

## We Welcome You to an Open House

Masonicare at Ashlar Village invites you to come see for yourself what life at Ashlar Village offers. The format for our open houses provides guests with ample time to tour a variety of housing options — including apartments, cottages and villas — as well as the shopping, dining and activity areas in The Hartog Activities Center. Everyone agrees that the opportunity to meet and socialize with current residents provides valuable insight into the lifestyle at Ashlar Village.

- 11 am: Presentation by the marketing team and questions
- Noon: Lunch with residents
- 1 pm: Tour of residential options and common areas
- 2 pm: Conclusion

For further information on attending an open house, please contact the Ashlar Village marketing department at (800) 382-2244.



*A family of turtles sun themselves on a log in the pond at Ashlar Village.*

## MISSION STATEMENT

Masonicare at Ashlar Village is a not-for-profit continuing care retirement community providing both independent and assisted living to people age 55 and over. Following the traditions of Masonry and open to all, we are committed to creating the highest quality of life for our residents by fostering an environment of respect, independence, and dignity.



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*Celebrating Our 25th Year!*

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# VILLAGER

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*News from Masonicare at Ashlar Village in Wallingford, CT*

## Residents Spring into Action

Whether it is within the Ashlar Village community itself, or the greater community at large, our residents are among the most active volunteers around. Dozens of residents are honored each year at the annual Volunteers Appreciation Luncheon.

Hilde Sager, director of marketing at Ashlar Village, said that "prospective residents are sometimes concerned about giving up

their community volunteer work when they move to a retirement community.

Many of our residents, including those who previously lived outside the Meriden-Wallingford area, jump right into the community and get involved by volunteering with social service, cultural and educational organizations."

Barbara Colby, who lives at Ashlar Village with her sister, Margaret Porter, says,

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"We feel very privileged to live here. To give back in thanks, we wanted to be a part of what Ashlar Village does to reach out to the greater community."

Together, overseeing coordination of the Make A Difference Group, they conduct drives to collect household paper goods, personal care items and bed and bath linens for the Meriden/Wallingford Chrysalis Home for battered

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*Margaret Porter (middle) and Barbara Colby (right) pose with Bob Kindt, who framed a copy of the Star Spangled Banner and donated it to the Specialty Shop, which sells items to raise funds for the Scholarship Fund for Ashlar Village employees and their families.*

## Residents Spring into Action *continued*

women, and collect food for Master's Manna an organization in Wallingford that broadly serves town residents who need assistance. Barbara and Margaret also assemble knitting kits for the Ashlar Village Care Shawl Program, which gives Care Shawls to anyone who "needs a hug."

Margaret and Barbara are also involved in the volunteer operation of the Ashlar Village Specialty Shop, which sells only hand-crafted items made by residents. Margaret is adept at knitting and sewing and uses her talents to make many items for the Shop, while Barbara's forte is "anything but," she laughs. However, she manages the record-keeping and writes the Shop's weekly articles for *The Verbiage*, Ashlar's residents' newsletter. The proceeds from the Specialty Shop go to a scholarship fund for staff and children of staff at Ashlar Village. Both sisters even find time to serve on The Masonic Charity Foundation's special events committee, helping with fundraising efforts.

Resident Charles Dupre calls himself a moving target. When he moved here from Hamden 10 years ago, Charles continued his volunteer work with the American Red Cross. A dedicated member of the Blood Drive Program, he was recently recognized as a Volunteer of the Year by the Connecticut Blood

Services Region. He recommends *The Verbiage* as a great way to find out about volunteer opportunities. "I paid attention to what the needs were," says Charles. Six years ago he noticed an item about a reading program with Cook Hill Elementary School. Since then, he has been going to the school every Wednesday morning and reading with kindergartners one-on-one. More recently, he read that Masonicare Home Health & Hospice was recruiting volunteers to become certified Hospice volunteers. He attended the training and has been a Hospice volunteer for the past year. "Friends said, "You won't be able to handle that, Charles. But I find it very satisfying. My patients appreciate the visit, and I feel as though I am doing something useful and meaningful," he said.

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*Charles Dupre has been recognized by the Connecticut Blood Services Region for his long time volunteer service at community blood drives.*



## Friendly Rivalry

Spring heralds the start of baseball season. And if you are a baseball fan in Connecticut, you are often right in the middle of one of the oldest and most famous rivalries in professional sports: the New York Yankees versus the Boston Red Sox. While that rivalry can be fierce at times, it is carried out in an affable, sportsmanlike way at Ashlar Village between Bosox fan and resident Jean Kaas, and Bronx Bombers fan and Ashlar Village president, Jon-Paul Venoit.

