

## PROGRESS REPORT

### “This is where I want to be . . . it’s a wonderful place.”

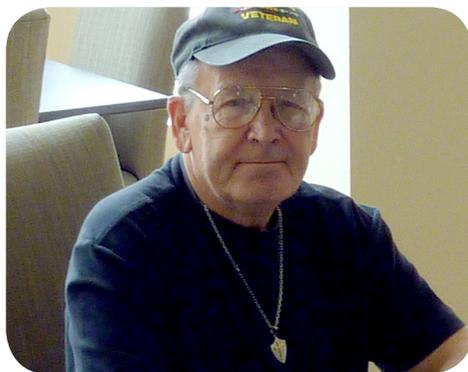
#### Army Veteran feels right at home at Lyons Place II

Donald Taylor’s dream has become a reality.

In April, the 68-year-old U.S. Army veteran moved into St. Mary’s latest property, Lyons Place II, located on the grounds of the Dayton VA. It’s the culmination of a journey that has taken Don from the jungles of Vietnam during times of conflict, to the peaceful, serene environment that he now calls home.

“This is where I want to be . . . it’s a wonderful place,” Donald voiced with the enthusiasm of a kid in an ice cream parlor. “I get to be around other vets and we have a lot in common. And there’s a lot of history here.”

Previously homeless, Don said



*Donald Taylor had been homeless prior to taking up residence at Lyons Place II. He values having all of the amenities of the VA right at his front doorstep and uses his expertise to assist fellow residents with any questions they may have regarding the VA system.*

he had an opportunity to live in a residential facility similar to Lyons II in Florida, but did not want to leave behind family and ties to the area. And besides, Donald said he isn’t particularly fond of the heat and mammoth insects that are associated with the Sunshine state.

So it was a blessing to him when he discovered Lyons II. In fact, the Army vet was one of the building’s first residents. The facility contains 55 units and is open to anyone 62 years of age and older. While it’s not exclusively for veterans, most of those who live there are vets.

After a service career that included tours in both Vietnam and Desert Storm, Don worked in the private sector. Unfortunately, a battle with leukemia ended his professional career and today he relies on a pension as his sole source of income. The affordability, location and facility itself made Lyons II the perfect fit for Donald – now in remission from cancer.

“The VA has saved my life many times,” Don recounted in reference to the medical care he’s received at the nearby VA Medical Center. “And there are a lot of things for me to do here. This is a great thing they’ve done for us veterans. It’s a wonderful place.”

#### Real Estate Development

- Started construction on 12 new cottages on the Hoover campus
- Completed construction on Lyons Place II, a 55-unit senior development on the Dayton VA Medical Center campus in Dayton, Ohio

#### Resident Services

- Year-to-date we’ve connected 123 residents to services and programs such as Medicaid, utilities/energy assistance, rental assistance, food stamps, and prescription benefits resulting in a cost savings to them of more than \$152,000.
- 82 residents were connected to health care and health care related services including health clinics and other medical, optical and dental care professionals, home health care services, prescriptions, durable medical equipment, medicine education and medicine management resulting in a cost savings to the residents of more than \$52,000.
- We’ve connected 330 residents to food/meal programs that provided a savings of over \$48,000 and linked them to multiple types of transportation that created a savings for residents in excess of \$26,000.

#### Homeownership services

- Coached 154 first-time homebuyers
- Worked with 198 homeowners to avoid foreclosure
- Counseled 125 seniors regarding reverse mortgages

### Our mission

St. Mary Development Corporation is a faith-based non-profit organization, called by God to create sustainable affordable housing for those in need. We work toward the day when all residents — especially the economically disadvantaged — have a decent, affordable place to live and become part of a community. We accomplish this through real estate development and management; supportive housing services; and community revitalization initiatives.

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### Make a gift

We depend on donors, like you, to support our mission and help us continue to achieve the type of success stories featured in this issue of Progress Report. St. Mary Development Corporation is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization, so your charitable donation is tax deductible to the extent allowed by law.

