BRAZOS TOWERS
AT BAYOU MANOR

Spring/Summer 2020

re-Inspired Living

a bi-annual newsletter from Brazos Towers at Bayou Manor

Designed for today's Modern Senior





A note from Michelle...

My how our world has changed in the last 6 months! As expected, life in retirement communities all over the country has become even more focused on keeping residents safe. Managing all aspects of this ever-changing pandemic situation, I have never been prouder of our leadership here at Brazos Towers. The proactive measures they chose to implement, well in advance of being required to do so, have been the secret to our ability to insure the health and welfare of our valued residents. In hindsight we are so grateful for their tenacity, discipline, attention to detail and most of all the compassion they have shown in the most difficult of situations. It's just one more reason to make sure the community you consider has a strong track record of high quality performance in maintaining a safe and secure environment, not only now, but in the past and for the future.

These days have me longing for the things I miss and now realize I used to take for granted. Going to a packed church for worship and praise; gathering with close friends for intimate dinner parties; going to cheer on our favorite teams (the Astros, Dynamos, Rockets, or Texans); enjoying a dramatic night of theater, symphony, opera or ballet that is SRO! The simple joys in life are hard to find anymore. They are there, you just have to get creative and dig a little deeper to find them.

I think the thing I miss the most is the ability to see all the smiling faces that Houston has living here. It reminded me of this poem:

> Smiling is infectious, you catch it like the flu.
> When someone smiled at me today, I started smiling too.
> I passed around the corner and someone saw my grin.
> When he smiled, I realized I passed it on to him.
> I thought about that smile, then realized it's worth.
> A single smile just like mine could travel round the earth.
> So, if you feel a smile begin, don't leave it undetected.
> Let's start our own pandemic and get the world infected!

Be well, stay safe and keep your sunny-side up!! ~ M

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by Donna Wrabel



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Regular wine drinkers have an 80% lower risk of developing Alzheimer's Disease.

https://www.webmd.com/beauty/features/drinking-wine-antiaging#1



Age Well with Wine

By Donna L. Wrabel, LSMW

When I told my 88-year-old mother that I was going to write an article entitled, Age Well with Wine, she said, that should be easy for you! And we both laughed. You see, I'm 100% Italian so if you have Italian family or friends or have ever watched an episode of Everybody Loves Raymond, you know that Italians love to cook, eat, spend time with family and are likely to have a bottle of wine on the dinner table!

Growing up Italian in New York, Sunday was our big family day, the most special day of the week. I remember waking up to the Italian hour playing on the radio. Singers like Vic Damone, Jimmy Roselli, Lou Monte crooning in English and Italian, my mom in her apron standing at the stove frying meatballs, stuffing bracciole, and stirring the gravy with a big wooden spoon. In Italian culture, some call it gravy and others sauce. I once had a two- hour heated discussion with a paisano (fellow Italian, over a bottle of wine of course) as to whether to call it gravy or sauce. Next time you are in Carrabbas Italian Restaurant on Voss Road, please ask Rosie Carrabba to weigh in on that question.

By lunchtime, our small house would overflow with relatives. We would sit down to eat several courses, drink wine, play cards, and simply enjoy each other's company. The younger ones would dance to Motown records, 45 rpms played on the Victrola. I consider myself so very fortunate to have grown up in a nice Italian family that focused on sharing time together around home-made food.

Jeanne Calment, a resident of France who lived a life longer and healthier than most, also had the good fortune to embrace the art of living with simplicity and grace. At age 90 she made a deal with her much younger lawyer that that he would receive ownership of her apartment upon her death if he subsidized it for the rest of her life. Despite being decades older, she outlived him. In fact, his heirs made payments on her apartment for years. On her 107th birthday, a reporter said, "Maybe I will see you next year Jeanne", and she replied, "I don't see why not, you seem to be in pretty good health!" Jeanne's health and longevity, she lived to a ripe old age of 122, inspired scientists from all over the world to study her life. They found Jeanne had several traits that may have contributed to healthy aging. She had a personality quality of playfulness and actively enjoyed a social life right until the very end. Jeanne stayed physically fit and would be seen riding her red bicycle throughout town. Her diet was what researchers call a Mediterranean diet of fish, lean meats and plenty of vegetables. Each dinner she enjoyed a glass of red wine and her friends recalled that she loved a square of dark chocolate after an evening meal.

