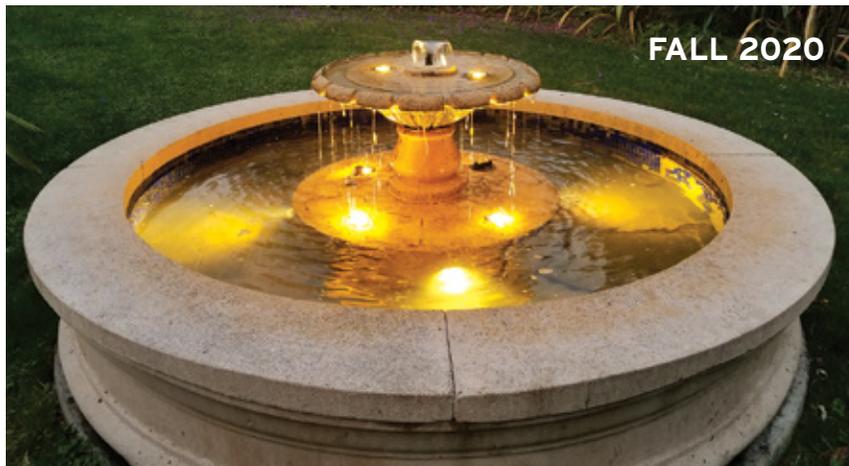


ARDEN WOOD Heart to Heart

SHARING PROGRESS WITH OUR FRIENDS

Right: The Isabel Garden fountain shines at nightfall.



The ripple effects of healing

John W. Mitchell, Executive Director/CEO

Not a day goes by without quick and whole healing at Arden Wood. It's the result of an organization-wide choice to pray for and expect "quick and whole healing" and to look for it and acknowledge it wherever and however it appears. "Love reflected in love" is the essence of Arden Wood's mission through its service to an ever-widening community of Christian Science healers.

Arden Wood has been affectionately called "a healing house," "a haven from the world," a place devoted to "ageless living" where there's "room to bloom." These phrases are accurate and alive. They are felt in the moment, and the feeling lasts! In this issue, we are delighted to share encouraging accounts of spiritual growing and healing written by Arden Wood friends near and far. As the memories and stories demonstrate, Arden Wood has inspired marriages, confidence in new career endeavors, progressive steps for women, lasting friendships, informational webinars, inspiring events...and delicious food! So much good ripples out into the world from Arden Wood's core activity of Christian Science nursing.

Through the years, the idea of Arden Wood continues to unfold to meet ever-changing human needs. Looking back on this year of tremendous disruption, Arden Wood remains a steady "beam of living Love" (*Christian Science Hymnal*, 23). 2020 has indeed been a year of clarifying our vision of what God sees—"man, pure and upright, whole and free" (*Hymnal*, 12) and of widening our outreach and prayers for the world.

2020 has inspired sweet moments of our expanding sense of unity:

- Weekly testimony meetings in our chapel with in-person social distancing and broadcasting to individual rooms.
- Our temporary "no visitors" policy has led to wonderful family moments over FaceTime, Zoom, and home videos.
- Care packages, cards, flowers, and favorite food items arrive daily in the mail or are hand-delivered to our front door.
- Family members have enjoyed precious moments together by talking on the phone while standing on opposite sides of our front door.

Continued on page 8

TLC AND SO MUCH MORE!

By Marilyn Green

I've been a committed Christian Scientist since 1970, and I'm 96 now! I'm also a dog and horse person. Over the summer, while walking my very active golden retriever, I suddenly found myself flat on my face in the street. I kept trying to get up, but I couldn't stand. So, I crawled to the curb and waited for someone to come by. And I held onto my dog's leash because I had learned early in life never to let the reins out of your hands! (It's such a good metaphor, isn't it?) Well, this wasn't a horse, but I wasn't about to let that leash go. So, there I was, praying by the side of the road.

