



Under the Oak Tree

A Crystal Oaks Long Term Care Publication

Issue 10

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From the desk of Tammy Breeding, RN, Director of Nursing

Flu season is here. Precautions have been taken by Crystal Oaks to lower the chances of our residents and staff contracting the flu. Flu vaccines have been offered and administered to all residents and staff who have provided consent. Crystal Oaks recommends to all families and friends to refrain from visiting the facility if they are exhibiting signs and symptoms of the flu.

I'm very proud to share with our residents, families, and employees a list of our staff who are currently in nursing school or recently graduated. Crystal Oaks promotes education and we are excited that we have so many employees that choose to further their careers in the healthcare profession.

We would like to congratulate Elizabeth Hoffmann, CMT to GPN; Angela Dodd, CNA to GPN; Ashley Henderson, Dietary Aide to LPN; Michelle Messenger, CNA to LPN; Shay Roberts, CNA to LPN; Tabithia Ellsworth, LPN to RN; Tiffany Muellner, LPN to RN; and Jessica Menke, LPN to RN.

The following LPN employees are currently enrolled in RN school: Heather Cates, Ashley Henderson, Michelle Messenger, and Dorothy Lucas.

The following CNA's are currently enrolled in LPN school: Nicole Causey, Amber Meyer, Emily Clifford, Samantha Deal, and Shaina Dunn. Also, Erin Suttles, CNA is enrolled in school for Occupational Therapy Assistant.

The following employees are LPN's currently taking prerequisites to enter RN school: Barb Conway, Nicole Fenton, and Krystal Bingham.

Sorry if I missed any employees. We currently have a large group enrolled in school at this time. Good luck and Congratulations to all!

From the desk of Jim Arnold, Chief Executive Officer

It is hard to believe another summer has just flown by and we are now into fall with Christmas right around the corner. I would like to thank our wonderful Activity Department for providing another summer of excellent programs and activities for our residents. A trip to The Muny and a Cardinal baseball game were some of the exciting resident activities this past summer.

As we get closer to the holidays, the facility will once again come alive with decorations provided by our staff. Our employees put many hours into decorating the facility for our residents and their efforts are much appreciated. Watch the activity calendar for our "Crazy Christmas Week," a week that is filled with many activities for our residents and staff. It should be another great holiday season here at Crystal Oaks.

Crystal Oaks Boutique

By: Michelle Rolfi

Happy shopping! Get your list ready and head to the Boutique. We are very excited about the upcoming holidays. New items are arriving weekly. Hours of operation are Tuesdays 1:00 to 3:00 pm and Wednesdays 10:30 am to 12 pm. The Boutique is operated by our volunteers, Mary Spencer and Linda Lown. Both Mary and Linda do a great job. If you are interested in volunteering, please contact Michelle at 636-933-2927. All proceeds benefit the Crystal Oaks Foundation.



Social Media

By: Cyndi Morgan

With the popularity of Facebook, Twitter, Snapchat, and other social media sites, please remember to be mindful of our residents' rights to privacy. We ask that when taking pictures of your loved ones that other residents are not included in the photographs. If other residents are inadvertently in your photos, we ask that those photos not be posted online. We appreciate your efforts to protect the rights of our residents.



Resident Spotlight: Ann Becker

By: Amy Daniels



Ann Becker, a resident at Crystal Oaks Assisted Living, was born on April 22, 1934 in Crystal City, MO. She was the seventh of eight children, having two brothers and five sisters. She was born and raised in Crystal City, except for a short period of time when her family lived in St. Louis. Due to the rationing of gas, they moved to St. Louis to be closer to the shoe factory where her mother worked. But, Crystal City is where her heart is and always has been.

