



"The Lord Cometh"

The Maranatha Village Trumpet

April - May 2016

Helping One Another Until Jesus Comes

VOL. XXX 3

The Conway Memorial Park



The Conway Family

The Village Names the Memorial Park after the Conway Family

Maranatha Village became a reality in June of 1973 when Floyd Conway signed the papers to receive title to 215 acres of rough scrubland, making it the future home of hundreds of like-minded Baptist Christians. Naming it and making it happen are two different things, but it was the beginning. Floyd Conway's dream took its first step toward what all of us enjoy today as a wonderful place to live during retirement and it allows for Chris-

tian service to continue.

At a Village Dinner-on-the-Grounds held on January 21, 2016, more than 200 people gathered to enjoy a good meal, learn some history about Maranatha Village, listen to some good music, be spellbound by memories of Maranatha Village by Ellen Reed, and to honor the Conway family by renaming the Memorial Park to the Conway Memorial Park.



Over the years, many people have done their part to make Maranatha Village what it is today, but Floyd Conway and his brother, George Conway, with their wives and families are the ones responsible for providing the dream and labor to take scrubland and turn it into a "destination."

Maranatha Village was honored on this occasion by the presence of



many of the Conway family. Several traveled a long distance to be here. A quote from Larry George Conway seems to express the feelings of all the Conway family when he stated "I would like to thank you and those involved in the ceremony for the privilege and honor bestowed on the Conway Family, now and forever in the future for the great foresight of my Aunt Margaret and Uncle Floyd and father George Conway to plan and develop Maranatha Village." To God be the glory.

Carl Barton, coeditor



Left to right: Brandon Parker - Kimberly Parker - Kiki & Larry Conway - Janell Conway - Jan & George Conway - Jan & Ken Conway



The Administrator's Perspective

Out of the Chute!

By Dr. Gerald Webber



Jerry

I rarely watch a horse race. I don't recall even visiting a race track. I don't want to get too close and be falsely accused of "playing the ponies." But as the build-up to the Triple Crown approaches, my interest is piqued, while the racing world anticipates what has come to be known as "The Most Exciting Two Minutes in Sports."

Next to the finish itself, probably the most electrifying moment in these races is the opening of the gates at the sound of the starting gun. With the way suddenly open before them, near-perfect specimens of quivering horse flesh break out of their chutes in single-minded pursuit of victory.

Not to push the metaphor too far, the Village Office experienced its own "out-of-the-chute" experience recently, as two new members joined our administrative team. On Tuesday, March 1, Jerry Johnson and Gerry Carlson filled out two new spots in the Board-ordered reorganization program: Johnson (Jerry Lee) as Business Manager and Carlson (Gerry Bruce) as Director of Marketing and Development. As the new Administrator, yours truly (Jerry Keith) had left the starting block on January 1, and was already around the first turn.

With the anticipated departure of Village Manager, Allen Lowe, at the end of April, these appointments are timely.

Jerry Johnson's responsibilities include: management of the business functions of Village operations; oversight of government compliance matters; control of accounting, purchasing, payables and receivables; supervision of technology and systems required to support these activities; direct oversight of account-

ing processes; preparation of financial reports for Administration and Board; annual presentation of a budget for Board approval; tracking and management of that budget; oversight of payroll and benefits; and such other duties commensurate with "...providing things honest in the sight of all men."

Gerry Carlson will oversee a comprehensive program of advertising and promotion; maintenance of a user-friendly website; growth of a development program for fund-raising; management of long-term leasing and short-term residence (promotional units, Guest House, RV Park) and some assistance with sales of mobile homes; working with lessees re: financial matters, necessary repairs and improvements; coordination of work schedules for employees and outside contractors; supervision of cleaning, upkeep and staging of villas and guest house; and such other duties directly connected to management and oversight of Village residential services.

Steve Milligan will continue as Maintenance Manager, as we conduct an active search for a working foreman to serve as his understudy, with a goal of improving our service to residents while preparing for the future.

With judicious use of scheduling, our objective is to maintain and grow services without expanding the payroll. As of May, we will have reduced office expenses by two full-time salaries (Village Manager and Office Manager) and replaced them with three part-time positions. The passage of time will judge the effectiveness of this plan, but we are optimistic at the prospects.

We're not at the finish line yet, but we're out on the track, kicking up dust! Thank you for your patience as we find our footing and settle into a winning pace. We want to please the Lord and serve our fellow-residents faithfully, making Maranatha an even better place to live, serve, and fellowship.

