



# *Caring*

CONNECTIONS

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Ohio Living  
Foundation

# A Doggone Good Time

## Therapy dogs become part of the family

Jim Prickett knows how impactful the love of a dog can be, and that is why he chooses to bring his five Pomeranians, Chloe, Frodo, Lily, Piper, and Sunny to Ohio Living Quaker Heights for everyone to enjoy. Jim and his dogs visit with residents and employees every two weeks.

“I’ve been bringing my dogs here for almost eight years. It brings me joy to witness the look on their faces when they see the dogs. I get to catch up with the residents and ask how they are doing. I’ve gotten to know so many wonderful people there because of this program.”

Residents wait patiently for the dogs to make their way through the hallways until they get to hold them. Jane, a resident who has taken a specific liking to Lily, shared how Lily brings her comfort just like her own dog used to. “I got a picture of Lily and I put it up next to the pictures of my family, because Lily is a part of my family now, too.”



*William “Bill” Kitzmiller showing some love to therapy dog, Payton.*

Linda Bingman, another volunteer, loves to visit with her sweet and affectionate golden retriever, Payton, once a month. Linda and Payton have been visiting residents for almost ten years and she has many memories of wonderful residents and patients who have loved her dog as their own.

“For many residents, the presence of a dog brings back fond memories of their own dogs,” she said. “I love that Payton sparks such positive memories for the residents. Seeing their smiles fills my heart and brings me joy.”

Family members who visit can see the therapy dogs interact with their loved ones. They also get to observe first-hand the peace and distraction that furry friends provide.

Linda described an incredibly moving experience she had with Payton and one of the residents. “I brought Payton into a resident’s room, and immediately her face lit up and she began talking to him. Her nurses and family gazed at the scene in disbelief because she hadn’t spoken to anyone in five years! Payton almost immediately brought the words out of her.”

These therapy dogs not only help bring tremendous joy to residents, but they also provide comfort to family members and staff at Ohio Living Quaker Heights. One employee said, “It’s my favorite part of the week. The dogs help the residents relax which helps all of us relax.”

Jim says the one thing the residents appreciate most about the dogs is that they accept the residents for who they are. No matter what their health situation may be, the dogs love them unconditionally.

“It’s so nice to be able to share my dogs with them. Ohio Living Quaker Heights has become part of our family.” 🌱

Generous foundation and resident donors  
provide new campus putting green

# A Hole-In-One Gift



Left, The putting green before it was replaced. Right, Doe Wagner trying out the new putting green.

Every year, Ohio Living Vineyard on Catawba hosts a summer golf tournament on its putting green, attracting competitors and spectators from both on and off campus. Residents who aren't golfers bring chairs and snacks to the tournament and use the opportunity to socialize with their neighbors and enjoy the fresh air.

The original putting green was generously funded by late resident Frances "Starr" Carsten in 2007. Over the last 12 years it was well loved — and well worn — and desperately in need of an overhaul. "I was inspired by the number of people that used the putting green each season, so I knew we had to find a way to replace it," said Campus Administrator Paul Shaw.

This year, residents and community members will compete on a bigger, better putting green thanks to the generosity of Ohio Living Vineyard on Catawba residents and a local foundation with a history of support for the campus.

When the fundraising effort was announced, resident and golf enthusiast Dolores "Doe" Wagner served as the resident cheerleader, encouraging others to contribute. Inspired by the project, resident Robert Lorensen stepped forward as the lead donor for the putting green. Letters of support were written to accompany the Ohio Living Foundation's grant application

to the Harry Stensen Memorial Fund, which in turn made a generous grant for the project. "The response from the community was overwhelming. I feel incredibly grateful to live in a community full of gracious donors and golf lovers," said Doe.

Donations also created an annual maintenance fund for the putting green, potentially covering the first ten years of upkeep.

"The putting green is so much more than a place to play golf," said Doe. "It's a place to bring people together." It serves as entertainment and an outdoor place for residents to gather or get some exercise. Family members visiting their loved ones can enjoy golf together. Residents can teach first-time golfers how to putt. In many ways, the putting green unifies the community.

