

The Vine

Abide in me as I abide in you. Just as the branch cannot bear Fruit by itself unless it abides in the vine, neither can you unless you abide in me. - John 15:4

VILLA RESIDENTS VOLUNTEER FOR COVID-19 TESTING AT MAPLE CREST

Throughout the COVID Pandemic MHCO volunteers have been at work in specialized service for MHCO Care Partners and residents. Nancy Williamson, Maple Crest Villa resident since 2015, was asked to spearhead a community sewing project of more than 250 cloth isolation gowns in 2020. As a retired nurse and expert sewer, her professional knowledge contributed to the functional design of the gowns and coordination of local cutters and sewers. In late 2020 she joined Elizabeth Kelly with the MHCO vaccination programs for residents and staff. As rapid COVID testing became available in late 2020, Elizabeth and Nancy facilitated routine testing of residents and staff at Maple Crest. In the Spring of 2021 Anne Butcher and Ruth Graber moved into the Maple Crest Villas. As retired nurses, both Anne and Ruth were eager to participate in community life and Nancy quickly recruited them into the testing rotation. This service has offered them the opportunity to get to know residents and staff inside the Maple Crest building. Each shared how good it is to interact with people after so much pandemic isolation. Residents and staff have expressed deep appreciation for their faithful

service. They all agreed that it is good to help out in the community! When routine COVID testing is no longer needed, De Michel, Maple Crest Life Enrichment Coordinator, will be ready to invite them to consider other volunteer opportunities. The vital support of volunteers like Nancy, Ruth and Anne ensured that Maple Crest Care Partners were able to focus on their roles in serving and supporting residents. Volunteers are essential to the life and mission of MHCO.

For more information about upcoming volunteer opportunities at MHCO, stay tuned to our website and Bluffton ICON for a listing of volunteer opportunities.



Nancy Williamson (left), Ruth Graber, Anne Butcher have been key volunteers in implementing the COVID testing program at Maple Crest since 2020.

MHCO Board Members

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 Ed Basinger
 Brice Brenneman
 Cliff Harmon
 Ross Kauffman
 Emily Koogler
 Myrna McCurdy
 Kevin Nickel
 Lorrinda Smith
 Bob Stahl

MHCO Fund Board Members

Brice Brenneman
 Stan Clemens
 Ross Kauffman

Contact Information

Mennonite Memorial Home
 410 West Elm St.
 Bluffton, OH 45817
 419-358-1015

Sherrie McClure,
Executive Director

Daren Lee, MHCO COO

Barb Gossard,
Activities Director

Chris Moser, Director Of
Resource Development and
Church Relations, Interim
Volunteer Coordinator

Willow Ridge
 101 Willow Ridge Dr.
 Bluffton, OH 45817
 419-358-1015

Jason Cox, Interim
Executive Director
and Marketing Director

Barb Gossard,
Activities Director

Maple Crest
 700 Maple Crest Ct.
 Bluffton OH 45817
 419-358-1015

Kelly Wheeler,
Executive Director

De Michel, Life Enrichment
Coordinator

Hilty Home, Pandora
 304 Hilty Drive
 P.O. Box 359
 Pandora OH 45877
 419-358-3218

Sherrie McClure,
Executive Director

Dee Steffen,
Activities Coordinator

Amanda Dettrow,
Hilty Preschool and
Child Care Director
 419-384-3220

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MHCOLiving.org

A WORD FROM DAREN

Spring is fully upon us and with it we are overwhelmed by our favorite spring flowers, joyful bird songs and the renewal of budding trees. It is hard to doubt the existence of a plan far greater than we are capable of when we still ourselves in the midst of creation. This year we are excited about inviting residents to experience creation in new ways as our fundraising efforts for 2022 include a focus on nature and wellness.

Recently, the Service Group of MHCO hosted a chicken barbeque fund raiser. Through the proceeds of this event and the generosity of others, a golf cart has been purchased for the enjoyment of residents on the Bluffton campuses that will soon be available for use to help enjoy the outdoors. I was reminded as I watched the work of our Service Group and other volunteers at this event that we are blessed at Mennonite Home Communities of Ohio (MHCO). The caring, dedicated people who give their gifts of talent and time are a blessing. Since the beginning of 2020, we have seen a dramatic decrease in the number of volunteers and volunteer hours. We are thankful we were able to start welcoming back volunteers in 2021 after a prolonged pause due to the pandemic and look forward to the days when we can get back to a larger group of volunteers. If only we could get to a point again where we had to be concerned about running out of room to list hundreds of volunteers' in publications like this! In this day and age where time is a precious commodity, it's important to find the right words to thank volunteers who take time from their busy lives to help out. Volunteering takes time and energy and offers no monetary reward. Our hope is that the experiences gained through volunteering with our residents and care partners are valued in other ways that make a



lifelong impact and build more dynamic relationships in our communities.

