

# Towson TIMES

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## BUSINESS

### Pickersgill completes capital campaign and renovations

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Pickersgill Retirement Community is like the little engine that could.

The independent, 200-bed nonprofit at 615 Chestnut Ave., in Towson, offers assisted living, independent living and skilled nursing care accommodations for seniors 62 and older and doesn't charge an entrance fee.

That makes it popular — there are 200 people on a waiting list for Pickersgill's 87 independent-living apartments — but leaves it without a huge pool of financial resources from which to draw.

But Pickersgill has managed to successfully complete a \$1 million capital campaign, thanks to donations from past and present members of its board of directors and to wise moves made by its investment committee, as well as donations from residents, family members, future residents, businesses, friends, employees and volunteers.

Other key contributions were a \$75,000 grant from the Middendorf Foundation, and a \$50,000 challenge grant from the France-Merrick Foundation that enabled Pickersgill to meet its \$1 million goal after raising \$950,000.

The grand total was "an amazing \$1.03 million," according to board president Kim Phillips.

The money from the two-year campaign, which was launched in 2006, will be used to offset the \$23 million cost of the critical 42-month renovation project that is under way and scheduled to be completed by early August.

"Through the generous support of our donors and the tireless efforts of our volunteers and staff, this campaign has already dramatically improved our community for Pickersgill residents," Phillips said.

The capital improvement project primarily benefits Pickersgill's assisted living area by increasing the number of rooms and creating brand new, modern rooms and suites with kitchenettes for seniors who are independent but may need extra services.

A gift to the campaign meant more than simply funding a construction project, said Joe Willard, who with his wife, Kathy, kicked off the campaign in 2006

with a \$250,000 gift.

It means residents will have new, improved areas for dining and socializing, and they'll age with more independence and dignity because of new building features, he said.

Brant Hart, Pickersgill's executive director for 24 years, credited Ann and Brian Brooke, who co-chaired the fundraising drive, and Frances Saybolt, who chaired the renovations committee, for their hard work.

"It's amazing we raised that much money with so few people," he said. "We've been very fortunate."

Hart said the money will help pay for a totally revamped auditorium, library, care plan conference room, casual dining cafe and breakfast area, as well as revamped dining rooms, gardens, landscaping, nursing stations, activity rooms, offices and lounges and an upgraded heating and cooling system.

In addition, residential wings of the 50-year-old building will be razed and rebuilt to provide modern assisted living and skilled nursing accommodations, he said.

After all, Phillips pointed out Pickersgill is located in the middle of a "charming" residential neighborhood.

"We cherish our friendship with our neighbors and remain mindful of keeping the neighborhood's integrity while creating a beautiful community for seniors to reside," she said.

When the construction first began, it was exciting, Hart said. In fact, it has been entertaining for some residents who enjoy keeping track of the progress.

"But it has started to wear on everybody," he said. "Now the end is in sight. That's a positive for all of us."

### BUSINESS NOTES

Robert Beachy, associate professor of history at Goucher College, has been named a 2009 John Simon Guggenheim Fellow for his work on homosexuality in German history.

Four members of the Towson University faculty have been selected to receive 2009 Board of Regents' Faculty Awards by the University System of Maryland.



SUBMITTED PHOTO

Wearing hard hats that Pickersgill provides to anybody close to the construction, apartment resident Sanford Disney shows his wife, Micke, how the work has progressed since the last time they inspected it.

They were recognized at the board's April 10 meeting at University of Maryland, Baltimore County.

- Clarinda Harriss, of Baltimore, a professor in the Department of English, received an award for teaching.

- Mary Lashley, a native of Towson and current resident of Fallston, a professor, Department of Nursing, was recognized for public service.

- Alison Millett McCartney, of Baltimore, associate professor, Department of Political Science, received an award in mentoring.

- Cody Sandifer, of Lutherville, associate professor, Department of Physics, Astronomy and Geosciences, was recognized for teaching.

Three Sheppard Pratt volunteers were honored at the Maryland Governor's Volunteer Service Award Ceremony on April 20 in Annapolis. They were nominated for the awards by the staff at Sheppard Pratt, in recognition of their outstanding service.

- Louise Hager, who lives at Broadmead in Cockeysville, was nominated for her pastoral care with Sheppard Pratt's geriatric inpatients. Ms. Hager has been a volunteer at Sheppard Pratt for nearly 10 years.

- Pat Byron, a Sheppard Pratt retiree from Bowleys Quarters, has volunteered in the Sheppard Pratt Gift Shop since 2005. Ms.

Byron was nominated for her dedicated service, which includes helping more than 200 customers a day find what they need.

- Betty Goldenberg, of Baltimore City, has been giving her time to the Forbush School for students with special needs for the past six years. Ms. Goldenberg was nominated for her work supporting the skills of some of the most disabled readers. Ms. Goldenberg is an avid quilter and makes custom "reading quilts" for her students to earn when they read 500 pages.

Dennis Hawkins, of Towson, has been a member of the Chorus of the Chesapeake for 26 years and a member of the Barber-shop Harmony Society for 35 years, has been named Barbershopper of the Year by the Chorus of the Chesapeake.

Bob Simon, of Lutherville, has recently graduated the Maryland Association of Realtors' ninth annual leadership academy.

Nurse practitioner Jen Lieu, of Timonium, heart failure specialist with the Heart Institute, has been named St. Joseph Medical Center's Spirit of St. Francis Employee of the Year.

Advance Business Systems, in Cockeysville, has been awarded the Ichiban Award by Savin for achieving the highest sales revenues in the country in 2007.