The Good Times Roll at Saint Simeon’s

Saint Simeon’s does every Mardi Gras up big, thanks to our dedicated Life Enrichment staff. In the morning, staff departments showed off the floats and costumes they created specifically for Mardi Gras and walked around the building in a big parade, adorning Residents with Mardi Gras beads. Some of the departments that went all out this year were the Life Enrichment Superheroes, the Facilities Services Egyptians, the Wellness Center “Krewe of Cupid,” and the Maintenance Horses and Gladiator.

In the afternoon, Residents enjoyed Mardi Gras Parties, complete with cake, punch, dancing, and live New Orleans-style music! Our Mardi Gras Kings and Queens were also crowned!
“I want to nominate Sherri Sayles in recognition of the service she provides in our Dotson Assisted Living Valley View Dining Room. On a daily basis, Sherri, by her professional attitude and caring demeanor, shows what an asset she is to Morrison’s and Saint Simeon’s. Recently I was expecting a visit by my granddaughter who was arriving too late for lunch here. Sherri voluntarily prepared a beautiful lunch tray for me to have for her. Consequently, we did not have to venture out into the cold weather for a meal when she arrived. What a gift! Ever since May when Sherri came on staff, the atmosphere in our dining room has experienced an upturn to a more positive and pleasant mood and added a delightful dimension to our dining experience.”

—Kay Herring, Assisted Living Resident

“I started working here in May 2015. Ella Barnes, who is the Service Manager, was one of my high school classmates (class of 1980), and she told me about a job opening. I am a Dietary Aide in Kitchen #7, which serves the Valley View Dining Room and catering events in the Bistro. I love my job! I love the Residents. I even love the hours I work. Not too early, not too late – 11:00am to 7:00pm.

My goal is to help Residents have the very best possible dining experience. Of course I provide basic table service, including picking up their menu order, bringing them their meal choices, drinks, and desserts, clearing the plates away, and taking the dishes to the main kitchen and cleaning up the dining room. I also plate the meals when necessary and wash the dishes if needed. What I really enjoy is lifting the Residents’ spirits whenever possible, talking to them, finding out how their day is going and singing “Happy Birthday” whenever a Resident has a birthday. I try to present a positive image for the Residents and my co-workers.

I was born and grew up in Tulsa. I attended Burroughs Elementary School, several junior highs, and graduated from McLain High School. While in high school I got my first job working as a cashier at Walgreen’s. After graduation I moved to Kansas City, Missouri and attended the University of Missouri-Kansas City. I actually lived in Kansas City, Kansas. There was just a short bridge connecting the two cities/states. It was very difficult to be on my own, working and going to school all at the same time. I eventually went back to Tulsa for a few months and then moved to Las Vegas to try my luck there.
GETTING TO KNOW

In Las Vegas, I had a lot of jobs. I worked as a model with the Linda Layman Model and Talent Agency in Tulsa. That is the same agency that Kay Herring (AL Resident) was with. In Las Vegas I worked with the Laws and Young Agency. I also continued singing. I’ve been singing since I was 5 years old in bands, choirs, solos, groups, churches, weddings, and funerals. I love gospel, rhythm and blues—all kinds of music.

On a whim, I also decided to become a professional hairdresser and received my training at Southern Nevada University of Cosmetology and worked at Supercuts. I also worked at a casino as a shift manager and trained new employees. They sent me to Mississippi to help open up a new casino in Natchez and also one in Tunica.

One day while working at Supercuts, I had what I can only describe as a spiritual experience. It was an overwhelming feeling telling me I needed to go home. I left work and went home, but that night the feeling and the words became stronger, and I finally realized that “home” really meant Tulsa.

I packed up and moved. One reason it turned out that it was important that I return here was that in my first nine months back in Tulsa, I lost a total of 13 family members.

I was able to get reciprocity to Oklahoma with my Nevada Hairdressing License, so I worked for Supercuts for a while. But Tulsa is definitely not the same market as Las Vegas and I was not making as much money as I needed, so I no longer do that, but I’ve kept my license current in case I ever change my mind.

