

— THE —
Bridge
SUMMER 2024





Ellen Layman and Rachel Morris share a heartfelt moment in Unity House on Founders Day.

From the President

Dear Friends,

It's been an action-packed start to the year, and I'm thrilled to share all the exciting happenings in this edition of the Bridge!

We kicked off the year with another successful Evening of Gratitude, where BRC donors had a firsthand look at the initial round of innovation grants coming to life. Thanks to your generosity, our Easter Basket campaign raised over \$12,000. We also celebrated our third annual BRC Awards, where our nursing residents were honored with superlative awards, and brought back our new and improved Taste of Home events. Events like these have been revitalized by the return of our Extended Family program.

But the excitement doesn't stop there! On May 1, we marked our 59th anniversary with a day of service: *BRC Gives Back*. Our Founders Day committee did a fantastic job organizing volunteer activities for residents and team members, benefiting both BRC and our surrounding communities. With 30 successful projects, 91 volunteers, and approximately 200 volunteer hours, we made a significant impact. Highlights included supporting our partners, Habitat for Humanity, VPAS, and Generations Crossing.

In this edition of the Bridge, you'll get to know some of our amazing residents, team members, and volunteers. Discover the stories of a Village resident who has directed nearly 100 comic operas, team members furthering their education with the support of the BRC Foundation's Scholarship Program, and a musician who's been a dedicated volunteer at BRC for over 40 years, among others.

You'll also get to know our dedicated Board Member, Bob Wheatley, and his journey on not one but both BRC Boards: Foundation and Operating. And Carrie Budd, BRC's Vice President of Development and Community Relations, shares the success of our first round of innovation grants, concluding in July. These grants, made possible by the LiveWell Campaign, have sparked excitement for the upcoming round.

I want to thank you all for your unwavering dedication and involvement with Bridgewater Retirement Community. Your commitment helps us maintain our compassionate and vibrant community, allowing senior adults to thrive. I look forward to sharing more exciting updates with you throughout the year. Enjoy your summer!

Rodney D. Alderfer
President | Bridgewater Retirement Community



Contents

News in Brief	4
Volunteer Spotlight	6
Happy Birthday, BRC!	8
Team Member Spotlights	14
Resident Corner.....	16
Board Member Spotlight	21
Taste of Home Returns to BRC	22
Continued Excellence: BRC Foundation's Innovation Grants.....	27
Donor Honor Roll.....	28

News in Brief

BRC Earns LeadingAge Virginia's 2024 Workplace Excellence Award

BRC is honored to receive this year's Workplace Excellence Award from LeadingAge Virginia. LeadingAge Virginia is an association representing the full continuum of non-profit services for older adults across the state. Their mission is to advocate, educate, and serve as a networking platform for its members. Each year, LeadingAge Virginia acknowledges communities that exhibit a strong commitment to their teams and work environment, all while ensuring high-quality care.

BRC embraces the philosophy that "you can't pour from an empty cup," recognizing that the well-being and satisfaction of team members are integral to the resident experience. This principle lies at the core of BRC's values of compassion, innovation, and stewardship. BRC is dedicated to filling the cup of each team member by providing the resources necessary to deliver the best care to residents. Just a few of many ways this commitment is demonstrated includes:

- **Culture University (Culture U):** BRC offers comprehensive training and workshops to enhance team members' skills and knowledge.
- **Workplace:** A community-wide platform enabling team members to connect, share, and collaborate.
- **Extended Family Program:** The revival of this program pairs team



members from non-direct care roles with households to provide support during outings and other activities.

- **BRC Foundation's Work Well Fund:** A fund designed to assist team members in crisis situations or those seeking to advance their careers and skills.
- **Mental Health:** BRC Chaplains Russ and Brenda Barb have received additional mental health training to better support residents and team members.



Introducing Executive Chef Ben

Executive Chef Ben Miller, who recently joined the BRC Dining

Team from Mary Baldwin University, brings with him two decades of culinary expertise. Born and raised in Grottoes, Virginia, Chef Ben has sharpened his skills in fine dining and higher education establishments. He has seamlessly integrated into the BRC community, already making impactful connections with residents. Beyond the kitchen, Chef Ben finds peace in the

great outdoors through fishing and camping, and a particular affection for the holiday season.

"Good laughter and good food are the reason I do what I do every day, as well as being able to showcase my talents and skills along the way," Chef Ben shared. An accomplishment he is particularly proud of is the experience of working under two James Beard award-winning chefs at a prestigious four-star, four-diamond-rated resort. Be sure to stop and say hi to Chef Ben around campus!

BRC Wins Sodexo's Gold Award



In February, BRC joined Sodexo's Annual GOALympics, an event hosted by Sodexo's Sustainability & Corporate Social Responsibility office. This platform allowed partners nationwide to showcase their sustainability efforts in a spirited competition. BRC earned the Gold by creatively involving partners in launching a sustainability initiative. The winning entry, the OZZI program, provides reusable food storage containers to reduce plastic waste in BRC's dining venues. Thanks to the efforts of our residents and team members, informative videos, and advocacy initiatives, BRC is proud to hold this prestigious award.

Continued Growth: Life Enrichment Team

The BRC Life Enrichment Team is thriving, continually enhancing the well-being of everyone on campus. This dynamic reorganization, which began last year, brought together life enrichment, fitness, technology education, and spiritual life.



In February, former Harmony Household Coordinator Sarah Lutz embraced a new role as Volunteer Coordinator. She has already been working diligently to elevate the BRC volunteer experience.

March saw Karyn Posey, previously the Tranquility Household Coordinator, step into the position of Assisted Living and Memory Support Life Enrichment Specialist. She is eager to build new relationships in Assisted Living and focus on engaging programming for all residents.



Madison Wardell joined the team as Life Enrichment Aide, to support the Life Enrichment Team and engage with residents across the continuum.

Madison, who began her journey at BRC as a Health Services Administration intern in the fall of 2023, has returned to continue building meaningful relationships.

It is exciting to witness the growth and dedication of this team as they work hard to ensure BRC residents thrive!

Entertaining BRC residents with hymns, folk songs for more than 40 years

By Dawn Medley

Greg Zimmerman vividly remembers the guitar he opened on Christmas Day in 1980. It was a full-size Fender F-50 acoustic. The spruce top and mahogany neck were accented by rosewood inlays on the back, sides, bridge, and fingerboard. A black pickguard completed the handsome instrument. The ten-year-old boy was not thrilled. He was not interested whatsoever in playing it. “I had never asked for a guitar. I didn’t want it, and I wasn’t very happy about it,” grinned Greg, now 53.

These days, he can smile about that initial frustration, knowing that the once-rejected gift inspired more than 40 years of musical appreciation. His first public performances were at Bridgewater Retirement Community alongside longtime volunteer musician, Clayton Towers. Four decades later, Greg—along with an ever-evolving collection of friends and family guests—has one of the longest-running volunteer acts on the BRC campus.

