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CHRISTIAN REST HOME  
ASSOCIATION

# Newsletter

1000 Edison Ave., N.W. • Grand Rapids, MI 49504 • 616-453-2475 Summer 2018



## RESIDENTS :

### IN SERVICE TO GOD

*"Though one may be overpowered, two can defend themselves.  
A cord of three strands is not quickly broken."*

— Ecclesiastes 4:12

Inevitably, the benefits of long life also come with challenges and heartache. Building relationships based on God's faithfulness helps us "find strength for today and bright hope for tomorrow." Meet five residents who have learned to bless God in all circumstances.

Shared faith, love, and respect characterize **John and Bertha Vis**. John was born in 1930, the tenth of twelve children on a farm in Hull, Iowa. Bertha was born in 1929, the fourth of twelve children on a farm in Manhattan, Montana. Her parents



*John and Bertha Vis*

were both born with the surname Visser.

John graduated from Western Christian High School in Hull and began teaching in small schools in northwest Iowa and southwest Minnesota, while earning college credits each summer. Bertha went through eighth grade at Manhattan Christian School. "I loved reading and would have liked to go on, but the mindset of people then was that girls should learn from their mothers to be housewives," she says.

Both vividly remember meeting at a Protestant Reformed youth convention in Oskaloosa, Iowa. "He was so handsome," Bertha says. John jokes, "Her eyesight was poor."

They corresponded for two years, and Bertha spent a winter house-keeping for a family in Iowa, so she and John could get to know each other better. They married in August 1951. Bertha offered sewing instruction in schools where John taught. Their children Bill and Marge were born by the time they moved to Grand Rapids, so John could finish college and get a permanent teaching certificate.

The Vis family lived in a little house on Quimby Street NE. John

studied full time at Calvin College, including summers, to complete his degree in two years. He went on to earn a master's degree in counseling and guidance from Michigan State University. John paid the bills by working at the old Kent County Juvenile Detention Center, in a unit for delinquent and neglected children.

Bertha spent her days alone with the children "We walked to the library, and I did a lot of reading to them. That background helped them when they started school," she says. Looking back at those whirlwind years, John says, "Bertha came through like a trooper."

When their Protestant Reformed church disbanded, they joined West Leonard Christian Reformed Church, where they still attend morning and evening services most Sundays. The Vis family grew to include Brenda and David. They became West Siders after buying their first home. The children went to West Side Christian School, Grand Rapids Christian High (Bill and Marge), and Calvin Christian High (Brenda and David). All four went to college.

Meanwhile, John rose through the ranks in the Kent County Juvenile Court system, which narrowed its focus to delinquent boys and girls, mostly ages 12 to 16. "I started with what people called 'Juvie' to pay the bills. When they changed their staffing system, I decided to stay on to see it through. It turned into a 32-year career."

Although he enjoyed interacting with kids more than doing administration, he put his faith to work where God placed him. "Kids usually stay one day to two months, pending their hearing. The court decides whether to send them to Wedgwood, a training center, or other facility. We couldn't be

*(continued on page 4)*

## From the Administrator . . .



Our summer newsletter features life stories of residents within our continuum of care. Their testimonies of faith encourage us in our daily walk with God. We are thankful to be part of their lives.

The Women's Service Board thanks those who collectively gave over \$4,300 during their recent "Bakeless Bake Sale." The service board's recent gifts to the home include activity supplies, automated external defibrillators, a pulse oximeter, pressure relief cushions and mattresses, and cable television programming. The board also covers ongoing expenses for our bird aviary. We thank the service board members for providing so many items to improve our residents' quality of life.

The Women's Service Board is again planning to host a concert with the Voices of Victory Quartet and the Covenant Christian Chamber Choir. The concert is scheduled for October 7, 2018, at 7:45 p.m. at Westend Christian Reformed Church. Please save this date to show your support for our residents.

Thank you for your gifts in response to our June appeal for \$37,800 for information technology upgrades

for Christian Rest Home residents. Your support of this project will help us to increase staff efficiency and assist in providing individualized quality care for our residents. If you have not given yet, would you consider helping us with this improvement project?

Did you know that Christian Rest Home has a secure unit that provides care and activity programming to residents who are living with Alzheimer's disease and other types of dementia? Over 5 million Americans are directly affected by Alzheimer's, which is characterized by memory loss and confusion. Alzheimer's is the sixth leading cause of death in the United States, and it's the only one of the top ten causes of death that lacks an effective treatment or prevention. The care and treatment of people with dementia is critically important to the health and well-being of our society, as well as to each individual and their loved ones. Our goal at Christian Rest Home is to honor each person and his or her God-given gifts, and to focus on preserving their abilities and quality of life to the fullest extent possible.

