



HARVARD REST HAVEN THE HARVARD HOUSE

Quarterly Newsletter

January 2026

From the Administrator's Desk

Happy New Year!!!! I have been reflecting back on the last three months that I have been in Harvard working as the Administrator and have been able to get to know some wonderful people, from residents, staff, family members, community members, and friends. Everyone has been very welcoming and wonderful. It does feel like home and is where I was supposed to be.

I would also like to thank everyone for the support that has been given to Harvard Rest Haven during the past holiday season. All the time that staff put in for the work on the Christmas Party, family members attending, community support, and the donations that were provided so that the Christmas party was such a success.

As we go into the New Year, hope to make more great memories, meet new people, and keep your family members and friends happy and safe in their home at Harvard Rest Haven and The Harvard House.

“The best and most beautiful things in the world cannot be seen or even touched – they must be felt with the heart.”
— Helen Keller

Audrey Perez, Administrator

Two residents were chatting about Valentine's Day.

Marge said, “I got a box of chocolates from a secret admirer!”

Helen squinted and replied, “Honey, that wasn’t a secret admirer...

that was the box you hid from yourself last week.”

**Thank you to all of our
Volunteers**

Luana VanCampen for doing Nail Care, and Reminisce and Trivia;

Gina Bowden for doing Bible Study;

Patty Joy and the High School Choir for Caroling;

The Methodist church ladies and UCC church for Caroling;

Dan Krel for playing saxophone and Christmas music for our residents;

Pastor Dave Johnson for doing worship, last supper and spiritual visits.

Pastor Dan Albers for doing worship, and spiritual visits.

Father Hoesing for doing worship and spiritual visits

Nursing Department

National Blood Donor Month: A Gift That Saves Lives

Every January, we recognize **National Blood Donor Month**, a time dedicated to raising awareness about the importance of blood donation and honoring the selfless individuals who give this lifesaving gift. Blood donation plays a critical role in health care, supporting patients of all ages. From those undergoing surgeries and cancer treatments to individuals facing medical emergencies.

Why Blood Donation Matters

Blood cannot be manufactured; it can only come from generous donors. Every two seconds, someone in the United States needs blood, and a single donation can help save up to three lives. Winter months are often especially challenging for blood supplies due to severe weather, seasonal illnesses, and fewer donation opportunities, making January a crucial time for awareness and action.

A Meaningful Connection to Long-Term Care

In long-term care communities, many residents have firsthand experience with the importance of blood donations. Blood transfusions are often essential for managing chronic conditions, supporting recovery from surgery, or treating serious illnesses. This makes National Blood Donor Month particularly meaningful. It highlights how acts of generosity directly impact the health and well-being of our residents, friends, and families.

How You Can Get Involved

While not everyone is eligible to donate blood, there are many ways to support this important cause:

- **Donate blood** if you are able and meet eligibility requirements
- **Encourage family and friends** to consider donating
- **Volunteer** at local blood drives or donation centers
- **Help spread awareness** by sharing information about the ongoing need for donors

A Thank You to Blood Donors

We extend our heartfelt gratitude to all blood donors. Your compassion and willingness to help others make a lasting difference in countless lives. National Blood Donor Month is a powerful reminder that even a small act of kindness can have an extraordinary impact.

Together, let's take a moment this month to recognize the importance of blood donation and celebrate the everyday heroes who make it possible.

Betty Ledezma, DON

Tina Buerer, ADON

Resident Care Coordinator, AL

Hello! I would like to introduce myself. My name is Irenna Romero and I took on the role of the Resident Care Coordinator at The Harvard House in November. I was born and raised in Grand Island and still reside there. I am married to my middle school sweetheart and we have three beautiful kids together. We have 2 boys who are almost 11 and 8 and recently had our Babygirl in September.

I went to Bellevue University and received my Bachelor's degree in Healthcare Management and graduated in January. I am still very new at this but I do take pride in my work and enjoy getting feedback from staff and residents.

In my spare time, I like to spend it with my family whether it is going to soccer games or Judo. In the summer we go to the lakes to fish and camp. Being together is what is important to me.

