

**September 2010**

## **Cheers to a Taste of Hawaii**

Last month, residents gathered to enjoy island cocktails, Hawaiian dances and great food at the Luau Party. Add the beach balls, Hawaiian leis and festive atmosphere and the only thing missing was an island breeze!



*Lois Quinn*



*Sig Erber, Kevin McGee, Connie Saviano, Phil Carlin and Clare Erber*

## **Building Community with Volunteers**

**By Shelly Genis, Life Enrichment Volunteer Coordinator**

Individuals from the community are reaching out to the residents of Smith Village to share their talents and interests—and it's really making a splash. On Saturday, July 24, Smith Village conducted its first volunteer orientation and the turnout was phenomenal. It was thrilling to see people excited to volunteer. They will share their knowledge about gardening, art, writing, photography and much more!

“A newspaper article about Smith Village’s expanded volunteer program struck a chord with me. Because one of the goals since I’ve retired is to give back to the community,” says Janet McGuffage, a retired teacher who was looking for a worthwhile cause when she saw a newspaper article about the program. “The timing was perfect.”

Judith Polzin, a 19<sup>th</sup> Ward resident, started her Smith Village volunteering by visiting her aunt, Agnes Steffen, who has been a resident since April, 2005. Judith found that after becoming familiar with Smith Village, she wanted to spend time with other residents as well. She has been volunteering with the Alzheimer’s/Memory Loss community for about a year-and-a-half, and appreciated the opportunity to meet with other volunteers.

“It’s so satisfying to know that you can bring happiness to someone through a brief conversation or listen for even a short time to their stories,” says Judith. “I sometimes think I actually benefit as much or more than the residents do from our visits. It gives me such joy to know that our talks sometimes spark a treasured memory or an image that is something special to them.”

Look for the “Volunteer” badges. If you see one, please introduce yourself and extend a warm welcome. Volunteers will be featured in future newsletters, so you can get to know them. It is exciting to build our relationship with the community and look forward to seeing what each volunteer brings to Smith Village.

## **New Resident Spotlight: Felicia Milen**

**By Mary Martschinke**

One of Smith Village's newest residents is Felicia Milen, a long-time resident of Chicago's Southwest suburbs. Born in Chicago Ridge, Felicia later made her home in Crestwood. She feels fortunate to have six of her seven children in the Chicago area because she enjoys all their company.



**Felicia Milen**

Since she joined us here at Smith Village, Felicia has enjoyed making new friends and has already found pleasure in some of the many activities, including participating in the Chimers and the Book Club. While she found European travel interesting, Felicia remarks, "Home is best."

When asked why she chose Smith Village as her new home, she simply replied, "This is the place I'm supposed to be in for now."

Be sure to welcome this sweet lady and collect one of her lovely smiles!

## **Holding onto a Book—and a Lot More!**

**By Pat Barto**

I've been reading a book from the third floor rec room called, *The Brain that Changes Itself*. It's a challenge! Even so, I've found valuable tips on how to handle the occasional, embarrassing memory lapses that can be downright scary.

For me, getting plenty of rest is a necessity. I make no apologies for not attending evening activities—and the book didn't have to tell me this! Physical activity is also an "on-going requirement for providing the brain with a good oxygen supply," says my book. Exercise also "stimulates and maintains the brain's balance system," making falls less likely. Being laid up after a fall can be a major setback to healthy brain activity. Along with regular exercises, extra hall-walking and stair-climbing, instead of a catnap, makes a big difference.

My book also states: "Whatever keeps the heart and blood vessels fit invigorates the brain, including a healthy diet." I am a cardiac patient and years ago my excellent cardiologist mandated a diet that I still try to follow.

I inherited an interest in politics from both parents, who, fortunately, were both loyal to the same party! Though "talking politics" may not be a good idea in every situation, staying interested is.

### **Publication Credits**

*Editors:* Sarah Jewett

*Contributors:* Pat Barto, Mary Martschinke,

Jim McKeon, Clare Moore and

Michael Thomas, D.O.

*Proofreader:* Erin Manghera

While these habits may not prevent the memory lapses that come with aging, I have reason not to fear serious memory loss. Thanks to the good God who has brought all these pieces together, and will be there for me regardless of how the story ends.

## On the Road Again

By Clare Moore

When was the last time you visited Brookfield Zoo? I did some mental addition and subtraction when I was asked that question and the answer is 17 years! As a result, when the trip appeared on our Life Enrichment calendar, I immediately decided to take advantage of the opportunity to visit the zoo again.

