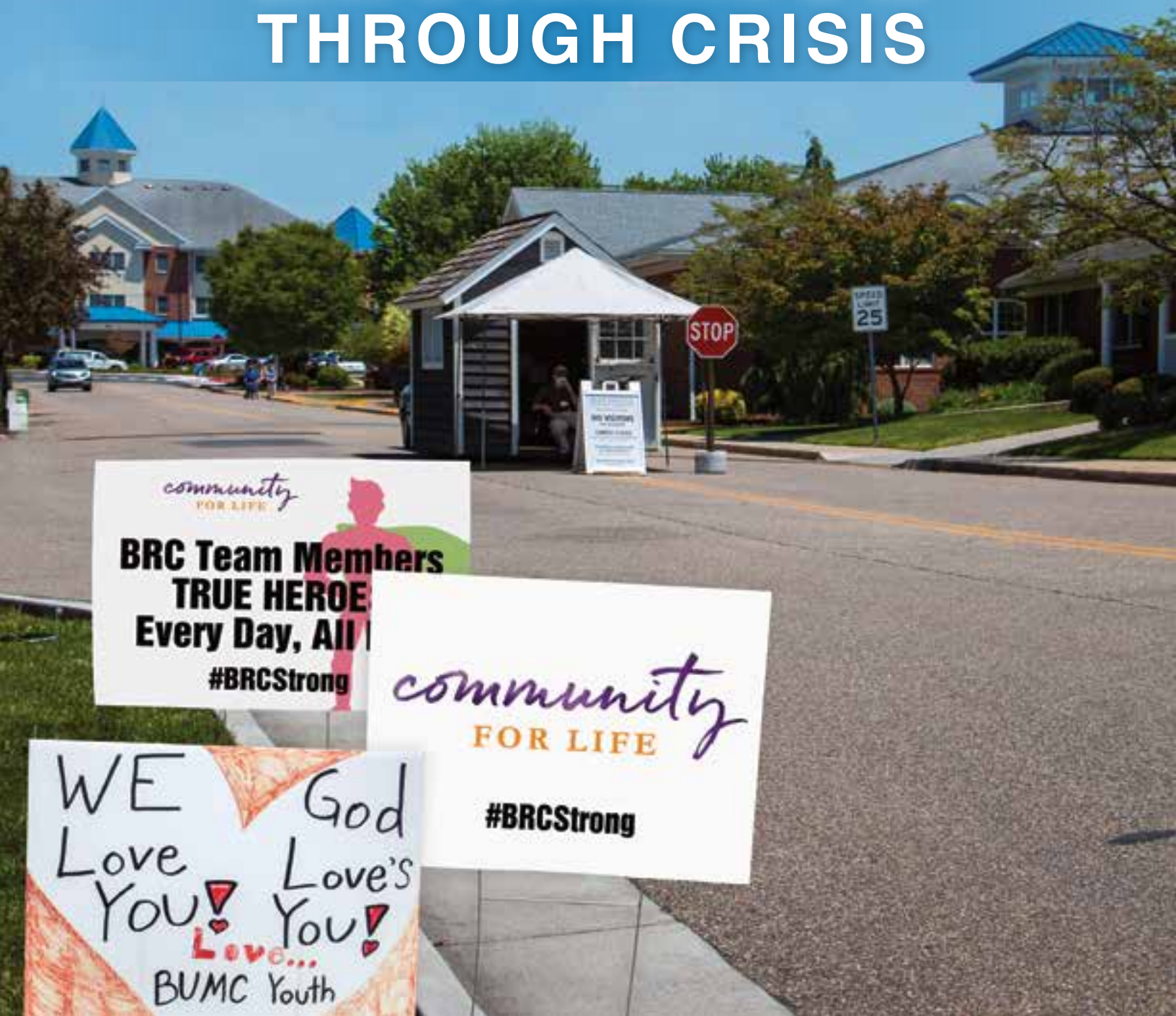


— THE —
Bridge
SUMMER 2020

RESILIENCE
THROUGH CRISIS



community
FOR LIFE

**BRC Team Members
TRUE HEROES
Every Day, All**

#BRCStrong

community
FOR LIFE

#BRCStrong

WE Love You! God Love's You!
Love... BUMC Youth



Resident Mary Ludwick takes advantage of the sunshine on an early spring day to get a head start on her gardening.

FROM THE PRESIDENT



These last several weeks have been hard. We've implemented strict preventive measures that feel like the antithesis of our operating philosophy of community building and engagement. We are anxious about the health of our residents and our own families and friends. We are worried about the economy. Although we haven't laid off or furloughed any of our team members, many face childcare dilemmas and the loss of income within their families.

And yet, our team has not balked at the challenges before us. Time and time again, they have stepped up to the plate in inspiring and meaningful ways.

Here's what I know. When residents face isolation from loved ones and community, our team keeps them connected—patiently setting up video calls and finding creative ways to celebrate birthdays. When it became unsafe for residents to dine together or leave campus for food and essential supplies, our team helped reinvent our entire dining operation and created a grocery-delivery program from scratch. When the fitness center and hair salons closed, our team adopted new roles and responsibilities eagerly. As each new policy rolls out, from restricting access to campus to requiring face masks, our team accepts new inconveniences gracefully, putting the health and safety of residents and their fellow team members above all else.

