

The Mayflower Log



A Publication of the Mayflower Residents Association

SUMMER 2013 - Volume 13 - No. 2

Welcome New Residents



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A hard working crew made sure that everything looked great



A Taste of Hawaii



A gathering of family and friends



FORTY YEARS OF FEASTING

"The Luau" is the Mayflower's most enduring and popular "feast day." This year's celebration, held in the

Buckley Dining Room July 17th and 18th was attended by over 200 persons.

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Mayflower residents, their guests, and other friends of the community enjoyed a splendid banquet that featured smoked salmon *lomi tomi*, buttered mussels, coconut shrimp, shrimp cocktail, soy-glazed beef tenderloin, honey teriyaki chicken with mango, and---not for the first time---smoked Iowa feral hog.

This year's Luau was the 40th in a long and honored tradition that began on July 25, 1974 as part of a series of monthly "theme dinners" designed to bring the Mayflower and the larger Grinnell communities in closer touch with each other.

The story of this special feast is a mixture of history and lore. To celebrate the Mayflower's 50th anniversary in 2000, the *Log* published a series of decade-by-decade chronicles compiled by Dr. Ruth Webb. In the entry for 1974 she wrote: "The first special dinner was held January 24th. This was also the first year of our popular Luau. Average attendance at the special dinners was 85-100." At the time of the first Luau the *Log* predicted that if it should be a success, it "might" become an annual event!

It is not clear how long the other "special dinners" continued, but the Luau was and continues to be a huge success. It appears that the original "theme dinners" (as they were sometimes called) were started by Director Harris Stafford and his new assistant, Rex Pippin, who was responsible for the Health Center, the Food Service and purchasing. Pippin succeeded Stafford as director in 1977.

For the first Luau, residents were requested to make leis out of yarn to wear. Those who had visited Hawaii were asked to bring posters or whatever souvenirs they had collected for display in the dining room. Corky Mann, daughter of Mayflower residents Leland and Mona Mann, lived in

Hawaii and generously sent fresh orchids continuing to do so for several years. The 1974 *Log* proclaimed, "the dinner will feature Hawaiian-style meats with a banquet-laden table featuring many, many types of fresh fruits."

As its popularity grew, the Luau was expanded to two evenings to accommodate more celebrants. By 2000, the Luau was so firmly established that for that 50th anniversary year there were three nights of feasting. "Resident reporter" Orlan Mitchell rhapsodized in the October 2000 *Log*:

"Luau. . .a feast . . .especially in Hawaii, held out of doors, with roast pig as the main dish." Such a feast was held recently in Buckley Dining Room....Each evening, the residents, their families and friends, along with special guests, gathered on the patio for. . . appetizers.

Upon entering the dining room it was easy to imagine oneself in Hawaii. Colorful streamers, fish mobiles, and a large buffet table decorated with trees made of real foliage and pineapples and a vast collection of tropical flowers were a perfect setting. Hawaiian music, men and women wore colorful 'aloha' shirts and muumuus and their coral and kiku bead necklaces added to the ambiance of this traditional Mayflower rite of summer.

No one has had more experience with the Luau than Scott Gruhn, Director of the Mayflower Food Service from 1989 to 1993 and from 2000 to the present. Scott's first Luau after returning was the 2001 event which he decided to hold in the Carman Center, the 2005 dinner was also in Carman because the Buckley Dining Room was being remodeled and regular meals were being served in the then-chapel located in the space where the movie theater is now.

According to a *Log* account of the 2007 event, from the beginning the Luau has

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WELCOME LARRY GORSUCH - Montgomery 7

"I grew up on a 400-acre farm and have seen many changes. Horse-drawn machinery, then John Deere tractors and [then] the newer machines," Larry remembered. "We had a real family farm: horses, cattle, pigs and fields of oats, corn, and lots of hay."

