

# FORUM

## MAGAZINE



### Even children can

# GIVE AND GROW

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transform lives p. 10

Truman Barnes made  
a difference p. 14

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**Front cover:** Children helped other children through a special food pantry Give and Grow project. See the story on page 5.



### Do you enjoy searching for Gleaner's wheat stalk?

It's hidden in every issue of *Forum Magazine*. Having difficulty finding the wheat stalk in this issue? Look on Page 29 for the answer.



    @GleanerLife



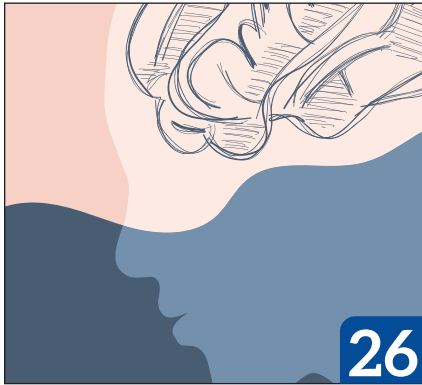
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### National Officers

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**Donna K. Baker, Vice Chair**  
**Bethany J. Figg | Margaret M.S. Noe**  
**William M. Tuttamore | Allen D. Underwood**  
**Jennifer D. Valdez**

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**Fernando Rivera, Vice Chief Gleaner**  
**Cheryl Jones, Chaplain**  
**G. David Traubenkraut, Conductor**  
**Sue Kemble, Guard**

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### Hours

Monday - Friday:  
8 a.m. - 4:45 p.m. Eastern time

# Thoughts from the president

## Dear Fellow Members of the Gleaner Family,

As we move into the heart of summer, I'm pleased to share several exciting updates and developments at Gleaner Life Insurance Society. The momentum we've built over the past several months continues, and I believe we are entering a new chapter defined by focus, stability, and growth.

## Welcoming Our New National Sales Director

I'm proud to announce that **Matt Taylor** has joined Gleaner as our **National Sales Director**. Matt brings over two decades of experience in building high-performing sales teams and fostering strong relationships with independent agents. He understands our mission, believes in the power of fraternal life insurance, and is already making an impact. Matt's leadership will be instrumental as we refine our product portfolio, expand our agent base, and deepen our commitment to both service and performance.

I also want to thank our **Agent Council members**, who played an active role in the selection process. Their involvement ensured that our decision was grounded in the real needs and perspectives of the field. I'm confident Matt is the right leader at the right time.

The Agent Council is a group of six independent agents who have volunteered their time and talents to provide us with invaluable insights. Their shared wisdom and support is truly a blessing to the Society. They include:

- Nicole Creamer
- Michael Drayton
- Donn George
- Dave Lolley
- Mike Multer
- Dan Zeiger

## Historic Board Election

For the first time in our Society's history, we held a Board of Directors election in which all voting Benefit Members had the right to vote. This important milestone was made possible by the newly revised Constitution, which expanded voting rights and enhance member involvement. Per the constitutional requirements, the voting period began on June 1 and ballots were required to be received by June 30. Congratulations to the four incumbents, Stephanie Andresen, Bethany Figg, Margaret Noe and William Tuttamore, who were voted in for an additional four-year term. Read more about the process and results on Page 4. We are grateful to all members who participated in this democratic process and helped shape the future of Gleaner.

## Convention Planning Underway

Planning for the 2025 Gleaner Life Convention this October is well underway. This year, we're making a

few meaningful changes to better reflect our values and strengthen member engagement:

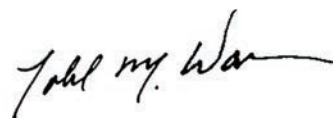
- **Friday Afternoon:** Welcome to the convention with our Board of Directors and me, offering an opportunity to meet our board members, casually mingle, and renew old acquaintances with other members.
- **Friday Night:** Arbor Night — We're replacing our traditional single entertainment event with a celebration honoring our Fraternalist and Fraternal Agent of the Year, along with the opportunity to explore various engagement tables and activity options designed to showcase the diversity and energy of our arbors and members.
- **Saturday Morning:** State of the Society Address — A new format will replace the formal business meeting, giving members a clear, direct, and engaging update on Gleaner's progress and direction. Allison Koppel, Chief Executive Officer of the American Fraternal Alliance, will also be speaking about the state of fraternal organizations.
- **Saturday afternoon:** A relaxing afternoon with opportunities to participate in various on-site activities as well as focused arbor educational sessions.
- **Saturday Night:** Tradition Continues — Our Saturday evening program will maintain its familiar tone of celebration, fellowship, and entertainment.

This convention will be a time to reflect on what we've achieved, connect with fellow members, and look ahead to Gleaner's future with confidence and unity. I look forward to seeing many of you there.

## Looking Ahead

With new leadership in place, a strong foundation of financial and operational improvements, and the convention on the horizon, Gleaner is positioned for a strong second half of the year. Thank you for your ongoing support, your engagement, and your belief in what we are building together.

Fraternally,



**Todd M. Warner**  
President and CEO



# Members return four to Board of Directors

**Milestone election marked firsts for Society:** For the first time in history, all of Gleaner Life's Benefit Members were able to cast ballots in June's election for four spots on the Board of Directors. Incumbents **Stephanie Andresen, Bethany Figg, Margaret Noe** and **William Tuttamore** were elected to new terms. It followed this year's revision of the Gleaner Constitution, which also made it the first election in which applicants were interviewed and vetted by an independent executive search firm, People Forward, to ensure transparency.

Of seven applicants, one was not a benefit member. The other six were evaluated by People Forward based on pre-existing Board Qualifications from the Board Policy Manual. Gleaner management and the current Board had no involvement in vetting or selection. There was no set number of candidates required; People Forward could have qualified all, some, or none. People Forward deemed four applicants qualified to appear on the ballot. Their selection was based solely on qualifications and the independent process. Per the revised constitution, their findings must be followed. Voting was conducted June 1 to June 30 by independent election services provider Election Source.



**Stephanie Andresen** — Andresen joined the Board in 2020. As an Infrastructure Product Owner at Blue Cross Blue Shield of Nebraska, she has more than 20 years of experience in project management, product ownership, and strategic planning. She was named Nebraska's Fraternalist of the Year in 2011.



**Margaret Noe** — Noe joined the Board in 2013. She graduated from law school in 1983 and her legal career has included terms as both Chief Probate Judge and later Chief Circuit Court Judge prior to retiring from the bench in 2019. She has been a Gleaner member for 25 years. She and her husband, Bill, have been married for 48 years.



**Bethany Figg** — Figg has served with the Board of Directors since her appointment in July of 2024, and has been Chair of the Society's Governance Committee. Her involvement in governance, financial management, and strategic planning comes from the combined experience of directing graduate medical education, serving on a financial institution's board, as well as running her own small business.



**William Tuttamore** — Tuttamore has served with the Board of Directors since his appointment in June of 2024. He joined Gleaner more than 30 years ago. Tuttamore and his wife, children, grandchildren and great grandchildren live in Ohio. He worked 45 years in the finance and insurance industry including the last 30 years at an Ohio bank where he retired as President CEO/Director.

Full candidate biographies appear at [www.gleanerlife.org/boardcandidates](http://www.gleanerlife.org/boardcandidates). All four seats carry four-year terms. Of 32,064 eligible voting Benefit Members, there were 4,574 ballots received (14.3% participation). This was a solid start for the new voting model, and it is hoped participation continues to increase in future elections. Gleaner Life is committed to transparency, professionalism, and strong governance. The Board of Directors is elected by members to guide the Society's strategy and oversight, and qualified Benefit Members are encouraged to consider applying for future Board elections. We gratefully thank all Benefit Members who took time to participate.