Please keep praying for God's blessing upon our ministry. We appreciate your faithful support!

— Todd Nyeholt

## ARE YOU MAKING THIS MISTAKE WITH YOUR LIFE?

We know of a couple in their early 90s who had not changed their will since their sons were teenagers. But if you haven't taken care of your estate plan, you can probably relate to that couple. After all, talking about wills means facing the fact that you won't live here forever.

The idea of putting together—or changing—a will sounds complicated, doesn't it? In fact, some people find thinking about wills so scary that they put it off.

Fortunately, Barnabas Foundation offers **free, no-obligation help** on making a will and on estate and tax planning. Because Christian Rest Home Foundation is a member of Barnabas Foundation, you are entitled to this confidential help and information.

More than 7,000 people have already accepted the Barnabas Foundation offer to help work out

a plan to provide for loved ones and give to Christian causes they love. You can read more about their experiences at [www.barnabasfoundation.com](http://www.barnabasfoundation.com).

Attorneys Steve Baker and Amy Bakker Baty, the local Barnabas Foundation representatives, have practiced law in business and estate planning. Typically, they need to meet with you just once, for only 60 to 90 minutes, to develop a free written analysis for you to bring to an attorney. They can even recommend attorneys who know how to include charity in wills and estate plans.

One of the easiest ways to remember us in your will is to make a bequest to the Christian Rest Home Association or the Christian Rest Home Foundation. All you do is include our name and address and specify the bequest—a dollar amount or

percentage of your estate—in your will. There's no need to tell us. We don't find out about a bequest till after a death, when an executor or lawyer contacts us. And bequests generally escape inheritance taxes.

The number and total of bequests vary greatly from year to year. From January through May 2018 alone, we had three bequests to Christian Rest Home Association and Christian Rest Home Foundation totaling \$99,762. Whatever size of planned gift you can give will make an important difference.

You can phone Steve Baker or Amy Bakker Baty toll-free at (888) 448-3040 and email them at [sbake@barnabasfoundation.com](mailto:sbake@barnabasfoundation.com) and [abaty@barnabasfoundation.com](mailto:abaty@barnabasfoundation.com). Or call Todd Nyeholt at (616) 453-2475 for free confidential advice on estate planning.

# MEMORIAL CONTRIBUTIONS

March 2018 – June 2018

**Elsie Arnoudse**

Michael Arnoudse \*

**Arlene Baas**

John Baas

**Lavina Baas**

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Gary & Esther Baas

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Luanna Ekema, Norma, Ginny & Ellen \*

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Arlene Nesselroad

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Mrs. Ruth Minnaar \*

**Nell & Lambert Morsink**

Albert & Marilyn Hoekzema

(continued on page 5)



totally open about it, but we ran it according to basic principles of Christian living.

"Kids in detention have experienced a lot of rejection. Some are receptive to guidance, others not. Yet, every person is worthy of respect as someone created in God's image. Every person deserves to be treated humanely," he says.

Bertha continued to sew dresses and shorts for an orphanage in Haiti, make surgical blankets for an orphanage hospital, and do cross stitch for gifts. John retired early so the couple could spend more time together. Their retirement years were rich with volunteering for Mississippi Christian Family Services in Rolling Fork, Mississippi, and for Christian Reformed World Relief Committee [now World Renew] in places damaged by natural disasters. Locally, Bertha volunteered for The Other Way Ministries' food pantry and John for Habitat for Humanity and Home Repair Services. They worked together at the Christian Reformed Conference Grounds the first five summers after John retired – John in maintenance and the registration office and Bertha as Director of the 10-week Vacation Bible School. Bertha also was a discussion leader in Bible Study Fellowship and later in the Coffee Break women's Bible study at West Leonard Church.

Three years ago, Bertha developed blood clots, lesions, and broken vertebrae. She was diagnosed with multiple myeloma, a bone marrow cancer. Doctors thought she had no more than three months to live. That's why she and John decided to move to Edison Manor. "I'm still here, and I have no pain," Bertha says.

