

# The Westbrook Chatterbox

Happy New Year!!

Another year has come and gone. We made it through and have come out stronger for it. At least I hope we have. It's so easy to focus on the negative but I encourage you to find the good and hang on to it with both hands. We have lived through almost three years of masks, quarantine, gloves and social distancing. The masks are gone (for now and hopefully for good). We all are a little wiser about our personal health and how to not get sick but more importantly how not to spread it if we do get sick. So here's to a healthy and happy 2023.

The holidays are over and now we sink into winter. Snow, dreary days without sun and for some, the after holiday blues. Below is a little poem that will hopefully help keep the blues away by getting us to focus on what's really important.

A Recipe for Happiness ~  
Happiness is something we create in our minds,  
It's not something you search for and so seldom find.  
It's just waking up and beginning the day  
By counting our blessings and kneeling to pray.  
It's giving up thoughts that breed discontent  
And accepting what comes as a gift heaven-sent.  
It's giving up wishing for things we have not  
And making the best of whatever we've got.  
For it's by completing what God gives us to do  
That we find real contentment and happiness, too.

With the new year comes New Year's resolutions. Resolutions are promises we make ourselves and too often break. "I resolve this year, I will make no resolutions therefore I cannot break them." This is a common statement these days because we get too busy to work at keeping the promise. This year, instead of not making a resolution, make one that is obtainable with a little bit of effort. Resolve to take the time to listen to others, take the time to visit someone who is sick, take the time to enjoy life to its fullest, take the time to just be silent and listen to God. Resolutions do not have to be hard. Remember the easiest promise kept is still better than the most difficult promise broken.

Hopefully, these words of encouragement will help us all start the New Year off on the right foot. With purpose and goals for our lives that will help us remain healthy and happy all through the year.

Until Next Month –  
Janelle

We have some different activities for January. Our own Sandi Jeffries will be sharing her poetry on January 3<sup>rd</sup>. Martha Armstrong will be doing a quilt show on January 10<sup>th</sup>. If you have a quilt you'd like to share, please bring it down and we will display it. There is a group of teenagers from Kearney High School that has been coming in to play cards. They have adopted the name "Bridging the Gap". They will be playing cards with us on two Wednesdays and doing a hot cocoa bar on January 27<sup>th</sup>. Pastor Jonathan Hayashi will be providing a church service on Saturday nights at 6:00pm.

### If You Are a Bear...

- \* If you're a bear, you get to hibernate. You do nothing but sleep for six months. I could deal with that.
- \* Before you hibernate, you're supposed to eat yourself stupid. I could deal with that too.
- \* If you're a bear, you birth your children (who are the size of walnuts) while you're sleeping and awake to partially grown, cute cuddly cubs. I could definitely deal with that.
- \* If you're a mama bear, everyone knows your mean business. You swat anyone who bothers your cubs. If your cubs get out of line, you swat them too. I could deal with that.
- \* If you're a bear, your mate EXPECTS you to wake up growling. He EXPECTS that you will have hairy legs and excess body fat. Yup....I want to be a bear.



### You Know You're Not Aging Gracefully If You Are...

- ◆ Very good at opening childproof caps with a hammer.
- ◆ Unusually interested in going back home before you get to where you're going.
  - ◆ The first one to find the bathroom wherever you go.
  - ◆ Smiling all the time because you can't hear a word anyone's saying.
    - ◆ Very good at telling stories....over and over and over again.
    - ◆ Aware that other people's grandchildren are not as bright as yours.
- ◆ Don't like traffic, waiting, crowds, children, politicians and most other people.
  - ◆ Certain they make adults much younger these days.

### A New Year's Prayer

- May you get a clean bill of health from your dentist, your cardiologist, your gastroenterologist, your urologist, your proctologist, your podiatrist, your psychiatrist, your plumber and the I.R.S.
- May your hair, your teeth, your face-lift, your abs and your stocks not fall; and may your blood pressure, your triglycerides, your cholesterol, your white blood count and your mortgage interest not rise.
- May New Year's Eve find you seated around the table, together with your beloved family and cherished friends. May you find the food better, the environment quieter, the cost much cheaper, and the pleasure much more fulfilling than anything else you might ordinarily do that night.
- May what you see in the mirror delight you, and what others see in you delight them. May someone love you enough to forgive your faults, be blind to your blemishes, and tell the world about your virtues.
- May the telemarketers wait to make their sales calls until you finish dinner, may the commercials on TV not be louder than the program you have been watching, and may your check book and your budget balance - and include generous amounts for charity.
- May you remember to say "I love you" at least once a day to your spouse, your child, your parent, your siblings; but not to your secretary, your nurse, your masseuse, your hair-dresser or your tennis instructor.
- And may we live in a world at peace and with the awareness of God's love in every sunset, every flower's unfolding petals, every baby's smile, every lover's kiss, and every wonderful, astonishing, miraculous beat of our heart.

