

— THE —
Bridge
SUMMER 2023





Janina Green shares a laugh at the Founders Day keynote address.

On the cover: Sarah Pierce and others gather at Gardenside Diner for the Founders Day happy hour.

From the President

Greetings from Bridgewater Retirement Community!

I hope this edition of *The Bridge* finds you well and enjoying the warmth and beauty of the summer season.

Here at BRC, we are still celebrating our recent recognition by U.S. News & World Report in its annual Best Senior Living ratings. You've probably heard the news by now, but just in case you missed it—**BRC was one of only seven communities nationwide to earn "Best of" status in all four categories: Independent Living, Assisted Living, Memory Support, and Continuing Care Retirement Communities.**

We've won a lot of awards over the years but being ranked at the top nationally means something really special. That is because the Best Senior Living rankings are based on in-depth data and surveys for nearly 4,000 senior living communities around the country.

And the accolades keep coming! We also recently received a Best of Virginia award from Virginia Living and were recognized in multiple categories in the Daily News Record's annual Best of the Valley competition. These acknowledgments are a testament to the hard work and dedication of our entire community, including our residents, team members, and supporters like you.

As always, our top priority is to do everything we can to enhance the quality of life for our 560+ residents, our 400+ team members, and our entire community.

It is only through the ongoing support and partnership of individuals like you that we are able to continue our mission of providing a vibrant and fulfilling environment for older adults. I am ever grateful that you choose to continue supporting our community. Have a wonderful summer!

Sincerely,



Rodney D. Alderfer
President | Bridgewater Retirement Community



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News in Brief

Campus Updates

- Progress on the walking trails continued throughout the spring. The trails are slated to be complete later this summer. Landscaping and tree planting will commence in the fall. Next spring, work will begin on the native wildflower meadow and pond restoration.
- The Studio is officially open! The newly renovated space features abundant natural light, dedicated personal studio space, and a new home for group art classes and events.



- Construction began in May on a new wellness garden adjacent to Lantz Chapel. This space will provide a place for quiet reflection and enjoying the outdoors. BRC's therapy clients will benefit from a beautiful space to strengthen their mobility and safely practice traversing a variety of terrains.

Bridgewater Home Auxiliary Dissolves

Since 1965, the Bridgewater Home Auxiliary has provided essential resources to enhance the quality of life for residents in BRC's Nursing, Assisted Living, and Memory Support households.

Through fundraising drives, famous luncheons, and countless special projects, the Auxiliary has been there to uplift and inspire the mission and vision of the Bridgewater Retirement Community.

However, the last several years have presented numerous challenges. The Auxiliary has struggled to regain its footing as BRC emerged from the pandemic. In the meantime, the BRC Foundation has had enormous success championing our community, raising over \$5 million to support programs directly aligned with the Auxiliary's mission. With these factors in mind, the BHA Executive Team made the difficult decision to dissolve the Auxiliary.

The ReRun Shoppe and Cottage Gifts will continue to operate under the leadership of BRC's Volunteer Services Department. The BHA's Executive Team is confident that both shops will thrive and continue to provide wonderful service and experiences for residents, team members, and our greater community. The BRC Foundation will steward proceeds from sales at each shop. The BRC Foundation will also assume the Junior Volunteer Scholarship.

Remaining Auxiliary funds will be transferred to the BRC Foundation to be held in the newly established Auxiliary Legacy Fund. This fund will continue to support programs and projects that align directly with the Auxiliary's mission to "enhance the quality of life for residents of Nursing, Assisted Living, and Memory Support Households."

BRC Adopts New Strategic Plan

In May, BRC's Board of Directors officially adopted a new five-year strategic plan. More information about the new strategic priorities will be shared in the coming weeks and months.

Catch up on other campus news and happenings on page 19!



BRC's new walking trails will provide access to several destinations and overlooks, including a labyrinth, natural playground, outdoor classroom, and more.



Team Member Spotlight

Landes in Love

By Dawn Medley

It's not unusual to hear Bridgewater Retirement Community team members refer to their workplace as "a big family." For Brian and Lisa Landes, that's more than just an expression.

The energetic young couple met on campus in 2015 and married in 2020. Lisa spent some time away from BRC. But after earning her occupational therapist degree, she was overjoyed when a position opened in Therapy that gave her the opportunity to rejoin her husband and the BRC community in August 2021.

