

# NEWSLETTER NAME

SEPTEMBER 2023

## At A Glance



Fresh melon is one of summertime's greatest pleasures!



Labor Day is Monday September 4th!

Managed by



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## From the Desks of the Co-Presidents

Julie Simpkins & Greg Echols

Is going back to school later in life the new norm?

It is that time of year again. Summer is over, school is back in session. We watched with interest the preparation, excitement and even some anxiety of people from pre-school to college. What is even more exciting is the shift of who is choosing to continue their education. Would it surprise you to learn that adults entering or returning to school later in life are now the majority of degree seekers in the U.S.?

There are many reasons for this new normal.

**Intellectual stimulation:** going back to school allows individuals to engage their minds, learn new things and stay mentally sharp.

**Personal growth:** continuing education later in life can be a transformative experience. It offers the opportunity to explore new interests, discover hidden talents and broaden one's perspective.

**Social interaction:** whether in person or online, college provides a unique environment for socializing, networking, and building connections.

**Pursuit of lifelong dreams:** many individuals may have put their educational aspirations on hold due to various reasons earlier in life. Going back to school later allows them to fulfill long-held dreams.

With permission from our own Resident graduate, we would like to share her story in her words. **Please continue to page 2 to read graduate's story.**



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## Path to Graduation: A letter from Vicki Ragner

*Dear Crystal,*

*You once asked me why I was going to college at my age. I think it was a “bucket list” thing. I grew up very poor and never thought about college, as it turned out I was a very good student all through school.*

*I always enjoyed school. After graduating from Auburn High School in 1963,*

*I thought about going to Northern Illinois. However, I had a boyfriend and did not want to leave him. Therefore, I did not go. I got a good job and kept Tom.*

*We were married on August 2, 1964, and had three children. We were not rich but lived well.*

*At the age of 30, I had a nervous breakdown, I felt life was over and I was “old”. That’s when I decided to go to Rock Valley College. I had three children and a full-time job, so I was only able to take one class per semester. There were so many times I could not go because I didn’t have money. I kept plugging along.*

*I was diagnosed with leukemia in 1989. I’m in remission now. My husband later died in 2013 and I started having heart problem and had to have open heart surgery. After moving into Heritage Woods of Rockford (6 years later) I decided to go back for my associate degree. I got off course after I came because my daughter suddenly passed away. My mother passed away the same year.*

*Once I started, I had to finish.*

*Now I’m graduating on May 19, 2023. Hoorah!!!! I finally did it!!!*

*The staff and residents of Heritage Woods were so very encouraging to me. They called me the “college girl.” Their encouragement was very much appreciated. They kept me going and cheering me on. Many of the residents here are “my family.” I am so excited to share my special day with all of them.*

*This fall I am going to a Philosophy Moral class just for fun. I plan to attend as long as I’m able too, who knows, maybe I will get another associate degree!*

*Love, Vicki Ragner*



**Congratulations Vicki! Thank you for showing us we can fulfil our dreams at any age.**



# IN THE NEWS

## ABOUT THE MONTH OF SEPTEMBER

Rick Banas

John Chapman, better known as Johnny Appleseed, was born on Sept. 26, 1774. For 40 years, he travelled through Ohio, Indiana, and Illinois, planting orchards. Native Americans regarded him as a great medicine man. Sept. 26 is Johnny Appleseed Day – a time to celebrate Chapman and all things apple.



Nobel Peace prize recipient Jane Addams was born on Sept. 6, 1860 in Cedarville, Illinois, a small village located north of Freeport in northern Illinois. She is the founder of the Hull House in Chicago to serve the sick and the poor. She is recognized as the founder of the social work profession in the United States. The Jane Addams Memorial Park is located near Navy Pier in Chicago. The Jane Addams recreational trail runs from downtown Freeport to the Wisconsin state line.



In a speech given on Sept. 12, 1962 at Rice University in Houston, President John F. Kennedy proposed a \$5.4 billion space program designed to put a man on the moon and bring him back safely before the end of the decade.

National Assisted Living Week kicks off on Sunday, Sept. 10. The theme this year is a “Season of Reflection.” It provides us with the opportunity to reflect on all the ways Gardant-managed assisted living communities benefit residents and their families. We also can thank all of the dedicated staff members who make a difference in the lives of residents each and every day.



Sept. 10 also is Grandparents Day. It is a time to celebrate the bond grandparents have with their grandchildren.

September is Healthy Aging Month. Started more than 30 years ago, it is designed to encourage us to improve our physical and mental health; incorporate healthy habits into our life; and encourage others to stay active.

National Rehabilitation Week runs from Sept. 18 through 24 in recognition of the benefits of rehabilitation.



Sept. 21 is recognized as the International Day of Peace.

The last Wednesday in September is National Women’s Health and Fitness Day.



