

# INSIDE: LEADERSHIP TRANSITION, PAGE 8



#### Table of Contents

| Making a Difference  |
|--|
| Sweeter by the Dozen   |
| Healthcare Admissions<br>Reopened at ECH 4–5   |
| Progress on ECH Patio Homes6–7   |
| Saluting Ginny Uehlin's Dedication8–9  |
| Features   |
| Engaging Team Members to<br>Build an Inclusive Culture 10–12   |
| Walking the Walk   |
| A Taste For Giving Gala13  |
| Unveiling the Manse<br>Makeover in Walnut Hills 14   |
| Scheper Ridge<br>Opens in Florence   |
| New Carlisle Village Creates a<br>Caring Community for Elders 16   |
| Preserving and Creating Affordable Housing in Clinton County   |
| A New Home for Deupree<br>Meals On Wheels18–19   |
| ON THE COVER<br>ERS Senior Executive Director of Residential<br>Healthcare Beverly Edwards<br>Photograph by Gary Kessler |

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Linkage is a resource to address issues and interests of older adults, providing a link between ERS's programs and the community. Since 1951, Episcopal Retirement Services (ERS) has dedicated itself to improving the lives of older adults from all faiths through innovative, quality living environments and in-home and community-based services delivered by experienced and compassionate professionals.











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FROM THE PURI ISHERS OF



Linkage is published by Cincinnati Magazine on behalf of Episcopal Retirement Services.

# Sweeter by the Dozen

ERS is One of Only three "12 for 12" in Cincinnati



# CINCINNATI'S TOP WORKPLACES Proud winner 12 years in a row.

his year, ERS was pleased and proud to again be nominated for a workplace engagement awards program.

The 2021 nomination was particularly meaningful considering the lingering effects of the global pandemic. Our Cincinnati team members were invited to complete a survey and measure the caliber of our culture compared to other companies.

Cincinnati.com and the *Cincinnati Enquirer* announced in June that ERS had won Top Workplace honors for the *twelfth* straight time.

The award is based solely on the feedback hundreds of team members offered through the engagement survey administered online.

Being named a Top Workplace a dozen years in a row is rare—only two other Cincinnati companies can make that claim. ERS is honored, especially because the judges were our team members!

Enquirer Media has recognized 135 companies and organizations in Greater Cincinnati and Northern Kentucky as Top Workplaces for 2021.

—Feoshia Davis ■



"I have never worked for an organization with a culture such as this. From the minute I walked in for my first interview to every day now at work, I get the same warm, welcoming feeling I've felt from the beginning. Here at ERS, you are known by name by everyone."

—Employee Survey response

# Renovations Complete and Healthcare Admissions Reopened at ECH

Aesthetic enhancements, a contemporary dining room, and a reimagined care model bring new life to ECH By Elizabeth Miller Wood



The renovated healthcare and administration building reopened in 2021.









Grille 75 offers premeir dining services to residents and their quests. ECH admissions are open for memory care, skilled care, and independent living. The personal care center is under construction and will open in 2022.

n March 2021, residents moved into the newly renovated healthcare households at Episcopal Church Home (ECH) now called Morton House. Fresh paint, new carpet, and bright accessories are just the beginning of the resort-like facelift, which is part of the community's larger, multi-phase Master Plan. "Our residents and our staff are in awe of how great it looks," says ERS Senior Executive Director of Residential Healthcare Beverly Edwards.

Along with cosmetic improvements, ECH also reorganized its care model to provide more personalized, relationship-based care. Four "households" now comprise the healthcare community, with 26 healthcare beds occupying the east wing and 26 personal care beds occupying the west wing. Each wing is further divided into 13-bed households according to memory or physical care needs.

Compared to the previous care model, which involved revolving care from various providers, the new model equips one caretaker to perform multiple duties in order to deliver more continuity of care as a versatile worker. "We really get to know our residents on an intimate level," says Edwards. "We are guests in their homes, and we're willing and ready to serve their needs."

Completed in July 2021, Grille 75 allows residents to experience a brand-new restaurant-style dining facility with a Kentucky-inspired menu. Guests are served tableside with choices that "remind our residents of what they would get out in the broader community," says Edwards.

