The Legacy of a Century

In 1915, the world was involved in the Great War, Harry Houdini performed straitjacket escapes, Babe Ruth hit his first career home run for the Boston Red Sox, and the one millionth Model T came off the Ford Motor Co. line.

1915 is also the year that Wisconsinites Ann Stacia Galarowicz and Char Otten are born. Now living in Madison, these women—both teachers, independent thinkers and clients of Independent Living—reflect on a century of living. See page 7 for Ms. Otten’s story.

Almost everyone has one: a favorite, memorable teacher. Someone inspirational. Or caring. Or creative.

For many from Antigo, Wis., it is a fifth grade teacher and principal who showed generations of students how to become better people. Inclusive and encouraging, Ann Stacia Galarowicz taught more than what can be learned from a book.

“You gave so much to me and hundreds of other young people over your career as an excellent teacher and guide. I can’t believe how patient and caring you were, when faced with 30 or so fifth-graders!”

Mrs. Galarowicz retired in 1977. On the occasion of her 100th birthday, in February 2015, cards from former students flowed into the mailbox.

“You were the kindest and best teacher I’ve ever had and still think of you even after 40-plus years.”

Between 1938 and 1977, “Stacia” Galarowicz was a teacher off and on in Antigo, her home town. When she began her teaching career—with a teaching certificate from Antigo Normal School—Mrs. Galarowicz taught grades 1 through 8 in a one-room school. Eventually, Mrs. Galarowicz landed at Pleasant View, a country school where she was both teacher and principal for 16 years. She taught 5th grade, plus social studies to 7th and 8th grade students. Along the way, she earned a college degree from UW-Stevens Point through evening and weekend classes.

One of the cards sent to Mrs. Galarowicz said, “You sure were a great principal. You taught teachers and kids alike the true meaning of hard work and how it would benefit one’s life. Everything you ever did you put your whole heart into it. That gave Pleasant View that family feeling, like we all belonged there.”

Continued on page 3

March 2015 is all about raising national awareness and support for Meals on Wheels, including our Evening Meals on Wheels program. Please see article on page 4.
Our Mission
Our mission is to support adults as they manage their independence by providing a variety of care services, skilled home health care and housing options to maintain health and well being.

NOTES FROM RITA

Featured in this issue of our newsletter are two centenarians, women who are inspirations for what they have accomplished. Mrs. Ann Stacia Galarowicz and Ms. Char Otten are also exceptional, in part because they exemplify what is to come.

According to the 2010 U.S. Census, the United States had 53,364 centenarians, more than any other nation. The age group 85-plus is increasing just as the age group 65-plus is increasing. By 2050, the U.S. population age 65 and over is projected to be 83.7 million, almost double its estimated population of 43.1 million in 2012. By 2030, more than 20 percent of U.S. residents will be age 65 and over, compared to 13 percent in 2010 and 9.8 percent in 1970. (1)

Funding retirement is a concern. Personal savings may be exhausted long before end of life, a real concern among men and especially women who live longer and experienced a lifetime of inferior wages. Yet government is looking for ways to cut Medicare and reduce other social support.

Social Security isn’t fool-proof, either. Trustees have warned that they be unable to pay full retirement benefits starting in 2033. One reason may be the pressure placed on the working population. By 2030, the working age group—those who are ages 18-64—will account for only 57 percent of the population; 43 percent will be children and seniors. Another way to look at this is that by 2030, about 35 seniors and 39 children will be dependent on every 100 workers. There will be about as many seniors as there are children relying on working adults for support.

It’s up to us, as individuals and as communities, to figure out how to support our longevity. Already, we’re seeing two trends among individuals. First, we’re seeing delayed retirements and new careers in retirement. The Pew Charitable Trust surveyed 7,000 households and found that 21 percent plan to never retire and 53 percent plan to do something else, including work at a different job. Second, we’re seeing exponential growth in uncompensated caregiving of elderly people by relatives and friends. The value amounts to $522 billion a year, according to a RAND Corp. study released last October.

Now it’s time to do more as a community. It’s time to invest more in services and housing to help our elders, just as they have invested in training and giving to the generations that have followed them. It’s important to act now, if only to keep the financial burden off the backs of tomorrow’s wage earners. That’s what Independent Living, Inc. is doing, and we invite you to join us.