They say that crisis brings out the best and worst in people. At BRC, I've been privileged to see it bring out only the best. In the following pages, we've tried to tell that story. I hope you'll be similarly inspired by the amazing work happening here.

Unfortunately, this crisis is not over yet, and we don't know quite what lies ahead. But if the last weeks have taught us anything, it's that this community and its people—from residents and team members to families and supporters—are resilient. Together, we'll get through this challenging time.

Sincerely,

Rodney D. Alderfer
President | Bridgewater Retirement Community

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from the Community

It Takes a Village

by: Anonymous BRC Villager

I was pulling out of my driveway last week when I saw what looked to be a building sitting in the middle of the road. As it turns out, it was a building—right there in the middle of North Second Street. It was put there to house a new security team that is helping to screen people entering campus. I got to thinking about it and realized that there’s no way BRC could have prepared for something like that in their budgeting.

So, I decided that I wanted to do something to offset that expense and made an anonymous donation. All this extra effort is being put in to keeping my neighbors and me safe. I didn’t ask for it, but they’re doing it because they care about our health and wellbeing. We are so fortunate to live in a community that is working hard to protect us.

Any time in my life that I’ve been able to give in support of others, it’s been rewarding. I felt better about myself being able to do something that helped others. It may just be that my neighbors feel that way too and could help BRC get through this crisis by also contributing what they can.

We all received a \$1,200 check from the government, and I immediately donated that money as well. I hope that my neighbors will follow my example and join me in supporting our community at this challenging time. You can give in memory or honor of a loved one, or you could even consider giving to a specific effort like campus security or medical supplies. I hope that, together, we can be a part of the solution.

“ We are so fortunate to live in a community that is working hard to protect us.”

An Expression of Thanks

From Cindy and Mike Fike, BRC Village Residents

Dear Friends,

As things continue to be unstable in the “world out there,” we are so very grateful for all of you. You have taken actions to keep us as safe as possible and have provided us with updated virus-handling procedures. You have made decisions for us that have been based on best practices and science. You have helped us deal with the “new normal” of a closed campus. You have gifted us with masks, bracelets, and hope-filled candles. You have shared your families (in smiling photos) with us in the absence of our own. You have slipped treats and inspirational messages into our take-away meals to be discovered and treasured when we open the bags. You have allowed us to travel and taken us to other worlds on our iPads. You’ve kept us fit and limber through virtual exercise sessions (and made them even more interesting by including “visiting dignitaries”). You have provided us with ways to get groceries and

[Continued on next page]

Close, Yet So Far Away

By Jessica Wetzler, for the Daily News-Record | Originally published Wednesday, April 8, 2020

In the 45 years Mary and Jack Whitley have been married, the only time they were separated was when Mary had to travel for work.

The couple were “joined at the hip,” Mary said, from the moment a manager at the bowling alley they both worked at introduced the Bridgewater College and James Madison University graduates to each other.

“And that was it,” Mary said.

The rest is history.

Then COVID-19 happened, and the 45 seconds it took for Mary to drive and see her husband in assisted living felt like hours.

“It’s been so difficult,” she said.

Long before Mary and Jack reached retirement age, they knew Bridgewater Retirement Community would be their future home. When Jack was attending Bridgewater College, he had a number of friends living in the area who had family members living at Bridgewater Retirement Community — back then known as The Home.

It was never a question of where they would go, but rather when they would get there.

In 2007, the question was answered when Jack was diagnosed with progressive supranuclear palsy, a degenerative disease involving the gradual deterioration and death of specific volumes of the brain.

Over time, the disease affected Jack’s motor skills, speech, vision and ability to swallow, making it necessary for him to be taken care of at all times.

For nearly two years, Mary spent more time with her husband than she would in her own home. Before lunch, Mary would see Jack, clean his C-PAP machine, put away his laundry and have the next two meals together.

When it was time for the nurses to help Jack get ready for bed, Mary returned to their home in the Bridgewater Village community, which could be seen from Jack’s assisted-living facility window.

“The bulk of my day was just spent with Jack,” Mary said.

Mary’s daily routine of seeing her husband was altered on March 13 when Bridgewater Retirement Community limited visitation to the public. For the next four days, Mary continued her routine, while keeping her three children updated.

The last time Mary saw Jack was March 17 — the day visitation to Bridgewater Retirement Community was closed to everyone, including independent living residents.

An Expression of Thanks [continued]

prescriptions without leaving our homes. You have made sure that our homes continue to function and that our grounds remain beautiful. You have called us to make sure we’re coping during this strange time. You have made yourselves uncomfortable by wearing masks to protect us. You have shared extra patience and care when we have been anxious or demanding. You have sacrificed parts of your own lives to make ours more comfortable.

We have always felt support and love from our BRC team, but you have certainly taken that to a whole new level! Please know how very much we appreciate and love each of you (until we can get close enough to tell you in person).

Cindy and Mike



The couple began keeping in touch through phone calls, and when there was a nurse or CNA available to help, Mary and Jack were able to see each other again through a FaceTime call.

“It is like I am rediscovering our home, which has been delightful. It is like Christmas all over again.”

