



MONARCH

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“It’s a Wonderful Life” at Plymouth Place

Marion Giles, 106 years young, celebrates her THIRD Groundbreaking Event



INSIDE:

Page 05

Neighbors Helping
Neighbors

Page 07

Seniors Bridging
Generations

Page 17

Enduring Love



Plymouth Place™

Senior Living



Table of Contents

Message from the President & Vice President	03
Board Chair & CEO Welcome	04
Neighbors Helping Neighbors	05
Seniors Bridging Generations	07
“It’s a Wonderful Life”	09
Passing the Baton	10
Enduring Love	17
New Growth at the Salon	19
Joan Westerdahl & the Impact of Benevolence	21
Launching the Plymouth Place Travel Club	25
The Power of Philanthropy	26
Mission Statement	27





Message from the President & Vice President



Art Grundke and Joyce Linn

What an enthralling occasion September 12th was for residents to participate in dual celebrations, which might twist standard logic, one grand opening and one groundbreaking simultaneously, but we tend to move right along at Plymouth Place. Both occurred on a sunny summer afternoon and involved many residents.

One of these was the cutting of the tape for the redesigned spaces along our Promenade, the primary resident thoroughfare; we celebrated the transition from tired to EXCITING! Residents of the current building can now enjoy an enhanced dining room with new furniture and intimate seating, a new private dining room for overflow or private parties, and an updated Pub, which includes cozy seating, food service, and live music several evenings each week. Plus, there is a new game room theater, featuring a large screen TV and tables for smaller groups

or dining room overflow, a new Market Place, which replaces “The Gift Shop,” now with expanded hours and featuring things residents might need, and a beautiful Salon/Spa featuring a new location and new services. These are such great additions to our current overall well-being!

The other event of that day was the official groundbreaking for several new buildings designed to replace our historical cottages. The new construction includes the Arboretum Villas at Plymouth Place, creating 59 new residences. It also will bring us The Center for Healthy Living, which will support health and multiple residents’ special interests, including a larger pool for aquatic activities. The Villas will also bring another restaurant with added culinary kitchen, a major reorganization of the grounds, bringing new gathering areas featuring social, gardening, and recreational activities, additional tree species to meet arboretum standards, and recent scientific pond enhancements to support expanded habitat and amenities.

The symbolism of the Groundbreaking Event reflected our recent 75th Anniversary when we celebrated the vision of our founders and those who have marched forward through the years. We sustain those fundamental values with which we began while enthusiastically adapting to progress, always laced with our culture of caring about others. These developments follow the Plymouth Place tradition, conceived and planned with expertise, and always influenced by our intention to meet the future. ONWARD! **PP**



Elizabeth Asperger
Board Chair



Jay Biere
Chief Executive Officer

Board Chair & CEO Welcome

Heraclitus, the Greek philosopher, said, “Change is the only constant in life.” Change is all around us, and we are excited about new things for Plymouth Place!

As we close out another groundbreaking year at Plymouth Place, we reflect on the changes we have embraced. This issue of Monarch could serve as a mini yearbook of sorts. While we look to our future, we also share stories we want to remember in the years to come.

We hope you enjoy the feature story on Marion Giles titled “It’s a Wonderful Life.” Marion has spent three decades as a Plymouth Place resident, and at 106 years young, she has some incredible insights to share. Similarly, “Passing the Baton” is an entertaining spread that combines quotes from some of our residents and staff with photographs from the Arboretum Villas’ Groundbreaking event, welcoming the biggest change to Plymouth Place in decades.

As you turn the pages, hear about the colossal success of the new Salon, meet the two Monarch Junior Legacy Award Winners, and familiarize yourself with the vibrant new Travel Club. And despite focusing on change and looking toward the future, take comfort in the things that will always remain, such as Enduring Love and Neighbors Helping Neighbors.

Through the changes and groundbreaking, the core values of Plymouth Place remain constant.

We will continue to provide a graceful environment that promotes a safe, healthy, and engaging lifestyle for all who join our community. We value each and every member of our Plymouth Place family! We are proud of Plymouth Place’s history and excited about our future. We are thankful for the support of our corporate and mission partners who walk alongside us to help our leadership, staff, and volunteers fulfill our mission. Thank you for empowering us to provide a senior lifestyle that is second to none. That, we assure you, will never change. **PP**

Neighbors Helping Neighbors



CHUG Emergency Beds for Cantata Residents in Dole Hall

The Supercell Storm of June 2022: Plymouth Place answers a call for help from neighbors in need

In the late evening hours of June 13, 2022, a powerful and destructive “supercell” thunderstorm formed along a front of hot and humid air, spanning over 100 miles from northeast Illinois to northwest Indiana, clocking wind speeds up to 95 mph and spawning two tornadoes in the nearby northwest suburbs. Hundreds of trees were downed or damaged, causing widespread power outages.* While we did not escape the relentless reverberations of the storm, it was no match for the careful planning and quick thinking fueled by compassion and resolve on full display at Plymouth Place.

The storm came as no surprise to our leadership team, already preparing and reviewing action items before its arrival. The staff’s rigorous Crisis Response Training was set into action and never missed a beat, thanks to CEO Jay Biere’s leadership, guidance from senior staff members, and

solid relationships with ComEd and other critical organizations.