# Beginning young to GIVE AND GROW



This Gleaner Life program can help children — as well as adults — create change while building their confidence and willingness to assist others.

You don't need to be an adult to help! Children can bring their own unique ideas when given a chance, as a recent Give and Grow project shows.

The village of Onsted, Michigan, keeps a small pantry for residents to pick out free food, but the pantry runs out quickly. "I saw their Facebook post that said they needed more," said Katie Keil, a member who works at Gleaner Life's Home Office in the Sales and Agent Department. "I knew it was something easy the kids would be able to help with and enjoy."

One of her daughters, her son, and two of their friends and family — ages 6 to 9 — helped after Katie applied for a Give and Grow project. Grants are awarded for projects conducted by benefit members and their volunteers to make a community impact. Keil's young group used their \$250 in Give and Grow funds to shop on May 2.

"I let them pick the food," Katie said, explaining that most food donations are dictated by adult tastes. "As a kid you want your chips and peanut butter and jelly. So, I let the kids pick the things they thought other kids would like."

"They thought it was really neat. They were excited," she added. "They had a hard time processing the idea that so many kids in the area don't have food. So, it was a good learning experience for them."

The group delivered the food the same day at the pantry. The village posted an appreciative thank you on Facebook: "I'd like to show village wide appreciation to Gleaner Insurance and their 'Give and Grow' program. Katie Keil delivered \$250.00 worth of groceries and diapers and wipes to our pantry and kept it stocked for the last two weeks. Thank you, we appreciate it so much!"

Not only did the children learn about helping families, they used their favorite foods to treat others the way they would want to be treated! Visit [www.gleanerlife.org/giveandgrow](http://www.gleanerlife.org/giveandgrow) if you would like to apply for a Give and Grow grant or learn more!



Five children shopped for some of their favorite groceries to help others. Pictured below were (from left to right) Navie Keil, Willow Baker, Holden Keil, Presley Keil and Kenadee Nieto.



Presley Keil and Willow Baker were pictured helping deliver the food and other items at the Onsted food pantry.



# BIENNIAL CONVENTION

OCTOBER 24-26, 2025  
KALAMAZOO, MICHIGAN

Gleaner's convention return will be one to remember! Our 61st Biennial Convention in Kalamazoo, Michigan, Oct. 24-26, 2025, at the beautiful Radisson Plaza Hotel & Suites Kalamazoo features entertainment ranging from charcuterie board building to a live eight-piece band, and new and exciting ways for arbor members to interact with one another. Kalamazoo will leave members and guests with memories for years to come!

## **Friday afternoon: Benefit Auctions**

In addition to our silent auction, members can take part in Benny's Auction. Instead of bidding a specific dollar amount on an item, guests can purchase tickets and enter as many of those tickets as they like in an item's corresponding box. At the end of the auction, a ticket is drawn from each item's box, and the item goes to the individual with the winning ticket. Proceeds from both auctions will benefit the Kalamazoo Community Foundation.

## **Friday night: Where Champions are Made**

We've designed a unique Friday evening experience that brings our arbors together for an exciting night of inspiration, education, and camaraderie. Wear your favorite sports jersey and get ready to team up as we explore ways to strengthen our activities and build a championship-level team. Join us for a brief huddle as we kick off the night honoring the MVPs of the weekend, the Fraternalist and Fraternal Agent of the

Year. The main event features interactive discussions and motivational moments as we focus on how collaboration, communication, and shared goals make us stronger together. Whether you're a rookie or a seasoned pro, this event is your chance to strategize, connect, and score big for our fraternal community!

## **Saturday Synergy**

This essential Arbor seminar is a don't-miss event for all arbor members looking to grow, strengthen, and overcome challenges together. Led by the Community Engagement team, this session will provide crucial insights, strategies, and solutions to address the biggest hurdles facing our arbors today. Be sure to grab a seat and take advantage of this valuable opportunity to gain knowledge, share experiences, and bring actionable ideas back to your group. Your participation is key to building a stronger, more connected community!





## Saturday afternoon tour options

- **Candle Making with Kalamazoo Candle Company (On-site)**  
Mix and pour your own custom-scented candle with hometown experts from Kalamazoo Candle Company.
- **Charcuterie Board Building (On-site)**  
Discover the perfect mix of finger foods to entertain any crowd and the best way to arrange the food for the perfect blend of appeal and flavor.
- **Beer and Appetizer tasting (On-site)**  
What food pairs best with your favorite lager? Enjoy a relaxing afternoon with samples to delight your taste buds.
- **Bingo (On-site)**  
If friendly competition is your idea of a good time, grab your markers and get ready to win some fun prizes in a friendly game of chance.
- **Hospitality Room with Football Games**  
We know convention falls during the same weekend of some big college football competition. Grab a seat and cheer on your team!
- **Explore on your own**  
Discover all that Kalamazoo has to offer. From on-site and local shopping to museums and more, Kalamazoo has plenty of options to fit any interest.

## Saturday night: Bluewater Kings Band

Following dinner on Saturday, we'll welcome the Bluewater Kings Band to help us sing and dance the night away. The eight-piece band features a repertoire that ranges from Great Gatsby Extravaganzas to '90s Throwback Parties and everything in between. The Bluewater Kings Band members are full-time professional musicians who excel at everything from Frank Sinatra, The Beatles, and Whitney Houston to Beyoncé, Daft Punk, Bruno Mars, and more.

Visit [www.gleanerlife.org/convention](http://www.gleanerlife.org/convention) or email the Community Engagement Department at [events@gleanerlife.org](mailto:events@gleanerlife.org) for more information.

# Kalahari, Ark Encounters, and more!



Gleaner members didn't wait for summer to enjoy 2025 changes in scenery, from amusement parks to museums to a paddlewheel boat — and fresh adventures are on the horizon.

About three dozen members boarded the Gleaner Getaway motor coach for May's trip to attractions in Cincinnati and northern Kentucky. The five-day, four-night trip visited Kentucky's Bible-inspired Ark Encounter in Williamstown and the Creation Museum in Petersburg, where participants had an opportunity to ride the Screaming Raptor Zip Lines. The group stayed in Erlanger, Kentucky. In addition to visiting the Cincinnati History Museum and the Museum of Natural History & Science, there was an OMNIMAX show projected on a five-story domed theater. On the final full day, members took a BB Riverboat sightseeing cruise to enjoy the Ohio River's scenery. One of the highlights was a dance-off which included an 83-year-old Gleaner member who danced like no one was watching!

## Safari to Kalahari

Here's another opportunity for Gleaner members to make family memories at the Midwest's largest indoor waterpark. Registration is now open for the annual Safari to Kalahari taking place Nov. 7-9, 2025.

This year's package remains a great way for parents (or grandparents) to enjoy a weekend of waterpark excitement indoors at Kalahari Resorts in Sandusky, Ohio. You'll find the perfect water adventure no matter whether your tribe favors the thrills of FlowRider® surfing, the uphill water rollercoaster and the new Dawn Breaker, or prefers the lazy river, family raft ride and wave pool — or some of each!

Each room receives four passes to the water park. Two different room packages are available:

- The Double Queen room features two queen beds with a patio/balcony.
- The Double Queen Sofa room provides a full-size sleeper sofa in addition to the two queen beds, and the option to purchase two additional water park passes for \$50 each per day.

All rooms also feature a microwave, refrigerator, coffee maker, hair dryer, table and chairs, 32" flat screen

television with pay-per-view movies, free high speed internet access, and complimentary access to Kalahari's Fitness Center. Gleaner also provides a complimentary Saturday morning buffet breakfast, with a free photo booth to help you remember your wild weekend of fun.

