



The Reed

KENDAL® at Oberlin

Together, transforming the experience of aging.SM

Spring/Summer Newsletter 2011

Giving Thanks for Kendal at Oberlin

by Robert Taylor, author, Kendal at Oberlin resident and board member



Robert Taylor

I have the honor and privilege of being one of the three residents here at Kendal at Oberlin who serve as full members of our Board of Directors. This year I

am the Board's Secretary and therefore a member of both its Executive and Governance Committees. I am also chair of the Board's Marketing and Admissions Committee – an assignment that is, as you can imagine, very close to my heart.

Even in these difficult times for our economy, for our country, and for each of us personally, we still have so very much to be thankful for, especially here in this extraordinary community. I'd like to address the gratitude we all feel by looking at three time periods – the past, the present, and the future.

Let me begin by talking about an experience that I'm sure many of us here today have had, but I'll give you my own personal version. My partner Ted Nowick and I began looking at retirement communities about ten years ago, right after he'd had five heart bypasses and a pacemaker put in and we realized that living on a rural road in the woods of Maine was not a good idea any more. We visited a number of possibilities in several different states, but none of them really appealed to us. Then we heard about Kendal at Oberlin, came here for a Try-It visit, and immediately saw that this was a place where we could be happy, welcome, and very comfortable. We could feel the warmth, the vitality, the openness, the sense that everyone we met was eager to reach out and include us. All of that just seemed to be part of the atmosphere around us the entire time we were here.

So for us, that was it. We joined the priority list and moved here seven years ago – the day after Thanksgiving of 2003 – and we've been even happier here than we'd ever imagined we could be. As we began to become acquainted with the communities, both here at Kendal and in the town of Oberlin, we learned why this place is so different from the others we had visited. An essential aspect of this is the way Kendal at Oberlin came to be.

All of us who've ever lived here – or will ever live here in the future – owe an enormous debt of gratitude to the small group of Oberlin residents who first realized, in January of 1987, that all of them were growing older, would need some kind of care in the years to come, and didn't want to have to leave Oberlin in order to find it.

Part of their time-consuming and painstaking learning process included visits to a number of already-established CCRC's. One of these, thank goodness, was Kendal at Longwood. They were very much impressed, and, in time, were able to help persuade that first Kendal to begin expanding its reach to other locations outside the Philadelphia area. Thus began our long and productive relationship with the Kendal system.

This special edition of The Reed features an article by Robert Taylor, based on a talk he gave at the 2010 Priority List luncheon. His words summarize nicely why Kendal is such a good choice. See for yourself - call 1-800-548-9469 to arrange a visit today.

What is the KENDAL[®] difference?



As all of you no doubt know, both the town of Oberlin and Oberlin College were founded on a set of values, of which inclusion and the importance of each individual person were an essential part. This is demonstrated most clearly by the fact that, soon after its founding in 1833, the town became a vital part of the Underground Railroad, which helped lead escaped slaves to freedom, and that the college, also founded in 1833, became the first in this country to admit both blacks and women.

These Oberlin values, combined with the Quaker values on which Kendal at Longwood had been founded, was an unbeatable combination. Our founding residents, and the spirit they and these combined values brought to this community, made it the unique place that it is – and I use the word “unique” in its strictest sense: “unlike any other.”

What this new community was all about was beautifully summed up in the *Oberlin News-Tribune* published on September 28, 1993, just before opening day: “Kendal’s approach is based on the philosophy that retirement and growing older can still bring new opportunities for personal growth and development, even if emerging limitations necessitate a degree of dependency.”

“Kendal’s goal is to enhance the quality of life and to provide high quality health care for each resident, while treating each resident with dignity and respect. The Kendal at Oberlin lifestyle seeks to make the later years productive and stimulating. Residents have the opportunity to share in building an interesting and vital community as they cultivate new relationships and pursue lifelong concerns.”

However, it’s important to say that even though it was a group of Oberlin residents who were the driving force behind the existence of this Kendal, those with no previous Oberlin connections at all have always been – and continue to be – equally welcome, as Ted and I were delighted to discover when we moved here. In fact, only about a third of our current residents either have lived in the town of Oberlin or attended or taught at Oberlin College or the Conservatory. The rest come from other parts of Ohio, it’s true, but also from a total of 32 different states across the country. It’s a mix of outlooks and experience and ways of thinking that add a great deal to the vitality of this community.

Still looking to the past, we are all enormously thankful for the amazing generosity our residents have shown through the years. Their monetary gifts have made possible so many of the things that add so much to our lives here: the swimming pool, the perimeter walkway, the tennis courts, the courtyard garden, the miniature golf course, a substantial portion of the Buttonbush Bridge, and many others.

