 grandchildren and 8 great grandchildren. In their first 33 years together, they owned and operated a local dairy farm. Eventually, their son took over the responsibility of the farm, and they moved to a house off of the property. In 1978, Henry started working for Mennonite Home Communities as Maintenance Supervisor and later was promoted to Director of Environmental Services before retiring in 1990. During his years with Mennonite Home, Henry started many activities that became a yearly tradition with much anticipation. In 1980, he volunteered to cook the hot

dogs and hamburgers for the resident picnics which still take place annually after 25 years. These are days for all residents to enjoy the afternoon together and be treated to a picnic lunch of grilled favorites. In 1981, Henry wanted to provide homemade ice cream as his birthday gift for the residents. He brought in ice cream churns and with the residents' assistance, everyone enjoyed ice cream from that year on.

Marian was also very active during these years in her near and dear projects. In the early 1960's, Marian was President of a women's literature group and a few years later, she initiated a specialized mother's group that is still active today. In 1980, Henry and Marian started "Marriage Encounter" with the Lancaster Mennonite Conference and followed up with "Engaged Encounter" in 1984 for couples interested in enriching their lives together. Marian had her own TV show called "Homemaker Happenings" which aired on a local Reading, PA channel in the late 1970's. Marian is an active volunteer with the therapy pool at Mennonite Home and still has found time to help Henry with the annual resident picnic for the past 15 years. As a couple, they have both given a great amount of time at the Willow Street Mennonite Church including teaching Sunday school and adult education classes.

It has been and will continue to be an honor to know Henry and Marian Leaman. Their unending consideration for everyone around them makes them such a pleasure to know as well as an asset to our community. To the world, you may be one person, but to one person, you may be the world. We are certain that the Leamans' have touched the lives of many during their years of service.

(1) "The Beacon," newsletter of Birthrite, South Africa Submitted 18 November 2004 by Marjorie Moore, Minds Eye Information Service, Belleville, IL.



Marian & Henry Leaman
MHC Volunteers



Shining Stars

Recognizing employees for the dedication and hard work that is done each and every day to make Mennonite Home and Woodcrest Villa a wonderful place for residents to live.

July



Ruth Anna Miller
T. R. Assistant



Sue Edwards
Pool Coordinator



Cora Kaylor
T. R. Assistant

August



Elias Groff
General Maintenance



Gerry Nissley
HVAC Technician, WCV



Linda Bair
Shuttle Bus Driver Leader

September



Shirley Waller
Housekeeper



John Leaman
Custodian



Steve Deneen
Floor Technician

Mennonite Home Communities

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If you wish to have your name removed from the mailing list to receive future newsletters or fundraising materials supporting Mennonite Home Communities, please send a written request to:

*Mennonite Home Communities Marketing Department,
2001 Harrisburg Pike, Lancaster, PA 17601.*

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“When I first considered a charitable gift annuity, the benefit to the residents of the Mennonite Home was appealing and the increased income was a very nice bonus. Greg showed me, in black and white, how my old bonds could pay 9.2% and increase my net income by well over 300%. Plus, I got a one time tax savings of over \$780. Seems amazing, but it is absolutely true! This is one instance where age is a benefit.”

— Mary Ella Herr
Woodcrest Villa Resident

Single-Life Annuity Rates

AGE	RATE
70	6.5%
75	7.1%
80	8.0%
85	9.5%
90+	11.3%



THE GIFT THAT GIVES BACK

At this giving time of year, you might consider a special gift to Mennonite Home that gives back to you and your spouse throughout your lives. Charitable gift annuities can support either benevolent care or capital projects, and provide these benefits:

- *Guaranteed Fixed Income: The interest is guaranteed throughout your lives.*
- *Tax Savings: You receive a charitable deduction today for part of your gift.*
- *Tax-Free Income: Part of the income is tax free for your anticipated life span.*
- *Higher Income: CDs and stocks today do not pay as much as gift annuities.*
- *Peace of Mind: Your income will continue as long as you live.*
- *Professional Management: The Mennonite Foundation, with over 60 years of experience, manages and guarantees gift annuities for MHC.*
- *Charitable Impact: You have the satisfaction of knowing your gift will benefit the Promise Partners Benevolent Care Fund or a capital project.*

Charitable gift annuities provide a guaranteed income to one or two people, based on their age. The interest rate is fixed for the lives of the beneficiaries. That is right – the income will never go down.

For younger donors, a deferred charitable gift annuity is a great way to fund your retirement needs while ultimately helping an organization that has been important to your family over the years.

Please call Greg Pierce, Director of Development at 390-4903 for a confidential discussion and detailed proposal.