



THE VISIONEER

A Project Update for Our New Vision Campaign Partners
June 2013

Living with Purpose: Stories and Pictures from Willow Ridge

“Suzie” was among the first elders to move to Willow Ridge. Because of a stroke suffered 5 years earlier, Suzie had difficulty finding words, finishing thoughts and interacting with people. A few weeks after Suzie moved to Willow Ridge, she was enjoying the hearth room when she began speaking. “Did you get all that? Did you get it?” Shahbaz “Allie” asked Suzie what she needed and Suzie began listing ingredients, “A cup of flour, a cup of sugar...” Allie wrote as Suzie called them out. Next came an event that would have been next to impossible in the traditional nursing home setting. The Shahbazim brought Suzie into the kitchen, washed her hands, adorned her with a hairnet and gloves and put the ingredients of her recipe into a bowl. Suzie kneaded the dough. The Shahbazim helped

Suzie drop the dough onto a cookie sheet and put it into the oven. She reminded them to make sure the biscuits didn’t burn! Finally, Suzie, shared freshly baked biscuits with the other elders of the home. Suzie is now a regular in the kitchen, a “normal” activity that she has not been able to enjoy since her stroke.



Life at Willow Ridge is rich with purpose and dignity.
Above: Elder Phyllis enjoys feeding Jonathan Herrmann, the son of Shahbaz Kayla Herrmann.
Below: Elders and staff of Frieda House celebrate Mother’s Day with corsages and balloons.

Ombudsmen Express Appreciation

Five Ombudsmen from the Area Agency on Aging, including the Program Director, Marianne Bradshaw, visited Willow Ridge. During the visit, Ombudsman Marianne said her expectation was that she would find the Green House homes to be “very nice.” She named some of the area facilities that are newer or recently renovated and said “They are very nice, but *this* (pointing to our homes) is wonderful!” She said it is the first time she can remember walking into a nursing home and feeling like she could go sit in one of the recliners and feel at home.





Above: Chaplain Bill Herr leads a Bible Study at Frieda House. Clarabeth Bixel leads a Bible Study at Betty House.
Below: Elder Christine Purves leads singing on the piano.



Question of the Month?

Are all the meals really prepared at Willow Ridge?

Yes! All meals are prepared in the kitchens of Betty House and Frieda House by the Shahbazim. One of the reasons we are able to do this is because of the flexibility and willingness of Community Market in Bluffton. Two to three times a week, food is delivered to each home by Community Market employees ensuring that produce is fresh and ready to be prepared. Many people comment that it always smells so good when they visit elders at Willow Ridge, just like a real home! Elders often share their own recipes and offer suggestions for meals. Good fellowship and conversation also takes place around the table, providing food for the soul as well as for the body. Thank you, Community Market, for working with us and adding to the enjoyment of the elders at Willow Ridge!



Elders enjoy a meal and fellowship around the table at Frieda House.

Willow Ridge: A Place to Go to Live

Elder Irene has come up with a slogan for Willow Ridge. She says "Willow Ridge—we may die here but we aren't dead yet and we have COME TO WILLOW RIDGE TO LIVE!" Irene also invites everyone to "Come to Willow Ridge and meet our little deer Willie." Irene named the small deer that sits under the pine tree outside the window. A duck has nested near a shrub at Willow Ridge. Irene has named it Willow. The elders and staff celebrated the hatching of the ducklings on May 21! Irene called the Bluffton News to report the hatching.

*View more pictures of events at
mhcoliving.org/news or go to
facebook.com/MHCOhio.*

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