



Maranatha Village



Maranatha Village Trumpet
Winter 2023-2024
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Season's greetings

Brian Halstead

Season's greetings to our Maranatha Village residents. To our returning residents and winter guests, we would like to take this opportunity to welcome you back to Maranatha Village. Thank you for being part of this wonderful Christian community. We hope you had a blessed summer.

We pray that this Christmas you will be ever mindful of the "Reason for the Season" and share Christ with others. Think of the many ways you can tell His story. Hand out a tract, tell someone how you came to know Him personally, tell them what Jesus is doing in your life right now or ask if they have any specific prayer requests and if you could pray for them. Look for ways you can tell the "Good News" to everyone you meet. Don't forget to give Him the honor and glory as we celebrate and remember to worship the babe in the manger. John 1:29 is not the typical Christmas verse but it tells us who He is. "Behold the Lamb of God who taketh away the sins of the world." Where else would a lamb be born, but in a manger of hay? Amen.

*Merry Christmas
and Happy New Year
from the
Maranatha Village staff
and administration.*



Carrying the Torch: Reaching Out to Our Community

Donna Messenger

One of the blessings of living in the Maranatha community is having many neighbors who share the same commitment to reach the world for Christ. The Great Commission is clear and many of us have shared the gospel in other languages all over the world. Though most of our residents are retired, there is still a strong desire to be involved in Kingdom work. It is refreshing to land in Maranatha Village and find a commitment to sharing the gospel beyond our fences. Here are just a few of the ministries that are happening on a regular basis “out and about” in our greater Sebring and Highlands County community.

Children’s Bible Clubs

Linda Peacock came to Maranatha Village in 2016 and began to work with the children’s clubs at Memorial Elementary School. Soon they needed help at Avon Elementary and not long after she was asked to teach at both clubs. Just before Covid the decision was made to part from Child Evangelism Fellowship and work directly with the schools. The name was changed from Good News Club to Children’s Bible Club. The attendance doubled and Maranatha Baptist Church got behind the club with workers and financial help.

Each club involves twenty different meetings after school throughout the school year. That gives good opportunity to build some roots of Biblical truth. The children are in first through fifth grades and are divided into small groups with a leader for attendance and memory verse time. Then the students are brought together for the main Bible lesson and missionary story.



As both clubs have continued to grow in numbers, it was determined that audio and visual equipment would help the teaching process to accommodate such a large group. One Sunday this past August, Linda approached George Daugherty and said, “I need you!” The seasoned A/V specialist agreed to the new challenge and currently serves at both schools, managing the sound system and projector each week. “I’m thrilled to be a part of this ministry,” George says.

So far this year they have had twenty-one salvation decisions. Each student is given a Bible at the last club. Linda adds, “It’s a wonderful blessing to work with these clubbers!”

Highlands County Concert Band

In 1977, a retired band director named Fred Pearce started a band for the community. Most of the band members were also retirees looking for a way to be involved in the community and to brush off their instruments to play music they enjoy. The concert series each season has generally included two Christmas concerts, and then one concert in each month for January, February, and March. One of the Christmas concerts is usually held at the Genesis Center in Lake Placid. The rest of the concerts are held at the South Florida State College.

For over twenty years MV residents have been a part of the band. Muriel Casas (clarinet), Carol Ciocca (clarinet), and John Thorpe (baritone sax) are currently playing in the band. Don Messenger (my dad) played clarinet in the band for ten years. He served on the

board and helped with much of the event planning over the years. “It was such a great way to meet and befriend people in the community,” he recalls.

Craft Cottage

Have you ever wondered what the Craft Cottage is all about? Do you have questions about what they do or who can be involved? Do I have to have my own glue gun? Do I need a license to carry a glue gun? Or maybe an important question—how does anything they do relate to outreach?

The ladies who organize the supplies, projects, and activities of the Craft Cottage have a twofold desire for its use. They want any resident of MV to have a place to work on craft projects together with others for fellowship and sharing ideas. Classes are scheduled periodically to learn new skills and work on projects. You are welcome to work on your own projects, using any materials in the cottage.

The second goal that the Craft Cottage team works toward is to support several charities with handmade projects. Here are some of those organizations and projects:

Samaritans Purse, Operation Christmas Child — crocheted hats for kids. Fran Bowers and Judy Meyers organized the Shoebox Campaign and were thrilled to have 42 participants and 169 boxes.