Next on the horizon, a 22 apartment-style personal care center that broke ground in the fall 2021 and is projected for completion in the last half of 2022. ■

# Progress on ECH Patio Homes and Clubhouse

New patio home models attract widespread interest while anticipation builds for the clubhouse completion By Elizabeth Miller Wood



ERS built three new model homes in Dudley Square at Episcopal Church Home in Louisville as part of the current master plan.

onstruction has been completed on three new model patio homes, which are part of a new independent living neighborhood called Dudley III. The homes are available in two models: The Herrington (1,600 square feet) and The Cumberland (2,100 square feet). Both models will feature two bedrooms, two bathrooms, a two-car garage, en suite baths with a stand-up shower, up-

scale kitchens, and open floorplans. The Cumberland will offer an additional sunroom space.

Each home will require about six months to complete. Construction begins this winter for 22 new patio homes to be built around a beautiful amenity garden.

"We've had over 90 inquiries for the model homes, and about 10 people have already com-









The new patio homes at Dudley Square combine the best parts of private independent living with the benefits and amenities of community life. ERS designed the patio homes as open-concept, two-bedroom, two-bath homes with modern features such as quartz countertops and energy-efficient, higherd appliances.

mitted to purchasing," says ERS Senior Executive Director of Residential Healthcare Beverly Edwards. "Those who are interested will need to act very quickly."

The much-anticipated new clubhouse was completed earlier this fall. Amenities include a fitness area with state-of-the-art exercise equipment, spa-

cious rooms for gathering, a full kitchen space, and a lively calendar of social programming.

"I envision the clubhouse will be the heartbeat of our independent living portion of our community," says Edwards. "It will be a gathering space for bridge or happy hours or just to enjoy one another's company."

# Announcing Ginny Uehlin's Retirement

For more than 30 years, she has been a respected leader in aging services, serving our community's seniors By Val Prevish





Ginny Uehlin pictured in 2016 with fellow next generation leaders Laura Lamb, Megan Bradford, and Emerson Stambaugh. Serving families has been one of the most rewarding aspects of Ginny's career. Pictured in 2010 with Marjorie P. Lee resident The Rev. David Lowry and his late wife Mary Beth.

fter serving older adults for more than 30 years, Vice President of Residential Health Care Ginny Uehlin is retiring. It is a bittersweet moment for the ERS team as Uehlin has helped guide the organization through many industry changes, most recently the tremendous challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic.

"She dedicated her entire career to older adults and her caring and intelligent leadership has added to the culture of excellence within our residential health care," says President and CEO Laura Lamb. "She is an amazing leader and has the heart to serve older adults."

Uehlin joined ERS in 2001 as Administrator of Health Services for Marjorie P. Lee Retirement Community, where she served until 2015. As Vice President for Residential Health Care she has provided strategic leadership and management oversight for the organization's continuing care communities. She was instrumental in the leadership team that designed the

innovative Deupree Cottages on the Deupree House campus. She also provided critical leadership for the current ECH Master Plan and supported the implementation of the Marjorie P. Lee Master Plan.

Lamb says her unwavering leadership through the COVID-19 pandemic was essential in providing a high quality safety record for ERS.

"She deserves a lot of credit for leading the organization through the difficult times of the pandemic. She kept residents and staff safe by following all CDC guidelines closely. We were able to come through the worst of the crisis without sacrificing our quality of care," says Lamb.

While Uehlin will be missed, ERS is looking at new candidates for Vice President of Residential Healthcare from its Next Generation Leadership Program to fill the large shoes she will leave behind. Lamb says there will be no gap in leadership for the role as ERS transitions to the next chapter in health care services.

# A Conversation with Ginny Uehlin, VP of ERS Residential Healthcare

irginia "Ginny" Uehlin, who has served older adults for 30 years and with ERS for more than 20 years, will retire in December 2021. Her legacy of compassion, dedication, and leadership will be remembered at ERS for years to come.

We sat down with Ginny to talk about her time at ERS, and her plans after retirement.

## Q: What aspect of your career at ERS did you find the most rewarding?

Ginny: Interacting with the residents, families, and staff. When I was an administrator at Marjorie P. Lee, I really got to know everyone in the building, and I found that really rewarding. Even now, there are residents and staff with whom I have close relationships who have watched my daughter grow. She was 4 years old when I started at ERS. Now she's 25!

## Q: What was your proudest moment during your tenure with the organization?

Ginny: I would say helping implement personcentered care at ERS. That philosophy is integral to the organization now. It's hard to believe there was ever a time when we told people when to eat, when to go to bed....I'm proud to have been a part of the team to bring purpose, choice, and freedom to our residents' lives.

