

## **My New Family...**

### **Stories about my first experiences at the Villa**



**I WAS ASKED TO SAY A FEW WORDS ABOUT WHY I LOVE THE VILLA. THERE ARE SO MANY. FIRST, I FELL IN LOVE WITH ALL THE RESIDENTS. THE STAFF ARE ALL WONDERFUL PEOPLE; THE STAFF GO OUT OF THEIR WAY TO SHOW THEIR RESIDENTS THEY RESPECT THEM. AS A SENIOR MYSELF, I BELIEVE WE ALL DESERVE THAT. THERE ARE SO MANY STORIES, I DON'T KNOW WHERE TO BEGIN. MY FIRST ONE IS MEETING MY NEW "MOTHER." SHE IS REALLY GREAT TO TALK WITH; WE TALK FOR HOURS SOMETIMES. I COULD TELL HER ANYTHING, AND I DO. I LIKE TO SEE HER AS MANY TIMES AS I CAN. ANOTHER ONE, I FELL IN LOVE WITH A 104-YEAR-OLD WOMAN. SHE TOLD ME ONE DAY, "TOM, I LOVE YOU." WHAT MORE COULD I ASK FOR? WE BECAME GOOD FRIENDS. SHE MADE MY DAY. I COME TO RESPECT MY FELLOW SENIORS. ONE DAY, I WAS GOING INTO THE ROSE GARDEN AND MET A YOUNG LADY. SHE WAS CRYING A LOT. I SAID, "WHAT'S WRONG?" "I HAD TO PUT MY MOTHER IN THE VILLA, AND SHE DIDN'T WANT TO COME HERE." I TRIED TO TELL HER, HER MOM WOULD BE OKAY IN TIME. SHE WILL MEET OTHER RESIDENTS, MAKE FRIENDS. I FELT SO BAD FOR HER; SHE ALMOST HAD ME CRYING WITH HER. I TALKED TO HER MOM AS MUCH AS I COULD. SHE TOLD ME HER MOM WAS GETTING BETTER. ALL THE MEN AND WOMEN CAME TO BE MY FAMILY. I GET SO MUCH MORE BACK THAN I PUT IN. IT'S A WARM FEELING, THE LOVE I HAVE FOR YOU ALL.**

Tom Mosholder, Volunteer  
Villa Family since June 2013

*My first month at Villa St Joseph was a rough one. Not long after starting, I became ill and had to have emergency surgery. Before I was out of the recovery room, Sr. Michelle Prah (Administrator at the time) was at Sewickley Valley Hospital. She sought out my husband, sat with him, and prayed with him. She told him that I was not to worry about my job. I had to focus on getting better. My job would be there waiting for me whenever I was well enough to come back. A week later, I returned. Due to the nature of my surgery, I was extremely weak. As per Sr. Michelle – not my doctor – I was only permitted to work half days. At lunch time every day for a week, she would make me go to the convent and have lunch. She also made sure I ate that lunch, and then she sent me home. I came back to my full time job and was fully compensated for the time I was off. This showed me the compassion and love that Sr. Michelle had for her employees. She exemplified the mission. I will always remember that. Sr. Michelle did it all – from washing walls, to scrubbing toilets, and still being an administrator that will always be remembered by all the pioneer employees with love and admiration. This is why I am a Villa St. Joseph employee. When I think of the Villa, I think of Sr. Michelle and her vision that came true. This was her "baby," and to me, it always will be.*

Jeanmarie DePace, "Pioneer" Employee  
Villa Family since January 1997

I am coming up on my 15<sup>th</sup> year as medical director of the Villa St. Joseph, and what a ride it has been. From the minute I first stepped through the doors, I knew the Villa was special. I remember being amazed by the peacefulness and tranquility, and the love and caring of both patients and staff. It quickly became clear to me that the mission created by the Sisters of St. Joseph is what not only made the Villa great, but is what will keep it the best for years to come. The mission of faith, love and caring, and being ever present for each other in the eyes of God, shines bright as I watch our staff member and patients interact on a daily basis. The Sisters of St. Joseph made the Villa so special in those early days, and the way they have instilled their mission and culture into us all will keep the Villa so special moving forward. Sr. Francesca, Sr. Carolyn, and Sr. Judith are three of the Sisters who really influenced my life. They not only influenced me as a person, but made me a more kind and empathetic physician as well. Their spirits, along with many others, are always present. It is an honor and a privilege to be part of such a special community. Congratulations, Villa, on 20 years of making a difference in the world one patient at a time!

Dr. Dave Thimons, Medical Director  
Villa Family since 2001

*My brother was the head of construction for the Villa. He worked with Sr. Michelle and used to tell us stories. They were so funny! One day, Sr. Michelle wanted to go on the big equipment. So he got her a hard hat and a pair of boots and took a picture. It turned out so nice. She was always so particular. They swore she went out at night and counted the bricks to make sure. She was really a gem. I watched the whole thing being built, but never thought I'd be here. I started out with a broken leg which caused back problems. I was home by myself and fell on the floor. I called my daughter, Joyce, who came right away and took me to the emergency room. They said there wasn't any more they could do for me. I called Jill - I knew her since she was a little girl, knew her mom and dad. I wanted therapy. They said I'd never walk again. So I said to Sr. Carolyn, "Please, can I stay?" "Of course!" I've been here ever since. I used to be a Eucharistic Minister. I enjoyed it so much, but couldn't do it anymore. It was a job, but I loved it. You know what was nice was you were in close contact with everyone. I liked that. You figure it took three men to take my place. I think a lot about Villa Voices. I've been in choir ever since I was young. I really enjoyed that.*

Dona Turnour, Villa Resident  
Villa Family since April 2004