



COMMUNITY SAFETY FIRST & REASONS TO BE THANKFUL

LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

November 13, 2020

Dear Residents and Families,

As Thanksgiving approaches I am thinking about all the things we are grateful for in this strange year. I am especially thankful that our residents have navigated this journey so far essentially Covid-free. With regards to our amazing staff members, it has been almost 30 weeks since one of them has tested positive for Covid. Most of the staff who caught Covid did not experience terrible symptoms and, due to our proactive quarantine measures, we managed to keep all residents safe. We have been diligent and lucky. Even though many staff have been exposed in their personal lives, we kept them out of the communities until they were well. We have a lot of reasons to be thankful.

It has been hard for everyone---especially for our residents, as they have been through what must feel like an endless quarantine. We may be forced to revert back to it again as we approach the winter season. I see frustration and 'pandemic exhaustion' in our staff, families and residents. The individual stories are heart wrenching---but we must remember that we have made it this far without a resident suffering from this terrible virus. Personally, I am immune-compromised and

have been home for now almost 9 months. The risk remains out there and, while dropping our guard might seem logical after so many sacrifices, it's absolutely clear that Covid virus case numbers are again rising and there are greater risks ahead. Maybe we will get a vaccine in the spring, but as yet there is no information about when distribution will happen to staff and residents.

While we have learned a lot about Covid and its transmission, we must remain vigilant and alert. While many of our competitors are opening up, I have safety concerns and I want all of us to do this right---there are too many precious lives at risk. I expect the Beauty Salon to be open in a limited way in a week, and that has taken much careful planning for your protection. The dining room will take longer, as there is a greater risk to indoor gatherings, with the need to take masks off to eat. We are working on a plan that will protect the community to open slowly. There are ideas, which others are trying, to create 'Pods' or 'bubbles' of 4-5 people that agree to extreme precautions to avoid contact with others, and only with the members of their Pod who are pre-tested. This would allow Pod walks, games and movie events – possibly eating together – We will see if this is something to consider.

I have a philosophy that I have shared with you in the past, but I feel it is important to reiterate again: our first responsibility will always be to keep the community as safe and protected as possible. When personal rights put the safety of the community, the residents and the staff at risk, I will always choose community safety first. This has unfortunately placed an additional burden on everyone, and for that I am sorry.

I appreciate the chance to speak to you about how we feel and about our primary priorities. Let's hope this virus passes soon. Let us be as creative and engaged with each other as possible during this challenging period. I give my thanks to you for your gracious patience and am so grateful that you allow us to serve you every day.

With my Best Wishes to you and your Families,
Garrett Loubé – DHS President

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