The pandemic continues to bring many challenges to the lives of those of us living and working within MHCO in addition to ongoing operations. Census and staffing obstacles continue to be our primary challenges. Our team of Care Partners continues their dedicated service in the midst of difficult circumstances. We have experienced some transitions and changes in key leadership roles. Sherrie McClure is in the role of Executive Director for both Hilty Home and Mennonite Memorial Home. Jason Cox is in an interim role as Executive Director for Willow Ridge. Maple Crest has welcomed Kelly Wheeler into the Executive Director role.

Your continued support through prayer, gifts of time and monetary support are appreciated and vital to the success of MHCO. Thank you for your support!

I will close with a blessing based upon Numbers 6:24-26. It is with a heart full of thanks for you that this is shared: May the Lord bless you and keep you. May He make His face shine on you and be gracious to you. May He turn His face toward you and give you peace.

Daren Lee

For the most recent information on MHCO and or COVID-19 response please visit: <https://mhcoliving.org/covid19>

INDEPENDENT LIVING RESIDENT FEATURE

We get many inquiries about the Independent Living services at Mennonite Home Communities of Ohio – people wondering what it is all about, and how it is different than their current living situation at home. In the simplest terms, Independent Living removes some of the redundant and time-consuming tasks from daily living, allowing residents to repurpose that time towards intentional living. We recently interviewed some Maple Crest Apartment residents to see what Independent Living means to them.

Darlene Arnold is one of Maple Crest's newest residents, just moving in with us in February. Darlene originally hails from Iowa, where she and her husband owned and operated a farm for many years. She explained that they were not planning on being farmers, but after college the family farm needed tending to, and they were up to the task. It ended up being their life's work, and they wouldn't have had it any other way. Fifteen years ago they moved to Cridersville to be closer to their son, a Pastor, but they always seemed to make it back to Iowa despite the 12-hour car ride at least once a year to see family and friends. Darlene's husband passed away about 6 years ago. Darlene said that, "I wanted to move to Maple Crest before I had to, so I could enjoy what a community like this has to offer." She also enjoyed the location, as it is close to family, including a grand-daughter who lives in Bluffton. She enjoys the many activities that are available on the Maple Crest campus, including games and exercise classes, but what she looks forward to most is walking the outside paths around the Maple Crest campus once the weather warms up. Darlene enjoys spending her extra time reading and doing needlework. Here she is

pictured with one of her pieces. Gus and Herlinde Goertz are also relative newcomers to Maple Crest, moving in on "June 12, 2021", according to Herlinde. The Goertz's were living in another senior living community in Findlay at the time, but were searching for a less expensive option that would allow them to better preserve their resources. Maple Crest ended up being a perfect solution for them, and they even enjoy a larger apartment than before. The Goertz's are originally from Archbold, where Gus worked for Sauder's Furniture and Herlinde went back to school and became a Registered Nurse. Some of their best memories include bringing their grandchildren to Sauder Village, where the highlights were eating at "The Barn", going to the Ice Cream parlor, and riding on the train. Now, Gus and Herlinde enjoy spending time on their hobbies – for Gus, that means playing cornhole and other games on the Maple Crest activity schedule, while Herlinde is more of a homebody that enjoys reading and crocheting. Herlinde stated, "I've been amazed at how welcoming and inclusive everyone has been to us from the beginning." They especially like the autonomy of Maple Crest – "While there is always plenty to do, sometimes we would rather just relax and enjoy our apartment!" Gus and Herlinde were especially complimentary of all the staff. "Joan, the Facilities Coordinator, is the most patient and calm person I have ever met." We appreciate having Gus, Herlinde, and Darlene as part of our community, as well as the chance to be a part of their stories. If you are interested in learning more about Independent Living at Maple Crest, visit mhcoliving.org or call 419-358-1015, option 2.

*Gus and
Herlinde
Goertz*



*Darlene
Arnold*



2021 MHCO VOLUNTEERS

Hilty Home - Mennonite Memorial Home - Maple Crest - Willow Ridge

MHCO WELCOMES VOLUNTEERS...

