

Life LifeTimes

WOODBROOK

Where Past and Future Meet

Fall 2009
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LifeTimes is published biannually by Woodbrook Adult Home, Inc., to carry news from our busy world to yours.

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WOODBROOK

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Salutations...

from Laurie Sweeney, RN, MSN,
Executive Director

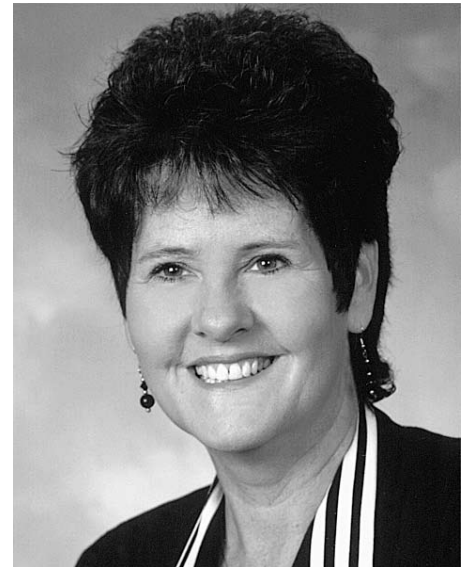
"Life isn't about how to survive the storm, but how to dance in the rain."

—Author Unknown

After our rainy, rainy, *rainy* summer this quote appeared in my life like a welcome umbrella. It stood out as a testimony to the attitude we encourage at Woodbrook. Our residents, our staff and administrative team along with our Board find ways to "dance in the rain" each and every day.

The idea of mere survival suggests a desperate hanging on or worse, a resignation that the storm is all there is. It disregards the true meaning of life, the idea that one must actually live it, taste it, touch it, feel it. I prefer the image of the human spirit dancing with abandon despite less-than-ideal circumstances. To me, life is about resilience, coping, developing effective tools and relationships to help us along the way.

Looked at this way, age is not to be feared, but revered. At Woodbrook, our residents exemplify "productive aging" through their ongoing interactions with each other and the community at large. While our physical plant is well-appointed, we don't just provide amenities for our residents. We encourage experiences. We recognize the valuable con-



tributions and suggestions our residents make and use them to guide us. Most importantly, we engage residents in both short and long-term planning.

Following their lead, we've expanded our paved walking path, installed a putting green out back and a generous portico out front. (story page 3) We've traveled the region to seek out the tastes and sights of the season (story page 3) and we're exploring technology to keep us not only connected, but in shape as well. Local sports legend, "Rope" Ropelewski enlivens our ongoing dance with his stories and spirit (Generations page 3) and new Human Resources Director, Judy Kennedy is our newest dancer.

Let it rain. At Woodbrook the staccato drops provide the back-beat for our joyful jitterbug.

New Board Member

When Peggy Streeter's mother came to Woodbrook it was "just for the winter" so Peggy and her brother wouldn't worry about her slipping on the ice to get the mail. "Two days after she arrived," Peggy says, "she told us to sell the house." Peggy's mother loved Woodbrook. So does Peggy. "During her years here, Woodbrook was always such a happy place to be, full of caring people," she says. "It still is. I get such a good feeling just walking in the door."

Peggy joined the Board in June, grateful for the opportunity to give back. "I've benefited from Woodbrook," she says, "and I want to return the favor." To that end, Peggy sits



Peggy Streeter

on the Buildings & Grounds Committee as well as the Personnel Committee. While this may be her first time on Woodbrook's Board, she brings a wealth of experience from her tenure on the Arnot Ogden Medical Center Board of Managers and the Anderson Foundation Board.

Warm Welcome

In September, Woodbrook greeted a new Human Resources Director. Judy A. Kennedy comes to us from the retail industry where she spent nearly twenty years honing her skills with Hess' Department Store, Kauffman's, Macy's and Sears. While she is well-versed in all areas related to her position, Kennedy says she especially likes putting together programs that boost and sustain staff morale. "Woodbrook is a positive place to work," she says. "I



Judy A. Kennedy

want to maintain the momentum of good staff attendance by finding new ways to make it fun to come to work."

