

There comes a time in life when the only really important thing for consideration is "Will my loved one be well cared for here?" We had toured several facilities, my wife and I, in preparation for that dreaded day. My wife, Joyce, has that terrible disease of Alzheimer's, and the Laurels of Dekalb was our choice. I say our choice, for that although she was progressing, as all do with this disease, she was part of the decision making. Before considering a facility we never made an appointment because there are care givers who would be certain "things were in place", if they knew a potential customer was coming to visit.

From our first exposure to the Laurel's it ranked way up there as far as cleanliness, friendly staff and resident room tidiness. We were met by the Administrator and as we were introduced to everyone from dietary to marketing, names were used for us as well as staff members. The smell of soiled clothing and/or to sleeping materials is a real turnoff for me. I have never lost sleep wondering if she is receiving the best care available, because I know in my heart of hearts that the Laurel's is the best of the best. I must say, in all my visits, only once did the smell strike me, and I have been there many, many times. An occasional accident is bound to happen, but for the smell to be prevalent and pervasive is not.

My wife, Joyce, receives better care than I could possibly provide. For consideration is around the clock nursing, administration of meds, monitoring, nutrition, hygiene and ambulation. The average person is unable to sustain any, let alone all of them, over time. I did it for over 6 years and let me say, "It took its toll".

The staff of the Laurel's has been more accommodating than could ever have been expected. To hear a RN or CNA say to a resident that they "love them" is more than just words. Think of how comforting this must be to one in the "memory care unit" who may have an occasional visitor. We do not know what those with dementia or Alzheimer's are able to process, but to see a smile come across their face is certainly rewarding to both the resident and to the caregiver.

How do you put thousands of thoughts into a few words is challenging, but I have done my best to convey by heartfelt thanks to God for guiding us to the Laurel's of DeKalb.

Jim Salway