

# Crystal Springs Retirement's Wealth of Activities

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## One Book. One Visit.

It is amazing how a book can bring people together. For their first organized book read, Crystal Springs selected *Growing up in Mama's Club* by Richard E. Kelly, which focuses on the Jehovah's Witness faith from the perspective of a young boy. What made this choice quite special was that the author, a native to Grand Rapids, agreed to visit after the readings for discussion and questions.

Kelly's animated visit gave community members the opportunity to learn more about the Jehovah Witness religion. He reminded them that "a full life is created not by what happens to us, but by how we make sense of events over which we had no control." The community members embraced this visit and look forward to another literary journey soon.

### **The 100-Foot Fundraiser!**

Grab a spoon! The second week in July sports one of Crystal Springs' most popular summer events - the 100-Foot Strawberry Shortcake! This annual fundraiser supports Senior Sing A-Long, a Grand Rapids charity organization. Giving back to them is the best reason for this event, but then again, who doesn't enjoy 100 feet of strawberry shortcake?

The party centers on a construction theme, which represents constructing the dessert itself, as well as funds for the cause. Decorated with yellow-and-black caution tape, plastic hard-hats and construction cones, the real centerpiece is the 100-foot trough holding more strawberry shortcake than Crystal Springs can eat.

Entertainment, sponsored by Senior Sing A-Long, is the highlight of the evening. The 2008 fare consisted of Skip Weymouth's "best-of-the-best" keyboard melodies and the snappy tap and jazz dancing of the Senior Steppers in their colorful costumes.

Folks were encouraged to donate the amount they felt their delectable dessert was worth - and donate they did! Crystal Springs was thrilled to hand Senior Sing A-Long more than \$400 to help their mission to provide top-quality entertainment to countless assisted livings, nursing homes and veterans facilities in the Grand Rapids area.

### **A Community Circle**

An amazing circle of service has formed at Crystal Springs Retirement that utilizes the Sunday newspaper and the popular online shopping site, Craigslist. It all started when a church decided to shop for the needy using coupons from newspapers, and posted a request for the coupons on Craigslist.com. When Crystal Springs answered this request, the circle was started.

Always looking for meaningful projects for our memory loss neighborhood, this was a perfect match. Each week, community members would sort out coupon sections from the newspaper, and then spend about an hour cutting them out.

Recycling is also a component. A member from the church arrives weekly to pick up the coupons, and then takes the newspaper scraps down the street to Legacy Christian School, who fundraise by recycling paper.



This is by no happenstance, as the middle school visits Crystal Springs twice a month with Mrs. Joan Stobb and their teens to share a craft and musical activities.

This "pay it forward" circle of service started with a leftover newspaper from the hands of our elderly. It is accreditation to the senior population's ongoing spirit of using materials to their fullest.

### **Arabic World A-Z**

How fascinating would it be to have the other side of the world brought right into your own dining room? Ruth Voetberg, local volunteer and daughter of Crystal Manor's Christina Voetberg, did exactly that. After spending much time as a devoted teacher in other countries, Ruth gathered her Arabic collection and gave Crystal Springs a grand presentation.

Through her display of artifacts, craftsmanship and lifestyle, Ruth bridged understanding of the Middle East. With her books, incense and native handwork, nearly 50 people were entertained and educated.

### **What's more fun than a TIKI BAR?**

Nothing, according to Lou Andriotti, CEO of LifeHOUSE retirement properties. All 13 Michigan and Illinois properties were challenged to build their own TIKI BAR within a week using donated items and materials found on their campuses. They were asked to get community members, staff and family involved in charting the progress with pictures. The week culminated with

each property throwing a party show-casing their new TIKI BAR, complete with drink menus.

The new gathering spot, referred to as "Flip Flops," also gave our specialized memory neighborhood a new way to visit. A new game, TIKI TALK, was formed. Cards with large print topics relating to tropical settings were made, and the most outspoken community member would take a card first. They would read the word aloud and it didn't take long until persons were relating to one another through memories of family vacations, fishing or strolling Lake Michigan beaches.

Each locale was judged by corporate staff and our TIKI BAR, "Flip Flops" was given the highest award - FIVE COCONUTS - affording the Crystal Springs Life Enrichment Department a check for \$300. The best part of this project was the buzz that bubbled forth at our dining room tables, the peering out windows and the anticipation of more good things to come from anything that bears the brand name LifeHOUSE.

