

Aldersgate Village

{ information for residents, their families, friends and staff }

NEWSLETTER

110th Birthday Celebration for Aldersgate Supercentenarian

Common conversation ice breakers include the questions, "Do you recall what you were doing the day Kennedy was assassinated?" Or "Where were you on 9/11?" But imagine receiving a lucid and truthful reply to asking "Where were you when William McKinley was shot?" Or "Do you remember when the first plane was flown at Kitty Hawk?" Topeka's own Ella Frieda Schuler, who celebrated her 110th birthday at Aldersgate Village Sept. 2, might truthfully answer such posers.

Born Ella Winkelmann Sept. 5, 1897 in Fontenelle, Neb., the fourth child of German-immigrant parents, Schuler was a four-year-old gathering eggs on the family farm when Roosevelt stepped in for McKinley in 1901. She was six, singing nursery rhymes as easily in English as German, when the Wright Brothers took flight in 1903. By the time the Titanic sank in 1912, Schuler was 15; skillfully milking cows and driving horse-drawn farm equipment over a 125-acre sea of hay for her older, school-bound brothers.

"Love at first sight," is how Ella describes her first meeting

with John Cecil Schuler. Originally from Virginia, the young man dreamed of becoming a railroader and living further west so he hired on with the Union Pacific Railway. Among his first travels as a tour guide on excursion trains, he met and soon married Ella on August 19, 1923 in her parents' farm home in Hooper. The young couple weathered a 10-year stint of railroad transfers, birthing three sons -James, John, Jr. and Robert, all born in Page City, Kansas -- before finally leaving the railroad and settling into a grocery business in 1934 in Topeka. Schuler's Grocery Store at Tenth and Jewel became a neighborhood fixture, catering to a wide economic range of clients, offering everything from canned goods to farmers' market fruits, and even gasoline via a station the Schulers purchased on an adjoining corner lot. Ella and John labored side by side to run a successful grocery business. During the Depression, Dust Bowl, and World War II, when money and resources were especially scarce, they debating over how long to extend credit to non-paying, jobless customers. Ella recalls



At home at Aldersgate Village, Ella Frieda Winkelmann Schuler regales a reporter during a recent interview.

battling a plague of "black bugs" that threatened to damage store merchandise. The tornado that devastated Topeka in 1966 twisted, but did not total the grocery store. "We faced challenges, but we weren't afraid of anything back then," Ella recalls triumphantly.

Still all was not work without a little play. As the boys grew older and finished studies at Topeka High School, Ella and John joined Prime Time Campers and used the grocery
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Ella Schuler Celebrates Her 110-Year Journey

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truck on some weekends as a camper with which they enjoyed the open road and fresh air at regional lakes and parks. And Ella always had her piano.



Ella and John celebrated their fiftieth wedding anniversary in 1973 at Pleasant Hill Methodist where the couple attended church. James, second of their three sons, died at 26 in 1952 from peritonitis following appendicitis - conditions rarely causing death today. John, the eldest, moved to

California in his work as a production-process troubleshooter for the National Gypsum Company and died only recently, in 2004.

Robert, the youngest, moved to Michigan where he practiced law. Ella's John, her husband of nearly 60 years, died at 83 in early spring 1983. Ella lived independently in their home and enjoyed several years focusing on traveling through Europe and the U.S. and giving slide presentations on her experiences to interested church and women's groups. Finally, at age 95, after sustaining injuries in a fall on an icy sidewalk, her full recuperation required she move into an assisted living apartment.

During these years, the Schuler legacy continued through Ella's sons John and Robert resulting in what today makes for an admirable guest list for her 110th birthday: six grandchildren, 15 great-grandchildren, and one great-great-grandchild.

Reaching her 110th birthday places Ella on an exclusive list of what experts have come to call "supercentenarians," individuals 110 years of age or older. Currently, in the

United States there are only about 40 validated supercentenarians; globally the list includes about 75.