The couple were also able to keep in touch with their children and grandchildren when Bridgewater Retirement Community gifted iPads to various households in order to stay connected while apart.

“While it’s not face to face, it is still a lot of personal contact, and if I could find a way to use a bucket truck, I would be outside his window,” Mary said.

It was a Tuesday when Mary was no longer able to see Jack in person and by the following Wednesday, Mary would have to face one of the most difficult experiences of her life — not being able to see her husband when he was in the hospital.

Three weeks ago, Jack broke his hip.

“The hardest part I ever had to do, I think, is when he had to go to the hospital and have that surgery in his frail condition and to not be able to be by his side,” Mary said. “That was just heart-wrenching.”

While Jack was recovering from surgery, his children and grandchildren made cards for him so he would be able to receive a card every single day. During phone calls, his two sons would share some things

that reminded them of Jack throughout their day.

With help from staff, Mary said she received a surprise phone call last Thursday from Jack.

“They let me watch his physical therapy, and he walked down a hall for the first time,” she said. “I knew he would get excellent care, but I didn’t expect the love and that has been so wonderful.”

As her time once spent caring for her husband became free, Mary said she has been spending her days doing a “lifetime of the little things,” such as gardening, re-reading her favorite books and doing some spring cleaning.

“Where I spent so much time with Jack previously, it’s so new and fresh to be home,” she said. “It is like I am rediscovering our home, which has been delightful. It is like Christmas all over again.”

And despite living during a time of uncertainty and change, Mary continues to be inspired by Jack and his ability to remain strong throughout 13 years of having progressive supranuclear palsy.

“I tell our kids, ‘just look to your dad’ ... he is so strong,” she said. “I am so grateful to have been married to him.”

When Mary is able to see Jack again, she already knows what she will do.

“I will just grab my sweet man and kiss him and hold him and not let him go until he tells me enough is enough.”



The Community Connections team continues to find ways to serve our greater community. Here, they finish prepping dozens of “Hometown Hero” care baskets which were later distributed to grocery store workers, postal carriers, waste management workers, local restaurants, and first responders.

Reimagining Wellness for a Community in Isolation

By Jeremy Douylliez

By all accounts, BRC’s wellness team was on track for a banner year. Building on the momentum gained last year when BRC brought the team in-house, things were shaping up. New fitness classes were soaring in popularity, continuous learning workshops were reaching residents and team members across campus, and the construction of a new fitness center was nearing completion. Plus, state-of-the-art strength equipment was poised to radically change the team’s ability to customize personal fitness regimens. So when the pandemic struck, the team was worried that their forward momentum could stall, and the progress residents had been making could plateau or be lost.

“That was my first big concern,” remembers Laura Spicer, director of resident wellbeing and engagement. “The progress has been huge. What are we going to do for residents if they can’t come here? I think back to a lot of our residents who come to the BAM (balance and movement) class—but only come to that one class. How do we maintain their progress?”

“I remember being so sad during my last ‘Rise and Shine’ class,” recalls team member Ali Snook. “We knew it was coming. We were sort of the last thing that was really rocking and rolling on campus, but we had already split our classes and were keeping everyone further apart.”

When the COVID-19 task force did decide to close the fitness center, the team got to work

reimagining what wellness could look like for a community in isolation.

Since the fitness center closed and on-campus events postponed, they have produced over 50 videos that are uploaded and shared with residents via BRC’s campus engagement app Wellzesta. Every week, they record

video demonstrations of their typical classes alongside new routines to hold residents’ interest—from yoga and tai chi to cardio routines like boxing.

And they’ve had to get creative. Many residents don’t own their own set of weights or fitness equipment, so the team has modified workouts to use objects like wooden spoons and bags of sugar. They also mix up the locale of the videos to keep them fresh—sometimes visiting local parks or scenic areas on campus to film.

For them, it was important to make the videos themselves rather than share professionally produced fitness videos. While that helps residents to maintain their existing routines, the team only needed one good reason to do the work themselves. “We wanted them to keep seeing the same faces that they’ve grown to love and trust,” says Laura.

Beyond fitness, they’ve produced a guided meditation series that’s become popular among residents. Plus, Laura regularly shares content like virtual tours from historical sites and organizations like symphonies, art museums, and zoos. Her criteria?

“We wanted them to keep seeing the same faces that they’ve grown to love and trust.”

— Laura Spicer

[Continued on next page]



Anything residents can watch in the comfort of their home that allows them to explore and learn. She's even worked with the dining team to produce a series of cooking demonstrations.

Of course, none of this would be possible without Wellzesta. BRC was an early adopter of the app which established a platform for resident engagement and was designed specifically for senior living communities. All independent living residents received iPads preloaded with the app in 2018. In addition to its messaging capabilities, it provides residents with access to campus event listings, menus, and directories.

"I truly count our blessings every day that we have this," says Laura. "I've talked to other communities, and the majority of what I hear is 'I wish we had something that was more real-time and user-friendly like what you guys have.'"

Wellzesta also allows for Laura's team to track how many residents are engaging with the content they're publishing. The campus-wide engagement rate is remarkably high, currently hovering around 80%.

