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L. Wilbur Messer Chapter Celebrating 80 Years of Fellowship

Messer First Monday - December

I open this edition of First Monday with the hope that each of you are finding enjoyment and grace in the many traditions of Christmas that you and your family enjoy. Decorating, baking, shopping, visiting and preparing consume so much of our time. It also seems like it is the time where many new or important "year-end" activities and needs fill our lives, mailboxes, and calendars. Enjoy your plans and your family and take a moment to reflect on the reason for our celebration.

Messer was well represented as many of us took time to celebrate the life of **John O'Melia** and learn about his impact on the world, the YMCA, his church, and most of all his family. A beautiful service was held a few weeks ago. Since then, I have learned that his dear wife **Marty** has now also passed, to join John in everlasting married life. At John's service the pastor reflected on the road less traveled, the narrow path that is so important, lonely and seldom used that bring to all great benefit and personal joy. John's eight grandchildren each provided moving memories of their grandfather and one "family secret. Daughter Carol sent it to us:

Grandparent to Grandfather.

*"What children need most are the essentials that grandfathers provide in abundance. They give unconditional love, kindness, patience, humor, comfort, and lessons of life. And most importantly, cookies."
Yes, he did truly love his cookies!*

In just a few days we will be enjoying our **80th Christmas Party, at The Meadows in Glen Ellyn, Illinois**. This is always a wonderful event and I enjoy starting the holiday season with the festive party and great friends. I am looking forward to this fellowship, uplifting entertainment and a great luncheon.

I have heard from two more members who are mending at this time. First **Bob Rhodes** suffered a stroke on November 16th and is now home to mend. Please remember **Bob and Mary** in your prayers. Also, **Marilyn and Jim Burdett** were involved in an auto accident over the Thanksgiving holiday. Jim is at home and letting bruises heal, but Marilyn is now residing at Wynscape for about 10 weeks as she recovers and receives therapy for 4 broken ribs and a broken knee. Remember them as well. I will have cards at the Christmas Party for you to sign. Their addresses and phone numbers are:

Jim and Mary Rhodes, 2315 Arquilla Drive, Downers Grove, IL 60515; 630-969-828

Marilyn Burdette, Wynscape Rehabilitation Center Room 2205, 2180 W. Manchester Rd, Wheaton, IL 60187; 630-681-4205

I want to thank **Jerry Prado Shaw** for sponsoring a table of Messer members at the Naperville YMCA's Mayors Prayer Breakfast last Friday. **Jerry, Martha Prado, Pat Nelson, Bill and Mary Glenn, Mary Tikalsky, Mike Bussey, and I** attended this inspirational event with Clark Baker, of the Houston YMCA speaking.



Pat Nelson will be preparing the next edition of Messer News Notes, following the Christmas Party, in January. Please send him a note or email with news of your holiday, winter travel plans, snowbird addresses, and of course feel welcome and encouraged to include a Christmas Photo to Share. We will also be listing the major Chapter events and dates for 2012 in that issue of Messer News Notes as well as any other dates appropriate for the January to May time period.

Thank you for sending your dues and contributions in to **Larry Hemdal** as we prepare for the New Year. If you haven't returned his billing yet, your prompt response will be appreciated. In addition, we are coming along well on the support of the Remembering Project but could certainly use your support as well. Please take a moment to review the special brochure and consider your pledge or gift. This is a really special part of our mission of working with our chapters retirees and capturing their career experiences.

Please continue to keep our members **Paul Broulette, Len Hollenbeck, Marilyn Burdett, Jim Rhodes, and Jean Bedgar** in your thoughts and prayers. A card or call is always appropriate.

Jean and I wish you all a most **Merry of Christmases**. Enjoy your holiday with friends, neighbors, and each other. I also wish you a very **Happy New Year** for 2012. Add a resolution this holiday **to attend at least one Messer event, or at least one more Messer event**. We are a unique gathering of retirees from one of the most beneficial and unique service agencies on earth. We were formed by **Sir George Williams** to serve others, and we were called to our career to carry out that charge. Thanks for you all! I am grateful to belong to our **Messer Chapter**