### Please make checks payable to:

St. Mary Development Corporation  
Attn: Tim Bete  
2160 E. Fifth Street  
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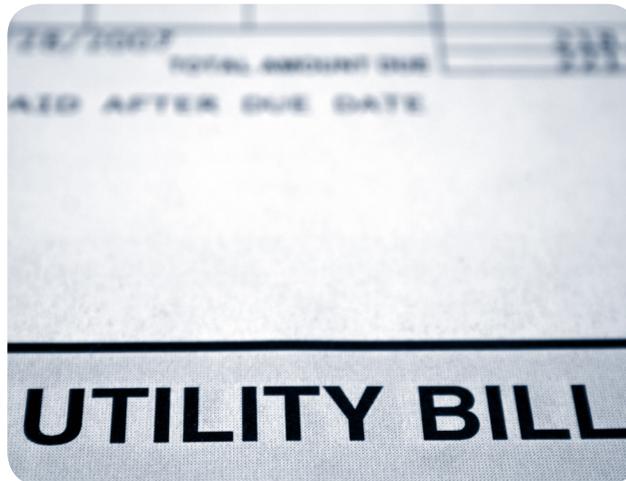
### Make an online donation

at: [www.StMaryDevelopment.org](http://www.StMaryDevelopment.org)

**Your donation helps seniors living right here, in our community. Thanks for being part of our ministry!**

## “I’ve received a tremendous amount of support and companionship.”

St. Mary property resident has endured a long journey to get to the place where she was meant to be



*Although downsizing residences and moving into a senior independent living community were initially bitter pills for Florence to swallow, she has come to the realization that her new home is where she belongs. It’s been a long journey but she now believes things have finally come full circle.*

“Florence” credits St. Mary Development Corp. service coordinators, her biological family and her church family with helping her land squarely on her feet. Not that there haven’t been any road bumps along the way.

“Had I been alone, I wouldn’t be here,” Florence, 60, stated while seated on the living room couch of the apartment in which she moved in April. “I’ve received a tremendous amount of support and companionship from so many people.”

Beset by health problems, it was a stroke Florence suffered last year that precipitated her “journey.” No longer able to continue her employment with the City of Dayton or navigate her three-story home, she moved into a new residence through St. Mary’s Single-Family Homes lease-to-purchase program. However, through extenuating circumstances, Florence racked up a Dayton Power & Light bill of nearly \$2,000 while in the program – one that she was unable to pay based

solely on her retirement income. Ironically, she earned just enough to prohibit her from qualifying for utility assistance programs.

Florence did not know where to turn, and was reluctant to ask anyone for help. But that’s where her service coordinator stepped in.

“She was in crisis when we first met,” she said of her introduction to Florence. It was decided that while she made restitution on her DP&L bill, Florence would have to move yet again. After a few months in limbo where Florence lived with a friend, the duo found an apartment in a St. Mary property.

However, there was still one more hurdle left to clear before making the move. While Florence was administratively ready to move in, mentally she was having great difficulty accepting the fact that she would be living in a senior facility. You see, her chronological age didn’t match how she felt mentally.

“This is a whole new world,” Florence beamed enthusiastically.

## “I came here with nothing but the shirt on my back.”

**He asked the Service Coordinators how he could help them with the things they needed. He'd rather give than take.**

Ask someone at the Biltmore Tower about Michael Thurman and you're likely to receive a blank-eyed gaze. But ask for “Chop-Chop” and virtually everyone would know of who you were enquiring.

The gregarious Mr. Thurman has led a life nearly as colorful as his nickname, which he earned for his ability to chop through doors and walls with his hands while participating in a fighting circuit. Born in Pusan, South Korea, the war baby was adopted by the Thurman family and brought to the States as a youngster – eventually settling in Dayton after a few Southern pit stops.

