

# Words From the WOODS

A QUARTERLY PUBLICATION FROM POMPERAUG WOODS

FALL 2024



Happy Fall Everyone! We are certainly making the most of these crisp fall days by getting outside and enjoying the beautiful fall foliage. Take a peek at the photos from our 1st Annual Walk to End Alzheimer's — everyone had a ball as we raised funds for a worthy cause. This season has been packed with plenty of daytrips as well as lots of fun events right here on campus. We're especially proud of our Pomperaug Players performance. The cast did an amazing job, and we celebrated their success with a special cocktail hour in their honor. It's been an unforgettable autumn, and we look forward to more happy times together in 2025.

Warmly, **Vicki Gyba-Marshall**, *Executive Director*

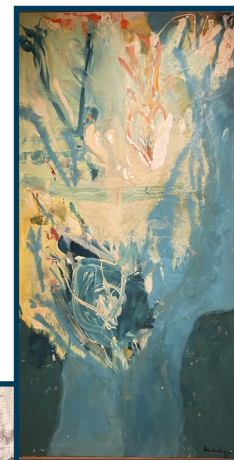
## The New Britain Museum of Art — Small Attraction: Huge Satisfaction!

The New Britain Museum of Art is a favorite of so many Pomperaug Woods residents. No matter what the medium, every room is a vibrant kaleidoscope of creativity that always inspires.

"The New Britain is a lovely museum that is just the right size to see in a few hours," said Lisa Huebenthal, Director of Community Life. "I have high expectations because the Museum always has such interesting featured exhibits in addition to its signature collection of American paintings. The New Britain never disappoints."

"I loved the exhibit about early women abstract expressionist painters, like Helen Frankenthaler and Grace Hartigan, who were equally as talented as male artists like de Kooning and Jackson Pollack, but were never given the same recognition," said resident Lea Embree. "And the room with the piñata-like murals, which were made using just paper strips and glue, was amazing! It was a morning well spent."

"I haven't been to the New Britain in 20 years," said resident Denise Linden. "It was good to go back and see it with fresh eyes. The beautiful multicolored room that was inspired by real paintings was just wonderful."



L to R: Denise Linden, Ellie Crystal, Lea Embree, May Bernhard, Sandy Milkes, Peggy Gloria, Janet Hansen, Lisa Huebenthal

Day trips are scheduled each month, and residents may sign up at the Front Desk.

# Enjoy **BIG SAVINGS** On Our **Putnam Apartments!**

**SAVE** up to **\$30,000\***

**BIG NEWS!** New residents who make a deposit on a select second floor Putnam apartment by December 31st will be awarded a one-time incentive of \$30,000 SAVINGS\*!

Everyone **LOVES** the Putnam apartments at Pomperaug Woods! There are two different cozy 1 bed/1 bath Putnam floor plans located on the second floor, offering panoramic views of the Connecticut countryside.

"We want every new resident to make their Putnam their own," said Leigh Schultz, Director of Sales & Marketing. "We can help you customize it with new carpeting of your choice and a fresh coat of paint throughout. It's just one of the many complimentary services we provide to make new residents feel truly welcome."

**DON'T WAIT!** Putnam apartments are going fast! Schedule a visit today!

\* Incentive applicable on select second floor Putnam style floor plans only. Must make a deposit by December 31, 2024. 80% Return of Capital Agreements only.



**Schedule a visit TODAY: 203-935-3734**

## Pomperaug Woods Earns **"GOLD"** Status in Extraordinary Impressions Program

LCS has been developing, managing, and leading senior living communities across the country for 50 years. Pomperaug Woods is one of more than 140 senior living communities under LCS leadership, and we are proud to partner with them to elevate the experiences of our residents through industry-leading initiatives and a deep commitment to hospitality and service.

One of the many innovative LCS programs Pomperaug Woods is certified in is the Extraordinary Impressions® program. The Extraordinary Impressions Program centers on creating high-quality hospitality experiences that deliver a richer, more engaging resident experience — delivering on the principle "We serve the resident first and foremost." The Extraordinary Impressions program is celebrating its 15th year, and only 23 communities across the country achieved "Gold" status. Pomperaug Woods is proud to be in that golden group.