## Q: What are you most looking forward to during your own retirement?

Ginny: Traveling. My husband retired nine years ago, so we want to go on more trips together. I've always wanted to pack a bag, go to the airport, and just flip a coin.

I also have this dream of taking each of my grandchildren somewhere special. I'd like to take my grandson to Antarctica and my granddaughter to France—she loves the *Eloise in Paris* books. I want to learn how to speak French too.



Ginny Uehlin retires December 17, 2021. She leaves a legacy of greatly enhanced care and services for our residents

### Q: Do you have any words of wisdom for families or current ERS staff members?

Ginny: There are so many different things I want to say. For staff, I'd just like to acknowledge the world we're living in right now. It's hard, but don't give up hope.

ERS team members have been heroes in the last year. They should really take pride in everything they've accomplished. I don't know of any other organization that has done what our staff has done.

To the families, I would say be kind to yourself. Caregivers have high expectations and are rough on themselves. Don't forget to show gratitude to both yourself and the staff.

The better the relationship between staff and families, the better we all persevere. ■

# Engaging Team Members to Build an Inclusive Culture

Working to quantify and measure diversity with benchmarks to guide our 'We Can Do Better' efforts By Feoshia Davis



The SLT will serve as Champions for the new Affinity Groups. VP of Middle Market and Ministry Megan Bradford leads the Young Professionals Group, VP of Affordable Living Jimmy Wilson leads the Women In Leadership Group, and VP of Marketing and PR Bryan Reynolds leads the Multicultural Group.

e Can Do Better (WCDB), the Episcopal Retirement Services (ERS) anti-racism initiative, continues to develop more than a year after the staff dialogue began.

The leaders and managers of ERS continue to give team members the tools to learn about being an ally to underrepresented communities through panel discussions and confronting bias. But now, ERS is also taking steps to benchmark our diversity numbers and create new affinity groups to support underrepresented staff success at ERS.

ERS defines *underrepresented* as self-reported black, brown, Hispanic, Asian, and LGBTQ persons.

"It's been a wonderful year learning from our colleagues and friends about their life experiences and how we can be better allies to our black and brown brothers and sisters. In the next phase of WCDB, we are moving into action, looking at how

ERS as an organization can better support underrepresented staff," says ERS President and CEO Laura Lamb.

The Servant Leadership Team (SLT) formed the WCDB initiative in the wake of the police killing of George Floyd and the summer of Black Lives Matter protests that followed. It began in June 2020 as a series of conversations and educational sessions regarding racial injustice and racism.

WCDB exemplifies two of ERS's Core Values: Inclusion and Relationships, says Vice President of Human Resources & Organizational Development Joan Wetzel.

"If we are going to honor relationships, I think WCDB helps us to honor those even more. Knowing what people are going through and their experiences outside of work makes me a more empathic individual," Wetzel says.



Affordable Living's Development Project Manager Janet Westrich and Marjorie P. Lee's Administrative and Volunteer Services Manager Katrina Traylor are two of the co-chairs for the newly formed Affinity Groups. Additional co-leaders will be identified in the coming months.

ERS Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Scorecard ERS recently released a Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Scorecard to take a deeper look into how our organization reflects our community by gender and race. The scorecard is part of 2021 We Can Do Better goals that also include:

- Examining HR practices for systematic biases and update protocols to make them more inclusive.
- Evaluating our resident marketing efforts for Continuing Care Retirement Communities (CCRCs) and identify opportunities to increase the diversity of residents in our CCRCs.
- Creating a staff scholarship for underrepresented staff in aging services, including evaluating our Next Generation Leadership program.

The scorecard reveals that while our overall demographics show a racially diverse staff (nearly half of the team identify with an underrepresented group), the inclusive numbers shrink in managerial and supervisory positions. (Please see scorecard online at erslife.org/WCDBscorecard). The goal over time is to have management more closely mirror staff representation.

While gender and racial gaps are prominent on the ERS Corporate Board, equity has improved. For instance, there were no black or brown members on the board in 2016. Underrepresented groups now comprise 22 percent of the board.

"Our Corporate Board shows what we can do if we are intentional. With our Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Scorecard, we are taking a deeper look into our staffing, management group, board of directors, resident census, and business partners to find places where there are gaps in representation across our organization. Now that we have organized the data, we are putting into place strategies that will help make an impact and measure our progress," Lamb says.

