

legacy

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Weaving Plastic Bags into Ministry for the Homeless

DETAILS ON PAGE 1



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On the cover: L-R Twin Lakes residents Gerry Heineman and Dorothy Inderhees



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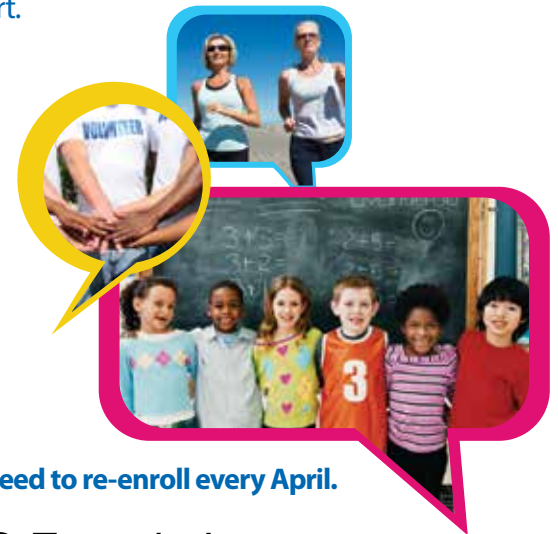
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Weaving Plastic Bags into Ministry for the Homeless



Gerri Heineman

You might call them the “bag ladies” of Twin Lakes.

Residents Gerri Heineman and Dorothy Inderhees are two of several women who have been involved in an effort to turn recycled plastic bags into sleeping mats for individuals who are homeless or when a person is in need of some dry “flooring” for a makeshift abode.

“It seems like a minimal thing, but we are told they can make good use of the mats. They seem to find them helpful,” says Inderhees, who has been at Twin Lakes for three years. “And you are keeping these plastic bags out of the landfill for a while.”

Making mats out of plastic bags has been a project at church groups and homeless charities in many parts of the country for a number of years. The process involves cutting plastic bags into thin strips that are then knotted together and rolled into a ball. It is sometimes referred to as plastic yarn, or “plarn.” Then the strips are crocheted into mats. Inderhees says her finished product is a mat nearly 3 feet by 6 feet. “It has a little bit of a spring and thickness to it, rolls up easy and it is not heavy. It has a tie, making it easy to carry.”

She acknowledges it can be difficult work, especially for some older people fighting arthritis. “It takes some force with the hands. I found if you just do a little at a time you can keep it up.”

“It is time consuming,” says Heineman, a retired electrician, who has lived at Twin Lakes for a year and a half. “I used to crochet a lot and someone said making these mats is just crocheting, so I thought I can try it. I do it when I can and feel up to it.”

It takes a couple hundred bags to make one of the mats, although both women confess they never bothered to actually count the number of recycled bags they use. “I’ve never counted. I probably shouldn’t,” Heineman says with a laugh.

And of course there is no shortage of the raw material using the ubiquitous plastic bag. “The plastic grocery bags are best, like those used at Kroger. They are rarely soiled so they can be used again,” Inderhees says. “They are also lightweight, thin and filmy and easier to work with.”

Both ladies say they take artistic pride in their mats and try to creatively mix the colors from different bags. “When you do this for so long you want it to look different,” Inderhees says. “We intersperse colored bags as we can. It keeps it interesting as you go on.”

“I don’t like doing the same thing,” says Heineman. “I just did a gray and white one that turned out very nice.”

Their mats have been sent to Matthew 25: Ministries and other church groups in the area that serve the homeless.

Heineman and Inderhees say they have heard the less fortunate folks appreciate their efforts. And Heineman says her cat, at least, finds the plastic mats comforting. “I know my cat likes them. I made her a small one so she can sleep on it.”



From L-R: Rev. Paul Burden, Rev. David Schwarz, Chaplain Rebecca Woods and Rev. Joe Boone

Pastoral Care: A Pillar of the Community

Residents of the Life Enriching Communities (LEC) campuses are aware that each campus has a full-time chaplain. What they may not realize is an on-staff chaplain is not that common these days in senior living communities, even among those with a religious affiliation.

“It has become fairly rare for senior living communities to have full-time chaplains,” says Paul Burden, who has been the Twin Lakes chaplain for three years. “Cost is a big factor. Our commitment to spiritual health, including the services of a fulltime chaplain, sets us apart from similar communities.”

LEC takes pride in its Pastoral Care programming at Twin Towers and Twin Lakes that enables people to celebrate the experience of God within their own faith traditions. The chaplain at each campus is free to set the agendas and develop programming that caters to the needs of their residents.

