SAINT SIMEON’S ANNOUNCES SUCCESSFUL 
— WESTERN DAYS EVENT —

Saint Simeon’s Foundation is thrilled to announce that Western Days 2015: Celebrating Saint Simeon’s, Where Caring Really Matters, was a huge success with over $510,000 raised.

Nearly 700 people attended Western Days 2015: Celebrating Saint Simeon’s, Where Caring Really Matters, which featured a marvelous silent auction, as well as the always entertaining live auction, led by volunteer auctioneer, Tommy Williams. Live auction items ranged from a traditional multi-course Polish dinner prepared by Debbie and Bishop Ed Konieczny, a private dinner for 10 and tour of Gilcrease Museum’s archival collection with Gilcrease Museum’s new Executive Director, James Pepper Henry, getaways to beautiful vacation homes in Washington, D.C. and Ruidoso, N.M., a tour of Tulsa’s Marshall Brewing Company with founder Eric Marshall, accompanied by a beer tasting and South American cuisine, a nine-course chef’s tasting for 10 with paired wines at Polo Grill, a flower design class for 12 taught by Toni Garner of Toni’s Flowers, and a trout fishing experience at Spring Valley Anglers, a private fishing club in Northwest Arkansas.

The evening also featured the traditional General Store stocked with handmade items from residents, and a delicious dinner. In addition, Western Days attendees were entertained by music from the Shelby Eicher Band. Donations raised during Lots of Love giving at Western Days will go towards a new physical therapy room at Saint Simeon’s.

June Patton and David Hogan served as Event Chairs, with Donna and Will Farror serving as Patron Chairs. Karen and Rick Garren were selected as Honorary Chairs and were celebrated for their long-time volunteerism and support of Saint Simeon’s.

The Pioneer Spirit Award was presented to Saint Simeon’s

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“It was a beautiful evening, and an Assisted Living Resident who enjoys being outdoors and loves walking Saint Simeon’s grounds walked all the way up to the Security Office. The Resident was unfamiliar with the Security Office but found a friend in Mike Burris. Mike is a Security Officer for Saint Simeon’s and is a favorite of everyone. Given that Mike spends the majority of his time in the Security Office and doesn’t get to spend much time getting to know the Residents, it was a treat for Mike and for the Resident to develop a new friendship. It was a great evening for both of them.”

— Tadd Weese, Facility Management Director

“I’m a Security Officer at the front gate and generally work from 4:00 p.m. to 12:00 p.m. Our most important job is to control all access to the property, but we also have other duties, like acknowledging different alarms. It could be an emergency, like a fire or tornado, or just monitoring a door opening from a Resident’s room or home into one of our courtyards. We even water flowers! Kathy Hinkle says that the two pots at the Security Office wouldn’t have survived and even flourished this summer without our daily attention.

I come from a military background. My father was in the Army, I was in the Air Force, and I have a daughter in the Marine Corps. When I started working part-time here, I also had a job as the supervisor at the Tulsa School Bus Plant. When the opportunity to come here full-time came up, I was happy to take it. My first real job was a paper route – I had the whole city of Muskogee for 20 years. I’ve also been a part-time fireman (when they needed me), an Air Force pressman (printing government requisitions), and worked at an eye glass factory.

I was born in Baltimore, Maryland. At an early age, 15 years old, I struck out on my own. I moved to Salt Lake City, Utah and finished my schooling there. I also took the opportunity to travel all over various Caribbean countries. By attending classes day and night, I was able to graduate at the same time as my classmates back home.
My dad, Frank Burris, was in the printing business, working for International Paper. My mom, Anna Burris, was a beautician. I had a brother, Eric, who was a good bit younger than me. I didn’t know him very well since I left home while he was still so little. My dad and brother are deceased, and my mother still lives in Maryland.

I attended the University of Utah, studying law at the time. I played AAA Baseball with the Salt Lake City Gulls. I got married and have five wonderful kids and 13 wonderful grandchildren. My kids are Juanakee, Cherokee, Cody, Ginger, and Amber. We are part Native American and related to one of the chiefs, Governor Bill Anotubby. I later married my wife, Stephanie. She has three daughters, two of them living with us, and one is a nurse, working on her Master’s degree in Edmond. I was kind of a strict father, but they all turned out pretty well!

Because of my time in the military, I traveled all over the United States but never overseas. We live in Broken Arrow and love the atmosphere there. It is a friendly community and close enough to Tulsa to have access to anything. On the side, my wife and I go to auctions to find furniture and then resell it on Craig’s list.