The Uniqueness of Maranatha!

by Allen Lowe



Allen

Sometimes we wonder why God has put us in the place that we are. Several times I talked with my pastor in Michigan about my work as a city manager. Finding money for city improvements and updating

office equipment did not make a difference for eternity. I did have the opportunity to work with many experienced and dedicated managers. They taught me how to use administrative skills to run a city. Later, I was able to help new managers entering the profession. With that, God used a series of events to bring us to Maranatha Village.

This Village is a unique place. Recently several board members and I met with our insurance agent to discuss renewal of our liability policy. Someone asked Chris what kind of increases other clients like us had seen in their renewals. His response was, "There is nothing else like you." Shortly after that, I talked with the Village financial advisor. I explained our operation to him so he could better know how to advise us. Eddie attends a large Baptist church in West Palm Beach. He said, "Just give me the word. I can fill your empty apartments with members of my church who want a second home within driving distance. They can't find anything else for the money that is this nice."

Mary Ruth and I have had the opportunity to meet believers with interesting life stories. A discussion over a cup of coffee can lead to recalling an African adventure or native dishes in Australia. The residents have such a mix of backgrounds, and this diversity is healthy for the Village. God has provided expertise in many areas, and most residents are eager to serve Maranatha and the Sebring community.

Our plan is to return to Michigan, complete some repair and maintenance on our 100 year old house,

and put it on the market. Next winter, we would like to spend three months in the mobile park to see the Village from that perspective. (There is also the pool, golf, Village dinners, concerts, picnics . . .) After that, whatever the LORD has for us will merely continue our diverse life adventure of 43 years.

We have learned many things while living in the Village, and we have provided a few examples of what you all have taught us.

If you are 70 and in the church youth group . . . You may live in Maranatha Village.

If you arrive 15 minutes early for an event, and you are the last one there . . . You may live in Maranatha Village.

If after you play three games of dominoes, you feel like you should have snacks . . . You may live in Maranatha Village.

If your social life is dominated by doctor's appointments. . . You may live in Maranatha Village.

If you call laundries "boutiques" . . . You may live in Maranatha Village.

If the person sitting next to you in church is a white haired lady with glasses and a sweater . . . You may live in Maranatha Village.

If you find your golf ball in both the fairway and the sand . . . You may live in Maranatha Village.

If when you have a problem, your first thought is to call Jeanne . . . You may live in Maranatha Village.

If you go to an assisted living home for coffee and cookies . . . You may live in Maranatha Village.

If you are the only one on the streets at 9 PM . . . You may live in Maranatha Village.

If every activity you participate in somehow involves food . . . You may live in Maranatha Village.

If you associate hot dog roasts with money for mini golf . . . You may live in Maranatha Village.

If Hands and Feet does not make you think of body parts . . . You may live in Maranatha Village.

If you put more miles on your golf cart than your car . . . You may live in Maranatha Village.

If you . . . I forgot what I was going to say . . . I may live in Maranatha Village.

New Village Residents

Geof & Cindy Livezey



Geof and Cindy

Geof and I came to know the Lord at an early age. Both of us were reared in Christian homes and attended church regularly. Geof was raised at Alpine Baptist, and I was from North Park Baptist. We met as teenagers. Geof came over to North Park in search of a Christian girl. We met not knowing that I was only 14, and he was 19. Geof was drafted that same fall and spent 2 years in the Army with one of the years serving in Vietnam. We wrote each other almost every day and became engaged the beginning of my senior year. We spent the year preparing for graduation and planning a wedding. I made my wedding gown and all the bridesmaid dresses. My dad requested that we wait until I was 18 to get married. That happened on October 11. The first date the church was available was November 1st. That date is now our anniversary. After a short trip to Niagara Falls, we went to Michigan's Upper Peninsula deer hunting. Geof was an avid deer hunter and wanted to introduce me (who had never camped or hunted) to deer hunting. What an adventure! Hunting became an annual experience for us until the arrival of our three boys.

Geof worked at a machinery company in Grand Rapids as a CNC programmer, and then at a mold making company in Kalamazoo as a Cad Cam programmer. We returned to Grand Rapids where he worked for a tool and die company, again as a Cad Cam programmer. His final job was in trucking as a dispatcher.

I was a stay-at-home mom. I was a licensed Day Care Provider for 25 years, working out of our home. After retiring from day care, I ran my own sewing business out of our home. I specialized in bridal and home décor. I am now retired from sewing. I am enjoying the grandchildren, quilting, gardening, and working in my flowers.

We are both very busy at our church. Geof is involved with leadership in our Adult Bible Fellowship. He is chair of the leadership team, and is involved with the sound system and develops PowerPoint as well as graphics for our promotional materials. I am his right hand person.