#### New Affinity Groups to Begin

In addition, ERS identified two affinity groups led by staff: Women In Leadership and Multicultural. The existing Young Professionals affinity group will retool their organization to encourage members of any age to support YP growth.

Each affinity group will have two co-chairs, and SLT members will serve as Champions. Staff interested in being part of the affinity groups met in July, with details about their progress will be coming soon.

Each group will decide its direction, Wetzel says. It could include educational topics or activities that help staff get to know each other better. ■



The Black Box mural at Gano Street in Downtown Cincinnati includes Jimmy Wilson, center, as Black Cloud. The project examines and reimagines the negative connotations associated with the word Black in English language and culture.

### **Increasing Racial** Dialogue Through Art

RS Vice President of Affordable Living Jimmy Wilson was among those who participated in **an** evocative mural project early this spring. The project, Black Box by artist Michael Coppage, examines—and reimagines—the negative connotations associated with the word Black in English language and culture.

The artist unveiled his mural on Gano Street, on the 21c Museum Hotel wall in downtown Cincinnati. There are 13 six-foot photos of black men and boys, each wearing a black t-shirt containing a familiar phrase: black market, black cat, or black ice.

Wilson, who is friends with the artist, is Black Cloud.

"His idea was birthed during the national and global reaction to the murder of George Floyd. This project was our way of inviting the public to have authentic conversations with black men about whatever topic they wanted. In our society, 'black' is often used to heighten the negativity of a thing

or situation. This also includes black men. I joined the project to advance community discourse about positive blackness, our perspective, resilience, and beauty," Wilson explains.

The mural was one of 27 projects by black and brown artists funded by nonprofit ArtsWave on the theme of "truth and reconciliation."

"When I first saw myself and others in mural form, I was quite proud of the images as I knew this was something unique and perhaps could add significant value to the artistic landscape. I also felt a sense of heaviness. We are anonymous faces and voices for the countless people who see these images and don't know the other black men in the project or me. Anonymous faces that love deeply and are deeply loved by our families and friends. Anonymous voices that care about the concerns in our community and share in the outcry that things must get better," he says of his view of the project.

"This project is an important part of a continuing effort to increase racial understanding," Wilson adds.

"There are too many forces and issues dividing us, and we need to be intentionally mindful of our interdependence," he says. ■ —Feoshia Davis

# A Taste For Giving Gala

There's always room at the ERS Table!











Joining as hosts for the live broadcast Dean Owen Thompson, Laura Lamb, Joy Blang, and Jimmy Wilson. Pictured during the Great Gala Cook-off are Emerson Stambaugh, Suzy De Young, Jack Koepke, Laura Lamb, and Dora Anim. Our supporters are encouraged to make a \$100 donation to supply a pantry pack to our affordable Living residents.

he results are in, and the ERS 'A Taste For Giving Gala' was a sweet success on many levels! To date, we have raised more than \$275,000 for the Good Samaritan Mission (GSM) Fund. Executive Director of Philanthropy Joy Blang hosted the live broadcast from the Bromwell's showroom in downtown Cincinnati. President and CEO Laura R.P. Lamb, VP of Affordable Living Dr. James "Jimmy" Wilson, and The Very Reverend Owen C. Thompson, Dean of Christ Church Cathedral, joined Joy to share highlights, challenges, insights, and our vision for the future for ERS and our partnerships with the community.

More than 400 guests joined the virtual live broadcast on Friday, October 8, 2021 to witness the premiere of the Great Gala Cook-off featuring an

All-Star ERS Cast—ERS Board Member and COO of the Greater Cincinnati Foundation Dora Anim, ERS Board Member and Retired Canon to the Ordinary, The Rev. Jack F. Koepke, III, and Laura Lamb. Hosts Director of Talent Acquisition Alicia Lee, and Executive Director of Hospitality Emerson Stambaugh, engaged with Celebrity Judge and Founder of La Soupe Suzy De Young and the chef contestants as they vied for top chef honors. Their challenge was to create a dish that incorporates ingredients inspired by the older adults served through the GSM. If you weren't able to join us live, please watch Full Gala: erslife.info/tasteforgiving or the Cook-off only: erslife.info/cook-off to see who earned the Top Chef Honor!









