

Centerpiece

SUMMER 2011

a newsletter for friends of the Iowa Jewish Senior Life Center



Royal Wedding Celebrated at Boulevard Place

On Friday, April 29th, Memory Care at Boulevard Place Residents joined in celebrating the Royal Wedding of Prince William to Kate Middleton. Official "wedding programs" were given to each Resident. Residents dressed in style – some wearing old fashioned hats

They also partook of a delicious wedding cake, thanks to the generosity of Trudi Rosenfeld.

Activity Director, Amber Rutherford explains, "Our Residents remember the wedding of Prince Charles to Lady Diana. We wanted them to enjoy this event, along with so many other viewers from around the world."



Jean



Vernetta



The Royal Wedding Cake!



Volunteer Linda

From the Director *The Needs of Old Age*

“Never lose sight of the fact that old age needs so little but needs that little so much.”

— Margaret Willour

In this issue of The Centerpiece, we turn our focus to the cadre of Life Center stalwarts who have chosen to devote significant pieces of their time to bringing something of the “outside world” to our Residents . . . those persons are our Volunteers.

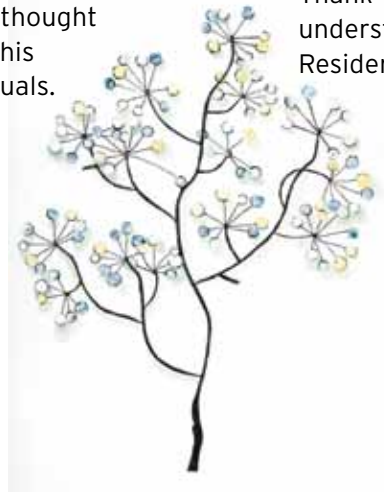
In my years as Executive Director of The Life Center, I have seen the number of Volunteers and Volunteer-run programming wax and wane. I long ago came to see Volunteer involvement in such “in-demand” Resident activities as Bingo as an immutable part of the Activities Program. I’ve also, rather sadly, seen Volunteer involvement in the annual Hamantaschen-making activity fall by the wayside . . . a tradition whose passing marked an unfortunate milestone for Activities.

These, as well as so many other Resident-centric activities, all have one thing in common – Community Volunteers. Each year as we gather in celebration of our Volunteers, there is always one thought that I feel compelled to share with this remarkable group of selfless individuals.

With warmest regards,



Stephen P. Blend, M.H.A.
Executive Director



At its very core, the Volunteer Program serves not only to entertain Life Center Residents, but also, I so strongly feel, that this Program helps to maintain the Residents’ connection to the broader Community outside the confines of The Life Center.

Being a Resident can be an isolating experience. The mere fact that our Residents come to know that there are Community members willing to give of themselves to maintain a connection, and a feeling of caring, cannot be overstated.

No matter how elaborate the programming put on by Life Center professionals, there can be no substitute for knowing that the loving gestures of the Volunteer Corps bespeak an understanding of the “little needs” which accompany old age – needs whose importance grows with the passing of the years.

Thank you to all past, present and future Volunteers who understand, intuitively, how being part of connecting our Residents to the Community means so very much.

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Volunteer Spotlight — Linda Willem

Linda and her husband have been married for 50 years. They have 3 wonderful children and 8 grandchildren, all who live near Des Moines, a fact which Linda thoroughly enjoys. Linda attends many sporting and music events of her grandchildren throughout the year. Linda did not work outside the home while her children were growing up, but began as a part-time typist at a travel agency to help a friend. She later decided to further her education and became a Certified Travel Consultant. Throughout her career of 15 years, Linda and her husband were traveled to many locations.

After her retirement in 2000, she became very bored. This is when her life of volunteering truly began. She started by delivering altar flowers through her church to people who were shut-in at their home or hospital. It was through these deliveries that she first came in contact with The Life Center.



The mother of one of her good friends was a Resident of Memory Care at Boulevard Place, at The Life Center. She began visiting Aasta on a regular basis. Through this, she met other Memory Care Residents, and enjoyed seeing them “light up” whenever she sparked memories.

After Aasta passed away, Memory Care Activity Director Amber Rutherford approached Linda and asked if she would consider volunteering on a regular basis at The Life Center. She has been volunteering ever since. She has

gone on a bowling outing, visited one-on-one with Residents, and helped with Bingo. Her favorite memory to date is the bowling outing. “To see their enjoyment, to see their faces light-up, was amazing,” states Linda. She is glad to know that the Residents will be going bowling again this summer.

When Linda tells her friends about her experiences at The Life Center, and the many memories she has here, some of them tell her they could never do this type of volunteering. They fear it would be too depressing, or hard to talk with people with memory deficits. Linda’s response to them is “it’s just something you do that is so rewarding!”