## No Two Alike

Beautiful, beautiful snowflakes, floating down to earth  
All created to be unique, each holding significant worth  
Just like an intricate snowflake, we come from up above  
To bless the world with beauty, to sparkle the world with love  
No two of us alike, we hold our own design  
And because we are so different, we get a chance to shine  
When Heavenly Father makes snowflakes  
He works on every detail  
He makes them precious and rare  
He lovingly spends time on every one  
He blesses them all the way through  
If He cares this much about snowflakes  
Imagine what He thinks about you!

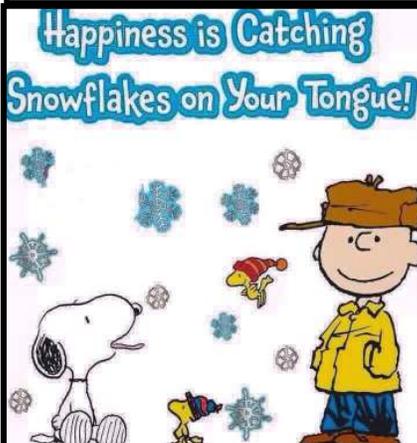


## I've Learned All About Life....

From A Snowman

It's okay if you're a little bottom heavy.  
Hold your ground, even when the heat is on.  
Wearing white is always appropriate.  
It takes a few extra rolls to make a good midsection.  
The key to life is to be a jolly, happy soul.  
We're all made up of mostly water.  
You know you've made it when they write a song about  
you.  
Accessorize! Accessorize! Accessorize!  
Don't get too much sun.  
It's fun to hang out in your front yard.  
Always put your best foot forward.

Winter is the season in which people try to keep the house as warm as it was in the summer when they complained about the heat,.

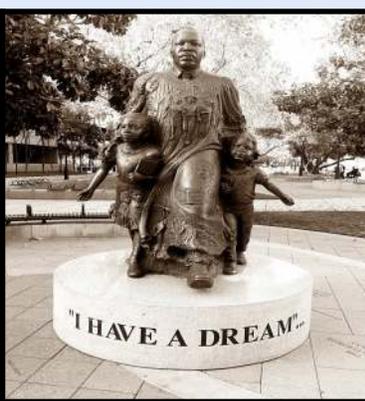
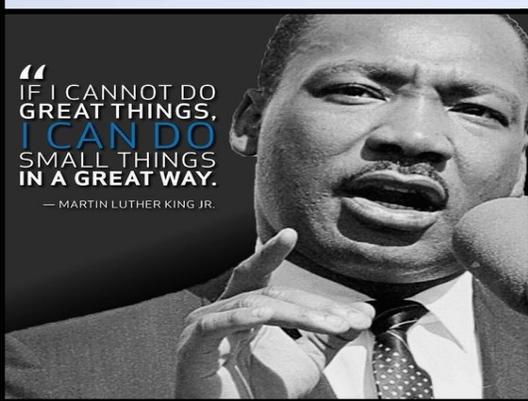


## Snowflakes

are one of nature's most  
**FRAGILE THINGS**  
but just look at what they do  
When they stick together.

If Love was  
a snowflake  
~  
I'd give you  
a blizzard.

# January 2023



**We must learn  
to live together  
as brothers  
or perish  
together as fools.**

- Martin Luther King, Jr.

