

April 2024

## From the campus administrator

It is with great excitement that I share with you the appointment of Maureen Homa as the new housing counselor for SummerWood of Chanhassen. Maureen has served Presbyterian Homes & Services for a number of years, working in various capacities including: campus administrator (Beacon Hill), resident services director and housing counselor.

Maureen has a passion for service excellence and a strong commitment to our ministry. Maureen's start date is yet to be determined but will most likely be in late April or early May. Maureen will be officing in the Terrace. Below you will find a note to you from Maureen.

Blessings,  
*Jodi Devick Neal, interim campus administrator*

### Dear Summerwood Residents,

I am excited to join the Summerwood Community.

I am a long-time employee soon to celebrate my seventeen-year anniversary with Presbyterian Homes. I have worked in a variety of roles and look forward to being your new housing counselor. I have a master's degree in social work and enjoy meeting new people and hearing their life stories.



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## Resident spotlight

Nan Porter has lived at SummerWood of Chanhassen for 8 years in The Terrace and 5 years at The Commons.

Prior to Nan and Jerry's arrival, she had open heart surgery and had slowed down. She and Jerry were ready for a move from their large home with a big yard to maintain. They moved to The Commons after Jerry's health



declined. Sadly, Jerry died 4 months later. Nan is very grateful for the staff at Summerwood, who were there for her during that difficult time.

Before retiring, Nan and Jerry were teachers. She taught science and he taught social studies. They met at Hutchinson High school. Later, Nan taught at Circle Pines and Jerry went to Saint Louis Park. They lived in Shorewood for over 50 years. She has 4 wonderful stepchildren, 8 grandchildren and 3 great grandchildren.

Nan has a commercial pilot's license with a float plane rating. Nan loved teaching physics and had an opportunity to take an aviation class. She spoke to the teacher of that class, and he was able to teach her to fly airplanes. Once, she had to make an emergency landing on a frozen lake due to engine failure. God was looking out for her, because the day before, her instructor was repeatedly going over safety instructions and she was able to focus on his voice, which helped her to land the plane safely.

*Lee Ann Eiden, resident services director*

# SummerWood News

## Pastor's message

Starting conversations about advance care planning

### National Healthcare Decisions Day, April 16

Who would speak for you about your health care options if you are unable speak for yourself? How do you open a conversation about what matters to you and have a say in your health care? These are the questions for April 16 — National Healthcare Decisions Day, designated by the “Conversation Project” of the Institute for Healthcare Improvement.

Presbyterian Homes & Services (PHS) is lifting up this day to encourage you and the people most important to you, especially those who may be called upon to care for you.

In an era of increasingly complex medical care, we can't afford to ignore life's end, or to separate our medical decisions from our spiritual values. PHS is dedicated to helping you open this conversation about your wishes for care with your chosen family, health care providers and with us. Our approach, “Honoring Choices,” offers encouragement and guidance for you to create a health care directive.

A health care directive is a document that informs others of your health care wishes. It allows you to name a person (“agent”) who will assure that your choices are honored or decide for you if you are unable to decide for yourself. This document has legal authority. Physicians, health care providers and hospital staff are bound by law to follow your directives.

Honoring Choices helps you and your loved ones talk about your health goals, spirituality, and what it means to live fully while remaining realistic about the end of life. Talking with the important people in our life helps us create the foundation of a care plan that's right for us. Reach out to our campus pastor who can help you get the conversation started.

## Employee spotlight

Tammy Gutzke has been with us at SummerWood of Chanhassen for 9 1/2 years as a housekeeper. A friend told her good things about SummerWood and there was a position available.

Tammy appreciates the Christian culture here and enjoys getting to know the residents and staff. She also likes to help and cares for all. Tammy loves animals and likes to garden.

A few weeks ago, one of our housekeepers had been overseas for over a month. so housekeepers were a bit shorthanded. During this time the other fulltime housekeeper had



to be away for about 2 weeks. Tammy was pretty much on her own. We called a temporary agency for help and they sent us two wonderful people who only spoke Spanish. For two weeks, Tammy guided them throughout our community.

Tammy did a great job working with them even using “sign language”. She is always willing to help wherever there is a need.

Thank you Tammy for your service!

*Al Gustafson, environmental services director*

## Letter from the Foundation

### The Rewards of Gratitude

In the golden years of life, we often reflect on things we have experienced and achieved. Now, more than ever, we understand the importance of physical and spiritual well-being and ways to best care for ourselves. Through challenges and joys, one simple practice can make a surprising difference: gratitude. Did you know gratitude is key to unlocking a treasure trove of physical benefits?

Countless studies have shown that practicing gratitude can lead to improved physical health, especially as we age. Physiologically, the act of giving thanks has been shown to lower blood pressure, reduce inflammation, and promote better sleep—all essential components of a strong and healthy body.

While King David may not have understood the physical benefits of gratefulness, he certainly encouraged this practice. For example, Psalm 107:1 tells us to "Give thanks to the Lord, for he is good; his love endures forever." Surely David understood that gratitude fosters the kind of resilience that helps us navigate life's ups and downs – and do so with grace and strength.

This verse also reminds us of God's enduring goodness, even amidst challenges or difficult circumstances. When we cultivate a heart of gratitude, despite what is facing us, we not only honor God but also nurture our own well-being.

Let us embrace the practice of wholeheartedly giving thanks for the blessings that surround us. Whether it's through appreciating the freshness of springtime, greeting a neighbor or thanking someone for their kindness, we can cultivate a spirit of gratitude each day.

In this season of life, we are thankful that you are a vital part of this community, as we journey together. May you, too, find a blessing today and reap the rewards of gratitude.

## Meet Maureen Homa, continued...

I live in Chanhassen with my husband Ted and two children Quinn (17) and Grace (15) who attend Chanhassen High School. Much of my free time is spent traveling, reading, walking my dog Dennis, and most importantly spending time with my family. I look forward to meeting you all soon!



*Maureen Homa,  
housing counselor*

## SummerWood Birthdays

Don K.	4/7
Dorothy M.	4/12
Vija R.	4/12
Ramer S.	4/26
Myrna D.	4/30
Linda R.	4/30



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Presbyterian Homes & Services is a nonprofit organization and an equal opportunity employer serving older adults through community services, housing, and health care.

Thank you, volunteers for making a difference every day

**S**t. Francis of Assisi famously said, “Remember that when you leave this earth, you can take with you nothing you have received – only what you have given.” At Presbyterian Homes & Services (PHS), our vital corps of volunteers understands this better than most.

Although National Volunteer week is celebrated in the third week of April, PHS community recognition events are held from early April through May. Each of our campuses hosts tea, luncheon or other events to give a gracious thanks to those who serve year-round.

Volunteerism is one of the hallmarks of PHS. From the very beginning, local church members, children, service clubs, neighbors, resident family

members and staff have volunteered in every one of our communities. We are blessed to have a wide diversity of volunteers, some who are here once a year, and some who are with us every day, including our own residents.

These volunteers complete a variety of tasks — reading to residents, assisting with activities, tending gardens, delivering mail, running errands and helping with office projects. Our volunteers lighten the work of the staff and brighten the days of our residents.

If you are interested in volunteering, contact [volunteering@preshomes.org](mailto:volunteering@preshomes.org).

Please take time to thank a volunteer today!