If it hadn't been for the much-loved resident Bingo games held regularly on campus, Brian and Lisa might not have connected. It wasn't

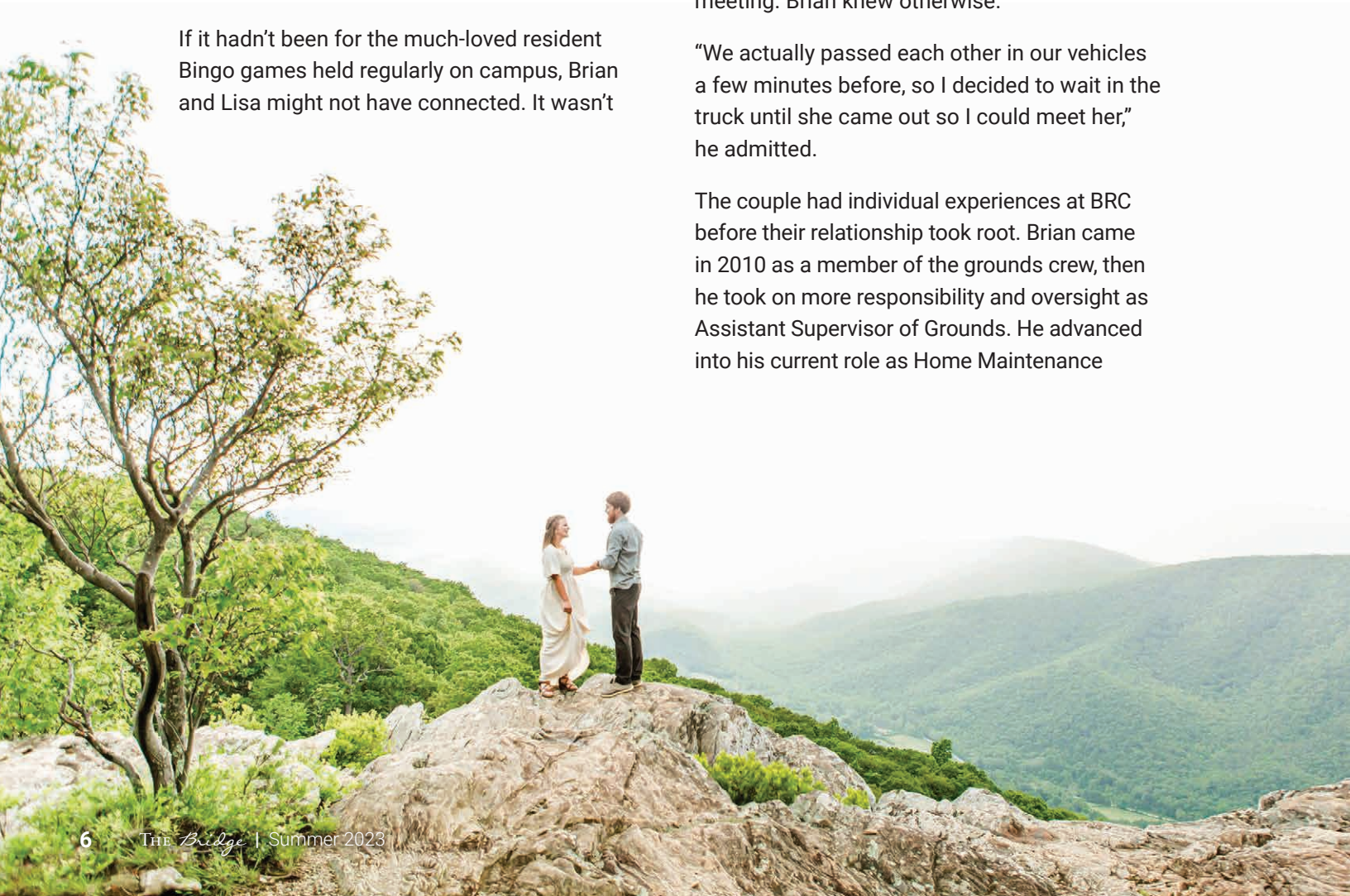
playing the game that brought them together, but rather an armful of tissues, chocolate, and other small prizes from the nearby Dollar Tree.

Lisa, then a recent Bridgewater College graduate, was working as a nursing activities assistant and had made a run to collect Bingo prizes for the week. "When I came back from the store, my hands were full of all this stuff, and he was right there to open the door for me," she remembered.

She thought it was a completely random meeting. Brian knew otherwise.

"We actually passed each other in our vehicles a few minutes before, so I decided to wait in the truck until she came out so I could meet her," he admitted.

The couple had individual experiences at BRC before their relationship took root. Brian came in 2010 as a member of the grounds crew, then he took on more responsibility and oversight as Assistant Supervisor of Grounds. He advanced into his current role as Home Maintenance





Supervisor in 2017. Lisa served as a volunteer while she was a student at Bridgewater College, and she was a critical part of the nursing team during its transition to the innovative household model.

“After we started dating, we learned that we had been asking about the other person at about the same time ... to the same people!” Lisa said. “We had a good laugh about that.”

The pair credits BRC’s supportive, collaborative workplace for nurturing their relationship through the phases of dating, wedding planning, and now married life.