## • You Are Blessed

- If you own just one Bible, you are abundantly blessed. Most people in the world do not.
- If you woke up this morning more healthy than ill, you are more blessed than 1 million people that will not survive the week.
- If you have never experienced the danger of battle, the loneliness of imprisonment, the agony of torture, or the pangs of starvation, you are ahead of more than 500 million people around the world.
- If you attend a church meeting without fear of harassment, arrest, torture or death, you are more blessed than almost three billion people in the world.
- If you have food in your refrigerator, clothes on your back, roof over your head, and a place to sleep you are richer than 75% of this world.
- If you have money in the bank, in your wallet, and spare change in a dish somewhere, you are among the top 8% of the world's wealthy.
- If your parents are still married and alive, you are very rare, even in the United States.
- If you hold up your head with a smile on your face and are truly thankful, you are blessed because the majority can, but most do not.
- If you can hold someone's hand, hug them or even touch them on the shoulder, you are blessed because you can offer God's healing touch.
- If you prayed yesterday and today, you are in the minority because you believe in God's willingness to hear and answer prayer.
- If you have the ability to choose between churches where you may freely worship, you have a blessing many people in this world do not.
- If you can read this message, you are more blessed than over two billion people in the world than cannot read anything at all.

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JAN

HAPPY

NEW

YEAR

### Featured Resident – Norma Roberts

Norma was born on a farm in Kidder, MO. She was the middle child of three children born to Lloyd and Lola Orr. She had a brother, Lyle, and a sister, Carol.

Growing up on a farm, she was in charge of bringing in the firewood each night and helped with milking the cows. She attended school in Kidder. Gym was her favorite subject because she loved playing basketball. History was her least favorite subject because she didn't find it interesting.

One evening while Norma was outside gathering wood, she got a phone call. It was from Lee Roberts and he was asking her out on a date. She was 14 and he was 15. They started dating. There wasn't much that they could afford to do in Kidder. Their dates were usually going to a movie and getting a bottle of pop from the gas station. He gave her an engagement ring for Christmas 1953.

She graduated valedictorian of her graduating class in 1954. There were a whopping two people in her graduating class. After graduation, Norma got an apartment in Hamilton, MO, and a job working in a shoe factory.

The couple married in April of 1955 and have been married almost 68 years. They moved to the Northeast area of Kansas City. Lee worked at GM and Norma stayed home. She was bored and didn't like the city. She lived across the street from the Kansas City Museum and spent many hours wandering around in it. She also went on many walks. After about a year, they moved back to Hamilton. They eventually settled on a farm. They had no running water. They used pond water to wash their clothes and had a well that they drew water from to drink. Lee drove the 80 miles each way to GM and Norma went back to work at the shoe factory.

In 1957, Norma quit her job and became a stay-at-home mom to their son, Gary. They raised chickens, which they stored in the grocery store's locker once they were killed and dressed. She also raised sweet corn. The couple attended the Christian Church in Kidder. One year they had a contest for Mother's Day which was what mother and baby looked the most alike. Gary and Norma won!

In 1959, the family relocated to Pleasant Valley, MO. They got involved with the Pleasant Valley Civic Organization and remained involved for over 35 years. They did many spaghetti dinners and chili dinners. They also were in charge of Bingo for eleven years. They attended McMurray Methodist Church in Claycomo for many years.

Gary was involved in baseball and they traveled all over for tournaments. The family also traveled other places for pleasure including Colorado, Utah, Florida, Indiana and Las Vegas. Norma enjoys playing the slot machines and they spent their 50<sup>th</sup> wedding anniversary in Vegas.

Lee's brother and sister-in-law were alcoholics. Lee and Norma would have their niece, Cheryl, come stay with them in the summer. When she was 13, she asked if she could just live with them. So they finished raising her and she's just like a daughter to them.

Once Gary was in school, Norma went to work at the Olan Mills Portrait Studio in Gladstone. She worked there for around 15 years. She and Lee retired in 1984. However, in 1987, they went to work cleaning up at the airport for about six years and then the re-retired.

Over the years, the couple has been involved with the Eagle's Club. On Friday nights, they would get together and play pitch. On Saturday nights, there was usually a live band and dancing. Norma did ceramics for several years. She has some Santas that she made on display in her apartment. But Norma's absolute favorite thing to do was mowing the yard. She preferred it to cleaning the house.

As Lee's health declined, Norma had a harder time keeping up with the yard and the house. They decided they needed to move. Their daughter-in-law, Rhonda, had just moved her mom into Westbrook and she really liked it. Lee and Norma came a toured the facility and moved into Westbrook the end of September. She loves that she doesn't have to cook anymore. She also enjoys the other residents and thinks that the staff is great.

