Residents and their families enjoyed the annual Christmas parties on December 10 and 11. Assisted Living Residents were treated to a Holiday Tea with music by Rick Fortner and visits from Santa. Health Care Center Residents enjoyed caroling to a new Clavinova piano, Christmas cookies, and visits from Santa. Memory Center Residents had a sing-a-long on the Clavinova piano, Christmas cookies, and visits from Santa. Thank you to all who attended!
“Valerie has made a big difference in the quality of life for several of our Memory Center Residents. Because of her talents, she has been able to interest many Residents in crafts, one on one. She has a unique ability of making wheelchair bags which hang on the back of wheelchairs and look pretty (while serving the purpose of accommodating Residents’ items, such as gait belts, etc.). Several of the Residents enjoy making these bags because they look like purses. Thanks, Valerie, for bringing joy to the Residents’ day.”

— Gina Sides, Unit Manager, Memory Center

“I started at Saint Simeon’s in April. I work the 12:30 to 9 p.m. shift and am able to help the Residents in the Memory Center with sundowning. I do activities with them like coloring, puzzling, talking, going on walks and listening to music. I love seeing the Residents get enjoyment out of what they’re doing. Sometimes my job is to help calm them down; other times it’s to just have fun.

I found out about this job when I called Saint Simeon’s inquiring if they had something part-time in the kitchen. Bonnie, the HR Director, thought I might be a good fit for a Life Enrichment position they had available. I always plan to work because I like being active and busy.

Previously, I worked for the City of Tulsa for 28 years. I worked for the Airport Authority in the finance department – I did purchasing and credit card accounts and other things. Before that, I worked at the zoo for 5 years. I retired from the City of Tulsa/Tulsa Airport Authority in 2014. After I retired, I bought a home that was built in 1937 and totally renovated it.

When I was a young child, my family lived in Kansas City. Sadly, my dad died while driving to Tulsa during a winter storm when I was 3. My family then moved
to Tulsa when I was 4 or 5. I went to Central High School and earned a degree in Liberal Arts from Tulsa Community College in 2008. I originally started college at OU after finishing high school, so it was rewarding to go back and complete my degree.

In my free time, I like to crochet. Recently, I’ve been crocheting a bag that I can store yarn in. I’ve been crocheting for about 20 years. I would like to learn how to knit. I also like making special items for family members. One year, I made a special scrapbook as a gift to my family. I’ve also made frames with poetry that I wrote for each family member. I just love arts and crafts.

I go to Church on the Move. I am one of 9 siblings – 8 girls and 1 boy. One of my sisters died in 2015. After my mom passed away, that sister had ownership of her house, so now my brother has ownership of it. We still have family gatherings at that house. When we get together, we have a really good time.

I have 3 grandkids: a 14-year-old grandson, a 9-year-old granddaughter, and a 2-year-old granddaughter who knows too much for her age. She’s always the ring leader.

One thing I’ve learned in life is that you can choose whether you’re going to be miserable or happy. I don’t think carrying a grudge is worth it. I’ve learned to let it go. Life is too short!”

THANK YOU, VETERANS!

Pictured here are just a few of the veterans at Saint Simeon’s. We celebrated them during a special program in November. Thank you for your service!
Dear Residents, Families, and Friends of Saint Simeon’s

In my office is a small hinged brass box. In that box are items that look and feel like little pebbles. It is a very special little box, to me. When I was a seminarian, I had the opportunity to visit my parents one summer in Saudi Arabia where they worked for ARAMCO. I had studied the religions and humanities of the Middle East as an undergraduate and was very excited to have the opportunity to go and see the people and culture first hand.

Saudi, in the early 1980’s, was a fascinating combination of the very old and very modern. One of my favorite memories is seeing a small Datsun (what Nissan was called in the olden days) pickup truck with a camel standing in the bed, riding through the desert. The market places looked pretty much like they did 1,000 years ago. Those market places would have everything from modern electronics, and gold souks (shops), to fresh vegetables and sides of meat hanging outdoors.

On the outskirts of a village, one might discover a few tent canopies set up by a Bedouin tribe. Here you would find all kinds of items for sale. It was in one of these that I found my treasure: real frankincense and myrrh. Both frankincense and myrrh are resin harvested from plants that grow only in a very few places in the world, Arabia being one of them. Cuts are made in the stalks of these plants. The resin oozes out of these cuts and hardens in the air. That hardened resin is burned in charcoal incense burners to produce that marvelous aromatic smoke that refreshes the nasal passages dried out by the desert sand and air.

It was a wonderful find for me, these little “pebbles” of frankincense and myrrh. It was amazing to acquire them from the same people who had been dealing in them for millennia. How well we all know the story of the visit of the Magi to the Christ child and their gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh – gifts appropriate to a king! Those Magi purchased them like I did, from the migratory people of the desert.

January 6th is the Feast of the Epiphany, which begins the Christianity’s liturgical season of the same name. Chief among the Epiphany stories is the visit of the Magi and their gifts given to a Jewish toddler in Bethlehem named Yeshua, or as he is known in the Greek version of the name, Jesus. It is a story of the outside world becoming aware that this seemingly insignificant child was of universal importance.

Epiphany is a great season to remember that there are wonderful surprises from God to be found in what appears to be common or insignificant. Little pebbles sold by simple desert travelers are gifts for kings! Kings are found in common people dwelling in an insignificant part of several ancient empires. May the season of Epiphany bring a new awareness of God’s enduring love into your life.