One day, a couple of residents saw them filming

and stopped by to chat. "We love the videos!" Laura remembers them sharing. "Sometimes, we do them. Sometimes, we just like watching."

While the current situation on campus is keeping the team occupied, they have also started planning for how things may ramp back up when a semblance of normalcy returns. They are looking forward to the new fitness center and its state-of-the-art equipment, which will allow residents to access their custom regimen by swiping a wrist band.

Still, they're tempering their expectations. "I don't think that the flood gates will be able to open," says Laura. She's anticipating that classes will need to be split in half to accommodate social distancing guidelines even after the initial threat passes.

They're also planning to reassess each resident's fitness level and rework individual regimens to accommodate for any losses in ability due to being in isolation. "The blessing in disguise is that this has given us time to really prepare for that," says Ali.

In the meantime, they'll carry on with a new normal. "I can say right now that I have absolutely zero stage fright," Ali says with a laugh. "I'll do anything!"

Spiritual Resiliency

By Brenda Sipe Barb, BRC Chaplain

My friend, Jen, lives in Massachusetts and is the director and chief compliance officer for a large health care organization. She travels quite frequently to provide support for nearly a dozen hospitals, post-acute, and long-term care facilities she oversees in the New England region. Though trying to be positive and encouraging as she supports her staff, like so many others, she's had great difficulty obtaining PPE and other medical supplies to meet the vast need. At least two of her facilities experienced a COVID-19 outbreak, and she recently shared her understandable concern of going into these facilities and back home again to her young family.

However, in the midst of chaos she is also witnessing beautiful and meaningful moments. Those moments as well as other small victories in the lives of those around her are but a few of the many ways God continues to encourage and provide the necessary strength and resolve she needs to be able to carry on during difficult and uncertain times.

Spiritual resilience is our ability to maintain a positive attitude even in the face of adversity. Spiritual resilience does not allow negative situations or even negative people to get us down for too long. The inner strength found within each of us can sustain us and keep us moving forward no matter the circumstance or challenge we are presented with.

How we respond rather than react to a challenging or difficult situation may be critical to the outcome's success. Reflect upon your inner strength and spiritual resilience. Being aware of such resources will help you determine your ability to cope when difficult circumstances arise or when your world seems to have turned upside down.

If you are blessed with great coping skills, be that source of light and love daily to those around you. Some are experiencing fear, anxiety and other stressors triggered by restrictions and challenges of navigating through these uncertain times. For others, it may be health-related or perhaps an issue in a personal relationship. Pray for them. Give them a phone call and demonstrate your concern through words of encouragement and a caring positive attitude. Though we cannot share a reassuring hug due to social distancing at this time, we can offer kindness, a friendly smile and listening ear, and we can share blessings discovered within meaningful moments. Just reach out and be there for one another. We will get through this unprecedented chapter in history. Be assured, we can all come out of this stronger with an abundance of spiritual resiliency to handle whatever challenges the future may hold.

I am thankful my friend has a deep and abiding faith in God, and an acute awareness of her own spiritual resilience. Likewise, may we all be observant and intuitive enough to seek out the blessings found within the many meaningful and beautiful moments taking place all around us every single day in and around our BRC campus—blessings that can encourage and give increase to the inner strength found within each one of us.

If you find yourself struggling with the challenges of daily life or having difficulty coping, please do not hesitate to contact Chaplain Brenda or Chaplain Russ at 540-828-2480.

Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged, for the Lord your God will be with you wherever you go. — Joshua 1:9



A New Normal in Dining

By Karen Doss Bowman

Lee and Andy Jackson have always enjoyed visiting with friends over lunch or dinner in Maple Terrace's Custer Room at Bridgewater Retirement Community (BRC). This spring, however, the global coronavirus pandemic has significantly altered life for the Jacksons, who live in the Bridgewater Village.

"Everything has drastically changed," Lee says. "Before, we were able to go to the dining room and meet and visit with others. Now, we are isolated. The team here at Bridgewater Retirement Community is doing everything they can to keep us happy. We certainly appreciate their efforts."

Since March, BRC's dining venues in Houff Community Center—the Custer Room and Stevens Café—have been closed. For now, Independent Living residents are either picking up their meals or having them delivered. Dining Services continues to offer a wide variety of options for lunch or dinner within a menu that rotates every week, including items such as sandwiches, soups, fresh fruit, and

desserts. Residents simply place their orders using the iPads that were given to them several years ago, and they can either pick up the food or have it delivered.

Residents also can order groceries such as milk, eggs, cereal, and fruit from Dining Services. Lee especially has enjoyed the chef specials each week, such as an omelet kit or shrimp scampi. She and Andy also have taken advantage of the opportunity to order hot fudge sundaes.

"They really have tried to keep everything interesting for us," Lee says. "The worst thing is the lack of contact with others. But just knowing that the team is doing their best to take care of us makes us feel good. They really are trying to help us feel comfortable."

"We know that a varied, nutritious, and flavorful dining experience is essential to the happiness and wellbeing of our residents," says Sarah Hagan, vice president of independent living. "Providing that to residents in the midst of a pandemic has been challenging, but our team has risen to the occasion and innovated in inspiring ways."

