

# Meet Duke.

Ask almost any Covenant Woods resident or staff if they know Duke, the therapy dog, and watch their eyes light up. Not only is he one of the most familiar dogs around campus, but also as a Great Dane - Duke is not hard to miss.

Duke's owners, Richard and Katherine Crowl, chose to live at Covenant Woods because of Duke. "The walking paths, the stream, the area is perfect for Duke," said Katherine. "He needed space. And we like it here a lot, too."

## WHY A GREAT DANES?

The couple, who moved to their Covenant Woods cottage from Goochland, have owned Great Danes for most of their married life. They happened on the big breed when Katherine wanted a dog and she let Richard choose what type.

Duke is the Crowl's seventh Great Dane. "Once you have a Great Dane, you just love them. It's like another person in the house," Katherine said.

At almost 200 pounds and six years old, Duke is known to be very affectionate, sweet and timid, and even sits on laps and watches TV at night. While Great Danes were bred to hunt wild boars in Germany, Katherine swears he would run and hide if he saw a boar.

## THE RIGHT TEMPERAMENT

It's this disposition that makes Duke a good therapy dog. The sole purpose of a therapy dog is to make people happy. Petting a therapy dog may lower someone's blood pressure during a stressful time, or take their minds off of something that may be bothering them.

When Duke was younger, Katherine took him to obedience school to learn to deal with children around the house. During that time, a few people suggested that Duke was the right kind of dog to become a therapy dog. Katherine did some research and found out that there are certain groups that can teach owners and their dogs to be therapy animals.

## MAKING KIDS HAPPY

Most of Duke's therapy dog career was spent at St. Mary's Hospital visiting the pediatrics floors. "We would go into a room with an ill or unhappy child and their worried family, and the whole room would change," said Katherine.

For about two years, Katherine and Duke worked together as a team visiting children, as well as some nursing homes and retirement homes. "It's been very satisfying to do," explained Katherine.

With the move to Covenant Woods and an operation on Dukes' leg, things have slowed down, but only a bit.

## IT'S A DOG'S LIFE

Residents love seeing Duke and his owners, and Duke and Katherine like sharing the enjoyment that comes from being a therapy dog and owner. "Duke sees all the people here and he gets the attention he loves. We often go to the main lobby and visit with people," Katherine said.

Katherine summed it up beautifully. "We just want to say how much we appreciate Covenant Woods being so gracious to us....and Duke," she said.

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# COVENANT WOODS GOES GREEN

Covenant Woods not only cares for our residents and staff, the organization works to care for the earth, too. Through a strong recycling program, the use of non-toxic products for cleaning and energy saving lights, we work to keep trash out of landfills and protect our natural resources.



## GOING GREEN IN THE DINING ROOMS

The latest part of this eco-friendly story is how the Covenant Woods dining department is striving to eliminate all Styrofoam and non-recyclable plastics. According to Michael Scheff, Director of Dining, residents requested that the dining team look into how they can help eliminate waste.

"We are currently working to remove all plastic bags in our four dining rooms," explained Scheff. "Covenant Woods has purchased market totes for take-out meals and passed them out to every apartment and cottage."

This move helps the environment in an impactful way because it could take up to 1,000 years for a plastic bag to degrade in a landfill.

The dining group is also working to convert to disposable food containers that are recyclable. This will help cut down waste when residents get take-out or eat-in.

"We want to be ahead of the curve and do the right thing for the environment," said Scheff.

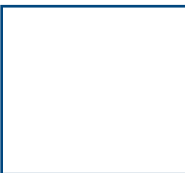


## MEET THE "TRASH QUEEN"

The self-proclaimed Trash Queen of Covenant Woods, resident Harriet Brockenbrough, has been at Covenant Woods since 2007. "When I got here, there was no recycling program. I knew that Hanover County did recycling at their trash center, so I knew it could be done here," said Harriet.

In a collaborative effort with the Conservation Committee, a recycling program was born. Today, residents can recycle appropriate items and drop them into special trash chutes and bins in designated areas. In addition to bottles, cans and papers, there is even recycling for old electronics and batteries. To Harriet and many others, this means less in our local landfills.

Harriet also enjoys the fact that Hanover Habitat for Humanity benefits from Covenant Woods' recycling program. "They collect aluminum cans to sell and generate money for their programs. Last year, Habitat raised about \$20,000 from recycling in Hanover County and a good number of their cans came from Covenant Woods," said Harriet.