# Unveiling The Manse Makeover in Walnut Hills







The Manse has regained its place as a vital part of the Walnut Hills neighborhood. Residents of The Manse, Affordable Living by ERS, its partners and community officials cut the ribbon at the grand opening celebration in September.

alnut Hills's newest affordable living community for seniors celebrated its grand opening on Tuesday, September 28, 2021, featuring Cincinnati Councilman Chris Seelbach among a lineup of Episcopal Retirement Services's (ERS) partners and local leaders.

The ribbon cutting marked the \$13.3 million renovation and expansion of the former Manse Hotel. The historic hotel, one of the finest to welcome African Americans during segregation, has been reimagined through a partnership between The Model Group and Affordable Living by ERS.

The Manse includes 60-one-bedroom and efficiency apartments. The jewel of the hotel, its ballroom, has been transformed into a community gathering space. Meanwhile, a colorful ArtWorks mural From Enslavement to Emancipation: Sky's the Limit by artist Cedric Michael Cox adorns the Lincoln Avenue side of the building.

Thanks to generous donors, \$265,000 in charitable gifts and grants have been received to enhance security and community spaces including a custom display depicting the history of The Manse. ■

# Scheper Ridge Opens in Florence

The beautiful Affordable Living by ERS community is the second built in Kentucky



ERS is thrilled to complete Scheper Ridge and excited for the residents who have moved in this year.

cheper Ridge is a new affordable living community named after retired ERS CFO Paul Scheper. The community was built during the pandemic and is located in Florence, Kentucky.

Affordable Living by ERS will celebrate the completion of Scheper Ridge at its grand opening with a ribbon cutting ceremony in November 2021. The 48 apartments (29 one-bedroom and 19 twobedroom), are fully leased and a waiting list has now been started. The residents are moved in, and they have begun enjoying activities in their community space and recreational areas.

The project received a \$1 million grant from the

Federal Home Loan Bank of Cincinnati. The building was developed by The Model Group, which is a long-standing partner of ERS. They work tirelessly to transform communities by developing high impact affordable housing, and ERS is grateful to work alongside them.

Scheper Ridge is the second affordable living community that ERS owns and operates in Kentucky, along with Trent Village in Lexington. ERS has a mission to serve older adults and will expand its reach and provide more and more access to seniors in the Tri-State who need safe, comfortable, and affordable living environments. ■

# New Carlisle Village Creates a Caring Community for Elders







At the New Carlisle Village community in New Carlisle, Ohio the residents are taking pride in their beautifully renovated apartments and shared spaces. Residents enjoy gathering at their outdoor fitness equipment and raised bed garden.

n 2019, Affordable Living by ERS announced renovations at Rachel Court, the second phase of New Carlisle Village, located in New Carlisle, Ohio. The construction began in 2020 and was completed in July 2021.

The 48 one-bedroom apartments as well as the laundry and maintenance building have been renovated with energy efficient heating and air conditioning, updated kitchen areas, renovated accessible bathrooms and new finishes, as well as an outdoor wellness/fitness area, and areas for residents to gather.

The community building for both Rachel Court

and Sunrise Terrace has also been remodeled.

The 48 fully-renovated one-bedroom apartments at Sunrise Terrace were completed in February 2021.

A highlight for New Carlisle Village residents is their community raised-bed garden. The carefullytended vegetables are shared among all neighbors. It is just one way the community fosters relationships and a sense of purpose among the residents.

The Affordable Living by ERS team is looking forward to a New Carlisle Village ribbon cutting celebration in 2022.

# Preserving Affordable Housing in Clinton County









Prairie View was awarded \$7 million in 2019, and Prairie Gardens, on the same campus, was awarded an additional \$7 million in 2020. Renovations will continue in Wilmington at Prairie Gardens for the next two years. In Blanchester, work is underway at Westminster Court I. The work at Westminster II will start in early 2022 and take 11 months for completion.

#### Prairie Oaks Village, Wilmington

Renovations to Prairie Oaks Village began in 2020 and continued into 2021. Construction is nearly complete on 74 apartments, as well as the common spaces in the Prairie View building. Included in the improvements are many structural elements, like plumbing and new flooring and installing kitchens into many apartments for the first time. Affordable Living by ERS secured \$14 million in tax credits to invest into reviving the Wilmington campus.