Pomperaug Woods HR:  
Brielle O'Neil &  
Liz Sheehan

"The staff at Pomperaug Woods has always invested our heart and soul in creating a welcoming culture," said Vicki Gyba-Marshall, Executive Director. "It is what we're known for. It all starts when you walk through the door. Everyone is greeted with a smile. We genuinely want every individual to feel important and valued. I want to personally thank our staff for all they do to create this culture of kindness. Achieving 'Gold' status is wonderful, but having residents say how much they love living here feels even more rewarding."

"Every staff member makes a notable contribution to the quality of life for residents," said Liz Sheehan, Director of Human Resources. "We pay attention to the details, and that makes all the difference. Thank you for the 'Gold' award, LCS. We appreciate the pat on the back!"

# The Pomperaug Players Take to the Stage with a Performance of *Sylvia*

The Pomperaug Players delivered another wonderful theater experience with the play, *Sylvia*. "It's the story of a man going through a mid-life crisis," said resident and founding Pomperaug Players member May Bernhard. "He and his wife are having difficulties, and one day he brings home a dog. I play the dog, Sylvia. It's very funny, and yet quite poignant. There's lots of truth to it."

"The cast was very dedicated," said Lisa Huebenthal, Director of Community Life. "May Bernhard, Glenn Anderson, Mary Ann Slocomb, Sally Bourgault, Joel Abramson, and Linda Heuser. Stage Manager was Marilyn Simon and preshow music was Lynne Kearney. So great!"

Glenn Anderson played the lead role of Greg, the husband. "I have done community theater for many years," said Glenn. "Without the worry of memorizing lines, it was so relaxing to work on this play. I look forward to being in many more Pomperaug Players performances in the future."

Mary Ann Slocomb played the role of Kate, the wife. "This is my second Pomperaug Players show, and this is a much larger part for me, so I was a little intimidated but excited. I never knew I would like this kind of thing, but it's a lot of fun!"

Resident Sam Burd and his wife, Lynda, are new to Pomperaug Woods and thoroughly enjoyed the show. "It was great!" said Sam. "What a unique way to get involved."

"It was a packed house," said resident Ellie Crystal. "I go to every Pomperaug Players performance. Every show is wonderful."



L to R: Lynne Kearney (Piano), Mary Ann Slocomb (Actor), Sally Bourgault (Actor), Maureen Denver (Popular local Director), Linda Heuser (Actor), May Bernhard (Actor), Glenn Anderson (Actor), Marilyn Simon (Stage Manager) Not pictured is Joel Abramson (Actor)

Check the Activities Calendar for future performances by the Pomperaug Players. Better yet, consider joining the cast. No previous acting experience required.

# The Frank Porto Band Makes a Splash at the Cocktail Hour

What's better than the weekly cocktail hour at Pomperaug Woods? Having The Frank Porto Band turn the cocktail hour into a dance party!

"The Frank Porto Band is terrific," said Lisa Huebenthal, Director of Community Life.

"They play everything from Sinatra to Big Band Classics, from The Beatles to James Brown. It's a 6-man band playing everything from the guitar to the flugelhorn. They have a big sound, and they really brought their A-game to this week's cocktail hour."

"What an unexpected surprise to have a full band for our cocktail hour," said resident Ida Ressler. "They were fabulous! They energized the crowd, and the music filled you with vim and vigor. I spoke with the band members afterward and told them what a great job they did. The whole evening was such a treat!"

"Such a lively band," said resident Lea Embree. "They even played some South of the Border Salsa. I really enjoyed it."

"I go to the cocktail hour once in a while, but I specifically went to this cocktail hour to hear the band," said resident Gloria Kalinowski. "I enjoyed it so much. It was such fun to sing along to the oldies."