Rita Giovannoni, CEO


Tennyson Senior Living Community

In response to the senior housing shortage, we’re doing our part by building Tennyson Senior Living Community, with construction slated to begin this year. Updates will be posted on our website, www.IndependentLivingInc.org. Donations are welcome, and if you would like to be on a notification/interest list, please contact Sue Berg at 608-268-9628 or sberg@independentlivinginc.org.
Family matters to Mrs. Galarowicz. After retirement, she eventually moved to Madison to be near one of her five children. Her husband John had passed away, and Mrs. Galarowicz—at age 86—was caring for her sister Ella, 12 years older. Ella moved to Madison, too, and lived to be 101. “She was my good friend and she was my sister,” Mrs. Galarowicz says. “I miss her.”

Today, Mrs. Galarowicz lives alone with daily check-ins from her daughter Linda Gorchels. With occasional help from others and deliveries from Evening Meals on Wheels, Mrs. Galarowicz maintains her independence. It seems to run in the family. Her parents immigrated from Poland, with her dad arriving first and sending for her mother soon after. They farmed near Antigo, and one of Mrs. Galarowicz’s early memories is riding in a horse and carriage with her sister Ella. Well, almost riding. When the horses were moving at a pretty good pace, the sisters liked to jump out of the carriage, hang onto the rail and let their feet “race” along the road.

“Mother didn’t know that we did that,” Mrs. Galarowicz says with a laugh. Transportation was a factor in Mrs. Galarowicz’s early education. Her parents didn’t have a car, and school was some distance away. So Mrs. Galarowicz boarded with a family in Antigo during the winter months. School always mattered to her. “When I was little, we played school, and I was always picked to be the teacher. It came true!”

Save the Date
Mark Sept. 24 on your calendar for a special day of golf. It’s our second annual fundraiser, hosted this year at University Ridge, 9002 County Road PD, Verona. You can do double duty when you play for fun and play to support seniors and adults with disabilities in Dane County. The cost is $200 per golfer or $800 for a foursome, and includes registration, lunch, golf cart and reception. Hole sponsorships are $500, and a great way to let your golf friends see your support. Additional information and registration can be found at www.IndependentLivingInc.org and clicking the “Donate” tab. Then click on the “register” link. See you on the golf course!

Our Programs
We help you or someone you know remain independent at home. Thank you, Dane County community, for trusting your care to us for more than 40 years. We look forward to caring for you for years to come.
Call for information today 608-274-7900

Supportive Services
Caregiver Respite
Evening Meals on Wheels
Financial Management and Counseling
Home Care
Home Chore
Home Safety Modification
Medication Management
Transportation

Home Health Care
Independent Health Care, Inc. (Medicare-certified home health care agency)

Services from Volunteers
Telephone Reassurance
Friendly Visiting
Kibble on Wheels
Chore Corps
Health Advocate, plus more

Senior Living
The Gardens, Madison
Segoe Gardens, Madison
McKee Park Apartments, Fitchburg
Olympic Village, Sun Prairie

Your local connection to an independent life since 1973
Evening Meals on Wheels Program Helps Seniors Thrive

Preparing a decent meal can be a challenge at the end of a day for an elder dealing with frail health. Arthritis, stroke, injury, failing vision or other concerns may cause a senior to simply give up making a nutritious meal.

The lack of good nutrition compromises frail health, becoming a downward spiral. Eventually, the unfortunate result may be unwanted placement in an assisted living facility or nursing home.

The inability to afford a meal is another factor affecting senior health. Food insecurity plagues almost one in six seniors, according to Meals on Wheels America. Hunger negatively impacts health, most recently documented in university research published by the National Foundation to End Senior Hunger. Findings show that food insecure seniors are 50 percent more likely to be diabetic, twice as likely to have gum disease or asthma, and almost 60 percent more likely to have congestive heart failure or a heart attack.

That's why Meals on Wheels America is leading its 13th annual March for Meals campaign. Member programs nationwide collectively raise awareness about meals on wheels, the issues of senior hunger and nutrition, the need for support, and the critical role of volunteers.

Locally, the Independent Living Evening Meals on Wheels (EMOW) program is vital in helping seniors stay healthy and at home. Seniors who are homebound and food insecure due to a lack of resources may qualify for a subsidy to cover half the cost of the meal. The EMOW program is fortunate to have support from many local organizations including United Way of Dane County, UW Health & Unity Health Insurance, Dean & St. Mary’s, First Business, WPS Charitable Foundation, Associated Bank, Summit Credit Union, and Gordon Flesch Co.

