

The Knolls of Oxford - Miami University

# Affiliation

Volume 3

2014



## *Bridging the Gap*

Past Success and Future Promise

## About The Knolls of Oxford

The Knolls of Oxford is a non-profit continuing care retirement community, owned and operated by Maple Knoll Communities Inc. with a history of more than 165 years of serving older adults. The Knolls of Oxford is a Continuing Care Retirement Community and is CARF certified, the International Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities. Located on a beautiful 85-acre campus, our community offers villas, assisted living apartments, a skilled nursing facility with a Memory Support unit, and a rehabilitation center.

If you're like many of today's energetic older adults who believe in lifelong learning and adventure, then it's time to come and get more out of life at The Knolls of Oxford. Designed for those with a sense of discovery and a zest for life, the community is located just 2 miles from Miami University. Here, in a spacious home, you can enjoy all the charm, security, stimulation and culture of living in a University town.

At The Knolls of Oxford you will experience a dynamic atmosphere, because the community has attracted singles and couples from across the country who are committed to enriching their own lives as well as the lives of others.



*Knolls residents Nicholas (Former Miami Band Director) and wife Phyllis Poccia at MU football game for coin toss*

### About This Volume:

Thanks to all of those at Maple Knoll Communities Inc., The Knolls of Oxford, and Miami University whose time, information, and observations made the content of this publication possible. The affiliation wishes to thank: Jonathan Morwitz and Brittany Shuler, Miami Communication students, and Crystal Warren of the Partnership Office for their assistance in formatting the document. The text for this publication was created by The Knolls of Oxford and Miami University from a collaboration of Knolls staff, Knolls residents, Miami staff and Miami students. This is a wonderful example of the Miami/Knolls Affiliation in action. Also, a special Thank you to Knolls resident John Blocher for his time in editing the publication.

The Affiliation is published jointly by The Knolls of Oxford and Miami University Partnership Office.



*Knolls residents Don & Carolyn Auble with Miami students (Misfitz A capella group)*

## **Knolls-Miami Affiliation**

### **Opportunities for All**

The third and most recent signing of the Affiliation Agreement between The Knolls of Oxford and Miami University took place on November 3, 2011. The event was kicked off by the Miami University Pep Band playing the Miami Fight Song through the Knolls auditorium with cheerleaders trailing behind. The excitement in the room was energizing, with everyone standing and singing along to the Fight Song. Dr. David Hodge, President of Miami University and Steven Brash, Board Chairman of Maple Knoll Communities, Inc. for The Knolls of Oxford were appointed to sign the agreement. Dr. Hodge referred to the audience being like a wedding party with one side all in red and white. He said, “I love this side!” and went on to say, “This is a really important relationship that we have here, very special to Miami University in all sorts of ways. We thank The Knolls in general for everything you do to make this relationship so special. It means a great deal to us to have the opportunity to work with you, live in the same community, and have our students share your experiences in meaningful ways.”

Those meaningful ways continue to blossom between The Knolls of Oxford and Miami University:

- Miami Students participate in service-learning internships and Administer-In-Training programs at the Knolls.
- Knolls residents participate in Miami surveys and research programs.
- Scripps Foundation programs such as OMA (Opening Minds Through Art), TimeSlips (story method), and Poetry Project benefit both residents and students.
- Knolls residents occupy the roles of both instructors and students in Miami’s Institute for Learning in Retirement (ILR) program. The Knolls is also the host site for ILR kickoff and end-of-semester luncheons as well as for many classes.
- Miami organizations such as athletic teams, fraternities, sororities, clubs and classes provide volunteers to serve the needs of Knolls residents. Technology support, car washes and intergenerational games and conversation are popular activities.
- Knolls residents attend many Miami athletic, academic, and cultural events. They are dropped off at the entrance for each event and often provided with preferred seating.
- The Miami Speech Pathology “Stroke Survivor Group” meets at the Knolls during the Fall and Winter semesters. Graduate students benefit from hands-on training, working with Knolls residents and other members of the Oxford community who have suffered from a stroke.

These are just a few of the many benefits the Affiliation has created. This partnership is proving to be one of the most successful of more than 100 similar collaborations between universities and retirement communities that represent a continuing trend across the country.

**The Affiliation goals stated in the original 2005 signing still stand:**

- To foster cooperation and interaction between The Knolls and Miami University for the benefit of Miami University, The Knolls, and their constituent groups.
- To enhance educational opportunities for Knolls residents and Miami University students and staff.
- To increase intergenerational exposure and activities.
- To provide employment as well as research and internship opportunities for Miami University students.
- To grant preferential admission to The Knolls for Miami University affiliated faculty, staff and their families to enhance the Miami University community.

Other Articles of the Affiliation further specify that Miami will work with the Knolls to identify and facilitate beneficial opportunities for cooperation that, “May include intergenerational learning, mentoring, and related programs as appropriate.”

The Articles also state; “The Knolls will offer preferential hiring to Miami students; The Knolls will make conference and multipurpose rooms available to Miami on a preferred basis; and Miami “will provide access, as appropriate, to residents of The Knolls for Miami-sponsored cultural and athletic events.”