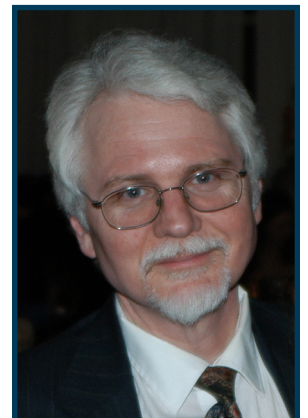
The Pomperaug Woods Cocktail Hour is held in Wilson Hall on Fridays at 4:15pm. Enjoy!

# Historian John Dwyer hosts a unique lecture and bus tour of Southbury history

Get on the bus! Southbury Town Historian John Dwyer shared his deep insights on our hometown, then treated residents to a bus tour of historic locales discussed in the lecture.

"Did you know that Southbury has had some very famous residents over the past 300 years?" said John. "Ed Sullivan loved it here, as did Victor Borge. In my historic overview of Southbury, we cover a lot of 'Did you know...' information. We start in the late 1600's when our town was founded by Puritans who split from their church in Stratford, CT. We move on to take a peek at how each of four different wars affected our town — the Revolutionary War, the Civil War, and World War I & II. And we learn how each century has helped our town evolve. Then we get on the bus and motor to four different locales — Main Street North where the first settlers arrived, South Britain which is where the industrial growth occurred, Main Street South where Town Hall and businesses sprang up as I-84 came through, and Southford where the Diamond Match Factory once was. It's a pleasure to take Pomperaug Woods residents on my own private tour of Southbury, and then wrap up the day with a stop for pizza!"

"It was a very well-done lecture," said resident Gloria Kalinowski. "And the bus tour took us to places I never even knew existed. John gave all of us maps so that we could follow along as we drove around town to see the historic homes and locations he had spoken about. He pointed out all the details in the architecture of different notable buildings in town. We even drove down an old Indian trail. It was a really interesting tour."



Residents check the Activities Calendar for days/times of lectures, classes, tours, and more.

# Pomperaug Woods Rolls Out the Red Carpet for New Residents

New residents to Pomperaug Woods get the full “welcome treatment.”

“Before a new resident moves in, they complete an ‘Interest/Hobbies’ survey,” said Amanda Regalado, Pomperaug Woods Residency Counselor. “Our many clubs and committees will reach out to new residents with a personal invitation to join a group they might really enjoy. We also post a photo/bio of each new resident so that our current residents can learn more about them and seek out those with similar interests. It’s a great way to make new friends.”

“Pomperaug Woods connects new residents with current residents in three ways,” said Lisa Huebenthal, Director of Community Life. “First, the resident-led Welcoming Committee reaches out to newcomers to answer questions and introduce them to other residents. Second, we also have the Welcoming Table in the Dining Room, where new residents eat with a member of the Welcoming Committee or Resident Council. And finally, our Marketing Department arranges dinner dates for new residents with current residents who are from similar locations or have common interests. At Pomperaug Woods, friendships are the foundation to happiness.”

New resident Barbara Delia felt welcome from the start. “I love eating at the Welcoming Table in the Dining Room,” said Barbara. “Everyone is so interesting and easy to talk to. And everyone says hi to me as I pass them in the hall. I couldn’t have picked a better place to live.”

Welcome to Pomperaug Woods everyone — we are so glad you said YES to the address!



L to R: Barbara Delia, Sam Burd, Fay Lassios, Lynda Burd, Greta Campbell

## Residents take in a NEW musical at The Goodspeed Opera House

The Goodspeed Opera House in East Haddam is a regional favorite, and residents were excited to visit this fabled venue to experience the brand-new musical *Maggie*. “It’s the story of a Scottish mother’s unbreakable love for her three sons,” said Lisa Huebenthal, Director of Community Life. “The story spans 20 years, and it’s based on the experiences of author Johnny Reid’s real family. We had the most serendipitous experience in that the two men who wrote the book and lyrics — Johnny Reid and Matt Murray — were sitting in the audience next to us. They were kind enough to take a photo with us after the show, and chat about the evolution of the play. This chance encounter added to the wonderful experience that was had by our group.”