Finally, two neighbors carried me home on a chair. I called Arden Wood to see about their Visiting Christian Science Nursing Service. Aicha Langel came the next day, and I thought I would be fine on my own at home. The idea of a broken bone never ever occurred to me. In all my active life, I'd never had a broken bone. Yet, there it was on the X-ray several days later. I called Aicha to explore the possibility of going to Arden Wood where I could receive more support. Because I was completely sheltering-in-place, without having visitors or going out,

Continued on page 4



INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

Visitors share their favorite memories of Arden Wood

CS NURSING

"YOU'VE GOT A FRIEND"*

By Aicha Langel, Director,
Visiting Christian Science
Nursing Service (VCSNS)

Arden Wood's VCSNS is happy to hear from anyone with a care need! New inquiries are carefully evaluated before we come to your home. And when we cannot visit, we are making phone calls to current and former patients, church members, and Christian Science practitioners. We also read the Bible Lesson with patients over the phone and via FaceTime. And often we can provide helpful suggestions to address a caller's physical need, to uplift thought, and to simply be a welcome voice of friendship. Frequently, we are the only human contact the patient has had from the outside and quite often the only one who shares their faith. The VCSNS is always ready and willing to offer practical suggestions and a fresh, inspiring perspective.

Please call any time! (415) 740-0460

* Song, "You've Got a Friend,"
James Taylor, 1971



Director of VCSNS Aicha Langel is happy to respond to your call.

An early start to Christmas!



The residents joined John Mitchell and Diane Speer for a video greeting to close our prerecorded "Christmas Celebration," which aired on Sunday, December 6th. Although it was early November when the video was taken, everyone dressed in their holiday finest for the occasion! You can watch a replay on our website: ardenwood.org. (Why no masks or distancing? Residents live as one big family in their Arden Wood home.)



A favorite Arden Wood memory

By Tracy Cheney

When I was a very young Christian Science nurse, it was so exciting to head to Arden Wood with two of my work colleagues from our rural location. We were to spend three glorious months in San Francisco for our Practical Nurses training course. Our Head of Nurses (at another Christian Science care facility) had been a former army nurse, and she was very particular about how we dressed. It didn't matter that we were in the throes of the women's lib movement when women were demanding to wear pants in all workplaces. She required us to wear formal white dresses, white stockings, and white shoes.

So, walking onto the Christian Science nursing floors and seeing Christian Science nurses wearing pants at the BA (as we called Arden Wood in those days) and even the beloved instructor, Martha Miller, wearing white pants(!)—it was just

too much for us. We ran to the nearest uniform store to buy white pants for ourselves. I felt rather giddy indulging in my "protest of the times" at Arden Wood.

I had no idea how short-lived our "liberation" would be! Unbeknownst to us, our own Head of Nurses was tapped to come to the BA to administer the final test to the Christian Science nurses in the third-year program. One morning, I was happily sauntering down the Arden Wood corridor in my white uniform PANTS when, much to my chagrin, there she was, striding toward me from the opposite end! My eyes nearly popped out of my head—I was caught mid-floor at the BA!

Suffice it to say, it was instantly clear there was not going to be a uniform change when we got back to our rural training facility. Still, I loved wearing my symbol of defiance at Arden Wood while I could! 🌿



A true calling: to serve the Cause

By Phillip L. Hewitt, Arden Wood Christian Science Nurse 1980-1986

I had the great joy to be a part of Arden Wood and its healing mission as a Christian Science nurse in the 1980s. I will always be grateful for my time there and for all the wonderful and loving individuals who crossed my path. I have many dear memories.

I arrived at Arden Wood in February of 1980 as a young Christian Science nursing student. I recall my first impression as I drove up that winding driveway. I had a great sense that this was truly more than a material structure that resembled a French chateau. Within those imposing walls were men and women who were dedicated to the Cause of Christian Science.

I would have the joy and privilege of spending the next three months attending this wonderful school and being a part of “one stupendous whole” (Mary Baker Eddy, *Miscellany*, 165:17). I would meet others from all over the globe who were on the same spiritual path as I was—to care for and support those individuals who were relying on Truth as the healing and saving power. We were there to support the patients and the work of dedicated Christian Science practitioners, who were faithful witnesses to divine Love in action. I truly felt I was in the atmosphere of Love divine.

In those days as today, we were taught and lovingly guided by very grounded and seasoned Christian Science nurses who had dedicated their lives to serving others unselfishly. I was blessed to know these Christian Science nurses and felt nurtured and loved by them.

