

A MAGAZINE *from* BRIO LIVING SERVICES

Community

Special Edition: A SUMMER UPDATE FROM BRIO LIVING SERVICES AND UMRC-PORTER HILLS FOUNDATION

Living Vibrantly



CRC residents and Legacy Society members Linda and Charlie Britton and Mercy



Creative Options for Vibrant Living

A letter from Steve Fetyko, President & CEO, Brio Living Services

This year, the first Baby Boomers, born in 1946, began turning 80. The U.S. Census Bureau shows that, in the next twenty years, the nation's 80-plus population is projected to double, from approximately 15 million to more than 29 million in 2045.

Providing outstanding, person-directed care and offering multiple ways to age vibrantly, no matter your circumstances, is more important than ever.

As we have officially announced our **Live Life with Brio** comprehensive campaign, I believe that Brio is well positioned to provide creative solutions that embrace vibrancy and independence, thanks to your help.

Engaging in conversation, listening to people's hopes and dreams for retirement, and creating avenues for healthy aging, despite the circumstances they may be experiencing, are the best ways to achieve our vision of a world in which all are empowered to age well.

Rooted in faith, 2026 marks our 120th year of caring for older adults from our historic Chelsea campus. In the words of John Wesley, founder of Methodism, your generosity inspires us to do all the good we can, for all the people we can, for as long as we can. If we can continue to do that, we can



Kelli Smith and Steve Fetyko present at the Campaign Kickoff.

be a great place for people to experience life the way they want to for, dare I say, another 120 years.

Thank you for choosing to invest in our organization. Our pledge is to prove ourselves worthy by executing fully on our mission each and every day of welcoming all, partnering together, enriching lives. We continue to thank you for all that you do for the older adults and team members we serve. ■



In Service,

Steve Fetyko
President & CEO
Brio Living Services

Being a Difference Maker

A Letter from Kelli Smith, President & CEO, UMRC-Porter Hills Foundation

My grandfather is 95 years old. He is feisty and vibrant and amazing, and I love every moment with him. But if you asked him, he wouldn't have expected to live this long. Now he tells me he's going to live to 105, so I'd better get ready!

Kidding aside, as our population is aging, how WILL we be ready? How will we make sure that people are cared for, with the dignity and compassionate care they deserve, to live a wonderful life as they age?

Here at Brio, we are preparing through our **Live Life with Brio** comprehensive campaign, featuring our four fundraising pillars. Thanks to your gifts, you are helping us:

- Transform our **Porter Hills Village** community and renovate and expand the **Chelsea Retirement Community Chapel & Performing Arts Center**. Last year, these communities were home to more than 1,300 people. We want our residents' homes to be as amazing as possible.
- Offer **enriching programs**, from concerts and performances to treatment modalities that uplift the dignity of all of us as we age.
- Support our **Brio team members**. They are equal partners in creating vibrancy for all we serve. We need each other, we rely on each other, and the Foundation is here to take care of them through *Scholarships* and *Emergency Aid*.
- Lift up our cornerstone of **Benevolent Care**, ensuring that resources are available for qualified residents who exhaust their savings.



Jennifer Shores, Executive Director, Chelsea Retirement Community; Nicole Maag, Chief of Residential Services, Brio Living Services; Rep. Kathy Schmaltz, Dist. 46, Jackson; Steve Fetyko; Kelli Smith.

Philanthropy means the love of mankind. Through the Foundation and all of you who invest in what we do through your donations, we give that love right back to the older adults and team members we serve.

Our founders cast their vision for what they wanted to see in the world. We, too, want to be those difference makers, caring for people's needs, today and tomorrow, and creating a sustainable organization that honors our vision, mission, and history. Thank you for joining us on this journey! ■



Best Regards,

Kelli Smith, CFRE
President & CEO
UMRC-Porter Hills
Foundation

Foundation Celebrates Campaign Kickoff with Event in Chelsea

The UMRC-Porter Hills Foundation celebrated its **Live Life with Brio** Campaign Kickoff in Chelsea on May 28. More than eighty guests attended the event, held at **Chelsea Retirement Community (CRC)**. To date, more than \$21 million in gifts, grants, and pledges, or over 75% of the total \$28 million goal, have been received.

