

# The Messenger



YOUR CARING HANDS SINCE 1949

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SPRING 2010

## Quitman Names Alex Patterson as Executive Director

Presbyterian Homes of Georgia announces the appointment of Alex Patterson as Senior Executive Director of Presbyterian Home and Retirement Community in Quitman.

Patterson brings both experience in long-term care and a heart for the ministry to the position. He most recently served as Chief System Officer for South Georgia Medical Center (SGMC) in Valdosta and Administrator of SGMC's Greenleaf Center. Previously, he held executive

positions for Advantage Health Systems, Laurel Baye Healthcare and the UHS-Pruitt Corporation. He earned a Bachelor of Business Administration from the University of Georgia in 2001, as well as an MBA from the university in 2005.

Patterson is excited to assume a position that enables him to combine his "life's top two priorities, God and family." "The opportunity to join Presbyterian Homes gives me the ability to answer what I believe to be a call from God as well as to lend my energy to a ministry that has been a large part of my family's life,"



Alex Patterson

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## Mother's Day Offering Allows Us to Live God's Limitless Love

*This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you.*

John 15:12

Perhaps more than any other human emotion, a mother's love epitomizes Jesus' great commandment that we love one another. From the time we are born, we turn to our mothers for virtually our every need, and they, in their limitless love, provide.

As adults, one of life's great blessings is the opportunity to give back to God's most senior children. Presbyterian Homes of Georgia's annual Mother's Day Offering benefits the *Caring Hand Fund*, which provides charitable care for our frail and aging residents who have outlived their life's savings.

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### Our Mission:

Presbyterian Homes of Georgia, Inc., is a Christian ministry providing exceptional services to enhance the quality of life for senior adults.



engifted: (v.) to provide with gifts;  
*For by grace you have been saved  
 through faith, and this is not  
 your doing; it is the gift of God.*  
 —Ephesians 2:8

## Multiplied Blessings

By Susan E. Stone,  
 Director of Development

*And He took the five loaves and the two fish,  
 and ... blessed and broke and gave the loaves  
 to the disciples and the disciples gave to the  
 multitudes. So they all ate and were filled...*

Matthew 14: 19-20

Each year, we gather with our employees to thank them for the devoted service they give to our residents, to thank them for their support of the *Caring Hands Fund*, and to ask them to contribute again. The other night, just prior to meeting with the 11 p.m. to 7 a.m. shift, I met the night security guard at Presbyterian Village. He wanted to know why I was entering the building so late at night and I told him that we had an Employee Giving Meeting to talk about support for the *Caring Hands Fund*. We talked a few minutes about his emigration coming to America about 15 years ago and about how care for seniors is so very different here compared to his home country.

As we were talking, a reverent tone came into his voice and he pointed over to the health services hall and said, "Oh, the care that our residents receive is so wonderful, it's like the Hand of God is laid upon them." He went on to say how remarkable it is that we never ask anyone to leave who has outlived their financial resources. He said that the *Caring Hands Fund* is a godsend.

I felt like asking him to just come with me and give my presentation to the employees. Then I realized that he didn't need to do that because our employees know that same message because they work in a culture of caring every day.

Meeting with our employees is always an inspiring experience. In addition to giving so much of themselves at work, our employees reach into their pockets and financially contribute to the *Caring Hands Fund*. Eighty-four percent of our employees give to *Caring Hands*. They know first-hand the difference that these gifts make and they willingly join in support by giving their best efforts, giving of their treasure, and giving of their hearts. In turn,

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## Philips Tower Residents Benefit from Wellness Coaching

*R*educing daily medications... going once again for leisurely walks... expanding social circles. Whatever their definition of wellness, residents at Philips Tower have a coach to help them attain their goals.

While the on-site fitness center features diverse and popular health and wellness programs, services now include wellness coaching by Wellness Director Jada Carr. "Wellness coaching is like business coaching or personal coaching. Whatever the individual's

wellness goals are—physical, mental, emotional—that's where our focus is," she said.

