



The Mosaic

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A Veteran's View

by Roger Landry, MD, MPH, President of Masterpiece Living



Veterans Day always brings mixed emotions for me. The memories can be intense, both positive and negative. But in the end, I feel proud and privileged to have such memories, and I'm all the better for it.

Most veterans will tell you that their time in service was among the most meaningful and rewarding in their lives. It doesn't take much thought to understand why. We are human, and our distant ancestors struggled in a hostile world to survive. They did survive, and we are here today because they banded together and all worked for the common purpose of survival. This tendency (more of a need) to be socially connected to others and to work for a higher purpose is wired into our very DNA. When we're doing it, whether it's in a military situation, a sports team, volunteering for some worthy cause, we are better for it—better to our very core. And the research on aging tells us we are much more likely to have a better aging experience when we are engaged with others.

In many ways, my own life was defined by just a few years of being in a flying squadron, both in peace and in combat, with a small group of aviators experiencing life and death, gains and losses, off in

a foreign country in the service of others. It marked me in ways I don't fully understand, but I know for sure that it was a gift.

I serve in different ways now: with the magnificent Masterpiece Living Team, with the many residents and associates of the seventy-plus communities in the Masterpiece Living Network, and within the aging services profession. I work with them for the benefit of all, so that we and future generations can live lives that are full and meaningful, no matter what our age. Once again, I am privileged. Once again, I am proud.

About Dr. Roger

Dr. Roger Landry is a physician, author of award-winning Live Long, Die Short: A Guide to Authentic Health and Successful Aging, and President of Masterpiece Living. Trained at Tufts University School of Medicine and Harvard University School of Public Health, Dr. Landry served as a flight surgeon in the Air Force for more than 22 years. Dr. Landry retired as a highly decorated full colonel and chief flight surgeon at the Air Force Surgeon General's Office after duty on five continents and being medically involved in a number of significant world events, including Vietnam, the Chernobyl Nuclear Disaster, the Beirut bombing of the Marine barracks, the first seven Shuttle launches, and the first manned balloon crossing of the Pacific.

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Saving Our Stories: Capturing the Histories of Veterans

by Brittany Calvert, MA



*“There is properly no history;
only biography.”*

– Ralph Waldo Emerson

Storytelling is part of the human experience. Stories connect us to both our present and our past. In *Live Long, Die Short*, Dr. Roger Landry encourages us to look back in our history to learn how to live better tomorrow. “After spending all the light time walking and gathering food, [early man] looked forward to being with everyone else around the fire, hearing stories of the old and young, but particularly the stories of the elders.” We need the “stories of the elders” to teach us who we are and show us where we are going.

The stories of our veterans, some of our most venerable elders, are cultural treasures, yet we are losing them at an alarming rate. According to the U.S. Veterans Administration, we are losing, on average, 555 World War II veterans each day. The stories of these veterans have profoundly shaped the world we live

in today, and they will be lost to time soon. The clock is ticking. Many Americans are unaware of the significance of the actions of this generation (both veterans and non-veterans) beyond the dry words in history books or the dramatic retellings of war stories on the big screen. We in the aging field have a golden opportunity to ensure that these stories are recorded for younger generations, both for the honor of those who lived through the experience and for the education of those who did not.

Some organizations within the Masterpiece Living Network are actively collecting and connecting these stories with our world. Christian Living Communities (CLC) in Colorado are participating in the Library of Congress’ Veterans History Project. A resident who volunteers with the Red Cross introduced the idea to Clermont Park, and now veterans from all three CLC communities are being interviewed by trained

volunteers. A video recording is produced and then shared with the veteran, and a copy is sent to the Library of Congress to keep for historical record, building a collection of biographies that comprise our nation’s history.

Not only are CLC communities capturing the stories of veterans, they have are also honoring the lives of non-veterans impacted by the war. For example, a Denver high school student interviewed a Japanese American currently residing at Clermont Park, who was sentenced to an internment camp in World War II. The student then created a one-person show based on the resident’s story and competed in the statewide historical competition. Consider the impact that this experience had on both the veteran and the student! How meaningful it would be if more students had the opportunity not only to hear such powerful stories but to creatively share those stories with others.

Some veterans may be uncomfortable sharing their stories for various reasons, ranging from reliving trauma to the belief that their story is not unique and therefore has little significance. We need to ensure that veterans who adopt the latter belief understand the true value and significance of their experience being shared. How are you ensuring that veterans feel valued and have the opportunity to be heard?