Little did Ms. Calment know her lifestyle was promoting healthy aging! Today, some studies suggest that one to two glasses of wine a day along with a diet which includes five to seven portions of fresh fruit and vegetables may be keys to a longer healthier life. Dr. Richard Baxter, author of the book, Age Gets Better with Wine, New Science for a Healthier better and longer life, agrees. In it, he shares research that connects red wine with potential positive health benefits in aging and longevity. Wine may have antioxidant properties and since oxidative damage is believed to play a central role in aging and related diseases, in small amounts, and especially when combined with good food choices and an active lifestyle, it may promote healthy aging! Remember, it is moderate consumption and experts warn that in excess, like vitamins or anything ingested, alcohol does harm.

Now, whenever I visit my mom who currently resides in an assisted living community in Florida, we make sure that we sit down for a good meal with my sisters, my favorite Aunt Ruth and Mom's new circle of best friends. We open a good bottle of red wine, enjoy conversation, laughter and sometimes even sing an Italian song, taking time to embrace the simplicity and joy of living.

Our toast is always the same,
"Salud Chindon", which translates to,
"Good Health for a Hundred Years!"



Donna L. Wrabel is a geriatric specialist, licensed social worker, author and motivational speaker on facing challenges of aging in positive ways. Together with husband Rick and son Rudy, Donna owns a professional caregiving company, At Your Side Home Care, for the past 13 years, where they have served families providing them with personalized caregiver support. Assistance is available from 1 hour to 24 hours. Services include transportation to medical appointments, medication reminders, companionship, fall prevention, meal preparations and help with any daily needs. For more information contact 713-337-1133 or visit www.Houston-HomeCare.com



Healthy Aging!

New research suggests that a Mediterranean diet could have a positive effect for older adults. The diet is full of vegetables, legumes, fruits, nuts, olive oil and fish and low in red meat, dairy products and saturated fats. It is consistently rated as one of the healthiest diets.

https://www.usatoday.com/story/news/health/2020/02/19/mediterranean-diet-could-help-healthy-aging-bone-health-gut-study/4804941002/

Choosing a retirement community is a big decision



You have a lot to think about...

1. What services are included in the monthly service fee?
Make sure you are clear about the services and levels of care offered on campus — and if they are covered in your monthly fees or are extra. If they do not offer the care you need, where will you go?

2. How can I be assured that I will receive the best care possible if/when I need it?
Seek it out and choose it before you need it. Plan to cover all your bases. CCRC's offer Independent Living residences where you can transition to higher levels of care as needed. Making a proactive plan allows you to maintain as much control as possible. Find an advocate that understands your wishes and will commit to following them if you become unable to do so yourself.

3. What happens if a resident runs out of money?
Nonprofit communities often have a benevolence fund that ensures residents can stay there if they outlive their resources through no fault of their own. Many people find this business model appealing because they know regardless of what happens with financial markets they will continue to be well cared for.

4. How do I know my money will be safe with your community?
When comparing costs, make sure to research the financial stability of the options you are considering. How many years they have been in business? What is the management structure? Who are the owners? When looking at CCRCs, a good question to ask is… **"What are your DAYS OF CASH ON HAND?"** Call us to learn more.