By 7 p.m., Tony Sierzega, Director of Facilities, reported that our cooling towers were down due to lack of power, and by 11 p.m., power was lost entirely in the north section of the building. We activated our emergency generators on the premises to provide essential power to the Health Care Center. Katie Freese, Senior Direct of Support Services, contacted CHUG (Collaborative Healthcare Urgency Group) to request a generator for Plymouth Place. CHUG is a non-profit consulting organization dedicated to training healthcare facilities to prepare for, respond to, recover from, and provide restoration services in emergencies, disasters, and urgent events.** As Katie explains, “CHUG puts action plans to work when a member has an emergency.”

The leadership team worked tirelessly during the overnight hours to serve our residents while preparing the next steps for recovery. While ComEd continued working on power restoration throughout the surrounding area, Katie worked on securing the generator through CHUG. The race was on to see if we’d receive and activate the generator before ComEd could restore the power.

Just after midnight the next day, June 14, our power was fully restored. We received the generator from CHUG, but it was not needed by then. And with one sigh of relief and a rush of welcome cool air, the phone rang at Plymouth Place.

Cantata Senior Living in Brookfield wasn’t so lucky and still without power. Their location near a forest preserve made reaching the power lines challenging. Jay and other area senior-living community CEOs had regularly



Collaborative
Healthcare
Urgency Group

“Neighbors Helping...” continues on page 06



Katie Freese,
Senior Director of Support Services

checked in with each other throughout the height of the COVID-19 pandemic, so when the leader of Cantata phoned their colleague and friend Jay to discuss how their facility needed a helping hand, it was a natural progression.

Unfortunately, the idle generator in our parking lot was not the proper specifications for Cantata's needs. Understanding that Cantata's power restoration would take some time, the Plymouth Place leadership team jumped into action and arranged to have thirty Cantata residents brought to Plymouth Place to provide overnight accommodations, comfort, and care.

While Plymouth Place staff prepared the facilities and arranged to provide our guests with meals and housekeeping, the Leadership team had to solve the obstacle of securing thirty beds in a few hours. Bill Pretzer, CHUG's Director of Operations & Training, made a special request to the Department of Homeland Security to secure the beds. "We were met with roadblock after roadblock it seemed to get these beds for our guest residents," Biere said. "We had a box truck from Cantata ready to pick up the available beds at Oak Forest Hospital and deliver them to Plymouth Place, yet there were obstacles that kept getting in our way before the team could actually get to them. Everyone persisted, never giving up, knowing that the mission needed to be accomplished. Our staff assembled and arranged the beds in Dole Hall just before guests arrived."

Between 5 and 7 p.m., three buses brought the Cantata residents to Plymouth Place to settle in and cool off for the evening. They were provided hydration, snacks, dinner, and necessary medications.

"Do it well and do it with dignity," said Katie. "We asked ourselves: How can we make a bad situation better? Plymouth Place didn't just give them a place to sleep. We provided them with a temporary home in Dole Hall, where they would be comfortable, welcomed, and cared for. They enjoyed dinner, a movie, and even musical entertainment that evening." The next morning, June 15, the Cantata residents were able to shower, be given fresh clothing, enjoy breakfast, and were invited to participate in Life Enrichment activities. "Residents were asking, 'How can I help?' It was really neat to see!" said Natalie Kallis, Assistant Director of Facilities. By noon that day, the Cantata residents were returning home.

As Jay explained, "Our mission states that we desire to serve residents at the community with excellence and to serve the greater community with the same passion. The prolonged power outage this past summer created a very difficult scenario for the residents of Cantata Senior Living. The Plymouth Place team jumped into action, providing support, comfort, care, and overnight accommodations for Cantata residents. In the process, we have created new friends and built a stronger bridge between the communities. The story of Plymouth Place will be told in the changed lives of people!"

It was a long 36 hours caused by a storm that blew in fierce and mighty. But the staff at Plymouth Place is fiercer and mightier, ever prepared to take on challenges as they serve our residents and the greater community in need. Kallis sums it up, "You just do what you know you need to do with a smile on your face." **PP**

*www.weather.gov **www.chugteam.org

LTHS Seniors Support Seniors
at Plymouth Place

Seniors Bridging Generations



Graham Sackley and Jack Meyers

Lyons Township High School students Graham Sackley and Jack Meyers, along with their sisters Emily Sackley and Samantha Meyers, established Senior Celebrations in 2019 with the original goal of delivering birthday packages to the residents of Plymouth Place. However, when the pandemic struck, they were forced to adapt their mission to the unprecedented nationwide isolation and quarantine landscape.

This is their heartfelt journey, discovering the benefits and rewards of community service and giving of one's self, driven by their kindness and generosity, as told by co-founders of Senior Celebrations Jack Meyers and Graham Sackley.

"Graham and I are fortunate to have close relationships with our grandparents. Personally, I see my grandparents 2-3 times per week since they live so close by," Jack said, recalling the start of their non-profit organization, Senior Celebrations, in 2019.

Graham remembers, "As the pandemic prohibited in-person visits, interactions with my grandparents became limited. They expressed their difficulties connecting with the community virtually, and at that moment, Jack and I both knew we should make an effort to remove these barriers for our grandparents and for seniors in our community."

Graham continues, "We reached out to Plymouth Place in 2020 regarding our first idea: a pen pal system. Our intentions were to connect senior citizens in residential homes with students from our high school, Lyons Township. Huddling around a small Chromebook, we met with the Director of Life Enrichment at the time with a PowerPoint presentation over Zoom. She displayed tremendous enthusiasm as she communicated the potential of recording life story interviews through a well-known non-profit called StoryCorps. We exchanged glances of interest with each other and started looking into the project. This was the moment when our relationship with Plymouth Place and its wonderful staff and residents was born.

