

The Westbrook Chatterbox

Happy 2017!

Once again we face the clean slate of a new year. So far I haven't messed up too bad. I don't make New Year's resolutions, so I haven't broken any of those yet. I've been to church every Sunday in this new year so far – all one of them. Dieting doesn't start until everyone goes back to school and work so that's not an issue. I haven't stolen anything, murdered anyone, lied that I know of. So as far as the New Year goes I'm doing okay. But then again, it's only January 1st. There's still time....

I hope as we enter the New Year that you all had a great Christmas. My family was greatly blessed this year. It was such a great time of sharing with family and friends. But it also was a time of changes. All of our plans for the week between Christmas and New Years changed – some for the better and some were sad. But we decided to make the most of the changes and change our house once again.

As I am writing this article, Jerome and Chloe are gutting the basement family room and hallway ~ ripping up carpet, throwing away a pit group, stripping everything off of the walls and pulling down the drop ceiling. We have a dumpster once again sitting in our driveway. And you may ask why are we doing this? Well this is how my family works. We take a wild hair and off we go. We decided that we wanted new furniture in the basement yesterday and so today we are redoing the whole basement. We are clearing out a bunch of clutter – Stuff, Stuff, Stuff.

I don't know about you but I am amazed at the Stuff I have collected. I look at it and wonder why. Some of it I haven't seen in so long that I wonder where it even came from. I have no recollection of some of it. So it's time for the stuff to go. I have a charity scheduled to pick up what is worth giving away and the rest is headed to the dumpster.

So I guess my word for the New Year is going to be PURGE. I purged the upstairs two years ago and this year, it's the basement.

However, there are things in my life that need purging as well. There are those habits that need to be broken, the thoughts that are not the kindest, the words that I wish I could take back, the actions I wish that I had or sometimes hadn't done. The time I didn't spend in God's word or in prayer or the time I didn't take for my family or the stranger in need that I ignored.

So as 2017 arrives and I once again face that clean slate, I hope that I will continue to purge both my home of unwanted stuff and my life of selfish and thoughtless behavior. I want to make 2017 the year that I took the time to appreciate the things that are important ~ family, friends and others. I don't have to know someone to smile at them or greet them kindly. I do need to make myself slow down and take the time to listen to others and to act accordingly. This is not a resolution. This is a change in thoughts and actions. There is no time table for completion. I may slip and fall many times but the important thing will be for me to pick myself up and keep moving forward.

I pray that 2017 will be a year of wonderful surprises, warm friends and wise decisions!

Until Next Month,
Janelle

This past November I went on my annual Mission Trip to Honduras. While there, one of my ministries is to work with the Seniors in La Villa. One thing I always try to do is incorporate exercise into whatever we are doing. The first time I worked with the Seniors in an actual program, we did stretching exercises that we have done here at Westbrook. Last year, we took them to a beautiful park and we did the PEPPI exercise program that we currently use here. This year, I wanted to do something that didn't seem like exercise, was fun and made people laugh. After hearing Joan working with our Resident's doing "Noodle Ball", I decided that is what I wanted to do! So, I took 14 pool noodle halves and about 50 balloons. As you can see in the pictures below, we had well over 40 in attendance that day! For the first 20 minutes, we used our hands and feet to keep the balloons in the air (as we have recently done at Westbrook while Joan was away). We then took turns over the next 30 minutes or so using the Noodles. I have not heard that much laughter coming from this group of people in a long time! They were truly enjoying themselves! We ended that part of our time together with sitting on the balloons to pop them! Again, laughter erupted from the Social Room. We discussed the importance of exercise and laughter. I went on to talk to them about how in Titus we are told that the older generation is to share what they have learned with the younger generation - that we are to be examples. Examples of how to live, love and laugh. That if we don't do these things, we lose sight of how wonderful life truly is! I want to encourage each of you to take the time today to exercise, to live, to love and to laugh - then, pass that on!



NOODLE BALL IN HONDURAS



Meet our Yoga Teacher - Kathryn Toure

Kathryn Toure started practicing hatha yoga in New York City, after graduating from the University of Kansas, and earned a certificate in yoga teacher training. She spent 17 years living and working in West Africa and earned a PhD in education from the University of Montreal. She resumed her yoga teacher training with Suzette Schultes at the Yoga School of Therapeutics in Overland Park, Kansas in 2013, and delved into understanding restorative yoga, which helps relieve stress, rests the nervous system, and restores hormonal and other balance. She started teaching yoga at Breathe Deep in Kearney in 2015, when she moved to Missouri. She is also a yoga instructor at William Jewell College in Liberty.