Congratulations...

Board member Sheila Giovannini was honored at the 2009 YWCA Tribute to Women. The annual event recognizes leadership, creativity, excellence and integrity among female community leaders. In the program for the event, Giovannini was cited as an inspiration to many local women. The committee applauded her work as an advocate for children and seniors with hearing difficulties, noting her willingness to provide "education, problem solving and intervention when needed" as well as her work to create learning opportunities for local high school and college students.

Giovannini is a living example of long term commitment. This fall marks the beginning of her 10th year on the Board and this professional audiologist, business owner, educator, advocate and community volunteer continues to cherish her relationship with Woodbrook.

"I am proud to be associated with this facility," she says. "There is no doubt in my mind that Woodbrook



Sheila Giovannini

residents enjoy the best that assisted living has to offer in the Southern Tier."

Giovannini credits Woodbrook's reputation for exceptional adult living to the accumulated knowledge, insight and vision of its dedicated Board. "Over the years, I've had the opportunity to work alongside some remarkable community leaders," she says.

After nearly a decade, she continues to believe in Woodbrook's mission – to encourage independence when it is wanted and offer assistance when it is needed – and looks forward to helping Woodbrook carry it out for seniors in our region.

Outdoor Carnival Actually Takes Place Outdoors

After several "rain-out" years that forced residents and families inside, Woodbrook's signature summer event finally snagged a dry day in July. Musical guest, Doc Possum provided the soundtrack for sno cones, ice cream, a cake wheel and several classic midway games. Kids (and adults alike) were delighted by the carnival's newest attraction, a "Bounce House" inflatable.

Fall Spectacular

As in years past, more than fifty residents boarded a coach tour bus and hit the road in hot pursuit of fiery fall colors and fabulous fare. All enjoyed the views of Seneca Lake from the dining room of Glenora Winery where a seasonal lunch was served.

B & G Keeps Pace with Pavement, Portico and Putting Green

In an effort to offer residents meaningful experiences as well as safe, healthy outdoor spaces, Woodbrook's Buildings & Grounds Director, Michael VanWert has had a busy season. It began with an observation. Many residents were braving traffic and uneven footing to "get a good walk" all the way down the driveway and out onto Maple Avenue. Thanks to the continued generosity of Dr. Margaret Locke, Jr., Woodbrook was able to extend the length of a protected paved walking path to a full ¼ mile complete with six bench stations. It will be plowed and salted so residents can bundle up and keep walking safely all winter long.

When coming and going by car, residents and guests need no longer brave inclement weather thanks to the beautiful new portico that connects to Woodbrook's front porch. In addition to protection from the elements, the canopy provides peace of mind when exiting and entering the building.

For our golf enthusiasts, Woodbrook has transformed a neglected area out back into the perfect place to "putter" around. We'll all eagerly await its "greening" up when spring comes.

"People don't come to Woodbrook to just sit," says VanWert. "We'd like to develop a large park-like area out back that includes a challenging fitness circuit with stations, a nature trail, benches and maybe even a playground for visiting children."

Generations...

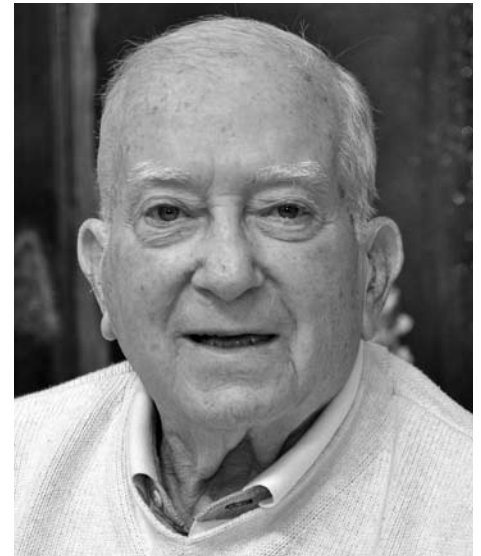
Leon "Rope" Ropelewski is a bit of a celebrity around Woodbrook. Folks here like to see his pictures, read the news articles and hear stories about Rope's days in a baseball, basketball, softball or football uniform. Truth be told, he's a local sports legend all around Elmira, having been voted Best of the Century in the Chemung Valley Reporter's poll for the No. 1 Male Athlete for 1900 – 1950. Rope has also been elected to four divisions of the Elmira Sports Hall of Fame.

