

Premier Issue, June 2013

3550

a publication by and for the residents of Mirabella Portland



Jim Rudolph
President

Mirabella Portland continues to thrive and Marketing tells us that we are essentially sold out. We could be the fastest growing CCRC in the country.

The Residents Association Council also definitely is maturing.

Early in April, I hosted the four other PRS Oregon Affiliate Council Presidents here – from Mirabella Seattle, Holladay Park, Cascade Manor and Rogue Valley Manor. Attending also was an ad hoc chair from University Retirement Community of Davis, Calif.

I was surprised to find out how different we are and how we function. Some are very aggressive in dealing with PRS and demanding changes for their respective affiliates. Working with the Mirabella Board, we are getting changes faster and more collegially.

As president, I called for a special meeting of the council on April 10 to recommend a resident to become a voting member of Mirabella Portland Board. The chairman of the board made this request and the council unanimously recommended that the president become the voting member. In addition, the vice president was recommended to become a non-voting member.

On April 23rd, the Mirabella Portland Board met and approved both recommendations. A week later, the PRS Board met and approved these changes and also modified the required Bylaws of Mirabella Portland Board.

These new advances will provide ongoing information to the residents.



Anthony Sabatini
Executive Director

I would like to personally congratulate the 3550 team on their first publication. Countless hours were spent creating this magazine and it is a shining example of what separates Mirabella from all other retirement communities. Considering what to share in this first publication caused me to recall how Mirabella Portland grew from an intangible vision into a thriving community.

Mirabella's journey began and continues with a steadfast commitment from those who live and work here. Many residents faced an enormous decision to commit to a brand new community during a staggering economic downturn; a move many have said was their hardest. Once here, residents had to adjust emotionally to living in a community environment rather than a private residence. Newly hired and trained Mirabella staff worked hard to prepare to welcome Mirabella's first moving vans and residents. We had our first community meetings – love those coffee socials.

Upon opening in August 2010, we served meals only in the Dolce Vita Bistro, and residents spent evenings getting to know the handful of neighbors who had already moved in. In time, Aria opened for the community to enjoy, as other areas of Mirabella continued to develop. We finally received our full certificate of occupancy in late October and achieved our coveted LEED Platinum Certification in November. The Health Center opened after receiving the green light from the state and federal survey in February 2011.

As Mirabella continued to grow, several committed residents began building the Residents' Association Mirabella Portland (RAMP.) Advisory and Association Committees began to form and coordinate community living. And residents enjoyed daily programs and events.

Throughout the last 2-1/2 years I have been slowly meeting with recently arrived residents, to gauge how Mirabella is living up to their expectations,

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**Cover Photo: Mirabella by Starlight, © 2013
Todd Albert Photography**
Mirabella Executive Chef Todd Albert made this photo of our home, seen from the southeast corner of Bond and Curry. "The challenge was to capture the illusion of star movement, yet not overexpose the lights shining on the building. Using a tripod, I shot sixty, 30-second exposures. With image-processing software, I stacked all 60 shots as layers, thereby showing the star movement and the detail of the building."



Steve Casey
Editor

Welcome to the debut issue of 3550, the resident-produced magazine celebrating, examining and reflecting upon life in and around Mirabella Portland.

We started with a decision not to do a “newsletter,” but create a full-on magazine worthy of this extraordinary place. What you have is a first draft – a glimpse of what we hope the magazine becomes.

Improvement and innovation will come through continuing hard work by the magazine staff, but mostly through ideas, comments, praise, criticism and suggestions that come from Mirabella residents. Those will keep us fresh and relevant.

As does this one, each issue will offer a profile on a Mirabella resident and a Mirabella employee – not on how they live or work here, but on their personal fascinating stories.

Each issue will offer news and, where warranted, investigative reporting. Each issue will offer updates on community groups and their activities. Each issue will offer feature stories.

Our plan includes regular features you won’t see in this issue but will in the next – a “Rumor Mill” column, designed to explore, and confirm or debunk popular rumors here; a “Did You Know?” column, with interesting tidbits about the area in which we live; a story on a different charity each issue, one

which attracts Mirabella residents as donors or volunteers.

We also look to offer advice to Portland newcomers from established residents on local shopping, dining, cultural events – and just finding your way around town.

After this issue, each will offer a package of articles on a defined theme, a subject of interest to our residents. First up? All About Dining.

We plan to publish every other month for awhile, then go monthly. Next issue: August 1. Depending on interest and budget, we may adjust the number of pages and may print black and white on inside pages. We’ll see.

On a personal note, I offer thanks to Anthony Sabatini, our executive director, who has been 100% supportive as we launch this magazine. He knows it will make him smile sometimes and knows it will give him an Excedrin headache sometimes. His reaction? “Go for it.”

And I offer my biggest share of gratitude to the stalwarts of the Communications Committee who have put up with my autocratic manner, have worked tirelessly to make this a better and more responsive community, have helped shape this magazine, who named it. It wouldn’t have happened without them.

Please – tell us what you think. Tell us where we are hitting the mark and what else you would like to see. Easiest way? A note in my in-house mailbox, 2507, or an email to stevenjcasey@me.com.

Thanks for reading. And enjoy your day in our beautiful community.

3550 is a publication of the Residents’ Association of Mirabella Portland. Its mission is to inform, enlighten, question, explore, amuse and occasionally irritate, thus enhancing the communication within and about Mirabella.

Editor: Steve Casey

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Want to Help?

Contributions of articles, photographs and ideas are welcome from all residents.

Please contact the editor in advance.

Writers’ guidelines are available on request.

Other important staff jobs are available. Call the editor to discuss.

The WOW Factor - Residents' Talents Bloom

There are lots of creative people at Mirabella – painters, sculptors, designers, quilters, writers, photographers, woodworkers, musicians . . .

Why not, thought resident Rolf Glerum – a man who claims no artistic bent himself – showcase those talents where they can be enjoyed by residents, staff and visitors alike?

Creativity on Display, or COD, was born.

Formed in February, its mission is to display the artistic works of residents

and staff in public area venues – which really means in the main lobby.



COD shows off a different artist each month, and a COD committee member provides a written description of the artist and his or her work.

Mary Zehring, pictured left with her quilt, was the artist in April.

Painter Hebe Greizerstein in March was the first to have work displayed. Writer Sybilla Cook was up in May and sculptor Bobby Cohn is featured in June.



June Contributors

Todd Albert – Todd is Mirabella's executive chef and an accomplished professional photographer. His website is www.toddalbertphotography.com.

Ken Berg - Mirabella resident Ken Berg, DMD, is a long-time faculty member at OHSU's School of Dentistry and is still actively working for the university.