Greg admits that the guitar lay virtually untouched for more than two years, until the family moved back to Mt. Solon from Germany, where his father worked for the U.S. Department of Defense. His dad grew up in the area, and he had connections in the musical community. It wasn’t long before Greg was signed up for lessons with Towers, a well-known local educator and music instructor. “He didn’t think much of the lessons at first, but he thought a lot of [Clayton], so he kept at it,” remembered Erma Zimmerman, Greg’s mom. “After several lessons, I could make my way—



passably—through one song, ‘Wildwood Flower,’” said Greg, reflecting on the traditional Carter Family folk tune. But Clayton was convinced that his young student was ready for an audience, so he brought him along to one of his scheduled shows at BRC. “I played with him on that one song, and then just kind of sat in the background on my stool, and he would joke around with me and the crowd. We did that format several times... as I got better, I’d play a little more, and lead some pieces,” he explained.

Greg made up for his early reluctance as soon as he started playing for others. The more he performed, the more he enjoyed learning new chords, fingerings, and songs to share with an audience. He began to play solo shows at BRC and added mandolin, bass guitar, and a little piano to his repertoire. By the age of 14, he was playing in church and pulling friends and family



in to join him at monthly BRC slots. “Music became something I couldn’t imagine not doing,” he said.

Greg’s journey came full circle when he enrolled as Bridgewater College’s first guitar major, with aspirations of becoming a full-time church music director. The unconventional way he learned to play meant that he still struggled to read music as a freshman, but he persisted and earned his degree. “I wasn’t their best guitar major, but I was the first,” he jokes.

While earning a living in other lines of work, music remained a significant part of Greg’s life. His characteristic humility is evident when he admits that he doesn’t have many recordings or photos of himself or the group in action. It’s just not something he thinks about—he’s purely in it for the moment. “I feel like doing it for money would change everything,” he said. “Since those first lessons, music has become a way of life... it’s a blessing to me.”

Longtime BRC Activities Director Pam Arbogast welcomed the shy, inexperienced 12-year-old Greg to his debut session. “Clayton had been playing [at BRC] for years with various people. One day, he called me and said, ‘Hey, I have this young guy I want to bring along, if it’s okay.’ I said, ‘Sure!’ and here Greg is, still coming to this day.” Arbogast, who retired after 49 years of experience, said, “It has been fun watching him grow up and then continue to entertain residents for so long.” She added, “They ask about him and [his wife] Holly, and they get excited when they see that he’s on the calendar.”

Greg is quick to credit Pam’s skill as a host and coordinator as the main reasons for the length of his volunteerism. “She made it easy to keep coming back.” During years of organizing activities

for BRC residents, Pam focused on building a culture of support for the volunteers she worked with while shaping the social calendar. “My philosophy was to always be there when they were performing or leading an activity,” she said. Like Greg and his crew, many groups set up regular visits year after year. “That’s a real testament to their dedication and desire to serve the residents,” Pam said.

Greg is honest about the fact that his shows haven’t changed much in 40 years, “At BRC, my aim is to pick songs that bring back memories and share Jesus with them,” he said. Regardless of who is playing with Greg, the group’s bedrock is built on hymns and folk songs. An array of music by well-known mainstream artists such as John Denver, Frank Sinatra, Bob Dylan, and Johnny Cash weaves in alongside contemporary Christian singers like Amy Grant and Michael W. Smith. “My wife loves what we do, but she often hints that we might need to update the set list. It’s a valid point; I’m not playing for the same people as I was 40 years ago, and they are probably familiar with different music,” said Greg. Holly has been part of every BRC show since they were married ten years ago.

Some of the most memorable moments happen when the group invites audience members to sing along. “At every program, I tell them that I enjoy singing with people rather than singing to them. Most times they join in enthusiastically,” he said. “Leading them in singing and seeing the smiles or tears forming in their eyes—that’s why we do what we do.”

Erma knows those moments well; she has been at nearly all of her son’s gigs since he started playing on campus. She and her husband, Joe, moved into Independent Living at BRC several years ago. Until he passed away in 2021, they attended side-by-side. “You can tell it brings him a lot of joy, and it brings me a lot of joy to watch him doing what he loves,” said Erma, now an Assisted Living resident. Greg’s original guitar was replaced decades ago, but it continues to strike a chord in his memories as the genesis of his music-filled life. “I guess [my parents] knew what they were doing all along.”



Happy Birthday, BRC!

On May 1, Bridgewater Retirement Community marked its 59th anniversary with an extraordinary event: *BRC Gives Back*. This initiative encouraged residents and team to engage in various volunteer activities, benefiting both BRC and surrounding communities. Efforts included removing invasive species from walking trails, planting flowers, weeding, and supporting local organizations like Generations Crossing and Valley Program for Aging Services.

The idea floated out of a Founders Day brainstorming session. Traditionally

celebrated in diverse ways, this year's focus was on community service. Carrie Budd, Vice President of Development and Community Relations, emphasized the importance of celebrating who BRC is as a community. "With a renewed focus on our organization's relationships with the community, and the success of Community Connections, we thought it would be meaningful to focus on how to give back. We feel the need to do what we can to help the members of our community, especially seniors," Carrie shared. She praised the planning committee's efforts and creativity by adding, "We had a great committee to think about what we could do to benefit others, on- and off-campus."

A major highlight of the day was a ramp-building project, in collaboration with Habitat for Humanity's Critical Home



[Continued on next page]



FOUNDER'S DAY [continued]

Repair Program. Residents, team members, and board members worked together to construct two complete ramps, which will benefit local seniors as they age in place. Carrie reflected on the collaborative spirit, saying, "People love seeing that come together and are proud to be part of an organization that really recognizes these things and want to be part of the solution." David Wenger of Habitat for Humanity expressed his gratitude for BRC's ongoing support, noting, "Even after several years of working with Central Valley Habitat, I'm always in awe of the generosity of the community; volunteerism is one of the great ways that we help keep things affordable."

Among the many enthusiastic volunteers was Beverly Moore, a resident who moved to BRC with her husband and understands the challenges of maintaining a home in retirement. She highlighted the significance of the ramp-building initiative, saying "One

of the reasons we moved from our home to the community here is because it was getting to be too much to take care of, and that gets difficult if you have a problem physically."

President Rodney Alderfer echoed this sentiment, highlighting the volunteers' eager willingness to participate. "Many of our residents lived in this community, they were involved in the community, they've been volunteering in this community for a long time, and we want to give them the opportunity to just continue to do that," Rodney said.

Another unique project allowed independent living residents to shadow a "CNA for a day" in BRC's nursing households. Rachel Morris, Unity House Clinical Coordinator, and Michelle Hartman, Unity Household Coordinator, both remarked on the positive impact

[Continued on next page]





“ I wanted to know what it’s like to work in households because I know so many residents already, but I didn’t know the team perspective.”

— Marty Barlow
Village Resident



of this experience. Rachel noted, “It was great they [the Founders Day planning committee] asked people to do that and our residents love seeing new faces! I think it’s eye-opening for independent living residents to see the home-like setting of our households versus the institutionalized setting that typically comes to mind when people think of traditional nursing homes.”