Residents of Ohio Living Vineyard on Catawba are incredibly grateful to the many generous donors who made this new and improved putting green possible. In fact, some residents are so excited to start playing they're not letting cooler temperatures get in their way. Shortly after the new green was installed, Doe was one of the first residents to break it in. "I couldn't wait until the spring to try it out. The new putting green will help make this our best summer tournament yet!" 

# Innovations in Dementia Care

## Ohio Living focuses on cutting-edge approaches to care

Every seven seconds someone in the U.S. is diagnosed with Alzheimer's disease. Ohio Living is passionate about implementing innovative approaches to memory care and brain health for Ohioans who live with dementia. Here are a few of our newest initiatives.

### The Montessori Method

Marie Montessori, an Italian physician and educator, developed the Montessori Method in 1897 for children with special needs — those whom many in society considered “unteachable.” At Ohio Living Llanfair, we're using the latest application of the Montessori Method for individuals with dementia who are too often viewed as “unreachable.”

The Montessori Method engages the five senses to tap into muscle memory; skills still present in people with Alzheimer's. Montessori tools help people maintain those skills, stimulating their brains for engagement and reconnection.

There is already evidence that the Montessori Method can reduce anxiety for individuals with dementia by providing engaging and rewarding activities in a supportive, thoughtfully prepared environment. Hallmarks of this environment include soothing lighting, easily accessible activity items, dedicated spaces for indoor and outdoor gardening, writing and typing stations,

and bins with items to rummage through, sort and feel. The goal of all Montessori-based activities is to help seniors with dementia rediscover the world around them.

Donor Mary Ann Jacobs funded implementation of the Montessori program, including the initial consultations and assessments, staff trainings, and program tools. Her father lived in The Grove, Ohio Living Llanfair's skilled memory care unit. “My father received amazing care at The Grove before he passed in 2008. When I was approached with the idea of funding this innovative program that would help residents with dementia, I knew it was something he, too, would have benefitted from.”

Her thoughtful gift allowed Ohio Living Llanfair to train its entire memory care team — housekeepers, activities, social services, nurses, nursing leadership, and nursing assistants. That's because in memory care, every person who interacts with a resident plays a critical role in keeping them engaged and connected. “After my father was diagnosed with dementia, he needed to constantly be engaged,” said Mary Ann. “He needed something that would help stimulate his brain and tune into the nostalgia he would experience. I believe the Montessori method would have done just that for him.”

“We strive to find ways for residents to have meaningful interactions,” said Jean Morgan, Executive Director of Ohio Living Llanfair and newly appointed Corporate Manager of Memory Care. “We find things residents respond to. We assess each resident to determine their baseline

cognitive and physical functioning levels, and in addition we assess their overall quality of life. Once these assessments have taken place, we develop concrete measures for each resident. Our goal is to stop the downward spiral of dementia by maximizing opportunities for them to plateau. The hope is that people will begin to function at higher levels.”

## Virtual Reality

Immersive training is taking center stage through virtual reality at Ohio Living Westminster-Thurber. Christine Bush, Director of Independent Living, describes the benefits of the training. “Through simulations, staff and family caregivers are experiencing first-hand what it’s like to live with dementia and other life-altering conditions. They gain understanding and empathy, leading to more effective and compassionate care.”

Ohio Living Westminster-Thurber is using software and a virtual reality headset from Embodied Labs, which provides first-person virtual simulations for Alzheimer’s disease, Parkinson’s disease, Lewy Body Dementia, and more. These experiences allow our users to embody a person with a specific condition and learn what it’s like to walk in their shoes.

Christine shared that participants often get emotional. “For most of them, this is the first time they’ve truly understood what the person they care for is going through and how their behavior towards that person can change how they react.”

Jantrea Marlow, one of our most tenured LPNs in Westminster-Thurber’s Bridgewater memory care neighborhood, was teary-eyed at the end of the three Alzheimer’s training modules. “I’m really good at caregiving, but I

don’t know if I’m as good at understanding our residents’ situations on a personal level...what it must feel like every day. This training helps me think about it much more deeply.”

