



*Blooming Where  
We Are Planted  
Residents and Staff Members  
Find Ways to Brighten Days*

# soaring

A PUBLICATION OF MENNONITE HOME COMMUNITIES

WINTER 2020

2020 Golf Tournament  
Creative Ways to Connect  
Annual Report

p4  
p5  
p6



# Outdoor Beauty Abounds

## AT WOODCREST VILLA

In the northwest corner of Woodcrest Villa (WCV), just beyond the Nature Trail, lies more than an acre of meadowland, stream and, soon, a memorial arboretum with native shrubs, wildflowers and trees, planted in memory of and in honor of residents who have passed away and in honor of those who have made an impact.

Arboretums are protected outdoor museums of sorts, where visitors can wander through a wide variety of identified trees and other plantings, grown for education and ornamentation. Picture a mini-version of Longwood Gardens or the United States Botanic Garden, in Washington, D.C.

In addition to beautification, the WCV arboretum will shelter native wildlife living along the banks of Swarr Run, the creek that winds along the edge of the arboretum on its way to the Little Conestoga Creek.

As plantings mature, the acreage will be “a place where we can honor our people ... to help us remember our loved ones for a long time,” said resident Shirley Harms. “An arboretum is a joyful experience .... A person can find renewal as each season comes and goes.”

*Dedicated walking trail,  
Flower Factory  
volunteers and arboretum  
brighten lives*

WCV resident Jerry Lawrence, a lifelong gardener, developed the arboretum idea over the past year. Step one was to remove invasive plants such as bush honeysuckle and poison ivy as well as dead trees and other debris along Swarr Run and the arboretum boundaries. Then, the Woodcrest Arboretum

Committee planted approximately 100 native shrubs and trees—serviceberry, paw paw, winterberry, paper birch, flowering crabapple, hydrangea, viburnum, chokeberry and Kousa dogwood.

The plantings accent areas along the Nature Trail and woodland tree canopy and act as a riparian buffer along Swarr Run, protecting stream banks and the waterway.

This past autumn, five memorial and honor trees were planted in the arboretum including an honor tree for the Mennonite Home Communities’ (MHC) “Health Care Heroes.” The Memorial and Honor trees include a cast bronze plaque. Purchased for \$1,000, this covers the cost of the tree and plaque, and the cost of planting and care.

The arboretum, created, funded and maintained by resident volunteers, will eventually feature American beech, Princeton elm,

black willow, red oak and oakleaf hydrangea. “We are perhaps the only retirement campus in the area that has both an arboretum and nature trail,” said Jerry.

The Nature Trail, recently dedicated to residents Lew and Gloria Kauffman “for their love of flora and fauna and their countless hours” of trail work, was the foundation of the “bloom where you are planted” initiative, which includes the greenhouse, raised gardens and the seasonal flower plantings.

The MHC Grounds crew has helped bring the arboretum to fruition by felling dead or dying trees and hauling away the debris. “We also make sure that the trees/plants that are being planted are suitable for the area that they want to plant them,” noted Jake Ault, grounds supervisor. “Sort of a ‘consultant’ role, if you will.”

The arboretum committee also made connections to tree experts and native tree farms through Lancaster County Conservancy, and Jenkins Arboretum in Devon donated identification signs.

In addition to developing the trail and arboretum, talented WCV residents bring their gardening talents together for the overall beautification of the entire community. Under the heading of WCV Flower Factory, Nature Trail & Arboretum, the gardeners nurture a variety of enterprises.

The Flower Factory grows, cuts and arranges bouquets, sold each week in the Marketplace, for the MHC benevolent fund—providing a continuation of high-quality care to residents who have outlived their resources.

The flowers, begun as seeds in February, come to maturity in a garden area next to the greenhouse, said Lawrence. Five bucketsful—a mix of perennials and annuals such as lisianthus, rudbeckia, cosmos, zinnia and dahlias—are cut each week and arranged into 15 to 20 bunches to be sold each Friday and Saturday. In season, the flowers bring \$100 a week to the fund.

*(Top photo) Jerry Lawrence (far left) leads the ceremony to dedicate the walking trail to Lew & Gloria Kauffman (pictured with Kauffman family members). Lew is one of several outstanding volunteers who devoted countless hours to making the trail a favorite walking path for many. (Middle photo) Location of arboretum on Woodcrest Villa Campus. (Bottom photo) Flower Factory volunteers create stunning flower arrangements with sales proceeds benefitting benevolent care.*