As opposed to larger fitness classes, wellness coaching takes a more personalized or individualized approach. It is also a more subtle method that uses evidence-based skills, such as motivational interviewing and principles of positive psychology, to help seniors reach their wellness goals. "The emphasis is not so much on *do this or do that*," Carr said. "Instead we work with individuals and ask, *what is it that you want to achieve? What is it that motivates you?*"

Carr gained knowledge of wellness coaching as part of her continuing education credits in late 2008 and is now a Certified Wellness Coach through Wellcoaches Corporation. She found a ready audience introducing the idea to Philips Tower residents. Once a month, she holds small group coaching sessions on each floor with an average attendance of 10 persons per session. "The small group setting works well," she said. "Everyone gets to



*Jada Carr offers wellness coaching to resident Beryl Taylor.*

*Continued on page 4*



# Presbyterian Homes Treasures Couple's Commitment

When Bob Eskew attended the groundbreaking of Presbyterian Village in 1986, little did he know that he himself would one day be not only a longtime resident, but also the first resident to serve on Presbyterian Homes' Board of Trustees.

Retired after 25 years with Heery International following a long, outstanding career with Georgia Tech, Eskew recently completed three faithful terms as a Trustee. "It was a great honor to serve on the board, and I thoroughly enjoyed it," he said.

Eskew and his wife Iris were already familiar with Presbyterian Homes' ministry when, on a Saturday morning in 1996, they came with friends to see the new retirement homes being built at Presbyterian Village. By Monday morning, they had applied for residency. The couple moved to the village in October 1996. "We love it more every day," he commented.

The Eskews have a remarkable history of volunteer service to the Atlanta community, lending their support to many benevolent causes. In 2009, they were Honorary Chairs of Viva Villa, Villa International's annual gala. Iris is past chair of the event, and the Eskews were recognized for their years of dedication to the organization.

Soon after moving to Presbyterian Village, Eskew was asked to lend his leadership and expertise to several fund-raising and development activities, which led to an invitation to join the Board of Trustees. Along with Dell Rearden, he co-chaired the successful *Face to Face with Our Future* capital campaign. Subsequently, he was serving as chair of the Development Committee when Presbyterian Homes met the Harland Foundation



Iris and Bob Eskew

***"The fact that no one has ever been asked to leave because their funds ran out is a very meaningful and comforting fact."***

*Bob Eskew, Retired Trustee*

Endowment Challenge to strengthen the future of the *Caring Hands Fund*. Iris, too, has taken on many volunteer roles at Presbyterian Village, serving on the dining committee and the landscape committee of the resident council.

The Eskews have been married for 64 years and have five children and one foster son, six grandchildren, two foster grandchildren and four step-grandchildren. Both Bob and Iris hold Presbyterian Homes' ministry near to their hearts. "We have learned to appreciate the *Caring Hands Fund* and what it means to so many," he said. ♦

## ***Quitman Names Alex Patterson as Executive Director – cont. from p. 1***

he said. A grandson of founder Rev. Dr. Frank McElroy, Sr. and nephew of current CEO Dr. Frank H. McElroy, Jr., Patterson grew up in Valdosta and has fond memories of attending many family gatherings at the Presbyterian Home

in Quitman. His family's tradition of caring for God's most senior children is "an inspiration" to him and has helped shape his career path. Patterson and his wife Kate have three children Ellen, 3, Campbell, 2, and newborn Griffin. ♦

# Calvin Court Residents Commence College-Level Course

Who says college is only for the young? Calvin Court residents are taking on a college-level learning course this spring. Using a video lecture series and curriculum developed by The Teaching Company's "The Great Courses" series, the group is selecting a course to study and are leaning toward "Great Battles of the Ancient World" to learn about important battles fought in the Mediterranean region.

The idea of forming a group to study a college-level course grew from Calvin Court's popular Book Club. The group wanted even more opportunities to learn together and be together and thought that a college-level course would be a positively healthy way to stimulate the brain, open the mind and keep the discussions going.

The Great Courses offerings feature two dozen 30-minute lectures on DVD and accompanying study and discussion materials. The courses are taught by established professors; the ancient battles course, for example, is taught by



(Left to right) Darlene Keeley, Linda Underwood, Carolyn Edwards and Dot Weatherall look over college course offerings.