Key support also comes from volunteers. Caring individuals deliver a nutritious meal, a warm smile, and a safety check that ensures the wellbeing of the person receiving the meal. Nearly 250 volunteers deliver evening meals for Independent Living, which helps keep the program affordable. Father-daughter pairs, individuals, and businesses that adopt routes are among the many volunteers who faithfully make deliveries, even during the recent frigid winter weather in January and February.

Prepared fresh by chefs, nutritious evening meals are available to any older adult. Several special diets are offered, including vegetarian, diabetic, 2-gram low sodium and gluten-free. A registered dietitian reviews the menu to ensure balanced meals.

Quality Standards

The Evening Meals on Wheels program at Independent Living, Inc. is unique because it is the only one of its kind in Dane County. EMOW also is one of 36 Wisconsin meals on wheels programs that are members of Meals on Wheels America. Three Wisconsin programs are accredited by MOWA, and EMOW has the highest level of accreditation, Magnet Accreditation at the Exemplary Level. EMOW is just one of six, out of 994 nationwide MOWA-member organizations, to be awarded this rare recognition.

For menus and other information about Evening Meals on Wheels, contact Michelle Christenson, manager, at 608-204-0923 or meals@independentlivinginc.org.
Never Retire From Learning

PLATO, the name of a prominent Greek philosopher, is also the acronym for a Madison group of mostly retired seniors enjoying lifelong learning. Participatory Learning and Teaching Organization is a member-driven nonprofit that offers classes based on the expertise volunteered by its members. One of those classes—one of the longest-running classes, in fact—has been meeting at The Gardens for about eight years.

“Short Stories and Essays” is capably led by retired history teacher Irv Klibaner. As coordinator, he researches the texts, prepares the syllabus and arranges for a volunteer to lead thoughtful discussions each week. It’s a two-hour class that meets Tuesdays and attracts about 20 regular participants. Residents at The Gardens have a standing invitation to participate.

The 10-week course is offered spring, summer and fall. The reading assignments clearly engage the participants in respectful and animated discussions. It’s a stimulating class.

“You read by yourself (at home), and you have your way of seeing things,” Klibaner says. “When you come to discuss what you have read with other people, you get a lot from them including another way of seeing things. It’s a wonderful group. We meld together; we have become a part of each other.”

Visual Dialogues

Artist Patricia Leathers agreed to exhibit some of her beautiful paintings at The Gardens independent apartments, where she also works. Displayed were landscapes and still life arrangements in pastels, water color and oils. “I’ve been drawing all my life,” she says, with a hint of a drawl. Born in Illinois, she frequently visited relatives in Mississippi, an ancestral home. “I found my art taking root in the Southern landscape,” the mostly self-taught artist says. “Nature became personified . . . and I began a dialogue with it. These became conversations on canvas.” Leathers’ works of art have been displayed at art fairs and in community/commercial spaces in Wisconsin, Illinois and Mississippi.

THANK YOU!

Independent Living, Inc. is grateful to receive and recognize these special tribute gifts between December 17, 2014, and March 11, 2015.

Remembering

Cora Bailey    Virginia Davenport    Melvin Huset    Helen Niemann
Karen Gunderson Kendra & Jerry Tutsch Marilyn Huset Polly & Jim Kuelbs
Mary Dahlstrom Dorothy Fisher Maxine & Lincoln Marty
Donna O’Leary-Steiner Darlene & Ross Willis Linda Marty Schmitz
Thank You to Our Volunteers

With this issue of the newsletter, we recognize more than 240 volunteers who deliver meals or assist in the kitchen with our Evening Meals on Wheels program. Thank you so much! Volunteers are vital members of our EMOW team. Your dedication and many of hours of service matter to the seniors and adults with disabilities we serve together. Again, thank you for your support!