# WELLNESS

## Preventing A Fall by Deborah Denham RN, MSN, CPPS, CPHRM

According to the Centers for Disease Control, more than 1 in 4 older adults report falling each year—this results in about 36 million falls. Falls can cause serious injuries such as broken bones or a head or brain injury. But falls are not a normal part of aging—they can be prevented.

There are simple steps you can take to keep yourself from falling and to stay healthy and independent longer.

### Speak up

Tell a provider right away if you fall, worry about falling, or feel unsteady. Have your doctor or pharmacist review all the medicines you take, even over-the-counter medicines. As you get older, the way medicines work in your body can change. Some medicines, or combinations of medicines, can make you sleepy or dizzy and can cause you to fall. Ask your provider about taking vitamin D supplements to improve bone, muscle, and nerve health.

Have your eyes and feet checked

Once a year, check with your eye doctor, and update your eyeglasses, if needed. You may have a condition like glaucoma or cataracts that limits your vision. Poor vision can increase your chances of falling. Also, have your healthcare provider check your feet once a year. Discuss proper footwear, and ask whether seeing a foot specialist is advised.

Ask your doctor about health conditions like depression, osteoporosis, or hypotension that can increase your risk for falling.

### Stay active.

Exercise to improve your balance and strength. Exercises that improve balance and make your legs stronger, lower your chances of falling. It also helps you feel better and more confident. An example of this kind of exercise is Tai Chi. Lack of exercise leads to weakness and increases your chances of falling. Ask your doctor or healthcare provider about the best type of exercise program for you.



### Make your home safer

- Get rid of trip hazards like throw rugs, and keep floors clutter free.
- Brighten your home with extra lighting or brighter light bulbs.
- Install grab bars in the bathroom(s)—next to the toilet and inside and outside of your bathtub or shower.
- Install handrails on both sides of staircases.
- Make your home safer.
- Remove things you can trip over (like papers, books, clothes, and shoes) from stairs and places where you walk.
- Remove small throw rugs or use doublesided tape to keep the rugs from slipping.
- Keep items you use often in cabinets you can reach easily without using a step stool.
- Have grab bars put in next to and inside the tub, and next to the toilet.
- Use non-slip mats in the bathtub and on shower floors.
- Improve the lighting in your home. As you get older, you need brighter lights to see well. Hang light-weight curtains or shades to reduce glare.
- Wear well-fitting shoes with good support inside and outside the house.

## Recipe Corner Ginger-Lime Melon Salad

- 3 ½ pounds melon (such as cantaloupe, honeydew, and/or watermelon), peeled, seeded, and thinly sliced
- 1 tablespoon lime zest plus ¼ cup fresh juice (from 2 limes)
- 1 tablespoon grated fresh ginger (from 1 [2-in.] piece)

### Directions

1. Gently toss together melon, lime zest, lime juice, and ginger in a large bowl. Transfer to a platter; serve immediately, or cover and chill until ready to serve, up to 3 hours.





# LIFESTYLE

## Birthdays/Anniversaries

### Resident Birthdays:

- Wilmona, F (09/02)
- Sherifat, S (09/12)
- Regina, S (09/24)

### Staff Work Anniversaries:

- Name (Years on staff)
- Name (Years on staff)
- Name (Years on staff)

### Welcome New Staff:

- Dajae, Mckinnis (Dietary)
- Sherifat, Shobajo (CNA)
- Mikita, Jones (CNA)
- Tierra, Cammon (CNA)

Greetings All,

I can't believe it is already September. Wow did the summer fly by! We have so many fun programs and activities scheduled for the fall. We are blessed and thankful for all of you who participate in the activities /events that Green Oaks River Oaks hosts. We hope you continue to participate and ask that you bring a friend along as well. July and August flew by so fast as we have made it through another month of renovations and hot temperatures. In September we will "fall" into a new season and be presented with some new opportunities to be engaged and socialize. I'm looking forward to our community remembrance of 9/11, our "Brunch" and celebration of Mexican Independence Day.

Renovations to the Lobby area has begun effective September 1<sup>st</sup>. This will affect the front entrance, reception area, community room and department manager offices. During this time, all activities will be held in the community dining room. To prevent interference or injury, you will not be allowed to gather on the 1<sup>st</sup> floor. You must either exit the community, gather on the patio, or enter the dining room for scheduled activities/ meal services. There is no scheduled time frame for completion currently. I will update everyone as soon as I am made aware of any updates. We appreciate all your cooperation and ask that you continue to be patient with us during this process.

Respectfully,

Donnita Dotson  
Executive Director

**Donnita Dotson**

## Reminders and Events coming up

Brunch 09/15/2023  
Mexican Independence Day 09/16/2023



# LIFESTYLE

## Upcoming Events:

Date: 09/15/2023      Time: 1:00am  
Location: Main Dining Room  
Details: Brunch and Celebration of Mexican Independence Day

## Horoscope

### **Aquarius (1/20-2/18)**

This month will be full luck.

### **Pisces (2/19-3/20)**

Clarity will come in all areas of life.