Are you someone that enjoys helping others and meeting people? Well then, please consider being a volunteer at one of our MHCO communities. We have many different opportunities for you to be involved! Many events and activities were suspended during the first years of the pandemic, but now we have testing processes in places that warrant a return of volunteers to the communities. Volunteer options include helping with crafts, playing games, leading a discussion group on news and events, entertainment and passing out snacks or water to elders. There are really so many options... The volunteer names

mentioned in this edition of the Vine Newsletter includes 150 volunteers including churches, community and business groups. Thank you for being a volunteer! However, the number of volunteers and volunteer hours are still below that of prior years. So, if are you someone that enjoys helping others and meeting people. We would welcome you as a volunteer at MHCO. Please reach out directly to any one of our activity directors, life enrichment coordinator or myself listed on page two for an opportunity for meaningful experiences with MHCO elders and Care Partners. Be well!

Chris Moser

Mustaq Ahmed
Anonymous
Trudy Baber
Jean Bardsley
Don and Ruby Basinger
Ed and Diane Basinger
Harlan and Pat Basinger
Janice Basinger
Elaine Bauman
Dwight Baumgartner
Benji and Sarah Bergstrand
Marilyn Bishop
Ruth Anna Bixel
Phyllis Bixler
Bluffton University Students
Jeff Boehr
Duane Bollenbacher
Brice Brenneman
Gloria and Richard Bucher
Deborah Buck
Marian Busick
Bob and Anne Butcher
Claude Campbell
Jerry and Vickie Cartwright
Stan Clemens
Don Clinger
Laura Coburn
Mary Coletta
Everett Collier
Edna and Greg Conkling
Dorothy Couch
Roy Couch
Deanna Creeger
Bill Croft
Gary Dipnarine
Valerie Eikenbary
Karen Emans
Ron and Sue Epp
Bob and Sue Fett
Dave and Mary Fett
Denise Fett
First Mennonite Church
Youth Group
Ralph and Melba Gerber
Harold Gerten
Paul Gesler
David Glick
Kenneth and Ruth Graber
Del Gratz
Arman Habegger
Cliff Harmon
Jeannine Hartman
Rhodora Hartman
Marsha Hector
Ruth Hefner
Tom Heimann
Bill and Gloria Herr
Arlene Higbie
JoAnn Hilty
Jonathan Hilty

Maureen Hoagstrom
Kelly Honse
Joyce Hostetler
Joanne Hoyt
Diane Huber
Larry and Jerry Hurley
Jane Inniger and Hannah Davis
Jason, Kim, Adam, and Max Fritsch
Ross Kauffman
Zoe Keckler
Elizabeth Kelly and Ray Person
Nicki Keuneke
Jim King
Marian Kissling
Emily Koogler
Melissa Lawrence and
Harley Cheney
Jared Lehman
Jill Lemley
Sandra Liechty
Ron and Alice Lora
Lorrinda Smith
Donita Luginbill
Barb Marquart
Becky Marshall
Kent Mathewson
Brendon Matthews
David and Barb McClurg
Sara McCune
Myrna and Robert McCurdy
Abbie Meyers
Kathleen Mikkelsen *
Sigrid Miller
Dave Miller
Jill Miller
Rita Montgomery
Dianne Moore
Kristen Mullins
Jack and Deb Myers
Ruth Naylor
Nancy Neff
John and Linda Nelson
Kevin Nickel
Chuck Niswander
Joanne Niswander
Pandora-Gilboa Local Schools
Kristen Parkins
Barbara Plaugher
Dick Potter
Dortha Radabaugh
Mary Ramseyer
Diane Reichenbach
Steve Reichenbach
M. Jean Reichenbach
Joyce Reigle
Marilyn Reigle
Sam and Janette Reineke
John and Carolyn Rich



*Don Clinger
pastor of 53 years, currently serving at the
Alger First UMC. Don has volunteered at MMH for the past 20
years. With the return of Bible Studies and Worship, Don has become
a familiar face as he regularly helps with Thursday morning Bible
Studies. Even with the challenges of finding the time, Don loves being
with residents and hearing their stories and experiences. Don shared,
“These people and many like them are the ones who have kept the
church going all of these years. They have made it possible for me and
many others to be a leader/pastor of the church. They need and deserve
our care and love throughout their life.”*