“There was a short time at the beginning when we didn’t really know how things would work, but it didn’t take long to see that everyone was rooting for us,” Brian said.

“More than anything, people were excited for us. They would ask me how he was doing, and they were happy that we had found each other,” Lisa added.



Meeting one’s spouse on the job was a trend in decline even before the COVID-19 pandemic, according to a nationally recognized survey by researchers at Stanford University. The most comprehensive study of its kind, titled *How Couples Meet and Stay Together*, reported that, after peaking at about 25% in the 1980s, in recent years only about 10% of couples said that they met their partner at work.

The Landes’ weekday schedules are different, so their typical workdays aren’t much different than if they worked in separate places, but they definitely enjoy occasionally seeing each other in passing or grabbing lunch together. They’re also grateful to live right near campus, and they take advantage of it by often walking to and from work.

And, sometimes, even a married couple just finds that “family” is the best way to describe what it’s like to work at BRC.

“It’s true, the culture here is so different from anywhere else I’ve worked,” said Lisa. “It does feel like a family, not just because we work here together, but because everyone shows that they care about each other.”



How The SECURE 2.0 Act Impacts Your Retirement Savings

By Abe Shearer and Jennifer Shirkey

It is rumored that Albert Einstein once joked to his friend and accountant that, “The hardest thing in the world to understand is income taxes.”

One thing is for sure—with how frequently tax laws change, it’s certainly difficult to keep things straight. In just the last handful of years, we have seen the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act of 2017, the SECURE Act of 2019, and the CARES Act of 2020. We also now have the SECURE 2.0 Act of 2022 (SECURE 2.0), which became law on December 29, 2022. SECURE 2.0 builds on the original SECURE Act to implement sweeping changes for retirement accounts.

Required Minimum Distributions (RMDs)

SECURE 2.0 raises the starting age for beginning these mandatory taxable distributions and also lowers the penalty for missing an RMD.

- **Starting Age:** Beginning in 2023, retirees with IRAs and workplace retirement plans must begin taking withdrawals at age 73, increasing to age 75 in 2033.
 - Previously, age 72 was mandated by the original SECURE Act, and before that was 70.5 up until January 1, 2020.

- **Penalty:** The penalty for not taking RMDs has been lowered to 25% of the RMD amount not taken. If full corrective action is taken later, the penalty gets reduced to 10%.
 - Previously, this penalty was a harsh 50% for those who overlooked taking their RMD.

Qualified Charitable Distributions (QCDs)

Currently, individuals aged 70.5 or older may use a QCD to donate up to \$100,000 annually to qualified charities directly from their IRAs. QCDs are excluded from taxable income, and you don’t have to itemize deductions to make a QCD. SECURE 2.0 enhances QCDs by indexing the \$100,000 limit for inflation starting in 2024. In addition, a one-time QCD may now be made to a charitable remainder trust (CRT) or charitable gift annuity (CGA) up to a maximum of \$50,000.

Catch-Up Contributions

SECURE 2.0 increases the amount older workers can contribute to their workplace retirement plans and IRAs.

- **Workplace Plans:** You have to wait a couple more years, but beginning January 1, 2025, individuals aged

60 through 63 will be able to make additional catch-up contributions of \$10,000 annually, indexed for inflation thereafter.

- Currently, the catch-up contribution limit is \$7,500 for those aged 50 and over.
- **IRAs:** Starting in 2024, the current \$1,000 annual catch-up contribution will be indexed for inflation, meaning it should increase gradually over time.
- Currently, the catch-up limit is \$1,000, but it hasn't changed for many years.

Student Loan Debt

Payments towards student loans may now help some workers start saving for retirement.

Beginning in 2024, employers will have the ability to incentivize retirement savings for younger employees by “matching” some student loan payments with similar contributions on the employee’s behalf to a workplace retirement plan.

One of the key barriers to retirement savings for recent college graduates can sometimes be a large student debt burden. This change can help alleviate this problem.

529 to Roth IRA Transfers

Individuals with excess funds in a 529 college savings plan may be eligible to roll them into a Roth IRA for the account beneficiary.

Beginning in 2024, and only for 529 plans that have been maintained for at least 15 years, extra funds may be eligible to be moved directly to a Roth IRA in the beneficiary’s name. Currently, options are

more limited for extra funds remaining in a 529 plan, and generally the account owner must pay a 10% penalty (in addition to federal income taxes) to withdraw the funds, or they can name a new beneficiary that is a related family member.

This is just a sampling of SECURE 2.0’s more pertinent items for retirement accounts. The law is over 350 pages long, so there are myriad caveats and other changes.