The son of Forrest and Mary Hicks Gorsuch, Larry was born and raised on a farm near Montezuma, IA. He graduated from Montezuma High School in 1966 and, rather than being drafted, enlisted in the US Air Force. He served from 1966 to 1970.

Larry's tour of duty took him from basic training in Texas to several air force bases in the United States, then to Guam. He completed his service at a missile base in Grand Forks, ND. During Larry's time in the service, he had experience with several different types of aircraft as well as a number of other assignments. He had earned the rank of sergeant by the time he was discharged.

Returning home he helped on the farm and was a caregiver for his mother. He now spends time with his father.

Larry has several hobbies. "I collect models of airplanes and cars. I read a lot--westerns, and books about astronomy, aircraft, and the weather. I like movies and TV." He also has a strong interest in bird watching and can identify birds by their 'call and song'.

While in the service, Larry and his dad traveled in Maine. He also has traveled in Colorado where touring the US Air Force Academy was a highlight of that trip.

"Mother's family came from Ireland and I'd like to travel to Ireland where her family lived," he added.

"You weren't one of those mean sergeants, were you?" I asked. "You know, the kind in basic training?" Larry smiled. "No, not too mean," he assured me.

Beryl Wellborn

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taken place in July "because Iowa's July weather is most like Hawaii's year-round tropical climate." As Orlan Mitchell's account indicates, the "social" portion of the event has sometimes taken place on the Buckley patio but, according to Scott, even this tropical gesture hasn't been very successful "due to the heat and residents not wanting to go outside."

As to the roast pig, the 1974 Log reports that the kitchen crew agreed to roast a whole hog for the inaugural Luau, but this signature dish has not always been on the menu. This year, thanks to an assist from Mayflower resident Don Pederson and his son, there was at least half a pig at each serving.

Despite the vagaries of the Iowa weather and the availability of pigs, the Luau continues to be an essential part of the Mayflower tradition because, thanks to the inspired efforts of Scott and all of the Food Service personnel, it is always a success, or as Scott modestly reports, "No complaints!"



*John's big decision
'What to choose
and how much'*

Sue Chasins and Harley Henry

MAYFLOWER'S NEW ACTIVITIES COORDINATOR

Anne Sunday arrived as a new resident of the Mayflower last year (see *Log*, Summer 2012) and as of May 1 of this year became the Independent Living Activities Coordinator (ILAC) with the task of helping the residents of the Mayflower's houses and apartments stay active.

A native of central Pennsylvania who spent much of her adult life in that area, Anne is the fourth person and the third resident to hold this position. She has already helped create several new attractive opportunities for residents to explore.

The new job description for the ILAC shows that the position has been expanded to include facilitating activities in partnership with other organizations and institutions. Some of these new events are hosted at Mayflower and others are held off-campus. For example, the computer training courses currently offered at Mayflower are taught by Iowa Valley Community College instructors. The North East Iowa Area Agency on Aging (NEI3A) is partnering with Mayflower to offer a four-week workshop "A Matter of Balance" on campus with a session underway and a second planned for August. The Grinnell Regional Medical Center (GRMC) collaborated with Mayflower to hold workshops on chronic health issues; in addition, a group of Mayflower residents is participating in a water aerobics class (dubbed the "Water Follies" by the group) at the GRMC indoor, heated therapy pool.

Anne sees these partnerships as a positive way for community residents to learn more about the Mayflower and for

Mayflower residents to widen their friendships and activities in the greater community. She believes that Mayflower is unique among local senior living and healthcare facilities in Grinnell in terms of the number of such partnership activities offered to residents.

So far as we can determine, the first resident to serve as the ILAC was the late Bette Kersey who, in a reflection she wrote for the Summer 2004 issue of the *Log*, recalled, "In 2000, I was hired for the newly-created position of coordinator of independent resident activities." In 2004

Bette was succeeded for a short time by Kellie McGriff who is now the Director of Health Services at the Mayflower Health Center.