In my second year of training, we had a class on bandaging. They were made of a gauze material, and there was a correct way to unroll them depending on the area that needed bandaging. We were instructed as to the real reason we were bandaging—to give temporary aid while the patient was making their demonstration.

One day, we were told by our instructor that the next day there would be a test. I became fearful and unsure that I would be able to demonstrate what she had been teaching us. As we filed out of the classroom, I stopped and said to her, “I can’t get this. It seems too difficult.” My instructor looked me squarely in the eye and said, “Mr. Hewitt, you don’t have to get anything.” At that moment, the mesmerism was broken! I returned to my quarters to begin my evening study and homework; but the first thing I did was open our textbook, *Science and Health with Key to The Scriptures*, by Mary Baker Eddy, to this statement on page 517: “Man is not made to till the soil, His birthright is dominion, not subjection” (517:31-1). That was exactly the angel message I needed. I went to class the next morning and passed the bandaging test!

I will forever cherish my time at dear Arden Wood and keep it in my heart and prayers.

How blessed the world is for such a place as Arden Wood and for all those who are continuing to dedicate their lives to serving this Cause. 

I HAD A GREAT SENSE THAT THIS WAS TRULY MORE THAN A MATERIAL STRUCTURE THAT RESEMBLED A FRENCH CHATEAU. WITHIN THOSE IMPOSING WALLS WERE MEN AND WOMEN WHO WERE DEDICATED TO THE CAUSE OF CHRISTIAN SCIENCE.

CS NURSING

TESTIMONIAL

Anonymous

These past several months have truly encouraged me to bear witness to Mary Baker Eddy’s firm statement that “loss is gain” (*Hymnal*, 207).

My mom has been a resident of Sheltered Care for the past couple of years, and I have always been able to visit regularly. Since March, however, that has not been possible, and it has been important to gain a deeper, more spiritual understanding of “presence” with Mom and to eliminate any feeling of separation. On a practical level, Mom hears from at least one of her three daughters every day by phone, and we then report to each other.

During the summer, Mom began to ask, “When will I see you?” From a human standpoint, there is no comfort in explaining the reasons why in-person visits aren’t possible at this time.

Consciously I affirmed that we both are inseparable from the Father, one with Him, safe and happy together in the “great heart of Love” (*S&H* 448:4). Is this routine? No, this is dynamic, ever-expanding. So, I expected there would be a new, creative, and practical expression of this unbreakable connection.

One day while we were talking on the phone, I told her she was the best mom in the world. Her reply, “I used to be...,” was not what I expected to hear! How can you be good, and then not good? So, I decided to send her “video messages.” I titled my videos, “Best Mom Ever!,” and each one is a close-up of me recounting a healing I experienced while growing up, supported by my mom’s specific

Continued on page 6

RESIDENTIAL

TLC AND SO MUCH MORE!

Continued from page 1

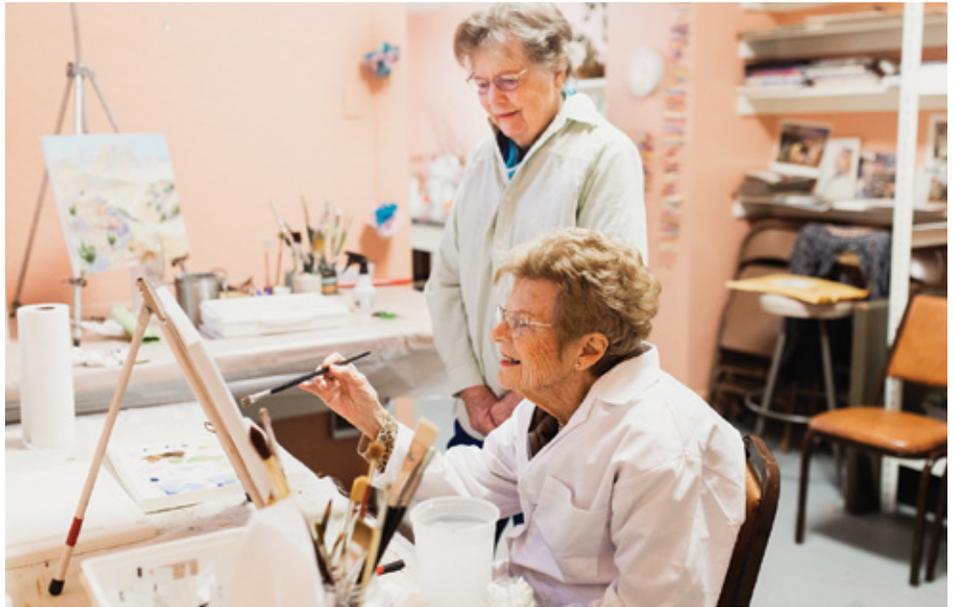
Arden Wood agreed to take me.

