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OUR MISSION

Presbyterian Homes of Georgia, Inc., is a Christian ministry providing exceptional services to enhance the quality of life for senior adults.

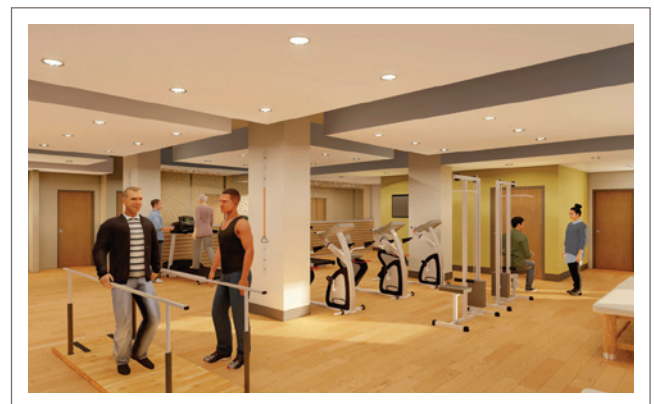
GROUND HAS BROKEN IN ATHENS!

Ground is broken! Three hundred guests, including local dignitaries, future residents and Presbyterian Homes representatives gathered recently to break ground on Presbyterian Village Athens. The \$143 million continuing care "life plan" retirement community will be located in Oconee County. Construction of the 70-acre campus is expected to be completed in two years with opening day in late 2020 or early 2021, and will offer independent living in cottages, villas and apartments as well as health care support in assisted living, memory support assisted living and skilled nursing. To learn more, call: 706-621-6026. ♦



EXPANSION PROJECT PLANNED FOR AUSTELL

Part of a massive expansion and renovation project to come at Presbyterian Village Austell, the new Rehabilitation Suite will quadruple the space available for physical therapy, speech therapy and occupational therapy. Presbyterian Village Austell plans to increase its number of Private Nursing Rooms, expand the Chapel, build a new 250-seat Auditorium, expand the Kitchen/Dining Facilities including construction of a Pub, build a new Rehabilitation Suite and enlarge the Wellness Center. In addition, interior spaces in the Morris Health Services Center, Hearthstone and the Wellness Center will be renovated and refreshed with new lighting, paint and floor coverings.



Architectural planning for these projects is drawing to a close. Construction drawings are completed, final cost estimation is underway and planning for civil engineering work is in progress. ♦

engifted: (v.) to provide with gifts

By Frank H. McElroy, Jr.

*You crown the year with Your goodness
and your paths drip abundance.*

Psalm 65:11 NKJV

Abundance is ours. Presbyterian Homes of Georgia ministry experiences abundance in many ways. The generosity of our many friends who provide for our residents in need, meaningful friendships that we are privileged to have with our residents and their families, connectedness to our faith family and the sacrificial service of our staff family are just a few examples of that abundance. We are grateful for all that God has provided.

With the end of 2018 and the beginning of 2019, our 70th year of caring for seniors, we are filled with optimism for the growth of our ministry. Our work is increasingly important as our country's population rapidly ages. Baby boomers present a "silver tsunami" that is coming at the very time that most in this group will be unable to pay the full cost of their care. But, Presbyterian Homes of Georgia stands firm. We are ready to help. And, with your continuing help, the *Caring Hands Fund* will steadfastly provide the assurance that no resident will ever be asked to leave our care because his or her financial resources have been depleted.

We wish you a very Happy New Year and, as we do so, we reflect upon the fact that the years of this ministry continue to be crowned with goodness. Our paths do drip abundance... because of God's generous gifts and because you care enough to help. We are blessed by your *Caring Hands* annual gifts, the capital gifts given that undergird that *Caring Hands* work, and by legacy gifts that endow the *Caring Hands Fund* and its efforts well into the future.

Together, we share goodness, spread abundance and serve those who are most in need...in His name and for His glory. ♦

YOU CAN BE AN ANGEL!

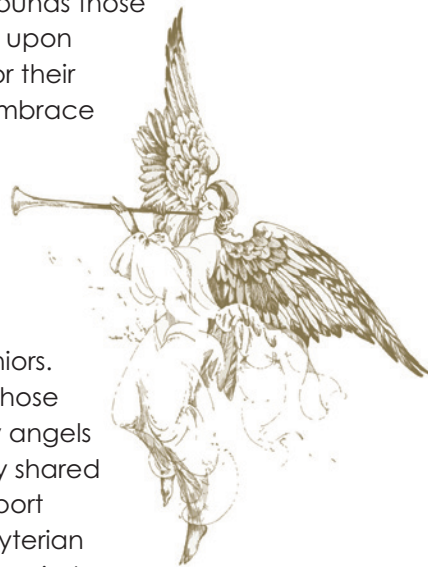
As 2018 closes and a new year begins, we are reminded of the age-old message of God's infinite caring that continues to resonate and remain constant. It is a comforting message that we are held in God's hand, cared about and cared for. At Presbyterian Homes of Georgia, we seek to serve in God's name and as we serve, we need look no further to see God's love than the earthly angels who send messages of caring to our residents through Angel gifts.

