



Village Voice

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MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

www.EHLMemoryVillage.com

A Great Big THANK YOU!

For the first time in our history, we had to evacuate our residents due to the risk of the Holiday Farm Fire. We want to take this opportunity to thank everyone who helped us during the evacuation and then with the safe return of our residents. We will forever be grateful to the members of the **Central Presbyterian Church** for opening their doors to us. We also want to issue a huge shout out to **Lane Transit District (LTD)** and **RideSource** for their assistance in safely transporting the residents! It was not just the moving and housing of residents that was a huge task but also the transportation of safety equipment, wheelchairs, beds, computers, and medications, just to name a few things. Not only did we have our own staff going above and beyond, but we also had an outpouring of help from friends, families, and other community members. From the bottom of our hearts, please accept our most sincere and loving thank you for helping keeping our residents safe.

In this newsletter, we are featuring some wonderful moments of joy that were captured during our evacuation. We also have included our evacuation story as a supplement to the newsletter.



EMPLOYEE SPOTLIGHT

All Our Amazing Staff!

There is absolutely no way we could spotlight just one employee this month. Instead, we would like to take this opportunity to thank each and every one of our 103 employees. Whether they were at the church providing hands-on care, working in the main office on campus, or coming in on their day off to help move a mountain of beds, mattresses, and supplies, they all did their part to ensure our residents were safe and happy. Thank you!



Music has always been an important part of our Village!



We always want our residents to feel and LOOK good!

In Remembrance

Gayle Henry

Gayle came to EHL in May of 2017. Laura, Resident Coordinator of our Willow Home, shared with us that, "Gayle was a wonderful lady. She loved to look at books and read them. She would always be humming the song, 'It's a Small World' and 'You Are My Sunshine'. She loved sitting in the living room to watch the 'Golden Girls' and 'I Love Lucy'. She will be missed by all of us." Gayle passed away at the age of 80.



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Our Evacuation Story

On September 8, 2020, the management team at ElderHealth & Living Memory Village (EHL) were talking about what to do if the Holiday Farm Fire moved into Springfield. We learned our strategic disaster plan that included moving our 90 residents to Thurston High School was not an option, as they were at capacity with families from the McKenzie River Communities already impacted by the fire. Our team began looking at our disaster planning protocols and brainstorming.

Different department leads had awesome input into the moving process, what to actually take with us, what vehicles were available, and through Dawn Brown, FNP we made contact with her church, **Central Presbyterian Church in Eugene**. Pastor Jennifer Martin assured us they could accommodate our residents and told us she was just a phone call away for help.

In early preparation for a possible evacuation, we had staff pack three sets of clothes for each resident. All of the resident's families were called and asked, "If we need to evacuate would you like to come take your loved one home or have them come with us to an evacuation site?" About 25 families were willing and able to come pick up their loved one, if needed.

On the late morning of September 9, 2020, EHL was placed on Level 1 evacuation alert. We were told in communication with fire officials that the fire was very unpredictable and at zero percent containment. Our management team met again and decided that if we waited for Level 2, we may not have enough time to evacuate safely. We therefore decided to start evacuating residents from the EHL campus.



The next seven hours were a blur. We remember calling Pastor Jennifer and saying, “Are you ready for almost 60 residents to be evacuated to your church?” Her response was, “I’ll meet you all at the church.” We contacted families to come pick up their loved ones and prepared a packet of medications and a crash course on how to care for their loved one. About 20 families came and took their loved one home. We simultaneously packed up linen, adult briefs, cosmetics, and prepared the mattresses to be taken and all nine of the very important medication carts.

All of the sudden, there were volunteers and staff moving things onto a long flat-bed trailer and in other trailers, pickup trucks, and cars. Tall stacks of mattresses and nine medication carts were packed and brought to the church and organized in the fellowship hall to create some sense of space for each home. Tape was placed at the head of each bed with the residents’ names on them.

Then Lane Transit District (LTD) and RideSource, along with private vehicles, transported 57 residents to the Central Presbyterian Church in Eugene. They were escorted from the buses into the church with staff and volunteers talking to them about a sleepover, or getting away from a fire, or just coming here for dinner depending on their ability to understand. One person told me when she arrived with more mattresses, she said it felt like she was entering a party, everything seemed so upbeat and organized.



And then FOOD from everywhere arrived! We had pizzas donated for everyone, both staff and residents. Piles of canned goods, sanitizing supplies, adult briefs, disposable plates, bread, cereal, peanut butter and jelly, gallons of milk, heaps of fresh fruit and veggies! The following days full meals for residents and staff arrived!



The health care community called and asked if they could help or bring food or drop off donations. The families were wonderful and some even helped to clean EHL houses that had been left in chaos on evacuation day.

The residents had fun seeing so many people, wandering around, visiting, and enjoying music and games. It really was a party/sleepover!



On September 13, 2020, we returned to EHL with the fire partly contained and reduced risk. We did everything in reverse: Multiple staff called each family to give an update. Trailers, a U-Haul truck, and staff in pickup trucks came to move the medication carts, beds, and supplies. LTD and RideSource and private cars transported the residents back to the EHL campus. Most residents were happy to don their masks and leave but a few had already grown attached to the church and needed a lot of encouragement to leave. By the time the last bed was loaded into trailers and trucks, the entire church was clean and back to its previous condition.

On Monday, September 14, 2020, we placed each home back on strict quarantine to re-create the individual home “bubbles”. We spent hours doing laundry and sorting clothing to each resident. We moved all supplies back to their home or department. When residents that day were asked if it was nice to be back home, many had no recollection of having been gone.

ElderHealth & Living Memory Village wants to thank all of the staff and volunteers. We also want to thank the food donators, the transport vehicles, the home cleaners, the other communities and professionals that offered support and help, and mostly we want to thank all of our families for taking your loved ones home or supporting us as we cared for them at Central Presbyterian Church.

Special thanks to Pastor Jennifer and her staff for being there to answer a thousand questions, helping when folks wandered into their offices, and for the graciousness and kindness you showed to our staff and residents.

Thank you!!