Residents in assisted living and nursing care also have noticed changes. While most of them still eat in their household dining rooms, the tables are spaced 10 feet

apart and limited to two people at a time. Some residents in nursing care are dining in their rooms. Whether in the dining room or walking in the hallways, all team members wear masks.

"Isolation is a huge, depressing thought for anybody in assisted living and nursing, so we're doing all we can to try to give them opportunities to speak to and be around other people and not just in their rooms 24 hours a day," says Nelson Marotte, manager of Dining Services. "The difficult thing

about wearing masks is that people can't really see us smiling anymore. It's difficult to see facial expressions, and that takes away from some of the communication."

Team members in Dining Services already do regular training to keep up with the latest best practices. During the pandemic, however, they have participated in daily meetings where they are reminded of best practices, such as wearing protective equipment and frequent handwashing.

Every day, team members try to lighten the mood for those in assisted living and nursing

care. Some play musical instruments during meals, and team members have been known to break out into song in the middle of the dining room, Nelson says. They continue to celebrate special occasions such as birthdays and holidays.

"We try to do anything help our residents feel at home," Nelson says. "For the most part, our residents seem to be in good spirit. But they are used to having their spouses, sons and daughters, grandchildren, and friends join them for meals, and that's all



For special items that the dining team isn't able to source for regular grocery delivery, team members make daily trips to the grocery store—ensuring residents' pantries stay stocked with their favorite items.

gone away now. That's been difficult for them. These are challenging times, but it's our priority to keep everybody safe. I'm really proud of our team members because they really have pulled together to help everyone get through these circumstances."

Campus Construction UPDATES



New Elegance in Assisted Living

This spring, current Assisted Living residents began moving into their brand-new living space in the connector between Maple Terrace and the Huffman Health Center. The new apartments feature spacious living with ample natural light, contemporary finishes, a charming mini-kitchen, plus newly refined dining and common areas—all with the support and assistance needed for daily life.

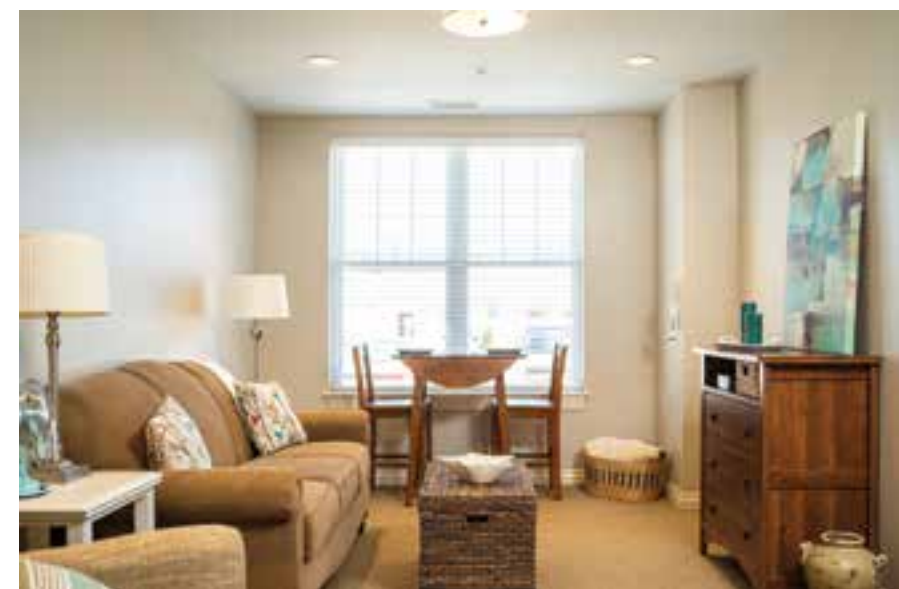
Up next, existing Assisted Living apartments will undergo complete renovation to bring a new standard of living to our entire AL community.