Ann met her husband, Harvey Becker, on the school bus at the age of 16. After graduating high school on March 14th, 1953, Ann and Harvey were married and moved onto the farm and into the house where Harvey had grown up. They lived there for 59 years. They have three daughters, three grandchildren, and five great-grandchildren. The walls in Ann's apartment are covered with pictures of her family and she lights up at the opportunity to boast about their greatness. She giggled as she spoke about her daughters and their love for hunting. Ann's youngest daughter bought her first shotgun at 18 years old. Not only did they enjoy hunting, they were good at it. She had never seen two girls so proud of their first deer. Ann's family loved fishing together, tending to the farm, and anything they could do together outdoors. As Ann spoke about her family, I could see the great pride she has in where her family has been and where they are now. Harvey's passing in February 2005 was difficult for her, but she smiled as she spoke about the strength of her family as they rallied around and supported her. Ann has a spunky personality and states, "I am 82 years old and I'm not done yet."

Resident Spotlight: Margot Freeman

By: Amy Daniels

Margot Freeman has been a resident of Crystal Oaks since April 2014. Her daughter, Denise Bruff has dedicated the following story, courtesy of Amy Peckham-Driver to help families affected by Alzheimer's.

There is a thick black line that separates life before and after of Alzheimer's.

This is my Nana's coat. My Nana died yesterday.

When someone suffers from a terminal illness, you think you'll know what to expect when they eventually pass away; you like to imagine that you'll be somewhat emotionally equipped for it. I was under this impression too, and for the most part I was right. I was composed when I received the message that she had passed, and when I arrived at her house and saw her afterwards, and when the doctor came to verify her death. I was composed when I kissed her forehead for the last time and watched the undertakers take her away.

I held it together for almost the entire day. It was only as we were getting ready to leave her house that the silliest thing got to me; I caught sight of her coat hanging off the banister. It was the most profoundly forlorn thing I'd ever seen.

It had not been moved since she had placed it there, which was the last time she ever left the house, on Christmas Day last year. It was hung up when she arrived home like it would be on any other day, only it didn't know that this would be the last time it would ever be worn. There was something so hauntingly sad about seeing it hang there in its normal place like it was waiting to be picked up and worn again.

It wasn't until this moment that I realized she was really gone. It dawned on me that 'gone' isn't some throwaway term or vast black hole by which you can define the absence of someone; it's the little empty spaces, like a vacant armchair or the slippers by their bed or a redundant coat hanging off the end of the stairs.

'Gone' is the half-finished scarf in my Nana's knitting bag and the pocket of jelly babies in her treat cupboard with only half the contents left. 'Gone' is the dreadfully trashy subscription magazines on her coffee table which won't ever get to be read. 'Gone' is the hideous 1970s electric fireplace in her living room that she'll never switch on again. 'Gone' is the watering can sat inside her conservatory, painfully unaware that she won't be using it to bring her beautiful garden to life this spring.

When we lose someone, we scan our minds for the most striking memories we have; we look for the big and the brilliant, for the sentimental and the sensational.

In our search for these, we often overlook the charm of the wonderfully ordinary moments in between. I stand in my Nana's kitchen now and I wish so much that I could just watch her fold her laundry, clean the dishes, or make a cup of tea-inane, bog-standard things we take for granted but would kill to experience one more time when it's all over.

I won't end this on a patronizing, platitudinous, 'you don't know what you've got until it's gone' kind of note. I'll leave you with something a little more unconventional-appreciate it the next time you see your loved one put on their coat. Savor that second where they're stood in front of you in the flesh; in glorious living form, touchable and huggable and real. Embrace the image of them cooking or drinking from their favorite mug or smiling as they walk through the front door.

These are the moments that string together each and every existence. These are the moments which punctuate every beautiful, understated day, so hold on to the value of each moment before it becomes a memory. Squeeze it tight in your heart because one day, unbeknownst to you, will be the last time you'll ever experience it. One day, you may just find yourself in the position that I'm in now, standing before an abandoned coat, wishing you could hug the person who was once inside it just one more time.

"Until we meet again, Nana."

Please pray for a cure and all of the thousands of people with Alzheimer's. This article is in memory of Margot Freeman.