Leaving behind their condo, with its flower garden, workshop, and sewing room, was an adjustment. Still, the couple agrees that their choice created a sense of relief for their whole family—which now includes 14 grandchildren and 21 great-grandchildren. Since then John has had fainting spells and received heart stents. They are looking forward to seeing siblings during a trip to northwest Iowa arranged by their daughters. Their

son, Bill, recently retired as a CRC pastor and has a home in Michigan, so, soon, three of their children will live nearby.

"We're pretty happy here. Several fellow church members live here. We like the food and activities. Every day together is a gift," John says.

**Wilma and Roger Vande Kopple** grew up with and passed on a love of faith, family, and fun. Both were born in 1926. Wilma lived in northeast Grand Rapids, the third of three in the Phillips family. The children went to Baldwin Christian School, and the family attended Ottawa Avenue Netherlands Reformed Church. Roger was the first of three. He went to West Side Christian School and attended Alpine Avenue Christian Reformed Church.

Wilma and Roger met in the school choir at Davis Tech, a vocational high school. "Davis Tech found a job for every student. I started as a secretary at Ideal Seating Company. I liked the people, the work, the whole atmosphere," Wilma says. Roger was a machinist at Michigan Machine and Tool.

They wrote to each other after Roger got drafted into the U.S. Navy during World War II. "I repaired ships in dry dock at naval air stations in Puerto Rico and never felt in danger," he says. He and Wilma dated more after the war and married in 1947 on

her dad's birthday.

"Everything was scarce after the war. It was tough to find housing," Wilma recalls. "Our first apartment was in a house. We had a kitchen, bedroom, and closet. We shared a bathroom with other renters. Our first son, Bill, was born while we lived there," Roger says.

Their family grew to three sons and a daughter. The Vande Kopples bought a house in northeast Grand Rapids, within walking distance of Creston Christian School and East Leonard Christian Reformed Church. Bill, Bob, Bruce, and Barb loved sports, and their parents attended as many of their games as possible—even though Wilma was often plagued with phlebitis [inflamed legs].

Like their parents, the kids loved books, board games, and family outings. Bill, especially, developed a lifelong love of fishing, courtesy of Grandpa Abe Vande Kopple. Unlike their parents, the children graduated from Grand Rapids Christian High and earned college degrees.

"I would have liked to go to college and become a writer," Wilma says. "I'd always planned on college, but it didn't happen," Roger adds. "We didn't have that kind of money when we were young," Wilma explains. So, she made sure her kids always had books, and she served for years as church librarian.

Roger says he kept looking for ways to improve himself. He accepted a tool and die internship and later worked at Kelvinator, Clare Tool and Die, and Walker Tool and Die. He also set up a basement workshop to build surgical arm boards for a local medical arts supplies firm. Roger directed the church choir for 20 years. "I was a tenor. Now, I'm nothing, because my voice is so hoarse," he says.

One blessing of retiring at age 65 is that Roger had more time to spend with Wilma and their family, which now includes 10 grandchildren and 12 great-grandchildren. The couple spent their retirement traveling and volunteering. "I don't want to say that I'm



*Wilma and Roger VandeKopple*

(continued on page 5)

## MEMORIAL CONTRIBUTIONS *(continued from page 3)*

### **Jay Muilenburg**

Martha Muilenburg

### **Dolores Mulder**

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### **Bea Toebes**

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Mrs. Audrey Gezon \*

Mr. & Mrs. Marvin Grit \*

Mr. Ralph Koll

*(continued on page 7)*

## RESIDENTS: IN SERVICE TO GOD *(continued from page 4)*

proud of our kids and their families—but I am,” Roger says.

In July 2013, their son Bill died unexpectedly at age 63, a week after being diagnosed with pancreatic cancer. “I think about him every day. He wrote three books on families, fishing, and faith. Several chapters are based on ‘strength for today and bright hope for tomorrow,’ and, now, whenever we sing ‘Great Is Thy Faithfulness,’ I get all choked up,” Roger says.

They decided to move to Edison Manor in July 2015. “My legs don’t move well, and I decided it was time to let someone else do the work. Our kids thought it was a good idea. We found people we already knew and made new friends,” Wilma says.

After Roger stopped driving in January 2018, they soon moved to Edison Assisted Living to get help managing medications and putting on Wilma’s pressure socks. They are grateful to still have a measure of mobility and independence. They enjoy family, friends, 2 p.m. Sunday worship services, and other activities.

