

The Gift of Valentine's Day

I was asked to write this article about what Valentine's Day means to me. One would think that this would be an easy enough topic to write about; but after a few hours of daydreaming, I looked down at my paper and, would you believe it, it was still blank.

The truth is that for most of my life I have thought of the holiday as nothing more than a commercial nightmare designed to force people into spending exorbitant amounts of money on others to prove their love.

However, in the past few years I have decided to let go of pent-up frustrations towards the heart shaped holiday and focus my energy on finding a deeper meaning in the infamous February fourteenth.

A few years ago, I began to look at this holiday from a different angle. I decided to use this time to reflect and appreciate all that I love. I now think of this day as a precious opportunity to remind the special people in my life how much they mean to me. Life is just too short to let something so important go unsaid. After all, love is the best thing we do.

Christy O'Connor
Director of Life Enrichment



The Peggy and Betty Story

Now that Social Media and virtual communications have captured how we create friendships, it is refreshing to learn of a lasting old-time friendship that has endured for years. Peggy Moore and Betty Love met at the Presbyterian Piedmont Springs summer camp when they were about ten years old. Their friendship continues to this day as residents of Towers unit #321.

Peggy grew up, as an only child, in the small town of Lowrys, SC. Peggy's father was the Postmaster and Railway Express agent in Lowrys. The family was very active in Lowrys' Zion Presbyterian Church, one of the sponsors of the summer camp. Peggy's first six years of education were in Lowrys' two-room school, two-teacher school; then she went to Chester, South Carolina, by bus for middle school, and graduated from Chester High School. Always wanting to teach, she enrolled in the Education Department, of the then, all-women Winthrop College. She vividly remembers the famous "Blue Line" that officially started the beginning of the school year.

Betty grew up on a 110-acre Bowling Green, SC, family cotton farm, called "Love Farm." She and her twin sister were the youngest of seven children, who all worked the farm. Sadly, her twin sister, Netty, passed away at 18 months. The Love family was very active in the Bowling Green Presbyterian Church, another sponsor of the summer camp. Bowling Green also had only a two-room and two-teacher schoolhouse that educated the local children up to grade six. For Middle School and High School, they were bused off to Clover, SC. Called to nursing, Betty enrolled in Charlotte Memorial Hospital's three-year nursing program. After graduation, Betty worked for a short time at the hospital and then for 40 years with the Charlotte Pediatric Group.

After graduating from Winthrop, Peggy and her college roommate (another Peggy), also a best friend of Betty's in high school, came to Charlotte

to teach. Betty and her roommate (Barbara), also a nurse, joined the two teachers and they moved into a large apartment in the Park Road section of Charlotte. There they shared living expenses and developed a lasting friendship. After about three years, the other Peggy was married. It was at this



Betty (Left) and Peggy (Right)

time the remaining three decided it was time to stop renting and purchase a HOUSE! It wasn't easy, as at that time, banks were hesitant to provide mortgages to single women not making tons of money. However, they persisted and finally were able to purchase a fairly new home in Charlotte's growing South Park area. The three women lived in this house for 28 years. It was during these years Peggy and Bar-

bara were taken into the Love family as two of their very own. They were special aunts to many of the Love nieces and nephews. Peggy and Barbara became very active members of Bowling Green Presbyterian Church. Now close to retirement, the girls decided it was time to move on to new adventures in home ownership.

The three made the decision to build their dream house on five acres of land on the site of the now dormant Love Farm. They said it was a challenge for the architect to fold the desires of three women into an acceptable plan, but somehow he managed it! The 2,600 square foot, one story ranch was built and occupied in less than a year. Betty and Peggy lived happily there for 20 years before selling and moving into the Towers. Sadly, the third roommate, Barbara, passed away 15 years before the Towers move. An interesting vignette about the new house: both women owned a riding lawnmower. On a set morning, Betty would mow the back and Peggy the front. It took one and a half hours to complete the mowing, and they celebrated with a "high five" before driving their mowers to the garden shed.

Retiring after 30 years teaching 4th grade at Montclair Elementary School, Peggy was ready for a final retirement after 10 years with First Union National Bank. Betty was ready for retirement

after 43 years in Pediatric Nursing. Barbara was also ready for retirement, after 44 years of nursing. Now fully retired, they decided it was time to see the United States and they embarked on 43 vacation trips and cruises with Christian Tours. They both agreed that the Alaska cruise and bus tour was their favorite.