John Branchflower – Retired musician, social worker and CPA John Branchflower is the resident restaurant critic, specializing in food carts.

Marge Carothers – Returning to journalism after once working as a reporter for *Broadcasting* magazine in New York, Marge compiled mountains of information on Mirabella activities.

Steve Casey – A recovering journalist, retired prosecutorial executive and street cop, Steve is editor of this here magazine. He wrote the profile of Duc Tran.

Bob French – Photographer and world traveler Bob French shot several photos for this issue of 3550, notably the portraits of Hugh and Susan Kerr, and Duc Tran.

Rolf Glerum – Retired public relations executive and long-time Portland resident, Rolf is vice-president of RAMP.

Curtis Guthrie – A retired high school teacher, Curt has lived at Mirabella since Sept. 8, 2010 – its first full week of operation.

Paul Johnson – Paul E. Johnson, MD, a Mirabella resident, is a retired pediatric cardiologist and a member of the Resident Health committee.

Judy McDermott – Retired after 40 years in various editorial capacities at *The Oregonian*, Judy McDermott helps design and lay out pages for this magazine.

Nancy Moss – Educator and playwright, Nancy turned to reporting for 3550, with a profile of Hugh Kerr and a story on the South Waterfront's private security arm, Pacific Patrol Services.

Taylor Pittman – Taylor is a food server in the Bistro and in Aria but, more to the point, is a published poet.

Jim Rudolph – Jim is president of the Residents' Assn. of Mirabella Portland.

Ronnie Rudolph – from years of PageMaker to vertical learning curve with new software, InDesign: She is the production editor of 3550.

Anthony Sabatini – Anthony is executive director of Mirabella Portland.

Claire Weber – An attorney who has worked in such strange places as Kazakhstan and the Louisiana legislature, Claire wrote the story on the Rogue Valley Manor lawsuit against Pacific Retirement Services.

Ron Weber – Perhaps best known for predicting the outcome of presidential elections almost to the exact number of Electoral College votes, retired political science professor Ron Weber is 3550's sports editor.

Rogue Valley Manor Settles Dispute with PRS

by Claire Weber

Many residents are aware of litigation brought against Pacific Retirement Services, owner of Mirabella Portland, by the PRS flagship property, Rogue Valley Manor, located in Medford. The matter has been settled, and we asked Mirabella resident Claire Weber, an attorney, to explain the issues and the resolution. -- Editor

Rogue Valley Manor, a continuing care retirement community (CCRC) in Medford, has settled its long-running dispute with Pacific Retirement Services (PRS) and withdrawn its class action suit against PRS, which manages the community.

An agreement was reached in late January, just days before the lawsuit was scheduled to be heard in Jackson County Circuit Court., and was ratified by Manor residents by a vote of 767 to 21.

The settlement;

- guarantees two Manor residents as voting members of the Manor board,
- restricts the authority of PRS to remove Manor board members,
- limits PRS management fees for the next three years,
- guarantees Manor board input in decisions to hire and review the executive director, although the agreement does not provide for re-hiring the popular executive director fired by PRS, and
- requires PRS to pay the Manor's legal fees, up to \$300,000.

Simmering Dispute

Disagreements between PRS and Rogue Valley Manor existed for years, most of them related to

the unique history of the Manor and PRS. PRS is a creation of Rogue Valley Manor.

Rogue Valley Manor was opened in 1961 as an independent continuing care facility. After 30 years of independent operation, the Manor created PRS in 1991 as a separate entity to provide support services to the Manor, as well as to future CCRCs. The relationship between the Manor and its creation – PRS – remained close.

PRS always dominated the Manor board whose members included a majority of PRS officers or board members. PRS was given authority to hire the Manor's executive director. Both PRS and the Manor expected the new entity to provide management and other services at lower costs for each CCRC because of economies of scale.

Over the next few decades, both PRS and the Manor underwent significant changes. PRS expanded to include CCRCs in Oregon, California, Texas and Wisconsin and is currently a corporate member or manager for ten retirement communities.

PRS grew its business by offering management and other services for non-PRS communities. As PRS grew, so did the Manor.

The Manor expanded from a single building to a 668-acre campus that houses about 1,000 residents. The campus now includes three multi-story apartment buildings, the Quail Ridge 9-hole golf course and cottages with a golf course view.

But this growth was not

without problems. In 2005, the Manor gave up land to PRS for a new project--- the Centennial golf course, a par-72 course in Medford. In return, the Manor received \$17 million in preferred stock in the new project. The project was initially planned to include an active adult community associated with the Manor as well as the golf course.

The 2008 economic downturn and reduced property value caused the stock to be devalued to zero in 2010, greatly depleting the Manor's assets. The adult community component of the project was never developed.

Crest Park

The second project was Crest Park, Inc.

The Manor purchased the Crest Park property to improve access to the Manor, as traffic congestion had become a serious problem.

PRS and the Manor conducted several land swaps involving Crest Park and other property and the Crest Park property was eventually sold.

Manor residents believed the Manor had not received adequate compensation for the property in the various land swaps with PRS. Some Manor residents became concerned that PRS had profited from the financial arrangements and land swaps for both the Crest Park and Centennial projects while the value of the Manor's investments had shrunk.

Residents also opposed annual increases in their residential maintenance fee and believed Manor income was being used for PRS projects unrelated to Manor operations. PRS continued to maintain that the maintenance

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photo by Bob French

Hugh and Susan Kerr

Everyone in this building has had to deal with courage,” says Hugh Kerr of the Mirabella. Vietnam War veteran and retired Marine general, Hugh knows that, “We all face the unknown and perhaps physical deficits or pain. Even moving into the Mirabella—the last place we’ll likely live—takes courage.”

The issue of fear and overcoming it may be more acute in combat, but fear, pain and uncertainty tend to increase in old people. Raised in Philadelphia by parents who were Plymouth Brethren, a sect like the Quakers, Hugh thought his highest calling was to

Resident Profile: Hugh Kerr Marine General Lauds Residents’ Courage

by Nancy Moss

be a missionary. His father died shortly after Hugh turned 16. Lacking funds for college, he took a competitive Navy test, passed it, and received orders to Oregon State on a full Navy scholarship.

His freshman year, Hugh excelled. His sophomore year, in the school of engineering, challenged him. Fraternity life, together with immaturity, caused him to rethink his future, and he decided to resign from the NROTC program.

He made an appointment to see the Professor of Naval Science, an experienced Marine Colonel and WWII veteran who knew how to handle fickle sophomores. During the interview, Hugh said he wanted to resign.

“Why?” asked the colonel, puzzled.