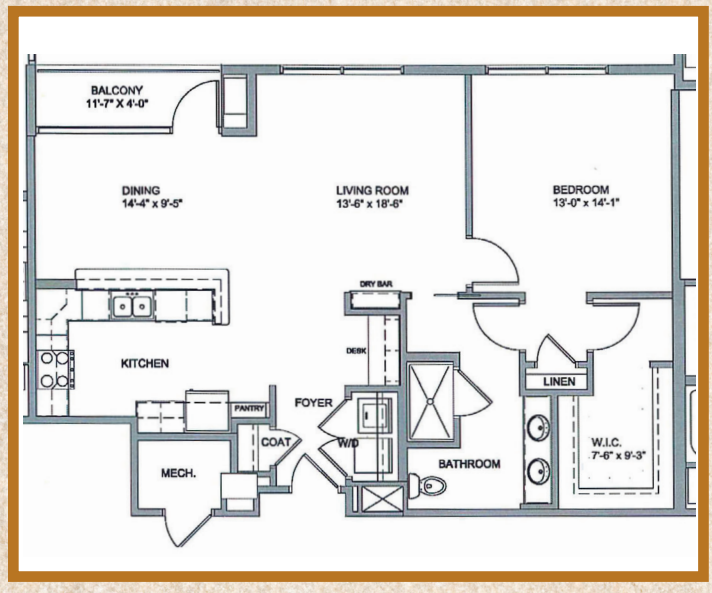
Take the stress out of your search, let us help.

Contact us today to schedule a planning session.
e-Mail: info@BrazosTowers.org • PH: 713-660-5000

