

'Just One' of Claude Ogle



His name is Claude Ogle Sr., but “it’s Mr. Life Care to you!” And with that declaration, he leans back in his chair, flashing a broad and infectious grin.

Upon which, he adds, “There’s just one of me. Just one!”

He’s right about that. Today, Mr. Life Care – an official title bestowed by Life Care Center of Cleveland, Tennessee – is being honored in a birthday celebration attracting visits, cards and letters from dignitaries in business, government, religion, health care and, of course, the media. He turns 101 on Monday, Feb. 22, but this afternoon was deemed a better day to draw a crowd.

One salute he is receiving is from Tennessee Gov. Bill Haslam, who sent a certificate that says Ogle, “... in recognition of achieving 101 years of age, is hereby accorded this Centenarian Award with sincere congratulations and best wishes from the people of Tennessee.”

Ogle’s agile mind and sharp wit bring on bursts of laughter in conversation. He can draw on a storehouse of stories, and he delights in telling them. Life Care associates attending the 2015 annual management meeting were treated to a [“Daily Dose”](#) video from Mr. Life Care, and got to see him in person on the closing day.

Examples abound of men and women who have turned 100 and are enjoying life. Peg Stearns, 105, a resident of Life Care Center of Wilbraham, Massachusetts, was featured in the *Springfield Republican* on Jan. 14 of this year. A retired nurse, she just had her 124-page book, *My Journey of a Century*, published on Dec. 30 of last year. By using a tape recorder, Susan Waters, a former staff development coordinator at Life Care Center of Wilbraham, helped Stearns tell the story of her life. Dennis Lopata, executive director at the facility, said Stearns has “an unbelievable memory.”

I will always remember with fondness Nyleptha Roberts, a former resident at Life Care Center of Sparta, Tennessee, who lived to be 112. She served two to three times a week as the facility’s librarian and made soap fish to give to guests. She, too, loved to tell jokes and to make people laugh.



(more)

McKnight's Long-Term Care News recently reported that the number of centenarians – people who live past 100 years old – has increased by 44 percent since 2000, according to federal health officials.

More than 72,000 people age 100 and older lived in the United States in 2014, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention said. That's up from 50,281 in centenarians in 2000, and around just 15,000 in 1980. Women make up the majority of those who live past 100, representing more than 80 percent of centenarians in 2014, the report found.

The report also noted that death rates for those older than 100 have slowed over the past six years, thanks in part to advances in health care, a bigger emphasis on health and well-being, and better training for healthcare professionals who care for the elderly.

Heart disease has remained the leading cause of death among those over 100, the report found. Alzheimer's disease became the second-leading cause with a 119 percent increase in deaths since 2000. Death rates for influenza, pneumonia and stroke have all fallen over the past 14 years, the CDC noted.

But get this: Experts expect the number of centenarians to continue to skyrocket in the coming years, as baby boomers age.

So Claude Ogle's tribe will continue to increase.

When asked if he has lived in Cleveland all his life, his quick and enthusiastic response is, "Not yet!"

The righteous flourish like the palm tree and grow like a cedar in Lebanon. They are planted in the house of the Lord; they flourish in the courts of our God. They still bear fruit in old age; they are ever full of sap and green, to declare that the Lord is upright; He is my rock, and there is no unrighteousness in Him (Psalm 92:12-15 ESV).

– Beecher Hunter