I have an apartment in Tulsa. I still love to sing, and even though I can never make the Sunday services (I don’t have one particular church), I go to rehearsals for various church choirs and a gospel group. Sometimes when weddings or funerals are on Saturday, I can sing with them. In my spare time, I enjoy cooking—especially grilling ribs or chicken.

I hope for the future that someday I won’t have to work all the time and I can be free to travel. I’ve met all kinds of people from all around the world and I want to visit those places. First up will be Italy, to eat and shop, and second will be Madrid, Spain!

Eduardo the Elephant

Barbara Harrison, whose mother was a Saint Simeon’s Resident, registered Saint Simeon’s to be a recipient of Eduardo the Elephant stuffed animals, a fundraiser through Avon. Her customers donated 30 of the elephants to Saint Simeon’s, which are now being enjoyed by many Residents! Pictured here is Resident Leslie Campbell enjoying her Eduardo the Elephant.
Dear Residents, Families, and Friends of Saint Simeon’s

The late, great Harry Chapin wrote a wonderful song that has been and continues to be very influential in my life. The song is “Flowers are Red” and tells the story of a little boy who, on the first day of school, begins drawing flowers in all colors because “colors was what he saw.” The teacher lets him know that it isn’t time for art and besides, “flowers are red, young man, and green leaves are green. There’s no need to see flowers any other way than the way they always have been seen.”

The little boy responds, “There are so many colors in the rainbow, so many colors in the morning sun, so many colors in the flower and I see every one.”

The teacher insists that he is to draw flowers according to her instructions and tries to get him to repeat her words, “Flowers are red and green leaves are green and there’s no need to see flowers any other way than the way they always have been seen.” When the little boy continues his claim that he sees a world of colors, the teacher sends him to sit by himself in a corner until he is “responding like he should.” Well, after a while he gets lonely and frightened and he comes back to the teacher and says, “Flowers are red and green leaves are green and there’s no need to see flowers any other way than the way they always have been seen.”

Time passes and the little boy’s family moves to another town. His new teacher is a smiling happy person who tells the class that, “painting should be fun, and there’s so many colors in a flower, so let’s use every one.”

But that little boy painted flowers
In neat rows of green and red
And when the teacher asked him why
This is what he said

Flowers are red, and green leaves are green
There’s no need to see flowers any other way
Than the way they always have been seen.

Each of us has learned things that we need to unlearn. We often see only what we’ve been taught to see – and nothing else. This greatly limits our understanding of the world around us, of others, and especially of God. Our perceptions are ruled by fears that have been instilled in us, sometimes from a very early age. An essential part of our spiritual growth is learning to recognize and challenge those fears, so that what inhibits us is removed, and we are free to become who we have been created to be. May you be able one day to look within yourself and exclaim:

There are so many colors in the
rainbow
So many colors in the morning sun
So many colors in the flower and I see every one

Blessings to you,
Fr. Bill Holly †
Signs are important. We need them to direct us to where we are going. They alert us to dangers. They can invite us to buy or visit something. They are used to express gratitude. Note the many plaques in our building and on our grounds acknowledging our generous donors (i.e., rooms, parking lots, benches, gardens and trees). Signs also preserve history. Have you noticed as you drive in the two signs at the first circle (old Assisted Living Building entrance)? One says Saint Simeon’s established 1960 and the other says Auxiliary established 1961.

*Signs can also be an annoyance, as described in the lyrics of the Canadian Group, Five Man Electrical Band’s song, Sign from the early ‘70s.

Here are three rather recent signs at Saint Simeon’s. The first was our Turkey Crossing Sign, which was taken down several years ago when the last of our flock of Easter Wild Turkeys were, frankly, no longer still with us to need to cross the road. The sign had really been necessary before that to protect cars from the turkeys! When the flock wanted to cross the road, they did, and would take their time about it. Woe to the driver who honked or started creeping forward. You haven’t lived until you have been “cussed out” by a Tom Turkey. Much less several of them at the same time.

Next up is our Golden Retriever Crossing Sign. It is at the turn into the Dotson Assisted Living Center parking lot and serves a very important purpose. Our Golden Retriever, Simone II, occasionally walks in the road or parking lot and we don’t want her to be run over. Simone lacks “street smarts” and sometimes thinks she is to extend a personal welcome to folks before they even get out of their car—while the car is still moving.