Each new tax law brings challenges and opportunities impacting your investments, tax considerations, charitable giving strategies, and estate planning. Becoming aware of the latest developments is an essential first step to optimizing plans for your hard-earned savings.



Abe Shearer and Jennifer Shirkey are Directors with Bridgewater Retirement Community. In a separate capacity, Abe is an investment advisor of Stratigent Financial, LLC. Jennifer is an attorney at Flora Pettit Attorneys at Law. The information provided is educational in nature and is not intended to be specific financial, tax, or legal advice. Readers should consult with their respective financial, tax, and legal service providers before implementing any of the options directly or indirectly referenced above.



Board Member Spotlight

Ann Siciliano

Key to the success of BRC is its dedicated board of directors. Ann Siciliano, a native of Rockingham County, has been serving on BRC's operating board since 2022. She brings to the role a passion for the community, a wealth of experience in non-profit work, and a personal connection to BRC through her sister Jane, a Joy Household resident.

Ann's roots run deep in the Shenandoah Valley. She was born and raised in Rockingham County, attended high school in Harrisonburg, and pursued higher education at James Madison University. Although her career took her away from the valley for a period, she found her way back home and has remained here for most of her life. Ann was a pharmaceutical representative for sixteen years, leveraging her marketing degree and familial ties to the pharmaceutical industry.

In 2003, Ann decided to take a break from her pharmaceutical career to focus on her family. She spent several years volunteering in schools and cherishing precious moments as a mother to her children. Later, she returned to the workforce after connecting with a friend involved with the Community Foundation of Harrisonburg and Rockingham County. Ann joined the Foundation in 2012, where she currently manages competitive grant processes, scholarships, and a tax credit program for K-12 students attending private schools.

Stepping into the non-profit sector was a significant transition for Ann, but she embraced the challenge. Her role at the Community Foundation has provided her with a unique perspective and a deep appreciation for the work of organizations like BRC.

Abe Shearer recruited Ann to join the board in 2022 (“Who can say no to Abe?” she jokes), but she was already well acquainted with BRC through her sister Jane. “My sister Jane has been a resident at BRC since 2017, and I just felt like this was a good way to serve and give back.”

Jane moved to BRC as a resident of Memory Support in Gardner House and has since transitioned to nursing care in Joy House.

“When we had to move Jane from Gardner to Joy, it was a really emotional time for us and for several of the team members in Gardner who had become quite close to her,” Ann remembers. “And they did everything they could to make it a smooth transition for her—as seamless as possible. They did anything they could to make her move feel normal and not upsetting, which was just above and beyond.”



When Jane received her Alzheimer’s diagnosis, Ann visited all the local retirement communities and memory support facilities. She quickly decided that BRC was the right fit. “They really try to think about what the resident enjoys—what are those special things?” she says. “What did they

“They did anything they could to make her move feel normal and not upsetting, which was just above and beyond.”

— Ann Siciliano, Board Member

use to do? What do they enjoy in their lifetime before coming to BRC? And they incorporate that just in the little things that they do for the residents each day.”

Knowing that skilled and compassionate team members meet Jane’s needs allows Ann to better enjoy the time she spends with her. “Knowing that I don’t have caregiver responsibilities in the day-to-day role makes it easier for me to do the things that bring her happiness and pleasure when I’m with her,” she says. “Getting her out for ice cream, or—she loves to be outside—to take her on walks, or to bring the dogs over to visit because she loves animals. We can do the things that make life fun for her and things that she can still take pleasure in.”

Ann sees recruiting and retaining qualified and compassionate team members as the most significant challenge facing BRC today, and she hopes that BRC will continue to be community-oriented as it begins to realize its recently approved strategic plan. She is thrilled that the new walking trail construction is progressing, connecting the campus to the greater community and allowing for a shared natural space enjoyed by both. Ann also hopes that the focus on improving facilities throughout campus will continue, making the community feel more and more like home to its residents. She is confident that the administration’s focus on collaborating and connecting with the broader community will help BRC continue to grow and flourish.



Celebrating 58 Years with Frank Talks about Ageism

This Founders Day, we welcomed the author of *Ageism Unmasked* to spark new conversations about elderhood in America.

From cradle to maturity, most people chart similar developmental milestones. But once we reach adulthood, we each embark on a remarkable journey of becoming, in the words of Dr. Tracey Gendron, “more

like ourselves and less like everyone else.” Dr. Gendron is the author of the thought-provoking book *Ageism Unmasked: Exploring Age Bias and How to End It*. She spent the day at BRC this Founders Day sparking new conversations on BRC’s campus about ageism and its effects on society.

Dr. Gendron is a gerontologist known for her research, teaching, and advocacy work in the field of aging. She is currently the

Director of the Gerontology Program at Virginia Commonwealth University, where she is also chair of the Department of Gerontology. Her research focuses on the intersection of aging and culture, and how cultural attitudes and beliefs impact the experiences of aging for individuals and society as a whole.