Over the past three years, our non-profit organization, Senior Celebrations, has sent over 300 handwritten letters to residents and held two StoryCorps interview events. These interviews captured the dates, events, morals, and personalities of the seniors and stored them in the archives at the Library of Congress. The supportive staff at Plymouth Place removed the logistics barriers, and we were able to foster authentic connections with the residents."

"Seniors Bridging..." continues on page 08



Jack Meyers, Bruce Carhart, Graham Sackley,
Jay Biere

“My first interview was with a retired high school history teacher, who taught me his love for routines, emphasized the power of education, and encouraged me to find passionate areas of work,” Jack recalls. “Our conversation was very real, and I was moved by the authentic answers to difficult questions that aren’t often asked.”

Jack continues, “After completing several successful StoryCorps interviews, we sat down with Paddy Homan and Jay Biere to discuss our next and most ambitious project yet, the 5k and one-mile fundraiser for the renovation of the Carhart Garden. During that meeting, we were fortunate enough to see firsthand their vision for the garden and were given a tour during the renovation stages. The two of us were taken aback by the size and beauty of the garden and could envision the residents utilizing the space in its entirety to connect with their friends and loved ones. The garden was absolutely a cause worth raising money for. By July 14, 2022, the day of the race, we had raised over \$20,000 and had over 200 participants and 30+ volunteers supporting the event.”

Graham recalls, “Beyond the monetary success, the lessons we have learned about community service made a much larger impact on both of us. Seeing the community rally around a common goal has allowed us to realize what young people can do with an

organized mission. With a large crowd like the one we had, I was overwhelmed by the message that it sent: people in the community do care about our senior citizens, and that, to me, made the project entirely rewarding and fulfilling.”

Jack added, “Our classmates volunteered to guide the course, and many sponsors came with food and water to support the cause. It was gratifying to see all of our efforts pay off. In August, we received the Monarch Junior Legacy Award alongside Monarch Legacy Winner Joseph Kerwin, who was the first physician in space. We are honored to be recognized for our community service, and we look forward to collaborating with Plymouth Place on other community events in the future, such as additional StoryCorps interviews!

Without Plymouth Place’s consistent support throughout the planning stages, this race would never have come to fruition. We are grateful the race’s success could help provide all Plymouth Place residents and visitors with a beautiful outdoor space like the Carhart Garden.” **PP**

Read some of Graham & Jack’s StoryCorp interviews at www.senior-celebrations.com.



Melinda Formusa, Chaplain Doreen,
Joyce Linn

“It’s a Wonderful Life”



Marion Giles Breaks Ground for the Third Time at Plymouth Place



September 12, 2022, was indeed a momentous day for Plymouth Place as we celebrated the official groundbreaking of its new Arboretum Villas. It was also for resident Marion Giles. “I have been living at Plymouth Place for 32 years-I never thought I would still be here, but I am,” remarks Marion with an ever-endearing and infectious smile. “And this is my third groundbreaking.” It is little wonder that Marion has created such an enduring legacy within Plymouth Place and all those who meet her.

“I’m so happy to be part of this special groundbreaking for Plymouth Place, to see it evolving to the ever-changing needs of people- everything looks so beautiful and pristine!”

For Jay Biere, CEO and President, having Marion at the groundbreaking was particularly significant. Marion was recognized by the Board of Directors as being an integral part of Plymouth Place and, thereby was part of the interview process for Biere when he was originally hired. “And Marion always reminds me when I see her that she interviewed me when I first got here six years ago!” laughs Biere. “Knowing Marion’s deep connection to this community, her deep faith, and



Marion Giles on her birthday

history, we thought we would honor Marion by having her hold one of the original 1944 groundbreaking shovels of Arthur Sandquist and Thomas Finley, who founded Plymouth Place.”

In the annals of Plymouth Place’s history, this will surely be remembered as one the most memorable occasions and achievements in our 78-year history. For Marion, she sums it up best by saying, “I’ve had a wonderful life. What more can I ask for, to be part of this occasion, to pass the baton to others to follow and continue on this journey? I look forward to the opening of the new Arboretum Villas and all the amenities that all the residents will get to enjoy.” Yes, at 106, she’s still going strong! **PP**



Marion celebrating her birthday
with Plymouth staff

Passing the Baton

A picture may be worth a thousand words, but our residents and staff have some reflections to add to help carry the story of the Arboretum Villas Groundbreaking event from September 14, 2022.



Susan and Hank Bode



Jan McDermid and Liz Asperger, Board Chair

What did the Plymouth Place Groundbreaking ceremony mean to you?

"It was an exciting time! A vision of good things to come. The cottages were gone and now there were plans to replace what was an active group of seniors with a new group. We were being renewed at a time to enjoy a more leisure lifestyle."

– **Sally Kruse**

"Plymouth Place is looking forward, enhancing our excellent reputation and tradition."

– **Art and Pat Grundke**

"It brought back the groundbreaking ceremony that I was a part of when the Landing was built. It means a chance for a new beginning for future residence at a time to enjoy a more leisure lifestyle."

– **Marge Kemper**

"For me the Groundbreaking Ceremony was a symbolic activity that depicted the beginning of a fresh service direction for Plymouth Place."