Incredibly, Ella is a healthy 110. She isn't plagued by multiple prescriptions. She reads for two or more hours each morning. Maintaining a lifelong interest in science, she only recently gave up reading National Geographic and Scientific American from cover to cover, but she still scours the local paper for news on science issues, including global warming. Reporting regularly for meals, she walks solo, albeit slowly, with the assistance only of a lightweight, rolling walker. Her first hospital stay, at 95, was the result of the injuries suffered in a fall on an ice-slicked sidewalk outside her Topeka home. And she comes by her good health and longevity naturally. Her father lived to 88, her mother to 94, and Schuler's siblings lived into their late seventies and early eighties.

Yet, gerontology studies show advanced age is only about 30 percent a function of genetics, something over which one has little control, and 70 percent lifestyle. When asked about her personal secret to living a long life, Schuler smiles as if the answer should be as obvious as today's newspaper tucked into the tote bag attached to her walker. "I'm here because God wills it!" she declares emphatically. Then, leaning forward, she adds intimately, "Let the Holy Spirit guide you, too."

Ella Schuler's birthday was celebrated by family and friends Sept. 2 at Wesley Hall at Aldersgate Village.



Message From The CEO

As you've heard me say before, we're building something special here.

A pervasive attitude of constructive change is the critical difference between an ordinary organization and one that becomes outstanding.

As we move forward into the late summer and Fall, we will continue with this momentum of positive change. Our plans encompass four key components:

1) To make our organization a great place to work we must have competent people who put the organization above themselves...people who have the fierce determination to do whatever it takes to make Aldersgate a very special place.

2) Knowing the reality about where we are now, what we have to improve on and where we want to go means that we must have an ongoing honest self-evaluation throughout the process. Armed with these facts about ourselves and a commitment to using this knowledge, we can eventually move from just fixing what needs to be fixed into the mode of ground-breaking and extraordinary progress. We will determine what we do best as an organization, what we care about the most and what motivates each of us.

3) Encouraging intuitive thought and taking decisive action will allow us to no longer operate from just a job description. Instead we can begin to instinctively take responsibility for what needs to be done. We recognize that we all play a role in the success of Aldersgate. We all have a common direction that we need to move - forward. And, we all keep moving that direction; contributing and working together until we have met our goals.

4) As we work together toward long-term success, we will share long-term rewards. It may take us some time, but we are building a culture here where every staff member is empowered to be a decision maker. Every employee is empowered to generate progress. Every department is empowered to grow their leaders. And, every leader is empowered to reevaluate the status quo and bring fresh ideas to the table.

These key components will be our building blocks as we continue to fashion a culture of leadership and personal development across the entire organization. To become an above average organization we will have to become above average people. I'm looking forward to it!

-Jerry C. Ney, CEO

Marcia Stecklein New Vice President Of Clinical Services

Marcia Stecklein brings a wealth of experience in long term care clinical administration to her new role as Vice President of Clinical Services at Aldersgate Village.

Her early clinical experience includes service in home health, intensive care, emergency room, pediatrics, surgery, oncology and medical units before moving to long-term care as the director of nursing at St. John's in Victoria and St. John's in Hays. She worked for Presbyterian Manors of Mid-America as a regional nurse consultant, then joined Via Christi Senior Services, serving as director of clinical services at both Cornerstone Ridge Plaza and Catholic Care Center. She was most recently employed as a nurse consultant with Heartland Resources.



Memorials & Honorariums

April - June, 2007

Our deepest gratitude to all of you who support our mission of service through your generous contributions.

In Memory of

Mrs. Violet M. Acheson

Sara Collins
Maynard G. Cox
Lynette Mills
Herbert M. & Sarah W.
Whitehead
Dorothy Woodin

In Memory of

Mrs. Evelyn F. Adkison

Gladys Glogau

In Memory of

Mrs. Barbara J. Anderson

Dean & Betty Edson

In Memory of Irene F. Baxter

Alberta Floherschut

In Memory of

Mrs. Lenora Cooper

Beverly J. Campbell
Jim & Karolyn Conaway
Ellie L. Davis
Bruce W. & Joyce E. Fleeker
Holton Teacher's Association
Philomithean Club

In Memory of Mrs. Helen Cox

Elda Brown
Jerome & Mary Jane Brueck
Bob & Sara Collins
Irma Dietrich
Eugene & Virginia Sue Francis
Rev. Jean Marie Grabher
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Herbert M. & Sarah W.
Whitehead
Dorothy Woodin