Our first home was in Standale, Michigan, followed by Comstock Park, Cedar Springs, Vicksburg, and Grand Rapids. We now live in Belmont, Michigan, in Leisure Village Retirement Community.

In 2014 and 2015, we visited Maranatha Village for one week. We felt very welcomed and spiritually fed and decided to return this year for three months. We had agreed that we were going to 'look but not purchase' this year. Well, we are now owners of a mobile home at 236 Maranatha Blvd. Plans are to spend eight months in Michigan and three or four months in Florida.

We have three sons who are married to very fine Christian women. James & Lori live in Kingston, Tennessee. Tom & Holly live in Hudsonville, Michigan. John & Corie live in Grand Rapids, Michigan. We have four grandsons and one granddaughter, and they very much light up our lives.

Decoration Day

Memorial Day, originally called Decoration Day, is a day of remembrance for those who have died in service of the United States of America. Over two dozen cities and towns claim to be the birthplace of Memorial Day. While Waterloo, N.Y. was officially declared the birthplace of Memorial Day by President Lyndon Johnson in May 1966, it's difficult to prove conclusively the origins of the day.

Regardless of the exact date or location of its origins, one thing is clear – Memorial Day was borne out of the Civil War and a desire to honor our dead. It was officially pro-

claimed on 5 May 1868 by General John Logan, national commander of the Grand Army of the Republic, in his General Order No. 11. "The 30th of May, 1868, is designated for the purpose of strewing with flowers, or otherwise decorating the graves of comrades who died in defense of their country during the late rebellion, and whose bodies now lie in almost every city, village and hamlet churchyard in the land," he proclaimed. The date of Decoration Day, as he called it, was chosen because it wasn't the anniversary of any particular battle.

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The Michigan Picnic



On Thursday, March 10th at noon, all the “Michiganders” gathered for a potluck lunch at the Fogle Pavilion. Yvonne White had some opening comments, and Dick Rounds,

a Cedar Springs native, led in prayer for the lunch. It was a partly cloudy day, about 85 degrees, with an east-southeast wind at 17 miles per hour. The wind was such that if you did not tie down your table cloth, it would fly away along with your plate. Allen Lowe, a retired Manager of the City of Roscommon, was the official photographer for the occasion. This year we were made keenly aware of those who were no longer with us. They are sincerely missed by all of us here at Maranatha Village.

Everyone had a great time of fellowship, and the food was scrumptious (as usual). The attendance for the day was 73 people. The



Michigan Summer Reunion will be held in July 2016 at Alpine Baptist Church. Yvonne White will notify every one of the exact time and date through a future issue of the Trumpet.



And, also notice will be given through the Maranatha Baptist Church e-mail Prayer Alert program.

So be alert and keep tuned in so that you do not miss the catered luncheon this July. You must have your reservation(s) in to Yvonne White two weeks

prior to the lunch. Her telephone number is: (616) 205-5534, and e-mail address is mikeyvonnewhite@yahoo.com. We hope to see you in Grand Rapids, Michigan, in July.

You might be a Michigander...

“If your idea of a good time is sitting out on a bucket on the ice in 30 below weather with a fishing pole.”



Which Will It Be – Hot Dog or Sausage ?



On February 10th and March 9th, we had our regular monthly Maranatha Village Hot Dog/Sausage Roast at Conway Memorial Park. The February day was a cool 68 degrees in contrast to the March day when the temperature was 85 degrees with lots of wind. These two events are fund raisers for **Maranatha Village Swimming Pool**. The total net amount given to the pool fund was \$1,197. The attendance in February was 130, and March was 176. We had lots of volunteers to help make the events successful. Some of the volunteers were Doug Fraser, Carl and Mary Bronkema, Ed and

Maureen Micka, Yvonne Johnson, Vera Ergang, Judie Laven, Carol Schafer, Hock and Deb Kershaw, and Don Laven who was the coordinator. Some of them worked both months and some one month. Everyone likes a picnic – especially when you do not have to bring any food, just bring \$4.00 for a hot dog or a sausage with bun, chips, and soda. For an extra \$1.00, you can buy a slice of pie. Pies are donated by the Village residents. Our thanks to every one for making — **SUPPORT YOUR POOL** — a big success.



Cook's Korner

Strawberry Shortcake Biscuits

from
Marianne Sipe

2 ½ cups all-purpose flour
2 ½ Tbsp baking powder
½ tsp salt
½ cup sugar
3 Tbsp butter, not margarine
1 cup milk

Combine the first four ingredients.
Cut in butter.
Gradually add milk.
Mix gently so it does not become tough.
Pour into an 8" x 8" buttered baking dish.
Bake at 350° degrees for 30 minutes.