Our annual Founders Day celebration is a time to reflect on our mission of providing the highest quality of life to our residents”

– Carrie Budd, VP of Development and Community Relations

Using sharp wit and real-world examples, Dr. Gendron spent Founders Day at BRC breathing new life into decades of research on age discrimination. Through a captivating morning keynote address and engaging workshops, she spun webs of thought-provoking and humorous conversations with residents and team members alike. Her words, both enlightening and empowering, provided actionable steps to combat ageism within





ourselves, our communities, and our culture.

“Our annual Founders Day celebration is a time to reflect on our mission of providing the highest quality of life to our residents,” said Carrie Budd, vice president of the BRC Foundation. “Dr. Gendron’s research clearly shows that ageism directly interferes with our wellbeing, so I can’t imagine a better way to do that than to tackle this topic.”

Ageism, unfortunately, remains one of the last “isms” that society accepts without question, pervading popular culture and mass media. And once you learn to recognize it, you cannot help but to see its presence everywhere. From magazine headlines seducing us with

promises to “Feel Twenty Years Younger” to backhanded compliments seasoned with the qualifier “for your age,” these messages permeate every aspect of our lives. Mounting evidence from extensive research reveals that such messages are far from harmless.

In fact, ageism has far-reaching negative effects on society. Its consequences include compromised health outcomes for older adults, diminished employment opportunities leading to financial hardship, heightened social isolation and loneliness, and the perpetuation of harmful stereotypes about aging.

Dr. Gendron encouraged participants to “own their age” and embrace a holistic

view of aging—not just as a process of biological decline, but also as a process of growth and adaptation in our bodies, psyches, and our spirituality. She challenged BRC to identify and disrupt the ageist messages we encounter daily.

BRC’s team leaders took that advice to heart at a workshop later in the day. “Dr. Gendron’s workshop on ageism was a powerful reminder of how our



own attitudes and the language we use shape our BRC culture of compassion,” said Kelsey Hartman, manager of organizational culture and design. “My big takeaway is that this isn’t a challenge without a solution—we can each combat ageism one person and one interaction at time.”

In addition to Dr. Gendron’s presentations and workshops, residents and team members celebrated Founders Day with game show games, an arts and craft show, and a happy hour in Gardenside Diner.





Love Lives On

Byard and Jo Layman celebrate over 60 years together, even though they reside separately at BRC

By Dawn Medley

Byard Layman wipes dust from the glass of a small framed black-and-white photo.

He pauses to study the young couple before returning it to its place atop the dresser situated between the recliner where he sits and the wheelchair that holds his wife of sixty-one years, Jo.

It doesn't take long to notice that—although eyeglasses now adorn both faces and the hair has silvered—the Laymans' smiles are the same as on their wedding day in 1962.

Ensuring enduring connection

For three years, Byard has made a daily practice—usually twice daily, in fact—of navigating the corridors that connect his Assisted Living apartment building to nearby parts of Bridgewater Retirement Community. He is usually seen carrying an inconspicuous paper bag of meaningful items and treats for Jo, who resides in Joy House, one of BRC's six unique nursing households.

Upon arrival, Byard arranges the contents of what Jo sweetly calls her “care packages.” A chocolate chip cookie. A special flavor of pudding. A magazine. Word puzzle books. Each item is a small, but unmistakably touching, testament to their relationship.

“Jo greatly relies on his presence,” says Jodi Morris, Joy House household coordinator. “I’ve seen how just sitting in her room not saying a word can make a huge impact on their emotional wellbeing.”

It is paramount to BRC team members that couples’ bonds remain strong, even when they are no longer able to live together. From organizing transportation to scheduling joint activities, team members coordinate across all levels of living to keep partners connected.

“It truly is a key part of their wellness and their longevity. Being close to the people they love is a big factor in their quality of life, and it is our mission to ensure our residents continue to live their best life,” Morris added.

The Laymans came to BRC together, sharing a home in Bridgewater Village as Independent Living residents for close to thirteen years.

It’s where Byard tended a small garden bed—nothing like the expansive and productive gardens he maintained in his earlier years, but no less meaningful, explained second-youngest son, David.

It’s where the pair shared their new stage of life with new friends, where they attended Bridgewater Church of the Brethren, and where Jo discovered the joy of working on puzzles and word searches.

It’s also where they celebrated their milestone 50th anniversary, accompanied by a few of their five adult children and a giant cake with “50” piped in gold. They made many sweet memories at their BRC home,

continuing the pattern of their life together.

But Jo had endured a few heart attacks years before moving—one nearly took her life, recalled David. When her health started a sharp decline that included a few serious falls while in Independent Living, Byard realized that they couldn’t safely take care of each other.