Cards for Kindness, an organization that sends cards to children in the hospital, veterans in homes, and residents of nursing homes. Cards are collected after each card-making class and sent in bundles of ten to this organization.

Veteran's Home (Sue Ellen Barton in charge) — red, white, and blue afghans are crocheted or knitted and donated.

Pregnancy Center (Joy Tillotson in charge) baby hats are crocheted, knitted, or loomed and donated to the center.

Women's Prison

Ruth Watterson and Marlys Johnson recalled for us a recent encounter at the Women's Prison. We share it here:

Upon entering the county jail, we proceeded to the receptionist's desk. She registered us, handed us our badges, and called for a sheriff's deputy to escort us to our destination. After being scanned, we went through seven heavy metal doors that clanged behind us, we proceeded down a long hallway with highly polished floors. Once reaching the area where the women prisoners are detained, another door was unlocked to give us access to the women. It is a large open dormitory room with bunk beds. The matron announced that we were here for Bible study. We entered a glass-enclosed room where some ladies brought plastic chairs for those who chose to attend the study. There were only seven who came for the Bible study that Marlys Johnson was prepared to teach. After taking prayer requests from the ladies, we prayed for each lady and her request.



Asking the ladies to open their Bibles, Marlys taught from Psalm 51. Marlys emphasized that true repentance is necessary in the process of accepting

Christ and to maintain a close walk with the Lord. This passage teaches us that we cannot make excuses or blame anyone else for our actions. We need to be totally broken and humbled before our God, and when we are, He welcomes us in love and grace.

The invitation was extended after we closed with a song. One of the inmates walked over and told us that as a teenager she had accepted Christ as her Savior. She then showed us her wrist with the words “Psalm 51” tattooed inside a heart. She said she had done it to remind her of all that Christ had done for her and she wanted to always live for Him. Then, with tears in her eyes, she thanked Marlys for teaching this Psalm, to remind her of her promise to the Lord, and how she had rededicated her life that afternoon to the Lord.

An older lady came to Marlys and said she wanted to pray to receive Christ. She said she had done it before, but what she was sensing now was much different. She

prayed and asked for forgiveness and for the Lord to save her. Our prayer is that this was a Spirit-led decision. We invited her to join us at church when she is released.

Sebring Historical Society

When Elaine Haines moved to Maranatha Village two years ago, Gerry Carlson took her to one of the weekly Coffee and Donut gatherings at the Sebring Historical Society. He had wanted to see MV residents become more involved in the community. Elaine was immediately drawn to the opportunity to be a docent (tour guide) at the Weigle House Museum. "I've played his music for years," she said. Weigle's most well-known hymn is "No One Ever Cared for Me Like Jesus." Charles Weigle moved to Sebring in 1915, just three years after the founding of our city by George Sebring. Eventually, he built a house next door to Mr. Sebring who lived right on Lake Jackson. His home is now a museum that tells the story of the people, the history, and the culture of Sebring and Highlands County.

Only the Beginning

Clearly in these few pages we have only covered a few of the ongoing outreach ministries performed by residents of Maranatha Village. A good group of men work with the men's prisons, several ladies go to the Palms nursing home to do a monthly birthday party for their residents. Others are involved in preaching or providing music in various places around the area. Even our annual yard sale (coming up in February) is an incredible opportunity for outreach.

Our hope is that one of these ideas might spark your interest if you are looking for ways to be more involved in the community. We have a precious story to share — the message of the gospel of Jesus Christ.

*Let's carry the torch until
He returns!*



Maranatha Baptist Church Sebring, FL



Dr. Chuck Phelps
January 21-24



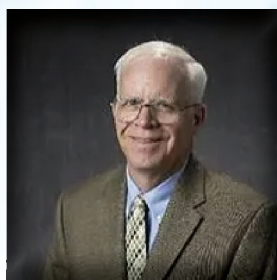
Dr. E. Allen Griffith
March 17-20



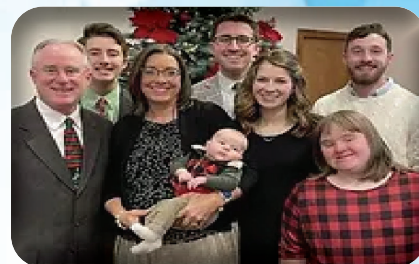
David "Dino Dave" Woetzel
February 18-21



