



Ohio Living
Foundation

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Caring CONNECTIONS

Opening Minds

through

Art

at Ohio Living Lake Vista

Story page 2



Dementia-Focused Art Program Builds Bridges

Last fall, Ohio Living Lake Vista residents were featured in the “Building Bridges Across Age” exhibit at the Medici Museum of Art (Warren, OH). The art was produced in Opening Minds Through Art classes, which provide an artistic outlet for people with dementia.

“Our collaboration with the Medici Museum of Art is a great way to provide a different perspective on aging,” said Brian Kolenich, Ohio Living Lake Vista executive director. “Our residents have been involved in Opening Minds Through Art for a while now. It is an evidence-based art-creation program for people with dementia that provides participants an opportunity for self-expression and engagement. Plus, it adds ‘artist’ to our residents’ already rich life-bios.”

The program is greatly beneficial to residents and allows them new ways to engage with their friends, families, and neighbors. It’s a new avenue for self-expression and the classes have proven to be beneficial to those with cognitive impairment.

“This program fits beautifully with the I’m Still Here® philosophy and focuses on engagement, learning, fulfilling current interests and exposing people to new opportunities,” said Jean Morgan, corporate manager of memory care at Ohio Living.

Funding from the Ohio Living Foundation supports this program and allows those with memory impairment new ways to take part in stimulating and life-enhancing opportunities. Additionally, residents’ art pieces can be viewed and purchased online at BetterWorld.org. Profits from the online auction are reinvested back into the program.

“Participating in a public art show gave our residents an added sense of purpose and meaning,” added Danielle Olson, director of program services. “It was also impactful to see the pride that their families carried when visiting the display.”

Opening Minds Through Art is also active at the Ohio Living Westminster-Thurber campus in Columbus and is opening a new program

at Ohio Living Mount Pleasant in Monroe. The program hopes to expand to other communities across the state in the future. Plans are underway to open a permanent gallery on Ohio Living Lake Vista’s campus to display pieces created by residents participating in the program.

To learn more, visit scrippsoma.org. To support the continued growth of this initiative at Ohio Living Lake Vista, reach out to Eva Allen at 440.497.5237 or eallen@ohioliving.org.

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Community-Focused Corporate Giving Opportunities

According to the Ohio Department of Aging, Ohioans ages 60+ will make up 26% of the state’s total population by 2030. To meet the growing need for senior care services, the Ohio Living Foundation recognizes the contributions of our partners through our Corporate Giving program.

Our corporate partners play a vital role in optimizing aging and ensuring the highest quality health care and services are provided to Ohioans. We work with companies to understand their goals, match philanthropic passions to our vital needs, and maximize overall impact.

Projects include new programs to expand access to care and innovative programs strengthening workforce development. To learn more about our diverse investment opportunities, contact the foundation at giving@ohioliving.org. If you have corporate connections within your network or know of a right-fit corporate partner, we want to hear from you!

Planned Giving Spotlight: Charities as IRA Beneficiaries

Ohio Living gives you the opportunity to maximize the impact of your IRA. From a tax planning perspective, IRA assets are best utilized when designated to your favorite charity. When left in inheritances or to one’s own estate, the entire amount is subject to income tax upon distribution. For example, if a couple left a \$75,000 IRA to their children, approximately \$18,000 would go toward paying federal income taxes, leaving only \$57,000 for the family’s use.

However, charities receive the full amount of the gift, ensuring all allotted funds go to the mission. By naming the Ohio Living Foundation as the beneficiary of your retirement plan, you will be optimizing your gift and touching the lives of not only your family, but your community as a whole.

Contact Nancy Hamilton at 419.290.1715 or nehamilton@ohioliving.org for additional information on beneficiary designations and how they can help support the great work Ohio Living is doing.

Unique Partnership Leads to 500 Echo Dots for Local Elders

The Ohio Living Foundation has teamed with Amazon and other partners to install Echo Dot smart speakers free of charge in the homes of 500 qualifying elders in the Mahoning Valley.

The Echo Dots, which can relay audio announcements and reminders and support some two-way interaction, are intended to improve communication, health and safety for elders. “Smart speakers can dramatically enhance communication and peace of mind for elders and their families, and we’re very excited about serving these 500 individuals,” said Wendy Price Kiser, chief operating officer of holdings, which provides supportive services that help elders stay independent. “We’re viewing this rollout as a learning experience that could help Ohio Living provide smart speaker technology to hundreds of elders who live in our communities across Ohio.”

The program is designed to serve low-income elders. Amazon is donating the 500 Echo Dots and Aiva Health, a voice technology provider, is discounting its work to program the devices. Ohio Living is donating funds for the remaining installation expense and Family and Community Services, a Ravenna-based nonprofit, is coordinating the rollout and enrolling eligible elders, along with the Senior Support Action Group, which assists elders in the Mahoning Valley.

The Echo Dot is a voice-controlled smart speaker that provides music, news, information and more. Through Amazon’s Alexa Smart Properties senior living solution, the Echo Dots distributed through this initiative can also relay announcements and food assistance delivery, provide community information and call up to five specific phone numbers on request. The capabilities of the devices can also be further customized by residents. For example, one participant’s Echo Dot delivers daily Bible readings.