Featured Floorplans

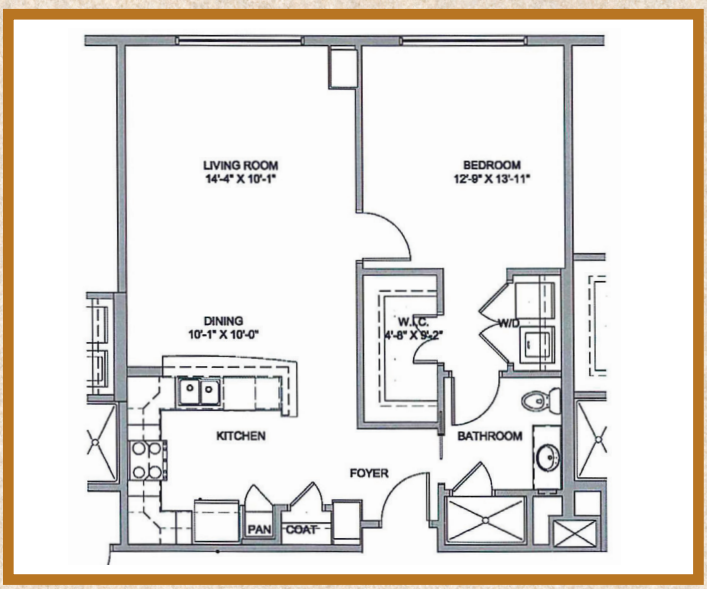
The Chestnut

Approximately 1,061 sq ft
1 bedroom/1 bath



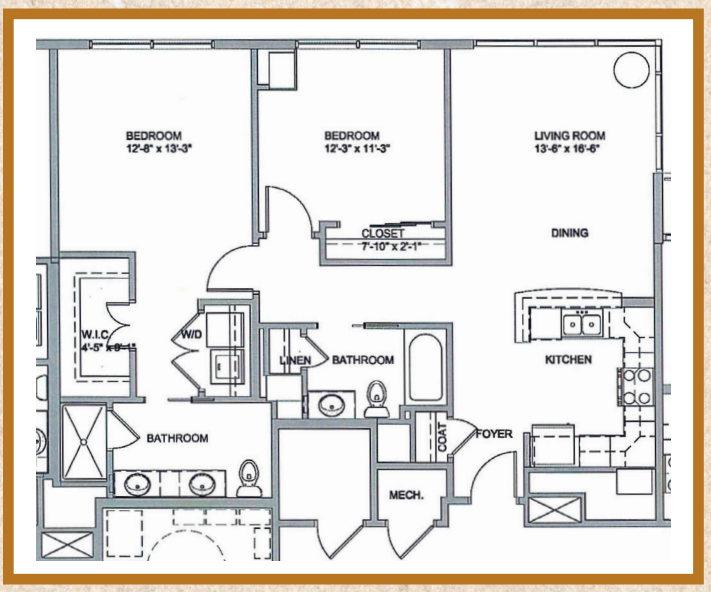
The Aspen

Approximately 868 sq ft
1 bedroom/1 bath



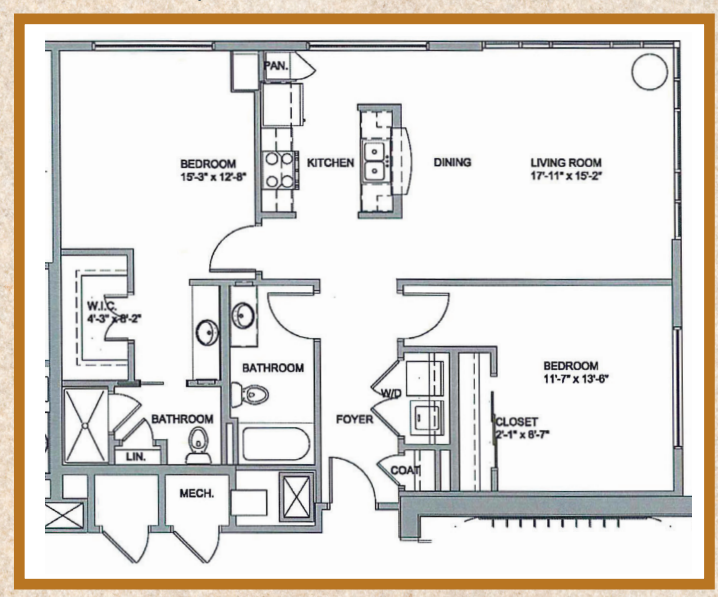
The Elm

Approximately 1,138 sq ft
2 bedroom/2 bath



The Hickory

Approximately 1,173 sq ft
2 bedroom/2 bath



Schedule a virtual visit today!

e-Mail: **info@BrazosTowers.org** • PH: **713-660-5000**



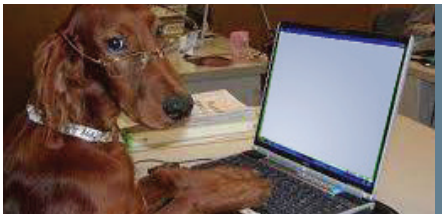
Writing Your Life

By Thema Zirkelbach

Meet Thelma Zirkelbach, resident at Brazos Towers at Bayou Manor... **Working with children as a doctor of Speech Pathology is not the only thing that keeps Dr. Thelma engaged. She also continues to develop new literary projects to add to her extensive body of work.**

As we celebrate our golden years, our Social Security checks, our Medicare coverage and our enjoyment of retirement living, many of us want to share our life stories with our children, grandchildren and the generations that come after. But how to begin? Somehow, we never find the time to sit down and write.

When needed I use this comic to keep me going:



1st rule of writing: *Sit*
2nd rule of writing: *Stay*

“First rule of writing: Sit. Second rule of writing: Stay,” and remember to keep this in mind: **No matter how much you want to write, you have to do it and keep at it.**

Overview:

Step 1. Describe your family. Tell something interesting about them. How did you feel about having siblings? If you were an only child, how did you feel about that—love it, wish for a sibling? Next prompt: Describe your childhood home and neighborhood.

Step 2: Family history. Were grandparents or great grandparents early settlers, immigrants? Do you know interesting stories or funny family

stories you'd like to pass down? Next, write about your earliest childhood memory.

Step 3: Firsts: First day at school, first grade, first date, first kiss, first job, first car. Next, who were your childhood heroes--family members? friends? teachers? famous people? fictional characters? Are your childhood heroes still your heroes or do you have different ones now? Are you someone else's hero? The hero prompt is always the most difficult one.

Step 4: Adulthood. How you met your spouse, then early years of marriage and a bit later, marriage with young children. Next, tell about special times: holidays, vacations, careers, moves. Finally, reflect on what you learned from this busy time in your life and what you hope your children learned.

Step 5: Living with teenagers, then the empty nest and how you filled it.

Step 6 : Looking back over a lifetime, write about turning points, triumphs and tragedies. This is a way to evaluate the important and the sometimes, challenging periods in life.

