Special care for special people

By Jo McCormick
Park Ridge Resident

It was quite consuming with the family we had back there in about 1975-76, a family of seven, with parents included, to be occupied with full-time employment away from the home site. The older kids were at this time in their educational experience where sports were likely to be important to them.

Over and above all the school activities there was still all the washing, cooking, cleaning and raising of a family and marriage activities. After a while I began to have thoughts that maybe working full-time away from home may not be doable.

This was not a spur of the moment decision as I really loved my job, but also my family. As a family we decided I should stay home!

Nebraska had an Adult Foster Care program available. I compiled information about it–discussed it with the family–and since I had become quite fond of working with the elderly with needs it seemed a no-brainer. We had just the right place for Adult Foster Care apartments and I could work at “home” so to speak. Terrific!!

We lived in the old hotel building in Madrid which was owned at that time by my husband’s parents. We occupied the east end of the large two-story building that already had both a small and a larger apartment on the ground floor to the west end of the building.

My husband and I lived in the far west apartment when we were first married in 1959. It was at that time owned by his uncle Lawrence.

My husband, Jerry, was the ultimate fixer-upper (the kids and I lived much of our lives in the throes of remodeling) so he reworked the “western” spaces of the Village Inn to provide a single occupancy apartment and one that could accommodate three people. It was not a co-ed arrangement–so it became a one-man place–next door to a three-woman abode.

I made reference to our kids living with remodeling much of their lives—they also got recruited into it on many occasions and in many capacities.

As I am writing this I just have to say it breaks my heart to see the inn today in its degree of degradation. Believe me, it did have its glory days when we were very proud to live there.

I would prefer to see it demolished than to be as it is now. Unfortunately, the inn would not be the only property in Madrid in that category.

Ironically, at the time we became involved in Adult Foster Care, the state was rethinking their placement criteria for nursing home (LTC) residents, and one of the ladies I had grown quite fond of at Golden Ours was deemed by the state to no longer be in need of a LTC facility. WOW! This was the first time, one of many to come (and they are still coming) that I began to question the government way of doing things.

Well, anyway, Mabel came to Madrid to Adult Foster Care, this following many years of living in the nursing home. We were tickled pink to have her as part of our family. All of our clients

became part of our family.

There was a short period of time of tension between us and her family. They assumed, quite erroneously, that I had arranged this whole change of residence for Mabel. Don't we wish we could control the government to act as we wish them to! The air soon cleared between us and we were all only interested in Mabel's well-being.

So you see, I was still actually kind of involved in LTC, but had not yet begun my 29 contiguous year stint at Golden Ours as I was on one of many of my deviations to find my niche.

My next few columns will be devoted to the wonderful happenings and relationships formed at the Madrid Adult Foster Care facility.

Deo volente, I will be back with you next month.