Anniversaries

By: Ashley Jennings

Crystal Oaks would like to recognize the following employees for their years of service:

JULY

- ◆ Jennifer Barnes-Nursing Administration-10 years
- ◆ Nicole Causey-Nursing-5 years
- ◆ Cheyenne Hughes-Nursing-5 years
- ◆ Deana Wanick-Nursing ALF-15 years

AUGUST

- ◆ Cyndi Morgan-Administration-5 years

SEPTEMBER

- ◆ Angela Deevers-Housekeeping-5 years
- ◆ Lisa Kutz-Housekeeping-5 years
- ◆ Misty Smith-Dietary-5 years
- ◆ Katie Stratton-Social Services-5 years

Congratulations and Thank You to Deana Wanick, Certified Med Tech/CNA, on 15 years and Jennifer Barnes, Assistant Director of Nursing, on 10 years of dedicated service to Crystal Oaks!!

Deana is eager to share the reason for her dedication to her job: the residents.

“The benefit of being in a position for 15 years is you gain job experience and knowledge, and you get to know the residents. I like what I do,” she stated.

Deana has five children and one grandchild.

Pokémon hunting with her children is a favorite past-time. She also enjoys reading.

Deana is dependable and well-known to the residents. She normally works the night shift and reports to work through all elements of weather. We appreciate your 15 years of service and are proud to have you on the Crystal Oaks team!



Jenny is happily married and has two children. She enjoys dancing: ballet, tap, and jazz.

She also has a talent for creative crafts.

Her family pets include a rabbit and three rats.

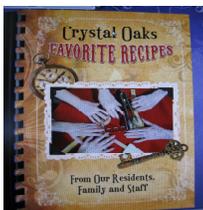
Jenny shared that she enjoys providing excellent care to the senior population. Dealing with different personalities can be a challenge at times but is also rewarding to her.

She feels that working together is the key to success with any team. When you stay with a team you help to provide continuity of care. You also have the opportunity to be part of changes and growth. “Jenny is organized and dedicated-she is a wonderful assistant and person,” stated Tammy Cashion, Director of Nursing. Jenny is proud to be part of the Crystal Oaks team and we are fortunate to have her.

Foundation News

By: Cyndi Morgan

Fundraising efforts are in full swing with Crystal Oaks Foundation. Crystal Oaks Boutique has been a big hit and offers a little something for everyone. Come by and see all that is available for purchase. The Awesome Autumn Accessory Auction was held September 29th and 30th and once again proved to be a popular and successful event. Many accessories and purses were available for immediate purchase while approximately 40 purses were sold through silent auction.



Our 4th annual Trivia Night with Silent Auction was held on October 22nd at the KC Hall in Festus. Trivia Night is our largest fundraiser and we would like to thank all who attended, donated items for the silent auction, and volunteered time to make this event successful. It was a fun evening with a great purpose.

Our newest fundraiser, the Crystal Oaks Cookbook, will be available in early November. The cost for each cookbook is \$20. Books will be available at the Assisted Living and South Lobby reception desks. The hardback cookbook includes recipes from our residents, their family and friends, and our staff. Cookbooks are ideal for Christmas gifts and/or keepsake items. We hope that everyone enjoys this cookbook and that the recipes will remind them of special times with loved ones.

Our Giving Tree continues to grow and currently has 60 leaves. Donors of \$100 or more are recognized with an engraved leaf bearing their name, company name, or loved ones' name which will hang on the Giving Tree in the front lobby. Consider purchasing a leaf in honor or in memory of your loved one.

Crystal Oaks Foundation is a registered charity and all donations are fully tax-deductible. Every donation we receive supports our mission and makes a difference in the lives of our residents.

Services Available

By: Cyndi Morgan

Additional professional services available at Crystal Oaks include psychiatry through Advanced Psychiatric Services, dental through Sterling Dental, podiatry care through Medical Options of the Midwest, and eye care through Outreach Eye Care. Contact Social Services at (636)725-1248 with any questions and for eligibility requirements.

Additionally, the Alzheimer's Support Group meets the first Wednesday of every month at 3 pm in conference room C. Contact Michelle Rolfi at 636-933-2927 for further information. The Stroke Support Group meets the second Thursday of every month at 2 pm in The Oaks dining room. Contact Cheryl Sazama at 636-725-1234 for further information.