Of course, guests also can enjoy Kalahari's award-winning restaurants, African-themed retail shopping, the Big Game Arcade with laser tag, escape rooms, blacklight minigolf and more, the Spa Kalahari & Salon, and so much more. See details and register at [www.gleanerlife.org/kalahari](http://www.gleanerlife.org/kalahari).

## Toledo Zoo Lights Before Christmas

It's also not too early to plan for Gleaner Life's final Family Day event of the year, the Toledo Zoo Lights Before Christmas on Dec. 13 at Toledo, Ohio. The award-winning zoo has lit up the cold Ohio nights for decades with its illuminated displays, winter village, giving tree, visit with Santa, reindeer encounter, Holly Jolly Express, and entrance to several of the zoo's buildings. Gleaner tickets are only \$25 each and include a pizza buffet dinner. Learn more about this year's Family Day events at [www.gleanerlife.org/familydays](http://www.gleanerlife.org/familydays).

## 2026 Getaway announced!

Get ready for 2026's Getaway trip to the majestic Canadian Rockies! Fly to Calgary, stay in beautiful Banff, dine at Chateau Lake Louise, ride the Banff Gondola, visit Yoho National Park, view unforgettable lakes including Louise, Moraine, Emerald and others, see the Valley of the Ten Peaks, travel the Icefields Parkway and Columbia Icefield Ice Explorer Ride, see Mt. Rundle, Bow Falls and the Natural Bridge, and learn from a professional tour director. This six-day trip begins Aug. 23, 2026. Add your email address at [events@gleanerlife.org](mailto:events@gleanerlife.org) and let us know you want the latest news about the Canadian Rockies trip and other Gleaner family activities.

# Faith in Change

**Change is inevitable but unsettling. Embracing it can be a principle for transforming our lives.**

It might seem strange to choose change as a principle to help build your life. Change, after all, is the opposite of permanence. It can be unpredictable, unsettling, and more than a little scary. How many of us face painful upheavals and wish we could return to “the good old days”?

Yet change also is inevitable, necessary, and can be a powerful force for drawing us closer to God and to other people. The Gleaner Society was formed in 1894 to create positive change, originally for farm families and soon after for all residents. For isolated “dirt farmers” of the late-19th century, transforming ideals such as protection, community, benevolence, stability, and empowerment into reality required faith indeed.

Founding members drew inspiration from the Bible’s book of Ruth. One of its themes is change. Naomi, her husband, and their two sons flee a famine around Bethlehem and move to Moab, a pagan nation east of the Dead Sea. Her sons marry Ruth and another Moabite woman. Both wives were raised in Moab’s culture, which sacrificed infants to its gods. Within 10 years of arrival, Naomi’s husband and sons have died, causing Naomi to bitterly return to her people in Judah. She urges her daughters-in-law to go back to their old homes, but Ruth would rather change everything than abandon Naomi. “Do not urge me to leave you or turn back from following you. For where you go I will go, and

“  
God loves you the way  
you are, but He also  
loves you too much to let  
you stay that way.”

Dr. Scott Hahn of the Franciscan  
University of Steubenville

# THE GLEANER

PUBLISHED FOR FARM FOLKS

ESTABLISHED IN 1894



where you live I'll live," Ruth declares. "Your people shall be my people, and your God my God. Where you die I will die, and there I will be buried. May the Lord deal with me, be it ever so severely, if even death separates you and me." (Ruth 1:16-17)

Ruth's turning to forsake her past and embrace God (as well as her faithfulness to Naomi) eventually is rewarded. Her loyalty earns her the protection and favor of Boaz, the owner of the fields where she gleans. Ruth marries Boaz, and their son Obed becomes not only a grandfather of the future King David but part of Jesus' lineage. The picture of God's grace welcoming outsiders into His family was mirrored in the aspirations of early Gleaner members.

When Ruth committed to change, however, any reward seemed unlikely. She was a widow, helping an older widow, risking a dangerous journey and potential starvation in a land where she would be a Moabite

immigrant. Her new situation must have felt frightening. The same can be true today when we face changes. It is a journey in faith but filled with guideposts:

1. Change is both unavoidable and necessary. Since ancient times, people have recognized that everything in this world is in flux. Without change there would be no learning and no growth. God is always doing new things, and we should pay attention (Isaiah 43:18-19). Pining for idealized "good old days" misses the present.
2. Change can be scary, but God promises to work all things — not just pleasant events — for the good of those who love Him and are called according to His purpose (Romans 8:28). This is shown not only in the life of Ruth but others including Joseph, Job, David and Paul as well as Jesus. We all endure pain and grief. It takes faith not to fixate on asking God "Why?" but to instead ask, "What should I do now?"

3. Change can be unpredictable, but we do have choices. Ruth couldn't anticipate her family members' deaths, but she could choose her next steps. We don't know whether our deaths will occur soon or years from now, but we can choose to set up protection now for our loved ones.

4. Medical science has found that change rewires our thinking, adapting new neural pathways and building new connections. This echoes biblical instruction to not conform to the world's pattern but to be transformed by the renewing of our mind (Romans 12:2). New thinking leads to new actions and then new habits, building character and resilience while changing our attitude.

5. Change alters how we respond to others. Our experiences should help us empathize with them. We can love and forgive because we've been loved and forgiven. Others — mentors, family, strangers, even our "enemies" — become catalysts for our changes (Matthew 5:43-48). Growing more like Jesus ("sanctification") is a life of growing more loving.

These changes, like Ruth's, all require faith. Personal willpower is notoriously weak. (How many New Year's resolutions have we broken already?) God, on the other hand, is already at work within us and can accomplish infinitely more than we might ask or think (Ephesians 3:20).

Like Ruth, we can embrace new ways. It's OK to feel scared. Death remains an "uncertain certainty," but we can have faith in God's sovereignty, love for us, and plans beyond our wildest dreams. Rather than ask, "Why?" we can ask, "What is this new thing, God?" Being thoughtful for the future and open to change helps us "expect the unexpected" and be transformed.



## Arbor, students make butterfly garden changes

Butterflies are wonderful symbols of change. Their metamorphosis from a caterpillar to a chrysalis to an adult butterfly is a study in transformation. So, when Plank Road Arbor (MI) teamed up with a group of student volunteers to refurbish an overgrown butterfly garden, they took part in a cycle of changes. The butterfly garden is located at Breckenridge Elementary School outside the library. With the help of five National Honor Society student volunteers the group cleaned the garden, rebuilt the retaining wall, and planted new butterfly-friendly plants. "It was a very enjoyable project and we were very pleased with the results, as were the school employees," Arbor President David Briggs reported.



*Refurbishing a neglected butterfly garden was how Plank Road Arbor (MI) effected change in May with the help of five National Honor Society student volunteers.*

# 2025 Gleaner Gives donates \$79,626

Home Office employees deliver donations after their ninth annual campaign.

Charity begins at home, and Home Office employees helped Gleaner Life Insurance Society (GLIS) support two dozen charitable groups in employees' communities. Their contributions helped the ninth annual Gleaner Gives Campaign provide \$79,626 to 24 non-profit organizations.

Each employee was given the opportunity to donate a portion of their pay and designate recipient groups. GLIS matched donations up to \$2,000 to provide a bigger community impact. Employees then hand-delivered most of the checks, for which the charities and community at large were appreciative. The largest checks went to Hospice of Lenawee with \$16,565, followed by the Lenawee Humane Society with \$14,629.

Whether it's by volunteering, spreading encouragement, or giving financial support, Gleaner Gives!



