

## A TRIBUTE TO HELEN ZIEGLER

*We dedicate this newsletter to her memory.*



**IN FEBRUARY,** we lost an integral part of Central Clinic, Helen Rose Ziegler. As the Human Resources Director and Associate to the Director, Helen had an easy-going manner, made time for everyone,

and developed many lasting friendships. She had the ability to call every person on the staff by name. She was a wealth of knowledge about each division of the Clinic. Helen's work ethic was exemplary. She worked long after others had gone home; even during her sickness and rounds of chemotherapy she came to the office as often as she possibly could, because she loved Central Clinic and the people here. She was the heart and soul of Central Clinic for forty years and her impact on the Clinic will be long-lasting.

### Helen's Story

With her gentle and compassionate spirit, Helen Ziegler was a true blessing to all those around her. Though reserved in nature, Helen loved a good adventure. A nurturer at heart and a pillar of strength, she bonded closely with friends and family. Helen built her life around serving others, teaching by example, and placing the needs of others before her own. She listened in her patient way and shared the wisdom she had collected over the

years. With her kind, sweet nature, she shared the beauty of her spirit with those close to her.

Helen's journey began on June 11, 1936. She gave her parents a reason to celebrate, as she was the first child born to Clarence and Lena Ritinger in Covington, Kentucky. They soon welcomed her sister, Loretta, and the family was complete. The girls grew up in a small, rural area of Campbell County called Gubser's Mill, where her grandfather and father owned a flour and saw mill. Growing up in a small town, her mother was extremely protective of Helen, keeping her sheltered, worrying that she would become injured. They lived a mile away from Saint Peter and Paul Catholic School, where she and her sister attended grade school. Every morning they would walk to school, except on frigid days when they would ride in the back of the dark, cold milk truck. Helen was a good student and was part of the first graduating class at Saint Mary's High School (now Bishop Brossart) in 1954. While in high school, she landed her first job, at McAlpin's Department Store's lunch counter as a waitress. The job did not last long because Helen was a bit shy, so she ended up in a secretarial position at the Academy of Medicine, which she enjoyed much more.



*A teenager*



*The young family*

After high school graduation, Helen attended Thomas More College. During her time there she met the love of her life, Wilbert "Will" Ziegler, through Will's sister, Juanita. Following a Thanksgiving dance they both attended, Will asked Helen on a date and they hit it off immediately. They dated for about a year and a half and tied the knot in June 1957. After the wedding, they lived for about a year in Ann Arbor, Michigan before moving back to Kentucky, where Will worked in the family mill. After Will received his law degree, they moved to Fort Mitchell, Kentucky, buying their first home in 1959. They welcomed their first son, Greg, the same year. Greg was born with special needs. This was when the dynamics of Helen's life changed. She never ran out of patience with Greg, tending to his every need, supporting, and caring for him day in and day out. Over the next several years, two more sons came along: Dan in 1963 and Rob in 1965. Helen stayed home until Rob started first grade and then decided to head back into the work force.

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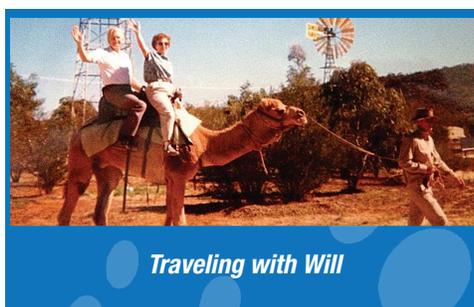


*Helen when she first came to Central Clinic*

In 1973, she was hired by Central Clinic (then known as Central Psychiatric Clinic), a part of the University of Cincinnati. She worked her way up to become the Director of Human Resources, Associate to the Director, and Corporate Compliance Officer. She made many lasting connections through her positions with Central Clinic and created a rich history, touching the lives of many. The position seemed to fit her personality perfectly and the gifts she brought to the company will be a beautiful legacy for those who follow in her footsteps.

Helen painstakingly trained the family, particularly Dan and Rob, to provide the best care for Greg when she was not at home. She enjoyed her career, but her highest priorities were her family and Greg's needs. She was a devoted mother and wife, always giving to her family whatever they needed from her. She was patient, never showing frustration, even on the hard days.