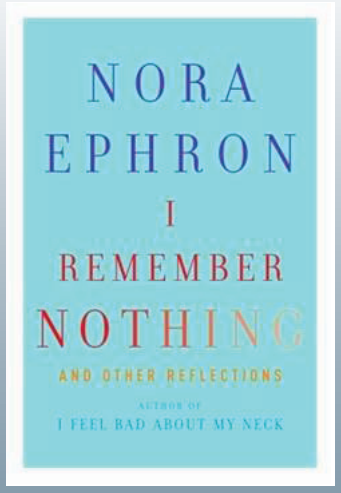
Step 7: Life review. What roles did you play in your life: child, student, parent, professional, etc.? .

Step 8. Is an exercise patterned on Nora Ephron's lists published shortly before she succumbed to leukemia of what she would miss (dinners with friends, crossing the bridge into Manhattan, Christmas lights and more) and what she wouldn't miss (vacuuming, taking off makeup and more). **Write ten things you'll miss** (besides family) a**nd five you won't miss.** And the final prompt: What do you hope your legacy will be?

Our lives have been long and full and there are so many things we want to share and so much wisdom we can leave for those to come after us. I hope you will expand your writings to encompass the bigger picture--what was going on in the world around you: pop culture, fashion, slang, and world events. What were you doing the day World War II began or ended, when Kennedy was assassinated, when Neil Armstrong stepped on the moon, when the Twin Towers fell on 9/11?

You might consider changes over the decades: the Depression of the Thirties, the war years of the Forties, the conformity of the Fifties, the counterculture Sixties and so on.

It was a pleasure to provide these steps to starting your memoires and I hope you will be motivated to start and keep writing. We all have so much to share.

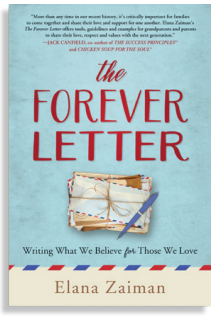


Nora Ephron's List...

"What I Won't And Will Miss"

...can be found in her book, **I REMEMBER NOTHING** or at ListOfNotes.com. Follow the link below

http://www.listsofnote.com/2012/06/what-i-wont-and-will-miss.html



RECOMMENDED READING

The Forever Letter By Elana Zaiman

Inspired by the medieval tradition of the ethical will, forever letters are heartfelt letters we write to the people who matter to us with the hope that, even if our letters aren't kept forever, the wisdom and love that we share will be.

https://elanazaiman.com/my-book/



The grass really is greener here.

But don't take our word for it... see for yourself. Schedule a visit today.

At Brazos Towers at Bayou Manor, we want you to find the place that's perfect for you. If we can answer any questions, or if you'd like to schedule a tour of our community or health center, give us a call at 713.660.5000. You can also find out more about us and get additional planning resources at BrazosTowers.com.

Brazos Towers at Bayou Manor has been a nonprofit Life Plan Community in Houston since 1963. We offer a unique brand of luxurious Independent Living and a full continuum of care that includes Independent Living, Assisted Living, Memory Care, Rehabilitation Care and Skilled Nursing. Our health center is open to outside admissions. Our residents come from all over the country to enjoy a dynamic lifestyle in our beautiful community.

5-Star Rated since 2015

Medicare Certified

If you find yourself looking for a soft spot to land in your neighborhood after hospitalization. Remember Houston's best-kept secret conveniently located near Bellaire, Meyerland, West U and the Houston Medical Center. 5-Star Rated since 2015, we are proud to provide top tier skilled nursing and rehabilitation care (Medicare Certified). Join us in congratulating the Brazos Towers at Bayou Manor Team on their continued success and service in our community.



BRAZOS TOWERS
AT BAYOU MANOR

Independent Living • Assisted Living • Memory Care
Skilled Nursing • Rehabilitation

"Every day, in every way, enhancing lives."

Marketing Department: 713.660.5000
E-mail contact: Info@BrazosTowers.org
Community: 4141 S. Braeswood Blvd, Houston, TX 77025

Brazos Towers at Bayou Manor and its sister property, The Hallmark, are the senior living communities of Brazos Presbyterian Homes, Inc. Brazos Presbyterian Homes, Inc. serves older adults of all faiths, regardless of race, color, sex, national origin, age or handicap, except as limited by state and federal law.

EQUAL HOUSING OPPORTUNITY