# REMEMBERING TRUMAN BARNES AND THE POTENTIAL FOR CHANGE



*Truman Barnes (right) was shown June 11, 1966, with former Albion Mayor Hugo Rieger while working with the Gleaner Boy Scouts to clean up along the Kalamazoo River. The location is where Barnes Park is today. (Frank Passic Jr. photo collection)*

**The difficult we do now; the impossible takes a little longer.**

— Phrase adopted in World War II by the U.S. Navy Seabees

**How one man's vision and can-do attitude helped clean the Kalamazoo River, initiate recycling, and guide Boy Scouts and arbors.**

Truman Barnes faced the impossible in the mid-1960s. He wanted to improve the environment and clean out Michigan's Kalamazoo River where it barely inched through his beloved city of Albion. The polluted river, however, was described from the 1940s-1960s as an "eyesore" most people tried to avoid.

A Gleaner Life member and veteran of the U.S. Navy Seabees during World War II, Barnes was determined to make changes. Decades of waste from paper and

cereal mills, pharmaceutical manufacturers, automobile parts suppliers, trash effluent, and other sources had turned the Kalamazoo River into a polluted slough.

Barnes, however, had a mission. "As it grew shallower and muddier, his sense of outrage simmered," a 1970 *National Gleaner Forum* story recalled. "In 1967 it boiled over in a one-man movement to save the river. He waded into the muck to clean out vegetation and started talking to everyone he could corral."

Among the first volunteers to heed Barnes' call were members of Albion's Boy Scout Troop 128. Barnes, who also was a Gleaner agent and District Manager,

This is the second part of a look back at past Gleaner Life Fraternalists of the Year. The first part appeared in 2025's spring edition of *Forum Magazine*.

sponsored the group and it was known the Gleaner Boy Scout Troop. "I was in his Boy Scout troop sponsored by the Gleaners in the 1960s, and he often mentioned the Gleaners," said Albion historian Frank Passic Jr. Barnes and his scouts had begun their environmental work on the south edge of the city, just down the street from Barnes' home on Adams Street. They cleaned up a riverside area along Water Street that had become a dump for construction debris, old sidewalk concrete, and dead willow trees, and turned it into a small park.

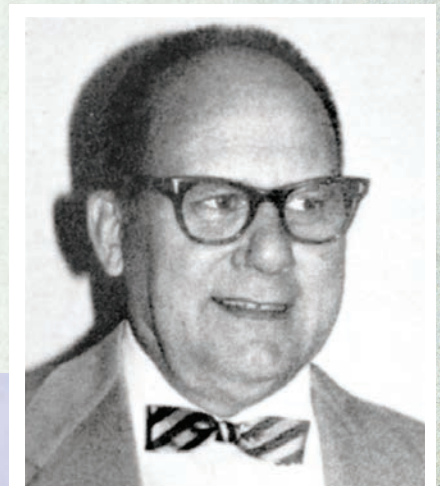
That was only the start. Dredging and cleaning the river itself was

expected to cost at least \$500,000. To help the city fund its portion, Barnes in 1970 opened one of the first recycling centers in the country, the Albion Recycling Center. He had formed the Albion Youth for a Clean Environment group the summer before, and the 42 members began operating the recycling center.

"Glass is color-sorted, broken in barrels, and sold to Owens-Illinois Glass Co., Charlotte, for \$10 a ton," *Forum* reported. "Papers and magazines are bundled separately and sold to Michigan Carton Co., Battle Creek. Newsprint brings \$14 a ton, magazines \$5 a ton. The project exports much of the city's trash, reduces smoke from burning papers, saves useful material, and holds the promise of a reclaimed river. That's gleaning and cleaning in one operation."

In a couple of years, the volunteers had recycled 330 tons of paper, glass

and metal to collect \$5,000. They also ground up wood and other organic material into "eco mulch" for gardens. They inspired other groups and projects. The city's Water Street Park Project fund grew to \$27,400 which was matched by state and federal agencies. A boat launch and benches were added. In 1973, the effort helped Albion win the National Municipal League's annual "All American City" award. A city celebration included a visit by Michigan Gov. William G. Milliken. In 1983, the park along the river was renamed Barnes Park in honor of Truman and his wife, Norma.



*Truman Barnes*



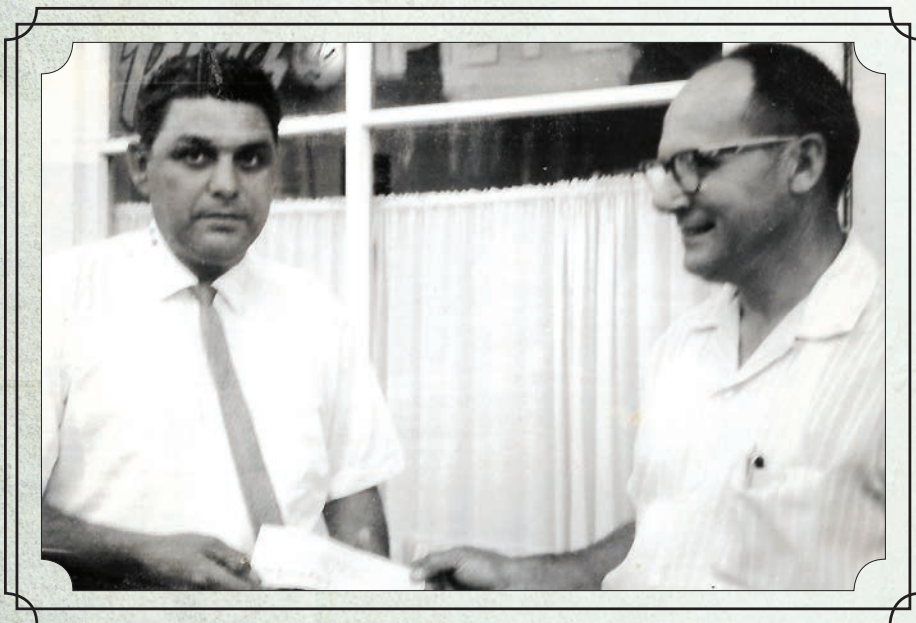
*Truman Barnes (right) was shown with Gleaner Boy Scout Troop 128 getting ready to march with its Gleaner flag in the 1964 Memorial Day parade in Albion. The scoutmaster next to Barnes was Roy Laurance. The image is a composite from 8 mm home movies in Frank Passic Jr.'s collection.*



Barnes' reclamation efforts also extended to Gleaner arbors. He was a longtime Arbor Chief Gleaner (now called President) and Secretary. Noticing several arbors in Jackson and Calhoun counties no longer were active, Barnes worked to combine three of them into United Arbor No. 125. It was based in Albion but included members from Homer, Union City and the surrounding area. When Gleaner hosted picnics, Barnes was known as "the Old Wagonmaster" and Norma often directed the music and played a variety of instruments.

Five years after Albion received its "All American City" designation, Truman and Norma found another way to spotlight the joy of water. They donated the large fountain for the pond in front of Gleaner's Home Office. The fountain has been maintained over the decades and still welcomes visitors and waterfowl.

*The fountain outside Gleaner Life's Home Office was donated by Truman and Norma Barnes in 1988.*



After Gleaner Life began to present its Fraternalist of the Year award at biennial conventions in 1985, Barnes was the fourth recipient chosen in 1991. It proved bittersweet as Truman, 75, passed away a few weeks before the convention occurred. His Fraternalist award was the first to be presented posthumously, with Norma accepting it.

Perhaps it is fitting that Earth Day is celebrated annually on April 22 — Barnes' birthday. "No one owns the earth," he said. "We are all caretakers."

*Truman Barnes, right, accepts a fundraising check from Frank Passic Sr., who co-owned Pizza Pete's restaurant in Albion, following a Boy Scout benefit night in 1963. (Frank Passic Jr. photo collection)*

# GLENER DONATES PIECES OF LONG-GONE SCHOOL

One-room schoolhouse served local farm children from 1875 to 1954.