Edward Klassen
January 26



Dr. David Ledgerwood
March 22



Felber Family
February 23

SPECIAL UPCOMING EVENTS



The Kramers
January 11, 2024 @ 7PM

**\$10 suggested
donation at the door**

Mark Trammell Quartet
February 22, 2024 @ 7 PM



Winter Concert Series at Southside Baptist Church



The Whisnants
February 8, 2024 @ 7 PM

379 S. Commerce Ave.
Sebring, FL



The Hyssongs
January 28, 2024 @ 6 PM



The Perry's
March 7, 2024 @ 7 PM



Welcome

New Village Residents



John Ciarrone **1 Gabriel**

For the time being, new resident John Ciarrone intends to be a snowbird in Maranatha Village from his lifelong state of Ohio. Born and raised in Lorain, Ohio, John has lived in Galion and Warsaw, Ohio. He currently has residence in Camden Township, Ohio, where he works part-time for the Township as their Fiscal Officer (Treasurer). John retired in 2015 after a full career as an educator. John is involved in local right-to-life activities as well as conservative political endeavors. He has been attending and serving at Camden Baptist Church for 32 years. "I have known Christ personally since I was twenty-six," he says. John's wife of twenty-four years passed away in 2009. Of his four adult children (ages 35, 33, 30, 28), three are married and he has three grandchildren. He enjoys staying active with weight training and pickleball. He loves movies and conversations.

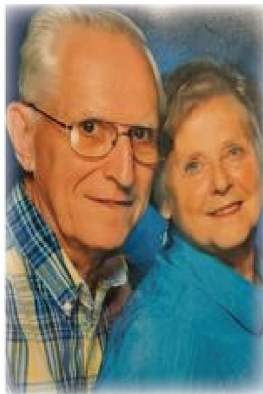


winter season. Because there were members from Maranatha Village and SIM Village at Southside, we were aware of both.

When Paul retired in 1999, he felt the Lord was encouraging him to donate his time and talents to volunteer work. At first it was at ABWE headquarters during construction of their training center in Harrisburg, PA. When winter came, he joined a cousin at SIM and we traveled with a camper. One spring we joined three other couples and traveled to New Mexico to work at a camp for Indian children under Baptist Mid-Missions. He traveled to Togo, Niger, Indonesia, and Ethiopia under ABWE, SIM, Friends in Action, and Source of Light. In 2007, we relocated to Mocksville, NC, and helped at Piedmont Baptist Bible College, but each winter we "felt the call" to come south to Sebring. In 2011, we decided to stay 6 months a year and establish a residence in Florida and joined membership at Southside Baptist Church. We continued, though, to travel back and forth to NC, still serving at SIM, Southside, and at Salem Baptist while in NC. In 2015, we decided to land in one location—Sebring, continuing at SIM and Southside. Last year the Lord made it clear we needed to make a change and cut back on our activities. We are thankful for Maranatha Village, where we can regroup and find out what He has ahead for us.

Paul and Eileen Churchill **12 Daniel**

We are originally from Northeast Pennsylvania. We became acquainted with Sebring because my parents, Kenneth & Lucile Brown, decided to winter here in the early 1970s. They were at tending Southside Baptist Church and encouraged us to come south whenever we had a vacation in the



Wayne and Carole **Vawter** **8 Mark**

At this point, Wayne and Carole Vawter plan to be in Sebring only for the winter. Watertown, Wisconsin, is their permanent residence up north.



Wayne and Carole started out in ministry serving with Gerry and Connie Carlson in St. Paul, MN. But most of their ministry years were spent in Wisconsin.

Wayne served as Mission Director for the Wisconsin Fellowship of Baptist Churches from 2001 through 2020. Carole served as adjunct faculty at Maranatha Baptist University in Watertown, WI, for several years, teaching music education classes and piano hymn improvisation. Following his retirement in 2020, Wayne has worked part-time with the facilities management team at Calvary Baptist Church in Watertown, WI, and Carole served part-time in the church office. Their ministries have included Faith Baptist Church (St. Paul, MN), First Baptist Church (Plainfield, IL), Bible Baptist Church (Portage, WI), Rock Lake Baptist Church (Lake Mills, WI), and the Wisconsin Fellowship of Baptist Churches.