Chop-Chop's journey took him to the Biltmore in July 2013. He'd been paying \$800 monthly for rent at his previous address, but bringing home only \$1,100 in state disability. That left little for anything else so he made the move. It was during an open meeting moderated by the St. Mary Resident Services team that he met Natalynne Baker and Visa Lee. He was in need, but didn't want to take something for nothing.

“I came here with nothing but the shirt on my back,” Chop-Chop intimated. “But I asked the ladies how I could help them with the things they needed. I'd rather give than take.” St. Mary provides

contracted service coordination to the Biltmore Tower.

He admits that meeting the team has really “opened doors” for him. They've assisted him with a myriad of services including finding a physician, receiving blood pressure screenings, furnishing his apartment and applying to the Meals on Wheels program. All leading to cost savings and housing sustainability.

“The people here are good people,” the affable U.S. Marine Corps vet professed. “They bring out the best in me. Some are a lot worse off than I am.” The assistance from Resident Services has enabled him to remain at the Biltmore where he can continue to carry out his good works.



**St. Mary Development Corp. service coordinators Visa Lee (left) and Natalynne Baker bookend Michael “Chop-Chop” Thurman during a special event held at the Biltmore Tower. Even in the tough times, the U.S. Marine Corps vet goes out of his way to lend a helping hand to those in need.**

## Lyons Place II open for business and accepting new residents



**Lyons Place II opened its doors to new residents in early April.**

With much anticipation, the picturesque new Lyons Place II welcomed its first occupants in early April. Located on the grounds of the Dayton VA Medical Center campus, 49 units already have been leased in the 55-unit building. In order to apply for residency, interested persons must be 62 years of age or older, be income eligible and pass a background check. Although the building is not exclusively for service veterans, there is a veteran preference and approximately 80 percent of occupants have served in the armed forces.

“It's something they can be proud of and it's a peaceful place to live,” Shari Hoosier, Lyons Place II manager, said as to why residents seem to enjoy living in the new facility. “Everything is going well and we're concentrating on tenant needs right now. I enjoy listening to all of their stories and reliving life through their eyes.”



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**We work toward the day  
when all residents of southwest  
Ohio — especially the economically  
disadvantaged — have a decent,  
affordable place to live and  
become part of a community.**



John Lyons is a hero in my book. So are all other men and women who served our country in the Armed Services. I'm sure John would have got a kick out of the fact that we named not one but two buildings after him (Lyons Place I and II.)

John was a friend of our co-founders, Dick McBride and Sr. Rose Wildenhaus. Dick and Sr. Rose helped John move into the first affordable senior apartment building St. Mary created.

John had many struggles through the years. He had a stroke. There was a risk he would have to have both his legs amputated but doctors were able to save his legs. Dick was by John's side the entire time. John got older and more frail. Eventually he died.

And on a warm September day in the year 2000, John was buried in the cemetery on the VA campus. The bugle played taps. Besides the dedicated staff of this campus, Dick and Sr. Rose were the only two others at John's burial. No other family or friends. That's pretty much how it had been for the last eight years before John died. John had served as a Navy cook during World War II but in his later years, he had no one to help him. No one except the staff on the VA campus, Dick and Sr. Rose.

St. Mary Development was founded to give poor seniors, like John, a safe, decent place to live. Over the

past 24 years, St. Mary Development has created more than 3,500 housing units, mostly for seniors. Our apartments aren't just for veterans, although we have many veterans who make our apartments their homes.

But after John died, Dick and Sr. Rose had it in their hearts to do something specifically for veterans. They talked with Congressman Mike Turner who also has a special place in his heart for veterans. Mike suggested creating housing on the VA campus, close by to the services vets needed.

In April we opened Lyons Place II and it is almost full. There's a story of one of the vets living at Lyons Place II (Donald Taylor) on the cover of this issue.

Thanks to you for your support. Without you, we wouldn't be able to create beautiful housing like Lyons Place II.

God bless,

*Tim Bete*

Tim Bete  
President  
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**Lyons Place II is named after veteran John Lyons, who is buried in the cemetery on the VA Campus in Dayton.**