The goal is to provide holistic pastoral/spiritual support and assistance to residents, families and associates through caregiver groups, Bible studies and grief counseling.

February brings a change in chaplains at Twin Lakes with the departure of Burden, who is becoming the pastor at St. Peter and St. Paul United Church of Christ in Westwood. “It’s been a wonderful journey,” says Burden, whose

varied career has included stints as a campus minister, a hospice chaplain and a church pastor. “It’s a bittersweet departure since I’m excited about my new ministry, but will miss the Twin Lakes residents.”

Burden has presided over expanding services to skilled nursing and memory care residents. Burden, who is also a chaplain in the Air Force Reserve, is proud to have created a monthly veterans group that shares stories and concerns and makes visits to local schools. And he started a regular book discussion group, partnering with a retired philosophy professor, also a Twin Lakes resident.

Rev. Jerry Mueller, who served as the interim chaplain prior to Burden joining the Twin Lakes team, will step in to provide chaplain services again. “I’m pleased to serve again as Chaplain for Twin Lakes,” Mueller says. “This is truly a life enriching experience, not only for the residents, but for those who serve here as well.

At Twin Towers, Chaplain Joe Boone says he is most proud of the Friendly Visitors program where residents receive training in Pastoral Care and reach out to provide one-on-one counseling and companionship with other residents.

“Our training involves being a good listener. And our visitors can alert the chaplain that a person may need ongoing

care. So they are our ears in the community," Boone says. "It multiplies our outreach and opportunity." As many as 50 residents are involved in the Friendly Visitors program with the residents themselves coordinating it.

Boone says between resident-and chaplain-led sessions, there is a Bible study or prayer group at Twin Towers every day. A Catholic mass is provided four days a week. There is also a steady stream of student chaplains at Twin Towers thanks to the accredited program of Clinical Pastoral Education based on the campus.

The guiding philosophy behind Boone's ministry is to recognize that older adults face dynamic change almost daily, a fact of aging often overlooked. "When people are in transition, they require some sort of spiritual care. Often there are daily changes and losses that simply require someone come alongside them and lift them up."

Boone, who has been chaplain at Twin Towers for 10 years, takes a wide ecumenical approach that includes a broad definition of "spirituality." "If someone enjoys that you come and read them the newspaper, play music or just talk, that's spirituality. It's one spirit communicating with another spirit. We are guiding and enhancing their lives and we count that as spirituality." The Pastoral Care team at Twin Towers also includes Rev. Rebecca Woods and Rev. David Schwarz.

On Boone's to-do list for the year are plans to increase the musical offerings, expanding the pastoral outreach to extended family members and to network with area churches and pastors to make sure residents are still engaged in their traditional church life.

"We don't want residents to feel cut off from the congregations they have been active in just because they moved here."



Jerry Mueller

Debt of Gratitude to Retiring Board Members



Ron Beshear



Larry Brueshaber

We would like to extend our sincere gratitude to Ron Beshear and Larry Brueshaber for their commitment and dedication in serving as Board Members for the Life Enriching Communities (LEC) organization. Ron joined the LEC Board in 2004 and served on several boards within LEC, most notable the Twin Lakes Board and the LEC Foundation Board. Larry joined the Twin Towers Board in 2001 and subsequently served on the LEC Board as well as several of the LEC Boards and Board committees.

"Larry and Ron have been a tremendous support to LEC over many years," says Scott McQuinn, President and CEO of Life Enriching Communities. "Their belief in the mission of LEC was evident. In a very positive and constructive way, they both asked some of the best questions to help leadership think through the many different initiatives that were undertaken during their tenure. Their close ties to the Montgomery and College Hill areas brought a personal interest and knowledge that was always beneficial. We are grateful for their service."

From Band Money to Annuities: Different Ways to Give

Charitable gifts are the cornerstone of the continuing ministry of the Life Enriching Communities Foundation.

Such gifts are especially critical for the LEC Foundation to fulfill the two pillars of its caring mission – providing engaged, full-time Pastoral Care to all residents and to maintain its Benevolent Care promise.

The Benevolent Care program supports residents who have exhausted their financial resources, through no fault of their own, and are unable to pay the full cost of services. Benevolent Care steps forward with the discounting of fees, including monthly and ancillary fees, and payment of certain expenses.

A majority of charitable gifts to the LEC Foundation are now earmarked for the Benevolent Care program. They take many forms and include bequests, cash gifts, charitable remainder trusts, real estate and life insurance gifts and annuities.

The story of two residents illustrates the different ways people choose to help. Louise Tatgenhorst, a resident for 12 years at Twin Towers, has designated an annuity to the community that will be cashed in after her death.