As the days become shorter and crisp air settles in, there is a certain magic that comes with the changing seasons. When the world slows down and the hustle fades, there's an irreplaceable comfort in being surrounded by family. It's in those cozy, intimate moments-whether gathered around the dinner table or simply sitting together-that we create lasting memories. With the days shorter, the warmth of family becomes a reminder to savor the present, cherish the connections we have, and be grateful for the shared moments that bring joy, laughter, and a sense of belonging.

Irenna Romero, Resident Care Coordinator

Business Office

As we step into February, I want to share a few important updates affecting our facility — plus a little personal note from me. There's a lot happening in long-term care across Nebraska, and keeping you informed is one of my favorite parts of this job.

Local & State Updates Affecting Nursing Homes

Across Nebraska, long-term care communities continue to navigate staffing shortages, rising operating costs, and ongoing regulatory changes. Rural facilities like ours feel these shifts especially strongly, but we remain committed to stability, quality care, and open communication. We may be a small town, but we're mighty — and we work hard every day to keep things running smoothly for your loved ones.

Minimum Wage Increase

Nebraska's minimum wage increased on January 1st, part of the statewide wage schedule approved by voters. We fully support fair wages for our hardworking staff — they deserve every bit of it — but this change does increase operating costs for facilities like ours. Think of it as the state's way of saying, "Your caregivers are superheroes, pay them like it," and honestly... they're not wrong.

Rate Increase Effective February 1st

By now, you should have received a letter explaining our rate increase effective February 1st. If you're like most people, you probably opened it with the same enthusiasm as a jury duty notice — and that's okay. Rate adjustments are never fun, but they are necessary to keep up with rising costs, maintain staffing levels, and continue providing the high-quality care your loved ones deserve. If you ever want to go over your billing statement or talk through how rates are determined, I'm always here to help (and I promise to make it as painless as possible).

A Personal Note

On a lighter note, I recently took a little break and traveled — first to Las Vegas, then to Florida. I came back with a tan, a suitcase full of sand, and a very rude awakening from Nebraska weather. Let's just say going from palm trees to wind chills should count as its own form of jet lag. It was wonderful to recharge, but even better to return to our residents and families with fresh energy. 

Thank you for your continued trust and partnership. Our residents mean the world to us, and keeping you informed is one of the most important parts of my job. Please reach out anytime with questions about billing, insurance, or anything else I can help with — I'm only a phone call away.

Sharon Ryan, Office Manager

Dietary Department

Happy Winter from the Dietary Staff!

We've been enjoying a variety of fun winter-themed food activities, including a Hot Cocoa Social with finger foods, hands-on cooking classes, and interactive mealtimes. Residents especially love our pizza-making class, where they get to create their own personal pizzas. Staff and residents also enjoy family-style dining with friends.

We recently held a soup tasting, offering up to five different kinds of soups along with new sandwich ideas. Top picks included oyster and zuppa soups, chili, taco, and chicken noodle, as well as pinwheels and pastrami with provolone sandwiches. The taco soup recipe—suggested by our own Reagan—was a big hit.

Our residents love being social and helping prepare treats for everyone to enjoy. If you have any favorite recipes for soups, finger sandwiches, or yummy desserts, we'd love for you to share them.

Taco soup by Tami

Ingredients:

- 1lb of hamburger
- 2 cans pinto beans
- 1 can Hormel chili (no beans)
- 1 can stewed tomatoes
- 1 can milk rote tomatoes
- 1lb Velveeta

Directions: Mix together until all blended, serve with sour cream and Fritos.

Robee Karash, Dietary Manager

Social Services Department

Supporting the Whole Person: The Role of Social Work in Our Nursing Home

When people think about nursing homes, they often picture medical care that includes nurses, therapy, medications, and doctors' visits. While those services are essential, there is another equally important part of care that focuses on emotional well-being, adjustment, and quality of life. That is where social work comes in.

As the social worker here at our facility, my role is to support residents and families through the many changes that can come with aging, illness, or a move into long-term care. These transitions can be challenging, and it is completely normal to experience a wide range of emotions along the way.

Supporting Residents

One of my primary responsibilities is to support residents emotionally and socially. This may include helping someone adjust to a new living environment, cope with health changes, or process feelings such as anxiety, sadness, or grief. I spend time getting to know residents, their life stories, preferences, strengths, and concerns so that care can be as individualized and meaningful as possible.