In 2020, he moved into an apartment in Assisted Living, and she relocated to Nursing on the third floor of the North Tower.

“It certainly wasn’t easy to be apart,” Byard said, “but it was a whole lot easier than it would have been if we hadn’t already been living here and had these options.”

“I knew that if I didn’t visit every day, she would not do as well,” he said.

Shortly after settling into their separate rooms, COVID-19 restrictions upended the Laymans’ daily visit routine. But they were undeterred, making regular phone calls whenever it was possible. As soon as they were able to see each other again, team members worked to find spaces where the pair could meet on campus without being in close contact with other residents, such as Lantz Chapel or a nearby common area, when it was unoccupied.

“They have always been helpful in getting us together,” Jo said.

A grand gesture amidst simple joys

The Laymans’ love story began with a bridge and a concert of holiday carols. Jo, a nursing school student at Rockingham Memorial Hospital. Byard, an employee on a local farm. She was singing. He was watching. Intently.

“I was just tagging along with a friend, who was there for his girlfriend at the time,”

[Continued on next page]

LOVE LIVES ON [continued]

Byard said. “We started talking. After that, we went out together ... a lot.”

It would be almost three years before their wedding day—Byard was insistent that Jo finish her nursing degree before starting a family. She did, finishing near the top of her class, and they were married in 1962 and welcomed the first of five children that same year.

For decades, life was full of the honest, simple pleasures of a young family. Workdays. Schooldays. Square dancing. Church gatherings. Family reunions.

David affectionately distills his childhood into a perpetual thread of universal life lessons.

“When we had a problem, we discussed it.”

“When we wanted something, we worked for it.”

“When we did something wrong, we sat on the couch together until we hugged and made up.”

The entire crew was together for their parents’ 25th anniversary, each participating in a memorable ceremony where they renewed their vows.

These days, routine moments such as Monday morning Bingo and singalongs with other nursing household residents continue to convey their lifelong affection and respect.

And the BRC team learned last year that you can never count out a grand romantic gesture when it comes to Byard. In April 2022, he enlisted the help of team members in both Nursing and Assisted Living to orchestrate a surprise 60th anniversary dinner for the love of his life.



I thought the idea of him surprising her at the Village Inn was an amazing and sweet idea!”

— Cameron Tolley, AL Coordinator

“I thought the idea of him surprising her at the Village Inn was an amazing and sweet idea!” said Assisted Living Coordinator Cameron Tolley, who developed a close relationship with Byard and Jo after his move to Assisted Living.

Thinking she was just going out for a drive with former Joy House Coordinator Jill Rhodes, Jo was over the moon when they stopped at The Village Inn—one of her favorite restaurants just a few miles down the road—and there was her husband. He was ready with a special meal, a bouquet of flowers, and a small group of familiar BRC faces to celebrate with.

“This man jumped out and was a-huggin’ and a-kissin’ me, and I thought, ‘Well, I can hug and kiss him back.’ And there we stood,” Jo said.

“It was so worth it,” said Tolley. “She raved about it for weeks afterward.”

“Whether it be visits every day, participating in activities together, or even a special supper, we want all residents to continue living their best lives, just with a little support from us occasionally,” Tolley added.

David didn’t need to be part of that celebration to know that his parents love each other as much today as they did on their wedding day.

“My mom told me when they were getting ready to move [to BRC] that, even after all those years, she was still learning new things about dad. I do believe that is at least one of the keys to their relationship,” he said.



Clear Skies at the Observatory

More than fifty residents, team members, and Shenandoah Valley Stargazers attended an open house at the observatory in May. Views of the sun were spectacular through resident John Seller's C11 telescope showing sun spots, while a special filtered telescope owned by Bart Huxtable showed beautiful filaments and solar prominences floating above the sun's chromosphere.



