

Marie's Mansion



Stephanie and Marie have become good friends since becoming neighbors at Shurmer Place MAL.

Marie moved to Shurmer Place Memory Assisted Living (MAL) in 2018, after her son, Peter Krutchnitt, noticed how difficult life had become for her. He and his family had moved in with her temporarily after his family's home burned, and they soon realized her short-term memory was not what it needed to be for her to manage her daily life independently. She was also unhappy and not eating well, and she wasn't interested in leaving the house to socialize, despite encouragement from the family. Her move to Shurmer Place MAL was intended to be a temporary arrangement, but Marie did so well that the family was happy to have her stay.

Marie perked up immediately under the friendly and caring attention of the MAL staff. When asked about the staff, Marie says, "Everyone is so nice, I love them all." In comparison to her home routine, which was to spend a lot of time in bed, she now

enjoys getting up promptly every day to participate with residents and staff in the daily routines and special activities of MAL. She especially loves the polka music, which reminds her of many years of dancing she enjoyed with her husband. Eating is no longer an issue since they serve many of the familiar German foods that were a regular part of Marie's life. When asked what her favorite foods are, she replies, "I love it all!"

Marie also resumed her social life and found a friend. She and her new "best friend," Stephanie, spend most days together, side by side. They have a lot in common so there is always something to chat about, and they love participating in activities, outings and fun together. When asked what her favorite part of MAL is, Marie's answer — of course — is, "I like it all. It is so beautiful, and I can go everywhere — all over. It is like having my own mansion."

The first thing you notice about Marie, a resident in Shurmer Place Memory Assisted Living, is that she smiles constantly. It's the kind of smile that goes all the way to her twinkly eyes. She's a genuinely happy person now that she's living here, and it shows.

This article offers information about the Planetree principles and person-centered design at Shurmer Place MAL. ♦



Marie was a featured artist in the Opening Minds Through Art (OMA) Program in November 2018.



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Message from Paul Psota, CEO



Our residents are flourishing!

Shurmer Place director Kim Schultz reports that residents had a great time at the play, *Witness for the Prosecution* through the Great Lakes Senior Matinee Series. The Aging Well series is underway. This month, the new HydroWorx underwater treadmill was featured. Black History Month, the Chinese New Year and Valentine's Day were celebrated. The educational program, quite popular with the residents, featured genetic DNA cancer testing and pharmacogenetics testing by MY DNA. Trips to the Strongsville Dance, Hanna Theater, Southpark Mall, Shinto's, and the Asian Gardens were enjoyed by all. Congratulations to Shurmer Place for receiving a deficiency free survey!

Altenheim Senior Living residents participated in a Mardi Gras celebration. Volunteers from St. John Neumann conducted an Ash Wednesday service. Residents enjoyed shamrock shakes and the Canon Irish Dancers for St. Patrick's Day.

Altenheim's newest residence, Shurmer Place Memory Assisted Living, helps each resident achieve their best potential every day through activities such as word puzzles, name that tune or famous person, yoga, exercise, sewing, flower arranging, art and other activities with which they have succeeded and can now talk about and enjoy. "Happy Hour" every Friday may include Margarita Mocktails and polka dancing. The Men's Coffee Club is a popular weekly activity. The Men gather around and decide what they want to discuss. A bridal fashion show was held by Hatpins and Hemlines, featuring the history, music and fashions of weddings from the Civil War to the present.

This issue of Flourish features Shurmer Place Memory Assisted Living. Resident, Marie and her son Peter tell their story of the journey to Memory Assisted Living and what it has meant to them and their family. Director, Beth Seese and Activities Director, Linda Begley give their perspective on helping each resident flourish.

And finally... if you have not made your gift to the Annual Appeal, please consider doing so. Your gift will help us provide programs and services that are vital to the well-being of our residents. You will help them flourish!!

Happy spring!!

Best Thing We've Ever Done

"My mother was born in Yugoslavia and emigrated with her family to Germany during World War II," Peter Kruttschnitt, Marie's son, began.

"After the War they came to the U.S. and settled in Cleveland. Mom was a kindergarten teacher in Germany, and then a dressmaker in Cleveland, until she met my father. Once they married, Mom became a full-time homemaker and raised my sister and me. Our parents loved to dance — the polka in particular — and they became regulars on the Polka Varieties television show."

"After Dad passed, Mom was on her own in the family home. We began to realize how serious her memory issues were when we moved in with her after our house burned. We became her caregivers as she continued to decline. She stopped eating and drinking, ended up in the hospital, and was diagnosed with chronic leukemia and dementia. She was depressed and confused and spent a lot of time sleeping.

"It's the best thing we've ever done for Mom, and we have great peace of mind knowing how safe and happy she is."

"When my wife developed health issues, we began to look for a temporary place for Mom to live so my wife could let go of being a caregiver and focus on her own health. I researched several facilities and chose Shurmer Place MAL because it seemed like the ideal solution for

Mom. At the time, I didn't realize how right I was.

