

From The Executive Direc-

March 2022 marks the start of the third year since the pandemic first began and we were ordered to shut our doors to visitors, cease communal dining and programming and alter the lives of the people who live and work at Oak Crest. These last few years have proven to be the most difficult and stressful for those working and living in long-term care. The many restrictions, regulatory policies and unreasonable and often debilitating isolations have taken their toll. For the rest of the State of Illinois, life has resumed some sense of normalcy, while long-term care and retirement communities continue to languish under masking, testing, vaccinations, quarantines, and state and federal regulations which limit residents' rights in the name of safety.

As an industry we remain confused that testing and vaccination mandates required by staff and residents are not required of other health care organizations. While positive test results of nursing home residents and staff are shared with the public, the state does not report that Oak Crest residents and staff are fully vaccinated, experience mild symptoms and fully recover. We remain confused that hospitals, medical offices, and other congregate living organizations are not required to test or report their positive test results. This disparity should not go unnoticed and continues to concern Oak Crest residents and staff who have followed every mandate, including full vaccination. To add to the confusion, we continue to receive conflicting and often contradictory information from the CDC, State of Illinois, and the local County Health Department. When additional information or clarification is requested, it is either not available or we are referred to yet another agency.

Despite all of this, and to Oak Crest's credit we continued to operate and provide quality services to the people entrusted to our care. While other business and regulatory agencies shut down and remained safe in their homes, Oak Crest staff continued to report to work each day. As an organization, we continually strive to improve our services and understand that there are any number of living options available for today's older adults. We also recognize that our continued success is reliant on the efforts of a staff made up of people who are committed to and supportive of the mission of this organization. These last few years have been the most difficult in the history of long-term care. With no end in sight, we continue to be responsive, professional, and most importantly empathetic to the on-going challenges of those living and working within our community. We recognize the frustration and confusion caused by the pandemic and want to assure all those affected that Oak Crest staff will continue to advocate and do our very best to ensure that safety and quality of life remains our highest priority.

For more information, please feel free to contact me.

Stephen P. Cichy
Executive Director

Stephen P Cichy



Our Mission

Oak Crest is a faith based not-for-profit community serving people 62 years and older through a continuum of services enhancing an individual's quality of life.

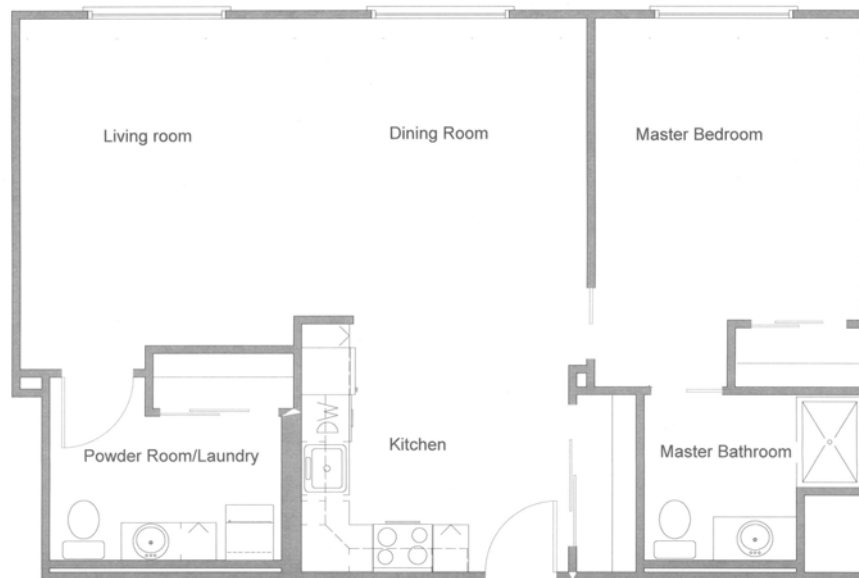
Our Vision

To be an innovative leader in senior adult services.