For more information about volunteering in Memory Care at Boulevard Place, please contact **Amber Rutherford**, Activity Director, at **(515) 255-5433, ext. 232** or **memorycare@seniorlifecenter.org**.

Stephen Blend’s 20th Anniversary Honored

On Sunday, May 15th, Mr. Blend was honored for his 20th Anniversary as Executive Director. The celebration took place at the home of Shelley and Martin Brody. Shelley welcomed guests and thanked Mr. Blend for his commitment to The Life Center. “I am most appreciative of Stephen’s ability to look to the future to foresee potential problems and be proactive in their resolution,” states Shelley, current President of the Board of Directors.

Incoming Board President, Ben Swartz presented a proclamation, indicating a gift in Mr. Blend’s honor from the past presidents of the Board of Directors. Past Board President, Anne Loeb then highlighted the variety of changes that have occurred in The Life Center’s history over the past two decades.

On February 4th, 1991, Stephen Blend began his tenure with The Life Center. At that time, The Life Center was blessed with 99% occupancy and an average of 13 admissions per year. Now, twenty years later, occupancy

has declined somewhat and the average number of admissions per year is closer to 250. In 1991 The Life Center had, at most, 1 resident on Title XIX (Medicaid), whereas now there are 10 residents on Title XIX. The Life Center loses, on average, \$25,000 per year in revenue on each Title XIX resident. Additionally, since 1991 at least 15-20 additional skilled nursing, long-term care, Alzheimer’s care, or assisted living facilities have opened in the Des Moines area. All of this, combined with the tremendous growth in home health care over the years has made an impact on the day-to-day functions of The Life Center. **However, The Life Center continues to maintain a high standard of care and superior staffing ratios.** With an eye to the future, we want to ensure The Life Center remains as the premier skilled nursing/rehabilitation, long-term care, and Alzheimer’s/ Memory Care location in the Greater Des Moines area.

We congratulate Stephen P. Blend on reaching this milestone!

In Appreciation of our Volunteers

The Life Center is fortunate to have volunteers with a plethora of talents. On Wednesday, May 18th, an appreciation luncheon was held at The Life Center to thank current and past volunteers who have dedicated time and talent to Residents and Staff. Wanda Gulick, Activity Director, presented volunteers with a gift and thanked those present for their dedication.

"Volunteers greatly enrich the lives of our Residents," states Wanda.

Pet Therapy

Laurie Gebert, owner of George the Golden Retriever, commented that "I feel guilty sometimes, because, although I know the Residents really enjoy their time with George, I also gain a lot from being here. I enjoy seeing their reactions to George, and it makes me feel really good." George is a registered therapy dog. He visits Residents twice a month has been doing this for about five years.

Patty the Poodle and owner **Eileen Thompson** brighten the lives of our Residents once a month, and have been doing this for 5 years.



Eileen, "Patty the Poodle" and Virginia



Gift given to the volunteers inscribed "Don't Just Count Your Blessings, Share Them."



Laurie and George

In Appreciation of our Volunteers

Manicures

Gwenn Copple, the daughter of a former Resident, has been providing a pampering experience for our Residents on a weekly basis since 1995. Residents look forward to their manicure by Gwenn.

Crafts & Games

Arlene Wolf, another daughter of a former Resident, has facilitated a weekly craft class for many years. "Seeing the Residents enjoy their creations is fulfilling for me," states Arlene. One Resident, Virginia, adds that "craft class is good medicine!" Arlene also helps plant beautiful flowers with the Residents on our terrace and patio areas.

The long-standing weekly Bridge game was discontinued a few years ago, for lack of players. **Joyce Knock**, daughter of a former Resident, was very appreciative of the care her mother received at The Life Center and wanted to give back to the Residents by becoming involved in their lives. She started volunteering with coffee and chat. When she heard Residents were interested in playing Bridge, she started the weekly game up again.

Residents who need assistance with Bingo have greatly appreciated **Vi Ashdown's** weekly presence since 1983. **Angela Oberlander** also volunteers with Bingo. She wanted to volunteer on a weekly basis, and after doing several other activities with Residents, she found her niche in Bingo. Wanda shares that "she has a contagious smile and sweet spirit."

Religious Services

Rabbi Berg leads a weekly service and has also been available throughout the year for special services. **Rabbi Edelman-Blank** has also been helpful since his arrival in Des Moines a few years ago. **Cantor Shivers** shares her talents with the Residents as well.

Bi-weekly communion services have also been made available to our Christian Residents. **Del Snook**, an Episcopalian layman leads those services, and has done so for the past four years.

