**Jane Doe: “High Valley gave me my mother back”**

Imagine being a young child and not being able to hug or kiss your mother.

That was me.

It’s not that my mother didn’t love me. She adored me, and I her.

But she had tuberculosis, and the risk of close physical interaction was too risky. So beginning around age two, most of my interactions with my mother took place at a distance. She would sit on the porch of her cottage at High Valley and watch me play in the yard.

I’ll never forget the day I showed my mother I had learned to ride a bike. It was the early 1950s and I was so proud of myself. I pushed off, pumped the pedals a few times . . . and plowed straight into a flowerbed. I gathered momentum . . . and crushed another set of plantings. And then, at last, I rode straight and steady down the sidewalk. My mother applauded from the porch. I beamed. If only I could have run into her arms and *felt* her pride in a hug and a kiss.

My mother spent several years on and off at High Valley—mostly on. I can’t even begin to imagine how difficult it must have been for my mother to be separated from my father and me for nine months to a year at a time. My father had just started a business and been elected to political office, so he had many demands placed on him. We lived with my grandmother and my great aunt, who became my second mothers. Even though it was 100 miles round-trip from their house in Westerly to High Valley, my father and grandmother took me there for regular visits. It was an extraordinarily challenging time for my family.

Then came the day when High Valley gave me my mother back.

In 1968 my mother was cured of tuberculosis. And as a 12-year-old, at last I got to hug and kiss her as much as I wanted.

I’m 59 now, and it’s only in my later years I’ve realized how much I owe this wonderful place.

My mother passed away in 2001 at age 89. During her time at High Valley she had formed lifelong bonds with two women who also had tuberculosis and were separated from their families. The three of them had helped each other keep going through their time of suffering.

I knew my mother and her two friends had all made plans to include a gift to High Valley in their wills. One year after my mother passed, one of those dear friends also passed away. I decided to follow in their footsteps and make a special gift to High Valley.

High Valley gave me my mother back. I am eternally grateful—and a gift in my estate plans is a way I can show my gratitude and honor my mother’s memory.