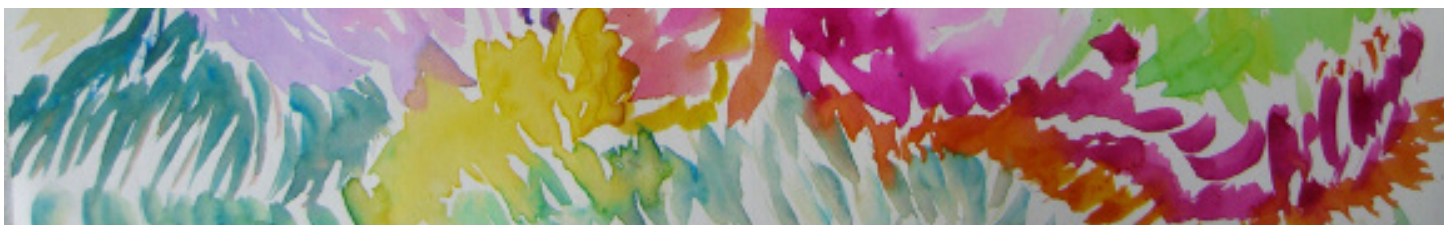
That these goals are being met is particularly evident relative to three major areas of the Affiliation: The Miami Performing Arts Series, Miami Athletic events, and the Institute for Learning in Retirement, as described below:

The Knolls of Oxford provides resident transportation to programs of the Performing Arts Series at Miami. “We love the Music and Theater performances that Miami brings on campus”, states Knolls resident Gitzene Myers. “We never have to worry about parking because The Knolls drops us off basically at the front door. Then a lot of times we have front row seating for the performance. There are also students who come out to the Knolls campus to perform for the residents. “Our residents enjoyed it when in the fall of 2012, theater professor Howard Blanning brought visiting Taiwanese students out to the Knolls to perform in our auditorium,” states Suzanne House, Knolls Activities Director.

For most, rooting for the Redhawks is nothing new. That’s because more than 60 percent of Knolls residents are either Miami alums or retired faculty and staff. Sponsorship of Miami athletic events entitles The Knolls to tickets for football, men’s and women’s basketball, and hockey. In recognition of that sponsorship, Knolls residents get to watch a football game from a suite in the press box. “We have a great relationship with the Miami athletic department”, states Vicky Trostel, Independent Living Social Director of The Knolls. “We also enjoy having the athletes come out to volunteer on our campus. Residents get to know the student athletes and often look forward to watching them participate in their given sport.”

Miami University’s Institute for Learning in Retirement (ILR) continues to be popular among Knolls residents, with several courses and ILR events being held at the Knolls. ILR offers Miami University faculty and staff as well as area residents the opportunity to teach and learn through a wide variety of courses and events. The Institute, with offices at 106 MacMillan Hall, averages 55 events and course offerings each semester at locations in Cincinnati, Fairfield, Hamilton, Monroe, Oxford, and West Chester.

Offerings this past spring included courses on the Philosophy of Science, Social Networking, Medicare, Digital Game Design, History, Writing, and Literature. Spring events included visits to the Madame C.J. Walker Museum, New Orleans



on the Avenue, and the Eiteljorg Museum of American Indian and Western Art. Also offered were *Diana, A Celebration*, and *Journey to the South Pacific* at the Cincinnati Museum Center and Omnimax Theater.

That sense of belonging, both ways, is at the heart of the Affiliation and a large part of what has made it such a huge success and benefit to Miami, The Knolls, and to the Oxford Community as a whole. The fact that both the Knolls and Miami welcome and embrace each other in such beautiful settings -- the idyllic Miami Campus and the Knoll's well-appointed facilities and inviting landscape-- is icing on the cake.

As former Miami President Dr. Phillip Shriver said at the 2008 Knolls - Miami Affiliation renewal while thanking The Knolls for providing such a beautiful place to return to and enjoy retirement, "This has been a match made in Oxford, a little piece of heaven on earth. And the best is yet to come!"

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## Changes in Administration Keep The Knolls Connected to Miami University

Tim McGowan has been an integral part of The Knolls and Miami Affiliation. He helped create the guidelines and goals for the original agreement signed in 2005. Although he still oversees The Knolls of Oxford, he splits his time with Maple Knoll Village. Tim is now the Vice President of Operations of Maple Knoll Communities, parent company of The Knolls of Oxford. He says, "I am thankful for the opportunity afforded to me by Maple Knoll Communities. Because of my increased responsibilities, I brought Ross Farnsworth, a 2009 graduate of Miami University, to The Knolls to manage our licensed areas. Prior to becoming The Knolls Administrator, Ross served as the Assistant Administrator at Bodman Pavilion at Maple Knoll Village. Ross understands the importance of the relationship between Miami and The Knolls. He started as an intern, then completed his Administrator-in-Training, then started working for our organization. He is a true example of the Affiliation. He was easily welcomed back by both staff and residents of The Knolls."

Reflecting that feeling, Ross states, "The first time I arrived on the Knolls of Oxford campus I immediately recognized it as a truly special place. I first stepped onto The Knolls campus five years ago and still feel that way every day."

Ross was happy he chose Miami University where he gained a solid education, and is so grateful that a part of his education was an on-site practicum that he completed at The Knolls. During that time he found out what he wanted to do for a living -- become a Licensed Nursing Home Administrator.