Holly Cookies

from
Hope Murdoch

30 large marshmallows
1/4 lb. butter or oleo
4 1/2 cups cornflakes
1/2 tsp. vanilla
2 tsp. green food coloring

Melt butter over low heat. Add marshmallows and stir until melted. Add coloring and vanilla. Mix well. Stir in cornflakes gently. Spoon onto waxed paper.
Add red hots to holly leaves. (*Work fast!*)

Peanut Crackles

from
Wanda Ballard

¾ cup softened butter
¾ cup white sugar
¾ cup brown sugar
1 slightly beaten egg
¾ cup peanut butter, creamy or chunky
1 tsp. vanilla
1-3/4 cup flour
½ tsp. salt
¼ tsp. soda
Cinnamon sugar

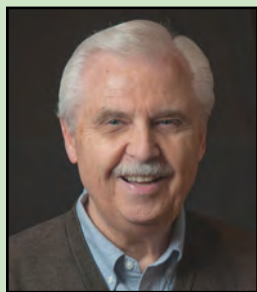
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Cream butter and sugars, blend in egg, peanut butter and vanilla.
Add sifted flour with salt and soda, mix well.
Form rounded teaspoons of dough into balls, roll in cinnamon sugar.
Place on ungreased baking sheet.
Press tops with fork.
Bake at 375° degrees for 10-12 minutes.
Makes 4 to 5 dozen.
(variations: add 1 cup raisins to dough or form each ball around a Chocolate covered peanut or place a Hershey kiss into center.)





Maranatha's Growth & Development!



Gerry

Maranatha Village is on the move! During the past several years, a number of significant improvements and enhancements have been added to the grounds and facilities here at Maranatha Village. The scenic Lillian Doane Walking Trail is enjoyed daily by many residents and guests. The Fogle Pavilion is regularly used for large and small functions and has become a centerpiece of outdoor life in the Village. In addition, the Allan and Ann Lewis Gazebo, the attractive arbor and Rest-a-While Beach, plus the comfortable swing between the two smaller lakes have become favorite spots for many. All of these blessings are the results of generous gifts to Maranatha Village by faithful residents and friends.

Now the next challenge is to complete the Miniature Golf course being planned for its prominent place in the center of the Conway Memorial Park. Plans are being secured and construction is planned for the near future. Why not give a gift toward completion of this project by **"Buying a Brick"** to help fund the course? Bricks can be purchased for \$100 each. It would be a great way to honor family members and friends by donating in their memory, or honor. Information on how you can participate is available in the Village office.

All of this activity is just a foretaste of what can be accomplished through the giving

of residents and friends of Maranatha Village. There are other projects that could be realized in the future as we look toward improving our remarkable Village. A recent survey of residents and guests identified over 30 suggestions for various possible projects,



21 Matthew St. — New Roof

improvements and upgrades. Some are large projects that will require extensive planning and serious funding. But they are all excellent ideas that can be pursued as we seek to honor the Lord here at Maranatha Village.

Some projects will definitely need financial support from friends in order for them to be accomplished. Stay tuned for further information and giving opportunities here at the Development Page of the next *Trumpet*.

Rev. Gerry Carlson



Rest-a-While Beach



Swing and Relax



Mini Golf Project

Goal is:\$20,000.00

Donations as of March 15, 2016.....\$13,089.00

Thank you to those who have given.

Village Office

Maranatha Village

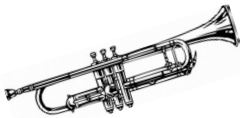
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**“Believe on the
Lord Jesus Christ
and you will be saved.”**

Ellen Reed Honored!



Ellen

Sunday night, March 6th, Ellen Reed was honored by Maranatha Baptist Church with a reception for her fourteen years of faithful service as treasurer.

Pastor Don Messenger led the evening celebration and Dr. Gerald Webber related the importance of Ellen's service to the church, telling us that Ellen's work was exemplary before both man and God. Bills were paid on time and

accurate records were kept, which was her goal; she did that consistently for 14 years.

The large gathering enjoyed many choices of cakes provided by the church ladies, and then everyone took advantage of the opportunity to wish Ellen the best in her retirement from the church treasurer position and also best wishes as she

continues her ministry as treasurer of Maranatha Manor.

Thank you, Ellen, for a job well done for the glory of God and for your service to Maranatha Baptist Church.

*“Only fear the LORD, and serve him in truth with all your heart: for consider how great things he hath done for you.”
1 Samuel 12:24*



Celebrating With Cake & Ice Cream