Betty started missing her interaction with children, so she began a mentoring experiment with a young boy, De Patton, when he was a kindergarten. He became her lunch buddy and friend. Peggy soon became involved. He visited their home frequently and they sponsored him at Bethelwoods summer camp. De became a mem-

ber at Bowling Green Presbyterian Church. Music became a passion for the young boy, and now he is a senior at Winthrop University, majoring in choral directing. Currently, he serves as music and choir director at the church. This exceptional and gifted individual was greatly helped by their mentoring and dedication to his welfare. To them, this is a special joy and many of the Towers residents have met and heard De Patton perform at the University's choral concerts. Peggy and Betty are a special gift to the Towers and the Bowling Green community. They love living here, and it shows.

Ed FitzGerald

Angela Elliott

Angela Elliott joined us as our new Resident Services Director, replacing Amy Laughlin. Angela started on January 8, 2021, and what a start it has been for her! Although new at Westminster Towers, Angela has extensive experience in Long Term Care management, spanning 30 years in various roles including Regional Director of Operations, Chief Compliance Officer, and Executive Director/Administrator roles. She will be directing Life Enrichment, Dining Services, Home Bridge, and the Manor, among other duties.

Angela is married and lives in Gastonia, just over the border into North Carolina. She is the proud mother to an adult son and daughter, and is

even more proud to be a grandmother to a granddaughter, who will be six, and a grandson who will soon be two years old.

Senior care is a lifelong passion for Angela. She believes that each day is an opportunity to improve the lives of the seniors she serves. To her, there is not a bad day in senior living, as someone always has a smile or a kind word for you. She thrives on innovation and is always on the lookout for new ideas to help her make improvements in the daily lives of seniors. Angela has spoken to many of you already and looks forward to 'meeting' each of you, even if it is just over the phone for now. She is at 803-328-5014 and her office is in apartment 209 in the Towers.



Angela and her husband watching the Panthers



There's nothing as precious as your grandchildren!



Angela with her beautiful family!

TOWER CLIMBING

Back in the years we served as missionaries in the Philippines we heard of a remarkable tower event which had occurred in the life of a Filipino we had met. Fred was a Christian but had resisted God's call into the ministry. Eventually he had begun to work both in the engineering field and in preaching at a Christian radio broadcasting station in Manila.

Then, an engineering position had opened for him in the US. The promise of increased finances, which offered him the possibility of supporting other Christian workers, enticed him to accept it. But after he had made the decision to go, the Lord stopped him in a literally electrifying way.

The lights of the station's sending tower went out one evening. Fred climbed up to replace them. Then, some 300 feet up, his head accidentally connected to the powerful electrical current that went out as radio waves. While stuck to it, he heard his own sermon from Romans 12 that he had taped earlier in the day literally go out through his body! That passage begins, "Therefore, I urge you, brothers, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God – this is your spiritual act of worship."

In the Lord's mercy the current released him, his fall was stopped, and he was able to climb down and stagger a few hundred feet to a nurse's home, where he collapsed. After two months of hospitalization, he came out as a man restored, though bearing the scars of his ordeal. More importantly, he was completely surrendered to Christ. He went on to serve God in a number of significant ways in the Philippines and overseas.

That 300-foot radio tower on the campus of the Christian Far East Broadcasting Company also had an impact on me once, though not as dramatically as for Fred! I was walking on the campus one day with a missionary who served there and was looking up at the tower. I casually commented something to the effect that the tower would be

fun to climb. To my surprise, his response was that we should do it! I wasn't wearing shoes which I felt would be suitable to climb towers but was hesitant to chicken out! So up we went on the narrow metal ladder. He went first and I followed, with my hands tightly gripping the rungs and my feet firmly in place.

Though this was many years ago, I remember



that when I glanced down as we climbed higher, it was a scary sight to see the ground far below. We made our way only to the one-hundred-foot level, and I carefully stepped across the space from the ladder onto the platform. We spent a few minutes there looking out at the view, but I doubt that I did much looking directly

down! Then I carefully stepped back to the ladder, seized the rungs, placed my feet, and began the journey down - again not focusing much on the ground below. I made it, but it was a less than comfortable experience – to say the least!

I've never forgotten that adventure on the tower. In retrospect, I think it forms a strong illustration of the Christian life. The Lord leads us to many "tower" challenges as we journey through life. It's so easy to start looking down at the dangers, problems, and disappointments as we climb, be caught up in anxiety, fear and regret, lose our grip, misstep, or even fall. On the other hand, God's call is to keep looking out and up, with a firm grip on His truth and promises, and the knowledge that He will keep us safe and accomplish good purposes in the climbs. As the biblical author put it in Psalm 105:4, "Look to the Lord and his strength, seek his face always," and in Proverbs 4:25, "Let your eyes look straight ahead, fix your gaze directly before you!"