In his first position at Maple Knoll Village Ross was an Admissions Coordinator and once he received his license, he became a Licensed Nursing Home Administrator (LNHA) and moved into the Assistant Administrator role. "I loved the time I spent at Maple Knoll; it was a great experience that allowed me to develop my leadership skills. When I took the Administrator position at The Knolls it felt like I was truly coming home. It meant so much that I could return to The Knolls where everything began for me. I am excited and grateful to be a part of the fantastic team at The Knolls. From the front line staff to the Management, we truly have an incredible team," says Farnsworth. Ross has fully enjoyed his time working with Tim McGowan. "I have an outstanding mentor in Tim McGowan. Without his guidance, I would not be where I am today. He is an excellent leader, and motivates those around him to do better every single day, leading by example," affirmed Farnsworth.

Tim was instrumental in forming this Affiliation with Miami University. It has been so beneficial to both parties that Maple Knoll Village is working on an affiliation with the University of Cincinnati modeled after the one between Miami and The Knolls.



*Ross Farnsworth, Knolls Administrator & Tim McGowan, VP of Operations for Maple Knoll Communities, Inc.*

# A Vision for All Ages

By: Monica Streit

“I’ve always been interested in helping people and curious about human behavior and, in particular, how we become who we are.” This is the core of Kevin R. Bush, Ph.D., Director of the Miami Partnership Office since 2011. He has a vision of the scope of partnerships that he pairs with academic and research credentials to help foster relationships between the classroom and community settings. One of these communities is The Knolls of Oxford.

Bush sees the community as “an ideal and necessary context to facilitate learning. Faculty who partner with The Knolls are able to gain valuable insight into their research from interacting and collaborating with residents; while students are able to learn an appreciation for all stages of life and the importance of lived experiences.” He has degrees in Psychology, Marriage and Family Therapy, and Human Development and Family Relationships. His research stresses the importance of building and maintaining healthy relationships. Bush is also an Associate Dean in the College of Education, Health & Society, and Associate Professor of Family Studies and Social Work at Miami University. He has an infectious drive and a clever sense of humor that serve him well.



“I try not to take myself too seriously; life is too short not to enjoy it and spend time with fun and interesting people.” Bush believes those people live at The Knolls.

“Our faculty and students are very lucky to have access to the depth of knowledge and diverse life experiences of residents of The Knolls,” explained Bush. “I have a strong belief in the power of learning out in the community

through mutually beneficial collaborations, including action research, volunteering and spirited discussions.” Bush uses his seat on the Partnership Advisory Council to help link many Miami communities with The Knolls.

Faculty connections are made through presentations of scholarly work including research talks, exhibits and facilitation of students’ service learning activities and internships. The Office of Community Engagement and Service (OCES) assists faculty in developing and coordinating service learning activities for Miami students. Bush also helps connect The Knolls to other Miami partners, such as the Center for American & World Cultures’ Global Rhythms series of international concerts and events. Through the Talawanda-Miami Partnership “I have taken Rob Shetterly (Cincinnati native and artist, Americans Who Tell the Truth) out to The Knolls on several occasions to give presentations and invited Knolls residents to attend his lecture and gallery exhibit at Miami,” said Bush.

“The Knolls is a revolving door for service learning and community engagement for Miami students. On any given day one is likely to see Family Studies, Social Work, or Gerontology students who are completing internships; or view groups of students from Art, Athletics, Greek or other student organizations performing for the residents or volunteering. One great example of a mutually beneficial partnership activity is the Scripps Gerontology Center’s Opening Minds through Art (OMA) program, where the OCES pairs student volunteers and seniors with dementia.” This national program strives to build bridges across age and cognitive barriers through art.

Another innovative program is The Knolls Intergenerational Technology Program, which partners Miami students together with Knolls residents to assist them with personal technology questions. “It seems like a great match – senior citizens with tech savvy students, but what it’s really about is creating relationships and forming bonds,” says Bush. His passion for connecting students and faculty to the local community helps bridge the gap between classroom learning and real life experience.

Classrooms are changing and Miami University is a pioneer in redesigning learning opportunities for her students. The Knolls will continue to play a key role in enhancing student learning and faculty growth at Miami for years to come. “Our goals for the partnership include maintaining a diverse collection of Miami faculty and staff, along with Knolls residents and staff, on the advisory council to help provide guidance and foster connections” said Bush. ... and the vision grows.

*Monica Streit, Sr. Program Assistant, College of Education, Health & Society*

# Making Strides with the Miami University Stroke Support Group

By: Sydney Rieman, Miami Student/ Knolls Intern

Around 9:45 am, a crowd begins to form inside of the Knolls auditorium. Friends and family from the Tri-State area reunite, happy to catch up on each others' lives. Students start to filter in, bringing all sorts of homemade desserts and casseroles. Dr. Kelly Knollman-Porter, a Miami University Speech-Language Pathologist, gathers everyone and begins the clinic.

The first hour of this clinic is casual small group conversation with the target of increasing communication for those that may have suffered damage to the language portions of his/her brain. The initial segment also gives everyone a chance to enjoy some coffee and the delicious food. For the next hour, patients are broken into even smaller groups in order to focus on specific therapy goals.

Insurance companies have been known to eventually stop covering treatments for patients with stroke damage. It has been proven that most of the rapid, noticeable recovery takes place within six months of the stroke, slowing in progress after one year. It was a common misconception that all progress comes to a halt after this one-year window.

