WEDDINGS AND ENGAGEMENTS

Montgomery-Van Tiem

Carole Montgomery of Bloomfield Hills announces the engagement of her daughter, Jill Monroe, to Reed Charles Van Tiem, son of Gail and Barry Van Tiem of Brighton. Jill is also the daughter of the late Thomas R. Montgomery Jr.

The bride-to-be is a graduate of Michigan State University and is employed as a senior account executive at Visual Services Inc. in Bloomfield Hills.

Her fiance is a graduate of the University of Dayton, and is employed as a marketing specialist for Nissan Motors Inc. in Aurora, Ill.

An April wedding is planned at the Academy of the Sacred Heart in Bloomfield Hills.

BIRTHS

Miranda Ashley Stone

Jonathan E. and Marie A. Stone of Lathrup Village announce the birth of their daughter, Miranda Ashley Stone, on Oct. 3 at Providence Hospital.

Grandparents are Jerald and Betty Stone of Lathrup Village and William and the late Stella Wnuk of Mayville, Mich.

Foundation collects toys

Annual plans to make the holidays brighter this year for hundreds of children coping with the effects of leukemia (and their siblings) are under way at the Children's Leukemia Foundation of Michigan, in Southfield.

To help raise the toys needed, CLF is conducting its annual Toy Drive. CLF is asking civic groups, businesses and individuals around the state to conduct a toy drive in their area..

The first agency program is the "Holiday Gifts Delivery Program," which provides toys to needy patients and their families. Toys also are needed for a year-round "Clinic Toys Program" that provides gifts to hospitals and clinics throughout the state for children and adult patients..

For more information on donating new toys can call CLF toll-free at 1-800-825-2536.

Elderly mother proves difficult

ON AGING

RENEE MAHLER

Q. My 89-year-old mother lives with me. She has been ill for about five years and I have done my very best to take good care of her. I have raised six children and they have turned out to be successful, independent adults. There were some difficult times but nothing I couldn't handle. The hardest thing I've ever done, however, is take care of my mother. I'm depressed, my temper is short and there are times when I just don't know what to do with her, especially when she is in a bad mood. She seems to take out all her frustrations on me and I don't seem to be able to find the patience to try to understand and help her needs. I love my mother but I'm tired and frustrated and don't know why I am so short-tempered with her now. I know she can't help being sick but I can't help it either.

A. Giving care to an older, frail, loved family member is probably one of the most difficult jobs there is. What you are feeling is not unusual and you are not alone in these feelings. Right now you are probably going through a whole range of emotions and feelings from love, anger, guilt and, not the least, stress and exhaustion. All very normal and understandable.

One of the best articles I have ever read about your situation and the feelings you are having was written by Tish Sommers in a magazine called Generations in 1985. Sommers wrote, "Care of the sick and dying is quite different from care of babies and small children. Children represent the future. They are developing human beings revealing new dimensions of their personalities. There is endless fascination in their growth, no matter how troublesome they may be. But when a person who has been close and important in one's life is disintegrating day by day and the future holds nothing except eventual decline and death, contact can be continually painful, apart from the physical burden. There is also the constant reminder of one's own mortality and a mirror of future decay. Often people in failing heath and in discomfort take out their frustrations on the closest target, the caregiver, making the tasks more difficult..."

Your mother is very fortunate to have a caring and concerned daughter like you but you deserve and need some time for yourself too. See if someone can't help you by giving you a break from your caregiving for at least a couple of hours a week. If you can, you might even consider hiring somebody just so you can do some of the things you have been putting off. Talk to a friend. Sometimes just talking about your feelings can help. Find a support group. There are other people in the same position as you are and perhaps they will have some answers for you. There are many care-giver support groups, try calling your local hospital or church. Above all, don't be a martyr. Don't think that you are the only one who can care for your mother. Don't think that it is solely your responsibility. Don't think that getting help means that you are not a good person.

On Aging columnist Renee Mahler is a gerontologist and a former member of the Michigan State Commission on Services to the Aging.

To leave a message, from a touch-tone phone, call (313) 953-2047, mailbox 1869.

Consultant back from conference

Lynn Luckenbach, an educational consultant with offices in Birmingham, recently joined 600 educational consultants and school officials from around the country at a national conference.

The gathering held in Boston was designed to enhance consultants' knowledge of current educational opportunities, as well as to explore ethical considerations of the profession. Sponsor was the Independent Educational Consultants Association.

Speakers were author Daniel Goleman on his book "Emotional Intelligence," humorist/motivator Kathleen Passanisi, and Columbia University's Susan Coleman on conflict resolution.

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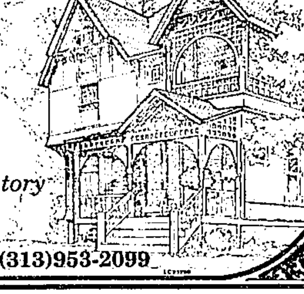
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