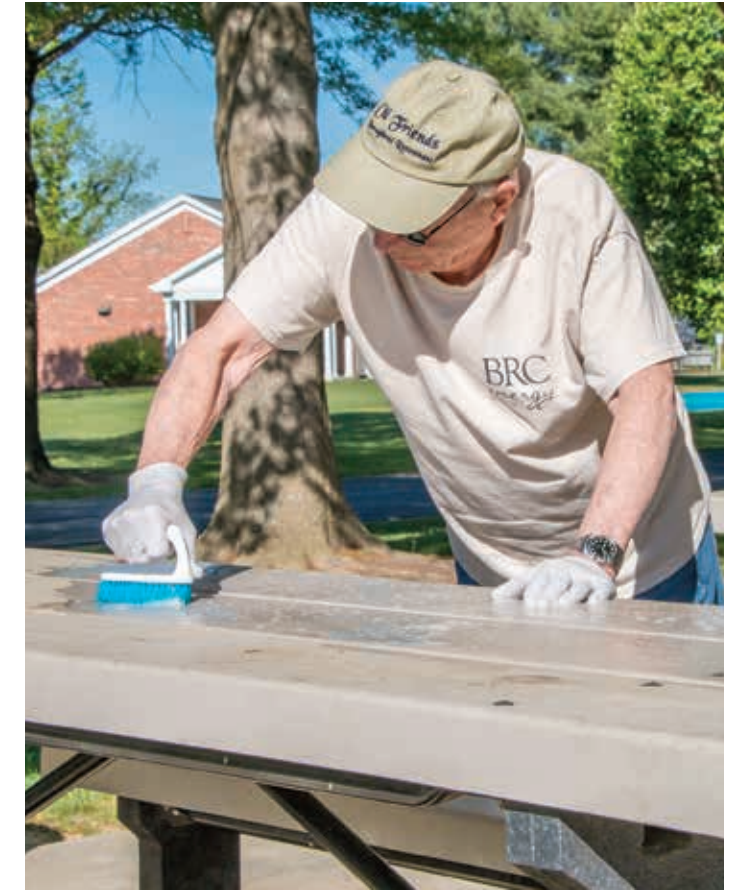


Marty Barlow, a new Village resident, was eager to participate as a CNA for a day in Unity House and “jumped right in,” according to Michelle. Marty almost forgot she was a volunteer Nurse’s Aide 59 years ago when Bridgewater Home first opened its doors—a job she credits to her father’s connection to Dick Stevens, the very first Bridgewater Home Administrator. Marty reflected on the gratifying experience, saying, “I wanted to know what it’s like to work in households because I know so many residents already, but I didn’t know the team perspective.” She has deep ties to BRC, with her mother having lived in Hearthstone Manor, Assisted Living, and then Unity House. “My mother just loved it here. She was loyal to this place!” Marty shared. She also spoke about the strong morale and teamwork she observed, along with BRC’s dedication to making nursing households a ‘top-notch’ environment for



residents. “When I compare it to 59 years ago, it really has come a long way,” Marty added.

Founders Day wrapped up with, quite possibly, the largest picnic the Oasis has ever seen! 210 residents, team members, and board members were in attendance, and no one left hungry. Carrie explains how great it was to finish the work-filled day with a celebration for all BRC accomplished together. The same picnic-style menu was served in Assisted Living and Memory Support households, along with Nursing households, so everyone got to experience the cookout even if they couldn’t join outside. BRC gave back 30 projects, 91 volunteers, and approximately 200 hours to the community this Founders Day.



BRC Foundation's Scholarship Program

The BRC Foundation's Work Well fund offers comprehensive support to team members across various situations, including emergencies, mental health assistance, professional development, and more. This inclusive support system empowers team members to fully utilize the resources provided by BRC, ensuring that there's something beneficial for everyone.

Team members have shared their positive experiences with the fund's scholarship program, hoping to inspire others to do the same. Anne O'Donohue, Vice President of Support Services, is among the many who have benefited from the program. She expressed, "Bridgewater is so committed to us as people, not just as team members, and this program is what brings that to life. I think the program has developed me as a person, a leader, and a team member, and to have a greater impact at BRC—it's a great investment in our team."



Taylor Metzler, R.N.

Taylor Metzler was born and raised in the Shenandoah Valley and has had the joy of working in Unity House since August 2023. She knew she wanted to pursue a career in healthcare after being a compassionate caregiver and later a CNA. "While I was finishing my first degree at Bridgewater College in 2020, I started working full-time as a caregiver for

a woman in one of our households. She and I became incredibly close and I was able to step into the role of being her advocate and, at times, her voice. This experience helped me to realize that I would be well-suited and fulfilled with a career in nursing," Taylor shared.

After learning about the BRC Foundation's scholarship program, Taylor enrolled in Eastern Mennonite University's accelerated second-degree program and achieved her BSN. She is proud to be a Royal and grateful for BRC's support in attending such a highly regarded university. "Thank you to each and every one of the donors who have made it possible for me to be in such a rewarding profession."



Anne O'Donohue

Anne O'Donohue's journey at BRC spans many years, starting alongside the Dining Team with Sodexo. Anne fondly remembers supporting an Evening of Gratitude event while working for another community, and how she instantly fell in love with BRC and the surrounding area. She felt the mission, the sense of community and BRC's commitment to quality of life. After that, she seamlessly transitioned into the role of Vice President of Support Services nine years ago.

In her current role, Anne is responsible for many vital functions at BRC including IT, purchasing, capital budget, risk management, and overall operations support. Despite the complexity of managing multiple projects across campus, she cherishes the opportunity it affords her team to be involved and build relationships. This made Anne's decision to take advantage of the scholarship program a natural one. She saw her concentration (a focus on Information Security, from JMU's Master of Business Administration program) as a chance to grow her leadership skills, make her team stronger, and make an impact on the organization.

The support of the BRC Foundation's Work Well fund made Anne's dream to go back to school a reality by supporting half of her tuition. The experience has allowed her to see BRC through