Pennsylvania State University professor Garrett G. Fagan, Ph.D. There are no grades, tests, quizzes, or papers required, only the desire for lifelong learning. ♦

## Engifted: Multiplied Blessings – cont. from p. 2

the fact that our employees contribute to *Caring Hands* inspires other donors to step forward.

As the time for the Mother's Day Offering approaches and Presbyterian Homes asks our supporters to contribute to the *Caring Hands Fund*, please think about Matthew 14: 18-20 where Jesus feeds the masses with two fish and five loaves. Just as Jesus multiplied the bread and fish, each *Caring Hands* gift adds to the whole. Each act of support for the ministry to God's senior children inspires others to participate and thus multiplies the result.

It is with grateful hearts that we acknowledge all who demonstrate their belief in the Presbyterian Homes ministry through your tangible expressions of support. As we thank you for your benevolence, we ask that you make known our ministry's need to others. With your help, gifts of all sizes will multiply. And just as with the fishes and the loaves, we will see the fullness of God's love and the power of God's Hand as we minister together. ♦

## Philips Tower Residents Benefit from Wellness Coaching – cont. from p. 2

participate, and we concentrate on the positive, what they have accomplished since our last meeting." The gains can be large ("I am able to walk to the grocery store again") or small ("I did not put that box of Little Debbie cupcakes in my cart").

Success stories include a woman who had not visited the wellness center in several years. Previously, she was physically active, but after an illness she had given up on a fitness routine. "Her wellness goal was to at least visit the Wellness Center," Carr said. "After a couple of coaching sessions, she showed up one morning in a bright pink sweat suit, and that was it!" She is now a regular at the fitness center.

"Wellness coaching is all about empowering individuals," Carr commented. "They decide which behaviors they want to change. Coaching helps them get there." ♦

### *Mother's Day Offering – cont. from p. 1*

On May 9th, more than 200 Presbyterian churches statewide will participate in the traditional Mother's Day Offering. This year's theme, *Live God's Limitless Love*, is drawn from John 15:12. "The Mother's Day Offering is an opportunity to demonstrate our love for one another and to express our gratitude for the soothing, gentle touch of our mothers, grandmothers and others who nurtured, cared and provided for us," said Dr. Frank H. McElroy, President and CEO of Presbyterian Homes of Georgia. "The *Caring Hands Fund* enables us to provide exceptional care for our most vulnerable residents. It truly is a way to live the great commandment to love one another as God loves each of us."



### **Need Greater Than Ever**

Like other nonprofit organizations, Presbyterian Homes is finding the current economy particularly challenging, as the number of seniors in need of charitable care increases even while charitable giving and government funding are down. Historically, the funding required to provide charitable care at Presbyterian Homes' four campuses remained at \$3 million for many, many years. In 2008 the figure jumped to \$3.5 million and in 2009 to \$4 million.

"As we developed our 2010 operating budgets, we were challenged by the need to increase *Caring Hands* contributions to cover this significant upsurge," Dr. McElroy said. "People are living longer. The deluge of residents who have outlived their limited resources, along with the government's unwillingness to sustain traditional levels of funding, combine to precipitate a truly compelling need."



Since beginning in 1949, Presbyterian Homes of Georgia has never asked a resident to leave due to outliving their financial resources. The *Caring Hands Fund*, buoyed by the Mother's Day Offering and other year-round fundraising, makes this possible. While every gift is gratefully received and acknowledged, Presbyterian Homes is asking all supporters to look deeply into their hearts and consider increasing their gift this year.

***"Through your support  
of the Caring Hands Fund,  
you demonstrate love  
for one another as God  
loves each of you."***

*Dr. Frank McElroy,  
President and CEO,  
Presbyterian Homes of Georgia*

### **On-line Opportunities**

In addition to the plate offering on Mother's Day, donors will have the opportunity to donate on-line or through a direct mail appeal which will be sent to church members statewide. Easily accessible materials also are available on-line to help churches promote the offering through newsletter articles, Minutes for Mission and pulpit announcements. Visit [www.phgainc.org](http://www.phgainc.org) to make a donation or access the promotional materials. For more information on the Mother's Day Offering, contact the Development Office at 404-231-5758 or 1-800-808-3309. ♦



# *Living with Alzheimer's: Speaker Offers Riveting Insights*

*"Hello, my name is Richard, and I have Alzheimer's disease."*

With that opening line, Richard Taylor, Ph.D., a retired psychologist and university professor living with Alzheimer's disease, began a special presentation recently, captivating residents, care-givers and guests at Presbyterian Village in Austell.