The first night, what struck me so profoundly was the beauty that greeted me when I entered my room, the order, the things we work to see in Christian Science, the atmosphere, the whole environment. It was astonishing and so welcoming. On the second night, as I lay in bed, I said, "Father, you knew my need before I did. Thank you!" I was overwhelmed by a feeling of being loved and cared for. All the other responsibilities in my life were gone. There I was! The people, the Christian Science nurses, the beauty, the whole thing was simply wonderful.

Within just a few days I was walking with a walker, and by the end of one week, I thought I could go home. But I would instantly be returning to all my household responsibilities for myself and my son, whereas staying right where I was would "seal the deal" on this healing. I stayed. And it was simply wonderful.

I want to sing from the rooftops that every Christian Scientist must take a couple of days to rest and study at Arden Wood. Everything about it is first class. Put it on your calendar! Do it often! Christian Scientists must know what a beautiful experience it is!

I went home after 14 days. And, yes—I've had a complete healing. 🌿



Residents Betty Van Dusen (standing) and Judy Reigle paint nearly every day in the Art Studio.

Healing in all facets of life

By Diane Speer, Director of Residential Programs

I came across a photo today of a 2015 "Crumbs of Comfort" concert held in the Isabel Garden parking lot. ("Crumbs of Comfort" is a band that three Arden Wood staff members formed, and they often played for in-house events.) The photo was taken the day I came to interview for a staff position at Arden Wood. I knew little about Arden Wood then, but I felt it was a match made in heaven, and the past five years since then have borne that out.

I love Arden Wood's mission and purpose. I love the amazing individuals who have worked to make sure Arden Wood fulfills its mission and purpose to the highest degree. And I love the individuals Arden Wood has served through its services, and who, in turn,

have contributed so much good to Arden Wood!

I am led to ask: What will Arden Wood look like when your children or grandchildren are seeking a fuller, truer sense of life, a more spiritual understanding of God's creation? Will Arden Wood meet their needs as it has met the needs of generations thus far? One ever-present quality expressed here is already paving the way: Arden Wood is constantly growing and bearing healing fruit.

Thanks to the prayerful support of Christian Scientists over many years, Arden Wood is contributing to the spiritual progress of the world. Those who have made Arden Wood their home have brought to Arden Wood a deep love of Christian Science. Arden Wood has provided a perfect atmosphere for ceaseless prayer and for an ever-deepening understanding of God's spiritual creation. With these comes a realization of the vast opportunities one has to serve the Cause of Christian Science and to support healing in all facets of life—well beyond physical healing.

Continued on page 6

If you would like to know more about our Residential programs, please call: (415) 379-2320 or email: dspeer@ardenwood.org



Back to my singing roots

By Lorena Peril

My father described Arden Wood as a wonderful, beautiful place. So, after graduating from high school in 1994, I started working there fulltime on the housekeeping staff. A year later, my mother joined me. Two of my aunts joined the staff after I left, and Mom stayed until she retired—just two years ago.

In my first two weeks at Arden Wood, I met Phil Serrano, a maintenance technician. He heard me singing “I work hard for the money!” while I was cleaning a bathtub. He said, “You’ve got a great voice. I play guitar. We should jam sometime.” We started rehearsing every day on my lunch break in an empty wing on the 4th floor.