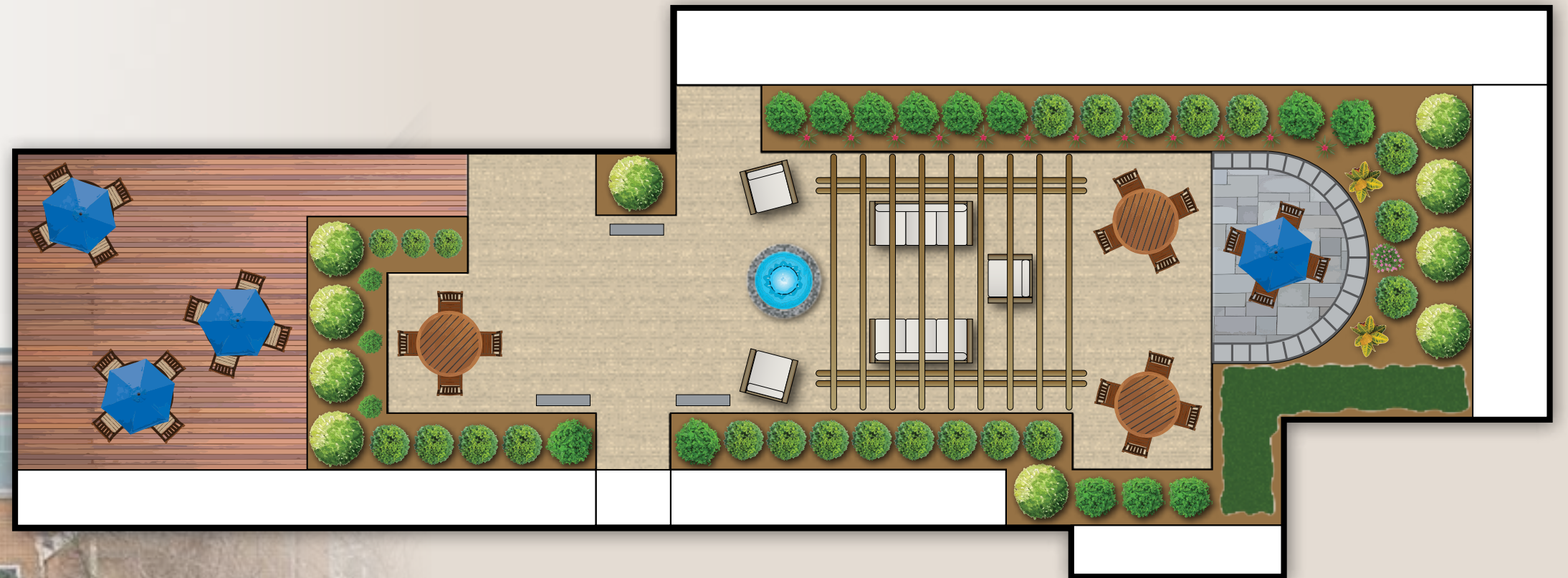


The Grove is now open!

We are thrilled to welcome new residents to our gorgeous new independent living apartment complex, The Grove. Featuring spacious open floor plans with abundant natural light, refined finishes, and garage parking, The Grove represents the next generation in independent living at BRC. Move-ins have begun with strict prevention protocols in place. Look for more highlights of this exciting new addition in future Bridge editions, on our website, and on social media.

THE
GROVE
at
BRIDGEWATER
RETIREMENT COMMUNITY





Up Next: A Fully Refreshed Meditation Garden

Last year, we raised funds to renovate our campus meditation garden which had fallen into a state of disrepair. With a new design completed, work will soon begin to revive the space.

The Shiflet Family gave to the Meditation Garden project on behalf of their aunt, Lola Shiflet. Lola, a Churchville, Virginia native who spent most of her life in New York City, was a resident in both Gardner House and Joy House during the final years of her life. “She received wonderful care. They showed her love and compassion,” her nephew Don says. Lola was an avid gardener and loved spending time outside. “She’d stand on the porch and look outside at the beauty of the outdoors,” he recalls. “So, when she passed away and left some funds, we felt this would be an appropriate place to invest in something with long-term, lasting value. I know she would have loved to be able to take advantage of the garden as it’s conceived.”

J. Robert “Bob” Johnson has “always had a liking for flowers and shrubbery,” he says. His mother loved to garden, and he now carries on the tradition by maintaining a large flower garden at his home in Bridgewater. He has a fondness for flowering shrubs, but also enjoys the colors and blooms of annual varieties. He’s also no stranger to Bridgewater Retirement Community—his mother lived here for several years and his granddaughter works as a household coordinator in nursing. “It had been on my mind to give some money,” he recalls. So, when he read last spring in *The Bridge* that we were raising funds to restore the meditation garden, he decided it was time to make a bigger contribution. When the project is complete, he hopes to enjoy time visiting with residents in the garden and at the adjacent café.



BOARD MEMBER SPOTLIGHT



Sherry Mongold

By Karen Doss Bowman

As director of finance at Sentara RMH Medical Center, Sherry Mongold is responsible for ensuring that the hospital has the resources needed to fight COVID-19 within the local community. But that doesn't stop her from trying to make people smile: Every now and then, she enjoys sporting a facemask sewn out of material imprinted with \$5 and \$10 bills.

"One of my colleagues has teased me with the nickname 'moneybags' because it's my job to allocate funds, so I thought this would be a fun mask to wear," Sherry says. "We're dealing with a serious public health crisis, but we've got to be able to laugh sometimes and lighten our spirits."

One of the newest members of the Bridgewater Retirement Community Board of Directors, Sherry brings over three decades of experience in the fields of accounting and finance to the role. A Rockingham County native, Sherry earned her bachelor's degree and MBA from James Madison University. Prior to joining the team at Sentara RMH, she worked for Rosetta Stone, Rocco, and SB Hoover, LLC.

During the coronavirus pandemic, Sherry has served as the finance liaison on the Incident Command Team at Sentara RMH. She collaborates closely with Sentara Healthcare—the not-for-profit organization to which Sentara RMH belongs—to ensure that the medical team has the necessary equipment and supplies needed to properly care for COVID-19 patients. Sherry also ensures that the Electronic Medical Record System has been modified to accommodate departmental

shifts that have occurred during the crisis.

"I'm working behind the scenes, and it's been difficult for me to not be able to see our patients," says Sherry, who recently wrapped up service as chair of the Harrisonburg-Rockingham Community Services Board of Directors. "But in my work, it's not necessary to be hands-on with patients, so it's definitely safer this way."