EVENING MEALS ON WHEELS VOLUNTEERS

Austin Anderson  
Jacqueline Anderson  
Susan Anderson  
Helene Androski  
Jean-Michel Ane  
Sigurd Angenent  
Victoria Angenent Mari  
Benjamin August  
Joleen August  
Jean Bae  
Michael Baer  
James Bakken  
Helen Baldwin  
Judy Balistreri  
Jack Barker  
Kevin Bartrom  
Joyce Behrend  
Rick Chappell  
Cindy Ann Byczek  
Janelle Buschmann  
Mary Buchner  
Janel Bertera  
Nicole Biessman  
Robert Billig  
Lindsey Blazel  
Lynd Bodi  
James Bren  
Colleen Berg  
Sue Berg  
Julie Stewert  
Colleen Benson  
Brooks Brenneis  
Virginia Brenneis  
Leonardo Brito  
Mary Buschmann  
Cindy Ann Byczek  
Rick Chappell  
Jon Chisen  
Geraldine Clark  
Craig Clemons  
Ralph Cohen  
Ditra Comer  
Howard Crook  
Linda Crabuagh  
Mary Cullen  
Jerry Day  
Alfonso Del Rio  
Rosanne Delfosse  
David Dexter  
Tami DiPiazza  
Danna Dold  
Elizabeth Dressel  
Suzanne Droste  
Kathleen Drury Buyck  
Tammy Earl  
Ruth Edson  
Cynthia English  
Larry Epstein  
Dorothy Ewing  
Susan Ezalarab  
Erin Fallon-Mosleth  
Dennis Frey  
John Galewski  
Sherry Gammeter  
Cheryl Gandolph  
Ahmet Gashi  
Verea Gashi  
Elizabeth Geiger  
Patricia Geiger  
Susan Geiger  
Rita Giovannoni  
Marah Goehring  
Vicky Golpen  
Amy Gothard  
Larry Gray  
Jill Greve  
Lea Groff  
Wayne Groff  
Veronica Guski  
Victoria Hahn  
Michelle Harrison  
Bruce Harville  
Bonnie Havey  
Bryan Helt  
James Helt  
Steve Henningfield  
Barbara Hennings  
Ronald Hennings  
Courtney Henry  
Richard Henslin  
Steve Herring  
Kyle Herzog  
Paul Hexum  
William Holman  
Gary Hughes  
Michael Hull  
Carol Hulland  
Alain Hung  
Amy Jacobsen  
Autumn Jesberger  
Hunter Jesberger  
James Johnson  
Joshua Johnson  
Leslie Johnson  
Elaine Jourdan  
Jaculeynn Joyce  
Michael Kafka  
Jill Kaiser  
Mihir Kansara  
Robert Kapinos  
John Keating  
Leroy Kemnitz  
Gregg Kissel  
Jeanette Koenig  
Mark Kolan  
Theresa Kolan  
Jennifer Kolb  
Tina Krouth  
Marianne Korol  
Jill Koshelin  
Michael Krepfle  
William Kubsh  
Arthur Kurtz  
Robin Kutz  
Cathy Kuske  
Linda Lane  
Craig Lehnerr  
Joanne Lehnerr  
Cheryl Levendoski  
Judy Levine  
Susan Little  
Darlene Lobenstein  
Jack Longert  
Janos Lonyay  
Amy Lord  
Amy Lowe  
Diane Luebke  
Peter Luther  
Thomas Marmet  
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Sue Mautz  
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Darrin Most  
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Dakota Murphy  
Dories Neis  
Denise Nettesheim  
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Nick Pelzer  
Marie Peppler  
Nathan Phillips  
Joseph Pichler  
Deb Pienkowski  
John Pinger  
Dawn Pollard  
Ilba Prego  
Betty Prossie  
Amanda Purington  
Christine Quall  
Mike Quall  
Nalini Rao  
Jim Raskob  
Zach Rawson  
Marilynn Rebman  
Dale Redmond  
Nancy Reimer  
Richard Reining  
Robin Reisdorf  
Kerrin Rhinesmith  
Sid Richards  
Pat Ring  
Cathy Rotter  
Ron Rotter  
Melissa Rupnow  
Joann Russell  
Kathleen Ryan  
Patrick Ryan  
Kathryn Sales  
Isaac Schafer  
Benjamin Schmidt  
Brianna Schmidt  
Kristine Schmitt  
Mandi Schoville  
Laura Schultz  
Nicol Schutz  
Kristy Schuster  
Louisa Schwartz  
Troy Schwenn  
Barbara Seth  
Tom Seversin  
James Shaver  
James Sirrianni  
Beth Ann Smith  
Emily Smith  
Tim Sondey  
Adam Spatchele  
Marta Stanek  
Frank Staniszcweski  
Kathy Stanton  
Noel Stanton  
Brian Statz  
William Sterud  
Stephen Stone  
Greg Stravinski  
Jenny Strugnell  
Xenia Sundell  
Theodore Tibbitts  
Angela Troia  
Melissa Tumbleson  
Shelley Udell  
Nellie Vallarta - Ast  
Michael Vranik  
Tara Vranik  
Michael Walker  
Timothy Ward  
Holly Wegner  
Chloe Wilkerson  
Nancy Winter  
Heather Wolowik  
Tom Wolowik  
Levi Wood  
Jennifer Zahn  
Victor Zhang  
Haosheng Zhen  
Jennifer Zuk  