Kelly Ridge
Jon and Basilda Rockhold
Hazel Rodabaugh
Teresa Romick
Ruby Sandy
Teri Sato
Terry and Beth Schey
Canda Schmutz
Phyllis Scott
Jane Seibert
Earlene Sellers
Diane Sharrock
Pat Sheidler
Jan Shields
Jim and Jane Smith
Bob and Marci Stahl
Betsy Steiner

Joan Steiner
Jill Steinmetz
Mel and Barb Stettler
Barbara Jean Stratton
SumiRiko Ohio, Inc employees
Garry and Nancy Thomas
Robert Town
Emma Mackay Tuttle
Jen Vastano
Gerald Wehri
Annette Werling
Betsi, Joe and Savannah Werling
Nancy Williamson
Kerris Wright
Kerry Wright
Ed and Nancy Yeager
Jeremy and Sunny Zank



Hilty Home volunteer, Harold Gerten came to Hilty at the request of the parish he attends. Harold retired some 20 years ago from the Lima Tank plant and his parishioner at St. Antony's asked him to serve communion and rosary at Hilty Home. Harold quickly became involved with bringing computers into Hilty Home for elders to learn on. This was during the time when computer games were just starting to become popular. Harold also became a regular for Wednesday afternoon game day helping as scorekeeper or preferably playing cards. Residents prefer to play group games in person. Harold suggested there may be a few residents and volunteers at Hilty Home who would be willing to play cards around the clock if they could. Harold has also helped at events and looks forward when these traditional events like going to the fair will be renewed. Harold's favorite card game is bid euchre.

THANK YOU TO ALL OUR VOLUNTEERS!

We endeavor to provide accurate names that include all volunteers that served during 2021 at any of the MHCO campuses. We also appreciate additional individuals who volunteered on behalf of their church or community

organization who may not be named in this list. Please contact Chris Moser at 419-358-1015 ext 263 for any corrections, oversights or if you prefer not to have your name listed in the future.

WHAT'S NEW - MHCO FUNDRAISING GOALS FOR 2022

Our Brighter Lives Annual Campaign is an important source of funds that help support capital projects, activities and programs that enhance the lives of elders and their families who are part of the MHCO family. We are excited for our emphasis on resident life improvements as part of the nurture and wellness focus for 2022. Thank you for your support of MHCO!

• Nurture and Wellness focus:

Recreation/craft room renovations to facilitate a return to group activities and events.

Nature and Nurture - Golf Cart outings to visit local areas of interest.

Fitness Center renovation at Maple Crest to update equipment and furnishings.

• **Benevolent Care:** Help support MHCO to care for older adults who have outlived their resources. This is the growing gap in the real cost for care provided to residents and what Medicaid reimburses for services provided.

• **MHCO Fund:** Undesignated gifts are allocated to this fund. A focus is put on supporting MHCO with recovering from ongoing COVID expenses. Funds are allocated by the MHCO board of directors for programing and projects.

• **Endowment Fund:** Will grow the Endowment Fund which provides an annual 4% payout to support the Benevolent Care Fund. All undesignated tribute gifts are put into this fund.

• **Other:** Hilty Home Preschool and Child Care, Landscaping and other designated gifts.

2022 BRIGHTER LIVES CHARITABLE GIVING GOALS

Nurture and Wellness focus:\$80,000

Benevolent Care:\$75,000

MHCO Fund:\$75,000

Endowment Fund:\$45,000

Other:\$25,000

Total:\$300,000



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donate
online!

**THANK YOU FOR
YOUR SUPPORT!**

Volunteers do not necessarily have the time; they just have the heart.

- Elizabeth Andrem, writer

MAPLE CREST WELCOMES NEW EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



Kelly and her husband Bryan.

Maple Crest welcomes Kelly Wheeler as the new Executive Director. Kelly has worked in long-term care for over 25 years, starting in high school as a nurse aide. She realized her passion for working with older adults during that time. With an intent to further her career, Kelly decided to pursue physical therapy and she earned her Associates Degree as a Physical Therapist Assistant in 2005. Kelly has served in a Therapy Director role for the last 10 years. Kelly currently resides in Cridersville with her husband Bryan and her youngest son Logan. Kelly's older son, Landon, lives in Indiana with his fiancé, Shelby, and grandson Bowan. Kelly enjoys spending time with family and friends, reading, traveling, and relaxing on her patio or with her husband on their boat. Kelly shared that "I am truly excited to start this new journey, meet the team, residents and family at Maple Crest."

Welcome Kelly!