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Community Spotlight: *Sprinkling the Magic of Llanfair Far and Wide* by Danielle Palli

At first, a few people protested. “My life isn’t that interesting. All I did was hold down two jobs during the Depression.” Another argued, “All I did after the war was get married and raise a family.” One resident at Llanfair shared her story of hiking across Europe in the 1920s at a time when women were discouraged from, even criticized, for doing so. These are stories of resilience in spite of adversity, stories that the Contemporary Dance Theater captured through modern dance and performed at both Llanfair and at the Aronoff Center for the Arts in Cincinnati this past summer.

Community Liaison Peg Ashbrock feels that Masterpiece Living philosophy is what sets Llanfair apart from other regional retirement organizations. When Peg shared this with distinction with Jefferson James, Artistic & Executive Director of the Contemporary Dance Theater, earlier this year, James’ eyes lit up and she said, “I have an idea.”

That meeting sparked a collaboration between choreographers at the theater and Llanfair residents to create an entire performance based on residents’ tales of triumph, love and loss, wartime woes, childhood dreams and wishes for a better world. The performance concluded with an educational question-and-answer session about contemporary dance. “It was such a great synergy between the dancers and our residents,” Peg told us. “And the choreographers were surprised to see how active our community is and confessed that it was not at all what they imagined a retirement community to be.”

Llanfair is a forward-thinking, no-limits community whose mission is to create a culture that fosters resilience. The tools that build resilience—social connectedness (particularly intergenerational connectedness), physical activity, having a sense of

purpose, constantly being challenged to learn new things—are present in all areas of Llanfair. Executive Director Sheena Parton told *The Mosaic*, “What we are seeing is that over the years, many of our independent residents are moving to assisted living and taking the Masterpiece Living principles with them. As they make the transition, they are not only adapting to changes themselves, but they are sharing what they’ve learned and practiced with those who may not yet have embraced that culture.”

Sheena is looking forward to bringing this same mindset to their new 19-studio private rehabilitation center by teaching team members how to communicate this ideology to the guests who stay there. In this way, Llanfair is not only creating a positive impact on their residents and team members, but they are sharing this culture with the greater community. As Peg told us with a laugh, “Sheena told me to ‘go and dazzle,’ sprinkling the magic of Llanfair far and wide!” From our perspective, the Llanfair community is doing just that!



Llanfair residents at the Aronoff Center for the Arts

Who's Livin' It? On Becoming Beginners: Bob and Maureen Maidhof

by Danielle Palli

*"In the beginner's mind there are many possibilities,
but in the expert's mind there are few."*

—Shunryu Suzuki

"I've never done anything like this before," Maureen Maidhof told *The Mosaic*. "But it's never too late to learn something new." Maureen was telling us about her volunteer work with Quincy Village's Healthcare Services, where much of her time is spent organizing files, distributing pamphlets, and gathering important health resources for those who may need follow-up care after they leave healthcare and return home.

Maureen and her husband, Bob, are new to Quincy Village. But being newcomers didn't stop this power couple of 42 years from jumping into life at their new home feet first. Bob, a former food services director for Marriott, and Maureen, a former teacher, each found a new calling with their move this past April. For Maureen, it was providing support to those recovering from an illness or injury. "I love making a difference in people's lives," she said and added with a laugh, "And it's so much more fun than when I was working full time. I'm doing it because I enjoy doing it, not because I have to!"

Bob, who is also a Quincy Village ambassador, nodded in agreement. He found his new calling teaching residents how to create their own stained glass works of art. Quincy Village is a Masterpiece

Living community that empowers its residents to challenge themselves by trying new things. Such challenges can provide intellectual stimulation, social engagement, and new meaning and purpose—all keys to successful aging.

When Bob explained to the Quincy Village team leaders that he had work tables, tools and an inventory of glass from a glass shop he once had set up in his house, he was invited to convert



one of the community rooms into a new stained glass workshop. Now he's using his 25 years of experience as a stained glass hobbyist to teach others. While he never expected to have a second career as an instructor once he retired, Bob admits that he loves it. He encourages others to jump in and try their hand at learning new things. In fact, he's been so inspired that he

recently teamed up with the Village's head chef to orchestrate an autumn-themed cooking demonstration for residents.

Both Bob and Maureen feel inspired in this new and exciting phase of their life and have been proactive in creating new opportunities, finding meaning and purpose through work, being socially engaged and using their talents to support others. As author and Masterpiece Living President, Dr. Roger Landry, would say, "Become a beginner, and scare yourself a little every day." Without a doubt, **they're livin' it!**

Centers for Successful Aging: *Redefining Aging, Transforming Senior Living* by Neal Miller, MA

Centers for Successful Aging: Best in Class

In its inaugural year, two communities were certified as Centers for Successful Aging: Querencia at Barton Creek in Austin, Texas and Somerby of Mobile in Mobile, Alabama. CSA recognition is awarded to forward-thinking, cutting-edge leaders that have distinguished themselves from other older adult organizations by implementing innovative policies and procedures that provide a unique culture of growth and empowerment for both residents and team members. Both Querencia at Barton Creek and Somerby of Mobile demonstrated through their culture, data, engagement, outreach into the greater community, and programming that they are “best in class.” These two communities have all the elements in place for offering an environment that will allow a person to remain engaged in life and continue to flourish regardless of age.

