

HEATH VILLAGE VOICE

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Bringing “The Last Great Race” to Heath Village

At the turn of the new year, I was itching to run another presentation for the community on a fun new topic. I chose the 52nd Iditarod Dog Sled race, a subject matter that I had been researching for some time. February was the perfect time for the presentation as the race began in downtown Anchorage, Alaska on March 2nd. The Iditarod, also called, “The Last Great Race” means “distant place” from an Ingalik and Holikachuk word, commemorating the Serum Run of 1925.

In 1925 Diphtheria broke out in Nome, AK and to get enough serum from Anchorage to Nome, a relay of 20 great mushers was set up to deliver the serum. It took the mushers 127 nonstop hours to carry the serum the 700 miles from Nanena to Nome. This historic journey to the remote Alaskan village established the Iditarod Trail which eventually inspired the annual Iditarod Trail Dog Sled Race. The race helps maintain this historic trail and honors the 1925 mushers and their team of dogs who saved the lives of the children in Nome.

During my research, I began corresponding with a musher, Joshua Robbins, who ran his first Iditarod this year. Through him, I was able to get the perspective of a current musher. Joshua is an Army veteran who has been successfully treated for PTSD and is racing to support other veterans. I connected with Joshua when I wrote to all the registered mushers and asked for their autograph to add to my research.

I knew this would be an exciting topic for people of all ages and I was thrilled to share my presentation with the residents at Heath and the children at the Friendship Center. I brought a half size stuffed Husky dog named “Togo” to introduce people to the dogs of the Iditarod. Togo is named after one of the two most famous dogs from the original serum run. At the end of my presentation, I challenged our residents to go online and pick a musher to follow. I placed a map of the course on the wall outside the Activities Department and updated the positions of all the mushers several times a day.

This race continues to grow in popularity not just within Alaska, but globally, with fans from all over the world. Online viewers can watch the progress of the racers along the trail which is 1,049 miles long. 1,000 miles is the approximate length of the course and 49 represents that Alaska, in 1959, became the 49th state.

Typically, the winner finishes the race in under 9 days. The last mushers take about 12 days. We continued to check the map daily and the suspense of waiting for the official announcement of a winner was very exciting. This continued until March 12, when Dallas Seavey was the first musher to cross the finish line, winning his record sixth Iditarod! What an achievement.

It was great fun picking a musher and cheering them on from afar throughout the race and guessing who we thought would be the winner.

Article by: Bill Blaskopf

Photos by: Housing & Marketing Services



Heath Village Voice
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Melissa Nichols
Kara Olsen

Celebrating Chinese New Year

I have been an employee of Heath Village in the Activities Department for more than 20 years. During my time here, I have cultivated many wonderful and meaningful relationships with the residents. Many residents have shown genuine interest in my heritage and customs and what is most valued by Chinese families. Their interest sparked many Chinese cultural seminars that I hosted during Chinese New Year for the community for 10 plus years.



This past January, I began brainstorming what traditions I would like to focus on this year and with my son and niece both recently married, I thought a traditional Chinese wedding and what to expect at the ceremony would be perfect. I focused not only on the ceremony but all the traditions leading up to the day. I shared many photos from my son and niece's ceremony, along with my own. I had many traditional Chinese wedding pieces on display including ceremony invitations, food, decorations, clothing & shoes, hair combing & tea ceremonial pieces, and much more. I wanted to bring to life all these deep-rooted customs for the residents.

Chinese weddings are lively and full of color. They are lavish affairs all about the happy couple and their respective families. It is a time focused on blessings of prosperity, abundance, and happiness for the couple from both family and friends. It begins with choosing the perfect match wedding date from the fortune teller, preparing the marriage bed, having two young children - a boy and a girl - to jump on your new marriage bed symbolizing a sweet and long-lasting marriage blessed with fertility and well wishes.

This is followed by the hair combing ceremony, picking up the bride, putting the groom to the test, which leads to the most important part, the tea ceremony. The bride and groom offer tea and pay respect to the elders of the family. We end the day with a 12-course wedding banquet which consists of symbolic, auspicious foods: a fish course for abundance, a suckling pig to symbolize the bride's purity, a poultry dish (usually chicken or duck) for peace and unity, and a sweet lotus seed dessert for fertility.