I now attend the non-denominational Christ the King Miracle Church. I served 15 years as a deacon in my former church. The Bible is my favorite book, and I read it every day. I love spending time with my grandkids, listening to jazz and classical music, and watching western or military action movies. I follow the Baltimore Ravens football team. I have a very large collection of Hot Wheels Diecast cars and trucks. I just always liked cars and have now amassed over 3,000 of them, and I’m still collecting!

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Resident Jim Dempster. Jim exemplifies the spirit of volunteerism, serving on the Saint Simeon’s Peggy V. Helmerich Library Committee, and also having served as a number of years as a Gillie, Gilcrease Museum’s volunteer program. Jim also started a husbands’ support group for men whose wives were experiencing memory loss issues.

King Wildcatter Underwriting sponsor of Western Days was the H.A. and Mary K. Chapman Charitable Trust. Wildcatter Underwriting sponsors were Phyllis and George Dotson, the E.L. and Thelma Gaylord Foundation, and the Ralph and Frances McGill Foundation.


Tool Pusher sponsors included an Anonymous donor, Ellen and Don Atkins in memory of Golden Colley, the Rt. Rev. Dr. Edward Konieczny and the Episcopal Diocese of Oklahoma, the George Kaiser Family Foundation, and WPX Energy.

Driller sponsors were Bank of Oklahoma, John and Lucy Barker, William L. Berry, Barbara and Arlo DeKraai, Don Carlton Honda, The Hille Foundation, Inasmuch Foundation, Kelly and Tony Jezek, Caron and Shawn Lawhorn, Lou and Connie Miller Charitable Foundation, the Jane and Clay Murray Family, ONE Gas, ONEOK, Staghorn Energy, LLC, Charles and Peggy Stephenson Family Foundation, and Trust Company of Oklahoma.
Dear Residents, Families, and Friends of Saint Simeon’s

Many members of my extended family have been avid gardeners. They grew flowers, vegetables, and plants of all kinds. Alas, I was never bitten by the gardening bug … until this year. For some reason, I just got this urge to grow some food! I like to grill anytime the weather will allow, and grilled vegetables are the best! I could just see myself grilling my own home-grown onions, potatoes, and bell peppers! Of course there would have to be tomatoes! You can’t have a vegetable garden in Oklahoma and not grow tomatoes!

There was a significant problem related to this budding desire (I know, that hurt): I don’t usually have a lot of free time, and when I do, I tend to be, uh, restrained … contemplative … peaceful … ok – I’m lazy! There was so much that had to be done. The idea of digging out a plot of ground and creating a raised bed garden was, uh, intimidating … anxiety producing … overwhelming … ok, ok – I’m lazy!

Then I discovered container gardening. Not only is it useful for growing flowers, but many people grow vegetables in containers. I quickly let my fingers do the shopping and discovered a large container that comes with fertilizer and instructions. All you add is potting soil for containers and the plants you want to raise. I quickly acquired a couple of these systems, and in a short amount of time, I had onions, potatoes, bell peppers, and tomatoes growing – and growing – and growing! These containers were amazing! They were also terribly over-planted. This was one of many lessons I learned over the spring and summer. Yet all of it was fun and exciting, and actually produced really good food! Food I got to grill! I’m enjoying the harvest!

The harvest is precisely why I’m writing about all of this. I’ve written many articles over the years about this time of year traditionally being the time of harvest festivals and celebrations. I’ve written about those celebrations being the basis of our own Thanksgiving Day celebration in this country. This year, I’m excited because I actually have participated in the ancient ritual of planting and growing. Now, I’m celebrating what I’ve done. My head is already filled with plans for next spring and what I will do differently.

Our harvest celebration simply wouldn’t be possible without those folks who farm the land and grow our food, cotton for our clothing, and livestock for our meat. In my silly little way, I tended a bit of soil and so joined with them in this basic activity of our human existence. As I celebrate Thanksgiving this year, I will be mindful and grateful for those who are responsible for the harvest we enjoy. I offer the following refrain from Dave Mallett’s “The Garden Song”:

Inch by inch, row by row
Gonna make this garden grow
All it takes is a rake and a hoe
And a piece of fertile ground

Inch by inch, row by row
Someone bless these seeds I sow
Someone warm them from below
Till the rain comes tumblin’ down

God’s Blessings to you,
Fr. Bill Holly †
Saint Simeon’s Friends of Flora and Fauna meets the second Saturday of each month in the Dotson Center Living Room. We hear about the interesting things going on with the plants and animals at Saint Simeon’s, always having some entertaining “non-human guests,” and enjoy the opportunity to share our personal experiences. It is especially delightful when family members join us. Barbara Bartlett always brings her mom, Pat Bartlett, with Rocky Peabody Peacock sitting on her lap. We’ve gotten to watch Rocky grow up. Barbara credits her mom for teaching her to appreciate nature.