My entire musical education took place at Arden Wood. I knew nothing about music or who the famous or popular singers were, like Mariah Carey or Aretha Franklin or Barbra Streisand. I just sang whatever I heard and could memorize by ear. Phil introduced me to all the singers and songs that were popular and classic. Each week, he would create a new CD of songs, and I would learn them. I can do mariachi, opera, rock ‘n roll, pop, Broadway, and I sing in three languages. Phil helped me to be totally versatile, which has been a real blessing in my career.

Chester Bean was my other Arden Wood teacher (Arden Wood’s custodian for 30+ years!). He helped me learn how to tell a story through musical theater. I would tell him I’m going to sing this song, like “Someone to Watch Over Me,” and he would coach me in how to perform on the chapel platform, not just to sing standing still. He helped me tell the song’s story. At the same time, my dad bought me a karaoke machine, which helped a lot.

Phil decided to call us the “Perilous Partners,” and we started performing at festivals around the Bay Area. We also performed at Arden Wood a lot.

Four years later, I left Arden Wood to be an office assistant in the financial district.



Lorena Peril sang to Arden Wood (and stole our hearts!) in our parking lot.

I was happy with my new life, so when my parents invited me on a cruise, I was very reluctant to go. Mom and Dad insisted I perform in the ship’s talent show. I had stage fright back then, but I did it. I sang “Natural Woman” by Aretha Franklin. When I hit the high notes, people were standing up and cheering so loudly. *Calm down, people!* But they were calling out to me to sing more. Something was happening. It wasn’t about the praise; it was the surge of confidence in my singing. *I think I have it!* It changed my life.

On the last day of the cruise, the cruise director tapped me on the shoulder and said, “I’m going to give you some info where you can send the talent show footage. Use my name.” I did. And I heard nothing for six months. Then one day I answered my phone, and a voice said, “This is Carnival Cruise Lines.”

I was invited for an audition in Los Angeles. I’d never been to one! In the bathroom before my turn, I said my prayers. “God, I just want to do well.” I carried a clear plastic bag of CDs with me—karaoke in every style—and asked the panel of judges what they would like to hear. “Whitney Houston.” They asked me to sing other genres. They applauded and became more and more excited. Finally,

Continued on page 7

RESIDENTIAL

FRESH AND FLAVORFUL!

We are thoroughly delighted to introduce you to our new food service provider, the Epicurean Group. Based in Los Altos, California, our new team of culinarians uses fresh, local ingredients to prepare customized food that satisfies our preferences. Epicurean’s service standards align beautifully with the Arden Wood standard of quality and grace and contribute greatly to the healing atmosphere here.

Epicurean Group follows environmentally and socially responsible practices. Everything they serve is made from scratch. Their artisan approach supports local, organic farms and ranches and the sustainable seafood model of the Monterey Bay Aquarium. They received the California Governor’s GEELA award for conserving resources and protecting the environment with their “Waste Not” program.

We can’t wait to be able to invite you to join us for breakfast, lunch, or dinner. You’ll enjoy fresh food made from wholesome ingredients, which, we can assure you, results in a delicious meal! Best of all, the Epicurean Group has won the hearts (and palates!) of our residents! 🌿



TESTIMONIAL

Continued from page 3

prayers and guidance. The Best Mom Ever, my mom, was my "prayer partner."

The emailed videos fit into the Christian Science nurses' busy schedule and can be played a few times for Mom. Then the Christian Science nurses email me exactly what Mom says and how touched she is. The other day she said, "I love the message! You are my shining star!" In that MOMENT, we are sharing our happiness and gratitude, so we ARE together. Bearing witness to our inseparable connection, ever-expanding in the great heart of Love, is definitely a Big Gain. 🌿



We will bid **Diane Speer** (pictured above) a warm farewell at the end of March 2021. If you or someone you know might be interested in the *Director of Residential Programs* position, please visit our website for details and an application: ardenwood.org



What's in a name? Pure joy!

A favorite Arden Wood memory by Bill Cheney, Los Angeles

In the summer of 1970, after graduating from UC Davis, I was hired by the BA (Christian Science Benevolent Association on Pacific Coast, as Arden Wood was named at the time) as its first male Christian Science nurse's aide. I did some housekeeping chores, but I also was able to work directly with residents in nursing care. I loved every aspect of my job, and I came away with one especially treasured memory.