Walking to school on dirt roads and sitting at desks around a heating stove, generations of children were taught in one-room schoolhouses. One such brick building opened in 1875 — 150 years ago — in Adrian Township, Michigan, and served local farm families for about 80 years. Gleaner Life recently helped rekindle memories of the old school by recovering three pieces bearing the school's name, Adrian Township School District No. 8 (also known as the Maynard School).

The district's last students attended there in 1954. The building was converted to housing around 1970. It stood about a quarter of a mile north of the present headquarters of Gleaner Life, which purchased the property in 1980. The house was taken down about 35 years ago after tenants "trashed" it. Gleaner Life Building, Grounds and Security Manager Kevin Stange began working for Gleaner a few years later, and knew where some of its pieces were located.

After a group of former students held their first reunion in 2024, Stange and another Maintenance Department employee, Todd Frederick, recovered three pieces of concrete with the school's name that had stood above its entrance. The pieces were donated

on April 21 by Gleaner President and CEO Todd Warner to two former students. "I know they're in good hands with you," Todd said. "These pieces bring back a lot of memories," Mary Alice Thompson replied. The former students donated the pieces to the Lenawee Historical Society.

A longer version of this story appears on the Gleaner Life website at [www.gleanerlife.org/maynardschool](http://www.gleanerlife.org/maynardschool).



Todd Warner met Mary Alice Thompson and Melvin Snyder on April 21 to donate the school's concrete sign pieces.



The old, one-room Maynard School was pictured in 1919 with its 18-year-old teacher, Ida Woodruff (center). Art Snyder, who later sold the farm where Gleaner Life's present Home Office is located, is seated at far left. (Melvin Snyder photo collection)



Concrete pieces that were set above the school's entrance were recovered and donated on April 21.

# Arbors in Action

Gleaner arbors took a cue from the spring foliage as they unfurled banners, began new growth, and blossomed. They supported community charities to help the homeless and single mothers, sponsored Arbor Day activities at schools and parks, brightened senior citizen centers and nursing homes, hosted blood drives, free bowling and zoo trips, and much more.



**Caro Arbor (MI)** held a poster contest for third graders from Schall Elementary School. The students created Arbor Day/Earth Day posters, and their teachers hung the posters on their walls. Arbor members went to each class and picked two winning posters. Winning students received a box of candy and a gift card from Dairy Queen. A presentation was given to classes about Earth Day and Arbor Day and keeping the community beautiful. Each class received a bag of white pine trees that students could take home and plant. Each class also received a bag of candy for participating, and the school secretary received a bouquet of flowers and candy for being so helpful.



**Buckeye City Arbor (OH)** assisted residents around the Buckeye Lake region. It supplied coffee and breakfast snacks to teachers at Millersport Elementary School on March 14 while at the same time providing the treats for customers at Dockside Doughnuts, where the goodies were obtained. The arbor reported that Arbor Vice President Sheila Fryer hung the arbor's banner in front of the restaurant and handed out flyers during the event.



**Capital Arbor (MI)** volunteered April 24 at the Cristo Rey food pantry. Cristo Rey serves Lansing residents in many ways including meals, a food pantry, a needs closet, counseling, legal assistance and onsite medical services. Before getting to work, Capital Arbor members presented Adam Wood, Cristo Rey's coordinator of volunteers, with a check for \$500 for the food pantry. Arbor members and others then unloaded the wide variety of donations received weekly, stacked shelves, and cut down boxes for almost an hour.



**Center Township Arbor (IN)** assisted Portage Commands, a new community center for senior citizens to have a place to socialize and have fun playing games and other activities. The arbor purchased \$500 worth of supplies, games and other items to help the facility and then delivered the donations and toured the facility on April 25.



**Faithfully Giving Arbor (OH)** organized its annual community Easter Egg Scramble on Saturday, April 12, in Bascom, Ohio. Members stuffed more than 2,000 eggs with toys, candy, and giveaways for all community children. The scramble was divided into four age groups, and was very well attended. Participants were grateful for a sunny and mild day, which helped put everyone in the Easter spirit.



**Floyd Arbor (MI)** hosted a free movie for families on Feb. 18. The arbor had 39 people attend the event. Popcorn, a beverage and a candy bag were handed out to each guest. A group of guests with special needs attended and enjoyed the new movie, "Captain America: Brave New World." The arbor also filled up two totes with food donations for the Pinconning Food Pantry.



**Good Deeds Arbor (OH)** hosted a community dinner in conjunction with its Community Volunteer Recognition on April 15. This year's CVR recipient was longtime local volunteer Dr. Jim Miller, a decorated veteran, counselor and pastor for more than 45 years. The presentations highlighted the history and structure of Gleaner Life, along with past and upcoming Good Deeds events. The evening ended with a drawing for a Blackstone grill, with the proceeds of the drawing benefiting the local VFW. Attendees were encouraged to become active with Good Deeds. They also had the opportunity to write cards of appreciation for local veterans.



**Gulf Coast Arbor (FL)** conducted a blood drive on March 9 at St. Jude Church, bringing in a SunCoast Blood Centers bloodmobile bus. One lady who gave blood (pictured going down the bus stairs) was 80 years old. A total of 13 units of blood were collected, which will benefit 39 patients thanks to Gulf Coast Arbor's efforts.



**Harmony Arbor (MI)** celebrated Arbor Day in April with Alma Pine Avenue School's 4th and 5th graders. Gleaner members gave teachers bundles of living pine trees wrapped in bags to give to students to take home and plant. Teachers pictured in random order included Samantha Snow, Jen Ferguson, Becca Adkins, Krista Wilson, Vern Smith, Mike Allison, Nate Farrar, Donni Fornusek, Cody Nevins, Morgan Nieman, Nicole Briggs, Lucas Carey, and Stephanie Davis.



**Homer Twp. Oak Arbor (IL)** held its Community Volunteer Recognition dinner on April 16, which also served as a “welcome dinner” as CVR recipients Mary Skowronski and Sharon Sweas became new members. They were presented with gift baskets during the dinner. The gathering also served as a meeting, with the arbor planning its annual Safe Driving event on April 28-29 and a shredding event on May 3 at the Homer Township Administration parking lot.



**Ithaca Arbor (MI)** remembered Arbor Day by planting a tree at Atkinson Park, near the Ithaca Senior Center, on April 25. The tree is an autumn maple and will grow to 40 feet tall. Members participating included (left to right) Diana Jones, Patty Macha, Rose Peck, Julie Hayes, Tammy Bates, Richard Coleman and Geri Coleman.



**Legacy Arbor (MI)** honored National Nurses Week a few steps from a lobby named for a former Gleaner Life President and First Lady. The arbor worked with a few other members and delivered snacks, drinks, and other treats to Lenawee County’s ProMedica hospital nurses. Gleaner Life information also was included. The group was pictured on a hospital staircase next to the Frank and Shirley Dick Lobby, named for the philanthropy of the former Gleaner couple.



**Mid Michigan Arbor (MI)** organized a visit May 13 to a local children’s zoo for two elementary school classes from Linwood Elementary School. The arbor provided transportation to and from the zoo, admission fees, and a ride on the carousel for each student. One of the most enjoyed attractions was the baby African penguins that were recently hatched at the zoo. Although cloudy conditions started the day, the tour enjoyed a fun day filled with giggles, “oohs” and “ahhs.” Teachers, students, and chaperones were very appreciative.



