



*Gibbs Care Center*

In January 2012, I visited Gibbs Care Center. Gibbs is a 72-resident, not-for-profit, community owned, Medicare/Medicaid certified, skilled nursing home located in Steelville. The home originally opened in 1977, but has been renovated and expanded over the years, including the addition of a 26-resident residential care home, Gibbs Manor.

Gibbs has been on the culture change journey for a number of years. They actively participate with Missouri's culture change coalition ([MCS](#)). Some changes they have made include the elimination of overhead paging, the addition of carpeting, and covering the cinderblock walls. Ten years ago, they added the front sunroom, converted the old dining room into a living room, and added a food bar. The residents loved the sunroom, so they added a second sunroom for smokers. However, they don't have any smokers anymore. They also added a desk in the living room that serves as a nurses' work area.

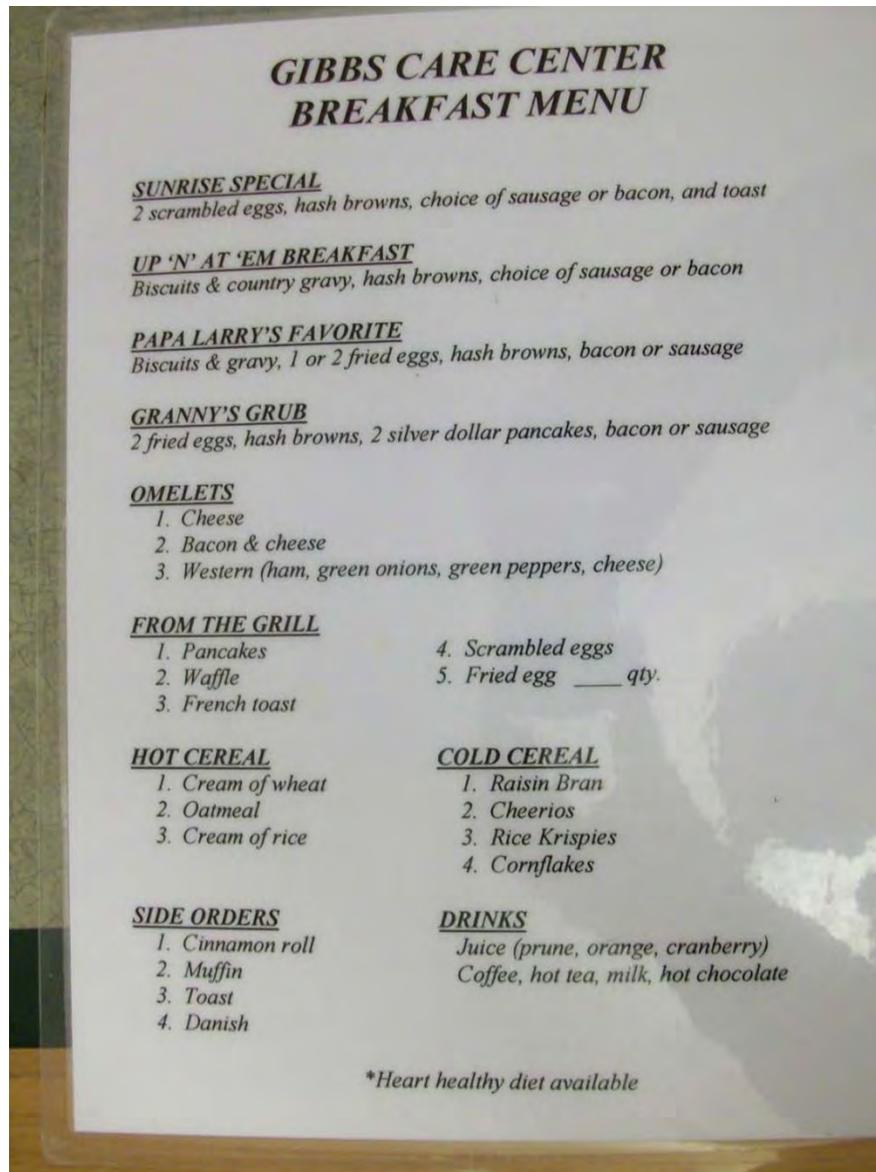


*Old dining room that has been converted into a living room*



*One of the sunrooms that was added about ten years ago*

They have implemented a short-order breakfast and the residents love it. The dining menus change monthly and they put items on the menu that the residents like. At mealtimes, a dietary aide goes around and takes orders.