Special guests included State Representative Kathy Schmaltz (District 46, Jackson) who chairs the House Families and Veterans Committee and works closely with issues affecting older adults. Rep. Schmaltz offered remarks and presented a Legislative State tribute to Steve Fetyko and Kelli Smith, recognizing Chelsea Retirement Community's 120 years of service in the region.

"Thank you for all you do for our seniors, your dedication, and just being a community. This is a real community and it's beautiful," said Rep. Schmaltz. "This tribute honors your decades of helping people."

Kelli thanked Campaign Co-Chairs Russ and Susan Ives, Tom and Barb Jackoboice, and Jim and Marie Preston, as well as all members of the Campaign Cabinet, for their service and commitment to the **Live Life with Brio** campaign. She also thanked the sponsors for this event, including Platinum Sponsor Huntington Bank.



Members of the **Live Life with Brio** Campaign Cabinet at the Chelsea Kickoff event

"Philanthropy makes such a huge difference in what we can do," said Kelli. "We can make life better for people. This [CRC] is the house that philanthropy built. This was someone's vision long before we got here. Remember that that power is inside each and every one of us to make a difference and pay it forward for someone else."

The \$28 million **Live Life with Brio** comprehensive campaign supports the Foundation's four fundraising pillars that promote vibrant living for older adults and investment in the team members of Brio Living Services. These include:

- Benevolent Care
- Capital Improvements
- Team Member Investment
- Program Investment ■

To learn more about how you can support aging adults through a gift to the **Live Life with Brio** campaign, visit Foundation.UMRCPH.org/Live-Life-With-Brio/

Mary Wagner: 'Seeing Our Dreams Come True'

A retired nurse, consultant, and project manager, Mary Wagner first joined the Porter Hills Board of Directors in 2015. “I retired in my early 70s, but I wanted to do more,” says Mary. “I had no idea where it might lead, but I thought, ‘I’m an older person and, in some way, this is going to open some kind of special door.’”

Little did she know that, in 2019, as Chair of the Porter Hills Board of Directors, she would help oversee the affiliation of Porter Hills with the United Methodist Retirement Communities (UMRC), along with John Nixon III, her counterpart on the UMRC Board of Trustees.

“Putting two different organizations into one takes time and a lot of relationship building,” says Mary. “We wanted to do the right thing for the right reasons, and there was a real commitment to the affiliation from leadership on both sides. I was very impressed by the things we could do together.”

In 2022, UMRC & Porter Hills rebranded as **Brio Living Services**. Today, seven years after the affiliation, **Porter Hills Village** is seeing major renovations to better serve its

residents—today and tomorrow—part of Brio and the Foundation’s **Live Life with Brio** comprehensive campaign.

“When I see the new construction and all the hard work of Steve and our talented leaders, it is thrilling to see our dreams come true under their guidance,” says Mary. “It gives me great joy.”



Mary is a devoted donor to the UMRC-Porter Hills Foundation. “The Foundation is critical to many components, including Benevolent Care and capital projects,” says

Mary. “Kelli and her team do a wonderful job. It’s critical to have that when you’re building and growing. You can’t be successful without it.”

Mary’s tenure on the Brio Living Services Board ended in 2024, but she continues to advocate for aging well in the Grand Rapids area as a member of the local Area Agency on Aging Board. “We’ve never had this many elders in our nation before, and safe housing and care are a critical need. I see this as an opportunity for me. I’m a fuller person because of it.” ■

Chuck and Carol Jennings: Actions and Gifts



Chuck and Carol Jennings have a long connection with Brio Living Services. Chuck devoted over 30 years of volunteer service to Porter Hills, including as chair of the governing board and the Porter Hills Foundation board.

Chuck's father and Carol's mother were residents at Porter Hills Village, and Chuck and Carol now reside at **Cook Valley Estates**. Today, they continue to volunteer in the community they call home.

