

The Positive Side of the Story: Protecting Seniors

SOME WELCOME GOOD NEWS

As the world collectively endures a pandemic unseen since perhaps 1918, it is natural to be concerned about our most vulnerable population: senior citizens. And, while seniors are at risk, along with the communities they call home, more light should be shone on the stringent safeguards that have been put into place to protect them. American Seniors Housing Association (ASHA) and LeadingAge, two organizations that work to support owners and operators of senior living communities, are actively working with partner organizations, providers and communities to offer support. HJ Sims is working with its banking clients to help them endure this challenging time. We would like to share the positive side of the story that has, until now, mostly been in the media shade.



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“Heartwarmers” from LeadingAge

More and more touching stories and anecdotes are coming from the front lines. Here are a few that caught our eye...

National Guard Helps Provider Protect Against Coronavirus

After Georgia Gov. Brian Kemp announced, on April 2, that the National Guard would be mobilized to help disinfect Georgia nursing homes, Lenbrook, Atlanta, GA, was contacted by the National Guard.

The organization’s COVID-19 Task Force welcomed the opportunity. On April 9, 42 troops (three National Guard platoons) arrived at **Lenbrook** and worked for eight hours over two days. The troops’ remit was to disinfect places the virus could hide or linger, not to clean. They worked in common areas, laundry and maintenance areas, the health care center, and assisted living.

According to **John Clark**, Lenbrook Nursing Home Administrator:

“It was quite a sight when on the afternoon of Thursday, April 9, seven military vehicles drove up to our loading dock to bring three National Guard platoons. After another walk-through, a total of 42 of our country’s finest, composed of three platoons, fanned out for five hours to treat Lenbrook’s common areas and our back-of-the-house laundry and maintenance areas. They were back the next morning for another three hours to completely disinfect our Health Care Center and Assisted Living.”

Source: [Lenbrook website](#)



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Residents Let Off Steam With a Nightly Howl

At **Kavod Senior Life**, Denver, CO, residents are getting involved in the 8 p.m. “howling” that’s been going on in many communities. On April 16, some Kavod residents joined with neighboring apartment complexes in full force.

One participant, **Mardene**, says, “I’ve been howling every night! I’m in the East building facing east, so the big apartment buildings in front of me howl long and loud – lots of young people with cowbells and flashing lights! It’s so freeing to draw in a huge breath and let it rip!”

Watch YouTube video at <https://youtu.be/spJvamhawcY>

A Simple Human Connection

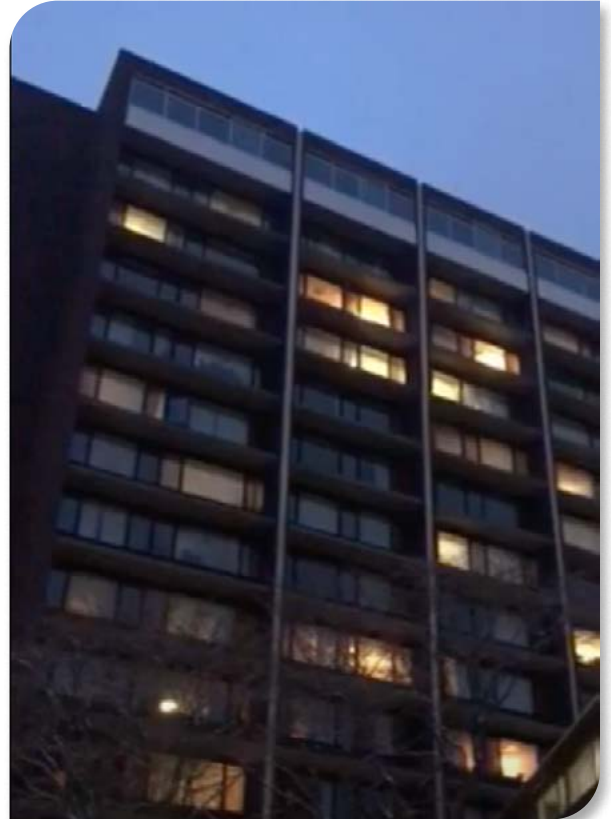
This story comes direct from **Jeanee Parker Martin**, president and CEO of LeadingAge California:

“Yesterday, my son Christopher, who lives in Philadelphia, told me that he called an 85-year-old man whom he had befriended while in college. He hadn’t heard from him for six to nine months, and when he called him several times the past few weeks, there was no answer.