She said, "Having practiced yoga for over half my life, I experience daily its benefits. I enjoy sharing the ethics, postures and breathing techniques of this ancient and evolving art with others of all shapes, sizes, colors, orientations and ages. I am especially inspired by the openness and insights of elders." Kathryn Toure is a certified yoga teacher (500+ hours), registered with Yoga Alliance, and is a member of the International Association of Yoga Therapists. She participates every year in workshops with world renowned yogis to continue to learn and to deepen her practice and her teaching. Her college-age children live in Washington, DC, and her husband lives in Nairobi, Kenya.

Kathryn has tried her hand at poetry. She is a writing coach, is on the editorial board of an African publishing company, and regularly edits manuscripts for publication. She is a member of Garrison School Cultural Center in Liberty. She likes to walk, i.e. on the nature trails in the neighborhood or around the lake at Watkins Mill State Park, and swim, i.e. at the community center in Liberty, and ride bikes. She recently discovered the thrill of off-road at Ruth Stocksdale Park in Liberty. Ooo la la, those switchbacks! Wear a helmet, just in case! She also likes playing Scrabble -- not to win but just to have fun with words and others. She likes jazz music and once played the saxophone a bit. Her paintings from West Africa are unfortunately in storage.



Kathryn with her sister, brother-in-law and her children
← Kathryn by the Missouri River
With a fish mural in Senegal →



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"My mother enjoys the activities and staff. She's always on the go and loves meeting new people. There's nothing that we would change about Westbrook, it's been perfect for my mom." Adam D

Hello, January

DON'T THINK ABOUT WHAT CAN HAPPEN IN A MONTH. DON'T THINK ABOUT WHAT CAN HAPPEN IN A YEAR. FOCUS ON THE 24 HOURS IN FRONT OF YOU & DO WHAT YOU CAN TO GET CLOSER TO WHERE YOU WANT TO BE.

“One resolution I have made, and try always to keep, is this:

To rise above the little things.”

- John Burroughs

My New Year's resolution is to stop hanging out with people who ask me about my New Year's resolutions.



A New Year's Wish

On New Year's Eve, Marilyn stood up in the local pub and said that it was time to get ready. At the stroke of midnight, she wanted every husband to be standing next to the one person who made his life worth living.

Well, it was kind of embarrassing. As the clock struck midnight—the bartender was almost crushed to death.



New Year Prayer for the Elderly

God, grant me the senility to forget the people I never liked anyway,
The good fortune to run into the ones that I do,
And the eyesight to tell the difference!!!

2017

HAPPY NEW YEAR

Featured Resident – Frank McMurray

Frank McMurray was born into a traditional Irish family in Brooklyn, NY. He was the second of four children born to Frank and Margaret McMurray and the only boy. Growing up they moved around to a lot of different neighborhoods all within Brooklyn. He attended St. Jerome's grade school. Frank enjoyed making model planes – from the struts to shrinking the nylon and painting. Frank started fishing at a young age to help feed the family. He grew to love fishing more when he didn't have to go daily. He also would go clamming and crabbing. The kids in the neighborhood would play in Farragut Woods. They once built a fort and were so proud of the camouflage they covered it with until they realized the camouflage was poison ivy and poison oak.

In high school, Frank started a band called Harmony Five. He played guitar and drums and also did vocals. They were too young to play in bars where alcohol was served, but they could play weddings and other parties since the alcohol wasn't sold by the drink. Harmony Five lasted for seven years or so. Frank also worked as a studio musician and even played for Frank Sinatra. Frank graduated from George Westinghouse Vocational Tech with a degree in optical mechanics. He did an internship making glasses and continued working there for six months after graduation. The store was closed due to the invention of plastic lenses for glasses.

He went to work in the bookkeeping department of Colonial Trust Co. He was a proponent of equal rights and opportunities of women in the workplace. He even turned down a promotion he didn't feel he was qualified for and suggested a woman instead.