“We believe the intuitive and accessible nature of voice and Alexa has the potential to help and delight customers in many scenarios, in and outside of the home,” said Liron Torres, head of Alexa Smart Properties, Amazon. “We build devices and services that help make customers’ lives better, and the senior living solution from Alexa Smart Properties enables organizations like the Ohio Living Foundation to do exactly that, while helping associates focus on important tasks and high-value care.”

One Echo Dot recipient, Carolyn Washington, highlighted the value that Alexa can contribute to elders living alone including offering reminders, personalized engagement opportunities, and the feeling of having a friend nearby. “I’m sure anyone of my age that lives alone will be glad and happy to own an Echo Dot. Thank you, Senior Support Team, for this peace of mind to me and for others.” 🌱

At right: Carolyn Washington (client) with her Echo Dot



Speaker Series Engages Ohio Living Breckenridge Village Residents and the Community

Ohio Living Breckenridge Village’s popular Aging Well Speaker Series kicked off in January and is now underway through October. Events take place on the third Thursday of each month and are open to residents and outside community members. A wide range of senior living topics are slated as part of the series including healthy meal planning, managing pain, mindfulness, and fitness.

“We are thrilled with the success of the Aging Well Series! Participants have been so interested in learning simple ways to invest in their health,” said Mimi Pekarek, director of outpatient therapy at the Veale Wellness & Aquatic Center. “Every session has been interactive and infused with positive energy.”

Following each talk, a time of fellowship is hosted with light refreshments themed to the session and prepared by Ohio Living Breckenridge Village’s culinary team. Attendees enjoy the opportunity to come together and not only discuss information that has been shared, but also connect and build community. Relevant handouts and giveaways are also distributed. For example, those who attended the “Finding Joy in January” event received a joy journal.

The ten-session series is free, thanks to the generous support of an anonymous donor who has underwritten all costs.

“Dynamic offerings like the Aging Well Speaker Series bring a host of benefits for attendees, from knowledge transfer to community-building,” said Eva Allen, director of gift planning at Ohio Living Breckenridge Village. “We are immensely grateful to the donor who made this possible, and we look forward to continuing this popular series for years to come.”

For more information or to register for an upcoming Aging Well Speaker Series event, call Mimi Pekarek at 440.954.8359 no later than the Friday before each talk. 🌱

Aging Well Speaker Series Upcoming Events

Sept. 21, 2 p.m. – Practical Reiki
Mary Ellen Laymen, Ohio Living Breckenridge Village, Director of Activities

Oct. 19, 2 p.m. – Frightful Food Fads: Demystifying Diet Trends and Learning Healthy Eating Habits
Julia Kucmanic, Ohio Living Breckenridge Village, Dietetic Technician

Donor Uses Architecture to Create Eco-Therapy Escapes

For over 100 years, Ohio Living has created and reinvigorated the life plan communities that our residents call home. Each has its own special space and culture that shapes the way people engage with the built and natural environments. Whether it is a rural or urban campus, they are places shaped by the vision of talented Ohio Living team members and residents. At all of our sites, philanthropy from passionate residents plays a unique role in creating and enhancing the vibrant places that make up our communities.

Retired architect and Ohio Living Llanfair resident Jim Warner played an instrumental role in the campus’s newest green space, the Wells Family Trinity Garden. The empty piece of land sat in a central location on campus, adjacent to the chapel, and now provides a much-needed space for residents, family members, and staff to commune and relax.

“Creating special places for people to interact and experience nature, while developing untapped potential, is a point of passion,” said Warner. “When I was asked to help with the Trinity Garden project, I was inspired by a spot on campus where I regularly spent time with my late wife, Robynn. It was tranquil and calm and offered a welcomed break from the skilled nursing environment. The healing qualities of being in nature soothed her and brought us both respite.”

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Two months after Jim and Robynn moved into Ohio Living Llanfair, Robynn’s health began to sharply deteriorate. She received rehabilitation, skilled nursing, and therapy services restoring her to health for about four years. The couple felt that coming to Ohio Living Llanfair was a gift from God that made their last years together rich and fulfilling.

“When identifying a place for the Trinity Garden, I was drawn to a bare, sunny, triangular piece of grass, circumscribed by three sidewalks at the center of campus,” recalled Jim. “With it being on the pathway to and from our chapel, it seemed natural to call it the Trinity Garden.” Robynn passed away in May 2022, a few months before the garden project was completed.

“Originally, I was approached about chairing the Grounds Committee, and one of my charges was to recertify the community as an arboretum,” explained Warner. “I felt honored to use my background to beautify the campus, make it more therapeutic, and increase its sustainable nature to reduce our carbon-footprint.” Jim’s efforts paid off. Ohio Living Llanfair has been recertified as a Level-One Arboretum by ArborNet, boasting more than 230 trees on its beautiful 14-acre campus.