ReRun Donation to Ukraine

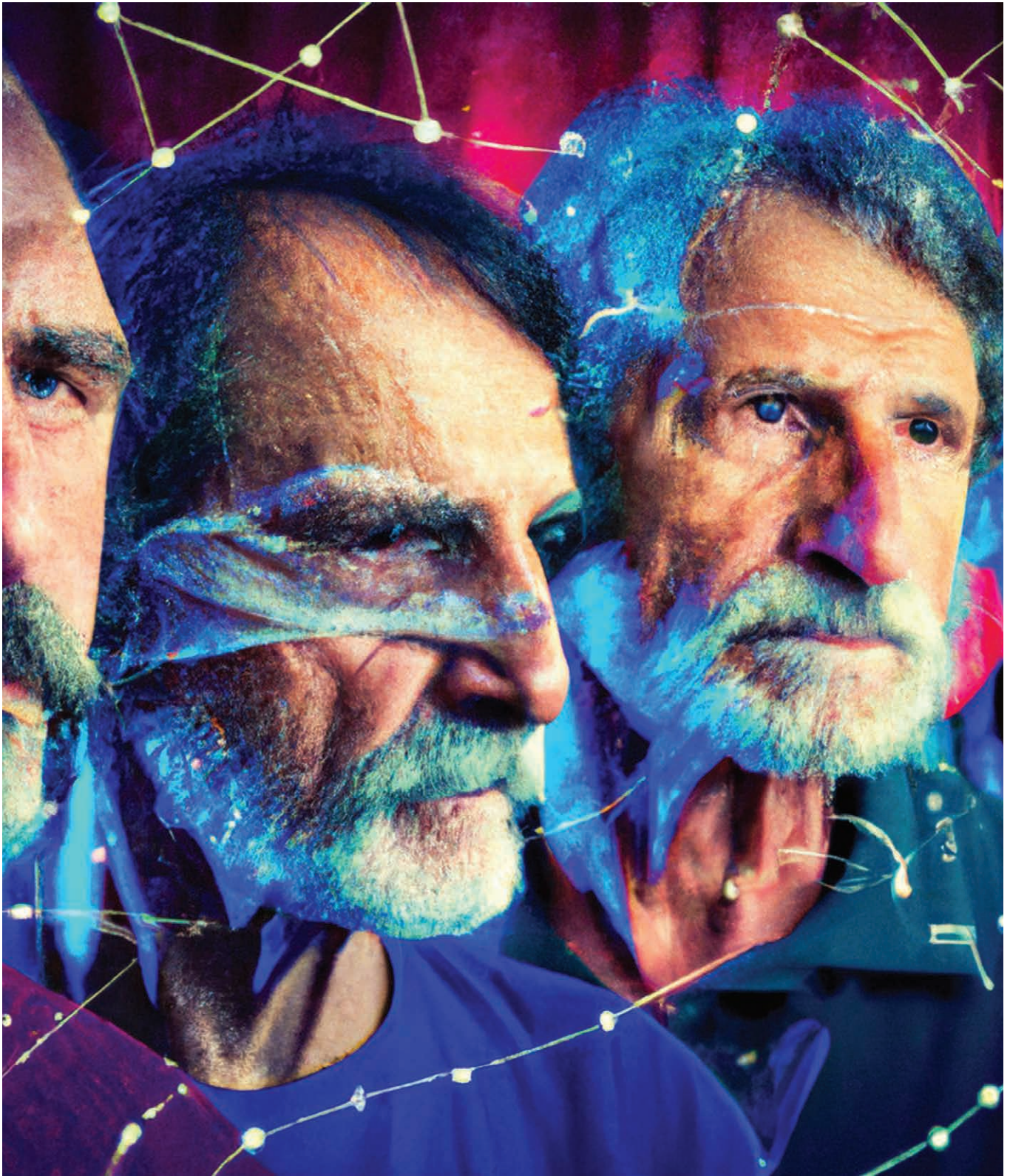
When the ReRun Shoppe ran a clearance sale on winter items earlier this year, two volunteers decided to reach out to Olga, a former team member who has often purchased clothing at the shop for her family and friends in Ukraine. The Shoppe donated several bags of clothing which will directly support families still in Ukraine and refugees resettling in the local area. The RuRun Shoppe has previously contributed lamps to the VFW for its resettlement program.



Opening Minds Through Art

Last year, BRC received a grant through LeadingAge Virginia to train team members and purchase materials to start an Opening Minds through Art (OMA) program. OMA is an award-winning, evidence-based, intergenerational art-making program for people with Alzheimer's disease and other forms of neurocognitive disorders. Its failure-free program provides opportunities for creative self-expression and social engagement for people with dementia. OMA also provides volunteers with opportunities to develop meaningful relationships with residents through the weekly interaction with OMA program participants.





All images for this story were generated by Dall-E, OpenAI's generative art model.

A Senior's Guide to ChatGPT and Emerging AI Technology

By Jeremy Douylliez (with some help from ChatGPT)

By now, it's almost impossible to avoid news and commentary about ChatGPT and other AI-powered technologies. We are at an inflection point with this budding technology, with many heralding an entirely new era of computing that has the potential to change our lives radically. Soon, AI technology will appear in services and products you already use, like e-mail and Microsoft Word. Your favorite fast-food drive-through may even be getting an AI facelift, with chains like Wendy's already testing a new chatbot-powered ordering experience.

But you may still be wondering what exactly these technologies are and how they can benefit you. With a bit of guidance, ChatGPT and other generative AI tools can become valuable resources that can enhance our lives in many ways.