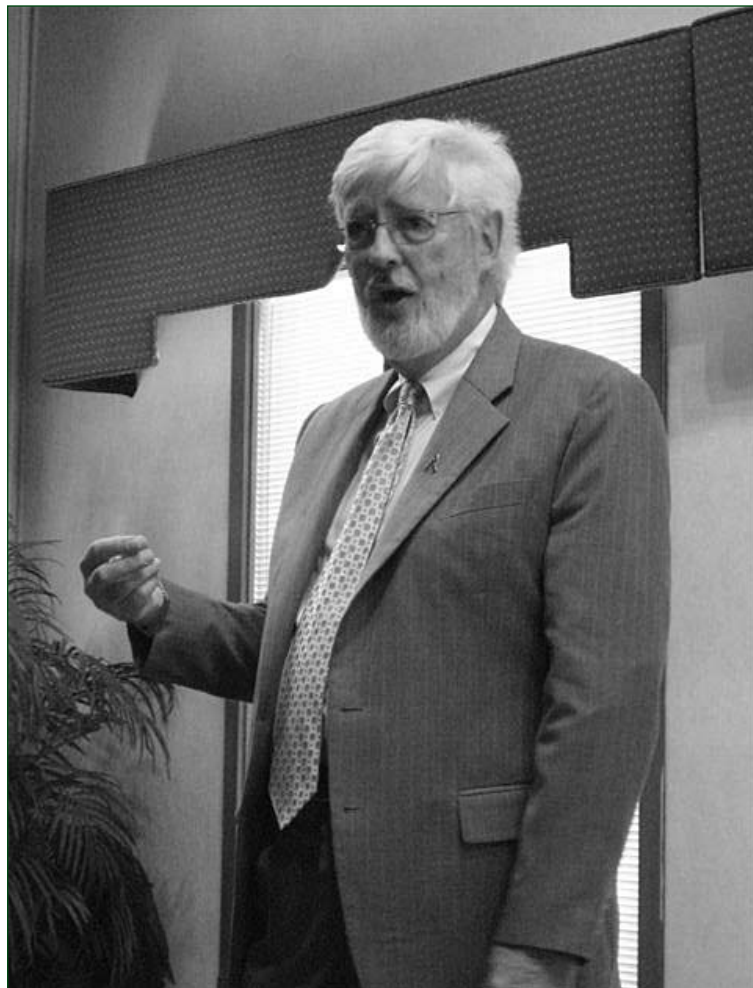
Dr. Taylor, who was diagnosed eight years ago at age 58, shared his thoughts, fears, frustrations and concerns, giving everyone present the rare ability to travel alongside him on Alzheimer's unpredictable journey. "Richard Taylor shared a perspective on this disease unlike any other," said Zanetta Farmer, Director of Hearthstone Memory Support Assisted Living Center at Presbyterian Village. "He enabled us to better understand the human impact of Alzheimer's and challenged us to keep exploring better ways to provide care."

*"As a person with first-hand knowledge, Dr. Taylor encouraged residents to share their feelings about what it is like to have Alzheimer's. These residents opened up and shared from the heart"*

*Zanetta Farmer, Director of Hearthstone*

A resident of Houston, Texas, Dr. Taylor has dedicated these years of his life to advocating for improved care for persons with Alzheimer's disease. He serves on the board of the Houston and Southeast Texas chapters of the Alzheimer's Association, and is the author of *Alzheimer's from the Inside Out*, a compilation of essays about living with the disease. The book has won national acclaim, including the 2007 Book of the Year Award in Consumer Health from the American Journal of Nursing and the 2007 Mature Media Bronze Award.

Although people living with Alzheimer's disease often have great difficulty expressing their thoughts and feelings, Dr.