“The production of *Maggie* was excellent,” said resident Fran Leili. “After seeing it, I recommended it to several friends. Coincidentally, I was seated next to the men who created the show. I told them that the show brought tears to my eyes. It was a really special day.”

“I take every opportunity to see live theater,” said resident Lea Embree. “I enjoyed the play a lot. And it was a lovely encounter to be sitting with the playwrights. They were very gracious.”

“The Goodspeed Opera House is such a charming place,” said resident Peggy Jett. “The singing and acting in *Maggie* were just so good. Definitely Broadway caliber. The shows at the Goodspeed never disappoint.”



L to R: Claire Taplin, Gloria Kalinowski, Fran Leili, Peggy Jett, Lea Embree, Rolf & Rita Kogstad, Ellie Crystal, May Bernhard, Sandy Bell, Norma Benedict, Lisa Huebenthal, Santosh Joshi

Day trips are scheduled each month, and residents may sign up at the Front Desk if interested.

# Meet Megan Boyd, the new Wellness Coordinator!

Pomperaug Woods is pleased to announce that Megan Boyd has joined our team as the new Wellness Coordinator.

"I am delighted to be able to work at Pomperaug Woods full time," said Megan. "As a dancer/choreographer/instructor now also certified as a personal trainer, I started teaching Creative Movement here two years ago. Now that I am here five days a week, I have the time to teach a full slate of fitness classes. Twice a week I teach a Balance class, a Chair Exercise class, and a Standing Exercise class. Once a week I teach an Early Bird Exercise class as well as a Barre Fitness class. I also support our Walking Warriors group once a week. And I'm starting a Personal Training program available for all residents. For those interested, I will do a private consultation to create a personalized training plan and meet with them one-on-one to help them get the most out of their workouts. I want to help everyone improve their balance, strength, and flexibility. Mobility is the key to a long and healthy life. It is my honor to support every resident on their wellness journey and hope to see them in one of our fitness classes soon."

"Megan is our inspiration," said resident Lea Embree. "Her classes feature so much more than just routine exercises. Megan makes each session fun as she tells us why we're doing each set. She's such a caring and friendly addition to Pomperaug Woods. We're lucky to have her!"

Welcome to the team, Megan. We're so happy to have you as part of the Pomperaug Woods family!



## Feel strong and energized when you take the new Barre Fitness Class!

Wellness Coordinator Megan Boyd is teaching a new fitness class that provides an excellent full-body workout. "Barre Fitness is not a dance class," said Megan, "but it is a fitness class where we coordinate our movement with music. We start in a chair for warm-ups and do several reps using very light 1lb weights. The light weights tone muscle and build strength. After the warm-up, we move to do standing exercises with a weight in hand at the barre. Both the chair and barre are there for balance. By standing and working your arms and legs, you are also building a strong core, and that is essential for lifelong mobility. This exercise class is the most strenuous fitness class that I teach, but I always offer modifications to every movement so that anyone can take it and feel successful. I incorporate upbeat, feel-good music into the class, so that everyone leaves feeling vibrant and healthy."



"I love this class," said resident Sally Bourgault. "I really feel like I've accomplished something when I'm finished. It's a great workout. And Megan is so knowledgeable. She explains how every stretch or movement we do impacts our bodies and improves our long-term health, which really motivates me. I go to exercise classes because of Megan. She is a wonderful teacher and, I might add, has a great sense of humor."

"Megan is a treasure," said resident Debby Cornwell. "As someone with a ballet background, I could tell Megan was a professional dancer the minute I watched her walk. I take ALL of her fitness classes. Her classes are all very full because everyone here loves her. She is just great!"

**Check the Activities Calendar for the exact date/time of the next Barre Fitness class held in Wilson Hall.**

# Pomperaug Woods Congratulates Our Most Recent **Employees of the Month!**

It takes a lot of wonderful people to keep the Pomperaug Woods community thriving. To spotlight our most exceptional employees, residents or employees can write a "Shoot-for-the-Stars" letter. "A Shoot-for-the-Stars letter details an individual's exceptional dedication to our community," said Liz Sheehan, Director of Human Resources. "We take those letters very seriously and use them to nominate and select our Employee of the Month."