I also help residents advocate for themselves. Whether it's addressing concerns, understanding care plans, or communicating needs to the care team, my goal is to ensure every resident feels heard, respected, and empowered.

Partnering With Families

Families play an essential role in a resident's life, and transitions to nursing home care can be emotional for loved ones as well. I work closely with families to provide education, support, and guidance. This may involve helping families understand the adjustment process, navigate difficult decisions, or access community resources.

I am always available to listen to concerns, answer questions, and help families feel more comfortable and confident about their loved one's care. Open communication and partnership are key to providing the best possible support.

Care Planning and Advocacy

Social work is an important part of the interdisciplinary care team. I collaborate with nursing, therapy, dietary, activities, and medical staff to help develop care plans that address not only physical needs, but emotional, social, and psychosocial well-being as well.

This includes assisting with care conferences, discharge planning, advance care planning, and connecting residents and families with appropriate services. Advocacy is at the heart of social work, and I strive to ensure that each resident's wishes and values are respected.

Here to Help

If you are a resident or family member and have questions, concerns, or simply need someone to talk to, please know that social services is here for you. No concern is too small, and conversations are always confidential.

Our goal is to support not just health, but dignity, comfort, and quality of life. It is a privilege to work with the residents and families in our community, and I look forward to continuing to support you in way I can.

Yesenia Hernandez, Social Services Director

This or That?

Residents can circle their favorites – great conversation starter

Hot cocoa or hot tea

Snowman or snow angel

Chili or chicken noodle

Mittens or gloves

Western movie or football game

Pizza night or soup tasting

Activities Department

As we end 2025 and as the calendar turned to January 2026. We unfold with its fresh beginnings, we're all looking for that fresh start and January is the perfect time to reset and refocus. We reflect on the memories we made in past year successes as we set new goals, fresh starts, healthy habits, building momentum for healthier more organized and more joyful year ahead.

Thinking of January everyone thinks of winter, coziness, snow, hot chocolate, hibernation, healthy habits, and Martin Luther King Jr Day (Jan 19th)

January is the 1st month of the year. January is also known to be the coldest month in the northern hemisphere and warmest in the southern hemisphere. We have had some warmer weather especially with it being January lately.

January's flower in the carnation.

January birthstone in the garnet.

Some fun facts:

Your blood makes up about 8 percent of your body weight.

Octopuses have 3 hearts and blue blood.

Hot water can freeze faster than cold water.

Honey never spoils

Pineapples take up to 2 years to grow.

The average person blinks 14-17 times per minute.

Human teeth are the only part of the body that can't heal themselves.

The Caesar Salad was invented in 1924.

I also want to take the time to thank everyone that donated to our Family/ Resident Christmas party raffle. We Raised \$641.00, between both SNF and AL. This money will be put into the activities department to help with supplies, entertainment, etc. We appreciate each and every one that donated to this.

Melissa Schumm, Activities Director

Laundry Department

As you all know I am also the Laundry Supervisor and took this role over almost a year ago-February 2025. Inventory Sheets.

I have worked hard in this department on updating your loved one's inventory sheets and also marking new articles of clothing and getting them added to inventory. We just had Christmas and have had several new residents lately. With this I have several articles of unmarked clothing that I will continue to work on trying to find the owner of and this is constant. With this I just want to put a reminder out there if you're bringing in or taking out articles of clothing, pictures, or your loved one's things that is on their inventory sheets I need to know so that we can update inventory sheets to match what they have here at the facility. It is very hard for me to justify if your loved one had or has something if it is not on inventory so I am asking for your help with this.

Melissa Schumm, Laundry Supervisor

Housekeeping Department

Dear Residents, Families, and Team,

As we turn the page to 2026, our housekeeping team is excited to keep our home sparkling, safe, and welcoming for everyone. For the safety and comfort of our residents and team, please help keep walkways, hallways, and doorways free of clutter to ensure safe movement for all. Your comfort is our priority. If you have any suggestions or requests to make our space even better, please share them with the Housekeeping Supervisor.