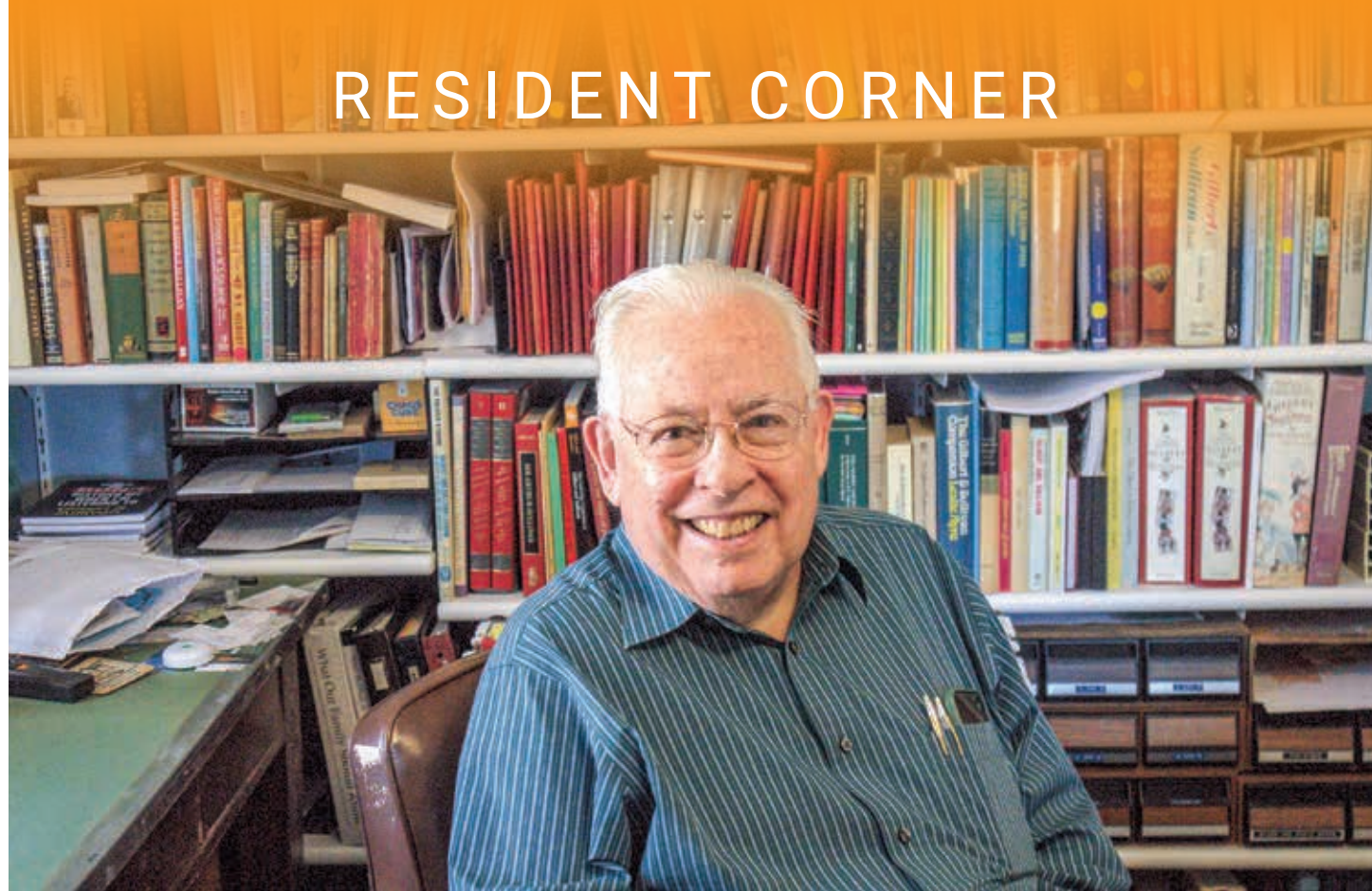
a new lens, to better support her team and those who depend on them, including residents and fellow team members. Anne's advice to any team member considering furthering their education? "Jump in and give it a try! BRC team members deserve it—they deserve to invest in themselves and to continue learning. They work hard daily to improve the quality of life for those they serve, and investing in their growth will make what they do more enjoyable." Anne is set to complete her master's degree in December.

William Rapisardi



William Rapisardi has been part of BRC's Village Maintenance Team for just over one year. William loves working at BRC and enjoys meeting interesting people every day. He was born in Chicago, spent most of his life in Kentucky but moved to the area from West Virginia to be with his girlfriend. William is an asset to the BRC team for his many experiences including groundskeeping, maintenance, IT, and security.

William is actively pursuing an HVAC certification from Blue Ridge Community College, supported by the BRC Foundation's Work Well Fund, and he will finish this journey in July. He looks forward to obtaining further certifications in the future, noting, "I just like to expand my knowledge on what I'm doing and what's around me." When asked if he would recommend other team members to take advantage of the Work Well Fund, William says "Definitely. If you want to expand your knowledge in anything, it's always there to go out and get."



BRC's Ralph MacPhail Celebrates Book Release

Collection of Gilbert & Sullivan Articles to Support Scholarship Fund

Ralph and Alice MacPhail moved to BRC in 2019. Ralph's 33-year career as the Director of Theatre at Bridgewater College, along with his love for Gilbert & Sullivan comic operas, has brought him joy and delighted many audiences. From Bridgewater to the Richmond Opera Company and Gilbert & Sullivan Austin in Texas, Ralph's dedication infused each performance with his artistic spirit.

Much of Ralph's life has been devoted to the study, writing about, and presenting of the works of Gilbert & Sullivan. Much of that

knowledge is now published in the pages of *Only Idle Chatter from Gilbert & Sullivan Austin*, crafted from his original program notes and newsletter articles written for productions between 2012 and 2020.

Tell us about yourself and your career.

I came to Bridgewater College as an undergraduate in 1961. By Thanksgiving, I knew I wanted to spend the rest of my life there working in theatre, and it happened! Alice and I returned to our alma mater in '72 and I taught and directed at BC for 33 years.

We have real roots here at BRC: my grandmother was among the first six women who moved into Bridgewater Home, my late mother-in-law was an RN, and my mom spent her last years here. We moved in four-and-a-half years ago from Broad Street [Bridgewater], just before Covid shut the world down. We love it and we're very grateful to be here!

How many performances have you directed?

There were 66 main-stage Bridgewater College productions but if you count others, it's between 90 and 100. Plus, about thirty at theatres away from campus. The opportunity to direct in Austin came along in 1998, seven years before I retired. Every summer, I'd go to Austin for about six weeks. When I retired, I was fortunate to have something to retire to, not from. When you're directing theatrical works with people you love, it's not really 'work.'

Why do you love comic opera?

I'm not the one who said this originally, but somebody once described Gilbert & Sullivan as 'G-rated works in an R-rated world.' They can be done tomorrow exactly as written; they don't have to be updated. Gilbert & Sullivan is a lively thing—they created works that will probably be presented on the English-speaking stage as long as English is spoken. They're universal and incredibly entertaining, without embarrassment. Gilbert & Sullivan appeals to all ages.

What's your favorite opera and why?

That's like asking who your favorite child or grandchild is! I like different ones for



different reasons. For example, I've directed the *Pirates of Penzance* more than any other; about seven times. There's a chorus called "Climbing Over Rocky Mountain" where the girls come on in their hoop skirts and do a dance—it looks like a Victorian flower garden, and I absolutely love that! It's a visual and musical delight.

Sullivan was a masterful composer; his lovely music often sands over Gilbert's brutal wit to make it more pleasant. Put them together, and miracles happened. I think they would be astounded to see their works are still as popular as ever, more than a century later.

I see you're in the process of giving your collection to the Lawrence and Lee Theatre Research Institute at Ohio State University...

A curator at the Ohio State University's Theatre Research Institute said, "We will be pleased to give your collection a home." I've sent over 200 bankers' boxes of books and memorabilia. It's very gratifying to know that it's there and being cared for. Once it's gone, it's gone—but it's not like I've decided to close the door and never look back, never do anything more in the field.

I still have a lot of research material and a comprehensive Gilbert & Sullivan library

[Continued on next page]



“ If you don’t say yes,
they’ll never ask you again”

— Alice MacPhail

it’s scholarly without being pedantic; it’s knowledge-based but not dry; not filled with footnotes. It’s been a very gratifying experience, and I was very pleased with the way it came out and is being received.

In the book, I noticed one of the first people you thank is your wife, Alice, for all her patience and support.

She puts up with it all! There’s a funny story there:

I remember receiving a call out of the blue one afternoon—it was about 1978. She said, “What was that all about?” I said, “It was the Richmond Opera Company. They’ve invited me to come down to direct *The Pirates of Penzance* this summer.” She said, “Well...” and I said, “Well, we have a two-year-old son, we only have one car, I don’t know where I would stay or eat or...” She said, without missing a beat, and I quote, “If you don’t say yes, they’ll never ask you again.”