**North Baltimore Arbor (OH)** hosted bingo for residents of the Brian Hill Health Campus’ assisted living center. Arbor member Juanita Place purchased the prizes, and all members brought cookies to share after bingo. There were 20 people present including eight arbor members. The residents were particularly fond of the puzzles and the dancing stuffed animals. One resident was reluctant to play because of his eyesight, but Gleaner member Marilyn Swope helped him and he won a bingo. He let his wife pick out a prize — a dancing stuffed animal.



**Oysters' Sand Arbor (VA)** held a community food packing event March 20 to help more than 320 elementary school children from Fairfax County who badly need nutritional support for their weekend meals. The arbor enlisted the help of more than 20 willing volunteers who received a "Volunteers Have Heart" T-shirt. The project assembled meal packs for low-income students who have more difficulty obtaining food during the weekends.



**Portage Center Arbor (OH)** rented a local bowling alley on March 16, and then invited clients with the Wood County Board of Developmental Disabilities to come bowl for free. All costs for bowling shoes, pizza, pop and cookies were covered by the arbor for clients as well as their families, caregivers and drivers. The two-hour session featured a wide variety of ages and abilities. Everyone reported having a good time



**Plank Road Arbor (MI)** put together a Valentine's Day project that involved students expressing appreciation for their parents and for adult care patients. Arbor members went to Breckenridge Elementary School on Feb. 6 and worked at tables with the Huskie Pups and After School student groups. The children made one valentine for their parents and then at least one more for residents at local adult care facilities. Arbor member Shelly Brittain delivered the valentines to Heart's Content and Arbor Manner. The arbor also donated \$150 worth of supplies to the after-school program.



**Riley Creek Arbor (OH)** provided a catered dinner for the mothers and children at Hope House in Findlay, Ohio. Arbor members also purchased and filled Gleaner bags with gifts for each family. Moms received self-care and comfort items, while the children received Gleaner coloring books and toys. Members enjoyed spending time with the facility's staff members.

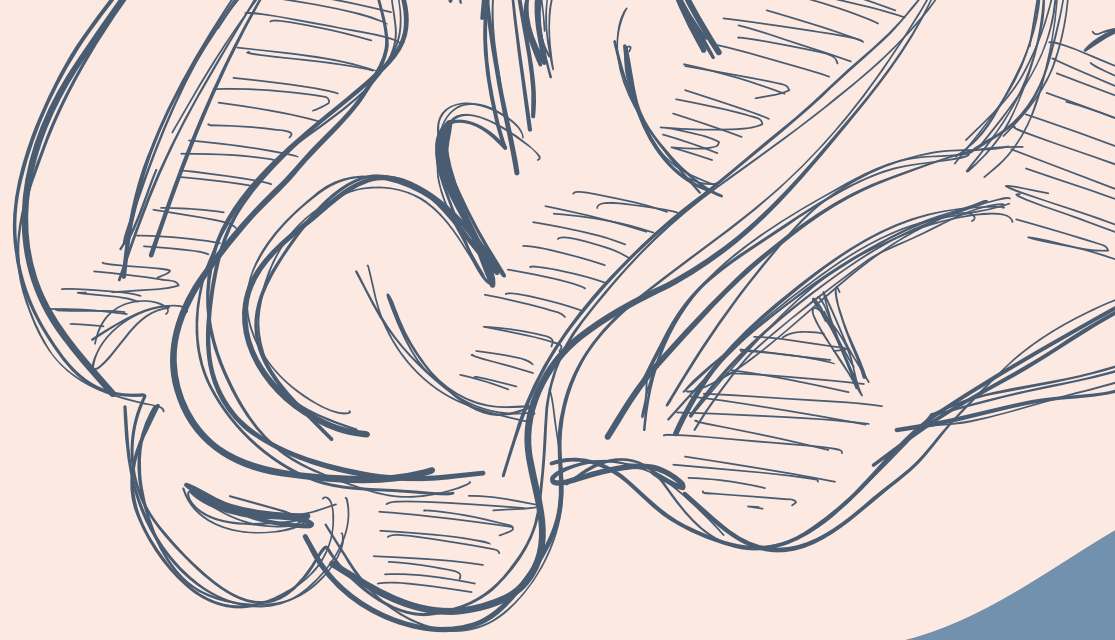


**Vulcaner Arbor (MI)** celebrated March as National Reading Month by helping the local library. Arbor members submitted their favorite book to be featured by the library during March. The arbor provided magnetic bookmarks, and ordered a few children/youth book series. It also purchased and presented a 6-foot table the library needed. One member noted the project prompted her to activate her own library card for online reading, and she ended up reading or listening to five books she otherwise would have missed.



**South Fairfield Arbor (OH)** hosted an Easter egg hunt on a sunny Saturday, April 12, with 4,000 plastic eggs filled with candy. Twenty-six eggs had no candy but contained numbers matching prize Easter baskets filled with toys and goodies. Eggs were divided into three areas for each age group: 0-3 years, 4-7, and 8-10. Arbor members noted that this year's event skipped its traditionally popular fresh-egg-on-a-spoon relays due to the high cost of real eggs. "Arbor members enjoyed the children's wide eyes and big smiles. It was fun to see so many children and their parents having a great time!"

**Mill Creek Arbor (IN)** honored Vietnam Veterans on March 29, which is recognized as Vietnam Veteran Day. The arbor hosted a catered lunch at Hamon Gray American Legion Post 83 in La Porte, Indiana. About 20 veterans and their guests attended. Arbor President Mike Graves led the program. La Porte's County Recorder talked about how her office can scan DD214 documents at no cost to help veterans apply for benefits, and spoke about a Property Fraud Alert program. Both the Legion Post Commander and guest speaker Ed Francis also addressed the veterans. Arbor volunteers served dessert and cleaned up the facility.



# BRAIN HEALTH IS INTERCONNECTED

Preventative changes can help ward off dementia, Alzheimer's disease, and other brain disorders and improve overall health.

“Thoughtful for the future” is the Gleaner motto, and it becomes literal when it involves brain health — our ability to remain thoughtful as we age and face increased risk of dementia.

America is growing older than ever. Having fewer children and more senior citizens pushed the U.S. median age in 2023 to 39.2 years, up from 28.1 years in 1970. One concern with a higher percentage of older people is the likely increase in rates of conditions linked to aging. This includes dementia and other brain-health issues. Somewhat misleading headlines have proclaimed, “As the U.S. ages, dementia is on the rise.”

The good news, however, is that simple demographics — more older Americans — is driving the rate increase. In fact, researchers are discovering more ways to avoid, delay, and in some cases even reverse brain-related health issues.

## “ There are things we all can do to take better care of our brains! ”

**Robyn Smith**  
Gleaner Life Medical Director

Dementia is the broad term given to many conditions marked by cognitive decline. Some of the more common include Alzheimer’s disease, which annually kills three times more people than breast and prostate cancer combined; vascular dementia, caused by reduced blood flow, often after a stroke; and Lewy body dementia, linked to abnormal deposits of protein in nerve cells.

Exams such as the Montreal Cognitive Assessment (MoCA) can identify problems early. Even regularly taking simple tests (such as remembering five random words for a brief period) may provide insight.

Just as most people 100 years ago thought cancer and heart disease were unpreventable, many still mistakenly see dementia as inevitable and hopeless. Decades of research is proving otherwise. Smith pointed to findings in a recent study from Brain Care Labs at Massachusetts General Hospital.<sup>1</sup> It identified 17 protective or harmful factors that affect not only our risk of dementia but also

stroke and late-life depression. “If you’re starting to work on one of them, very often you’re actually improving multiple at the same time,” said Dr. Sanjula Singh, a principal study investigator. “That’s a good way to start.”