First, a little background: The Chicago Zoological Society was chartered in 1921 with John T. McCutcheon, a cartoonist for the *Chicago Tribune*, as its first president. Several of Chicago's top commercial leaders joined McCutcheon to form a committee to search for funding and property for the zoo. At the same time that the Zoological Society was formed, a group of Cook County officials traveled to Tier Park, Germany to view its moat-style, "barless" zoo for ideas which ultimately inspired the design of Brookfield Zoo.

Two years later, Edith Rockefeller McCormick donated 83 acres in Brookfield, Ill., to the Society—and Brookfield Zoo was born. Construction began in 1926, but halted in 1929 due to the stock market crash. In 1931, building resumed and the zoo was completed in 1934. The four cornerstones of the zoo have always been conservation, recreation, education and scientific study.

Seventy-five years later, Brookfield Zoo is considered to be a world-class zoo. Some of the most popular exhibits are The Savannah, where the giraffes will eat the flowers from your hat if you get close enough; Fragile Kingdom, home of the big cats; Dragonfly Marsh, where you walk among the butterflies and must be very careful that you don't take any of them with you when you leave; Stingray Bay, where you can touch a Stingray; and the Seven Seas exhibit, where two daily shows feature dolphins. In addition, in the Rainforest, rain actually runs down the forest walls and drips from the overhead branches. This popular area is home to 19 varieties of primates, the largest of which is the Orangutan. The Great Bear Wilderness was recently completed—and of course, there is a children's zoo.

Needless to say, there are ample places to eat, an abundance of rest-stop facilities and parking for almost 7,000 cars. I'm not going to wait another 17 years for my next visit!

## The Boys of Summer

By Jim McKeon

Cleveland shows Detroit how it is done. Jhonny Peralta showed Ryan Raburn and the Detroit Tigers the bullpen door, as the Indians completed a four-game series a month ago.

With a runner on first and second, and two outs in the first inning, Peralta hit a 1-1 pitch toward the Cleveland bullpen. Center fielder Raburn leaped into—and tumbled—through the door. The ball caromed off the wall. Left fielder Brennan Boesch raced over to retrieve the ball as Peralta, one of the slowest players on Cleveland's roster, chugged around the bases. "It seemed like that's the way things went the whole road trip," Raburn said.

Peralta slid in ahead of short-stop Danny Worth's relay throw—for Cleveland's first inside-the-park homer since 2007!

**"I have never let my schooling interfere with my education."** —*Mark Twain*

## Here's to Healthy Living



Dr. Michael Thomas  
Medical Director

### The A, B, Cs of ZZZZZZZ....

If you ever lie in bed staring at the ceiling, you know what it's like to feel "sleep-

challenged." You're not alone. Sleep issues are common among seniors because after age 40, the internal body clock changes, often making it difficult to fall asleep or stay asleep!

Refreshing sleep is important, not only to recharge the body, but also to dream. To improve your chances for a good night's sleep:

1. Get enough sunlight. Exposure to sunlight tells the brain it's time to be awake. In fact, sunglasses inhibit this effect, so it's good to take them off for a bit. In contrast, darkness tells the brain it's time to sleep.
2. Make your bedroom dark and quiet.
3. Regular exercise improves sleep, but complete your workout more than a few hours before bedtime.
4. Avoid evening snacks.
5. Leave anxiety and stress outside your bedroom.
6. Enjoy a warm bath before bed.
7. Try melatonin, an over-the-counter sleep aid. Prescription medications can help, but use only for short periods. Alcohol can help some people fall asleep, but it's also a stimulant and affects individuals differently.

If sleep problems are ongoing, talk with your doctor.

### News to Consider

#### Enjoy Lifelong Learning

Watching children march back to school can create happy memories, but it's important to remember that learning isn't just for kids. In fact, most experts believe *using the brain* keeps it healthier. Writing, working puzzles, playing games and taking opportunities to learn new skills helps keep the mind sharper longer—and there's no need to attend school to benefit.

Here are a few ideas on how to make learning a bigger part of life:

1. Read. Always have a book on-hand. Sometimes it helps to attend a book club to share ideas.
2. Spend time with people who enjoy learning new skills and sharing their knowledge. The process is contagious.
3. Learn skills you want to *use*. Learn to paint a picture to capture a favorite memory. When you're motivated to learn, you enjoy the process more.
4. Teach others. Do you know how to sew, draw or use a computer? Sharing knowledge sharpens your brain.

Learning also expands your perspective. You gain valuable knowledge that can improve your life—and it's fun.

### Farewell from Mary Kate and Emily, Summer Interns

As our internship comes to a close, we want you to know how much we appreciate our time here at Smith Village. You have been exceptionally welcoming! This opportunity has given us a broad perspective on gerontology—and assures us that we're in the right field for our careers.

We leave here not only with an enhanced education, but also friendships that will continue to shape our lives. We may be leaving Smith Village, but Smith Village will never leave us! Thank You!