I’ve often thought since, she’s regretted saying that because Austin was a matter of being away from home for weeks. She made it possible; I can’t direct these productions just anywhere. She’s been very supportive in this mania through the years, knowing how important it is to me, and has always traveled to the final performances.

[Continued on next page]

BOOK RELEASE [continued]

here in our home in the Village. In fact, we waited for a duplex with a basement, so we’d have room for what I call ‘the archive in the undercroft.’

Are you planning to do more with your collection?

I continue to write for *The Austin Savoyard* and just finished a long article for the *W.S. Gilbert Society Journal* in England. In 1986, I had a chance to speak at the *W.S. Gilbert Sesquicentennial* conference at MIT. I wrote a long paper on Gilbert and Shakespeare, but the proceedings were never published, so I’m thinking about revising and submitting that (in installments). Also, new

books on Gilbert & Sullivan continue to be published that need reviews.

Tell me about your book.

I’d been named Gilbert & Sullivan Austin’s first Artistic Director in 1995. In 2020, they had to cease production (like so many theatrical companies did due to Covid) and reorganize. GSA was looking at budgets and there were costs associated with my engagement they wouldn’t have with a local director, so they made me Artistic Director Emeritus. Without a production to plan for, I had all this time, so I thought of doing this book to benefit the company’s scholarship program.

All the work on *Only Idle Chatter* was done here [at BRC] on Rosewood Circle—thank

goodness for computers! I had all this experience behind me, I’d written all this stuff over the past decade. I contacted the editor of *The Austin Savoyard*, and said, “Can you send me my edited scribbblings for the newsletter and programs?” She sent them back to me and I just started to work at it; assembling and updating them. I had no idea it would result in a 250-page book!

It’s published online by Lulu.com, although theoretically, the publisher is Gilbert & Sullivan Austin. I’ve sent copies for review to the various Gilbert & Sullivan publications. The contents were designed to create interest in Gilbert & Sullivan productions for people with little to no knowledge of the works. I like to think



If she hadn't said that you probably wouldn't be where you are?

Gilbert wrote a play called *Foggerty's Fairy* in which a fairy grants him [Foggerty] the right to go back at any point in his life and make a different decision. We often don't realize how changing one decision informs everything else that follows. If I hadn't gone to Bridgewater College, I would have never met Alice, nor would I have seen Professor Nelson T. Huffman's 1962 production of *H.M.S. Pinafore* in Cole Hall. So, if I hadn't come to Bridgewater College, Gilbert & Sullivan might not be part of my life—nor would Alice! What a blessing it is when one can look back, without regret, at a gratifying life.

Is there anything else you'd like to add?

I would like to again say how grateful Alice and I are to be in the BRC community. We've been met without exception with courtesy from all and help when we've needed it. It's been a delightful transition for us. It's just wonderful, especially not to have to worry about groundskeeping or housekeeping—and to be surrounded by wonderful residents and team!

Only Idle Chatter from Gilbert & Sullivan Austin is available for purchase from Cottage Gifts, Lulu.com, and Amazon.com. All proceeds from sales support the Gilbert & Sullivan Austin Scholarship Fund.

BOARD MEMBER *Spotlight*



Bob Wheatley

Bob Wheatley is native to the Shenandoah Valley, having pursued his

academic journey at Wake Forest University before obtaining an MBA from William & Mary. While his roots initially led him into the family's automotive business, he's been a financial advisor with Edward Jones for 25 years and opened the Bridgewater location. Reflecting on his introduction to the Board, Bob credits a former BRC team member for sparking his interest in joining the Foundation Board, a decision that led him to serve for six years before being invited to BRC's Operating Board in 2019.

President Rodney Alderfer elaborates on why Bob was an ideal addition to the Operating Board, noting his familiarity with BRC, his specific skill set, and calls him a "Community Man." Rodney shares, "He is thoughtful in the advice he's provided over the years." Yet, Bob's connection to BRC runs deeper than board membership. He reminisces about the monthly lunches organized by the BRC Auxiliary prior to Covid, highlighting his sponsorship of some of these gatherings

gave him the opportunity to step away from the office and engage with the community for a day.

Bob's career and tenure on both boards has helped him form many connections, which he values greatly. "It's always been about the relationships for me," he explains, emphasizing the relationships he's created with roughly 50 to 60 BRC residents over the years. Bob highlights how his work and involvement with BRC go hand in hand. He's gained clients through BRC, and in turn, some of his clients have chosen to live in the BRC community. This mutual support, he reflects, is a humbling and neat experience that he cherishes.

Bob credits the strength of the Operating Board to its unwavering commitment and visionary leadership, which has ignited significant, positive change within both the facilities and organizational culture of BRC. "The incredible vision leadership has for the future of BRC is catapulting [them] to being a top community. There's been a lot of consistency over the years; the tenure, the leaders, and many talented people coming along. But it's still all about the residents."

Taste of Home Returns to BRC

Cameron Tolley, Assisted Living Coordinator, has worked at BRC for a long time and therefore has the insider's view of what's happening around campus. Her responsibilities include scheduling and regulatory compliance, but when she's not doing that, she's busy living life with residents. For years, Cameron worked with a former Executive Chef to create an activity using residents' recipes. It all started with residents handing over their cherished recipes to her for safekeeping. Fueled by her enthusiasm for resident engagement, Cameron turned the

collected recipes into an interactive event, where everyone sat around a table in a U-shape and took turns adding ingredients, mixing, etc. It was something they could do on campus and enjoy together, but with the help of the Dining Team, the events then evolved into cooking demonstrations. The earlier demos included applesauce cake, cookie dough, and egg salad sandwiches. The activity transformed around 2018, thoughtfully becoming "Taste of Home."

[Continued on next page]





TASTE OF HOME [continued]

One standout memory for Cameron, to this day, is a resident's prized minced meat pie. How delicious does meat, fruit, molasses, and nutmeg sound baked into a pie? She explains, "I had never made this before, so I felt like I needed to test it out. We were in the Community Room (at the time), and I needed people to taste it. The only willing participant was Rodney [Alderfer]. He said, 'Oh yeah, I love minced meat pie!'" The cooking demos evolved even further to include themes, after one resident passed away and her family brought in a cooking wok to share her famous sweet and sour pork. This sparked a Chinese New Year themed meal that everyone enjoyed.

Taste of Home experienced a temporary hiatus for a few years due to Covid. However, since its revival, the events have been a wild success. Just this year,

Cameron has seen a huge increase in the number of residents participating from all levels of living. Several team members have commented on how great and successful Taste of Home has been, and how much passion Cameron puts into it. Currently, she works with Executive Chef Ben Miller to bring residents' dishes to life. "I love working with Chef Ben," Cameron says, "He truly takes my crazy and just lets me be crazy. I know I can hand him any recipe and he'll make it happen." And Chef Ben has equally great things to say about the privilege of recreating residents' culinary legacies. "It has the feel of home and I love interacting with our residents; that's why I'm here."

While Taste of Home had traditionally been an activity planned within Assisted Living and Memory Support, Cameron decided to spark interest across all levels of living. She started by inviting ten Independent Living residents, just to see if they'd show; then the event was so full, it had a waitlist; then Nursing residents organically started joining, and it blossomed from there. Cameron recalls having an "oh crap" moment, looking up at the crowd during this year's March Madness Taste of Home. There was plenty of food and no reason to panic, she just couldn't believe how amazing the turnout had become.