One interesting fact about Norma is that she stripped bluegrass for a couple of years. For those who were uninformed about this. They would strip the grass and harvest the seed for extra cash. The seed was then sold to grass companies for planting.

Besides Gary and his wife, Rhonda, they have two granddaughters, two great granddaughters, a great grandson and a great great granddaughter.

## 15 of the Best and Free Health Benefits of Smiling

We spend trillions of dollars every year in the U.S. alone trying to boost our health. With supplements, fitness routines, gym memberships, doctor visits, dental checkups, and prescriptions, it all adds up fast. Yes, into the trillions! There are many ways you can personally save money and boost your health. There are even a few things you can do that are absolutely free. One of the easiest and cheapest ways to boost your health, your mood, your longevity, and even your success is to smile.

Smiles do a lot more than simply let the world know you're happy. They don't even have to be genuine to have some effect, but truest smiles do you the most good. Most people can spot a fake smile, even if they can't say how they know. Fake smiles usually use fewer muscles than genuine smiles, which involve muscles around the eyes. Real smiles also creep in slower than the false ones. So, if you have to fake a smile, try to make it as real as possible, think of happy memories or visualize your favorite people and places. It makes a difference in what others see and in how you feel.

**1 – Lower Heart Rate** – Smiling slows the heart and relaxes the body. This lets the heart work without overworking. People who smile and laugh often are less likely to develop heart disease. Smiling also temporarily reduces blood pressure.

**2 – Reduce Stress** – Stress is a common problem in the modern world that causes a myriad of health problems. Stress relief may be as simple as smiling a little more throughout the day. Smiling releases endorphins that counteract and diminish the stress hormones.

**3 – Better Mood** – The endorphins do more than kick stress to the curb. Endorphins lift your mood. Feeling down? Slap a smile on your face, even if it isn't entirely genuine at first, and turn your entire day around with something simple, easy to do, and free.

**4 – Increase Productivity** – Smiling has been shown to increase your productivity while performing tasks. There's truth to the "whistle while we work" mentality. This also explains why silly internet memes and pictures of cute animals can actually get people motivated and working harder after a few moments of smiling or laughter.

**5 – Encourage Trust** – Studies show that we are more trustful of others when they smile and smile genuinely. Trust is an important part of social health when dealing with people, whether they be loved ones or simple acquaintances. Seems relationships are truly built on smiles.

**6 – Produce Empathy** – When we're embarrassed or caught doing something questionable, often our first response is a smile. This instinct breaks the initial ice of embarrassment, promotes leniency in what others think of us, and engenders a sense of empathy since we've all experienced embarrassment and we want to smile along.

**7 – Avoid Regret** – We smile to avoid feeling bad for not smiling. Sounds weird and circular, but we don't want to hurt people's feelings, so we smile when someone shares some story about their dog, even if we don't really care. Studies show that if we don't smile, we feel regret for failing to do so. This regret brings down our mood and boosts stress hormones.

**8 – Kill Pain** – Smiling and laughter both have been shown to lessen pain. They release endorphins that lift our moods, but many of these act as natural painkillers too.

**9 – Increase Attention** – Stress limits our perceptions and narrows our attention. Our bodies kick into fight or flight mode where we can focus only on one of those things. Smiling counteracts this and widens our attention again, opening us back up to multitasking and insights that come from the fringes of our perception and our subconscious.

**10 – Contagious** – Around 50% of people smile back. This spreads the health benefits throughout those around you and it comes back to you several times as well.

**11 – Build Attraction** – Smiling makes people more attractive. This seems to be especially true for women. Men are more likely to approach a woman who smiles than one who simply makes eye contact, while women aren't necessarily drawn in by a smile alone.

**12 – Earn Success** – A smile can appear confident, self-assured, and on top of your work. Those who smile are more likely to earn more money through tips and raises. They are more readily approached with business ideas and offered advancements.

**13 – Look Younger** – Smiles naturally lift the face and in studies have shown to make people look younger, around 3 years younger on average.

**14 – Longevity** – The effects of a good smile extend past just the exterior good looks. People who smile more often live longer too, around 7 years longer than most according to one study. It releases stress, helps the heart, and much more to keep you healthy longer.

**15 – Boost Immune System** – Smiles help the body relax and this lets the immune system react more quickly and effectively against invaders.