“I wanted to make some type of gift because I think this is such a progressive place,” says Tatgenhorst, who had a career as a nurse at Cincinnati Children’s Hospital. “They do everything to keep people healthy. I just don’t think you’d find a better retirement place.”

Selecting Twin Towers as her retirement residence was a natural move for Tatgenhorst. She raised a family in Westwood and was a member of the Westwood United Methodist Church. She was familiar with the mission of Life Enriching Communities. “We knew a lot of people in Westwood and we know a lot of people here at Twin Towers who had come from Westwood,” she says. “Actually, my mother-in-law died here.”

Walter Griesinger, a psychologist who taught for 32 years at the University of Cincinnati where he is a professor emeritus, is using a very different giving approach. Griesinger’s labor of love over the years has been music, so he donates money earned in the longtime band he still performs with.



Louise Tatgenhorst

“I donate my part of the band pot to the Benevolent Care Fund,” Griesinger says. “I thought it was a way I could donate within limited means.”

Griesinger is the keyboardist in the renowned Howard Bloemker Orchestra, a six-piece group that specializes in big band standards. The group has played continually for 70 years since Howard Bloemker founded it in 1947. Griesinger took over as band manager when Bloemker retired in 2013.

“We play for the love of music, but we have some pretty regular gigs,” says Griesinger. “We play pretty much the retirement community circuit these days.” The band plays several times a year at LEC-sponsored events at both Twin Lakes and Twin Towers.

Griesinger moved to Twin Lakes several years ago with his wife Thelma, a former elementary teacher at St. John’s in Deer Park. The couple lived in the Kenwood area for 42 years.



Walter and Thelma Griesinger

Griesinger remembers poking around what was a construction mud hole around 2003 in Montgomery wondering what was being built. He had stumbled on the initial Twin Lakes construction. "Years went by as we watched it being developed," he says. "We were one of the first people to set foot in the mud and now we live here."

Griesinger says he and his wife chose Twin Lakes because of its proximity to Montgomery shopping and they wanted a community with a nonprofit religious affiliation.

Both Griesinger and Tatgenhorst are sensitive to the financial demands faced by senior living communities and their residents. "Things are just very costly," Tatgenhorst says. "I just knew I wanted to be able to help out in some way."

The LEC Foundation is called upon to fulfill its benevolent promise because of multiple societal factors that can lead to residents exhausting funds that they once thought would be sufficient for a comfortable retirement. They include increased life expectancy, rising healthcare costs and inadequate Medicaid funding.

Griesinger notes other reasons for supporting the LEC Foundation – the effects of one's declining funds over the years and the possibility of funding acute care. These financial situations affect the funding of both one's own independent living and, perhaps in addition, spousal acute care. For some, money starts to get eaten up, especially if they need some acute care ... A dozen years ago people thought they had enough money. And they did, back then. People have to be careful. It's another reason I try to support the benevolent fund in my own small way."

The Eight Top Ways to Make a Planned Gift To Twin Towers, Twin Lakes or the LEC Foundation

1. Have an estate plan. A will or living trust benefits you and your family and can easily include a bequest to the Life Enriching Communities Foundation. If you need to write or revise your estate plan, give us a call.

2. Make a bequest. Ask your attorney to review the following wording and include it in your will: "I give and bequeath the Life Enriching Communities Foundation (tax identification number: 06-1708088), located in Loveland, OH, the sum of _____

_____ dollars
(\$ _____) OR _____ percent
(_____ %) of the rest, residue and remainder of my estate OR the following described property: _____."

3. Name the Life Enriching Communities Foundation as a beneficiary of your retirement plan.

4. Name the Life Enriching Communities Foundation as a beneficiary of your life insurance policy.

5. Create a charitable remainder trust. Contribute cash, stock or real estate to a charitable trust and receive an immediate income tax deduction, a tax-free bypass of capital gains, and income for life.

6. Take out a charitable gift annuity. This simple contract offers many of the same benefits of a charitable remainder trust (see #5 above). The payments to you are fixed, guaranteed, and partially tax-free. The older you are, the higher the payment.

7. Set up an endowed fund at the Life Enriching Communities Foundation: The Life Enriching Communities Foundation and you write a letter of agreement creating your endowed fund. You get an immediate dollar-for dollar tax deduction when you fund it. The fund becomes a permanent resource producing income for the Foundation.

8. Call the Life Enriching Communities Foundation: Think of the Life Enriching Communities Foundation as a resource for information on estate planning and planned giving. We can provide you and your advisers with tax and income calculations for charitable trusts, charitable gift annuities, and other methods of securing tax and income benefits through gift planning. Above all, seek qualified independent financial and legal counsel.

