

The Westbrook Chatterbox

Happy May!

This month I want to do something different. I'm going to take a trip down memory lane. The following intro was written by my and April's former boss, Winnie Kimsey. She took both of us under her wing and mentored us. She was our work mother and we learned a lot from her. Here's to the memory of all our "mothers".

Greetings! Isn't early spring just the most exciting time of the year? All the earth is coming alive. The birds are returning from their winter havens, the grass is greening, and once again, the hum of lawnmowers is being heard.

When I was a child, my favorite activity of spring, besides shedding long underwear, and running barefoot, was to go to the woods and hunt for wildflowers. My mother taught us how to find the delicate Billy Boy Breeches, Snow-drop and Sweet Williams, and we would blend them into bouquets with wild violets.

Another thing my mother taught us was how to find mushrooms. Such a delicate, delicious morsel! My mother always warned us to carry a stick just in case we would find a snake out sunning himself after a winter of hibernation, and often times that was the case.

My mother was wise. Not as the world would measure wisdom. She led a simple life. I would not have had her otherwise. She was the guiding force in my life, and her convictions remain with me still. Some of us had the experience of being at the same time a mother and a child. What a privilege that was! A link connecting one generation to another. During the years since my mother was a girl and my daughter became a woman, there have been many changes in our world. As I observe my grandchildren, it boggles my mind to think of the adversities and possibilities that faces their generations to come. And they are being prepared for their destiny, as the coming rulers of the world, in the procession of time by Mothers.

Mother's Day is May 14th, a day to honor mothers and grandmothers.

"Before we knew the years had flown, and all our kids were gone from home.
The days seemed so long and lonely then, until we had our grandchildren.
And so it seems a special treat with children once more round our feet,
For once again, the youngsters are raiding Grandma's cookie jar."

The following poem was written by a former resident, Irene Snyder. She originally contributed this poem in May of 2004.

Oh, how long ago it seems, since that sad and lonely day
When God came down from Heaven and took Mother Dear away.
Oh, Mother, how I miss you and I wish that you were here
But I know that Heaven's a nicer place since they have you up there.
If only I could have you back for just a day or two
There are so many little things I'd like to tell to you.
Oh, Mother, how I loved you and I'd give just anything
If only it were possible to see your smiling face again.
But I know that God has set a time when each of us must go
And though we miss you sadly here, you're happy there I know.
No matter how much I miss you or how much for you I long
I guess your going was meant to be for God can do no wrong.

Until Next Month – Janelle



A mother's love is something that no one can explain
It is made of deep devotion and of sacrifice and pain
It is endless and unselfish and enduring come what may
For nothing can destroy it or take that love away
And it never fails or falters when all others are forsaking

It is patient and forgiving even though the is breaking
It believes beyond believing when the world around condemns
And it glows with all the beauty of the rarest, brightest gems
It is far beyond defying – it defies all explanations
And it still remains a secret like the mysteries of creation
A many splendored miracle man cannot understand
And another wondrous evidence of God's tender guiding hand.



When I was young, you helped me grow and taught me all I had to know.
Of love and trust and faith and hope and everything it takes to cope.
You may have thought I didn't hear or maybe that you weren't quite clear
But all the things you taught to me were heeded very carefully.
And now I want to thank you for your love , your care and so much more!
Happy Mother's Day!