"I was immediately impressed with the quality of the staff and the facility and activity director. They were really skilled and always cheerful. They were able to get Mom up and into daily activities right away. Her depression lifted and the many interactions she now has with staff and residents give her a reason to get up every day. Hospice also visits Shurmer Place to provide care in the comfort of her room. Her quality of life is better now than it has been in years. When my sister and I visit, she is truly content. It's the best thing we've ever done for Mom, and we have great peace of mind knowing how safe and happy she is. I wish we had moved her there sooner."

This article on the Altenheim Senior Living website offers helpful tips on how to transition a parent to a memory care facility. ♦



Linda and Marie "Roll Out the Barrel" during an impromptu polka dance.

A Clinical Helping Hand

Susan Morella is a clinical nurse specialist, working with Dr. Debs, the Medical Director at Memory Assisted Living. She received her BSN from The Ohio State University and advanced practice Master's degree from Kent State University. She began her career in cardio-thoracic surgery at The Clinic, where many of the patients were geriatric. Care there was acute.

Looking for a position that would provide her with a more balanced professional and family life, a friend suggested she consider working in an assisted living/skilled nursing environment.

Now she has the best of both a hospital setting and assisted living. Susan states, "While there are some issues that are acute, I also am able to build relationships with the residents, families and staff. What is especially good about being at MAL, is the great staff. I can tell they care about the residents. The special care they give is based on each resident's acuity level. They are efficient and timely in giving me information I need to treat the residents." ♦

Each Interaction Matters

"We encourage our residents to achieve their best potential each day."

This is how Linda Begley, Director of Activities at Shurmer Place Memory Assisted Living, describes her role. She is part of an interconnected team of professionals who become an integral part of the residents' daily lives and take personal responsibility for making each day as positive, fulfilling and satisfying as it can be for them.

The caregivers, therapists, activities coordinators, dining service providers and environmental staff know they each contribute to how the residents feel on any given day, so they work as a team to assure that every interaction is a good one. "Time is more precious as we age and become frail," says Linda. "The question we ask ourselves at MAL is: if this is the last time you ever interact with this resident, how do you want the experience to be, for them and for you?"

Interaction is crucial to the wellbeing of memory-impaired residents. Each day begins and ends with routine interactive activities that provide a sense of security,

purpose and fun, and can help reduce anxiety and set a positive tone. "For example," Linda offers, "our resident Marie likes to take care of closing the window blinds in the community every evening. That's her contribution to our routine." Staff and residents perform all activities together, to reinforce the sense of family and encourage engagement.

Additional creative and stimulating activities are scheduled throughout the week and are often designed to the particular interests of the residents. For example, many Shurmer Place MAL residents love polka, classical and other types of music, which are often performed live for them by visiting musicians. Residents also cook and bake typical comfort foods from their youth, and those who are interested are offered creative projects like gardening, collage, painting, sewing, knitting or crochet. Exercise, such as armchair bowling, is another regular activity presented in a fun way. "These activities help energize our residents and provide a sense of satisfaction from completing a session or project. We try to learn about their interests and find ways



Linda Begley, Director for Activities at Shurmer Place Memory Assisted Living, greets Marie with a hug.

to incorporate them into our activities. This taps into our residents' long-term memories and provides a positive boost."

Take a visual tour of the beautiful family-friendly spaces at Shurmer Place Memory Assisted Living.

To see the current calendar of activities for the MAL residents [click here](#). ♦

Leadership With Heart



"This is one of the most rewarding jobs I've ever had.."

Resident Loni and Beth Seese, Executive Director and Director of Nursing at Shurmer Place Memory Assisted Living, work on a puzzle together.

Beth Seese RN, Executive Director and Director of Nursing for the Shurmer Place Memory Assisted Living (MAL), is responsible for five staff functions in this multi-level 38-resident facility. She works with the Resident Care Coordinator, 24-hour nurses, the resident companion caregivers and the dedicated housekeeping and dietary staff. Although this may seem like a lot of "moving parts," MAL operates as a unified family and works toward the same care goals. The "mama bear" of this family is Beth Seese.

"This is one of the most rewarding jobs I've ever had," says Beth. "My staff members are my professional family, and our residents are our extended family, so there's a lot of love in this community. We also have a very resident-driven care model. In addition to the facility itself being designed to optimize their lives, each resident is accepted in whatever state they are in each day, and that day is optimized for them by every staff member they encounter."

Beth continues, "Every day for a memory-impaired resident is a snapshot that will change. Each person can be having a happy day or an anxious one. He or she may have lost a capability they had the day before, so they may need different kinds of interaction and support that day." To reinforce their sense of family and security, every member of the MAL staff knows and addresses every resident by name. Staff members also learn everything they can about each person's history, preferences and routine so they can provide as much continuity and comfort as possible, even in the midst of constant change.