This is an adventure Barbara recently shared with us:

“As you know, I am the human mother of Rocky the Peacock, who hatched in the Education Office under the watchful gaze of Simone (his first mother) the summer of 2014. I have always loved animals, but now I have a special affinity towards birds—really large birds. When I went on vacation this summer to Esalen, California on Big Sur, I had the treat of my life… getting to watch the biggest bird on our continent fly and roost. For those of you who don’t know, the California Condors almost became extinct in the 1980s when DDT made the eggs too fragile to survive. Volunteers gathered up the remaining 23 California Condors and put them in a protective breeding program. My mother, Pat Bartlett, who is now a Saint Simeon’s Resident, had a friend who came and visited us right after he had finished helping capture the condors. I remember how he told us about crawling up the cliffs of the rugged shoreline to reach the birds.

They have been slowly releasing these huge birds back into the wild, teaching them how to be parents to their young and monitoring their progress. While born in the wild, every condor is still labeled, numbered, and fashioned with a transmitter. Because of this, when you see their big name tag (see green tag in photo), you can go online and learn all about that very condor. I learned that Sovereignty, aka Green #2, was born in Big Sur the same week that Rocky was born in Tulsa.

I met Sovereignty (one of only 50 Condors now on the coast) when he flew in from the gorgeous ocean the first day of my retreat at beautiful Esalen. This huge baby Condor, with his TEN FOOT wing span, came flying in and perched in one of the trees.

You can see from Sovereignty’s photo that he is like a vulture with no feathers on his head. That is so he can easily clean himself after eating carrion (dead things). While the biggest and strongest, he was still young and easily intimidated by smaller, more agile birds that can fly much faster. The seagulls were pestering poor Sovereignty, so he flew to a tree on the deck of my cabin. He settled into a tree where I watched him scoot up a limb to the protective cover of branches to keep the other birds from trying to push him off the branch. He roosted there the rest of the day and into the night as I lay on my bed watching him… just like Rocky roosts every night by my sky light to watch me go to sleep. I felt right at home!”

FRIENDS OF FLORA AND FAUNA MEETING

Saturday, Nov. 14 | 10:00 a.m.
Dotson Living Room
Tiger Cub Scout Troop 44 from Holland Hall recently earned a merit badge by planting two new crepe myrtles at Saint Simeon’s. The boys enjoyed their afternoon visiting with Residents, finding turtles and the new peacocks in the courtyards, exploring Eckel Park, and adding to Saint Simeon’s beautiful landscape by planting purple crepe myrtles outside the Valley View dining room.

Our Residents enjoyed an Autumnal Recital on Sept. 30 with music by Joseph Arndt, organist/harpischordist/pianist at St. John’s Episcopal Church, and Merry Boustani, vocal professor at The University of Tulsa. We appreciate these talented musicians sharing their talents with us! The Residents especially enjoyed the sing-a-long! Many thanks to Phyllis and George Dotson for sponsoring this special event!
Welcome to our Family!

Barbara Allen  Jo Goff  
Woody Allen  John Lopp  
Virginia Atwood  Victoria Lopp  
Betty Cottier  Karen Miller  
Virginia Franklin  Dale Sherwin
Blessing of the Animals

The annual Blessing of the Animals took place at Saint Simeon’s on Oct. 5. Simone of course received her annual blessing. We also had four canine visitors from the Tulsa SPCA that received a blessing from Father Holly. The Blessing of the Animals is held in observance of the Feast of St. Francis of Assisi, recognizing pets’ importance in their own right – that their being and their end is God’s to give and part of God’s plan.

Father Holly blesses a sweet, adoptable dog from the Tulsa SPCA.

SAVE THE DATES!

SAINT SIMEON’S CHRISTMAS PARTIES

ASSISTED LIVING TEA WITH SANTA
Friday, December 11 * 2:30 - 3:30 p.m.
Dotson Center downstairs dining room

HEALTH CARE CENTER PARTY
Saturday, December 12 * 10 a.m. - 11:30 a.m.
Health Care Center Bishops’ Plaza area

MEMORY CENTER PARTY
Saturday, December 12 * 3 - 4 p.m.
Memory Center Common area