Meet this quarter's three Employees of the Month:

## **JULY: Chase Charbonneau,** *Environmental Services Department*

Chase joined Pomperaug Woods in May, 2023. He is truly dedicated to our residents, and he has blossomed into a leader. His efforts make a big impact on the cleanliness of our community.



## **AUGUST: Marilyn Colabatistto,** *Receptionist and Transport Driver*

Marilyn joined Pomperaug Woods in February, 2022. Her professionalism, kindness, and dependability put residents at ease. They look forward to her engaging conversations.



## **SEPTEMBER: Michael Santos,** *Food & Beverage Department*

Mike joined Pomperaug Woods in October, 2023. He has proven himself to be a dedicated, passionate, and talented cook. He helps create extraordinary dining experiences for residents.



We thank our Employees of the Month for going above and beyond to make Pomperaug Woods such a special place to live and work!



## Pomperaug Woods Board Member Spotlight: **Greg Lukos**

The Pomperaug Woods Board of Directors is pleased to welcome Greg Lukos, who joined the Board in February. "I recently retired as the Director of Operations at Heritage Village after 47 years of service," said Greg. "I understand the hurdles that senior living communities can encounter. Joining the Pomperaug Woods Board gives me the opportunity to continue to make a meaningful contribution to help better the

lives of seniors. I remember when Pomperaug Woods was being built. Dr. Wilson had this vision of what a vibrant senior living Life Care community could be, and it has exceeded everyone's expectations. I am truly impressed with how beautiful this community is, how well-maintained it is, how much it has to offer residents, and how welcoming the entire staff is. As a Board Member, I am excited to give back to the industry that I spent my entire career in by helping Pomperaug Woods grow and thrive for many years to come."

Greg is part of the Board's Facilities Committee, and brings a unique skill set to that role. "In my spare time, I am a Certified Arborist with the International Society of Arboriculture," said Greg. "I am also the past president and current treasurer of the New England Chapter of the International Society of Arboriculture, helping educate the public throughout New England on the importance of trees, safety, and the green industry in our world. I am particularly impressed with the new walking paths and bridge installed over the wetlands at Pomperaug Woods. What a great way to get residents out into nature in a way that respects the integrity of the environment!"

We're glad you joined the Board, Greg. Thank you for sharing your senior living expertise and insight with our community!

## Residents grab their sneakers for the 1st Annual Pomperaug Woods Walk to End Alzheimer's

Everyone was all smiles for the 1st Annual Pomperaug Woods Walk to End Alzheimer's.

"Pomperaug Woods is so pleased to take part in the world's largest fundraiser to fight Alzheimer's," said Vicki Gyba-Marshall, Pomperaug Woods Executive Director. "The Walk to End Alzheimer's raises awareness and funds for Alzheimer's care, support, and research, and we are proud to welcome people of all ages to our campus to walk together for a great cause."



"The campus looked beautiful," said Lisa Huebenthal, Director of Community Life. "We lined the walking route through campus with plenty of balloons, and there were special t-shirts for all who walked. Residents that weren't doing the walk rang cowbells and cheered from the sidelines. Under the pavilion we had snacks and water for everyone, and there were plenty of raffle baskets donated by local businesses that everyone was excited about winning. Today we raised more than \$4,000 for the Alzheimer's Association, so everyone is a winner."

Residents Rolf and Rita Kogstad put in three laps around the campus. "It was such an exciting atmosphere," said Rita. "The whole staff was dressed in purple, and the entire event was so well-organized. Rolf and I walked with different people throughout the event, so it was fun to chat with various friends along the way. We really enjoyed the day!"

"Lisa and the rest of the Pomperaug Woods staff did such a wonderful job," said resident Lyn Atkinson. "The rain held off, and we all had a great time."

Pomperaug Woods is hoping to make the Walk for Alzheimer's an annual tradition. We look forward to seeing everyone at next year's event!