April's Earth Day Taste of Home showcased a delicious butternut squash pizza submitted by Margie Robison, an Independent Living resident. Margie didn't realize she automatically had a seat at the event because her recipe was chosen. "If your recipe is picked, you automatically have a spot," Cameron explained. In April, other recipes featured included Gardenside

“ I love working with Chef Ben. I know I can hand him any recipe and he'll make it happen.”

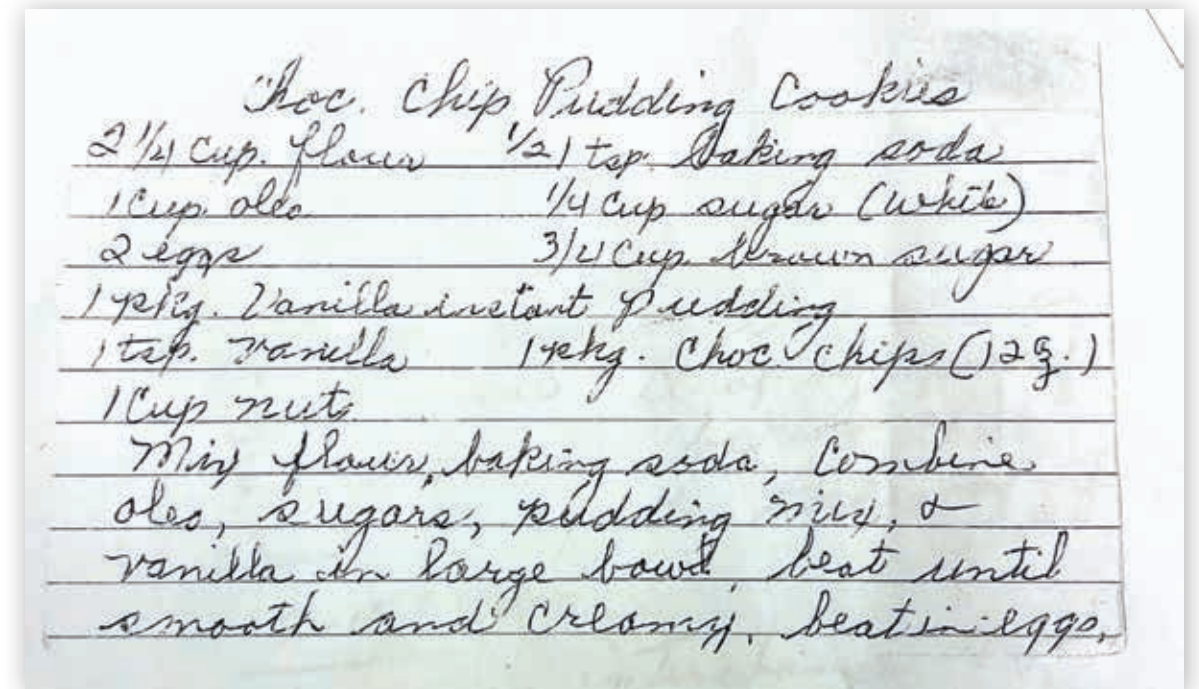
– Cameron Tolley

cook Buffy Mitchell's cucumber salad and Assisted Living resident Eugene Counts' peach cobbler. Everyone walked away full! However, it was Vice President of Nursing Jeff Lambert's white chicken chili that stole the spotlight earlier this year. Residents enjoyed it so much they're begging for it to be included in the Junction's soup lineup.

It requires a lot of hands to help pull off monthly Taste of Home events, and Cameron credits much of that success to the revival of BRC's Extended Family program. "It's great knowing that people will show up and help get residents there," she explained. Cameron also enjoys collaborating with the Dining Team, and she's been extremely satisfied with the participation from

residents and team members providing their keepsake recipes. Additionally, she noted it's been amazing to watch residents engage with Chef Ben. He appreciates that Taste of Home provides him with the opportunity to build connections with residents, allowing them to get to know each other better. Furthermore, Chef Ben enhances the events by hosting trivia aligned with each theme, so there's more to take away from each event.

Reflecting on the successful comeback of Taste of Home, Cameron mentions it's all about bringing people together and showcasing something from everyone. She excitedly shared, "It's just nice to see the things that they [residents] have cooked over the years with family and friends, and to watch them bring it back and bring joy to their lives. It's so kind that they'd share these things with me."





Janice Wade Retires... Again!

What began as a simple gesture for her church friends turned into a full-blown card-making career for Janice Wade. A member of a 4,000-strong congregation in Lakeland, Florida, Janice was asked to repurpose greeting cards for those unable to attend services. Her hobby blossomed into a significant undertaking as Janice sought leftover cardstock from local printers and collected unused envelopes from Walmart after holidays to prevent them from being thrown out. She brought her passion from Florida to BRC, creating beautiful greeting cards for various occasions using donated materials. Janice's work brought joy to residents and team members since 2014, until this year when she decided to conclude her venture. We deeply appreciate her years of artistic dedication and the extra happiness she spread to so many lives!



Stokesville Observatory Solar Eclipse

In April, BRC residents had an unforgettable experience at the Stokesville Observatory, where they marveled at the solar eclipse. The event was filled with excitement and awe, creating joyful and wondrous memories under the clear skies.



Continued Excellence: BRC Foundation's Innovation Grants

By Carrie Budd



At Bridgewater Retirement Community, we are proud of the enriching life we create for our

residents and the great work environment we provide for our team. BRC's core values of compassion, innovation, and stewardship work together to create our wonderful community. This does not mean, however, that we feel we have achieved all we can.

As an organization we are continuously striving to be better. With the recent success of the LiveWell Campaign, we decided to dedicate a portion of the funds to support new and innovative ideas that come from our team members.

In July of 2023, we awarded the first round of innovation grants to team members for a range of projects that benefit residents, team members, and our greater community. During this year's Evening of Gratitude event, we asked our grantees to create a display sharing with our donors the new ideas that the grants funded. It was exciting to see donors move from table to table hearing about the monthly Farmers Market started on campus, trying the new Tovertofel console used in our memory support households, learning about our very successful Senior Prom, and hearing about the many ways we support our community partners, Valley Program for Aging Services

and Generations Crossing. So much has been accomplished in the first year of this exciting, new program.

I recently held an information session for team members interested in applying for this year's grants. I was amazed and energized by the depth of commitment of our team members to our residents. Their creative and innovative ideas were inspiring, and I am excited to see what can be achieved in this next year.

The first year of innovation grants ends in July. All year, our grantees have been sending in quarterly narrative and financial reports outlining what they have achieved and how grant money has been spent. Now, a new group of team members is filling out grant applications, preparing projected budgets, and submitting them by the end of June. After a two-step review process, BRC's Foundation Team will announce the recipients of the next round of innovation grants at the end of July.

Along with our creative and innovative team members, it took visionary donors to make the Innovation Grant Program possible. Thank you for your investment in BRC and your trust in our team to responsibly use the resources you have generously shared to supercharge our program development. We are so grateful for your generosity and excited about the future of BRC.