He continues to volunteer his time with an array of clubs and committees on campus. He has also discovered a new passion for watercolor painting and enjoys showcasing his art locally at shows and online (jwarnerart.com).



Pictured: Warner with his late wife Robynn and goddaughter Clara; Warner’s watercolor painting of Dexter Chapel from Spring Grove Cemetery; Warner’s Trinity Garden plan

Jim has designated a gift to Ohio Living Llanfair as part of his estate to honor the tremendous care and support the campus provided for his family, particularly during his wife’s rehabilitation. He aims to further the mission of best-in-class palliative and hospice care with his giving, to help others in the future.

“I am very conscious that I am one of the very few who can live in a community with life care; assuring that I will be taken care of for the rest of my life,” expressed Warner. “That is a particular comfort to me since I don’t have kids or relatives nearby who could care for me. Since God granted me the resources to do so, I decided that I could extend that love to others who are in need and may not have the resources. I wish this was available for every senior, but at least I can help a few.”



Dementia Specialists in Ohio Living Westminster-Thurber’s Bridgewater Memory Care neighborhood

Another Community Certified as Memory Care Center of Excellence

Ohio Living Westminster-Thurber is the latest Ohio Living life plan community to receive the coveted Hearthstone Institute Memory Care Center of Excellence Certification. To receive this distinction, 28 employees across the campus completed 18 hours of classroom training to become Dementia Specialists. Employees working in the campus’s Bridgewater Memory Care neighborhoods worked one-on-one with the Hearthstone staff to put into practice the I’m Still Here® approach for communication and engagement.

Through donations to the Ohio Living Foundation, we are transforming memory care across our communities. I’m Still Here® is a comprehensive certification that touches on all aspects of dementia care to create a holistic approach to care for residents. The approach has reduced the common symptoms of dementia, such as aggression, agitation, anxiety, and apathy. The I’m Still Here® program provides structure to residents’ daily lives by using new and innovative forms of engagement. It also reduces the use of antipsychotic medicines and the number of resident falls by increasing levels of engagement.

Interactive Gaming System Engages Residents, Sparks Fun

Fun is a must! An interactive gaming experience, Lucynt, was recently introduced at Ohio Living Mount Pleasant and Ohio Living Breckenridge Village, funded by Ohio Living Foundation donors.

Complimenting the I’m Still Here® philosophy of active engagement, Lucynt encourages movement and provides cognitive stimulation, that is automatically adjusted based on an individual’s abilities. It will benefit all residents, those with dementia and residents who are interested in maintaining brain health.

Additionally, the system is easily accessible to residents and encourages their independence and personal interest by offering a variety of options, from card games to puzzle piece assembly. The system requires minimal set up and allows residents to play individually or in groups.

Lucynt is just one step in Ohio Living’s overall mission to transform how we support those living with cognitive impairment. Charitable donations to the Ohio Living Foundation, will enrich lives for years to come as our memory care program grows in scope and influence. Keep an eye out for a more in-depth look at memory care initiatives at Ohio Living in the next issue of Caring Connections!



Ohio Living Mount Pleasant residents enjoying Lucynt

Make It Happen® Program Facilitates Precious Moments

It was Mother Teresa who said, “Not all of us can do great things, but we can still do small things with great love.” Her words embody the spirit of Ohio Living Home Health & Hospice’s Make it Happen® program. This program brings special moments of joy and meaning to those nearing the end of their lives by fulfilling their life-enhancing wishes. Each moment is unique, personal, and makes a lasting difference.

The Ohio Living Home Health & Hospice – Greater Toledo team embody this mission by granting Make It Happen® wishes, thanks to the generous donations that fund 100% of the program. Team members regularly fulfill wishes big and small that make positive impacts on the lives of their patients and families.

One Ohio Living Home Health & Hospice patient was assisted by our team in finding some new clothing. The patient had lost weight, and as time passed, the impact of wearing clothing that didn’t fit took a toll. Staff rallied together to Make It Happen® by going on a shopping spree to purchase new clothing that also fit the patient’s personality. The result was deep appreciation from the patient, who couldn’t believe her caregivers had gone above-and-beyond to extend this level of care.



The patient on her shopping spree

Team members also stepped in to help a couple who, because of the husband’s fall in their home, were residing in different Ohio Living locations. When his health took a turn for the worse, the team banded together to Make It Happen® and ensure his wife was by his side. Within 30 minutes, a ride was arranged to transport her to her husband, where she was able to be with him until he passed. She was grateful, and the team was too – it was incredibly meaningful to foster timely togetherness.

“Our Make It Happen® program is designed to help people in these kinds of situations,” explained Wendy Jess, volunteer coordinator, Ohio Living Home Health & Hospice – Greater Toledo. “When families are unable to do certain things, we come alongside them, with the support of generous Foundation donors, to make a tangible difference, while maintaining their dignity and peace of mind.” 🌱

Giving Throughout the State

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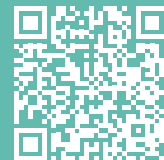
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To learn more about the Ohio Living Foundation and sign up to receive *Caring Connections* directly to your inbox, **scan this code** or email giving@ohioliving.org!



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