– **Russ and Donna Lundstrom**



“A wonderful occasion to celebrate a milestone event in the life of Plymouth Place for me and my family.”

– Bill O’Meara

“Once again, Plymouth Place did things in a first-class way. One of the benefits of being part of an organization that strives to be ‘top drawer’ is that it seems to gather residents who have a meaningful story to tell. The groundbreaking is another way of expanding the group of knowledgeable folks with a story to tell.”

–Hank Bode

“The Plymouth Place Groundbreaking Ceremony to me meant a host of new beginnings. Being behind the scenes and knowing how much hard work, time and effort that has been put in to this project up to that point, it was an honor to be a part of the future of something great. The Arboretum Villas has been a long time coming, and seeing the plans of what’s to come, I know it will be magnificent.”

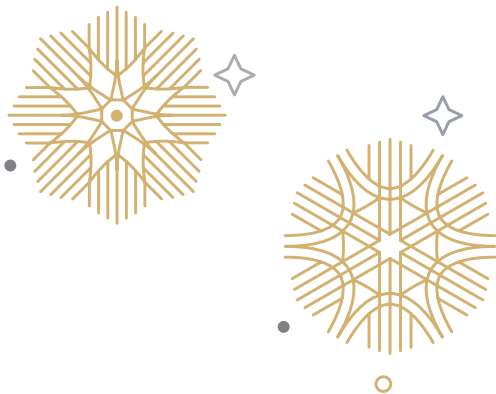
**- Michelle Siegfried,
Executive Services Manager**

“The groundbreaking ceremony symbolized another milestone in the life of Plymouth Place and was the first step in making way for many new friends who will arrive here. Personally, I watch the workers’ progress each day from my east windows and marvel at the many workers’ skills.”

– Barb Fisher

“Plymouth Place was founded by the Congregationalists. We take great pride in our heritage as we build for the future with this groundbreaking.”

– Jay Biere, CEO



“Passing...” continues on page 12



Jay Biere with Evelyn Griffeth



Gene and Judy Srivver

What are your hopes for Plymouth Place in the years to come?

"I know Plymouth Place has a vibrant future to look forward to in years to come. The expansion of services and amenities under the direction of our wonderful staff will be enjoyed by both current and new residents."

– Melinda Formusa

"Plymouth Place will continue to look toward the future and will serve our community for years to come." **–Janette Gutekunst**

"LIVE the best time of your life. EXPERIENCE the whole YOU with offerings at well-appointed destinations within our community."

– Chris Irvine

Senior Director of Rehab and Wellness

"My hope is that we keep our residents at their highest level of function through our variety of wellness initiatives so they can live rich healthy vibrant lives while aging in place w dignity and loving care."

– Nicole Hibbard

Experience Director Assisted Living /Memory Care

"In the years ahead, Plymouth Place will see and even more rapid change in the world we live in and even more so in the area of care in the latter stage of life. It is our hope and belief that we as a community will be ahead of that change."

– Daniel and Mary Lou McEachran

"My hope is that we have a robust wait list because word of mouth and our reputation makes us that popular."

– Katie Freese,

Senior Director, Support Services





Paul Nemecek



Grace Gutekunst and Mary Forester



Paddy Homan, Beatrice Calloway,
Joan De Rycke, Jay Biere



Laura Weyrauch, Board Member
& East Campus Task Force Chair



Dan and Mary Lou McEachran, Jay Biere



Bill O'Meara, Janette Gutekunst, Alice Chin,
Dorothy Lund

"Passing..." continues on page 14



Resident Council Committee: Left to Right:
 Joyce Pilditch, Art Grundke, Joanne Everett,
 Denise Stehman, Carol Braksick,
 Barbara Fisher, Michael and Linda Cieslak,
 Pat Rozanski, Hank Bode, Don De Braal,
 Karen Nordquist, Jan McDermed,
 Melinda Formusa, Joyce Linn



Joyce and Tom Allen



What would you want others to know about Plymouth Place?

“Hank and I thank God every day that we moved here in October 2019. This is a community that welcomes everyone and is truly making an effort to continue diversifying its residents, staff, and programs. We’re thrilled with the many opportunities that enrich us socially, mentally, physically, and spiritually. Thanks, Plymouth Place!”

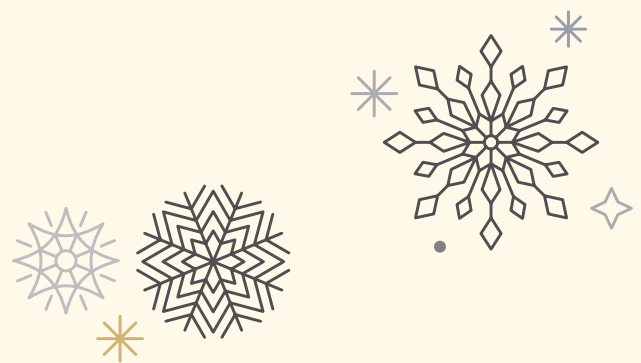
– Susan Bode

“Being at Plymouth Place helps turn back the clock on age. Where we can feel young and have stress free, carefree living while aging gracefully. Where you can spend time enjoying being you.”

– Alice Chin

“I want others to recognize the mission and financial basis of Plymouth Place, notice its superb location, and treasure the friendliness of its staff and residents.”

– Jan McDermed



“What a caring and warm staff means to the residents who become ‘family.’”

