September / October 2026

Home Front

THE Mary Culver Home FOR VISUALLY IMPAIRED WOMEN

A Newsletter for residents, families, staff, and friends of the Mary Culver Home

Birthdays!

Happy birthday to our residents and staff celebrating in September and October.

Residents:

Joan Moss, September 20
Dorothy Ackfeld, September 21

Rosalie Toner, October 7
Marilyn Hammon, October 20

Staff:

September: Tomekia Hearn, 9th; Carrie Veach, 19th; Carol Heimburger, 25th

October: Terrie Belk, 15th; Janell Jones, 23rd; Julie Kovac, 26th



Amy's Updates

What a wonderful fall we've had at MCH! Celebrating our 160th anniversary was a special milestone -- it was great to come together to celebrate the history of The Mary Culver Home and the women who make it such a special place. Our annual Fall Tea was another wonderful event, full of music, food and shopping! Thank you to everyone who helped make these events such a success.

As we move into the holiday season, we have more celebrations in store. First, we will host our tree-trimming party on Saturday, December 5, from 9 a.m. to noon. We can always use extra hands that day to help fluff branches and put ornaments on the tree! Our resident Christmas party will be held on December 15, from 2 to 4 p.m., followed by our staff Christmas party on December 17 from 1:30 to 3:30 p.m. More information on these events will follow.

We are also looking for individuals who are interested in getting involved with MCH in a meaningful way. Be sure to turn to page 4 to learn more about becoming a board member.

Amy

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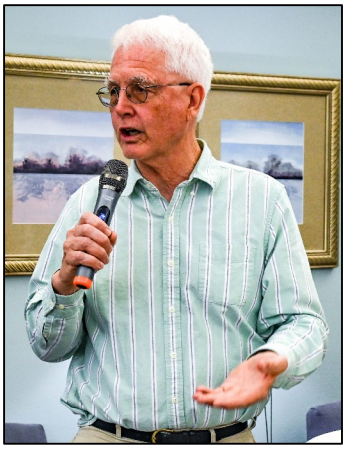


Sesquicentennial celebration

The Mary Culver Home hosted a party October 3 to celebrate our 160th anniversary, as well as the 60th anniversary of the move to Kirkwood. Current and former families and board members, residents, employees and other friends of MCH were on hand as Kirkwood Mayor Liz Gibbons presented a proclamation in honor of Mary Culver Home Day to Executive Director Amy Lepper.







Above, Cathy deJong, right, and her daughter, Kristen, serve as bartenders at the event. Right, board President Kevin Miller welcomes the party attendees.

Spinning webs for snacking



Bobbi, above, and Marilyn, below, adorn their sweet spiderwebs with sprinkles.



Crunching on caramel apples



Jenny snacks on a homemade caramel apple.

S'more, please



Marilyn, left, and Jane toast marshmallows for their s'mores.



Chocolate, graham cracker and marshmallow are a winning combination for Jane.



Donna, above, toasts a marshmallow, while Karen, below from left, Bobbi and Jackie wait their turn.



Wish List

- Birdseed
- Assorted miniature chocolate candy for the bingo cart
- Fun-size candy bars, M&M's and individual bags of potato chips for the snack cart
- Penny auction items: Dove body wash, toothpaste, scented hand lotion and body spray



A Day at "The Home"

(a person's view after living at Mary Culver Home for 3 months)

Written by Jackie Duffey

We are all residents of Mary Culver Home.
Sometimes you will see residents roam.
Breakfast is at 8 a.m. on the dot,
Where a delicious breakfast is always served hot.
After that we go to the activity room,
Where we work out 'til nearly noon.
After lunch it's time for a rest,
To be ready to be at our best.
Time for knowledge, fun and ball,
This is surely enjoyed by all.
Dinner and dessert are on the list,
Making everyone happy and full of bliss.
Then it's time for trivia night,
To see if we are really bright.
When day is ended, there is no more light,
So now it's time to say good night.

Celebrating ability: Dietary aide serves up smiles

MCH partnering with Best Buddies program

Dietary server Kristen McGuire announces every day that she loves her job, and there's no doubting her sincerity or enthusiasm.

Kristen joined the dining services department in August, about a month after The Mary Culver Home was approached by the Best Buddies Jobs program, which connects people with intellectual and developmental disabilities with employers who are committed to building inclusive workplaces.

Christine Ude, program supervisor and Kristen's job coach, said Kristen's strengths – she loves helping people and is very outgoing and kind – make her an ideal server. She also said Kristen loves being able to interact with the residents one-on-one and to build relationships with them.

"I like to talk, but when it's time to work I focus," Kristen said. "The residents are my grandmas, and I care for them and pray for them every night."



Kristen McGuire started as a dietary aide in August.

Kristen has experience working at other nursing homes, but she initially assisted in our dining room as a volunteer to determine whether The Mary Culver Home would be a good fit for her. Christine and Dining Services Director Terry Beals worked together and with Kristen during her training period, focusing on how to make the job easier for her while ensuring she is competitive with the other servers.

"We concentrated on what she's good at," said Terry, whom Christine praised as a natural support for Kristen. "The residents love her and the way she communicates with them."

Kristen said she brings home the menu to study so she can discuss the food options with residents, who said she's always polite and friendly and was quick to learn their names. They appreciate her taking the time to get to know them and their preferences.

Christine and Best Buddies will stay involved with Kristen throughout her career.

Outside of work, Kristen loves spending time with her parents, siblings and friends, especially her godchild, Josie, and her beloved dog, Molly, whom she adopted from the APA. She serves as a Best Buddies ambassador and is involved with its leadership program.



Terry Beals, director of dining services, assembles pierogi ingredients.

Pierogi production line

Resident Mary and her sisters, Ann and Janice, recently taught the other ladies how to make pierogi, dumplings made by wrapping unleavened dough around a filling and cooking in boiling water. Ann says their grandmother brought the recipe over from Poland. Here, they made a loaded potato pierogi, but other family favorites are sauerkraut, cheese, breakfast, mushroom, Polish sausage, mushroom and even strawberry.



Mary rolls out the dough.



Marilyn, above, and Karen, below, prepare the filling.



Ann coaches Rose Marie.



Margie seals a pierogi.



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Thank you!

Cor Jesu students bring energy





Freshmen from Cor Jesu Academy act as personal shoppers for residents at the Fall Tea Boutique. The students visited for the Freshman Charism Day.