



*Silver Spur*

In January 2013, I visited the Silver Spur in St. Louis. The Silver Spur building was originally a hospital. Then from the 1940s to the 1970s it served as a rooming house, until it was purchased by the current operators, Arena Manor, Inc. Silver Spur is a 34-resident assisted living home that serves individuals with mental illness.

Since the home is so small, staff members and residents know each other well. Most of the residents have lived there more than ten years and several staff members have worked there for many years. They are typically full with a waiting list.



*Antique wooden Indian standing guard near the home's front door.*

The home is decorated with an Old-West theme that makes you forget you are in inner-city St. Louis. Person-centered care has been the goal of Silver Spur from the beginning. They recently had an in-service training on Culture Change for their staff to reinforce their commitment to person-centered care.

Choice is a normal part of life. While the Western theme is prevalent throughout the home, residents are free to decorate their rooms how they choose. They go to bed and get up as they choose. They come and go as they please and set their own schedules. Recently, the housekeeping schedule was changed because the residents preferred their rooms to be cleaned in the afternoons, rather than mornings. Some residents work at local sheltered workshops.

There are both private and semi-private rooms. They recently added a recreation room with a television and workout equipment. There is Wifi throughout the building. There is also a refrigerator for the residents use.





*Old West bar in the dining room*

The Resident Council helped design the dining menu and chose what foods are on it. They recently began serving meals in two shifts to alleviate crowding in the dining room and to give residents more options regarding when they choose to eat.



*Birthday board*

Residents participate in many activities, including crafts, playing Wii, and writing for the home's newsletter. They recently started a creative writing class. They also enjoy many outings, such as going bowling, to Anheuser Busch, go-cart riding, swimming, or to the movies. The most popular are bingo, food activities, and celebrating birthdays. Each resident receives a gift and a cake and ice-cream party on his or her birthday. The local public library also brings books to the home for the residents.





*Resident Johnny Hall*

Resident Johnny Hall has lived at the Silver Spur for six or seven years. He was born and raised in St. Louis. His Father owned an antique furniture store and his Mother did home care work. He has one brother, who now lives in Texas. He said he likes living at Silver Spur. He particularly enjoys his relationships with the other residents. He complimented the food and the fact that if he doesn't like what is being served, the staff will fix him something different.



*Resident Cecilia E. Restivo*

Resident Cecilia E Restivo was born and raised in St. Louis. However, she has lived in many states throughout her life. She was proud of the fact that she graduated second in her high school class and received the Gibson Girl Award. She worked as a flight attendant for Eastern Airlines and also worked for AT&T. She has lived at Silver Spur for ten years and said the staff members go out of their way to make the residents happy. She particularly enjoys going out to look at the Christmas lights. During my visit, she was making plans to enroll in college courses.





*Resident Scott Dawson*

Resident Scott Dawson was born and raised in St. Louis. Growing up, his Father had a drywall business and his Mother worked at a restaurant. He had one sister and two brothers. He raced BMX bicycles and played baseball. He went to Jupiter, Florida and trained with the Cardinals. He then worked with his father until he passed away.

Mr. Dawson said he loves living there. The residents are treated real well. “If you need something, they make sure you get it.” He comes and goes as he chooses and especially enjoys going out to eat and to the Thrift Store.



*Day Shift Supervisor Regina Bradley*

Day Shift Supervisor Regina Bradley has worked at Silver Spur for 20 years and still loves her job. Her daily duties include passing medications, helping serve breakfast, cleaning, cooking lunch, and answering the telephone. The residents and staff are like a big family. She sometimes takes residents home with her for visits, out to eat, or shopping. She takes one of the residents to his mother's home for visits on her way home on Friday evenings and picks him up on her way to work on Monday mornings.

She has learned how to work with residents with mental illness and how to keep them calm and deescalate situations before they get out of hand. Because she and the other staff members know the residents well, they are able to recognize small differences early and catch them before they become a big problem. They rarely have serious issues.