“He was driving by this gentleman’s house early yesterday morning so he decided to go up and knock on the door (social distancing of course) to make sure he was okay. A young man answered the door, and told him the older man had sold the house and moved into a nearby retirement community. Christopher learned that the community is **The Hill at Whitemarsh**, a LeadingAge member in Lafayette Hill, PA.

“[My son] called the front desk and asked to be connected to his [friend]. He was immediately connected, and lo and behold, the older man was doing fine and Christopher was glad to speak with him. We don’t get too many happy stories these days, and I really liked that he didn’t stop at the first ‘no answer.’”

Source: [LeadingAge website](#)



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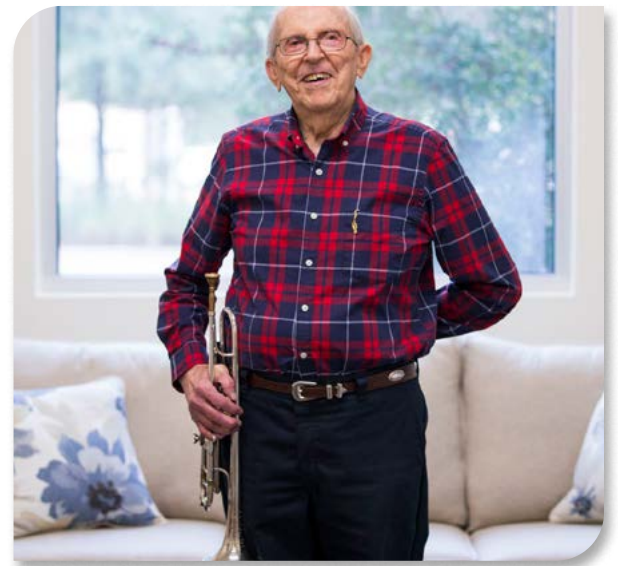
Does coronavirus worry a 94-year-old Marine who survived World War II? How Dallas elders see the pandemic...

Never was there more a time when North Texans needed the commonsense wisdom of **John Gould** and the many others like him – those beloved elders who have had the privilege of living through decades of ups and downs and gaining the perspective of the long view.

“When you live a long time, you learn to keep it simple,” says John, who has survived Nazis and the death of a beloved spouse.

His advice for the rest of us: *“Take it easy, pray for each other and look after your neighbors, even if you don’t know them that well – especially those who are lonely or really fragile.”*

Source: [The Dallas Morning News](#)



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“Here there’s a “Front Line” of protection from all aspects of life.”

Karen, a retired New York City lawyer and current **Gainesville Retirement Center** resident in Gainesville, Florida, feels that she could not be safer living in a senior living community.

“There’s a “Front Line” of protection from all aspects of life that one would experience in normal life: cleaning, eating, interactions, etc. Dining rooms are open, but safely spaced and monitored. Apartments are cleaned, but by staff that have been vetted. Deliveries are made, but not directly from any outside individual. Activities are ongoing, but with protective measures.”

In summary, on a day-to-day basis, Karen feels protected. Additionally, Karen was feeling ill a few weeks ago, just prior to the gravity/notoriety of the COVID-19 outbreak. Karen was able to access the resident Nurse Practitioner and was seen in-house; and able to get her prescriptions, SAFELY.

Karen explained that hailing from New York City, she would have had to go to a walk-in clinic or to the ER; and how exposed would she have been in New York?

Appreciation at The Cypress of Hilton Head Island

Colorful, heartfelt signs are a poignant reminder to the essential employees of **The Cypress**. As an award-winning Life Plan Community in Hilton Head, South Carolina, all employees are essential: the nurses, physical therapists, housekeepers, dining room servers, dishwashers and chefs, supervisors, office assistants, activities and fitness coordinators, maintenance and painters, concierge, security and department directors.

These are the men and women who sacrifice their own personal safety to help our members and residents of The Preston Health Center, The Cypress’ on-site medical center, stay safe during the COVID-19 Pandemic.

Their faces are masked, but they need no cape. They wear scrubs and tool-belts, hardhats and high-heels, aprons and track shoes.

Their motivation to continue this heroic work comes from “thank you” notes that fill inboxes and the calls and cards from family from afar about the care we are

providing their loved-ones. Most importantly, their inspiration comes from the satisfaction that their contribution to The Cypress members and to each other is not only heroic, it is making a difference.