Each gift surrounds those who depend upon our ministry for their care, in an embrace of quiet assurance.

As 2019 arrives, we enter our 70th year of caring for seniors. For many of those years, earthly angels have selflessly shared financial support to help Presbyterian Homes of Georgia to continue caring for residents who have outlived their financial resources. The need is great, but with help, we can meet it.

If you have not yet had the opportunity, please join this divinely inspired chorus by giving a year-end Angel gift to the *Caring Hands Fund*. Alleluia! ♦

**For unto us a Child is born,
Unto us a Son is given...**
- Isaiah 9:6



A DAY IN THE LIFE OF...

MARY TWINING BAIRD

When Mary Twining Baird was asked to teach a graduate level class on her experience on the Sea Islands, she was petrified. The Phillips Tower resident had just started graduate school at Indiana University, pursuing a master's degree in anthropology and folklore.

"I was a first year graduate student," she recalls. "The thought of standing up in front of other graduate students scared the heck out of me."

But as Mary spoke, she realized that she had command of her subject, and enjoyed sharing her knowledge of the Sea Island people. "There weren't many books on the subject at the time," she says, "so to learn about this, you had to see it for yourself, or hear about it from others who had seen it."

After that, Mary says, "there was no looking back." Those experiences – lecturing in classes at Indiana University while she was also a student – sparked her interest in teaching, and launched a career that spanned nearly four decades, teaching classes in anthropology and folklore about the subject she had grown to love: the culture and people on the Sea Islands.

The Sea Islands run along a 400-mile stretch of the Southeastern coast from the southern most part of North Carolina to the northern tip of Florida. They are accessible by streams, rivers and marshes. Some you can only get to by boat and others are connected to the mainland by bridges and causeways. They are known for their rich African-American culture and history.

Just before she began graduate school, Mary went to Charleston, South Carolina, volunteering to help get African Americans in that city and the nearby islands registered to vote, something she called part of her "civic duty." She got to know many of the locals and realized "there was a whole other culture out there."

"The people on the islands had a whole other way of living, and they spoke Gullah, a whole other language. I was looking at them intently, trying to understand Gullah, and they were looking at me trying to understand my



Mary Twining Baird

'Yankee' language," says Mary, who was born in New York City, but grew up in Cambridge, Massachusetts, where her father was a professor of astronomy and geography at Harvard University.

"I was offered a job as a librarian of a school while I was in Charleston," she says, "and I was tempted to stay, but I thought that if I was going to say anything significant about the Sea Island people, I needed further training."

So, she completed her graduate degree (and eventually earned a Ph.D.) and when recruiters from Georgia State University came looking for new instructors to augment their anthropology department, she accepted a position. In 1968, Mary moved to Atlanta to take her first teaching position – teaching courses in both anthropology and English. From Georgia State, she went on to teach at Atlanta University (now Clark-Atlanta University), where

Continued on page 6

TECHNOLOGY THAT CARES: PV'S HEARTHSTONE RESIDENTS AND STAFF HELP SHAPE SimpleC

Imagine you have a family member with Alzheimer's or dementia who has difficulty taking medication or who becomes agitated when he or she is given a bath. Then imagine, as a family member, that you can put pictures and music in a computer that can then be shown to your loved one to help decrease their anxiety and distress during certain times.

That is what SimpleC is able to do. The SimpleC Companion™ is a technology platform that offers digital therapy to those with memory disorders and other chronic diseases. It is a computer used by caregivers to remind, encourage and soothe the individuals for whom they are caring. The digital therapies include pictures, music, and Trusted Voice™ that are meaningful to each person. The therapies help improve habits and mood, resulting in better health.

"The goal is to avoid drug interventions to deal with agitation," says Dan Pompilio, Founder and CEO of SimpleC. "We do this by influencing behavior through reminiscence therapy, music therapy and validation that by hearing a trusted voice, they are in a safe place."

At the heart of this is what is known as "person-centered care", which focuses on the personality, the past, social supports and the routine of each individual. "Who the person is comes first," says Jason Zamer, Vice President of Customer Success at SimpleC, "and that will be different for everyone. We set up the Companion based on who they are and what is meaningful to them."

He says the top five challenges the Companion addresses are: participation (in both social activities and in care), depression, bathing, getting up and dressed in the morning and hydration. Research has shown that with use of the Companion, individuals can achieve 60 to 70 percent of their personal care and wellness goals such as: reducing agitation, irritability, disorientation and sleep



Hearthstone staff member Rosy Cespedes (L) and resident Walter Barnhill (R) use SimpleC to reminisce about basketball.

difficulties while increasing exercise, improving hydration and maintaining a healthy level of food consumption.