The Ziegler family took memorable trips to UDF where they indulged in rainbow sherbet, and big Saturday shopping trips with Aunt Loretta to the Newport Shopping Center. As Rob got older, he started playing tennis and Helen made sure she was at every practice and all his tournaments, supporting him from the sidelines. Helen and Will purchased a condo in Longboat Key, Florida, where they enjoyed many family vacations. Helen loved to travel, and as the boys grew older the family visited several state parks. Helen excitedly planned to explore more distant destinations with Will. They went all over the United States, as well as endless foreign countries. Saint Thomas was her favorite place to spend a vacation.



*Traveling with Will*

When not spending time with family, working, or traveling the world, she found peace working in her yard and garden; she



*Helen's fun, quirky side!*

could name any flower she laid her eyes on. Helen loved a good hamburger, and solving newspaper crossword puzzles as she traveled by plane. She was a loving grandmother and especially enjoyed visits with her beloved grandchildren, cherishing opportunities to dote on Daniel, Bridget, Will, and Lena, any of whom could effortlessly bring a brilliant smile to Helen's face. Helen's daughters-in-law, Cindy and Stacey, shared a unique connection with her as well; Helen worked with Cindy at Central Clinic. She was always ready to lend a listening ear to her entire family. Helen appreciated all the blessings in her life.

Helen's health began to deteriorate after her diagnosis of colon cancer last July. Sadly, her rewarding and happy life came full circle when she passed away February 15, 2014. Her loving demeanor will be treasured and passed on for generations to come. Helen will be greatly missed by her family and friends, and by Central Clinic.

*Adapted from story by Linnemann Associates Funeral Home*

## The Administrative Hub Remembers Helen



The Administrative Hub is a close-knit team; Helen was not only our boss and co-worker, she was our good friend. We knew her in a way that most of the other Central Clinic staff did not know her.

Helen was a strong Human Resources Director. The entire Clinic had great respect for her knowledge and the way she handled each issue with compassion and skill.

Although she had a solid work ethic, she also had a fun, quirky side. She would walk in an office singing "Jimmy Crack Corn" while doing a little dance. When one of her staff accidentally wore two different shoes to work, Helen went into her closet, got a black shoe and a red shoe and wore them the rest of the day. One co-worker nicknamed her Mrs. Wiggins, after Carol Burnett's secretary role, and Helen would

do the "Wiggins Walk." She constantly left her keys and glasses in other 3rd floor offices and couldn't remember where, so most of us would scurry around trying to find them.

Helen had a big sweet-tooth! Her eyes lit up if someone brought pastries or cookies to the office. She loved "Cowtails," so a co-worker would sneak some into her mailbox at times. Most of the time Helen ate her breakfast at work: a Coke and either Cheez-Its or Animal Crackers. Her biggest frustration at work was the computer; she much preferred her trusty typewriter. You could walk down the hall and hear the speedy click-click-click of her typewriter keys. She could probably type faster than anyone in the Clinic.

Helen knew the favorite colors and the personal tastes of each of her secretaries, and she would bring them gifts from vacations, on holidays, or to just show them she cared. We have a stack of postcards from her world travels. From the Virgin Isles she wrote, "Sounds like it

was a good week to get out of Cinti. I'm sure that's the end of the snow for this winter. Right? If not – I'm staying here." From Yellowstone, "Life is good here – Everything going fine. Saw lots of bison, deer, & elk. Still didn't see a bear – we're still looking – from a distance! Take care." From Maine, "Everything good here. Irene followed us up the Coast, but by the time she arrived in Maine, most of her "huff & puff" was gone! Getting ready for more "lobstah."

Helen believed strongly in working as a team. Helen cross-trained and shared her wisdom with each of the Administrative Hub in different areas. We each have a "piece of the puzzle," so as we work as a team we can efficiently continue the work she so brilliantly accomplished for so many years. We were fortunate to be trained by her. She left the Clinic in good hands. But we all agree that no one will ever be able to take her place!

# HELEN'S EULOGY

by Dr. Walter Smitsen

After Will asked me to try to think of one word to capture the essence of Helen's life, work, and values it is not a surprise that word is "Saint." While obviously I have no authority to bestow sainthood to anyone, I do want to draw your attention to one important criterion the Catholic Church uses to determine sainthood, "The person must have lived an exemplary life of goodness and virtue worthy of imitation." I'm sure all would agree: If there was ever a person worthy of imitation it would be Helen Ziegler. Yes, there was a St. Helen, mother of St. Constantine the Great, around the year 300.