### Factors raising risk

Many factors can play a role in the onset of dementia:

- Two risk factors are age (dementia becomes more common after age 65) and family history (genetics can play a role, especially with early-onset Alzheimer’s). Neither factor, though, necessarily means a person will develop dementia.
- Health conditions — High blood pressure, high BMI (Body Mass Index), high total cholesterol, hearing loss, pain (especially pain that interferes with activity), poor sleep, depression, stress.
- Lifestyle conditions — Smoking, a diet high in red meat, sugar-sweetened beverages, sweets and salt, isolation leading to loneliness, lack of physical activity.

### Factors improving protection

Researchers consistently find the changes that improve our general health may also help protect our brain health:

**Moderate or high levels of physical activity** — Numerous studies show exercise helps brain health by increasing blood flow to the brain, reducing inflammation and aiding the brain’s ability to adapt and grow (neuroplasticity). Examples include brisk walking, jogging or running, swimming, bicycling, dancing or playing tennis.<sup>2</sup>

**Reducing alcohol intake** — Alcohol crosses the blood-brain barrier. Intoxication not only interferes with neural communication, it also causes brain shrinkage, nutritional deficiencies, and heavy use raises the risk of strokes. It is further linked to depression, blackouts and head injuries, all of which impair brain health.

**Cognitive activity** — Puzzles, memory exercises and other mentally stimulating tasks help build new neural connections to replace broken ones. Learning languages, listening to new music, taking different walking routes, and following up on our curiosity can protect cognitive health.

**Protective diet** — A diet high in vegetables, fruit, dairy, fish and nuts is beneficial. For example, antioxidants like anthocyanins protect from inflammation and can be found in blueberries, cherries, dark carrots, and red cabbage. Flavonoids are another antioxidant and can be found in fruit and vegetables including onions, green chili peppers, grapefruit and blackberries.<sup>3</sup> Omega 3 fatty acids (wild salmon, sardines) also have shown positive results.

**Regular sleep** — Numerous studies connect poor sleep to cognitive impairment including higher risk of Alzheimer’s disease.<sup>4</sup> Getting eight hours of sleep (but not more than nine hours) is considered important, so regular bedtimes and awakenings can help. Putting away video screens and turning off the lights also are important.

**Social networks** — Connecting with other people is vital, whether with families, church groups, book clubs, or cultural events.<sup>5</sup> Gleaner arbors are one way to protect mental health while building our communities and fighting isolation (a risk factor in mental decline).

**A sense of purpose in life** — Identifying your purpose and having clear goals is tied to enjoying better cognitive health.<sup>6</sup> Knowing we make a difference can help fend off aimlessness and depression.

“If you’re overwhelmed by where to start, lowering blood pressure and increasing physical and mental activity appear to have the greatest benefit, but all are helpful,” Smith advises. “As Dr. Singh suggested, choose one risk factor to address and then take it step by step.” This could be as basic as swapping water for sugary drinks, taking a daily walk, or beginning a new hobby.

## Caregivers can’t do it alone

Another facet of dementia involves caregiving. Although the risks of dementia can be mitigated, there is no cure. People who care for others face many challenges while carrying out a rewarding responsibility. They may deal with physical and emotional exhaustion, a high financial burden, and often experience a lack of self-care. “This contributes to chronic health conditions and a notably higher mortality rate, even for healthy caregivers,” Smith

noted. “While I am all for prevention, the impact of caring for someone who has Alzheimer’s/dementia is undeniably huge.” Some ways to help:

- Educate yourself about dementia to help prepare and manage care for yourself and your loved one. Some helpful groups include the Alzheimer’s Association, AARP (they have information and help online; you do not have to be a member), the V.A. has support services if your loved one is a veteran, and your local Council or Area on Aging. Your area may also have local volunteers, including through a church. Some support services may be available through medical insurance as well.
- Join a support group — whether online or in-person if able. If struggling as a caregiver, please seek and ask for help.
- Maintain regular updates with other loved ones. Dementia is often described as “the long goodbye,” but it can be a fulfilling journey for family and friends.
- It is important for caregivers to establish predictable schedules. Having a routine reduces confusion and anxiety for people with dementia.
- Utilize activities. These might include your loved one’s old photo albums, favorite music, or time in a garden.

Take a minute and think about your future. Identify why you want to remain mentally strong for others, and begin making those positive changes now. It isn’t easy, but you are not alone.



<sup>1</sup> <https://www.nbcnewyork.com/news/business/money-report/brain-health-experts-top-3-tips-for-lowering-your-risk-of-dementia-stroke-and-depression-all-at-the-same-time/6249256/>

<sup>2</sup> [www.medicalnewstoday.com/articles/just-5-minutes-physical-activity-day-may-protect-brain-health-aging](http://www.medicalnewstoday.com/articles/just-5-minutes-physical-activity-day-may-protect-brain-health-aging)

<sup>3</sup> [www.health.harvard.edu/blog/can-flavonoids-help-fend-off-forgetfulness-202109172596](http://www.health.harvard.edu/blog/can-flavonoids-help-fend-off-forgetfulness-202109172596)

<sup>4</sup> <https://pmc.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/articles/PMC10155483/>

<sup>5</sup> [www.thelancet.com/journals/lanhl/article/PIIS2666-7568\(22\)00217-3/fulltext](http://www.thelancet.com/journals/lanhl/article/PIIS2666-7568(22)00217-3/fulltext)

<sup>6</sup> <https://pmc.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/articles/PMC10884354/>

## 50-YEAR MEMBERS

### Arkansas

Marianne Vere, *Russellville*

### Illinois

Patricia A. Jaskowiak, *Joliet*

Travis Lee Love, *Ottawa*

Beverly A. Root, *Avon*

### Indiana

Scott D. Zimmerman, *Remus*

### Michigan

James R. Brummel, *Yorkville*

Victor A. Freed, *Reed City*

Rodney D. Hinkle, *Greenville*

Mary Jane Kosmalski, *Mussey*

Linda Kay Ludgin, *Saginaw*

### Ohio

Philip F. Avina, *Bowling Green*

### Texas

Jean Louise Lawson, *Prosper*



### Did you find the wheat stalk?

In this issue of *Forum Magazine*, the wheat stalk is hidden on **Page 12**.

## 75-YEAR MEMBERS

### Alabama

Charles E. Baird, *Boaz*

### Arizona

James M. Ruettiger, *Mesa*

### Florida

Deann N. Abshagen, *Hudson*

Janice Ellen Lickly, *Frostproof*

### Kansas

Sandra K. Gray, *Leawood*

### Illinois

Larry Bork, *Jacksonville*

Ruth A. Pesack, *Shorewood*

Susan Pfau, *Serena*

Wm. J. Surprenant, *Chebance*

### Indiana

Jackie E. Duncan, *Schneider*

Robert J. Hannon Jr., *Portage*

Larry G. Spry, *Lowell*

### Michigan

William C. Ewers, *Tekonsha*

Mary Etta Fowler, *Saint Joseph*

Mary M. Harwood, *Lansing*

Peter C. Manning, *DeWitt*

Kirk D. Miller, *Mount Pleasant*

Margot L. Sanford, *Bangor*

Deanna S. Stamp, *Marlette*

### Ohio

Patricia Mae Baker, *Cleveland*

Rex Decker, *Maumee*

Jo Ann Echler, *Wauseon*

John A. Gadzialski, *Wauseon*

Carol Ann Harlow, *Oak Harbor*

Bette Hudnutt, *Plain City*

### South Carolina

Nadine Denkins, *Kershaw*

### Texas

Douglas M. Baysinger Sr., *Sugar Land*

William E. Engel, *Austin*



# SUMMER



CHUCK



BETTY



MABEL

Summer has arrived, and with it, Mabel has been officially unleashed on the outside world. Every walk is an expedition. Every leaf, stick, and bug holds potential. Everything must be sniffed, chased, or questioned.