#### Westminster Court, Blanchester

Work is well underway at Westminster Court, despite a long process to secure the final funding for the development. An \$8.5 million renovation of 64 one-bedroom apartments for low-income seniors

involves renovating the community space and adding a kitchenette and fitness center with equipment customized for the needs of older adults. Seniorfriendly fixtures, flooring, and lighting will be added to enhance the residents' ability to age in place, and the renovated community will meet Enterprise Green Communities criteria.

The next several months will be full of anticipation. "There is a critical shortage of quality affordable apartments for low-income seniors, and we have a moral commitment to providing comfortable and well-designed living options and supportive services which enrich the lives of older adults who make a home with ERS," says Vice President of Affordable Living Jimmy Wilson. "It is our goal to be an anchor in each of the neighborhoods we serve."

# A New Home for Deupree Meals On Wheels

Thanks to generous donor support, our meals provider will expand services and meet demand By Val Prevish



Thanks to philanthropy, Deupree Meals On Wheels relocated to a larger off-site space customized for delivery operations. ERS got it up and running in April of 2021 and it is much more efficient for both the staff and volunteer drivers.

eupree Meals On Wheels (DMOW) is a lifeline for many seniors living at home alone. That lifeline became a little bigger in April 2021 after DMOW moved to its new, larger location in Fairfax from its former home at Deupree House Dining Services kitchen.

The move was the result of generous donations from many individuals led by two longtime ERS volunteers and past board members. Lead donors Bob and Connie Reed along with Tate and Anne Greenwald, who provided a matching grant opportunity, made it possible for ERS to raise nearly \$90,000 to cover the costs of renovating the new space and then move the operation into its new home. This support was invaluable in making the project a reality during the difficult pandemic year, says Executive Director of Philanthropy Joy Blang.

DMOW saw unprecedented growth during the COVID-19 pandemic. Demand for meals increased 56 percent, says Vice President of Middle Market and Ministry Megan Bradford. With the expanded

kitchen and work space of the new facility, DMOW was able to meet the increased demand with no waiting list, a proud accomplishment.

Amenities at DMOW's new home include larger meal prep and assembly areas for staff. There is also a warming oven and milk refrigerator for convenience. Expanded storage capabilities allow the program to stock additional items for clients, such as microwaves, personal care items, cleaning supplies, and pet food. In addition, there is more office space for staff, and easier access for volunteers to load vehicles for deliveries with a large walk-in cooler located outside the building near the back entrance.

"Loneliness and accessing food have been two of the biggest challenges for older adults since the onset of the pandemic," says Bradford. "Can you imagine having to make the choice of putting your life at risk of contracting COVID-19 at the grocery or feeding yourself? Nearly 7.4 million seniors have incomes below the poverty line. That's an income of \$240 a week or less, which, after housing, utility, and medi-





Lead donors Connie and Bob Reed are pictured baking together in their kitchen. The Reeds provided substantial support for the Deupree Meals On Wheels on the Move Campaign. ERS hopes that their faithful giving will also provide inspiration for others to support our mission.

cal expenses, leaves very little for food. As a part of ERS' mission to serve older adults, Deupree Meals On Wheels provides a layer of support to those living in the greater community to stay independent for as long as possible. Meal delivery can be arranged through Deupree Meals On Wheels on a long-term basis or temporarily."

As numerous volunteers can attest, the program is much more than just a hot meal for many of its clients. Bradford notes the volunteers serve as a friendly face and a connection to the community that might otherwise be missing in their lives.

"Our 'secret sauce' has always been personal interaction. Volunteers and staff don't just deliver meals, they build relationships," says Bradford. "While nutrition and sustenance are a primary goal, regular touch points allow ERS to identify and address physical, medical, or social issues an individual living in isolation may be experiencing."

Donors Tate and Anne Greenwald served as volunteers in the DMOW program for many years and developed strong friendships with the program participants. "Through the years, Anne and I have developed relationships with the people on our route," says Tate Greenwald. "Sometimes, we were the only people they would see all week. The DMOW program is vital to their ability to remain living in their own homes."

Thanks to generosity of the Reeds and Greenwalds and additional program donors, DMOW will continue to meet this vital mission without turning individuals away. Blang said there is a continued need for donations to make vital improvements to the space, including an awning for the pick-up and drop-off location so volunteers can load vehicles without being fully exposed to the weather. If you would like to donate, contact Blang at jblang@erslife.org. ■



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To all who sponsored, supported, and watch partied with us this year... thank you, your kindness will touch many lives. Foundation

"There's always room at the ERS table!"



