So, as we make our way up and down the "towers" God leads us to in life, let's avoid focusing downward, and look ahead and up to the Lord, who will guarantee our safety. And ultimately, when we arrive at life's final tower, we will climb upward into eternal and glorious safety in our heavenly home!

Wendell Anderson

OUR AAA GOD

Our family had had the privilege of entertaining a South African lady by the name of Julie who had come to the Philippines. She was an amazing woman of God who lived totally by faith. She had landed in Manila with about \$20 to her name, which she had hoped was enough to get her a taxi ride to the Far Eastern Bible Institute compound (it wasn't). However, God had other plans. She saw a needy woman and He told her to give her the \$20. She obeyed Him right away, but then asked Him to show her how to get to the Bible school. After a while, she struck up a conversation with a gentleman who, in the providence of God, was going there and offered her a ride!

Many stories followed over the course of her visit with us as she told us how God had provided for her. Our children listened to these stories right along with Wendell and me. Soon after she left, we went to the city for the weekend and chose to make the 66-mile journey home early Monday morning rather than late in the day on Sunday. Both Wendell and I had morning classes to teach at the Bible school, so it

was imperative that we get home.

However, our vehicle had been acting up for a while. The carburetor float would stick, which would flood it, and the car would sputter and then stop. We would have to open the hood and whack the carburetor with some kind of tool to unstick the float and then work to get it started again.

Of course, that morning it chose to happen out in the middle of nowhere about halfway home, and the car stopped. With the two children in the back seat, Wendell prayed that God would help us to get it running again. Then he grabbed his tool and started to get out of the car, but our son piped up and said, "Try it again, Dad, before you open the hood." And so he did, and it started immediately! He put his tool away, put the car in gear, and we proceeded on our way home in plenty of time to teach our classes.

As we rode along, our son commented that if God could provide for Aunt Julie the way He did, surely He could help us get the car started. He seemed quite pleased with himself for having offered the suggestion. It was a good lesson for us all to learn, that God is as concerned about the small things of our lives as the large.

Nancy Anderson



News You Can Use



Wellness Committee:

February is heart month, so let's be kind to this very important organ that keeps us "ticking!" Every day, we should strive to en-

gage in some form of exercise: attend a class, use the exercise room, swim, or go for a walk in the glorious world God has given us. If you have a smart phone, track your daily steps on the health app. You will be surprised at the numbers. Keep moving! Remember the saying, "a body at rest stays at rest, a body in motion keeps moving." Your heart will thank you. **Sue Nazak, Chairman**



I logged 1,180 walking miles on the Westminster campus's outer circle roadways last year.

I'm not a social walker. The route I use is 0.65 miles long, and I do five loops daily. This takes me 60-63 minutes to complete, rain or shine. So my speed is 3.25mph.

HOPE EVERYONE DOES IT SAFELY.

Ron Weisburg

Our Father in Heaven

One of my classmates in nurses' training was a girl by the name of Synnove Svendberg. She had been born to Swedish parents who were missionaries in Pakistan, so they spoke Swedish and Urdu, the language of Pakistan, in their home. She attended an international school where she learned English as well. We always enjoyed having Synnove around, because if she got excited, she would lapse into Swedish or Urdu! When we would point this out to her, she would laugh at herself and then translate it into English. She married David Mitchell soon after our training was finished, and they went back to Pakistan as missionaries.

One day she heard a knock at her door. When she opened it, she saw a regal Pakistani woman of great importance whose name was Madame Bilquis Sheikh standing there. She nervously invited her in and offered her tea. The lady responded that she needed nothing, but simply wanted to ask a question of a Christian. Her question was this, "Does perfume have anything to do with the Bible?" Offering up a quick prayer, Synnove led her to 2 Corinthians 2:14, which says, "But thanks be to God, who in Christ always leads us in triumphal procession and through us spreads **the fragrance of the knowledge of him** everywhere." "Ah," the lady responded, "so it is Christ who is the fragrance!" With that she abruptly left.

Some months before, Madame Sheikh had brought her grandson to a Catholic hospital for treatment. While there, she picked up the Bible that was in his room and began to read. A nun walked into the room, saw her reading it and asked why a Moslem woman would be reading the Bible. "I am searching for God. I must find

God!
How can
I know
him?"
she re-
sponded.
To that
the nun
replied,
"Talk to
him as
you

would your father." Then she quietly left the room.