The Vawters have four sons, one daughter, and twelve grandchildren. David and Melissa Vawter, Oxford, MI (2 daughters, Hallie married to Brandon, and Emma); Ben and Shannan Vawter, Perkasio, PA (2 sons, Nicholas and Logan); Paul and Pauletta Vawter, Elkhorn, WI (5 children: Michael, Grace, Lydia, Levi, Eva); Andrew and Amie Vawter, Lucas, TX (2 children, Azalea and Archer); and Paul and Abigail (Vawter) Harvey, Watertown, WI (1 son, Charlie).

Wayne and Carole look forward to spending time with life-long ministries co-laborers and making many new friends at Maranatha Village!

Karen Tackeberry ***12 Matthew***

I was introduced to Maranatha Village through Dwight and Cheryl Turbett. Their daughter Kari is married to my son Ted, Jr. My husband and I lived in Loves Park, IL (100 miles west of Chicago), all our married life. He passed away in 2019. My husband was business administrator and bus director of our church. I worked in the bookstore in our church's Christian school and was involved in AWANA for many years, most recently in Cubbies, which I really loved. We had four sons and one daughter, plus one son who claimed us as his Dad and Mom. I have ten grandchildren and four great-grandchildren. Maranatha Village will be my year-round home.



Beatrice Bubb ***12 Luke***

I am incredibly blessed. Born into a Christian family, along with six brothers, we were introduced to godliness from the beginning. By age nine, I was born into God's family, baptized, and joined a young but growing church where I grew in God's Word.



Soon after graduation, I married my first husband and for nineteen years we raised our five children. At the age of thirty-seven, my husband was suddenly killed in a motor vehicle accident. My life drastically changed at that moment. I was a stay-at-home mom and my children ranged in age from two to seventeen. My oldest was headed to college in the fall to Grand Rapids Baptist Bible College. I knew I had to return to college as well to pursue my nursing degree. That was the beginning of several years of college, starting out with night classes only. In three years my three oldest children and I all graduated and started our careers. We had our struggles as any family does, but we clung to our Savior and He was faithful to love and forgive our many mistakes. It could not have happened without His guidance and encouragement. So, for nineteen years we tested and proved God that had us securely in His hand. Our careers blossomed and even thrived.

Then, God sweetly brought Jack my way. A widower with three grown children, we were sure God had brought us together. We married and experienced God's direction for 27 years. We had a full, sweet life for those years, and then he was diagnosed with ALS. God was still good and Jack entered his heavenly home in 2021.

While I'm only here for three months a year, I'm still reminded of how incredibly blessed I am as God's child. I've memorized and claim Romans chapter 8. It's powerful!



We want to extend a very warm welcome to all of our
WINTER GUESTS!

We trust you all will enjoy your time with us and feel at home at Maranatha Village.



JESUS IS BORN

Instructions: How many different words can you form from the letters in the phrase above? Award yourself 8 points for each 8-letter word, 7 points for each 7-letter word, 6 points for each 6-letter word, 5 points for each 5-letter word, 4 points for each 4-letter word, and 3 points for each 3-letter word. See the score ranges below!

0-30
POINTS

SLEEPY SHEEP

31-60
POINTS

MODERATE MARY

61-90
POINTS

JUMPIN' JOSEPH

91-120
POINTS

SAVVY SHEPHERD

121+
POINTS

WONDROUS WISEMAN

| | |
|------------------------------------|------------|
| Deb Newsome (supported missionary) | 12/08/2022 |
| Bernice Dougherty | 12/20/2022 |
| Bob Goodrich (former resident) | 02/21/2023 |
| Lyle Mohr | 02/26/2023 |
| Ron Begue | 02/26/2023 |
| Vera Ergang (former resident) | 03/09/2023 |
| Gary Hanson | 03/29/2023 |
| Doris Halsted Lamoreaux | 04/03/2023 |
| Wayne Mattson | 04/14/2023 |
| Phyllis Lucas | 05/04/2023 |
| Ann Truax | 05/24/2023 |
| Donnabelle Harriman | 06/16/2023 |
| Frank Smith (former resident) | 07/19/2023 |
| Ed Oglesby | 07/29/2023 |
| Cleo Faircloth Mott | 09/01/2023 |
| Fran Weddle | 09/22/2023 |
| Roger Ergang (former resident) | 10/10/2023 |
| Jim Young | 10/17/2023 |
| Jean Armstrong (winter resident) | 10/24/2023 |

*Precious in
the sight of
the Lord
is the death
of His
saints.
(Psalm 116:15)*