What exactly sets these communities apart from the rest? The proof is in their outcomes and culture.



Querencia at Barton Creek: Achieving High Outcomes

Querencia at Barton Creek scored significantly higher than the Masterpiece Living network average for many measures of successful aging, including nutrition, physical activity, spiritual fulfillment, and social engagement. Another substantial indicator was that residents reported feeling strongly supported by both staff at Querencia and by their family and friends when it came to their personal successful aging efforts. In addition, Querencia realized the

unique talents and skills that existed within the people living in their community and decided to leverage that human capital. *Roughly 60% of residents felt that Querencia frequently gave them the opportunity to use their existing skills for the good of the community, and nearly half felt they were given frequent opportunities to learn and gain new skills.*



Somerby of Mobile: Demonstrating Cultural Primacy

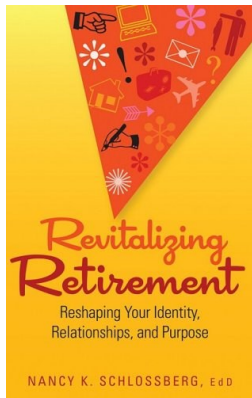
However, it takes more than quantitative outcomes to set a community apart. Somerby of Mobile demonstrated that cultural outcomes are equally important. Successful aging has become the central philosophy of their company mission statement and is carried out by all team members regardless of position. As a result, it has had an impact on the entire culture of the community – from hiring practices to branding, even to community giving.

It takes both to be “best in class”: communities must be exceptional both with quantitative data and cultural data in order to earn the coveted designation as a Certified Center for Successful Aging. As we conclude the CSA Application period for 2014, we encourage you to consider how your community’s culture and data reflect your successful aging achievements and how you might raise the bar in the coming year.

The 2015 CSA Certifications will be announced in the January edition of *The Mosaic*.

Book Review: *Revitalizing Retirement*

Reviewed by Teresa Amaral Beshwate, MPH



If defining what retirement looks like matters to you, this book is a must-read. If retired life so far isn't all unicorns and rainbows, this book is for you. If you work with older adults whose lives may lack meaning and purpose, you'll find this book invaluable.

In *Revitalizing Retirement*, Lyceum 2015 keynote speaker Nancy Schlossberg, Ed. D, explains the universal need to matter, the five dimensions of mattering and why retirement brings the issue of mattering into clear focus. Building resilience is an important theme, along with how to reshape one's identity and revitalize one's purpose. Dr. Schlossberg encourages readers to identify passions—whether a creative focus, a learning focus, working or volunteering focus, along with others. She then categorizes the various retirement paths that people take, and the advantages and disadvantages of each. Next, readers are encouraged to put their passion and path together to help reshape their purpose during this phase of life.

Dr. Schlossberg weaves important research findings and motivational guidance to leverage human capital and chart the course to make retirement the most rewarding of all phases of life.

You won't want to miss learning from Dr. Schlossberg firsthand at the Masterpiece Living Lyceum April 15-17, 2015 in St. Petersburg, Florida.

Saving Our Stories (Continued from Page 2)

The Masterpiece Living Network is composed of the *best of the best* in the aging field, and you have the opportunity to gather the stories from *The Greatest Generation*. Not only will this benefit our world by collecting these gems of history, but it will honor the storytellers and express how they continue to contribute to the greater good through their experiences. It starts with a conversation. This month, honor a veteran by asking his or her story and sit back and enjoy a small part of America's history.

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MPL News

Story & Photo Contest Winners

Thank you to all who submitted stories for our *Stories of Resilience* Story & Photo Contest. Congratulations to the following winners:

1. Hugh Petrie, *Holly Creek Retirement Community*
2. Betty Wortham, *Westminster Woods at Huntingdon*
3. Martha Loats, *Clermont Park*

Each winner receives a free registration to the 2015 Masterpiece Living Lyceum and a copy of the *Stories of Resilience* photo book.



Masterpiece Living
Lyceum 2015:

***Making Your
Masterpiece Matter***

April 15-17, 2015

Renaissance Vinoy
Resort & Golf Club

St. Petersburg, FL

<http://bit.ly/Lyceum2015>