

# Life LifeTimes

## WOODBROOK

---

Spring/Summer 2018 Vol. 23, No. 1 *Where Past and Future Meet*

### Mission Statement

*Woodbrook strives to create a safe, beautiful, and loving home for our residents, one in which they are celebrated and encouraged to thrive in a healthy environment with dignity, respect, and joy.*

Adopted by the Board of Directors  
December 11, 2013

### WOODBROOK

*Chemung County's premier  
assisted living residence*

*LifeTimes* is published  
biannually by  
Woodbrook Assisted  
Living Residence  
to carry news from our  
busy world to yours.

## WOODBROOK

Woodbrook Assisted Living Residence, Inc.  
1250 Maple Avenue  
Elmira, New York 14904  
Phone: 607-734-7741  
Fax: 607-734-5636  
E-mail: [lsweeney@woodbrookhome.com](mailto:lsweeney@woodbrookhome.com)  
Website: [www.woodbrookhome.com](http://www.woodbrookhome.com)



*These three dedicated walkers, along with other residents logged enough miles in the Step On It program to walk to Walt Disney World! Here's a photo from their Disney Destination Celebration (l-r): Anna D'Elia, Lillian Crossley and June Mitchell.*



*Pat McMahon (l) and Dick Matson (r) at the Hibernians for St. Patrick's Day.*



*Hila Hunsigner was one of many who enjoyed Easter celebrations this spring at Woodbrook.*



*Spring has sprung at Woodbrook! Residents enjoy the beautiful weather, nature-walking trails and colorful blooming trees and plantings.*

## Salutations

*The journey in between what you once were, and who you are becoming, is where the dance of life really takes place.*

Greetings everyone, and welcome to a glorious spring and summer 2018! This featured quote is about the dance of life! It is unique to Woodbrook because that “in-between journey” is the dance of a new lease on life for our residents. We spoil our residents in every way we can, physically, emotionally and spiritually. We do the heavy lifting — the laundry, the cooking, the dishes, the activity planning — so our residents can enjoy life without stress or worry. They enjoy time with their new friends, and sometimes even reunite with old ones. Staff and volunteers are devoted to making life at Woodbrook the most welcome, joyful and peaceful time of their lives, each and every day.

Many of you know I’m a wee bit Irish, and, as usual, we make St. Patrick’s Day stretch into a month of celebration for everyone. The decor goes up early, Irish music plays for a week, special menus are served, outings take residents to the local Hibernian’s Club, plus we have our big St. Patrick’s Day party. One of my favorite movies – The Quiet Man – with John Wayne and Maureen O’Hara was viewed on the big screen.

Our Theater Room is a hub for great classic movies – with the Turner Classic Movie channel and Netflix available. During the Olympics, residents gathered to watch the athletes on the big screen in comfortable recliners.

Mother’s Day is a highly-anticipated event here at Woodbrook where we receive many visitors. Each year the Dietary and Activities Departments do an outstanding job, right down to the smallest details. This year is bittersweet as it was Gary Durfee’s farewell event to his beloved residents.

Outside, our grounds are bursting with blooms, birds and wildlife. Our groundskeeper Paul DiPietro does a wonderful job with the trails, the flowerbeds, the raised planters and so much more. Woodbrook is a registered National Wildlife Habitat, and that means our grounds are meticulously cared for in a way that attracts small animals, birds and butterflies. Deer, rabbits, woodchucks, etc., frequently roam the back lawn behind the pavilion. The residents love to watch the busy bird feeders. It’s a beautiful place here at Woodbrook, inside and out.

Please share the good news about life here at Woodbrook! We are so proud to say that Woodbrook is the most affordable assisted living residence in the tri-county area. . . and no one is ever asked to leave if their money spends down. Woodbrook – Affordable Excellence!

## Semi-Private Rooms Available

New! Double rooms are now available and can be furnished at no extra cost. Remember: Woodbrook never asks anyone to leave, even if they spend down their money. Woodbrook is the most affordable assisted living facility in the area.



Laurie Sweeney, RN, MSN  
Executive Director

## Staff News

### Staff Recognition Ceremony Honors Service Milestones

On March 7, Woodbrook held its annual Employee Recognition Ceremony to honor staff members for milestone years of service (April 1, 2017 – March 31, 2018) and perfect attendance. After a catered lunch served by the management team, certificates were presented for 1, 5, 10, 15, 20 and 25 years of service. Staff with perfect attendance in 2017 were also honored.

“Our employees are Woodbrook’s greatest resource,” said Laurie Sweeney, RN, MSN, executive director. “Thank you for supporting our mission with passion and purpose on a daily basis.”

After lunch and dessert, certificates were presented to honorees. Service gifts and door prizes were also awarded.



Four staff members were honored for perfect attendance (l-r): Dick Matson, Pete Serefine, Lynette Roberts and Amanda Zoricak. (Missing from photo: Scott Cartwright and Jack Coxall.)

#### One Year

Mary Rynders  
Pete Serefine  
Christine Taylor  
Amanda Zoricak

#### Five Years

Marietta Beiling  
Stephanie Briggs  
Paul DiPietro  
Dick Matson

#### Ten Years

Linda Keeney

#### Fifteen Years

Linda Campbell  
Genny Rathbun  
Cindy Wood

#### Twenty Years

Justin Spicher

#### Twenty-Five Years

Gary Durfee

#### Perfect Attendance

Scott Cartwright  
Jack Coxall  
Dick Matson  
Lynette Roberts  
Pete Serefine  
Amanda Zoricak

## Transitions

Farewell and thank you to David Biviano, who is stepping down from the Board of Directors after having served since 1999. After an initial seven-year term, he returned to the Board in 2012, and is now finishing a six-year term. For 12 of those years, he served as Chair of the Board's Marketing Committee.



