

# MPC Living

Margaret Pratt Community's Monthly Newsletter



July 2024

I recently returned from a week of traveling through the Mid-Atlantic and Midwestern regions of America. My wife and I spent time in Pennsylvania Amish Country, hiked in West Virginia, went boating on Lake Cumberland in Kentucky, and visited my son who is a student at Indiana University. Our last stop was also in Indiana where I spent some time visiting my mother's gravesite.

My mom died in 2015 from respiratory failure at Westminister Assisted Living Community in Muncie, Indiana. As I stood over her resting place, as I have done many times, I was reminded of how much she loved me and the many ways she demonstrated that love over the course of our many years together both as a child, as an ambitious young adult who had packed a pickup truck and moved out of our home at the age of seventeen, and later, as a husband and father of four.

At that time, and for some decades that followed, I paid her little attention. I was doing my own thing...and then I started a family, and I forgot her some more. The years went by and although we had monthly calls (I had moved to New England) and once-a-year visits, my mom became simply a mental shell of the dedicated and faithful mother who brought me into this world.

Then, her physical and cognitive health started to slip, and it was a wakeup call. My two siblings and I quickly responded and helped her transition into Westminister. Initially she thrived, had many friends and enjoyed her life there, but after a couple of years we began to receive calls from the community staff about her behavior. It was reported that she was pilfering from other residents, stealing candy from the gift shop or "paying off" the housekeepers for sweet treats. She stubbornly barked at her caregivers and refused to take her meds. My siblings and I didn't believe the staff and thought surely, they were mistaken, or worse, just didn't like our mom. We complained incessantly about their continued calls about incidents. "That's not our mom," we would fire back, or "we just spoke, and she said everything is fine with her...she gets along great with the staff".

Months, and many care plan meetings later, we began to understand that our mom had aged...she had changed.

She was no longer the gentle, compassionate person that we knew growing up. Time and illness were consuming her. (*continues on page 2*)

(Continues from page 1) The Health Services team had been accurate with the reporting, and they were doing their jobs well, not only for our mom, but also for the additional 95 residents they managed. Our full realization came when we were called to witness her sitting in the elevator door entrance in her pajamas, cross-armed, defiantly preventing anyone from boarding the elevator.

Shortly afterwards, our mother transitioned to a secure neighborhood in the community where she received additional care and meds that gave her more comfort.



On Christmas Night, 2015, just weeks after my mom was laid to rest. I pitched a tent on her gravesite and slept. I remember wanting to reach through the ground so I could hug her and tell her how much I owe her for all that she had done to help me succeed in life. And to tell her I love her.

**Time is precious...use it wisely. - Michael**

## Kitchen Corner

Hydration- The humid New England weather has shown up right on schedule. Keeping residents (and staff!) hydrated is a big goal but something we strive for each day.

Here are some tips we use in-house that might help you at home:

*It's time to hydrate*

- 💧 Flavored waters - our favorites are strawberry and citrus.
- 💧 Watermelon snack breaks.
- 💧 Sugar free popsicles or Italian ice.
- 💧 Electrolyte packets mixed into Jello.
- 💧 Try mixing half red Electrolyte drink (Gatorade, Pedialyte, Powerade, etc) mixed with half cranberry juice.
- 💧 Eating fresh fruits and vegetables also helps. Enjoy those cucumbers, tomatoes, and berries!
- 💧 Drink a glass of water at each meal.

## Club News



Residents have been kept very busy deadheading the hanging plants during our porch socials. It's been wonderful to hear the stories of their previous homes and the gardens that went with them. Our first harvest of the season is lettuce. The gardening club is very hopeful for the tomatoes and cucumbers to come in. Both of them are doing pretty well despite the weather. The pepper plants are not doing as well but with some fertilizer and TLC, hopefully they will come through strong.

The residents in the Gardens program have been growing out herbs and will be making lemonade and teas featuring them later in the month. They have Honey Lavender, Sweet Purple Basil, and Pineapple Mint! Please remember to refrain from picking the vegetables as they come available for harvest. The residents have a plan and we do hope to be able to have the ones who've put in the love and labor pick the trophy!

