



In 2021, we spoke with Laura Belson about her late mother Eleanor Whipple (Ellie) and the immeasurable impact Ellie left on Orleans County. Eleanor Bailey Whipple was born on Dec. 10, 1923, in Boston, Massachusetts where she was raised before attending Oberlin College in Ohio from 1941 through 1943. Later, Ellie would make her way to Upstate New York and graduate from SUNY Brockport with her BS in Elementary Education.

After graduation, she met and married Robert Whipple, bought a home in Lyndonville, became a fifth-grade teacher, and never looked back. They raised four children, Marsha, John, Julia, and Laura.

She was a lifelong member of the Lyndonville United Methodist Church and, at one time, was also a Sunday School teacher. Eleanor took pride in her community by volunteering at Medina Memorial Hospital for many years, acting as a member of the board at Hospice of Orleans, serving as secretary, and volunteering on the ARC Endowment Committee. In her spare time, she enjoyed sewing, quilting, crafts, gardening, camping, walking, cross country skiing, and reading. She also joined a bowling league in Medina. She lived her entire adult life in Lyndonville.

Later in life when Eleanor needed some support Laura and her brother John both lived nearby and were able to help her remain in her own home until her health started declining. “We never considered a nursing home, so we were very fortunate that a bed was available at Hospice of Orleans,” Laura said. “Eleanor was very happy at the Martin-Linsin Residence.”

The family adorned her room with pictures and a 3 ft. Christmas tree which would be decorated for all the holidays and seasons. “We knew she was well cared for and comfortable which was a great sense of relief and comfort to us,” Laura explained. The Martin-Linsin Residence staff made a point to involve Eleanor in many projects and crafts.

“She felt loved and important, she had a purpose in life,” Laura said. “She made beautiful bows and handmade cards and bookmarks. When one of the staff members was having a baby and Hospice was having a baby shower, Eleanor was asked to help decorate the great room and made bows for some of the gifts. She had a great day.”

Eleanor was a dog lover and had a chihuahua named Tippy. Tippy’s temperament was lacking manners and the staff learned early on not to get too close when the pup was visiting, or they’d be growled at. Her nickname became “The Beast.” Laura’s dogs would also come to visit Eleanor often. They were well behaved and were always rewarded with a dog biscuit.

Laura recalled the staff going out of their way to make these visits special for all. “When Eleanor passed and we had to clean out her room it was very hard for us,” Laura said. “Eleanor had been at Hospice of Orleans for almost two years and saying goodbye was very difficult. You see, hospice and the staff had become a second family to us. The friendships and connections became so important to us all and we will be eternally grateful for the great care and support we all received. With the holidays approaching, the first without our Mom, I know it’s going to be hard, but I will think back on all the memories made with her at Hospice of Orleans and just so very grateful for being there for her and making her feel special.”