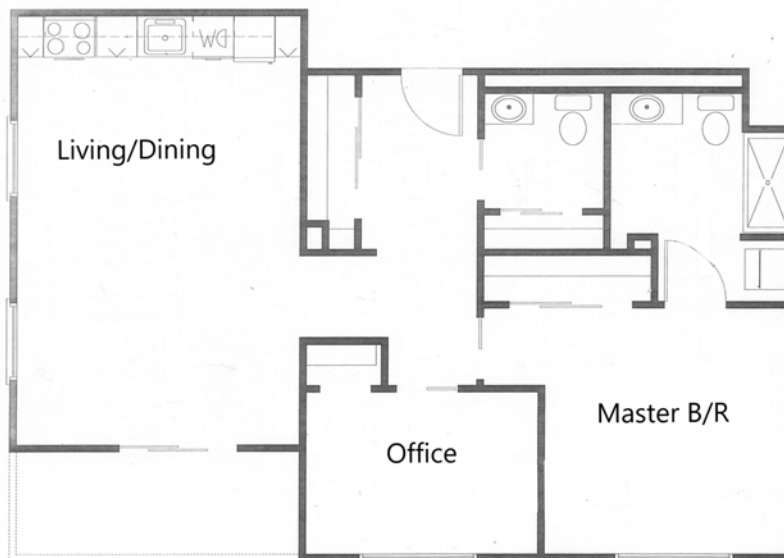
Come see for yourself....

Since opening in 1980 Oak Crest has enjoyed a wonderful history of providing quality services to the community. Each of these apartment homes features a well-appointed kitchen, spacious living spaces, laundry, and access to our community amenities including an on-site café, fitness center and pool. More importantly we are building friendships and memories. We offer the guarantee of future care and peace of mind.

Come visit one of our featured apartments and see what all the excitement is about. Oak Crest is located at 2944 Greenwood Acres Drive, DeKalb. Individuals interested in hearing more about this next chapter in Oak Crest history should contact Liz Hoppenworth at (815)756-8461 or lhoppenworth@oakcrestdekalb.org



DeKalb Area Retirement Center
900 Sq Ft Unit
Not to Scale



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Board of Trustees

In 1978 a voluntary Board of Trustees was established for the governance, fiscal responsibility, and strategic direction of the DeKalb Area Retirement Center. Members represent surrounding communities and are selected for their ability and willingness to contribute in various ways to the success of the organization.

This spring Oak Crest recognized members completing their terms of service and welcomed new members. Board President, Dave VanBuren said, "Linda Mason and Dave Louis, through their commitment and leadership, have served the community well. Oak Crest has benefitted from the extensive knowledge and experience of these very community-minded leaders. It has been an honor to serve with them. In recognition of their service, this spring two oak trees will be planted in their names as a reminder that the seeds we sow today are for the benefit of the generations to follow."

New members inducted to the Board of Trustees are Laura Smart and Angela Delmont.

Laura is a retired Northern Illinois University professor of Human Development and Family Science. Laura's experience with Oak Crest spanned several years as she coordinated undergraduate students completing university internships. Laura has served as a member of the Board of Directors of Altrusa International of DeKalb County. Laura will serve on both the Building and Health Care Committees, where her experiences will prove invaluable. Laura and her husband Roger are parents to one daughter and grandparents to a four-year-old grandson. In her spare time, Laura enjoys genealogy and bicycling.

Angela Delmont, RN is the Director of Nursing at Kishwaukee Community College. In her role at Kishwaukee College, Angela works closely with nursing students, many of whom work at Oak Crest while completing degrees, and upon graduation accept nursing positions. Angela is mother to three children and grandmother to two. In her free time, she enjoys spending time with her husband Joe, cooking, traveling, and assisting families and children in need. The Board welcomes Angela as a member of both the Health Care and Community Relations Committees where her professional expertise and insight will prove invaluable.



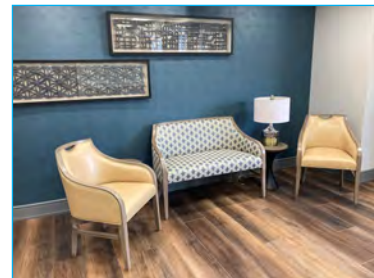
Laura Smart



Angela Delmont

Terrace View Dining Room

Oak Crest residents are enjoying the newly renovated and decorated dining room. The new dining and reception areas awash in cool blues and greys provide a soothing and welcoming environment. New modern furniture with sleek lines and watercolor abstracts completes the new look. The new dining room welcomed back diners who, due to COVID restrictions, had not been able to dine together. One resident said, "The dining room is lovely, but the fact that we can again enjoy a meal with friends, that is the best news of all."