In 2005, resident Netia Worley was hired as the ILAC, a position she held until mid-2012. Under Netia's guidance, vision and energy, many resident activities now well-established at the Mayflower were initiated. Netia's involvement and success in

helping create new activities was sorely missed when she decided to give up the position. It quickly became clear that her successor needed to be found.

Though she is filling some big shoes, as it were, one cannot imagine a more qualified individual than Anne. Her entire career has been centered on guiding and teaching people. She was a bus tour guide in Pennsylvania, a school teacher, and a UCC pastor. She became an Iowa resident eleven years ago when she became the pastor of a rural congregation near Clarkesville, IA. She is currently



Anne Sunday Leading the new
"Story telling" group

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WELCOME ROBERTA ATWELL - Altemeier 206

"Well, I'm not quite as nervous as I was 40 years ago when you interviewed me for an appointment in the Department of Education here at Grinnell College," Roberta remembered as we lunched at the Bistro, reminiscing about the 'good ole days'.

Roberta's roots are in southern Missouri: Monet, MO to be precise. Following high school graduation she earned a bachelor's degree in the Social Sciences, then taught high school social science courses for 15 years. After receiving a doctorate from the University of Missouri (Columbia) her teaching continued at the college level.

At Grinnell College, Roberta was a leader in the development and establishment of Women's Studies as an area of study which eventually became a program offering a major.

She edited a book about the relationship between daughters and their mothers. Currently, she is researching and writing her family's history.

"I've been to all the states except Alaska, Maine, Oregon, and Idaho," she responded in answer to my question about her travels. "I've also been to Turkey, Israel, China, Japan, Russia, the Yucatan and, with luck, I'll get to the four states and some places I've not been."

"What other interests do you have," I queried.

"Well, coffee and the newspaper, so don't call before 10:00 a.m.! I read--lots of mysteries. I like playing bridge and I watch lots of sports on TV. I'm a very private person."

I assured her that her privacy would be respected, but I added, "If you need a question answered or help, don't hesitate to ask."

As we left the Bistro, I remembered her having said, "We met forty years ago and you offered me a teaching position as an Assistant Professor. That made my day!" That made my day as well.

Beryl Wellborn

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completing a three-year program offered by the Franciscan Spirituality Center in La Crosse, WI. to become a certified spiritual director.

The secret to her success, she says, is becoming a good listener and, of course, enjoying people. It's impossible to be in her company and not become engaged and energized by her sunny personality and her obvious interest.

Anne reports that as the ILAC she spends time interacting with residents to

learn their interests and counts on their initiative and involvement in planning events. The idea for the recent Des Moines Zoo trip, a plan to attend a puppet show at the Iowa Transportation Museum, and an upcoming journey to the Crossroads Mall in Waterloo are all examples of resident-initiated activities. Anne is now also certified to drive the Mayflower's 12 passenger van in case none of the other volunteer drivers is available.

Alice Breemer and Harley Henry

WELCOME VICKI SOPHER - Pearson 206

"I'm getting to know people by name. The Mayflower's a very friendly place," Vicki said. "As I get better acquainted, I'll probably participate in some of the activities." She added, "I have some memory problems, so I'm glad to be close to my sisters Jan (Peak) and Kim (Wemer)."

Vicki is one of Bill and Clio Sopher's six children. She was raised in Ft. Madison, IA. Following high school she graduated from the University of Iowa.

Vicki moved here from Chicago where she worked for several years for the Arlington Heights Public School District. Her duties included data management using the computer.

While living and working in Chicago, Vicki visited friends in Arizona and California. Following her retirement, she spent much

of her time helping friends and neighbors. "I would drive kids and their mothers to the doctor and take those who couldn't drive to the grocery store. I enjoyed helping friends whenever I could."

Vicki went on to say that she reads a lot. "I never get tired of it," she observed.

With twinkling eyes and laughter in her voice, she told me that for twenty years she lived near Wrigley Field, the home of the Chicago Cubs. "On game days or nights there was lots of noise and lots of people."