Though Sherry just began serving on the BRC board this year, she already has taken notice of the community's beautiful facilities and passionate team.

"The team at BRC is energetic and creative, and they seem to have good karma together," she says. "Those traits have flowed into the overall environment, creating a caring place for the residents."

For now, Sherry believes the coronavirus pandemic is the biggest challenge facing BRC. Because residents belong to a high-risk population, keeping them healthy is essential. Her recent experiences on the Sentara RMH Incident Command Team allows her to offer valuable insights to help ensure safety for residents and team members.

"I cannot overstate the level of detail our Incident Command Team has gone into to develop new processes and protocols—from protecting staff with their personal protective equipment (PPE) and new protocols for delivering care to supporting patients and giving them opportunities to interact with their families from a distance," says Sherry, who also serves on the boards of the United Way,

Considering a move to BRC?



With strict prevention measures in place, new residents continue to move to our community—including into the Grove, which opened in April. If you find yourself contemplating a move to Bridgewater Retirement Community in the near future, this is a good time to consider joining Bridgewater Advance.

Members of the Bridgewater Advance priority wait list get enhanced notification alerts when homes meeting their personal criteria become available. Plus, only Advance members are currently able to come on site to see a specific available property they are interested in.

To join Bridgewater Advance, contact your BRC marketing counselor:



Lisa Shickel
lshickel@brcliving.org
540-828-3404



Candise Williams
cwilliams@brcliving.org
540-828-a6197

the RMH Foundation, Harrisonburg Community Health Center and the Valley Health Plan.

With the growing population of aging Baby Boomers in the local community, Sherry is excited to participate in making sure there is adequate and quality housing available.

"The environment at BRC is positive and contagious," Sherry says. "The entire team seems

to be energetic and creative, and I think they've done a great job of creating homelike atmosphere for residents. I have a real love in my heart for our older generation so it's important to me that our community has options like BRC, where they can go to live safely and comfortably."

Kayla Mayer

By Jeremy Douylliez

Kayla is well accustomed to long drives. She's a full-time CNA in Unity House and commutes to BRC every day from her home in Circleville, West Virginia: a quaint community nestled in the picturesque mountains of West Virginia near Monongahela National Forest. She lives on ten acres of property with her cows, two Great Danes, and 13-year-old sister of whom she has full custody. After growing up in Augusta County, she moved to Circleville for a change of scenery.

The commute adds up to an hour and a half each way (two hours when she gets stuck behind a turkey truck), but she makes it to work on time six days a week. "I wouldn't [drive that far] for any other job," she says. "But everywhere you go here [at BRC] there's a smile. And if you ever have any troubles, there's always someone to go and talk to."

But her drive to get dog food doesn't typically take as long as her drive to work. A few weeks ago, however, she found herself driving even further to find food to fill her dogs' bowls. There's no grocery store in Circleville, so she typically shops at a community cooperative. When she went there in search of dog food, she came back empty-handed. She headed over the mountain to search stores in Harrisonburg. No luck. Finally, she managed to find what she needed at the Tractor Supply in Staunton. Great Danes come with great appetites—a 50-pound-bag-per-week appetite, to be precise—so, Kayla stocked up on as many bags as she could find.

On her drive home, she considered the likelihood that other families in her own community may be struggling to feed their pets right now. The cashier at Tractor Supply had told her that even families with small dogs were struggling to stay stocked down in Staunton. A nationwide surge in demand sparked by fears of COVID-19 had left pet owners everywhere scrambling to find food, but when supply lines are strained, rural communities like Kayla's are hit especially hard.

So, she called her pastor at Circleville United Methodist Church with an idea to start a community dog food drive. With the support of the church, she launched the effort and (as of April 22, with two weeks left to go) has collected food from over 30 donors and helped over 80 families keep food in their pets' bowls.

It's just one example of the many ways Kayla looks for ways to help others. As a CNA, she spends her days helping residents in Unity House get through their routines—providing intimate, hands-on care like assisting residents with dressing and daily hygiene. And because BRC staffs far more CNAs than the average nursing home, she's able to spend quality time with each resident she serves. "That means a lot," she says. "It's the family aspect here that I really love." Plus, with her thirteen-year-old sister looking up to her, she hopes to lead by example. "She watches every move I make, so I have to always try to be the best I can."

"I have watched her grow quite a bit over the last several months," says her supervisor Cindy DeLoach. "She's vital to the care we provide every day."

"If there's something wrong, I will be there to try and help fix it," Kayla says. It's that spirit which makes us grateful to have her on the team.

A Virtual Success on Founders Day

By Jeremy Douylliez

Every year, BRC marks its anniversary with a celebration called Founders Day, which honors the community we've built together over the last 55 years. This year, with no food trucks to hire or workshops to host, the annual festivities could have passed with a whimper. But BRC's team couldn't let the day go by without finding a way to celebrate despite the pandemic.

"What we need more than anything right now is the feeling of community that celebrations like Founders Day provide," says Vice President for Development and Community Relations Carrie Budd, who chairs the Founders Day committee. "If we couldn't get everybody together like usual, we would find a way to celebrate anyway."