Things My Mother Taught Me

My Mother taught me LOGIC..."If you fall off that swing and break your neck, you can't go to the store with me."
My Mother taught me MEDICINE..."If you don't stop crossing your eyes, they're going to freeze that way."
My Mother taught me TO THINK AHEAD..."If you don't pass your spelling test, you'll never get a good job!"
My Mother taught me ESP..."Put your sweater on; don't you think that I know when you're cold?"
My Mother taught me TO MEET A CHALLENGE..."What were you thinking? Answer me when I talk to you...Don't talk back to me!"
My Mother taught me HUMOR..."When that lawn mower cuts off your toes, don't come running to me."
My Mother taught me how to BECOME AN ADULT..."If you don't eat your vegetables, you'll never grow up."
My mother taught me ABOUT SEX..."How do you think you got here?"
My mother taught me about GENETICS..."You are just like your father!"
My mother taught me about my ROOTS..."Do you think you were born in a barn?"
My mother taught me about the WISDOM of AGE..."When you get to be my age, you will understand."
My mother taught me about ANTICIPATION..."Just wait until your father gets home."
My mother taught me about RECEIVING..."You are going to get it when we get home."
And, my all-time favorite - JUSTICE..."One day you'll have kids, and I hope they turn out just like YOU -- then you'll see what it's like."

Hello May



The Hand I Hold

That hand that cradled me when I was small

The hand that reaches out each time I fall

The hand on my forehead when fevering

The hand on my shoulder encouraging

The hand that cheered in my victories

The hand that caught me in all defeats

The hand on my cheek that wiped a tear

The hand in my heart that calmed my fears

This is the hand that guided me

Throughout my lifelong journey

This is the hand I will not let go

“I’ll hold your hand mom ‘til old you grow”



Happy Mothers Day

“I don't have to tell you how fragile this precious gift of freedom is. Every time we hear, watch, or read the news, we are reminded that liberty is a rare commodity in this world.” – President Ronald Reagan
These fallen heroes represent the character of a nation who has a long history of patriotism and honor - and a nation who has fought many battles to keep our country free from threats of terror. ~ Michael N. Castle

137 years later, Memorial Day remains one of America's most cherished patriotic observances. The spirit of this day has not changed - it remains a day to honor those who died defending our freedom and democracy. ~ Doc Hastings

“Memorial Day this year is especially important as we are reminded almost daily of the great sacrifices that the men and women of the armed services make to defend our way of life.” – Robin Hayes

“It doesn't take a hero to order men into battle. It takes a hero to be one of those men who goes into battle.” – General Norman Schwarzkopf Jr.

“It is foolish and wrong to mourn the men who died. Rather we should thank God that such men lived.” – General George S. Patton

“Let every nation know, whether it wishes us well or ill, that we shall pay any price, bear any burden, meet any hardship, support any friend, oppose any foe to assure the survival and the success of liberty.” – President John F. Kennedy

“And they who for their country die shall fill an honored grave, for glory lights the soldier's tomb, and beauty weeps the brave.” – Joseph Rodman Drake

“Our debt to the heroic men and valiant women in the service of our country can never be repaid. They have earned our undying gratitude. America will never forget their sacrifices.” – President Harry S. Truman

“For love of country, they accepted death.” – President James A. Garfield



Mothers Day Trends in the 20's

- As soon as the Mother's Day became official, florists everywhere began *selling* carnations, which was the flower given out to mothers by the founder of the Mother's Day movement, Anna Jarvis. FTD's "flowers-by-wire" service already made it possible to order flowers by phone in some locations around the U.S.

Mothers Day Trends in the 30's

- Gifts of flowers for Mother's Day became a tradition. Carnations were still a staple and almost all mothers wore them to church, which was still the norm.
- The floral industry exploded when Mother's Day rolled around. Plants and simple floral arrangements became de rigueur. But compared to today's standards floral options would have been limited. This was the period of The Great Depression and luxuries were largely dispensed with.

Mothers Day Trends in the 40's

- World War II was in full swing during the 40s and resources were limited. Mother's Day was typically limited to small gestures, by today's comparison.
- Flower arrangements grew in popularity and were widely given as Mother's Day gifts. The flowers by phone business grew.
- By the mid 40s, Hallmark cards landed in the mainstream. Commercial gift cards, especially Valentines and Christmas cards, had been popular and very successful since the late 1800s. But now a name was associated with the growing business. However, wartime demanded a rationing of resources. Even paper was in short supply, so even though gift cards had entered a commercial realm they would have been limited.
- Innovations in food preservation made specialty foods more widely available. Carvel ice cream—one of the first big commercial ice cream companies in the Northeast—included a Mother's Day ice cream cake among its products.
- Boxed chocolates were commonplace on drug store shelves and became traditional gifts for Moms.