## CHEERS FOR VOLUNTEERS!

Volunteers are valued members of the Covenant Woods community. They come from all walks of life including nearby schools, the greater Richmond area, as well as Covenant Woods residents.

What does it take to be a volunteer at Covenant Woods?

Most volunteers start with a phone call to the office of Community Relations. A staff member will contact the individual and ask a few questions to gauge the level of interest and see if Covenant Woods is a good fit. Potential volunteers are required to follow Covenant Woods' policies and agree to a background check. The process then involves an application and orientation. After that, volunteers are assigned to a department.



### VOLUNTEERS BY THE NUMBERS

- › Over 160 active volunteers
- › Independent volunteers can be as young as 15 year of age
- › The youngest volunteer (who comes with an adult) is 11
- › The oldest volunteer is in their 90s
- › Volunteers must commit to 50 hours a year

One of the most important things for the program is to make sure that the volunteer is getting what they want out of volunteering, and that Covenant Woods has the right opportunities for them. According to Elizabeth Pace, one of the best questions to ask is why a person wants to volunteer.

"When I think of our volunteers, I don't think just about what they will be doing. I think why they chose Covenant Woods and what they can learn," explained Elizabeth.

"We have people who are changing their careers, some who are simply missing their grand-parents, and some who are thinking about going into nursing. Whatever brings them here, they have the opportunity to serve."



## Grab your suitcase AND GET OUT OF TOWN.

“*We keep our passports ready at all times.*”

That's the philosophy of Sara Jo and Buddy Williams, Covenant Woods residents who love to travel.

"Traveling when you're in this community setting is very easy," said Sara Jo, referring to the maintenance-free and secure living found at Covenant Woods.

Each summer Sara Jo and Buddy pack up and take a trip to Maine, where they rent a rustic cabin on Monhegan Island for two weeks. While in Maine, the couple explores the island and shares meals with friends they've made over 17 years vacationing there. Sara enjoys painting the vibrant art scene on the island.

They also love to visit the UK, in particular London where they have friends. Each year they enjoy going to favorite places in the city and visiting destinations such as Edinburgh, Scotland.

Sara Jo and Buddy also like heading to their river house only about 45 minutes away from their home at Covenant Woods. It gives them a chance to relax and they can take their dog with them for a few days away from the hustle and bustle of everyday living.

"When we're gone, we don't have to worry about someone coming over to check the house or anything. It's certainly easier than owning a home in the Fan," explained Sara Jo. "This (community) is exactly what we wanted."



"Uncle Henry" cottage, Monhegan Island, ME



## INTERNS EXPLORE and share their passions at Covenant Woods.

In addition to experienced staff and generous volunteers, Covenant Woods also benefits from college and graduate school interns who work on campus.

Elise Myers, Intern

Internships at Covenant Woods offer students an inside view as to what it's like to work in a real-life situation and they are able to put their education to practical use. The interns work throughout the year in several departments such as marketing, community involvement, recreation, and spiritual care.

According to Elizabeth Pace, Covenant Woods' Community Relations Manager, all internships start with finding out what the schools' requirements are as well as asking the students what they want out of the program. "We want to make sure that each intern gets value out of their internship," explained Elizabeth.

### ON THE WAY TO A NURSING DEGREE

One intern making the most of her time at Covenant Woods is Elise Myers. While working with the staff until May 2017, she splits her time between the Assisted Living Social Workers, the Marketing Department, and the Independent Resident Liaison.

As a senior at VCU with a major in Health Science and a minor in psychology, as well as attending nursing classes at Bon Secours Memorial School of Nursing, her ultimate goal is to graduate with a bachelor of science degree in nursing.

Elise believes that her time here has been worthwhile. She explains, "Covenant Woods is making sure that I get the best out of my experience. I have certain projects that I work on, but everyone is flexible and makes sure I'm getting what I need!"

### SPIRITUAL EXPERIENCE

Another intern enjoying her time at Covenant Woods is Angelia Yancey. As a Chaplain intern from the Clinical Pastoral Education group in Richmond, she is working with Steve Scott, Director of Spiritual Care. She visits with various residents and talks with them and their families.

"We're here to support the residents and their families. I think it helps that the families know that their loved one has spiritual support even when they're not there," explained Angelia.

"I call Covenant Woods my place of peace," she said. "When I come on a Saturday or Sunday, it's the best time. It helps bring my week back into focus."

**FOR MORE INFORMATION** about the internship program, contact Elizabeth Pace at 804-569-8007.