One of the residents was so proud of her name, Mrs. Hammgren. She was very friendly and sociable, full of cheer and good humor. To assist us in remembering her name, she'd query us as follows: "You may have seen a horsefly and a butterfly, but have you ever seen a hammer grin?" Visiting her room was always a joy.

One day, I went to a hardware store

along West Portal Avenue and purchased a small hammer. I found colorful feathers and paints at a craft store. I decorated the hammer, and the next time I visited her room, I hid the smiling hammer behind my back, waiting for the inevitable question, "Have you ever seen a hammer grin?" I slowly pulled the hammer from behind my back and presented it to her without a word. She seemed puzzled for a moment, and then she burst into delightful laughter. She absolutely loved her new prop to go along with her gentle query to every visitor, and she displayed her hammer with pride and joy thereafter.

When I left for graduate school at the end of August, I packed this special memory with me, and it has brought smiles to many whenever I have shared it through the years. 🌿

Healing in all facets of life

Continued from page 4

It may be finding a new sense of purpose, cultivating fresh interests, finding close friendships, and seeing more opportunities to help one's neighbor. This has been a consistent description of Arden Wood's contribution to the Christian Science community and the world. I hear it reflected in comments from residents expressing so much gratitude for Arden Wood.

The bulletin board in our residential media room is crowned with the words: *Love God. Love thy neighbor as thyself.* They motivate one to volunteer in ways that bless others. They inspire one to spend additional time in prayer and study. They open avenues to express this love to one another.

Holding weekly Wednesday testimony meetings has prompted many to serve as Reader (some for the first time). The current art show that adorns the

walls of the Gallery Café is the work of new resident Betty Van Dusen, who has captured the beauty of the southwest in every stroke of the brush. Several of her paintings were painted right here in our art studio where Betty and another resident artist, Judy Reigle, have spent time almost every day this year. A different kind of art is being showcased in our Main Dining Room by Epicurean chef, Sven, who shares his cooking style in wonderful live demonstrations. Residents have enjoyed his expert knowledge, his flair and showmanship, and the delicious samples he offers to taste.

Arden Wood is an idea that is constantly revealing new facets. Inspired ideas arise and fresh activities emerge. Will Arden Wood meet the needs of future generations as it has thus far? Yes, because progress is taking place continually with every new day! 🌿

Back to my singing roots

Continued from page 5

they asked, "Opera?" I gave it!

And then I joined the crew of "Carnival Paradise." I had told Phil Serrano I was going to audition. He said, "I'm so proud of you...They're going to keep you!" And they did. Over the next four years, I opened bigger ships and newer ships around the world.

I loved the ships, but when a friend called one day and said, "Come to Vegas. We're looking for a singer for our band," I took some vacation time, flew in, sang "Respect" by Aretha Franklin, and got the job—all in one day! It felt the same way it had in the cruise talent show.

I was late for my very first audition for a *real* Vegas production about a rock female band, called Sunset Strip. But when I sang "Lady Marmalade," by Christina Aguilera, an Emmy Award-winning choreographer who was listening gave three snaps in the air. I discovered that meant, "Yes!"

I performed in that show for six incredible years—until Barry Manilow saw us one night. He wanted us for his opening act, so we joined his 2007 "Music and Passion" tour. Another amazing experience! When we returned to Las Vegas, we changed the name of the 2008 show to "Suncity Heat" and went back on stage. And then the 2008 recession hit, and the show closed.

But, amazingly, in just two weeks, I was hired for another show, called "Fantasy."

The only singer in the show was leaving after 10 years, and I called at exactly the right time. "Fantasy" has been awarded the "Best of Las Vegas" show! And I've been nominated twice for the "Best Resident Headliner," including this year, 2020. But I'm a local celebrity, and I'm up against Lady Gaga and Cher, so I don't ever win!

I left "Fantasy" in 2013—a decision you don't make. But I did. I was given the lead role in "Sandy," a 2013 version of "Grease." And I got to perform with my husband, Ray, on a world tour for three years. I couldn't say no.