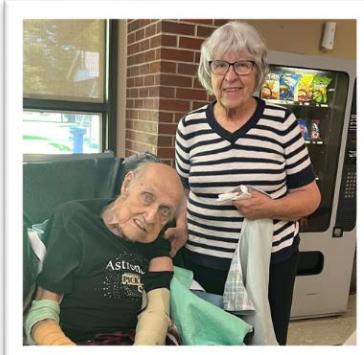
Here is to a clean, cozy, and joyful 2026.

Ascha Schumm Housekeeping Supervisor

Pumpkin Patch



Soup and Sandwich Tasting



Reagan's Baby Shower



Dietary Week



Christmas Party





Cookie Decorating



Soup Making



More Christmas with Santa



Employee of the Quarter

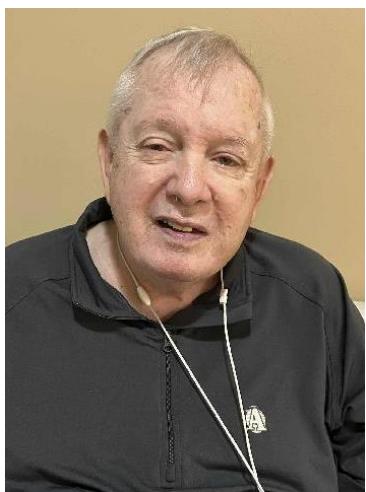
Harlinee Galaviz

Harlinee has worked at Harvard Rest Haven for 5 years. She started with us during the pandemic. She enjoys working with her coworkers here.



Resident of the Quarter Nursing Home

Darrell Brown



Darrell Brown grew up in Washta, Iowa, where he attended school through the eighth grade. He is one of five children, with siblings Rita, Mike, Jim, and Rosa. As a young man, Darrell helped his dad in the family grocery store and later spent six months assisting his grandparents in Sioux City. He also worked for a year on a farm in Bancroft, Nebraska, and helped bale hay for farmers around Quimby, Iowa.

Darrell learned how to repair washing machines while helping at his dad's laundromats. He became quite skilled at taking the machines apart, diagnosing the problem, and putting them back together again. His abilities extended beyond mechanics—at one point in his life, Darrell spoke to various groups in Cherokee, Iowa, advocating for job training and independent-living opportunities for people with mental disabilities.

He has always lived by his mother's mantra: "Where there's a will, there's a way." When Darrell set his mind on something, he found a way to make it happen, no matter what others thought.

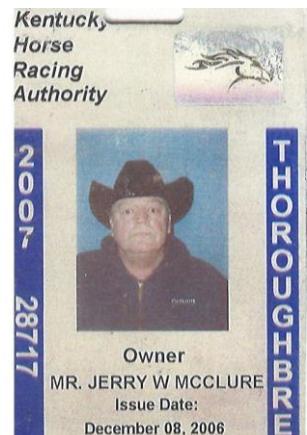
Darrell enjoys western movies, cheering on Nebraska football, and playing games—especially Rummikub with his sister Rita. He also loves to dance and spent years involved in square dancing, even when it meant driving long distances just to join in. These are only a few highlights of Darrell's remarkable life journey.

Resident of the Quarter Assisted Living

Jerry McClure

Jerry was born on July 31, 1949, in Indianapolis, Indiana. He graduated from high school in 1967 and went on to work for 35 years with the State of Indiana Board of Animal Health. He and a friend are licensed Thoroughbred racehorse trainers and owners.

Jerry moved to Harvard in 2017 and transitioned to assisted living in April 2025. He finds the apartments very comfortable, especially with meals included. He is a six-year Army veteran with no regrets and enjoys living here close to family.