HONOR ROLL OF DONORS

Non-Tributes

January 1, 2024 – April 30, 2024

Stanley & Karen Abbot
 Frank & Joyce Aigner
 Raymond & Susan Albers
 Judith Miller Allen
 Robert & Linda Alley
 Robert & Beverly Armbruster
 Robert & Mary Atkins
 Heather & Eric Barkey
 Beaver Creek Church
 Suzanne Nalker Benedict
 Roger & Sonja Bible
 Mary Ann Blaine
 Charles & Arvella Blair
 Blue Ridge Chapel Church of the Brethren
 Bruce & Nancy Bowman
 Jim & Sylvia Kline Bowman
 Ruth D. Boyers
 Chester & Nancy Bradfield
 Martha Bradfield
 Nancy R. Bradfield
 William & Jane Branch
 Judith K. Breeden
 Bridgewater Church of the Brethren
 Mary Ann Brown
 W. Richard Brown & Kathleen Siker
 Peggy Sue Bryan
 Gretchen Buddenhagen
 Calvary Church of the Brethren
 Campbell Print Center
 Betty Caricofe
 Joanie Cassens
 Cedar Grove Church of the Brethren
 Dianna Chandler
 Charlottesville Church of the Brethren
 City National Bank
 Dr. Allen M. Clague Jr.
 Mary Clanahan
 Miriam Cobb
 Sally Jane Conner
 Melba Cook
 Ellen Click Cooper
 Virginia Coppedge
 Patricia S. Costie
 Ronald & Violet Cox
 Gary & Susan Creasy
 Benny & Cathy Cupp
 Thomas & Joy Daggy
 Hattie Driver
 Rev. Wendell & Sonya Eller
 Robert B. Emswiler

L. Kathryn Evans
 Beverly & Terry Eye
 Ann D. Farrell Estate
 Richard & Janean Fawley
 J. Michael & Cynthia Fike
 James & Ann Flora
 Theodore & Mary Beth Flory
 Forest Chapel Church of the Brethren
 Donald & Polly Fravel
 Gregory S. Fulk
 Carole Gaines
 Lelia Lightner Galvin
 John & Marilyn Garber
 Sandra Gardner
 James & Phyllis Gaskins
 Diane Gasper
 GFWC Wayland Women's Club
 Juliana Graham
 Paul Graham
 Eldridge W. Gray
 Cynthia P. Gregson
 Rev. James & Deborah Harris
 Linda Harter
 Henry & Loretta Hawkins
 John & Brenda Hedrick
 Galen & Inge Heisey
 Judy Henneberger
 Wayne & Nancy Hepler
 Shelia S. Hevener
 Christopher Hively
 Roma Holloway
 Dr. Wallace & Eleanor Holthaus
 George & Ann Homan
 Dr. Jesse & Alice Lee Hopkins
 Gloria R. Horne
 Michael Hostetter & Nancy Cherniss
 Stanley & Mariannis Houff
 Rev. Debra Sue Huffman
 Lee & Andrew Jackson
 John & Helen Jarrels
 Bob Jochen & Chris Smith
 J. Robert & Patricia Johnson
 Gayle & Hester Judy
 Clayton & Marsha Justice
 Betsy Kennedy
 Peggy C. Kennedy Estate
 Charlotte Kenney
 Nancy Still Keplinger
 Sharon Kiracofe
 Robert & Sarah Kloetzer
 Joanne Lam
 Diana & Esten Lambert
 Craig & Theresa Landes

Don & Carole Landes
 Paige Landes
 Glen & Katherine Layman
 Virginia D. Layman
 David & Lorraine Lineweaver
 Henry & Ellen Lineweaver
 Mary Ann Littrell
 Linda Logan
 James A. Longenecker
 Wes Loomis & Jane Mohr
 Deborah L. Lopez
 Ralph & Alice MacPhail
 Laura S. Mapp
 Rebecca Martin
 Rod & Sandy Martin
 Marion & Joan Mason
 Peggy G. Mason
 Joel "Mac" & Beverley McCauley
 Michael & Sallie Meffert
 Memorial Church of the Brethren
 Ann Marie Menard
 George & Juanita Mendenhall
 Mill Creek Church of the Brethren
 Dawn Elizabeth Miller
 Janice Kathryn Miller
 Saraona F. Minnich
 Barry & Connie Minnick
 Charles & Suzanne Mizell
 Wanda S. Moad
 Sherry L. Mongold
 Katharine Moore
 Mount Bethel Church of the Brethren
 Mount Olivet Church of the Brethren
 Barbara K. Moyers
 Eugene & Pam Moyers
 Terry & Diane Murray
 Anne W. Nielsen
 Rosemarie J. Palmer
 Stephen & Shirley Parsons
 Larry & Jane Pelletier
 D. Jean Petre
 Pine Grove Church of the Brethren
 Edward & Judith Powell
 Nan Powell
 Sandra Pruett
 Joseph & Becky Puffenbarger
 William & Virginia Reinhold
 Robert L. & Carol Kim Retka
 Linda Ridder
 Michael & Margaret Robison
 William & Tammie Rodgers
 Kenneth Blair Roller
 Michael R. Ross

B. Franklin & Ann Salyards
 Jeffrey & Patty Schleifer
 John H. & Faye T. Sellers
 Fred & Helen Shank
 W. Keith & Jennifer Sheets
 Gary & Rebecca Shickel
 Charles C. Shiflet Jr.
 Helen Shiflet
 Karen Shiflet
 Shiloh Church of the Brethren
 Elwood & Barbara Shrader
 Ann & Mark Siciliano
 Edgar (†) & Catherine Simmons
 James G. & Jean H. Simmons
 William L. Simmons
 Terry & Vickie Slaubaugh
 Elizabeth H. Snyder Estate
 Wayne & Carol Spangler
 Staunton Church of the Brethren
 Kathy Stanley's Family
 Garnet Suiter
 Summit COB Women's Fellowship
 Sunrise Church of the Brethren
 Rev. Fred & Nancy Swartz
 Linda S. Tanguay
 The O'Connor Group
 Timberville Church of the Brethren
 P. David & Mardi Trout
 Gary & Marcia Tyeryar
 Valley Pike Church of the Brethren
 Frederick & Joyce Wampler
 Weaver's Flooring America
 Elizabeth Webster
 Michael & Janet Weeks
 Tom & Marnie Wheatley
 Larry & Amy White
 Richard & Pamela Wilkins
 N. Paige & Ann Will
 Ray M. Wine (†)
 Robert & Nancy Wiskeman
 Merv & Mary Wunderlich
 Richard & Margaret Wurst
 Vicki & James Zerkel
 Fred & Katherine Zimmerman

Tributes

January 1, 2024 – April 30, 2024

In Honor of

Danny Ritchie
 Blue Ridge Mtn Dulcimer Players
Martha Arey
 Thomas and Joy Daggy
Russ and Brenda Barb
 Virginia MacNaughton
 Faye S. Sutton Family
Sam Thacker
 Thomas and Joy Daggy

In Memory of

Ruth "Bin" Atkins
 Robert & Mary Atkins
Jane M. Brown
 Robert & Beverly Armbruster
Genevieve Buckholz
 Bridgewater Village Residents' Association
Swannie Smith Colvard
 Michael & Gail Hunt
Madge M. Eckenrode
 Donna Mitner
Forrest L. Frazier
 Bridgewater Village Residents' Association
 Mensel & Linda Dean
Don Gault
 Bridgewater Village Residents' Association
Helen Harsh
 Doris Harsh
 Mollie Jane Arey
Twyla A. Heatwole
 William B. Kyger Jr.
 Dennis R. Slagle
 Arthur B. Buckley Sr.
Vivian Hevener
 Bridgewater Village Residents' Association
Cora Hinkle
 Suzanne M. Hinkle
 Cathy D. Hinkle
 Doris Harsh
 Turner Ashby High School

BRC deeply appreciates the contributions of each donor. We have made every effort to make this list complete and accurate. If you notice a mistake or omission, please accept our apologies and contact us at **540-828-2652**.