Musical Entertainment

Musical entertainment is a true delight to the Residents! About a year ago, **Nick Walker** began visiting on a monthly basis to play piano for Residents before dinner. The **Zimmerman girls**, who also play piano, come to share their talents once a month. The Residents' attention is of great encouragement to the three girls

We also have several groups who visit on an annual basis. Our New Year's Eve Party entertainment consists of 10 performers. **Abe Rissman** has organized and hosted the show for many years. "He loves to see the Residents enjoy the show," comments Wanda. *Harmony for Life* is a group of 6-8 senior citizens who have learned to play organ in a program offered at Critchetts. For the program, Critchetts delivers an organ for them to play. *The Five Belles Hand Bell Quartet*, *The Principal Singers*, and *The Iowa Polka Club* share their talents with our Residents periodically.

Save the Date for The Life Center's Annual Fundraising Event!

On Sunday, September 18th, we hope you will join us in celebrating 80 years of institutional existence at our annual, fundraising event. Over the past 3-years, The Life Center has been able to renovate the bathing spas, all long-term care Resident rooms, and begun working on Resident common spaces and lounges through the generosity of our Community. We continue on this multi-year "Project Transformation" to enhance and revitalize our building aesthetic.

Invitations to the September 18th event will be mailed within a month. For more information about Project Transformation, and to ensure you receive an invitation to our annual event, please contact **Jennifer Youngquist at (515) 255-5433, ext 283**.

General admission is \$100 per person, with additional giving levels beginning at \$250.

We are grateful to our Donors

The Life Center is pleased to acknowledge the following contributions received between January 1, 2011 and June 30, 2011. Every effort has been made to ensure proper gift recognition. However, in publishing a list of supporters, it is possible that we may have omitted or misspelled your name. If so, please accept our sincere apology and kindly notify Jennifer Youngquist at 515-255-5433 ext 283.

Birthday Celebration of:

Sylvia Miksich's 100th

The Miksich Family ***

Fred Hubbell's 60th

Larry Kirsner & Joan Burke

Thelma Kardon's 90th

Gwenn & Steve Copple
Goldie Zeichik

Alan Stern's 80th

Gwenn & Steve Copple
Mr. & Mrs. Sydney Tabach

Blanche Weindruch

Charlene Abramsohn

In Honor of:

Sarah Ballard's Bat Mitzvah

Gwenn & Steve Copple

Stephen Blend's 20th Anniversary with The Life Center

Martin & Shelley Brody
Mr. & Mrs. Robert Carpenter
Larry & Judy Deutch
Mrs. Charlotte Elmets
Mr. & Mrs. Arnold Engman
Mr. & Mrs. Stanley Engman
Sarah & David Farnsworth
Dennis & Sharon Goldford
Cathy & Tom Goldman
Mr. & Mrs. Louis Hockenberg
Mr. Larry Kirsner
Mr. & Mrs. David Lettween
Edward & Anne Loeb
John & Cyril Mandelbaum
Mr. & Mrs. Peter Sandler
Dr. & Mrs. Michael Stein
Ben & Joyce Swartz

Andrew Galinsky's Wedding

Gwenn & Steve Copple

Mrs. Rita Nash

Jody & Pierre Colletier

Louis & Rebecca Nussbaum

Mr. & Mrs. Wayne Grove & Family

Roselind & Sheldon Rabinowitz' 60th Wedding Anniversary

The Richard Kolz Family
The Mickey Shepards

Jean Rogers

Ann Victor

In Honor of: continued

Ben & Joyce Swartz' 50th Wedding Anniversary

Charlene Abramsohn
Martin & Shelley Brody
Gwenn & Steve Copple
Marshall & Judy Flapan
Sharon & Dennis Goldford
Mrs. Nancy Pearlman

The Life Center Employees

Charlotte Raush

For Recovery of:

Betty Bernstein

Rose Koufer

Adelaide Krum

Mrs. Maryan Nadel

Gloria Rovner

Mr. & Mrs. Marvin Braverman

Annette Siegel

Rose Koufer

Larry Stein

Gwenn & Steve Copple

In Memory of:

Bernie Arenson

Elizabeth Sherman

Bess Barr Greilsheim & Jacob Barr

Nancy Schwartz

David Bear

Jeanette Bear

MJ Bear

Margo & Don Blumenthal
Kent & Janice Rosenberg

Sol Beecher

Louis & Ann Balentine

Anne Blumenthal

Lois P. Hartline

Helen Brocka

Joyce Knock

Milton Brown

Joanne Brown***
Gwenn & Steve Copple
Mr. & Mrs. Sydney Tabach

Ida Bucksbaum

John & Jackie Bucksbaum ***

Verene Cohen

Milton & Esther (Engman)
Shepard

James B. Cushing

Jim Cushing

In Memory of: continued

John R. Dahlke

Mayrellen Dahlke

Michael Dobrin

Michele Dobrin

Hearest Duncan

Paula & Randy Duncan

Alice Frein

Mr. & Mrs. Wallace Olsan
Dianne & Dave Swieskowski

Harry Galinsky

Charlene Abramsohn
Gwenn & Steve Copple
Harlan & Audrey Rosenberg
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Lanette, Austin, Dylan
& Madeline
Stan & Jody Reynolds
Trudi Rosenfeld & Family
Jean & Marvin Selden
Julie Sjekloch
Mr. & Mrs. Jon Torgerson
Urbandale Fire Department
John & Karen Wilgenbusch
Linda Willem
Goldie (Mrs. Milton) Zeichik

In Memory of: continued

Judith Holl

Will & Hannah Rogers

Fern J. Hyett

William D. Hyett

Manuel & Betti Kiess

Manfred & Eileen Kiess

Allan Lefkow

Gwenn & Steve Copple

Victor Lipsman

Paulee Lipsman

Eva & Frances Markowitz

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Beverly Robinson

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Doloris Rosenberg

Kent & Janice Rosenberg

Dr. Martin Rosenfeld

Margo & Don Blumenthal
Dex One
Fred & Lois Margolin
David & Kris Saggau

Mary Rubin

Fred & Lois Margolin

Arthur Sherman

Elizabeth Sherman

Mark E. (Buck) Sloan

Darlene J. Sloan Family

Cantor Pinchas Spiro

Lora Lee Spiro

Sis Stein

Mrs. Elizabeth (Betsy) Pink

Jessica Steinger

Margo & Don Blumenthal

Ethelyn Swartz

John & Jackie Bucksbaum ***

Gloria & David Taffae

Bill & Sue Spaniol

Stanley L. Weinberg

Irene Ruth Weinberg

*** Reflects contributions of \$1,000 or above

We are grateful to our Donors

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*** Reflects contributions
of \$1,000 or above

*A special thank you to the Zarnow Family Music Fund Trust.
Their donation allowed us to provide music from
the Maple Street Jazz Band for our annual Purim party.*



Boulevard Children's Center Expands

For many years The Life Center has been blessed with the presence of Boulevard Children's Center. The multitude of inter-generational activities offered throughout the year is a joy to both the Residents and the children. According to Norene, Memory Care Resident, "they put their whole hearts into what they're doing. They make everything come to life!" Vernetta adds, "I like seeing them interact with each other." Activities include interactions through playing games, coloring, reading, seasonal parades, and Program dress-rehearsals. Dorothy states, "I enjoy when they sing with me." Helen proclaims, "You gotta have kids to play with!"



Due to an increase in demand for child care, as well as insufficient space in some of the current rooms, Boulevard Children's Center is reconfiguring rooms and office spaces and adding a "transitional room" for 1 1/2 through 2 1/2 year old children. This new room will be called "The Ladybug Room" and the changes are expected to be completed by July 11, 2011.

What's Happening at The Life Center?

Bon Appétit!

In February, The Life Center introduced restaurant-style ordering for each day's meals. Previously, Residents had to decide an entire week's worth of meals on one day. Now Residents are able to choose their meal option at the table, just as if they were at a restaurant. When asked how she likes being able to order her meal at the table, Adelaide says, "that was a novelty!" Lulabelle adds, "I think it's good. We have a choice between several entrees." Dietary Director Darlene Perdue comments, "The Dietary Department is thrilled to see Residents making choices and being independent."

National Nursing Home Week Celebrated

Each year, starting on Mother's Day, National Nursing Home Week is celebrated at The Life Center to recognize the staff, family members, volunteers, and many others who take part in the lives of our Residents. Activities throughout the week were aimed at getting to know more about the lives of our Residents and showing appreciation to staff.

New Sign!

Do you recall the first time you visited The Life Center? Did you get lost, or have difficulty knowing where the main entrance was? Well, we are hoping the new sign above our main entrance will make what was once a mystery, only history.

Activity Spotlight - Mother's Day Breakfast

On Monday, May 9th, Memory Care at Boulevard Place held their annual Mother's Day Breakfast. This is always a special event to both the Residents and their family members in attendance.



Marsha, Bea and Brenda



Resident Dining Room Redecorated!

As part of Project Transformation, one of the Resident Dining Rooms that is also used as a multi-purpose activity area was recently redecorated. Instead of having 3 different colors of wallpaper, it is now painted with a soothing sage color with updated artwork. Resident Helen says, "It's beautiful! I remember the old room and this is much better!"



Norene and Family