

Rockin' in the rest home

By Jo McCormick

Park Ridge resident

As I was sorting through some “stuff” of mine I discovered notes for a manuscript I had planned to use to end my “Golden Ours” activity story. So, a brief deviation from my last two columns—and back to G.O.C.H.—the 1990s. Keep in mind I can blame my, at times, spasmodic mind control on aging. The writings will be like briefs of actual events that were crowd-pleasers.

Between 1990 and 1994 many concerts, talent shows and skits were presented by the Golden Ours choir group under the direction of Shirley Knudsen.

Many more than these briefs were given, but column space would not accommodate them; however, be assured they were the highlight of many a resident. Music, fun, and fellowship makes all ages feel good.

Nov. 14, 1990: “Roaring 20s” concerts in chapel at GOCH, Shirley Knudsen directing, Sara Regier at the piano, Jo as A.D. Full house of spectators. Top hats, skimmers and tiaras were costuming. Volunteers moved residents, held music, turned pages as needed.

Smiles all around by residents and audience shown on VCR tape spent their last years at GOCH as residents. Two staff members performed, Kathy Ogg and Katy Carlson. Introducing herself Katy announced she had worked at GOCH for 1,000 years. She always had a joke ready.

Twenty-two years later Katy was admitted to GOCH as a terminal resident and spent the remainder of her “earth time” there.

Many residents were seated with their families in the audience. Lorene, a resident, and her husband Frank Schrimsher sang a duet, “O You Beautiful Doll.” Frank’s arms were around and embracing Lorene. Lorene in the past had been a music and voice instructor.

Doris, a resident, and her husband, Don Potts danced the Charleston.

Roy Rousey and his sister, Lavonne Mrasek performed a hilarious rendition of “Barney Google.” Lavonne whistled, dressed as a voluptuous, over-dressed “wife.” Roy had a multi-colored wig on with bobbing eyeball glasses. The eyes kept time to the music as he vigorously nodded his head—much laughter and applause from spectators.

Choir sang, “Sentimental Journey,” “Baby Face,” “Million Dollar Baby,” and “Gimme A Little Kiss.” Several residents were drawn out of their rooms by the sound of revelry and old-time favorite tunes.

Tom Pratt and Jean Onken, both residents, both in wheelchairs, did a wonderful, playful enactment of “Ma, He’s Makin’ Eyes at Me.”

Grace Peak, volunteer, held Jean’s music and also assumed Jean’s mother character who tried to fend off Tom’s advances. The audience called for an encore.

“Yes Sir, That’s My Baby,” a piano interlude by Sarah at the piano and all the people in the

chapel ROCKIN'.

The choir concluded the program with "There'll be a Hot Time in the Old Time Tonight" with roaring participation by all present.

Cookies and coffee for all followed in the GOCH dining room.

Next month—Dec. 15, 1990—"When the Chimes Rang."

See you then if it is to be.

Jo