Blessings to you,
Fr. Bill Holly †
The great French Marshall Lyautey once asked his gardener to plant a tree. The gardener objected that the tree was slow growing and would not reach maturity for 100 years. The Marshall replied, “In that case, there is no time to lose; plant it this afternoon!”

— As told by John F. Kennedy

Thank you to Royse and Sheila Parr for recognizing the uniqueness of our Ginkgo trees and sharing their interesting history with us. They had several Ginkgo trees growing at their home near 31st and Lewis.

Of the many lovely trees at Saint Simeon’s, two have a fascinating 270 million year-old history. They are Ginkgo Biloba (or Maidenhair) trees.

According to Royse Parr, a new resident and retired Geologist/Corporate Attorney, “These living fossils date back before the time of the dinosaurs. They are native to China. Because they are very slow growing, the wood is extremely hard and they are impervious to disease and insects.”

The distinctive fan shaped leaves are the only deciduous leaves with no center vein. They turn a radiant yellow in the fall. The female of the species bears a four smelling fruit so the males are preferred for landscaping.

Ginkgoes are renowned worldwide for their medicinal properties. Until rediscovered in Japan in 1691, the tree was thought to have gone extinct. Now, cultivated Ginkgo trees grow throughout the world. It is uncertain if there remain any in the wild.

Mr. Parr has discovered very old, large Gingko trees on both the University of Oklahoma and Oral Roberts University campuses and at a private home in Okmulgee.

Saint Simeon’s two Gingko trees grow in the first circle as you drive past Eckel Park. There is one growing on each side of a center large River Birch. They have hardly been fazed by our Oklahoma ice storms. After all, they survived the last Ice Age!

“The ginkgo tree is from the era of dinosaurs, but while the dinosaur has been extinguished, the modern ginkgo has not changed. After the atomic bomb in Hiroshima, the ginkgo was the first tree that came up. It’s amazing.”

— Koji Nakanishi —
Gingerbread Cheer

Our Residents created a gingerbread house for the Philbrook Museum of Art Gingerbread House display, and some of them had a chance to visit it! Here they are with “I’ll Have a Blue Dome Christmas.”

Happy Retirement

Kum Yon!

Saint Simeon’s beloved CNA Kum Yon Jones retired after 37 years of working at Saint Simeon’s. Dozens of Residents, family members, staff members, and former family members gathered on Nov. 11 for her retirement party. Several people shared stories of how her gentle touch and sweet spirit have soothed many Residents over the years.

Resident Lois Gatchell shared that when she came to tour Saint Simeon’s before moving in, she saw Kum Yon, who had also cared for her mother when she lived at Saint Simeon’s. Seeing Kum Yon after all those years made her feel like she was coming home.

Kum Yon wishes to thank everyone for all the love and cards she’s received. She was so touched and grateful and didn’t expect such a party.

We were delighted to receive this Snow Village, donated by Farryl Stokes. It brought much cheer to Dotson Family Assisted Living Center Residents who visited Carla’s Corner this holiday season.
Happy Birthday — January —

1/2 Doris Stanton  
1/3 Rose Gillig  
1/6 Robert McGuire  
1/7 Adele Garren  
1/7 Raymond Bingham, Jr.  
1/8 Dillard Iseley  
1/15 Joan Magie  
1/17 Geraldine Yoakley  
1/19 Colleen McKee  
1/21 John Cagle, Jr.  
1/22 Arling Christensen  
1/24 Bishop William Cox  
1/25 Virginia Franklin  
1/26 Jim Dempster  
1/27 Dolores Betz  
1/28 Dwain Ezell

Flat Simone Contest!

By now, if you’re a print subscriber, you’ve discovered the “Flat Simone” inside your January Quill! Take Flat Simone with you anywhere you travel between now and June 30, 2017, and use the hashtag #simonesaintsimeons on Facebook, Instagram, or Twitter. The most creative entry will win a $250 gift card for Southwest Airlines!

The idea for Flat Simone originated from the Flat Stanley Project. Flat Stanley was a project that a third grade teacher in Ontario started in 1995. The project features paper cut-outs based on the character of the children’s book Flat Stanley. Students were encouraged to write a story about Stanley, then mail their Stanley to someone, such as a friend or relative in another country. The person who received Stanley was asked to take a picture with the cut-out doll and send the letter back.

We’ve decided that Simone is just as travel-worthy as Flat Stanley! Feel free to take pictures with Flat Simone with yourself, or send her to friends and family around the world for them to take pictures with her!

If you’re an e-newsletter subscriber and would like us to send you a Flat Stanley so you can participate in the contest, please email Lindsay Morris at lmorris@saintsimeons.org.

Welcome to our Family!

Katherine Amend  
Odie Granville  
Sharon McMillan  
Willard O’Daniel

Alzheimer’s Association

Caregiver Support Group

Thursday, January 26
6:00-7:30 P.M.

Saint Simeon’s Smith Conference Room

Complimentary dinner will be provided.

Margaret Love with the OKDHS Aging Board and the Silverhaired Legislature will be our speaker.

Please RSVP by January 20 to Brenda Haesloop at 918-855-1502 or bhaesloop14@att.net.

If you no longer wish to receive the Quill by mail or if you wish to switch to a color e-newsletter subscription, please contact Lindsay Morris at lmorris@saintsimeons.org or 918-794-1945.
Each year, our Residents are responsible for decorating the Christmas trees in each area of Saint Simeon’s. For the past three years, the Dotson Family Assisted Living Center Christmas tree has included ornaments for the Santa for Seniors program, and Saint Simeon’s Residents, family members, and staff have bought Christmas presents for dozens of low income seniors.

Pictured here are a few of our Assisted Living Residents making their tree look beautiful!