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## New at Brookdale

NEWS & ANNOUNCEMENTS

### What's New at Brookdale Living Communities?

#### Love in Bloom for Brookdale Residents

“Hear the mellow wedding bells, Golden bells! What a world of happiness their harmony foretells!” Edgar Allan Poe

There’s no time limit on love and marriage. So, in honor of June, the National Wedding Day Month, we pay tribute to some of our residents, ages 72 to 92, who found new love and marriage at Brookdale Living Communities.

*“Brookdale is the first retirement community my husband and I looked at. We saw several others, but none quite matched Brookdale.”*

**- J.W., a Brookdale resident**

**Visit a Brookdale community:**



Would you like a tour?  
Let **Mr. Brooks**  
show you around.

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#### The Springs of East Mesa, Arizona



*Geneva and Scott Cooper.*

Scott was the very first person she met when Geneva moved into The Springs. She went to the lobby to listen to music when Scott, 82, immediately asked her to dance. Taken aback, the eighty-five year old Geneva said, "My God, I haven't danced in 15 years!" But, he talked her into it, she said, "and we've been dancing every since."

"The couple, both widowers, dated a few months and tied the knot in 2003. "I never had a second thought about it," said Geneva. "We get along great, he's a fabulous dancer and he's taught me so many new things." Those "things" include the game of Bridge, which she proudly notes, "Scott is currently writing a wonderful book about."

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### **The Springs of East Mesa, Arizona**



*Howard and Anna Zapp.*

Both Howard and Anna had lived at The Springs for several years, but never connected until two years ago when they met at Happy Hour. "He came over to ask me to dance and we just kept dancing," said Anna, who married him 6 months later. The proposal wasn't too romantic, according to Anna, who said Howard popped the question as he was leaving to go to the hospital for toe surgery. "At first I said no, because I thought he was joking," she said.

Anna, 90, and Howard, 89, waited until his toe healed before they wed so he could walk down the isle. Anna said she's glad

she took the plunge, “I didn’t think I would ever get married again!”

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### **Chatfield, West Hartford, Connecticut**



*Bob and Peggy Atkinson*

After two years of marriage, Bob and Peggy are still “recovering” from their honeymoon to Alaska. “We did everything but kill a whale,” laughs Bob, 89, who said they panned for gold, went on dog sleds and climbed the Yukon Trail. “Everything you can think of that has to do with Alaska, we gave it a whirl,” said Bob, “and I’ll never forget it.”

Bob said he and Peggy, 72, were both widowers and just sort of “drifted together” while living at Chatfield. They dated two years and had a big wedding at the community. The place was packed with family and 100 residents from Chatfield. “We did it right,” said Stan, “and it was all very memorable.”

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### **The Grand Court Lubbock, Texas**



*Grif Griffin and Lois Cudd Griffin*

Divorced for 57 years, Lois wasn't expecting to ever remarry. "But then again, I'd never met anyone like Grif," said the 84-year old newlywed, who said her vows on May 1. "I fell for him immediately," she said, "and when he invited me to church I thought this was the guy!" Grif, also 84, and a widower, said "When it hit me, it hit me hard. I hadn't known her but a few days till I knew she was special."

The couple enjoys music, dominos, reading the Bible and praying together and after six months of dating they married in the lobby of The Grand Court. Surrounded by family and friends, Lois said it was wonderful and that their respective children met and got along terrifically. Another great side effect of the marriage, she said, is that "the community here is so happy for us. We were just amazed, I guess love spreads and makes everybody feel good. Everyone treats us like celebrities!"

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**Edina Park Plaza, Edina, Minnesota**



*Harley Bergen and Verna Wilson Bergen*

After 12 months of marriage, the Bergen's celebrated their 120th wedding anniversary in December. The couple explained they had a total 119 years of marriage between them before being widowed and the anniversary "was a way to pay tribute to our former spouses." Verna, 90, first impressed 87-year-old Harley by singing the Iowa Corn Song one night on the Plaza's terrace. "We're both from Iowa," she said, "and he was so impressed I knew the words!"

"After dating for a year and a half, they discovered "we really missed each other" when Harley went to Arizona for the winter. To remedy the situation, upon his return they became engaged. A while later, they married and took off to Arizona together on their honeymoon. "It's just amazing how compatible we are," she said. "I'm absolutely happy and what's great, is that the families are just as ecstatic as we are."