Employee Spotlight



Ann Reaves, BS, RN has served the Oak Crest Community as the Assistant Director of Nursing since November of 2017. Ann leads by example and her drive and determination will continue to direct the path of our very successful nursing department. She possesses strong clinical skills and continues to take an active role in restorative care, antibiotic and psychotropic stewardship, and staff education. Ann's experience prior to joining Oak Crest and her level of interest in the field of long-term care and services makes her an invaluable part of the Oak Crest leadership team.

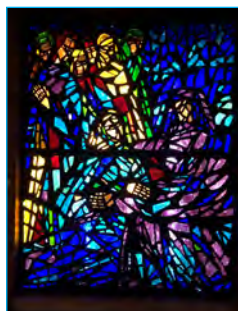
"Ann's experience and her commitment to the position, and the well-being and quality of life with whom and for whom she works sets her apart," said Liz Hoppenworth, Resident Services Administrator. "A multidisciplinary approach that focuses on the individual wants and needs of each resident entrusted

to our care is what makes Oak Crest unique. Ann Reaves, along with the other members of the Health Services Department embraces and fosters the mission of the organization. The entire department works tirelessly every day, and during these unprecedented times have offered services and care seamlessly and without disruption. Ann is a pivotal part of ensuring that Oak Crest not only meets but exceeds resident and family expectations."

Ann Reaves said, "Oak Crest Health Services staff represent the best and brightest. As nurses, we never lose sight that the most important part of any interaction is the time we spend providing information, care, and support to residents and their families. Being a part of the Oak Crest Health Services staff means committing to and maintaining a reputation of excellence. I am proud to be a part of the Oak Crest Community."

Circle of Care

Oak Crest's Annual Giving Campaign to benefit the Good Samaritan Fund begins May 1, 2022. We are again looking to our friends in the community for support. This fund benefits those who outlive their financial resources. In past years Oak Crest residents have used more than \$200,000 from this fund. This rate of utilization continues to increase to accommodate the growing number of residents requiring assistance. The Good Samaritan Fund is supported solely through contributions and donations. All proceeds generated by the Circle of Care Campaign directly benefit the Good Samaritan Fund.



At the time of our 25th Anniversary we established the Silver Acorn Donor Program. Supporters of this program have donated or pledged to the Circle of Care Campaign in the amount of \$2,500 or more. Several people are already participating, and we wish to thank them again for their continued support and invite you to join them. Of course, each and every donation is welcomed and appreciated.

Letters will be sent to previous and prospective donors. These letters will tell you more about the Circle of Care Campaign. Please consider donating. Your generosity will ensure that the Good Samaritan Fund continues.

If you should have any questions or would like additional information on the Circle of Care Campaign, the Good Samaritan Fund, or Oak Crest please call Stephen Cichy at (815)756-8461. We look forward to hearing from you and appreciate your support.

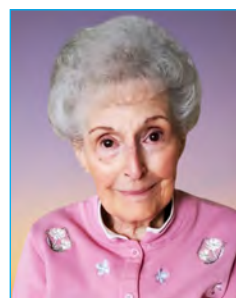
Roger Maas
Community Relations

The Door Opens

In Welcome

Top To Bottom:

Ray Nelsen – Sycamore IL
Robert & Caryl Rhoads – Rochelle, IL
Sharon Rogers – Peoria, AZ
Suzanne Silverman – DeKalb, IL



Artwork

Oak Crest residents and visitors alike enjoy the large variety of artwork that graces the many corridors and common areas. Many of these items are donated by family and friends and we are currently accepting new donations. If you have artwork, paintings, sculptures, or prints, please contact Liz Hoppenworth at (815)756-8461 or lhoppenworth@oakcrestdekalb.org

Q & A



Serving the Oak Crest community for more than thirty years has afforded me a wealth of experience and perspective. This last year has also proven challenging as we navigate through the pandemic and adapting to a new "norm." Although change has been a constant, it has not affected our ability to provide a supportive and safe environment for those seeking long-term retirement in a community that encourages independence, while guaranteeing future care and services. As

I meet new people and assist them in their retirement decisions, I have noted that people tend to ask very similar questions as it relates to Oak Crest and retirement. I am including the five most asked questions and my responses.