Short-order breakfast menu

Residents furnish and decorate their rooms as they choose. They can take the type of bath they choose, when they want it. There is a resident use refrigerator and residents can have personal refrigerators in their rooms if they wish. Snacks are available at all times at no additional cost. Some SNF residents choose to eat in the RCF and use the RCF laundry room. Residents may bring their own pets on a case-by-case basis. Some residents do volunteer work, such as taking a snack cart around, pushing residents who use wheelchairs, and coordinating movie nights.



*Mutley – Comes to work every day with the Assistant Director of Nursing*

When residents pass away, they have a memory book with pictures. It is passed around and people write whatever they want. Then it is given to the resident's family.

They were just putting the final touches on their most recent addition and they were in the process of renovating the existing structure while I was there. Some of the physical changes include the addition of ten new private rooms to the SNF. Each new room also has a private bath. There are now 12 private rooms in the SNF and 18 in the RCF. All new rooms will be equipped with telephones and there will be wifi throughout.



*New private room with bay window*

They added a lot of glass to allow the sunlight in. They also added a lot of carpet. There is also a new beauty shop. They removed the old institutional nurses' station and replaced it with a small desk. The audible call system has been replaced with a silent wireless pager system. They also removed the lights above the doors. They added new covered and uncovered patios. They added a new water fountain in the courtyard and will be adding benches and picnic tables. They are thinking about adding a swing set for children. They will also be adding bird and wildlife feeders in back of the building.



*New covered patio*



*New fountain in the courtyard*



*New nurses' work area*

The Steelville Arts Council is going to help decorate the home with artwork that is relevant to the community. There is already a decorated canoe out front. Similar canoes can be found throughout Steelville. Artists will display their artwork and will rotate it in and out. There will be "Then and now" photos of the downtown area and a mule display. There will also be a display made from the many thank you cards that they receive from residents' family members.

Future plans include adding a towel warmer and liberalizing their medication passes. They will also be replacing existing resident room floors in the next 24 months.



*CNA Stephanie Curtis*

During my visit, I met CNA Stephanie Curtis. Ms. Curtis is a lifelong resident of Steelville. Her father was a sawmill worker. Her mother also worked at Gibbs as a CNA. She has two children and loves the outdoors and camping. She has worked at Gibbs for the past year-and-a-half and she worked there previously for seven years.

She told me about the positive changes she has seen there over the years. It is “more homey” now and the residents have more rights and freedoms than they used to. They can get up when they want. With the new pagers, there is no beeping. Residents’ food preferences are accommodated. They can choose what they want to eat. She loves working there and loves working with the elderly.



*Resident Debra McGuire*



*Resident Debra McGuire's room*

I also met resident Debra McGuire. Ms. McGuire was born in Poplar Bluff, but moved to Steelville when she was only five-years-old. Her father worked with Brown Shoe Company at Piedmont and her mother has volunteered with the senior meal program for 30 years. She went to Cosmetology School and had her own business in Steelville.

She has lived at Gibbs since 2008 and loves it there. She has a computer, television, stereo, and telephone. She said she wouldn't be doing anything different at home, except she gets to see people there and has great friends there. There is roaming room and the sidewalks are great. She can come and go as she chooses and there are a lot of activities.

She really likes some of the changes that have taken place. They didn't used to have meal choices; now they have five or six. She likes the new beauty shop. "The cook-to-order meals have been really cool." and "The new garden and fountain really rocks."

She said they have a good group of employees and the care is really good. It is very clean. She has a cat that comes and sits on her window at night, which she feeds. She couldn't think of anything that she would change.