

HEATH VILLAGE VOICE

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Rooted in Community: *Heath Village Celebrates Arbor Day*

Arbor Day is a national holiday celebrated each spring on the last Friday in April. It began in 1872 in Nebraska by J. Sterling Morton, a nature enthusiast and strong advocate for trees. One of the best ways to celebrate Arbor Day is, of course, by planting a tree.

Heath Village proudly celebrated Arbor Day with the planting of another tree on our scenic campus, continuing a cherished and deeply rooted community tradition that began in 1975.

More than 30 years ago, this tradition became even more meaningful with the involvement of students from The Friendship Center, our Intergenerational Child Care Center, and we were thrilled to welcome them again this year. Students excitedly took turns shoveling soil at the base of a new seedling planted by our talented and hard-working Grounds Department. Residents, Heath Village team members, and Friendship Center students all gathered together to celebrate the occasion. It was also an honor for me to speak at this year's program alongside our CEO & Executive Director, Mary Ellen Bove.

With perfect weather and the enthusiastic energy of students and residents working side by side, the joy of the day was truly contagious. Together, we proudly added another beautiful tree to our ever-growing campus, making this year's celebration memorable once again.

This year's tree is an Adams Crabapple, a beautiful flowering tree known for its changing seasonal colors. In spring, it produces vibrant red blossoms that later give way to glossy red fruit. During the summer months, its leaves are bright green before transforming into striking shades of orange and red in the fall.

The newest addition to the Heath Village landscape becomes part of the rich tapestry of trees across our beautiful 100+ acre campus, enhancing the natural surroundings residents enjoy throughout the year.

It is a meaningful way to give back to our environment while continuing to grow a community that values nature, sustainability, and connection.

Arbor Day is often seen as a welcome sign of spring, and each year we happily embrace the season at Heath Village by continuing our longstanding tradition of celebrating Arbor Day in our own special way for more than 50 years.

Article by: Paula Benson – President, Heath Village Residents' Council

Photos by: Sales & Marketing



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A Journey Through the Amazon & Galapagos: *Sharing a Bucket List Adventure with Residents*

One of the many special experiences at Heath Village is having the opportunity to connect with residents through shared stories and adventures. Recently, I had the pleasure of hosting a photo presentation for residents highlighting a truly unforgettable journey that my husband, Andy, and I took last October—one that had long been on our bucket list: the Amazon Rainforest and the Galapagos Islands.

The trip was an incredible blend of culture, wildlife, and breathtaking natural beauty, and it was wonderful to relive those memories while sharing photos and experiences with residents who were over the top excited to hear about my journey.

Our adventure began in Ecuador's capital city of Quito, a UNESCO World Heritage Site nestled high in the Andes Mountains. Walking through the historic Old Town felt like stepping back in time, with beautifully preserved colonial architecture and charming cobblestone streets. One

memorable stop was visiting the famous "Middle of the World," where we were able to stand in both the Northern and Southern Hemispheres at the same time.

From Quito, we traveled deep into the Amazon Basin, arriving at a remote eco-lodge accessible only by motorized canoe. The Amazon offered an experience unlike any other. One of the most meaningful parts of our journey was spending time with a traditional Kichwa family and learning about their daily life and customs.

Our young hostess, just 21 years old and raising two children without electricity, shared her remarkable way of life with us. Her family prepared a delicious lunch of fish wrapped in banana leaves, yuca, and local delicacies—including roasted chontacuro, a large edible grub considered a special treat. Of course, I had to be adventurous and give it a try!

We also learned about medicinal plants, including the healing properties of "dragon blood," and observed traditional hunting techniques using a blowgun. The biodiversity of the rainforest was extraordinary. During river excursions, we were fortunate to spot sloths, squirrel monkeys, white-throated toucans, and an array of vibrant birds.

Our next destination took us to the Galapagos Islands, where wildlife interactions felt almost surreal. We walked among giant tortoises in the Santa Cruz Highlands and watched blue-footed and red-footed boobies perform their fascinating mating rituals. We also encountered magnificent frigatebirds, pelicans, and countless other species.

One of the highlights of the trip was snorkeling in the crystal-clear waters surrounding the islands. Swimming alongside sea lions, Pacific green sea turtles, Galapagos penguins, harmless sharks, spotted stingrays, and colorful tropical fish was an experience we will never forget.

From volcanic lava landscapes to extraordinary wildlife encounters, every stop along the journey felt like stepping into another world.

Being able to share these memories and photos with residents made the experience even more meaningful.

Traveling creates memories that last a lifetime, and it was a joy to bring a small piece of that adventure back to share with our community.



Daisy pictured with a giant tortoise in Santa Cruz, Galapagos League



Daisy with her husband Andy in the Amazon near Rio Napo



Daisy and Andy at Isabela Island, Galapagos

A Night of Stars at Heath Village: Celebrating Our Residents Oscar-Style

I have always loved planning parties. Over the years, I've hosted many gatherings at my home, so creating special events for our residents is something I truly enjoy. One thing I value most is recognizing the incredible people who make up our Heath Village community. We have such a special group of residents, and I felt they deserved to be celebrated in a unique way.