### **Aries (3/21-4/19)**

Your hard work gives excellent results.

### **Taurus (4/20-5/20)**

Changes are on the rise.

### **Gemini (5/21-6/20)**

You will overcome your complexes and take a step towards your dreams.

### **Cancer (6/21-7/22)**

Prepare for the beginning of a new life stage .

### **Leo (7/23-8/22)**

Increased loads are coming.

### **Virgo (8/23-9/22)**

You are in for unforgettable adventures.

### **Libra (9/23-10/21)**

This is a good time for introspection, the search for true desires.

### **Scorpio (10/22-11/21)**

This is a good time to participate in charity events, to help those in need: kindness will not go unnoticed.

### **Sagittarius (11/22-12/21)**

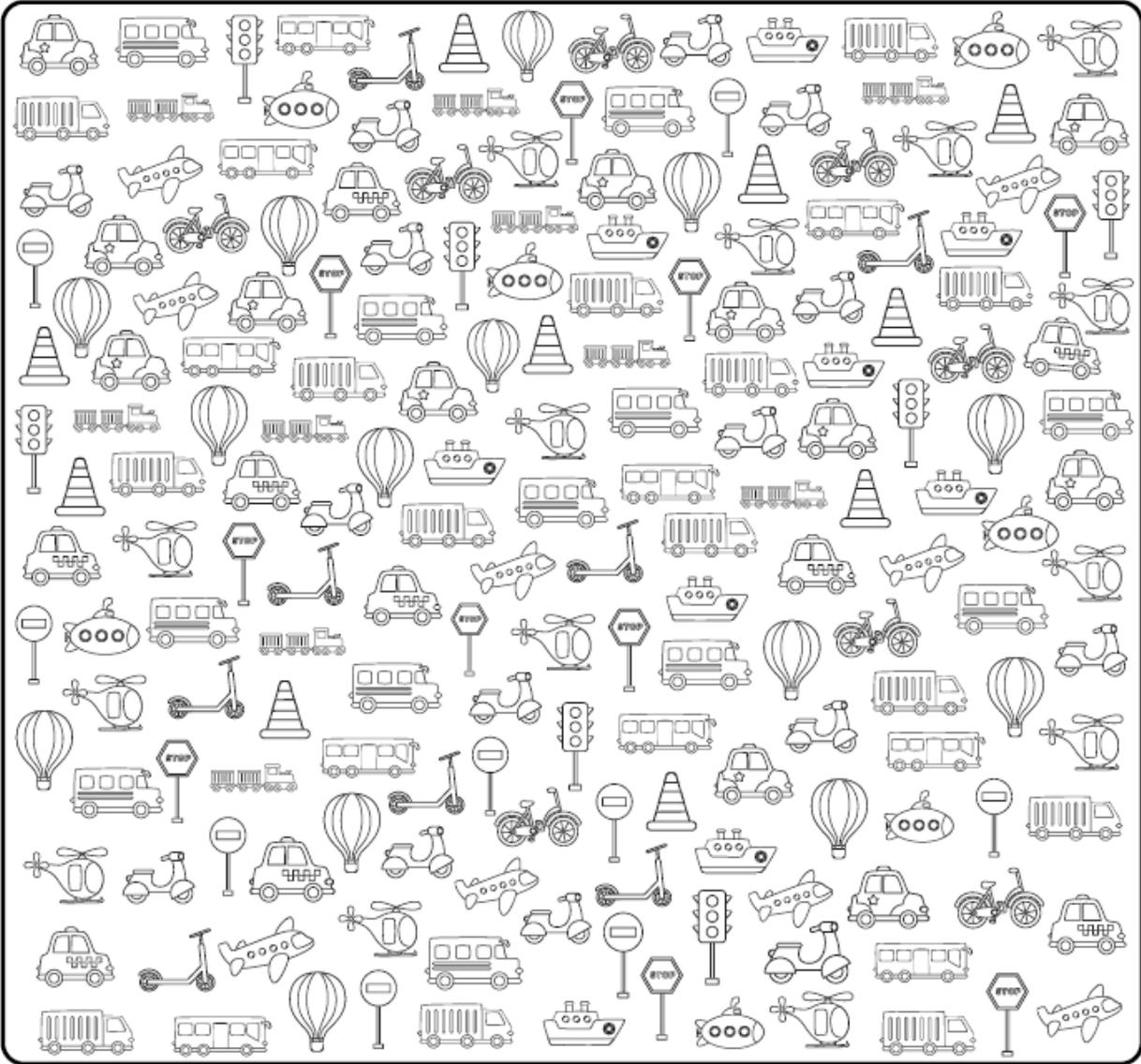
Discover new facets of your talent by delving into a hobby.

### **Capricorn (12/22-1/19)**

Good luck will accompany any undertakings, you just need to decide to take the first step. Act, not to soar in dreams.



# I SPY ROAD TRIP



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# ANSWERS