– Joanne Everett

“Many of the programs offered range through a wide variety of areas...I also enjoy learning from my neighbors who have diverse backgrounds and interests. I enjoy good entertainment but can no longer go out to find it. Here at Plymouth I don’t have to—it comes to me in Dole Hall. We continue to have wonderful entertainment and I only have to take the elevator.”

– Karen Nordquist

“Plymouth Place many times goes beyond its commitment to its residents. I feel I owe my life to the staff – they not only treat me physically but treat me mentally...that’s just one of the forward thinking strategies Plymouth Place does so well.”

– Dorothy Lund



Sue Gross, Alice Karaba, Jack Thomas, Jennie Bozic, Marilyn Thomas



Alice and James Chin, Marilyn Slanec



Jeanine Crouse, Jay Biere, Joyce Pilditch, Sue Gelderman



Dr. Rebecca Lake, Board Member



Michelle Siegfried, Maria Sharabaika



Cottagers – Margery Klindera, Sally Kruse, Margery Kemper

“Living in a place where our families do not have to worry about our well-being is one of the great things about Plymouth Place. This is a gift beyond measure to the residents and loved ones. Residents are actively involved in decisions that impact community living helping to keep Plymouth Place a personal home...”

– Grace Gutekurst

“It’s a wonderful place to live—caring, friendly, mind-expanding and joyful!”

– Marge Klendera

“Plymouth Place has both a vibrant and peaceful vibe. The culture here is warm, inviting, helpful and friendly. Great staff, wonderful residents, terrific food and amenities ... it is the perfect spot for your retirement years.”

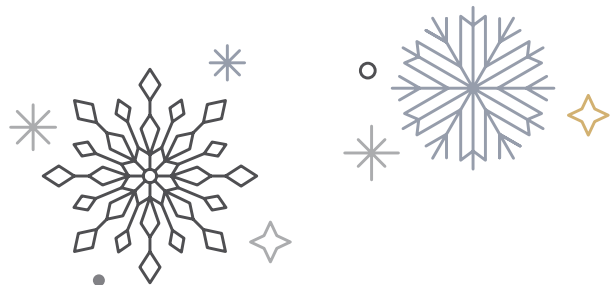
– Paul Nemecek

“The residents here are from a variety of interesting backgrounds and locales, and are very friendly. There are a wealth of opportunities to join special interest groups, go on short and long trips and attend programs both here and in the area.”

– Mary Forester

“My hope would be that people realize that this is not a home for ‘mom’ but a place to live and enjoy life after kids, and when the home maintenance is more of a pain than a joy.”

– Michael and Linda Cieslak



Enduring Love

Couples at Plymouth Place Renew Their Vows



How long do you keep a promise? A day? A week? Or for many years? On June 5, 2022, fifteen couples at Plymouth Place publicly renewed their vows, keeping the promise they made to each other many years ago. The momentous occasion was a perfect demonstration



Alice and James Chin

of how we acknowledge and honor the extraordinary lives of our residents.

At the request of Independent Living residents Dan and Mary Lou McEachran, the wedding vow renewal service was organized for a beautiful summer Sunday afternoon. Dan recalled that the previous vow renewal ceremony at Plymouth Place was performed about three years ago. Of the three couples who participated in that ceremony, he and Mary Lou were the only couple still alive to celebrate another anniversary. That sparked his request for Rev. Christina to officiate the vow renewal ceremony again.



Val and Katherine Price



Dan and Mary Lou McEachran



Don and Jan Matheny

“It meant a great deal because both of us are 90, and we’ve been very fortunate to live this long,” said Dan McEachran. “We really wanted to celebrate this fact. The setting was there, and the chaplain was there who enjoyed doing the whole thing.”

Family and friends attended. Watching the faces of children and grandchildren as their faithful parents recommitted their promise and demonstrated what it meant to be married was so profoundly moving.

It was a festive ceremony—each couple was bestowed hand-crafted corsages, boutonnieres, and a mini wedding cake with a flowered and beribboned knife for the cutting. Renewed vows were exchanged, and well-worn rings were rededicated and blessed. Nicky Young provided lovely harp music. The service was sealed with a traditional kiss and a champagne toast!



Edward and Melanie Voboril



“Enduring Love” continues on page 18



**Edward and Janet Roman
with family**



Reverend Christina Vosteen



Gene and Judy Srivver

It's easy to focus on a wedding day and all the planning that goes into it. The real challenge of a marriage is not contained in one day. The days and years that follow are the actual tests of long-ago vows. These fifteen couples gave all in attendance

the hope that intentional love could last, for better or worse, each day between then and now.

This excerpt from the hymn sung at the ceremony's vow renewal honors the love felt around Plymouth Place and beyond:



Joyce and Tom Allen

*Love is the gift, and love is the giver,
Love is the strength that binds us through time,
Love forgets self to care for the other,
• Love changes life from water to wine.*

**– Come to a Wedding
(Morning Has Broken)**



Ron and Christine Wolosewicz



Raymond and Lucia Hill



Peter and Maria Devlin



New Growth for the Salon



“Self-care” and “Self-love” describe what motivates us to manage our overall well-being—how we take care of ourselves and what we do to enhance our physical, emotional, mental, and spiritual wellness.

“Self-care” ranges from daily hygiene routines and getting to bed at a reasonable hour to embracing the extra activities that help us feel better but are not as essential, such as watching a movie or getting a therapeutic massage. “Self-love” is the feeling that motivates us to care for and be kind to ourselves—doing things that make us look good and therefore feel good. Our new Salon at Plymouth Place is the oasis where “self-care” meets “self-love” for all our residents and guests.