Without these generous gifts, adding these things to our campus would not have been possible, for an inescapable reason of economics: These Founders were committed to being sure that people who wanted to live here who had spent their lives in some kind of service to others, rather than amassing large amounts of money, could afford to come. For that to happen, they had to build comparatively simply, constructing at first only the essentials. Luckily for all of us, philanthropy has, through the years, helped provide the rest.

Moving to the present, I’m delighted to say that this spirit of generosity continues, with significant ongoing gifts of both money and time. Each year, our residents contribute more than 40,000 hours to voluntary efforts that benefit both Kendal at Oberlin and the

KENDAL... *on the web!*

Check our on-line events calendar regularly. Visitors are welcome at programs listed on the calendar page at:
www.kao.kendal.org

To learn about resident life at Kendal, visit the web site of our Kendal at Oberlin Residents Association:
www.kaores.kendal.org

Visit us on Facebook:
[facebook.com/
KendalatOberlin](https://facebook.com/KendalatOberlin)

The Reed provides news and information about Kendal at Oberlin, a Quaker-related nonprofit continuing care retirement community. If you would like to share this newsletter with a friend, please let us know and we’ll add them to our mailing list.

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Volunteering, working together...

greater community around us.

People from the outside who don't know us well chuckle at the idea of 80-plus committees. All of us here know that it is these very groups that make our lives so full and rich – and we wouldn't have it any other way. They bring us art exhibits, concerts, lectures, play readings, lifetime learning courses, movies, and a literary journal that we publish three times a year. They give us a well-stocked and well-used library, fresh flowers in our public spaces all year long, a monthly newsletter, our own TV channel to tell us about that day's meals and all that's going on that week, notices on our bulletin board, a community telephone directory, a woodshop, a hobby room, a horticulture room.



Kendal's resident team for the 2010 inaugural Oberlin Lung Walk receives an award for best fundraising effort. Resident Connie Boase was instrumental in establishing a lung walk in Oberlin.

From right, Virginia Erdy, Betty O'Connor, Martha Stacy, Nancy Garver, Connie Boase, Jerry Berner, and Kristine Popa, Development Manager for the American Lung Association.

Dedicated residents spend enormous amounts of time and energy supporting our Residents Assistance Fund, by accepting all sorts of items for resale that the current owners no longer need, and also by helping to clear out cottages and apartments of those who have moved, most often from a cottage to an apartment or to the Care Center, and offering these items for sale as well.

Two years ago, we set up a residents' website, overseen by our own resident webmaster, which has been a huge success. A recent check showed that we've had more than 30,000 visits to the site. This led to the organizing of a revitalized Computer Users' Group, which helps residents understand – and make use of – the waves of new technology that keep coming our way.

Other residents are involved in making sure our buddy system is working well, accompanying residents to medical appointments, sitting with those who are ill or dying, and planning memorial services. Two residents who moved here just a few months ago have set up a Residents' Network, which will match residents willing to run various kinds of errands with those who are unable to get out themselves. This will, of course, be especially valuable as the winter months approach.

Beyond Kendal at Oberlin, our residents are actively and extensively

From Maggie Stark, Director of Admissions



Like the town of Oberlin and Oberlin College, Kendal also shares a rich history with similar values and purpose.

Robert Taylor beautifully describes and gives you insight on how Kendal at Oberlin began thanks to a small group of dedicated Oberlin residents who had a vision. They shared a common dream of building a retirement community in Oberlin based on values that the town and college also embraced. After much work and dedication, gratefully this small group learned about Kendal, an organization founded with intentional regard for Quaker values and practices. A perfect fit and a perfect philosophy!

Now, eighteen years later, residents today continue to benefit from the wisdom and sound choices our founders made. Choices and values that help ensure that residents, staff, and board members share the spirit of community and collaboration and the respect for each individual that flow from the principles of the Religious Society of Friends.

Life is not made merely by the dreams we hold, but by the choices that we make. We celebrate the choices Kendal at Oberlin founders gave us.



...a caring community!

involved in such worthy local causes as Oberlin Community Services; the Hot Meals program; the Oberlin Heritage Center; the Oberlin Public Library; FAVA and its rich array of cultural offerings; tutoring in the schools; a variety of partnerships with Oberlin College, the Conservatory, and the Allen Memorial Art Museum; and in board positions with such organizations as the League of Women Voters, the Oberlin chapter of the NAACP, and the local Bill Long Foundation.

So, in these many, many ways, we all give to each other and to the community around us – and there is no way to fully calculate the amount of good this does, or the amount of gratitude the recipients feel.