- Q:** I'm doing fine in my home now and with the current health crisis, why should I even consider a move to Oak Crest before I really need it?
- A:** The time to make decisions concerning your future is now. It is so important that you make choices while they are yours to make. Two things that I have found Oak Crest residents share, is a fierce desire to make their own decisions and secondly, to remain independent. COVID has not changed the fact that Oak Crest is a retirement community designed to offer independent living to active older adults and are probably best prepared for crisis situations. One resident said, "Thank goodness I chose Oak Crest as my home. Here I am safe, cared for and have everything I need. The world is a scary place when you are out there on your own."
- Q:** I'm pretty used to being independent, and if I come here will I lose that?
- A:** Living at Oak Crest you have all the same opportunities you had at home and much more; the main differences being, Oak Crest offers the guarantee of security and future care without the worry. You remain as independent as you were before. For the protection of everyone living and working at Oak Crest, COVID-19 has affected the way we enter and leave the building, has limited some of the amenities and opportunities we normally enjoy, but also has afforded individuals with more testing opportunities, information and on-site care and services.
- Q:** If I am interested in coming to Oak Crest will I have to sign over all my assets?
- A:** No. Applicants must complete a financial statement disclosing assets and income. This information is kept in strict confidence and is used to determine someone's eligibility as it pertains to financial obligations should they be accepted to Oak Crest.
- Q:** If I am responsible with my assets and still run out of money will I have to find another place to live?
- A:** No. Oak Crest's commitment to its residents is one that guarantees if they outlive their financial resources and have not in any way divested themselves, they would be provided a home here. This is accomplished through the Good Samaritan Fund.
- Q:** Some places really pressure you when you call with questions or stop by. What should I do if I would like

some information about Oak Crest but don't want a sales pitch?

- A:** Part of Oak Crest's philosophy deals with community awareness and education. When someone calls with a question, we respond in a timely manner and provide complete and concise information. We hope that people never feel pressured. We pride ourselves on being approachable, cooperative, and informative. Most people comment that a visit at Oak Crest is like a visit with an old friend.

I hope the above information has answered some of your questions and given you some facts in black and white. Now, I invite you to come and experience, in living color, all that Oak Crest has to offer.

Liz Hoppenworth
Director of Resident Services

Together is Always Better

Chuck and I have been married for sixty years and someone recently said, "You must really like each other." We both laughed and he said, "After all these years you'd better believe it!" That conversation made me reflect on our lives together and everything we have gone through as a couple. We have experienced the joy of new love, the birth of two wonderful children and many happy birthdays and wedding anniversaries. We have also weathered health changes, retirement, and the heartbreak of losing good friends and family members. The one constant in all the ups and downs of life is we have been blessed to face each new event and obstacle as a couple. So, when we were considering our retirement options, we knew the most important thing for us was to be together. Not just now, when we are both healthy and independent, but later when one of us might need more assistance or nursing care. For us, Oak Crest checked all the boxes. We have a beautiful apartment, great meals, activities, and the support we need when the time comes. On our first visit to Oak Crest, we met with Liz Hoppenworth who shared all the pertinent information, gave us a tour, and answered our questions. At the end of the visit, she encouraged us to think about our decision and offered to assist us every step of the way. She advised us that a life-changing decision like retirement living is best made when you can enjoy the many amenities and services offered at Oak Crest. She then added that anytime you make a change like this, it is always better when you take along your best friend. Chuck and I thought about that. As much as we loved our home and our neighborhood, we knew that making a move now, while we were able, was the right choice for us. Throughout our marriage we have made all the important decisions as a couple, and this was no different. We are happy to say that Oak Crest is one of the best decisions we made for ourselves and our family.

Ruth and Chuck Lindhart
Residents since March 2020



Oak Crest Awards Employee Grant



Twice a year since 1997 the Community Relations Committee of the Board of Trustees has awarded grants in the amount of \$300 to deserving employees to pursue educational or enrichment programming. This grant is in addition to the annual Employee Scholarship designed for employees or their dependents pursuing an accredited undergraduate degree/program of study.

This year's grant was awarded to Jennifer Orzechowski. Jennifer has worked as an Oak Crest certified nursing assistant since August of 2019. She is presently enrolled in the nursing program at Kishwaukee College. In her application Jennifer wrote, "I have worked very hard to support myself and my education. I would be so grateful to be chosen as the recipient of this grant to help pay for books and supplies. My life's dream is to complete my education and be considered for a position as a nurse here at Oak Crest."

Stephen Cichy, Executive Director said, "Oak Crest's culture is one that promotes self-improvement and growth. This grant is just one of many ways Oak Crest demonstrates the values of the organization and offers support to the very people who make this community great."

Truck

Oak Crest is looking for a full-sized pick-up for donation or purchase. Please contact Steve Cichy at (815)756-8461 or scichy@oakcrestdekalb.org

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