I have selected three characteristics of many to illustrate Helen's life of goodness and virtue:

1. **Helen's incredible work ethic.** The story goes that when Pope John XXIII was asked how many worked in the Vatican, he paused and then said, "About half." Helen would have been the half that worked. Helen was very dedicated to the mission of Central Clinic, providing mental health and addiction services to thousands who cannot afford private care. As Director of Human Resources, Helen was the heart and soul of the workforce. There was always a steady stream of employees stopping by her office. She knew the names of all 250 employees, the names of the spouses, and the names of their children. I would occasionally urge her to close her door to get her work done, but the door was never closed. Helen routinely worked beyond normal work hours. She would also frequently bring Will into the Clinic on Saturdays, park him in my conference room with his computer, and catch up on her work. During Helen's tenure, the Clinic grew from one location on the University of Cincinnati Medical Campus to ten locations today. On one of my visits to the hospital, a short time before she died, she was mostly sleeping. But at one time she opened her eyes and said, "Don't forget to get a note out to the employees about Martin Luther King's Day."
2. **Helen's unwavering love and concern for her family,** her husband, Will; sons, Greg, Dan, Rob; daughters-in-law, Cindy

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- Dr. Walter Smitsen

and Stacy; sister, nieces, nephews, and grandchildren. She was never too busy to drop everything and attend to a member of the family. She loved family gatherings – especially with grandchildren. None of the family was ever far from Helen's thoughts. Their welfare and safety were often on her mind.

3. **Helen's pattern of continually attending to and caring for all those around her,** which reflected her goodness and virtue, all with amazing patience. One of Helen's frequent questions to me was, "Will you do me a favor?" I always knew this had to do with such things as:
  - a) Write someone a character reference;
  - b) Make a call on behalf of someone;
  - c) Help her think of how she could help a family member.
 Of course, none of us ever said, "No," when Helen asked that question about a favor. When it came to helping people, Helen would not stop until she found a way to be helpful. This can be illustrated by the following interaction I had with her over the years: I would be at my desk; Helen would get me on the phone, saying someone in distress called

wanting to see me. I would often say that I was too busy, and would give her other names, thinking that was the end of it. Without fail — my door would open and she would seat herself next to my desk and would say in that sweet, soft voice, with the little smile, "Can I just look at your appointment book?" I would hand it over. After a few moments, "Looks like you have time at 3:00 tomorrow." "Yes," I would protest, "but I need that time to do paperwork and make phone calls." Helen would never take "no" and would always walk out with the appointment. I am sure she had already assured the caller she would get a time. In later years, I didn't bother to protest. She would simply write the name on my schedule, and leave with a look of contentment.

Helen had other ways of helping people. Just this week I talked with an employee at the beginning of our work day, saying, "I notice you are rarely here at 8:30." The person said, "Oh, Helen told me I can arrive anytime between 8:30 and 9:00 since I have heavy traffic, and not take a lunch." I am not sure our labor attorneys would agree that you can give up lunch breaks, but that did not slow Helen from trying to make life easier for that person. I am sure there are other such surprises in store for me.

Together we celebrate a life of goodness and virtue, consisting of hard work, love of family, attending to and serving all who crossed her path. Helen will always serve as an inspiration. We will miss her deeply and our loss will be long lasting. At the same time, we honor her by celebrating her time in our lives. All of us who spent time around her are better for the experience.

And in closing, from my many years of working with Helen, I know she was a person with deep, abiding faith. She showed that day after day by living her life in accordance with the example Jesus gave us. I have absolutely no doubt that when Helen Ziegler reached the Pearly Gates she was immediately waved through.

**We are very grateful to the generous donors who have contributed \$62,000 in memory of Helen!**

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## Our Vision

To be a leader in providing and advocating for accessibility, best practices and outcome-driven behavioral health services for consumers and their families.

## Our Mission

To provide culturally sensitive and outcome-driven Mental Health, Substance Abuse, Forensic, and Prevention Services to children, adults, and families. Central Clinic accomplishes this by making services accessible, individualized, effective, consumer oriented, and recovery/resiliency based.

## Our Values

- We value our staff and the individual contributions it makes.
- We honor and respect the breadth of cultural diversity, values and ideas of our staff, clients and community partners.
- We treat our staff and clients with dignity and respect.
- We believe that recovery is possible.
- We value giving clients reasons to hope for recovery.
- We value making resources available to clients to assist in their recovery.
- We understand and promote the active participation of clients in their plan for improving their lives.
- We value the dignity and rights of the clients and families we serve.
- We value the right of privacy of our clients.
- We value and actively seek community/systems collaboration to improve the quality of life in our community.
- We are committed to using outcome data to drive management decisions in our programs.

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