Chuck enjoyed a 35-year career heading the Human Resources team at Old Kent Financial Corporation, an organization that encouraged community volunteering. "I'm kind of a volunteer guy," Chuck says. "I grew up in that environment."

Currently, Chuck volunteers to lead and help identify speakers for the **Foundation Speaker Series at Cook Valley Estates**, supported by gifts to the UMRC-Porter Hills Foundation. In June, the Foundation Speaker Series included topics ranging from espionage to teaching your kids about financial investing to a celebration of America's 250th anniversary.

"The Speaker Series incorporates education, fun, and variety into our lives at Cook Valley," says Chuck. "Some of our residents might be limited to where they can go. Bringing entertaining speakers into our community really adds to our quality of life."

Chuck and Carol also volunteer as members of the Campaign Cabinet, supporting the **Live Life with Brio** comprehensive campaign.

"When you believe in something you have to believe totally," says Chuck. "It is important to be financially supportive of the organization that you're involved with to the best of your ability. We try to give through our actions as well as through our gifts."



Carol and Chuck Jennings with Foundation Director of Philanthropy Rachel Webster

In addition, the Jennings' are members of the Foundation's **Legacy Society**. "It goes along with putting your money in what you believe in," explains Chuck. "It is a natural step in our life's history to extend to our planned giving." ■

A 'People Person'



Barb Sullivan

We are pleased to feature Barb Sullivan who joined the Foundation team in 2022 as our Office Manager in Chelsea. Among her many talents

are juggling the very busy calendar of Foundation President & CEO Kelli Smith, scheduling meetings, planning for Foundation events, and keeping the team organized.

"I am a 'people person,' and I love helping others," says Barb. "Working on the phenomenal Foundation team, I have met so many new people — residents and team members. What a blessing it is to help others and make their day more enjoyable. The relationships I have made will always have a place in my heart."

Kelli describes Barb as "pure joy! She is always thoughtful, anticipates everyone's needs, and is full of positive energy. We are so fortunate to have her as part of our Foundation team and organization." ■

Smith Honored



Bestowing the UMC cane upon Russ Smith

Chelsea Retirement Community (CRC) resident and retired United Methodist pastor, Rev. Russell L. Smith, was honored recently with the presentation of the Michigan United Methodist Conference cane. This historic cane is bestowed upon the oldest living United Methodist pastor who has been under appointment to the Conference for 30 years or more. Russ and his late wife, Ruth, served in five churches during his 31-year career.

The cane has great significance within the Michigan Conference and CRC. The body of the cane is made of wood from the original Methodist Episcopal church in Adrian, built in 1840.

In 1904, the Conference decided the cane should be a "more historic souvenir" and appointed three ministers to oversee this work, including James E. Jacklin, one of the founders of what is now CRC. The committee added a series of inserts of wood from other historic Methodist sites, including the bookcase of Seth Reed (1823-1924), an early Methodist circuit rider who, along with his wife, became the first Superintendents of CRC. ■

Ray and Kay Kretzschmer: 71 Years of Happy Marriage

Porter Hills Village residents Ray and Kay Kretzschmer recently celebrated their 71st wedding anniversary. What's their secret to a happy marriage? "I don't know," says Ray, laughing. "Patience, love. Open communication makes a big difference."

The couple married while Ray was studying to be a minister. He served in many communities and was associate pastor at Westminster Presbyterian Church in Grand Rapids, which founded Porter Hills Village. While there, they became very familiar with the community – Kay volunteered and Ray visited church members who lived there.

Kay's many talents included driving a school bus, becoming a piano technician, and teaching and making stained glass. Ray enjoys woodcarving and playing the banjo.

In the latter part of his career, Ray worked as a pastoral counselor and traveled to serve churches in Oklahoma and Texas. "We knew we'd only be at a church for a few years, so we bought a truck and 5th wheel that we called 'The Manse-Mobile.' Our dear family was all in the Grand Rapids area, though, and Kay hated the heat. That's when I retired."