Hugh replied that he wanted to go to bible school. The colonel, who was a little hard of hearing,

misunderstood and said in disbelief, “Barber school! Kerr, don’t be a fool. Get out of my office—Dismissed!”

Totally intimidated, Hugh was marching to the door when the Colonel called, “And boy, you buckle down and study.” Hugh quit the fraternity, found another residence, and studied. This proved a turning point in his life as Hugh went on to graduate, was commissioned in the Marine Corps, and sent off to Quantico in 1955.

Hugh Kerr’s life, including two tours of duty in Vietnam and their consequences, has

tested him. Asked where the soldier’s courage comes from, Hugh refers to his training. An instructor of military science at USC and holder of two Masters’ degrees, Hugh has found the Marines’ “training to objective” (do it correctly or repeat until you succeed) more effective than the academic world’s.

In exercises, the Marines provide trainees as much realism as possible without live ammunition, making instant decisions an almost rote, automatic response. Recruit training emphasizes instant obedience to orders and confidence in Marine leaders.

Exercises like maneuvering through a field strung with trip wires, or “snap-fire” training help provide the reflexes to prepare a combat-ready Marine, able to function during night operations when darkness and inability to see, added to the need for silence

to maintain the element of surprise, can cause confusion. The famous “fog of war” increases at night.

Aside from intense and thorough training, Hugh’s religious faith helped guide his performance in the field. On tough days, he prayed many times a day for guidance. His biggest fear in combat was that “men might be injured or killed because of a bad decision made by me,” and not his own death, which would happen if it was “my time.”

In the Marines, the chief goal was to accomplish the mission; second was to take care of men under your command.

Then-Captain Kerr always called for whatever supporting arms were appropriate and available to accomplish the mission, relying on a forward observer



to put accurate fire on an enemy position and give men serving under Kerr the best possible chance to take an objective and survive.

“Courage,” Hugh says, “is the ability to face danger, difficulty, the unexpected or pain, without

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Born into a poor but picturesque suburb alongside a waterway in a country ravaged by war for a generation, Duc Tran came into adulthood as soldier, fugitive, and sailor who took half a hundred of his fellow refugees across impossible seas to a new life away from Vietnam.

Decades later, he is a maintenance technician at Mirabella Portland, where his outgoing personality and can-do attitude have made him among the community's most popular employees.

In an outer district by the Saigon Zoo and bordering the Thi Nghe channel, which empties into Saigon River, Duc (pronounced

Staff Profile: Duc Tran **An Extraordinary Tale: Vietnam to PDX**

by Steve Casey

“Duke” as in Ellington or Wayne) shared a home without electricity with his mother and two sisters. His father, who had another family, rarely was seen.

From his childhood home, Duc looked out across a sweeping expanse of rice fields.

“It was beautiful,” he recalled recently, “the moon coming up. You could see forever.”

His mother held a job, unusual for a woman in Vietnam at the time, working at a laboratory making veterinary medicine. When she went to work each day, and Duc went to school, they crossed the channel in small ferries rowed by boatmen.

“Then when I was about six or seven (about 1960,) the Americans came and built a big road over the rice fields and a bridge over the channel,” he said.

The road that sent trucks thundering past his boyhood home eventually took Duc away, to the sprawling Bien Hoa air base when, at 18 and just out of high school, he joined the South Vietnam Air Force.

“Over here,” he said, “in high school they’re always talking about what college they will go to. Over there, you were always talking about what military. After you sit for examination, you pass or you don’t pass, you are going into the military.”

Duc served until the Republic of Vietnam collapsed on April 30, 1975.

“After 1975.” Duc says that a lot.

The world changed that April day.

“The Communists took over and we didn’t have food. You couldn’t move, you couldn’t go anywhere,” he said. “If you go anywhere, you need to get permission. You were totally under control. It was a very scary situation.

“Every day, you go stand in line. You have a piece of paper that says how many people are in your family, and tells how much rice they can give you a day.”

Work was scarce: Duc first helped cut trees in the jungle for a can of rice a day, then crewed for a friend with a fishing boat. When he left his mother’s house to find work, his name officially was struck from the list of her household. Duc became an illegal alien in his own country.

“I lived under the table,” he said. “I don’t have any papers, and

I got caught two or three times.”

Jail was rank, and release random. Released eventually, he headed back to the fishing boat in Vung Tau, on the coast of the South China Sea, and went looking for identification. Phony identification.

“I tried to buy a piece of paper, and that is really, really scary,” he said, noting neither buyer nor seller knew if the other was a government agent.

To visit his mother in Saigon, he had to pass through multiple checkpoints and show his ID at each one. Getting into Saigon was easier than returning to Vung Tau, as police watched for people trying to get to the coast to escape.

He slept on the boat when he could, for on land there were always police checks. For four years, Duc lived on the edge.

Along the way, Duc and his boat-owning friend acquired a compass.

“If you carry a compass there, it’s like carrying a weapon here. If you are caught, it’s very serious,” he said

At Chinese New Year 1980, he took a big chance and went back to Saigon to visit his family. He told his mother it might be his last visit.

On March 15, 1980, Duc Tran shoved off from Vung Tau, set a compass heading, and hoped that the engine on the little boat carrying 52 fleeing refugees would not conk out, but would propel them to, oh, Singapore, or Malaysia, or Indonesia.

“Looking back,” he said with a laugh, “now I can say it’s a really, really bad idea.”

Indeed. According to the
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photo by Bob French

Duc Tran

Splish, Splash, More Fun Than a Bath

by Ron Weber

Great Serve! Nice shot! Out! Ceiling! Sh...cks! Do Over?

These are just a few of the words often uttered each Monday, Wednesday, or Friday at 11 a.m. around the Mirabella swimming pool when buffed and toned residents gather for pool volleyball.

Early arrivals set up the net, array the pylons, set the noodles, collect and display the rack to block the hot tub, and select the ball. Late-comers might quibble or argue about those choices, but never win their point. They snooze (over-sleep), they lose on those questions.

Soon after Mirabella Portland gained its first residents in late 2010, a small group organized the first pool volleyball game.

Three pioneers (Paul Johnson, Ralph Merrill, and Jill Seager) convinced Karle Wagner, our Wellness coordinator, to order the equipment and to try some games with them. Word got out about the fun to be had and before long a dozen others began the regular routine of MWF games.

Some had played before either on a court or in a pool. But most had not played regularly at any time in their previous residences.

When more recent comers to Mirabella moved in they were

urged to take up the sport. After setting up the pool for the game, players enter the pool matching up to get an even number of players on each side. While the players gather, those in the pool bat the ball around, practicing setting – a two-person serve return where one player tips the ball up to a teammate who can then ram it over the net at scrambling opponents – and trying out a serve or two.