Customer Service

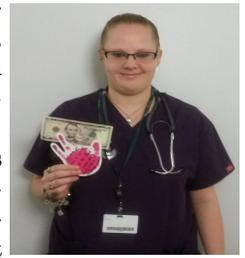
By: Cyndi Morgan

One of our goals at Crystal Oaks is to provide kind and compassionate care to our patients, residents, and their families and to treat each other with dignity and respect. Our hope is that our staff will exceed expectations in their work. This past quarter, Brandon Pfothauer exceeded our expectations and received recognition for going above and beyond his job duties. Brandon was recognized by his supervisor for his dedication to Crystal Oaks and the Housekeeping Department and his willingness to ensure that shifts are covered and work is completed. Brandon received an "I Did It" button, five free meal tickets, and will be entered into a drawing for a \$50 gift card. He will also be invited to a Customer Service Recognition Luncheon with his supervisor. His picture will be added to our "Wall of Fame" in the lobby. Great job Brandon!



Many other staff members received "High Fives" for their efforts, exemplary teamwork, compassion, and dedication to our residents, their families, and co-workers.

We welcome your comments and/or suggestions as we are continually looking for ways to improve our services. For your convenience, comment cards are available at each reception desk.



Crystal Oaks, a division of Crystal Oaks Long Term Care, is a local not-for-profit organization.



CRYSTAL OAKS LONG TERM CARE

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Activities in Action

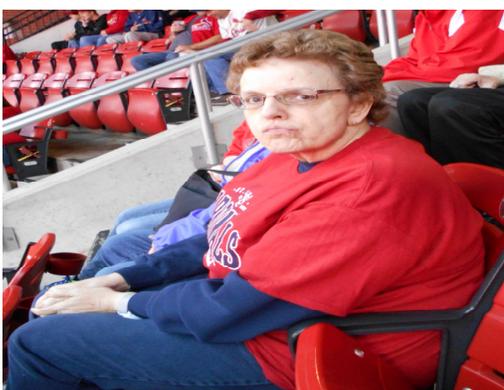
By: Jenny Conway

What a busy summer we had here at Crystal Oaks. In July, we had entertainment with the fabulous Bridgette Kossor. We had an ice cream sundae cart that travelled the halls to cool off our residents. When the weather was nice we went outside and worked in our garden. We grew okra, tomatoes, cucumbers, and squash. We had a good harvest. July ended with a watermelon social and reminiscing about who could spit seeds the furthest. We all got a good laugh out of that!



In August, we introduced the Swig-Rig (a red wagon) that comes around every Friday to offer different beverages to the residents. Dine-in day was a big hit offering the residents a chance to eat KFC for lunch on 300, 400, and 500 halls. We rocked out in Cafe Crystal with Chad Evans, Marge Jackson, and the Al Sherman Trio. We also went on several country rides to Kimmswick, Ste. Genevieve, and beyond.

In September, children from Wee Care visited and the residents helped them make and decorate paper hats. The room was filled with giggles. Dine-in day featuring Captain D's was held on 100 hall and Savannah Place. We had entertainment in Cafe Crystal with Mike Brunner. The residents could be heard singing along to past country hits. To finish up the month, we took our annual trip to Busch Stadium. After a quick stop at McDonald's, we headed up Hwy 55 eagerly awaiting the site of the stadium. Although it rained we stayed dry. Everyone was grinning from ear to ear. One resident mentioned that it was her first time at a ballgame. Popcorn, peanuts, and nachos, our ballgame snacks were enjoyed by all. The Cardinals rallied in the 9th to bring home the win! What a night!!



MARK YOUR CALENDARS:

- ◆ Monday, December 5th: Wrapped gift for your loved one due to Activities
- ◆ Monday, December 12th: 100 Hall Christmas Party
- ◆ Tuesday, December 13th: Savannah Place Christmas Party
- ◆ Wednesday, December 14th: 300, 400, 500 Halls Christmas Party
- ◆ Thursday, December 15th: Alden Place Christmas Party
- ◆ Friday, December 16th: Assisted Living Christmas Party



For a listing of daily activities, please call the Activity Hotline at (636) 725-1244.