Salon entrance is welcoming!

The evolution of our Salon began a few years ago when the Salon at Plymouth Place underwent some changes. Sharon Andersen, an experienced beauty and self-care specialist, was recruited and recommended highly by a staff member. Sharon expressed an interest in taking the Salon to its next evolution with a new design and expanded services, sourcing great products and talent. The more the leadership team at Plymouth Place engaged with Sharon and learned how capable she was, the more it became clear that she was a perfect match. Sharon is now our Salon and Spa Manager!

Launched in August 2022, the Salon on the lower level, located across from the Bistro, now provides expanded services for both men and women, provided by a talented and energetic staff. Sharon has meticulously hired a team of highly qualified staff, including:

- Five hair stylists
- Two nail technicians
- Two massage therapists
- One aesthetician (cosmetic skin care and treatment services)

“Each professional and licensed Salon staff member must complete a minimum of 20 hours of instruction in



Sharon Andersen, Manager, in the New Salon



“Salon...” continues on page 20

their field each year,” remarks Sharon. “We are so grateful to the employee scholarship fund for providing continuing education opportunities for my staff in their pursuit of excellence as they seek to serve residents.”

The Salon now also offers high-end professional skin and hair care product lines, including:

- Schwarzkopf color and styling aids
- Alterna Caviar shampoos & conditioners
- Hale & Hush skin care products designed especially for mature and sensitive skin types



- “Dazzle Dry” nail care line, providing non-invasive polish lasting up to two weeks!

For Sharon, this is a dream come true. “I feel this is a lifelong ambition of mine to create something that can really make a difference in the lives of people on an everyday basis. My staff and I get no greater joy from seeing residents every week. They might think we brighten their day and make them look beautiful, but I can assure you, it’s a two-way street—they brighten up our day!”

For resident Geraldine Burke, her weekly visit to the New Salon is one of the highlights of her week. “I just love the Salon. It’s a high-class outfit you got in there, impeccably arranged to make us all look beautiful,” smiles Geraldine. “The staff are so fun and engaging.”

There’s the old adage that do what you do with a passion, and the rest will follow. This must surely be the case as the Salon’s business is already up 30% under their new management, due in large part to their highly-skilled staff’s genuine commitment to our residents and incredible attention to customer service. “The Salon has become a warm and welcoming place where staff and residents laugh, have a good time, and leave with a good feeling,”

remarks Cheri Boublis, Senior Director of Hospitality. “Amazing friendships have also developed in the Salon, extending the joy and light beyond its walls.”

Sharon and her team are highly optimistic about the Salon’s future. “We plan to be open six days a week in anticipation of serving more customers among the future residents of the Arboretum Villas.”

In addition, the Salon now offers its services to the families and friends of our residents. Even some of our staff members have enjoyed the convenience and professionalism the Salon has to offer.

Sharon sums up her team’s vision. “The Salon’s mission is to treat all its guests as a family while delivering exceptional salon & spa experiences. We’ve just begun to envision our endless possibilities as we continue to grow and thrive, offering our residents a friendly oasis where ‘self-care’ meets ‘self-love’one blow dry at a time!” **PP**





For Georgie Westerdahl, Plymouth Place will always hold a special place in her heart. “My mom and dad, Joan and Edward Westerdahl, began their married life with my siblings, Bonnie and Eddie, just around the corner



Joan and Bob Westerdahl
on their wedding day

“I think Mom had it planned to meet Ed on his birthday,” smiles Georgie.

Early days

Growing up in the Westerdahl household, there was always talk about sports! “They both shared a love of sports, and when they met, Dad played and lettered in three sports at Knox College- football, basketball, and baseball,” remarks Georgie. “The only thing that divided this household was Cubs vs. Sox.” Georgie also remembers the strong work ethic on the part of her parents. “My father decided it best to be self-sufficient to support our family and founded an industrial distribution business, Emerson Supply Company which became Wes-Cor, Inc. in later years. Joan assisted from the home front, especially during the early years, also raising our family.”

Ed and Joan Westerdahl’s s ancestors were of German and Swedish descent. “Ed’s father, during his years as a Methodist minister, enjoyed a special friendship with the poet, Carl Sandburg, as they were both of Swedish descent and spoke the language of the homeland,” remarks Georgie. “My grandfather attended medical school at the University

Joan Westerdahl & the Impact of Benevolence

from Plymouth Place which we knew was part of their original community,” remarks Georgie.

Ed and Joan were married for 68 years and came to Plymouth Place in 2012. Ed passed away in 2014, two years into his stay at Plymouth Place, and Joan passed away at the age of 97 on November 14, 2022, on what would have been Ed’s 100th birthday.

How a Well-Meaning Act Now Can Lead to Long-Lasting Kindness

“Benevolence...” continues on page 22

of Chicago and became M.D. I've had the pleasure of meeting some of his former patients who happened to recognize the Westerdahl name." "He was a steel executive with Joslyn Steel and participated on the team of The Manhattan Project during the war."

Coming to Plymouth Place

When the time came for Mom and Dad to move, Georgie, who was their Health Care advocate advised, "Plymouth Place was on a short list of one!" Georgie remembers her parents' early years at Plymouth as being a wonderful carefree time for them both. "They loved everything about Plymouth, the new and old friends they connected with, the music, the beautiful surroundings. They had worked hard all their life and now this was a time for them to sit back and enjoy this next journey together. It also gave my siblings, Bonnie, Eddie and myself such peace of mind knowing the incredible lifestyle and health care services that Plymouth Place has to offer."