*Richard Taylor, Ph.D., speaks to audience at Presbyterian Village.*

Taylor has the ability to tell his story in vivid, gripping and sometimes humorous ways. His message is one of loving support and open dialogue. Following his general presentation, Dr. Taylor visited with several residents of Hearthstone, the innovative and acclaimed memory support center at Presbyterian Village. "As a person with first-hand knowledge, Dr. Taylor encouraged residents to share their feelings about what it is like to have Alzheimer's. These residents opened up and shared from the heart," Farmer said. "Richard Taylor's presence at the Village was a great inspiration to our residents and to us all."

For more information about Hearthstone memory support, call 770-819-7000 or visit [www.phgainc.org](http://www.phgainc.org). Richard Taylor's website is [www.richardtaylorphd.com](http://www.richardtaylorphd.com). ♦

## Outpouring of Caring Fills Food Shelves

When it was time to restock the food pantries this winter for residents in need at Calvin Court and Philips Tower, employees, friends and even residents themselves from Presbyterian Homes of Georgia's metro Atlanta campuses responded overwhelmingly. In fact, this year's response to the call for food and staples collection was so successful that at one campus—Calvin Court—the pantry literally overflowed, necessitating a second pantry space.

Far from keeping people from contributing, the difficult economy may actually have spurred an outpouring of donations. The effort started with the staff at the various campuses, who were asked to donate canned goods, supplies and staples. The donations multiplied as local churches, friends, supporters and residents pitched in with more donations. At Presbyterian Village alone, so many canned goods and staples were collected that donations were generously shared among a local food bank as well as the food pantries at Calvin Court and Philips Tower.

Presbyterian Homes thanks all those who participated in this year's food drive. Your donations bring comfort to residents in need. ♦



*Resident Council President Tom Hart and Social Services Director Nova Davis stock the food pantry.*

## SOME GIFTS GIVE BACK...AND FORWARD

Make a charitable gift annuity to Presbyterian Homes of Georgia and you give a gift that not only provides for you throughout your lifetime, but also benefits Presbyterian Homes' mission for generations to come. How?



A charitable gift annuity can:

- Ease your cash flow by providing fixed income for life
- Provide tax benefits for your charitable contribution
- Support our vital ministry

A charitable gift annuity can include a survivor beneficiary, such as a spouse, dependent or friend. You can even name another person as the income beneficiary—perhaps a loved one or friend in need.

**The benefits are many—and mutual. Contact us today.**



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# Learning System Helps Staff Hone Skills

Care providers at Presbyterian Homes of Georgia now have the ability to sharpen their skills, test their knowledge and earn continuing education credits all, literally, at their fingertips, with the addition of 80 computerized learning modules from Fox Learning Systems.



*Bright Adiri, a certified nursing assistant at Presbyterian Village, utilizes the Fox Learning System.*

The state of Georgia requires that all certified nursing assistants complete 15 hours of continuing education each year. All Presbyterian Homes' residential care associates complete a minimum of 16 hours annually. In addition, Presbyterian Homes of Georgia requires in-service training and leadership workshops several times

throughout the year over and above the state requirements. Now, with portals set up strategically around each campus, the staff can complete required course work conveniently and efficiently in 80 wide-ranging areas of learning, including long-term care, Alzheimer's care and hospice care.

"The Fox system is very user-friendly and offers convenience and flexibility not previously available to our care providers," noted Gwen Hardy, Corporate Director of Human Resources for Presbyterian Homes. "In fact, with this system, anywhere our staff can access the internet, they can access this coursework." The system also allows employees to bookmark and save their work so they can complete coursework incrementally. "Now if an employee for whatever reason cannot attend a full in-service session, they can access and learn from these online, in-service programs 24 hours a day, seven days a week," Hardy commented.

A leader in on-line video education for care givers, Fox is working closely with Presbyterian Homes of Georgia to offer a customized learning system that meets its specific needs. "This is a learning system that can grow with us," Hardy said.

She also noted a correlation between innovation, such as the Fox Learning System, and a record high 84 percent employee retention rate at Presbyterian Homes' campuses. "One way to achieve quality of care giving is through excellence in continuing education of the care givers," Hardy noted. "Employees want opportunities for education and knowledge in order to do their job to the best of their abilities--and to do more on their job." ♦



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