So what exactly is ChatGPT? The AI chatbot is an example of technology known as a "large language model" and can generate human-like responses to text prompts. In other words, you can ask ChatGPT a question or provide it with a prompt, and it will create a reply that sounds like a human

being wrote it. It's been trained on an inconceivably large amount of data—from books, magazines, movies, and just about any writing publicly available online.

One of the most exciting things about ChatGPT is that it can be used for a wide range of purposes. A few ideas for how seniors may use ChatGPT include:

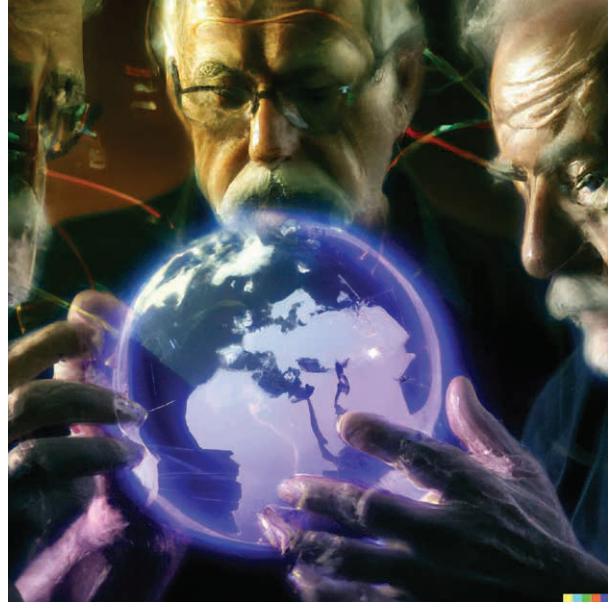
- **Getting answers to questions:** Have you ever had a question about a topic you didn't know who to ask? With ChatGPT, you can ask just about anything and get a helpful response. Whether you're wondering about the best way to prune your rose bushes or want to learn more about the history of your hometown, ChatGPT can provide you with interesting and helpful information.
- **Finding new hobbies and interests:** One of the great things about retirement is having more time to explore new hobbies and interests. ChatGPT can help you discover new things by generating ideas based on your interests and

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CHAT GTP [continued]

preferences. For example, you could ask ChatGPT, “What are some good books to read if I like mysteries?” or “What are some ideas for beginner projects for someone just getting started with water coloring?” and it can provide you with a list of recommendations.

- **Sparking creativity:**
ChatGPT can be a great tool for assisting you with writing a story, poem, or letter. Other AI programs such as Midjourney or Dall-E can even generate images based on written prompts and can be quite amusing to play with!



If you’re new to ChatGPT and generative AI, here are a few tips to help you get started:

- **Keep your prompts simple and straightforward.**
To get the best results from ChatGPT, it’s important to provide it with clear and concise prompts. Avoid using overly complex language or asking multiple questions at once. Instead, try to ask one question at a time, using simple, straightforward language.
- **Be patient.**
ChatGPT is an impressive technology, but it’s not perfect. Sometimes, it might generate a response that doesn’t make sense or isn’t relevant to your question. If this happens, don’t get discouraged. Just try rephrasing your question or asking a different one.
- **Use it as a tool, not a replacement.**
While ChatGPT can be a valuable resource, it’s important to remember that it may get things wrong and is not a replacement for human interaction.

While ChatGPT is an impressive technology, it’s just one example of the

Have you heard?



AND THE ACCOLADES KEEP COMING!

2023 Best of the Valley

- Best Retirement Community
- Best Assisted Living
- Best Nursing Home
- Best Physical Therapy Practice
- Finalist for Best Company to Work For

2023 Best of Virginia

- Best Retirement Community

many exciting developments in the field of generative AI. In the coming years, we can expect to see even more innovative tools and applications that can enhance our lives in many ways—from personalized healthcare treatment recommendations and predictive models for disease prevention to AI-powered personal assistants.

This new tech may seem daunting at first, but tools like ChatGPT can provide useful information, spark creativity, and entertain. By embracing this technology and following some simple guidelines, seniors can navigate the world of generative AI with confidence and reap its many benefits.

HONOR ROLL OF DONORS

Non-Tributes

November 1, 2022 – April 30, 2023

Anonymous Donors

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Bobby & Ellen Abernethy
Frank & Joyce Aigner
Rodney & Jenelle Alderfer
Judith Miller Allen
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Blue Ridge Chapel Church of the Brethren
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The *Bridge* committee would love your feedback! Email your thoughts on this edition to communicate@brcliving.org.

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At Bridgewater Retirement Community, we offer abundant amenities, craft scrumptious cuisine, and provide excellent support so you can live your purpose. That's our purpose—to help you make the most of every day. It's how we've earned regional, state, and national recognitions, including "Best Continuing Care Retirement Community" from U.S. News. Come see for yourself what it means to live well.

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