Mothers Day Trends in the 50's

- Hallmark cards became a household name in the early 1950s. No longer were consumers limited to Christmas and Valentines gift cards, but commercial card manufacturers quickly capitalized on all manner of holidays, including Mother's Day.
- Gift cards and gift-wrap became mainstream. No more would gifts have to be wrapped in brown paper and decorated by hand.
- Department stores such as Macy's and Dayton's thrived in urban areas and gave cosmopolitan consumers access to a broad range of goods, including jewelry, apparel, perfumes and other products.
- Fashion magazines such as Harpers Bazaar and Cosmopolitan came into their own. These publications advertised apparel and jewelry for the modern, sophisticated woman.
- The 50s was the era of the ultimate homemakers and Mother's Day gifts for the home and modern kitchen were commonplace.

Mothers Day Trends in the 60's

- Discount department stores sprang up across suburban America and brought inexpensive and affordable goods to consumers. They heavily marketed gifts for all occasions.
- By this time consumers could order a much wider selection of floral arrangements over the phone and have them delivered almost anywhere in the U.S. as long as there was a florist nearby.
- Inexpensive keepsakes and engraved gift items were typical gifts from children, many of whom continued to craft their own handmade cards for Mom.

Mothers Day Trends in the 70's

- During the 70s Moms returned to work and began their double-duty lives. In the meantime the rise in family restaurants and changes in eating drove up demand for more convenient ways to feed families.
- Moms were often taken out to eat for Mother's Day. Ads nationwide sold families on Mother's Day brunches and dinner specials. Since then, restaurants have capitalized on the occasion with discounts, coupon specials and even upscale brunches, buffets and luncheons.

Mothers Day Trends in the 80's

- The sky was the limit for Mother's Day gifts and practices in the 80s. Even though the ecommerce trade had not come along, consumers had widespread access to gifts via catalogs. Credit cards made over the phone purchases second nature. Flowers, candy, jewelry, dinner and brunch out continued to be commonplace and traditional gifts.

Mothers Day Trends in the 90's

- Internet retail businesses took off during the late 90s. This allowed consumers much greater flexibility with Mother's Day gifts as online retailers expanded their product lines in response to the growing demand.
- Online floral delivery companies added gift baskets and non-floral items to their inventories.
- Online purchases became increasingly effortless and deliveries were guaranteed to be on time.
- The gift card industry also added Mother's Day e-cards to their product lines. Established as a means to advertise their goods, personalized online cards have become almost as popular among younger generations as store-bought cards.
- Electronic gadgets have entered the mainstream gift market. Moms may be given digital cameras, CDs, DVDs, even laptops and cellphones.
- Restaurants do some of their best business on Mother's Day and consumers have become more lavish spenders.
- Mother's Day gifts don't stop at affordable; some Moms are treated to expensive jewelry, upscale getaways and shopping sprees.

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"The whole staff goes above and beyond. I couldn't be any more pleased with where my mom is. Everyone is great. They take care of her like she's their own mother." Kurt Dysart

Featured Resident – Helene McDaniel

Helene was born in Palco, KS, to Rollie and Amy Gibson. She had a sister, Betty, who was two years older than her. Her father farmed and Helene worked with him while Betty helped her mom with the house. At the age of eight, Helene was milking cows by hand until they got machines three years later. She was also responsible for running the separator. As she says, she was her dad's boy. By eleven, she was driving a John Deere tractor as much as 8-10 hours a day when she wasn't in school. The family moved to a 400 acre farm outside of Oak Grove when Helene was around fourteen. They grew wheat, milo and corn as well as mowed and baled hay. Helene's mom was left an invalid after a heart attack when she was 35. Helene continued to farm with her dad and go to school while her sister, who had graduated, took care of her mom. She graduated from Oak Grove High in 1945.