David Biviano

"I look back on my 13 years of the Board with a sense of amazement at the evolution that has taken place at Woodbrook," he said. "None of this would have been possible without the commitment and visionary leadership of Board members, the Executive Director, and a totally committed and caring staff. They are truly a remarkable group! I'll miss their energy, dedication, and humor, but carry with me so many wonderful memories. It's been a genuine pleasure and privilege to have been included in the Woodbrook family."

Also, congratulations to David Biviano as a winner of the Twin Tiers 2018 Jefferson Awards for Public Service. He was one of four individuals recognized for exemplary volunteerism to our community.



Want more Woodbrook news and photos?  
Like us on Facebook!

## Woodbrook's Dietary Director Provides Culinary Excellence for 26 Years

Woodbrook will soon say farewell to its chief executive chef, Gary Durfee, who's retiring after 26 years as Dietary Director.

Gary was hired in 1992 as a temporary cook after already establishing himself as a renowned regional top chef. At that point, he'd worked his way up through the ranks in food service, starting as a dishwasher to become a top chef "the hard way" at Brennan's, one of Elmira's first fine cuisine restaurants. He was taking a break after eight years there when the Woodbrook opportunity opened up.

Shortly after he started as a cook, the dietary director retired. Woodbrook's Board of Directors at that time — knowing Gary's reputation as a great chef and kitchen manager — promoted him to that position...and he's been there ever since.

"The Board encouraged me to treat the dining room like it was my own restaurant," Gary recalls with a smile. "So I did."

Under Gary's leadership over a staff of 17, Woodbrook's dining service elevated into a quality far above average expectations for an assisted living residence. The kitchen is state of the art, 85% of the food is cooked from scratch, the dining room looks like a restaurant, and menus, service and presentation are exceptional.

"My motto? The residents at this stage of their lives deserve to be spoiled, and I am the person who spoils them...with food," said Gary. "In addition to Friday fish dinners of baked haddock, we serve entrees like sea scallops in white wine sauce. For birthday dinners, we serve roasted tenderloin of beef. There's a nice blend of upscale food with comfort food."



Gary Durfee with Laurie Sweeney at the 2018 Mothers' Day Tea. This was Gary's 26th and farewell Mother's Day Tea, one of the most highly anticipated annual family events at Woodbrook.



Gary Durfee brought culinary and food service management standards to a high level during his tenure as Dietary Director.

Dining at Woodbrook isn't just about great nutrition, it's a social experience. Meals aren't just churned out with one set menu. Residents get choices and specials, and they order meals just like they would in a restaurant. Gary also helped launch the in-house ice cream shop called The Big Dipper with its own nostalgic menu.

"When I started at Woodbrook, we had approximately 150 recipes in the recipe file. Now we're approaching 900," he said.

Leaving Woodbrook will be bittersweet, Gary said, but it's time for a change. He looks forward to time at home with his two canine children.

"There's a grandeur to Woodbrook," said Durfee. "It's a very special place."

He will be missed.

## Volunteer Luncheon Held April 26

Woodbrook rolled out the red carpet to honor its volunteers at the annual Volunteer Recognition Luncheon. A gourmet meal was prepared by culinary staff and served by the Activities Department. After coffee and dessert, Executive Director Laurie Sweeney and Activities Director Denise Moonschein handed out gift certificates to a local restaurant.

Many different volunteers frequent Woodbrook, all with different talents and tasks. Some give hours, others give weeks and months and a few have volunteered for years, and every minute enriches the lives of the residents.



Executive Director Laurie Sweeney (center) recognized her two cousins, Connie Sweeney (left) and Gail Sweeney (right) for volunteering at Woodbrook's annual Volunteer Recognition Luncheon.

“Woodbrook is full of gratitude for our volunteers, and wish to celebrate them during National Volunteer Week,” said Laurie Sweeney, RN, MSN, executive director.

“Thank you for your caring, kindness and selfless giving. What you are doing for others truly makes a difference in the lives of our residents and staff.”

### Executive Staff

Laurie Sweeney, RN, MSN  
*Executive Director*  
Judy A. Kennedy, BA  
*Human Resources Director*  
Bonnie Hart  
*Administrative Assistant*  
Fred Maloney, BSBA  
*Finance Director*  
Ruth McDonough, RN, BS  
*Case Manager*  
Denise Moonschein, BS  
*Activities Director*  
Michael VanWert  
*Buildings and Grounds Director*  
Gary R. Durfee  
*Dietary Director*  
Lori J. Jamelski, LPN  
*RCA Director/Case Manager*

### 2018 Board of Directors

Michael Hart, *President*  
Michael Collins, *Vice President*  
Tammy Pabis, *Treasurer*  
Scott Heffner, *Secretary*  
Arthur Ambrose  
David Biviano  
Angela McInerney  
Ann Mortimer  
Joshua Navone  
Richard Poes  
John Wahl

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

1250 Maple Avenue  
Elmira, New York 14904

WOODBROOK

Presorted Standard  
U.S. Postage  
**PAID**  
Elmira, NY  
Permit No. 77