For more information, please contact:

Dan McManus,
Executive Director, LEC Foundation, 513-719-3540
Email: dan.mcmanus@lec.org



Getting Involved in the Community: Plenty of Volunteer Opportunities

Barbara MacTaggart believes strongly in the volunteer spirit, and her wish is more residents at Life Enriching Communities would take advantage of the opportunities to help fellow residents and support the community at large.

“We always need more volunteers. Always,” says the Twin Lakes resident. MacTaggart has raised her hand many times since she moved to the community nearly 12 years ago. “When they would ask for volunteers I just said, ‘I’ll do it.’ ”

MacTaggart’s impressive volunteer resume includes working in the campus shop one day a week; she also co-chairs a book club, oversees the annual Christmas fund that makes monetary gifts to Twin Lakes associates, works on the events and programs committee and is treasurer of the Friends of Twin Lakes Auxiliary, a group that has raised several hundred thousand dollars over the past decade for the Benevolent Care Fund.

MacTaggart finds volunteering is great therapy and thinks being “old” is not an excuse for getting involved. “I have

to walk with a cane and I have a bad leg, but my brain is still top-notch,” says the 85-year-old. “I don’t want to just sit around. We have a lot of opportunities to help.”

She says there are three key areas where volunteers are always welcome:

* One of the biggest needs is at the campus shop, with three shifts a day, five days a week that need to be staffed. Proceeds go to the Benevolent Care Fund. “I know some people are a little leery of working a cash register, but we have about the simplest one you can find. We always need new people.”

* Volunteers are always needed to provide a variety of services or just quality companionship for individuals with memory loss or in need of long term nursing services at Twin Towers and Twin Lakes. “People in those situations need the stimulation of any kind,” MacTaggart says. “Individuals

with memory loss love music, so we are always looking for people to play piano or lead a sing-a-long. It’s a great boost for the residents.”

She also notes some residents bring their dogs for a comforting visit and therapy dogs from the outside community are welcome. These visits are coordinated through Volunteer Services. On Sundays and Wednesdays many residents like to attend the services in the chapel and volunteers are needed to facilitate their journey. And MacTaggart says many people in nursing care are looking for encouragement to get well and mobile again. “They appreciate visitors. There are many people whose minds are sharp, but their bodies aren’t.”

* The welcome center desks, especially for the skilled nursing areas, also need volunteers. “We always need people to answer the telephone and greet visitors. It’s a simple job, but it helps out so much.”

Besides helping to pass the time, MacTaggart says volunteering is good for the soul. “I just get pleasure out of helping people. I love to work with numbers, so being the treasurer of the auxiliary gives me great enjoyment. And it’s camaraderie working with other people. I’m not just stuck in my apartment.”

Gifts to LIFE ENRICHING COMMUNITIES

On behalf of the residents of both Twin Towers and Twin Lakes who benefit from your gifts, we wish to express our sincere appreciation to the individuals who contributed September 16, 2016 through December 31, 2016. Your generous support helped to fulfill our mission. Thank you for expressing your loving care to our residents with your generous gifts.

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UPCOMING EVENTS:

Auxiliary of Twin Towers Annual Meeting

The Auxiliary of Twin Towers cordially invites you to join us on Monday, March 13, for the Annual Meeting and Luncheon. Guest speaker Sibyl Towner will present "Crown of Maturity in Christ – Is Being a Blessing". The meeting begins with brunch at 10:30 a.m. in the Gulden Community Center. A registration fee of \$5 is due Friday, March 3. For additional information, please contact Wendy Bruestle at 513-661-3261.

Teepa Snow Returns to Twin Towers

Xavier University, The Bethesda Foundation and Life Enriching Communities are pleased to bring renowned Occupational Therapist and dementia care/dementia education specialist to Twin Towers. On Wednesday, March 15, Teepa will present "Understanding Progression: Seeing GEMS Not Just Loss" in the Gulden Community Center beginning at 9 a.m. Teepa works closely with a variety of service providers in the U.S. and Canada to develop, improve and optimize programs and services to people living with dementia, their care partners and family members. RSVP at Seniors_Event@TriHealth.com.

Bingo with a Bling at Twin Lakes

It's that time again! Mark your calendar for this special event hosted by the Friends of Twin Lakes on Friday, May 19 in the main dining room. The fun starts with registration at 11:15 a.m., lunch at 11:45 and an afternoon of bingo from 12:30-2:30 p.m. Space is limited and reservations are required. Bring your family and friends. RSVP by calling 513-247-1919