Helene met her first husband while still living in Kansas but lost track of him when her family moved to Missouri. Helene was engaged to a young man she met in high school when Dennis Rossiter came and looked her up. He was on furlough and engaged to another woman. They reconnected, fell in love and married in just two weeks. She was 18 and he was 23. Dennis was sent overseas to Germany and Helene with her sister went to work at the Lake City Ammunition Plant. While the men were overseas, the ladies spent their evenings dancing the jitterbug at various clubs.

While Dennis was on furlough a second time, Helene got pregnant and their daughter, Peggy, was born in 1947 a little over a year after they were married. Helene's mother passed away at the age of 42 and a year later, her dad passed away due to complications from surgery. He was only 43. The couple were both working for the phone company – she as an operator and he as a lineman.

Dennis and Helene moved to Concordia, KS, to help Dennis' dad with the farm. They were promised a tract of land and some farm animals. Helene gave birth to their daughter, Amy Jo, in Concordia. The promise of land and animals fell through and Dennis moved his family back to Oak Grove.

Helene went to work for the phone company as an operator. She would work nights and take the girls with her. They slept in the back room while she manned the switchboard. Dennis went to work at Gleaner's Combine Company. He stayed there until he was laid off. In 1952, he then went to work at Fisher Body until he retired 33 yrs later. Helene left the phone company and went to work at Bendix for a couple of years but quit when their son, Kevin, was born in 1955.

When Kevin was about nine, Helene went to work for BMA in KC. She was the supervisor over the entire accounting department for about 10 years.

Helene and Dennis divorced in 1966 and she moved to Grain Valley. She met Richard McDaniel at church, they started dating and married in less than a year. Shortly after they married, they relocated to Marietta, GA, to be close to Helene's friends, Kenneth and Estelle. Helene got a job running the accounting department for a construction company and Richard worked as a security guard. Helene was a serious antique collector and her entire home was antiques from the furniture down to the dishes that they ate on. After five years, they quit their jobs and bought a fifth-wheel. They spent the next two years traveling all over the US and finally settled in a upscale trailer park in Ramona, CA. They ended up managing the park for almost four years before moving back to Missouri to take care of Richard's dad.

They settled in Pleasant Hope, MO. Helene got a job as an office manager and doing the accounting for a commercial construction company. Shortly after their 25th anniversary, Richard was diagnosed with lung cancer. He passed away in January 1997. Helene continued to work and stayed in their house.

Helene has lived her life to the fullest. She took up playing golf in the late '80s, traveling all over the country playing various courses. She and Richard loved to ride motorcycles. Helene had her own full-sized Harley. She also had an MG Midget that she raced in motor car rallies.

But Helene's real love is music. She has played the piano since age 7. She also plays the upright bass, bass guitar, mandolin, violin and she sings. She self-taught herself on all the instruments and plays entirely by ear. She sang with her sister as a young girl and then with her daughter, Peggy. She played in a band that entertained at retirement homes for many years. She was a member of the Sweet Adelines and was in a band from 1983 – 2014.

Nine years after Richard's death, she met Vincil Wood at a Senior's Dance. They dated for five years and married in 2011. She quit her job and moved to his horse ranch in Bolivar. He bought, sold and trained Tennessee Walkers. Vincil passed away in June 2016.

When Vincil died, she moved to Westbrook to be close to her daughter and son-in-law. Amy Jo found Westbrook for her since there was nothing they liked in Bolivar. Helene moved here in July of 2016. She likes her apartment especially the location and her patio. She says the people are nice and the food is good. She also likes that the place is always clean. She quickly joined the Westbrook Prime Time Singers, our own choir and attends every music program and she loves to play Bingo.