Imagine my surprise when she added, "In the twenty years I lived in 'Wrigleyville,' I went to only one Cub's game."

Though she's not a baseball fan, Vicki learned about football by watching games with her father.

Beryl Wellborn

WELCOME NANCY BROWN - Montgomery 8

"Come in, come in; don't mind the clutter," Nancy greeted me. "You probably know that, eventually, I'll be living in Montgomery 8, so I'm not going to pack and unpack any more than is necessary." For the time being, Nancy lives in Pearson 205.

Nancy comes to the Mayflower from Ames, IA. She was born in Concord, MA, grew up in Vermont and, after completing her co-major doctorate in Institution Management and Economics, became a full-time faculty member at Iowa State University, Ames, IA. She taught at ISU for 30 years.

During her professional career Nancy also worked at other universities as a management dietitian in their residence hall food services.

When I asked, "Is the Mayflower new to you?" she assured me that it was not. "No. I served on its Board of Trustees from 1986 to 1992. I was also the Board's secretary."

"What other interests do you have?" Nancy reported that she was an active member of her church and the League of Women Voters. "I have held several offices in the Ames UCC Church, including Moderator and Clerk and chaired numerous boards and committees. I served as President of the Ames chapter of The League of Women Voters. At the state level I served as secretary and also headed a study on mental health delivery in Iowa.

"I've traveled to each of our 50 states and I've visited more than 50 countries in

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THE WISE DISPOSAL OF LEFTOVERS

Their concerns range from leftover pharmaceuticals to old cell phones, and from used soda cans to recycled printer cartridges.

They are the Green Team, one of the Mayflower's answers to today's throwaway culture. Jim Ahrens, chairman of the team, explained the various disposal tasks the team tackles.

For example, recently it was the twice-a-year collection of unused medicines. This year's first collection was in April. Residents were asked to turn in any drops, pills, or other medications that were no longer needed. No medical "leftovers" should be thrown into the garbage, flushed, or otherwise dumped. Instead, Jim advised, the Green Team collects them and hands them over to responsible disposers. A second collection of leftover medications is scheduled for October and we will all be notified!

A much more frequent collection of soda cans and bottles takes place every week. Residents need to be aware that any container that has an Iowa tax stamp affixed to it (particularly containers of either alcoholic and/or carbonated beverages) can be redeemed by the Green Team if it is not simply dumped into the recycling bins.

In the disposal areas outside Montgomery and Buckley, there are

separate bins for both cans and bottles on which purchasers have a paid state tax. Jim picks them up from the two recycling spots there, takes them to be redeemed, and turns the proceeds realized over to the Boy Scouts. You can make a bigger difference by making sure that your taxed containers go to the Green Team.

Staying up to date with the "waste" created by modern technology, Jim can now ship old cell phones to a recycler at no charge, and can get electronic equipment recycled, except for televisions with cathode ray tubes. He also can tell the owners of such elderly equipment how to do it themselves. Additionally, Jim can also donate recyclable used printer cartridges to benefit a local Christian school, provided that computer users turn them over to him.

That's several sizeable jobs and all of them require the cooperation and support of Mayflower residents. Jim's Green Team includes Erin Gersdorf of the Mayflower staff, *ex officio*; Ann Stillman, secretary; and Loree Rackstraw, Nancy Reinecke, and Carolyn Runyon. Additional recruits would be welcome.

The Green Team suggests that you be discriminating about how you throw things away. Those soda cans and taxed containers can do more work if you let the Green Team have them.

Sue Chasins



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all of the continents except Antarctica. All places have some unique characteristics. They are each so different and fascinating."

We ended our conversation by her telling me that she likes to bird-watch and read.

"I've lots of books—fiction and non-fiction. I need to read and then let go of some of them, but that's not always easy."

Beryl Wellborn



A visit to the Zoo and Des Moines Art Center



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