Wham! (l to r) Ottomar Rudolf, Paul Johnson, Bob DiLallo and Sheri Winkelman do battle in pool volleyball

Often the ball needs re-inflating. As soon as enough players have arrived, the game begins with one team serving. Only the serving team scores points. Fifteen points wins a game, assuming a two point difference.

In recent weeks, disputes have occurred over which size ball to play, as the storage room has a number of options. Too large a ball hurts the arms of some servers. Two small a ball is hard to get over the net to make a point. So the teams have gravitated to a medium size ball provided by Jim and Ronnie Rudolph. Rotation of players in the pool has also sometimes proven a problem. With five

players per side someone must occupy the middle of the pool position.

Being mature, some players get confused and play must pause to have the players arranged properly. (The other team welcomes the break in the action so they can rest by treading water or leaning on the side of the pool.)

Over recent weeks players have been known to volley the ball back and forth 10 to 20 times until a

player misses the return or knocks the ball out of the pool. Several words often are heard when the serve return is flubbed or the ball bounces off the ceiling. One of those words is not “sorry.”

And, “to set or not to set” is an eternal

question, which often comes up during a game. The pros are really good at setting, while newcomers like me are terrible “setters.”

Once a team wins the game, players change sides with the losing team serving first in the next game. Rarely does one team win all games; breaking even is more frequent with the competition between teams relatively equal.

After four or five games, time is up with players saying they have to go off to lunch or to take a soak break in the hot tub.

Soon no one remembers which team won how many games and instead says, “Wow, that was fun and boy, I am tired out.” ❀



The Collaborative Life Science Building is scheduled to open in March on the South Waterfront.

Three-University Project Comes to the Neighborhood *by Ken Berg*

Finishing touches are going on the new Collaborative Life Sciences Building being constructed in a partnership of Oregon Health Sciences University, Portland State University and Oregon State University.

At almost 500,000 square feet, the building will house classrooms, offices, research labs and – near to my heart – a state-of-the-art facility for the OHSU School of Dentistry.

Its Skourtes Tower was named for Bonnie Skourtes and Gene Skourtes, DMD, whose \$10 million donation helped make the project a reality.

Mirabella residents have watched the building go up over the past months, and it is just a season or two from completion, along the streetcar tracks on SW Moody Ave.

PSU will be the first occupant, with expanded classes in biology and chemistry starting next March. Later next year, OHSU and Oregon State academic programs will move in.

OHSU’s medical school, dental school and nursing school will be located at the new facility, as will

Oregon State and PSU programs.

The new building will allow expansion of the MD program from 120 to 160 students and the DMD program to grow from 75 to 90 students. The Physician Assistant program will also increase, from 38 students currently to 48.

The OSU/OHSU doctor of pharmacy program, now located at the Center for Health & Healing, will move and increase from 80 to 115 students.

Research programs are huge in the new facilities.

There is to be a highly specialized space for OHSU’s Center for Spatial Systems Bioscience. These expanded facilities will allow OHSU go grow its research programs over the next five to seven years.

OHSU brings in nearly \$360 million in external funding to support its research mission, and that is expected to increase significantly as the programs expand.

The College of Pharmacy will increase its drug discovery, dosing and delivery programs.

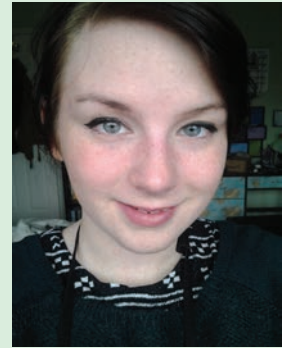
PSU research programs will complement OHSU programs.



I’m The Girl

by Taylor Pittman

*I’m the girl swaying in the wind
I’ve got all sorts of gadgets hanging from my neck
‘Cause I don’t want to risk losing a moment with you.
I found I loved how your eyes glisten with the sun
With the simple snap of a button
I discovered a world of intrigue in your hands
With a soft click.
I’ve forever captured the way you*



*walk in Autumn
☺ if you listen real close, you can hear the sound of the leaves beneath your feet
I’ve silenced your laugh, but I’ll always hear it ringing in my ears
I’ve frozen that smile in your eyes
...
So I’ll never forget the taste of your smile
The sweet scent of your laugh
Or the feel of your walk beside me
Because I’m the girl swaying in the wind
☺ I’ve got all sorts of gadgets hanging around my neck
Just so I never forget,
Never lose,
A moment with fleeting you.*

*From her blog,
the red hero inspiration*

Mirabella from Start to Finish...



March 2007



May 2008



July 2008



December 2008



January 2009



March 2009

...A Photo Essay Compiled by Curtis Guthrie



October 2009



November 2009



view from 24th floor



Today

A Great Way to Say Thanks to Every Mirabella Employee

In June, all our thoughts turn to . . . Christmas?

Each December, generous Mirabella residents give a cash

community, so these gifts – tax free to the employees and *not* tax-deductible to the giver – are greatly appreciated.



Nah, employees don't really enjoy receiving residents' tangible thanks each year, as witness the reactions of (l to r) Nicole Johns, Alex Gulpán, Tammy Chisolm and Todd Albert.

gift to each employee as a holiday "thank you" for all they do for us throughout the year.

Mirabella is a no-tipping com-

The gifts are given through the Employee Appreciation Fund, or EAF, which is administered by resident association treasurer Wayne Ericksen.

While many residents contribute a lump sum in December, others prefer to make monthly or quarterly contributions, or have funds transferred to the EAF account at Umpqua Bank next door. Erick-

sen is happy to help set those up.

Gifts are at the discretion of each resident. A general guide is \$2-\$5 per resident per day. Which

means a single, full-year resident might contribute \$730 to \$1,825 a year, and a couple twice that. Of course, residents are free to give more, or less.

Last year, residents contributed \$244,739 to the fund.

The 211 eligible employees received 99 cents for each hour they worked during the year – regardless of their job title or salary. The maximum check to any employee was \$2,056.

Our employees do an incredible job day in and day out, and are friendly and caring to boot. This is the one way we have to say "we really appreciate you."

Anyone who wants to contribute, but avoid a large payment in December, may call Ericksen at x6865.

All contributions are both voluntary and confidential. ☘



Joan McCoy was one of several Mirabella residents taking part in a South Waterfront cleanup on Earth Day in April. Her pre-cleanup questionnaire asked, "Are you over 18?" She answered, "Boy, am I ever!"

Mister Mirabella

Portland native and retired orthodontist Guy Woods is Mirabella's original resident – first to move in, on August 23, 2010. The verdict? "It's great; couldn't be better."

If the man of 91 looks a couple decades younger, there is a reason.