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**Chambrel at Island Lake, Longwood, Florida**



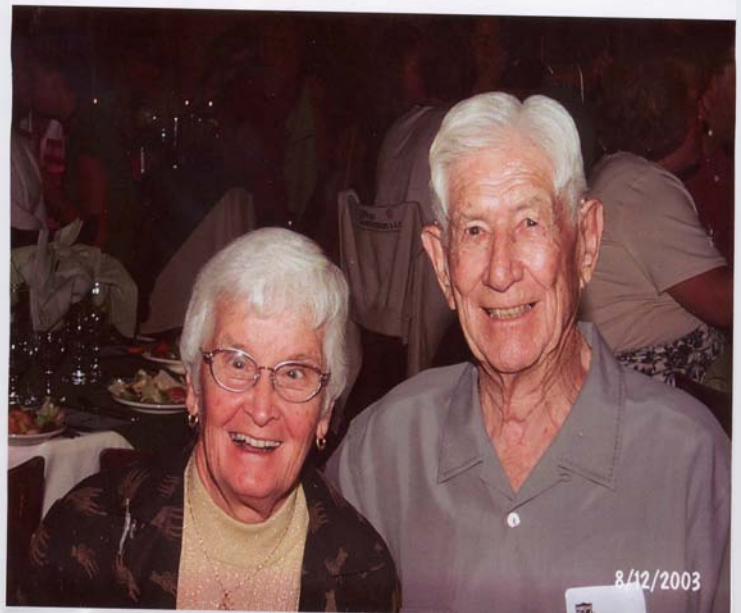
*Stan and Lavina Higgins*

Stan had lived at Chambrel for 12 years when Lavina moved in six years ago. She was checking out her parking space and “I heard her tell the move-in coordinator that she didn’t know her way around the town,” said Stan, who proceeded to call her and offered to be her tour guide. “And the rest is history,” said Stan, 82, who notes that Lavina doesn’t like to give her age. “She’s older than me, but you’d never believe it,” he explained.

“The couple dated for four or five months, “when you get to be our age you don’t have long engagements,” said Stan, who noted they had both been recently widowed and really enjoyed dinners, movies, plays, singing in the chorus and playing Bridge together. Stan said they had a big wedding at the Chambrel and all their children came. “We have a lot to be thankful for,” said Stan, “we just get along so well together and we love each other’s kids.”

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**Chambrel at Island Lake, Longwood, Florida**



*Don Diehl and Mary Lou Gallagher*

“Never in a million years did I think I’d ever get married again,” said Mary Lou, 77, who tied the knot with ninety-two year old Don two years ago. The couple lived at The Chambrel for several years before they noticed each other. “We used to go to church on Sunday mornings and then we just sort of started doing things together like playing Bingo,” she said.

“After dating about year the couple married and began to travel. “We love to take car trips,” said Mary Lou, “Stan is a wonderful driver -- he even drove us to Alaska.” The next trip on tap is to the Florida Keys. “We’re both so very happy,” she said, noting that the Chambrel is “our home base and is always waiting for us when we return from our adventures.”

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**The Grand Court Albuquerque, New Mexico**



*John and Mary Watson*

It took Mary, 79, a few days to say “yes” to John’s proposal. She had been married 50 years before being widowed, “so I hesitated a bit,” said Mary, who after 2 years of marriage is glad she did. “He’s the dearest and sweetest person I have every known,” she said, “and he has taken care of me very well.”

“John, 85, was President of the Resident Council at The Grand Court when they started going to movies and having dinner together. They dated four months and decided to wed. John had been widowed twice before and never had a big wedding, according to Mary, who said that as council president she felt he deserved a “big bash” at Grand Court. “We had a 100 in attendance and lots of champagne,” exclaimed Mary, “it was my gift to him and he loved it.”

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**The Grand Court Albuquerque, New Mexico**





*Robert and Lillian Handy*

Over a year ago, Lillian helped to nurse Bob through a bout of pneumonia. The couple only knew each a few months and took many walks together, but the sickness brought them closer and when Bob, 90, got better, they decided to exchange wedding vows.

Lillian, 87, said they had both been widowed twice, but are so happy they decided to marry again. “Bob and I have a wonderful relationship,” she said, “and our two families just get along great.” Bob agrees. “I love her and we’re very, very happy,” he said. The two of them don’t even have to talk to have a good time, he added. “We just sit in our lounge chairs side-by-side and we’re content in knowing each other is there.”

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