Moslems never think of God as their father, so this was an entirely new concept to her. Her father had been a prominent figure in the Pakistani government. But she remembered that, whenever she wanted to see him, she could go to his office. He would put down his work, take her on his knee and give her his undivided attention until she was satisfied and ran off to play once again. "If my earthly father paid attention to me like that, would God do the same?" she mused. So, she began asking this Heavenly Father to reveal how she could have a relationship with him.

She procured a Bible and began to read it avidly. Then one night she dreamed that an angel appeared in her bedroom, put a vial of expensive perfume on her nightstand, and told her, "Open it, and the fragrance will fill your room." Hence her visit to see my friend, Synnove.

Madame Sheikh did become a very committed Christian, which was a dangerous thing to do in her family and society. She endured rejection, persecution, and threats on her life, but the Lord protected her. The missionaries were reticent to have much to do with her for fear of adding to her persecution. They even postponed baptizing her for some time, which she had earnestly requested, until they found a safe place to do it. One night, Dave and Synnove went to her home after dark to spend time with her and encourage her. She was so grateful for their visit, as she had been alone for days, and had prayed that God would send someone with whom she could have fellowship.

She eventually left Pakistan, which meant leaving all that she owned behind, having been allowed to carry only \$200 out of the country. She became a missionary and wrote a book titled, I Dared to Call Him Father. She challenged all who heard her to trust the Lord and obey him, no matter what the cost.

For those who had earthly fathers who treated them as kindly as Madame Sheikh's father treated her, it is easier to approach their Heavenly Father. But for those who have had fathers who were unkind, abusive, or absent, it takes courage to dare to come to God and call him Father. But taking the risk is well worth it! He patiently waits to reveal His loving nature to those who do.

Nancy Anderson



In Loving Memory:

*Ladson Barnes
Herbert Hanna
Anton Knopfler
Betty Leach
Hulic Ratterree
Nancy Ratterree*



Any gift to the Endowment, Capital Campaign, or Employee Assistance Fund can be made in honor or in memory of a loved one or neighbor.

******NOTICE******

Beware of any solicitation from known national insurance companies offering cash deposits into personal bank accounts. The request comes in very official-looking documents, with phone number contacts, and forms to be filed to initiate the deposit. **It is a SCAM!** They are after your Social Security number and bank account routing number. We understand that they are using this scam extensively with residents of retirement communities.

Contributions

Endowment

In Memory of: Dody Hoff
Lynn Hornsby

In Memory of: John Eason
Sig and Judy Huitt
Jim and Nancy Bright

In Memory of: Ladson Barnes
Dicksie Ward
Joanne Cauthen
Jane Watkins
Lynn Hornsby

In Memory of: Bill Graham, Jr.
Spencer and Elizabeth Anderson

In Memory of: Randy Craven
Sig and Judy Huitt

In Memory of: John Damron
Lynn Hornsby

General Fund

In Memory of: Ladson Barnes and John Damron
Ed and Jody FitzGerald

Employee Appreciation Christmas Fund

In Memory of: Herbert Hanna
Jody FitzGerald

In Honor of: Winona Kennedy
Karen Kennedy

Thank You

Just for Laughs!

Crabby Road

2-15-12



We are looking for articles about Westminster Towers residents and happenings around the Towers!

Entries can be submitted directly to Christy
O'Connor or Linda Lenz.

Deadline for entries for March is
February 15th.



Westminster Towers, an extension of the ministry of Westminster Presbyterian Church, was founded on the theological principles and values of the Presbyterian Church in America. Our mission is to provide services that inspire, encourage, and empower seniors, while demonstrating the love of Christ to support individual well-being.

Westminster Windows is published monthly for the residents, staff and friends of Westminster Towers continuing care retirement community.

Submissions and column ideas are welcomed in writing to the following members of the newsletter committee (submissions will not be returned, and they will be used according to space availability and content appropriateness).

Newsletter Committee — Committee Chair: **Linda Lenz**; Members: **Nancy Anderson, Lou Ardrey, Marshall Doswell, Pinky Funderburk, Barbara Gladden, Mary Alice Mitchell, Carole Partridge, Gaylon Syrett, Janet Yocum**; Residents' Association President: **Spencer Anderson** President and CEO: **Jim Thomason**; Editor: **Jennifer Tucker** Director of Life Enrichment: **Christy O'Connor**

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