

Birthdays!

Happy birthday to our residents and staff celebrating in March and April.

Residents:

Marilee Steger, March 15
Virginia Toohey, March 28
Margie McDonald, April 10

Staff:

March: Tianna Stewart, 1st; Ashley Rice, 19th; Brooke Lorenz, 20th; Edith Kaburu, 25th; Shauna Hill, 31st
April: Latrisha Griffin, 2nd; Jeanette Adams, 6th; Jullien Roberson, 17th; Zann Johnson, 21st



Donate items for our spring boutique

New and gently used items are being collected for our Strawberry Festival Boutique, which will be held in June. Small appliances, kitchenware, home décor and unique knickknacks are top sellers. Items can be dropped off with the receptionist any day between 8:30 a.m. and 5 p.m. before June 1. Call 314-966-6034 if you have questions.

Spring is finally here, and we are really looking forward to getting outside and enjoying the outdoors. The patio furniture is out, the flowers are blooming and we have our annual spring events planned.

May brings our annual **Grounds Beautification Day**, which will take place on Saturday, May 2, from 9 a.m. to noon.

Even if you only have an hour to spare, we would appreciate your help! Please contact Julie Kovac, business office manager, at julie@maryculverhome.org if you plan to be here.

June will be here before we know it, and that means the return of our **Strawberry Festival**, of course. Save the date for Saturday, June 13, from 1 to 3 p.m.

We could also use volunteers to help with our boutique! Please let me know if you are interested in pricing items or setting up for the sale. You can reach me at amy@maryculverhome.org.

Looking forward to sunshine, fresh air and seeing all our family and friends at MCH!



Amy's Updates

Amy



Longtime worship volunteer Dianne Wilcox, above right, has retired. She has taught Bible lessons and sang hymns with the ladies for 17 years.



Residents and employees enjoy cake and a history lesson every year on Mary Culver's birthday, March 19.



Residents and employees pose for a photo in front of the banner marking the 160th anniversary of The Mary Culver Home. 2026 also marks the 60th anniversary of the move to Kirkwood. Plans for an anniversary celebration have not yet been finalized.

The Mary Culver Home marks major milestone: 160 years

In 1866 at the Missouri School for the Blind, nine female students decided to form “The Blind Girls Industrial Band” with the goal of establishing a permanent residence for worthy blind girls. With a treasury of not quite \$2, but with great energy and determination, they set forth to make their dream come true. They earned money making brooms and doormats, taking in laundry, selling their garden produce, and giving performance recitals in the community. Aid from many friends in the city added to their own efforts. At first “The Band” shared quarters

with other philanthropic organizations, but in the 1880s they struck out on their own, establishing their first Home at 1828 Wash Street. After nine years at

this address, they needed more room, so they purchased and remodeled the old Nicholson mansion at 1214 North Garrison Avenue. By 1905, the corporate name of the organization was the “Blind Girls Home.” The annual report for

that year showed residents working and praying for more space so they could accept the increasing number of applicants from the Missouri School for

Photo with banner could earn \$100!

Take a photo – alone or with a group – in front of our 160th-anniversary banner and email it to amy@maryculverhome.org to enter for a chance to win \$100. Photos will appear on our Facebook page (The Mary Culver Home for the Visually Impaired), and the winner will be chosen at random. Only the person who submits the photo will be entered into the drawing. The deadline to enter is May 15. Good luck!

A century of memories

Residents shine in special club

By Rene DeFiore
Development Director

The Mary Culver Home has three residents currently in our **Century Club**, with a fourth soon to join them.

Virginia turned 103 in March. This amazing lady served her country as a nurse during World War II.

Willene turned 102 in February. She remembers standing in line for day-old bread during the Great Depression.

Millie turned 101 in December. She and her siblings traveled to school by horse and buggy. During lunch, they would go outside to feed hay to their horse.

Eleanor will turn 100 in May. She is bilin-



Can you believe these two beautiful ladies are over 100? Millie, left, is 101, and Virginia recently turned 103. Not pictured are 102-year-old Willene and 99-year-old Eleanor.

gual and often would speak Czech, frustrating her daughter, if she didn't want her to know what she was getting for her birthday or Christmas.

Each of these ladies is a special part of The Mary Culver Home, bringing a unique personality and impressive life experiences. And what remarkable memories they share!

Living to this age is an amazing accomplishment and should be recognized. Will you celebrate these ladies with us? Let's show them how truly special they are! Please donate \$100 or more in honor of our **Century Club** members. You can do so by using the enclosed envelope or by visiting our website (maryculverhome.org) and clicking on "Donate." Please note "Century Club" on your donation.

MILESTONE

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the Blind. The answer to their prayers came in the form of Mary Elizabeth Culver. Her substantial gift enabled the women to build a Christian-based group home designed for their needs at 5235 Page Avenue. On Thanksgiving Day in 1909, the 38 members of the Blind Girls Home quietly, but with hearts full of joy and gratitude, took possession of their new residence. When the Blind Girls Home celebrated its 50th anniversary on Page Avenue, three of the original 38 women were still living there. But times

were changing and no young women were moving into the Home. The Board of Directors decided a new Home would better accommodate the needs of aging blind residents. After an extensive search, the board bought the property at 221 West Washington Avenue in Kirkwood, and selected the architecture firm of Hellmuth, Obata + Kassebaum to design the new Home. On October 24, 1966, the residents moved to Kirkwood, and in 1993 the board changed the name to The Mary Culver Home for the Visually Impaired in honor of their benefactress.

Source: *The Mary Culver Home Employee Handbook*

Staff star



The quarterly Compassion in Action Award winner is early cook Barbara. Residents praise the quality of the tasty meals she prepares, particularly breakfast. In every newsletter, we'll take the opportunity to honor an employee identified as outstanding by residents and management.

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The mission of The Mary Culver Home is to provide visually impaired women with dignified, compassionate, holistic nursing care in a warm family atmosphere, as well as to promote security, confidence, and an excellent quality of life.

2 employees celebrate 25 years of outstanding service

Thank you to **Terrence Crump** and **Kevin Lavin** for 25 years of service!

Both were hired in 2001 — Terrence (maintenance) on January 22 as “Full Time Custodian,” and Kevin (dietary server) on June 25 as “Late Diet Aide.” Job titles have been tweaked over the years, but their job duties have stayed the same. They also have stayed true to their outstanding character, always treating the ladies with compassion, respect and affection. In 2001, Kevin heard



Kevin Lavin, left, and Terrence Crump both started working at The Mary Culver Home in 2001.

The Home was hiring from his neighbor, Leo, who worked as a nurse. He lives in Kirkwood, about a block away, and has been invaluable during staffing and weather emergencies. Kevin has called the ladies “mom” for as long as

he can remember because he thinks it makes the dining room more homey. He sees something endearing in each resident so he never has a favorite one. Kevin is a World War II buff and often travels to military shows. You

might see him walking his dog, Chase, in the neighborhood.

Terrence responded to a help-wanted ad in the newspaper. Like Kevin, he gets along with everyone: residents, families and co-workers. He says he’s always happy to be at work, and he’s gotten a lot of wisdom and advice from residents when he’s working in their rooms hanging art or TV mounts. Terrence, who lives in Dellwood, enjoys music, cruising in his car and playing with his German Shepherd, Bentley.