## Life Enrichment News

July is here and wow has it been a hot one! We have been busy here at MPC. We had a great time at the 4th of July parade in Woodsville. We have music with Cooie this month and ice cream rides to Hatchland Farm for yummy ice cream treats! We have many fun activities planned and are enjoying fresh vegetables from local farms 4Corners and Pierson's. We are planning a trip to the North Haverhill Fair to enjoy the local summer attractions.

August is fast approaching, and we look forward to more fun times on our porch! If there are any other activities that residents and families want to see, please let us know! Enjoy the summer and stay cool!

## Meet the Staff - Nick DiLorenzo

**Q:** How long have you been at MPC and what is your role?

*A: I have been employed at Margaret Pratt community for four months. Currently I am a med tech helping residents manage their medications. I am also a Certified Medical Assistant and Certified Fitter of Orthotics and Prosthesis. Years of focus in Orthopedic medicine helps bring a strong understanding of our aging population. It is a very rewarding job assisting in the health of our residents.*

**Q:** Where do you live, where are you from?

*A: I was born and raised in Cumberland, Rhode Island. Growing up with a large Italian family taught me so much. Both of my grandmothers were nurses. They stressed to me at a young age the importance of selfless service. This is why I joined the Army at the age of 21 and after 6 years moved up to Bradford, Vermont with my family.*

**Q:** Fun fact about yourself:

*A: I volunteer as a scout leader in the local Bradford Pack 776 and love the outdoors.*

*Developing youth to become strong citizens and give them tools to grow has been a huge passion of mine. Growing up by*

*the ocean grew my passion of deep sea fishing and Quahogging, as well as Camping and kayaking. Outside of that my favorite thing to do for fun is spending time with my two children ( Aidan and Arabella).*



## A Word from our Health Specialists

Please speak directly with Suzette or Dorothy before bringing back a resident who has been hospitalized. We understand the need for beds at local hospitals and appreciate their efforts. However, admitting a resident to MPC before we are ready can be challenging. We need to follow procedures to ensure we have the necessary medications, oxygen, or hospital beds. These policies are in place to ensure the safety of our residents and staff.



# Word Search

FIREWORKS | SUNSHINE | BURGERS | FLOWERS | GARDEN  
 CLOWNS | FLOAT | FIRETRUCK | TOMATOES | SPINACH  
 PICNIC | CARS | ANIMALS | LETTUCE | PEPPERS | TENT  
 PARADE | JULY | FAIR | BBQ | HOTDOGS | CUCUMBERS

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## Fun at MPC





## The James Barton Fund

Like us, you are probably aware that housing is an enormous problem in Vermont today with a shortage of inventory and increasing housing costs. At the same time, our elder population is growing dramatically. One less seen but powerful impact of this is the dearth of safe, healthy, affordable housing as seniors become less able to live at home. This is why we established the James Barton Fund at Margaret Pratt Community.

The fund was created in honor of our founding member, James Barton, to address a critical need: ensuring that residents can remain at MPC even if their financial resources are exhausted. Our commitment is to provide compassionate care, regardless of financial circumstances. MPC participates in Vermont's Medicaid program, allowing us to support low- and middle-income elders, especially those who fall into the "forgotten middle" – those who don't qualify for Medicaid but can't afford private pay.

Owned by Enhanced Living, Inc., a Bradford-based nonprofit organization, MPC prioritizes care over profit, guided by the values of respect, quality, and humanity. The James Barton Fund is vital to fulfilling this mission, providing the financial support needed to cover housing, meals, and assistance for our residents.

Your contribution to the James Barton Fund will directly support these efforts. As life expectancy rises, the likelihood of outliving financial resources increases. This fund ensures that our residents can live with dignity, security, and peace of mind.

We invite you to donate to the James Barton Fund. Your tax-deductible contribution will make a significant difference in the lives of our seniors, ensuring they receive the essential services they need.

### How to Give

**Send your check or money order payable to:**

The James Barton Fund  
c/o Enhanced Living, Inc.  
210 Plateau Acres, Bradford, Vermont 05033

**Or donate by credit card online:**

<https://www.margaretpratt.org/donate>



MARGARET PRATT  
COMMUNITY