"20 years ago," Dr. Knollman- Porter says, "I was instructed to discontinue treatment after one year." Now, through recent studies, there has been evidence suggesting that there can be improvement even 3-5 years after a stroke.

This is where the MU Stroke Support Group comes in. Although they started 25 years ago as a small number of people meeting in Bachelor Hall on Miami's Campus, more and more people began to come. When there was a need for more space, it was moved to The Knolls of Oxford. The Knolls of Oxford is happy to house this group, honoring this partnership with Miami University for over 8 years now.

Although this program is advertised mainly through word-of-mouth, even hospitals have begun referring patients to this clinic. Offering free services for those who no longer have insurance coverage for therapy, similar experiences are hard to come by.

This group is not just beneficial to the patients, but also to the graduate students of Miami's speech pathology program. Through a service-learning course, first year graduate students are paired with a client and provided with an opportunity to conduct informal evaluations and develop/execute therapy goals. Although the course ends by winter break, the students continue to work with them all year.

This clinic meets with smaller groups in Bachelor Hall twice a month throughout the semester along with the once a month meetings at The Knolls.



*MU Speech Pathology students with Knolls resident Myrna Strohmier*

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## Opportunities at the Knolls with Jessica Drehs

By: Sylvia Turner, Miami Student/ Knolls Intern

Gerontology is a field not many people, especially young people, are familiar with. Miami University is one of a handful of Ohio schools to offer a gerontology graduate program, and one of even fewer to offer a PhD. Jessie Drehs, a 2011 Miami graduate, began her undergraduate career knowing she wanted to pursue Gerontology.

"I started my first job when I was 15 at a retirement home in Cincinnati," Drehs said, "so when it came time to pick a major, it was pretty much all I had ever known."

The Gerontology program requires each student—major or minor—to complete a semester long internship (this is a capstone class that meets once a week) at a local facility for older adults. Jessie was lucky enough to be placed at The Knolls of Oxford (TKO) during her senior year.

“Interning at The Knolls helped me decide that I wanted to continue doing something similar once I graduated,” Drehs said. Jessie interned underneath director Tim McGowan and then continued the following semester, working with Stacey Brekke and Laura Lacy in the marketing department. One of the best attributes of the Gerontology capstone is the requirement to complete a contribution project: a way to give back to the facility. “Jessie worked on a couple of projects for



*Retirement Counselor, Jesse Drehs with Maple Knoll resident Dick Haley*

us, she helped in creating a new meal plan for residents and changes to our Café menu and she also did a presentation introducing residents to Facebook. Then Jesse worked one on one with residents to help them become more familiar with Facebook” states Brekke, Director of The Knolls of Oxford Communications. The changes to the menus were willingly accepted by all the residents. The Knolls Facebook page also saw a boost of Facebook fans from current residents.

“I revamped the menus for the dining room and The Café,” said Drehs, noting that this required her to meet with the Director of Food Services to discuss menu options, as well as forming focus groups with the residents to come up with the most desirable options. However, her favorite memories at The Knolls were the times she got to spend in the cottages, providing Facebook lessons for the residents. Thus proving that the most rewarding parts of the Miami University/TKO affiliation are the face-to-face interactions between the students and residents.

After graduation, Jessie returned home to Cincinnati and began the dreaded job search. Luckily for Drehs she received an email from Stacey Brekke informing her of a position at Maple Knoll Village. “When I found out that Maple Knoll Village (The Knolls sister community) was looking for a retirement counselor she was the first person I thought of for the position. I knew Jessie would do a great job because she was very good at multi-tasking and a pleasure to be around. The residents truly enjoyed working with her,” Brekke said.

“I was very excited to get the email,” Drehs said, “I emailed her back immediately.” Now, Jessie works as a retirement counselor at Maple Knoll Village; she makes sure the units are occupied. She explained that she is constantly speaking with new prospects who have an interest in retirement living.

“My day consists of scheduling tours of the campus, deciding which amenities or services will best fit the prospects’ needs, and eventually help the prospects through the contract/move-in process,” she said.

This type of success story would certainly turn heads toward the Gerontology program at Miami, and all of the wonderful and enriching opportunities it offers. This is also a true reflection of how wonderful the affiliation is between Miami University and The Knolls of Oxford.

“I would recommend Gerontology to anyone that has a passion for older adults,” Drehs said, “I think the assistance the professors provide in finding an internship turns into a really great experience.”

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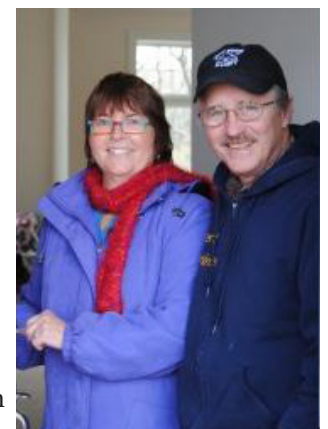
## Home is Where the Heart is

By: Brittany Shuler, Miami Student/ Knolls Intern

Home is defined as, “the place where one resides permanently.” But, home is much more than that. Home is a place where you feel comfortable, secure and are a contributing member of the community. Home is something the Fishers take seriously and hold dear to their hearts. Home isn’t where one’s job is located or where one’s family is from. According to the Fishers, home is somewhere “where you have good and inviting neighbors, where people take care of each other and where you have a sense of community.”