This seminar, in the Year of The Dragon, was one of the most emotional and meaningful events I have hosted thus far at Heath Village. I was very happy to share so much of myself and my family and my heritage with the community.

Article by: Daisy Dauch, Activities Department

Photos by: Housing & Marketing Services



The Language Lounge at Heath Village



In the spring of 2023, I was struck by how much our Ukrainian housekeeper, Lana, was struggling with the English language. I was impressed by her courage to tackle a language and alphabet so different from her own. It then occurred to me to offer English classes to staff who were non-native speakers. English classes for employees had been provided by a former resident several years ago but there was a long hiatus that followed. I recognized that there was still a need and a desire by employees to learn the English language. This interest led to turning our boardroom in Heath House into our own special *language lounge*.

Since October 2023, I have been offering two afternoon classes a week for housekeeping staff with varying abilities to speak English.

So far, the countries represented by the staff are Ecuador, Mexico, Dominican Republic, El Salvador, West Africa and Ukraine. It has been very enjoyable and rewarding to help these employees improve their language skills.

As a teenage immigrant from Cuba myself, I can easily identify with their experience. With the help of several books and many YouTube videos, I have created lessons that the students can apply in their daily lives.

We dive right in when they enter the room and begin speaking English. They also have written exercises to help with sentence structure and grammar. The more advanced students often get reading assignments. The students particularly enjoy YouTube videos and make progress every class. We have all formed a connection and learn about each other's countries of origin, customs and lives before arriving in the U.S.

My intention is to continue offering the classes and add new employees who need help with their English.

Article by: Maria Katonak

Photos by: Housing & Marketing Services



The Luck of the Irish

Eat, drink & be Irish was our motto this year at our St. Patrick's Day happy hour...and we did just that, along with enjoying live music from our resident leprechaun, Carmel, while singing many good ol' Irish tunes. Everyone is a wee bit Irish on St. Patrick's Day.

"May you have all the happiness and luck that life can hold—and at the end of your rainbows may you find a pot of gold!" 

Article by: Housing & Marketing Services

Photos by: Housing & Marketing Services



It's A Small World

In the early 70s, my husband Richard decided to take on a new project and he built a Victorian doll house from scratch for us, finishing the miniature home in 1976. That's when we thought this project was complete. However, what was once a toy for our daughters for many years continued to evolve and become a fulfilling hobby for both my husband and me. We etched the number 76 over the front door of the house into the glass transom as a reminder to us of the year we thought our miniature home was complete but our journey was meant to continue.

The interior and exterior design and furnishings of the home, along with the wardrobe of the family living in our doll house, date back to 1910. It is similar to an old doll house in England, but with many new touches and some progressive add-ons, such as electricity which became available in residential homes around 1910. Originally it had a wood stove and an ice box but when we later put in electricity, we added a refrigerator and vacuum cleaner, but the treadle sewing machine remained.

The dental molding on the windows and the lattice work at the foundation were all made in Rich's woodshop. I made the stain glass windows with food coloring added to glue. The roof is painted to look like slate and the snowbirds were added to the roof to prevent ice sliding down the roof. The lightning rods were also a new addition as were the clapboard siding and electricity. The siding is made of two layers of poster board and then painted and installed over the plain painted house.

Several items (many of the more than 11 dolls) were given to me by a dear friend and former resident, Margaret Brock, who also had many doll houses of her own. She gave me two teddy bears and a very special book, "Hansel and Gretel", that can be read with a magnifying glass.

The house changes with the seasons. In spring, daffodils (paper), tulips (seed pods), flowering shrubs (dried flowers) and wisteria, which I made with status flowers, all appear. Fall brings pumpkins on the front steps, the children apple dunking on the front porch, and sun flowers (painted straw flowers) in the corner garden.

A 48-star flag hangs on the porch and we honor Memorial Day, Fourth of July, and Election Day with flag bunting across the porch railing. During election season a banner urging Votes for Women is seen on the front lawn. It reads, "For the work of a day, For the taxes we pay, For the laws we obey, We want something to say."

At Christmas the whole house is decorated, wreaths on the windows and a lighted Christmas tree in the living room. Mother is wrapping gifts in the bedroom while father is keeping the children busy hanging the wreaths. Santa cookies have been baked, stockings are hung by the fireplace, and all is ready for the big day.