Nor can we residents ever express adequately enough the thankfulness we feel toward the staff here at Kendal: the Administration that keeps things running so smoothly and on such a firm financial foundation, even – or especially – during these difficult years; those who cook our meals, clean our cottages and apartments, mow our lawns, shovel our snow, keep us healthy through a variety of fitness activities, and provide care and therapy whenever we need it.

Our Stephens Care Center is of the highest possible quality, having come through recent inspections with zero deficiencies (the average for such inspections, I understand, is seven), and it also has a staff that is as caring and compassionate as you could find anywhere. They've been working hard in recent years to make life in both assisted living and skilled nursing care as "person-centered" as they possibly can. This means that – far from the regimented procedures that were never questioned for much too long – those who live there can decide for themselves when they want to go to sleep, when they want to wake up, and, so long as they are physically able, where they want to eat their meals.

The inclusion of Care Center residents into the fullness of the Kendal at Oberlin community is best illustrated by the architecture of this part of our campus. The hallways of the Care Center are major access routes between cottages on the west side and the main administrative-dining area, and between cottages on the east side and the swimming pool and fitness area. All of this traffic, through one of our two major art galleries, makes the Care Center a busy and vital place – and very definitely an

integral part of things.

Turning now to the future, what all of us here, residents and staff alike, are most thankful for in this respect is you, our Priority List members, because you are our future. You've come here to visit and look us over, you've fallen in love with the place as so many others have done before you, and you've committed yourself to come join our extended family when the time is right. We know that the fact that you've chosen to come here, and not somewhere else, means that you understand what this community is all about, for all of the reasons I've just been discussing, and that therefore you'll fit right in – and will continue our traditions of caring, compassion, generosity, and inclusion on into the future. We salute you, we thank you from the bottom of our hearts, and we leave you with this message: come as soon as you can. You'll be glad you did.

Congratulations Jim White! *2011 Oberlinian of the Year*

Kendal resident Jim White has been contributing to the Oberlin community for many years. This year, nominated by Pat Murphy of the Oberlin Heritage Center, Jim was chosen by the Oberlin News Tribune to receive this special honor. He has served on the board of the OHC since 1999, and as president from 2005 to 2010. He has been active in many community efforts and has served as a member of city council.

A community-wide reception to salute and thank Jim White for all he does to make the community of Oberlin a better place will be held at First Church of Oberlin on March 19th, from 3:30 to 5:00 p.m.



Upcoming Events at Kendal...

March 24th – 2:30 to 4:00 pm

A Taste of Oberlin... at Kendal

Back by Popular Demand, Kendal will be hosting a Taste of Oberlin once again. Join us for delectable samples from over a dozen local eateries. Enjoy Italian to Mediterranean dishes and everything in between! Live entertainment provided by the Northern Ohio Youth Orchestra (NOYO). One non-perishable food donation per person is welcomed. Donations will be collected and given to Oberlin Community Services. Experience a taste of Oberlin and Kendal! Call 440-775-0094 for reservations and mark your calendar...you won't want to miss it!

YUM!



May 27 to 30 – 9:30 am to 4:00 pm

Oberlin College Commencement/Reunion Weekend Daily Open House at Kendal

Tours, conversation and refreshments available at Kendal each day – all are welcome.

July 18 to 22

Lakeside - The Chautauqua on Lake Erie

Kendal at Oberlin and Kendal at Home are sponsoring the 2011 Environmental Stewardship educational theme week at Lakeside. This event, which includes ten seminars, takes place the week of July 18-22.

Lakeside, a summer community located on Lake Erie's shore, has nurtured mind, body and spirit for more than 135 years. For more detail on Lakeside and its summer events please go to their website at www.lakesideohio.com. Then decide which seminars you'd like to attend, and we'll see you there!

August 7 – August 31

Bay Arts Senior Art Exhibit: Community Artreach

"With age, art and life become one" (Georges Braque)

Kendal plans to celebrate the creativity of older adults 60+, who help define successful aging. This juried show will include works by artists from Kendal at Oberlin, Kendal at Home, and the greater community. The show will be held at Bay Arts in the new Fuller House Art Gallery. Two special events are planned.

- On Sunday, August 7 from 5:00 – 7:00 p.m. the exhibit opens with an artists' reception and refreshments.
- On Friday, August 19 from 5:00 – 8:00 p.m. begin your weekend with a live remote broadcast by WCLV, meet the artists, and savor food and drink as you listen to the jazz group CB4.



Near East, a woodblock print by Paul Arnold, Kendal resident and Emeritus Professor of Art at Oberlin College



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A subsidiary of Kendal Northern Ohio, Kendal at Oberlin is affiliated with the Kendal System of communities and services for older adults. We are grateful for the service of our board members.

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* denotes Kendal resident
** denotes ex-officio member



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Barbara W. Thomas
Chief Executive Officer

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www.kao.kendal.org

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