Become a



Funds donated to the BRC Foundation do a lot more than support the basic operations of Bridgewater Retirement Community.

By choosing to become a monthly donor, your contributions:

- Help to ensure that residents who outlive their financial resources are never asked to leave their homes.
- Purchase needed equipment and vehicles.
- Assist in the development of spiritual life programs and activities.
- Support resident programs in our nursing households like day trips to the beach.

Consider becoming a BRC Energizer today. Your generosity makes a difference.

Bill Reinhold's Christian Service Award



Village resident Bill Reinhold is an alumnus of King University in Bristol, TN. Each year, the university honors and recognizes the remarkable achievements of its alumni.

This April, during King University's Dogwood Homecoming weekend, Reinhold received the prestigious Christian Service Award. This award is presented to alumni who have devoted their lives to full-time service in fulfilling the commission of Jesus Christ.



102nd Birthday Ride

Charlsey Puffenbarger celebrated her 102nd birthday this April by cruising in style on the trishaw bike with her niece and resident, Deidra Hill!

Ellwood G. & Helen L. Hooke

Ronald & Leona Fox

Fred Houff

Bernard H Yancey

John ODell

James R. Mitchell

Arthur & Mary Jo Mitchell

Edmund & Deborah Price

John & Janice Flora

Houff Corporation

Karis Project

Steward Jordan

Thomas & Robin Miller

Rick Kiser

Tom & Barbara Ross

Josephine Layman

Roy Layman

Kyger Funeral Homes

Mark Lehman

Lois E. Hertzler

Carol L. Parks

Joy L. Sherman

Sandra W. Lineweaver

Mensel & Linda Dean

Patricia A. Gardner

Michael & Patricia Fiore

Jean & Frank Gearing, III

Kelli L. Tomasulo

Joann Liskey

Bridgewater Village Residents' Association

Vivian S. Longenecker

Bridgewater Village Residents' Association

William Ludwick

Bridgewater Village Residents' Association

Bob Lynch

William B. Kyger Jr.

Ruth Cupp Maneely

Paul & Suellen Maneely

Lois Miller

Bridgewater Village Residents' Association

J. B. & Louise S. Minnich

Saraona F. Minnich

Erika N. Moore

Tara Crisinati

Libby Tofflemire

Keith Borders

Cathy & Hans Naumann

Robin Austin

Danielle Wroblewski

Barbara Williams

Betty Lou Myers

Bridgewater Village Residents' Association

Bill V. Neff, Sr.

Thomas & Robin Miller

Bridgewater Village Residents' Association

Odile Proctor

Christopher Westerfield

Bridgewater Village Residents' Association

Charles Raisner

Bridgewater Village Residents' Association

Edwin Earl Rodger

Mary Lou Berkey

Sue Rotzin

Bridgewater Village Residents' Association

Donna Shirkey

Sunset Drive United Methodist Church

Joyce Slocum

Ed & Betsy Craun

Doris Smootz

Bridgewater Village Residents' Association

Mary Snelson

Jeffrey E. Snelson

Elizabeth H. Snyder

Ronald & Mary Bowman

Rudell E. Ahalt

Bridgewater Village Residents' Association

Faye S. Sutton

Barbara & Robert Whaley

Joyce M. Grove

Bridgewater Village Residents' Association

Ruth Hume Taylor

David & Constance Taylor

June Vernon

Stephanie V. McNeill

Eleanor C. Weaver

Jim & Pam Hunt-Carter

June T. White

Bridgewater Village Residents' Association

Ruth Wright

Helen Shiflet

Suzann L. Meyerhoeffer

Susan Thompson

Edgar Meyerhoeffer

Susan Thompson

Jenny Andes

Douglas Gordon

† Deceased

THE *Bridge* is made possible by the work of the following BRC team members and contractors.

Editor | Ashlie Heatwole

Writers | Ashlie Heatwole, Dawn Medley, and Olivia Shifflett

Art and Design | Dustin Blyer

Photography | Dustin Blyer, Sera Petras, Boyd Pearman Photography, Kirsten Pittman, Bill Reinhold, Rhonda Collins, Sarah Lutz, Valley Program for Aging Services, and Central Valley Habitat for Humanity

Special thanks to | Anne O'Donohue, Ben Miller, Bill Reinhold, Bob Wheatley, Cameron Tolley, Carrie Budd, Erma Zimmerman, Greg Zimmerman, Janice Wade, Kristin Knight, Marty Barlow, Michelle Hartman, Pam Arbogast, Rachel Morris, Ralph MacPhail, Rhonda Collins, Rodney Alderfer, Sarah Lutz, Taylor Metzler, and William Rapisardi

The *Bridge* committee would love your feedback! Email your thoughts on this edition to communicate@brcliving.org.

BRIDGEWATER RETIREMENT COMMUNITY

holds memberships in the following organizations which help us to better serve you.



Yes! I want to support the  BRC Foundation!

\$50 \$75 \$100 Other

Enclosed is \$ _____ (Your contribution is tax deductible)

Bill my credit card: Card number: _____

Exp. Date _____ 3-digit security code (CVV) _____

Your gift to BRC Foundation will bring joy to our residents and enhance their daily lives.

Thank You!

Name/Group _____

In Honor/Memory of _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone _____ Email _____

Contact us: cbudd@brcliving.org

A not-for-profit organization under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code.
Make checks payable to: BRC FOUNDATION, 302 North Second Street, Bridgewater, Virginia 22812

The Bridge is the official publication of Bridgewater Retirement Community, which includes Bridgewater HealthCare, Inc.; Bridgewater Home, Inc.; Bridgewater Village, Inc.; and the BRC Foundation. We invite your comments and suggestions. Reproduction of articles may be done with written permission. Please contact editor Ashlie Heatwole via email at communicate@brcliving.org or by mail at 302 N. Second Street, Bridgewater, VA 22812.

BRC is the Best... *Again!*



We're thrilled to announce that once again, BRC has been honored in the U.S. News & World Report's Best Senior Living ratings. For the third consecutive year, every area on our campus made the rankings:

- **Best Independent Living**
- **Best Assisted Living**
- **Best Memory Care**
- **Best Nursing Home (short-term rehab & long-term care)**
- **Best Continuing Care Retirement Community**

Moreover, we've excelled in the following subcategories:

- **Value**
- **Activities & Enrichment**
- **Location & Environment**
- **Management**
- **Care Services**
- **Staff & Hospitality**
- **Safety**
- **Food & Dining**

These accolades speak volumes to our unwavering dedication to providing the best possible experience for our residents and their families. Thanks to everyone for supporting us, we couldn't do it without you!