Birds, in particular, were very puzzling. They defy gravity. They chirp. They vanish into the sky like magic — they must be carefully observed. Or how can fish and frogs live under the water? Doesn't the water go up their noses too? You can watch her trying to make sense of everything she encounters. She has approached the lake cautiously but she's warming up to it. Her world is one of discovery, and she's meeting it nose first.

Betty, meanwhile, is in her element. She runs. She swims. She fetches. And in between all of that, she languishes in the direct sun for long, worshipful naps. There is no doubt: summer was made for Betty.

Mabel doesn't fetch, exactly. But she's happy to chase Betty when she goes after the ball. She runs with the long, graceful strides of a deer and often leaps over her siblings. Her goal is less about retrieval and more about chaos. She thrives on the pursuit of her sister and the possibility of stealing the prize at the last second.

Chuck, however, continues to remain above it all. He's

adopted the persona of a refined gentleman who just happens to live with two dogs. He'll retrieve a ball if it lands within a hop or two. Otherwise, he'll just give us a side-eyed glance and stay put. Barking? That's for other creatures. Chuck alerts us to danger (real or imagined) with a deliberate huff, then stares at us with the quiet confidence of someone who just saved our lives. "You're welcome," he seems to nod.

The pontoon has become our floating sanctuary. It's the one place where Mabel — our little whirlwind — actually lies down and rests. The rocking of the boat lulls her into peaceful naps, while Betty scans the water for her next splash and Chuck resumes his duties as first mate, keeping watch for other boats and maintaining order from his throne.

Outside of our own pack, I continue volunteering at the Lenawee Humane Society. It's rewarding, emotional work — full of wagging tails and hopeful eyes. The hard part is walking away without bringing another one home. We're capped at three dogs (for now), but I encourage anyone considering a pet to look into a rescue. Other than Chuck, who believes that he rescued us, it seems like all of our rescues have truly

# FUN

appreciated the loving home we've given them. The Humane Society is a wonderful place to start, but there are also many fosters, breed-specific rescues, and local networks that help match dogs with good homes.

Watching Mabel explore, Betty sprint and swim, and Chuck silently judge them both has made this summer especially sweet. They remind us that joy can be as simple as warm sunshine, a gentle summer breeze, and the love of a rescue dog — preferably one who huffs instead of barks.



*Andrea*

Andrea Warner

*Wife of President and CEO Todd Warner*

[www.gleanerlife.org](http://www.gleanerlife.org)

## recipe file

### Ice Cream Sandwich Summer Stack

#### Ingredients:

- 2 cartons Cool Whip (thawed)
- 20 ice cream sandwiches (approximately)
- Chocolate syrup
- Caramel syrup
- Top as desired
  - Heath toffee bits
  - Colored sprinkles
  - Mini M&M's
  - Crushed Oreos
  - Sliced almonds
  - Get creative!



#### Directions:

1. In a 9x13-inch pan, unwrap and layer approximately 10 ice cream sandwiches side by side to cover the bottom.
2. Spread one carton of Cool Whip evenly over the sandwiches.
3. Drizzle generously with chocolate and caramel syrups.
4. Repeat with a second layer: another 10 ice cream sandwiches, the remaining Cool Whip, and more syrup.
5. Sprinkle your topping of choice over the top for an extra crunch.

Cover and place in the freezer until firm. Store frozen and serve cold — perfect for hot summer days!

Note: Most ingredients are available in sugar-free or reduced-sugar versions — making it both indulgent and adaptable!

# BENNY'S PAGE

## Hey, Kids!

Summer has arrived! While you're busy enjoying everything about summer, don't forget to slow down and take in the beauty of nature all around you! I love to pick flowers, dig for worms and catch lightning bugs. What are some of your favorite activities? From water balloon fights to arts and crafts and visiting amusement parks, there is always something fun and exciting.

After playing outside in the summer I like to enjoy a cold drink or treat. Popsicles are one of my favorite summer treats. I especially love the ones I make myself. They are very simple to make. You need popsicle molds (look at dollar stores for affordable options), Sprite or lemonade, and your favorite gummy candy. I like to use gummy bears and worms!

Simply fill the popsicle molds about halfway full with your gummy candy and then pour the Sprite or lemonade on top. These delicious and fun treats take a while to freeze so I like to make them at night so they're ready the next day.

I hope you enjoy the rest of your summer break!

Take care!

**BENNY**

The Benevolent Lion





# Gleaner's Blueprint

Whole Life Series™

## Durability designed for your lifetime deserves a Blueprint

A well-designed home is not built by accident. It requires planning to fit your lifetime desires, plus flexibility to accommodate change. Life insurance to help meet your needs also requires careful planning.

Gleaner's Blueprint Whole Life Series™ gives you the permanence of whole life insurance, guaranteed cash value, dividends, plus the flexibility of options to suit your family:

- A level-premium option with three ways to pay: 10-year pay, 20-year pay, and paid up at age 100.
- Subject to underwriting approval, level-premium riders are available at an additional cost and include a guaranteed insurability option to add coverage in the future regardless of your health, and waiver of premium in case you become permanently disabled.
- Blueprint Single-Premium Whole Life is a simple solution that establishes immediate cash value and becomes a potential legacy for loved ones or charitable organizations.

Whether you prefer the simplicity of a one-time, single premium payment or to pay for your plan over time, Gleaner's Blueprint Whole Life Series™ is designed for your needs. For more information, contact your Gleaner agent listed on the back of this publication or visit [www.gleanerlife.org](http://www.gleanerlife.org).

Gleaner Life Insurance Society is domiciled in Michigan and licensed in AZ, FL, GA, IA, IL, IN, KS, KY, MI, MO, NC, NE, OH, PA, SC, TN, VA, WI and WV. Blueprint Single-Premium Whole Life form number: ICC21-SPWL with state-specific variations. Blueprint Level-Premium Whole Life form number: ICC21-WL with state-specific variations.

*\* Benefits received from these riders are subject to the terms and conditions specified in the certificate.*

### Product features

#### Whole life options:

- Blueprint Single-Premium Whole Life
- Blueprint Level-Premium Whole Life
  - 10-year pay
  - 20-year pay
  - Paid-up at age 100

#### Issue ages:

- 0 to 80 (10-year pay)
- 0 to 75 (20-year pay)
- 0 to 85 (Paid-up at age 100; single-premium)

#### Minimum face amount:

- \$25,000 (ages 0-49)
- \$10,000 (ages 50 and above)

**Maximum face amount:** None  
(subject to Home Office approval)

**Living Benefit Riders\*:**  
Chronic Illness Rider, Critical Illness Rider, Terminal Illness Rider

**Additional level-premium riders:** Guaranteed Insurability Option, Waiver of Premium

**Dividend options:**  
Paid-up additions (default), paid in cash

**Additional level-premium dividend options:**  
Reduce premium, accumulate with interest

# Gleaner

Life Insurance Society

5200 West U.S. Highway 223, P.O. Box 1894  
Adrian, Michigan 49221-7894

## Get involved with an Arbor!

Be the change and make a difference in your community! Arbors (the Gleaner term for our service groups) give members a way to connect, funding for local projects, ideas for outreach, and the organization to multiply your efforts.

To find an existing arbor near you, visit [www.gleanerlife.org/arbors](http://www.gleanerlife.org/arbors) or, if you don't have one nearby, you can start an arbor. We're changing to make that easier than ever! To learn more visit [www.gleanerlife.org/startanarbor](http://www.gleanerlife.org/startanarbor) or email [communityengagement@gleanerlife.org](mailto:communityengagement@gleanerlife.org).