Because they didn't have a house, Ray and Kay considered renting a condo but decided, instead, to move to Porter Hills Village. It's been their home for twenty years. They continued to be active volunteers at Generations Daycare and started activities like Wii bowling.



Ray and Kay Kretzschmer and Family

The continuum of care also attracted them. "We didn't really know what that meant until now," says Ray. In November 2025, Kay moved to the **Porter Hills Village Health Center** as her dementia progressed. "Her strength started to go, but she still has her sense of humor and her beautiful smile," says Robin, one of the couple's three daughters. "We couldn't be happier with her care."

Ray says the Foundation's Benevolent Care Fund is also important to them. "We want to support the Foundation," explains Ray. "It's not a lot, but we have included it in our budget and have it automatically withdrawn."

Robin and Kay dye their hair purple in recognition of the Alzheimer's movement. Robin shares, "It's reassuring that our parents are happy and safe here. The team members go above and beyond and are warm and generous. They're part of our family now." ■

Sue Stoddard: 'Focus on the Whole Person'

As Porter Hills' Vice President of Finance from 2012 to 2014, Sue Stoddard was familiar with Paige Hendrickson, Executive Director for **Avenues by Brio Living Services**. "Paige and I had offices near each other," explains Sue. "I was impressed with the rapport Paige had with the Avenues members. Paige is a warm, calming presence, very caring."

Today, Sue is an Avenues member. She describes herself as "on the young side" of most members but feels having the safety net of Avenues is important as she ages. As a single person with two sons who live far away, Avenues holds many benefits for Sue. "Avenues offers a point of contact for my sons should we need it, and I have an assigned navigator, Jessica Lincolnhol, who helps me with age-appropriate exercise programs and accompanies me to doctor's appointments as needed, to name just a few benefits."

Sue says her parents set a good example for her when they moved to a continuing care retirement community (CCRC) in their hometown. "It provided peace of mind for them and for me," says Sue. "Dad had Parkinson's and used every level of care. Avenues offers that same assurance without having to move from the home where I have lived for over 40 years."

Sue remains active as a volunteer with the Voluntary Income Tax Assistance program



Sue Stoddard volunteers in the community.

through United Way. She also plays violin in the Calvin Community Symphony and enjoys golfing, gardening, hiking, and biking. In addition, Sue supports the UMRC-Porter Hills Foundation's Benevolent Care Fund. "I like being able to help residents who have exhausted their resources."

She adds, "I really like Brio's focus on the whole person. It was nice working for a place like that, and I'm grateful to be part of Avenues that looks at each member as an individual. It's a great match for me, and I'm looking forward to being with Avenues for a very long time." ■

Zoie Langston: 'Everything Connects to Relationships'

Zoie Langston is able to balance work and school to achieve her dream of being a therapist, thanks, in part, to a Scholarship from the UMRC-Porter Hills Foundation. On the weekends, she is the unit clerk at Chelsea Retirement Community's **Kresge Healthcare and Rehabilitation Center**, where she has worked for the past year. During the week, Zoie is pursuing her Master's of Social Work (MSW) degree at Michigan State University and is set to graduate in May 2027.

"I am furthering my education because I am passionate about mental health in marginalized communities," says Zoie. "The mental health field continues to need passionate workers. As a person of color, being able to talk about mental health among the black community is so important to help combat negative stigma and misinformation."

In Zoie's role at CRC, she works primarily with adults who are at the Kresge Center for short-term rehabilitation. She especially enjoys the people she gets to know, of all ages and backgrounds. "Everything connects to relationships," Zoie says. "Meeting so many different people and hearing about their life experiences and learning from them is really special. They are often stressed about coming to rehabilitation. As the unit