A former avid golfer, he now works out in the chair exercise class three times a week, walks a mile every other day and plays bridge five times a week, including twice at Mirabella, twice at downtown's Arlington Club and once in Beaverton.

Through friends, relatives and being a man about town, he knew all about Portland CCRCs and



Guy Woods

thought Mirabella was a world apart.

He still does. ☘

Arresting Cardiac Arrest

by Paul E. Johnson

Sudden death from cardiac arrest is very common – and may be the first sign of cardiovascular disease.

After the age of 40, a male in the U.S. has a 1 in 8 chance of dying from cardiac arrest. Women are rapidly approaching that same ratio.

Still, there are proven ways to save the lives of those experiencing cardiac arrest, and what happens before the patient gets to the hospital is often critical.

Out-of-hospital cardiac arrest and what occurs in the hospital cannot be compared, as the inside of a hospital, clearly, is an entirely different environment than out on the street or in a home or office.

Until about 60 years ago, nothing could be done for a person on the brink of death from cardiac arrest. About then, physicians observed that external cardiac compression was a possible alternative treatment, and CPR (cardiac pulmonary resuscitation) was born.

This required chest compression and mouth-to-mouth pulmonary support.

It had limited success, and only about 6-8% of those stricken survived with normal brain function. Over the past five or six decades, however, research has shown that pulmonary support (mouth-to-mouth) is not needed and may actually be detrimental.

Cardiac arrest can be caused by a type of abnormal heart beat

called ventricular (the pumping chambers of the heart) fibrillation.

Fibrillation is an ineffectual beat. In other words, the heart is no longer able to pump blood to the body.

This condition can be stopped by an electrical shock administered by paddles placed on both sides of the heart.

Research further showed that such paddles placed externally on the chest were effective in stopping the lethal heart rhythm. This had an immediate hospital application, and you have probably seen doctor shows on television where ER crews shout “clear!” and use those paddles to shock the heart back into rhythm.

But the application isn't limited to a hospital setting. With the advent of the Automated External Defibrillator, or AED, offices, gyms, sidewalks, airports, meeting places and countless other spots all became potential temporary ERs.

The AED is manufactured by several medical instrument companies and is foolproof. Again: it is fool-proof. It is incredibly easy

to use and delivers a measured shock, known to end the abnormal heart beat.

When the new CPR method (100 chest compressions per minute, with no mouth-to-mouth breathing) and the AED is used prior to the arrival of paramedics, the recovery rate dramatically increases.

In one study in Seattle and Rochester, Minn., the recovery rate shot to 50%. In Tucson, Ariz., it rose to 38%.

In all three cities, a prime reason for success was extensive public education, resulting in the early administration of CPR.

At Mirabella, there are four AEDs in strategic locations: in the fitness center; on the second floor; in Aria, and in the main lobby.

Mirabella has an ongoing training program for both employees and residents, and you can expect hands-on classes in CPR and familiarization with the easy to use AED units.

Yes, we hope we never have to use either. But preparation can save a life, and save a brain. ☼

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“No, HDL and LDL were not the robots in Star Wars.”

OUR OWN TOWER OF BABEL

by Rolf Glerum

Don't feel badly if you can't understand the Mirabella resident or employee on a cell phone or hushed conversation.

He or she could just be speaking one of the 38 – at least 38 – languages known by folks here, in varying degrees of fluency.

We have, in a non-Biblical sense, our own Tower of Babel – a whole bunch of people who live in a tower and speak in various tongues.

There are at least 41 individuals living or working in Mirabella who speak one or more of the 38 distinct non-English languages or dialects we found just in an admittedly cursory search

So, other than English, what languages have we here?

As expected, the most-spoken tongue in the building is Spanish, with 15 (*quince*) Spanish-speakers. There's a close race for second place . . . 8 (*huit*) speak French and 7 (*sieben*) are fluent in German.

Moving down the list, we find 5 (*cinco*) Portuguese-speakers, and 4 (*cztery*) who speak Polish.

Four widely-different languages are spoken by three people each . . . Chinese Mandarin (*san*), Italian (*tre*), Japanese (*mi-ttsu*) and Russian (*tri*.)

Interestingly enough, of the five Romance languages (Spanish, French, Italian, Portuguese and Romanian), the only one not represented is that last, although this writer studied Romanesti at the Army Language School in Monterey, CA in the mid-50s. As with many things, however, if you

don't use it, you lose it. *O aseme-neea mila*. (Such a pity.)

Two speakers each have command over no less than seven different languages and a married couple (you are free to guess) each speak six: Chinese Cantonese (*yih*), Chinese Hakka (*ngi*), Czech (*dva*), Dutch (*twee*), Indonesian (*dua*), and Khmer (*pi*.) There are even two folks among us who still speak the "Mother Tongue of Romance Languages," Latin (*duo*).

Who are our language champs?

Our seven-language speakers are residents Jim Seubert and Frieda Grayzel.



Among our multilingual staff, concierge Brooke Sahlstrom wins top honors with five languages.

Bear with me now, as I relate, in alphabetical order, the 20 languages spoken (or signed) by a single resident or employee.

Heading the list is one trained in American Sign Language (raised index finger). Amharic (*and*) is next, followed by Chinese, Shanghai Dialect (*yih*) and Croatian (*jedan*). Estonian (*uks*), Haitian Creole (*youn*), Hebrew (*ehad*) and Hindi (*ek*) brings us to the Ks.

Korean (*hana*) has one speaker, as does Krung (a Thai dialect), Laotian (*neung*), Oromo (*tokko*), Punjabi (*ikk*) Senegalese

(*benn*) and Slovak (*nula*). The final five include Tagalog (*isa*), Thai (*neung*), Ukrainian (*odyn*), Vietnamese (*mot*) and Yiddish (*eyns*). Some of these languages may be unfamiliar. Oromo and Amharic, for example, are both spoken in Ethiopia and Kenya, while Khmer is the official language of Cambodia. Punjabi, in addition to sounding like the name of Orphan Annie's friend, is the official language of Pakistan (and also the Sikhs of India.)

Senegal boasts 36 distinct dialects; our speaker is fluent in three – Wolof, Diola and Pulaar.

Let us not forget the many forms of our own Mother Tongue. American English, British English, Canadian English (eh?) and Australian English, all are heard daily in our community.

American English has many dialects within itself – Southern Drawl, New England Broad, Midwestern Twang, Brooklynese and even, as it's sometimes referred to, California Speak.

Linguistics is the study of languages. Scholars from China to Chile have set out to count the number of languages in the world; the generally accepted total is 6,800 to 6,900. Within this total, the number of dialects is about 39,500.