When asked about "those days" Rope responds, "Al pretty much summed it up." He's referring to his good friend Al Mallette, another local legend best known for his Sports Journal. In an article about the contenders for Male Athlete 1900 – 1950 Mallette devoted nearly three full columns to Rope's accomplishments in softball and baseball – "always a 300+ hitter and all-league third baseman/shortstop" – basketball – "Rope went on to a 15-season semi-pro basketball career and was the catalyst performer on two of the all-time area semi-pro basketball teams" – and football – "No Metro-Elmira football player ever debuted with such glowing credentials... In his first game he had three touch downs and gained a total of 263 yards." Rope directed the Boys in Blue to an unbeaten 1939 campaign."

Rope is also cited in the program for the June 26, 1983 Chemung Canal Trust Company Old Timers' Game. It seems Rope also found time to play shortstop for the Elmira Pioneers hitting .212 during the 1943 season.

The Second World War put an end to his playing time. "I went into the army after the '43 season ended," he says. "On Omaha Beach we got bombed the first night, we got bombed the second night. I was a little busy."

"Rope Rules"



Leon "Rope" Ropelewski

Rope was born and raised on Bloomer Avenue in Elmira. He attended St. Casimir's grammar school and Elmira High. Originally employed by Harris McHenry Lumberyard on Elmira's Southside, Rope eventually worked his way to the position of Vice President at Robinson Lumber. He married Gerry Lynch with whom he

Rope says nothing compares with watching his kids. "It was always a thrill to see them do well."

raised four children – Lee, James, Lynn and Gail.

"I still watch a lot of sports," laughs Rope as he turns off the wall-mounted television set to answer some questions. He believes despite the bad reports, most sports, especially those for young people are really good. "Playing sports builds strength and strength of character, preparing people to better handle life in general," he says. While he's seen a lot of exciting sports moments during his lifetime, Rope says nothing compares with watching his kids. "It was always a thrill to see them do well."

Governor Establishes Assisted Living Week

New York State Governor, David Patterson signed an executive proclamation declaring September 13 – 19, 2009 as Assisted Living Week. To celebrate, Woodbrook residents, visitors and staff participated in “themed” days and special activities throughout the week. Whether they chose to don a crazy hat, colorful socks or some cool capris, all were treated to a cake and punch social, a hot dog cookout and a continuous bingo game complete with prizes.

LifeTimes

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Seasonal Celebrations...

December

Family Festival

New Year's Eve party

Christmas Cards with community groups

January

Winter Wonderland party

Scrambled Dinner

February

Valentine's Day party

Senior dance

March

St. Patrick's Day party

Talent Show

April

Easter party

Luncheon outings

Ongoing

Cooler months feature crafts, cooking & baking activities to keep us all warm

Mystery “Meal on Wheels” outings

Executive Staff

Laurie Sweeney, RN, MSN

Executive Director

Judy A. Kennedy, BA

Human Resources Director

Bonnie Hart, CPS

Administrative Assistant

Patricia E. Stone

Finance Director

Ruth McDonough, RN, BS

Case Manager

Denise Benjamin, BS

Activities Director

Michael VanWert

Director of Buildings and Grounds

Gary R. Durfee

Dietary Director

Lori J. Moyer, LPN

Director of RCAs/Case Manager

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