So, Founders Day moved online. Through a series of videos released on Wellzesta throughout the day, residents at all levels of care were able to participate in virtual workshops from local businesses. Everything residents needed to participate in the activities was delivered directly to them in the morning.

BRC's fitness team developed special yoga and Tai Chi routines to kick off the day. Then, Abby Chick, lead designer at Blakemore Flowers in Harrisonburg, led a fantastic flower arranging demonstration showing off tips and tricks for arranging a lovely spring centerpiece. Brothers Craft Brewing then led residents through a virtual tour of their brewery and gave tasting notes on three beers provided for tastings.

Finally, Bluestone Vineyard in Bridgewater and Ballerino Creamery in Staunton partnered to provide local wine and cheese pairings.

Plus, BRC hosted its first ever "Top Chef" competition. Throughout the week, videos dropped on Wellzesta featuring contestants Andy Shipman, Jonathan Cortes, and Rodney Alderfer preparing

dishes. Residents voted to determine the winner. Andy took the title, and his dish was featured in the take-home dining menu for dinner on the next week.

The response was enthusiastic. "Our residents loved creating the flower arrangements," said Tranquility Household Coordinator Sara McAlister. An independent living resident wrote to the team to thank them for the effort saying, "Thank you so very much for the clever way we are experiencing Founders Day. The virtual presentations are so well done."

Next year, we're hoping that Founders Day will look a bit more traditional, but we'll chalk this year's celebration up as a virtual success.

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December 1, 2019 – April 30, 2020

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Tranquility House resident Louise donated fabric from her quilting stock to be fashioned into masks for our team members. She was thrilled to see her materials put to such great use!

Walter Daggett
Ann G. Daggett

Wayne and Maurine Geisert
Gregory and Margaret Geisert

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June T. White

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W. Dale and Meridith Houff

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James and Sylvia Bowman

Yolanda E. Gerard
Charles J. Gerard
Karen Gerard

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.

The SECURE Act, Explained

By Carrie Budd



Ideally, planning for retirement begins at a young age. You save money each month and, hopefully, some portion of that is matched by your employer. You plan for your future based on the many complex rules in place regarding retirement savings, pray that everything goes smoothly, and then Congress changes the rules. That's exactly what happened earlier this year.

The Setting Every Community Up for Retirement Enhancement (SECURE) Act went into effect on January 1 and has disrupted the plans of many current and soon-to-be retirees. Although your best plan for understanding how this affects you individually is to talk to your financial advisor or estate attorney, I thought I would give a very brief overview of the most relevant changes.

1. You can wait until age 72 to start taking required minimum distributions, but QCDs can still begin at age 70 ½.

If you turn 70 ½ after January 1, 2020 you will not be required to take minimum distributions from your traditional IRAs till you are 72. However, if you are charitably inclined and wish to make a qualified charitable distribution you can do this starting at age 70 ½. Confusing—yes! But QCDs are one of the best ways for individuals 70 ½ or older to contribute their favorite charities.

2. Rethink your plans for leaving a stretch IRA to your heirs.

Before January 1, 2020, if your beneficiary inherited an IRA from you, they could take required minimum distributions over their lifetime. That's now changed. Beneficiaries generally must now take out all the funds over a 10-year period.

This can have serious tax implications for the beneficiary. Because many who inherit are in their 40s or 50s, it can even impact things like qualifying for college financial aid for their children. There are some key exceptions to the 10-year rule: surviving spouses, beneficiaries who have not reached the age of majority (but only until they reach the age of majority), beneficiaries who are less than 10 years younger than the deceased account holder, and chronically ill or disabled beneficiaries.

Become a



Funds donated to the **Bridgewater HealthCare 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.

If IRAs were a part of your estate plan you will want to talk with your estate attorney and decide whether to rethink your plans. IRAs are still a great option if you plan to leave part of your estate to charity. Charities receive the funds tax-free, allowing you to leave other, less complicated resources to your heirs.

3. If you are working after age 70 ½, you can still contribute to your traditional IRA—but be aware of how it affects your QCDs.

You may continue to contribute to your traditional IRA if you are working after 70 ½, but if you are planning to make QCDs be aware you cannot double-dip.

For example, Jane is 77 and working part-time. She decides to make an \$8,000

contribution to her IRA and in the same year she does a QCD of \$10,000 to her favorite charity. The SECURE Act sees this as double-dipping, so it reduces the tax-free portion of the QCD by \$8,000 making only \$2,000 of the QCD tax-free.

It may or may not be in your best interest to continue contributing to your IRA after 70 ½ so discuss this with your financial planner and keep future giving in mind.

The SECURE Act makes other significant changes to the retirement landscape, so be sure to do your research and evaluate your current retirement and estate plans with your financial advisor and estate attorney.

As always, if you're considering including BRC in your estate and retirement plans, our Foundation Team is eager to hear from you.



FOR YOUR DEDICATION AND SERVICE:

Thank you

ENJOY THIS MEAL NOW OR STORE IN THE FREEZER FOR LATER.

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BRC has sought to ensure team members feel appreciated for the extra effort they've put in during this extraordinary time. One week in May, every single team member was sent home with a ready-to-heat dinner for four from Dayton Tavern.

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

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BRIDGEWATER RETIREMENT COMMUNITY

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

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