"We launched the SimpleC ten years ago at Hearthstone at Presbyterian Village," said Presbyterian Homes of Georgia COO Gwen Hardy. "It introduced a new way for families to keep in touch with their loved ones and to provide support. Families and friends could share photos, spark memories, select favorite music to improve their loved one's mood and record voice messages to express their love and provide motivation."

"Presbyterian Village has been an important partner of ours for years," Jason says. "Having Hearthstone as a research site has really helped develop a person-centered care solution." Over the years, SimpleC has collaborated with Presbyterian Village to expand care modalities, identifying new ways to help Hearthstone residents.

"We studied the effect of individually tailored prompts for meals, by showing residents pictures of food before mealtimes," he continued. "The results were significant.

Continued on page 6

THURSDAYS WITH GIZMO

Each Thursday, Lizzie Garrett, a resident at Presbyterian Home and Retirement Community in Quitman, looks forward to a special guest. The visitor is none other than Gizmo, a five-year-old Havenese therapy dog.

He and his owner, Carol Aldrich-George, visit with the residents on Thursday mornings for a few hours. Carol takes Gizmo to individual rooms as well as in open areas to give residents a chance to pet the dog and visit with him. Every now and then, he'll even do some tricks.

"Visiting with Gizmo gives people that connection that they might've had as previous pet owners," Carol says. "It connects them through their memories and makes them smile."

Gizmo is a certified pet therapy dog, which means he went through special training to be verified on his temperament, behavior and health. Carol has been taking Gizmo to visit people for several years, and has been coming to Quitman for the last year. She is also a trained hospice volunteer and comes through a program at Archbold Medical Center.



In general, pet therapy has been known to help reduce blood pressure, alleviate pain, reduce stress and have overall a calming effect on individuals. To Carol, the best part is seeing Gizmo put a smile on people's faces.

"It's wonderful for the residents, and it's good for Gizmo and me," she says. "So, it's a win-win. It's very rewarding." ♦

EXERCISING IN SWAINSBORO



Swainsboro residents (pictured above) get into the groove with the weekly Low Impact Exercise Class. Every Wednesday at 11:00 a.m. a group of eight to ten residents come and "dance to the oldies" with Rosa Amerson. You can see smiles and hear giggles as they exercise!

PV's Hearthstone Residents and Staff Help Shape SimpleC – cont. from p. 4

Residents knew the meal was coming and they were awake and ready for it. The study found that this method was effective in improving meal consumption. It also had the added effect of increasing hydration and decreasing the risk of infections."

SimpleC used that research as a jumping off point for more research opportunities, and is now using grants from the National Institutes of Health (NIH) to support further studies.

"We are currently in the midst of a pilot study at Hearthstone based on using our technology to track the potential side-effects of the drugs that each resident is

taking," Jason says. "We are studying the longer term behavioral trends – such as nausea, agitation, anxiety– and then hope to make results available for quarterly family meetings and doctors' visits.

"We want to help be another tool to reinforce the person-centered care done so well at Hearthstone," Jason says. "Working together, we refine new care measures to improve the quality of life for residents."

"We are proud to be associated with Presbyterian Homes of Georgia," adds Dan Pompilio. "They are a true partner." ♦

A Day in the Life of... – cont. from p. 3

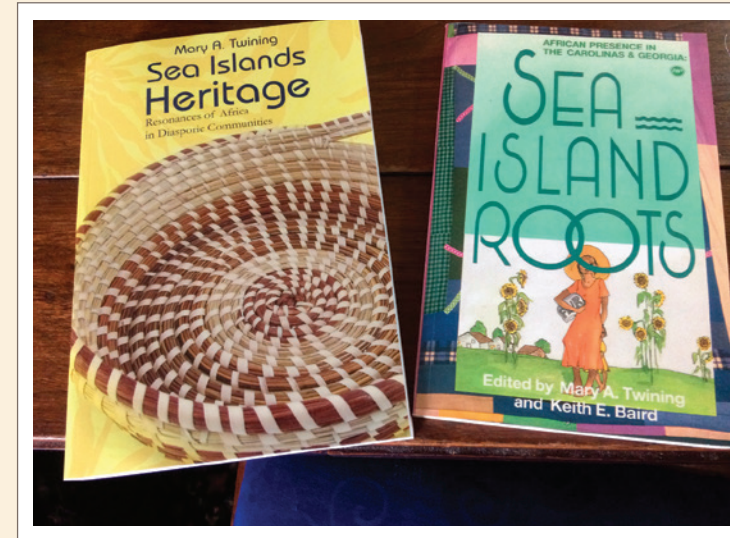
she started an African American Studies Program. It was there that she met her future husband, Keith Baird, a linguistics professor.