Adopt-A-Routes  
ACI Wireless  
Beacon Technologies  
GE Healthcare  
Madison Breakfast Rotary  
Madison Horizons Rotary  
Ryan Brothers  
Ambulance Service  
Mom’s Club  
St. Mary’s Care Center  
TASC, Inc.  
Token Creek Lion’s Club  
Youth with a Mission  
Zimbrick Buick  
Zimbrick Honda
What Makes a Community Special?

Whether an apartment community is filled with college students, families with children, or retired residents, some communities have that special, inviting atmosphere that comes from the people who live there. One remarkable resident who has lived at both The Gardens Independent Apartments and (briefly) Segoe Gardens Assisted Living agreed to share a bit about who she is and where she led her life.

Char Otten was born in 1915, ahead of her time.

What do Indiana Jones and Agatha Christie have in common? Char Otten.

It’s quite a tale. Charlotte Otten, of Sheboygan, Wis., is a 1937 zoology graduate of Carlton College. She took her interest in endocrinology to Minneapolis where she taught university lab classes, and conducted research in genetics and ancient blood groupings which attracted attention. It resulted in an offer from the University of Wisconsin-Madison anthropology department, where she worked in the early 1940s before accepting a teaching position in physical anthropology at the University of Chicago.

“At that time, you could do almost anything and call it anthropology,” she says with usual wit and good humor. It was there she met Bob and Linda Braidwood. Both affiliated with the Oriental Institute at the University of Chicago, the intrepid duo gained international reputations for their archeological work. Bob Braidwood was later rumored to be a role model for the Indiana Jones character in the movie series.

The Braidwoods planned an archeological expedition in Jarmo, Iraq, and Ms. Otten joined them. It was 1948. On the other side of the world, she saw more than artifacts and sand. Just like the movie “Indiana Jones and the Temple of Doom,” she saw snakes… lots of snakes.

Snakes made life difficult. “There were cobras and all kinds of unknown snakes, poisonous and not. The desert was hot during the day but cold at night, and the snakes would try to come into the tents at night for warmth. That’s why I moved my bed into the back of the truck. I didn’t care to warm a snake,” Ms. Otten says.

The expedition stayed in Iraq for nearly two years, digging through two winter seasons, and avoiding summer heat. “We had some interesting discoveries, like early ovens. And we found what might have been altars with small figures of clay on them. This was a world of clay, and muck,” she adds.

One of the most exciting days on the site had nothing to do with artifacts. Residents of two nearby villages coveted and competed for the jobs offered by the archeology team. “One day, they arrived all armed and firing at each other. I had to take a few of the wounded into the back of the truck to do what I could. Eventually, we found a way to get the wounded to Baghdad,” Ms. Otten says. “That was the first time our help shot each other.”

During the summer, Ms. Otten stayed in Baghdad where she met author Agatha Christie. “She was working on a story. We went to the Hotel Zia and were throwing pillows down the clothes chute to see where the body would land. She was great fun.”

When Ms. Otten returned to Chicago, she worked at the Field Museum, another career turning point. “That’s when I became interested in art, aboriginal art. Here I was working with all these beautiful things. This was at the time when a class in ancient art always started with classical Greek art. Nobody had

Ms. Otten, with a doctorate in biological anthropology from Michigan University, is the author or editor of several scholarly works. She retired from Northern Illinois University in DeKalb in the 1980s ... but was soon teaching classes in Rockford and Beloit, usually on the same day that she would visit her mother in a nursing home at Lake Geneva. It was a lot of miles “especially on me,” she says.

Now retired for good from teaching, Ms. Otten enjoys the company of family and friends who look forward to Ms. Otten’s 100th birthday in May. Her apartment, at The Gardens, has stacks of books, assorted art and memorabilia, and current newspapers and magazines. It’s an intriguing collection of artifacts from an adult life that didn’t start as she had hoped.

“I really wanted to be a veterinarian but there wasn’t a program anywhere accepting women at that time. It was mostly horses and cows and livestock, and only men were accepted for that,” Ms. Otten says, adding wryly, “Today, now there are more women vets than men!”