One evening, while watching a commercial for the Oscars, inspiration struck. I thought, "How fun would it be to bring a little Hollywood glamour to Heath Village?" I shared the idea with Tim Drown, Director of Dining, and he encouraged me to run with it. I'm so glad I did.

Our Oscars Awards Night turned into a dazzling evening filled with laughter, friendship, and a touch of old-fashioned Hollywood charm. Residents embraced the theme and enjoyed an evening where they could celebrate with one another and be recognized for the qualities that make our community so special. Awards were determined by popular vote, which added even more excitement and anticipation throughout the night.

Bill Blaskoph served as Master of Ceremonies and Chairman of Awards, bringing enthusiasm, humor, and heartfelt words to each presentation. His speeches made every award feel meaningful and entertaining.

Some memorable moments of the evening included Alice Holzapfel receiving the award for Best Leading Role in a Conversation, honoring her warmth and gift for storytelling. Al Garcia was recognized with the Community Kindness Award for his generosity and caring spirit. The elegant duo of Ellen Landau and Irma Hujer stole the spotlight with the Old Hollywood Glamour Award, truly embracing the spirit of the evening.



Laughter filled the room as Dan Fitzpatrick earned Best Comedic Timing. Although Dan was unable to attend, Bill's remarks had everyone smiling. Barbara Hills also earned recognition with the Script Supervisor Award, celebrating her behind-the-scenes memory and contributions. Carmel Bourneuf received the Craft Services Award, honoring her care and the many ways she helps keep our community vibrant and thriving.

One unexpected and special addition to the evening came when Al Garcia's family arrived with a reservation for 19 guests. They had no idea our Oscars celebration was taking place, making their arrival perfect timing and adding even more energy and excitement to the night.

The event was filled with smiles, applause, and shared memories. It reminded all of us that while Hollywood may celebrate movie stars, we are fortunate to have our own stars right here at Heath Village every day.

Article by: Maria Hadley, Heath Village Dining Supervisor
Photos by: Activities & Dining Department

India: A Land of Contrasts

We recently returned from a remarkable two-and-a-half-week journey through India that provided us with an unforgettable educational and cultural experience. Traveling with Road Scholar Tours, our trip was designed to be much more than a vacation—it was an immersive exploration of one of the world’s most fascinating and complex countries.

Guided by an exceptionally knowledgeable guide from Jaipur, we traveled through ten cities across both northern and southern India. The pace was fast and physically demanding, but each day brought new opportunities to learn and experience the rich history, traditions, and culture of the country.

Throughout our journey, we attended thought-provoking lectures on a variety of subjects, ranging from The Relevance of Gandhi in Today’s World to Contemporary Women’s Issues in India. These presentations gave us valuable insight into the country’s past and present and helped deepen our understanding of the places we visited.

India’s architecture and history were on full display as we toured nearly thirty magnificent forts, temples, palaces, and museums. Many of these sites required visitors to remove their shoes and, in some locations, women were asked to cover their heads as a sign of respect. We also toured several businesses, including expansive tea and spice plantations where we learned about their production processes.

Of course, no trip to India would be complete without mentioning the cows. Considered sacred in Hindu culture, cows are not slaughtered and are often seen freely roaming the streets—a unique sight for visitors experiencing India for the first time.

Most of our accommodations were in beautiful city hotels, although a few nights were spent at a charming retreat in a rural setting where we stayed in private cabins and enjoyed outdoor dining under the open sky. The food throughout our journey was consistently delicious, although there were many times we had no idea exactly what we were eating. Thankfully, our guide helped steer us away from foods that were especially spicy.

The adventure also included some memorable and entertaining experiences along the way. We rode in traditional rickshaws, traveled by camel-drawn cart, and explored Kerala’s peaceful backwaters aboard a houseboat where we lived for three days while visiting villages and rice paddies along the route.

Not all transportation experiences were relaxing, however. Riding in India’s famous three-wheeled Tuk Tuks was an adventure all its own. At times, it felt very much like a “hold on for dear life” experience as drivers navigated traffic with remarkable confidence and intensity—making even New York City cab drivers seem calm by comparison.

One of our most heartwarming memories came during a visit to a small village elementary school where the children excitedly prepared a presentation for us. Equally memorable were the opportunities to dine in the homes of local families on three separate occasions. Sharing meals and conversations with our hosts offered a meaningful glimpse into their daily lives and traditions.

Looking back, our journey through India was both enlightening and unforgettable. We experienced a country filled with extraordinary beauty, history, and hospitality while also witnessing striking contrasts between tremendous wealth and unimaginable poverty. It is a place of profound contrasts, and one that will remain with us for a very long time.

*Article by: Dottie Crossett & Rob Rice
Photos by: Dottie Crossett, Rob Rice and
Sales & Marketing*



Dottie & Rob pictured in front of the Taj Mahal



A memorable moment from Dottie & Rob’s travels in India: a wild elephant strolling within 20 feet of their tour bus while exploring a national park.



A Strike of Fun: Heath Village's Bowling Adventure

Our bowling trip was a great success! We filled two lanes with four bowlers each and played "real" bowling—no gutter guards allowed, which led to plenty of laughs and a few creative shots into the gutters.