Helene has been involved in church all her life. She was raised Seventh Day Adventist, converted to the Christian Church as an adult and returned to Seventh Day Adventist when she married Vincil. She says that her life's motto is "Be kind to others and they will be kind to you!" This is how she has always lived her life.

Besides her three kids, Helene has one son-in-law, one daughter-in-law, five grandchildren, eight great grandchildren and five great great grandsons plus one due next month.

Sleep tips: 7 steps to better sleep

Feeling crabby lately? Or simply worn out? Perhaps the solution is better sleep.

Think about all the factors that can interfere with a good night's sleep — from pressure at work and family responsibilities to unexpected challenges, such as layoffs, relationship issues or illnesses. It's no wonder that quality sleep is sometimes elusive.

Although you might not be able to control all of the factors that interfere with your sleep, you can adopt habits that encourage better sleep. Start with these simple sleep tips.

1. Stick to a sleep schedule - Go to bed and get up at the same time every day, even on weekends, holidays and days off. Being consistent reinforces your body's sleep-wake cycle and helps promote better sleep at night. There's a caveat, though. If you don't fall asleep within about 15 minutes, get up and do something relaxing. Go back to bed when you're tired. If you agonize over falling asleep, you might find it even tougher to nod off.
2. Pay attention to what you eat and drink - Don't go to bed either hungry or stuffed. Your discomfort might keep you up. Also limit how much you drink before bed, to prevent disruptive middle-of-the-night trips to the toilet.
Nicotine, caffeine and alcohol deserve caution, too. The stimulating effects of nicotine and caffeine take hours to wear off and can wreak havoc on quality sleep. And even though alcohol might make you feel sleepy at first, it can disrupt sleep later in the night.
3. Create a bedtime schedule - Do the same things each night to tell your body it's time to wind down. This might include taking a warm bath or shower, reading a book, or listening to soothing music — preferably with the lights dimmed. Relaxing activities can promote better sleep by easing the transition between wakefulness and drowsiness.
Be wary of using the TV or other electronic devices as part of your bedtime ritual. Some research suggests that screen time or other media use before bedtime interferes with sleep.
4. Get comfortable - Create a room that's ideal for sleeping. Often, this means cool, dark and quiet. Consider using room-darkening shades, earplugs, a fan or other devices to create an environment that suits your needs.
Your mattress and pillow can contribute to better sleep, too. Since the features of good bedding are subjective, choose what feels most comfortable to you. If you share your bed, make sure there's enough room for two. If you have children or pets, try to set limits on how often they sleep with you — or insist on separate sleeping quarters.
5. Limit daytime naps - Long daytime naps can interfere with nighttime sleep — especially if you're struggling with insomnia or poor sleep quality at night. If you choose to nap during the day, limit yourself to about 10 to 30 minutes and make it during the midafternoon.
If you work nights, you'll need to make an exception to the rules about daytime sleeping. In this case, keep your window coverings closed so that sunlight — which adjusts your internal clock — doesn't interrupt your daytime sleep.
6. Include physical activity in your daily routine - Regular physical activity can promote better sleep, helping you to fall asleep faster and to enjoy deeper sleep. Timing is important, though. If you exercise too close to bedtime, you might be too energized to fall asleep. If this seems to be an issue for you, exercise earlier in the day.
7. Manage Stress - When you have too much to do — and too much to think about — your sleep is likely to suffer. To help restore peace, consider healthy ways to manage stress. Start with the basics, such as getting organized, setting priorities and delegating tasks. Give yourself permission to take a break when you need one. Share a good laugh with an old friend. Before bed, jot down what's on your mind and then set it aside for tomorrow.

Nearly everyone has an occasional sleepless night — but if you often have trouble sleeping, contact your doctor. Identifying and treating any underlying causes can help you get the better sleep you deserve.

From The Mayo Clinic Doctors