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# interchange

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## Conversational Connections

Dear Friends & Family,

In this digital age, we can connect at a moment's notice with amazing response rates, no matter where we are! We can connect via cell phone calls, facetime chats, text messages, and emails. However, despite the benefits, we seem to lose something: personal face-to-face interaction.

At a recent Communications Advisory Council meeting, we discussed how younger generations do not engage and socialize as past generations. There is less time devoted to just sit and talk without the intrusion of some electronic device or technology (cell phones, TV, video games, etc.) And now, there is a new form of addiction - social media addiction - which has been found to negatively impact one's mental health and relationships.

In this issue, Ellie Starks, a member of our Communications Advisory Council, shares a heartwarming story experienced at her place of employment. Following that, we share two video interviews with our Sisters, conversing and reflecting on their lives.

Even though *this* message is being sent electronically, we want you to consider how much time you spend face-to-face in conversation. Think of those persons in your life who may have something to offer or share. Invest some time. Talk to them...in person, if you can!

*Kathy Gatliff, Editor*
*Director of Communications & PR*

**Sources:**
https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC9046602/
https://www.addictioncenter.com/drugs/social-media-addiction/

*Continued…*

# The Lost Art of Chatting

*By Ellie Starks*

After eight months of getting to know each other as pen pals, retired teachers from Shorewood Senior Campus and 5th graders at Folwell Elementary School met in person this May.

The Shorewood Teachers Club “adopted” Sarah Coffing’s 5th-grade class in September, and they have been pen pals every month since then.

Chuck Nelson leads the teacher’s group at Shorewood. In an age of technology, old-fashioned letter writing proved to be worthwhile. “The letters have brought a lot of joy to the teachers. And the students look forward to getting letters from their pals,” he said.

The teachers and students enjoyed a pizza lunch together and spent the afternoon playing games and chatting.

Not only does the endeavor highlight the lost art of letter writing, but one student reminded his teacher pen pal of the importance of holding conversation, written or oral.

One post-meeting letter from 5th grader Henrik said it best in his letter to retired teacher Dar Whitman: “It has been nice chatting with you over the past few months, and I wish we could have more time to talk.”

Add that to the intergenerational exercise, and it produces students with appreciation for seniors, and seniors who have an opportunity to pass on their wisdom.

“I feel like it is nice to have someone you can just chat about regular stuff with,” Henrik continued in his letter. “It is also cool to be able to make a friendship with someone who you don’t know at the start, and who you might not have ever gotten the chance to know.”

Human connection. We need it, no matter our age!

Henrik and Dar meet for the first time in person to converse!

# Conversations with Sisters

*Copy and paste the links below the images into your browser to hear the Sisters share their personal stories.*

"I wouldn't trade one minute, I would do it all over again, starting with day one. And I'm just so grateful." *Sister Elizabeth Gillis*

View here: https://vimeo.com/949252442/f281ff1cbf?share=copy

"This community is a wholesome group of women that stretch us out into the spirit." *Sister Lalonde Ryan*

View here: https://vimeo.com/957885612/562a42cb89?share=copy