The most-spoken language on the planet, by far, is Mandarin Chinese, used by some 880 million. Second is Spanish (329 million), followed closely by English (328 million.)

That's all sure a lot of babel.



Yummy For Your Tummy - Exploring Portland's Food Carts

by John Branchflower

Welcome to my Food Cart reviews. Each issue will introduce you to at least one new cart, and perhaps an occasional hole-in-the-wall café.

First, a few words about carts, in case you are not familiar with them. Portland is home to about 475 of these semi-portable self-contained restaurants, organized in pods (groups) in various parts of the city.

Carts are licensed annually, and inspected twice each year by the county. A great variety of the world's ethnic styles is represented. Most carts open between 10 and 11 a.m., and close between 2 and 3 p.m. Some are open only Monday through Friday.

First up (my favorite) is The Whole Bowl, just east of the SW 10th and Alder streetcar stop. Their main menu is a single dish of brown rice, red and black

beans, fresh avocado, salsa, black olives, sour cream, Tillamook cheddar, cilantro, and a very



secret Tali Sauce (probably garbanzo beans, olive oil, almonds, garlic, yeast, Dijon mustard, lemon juice, curry powder, onion powder, turmeric, chili powder, and cayenne).

The addicting sauce is what gives this otherwise bland com-

bination its real zip. For variety or special needs, you can omit any item, or request non-dairy or vegan (soy cheese and soy sour cream). The meal is served in two sizes: the 16 ounce Big Bowl (\$5.50) or the 12 ounce Bambino Bowl (\$5.00).

On a typical non-winter day this cart has the longest queue on the block, which is how I decided to give it a try. Let the regular business crowd be reviewer.

Typically pods do not have seating. Most customers at this location either take their lunches back to their offices, or eat on benches at O'Bryant Square, located at SW 9th and Washington, kitty-corner from the NE corner of the pod. On rainy days I like to walk my lunch back to 11th and Alder and take the streetcar home.

Getting hungry!

Anthony (continued from p. 2)

and to look for clues as to how people are settling into the community. As new residents talked about Mirabella, they would reference their "unit" or "apartment."

But I noticed that, over time, residents started saying "home." I enjoy hearing, "It was nice to know I was only an elevator ride away from getting home after a dinner with friends!"

When I hear this, I know we have done our job. We have made this community into something people are comfortable enough and proud enough to call

home.

Mirabella has continued to grow and finally reached 98% occupancy, which in my book represents a stabilized, full building.

Additionally, we received our 501(c)(3) tax exemption approval from the IRS for our own foundation. The Mirabella Foundation will begin to grow and further represent this community's compassionate nature.

A lot has gone into making Mirabella what it is today and we all have much to be proud of. It is important not to lose sight of the fact that Mirabella is a beauti-

ful, thriving, and young community, full of outstanding services and comforts but - most important - it's full of great people. I am very proud of what has been formed in such a short time.

Residents and staff have come together to form a bond that can only be truly appreciated if you live and work here.

We have shared the excitement of early move-ins, creating a new community from scratch, working through growing pains and adaptations, and together enjoy the satisfaction of the vibrant Mirabella we built together. ❀

Boy, Are We Ever An Active Bunch

by Marge Carothers

Editor's Note: This is the place for every committee and interest group at Mirabella to tell fellow residents what you're all about, provide news of the group and invite others to join you. Please keep 3550 reporter Marge Carothers up to date on what's going on. Reach her at x6648.

Afternoon Book Club

First Wed. of the month, 4 p.m.
Sky View Room

The Afternoon Book Club format is an informal discussion of books selected by group members. The Club meets for about an hour.

John Branchflower 6757

Art

Second Thurs. 9 a.m.
Art Studio

The Art Committee manages the art studio, offers classes and sometimes field trips, exhibits, and advises the administration on art in the building and on the grounds.

Focus is on developing a program that is challenging and fun for all levels.

Yvonne Branchflower 6757

Building and Grounds

First Wed. 2 p.m.
Park View Room

The committee's goal is to enhance quality. Projects have included green information, Bistro windbreak enclosure, gardens and grounds, safety issues, golf bag storage, recycling, house-keeping issues and availability of handicapped aids.

Members work closely with John Hart, director of facilities services.

Paul R. Johnson 6746

Communications

Third Thurs. 1 p.m.
Park View Room

CommComm is responsible for producing 3550, the resident

magazine, improving the usefulness of Channel 11, working with audio/visual equipment at Willamette Hall, running the resident side of MiraNet, and helping reduce the amount of paper generated in in-house communications.

Steve Casey 6872

Creativity On Display (COD)

Second Wed. 1:30 p.m.
Park View Room

Creativity on Display exists to showcase the works of residents and employees of Mirabella Portland, arranging for suitable display venues in the main lobby of the building.

Rolf Glerum 6720

Dining

Fourth Tues. 2 p.m.
Park View Room

The Dining Committee has never lacked for topics: reservation policies, dress codes, room and table arrangements, proper service by the wait staff as well as many specific food and menu items.

Dining is of common interest to everyone and meeting agendas are based on written suggestions from comment cards and those posted on MiraNet.

Sue Knoll 6813

Norm Bengel 6777

Duplicate Bridge

Mon. and Sat. 1 to 4 p.m.
Willamette Hall

Some 18 duplicate bridge players live in Mirabella and the game is open to non-Mirabella resi-

dents. In duplicate bridge, multiple tables play the same bridge hands. Scoring is based on how each partnership does compared with other partnerships playing the identical hand. Newcomers are welcome, with or without a partner.

Ed Parker 6778

Fitness

First Thurs. 2:30 p.m.
Park View Room

Mirabella's Fitness Committee has helped start two new classes on Saturdays. Qi Gong is a form of Tai Chi for seniors and is offered at 11 a.m. Instruction is by a DVD on a television screen. Another popular class is Beach Ball Blast at 2 p.m. in the pool. All are invited to participate.

Residents are kindly asked not to enter a class already in session. Catherine Rudolf 6803

Foundation Committee

First Wed. 10 a.m.
Park View Room

The Foundation Committee is a bridge between Mirabella residents and the Mirabella Foundation board – helping coordinate communication and activities.

The first fundraiser was the amazing Valentine's Day dinner. The goal is to establish a fund that might be used to support a resident who outlives his or her financial resources.

Other uses could be to provide equipment or services. Peter Fenner 6883 and Charlie Hickman 6704

Library

Second Thurs. of even-numbered months
Library

The Library Committee evaluates donations, assigns call numbers, puts on labels, stamps books and keeps the library organized and inviting. Satellite collections are on the second and third floors, in the art studio and the employee break room. Jigsaw puzzles are found outside the Terrace elevator on the sixth floor, and games are on the fifth floor Terrace and in the Sky View Room on the 25th floor. These may be borrowed.