They both first encountered this feeling of home while attending Miami University. Lee was a business student, class of ’68, and Rosemary, class of ’69, was an elementary education student.

While in Oxford they felt like they were a part of the community. Lee worked throughout his school years and managed to balance work, school, and an active social life making trips uptown



*Lee and Rosemary Fisher*



to Mac & Joe's and Purity Bar. Both were also very involved in campus activities such as Choraliers, Chorale and Glee Club. Oxford was a safe, fun, eventful, yet peaceful and remote place to them. They spent a lot of time studying and working, but made time to ride around all night in shiny black mustangs with scarlet red interiors and have nights out uptown, that is until Lee "the ladies man" Fisher would get himself in some kind of predicament. It's safe to say they enjoyed their time attending school and graduating in Oxford.

In 1969, Lee was called to serve his country. Upon his return, Lee and Rosemary were faced with a decision, where do we go from here?

After bouncing around in Cincinnati, their professional careers sent them on a 577-mile trip to Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. There, even in the hustle and bustle of the city, the Fishers felt at home. There they had great neighbors, a wonderful community and security. After years of living in Philadelphia and working in the corporate world, Lee decided to trade in his business casual attire and Rosemary said goodbye to chalkboards as they headed off to West Virginia. The Fishers embarked on a much anticipated, new chapter in their lives.

They said "Auf Wiedersehen" to the city and "Hallo" to fresh air and farm life. Way out in the fields of West Virginia Lee and Rosemary settled into the cozy, self-sufficient farming lifestyle.

They spent their days cooking up fresh made meals in the kitchen, riding around and bailing hay with nothing but a RED tractor, and spending nights with their neighbors. Neighbors being defined as no more than five miles down the road. However, even then they felt safe, secure and surrounded by wonderful people.

Then the unfortunate happened. Tragically, Lee was diagnosed with cancer. Being the fighter and go-getter he is, he has beaten it, but this left the Fisher's wondering 'what if?'

With no ties to any place specific, they began searching the country for a place they could call home in their later years. Somewhere where they felt safe and secure, but surrounded by good people and a great community.

After researching every retirement community in all desirable locations, it hit them, Oxford, Ohio. They wanted to be somewhere closer to their families with the solitude of a great social community, but the nagging question still lingered, what about the good neighbors and additional care they would need? They looked into retirement communities in the area and decided to nestle into The Knolls of Oxford community.

Lee and Rosemary said they couldn't imagine living anywhere else. At The Knolls, "They get the best of worlds, the farm surroundings, great community and neighbors and all the care they will ever need into their final days," emphasized Lee.

Rosemary was delighted to retire her spatula and dine in at The Knolls café and Ivy Creek Supper Club for meals. Lee was excited to get back into the social life and spend more time restoring and maintaining his tractors.

At The Knolls, the Fisher's are free to care and do for themselves as much as they please and when they wish to do less the Knolls employees are delighted to step in and lend a hand.

Since living at The Knolls, the Fishers have taken full advantage of the affiliation between The Knolls and Miami University. Lee and Rosemary have taken classes to continue their education at Miami, attended athletic and social events like hockey games, and hope to see Choraliers and Glee Club performances in the near future. Lee and Rosemary have made many friends within their community as well as within the student community. They have gatherings and dinners with their neighbors, students from class and students they've meet through The Knolls.

If you ever see a shiny, red tractor at Starbucks uptown, that would be the Fishers; and feel free to ask Lee for a ride!

Lee and Rosemary couldn't imagine being anywhere else. Home is where your heart is and the Fishers' hearts are in Oxford.

# Love and Honor: The Story of Don and Betty Gerber

By: Jonathan Moritz, Miami Student/ Knolls Intern

Love and Honor. The sacred phrase of Miami University resonates deeply within alumni of Miami. It is the school where they made lifelong friends, earned a great buildable education, and made a plethora of great memories. Love and Honor to Miami is different for all alumni, like Don and Betty Gerber for example.

Don and Betty Gerber were students when they met at Walsh's Bar in Hamilton, Ohio while sharing 3.2 beers in August of 1950. Don was a NROTC student aspiring to a triple major in Economics, Naval Science, and Math. Betty was a Theater major at Western College for Women. "Not many people had cars in those days," Betty remembered fondly, "he and his Beta friends just drove up to Peabody (Pea-ba-dy, not Pea-Body) Residence Hall where I was sitting outside and asked if anybody wanted to go out with them to get 3.2 beer at Walsh's Bar in Hamilton. A couple of friends and I said yes and the seat next to him was open." Sixty-two years later, two kids, and two different careers later, Don and Betty are still as in love as the day they met at Walsh's. Their favorite places while attending Miami University were Mac-n-Joes and the College Inn, next to Brickstreet which was then a movie theater.

Before graduating in 1951, Don, who came from Upper Arlington near Columbus, was a member of the Beta Theta Pi Fraternity. He lived in the Beta House for his final two years at Miami. He also lived in the New Men's Dorm (Now Symmes Hall), and was a counselor at the Lodges, right behind where the new Recreation Center is now on Chestnut Street.

After graduating, Don proudly served with the Marine Corps during the Korean War. Don was honorably discharged from the Marine Corps in 1955. Immediately following his duty, he received a job in the Purchasing Department at Proctor and Gamble. After great training at Proctor and Gamble, Don was recruited by American Motors and transferred into their Kelvinator division, which was bought by Electrolux in 1969. After living in twelve different cities, Don ended his career with Electrolux in Dublin, Ohio.