## Dementia Live®

Staff at numerous Ohio Living locations have been trained in Dementia Live, an experiential sensitivity training for people who care for individuals with dementia. This high impact experience immerses participants into the environment that a person dealing with

dementia might face every day. Participants wear glasses that reduce peripheral vision and skew depth perception, headphones that create white noise, and gloves that impede the sense of touch. The result is a deeper understanding of what it’s like to live with cognitive impairment and sensory change.

Several of our team members found the experience so meaningful that they have become trainers for the program, offering the

experience to family members, healthcare workers, social services, and other caregivers who wish to connect more meaningfully with someone who has dementia.

## The Future

Ohio Living will continue to explore new approaches in dementia care. “We’ve convened a memory care task force to evaluate new methods and systems to provide clinical tools for staff as well as brain wellness programs for those receiving care,” said Laurence Gumina, Ohio Living CEO. “Memory care is a priority for Ohio Living. Ultimately, we plan to create unified, best-in-class services across the Ohio Living system. We’ll be sharing more about these plans as they develop.” 



# Donors Provide Care for Caregivers

## Showing gratitude in meaningful ways

When one Ohio Living employee rescued a frightened puppy, she never expected it would risk her family's health.

"We rescued Kali Jean, a five-month-old puppy, and it was immediately clear that she suffered from severe anxiety. Within a few months, she had torn through the kitchen vinyl flooring and was digging into the original linoleum underneath, contaminating our home with asbestos. My husband was unemployed, and we were living paycheck to paycheck.



The asbestos remediation cost more than \$900. I set up a payment plan, but I knew we still couldn't afford it. I never imagined that Ohio Living would be there to help me."

Ohio Living employees provide loving and compassionate care to our residents and patients every single day. Naturally, residents and family members often want to share their gratitude in kind. However, Ohio Living staff members can't accept gifts or gratuities. That's why we've created these meaningful opportunities for grateful individuals to express appreciation of Ohio Living staff.

### A Safety Net Called the Caring Fund

In late 2016, the Caring Fund was created with donor support to provide emergency financial assistance to employees experiencing hardship through no fault of their own. A maximum of \$500 can be provided immediately when urgent needs are affecting an employee's life, safety, or the ability to get to work. Up to \$5,000 can be granted through an anonymous application process to help with practically anything that

causes an unexpected financial hardship outside of the employee's control. This is how Kali Jean's owner received help.

Since its inception, the Caring Fund has provided nearly \$173,000 in grants to grateful Ohio Living team members. "At first I was reluctant to apply for financial assistance from the Caring Fund. After all, it was my dog that created the problem, and I felt guilty asking for help. I'm glad I did, because without the Caring Fund we would have gone into collections. I'm so grateful to the donors who make this Fund possible!"



*A panoramic view of the new employee break room at Ohio Living Quaker Heights.*

### Brightened Break Rooms

Our employees are the heart of our communities, yet their break rooms often fall to the bottom of the list when it comes to renovations. However, in recent years, thoughtful donors have funded upgrades for many of these break rooms to give employees the same inspiring, beautiful spaces that we provide for our residents. Most recently, the employee break rooms at Ohio Living Dorothy Love and Ohio Living Quaker Heights have been refreshed, thanks to the generosity of our donors.

These renovated break rooms provide bright and comfortable spaces for staff to rest, eat, and recharge their batteries — figuratively and literally. The rooms have been completely

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# Brightened Break Rooms

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revamped from floor to ceiling with new seating, paint, lighting, window treatments, counter tops and cabinets. They even added cell phone charging stations. Every detail is designed to increase enjoyment and ease for employees.

We're also happy to announce that a fundraising effort is now underway to renovate the break room at Ohio Living Sarah Moore! To donate to this renovation or the Caring Fund, please write-in your designation on the enclosed reply form or visit [ohioliving.org/foundation](http://ohioliving.org/foundation).



*The renovated break room at Ohio Living Dorothy Love.*

## A Look into the Senior Center

The Ohio Living Home Health & Hospice Senior Center in Youngstown provides education and entertaining programs for older adults.