Sadly, Ed passed away two years into his stay at Plymouth. "We were all heartbroken, but we knew Mom was in the right place. Ed had set mom up for success for her final years at Plymouth."

As the years progressed, Georgie and her siblings supported Joan at Plymouth Place in every way possible. "Mom made new friends who looked out for her in every way, including staff."

In the final year of Joan's life, her family became concerned that Joan may not have enough resources to supplement her care at Plymouth Place. "We became quite anxious at how we would manage her finances, and so I reached out to Jay Biere, CEO, for some advice," remarks Georgie. "Jay suggested Mom might be a candidate for Plymouth's

Benevolence program. I will forever be grateful to Jay and his team for his kindness and their gentle treatment of our situation, as the request for assistance from the Benevolence Fund was granted the last year of her life." Georgie continues, "I pledge to help to replenish the fund and encourage others to donate so that other families like ours can enjoy the peace of mind that their parents can enjoy those golden years in Plymouth Place."

Plymouth Mission lived out!

For Jay Biere, CEO and President, having such a fund available to residents and their families is the backbone of the Plymouth mission to serve. "We are proud to say that we have never asked a permanent resident to leave due to the outliving their resources in our 78-year history," remarks Biere, who has now served at Plymouth for six years. "Our reserve fund makes this ability to provide benevolent support possible. Benevolence payments are overseen and approved by our Board of Directors, in consultation with our Controller."



The Westerdahls

“We celebrate aging and the modern advances in new technology in aging,” remarks Biere, “hence our response in creating the amenities in our new campus expansion to provide the necessary tools to keep our residences aging successfully into their final years. But at the same time, we need to recognize that there has to be an equal financial equilibrium that can support people who may outlive their resources, albeit through no fault of their own.”

As Controller of Plymouth Place since Jan 2021, Beverly Carino knows the importance of good stewardship. “Plymouth Place has safeguarded the goodwill and trust of our donors’ intent to pass on the goodwill shown to them while at this community, to provide for the care of others should it be required. In any year, we may have 6 to 8 residents needing financial support. Our team ensures that this is carried out in the strictest of confidentiality,” remarks Carino. “It is such a privilege to be part of an organization that provides such support.”

Gently Supporting Families

For another former resident’s family member who wishes to remain anonymous, it was a balance of being there for mom while supporting their mom financially in her final years. Here is his account:

“For the majority of my mother’s years as a resident of Plymouth Place, she enjoyed a beautiful life in Assisted Living. In my mother’s final year at Plymouth Place, her health declined significantly, and she moved to the Health Care Center to receive a higher level of skilled care required to meet her needs.

While my mother resided in assisted living, I covered approximately two-thirds of the cost with my own funds. My mother covered the balance with the resources she had—social security, savings, and dividend income. That arrangement worked perfectly fine. But with this new development—not knowing how long my mother would be a healthcare resident—I became concerned about the significant increase in cost and its impact on my ability to continue contributing to my mom’s living expenses without significantly depleting my retirement funds. Not knowing the length of time my mom would reside in the health care center drove my concern. This is when I decided to investigate what I had heard about but didn’t fully understand—the Plymouth Place Benevolent Fund.

I contacted the finance department where I had developed a good relationship over the years, to express my concerns and to inquire about the Benevolence Fund. As is the case with all Plymouth Place staff, the finance team’s response was warm, understanding, and very helpful. A mix of positive emotions came over me—how nice and true-to-form Plymouth Place offers this, and how comforting that my worries were relieved. Adding to my peace of mind and feeling of security, now that I had a plan going forward, Jay called me to express his concern for my mom’s health, to reiterate the parameters of the Benevolence Program, and how it can work for us. I was very impressed with Jay’s proactive outreach to me and the compassion he had for our family’s situation.

“Benevolence...” continues on page 24



Joan Westerdahl at
Plymouth Place

I implemented the first step of drawing down my mom's remaining assets and applied the proceeds to her living expenses going forward. Once my mother's assets were depleted, which I expected to be soon, she would then qualify for the Benevolence program. But my mother passed away prior to the depletion of her remaining assets, just five months after her move to the Health Care Center, so it was ultimately not necessary to pursue the Benevolence Program. That final outcome does not diminish the immense gratitude I have for being offered the opportunity to participate in the Benevolence Program."

"The Benevolence Program is a God-send and a shining example of how Plymouth Place provides best-in-class care with compassion—putting residents first—consistently living up to its mission of honoring the individual's right to experience life to the fullest. Plymouth Place treats everyone as family, made evident by the Benevolence Program."

On November 17, 2022, a celebration of the life of Joan Westerdahl was held in the Assisted Living area. Residents and staff gathered to share stories about Joan. Georgie attended, and the service was organized by Chaplain Doreen Sterba DeZur, one of two resident chaplains at Plymouth Place. Indeed, Chaplain Doreen's parents also lived in Plymouth for many years, and she, too, understands the challenges facing families. "My dad, Edwin Sterba, told me on more than one occasion that he never thought that he and my mom would live into their 90's, and he was still certain she out live him, but he took comfort in the knowledge that they had been at Plymouth Place long enough that should they run out of funds, she was set for life in the care of Plymouth Place. The benevolence fund gave him great comfort."