Frank met Ellen O'Donnell through his friend who needed a ride to his girlfriend's house. Frank had been detailing his car but drove his friend over to see Kathy. Kathy was Ellen's cousin and lived in the same building. It wasn't love at first sight for Frank and Ellen. He took her out and then it was a couple of weeks later that he contacted her again. She already had a date for the night Frank was inquiring about so it was another week yet before they went out again. Four months later, they were engaged. After the traditional one year waiting period required by her Irish/Italian heritage, the couple wed in November of 1955.

The couple settled into married life and Frank took a job driving a school bus. They started their family in 1956 when their daughter Lisa was born. Their family grew to include Laura, Leslie, Chris and Lydia. They moved to Rhinebeck but after a year returned to Brooklyn. After driving a bus for twelve years, Frank switched careers and went to work at TWA. He started in fleet services and then moved to ramp services and finished his career in security. Frank would take Ellen to Europe on a regular basis. They went to London, Paris, Rome, Athens and more. He said it was cheaper to fly to Europe, get a hotel and go see a show than it was to see a show in New York.

Frank was transferred to Kansas City in 1972. He stayed in Platte City while Ellen and the kids remained in New York until their house sold. The couple then bought a house off of Old BB Highway just outside of Kearney. While Frank worked security for TWA, he served on both the police and firefighting teams. Frank retired in 1998 after thirty-three years of service. Ellen and he continued to travel. Ellen was killed in a car accident in 2006,

Frank moved to Westbrook Villas in September of 2009. His daughters decided that he shouldn't be alone even though Frank was fine with being alone. Moving to Westbrook definitely changed his mind. He met Ann Webb in the dining room and the two hit it off. He was in 604 and she was in 600. In the summer of 2011, they moved into a two bedroom apartment. They recall it was around 100 degrees and the air conditioning unit in their new apartment went out.

Frank enjoys reading and music. He used to play handball. He says the best things about living at Westbrook besides Ann include the staff. He says the apartments are well kept and he enjoys the entertainment and church services that are offered.

Besides his five children, Frank has three son-in-laws, a daughter-in-law, eight granddaughters, one grandson and two great grandsons. He says that the lesson he would like to pass on to the next generations is to be kind to people. It's important to be nice to people because God directs us to do so. He says, "If you can't be nice, you can't be anything."

In September, we started offering chair yoga on Friday mornings. Kathryn Toure from Breathe Deep has been coming in on the second and fourth Fridays. Get to know more about her in the Starting Jan. 13th, she will be coming every week. There are so many health benefits of yoga. Below is an article from AARP and benefits listed on the AgingCare website.

We would strongly encourage you to give yoga a try. Come out and see what it entails. Do what you can and don't do anything that you can't. If nothing else, the deep healthy breathing is beneficial and the laughter at the beginning gets the endorphins moving.

3 Reasons to Practice Yoga in Your 70s — and Beyond

1. Improve balance

Yoga tones muscles and works on your proprioception — your sense of position in space. Practicing postures that emphasize standing and balance can help build strength and confidence, too. "About 80 percent of proprioception is in your ankles, so standing poses are important, particularly for people in their 70s," explains Payne "As you get more sedentary, your sense of balance atrophies. 'Use it or lose it' really does apply."

2. Sharpens your mind

Unfortunately, as we age, our thought processes aren't as sharp as they once were. The upshot: A 2016 International Review of Psychiatry study reported that practicing yoga relaxation techniques for 30 minutes had immediate beneficial effects on brain function and performance among people with multiple sclerosis.

"Focusing on the breath and synchronizing it with movement helps keep the mind clear and engaged," Atkins says. Breathing exercises such as alternate-nostril breathing help harmonize the left and right hemispheres of the brain, which correlate to the logical and emotional sides of the personality.

3. Boosts mood

Yoga's combination of breathing, meditation and movement creates an overall sense of well-being. In fact, studies show yoga has a greater impact on enhancing mood and reducing anxiety than other forms of exercise. The reason? Yoga boosts levels of the brain chemical GABA, which helps calm nerves.

From AARP Healthy Living

Research on yoga is still in its infancy, but some promising results regarding the benefits of practicing the discipline have been published.

Yoga has been shown to:

- * Improve sleep quality and improve depression
- * Reduce stress
- * Help control blood sugar in people with diabetes
- * Enhance respiratory function
- * Help alleviate arthritis pain
- * Increase bone density and prevent osteoporosis
- * Improve balance
- * Moderate chronic pain

From AgingCare.com