Barry Shapiro and other volunteers delight skilled nursing and memory care residents with a book cart each week. There is demand for more large print books and DVDs.

Linda McCammon 6724

Mah Jongg

Mon. 10 a.m.
Park View Room

Mah Jongg—while the Chinese game is so ancient its beginning is uncertain, the American version at Mirabella promises lots of fun. The goal of the game is to gather and combine a group of tiles to meet a pre-set combination ahead of other players. The committee chair teaches newcomers the game and continues brush-up and strategy sessions as well.

Susan Wilson Berg 6719

Media

No regular meetings

The Media group produces the live-at-Willamette-Hall and carried-on-Channel-11 interview program Personal Prism, hosted by Sivia Kaye. The pro-

duction team is Rosie Batcheller, Kim Batcheller and Ron Mendonca.

Sivia Kaye 6790

Movies

Meetings as needed

Curtis Guthrie's enjoyment of watching movies with friends evolved into Mirabella's popular Movie Night (or day) in April 2011. Domestic movies are Thursday night at 7:30 p.m., with a repeat on Sunday at 2 p.m.

The last Tuesday of the month a foreign movie is shown at 7 p.m.
Curtis Guthrie 6700

Needlework

First and Third Tues, 12:45 p.m.
Art Studio

Any and all types of needlecraft take place while people chat and catch up on the latest news. Members work on their own projects or make blankets and bonnets with materials supplied by the OHSU "Blankets and Books for Babies" program.

Maggi Travis 6698

On Stage

Monthly

The group will read, and possibly perform, short pieces with roles appropriate for seniors. Many of them will be comic. The group will meet monthly, with more frequent sessions before any performance.

Nancy Moss 6848

Pets

No regular meetings.

The Pet Group was formed to bring together those with pets in Mirabella. As of the end of the year there were at least 40 units with pets—17 cats and 28 dogs. Cats are not visible so there may be more.

Nancy Glerum 6720

Ping Pong

Meetings and programs still under development.

Watch this space!

Ronnie Rudolph 6853

Program and Social Activities

First and Third Mon. 2 p.m.
Park View Room

The resident-driven committee prepares and presents programs and activities which reach across educational, entertainment, social and cultural interests and the desires of residents.

There are at least 16 different programs scheduled each month. Many other events throughout the Portland Metropolitan area also are attended by residents. Notification of all events is through e-mail, in-house mailboxes, notice board in the mailroom, elevators and Channel 11 and MiraNet. An excuse "there is nothing to do" is rarely heard.
Muriel Mendonca 6774

Quilts For Kids

First and Third Thur. 9:30 a.m.
Art Studio

This arm of the Art Committee makes quilts for kids in foster care. When a child is taken from an abusive situation and given to a new family, he or she may choose a quilt to take along for comfort. The program is part of a collaboration among Kaiser Permanente, Randall Children's Hospital at Legacy Emanuel and OHSU's Doernbecher Children's Hospital.

Interest is all that is required to take part—materials, instructions and good conversation and fellowship are all provided. So far 16 quilts have been finished—all different and waiting to be loved.
Mary Zehrung 6686

Resident Health

Fourth Wed.

Park View Room

The scope and responsibility of the Resident Health Advisory Committee is to keep our community—from the standpoint of public health-- as healthy as possible. This targets residents in independent living and enhancing lives of residents and guests in skilled care, memory care and assisted living. Noticeable improvement has been the inclusion of hand sanitizer dispensers in Aria West, and placement in other areas is being considered. Other ideas being addressed are support for residents with minor illnesses/emergencies on-site; balance and gait awareness and fall prevention education. Residents are invited to suggest agenda items—and, as always, are invited to participate in committee activities.

Barbara Gaines 6650 and Charles Hickman 6704

Social Bridge

Fri. 1:30 to 4 p.m.

Park View Room

All one needs to join the Social Bridge Group is a sense of humor and the ability to count to thirteen. The group will appeal mostly to beginner and intermediate players, though everyone is welcome. It is not competitive and one does not need a partner or need to sign up in advance. Help is always available on difficult hands.

The original one table has now grown to between 3 and 4 tables weekly.

Laurie Meigs 6830

South Waterfront

Meets quarterly in the Administration Conference Room

The goal of the committee is to connect Mirabella residents to the groups and activities in the SWF. A history of the SWF Association and its Community Relations office is available on MiraNet. Active groups in SWF and its contact for more information are: Dog Park – Dick Lukins; Community garden plots – Charlotte Beeman; SWF Art Exhibit – Irene Tinker; Montessori School volunteers – Muriel Mendonca; dock committee – Ronnie Rudolph; Elizabeth Caruthers Park – Sybilla Cook; trail to the Spaghetti Factory – Dick Lukins; Benz Springs blocking river trail – Dick Fradkin; green practices in SWF buildings- committee to be set up in the fall.

Irene Tinker 6806

Transportation

Second Tues. at 3 p.m.

Art Studio

A liaison with Administration, RAMP and residents, this committee plans and arranges transportation to organized and educational, events, classes and lectures, as well as transportation of residents to various appointments in the city. Other responsibilities are to address concerns about transportation issues, valet and parking garage protocol.

Art Moss 6848

Travel Club

Third Tues. 3 to 4 p.m.

Park View Room

Tremendous enthusiasm and willingness to suggest and help organize trips have propelled the Travel Club since its beginning in August 2011. The large group of volunteers pursues input from residents about travel desires, whether domestic or international. Though usually day trips,

overnight trips to Seattle and eastern Oregon received raves. At least one trip a month is planned.

Sheri Winkelman 6723 (through August), Sandy Stapleton 6794

Welcoming

Second Mon. 1 p.m.

Park View Room

Mirabella's friendly and welcoming atmosphere emerged at the beginning in 2010 from a Greeter Program.

Each new resident receives a Welcoming Packet and visit from a committee member.

Not only are new residents introduced into the community, but the sense of friendliness and participation is fostered long after the last moving box has been tossed away.

Socials, council meetings, orientation programs and warm personal contact keep that welcoming spirit going.

Dot Lukins 6736

Woodworking

Meetings called when needed

The Woodworking Shop is open 24 hours a day to residents who enjoy making things from wood.

The committee's goal is to provide a clean and safe environment and to share knowledge and training.

All tools and equipment have been donated by members, who provide their own materials and supplies.

All residents, whether experienced woodworkers or novices, are invited to join, and must complete a qualification course to insure they understand how to operate the equipment safely.

Bob Ivey 6856



Let's say you're walking in the South Waterfront and see something troubling: a woman lying sprawled on the sidewalk or a man talking loudly to himself and accosting passers-by.

