

Happenings

January 2020



Get Ready for 2020 Elections

As Americans head to the polls in 2020, those who are older may be underrepresented, due to numerous voting obstacles—from lack of transportation to polling sites to onerous new voter identification requirements. “It may be more difficult for people who no longer drive to get to polls, for example, or they may have trouble walking or standing,” says Joan Whitford, resident of Bethesda Orchard and a Deputy Registrar for St. Louis County Board of Elections, and who has been helping register Bethesda seniors to vote for many years.

Last Fall, voter initiatives lead by Joan Whitford and Carol Strawbridge, a Village North resident and board member of the League of Women



Voters of Metro St. Louis, yielded registering more than 100 residents

to vote. In many cases, seniors signed up to be on the “Permanently Disabled List” which assures them they will receive an Absentee Ballot in a timely manner prior to all elections. Learn about ballot issues and update your voter registration at a Bethesda community or through the BHG Foundation, 314-800-1981.

Charless Foundation Funds Senior Stipends



Bethesda received \$10,000 from the Charless Foundation to help fund Senior Support Solutions (SSS) stipends to benefit in-home care, transportation and durable medical equipment for seniors who have financial hardship. With many seniors falling into weakening safety net for social services, they often cannot wait for the time it takes other resources to kick-in and provide assistance. This grant offers that short-term more and immediate assistance that seniors who are struggling financially may need.

“Senior Support Solutions offers personal services that allow seniors to continue to live independently. We are so appreciative that the Charless Foundation has availed us with funds to help seniors who do not have the resources to pay for in-home services,” says Michelle Glass, Corporate Vice President of Senior Living and In-Home Services.

Founded in 1853 as the Charelss Home “Home of the Friendless,” in its latter years the Charless Home provided independent living, assisted living, and skilled nursing for as many as 116 residents. The Charless Home closed in 2012. Today, the Charless Foundation Board supports under-resourced older adults in residential facilities and in a range of other senior programming, and is a component fund of the St. Louis Community Foundation.



Workforce Investment Opportunity Act Funds Staff Development

Bethesda received a grant from the Workforce Investment Opportunity Act (WIOA) funded by the Department of Labor (Federal Program), which helps subsidize our staff development training programs up to \$4,000 per student for their tuition and educational supplies. WIOA awarded \$21,000 to help educate and purchase supplies (scrubs, stethoscope, etc.) for seven employees aspiring to become Certified Nursing Assistants (CNA). In November, Bethesda graduated its second class of students who recently sat for the CNA state exam (pictured are the recent graduates of the CNA training Program). A third CNA training program will take place the first quarter of this year.

Good People Doing Good Things: Seniors Helping Sweet Babies

Loretta Heidenfelder organizes Bethesda Orchard seniors as they gather ready to clip tags from bags of donated clothing for Sweet Babies. Founded ten years ago by former Bethesda Orchard resident, Alice Provaaznik, and longtime volunteer at SSM Health, Sweet Babies provides families with newborns clothing and other items of necessity hoping to keep their babies warm, comfortable



and safe when they leave the hospital. "Most of us are moms and grandmas—and we want to help needed moms have what they need to bring home their new baby, and know that is loved and cared for!" says Loretta Heidenfelder.

Joe Birk Remembered



The Bethesda family fondly remembers Joseph E. Birk, Jr., a former Chairman of

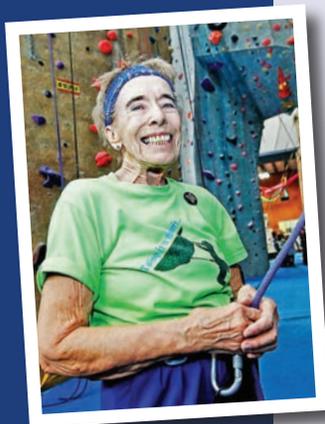
the Bethesda Board of Directors (2013-14) and long-time supporter of our organization, who passed away in November at the age of 89.

Joe was a retired attorney and executive at Ameren UE (now Ameren Missouri), and he had been active in many area businesses. He served on the Board of Directors of several community organizations, including Bethesda, where he also served as Treasurer as well as Chairman. He also had served on the Bethesda Advisory Board.

Joe received the Norwood Award in 2006, in recognition of his distinguished service and commitment to Bethesda. This service included lending his expertise to help address legal matters and provide guidance. In 2010, St. Andrews honored Joe as an Ageless Remarkable St. Louisan.

Senior SPOTLIGHT

Marybel Cova



Many of us ring in the New Year with resolutions—some resolutions focus on self-improvement like losing weight or be a healthier you. For Marybel Cova, longtime resident of Bethesda Orchard, her New Year's resolution is to continue rock climbing. Marybel has been climbing for more than 30 years, and at the age of 87, she sticks to regularly climbing indoor rock walls like Upper Limits verses adventuring the great outdoors.