

**Best of the Best 2019 “Our funeral home’s 125<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration”****1) Rationale behind the idea:**

The Perry Hannah House, the Jonkhoff family-owned funeral home in Traverse City since 1976, was poised to mark the 125<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Traverse City’s founding father’s retirement home. We had a 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration 25 years prior, but this year we wanted to have one too with the additional educational twist of a “Leadership Lessons Learned” essay scholarship contest. This educational opportunity helped inspire future leaders and encouraged reading about our region’s rich heritage. This contest was coordinated by the co-authors (Peg Jonkhoff and Fred Hoisington) of *Perry Hannah’s Gifts Then and Now* and members of the Grand Traverse Regional Community Foundation Youth Advisory Council (YAC). Members of the YAC volunteered during the open house with photos and a special thank you on pages 28 and 29 post-event Facebook comments too.

Our community loves to tour the Hannah House and experience the peaceful, sanctuary like setting of this magnificent “gift” from Perry Hannah to our community. We even had our gardens setup as we do for funeral or memorial services held in this very unique and beautiful location. This “gift” of our 125<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration was for residents and visitors to our community. However, residents will hopefully think of our funeral home when “God calls” as they are both familiar with our sanctuary-like setting and the comforting, peaceful ambiance one feels the moment you step through the front doors of our historic building.

**2) Detailed description of the activity:**

Peg created a press release about the event, Facebook and TC Ticker ads too. (Please see page 30 and consequent great press on page 31) Peg and Les were on the popular Ron Jolly radio program to help promote the event. (See page 32) Peg organized 45 docents, arranged for

their boutonniere's, pre-event lunch, created history cards for their room(s) and sent thank you notes to all with a gift certificate for dinner at Minerva's located in one of Perry Hannah's former architectural gifts - the Park Place Hotel. (See page 33)

She contacted all other participants i.e. Father Fred Food Pantry's Paula Prusick who collected can goods in the parlor with both Father Fred and Perry Hannah life-size cutouts.

Peg purchased 125<sup>th</sup> anniversary wooden yardstick as both a remembrance and funeral home advertising. Kyle, Jillian and Deb also helped with various materials for this event.

### **3) Benefits provided to families or the community at large:**

Our community lined the sidewalk to have the opportunity to enjoy the 125<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Perry Hannah Home and experience the home and garden's magnificent beauty with all five senses.

Participants were encouraged to bring non-perishable food party "gift(s)" to benefit the Father Fred Food party. Thus they were able to feel good about bringing a gift to be gifted and help feed the hungry in our community.

All 3,100+ guests enjoyed all four floors of the Hannah House and gardens too learning so much from the 45 docents strategically positioned throughout the building. The gardens caretakers, Bart and Gail Ingraham and Kevin Juett were on hand as well to answer all questions.

Our community learned how each room was used Then (when Perry Hannah lived here ) and Now including special exhibits like authors in Perry's former library such as Paul Welch (A Colorful Cast - history of NMC's Art Department) and Val Winans was even in our lounge with her dog Remington and his book entitled "Road Trip with Remington Beagle: Michigan to Alaska and Back.

Everyone enjoyed beautiful floral arrangements created by both local florists and members of The

Friendly Garden Club of Traverse City in both home and garden locations. Example thank you notes appear on pages 34, 35 and 36.

#### **4) Benefits provided to funeral home and staff:**

Every staff member was invited and encouraged to participate in the many activities ranging from the July 3, 2018 National Cherry Festival Heritage Parade to the exciting 125<sup>th</sup> anniversary open house day on September 9, 2018.

Members of our Reynolds-Jonkhoff work family and friends walked in the National Cherry Festival's Heritage Parade on July 3. They were all dressed in cherry red t shirts to help celebrate both the cherry industry and promote "Hometown Heroes" too. Please see pages 37 and 38.

Sixteen work family members helped during the September 9 open house event between 11 (orientation time) 1 pm to 4 pm community open house time.

All full and part time staff member's 8 x 10 photos were displayed in our Hall of History on the second floor. (See Addendum for photo)

Our funeral home's 125<sup>th</sup> anniversary was recognized by Traverse City Mayor, Jim Carruthers, with a special proclamation that he read at our morning all staff meeting. (See page 36)

#### **5) Other organizations that were involved with the development or implementation of the idea:**

We sponsored the Cherryland Post 2780 VFW float in the National Cherry Festival Heritage Parade on July 3, 2018. Twenty six work family members and friends dressed in cherry red t shirts and black shorts (See page 37 and 38). Our entry WON the Consumer's Energy Heritage Parade 2018 Ambassador's Award as appears on page 38. We also sponsored the Scottville Clown Band, walked in the parade with "clowning around" photo bombs and WON the DTE Energy Foundation Cherry Royale Parade 2018 Festival Award. Our family's cherry red 1965

mustang carried veteran and clown celebrities too. Kyle arranged for speakers in a truck blasting patriotic songs like Lee Greenwood's God Bless The USA!

We helped promote the Senior Center's "Hometown Heroes" veterans appreciation event (see pages 26 and 27 including the school photo and post-event press too) on October 10, 2018 as it was part of our cherry red t shirts design.

Grand Traverse Regional Community Foundation Youth Advisory Council members were on hand during our 125<sup>th</sup> anniversary open house. (See page 28)

The Father Fred Foundation received a truck full of "gift(s)" of non-perishable food items.

Local author and artists, Paul Welch and Verna Bartnik were in the Library with Ann Swaney, Northwestern Michigan College historian librarian to educate about our area's rich art history.

Professional photographer, Don Rutt took photos with his wife Pat during the event to be included in the eventual third printing of *Perry Hannah's Gifts Then and Now*.

The Friendly Garden Club provided flower arrangements with cards identifying all plant materials. (See Addendum for photo)

All local florists provided arrangements for pre-determined rooms such as the dining room Perry's upstairs table, second floor dining room, foyer and lounge.

The Zonta Club of Traverse City was represented in the attic with trees for sale and to promote the November, 2018 Festival of Trees. (See Addendum for photos and promotional materials)

This educational, enjoyable 125<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Perry Hannah Home's event was made possible and so very successful thanks to the caring efforts of so many in our community!

Please see the Addendum for more Cherry Festival parade and 125<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration photo highlights.

The winning essay and newspaper promotion of the first and second place winners were shared on June 16, 2019 during graduation season. (See page 39)

All of the collaborative partners, all of the many activities, all of the educational opportunities, all of the meaningful moments... we hope qualifies us for the Best of Best Award this year.

In summary, it is always fun to read "The Seasonal Report" newsletter that recaps and highlights the season as created by Lindsey and Peg. We hope you enjoy reading our newsletters too as appear on pages 40 to 43 as we have much to celebrate and share as we pursue excellence in funeral service as a Reynolds-Jonkhoff Funeral Home work family!