Jean learned to love the sport of baseball from her father, who was a semi-pro player. In the 1970s, Jean and her husband lived in West Haven, where the Yankees had a Double A team. As regulars at the games, the Kaases became friendly with the players and invited a few to dinner. Thus began a nearly decade-long program of hospitality. "We fed and housed hundreds of these kids," said Jean. "They were trying so hard to make it to the big leagues, and they were away from their families, so we welcomed them and their wives into our home." Jean said that they even had two babies born at Yale-New Haven Hospital to players living with them.

The players nicknamed Jean, "Mama Kaas" and it stuck. She has a scrapbook full of cards and letters of thanks addressed to Mama Kaas from the many players she housed and who still keep in touch. Some went on to play in the majors, such as Ron Guidry. Another, Buck Showalter, became a manager of the Yankees.

A lover of letters and words, Jean authored a book about her nine years as Mama Kaas called "Minor League Mama." The book is in the Baseball Hall of Fame in Cooperstown, and earned Jean a lifetime pass to the museum.



*Bosox fan Jean Kaas in Yankee pinstripes courtesy of the Photo Shop skills of Jon-Paul Venoit, Ashlar Village president and friendly baseball rival.*

Jean's loyalties switched to the Red Sox after seeing Yankees management "in action" during spring training games. "I just couldn't root for Steinbrenner," she said and threw her support to Boston. She has been an ardent fan ever since.

Jean, who moved to Ashlar Village 11 years ago, got to know Jon-Paul well through her volunteer activities such as running the Op Shop, which she took over 10 years ago and which raises money for The Masonic Charity Foundation. Jean and Jon-Paul developed their friendly baseball rivalry which plays out in repartee in meetings and funny exchanges. Jon-Paul, for example, used Photo Shop to create pictures of Jean in Yankee pinstripes playing short stop, or donning a Yankee cap and posing with Joe Torre.

Last year, when the Yankees took the pennant, Jon-Paul threw a party to celebrate his team's victory. But, ever the good sport, he also threw a party when the Bosox won the title.

Entering the 2010 season, Jean and Jon-Paul are both looking forward to another year of betting that his or her team will make it to the World Series...and of good-natured rivalry!

## Giving Back Has Its Rewards

Every week, Ken Johnson visits a second grade classroom at Cook Hill School and brings along his frog puppet. The kids immediately crowd around him while Ken brings the 'frog' to life. The students then take turns reading their newly mastered books to him, honing their reading skills.



Volunteering at Cook Hill School, Madeline Erskine (above) plays alphabet bingo on a recent visit with a class of kindergartners, and Joan Genkerell (left) reads with a student.

The Cook Hill School program is just one of the ways that Pond Ridge residents are able to give back to the greater community in some way. Madeline Erskine has been participating in the reading program for a couple of years, while former teacher Joan Genkerell joined the team when she moved here last fall. Joan, who taught elementary school for 40 years, said that she always loved school and being around children. "The kids were always interesting, and I love having the opportunity to go back into the classroom again." Madeline's class of preschoolers has visited her at Pond Ridge because the teacher said that, "the kids love her so much."

Recreation coordinator Debbie Markiewicz said that participating in such a community program "keeps our volunteers feeling young, vibrant and involved. When they return from their classroom visits, they are beaming."

## Expressions of Pond Ridge

*By resident Ken Johnson*

Pond Ridge has much to share  
It's a place to get good care.  
You left your home even your fridge  
But you'll never find any place as nice as  
Pond Ridge.

The residents you will find real nice  
You never have to greet them twice.  
All the food is prepared to one's delight  
And the desserts are great to the very  
last bite.

The activities will keep you on the run  
Whenever you wish to have some fun.  
You may have days when you're off color  
The nurses will care for you like your mother.  
You can get a bus when the needs arise  
All your appointments are kept without  
a surprise.

So spend your days with someone to share  
The happy times you enjoy at Masonicare.

 **Masonicare**  
at Ashlar Village 

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# REFLECTIONS

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*News from Masonicare at Ashlar Village Assisted Living*

## Dining Out

Alice Longley is one of the memory care residents of The Hearth at Pond Ridge who enjoys monthly outings to area restaurants, such as this one to 95 Gathering in Wallingford. Enjoying the change of scenery, small groups travel with staff via bus to sample the fare at area favorite dining spots. During the summer, The Hearth staff packs a picnic lunch and heads to scenic destinations such as Hammonasset State Park on the Connecticut shore or Wadsworth Falls.

“Our luncheon outings are stimulating and spark fun conversation around the table,” said Katie Morissette, program coordinator at The Hearth. Katie said that they also schedule scenic drives for the residents, touring area attractions and points of interest. “Of course, there is usually an ice cream stop along the way, too,” said Katie. “That is everyone’s favorite stop.”

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*Hearth resident Alice Longley enjoys a delicious lunch with staff member Marie Chase.*