Betty, who came from Winchester, Kentucky, was on track to graduate from Western College for Women with a Theater degree in 1952 before Don decided to surprise her with a marriage proposal. She married Don on June 16, 1951, just before he shipped out to Korea. She spent her final year living in Peabody after spending her previous two years living in Hillside and McKee Residence Halls. She worked hard to balance being a mother with her passion for Theater. She starred in several local plays, while the family lived in Grand Rapids, Michigan, and later in Dublin, Ohio. Her "fifteen minutes of fame" came in an Unsolved Mysteries episode. Wherever they lived, Betty tried to satisfy her interest in theater by participating in the local community theater, on or off stage, especially in Grand Rapids, Michigan.



1951

Don and Betty originally retired to North Carolina, however in 2001 after a series of health scares, a scary question crept into Betty's mind, "if something happens to me, then what happens to Don?" They started searching for a continuing care retirement community and fell in love with The Knolls during a Miami/Western Reunion Weekend. "The people [at the Knolls of Oxford] are just terrific, the staff are amazing, and the 24/7 care you receive. You get your money's worth. This place is full of fellow retired professionals and interesting people affiliated with Miami University including, retired professors, parents of current professors, and fellow alumni from Miami and Western College. Since it is a college town there is plenty to do by choice. You chose whether or not you want to take advantage of the many activities and events the staff of The Knolls plans and coordinates. It is also the popular thing to do right now," Don and Betty both raved.

They were also impressed with how the Knolls is so different from the other continuing care communities. Here they live independently. They buy their own food, have their own schedule, and can socialize with people of their own age. In case of emergency, they push the button on their pendants and someone from The Knolls responds. Their cottage is nice and spacious with a beautiful yard and some transportation is provided to sporting events, performing arts events, and shopping-even to Cincinnati and Dayton.

The Knolls also gives them a chance to be closer to family. Their son and his family live in Indianapolis and their daughter lived in Chicago, before she tragically died nine years ago. In honor of her memory, the Gerbers set up an endowment with Miami University, the Catharine A. Gerber Award. According to Miami, this prestigious award is given to a Western Program Student or students “to recognize undergraduates in support of the Western Inquiry Center. Preference in making such grants shall be given to those student’s proposals that further the collective capacity for peer learning and mentoring in the Inquiry Center.” This endowment is not the only thing that the Gerbers still visit Miami for. Thanks to The Knolls transportation services, they like to attend Hockey and Football games together. Don attends fitness classes at the REC center thrice a week and Betty is highly involved in the Western College for Women’s Alumni Association. Some of their favorite places in Uptown Oxford now are Paesano’s, Dakotas, and Kona Bistro.



2013

Miami University impacts and influences them today, as much as it did in 1951. It is where they learned, triumphed, laughed but most importantly, it is where they met sixty-three years ago. They could not think of any other place they would rather spend the rest of their lives than with family and fellow retiring Miami alumni. They could think of only one possible place for this to happen, the loving and beautiful community of The Knolls of Oxford. Love and Honor.

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## Veda Etheridge Embraces Family

By Donna Boen, Editor of Miamian

Some days Veda Etheridge finds it hard to believe it’s been 54 years since she and Bob and their two sons moved to Oxford. They came right after Miami University finished celebrating its 150th birthday in the summer of 1959.

She still shudders when she thinks of their first house, a rental on Spring Street with a dirt cellar. Rental properties in Oxford were scarce back then, and most of what was available had already seen better times.

Fortunately, it was only temporary housing. Meanwhile, Veda, 8-year-old Rob, and Mike, then 5, settled happily into small-town life while Bob started his job as Miami’s Dean of Men. A year later Bob became Dean of Students, and the Etheridges moved into a home on Bishop, becoming neighbors to the Milletts in Lewis Place, home to Miami presidents.

Veda cherishes the time her family spent with John, Catherine, and their three boys. “I was so pleased that we were able to know the Milletts. That was a wonderful experience.”

And 8-year-old Rob cherished his newfound freedom. From their Bishop home, he could walk to school at McGuffey and ride his bike uptown to get a haircut and go to the movies. He immediately loved the small town, Veda said. They came from Michigan State where Bob earned a doctorate and then served on the Dean of Student’s staff.

“Bob knew Miami’s reputation, the setting, and knew it would be good for our family,” Veda recalled recently during a chat in her Knolls home on Scarlet Oak Circle.

Miami was their last move career-wise although they changed homes two more times after Bishop, first to a house they built on Iveswood in the Springwood neighborhood east of town and then to The Knolls of Oxford. Even before Bob retired as Vice President for Student Affairs in 1989, they signed up for The Knolls.

At that point a retirement community was still in the talking



*Veda Etheridge and her family in front of Etheridge Hall*

stages. Bob was involved with some of the early committees that interviewed different companies interested in being selected by the city to build in Oxford. Bob and Veda moved into one of the cozy cottages at The Knolls 13 years ago, spending six months each year in Oxford and six in Naples, FL.

Veda enjoys the community's various group outings, especially trips to the shopping centers, the symphony and plays in Cincinnati. She also likes spending time with her neighbors, who have become family.