### Seniors Become Tech Savvy

Many seniors avoid technology simply because they don't understand it. That's why we created the Tech Savvy Seniors program, which teaches them about current technology and how to access the world through the internet.

Tech Savvy Seniors was made possible by Direction Home of Eastern Ohio, who funded the computers as well as a part-time instructor. Additionally, volunteers from Home Savings Bank in Youngstown taught members how to use online banking.

"They are eager to learn how to stay in contact with their families and friends, become more confident online, and discover new opportunities," said Mona Mangiarelli, Senior Center Director.

"I know now how to avoid phone calls that are scams, and I can teach my sister, too," said one smartphone class member. "I've also learned how to download apps on my fitness watch. I'm really looking forward to the next class."

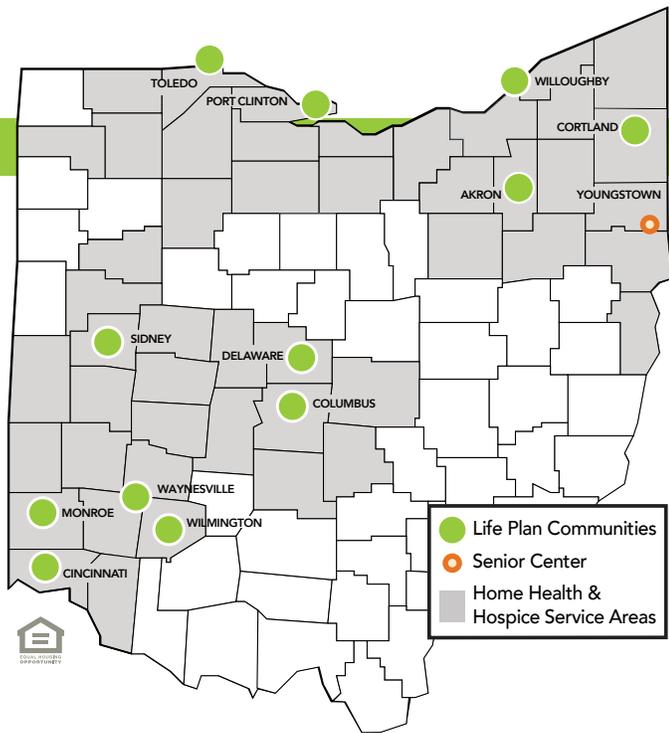


*Members gift wrapping their watercolor paintings*

### A Gift for the Holidays

The Cafaro Foundation has long supported hospice patients of Ohio Living in the Greater Youngstown area, including funding a Christmas gift program since 2017. In this unique program, Senior Center members create special gifts that bring joy and comfort to hospice families.

Phyllis Cafaro of the Cafaro Foundation explains her motivation behind the Foundation's support, "The staff and families of our hospice patients can always use some extra love — especially during the busy holiday season. We enjoy supporting programs that help ease minds and fill hearts." 



# Ways to Give

There's more than one way to give to what means most to you. Here are some of the most popular ways our friends choose to make a difference:

## Cash Gifts

Outright gifts are the most direct way for you to have an immediate impact. You can mail a check or a money order to our corporate office at the address below, to the attention of the Ohio Living Foundation. Or make a gift online at [ohioliving.org/foundation](http://ohioliving.org/foundation).

## A Gift in Your Will

If you're not ready to part with your money today but still want to make an impact, consider a gift through your will or trust, or naming us as a beneficiary of an asset or account.

## Life Income Gift

You'll receive an immediate tax deduction and income for life through fixed payments that are partially tax-free, with a Charitable Gift Annuity.

Retirement Assets – Donating retirement assets, through a charitable IRA distribution or other ways, can provide you with tax benefits and help with inheritance planning.

## Real Estate

This option helps you avoid the hassle of selling your home, vacation property or commercial real estate. There's even a way to donate your property that will pay you a fixed income for life!

## Grants

A gift from your family foundation or donor advised fund can provide a variety of benefits.

## Other Options

There are lots of ways we can help find the right gift for you. Talk to our experts at no obligation. Please feel free to reach out to one of our Gift Planners to discuss further.



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