They still have a great sense of humor. While Wilma lists all her activities and the books she’s reading, Roger says, “I don’t read as much

now. I sleep a lot.” Wilma replies, “Now why is that a man’s thing? Napping! Keeping active is good for you.” Roger smiles. “I keep telling her, ‘This is a rest home.’”

If you visit **Ruth Van Mullen** at Christian Rest Home, you will probably find her reading the Bible or Christian fiction or knitting in her cozy bed. Ruth was born to Rena Goeree in 1921 in northwest Grand Rapids. Jacob Vander Kuyl adopted 3-year-old Ruth when he married Rena.

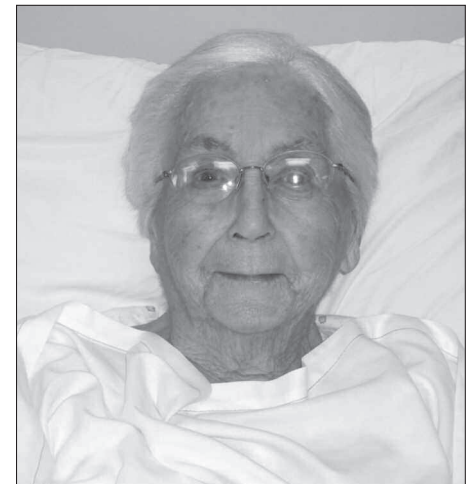
“He was a very good man. Mom and Dad always saw that I and my two half-brothers went to church and catechism. They tithed. All that good training paid off.

“Dad was a machinist. Mom did housework for others when needed. We rented and moved a lot, so I went to school at West Leonard, Widdicomb, Harrison, and Stocking. I made friends easily,” she says.

Ruth remembers being baptized at age 4 or 5 in Coldbrook Christian Reformed Church [now Beckwith Hills CRC] but says that only as an adult did she grasp what baptism means. She happily quit school after ninth grade. “I didn’t care for study-

ing. I wish now I had and don’t recommend quitting school. I cooked, baked, and cleaned for various families in East Grand Rapids and on the West Side.”

Ruth met Lawrence Van Mullen in 1938 in a Christian Endeavor [youth group] meeting at Seventh Reformed Church. “Larry had a bad eye. We waited to plan a wedding till the military assured us he wouldn’t be drafted. We got married on August 26, 1943. He got drafted in September and sent to Missouri in October.



**Ruth VanMullen**

*(continued on page 6)*

"I stayed in our West Side apartment and worked at Butterworth Hospital, sterilizing surgical instruments. In the service, Larry got appendicitis, scarlatina, and temporary arthritis. When he was honorably discharged, we didn't think he'd get his health back—but he did," she says.

Larry returned to his career as a draftsman for engineering firms, first for Witters and Crampton [renamed Jarvis Corporation] and then Leigh Products in Coopersville. Ruth says the birth of their son Lawrence David in 1946 was a "very big turning point."

"Larry was awfully blue when he was born. He had surgery at ten weeks, which left him with a brain injury. At first, I thought, 'Why me, Lord?' We decided we had to trust the Lord through whatever happened. I started praying, 'God, you know I wanted that baby. If you want him more than I do, I surrender.' But, when I surrendered, God let us keep him. A doctor told us to put little Larry in an institution, but we said, 'Never!'

"We took care of him at home till he died at age 29. Before he died he said, 'Don't worry about me. I'm going to heaven.' We were always

thankful to God for giving us that many years with Larry. He was a trustworthy kid with a good memory, and he could walk. He went to special education classes for a while at Lincoln School, but he tired so easily. He got a lot from looking at pictures in books, even though he couldn't read. We never understood why, but he couldn't take medicine, and he lived on just milk and ice cream," Ruth says.

Their daughter, Janice, was born in 1951, the same year they built a house near Richmond Street NW and Wilson Road. Daniel was born in 1954. Their lives revolved around family and church. They were charter members of Remembrance Reformed, and Larry drafted the design for the original building. "He was such a good marriage partner. Jan and Dan were so loving to their brother. They always said, 'Mom, Dad, if anything happens to you, don't worry. We'll take care of him,'" she says.

After retirement, Ruth and Larry traveled to all 50 states and Canada. Their home base was with Dan's family in Sparta, and Ruth remained there after Larry died in 2006. "As we watched him go downhill, I was so

thankful that the Lord took him fast to avoid a lot of pain," she says.