Source: Cypress of Hilton Head [website](#)

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Assisted Living: Safer Option for Older Folks

The fact is that assisted-living residents are much safer living in our communities than they would be living by themselves with the physical and cognitive impairments that characterize most of those we care for.

With the emergence of COVID-19, assisted-living providers have **carefully followed the specific recommendations** provided by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, and have overwhelmingly gone beyond this guidance to implement safe containment plans that protect residents and staff. Assisted living continues to work cooperatively with the various agencies that are helping us navigate this pandemic, including the CDC...

Excerpt from April 16, 2020 article in the: [Wall Street Journal](#)



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“You protect me from this invisible monster in more ways than I’m aware, YOU ARE MY HERO.”

According to **Iris Blundell**, Managing Director of **St. Anthony’s Gardens**, a Senior Living Ministry of the Archdiocese of New Orleans in Covington, LA, residents have expressed they would not want to be anywhere else during this pandemic.

Using handwritten notes, residents showed their deep appreciation. In summary, they acknowledged, *“You prepare my meals, you deliver my meals, you take my temperature daily, you order my groceries and deliver them to me after you have sanitized them along with my mail too, you even remove my trash from the hallway, you bring my pill boxes to me after my family has refilled the boxes, you help me to Skype my loved ones, you protect me from this invisible monster in more ways than I’m aware, YOU ARE MY HERO.”*

We cannot imagine weathering this ‘out of the blue’ invisible threat anywhere but at Saint Anthony’s. We also cannot imagine living anywhere which is more safe, caring and in tune with the needs of the residents.

The efficiency with which each of you adapts to daily shifts in needs & requests is nothing short of magnificent. Multi-tasking, job sharing, teamwork are the norm - handled with excellence.

We miss the dining servers but have really enjoyed seeing management, the administrative staff, office personnel and others each day. We wholeheartedly applaud the positive attitude and endless energy assumed with each new duty.

Maintenance/housekeeping: we know you are there keeping the virus at bay, the lightbulbs replaced, the doors in working order, the trash removed and much more.

Kitchen- we know you have experienced supply shortages and staff changes. The bottom line...the residents at Saint Anthony’s receive wholesome meals each and every day.

Concierge-our daily point of contact for conveniences which have now become necessities-awesome job...utterly awesome.

We pray each day for the health and safety of everyone at St. Anthony’s. Thank you!

Dave, Jackie & Anorpy Didiu

*To Our Dear Staff:
My heart is touched
by your kindness, compassion
and empathy.
You are all truly champions
in our defense against
an unseen monster. You
have put your own
safety behind you to
care for us.
Thank you from my
heart. God bless you
and keep you and
your families safe
Sue Wilkerson*

*You are kidding me! 4-9-20
This card is not big enough
to give them all the credit that
is due. We have been happy & pleased
with everyone on the SAC team from
the time we moved in, but there
is no way we can express our thanks
for all the hours they have put in
to serve all our needs. We have
told our family & friends how blessed
we feel that we chose this as our
last home. The food has been great &
more than enough. Everyone has really
stepped up to the plate doing whatever
job was needed. Thank you, thank you
just us,
Bette & S. J. McEvoy
I thank you!!*

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“Gratitude comes from every corner.”

According to **David Hunter**, President and CEO of **The Mary Wade Home**, a five-star senior community in New Haven, CT:

“While we all have been impacted by the Coronavirus Pandemic, the residents and staff at Mary Wade have been hit especially hard. We care for the most frail and vulnerable of our elderly and we do it with gentle caring, compassion and dignity. **Our families express their appreciation**, which has helped us through difficult times. Gratitude comes from every corner and we at Mary Wade are honored to be entrusted with the care of so many. Thank you.”

Your team is making HEROIC EFFORTS under such adverse conditions.

– Katie M.

Thank you David for all you and your staff do always, but particularly in this difficult time. Stay well.

– Barbara S.



‘We are all in this together’ doesn’t seem appropriate as I sit at home while writing this letter, but please know we appreciate immensely your commitment and dedication to your work. God bless you all!

– Robert, Chris & Laurie and families

I’m so happy that my mom is a resident in the best-run nursing home in the state.

– Philip G.

We are so grateful for your care of Louise and everyone else there. You are amazing.

– July C.

Mary Wade is the standard, especially during these difficult times.

– Eric O.

Thank you for your amazing work. Stay safe and healthy.

– The HJ Sims Team