When Keith took a teaching post at the State University College at Buffalo, she went with him, taking a position in the African American Studies and Anthropology Departments. Eventually they returned to Clark-Atlanta University to teach.

Along the way, she continued to do field work in the Sea Islands, immersing herself in the culture to learn more about the people and the islands themselves. She wrote two books on the subject: "Sea Island Roots," a collection of essays based on her dissertation work and co-edited with her husband; and "Sea Islands Heritage," about the history and culture of the Gullah Geechee people.

Mary retired from Clark Atlanta University in 2002, but continued to lecture on her favorite subject. Mary and Keith moved to Philips Tower in 2009, after living in the Adams Park area of Atlanta for decades. She says they liked the diversity of Philips Tower, meeting people from all walks of life and areas of the world. Keith passed away in July 2017, at the age of 94.

Mary, who is 87 years old, still manages to keep very busy. Since 2004, she has been jury chairperson of the Lillian Smith Book awards, named for the Georgia author. She and the committee read through 40 submissions each



year. She is also working on a paper she hopes to submit to the American Folklore Society.

She says there are many highlights in her long career, including participating in the Civil Rights struggle in South Carolina, and her work with undergraduate and graduate students at Clark-Atlanta University, helping them meet their goals. She is also very proud of the two books she wrote.

"It was always my goal to write a book about my time in the field," Mary says. "The Sea Island people are among the most gracious people in the world. I was grateful to be a participant observer in their culture." ♦

CALVIN COURT RESIDENTS ATTEND ATLANTA'S MAYOR'S BALL

It was the "Roaring Twenties" all over again for the dozen or so Calvin Court residents who attended the Annual Mayor's Seasoned Ball. A festive night to honor seniors, filled with music, food, dancing and celebration, the Ball was held recently at the Marriott Marquis Hotel and was open to City of Atlanta residents 62-years-old and older. The event was free of charge to the seniors who attended, with the city providing transportation to and from the gala.

"This Ball is a small token of our appreciation," Atlanta Mayor Keisha Lance Bottoms told the group. "It is upon your shoulders that we all stand. On behalf of the city of Atlanta, we are grateful for you, we appreciate you and we love you."

Following the Mayor's welcome, attendees were treated to a sit-down dinner, music from a DJ, a costume contest for the best "Roaring Twenties" themed costume and a recognition of longevity: a special prize awarded to the most senior person at the party.

The Ball has been a popular activity for Calvin Court residents for several years.

For resident Vertis King, it was all about the dancing. "I love to dance," he says. "I got up there right when it started and didn't stop until it was time to leave." Vertis says it's also nice being around other seniors. "I ran into someone I worked with 20 years ago and because I have attended the Ball for several years, I have come to know several of those who attend," he says.

Fellow Calvin Court resident Gemma Pryce attended for the first time this year. "It was a great opportunity to dress up, see all the costumes and meet new people," says Gemma, who moved to Atlanta in May. "When you're new to a city you like to try to go to as many activities as you can to see what the city has to offer. I was very impressed with this event."

For both Gemma and Vertis, when the Mayor's Ball comes around next year, they will be on the bus! "Definitely," Vertis says. "I will be there." ♦



A group of Calvin Court residents attended the 2018 Mayor's Ball in Atlanta. From left: Wayne Harris, Corretia White, Andrea Ellison, Gemma Price, Barbara Reeder, Vertis King and A.J. Thakore.

12TH ANNUAL CARING HANDS CLASSIC AND CEILIDH AUCTION ANOTHER GREAT SUCCESS

Comedian Jeff Foxworthy's pro bono performance at the recent 12th Annual Caring Hands Classic Ceilidh Auction highlighted the evening where 450 guests enjoyed an outdoor silent auction party and strolling buffet before heading into the Atlanta Athletic Club for the Caring Hands program.



The following day, two hundred golfers teed it up to benefit Caring Hands in near perfect course conditions. Golfers enjoyed vying for the chance to win vehicles, watches and other prizes with a hole in one on the Par 3 Holes. Several came close, with one shot that hit the pin but that didn't drop in the hole.



In the church competition, the Knox Cup was won by the Oconee Presbyterian Church/Madison Presbyterian Church team, while the Calvin Cup went home to Valdosta with the Park Avenue Methodist Church team.

With donations still coming in, preliminary figures show that a net of \$506,000 has been raised to date for the Caring Hands Fund from the combined total of the Ceilidh Auction and the Golf Tournament. These dollars will supply much needed nursing care, supplies, drugs and therapies as well as other services for our residents. We are extremely grateful to all who supported these events. ♦



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