Ruth moved from Dan's house to Christian Rest Home after a health crisis in February 2018. "I have two kinds of cancer, my heart is bad, and I can't walk. I have no pain, and the doctors have promised they can keep me comfortable when the time comes. I expected living here would be a drudge, but I'm having a ball. The people are so nice. I'm very thankful God still gives me the ability to read and to knit sweaters for the church missionary box and nurses' families," she says.

When her kids, two grandchildren, and two great-grandchildren visit, Ruth says they go home smiling, because they know she is getting good care.

She has planned her funeral as an invitation for people to commit their lives to Christ. Ruth wants her pastor to preach on the song "I Gave My Life for Thee" and God's promise to never leave us. Funeral goers will sing "Face to Face with Christ My Savior," "How Great Thou Art," "Turn Your Eyes upon Jesus," and, as the casket is carried out, "God Be with You till We Meet Again."



## ABOUT OUR RESIDENTS

- 120 residents receive nursing care in Christian Rest Home.
- 30 residents receive assisted care in Edison Assisted Living Center.
- 44 residents live independently in Edison Manor.
- 68% of our residents are women.
- Our youngest resident is 53. Our oldest residents are five women aged 100 or older.
- The average resident age is 87.
- Our residents come from 68 churches.
- 78% of our nursing residents receive Medicaid assistance.

## CRH Rehab Services

Christian Rest Home provides excellent sub-acute rehabilitation services after surgery, injury or an illness. Our team of nurses and therapists will help you recover and return home as quickly as possible.



**MEMORIAL CONTRIBUTIONS** (continued from page 5)

**Bea Toebes** (continued from page 5)

J. Marc Korte  
 Marcae Manting \*  
 Mr. & Mrs. Dan McIntyre  
 David & Linda Randall \*  
 Steve & Barb Shattuck  
 Mark & Michelle VanderVelde \*  
 Greg & Lynn VanDrie \*

**Raymond VandenBerg**  
 Dan & Wanda VandenBerg \*  
 Dan & Wanda VandenBerg  
 Roger & Faith VandenBerg \*

**Donna VanderKlipp**  
 J. Marc Korte \*  
 Staff @ Ken-O-Sha Home Comm.  
 Program \*

**George VanderWerp**  
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**LaVerne Woldyk**  
 James & Arlynn Kuiper  
 Mrs. Doris Matcheck \*

**Charles Yff**  
 Mrs. Gloria Yff

**Total Memorial Gifts....\$12,905**

\* Gifts designated for Christian Rest Home Foundation

**IN LOVING MEMORY**

**March 2018 – June 2018**

Genevieve Wynsma	March 9	age 89
Dorothy Becker	March 26	age 95
Forrest DeMaagd	March 30	age 88
Ann Hoedeman	April 2	age 93
Gordon Christensen	April 6	age 92
Richard Hoonhorst	April 7	age 87
Lucille Coon	April 9	age 96
James Hoekstra	April 18	age 63
Frank Frodl	April 28	age 90
Daniel Bozek	May 20	age 93
Laurette Kulak	May 26	age 97
Beatrice Toebes	May 28	age 85
Evelyn Walker	June 2	age 93
Jack Witt	June 3	age 94
Gertrude McNulty	June 10	age 90
Roger Driesens	June 29	age 92
Maxine Atkinson	June 30	age 81

**CONTRIBUTING CHURCHES**

**March 2018 – June 2018**

Beckwith Hills CRC	Free Ref.
Blythefield CRC	Grace Protestant Ref.
Faith Community CRC	John Knox Presbyterian
First Netherlands Ref. Cong.	Seventh Ref. Walker URC

**Christian Rest Home**

provides rehabilitation, long term and dementia care within the nursing facility.

**For more information and a tour, call Linda Elders, Director of Admissions, at (616) 453-2475 or e-mail [lolders@crhome.org](mailto:lolders@crhome.org)**

**Edison Manor**

**has immediate occupancy available for one-bedroom apartments.**

Edison Manor provides senior citizen independent living and offers meals, activities, and housekeeping services. Our residents enjoy secure, homelike comfort and Christian companionship.

**For more information and a tour, call: (616) 453-0993 [www.christianresthome.org](http://www.christianresthome.org)**



**CHRISTIAN REST HOME ASSOCIATION**

1000 Edison Ave. N.W.  
Grand Rapids, MI 49504

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Check out our website at:  
[www.christianresthme.org](http://www.christianresthme.org)

Michigan Charitable Contributions Solicitation License Numbers:  
Christian Rest Home Association – MICS 6594  
Christian Rest Home Foundation – MICS 8956