Shortly after we got back to Las Vegas, "Fantasy" needed a singer again, and I got my job back...until the pandemic closed everything down last March.

In a blink, I went from singing to a crowd of 400 to crooning to my husband. I started to sing for birthday parties, in courtyards at senior centers, even below someone's balcony for their birthday. And then Ray said, "Let's take you on the road." That's when I reached out to Arden Wood. I wanted to come back to my singing roots! Right in the middle of my outside concert for the residents and staff, who walks into view but Chester. I cried! That was the full circle.

Thank you, Phil and Chester and Arden Wood! 🌿



Relationships bloom

By Philip A. Lineer

I was the evening Houseman (Call Watch) at Arden Wood in 1980-81 and met my wife, Janet Lundberg, when she moved from Michigan to join Arden Wood's Christian Science nurses training program. My brother, David, was also employed in housekeeping, and my mother spent a few months receiving care on the Christian Science nursing floor. Even my father

remembered Arden Wood as a boy back in the 1930s: his best friend grew up a couple blocks north on 16th Avenue.

I am so grateful for the continued important work Arden Wood is doing and for everything it has done for my family. As I'm able, I'm happy to support Arden Wood. Please keep up your good work.

I look forward to visiting again! 🌿

SAVE THE DATES

Upcoming Spring Events

**Long Term Care
Webinar**
January 21

**Care Workshop
Webinar**
Date TBD

**Arden Wood
Annual Meeting**
May 2
Madelon Maupin, Speaker

Make sure we have your
email address! Send it
to info@ardenwood.org



ARDEN WOOD

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WEBSITE

ANNOUNCEMENT

We've refreshed our website with new features, colors, and pictures. And it's easier to find what you're looking for. Visit soon and come often!

ardenwood.org

"Your website is a treasure trove of wonderful healers in Christian Science. I have been sitting here listening to all these tremendous speakers since 5 o'clock. It is now 9 PM. Thank you!"

Georgia Ellen Brown

Please sign up to be on our email list. It's the most effective way to keep you informed. We promise not to flood your inbox! Email us at info@ardenwood.org

OUR PRAYER THIS CHRISTMAS SEASON IS FOR THE POWER AND PRESENCE OF THE CHRIST, TRUTH, TO BE FELT MORE DEEPLY AND TO BE VISIBLE MORE ABUNDANTLY—FOR ALL MANKIND!

A merry matching challenge

We're happy to share that several generous donors have made a year-end matching challenge possible! For the entire month of December, all donations to the General Fund will be **MATCHED** in full up to \$100,000.



Over the summer, we exceeded our matching challenge of \$100,000 to the extent that we almost quadrupled the goal. ALL THANKS

to your generous support!

As a nonprofit, donations to Arden Wood cover 35% of our operating budget. We depend on year-end gifts, planned giving, monthly giving and matching challenges like this one to meet our operating needs.

Please consider giving this month (December 1–31), and your gift will have **DOUBLE** the positive and inspiring impact! 🌿

The ripple effects of healing

Continued from page 1

In one instance, the son drove up to our doors in his pickup truck, rolled down his window, and talked to his mom who sat in a comfortable chair we had placed in the open doorway. The picture truly painted a thousand words.

Another stellar example is the beautiful transition from our in-house food service staff to an external food service vendor, Epicurean Group. We were led to make this change three times and then to stop before it happened. Quite suddenly, it

was clear that "now is the time," and we moved forward. The graceful transition has been a shining light to all of us—and tasty! We can hardly wait until we can welcome family and friends for a meal.

Prayer underpins all the activities and services at Arden Wood. Our prayer this Christmas season is for the power and presence of the Christ, Truth, to be felt more deeply and to be visible more abundantly—for all mankind! **We wish you a happy Christmas.** 🌿

JOIN THE HIGGINS SOCIETY

It includes donors who pledge a gift of \$1000 or more for three consecutive years. New members are always welcome!

BECOME A SUSTAINING DONOR

Monthly donations make a world of difference! They help us meet ongoing expenses.

If interested, please contact John Mitchell: jmitchell@ardenwood.org or (415) 379-2200. Thank you!