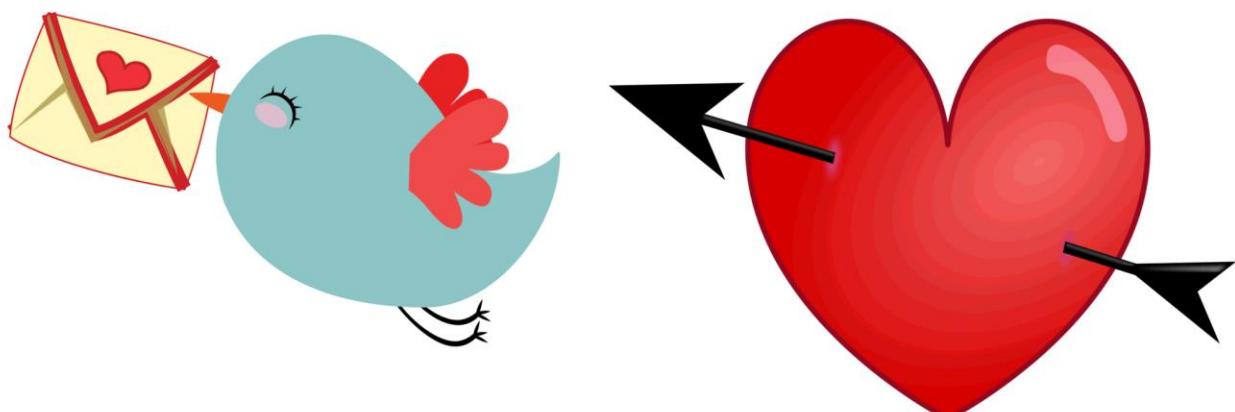


Valentine's Word Search

D	W	R	E	L	O	V	E	H	F
Q	A	Y	O	M	U	W	L	R	L
R	C	R	E	M	B	Y	U	I	I
O	U	C	L	D	A	R	K	S	R
S	P	H	R	I	S	N	A	O	T
E	I	E	F	U	N	W	T	C	H
Z	D	R	Z	U	S	G	X	I	E
F	R	I	E	N	D	H	Q	N	C
B	W	S	C	R	A	Z	Y	J	C
I	K	H	H	U	G	J	B	Z	U

Word list:

- CHERISH
- CRAZY
- CRUSH
- CUPID
- DARLING
- EMBRACE
- FLIRT
- FRIEND
- HUG
- LOVE
- ROMANTIC
- ROSE



HAPPY BIRTHDAY!

January

Cari Hankins – 1/2
Jaden Claycamp – 1/4
Diane Steffen – 1/11
Deborah Groshans – 1/21
Tracie Goebel – 1/28



February

Lyle Leichleiter – 2/1
Tom Morran – 2/2
Harlinee Galaviz – 2/4
Jenna Bergen – 2/5
Ted Hermann – 2/18



March

Gloria Tagge – 3/1
Arlette Elshof – 3/7
Tina Buerer – 3/11
Alicia Rehbein – 3/12
Dean Hansen – 3/14
TJ Gaughen – 3/17
Diana Ortega Diaz – 3/27
Mely Tsao Luna – 3/30



🍴 ❤️ Valentine's Chocolate-Covered Strawberries

A classic treat that feels fancy but takes just minutes to make.

Ingredients

- 1 pound fresh strawberries (washed and completely dry)
- 1 cup semi-sweet chocolate chips or melting chocolate
- 1 tablespoon coconut oil or shortening (optional for smoother dipping)
- Optional decorations: white chocolate drizzle, sprinkles, crushed nuts, mini chocolate chips

Instructions

1. Line a baking sheet with parchment paper.
2. Melt the chocolate in the microwave in 20-second bursts, stirring until smooth.
3. Stir in the coconut oil if using — it makes the chocolate glossy and easier to dip.
4. Hold each strawberry by the stem and dip it into the melted chocolate, letting the excess drip off.
5. Place the dipped strawberries on the parchment paper.
6. For a festive touch, drizzle melted white chocolate over the top or add sprinkles while the chocolate is still wet.
7. Chill in the refrigerator for 20–30 minutes until the chocolate is set.

Audrey Perez, Administrator

Betty Ledezma, RN DON

Tina Buerer, LPN, ADON

Irenna Romero, RCC, AL

Sharon Ryan, Office Manager

Elia Ledezma, RN, IP, Staff Development

Yesenia Hernandez, Social Services Director

Nick Brown, Maintenance Supervisor

Robee Karash, Dietary Manager

Ascha Schumm, Housekeeping Supervisor

Melissa Schumm, Activities Director / Laundry Supervisor

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