Family and friends are important to Veda. Indeed, Bob was a childhood friend long before he became her high-school beau. They grew up together in Fairfield, Illinois.

"In high school I was starting to see that this young man had potential. He was very handsome and played football and was the valedictorian of his class, and he was just very special.

And I wasn't going to let him get away," Veda said, laughing at the thought. "I don't think he wanted to get away."

This autumn has been a time for reminiscing as the Etheridge family and longtime friends gathered to dedicate Miami's newest residence hall – Etheridge Hall – Nov. 7, 2013. Returning for the event were many of Bob's former staff as well as sons Rob, who now lives in Australia, and Mike and his wife from Murfreesboro, Tenn., three grandchildren, and Veda's 3-year-old great-grandson.

Of the 232 students who live in the new hall, located in South Quad south of the Center for Performing Arts, Veda said, "I wish they had had a chance to know Bob. They would have liked him. He was really the students' friend." A progressive thinker who was always pushing for change, Bob would like that the students living in his namesake are benefiting from a new concept in which the traditional corridor layout has been replaced with eight, 30-resident houses. Each 15-bedroom coed house includes such student-requested features as communal living and dining room plus kitchen, multiple bathrooms, and a study room.

He'd also appreciate the indoor bike storage on the first floor as he was often seen riding his oversized bike around campus during a time when students wouldn't have been caught dead pedaling a two-wheeler.

In fact, the former high school football star enjoyed recreational sports immensely and pushed hard for a rec center at Miami from nearly his first day on campus. Even though it didn't open until five years after he retired, Etheridge took tremendous pride in it.

Nothing, however, could top the pride he felt for "his" students, even during difficult times when he had to be the disciplinarian. Those times were rare, according to Veda.

"He just said, 'Our students are so good and you only hear when a student gets in trouble ... those students!' No, our students were so good and so devoted to class work and doing the right thing. They were good people. If anybody got in trouble, it was an aberration."

During the Etheridges' early years, the halls still had dorm mothers and each fraternity had a housemother. The dining halls required that students dress for dinner, women in dresses or skirts and men in sports coats. The evening meal included tablecloths, place settings, and a designated host at each table. If you started college without table manners, you were taught them soon enough.

"We would have students in our home, and we were also invited out to the residence halls to eat and get to know them, and we took our boys with us. The students kind of like to have the boys around. Of course, you attended everything. Whatever there was, you went. We went to baseball games, football games. Fraternities would have dances and maybe one evening we'd go to five or six different ones."

Even when students were pulling pranks that they shouldn't have, Vice President Etheridge enjoyed their creativity. "There were a lot of funny, funny things, and Bob delighted in their ability to think of these things," Veda said. "One Christmas a fraternity cut off the top of a big evergreen on campus, but they dragged it. And they couldn't figure out how they got found out. They shouldn't have done it, but it was so funny."

Those were good times. After Bob retired, they had no desire to leave the community they had called home for so long.

"I'm so glad I'm in Oxford because all my closest friends are here now." Veda especially appreciated her Knolls friends during the difficult days after Bob's death in 2010. "I think we all feel that we're a part of one larger family, an extended family. That's kind of satisfying. It gives me a certain security," she said. "That's what Oxford's all about I think."



*Veda Etheridge with Etheridge  
Hall Resident Director*

# Bridging the gap: The Knolls Technology Program brings together two Generations of Miamians

By: Emily Stewart -Alumni Relations

“Hit the button, we’ll see what happens.” Miami University student Ryan Martini ’13 joked that was how he hooked up a DVD player for Pris Berry ’54, a resident at The Knolls of Oxford continuing care retirement community.

Though a humorous moment, that phrase is actually quite fitting when considering how the “Oxford grandma” came to meet her “local grandson.”

Martini, who hails from Cincinnati, chose Miami four years ago based on the reputation of its School of Education, Health and Society. He aspires to teach math and English to high school students, but through a unique partnership between Miami and The Knolls of Oxford, he’s spent the last four years refining his skills outside the classroom—and at a much more senior level.

The Knolls technology program was designed to involve current Miami students in teaching technology basics to community residents. Initially, students and residents were to meet for five one-hour sessions to become familiar with devices such as phones and computers. “I wasn’t any kind of electronics expert,” Martini, an adolescent math education major, said. “But it was kind of like teaching, so I decided to do it.”

The program paired him with Berry, a native New Yorker turned Oxford lifer after she graduated with a degree in psychology from Western College for Women in 1954. “My father was delighted to move my stuff across the street instead of hauling it back to New York after I graduated,” she said with a smile.

As a student Pris met future husband Robert Berry, an economics professor whom she says was “on loan” to Western College from Miami at the time. The Berrys made a life in Oxford, raising their son and daughter, and found their way to The Knolls in 2006. Robert fell ill with Alzheimer’s disease and passed away in August 2012. Pris fondly recalled her 80th birthday celebration, the last of her birthdays with Robert—and how special it was that Martini also could be there.

What began as a tutorial service became a special friendship spanning two generations of Miamians. In between hooking up DVD players and conquering the iPad the Berrys’ son gave her as a gift, Pris and Martini have learned a great deal about each other as well as some valuable life lessons.

“Teaching-wise, I’ve learned that it’s not my job to ‘do something,’ but to get someone to do something on their own,” Martini said. “From Pris, I’ve learned a lot about life. I thought being a college student would be the busiest time of my life, but Pris keeps a pretty full calendar between The Knolls, working at the art museum, writing to people...I’ve learned that life gets a lot busier.”