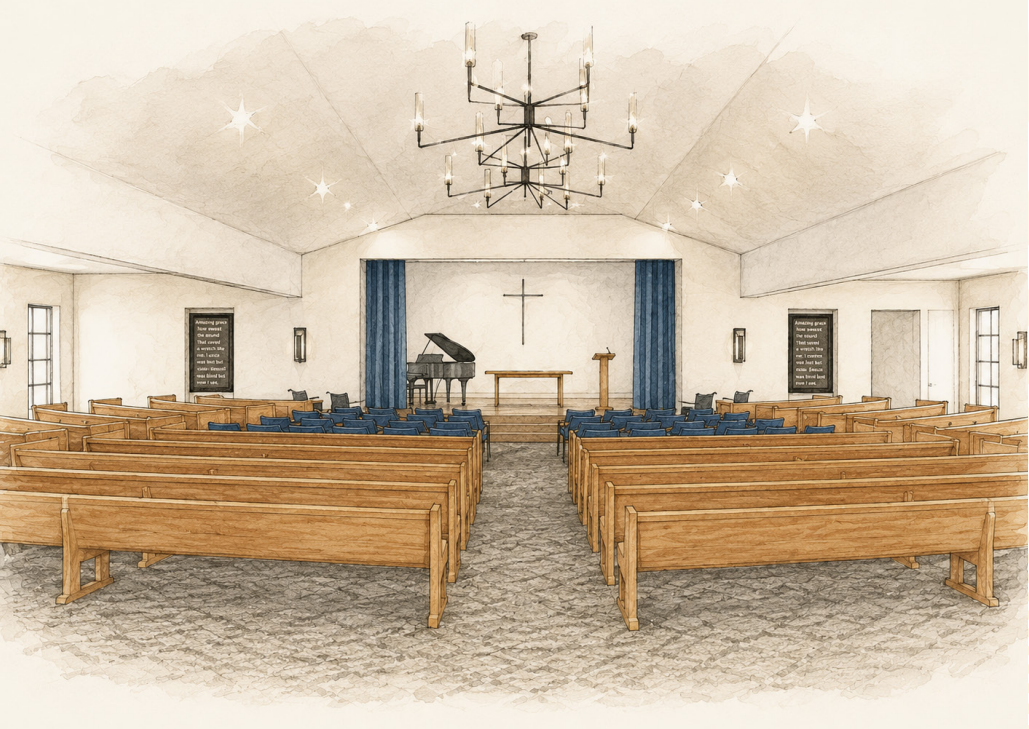


Foundation Scholar Zoie Langston

clerk, I can talk to them, arrange transportation to their doctor appointments, and help take away some of their worry. They are really appreciative."

Zoie says she is grateful to all those who donate to the Foundation's **Scholarship Fund**, part of the **Team Member Support Services** program. "Because of your support, I can continue pursuing my education with confidence and focus, and this scholarship eases the financial burden, while reminding me that others believe in my potential." ■

Your gifts to Team Member Support Services help team members, like Zoie, make their dreams come true! Learn more at Foundation.UMRCPH.org/Employee-Support



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EXCITING THINGS TO COME!

We are pleased to be opening
our Chapel and Performing Arts
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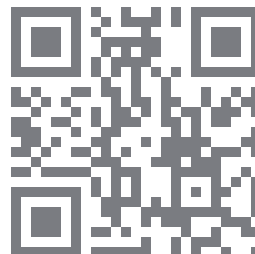
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August is Make-a-Will Month

August is Make-a-Will Month, but less than one third of Americans have a will, according to Terrence G. Quinn, Esq., an estate planning attorney in Ann Arbor and founder and president of The TGQ Law Firm, as well as a member of the UMRC-Porter Hills Foundation Board of Directors. “Two thirds of those who have a will still may not have it right,” says Terrence.

With over two decades of experience in estate planning and elder law, Terrence suggests a trust-based plan to help minimize taxes and eliminate the need for probate, which can take up to a year. “Planning is always necessary,” Terrence urges. “Consider ways to save taxes

for you and your family, including opportunities to designate a portion of your estate to your favorite charity, such as the UMRC-Porter Hills Foundation.”

Terrence’s advice: “Review your will or trust once a year to update any beneficiaries and to ensure your plan still reflects your family’s needs, your beliefs and goals, and the causes you care about.” ■



Terrence G. Quinn, Esq.

Learn more at Foundation.UMRCPH.org or contact
734.433.1000 ext. 7397 or 616.577.2297.

