

He(art) in Community at **WESLEY WOODS**

“ A Wesley Woods couple is keeping their passions alive in the vibrant community they’ve come to know as home, and it’s made a ripple effect.

When Carol and Olin began looking for a senior living community, they wanted to make sure they could find one with a continuum of care and opportunities to live very social, creative lives. They struck gold with Wesley Woods.

“We walked into Wesley Woods and I thought, this is it, this is where we’re going to be,” Carol recalled of the experience. “It takes a load off your mind choosing a community with a continuum of care. We can enjoy our surroundings and the people here and not have to worry, and we realized we don’t need as much space because every special room we would’ve had in the house is in the building, like the social areas, the dining room, and the art room. This way, your home can just be your home, it’s so much less to worry about.”

Olin agreed and added, “Wesley Woods has been a very unbelievably nice situation for me and my wife. I don’t have room to house all my art supplies and set up to paint, so it’s nice there’s a separate space for it in the building.”

Since the 2020 pandemic, Olin has found great joy in painting, and having access to the fine art studio has been most fulfilling for him. “I do all my painting at the studio. There’s a big table, plenty of room, anything you need. I paint an hour a day in the mornings after I’ve gotten up and had my breakfast and some coffee. People come to see what it’s like and what we’re working on, and everyone thinks my work’s fairly good; they really encourage me here to keep it up.”



●●● Olin's work is so admired that people in the community often reach out to him with special requests. He recalled one in particular that stood out to him, "She had something in mind that she saw in that wabi-sabi style, where it's very minimalist and looks incomplete, but it's meant to relax you. It's a large two-by-three-foot painting of a man walking his dachshund, nothing else, no trees or busy colors. The picture's nice and uncomplicated, it was calming like anything I've ever done."



Carol has also found creative fulfillment and friendship at Wesley Woods. "I wrote my first children's book many years later after my grandson was worried about a thunderstorm," she said about the start of her experience as an author. "It did well and I made another about our granddaughter getting a wish for her birthday, and another about a fox on the playground that touches on bullying. I've written two more books

since we moved here. It means the world to me to live somewhere that encourages my work and wants me to keep writing!"

One of the beautiful things about having a complete continuum of care under one roof is that friendships can thrive across all levels of living. Carol and Olin have been so lucky to develop lasting relationships and collaborations across the community. "Food and fellowship go together really well!" Olin testifies to the many group luncheons and dining experiences at Wesley Woods. The creative couple also shared the past request from the woodshop group to decorate a fairy house. "We gifted it to our neighbors in memory care," Carol beamed. "I love the people here, it's a very active community. My husband's doing fantastic now that we live here. The amount of activities and camaraderie allows us to stay healthy and busy."

Reflecting on the decision to choose senior living and enjoy an active lifestyle, Olin shared some perspective. "A lot of people overwork themselves in their careers and then they finally retire and don't have any hobbies, and that's terrible to sit on the side watching other people do things and not yourself." He then urged people not to wait too long to consider senior living. "You want to be here to enjoy everything the community has to offer for as long as possible with the people you love. It's been a very positive experience, and I think everyone here makes it so special."

As a not-for-profit organization committed to providing all-inclusive services and programs for its residents, Wesley Woods is surely fortunate to have residents who can create and inspire others in community.