Pris was quick to note that Martini himself is in high demand. “He’s wonderful, just a really fine young man,” she said. “Back when I was a student, we didn’t have opportunities to do the work Ryan is doing.”

That unique facet of the technology program is not lost on Stacey Brekke, who handles communications for The Knolls of Oxford. She’s watched Martini and Pris forge a special friendship over the last four years and believes it’s symbolic of Miami’s relationship with The Knolls—located just outside of campus.

“Their relationship is an example of how important the affiliation between Miami University and The Knolls of Oxford really is,” Brekke said. “The Knolls of Oxford is very fortunate to have such a wonderful relationship with Miami.”



*Knolls resident Pris Berry and Miami student Ryan Martini*

# My Zamboni Ride

By Knolls Resident, John Blocher

As the scoreboard clock in Miami's Steve Cady Arena reaches 07:00 before game time, the goal horn blasts, lights are turned up, smoke pours from the locker room tunnel, followed by a stream of red & white jerseys and: "HERE COME YOUR MIAMI REDHAWKS!" After the teams are introduced and the Star Spangled Banner is played or sung, the P.A. announcer intones, "NOW LET'S PLAY SOME HOCKEY!"

Austin Czarnik, Captain of this year's team --and Center-- menacingly approaches the face-off at center ice, ---and when the puck is dropped, destruction of the ice surface begins as a side effect of the game. The players' sudden turns and powerful thrusts of fast skating on thin blades puts a tremendous compressive stress on the ice surface where the sharp edges dig out ice that must be replaced periodically to maintain a reasonable continuity of conditions.

Enter the Zamboni during the 15-minute intermissions of the three-period game. After over 60 years, "zamboni" like "kleenex" has almost become a generic term, but the family-owned company originated in the 1940s by Frank Zamboni in Paramount, California is still in business there, building about 250 machines each year. "Zamboni" is its brand name. Its principal competitor, with an "Olympia" of about the same size, is the Resurface Corporation of Elmira, Ontario.

Miami has two Zambonis that scrape about 1/16 inch of ice off the surface as shavings to be hauled away. Surface grooves are flushed with water that has been purified by reverse osmosis, followed by a thin layer of hot water (140-145 degrees) that on freezing bonds tightly to the ice and forms a smooth strong surface. The Zamboni driver executes a pattern of overlapping ovals for uniform surface coverage. A graceful dance of Miami's two machines ensures timely coverage of the ice for the next period of hockey mayhem.

In honor of my 95th birthday January 6, my family arranged for me to ride the Zamboni on March 1, the first date open when some could be present. Early in the intermission after the first period, Vanessa showed up at Section 14 clutching the release where I'd signed my life away. Then a quick walk to the nearest elevator. When that didn't come on call, we hightailed it to the elevator in the opposite corner of the Goggin Ice Center and appeared just in time for me to climb aboard and take off with Jon Elliott at the wheel.

Amid cheering of the crowd and mutual hand waving, Jon performed his typically competent ice dance followed by his buddy Andy Rolfes in the other Zamboni completing the pattern. I was confident and comfortable all the way.

Some asked, "How did you feel?" – Well, being below the upper level of the tempered glass plates that surround the ice, and seeing much of the crowd through that barrier, I felt like I'd taken up life in a fishbowl! Which got me thinking...

EPILOGUE -

Although the Miami Hockey "Brotherhood" may still feel that they are living in a fishbowl surrounded by anxious fans, they came close to completely justifying the 2013-14 season. Seeded #11 at the end of NCHC season play and going into the league's first tournament, they beat the #1 and #2 seeds and threatened to deprive Denver of its 4-3 win in the title game.

Thus in looking forward to the 2014-15 season, their many fans can now feel more eager and less anxious!

GO REDHAWKS!!



## The MU Communication Students



**Jonathan Moritz**, Miami class of '15, is from Chesterland, Ohio just outside Cleveland. He enjoys backyard sports like Ultimate Frisbee and Football. His hobbies also include distance running and writing narratives. While at Miami he double majored in Strategic Communication and History and is pursuing a career in Strategic Planning, Public Relations, or Market Research and would like to work globally. He loves traveling and trying new things. He currently has a marketing internship with the Cleveland Aquarium.



**Brittany Shuler** is 24 years old and originally from Shermans Dale, Pennsylvania. Brittany is a senior at Miami University and plans to graduate in May 2014. She's a strategic communications major. She is an active member and previous treasurer of Public Relations Student Society of America and regularly attends events in and around Cincinnati, with the national chapter members. Brittany is also actively involved in Miami's UN Models organization. Through PRVisions, she is currently assigned to the local family resource center in Oxford, Ohio, through Miami's PR Visions Firm as an Account Executive. At the firm, she has been working on increasing the Family Resource Center's awareness in the community. Along with her PR work for the center, she is to promote and publicize the thrift store. She also is a freelance writer for the PR-premiere and Miami Student and Co- Chair for PRSSA Fundraising Events. Brittany currently holds an internship position with The Knolls and Clear Channel Media. She loves being involved as much as possible within Miami University. She jokingly describes her life with the well know quote, "so much to do, so little time."

### Knolls-Miami Partnership Advisory Board

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