You could head for the concierge and ask her to call Pacific Patrol Services, South Waterfront's security organization, which covers the area's sidewalks and common areas.

Started in 2005, Pacific Patrol provides officers on bikes, 24 hours a day. Recognizable by their black and yellow polo shirts – and similarly colored rain jackets in winter weather – these officers check for unsecured doors, public intoxication, noise complaints and other

low-level problems. If a situation escalates, they stand back and call the police.

If a Mirabella resident worries about darkness when she has to walk her dog in the evening, she can ask the concierge to call Pacific Patrol and request their officer swing by at a specific time.

On Patrol in South Waterfront

by Nancy Moss

Patrol hours are flexible.

The South Waterfront is a “nice community, well taken care of,” says Pacific Patrol president Michele Timfichuk. But even nice communities can have problems.

Patrol officers observed that one man was paying too close

attention to some children in Carothers Park and asked him to move on. Later, they learned that he was indeed a pedophile. With two schools in the area, it pays to be careful.

Funded by the dues each building pays the South Waterfront Association, Pacific Patrol Services provides each of its officers with 40 hours of training; some of it in the classroom, some on bicycles, and some in the district. Officers carry a state certification card, which they will produce on request.

Owner Alan Pendergrass stresses that Mirabella residents can request officers' help if they need it. ☼

Duc Tran (continued from p. 8)

United Nations, some 500,000 Vietnamese boat people died at sea.

Duc was on the open boat seven days, and the first two, on deck and working the tiller 48 hours straight, he knew he was going to die.

“Waves were breaking over the boat,” he said. “It seems like the longest two days of my life.” Tired, constantly wet, battling the ferocious storm, he repeatedly called for someone to spell him. He was ignored.

Spent, he collapsed on deck and someone else finally took the tiller. He awoke to a dead flat, calm ocean, “just like waking up from a bad dream.”

Smooth sailing later, the little boat arrived at Kuku Island, part of Indonesia. A UN ship came each week to pick up refugees,

and Duc was taken to a camp on Galang Island, where he lived for a year and a half.

The processing center at the



camp accepted him for immigration to the U.S. because of his military service. A Lutheran Church in Maryland agreed to sponsor him..

Duc went east at first, but a friend from the refugee camp urged him to come out to Oregon and bought him a Trailways bus

ticket. Arriving in Portland in 1982, Duc was a night-time janitor and daytime student, learning English, basic academics and auto mechanics.

Along the way he met Lorna, mother of three girls who now works at Portland State University. They have been together since 1988, and married about 10 years ago.

Duc worked as a mechanic for National Car Rental, Sears, and a Buick dealership, but after 20 years he started looking for another way to use his skills.

He got to Mirabella Portland right when it opened, and found a home.

“Just like when I grew up, I lived in a small community and we knew each other and we all helped each other,” he said. And that sense of community is what he found at Mirabella, where he enjoys helping residents. ☼

Rogue Valley Manor

(continued from p. 5)

fees are reasonable for upkeep of the Manor campus and services.

Manor residents, including Manor board members, questioned the close financial and management relationship of PRS and the Manor and expressed concern that PRS had too much control over the Manor and Manor funds.

Seven Manor board members analyzed the financial relationship and concluded the Manor's interests were not being well served.

Months of discussion between the Manor board and PRS resulted in a stalemate, so the Manor filed a lawsuit against PRS on August 10, 2012, asking to become autonomous.

PRS responded by exercising its legal authority to dismiss the seven Manor board members on August 24, 2012. The reduced board then withdrew the lawsuit. PRS also fired the Manor's long-time executive director, Kevin McLoughlin, and barred him from entrance to any PRS properties.

Both moves were unpopular with Manor residents and some 85 percent of residents signed a petition to support McLoughlin and the dismissed board members. Residents formed a steering committee to press grievances against PRS. By late summer, residents had donated over \$100,000 for legal fees and pledged an additional \$150,000 for future legal expenses.

After two months of mediation, which ended in mid-November, three major areas of dispute remained: PRS governance authority over the Manor, past and future maintenance fees and reinstatement

of Kevin McLoughlin. The Steering Committee announced a class action suit against PRS to resolve these issues.

Trial was averted by the January settlement. While McLoughlin has not been re-hired, the new executive director is Sara Prewitt Smith, who had worked under him.

According to news reports, a member of the resident steering committee said reaction among residents to her thus far has been "universally positive."

In April, McLoughlin filed a \$1.425 million lawsuit against PRS, alleging he was wrongfully terminated. ❀

General Hugh Kerr

(continued from p. 7)

being overcome by fear or deflected from a course of action a person considers right." His life has given him many chances to display this quality. In Vietnam, he operated one day in an area hit by Agent Orange. It was surreal, Hugh says: no leaves, no birds or insects: no natural life around them.

Wow, he remembers thinking, this is bad stuff.

Since leaving the Marines, Hugh has endured many surgeries, a few of which may be attributed to his Agent Orange exposure. (The VA recognizes eleven diseases associated with Agent Orange).

One night at home, Hugh started to do the 50 push-ups that were part of his nightly exercise routine and found that he couldn't do even one. His doctor found that his cervical collar was pressing in on his spinal cord, causing

a loss of strength and feeling in his arms and hands. His spine was literally collapsing on itself. (He has lost four inches in height).

Two neurosurgeries in four days "almost did me in," Hugh recalls, adding that "coming back from those surgeries was the toughest physical and mental challenge I have faced." His religious faith helped, as did a good physical therapist who "pushed me hard."

Hugh's wife Susan raised three boys on her own for long stretches when Hugh was deployed. She also became the caregiver who supported him as he slowly and strenuously moved from wheelchair to walker to walking with, then without, a cane. A lot of his progress is due to Susan, Hugh says; she gave him a good talking-to when he needed it. There is good and bad pride, Hugh reflects; pride in one's assets might lead to superiority which can be harmful, but pride that pushes someone to excel and to overcome challenges is helpful. "It takes a little courage to overcome and deal with difficult therapy in an active way." Told by a fellow Mirabella resident in the Wellness Center, "You look great!" Hugh responds, "Well, I'm faking it pretty well."

Asked for advice for people facing major surgery, Hugh suggests that they prepare before-hand, follow a prescribed exercise program before it, and work to control their weight. These precautions could reduce post-surgical pain and hasten recovery.

One famous definition of courage, Hemingway's "grace under pressure," can apply both to soldiers and to someone facing surgery or serious illness. ❀

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Farmer's Market enlivens our neighborhood May through October.

Photo by Bob French with thanks to Riva on the Park apartments for the vantage point