There were plenty of "almost strikes," with many of us convinced the lanes might have been a little uneven as our perfect throws just clipped a pin or two. The snack bar was a hit as well, offering tasty options that kept everyone fueled between frames.

A special highlight was our bus driver extraordinaire, Randy, who even jumped in to bowl a few frames and helped boost a couple of scores along the way.

It was a fun outing filled with laughter, friendly competition, and great company...that's how we roll at Heath Village!

I had such a great time, I was compelled to write this short rhyme.

"The Heath trip to bowl was such fun
Though often the pin down was one.
Heath bus trips are great.
Watch for the next date.
And sign up, join in and have fun!"

Article by: Frieda Burrowes

Photos by: Activities Department



Newcomers



Memories & Meaningful Moments: Honoring Resident Milestone Birthdays at Heath Village

Happy 90th Birthday Patricia Noonan!

Pat recently celebrated a milestone birthday surrounded by what has always mattered most in her life – the love of family and friends. Her 90th birthday was a joyful occasion filled with the warmth, laughter, and togetherness that have defined her remarkable journey.

From moving to America from Ireland at the age of 14, to building a rewarding career in healthcare and nursing, to creating a beautiful family and eventually making Heath Village her home, Pat's life has been guided by the values of love, compassion, and connection. Family has always remained at the center of her life, with countless gatherings filled with laughter, love, and genuine togetherness.

For someone whose life has always been centered around community, friendship, and meaningful relationships, Heath Village was naturally the perfect fit. We are honored to celebrate Pat, her many accomplishments, and the incredible experiences she has shared throughout her 90 wonderful years. Happy Birthday, Pat!

Article by: Beverly Kinney

Photos provided by Pat Noonan's Family



Happy 107th Birthday Mgalina Rowe!

Our community recently celebrated Mgalina "Lena" Rowe, who marked her 107th birthday on April 6th. Prior to moving to Heath Village in 2013, Lena was a lifelong resident of Rockaway Borough.

Lena and her husband once owned a Hershey's Ice Cream Parlor in Rockaway, where they built both a business and a life centered around family. She continues to be cherished by her beautiful family and our community alike.

When asked about her longevity, Lena attributes it to "always keep moving and eating a small piece of chocolate, along with plenty of fresh fruits and vegetables every day." Great advice Lena. Happy 107th Birthday!

Article by: Sales & Marketing

Photos provided by Lena Rowe's family



In Memoriam

Esther Guerin	February 3, 2026
Michael Grundy	February 23, 2026
John Madden	April 1, 2026
Rev. John Morrow	April 10, 2026
Miriam "Dolly" Tamburello	April 13, 2026
William "Bill" Borden	April 18, 2026

Judith "Judy" Letwink	April 19, 2026
Nancy Dannhardt	April 30, 2026
Natalia Swaim	May 4, 2026
Richard "Rich" Kennedy	May 19, 2026
Marguerite "Margy" Raser	May 23, 2026

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Celebrate Spring at Heath Village! Call 908-852-4801 today to schedule a tour of our beautiful campus or register for a Village Luncheon. Ask about exciting updates to our Independent Living expansion and future opportunities at Heath Village. Like & follow us on Facebook to stay up to date on all the activities at Heath Village.

The Friendship Fund Charitable Gift Annuity

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.

Income tax benefit: You get an income tax charitable deduction in the year you make your gift. If you let us know your date of birth and the amount of your contemplated gift, we can calculate your deduction.

How annual payments are taxed: A large portion of each annuity payment received is tax-free. The tax-free amount is fixed at the outset and remains constant for the period of your life expectancy.**

The rate of return is attractive and guaranteed for life - without investment worries or responsibility.

Rate Examples: One-Life Annuity Rates 1/1/2024

Age**	Rate
75	7.0 %
76	7.2 %
77	7.4 %
78	7.6 %
79	7.8 %
80	8.1 %
81	8.3 %
82	8.5 %
83	8.7 %
84	8.9 %
85	9.1 %
86	9.3 %
87	9.5 %
88	9.7 %
89	9.9 %
90+	10.1 %

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.

Enjoy campus life at HEATH VILLAGE A UNIQUE RETIREMENT COMMUNITY

Independent living in one of the garden-type units ranging in size from studio apartments to two-bedroom cottages. Dining and meal plans are optional.

We're Growing! Call to learn about our exciting new Independent Living expansion.

Mayflower House is a residential health care facility with 24 hour staff, meals, housekeeping, laundry, medication monitoring all included in the monthly cost.

Assisted Living Coming Soon!

The Meadows Nursing & Rehabilitation offers long-term care, sub-acute, rehabilitation and respite care services in a new state-of-the-art facility.

All monthly rates include 24-hour emergency call service and annual carpet cleaning; use of lounges, chapel, library, swimming pool, computer equipment, craft rooms, fitness center and other community facilities; bus service to Hackettstown, club cart service within the Community and on-site parking.

*Affordable monthly rates.
Optional community fees.
Come and see for yourself.
Call 908-852-4801 for an appointment.*