Continuity is also critical in staffing, since they are the people residents interact with every day. Although residents may not remember all their names, they recognize faces and feel more secure, content, and even happy to see that familiar person. Fortunately, the staff at Shurmer MAL is extremely loyal and dedicated, so turnover is very low. They are there because they genuinely love the work they do. "I'm very proud of everyone here," says Beth. "It's more than a job for them – it's a calling. Our staff takes caregiving very personally, and they are willing to go beyond their job requirements to help residents. For example, I have known a staff member to purchase socks on her own time for a resident who needed them, because the resident's family didn't live in the area. Staff have also requested to wear funny Halloween costumes so they could entertain the community and bring smiles to residents' faces."

How has Beth developed such a loyal team? What's the secret to her leadership? "As a nurse, I have an expectation of anyone I hire," says Beth. "When I talk to you, I need to feel your heart. I can teach you skills, but compassion is innate – it must be there from the start." ♦



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OUR MISSION: To achieve the optimal level of mental, physical, and spiritual well-being of individuals, families and the community through the provision of high quality residential living, skilled nursing care and specialized services offered in a family-like atmosphere.

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Did you know...



National Volunteer week is April 7–13?

- The Women's Auxiliary was the first volunteer organization at Altenheim?
- Altenheim volunteers devoted over 1400 hours of their time and talents for the benefit of the residents in 2018?
- The word volunteer first appeared around 1600 and was defined as "one who offers himself for military service?"
- The Women's Auxiliary is seeking volunteers. Call Brigitte Ward, President, for more information at 330-225-9041.



Altenheim complies with applicable Federal civil rights laws and does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, disability, or sex.

ATENCIÓN: si habla español, tiene a su disposición servicios gratuitos de asistencia lingüística. Llame al 440-238-3361.

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If you wish to have your name removed from future marketing and fundraising communications, contact the Office of Institutional Advancement between 9am–5pm
Monday-Friday at 440-238-3361, ext 1171.

Ways You Can Make a Difference:

Annual Appeal for Altenheim – Your unrestricted gift will help fund residents' programs and activities.

Tributes – Remember a loved one or recognize someone special through a memorial or tribute gift of any size; or purchase an engraved brick for the Meeting Center Courtyard.

Restricted Giving – You may direct your gift to a specific program or service such as activities, education, facilities and equipment, or Alzheimer's and dementia care.

Gifts of Time and Talent – Are you passionate about helping others? Altenheim Senior Living has a variety of opportunities to volunteer.

Gifts-in-Kind – Movies, books, blankets and other personal in-kind gifts add to the residents' feeling of home.

Matching Gifts – Check with your employer to see if your financial donation will be matched by corporate giving.

Planned Giving – Bequests, life insurance, beneficiary designations and other planned, deferred gifts will benefit our residents.

Contact The Office of Institutional Advancement, 440-238-3361, ext. 1171, or go to www.altenheim.com/donatenow to make your gift.

Yes! I want to support Altenheim and its mission.

☐ I would like more information about making a bequest or other planned gift to The Altenheim Foundation

☐ I want to support Altenheim's mission with a gift to the Annual Appeal

Please accept my gift \$ _____
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Planned Giving

The Altenheim Foundation, a 501(c)(3) organization, serves as the philanthropic arm of Altenheim Senior Living. It secures funds to enhance the quality of life for the residents entrusted to our care.

One of the best ways you can enhance the quality of life for future generations of residents is to make a planned gift to The Foundation.

What is Planned Giving?

Planned giving is a donor's desire to make a future charitable gift. A charitable gift should be integrated into your overall philanthropic, financial, tax and estate planning strategy.

Are you ready to make a planned gift?

It is extremely important that you seek the advice of a professional financial planner, tax specialist and/or accountant as you consider making a planned gift. Throughout the planning process, ask yourself these questions:

- What are my financial needs?
- What impact do I want my gift to have at Altenheim?
- What assets—cash, appreciated securities, or real estate—do I have available to fund my gift?
- What is the best way to make my gift and fulfill my family and philanthropic objectives?

This is your opportunity to leave a legacy and invest in Altenheim's future!

What are the types of planned gifts?

- Outright gifts that use appreciated assets as a substitution for cash and include securities, life insurance policies and real property.
- Gifts that return in come or other financial benefits to the donor such as a charitable gift annuity and charitable remainder trust.
- Gifts payable upon donor's passing including bequests.

Whatever your philanthropic goals are, The Altenheim Foundation will work with you and your financial advisor to leave a lasting legacy for you and your heirs. Your planned gift will provide for future residents to live and be compassionately cared for in our Life Plan Community. Contact the Office of Institutional Advancement for more information at 440-238-3361. ♦

The Altenheim Foundation is a not-for-profit 501(c)(3) organization.

Gifts are tax deductible to the extent allowed by law.

Please consult your tax adviser if you have questions about the deductibility of your gift.

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