For Georgie, her appreciation for the care and loving care her parents received at Plymouth Place will be forever etched in her memory. "I'm beyond grateful for the assistance we received the last year of Joan's life, and it is my intent to remain involved in the giving end of Plymouth's Benevolent Fund as it provides peace of mind to residents who may need additional help as we all navigate ever-changing and increasing health care retirement benefits for our loved ones."

For Plymouth Place, this is who we are, what we do, and why we do what we do- and it goes back to our founding fathers' visions for such a community. **PP**

Launching the
Plymouth Travel Club! Open to ALL
friends of Plymouth Place.

Solo Travelers Welcome, Too!



Beautiful Kenmare Harbor, County Kerry, Ireland

Plymouth Place Travel Club

In the spirit of living vibrantly, we are delighted to announce the launch of Plymouth Travel Club, catering for local, national, and international trips. “We decided to launch this dedicated service for our residents, families, and many friends of Plymouth Place,” remarks Kathleen Riley, Director of Life Enrichment. “Having such a travel club is a great program to offer as people want to travel more and experience travel with a lifelong learning component,” comments Jay Biere, CEO. “We want people to take advantage of all that Plymouth offers, and this is just another way of enhancing their lives.”

Kathleen Riley says the travel club will meet regularly to gauge participants’ travel interests: “We will meet in the Game Room on January 12th to have our first meeting. We anticipate a great turnout and have already received tremendous interest from people wishing to go on historical tours of Springfield, Philadelphia, a potential Great Lakes Cruise, and of course, Ireland!”

*It’s your heart that takes you
places. Yet it’s your endless passion
for discovery that leads you there.*

The Rock of Cashel,
County Tipperary, Ireland

After a successful tour of Ireland in 2022, and given the enthusiastic response of those who traveled there combined with the considerable interest by others wishing to go another time, it has been decided to travel back to Ireland in the fall of 2023. This will be led, once again, by Jay Biere, and Ireland-born and raised Paddy Homan, Senior Director of Philanthropy.

“We are excited to lead a tour back to Ireland in the fall of 2023 for eight days between September 23 and October 1, 2023. The locations have been carefully chosen, and the trip will be customized to suit participants,” comments Homan. “Everything will be top class, from the hotels chosen to the carefully planned music in each location, not to mention the finest of cuisine. Of course, we have already secured the services of Bus Driver Austin McCardle, who was such a hit on the last tour.”

To learn more about the Plymouth Travel Club or if you wish to get a brochure of the Plymouth Trip to Ireland in 2023, contact Kathleen Riley at kriley@plymouthplace.org.

All aboard! PP



The Power of Philanthropy



Paddy Homan,
Senior Director
of Philanthropy



We hope this edition of Monarch gives you a sense of this truly historic time to be at Plymouth Place, the continued vibrancy of our mission, and our much-needed role in serving the needs of our residents, staff, and the wider community.

The power of philanthropy—that innate desire to make an impact because of an intrinsic belief in the goodness of humanity—is ever-present in the lives of residents and staff who partner with us on our journey. May I also add their families too, who witness first-hand, the daily acts of love and kindness shown to their loved ones by so many, and seek to give back in a meaningful way.

There are many ways to make a charitable donation to Plymouth Place, including an outright unrestricted cash gift to cover our day-to-day operations. If you wish, you can specifically designate your charitable gift to be applied to any of our many programs and initiatives, such as our:

- Quality of Life Enrichment Music Programs
- Renowned Scholarship Fund
- Spiritual Life Fund to cover the salaries of our two dedicated chaplains
- Reserve Fund for Benevolent support
- Emergency capital needs

To learn more about how you can help us serve our residents, staff and the wider community, please visit us at www.plymouthplacegiving.org

It would give me no greater honor than to sit with you to hear about your philanthropic interests at Plymouth Place. Please reach out and let's explore the many options to suit your goals for Charitable Giving at Plymouth Place:

Paddy Homan

708.588.6940 | phoman@plymouthplace.org

Marion Giles puts it so well in her “It’s a Wonderful Life” commentary on her extraordinary life—a large part of it at Plymouth Place! Of course, when life may not be as wonderful, it is gratifying to know there is a pillar in our community like Plymouth Place. We seek to partner with other area not-for-profits to play our part in serving the greater good. It is through such partnerships that we can achieve so much.

Through the support of our many gracious donors and their families, we can rapidly respond to the ongoing needs within our community and beyond. It is a joy to serve at Plymouth Place and be part of this journey with our residents and staff at this unique time in our history.

We look forward to honoring and giving thanks to our valued Donor Society members at our Annual Legacy Tea on August 13, 2023.





Daniel J. Collins, AG Architecture, Plymouth Place Board of Directors and Emeriti Board: John Barrett, Liz Asperger, Jan McDermed, Dr. Rebecca Lake, Laura Weyrauch, Dr. Kent Armbruster, Art Grundke, Tom Teegarden, Hank Bode, Joyce Linn

Plymouth Place Mission Statement

Plymouth Place is a retirement community, based on Christian values that honor the individual's right to experience life to the fullest.

Plymouth Place believes in the dignity and worth of each individual and the need to retain one's own personal identity and independence.

Plymouth Place is dedicated to providing a gracious environment on campus for individuals in their retirement years, as well as meeting the needs of the aging community at large.





Plymouth Place
315 North La Grange Road | La Grange Park, IL 60526

***For your Gift Planning needs go to
www.plymouthplacegiving.org***