Our latest one, Peacock Crossing Sign, is located just past the first circle and before the entrance to the Ice Cream Parlor. We have had peafowl (peacocks, peahens, and peachelicks) living here for many years. In the mornings or early evenings, they sometimes fly out of the courtyards over the building and roam around on the grounds. Usually, it is just the males, but they all are capable of flying away any time they wanted to. But why would they ever leave? They get free food and water 24/7, lots of entertainment going on in every window they look in, safety from predators when it comes time to raise a family. And, planning for the future, they are already living at the best retirement community in the state!

Never ignore a sign that says, “Do not drive into water crossing road.” In 1987, after an Oklahoma thunderstorm (included a couple of tornados), I drove my car into water under an overpass in downtown Tulsa at 4:30 in the afternoon and would have been swept away if it had been a river or stream flowing out of its banks. Instead it was just water rising in a low place because of the intense rain. But that was enough to trap me in my car, which proceeded to fill with water up to my neck before I was finally able to get out!
IRA Charitable Rollover

As of December 18, 2015, the IRA Charitable Rollover was passed by Congress and signed into permanent law by the President.

A charitable IRA Rollover makes it easier to use IRA assets, during lifetime, to make charitable gifts ranging from $100 - $100,000. This provision allows certain donors to exclude from taxable income – and count toward their required minimum distribution – certain transfer of IRA assets directly made to charities. A gift that qualifies is:

- Made by a donor age 70 1/2 or older
- Transferred from a traditional or Roth IRA directly to a permissible charity, such as Saint Simeon’s.
- Completed during the applicable tax year

As with any gift planning question, donors should consult their tax professional for specific advice.

Medical, Nursing Home, Special Care Expenses

Nursing home expenses are allowable as medical expenses in certain instances. According to the IRS website:

- If you, your spouse, or your dependent is in a nursing home and the primary reason for being there is for medical care, the entire cost, including meals and lodging, is a deductible medical expense.
- If the individual is in the home mainly for personal reasons, only the cost of the actual medical care is a deductible medical expense, and the cost of the meals and lodging is not deductible.
- The total of all allowable medical expenses must be reduced by 10% of your adjusted gross income – 7.5% if either you or your spouse is age 65 or older.

Saint Simeon’s does not offer tax advice. Consult with a tax professional or financial advisor for specific advice.

Sweetheart Dinner

Residents enjoyed a delicious multi-course Valentine’s dinner on Feb. 8 thanks to a gift made by Caron and Shawn Lawhorn. Thank you to Morrison’s Community for making the meal extra special!

(from left to right, top to bottom) Shawn and Caron Lawhorn, Saint Simeon’s Trustee, Lindsay Hurley Fick, President and CEO, Carolyn Blair, Executive Director of the Foundation, and Barbara and Woody Allen, Saint Simeon’s Resident and parents of Caron Lawhorn.
We love to have pets visit Saint Simeon’s. For the health and safety of our Residents and staff, there are a few rules for our pet visitors:

- They must be clean and free of skin infections.
- Dogs and cats must have current rabies shots and wear their tags.
- Dogs and cats must be on a leash and any animal must be under the physical control of its owner at all times.
- Pets are not allowed in the kitchens or the ice cream parlor and dining rooms when food is being served.
- Animals may not spend the night in Resident rooms or be left unattended in Resident rooms.
- Owners may be asked to provide proof of vaccination or a statement that the animal is free of disease transmittable to humans.
- Saint Simeon’s reserves the right to refuse visits for any animal that appears to be a physical or emotional danger to Residents.
Saint Simeon’s has a new class in the Wellness Center called “Sock it to Me!” Based off of a program developed for Parkinson’s patients called “Rock Solid,” the program helps build flexibility, speed, and strength through non-contact boxing. Not everyone in the program has Parkinson’s. It’s a beneficial and fun class, and our Residents love looking like Rocky! A big thank you to Lori Strickland, daughter of Resident John Cagle, who made a gift to purchase the new boxing equipment.