In Memory of Mrs. Vera George

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Eugene & Virginia Sue Francis
Gladys Glogau
Mabel C. Henderson
Mildred Lake
Grace Myers
Iola Schroeder
Serendipity Circle UMW
Irene M. Unruh
Herbert M. & Sarah W.
Whitehead

In Honor of Mr. Ross Gray

Eugene & Virginia Sue Francis

In Memory of

Mrs. Gladys I. Myers

Walter & Pamela Blood
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Mrs. Virginia Nordstrom

Clinton C. & Violet Acheson
Clayton & Gwendolyn McMurray

In Memory of

Mr. David G. Oldham

Mark W. & Mary Beth Chambers
Friendship Class of Memorial
Drive UMC
Naomi Hartman

Memory Walk Provides Reason For Hope

For nearly 60 years, three Topeka ladies have been passionate advocates for individuals with Alzheimer's, their family members and caregivers. Joyce Barr, Diane Bottorff and Alice Vernon were honored by being Ambassadors at this year's Memory Walk and 5k Run held June 9 at Hummer Sports Park.

Barr has been an Alzheimer's support group leader several years at Aldersgate Village. Also, she pursued forming an Alzheimer's Chapter Office in Topeka and also served on the board of the directors. Barr's mother had Alzheimer's when she lived for many years at The United Methodist Home.

Carrie Belveal, Director of Social Work, Carly Geering, Social Worker, and Verlee Sanneman, Marketing and Development Assistant, planned employee fundraisers, sold "A Reason to Hope" purple bracelets and colorful Tribute Flags. The fundraisers included: a Mexican luncheon, a Baby Photo Contest and a Silent Food Auction. The flags were to either honor or remember a loved one who suffered the deadly disease. These flags were on display during the walk and will be on display at next year's Memory Walk and

5k Run.

Aldersgate Village continues to be a major sponsor of the annual Memory Walk & 5k Run in Topeka. Aldersgate Village also sponsored and hosted the appreciation dinner the evening of July 19th in Wesley Hall. The residents and staff raised \$4,272 for the walk and received first place in the retirement community/nursing home facilities category.



Residents and staff at Aldersgate Village raised \$4,272 for this year's Memory Walk, capturing first place in the retirement community/nursing home facilities category.

New Home Health Director

Teresa Brown has joined the staff of Aldersgate Village as the Director of Home Health.

As the Director of Home Health, Teresa's responsibilities will include planning, organizing, directing, staffing and scheduling various home health-related services across the entire campus. In addition, she will serve as the relationship manager with other strategic healthcare affiliates in the area.

She has a Bachelor of Science degree in business administration, marketing/management from Emporia State University and a Master of Arts degree in counseling

psychology from St. Mary's University, San Antonio, Tex.



Married with an eight-year-old daughter, Teresa enjoys running, boating, developing her relationship with God, training/showing her dog and being a part of her daughter's school marketing committee.

"I love working with people," she says. "Since starting with Aldersgate what I have found to be the highlight of my day is talking with the folks who live here. They have such a history and a great sense of humor."

Marc Jasperson Named Development Director

Aldersgate Village is pleased to announce Marc Jasperson as the director of development. His duties will include directing all aspects of Aldersgate's development program including cultivation, solicitation and stewardship through annual fundraising, planned giving, capital campaigns and grants.

Marc has over 25 years of managerial, sales, marketing and fundraising experience. Most recently Marc has served in financial development roles with the Emporia State University

Foundation and the Kansas Capital Area Chapter of the American Red Cross. He has a degree in Business Administration from the University of Kansas.

He is a native Topekan, and attended local schools and Lowman United Methodist Church growing up. He also has special ties to Aldersgate Village.

"My mother lived many wonderful years at Aldersgate and it is like déjà vu for me in some ways coming back here. It has been so nice getting reac-

quainted with several residents whom I already knew as well as meeting



many new friends. All of the residents and staff here are very welcoming and friendly. I guess that is one of the many reasons why Aldersgate is such a special place. I am so happy to be a part of the Aldersgate community!"

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