Creating this miniature life was a family affair that we enjoyed working on with our daughters. We put an abundance of tender loving care into this mini home and we continue to enjoy it to this day.

Article by: Faye Kennedy

Photos by: Housing & Marketing Services



*Heath Village residents,
Richard & Faye Kennedy*



Art Matters

"Life is art. Art is life. I never separate it." – Ai Weiwei

This quote explains my sentiments exactly, starting from when my true 'art life' began decades ago in 1973 when my husband and I lived in Chatham, NJ. My passion for painting and creating art intensified at this point in my life and I wanted to find like-minded folks. I joined an art group in Chatham Township called *Art League*. We had monthly art shows within the township, and I belonged to a few other groups in the area and participated in additional shows in local libraries and the studio *Drew Art* in Madison, NJ.

When my husband and I retired and moved to Heath Village, a friend of mine from the Chatham art group recommended that I reach out to Susan Jones, a local artist who runs an art club called *Art Matters* in Long Valley. I met Susan at the Washington Township Public Library (WTPL) in Long Valley, and she invited me to join her club. I joined right up and enjoyed meeting new friends with a common love for art. I participated in shows exhibited at the Chester Library with the group and also some solo shows at the WTPL.

At Heath Village, we have a robust art group that meets weekly and a small group of us interact daily. I asked a few fellow resident artists to join *Art Matters* along with me to expand our reach and share our art not only on campus at Heath, but within the local community as well. Heath Village residents - Susan, Maria & Maureen, chose to participate as well and we all show our work with *Art Matters* at the local libraries. We are now busy planning an upcoming show at the Willowwood Arboretum in Chester Township, Morris County!

I was extremely excited to share these amazing opportunities with my dear friends and make a connection between our "village" art club and the local outside community art groups. We are having great fun working on new pieces to show in upcoming events and have become a tight-knit supportive group with fellow artists in our local area.

Article by: Carmel Bourneuf

Photos by: Observer Tribune Photographer – Mark Kitchin, Susan Jones – Art Matters and Housing & Marketing Services



Carmel exhibiting her artwork at the grand opening of the Washington Township Public Library post renovations.

Photo by Mark Kitchin, Observer Tribune



Pictured Left to Right: Susan Sumner, Maureen Kahrar, Maria Moch & Carmel Bourneuf



Carmel leading a workshop at an Art Matters meeting in the Washington Township Public Library

Photo by Susan Scarince-Jones, Art Matters

Newcomers



Christopher "Chris" Kuras, from Lebanon, NJ to Mayflower

Anthony "Tony" Mangogna, from Rockaway, NJ to Apt. 74

Marvelia "Marvy" Mangogna, from Rockaway, NJ to Apt. 74

Constance "Connie" Popovitch, from Lebanon, NJ to Apt. 56

Ingobert "Ingo" Rau, from Pittstown, NJ to Apt. 2

Love is in the Air

Our traditional Valentine's Day Luncheon is always a hit on campus where you can feel the joy in the air when you enter the room. Surrounded by great friends, residents celebrate this special day together. They enjoy delightful company and a delicious meal while listening to the sweet and beautiful sounds of the flute. There is not just love in the air but lots of laughter as well. All who attend this luncheon leave with their heart full of happiness.

Article by: Housing & Marketing Services

Photos by: Housing & Marketing Services



In Memoriam

Josephine Padula
Joseph Tang
Frank Wynne

2/7/24
2/16/24
3/5/24

William "Bill" Froede
Robert "Bob" Zimmerman

3/10/24
3/16/24

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Making an annuity gift: You irrevocably transfer money or securities to our Friendship Fund. In exchange, we pay you (and another, or a survivor, if you like) a fixed amount annually for life. In effect, your transfer is doing two things -making a charitable gift and purchasing a fixed income for life.

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1/1/2023

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77	7.0 %
78	7.2 %
79	7.4 %
80	7.6 %
81	7.8 %
82	8.1 %
83	8.3 %
84	8.5 %
85	8.7 %
86	8.9 %
87	9.1 %
88	9.3 %
89	9.5 %
90+	9.7 %

The Friendship Fund Charitable Gift Annuity is a wonderful opportunity for giving, as it benefits the donor as well as residents of Heath Village. We hope that you will discuss this opportunity with your legal or financial counsel.

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