

“We don’t stop playing because we grow old.  
We grow old because we stop playing.”  
-George Bernard Shaw

# MAGNOLIA *Messenger*

A monthly newsletter for Hillcrest Health & Rehab’s  
Magnolia neighborhoods

## Advantages of Pet Therapy

You may have noticed that in any given week, Hillcrest has many furry visitors. Therapy dogs provide a lick in exchange for a good petting. Farm animals have made appearances to the delight of many of our guests who grew up in the country.

There is a reason for this creature madness! Pet therapy is a very beneficial activity for animal lovers. Numerous studies show that contact with an animal can have profound mental, emotional and physiological benefits for our aging adults.

### Mental Advantages

The simple act of petting an animal can kindle warm memories. This in turn stimulates communication, conversation and interaction with others. The introduction of a pet creates a diversion from the monotony of the day. Watching birds fly, fish swim or a squirrel hunt for its buried acorns provides mental stimulation without verbal prompts.

### Emotional Advantages

For many, the journey of aging leads to loneliness. Physical limitations prevent seniors from engaging in activities that once brought them joy. Social engagements with friends may be limited or may no longer exist. This most likely leads to isolation. Animals can provide the nurturing our aging adults so desperately need. They serve as a companion, give our seniors something to look forward to and give them a purpose for getting out of bed in the morning.

### Physical Advantages

As we age, physical changes lead to limited mobility, lower energy, isolation and depression. Petting or holding an animal has been scientifically proven to increase the “feel good” hormone serotonin and other hormones that elevate mood and reduce depression. Blood pressure and cholesterol decrease, anxiety is reduced and appetites are stimulated. Those that take care of pets also tend to take better care of themselves. This can lead to the reduction of the need for some medications. Petting or brushing an animal can improve range of motion and provides physical activity.

**-Laurie Simmons, Recreation Leader**

## FEBRUARY BIRTHDAYS

Feb. 2 Yolanda Oropeza

## WELCOME TO MAGNOLIA!

Bonnie Miller, Michael Murphy, Mildred Carey,  
Marie Apostol, Harold Hanten &  
Joseph Chapman

## MEET THE LEADERSHIP TEAM

### ADMINISTRATOR:

Aaron Klaasmeyer, (402) 682-4229

### DIRECTOR OF PATIENT TRANSITIONS:

Chasity Coover, (402) 682-4297

### DIRECTOR OF RECREATION:

Mary Johnson, (402) 682-4223

### DIRECTOR OF CLINICAL SERVICES:

Jamie Shanks, (402) 682-4220

### DIRECTOR OF INPATIENT REHAB:

Raegan Muller, (402) 682-4263

### DIRECTOR OF CULINARY SERVICES:

Kyle Lancial, (402) 682-4236

### DIRECTOR OF ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES:

David Murdoch, (402) 682-4235

### REGIONAL ADMINISTRATOR:

Cindy Klein, (402) 933-4662

## ARE YOU ON THE LIST?

Each month, we distribute the newsletter via email. If you’d like to be included on the newsletter distribution list, get us your email address, and we’ll keep you posted!



## FEBRUARY HIGHLIGHTS

- Feb. 1: Merrymakers’ Aaron Shoemaker in Magnolia Gardens, 2 p.m.
- Feb. 4: Bible Study in the Chapel, 2 p.m.
- Feb. 6: Merrymakers’ Joe Taylor in the Chapel, 10:30 a.m.
- Feb. 11: Bible Study in the Chapel, 2 p.m.
- Feb. 13: Moms of Faith Toddler Therapy in Windsor, 9 a.m.
- Feb. 13: Singers from Christ Cathedral in the Chapel, 7 p.m.
- Feb. 15: Fontenelle Forest in Magnolia Gardens, 10 a.m.
- Feb. 16: Scatter Joy Farms, 2 p.m.

## WORSHIP SERVICES

Sunday, 10 a.m., Catholic Mass in the Chapel  
Monday, 1:30 p.m., Worship with Chaplain Jerry  
Tuesday morning, Catholic Communion,  
provided by John DuBay

## FEATURED EVENT

### Valentine’s Day Lunch

February 11, 12-3 p.m.  
Magnolia Garden

It’s a celebration of LOVE! Come join your special someone for our annual Valentine’s Day Celebration. The menu includes sloppy joes, fresh fruit salad, potato salad, iced tea and mini cakes.

## Aaron’s Column



According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the flu season is in full swing with widespread cases being reported in all 48 states. We didn’t have to go far to discover that Nebraska is right in the thick of it as well. Several cases have been confirmed within our own

walls.

Masks and gloves were donned, doors shut and several additional precautions were taken to maintain as much control over the spreading of the flu as possible. In essence, it was a quarantine. As inconvenient as it was, however, the plan worked. For now, Hillcrest Health and Rehab is holding steady with minimal cases reported.

An influenza vaccination and good hygiene habits are your best defenses in abating the flu. Avoid close contact with those you suspect are sick. If that is not possible, opt for a mask that will cover both your mouth and nose. Wash, wash, wash your hands, and resist touching your mouth, nose and eyes.

Many of our residents are already living with compromised immune systems. We ask that should you be experiencing any flu-like symptoms, please consider putting off your visit to Hillcrest for a few days or until symptoms no longer exist.

On the fun side of it, as our little visitors entered the building, convincing them to put on a mask and play Doc McStuffins was so enjoyable for the visitor and team members. Smiles all around.

Thank you!

**-Aaron Klaasmeyer, Administrator**

## RESIDENTS IN ACTION

Every morning, our residents are encouraged to join in our Fit and Fun exercise program. Numerous chair exercises help stretch the muscles, allowing for greater range of motion and better blood flow throughout the body. For some, it's not so much a chore as it is fun when we pretend to be putting cookies in an oven, flying a jet plane or disco dancing.



Joan Spain builds a snowman with the help of Recreation Leader Emma Larson.



Jackie Matsen chooses buttons for her snowman craft.



Richard McConnell enjoys the morning newspaper.

A couple times a month, our Magnolia residents demonstrate their creative qualities by engaging in a craft project. Their latest undertaking was, appropriately enough, building a snowman. Made of painted wooden blocks, residents used their own inspirations to bring them to life.

**-Laurie Simmons, Recreation Leader**



A warm fire brings a warm smile to Lonnie Barber's face.



Clem Boukal, Agnes Nolte and Birtie Tschida warm up with morning exercise.

## A MONTH IN REVIEW

The bitter cold that blanketed the Omaha area made most of us want to cover up with our own blankets and hibernate for the winter. However, several of our Magnolia residents used the time wisely by breaking out the puzzles and

strengthening their brain "smarticles." With a little patience and perseverance, they have completed several pictures and have advanced to the 500-piece puzzles!

**-Laurie Simmons, Recreation Leader**



Jackie Schwartz studies her puzzle piece.



Birtie Tschida and Jackie Matsen help each other to find the right pieces.



Juanita Arcola, Agnes Nolte, Birtie Tschida and Jackie Matsen spend an afternoon working on a large puzzle.