The Trail MIX

The neighborhood news from Trinity Woods I Issue: November 2026

Courage, Commitment and Community
HONORING THE HEROES AMONG US

70TH ANNIVERSARY
Established 1956
Trinity Woods

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ThanksLIVING!

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New Neighbors
Meet Jane and Mary Kevin!

By Bonnie Polak, VP Philanthropy and Community Engagement

Heroes don't always wear capes. Sometimes they are the neighbors we greet in the hallway, the friends we share a meal with, or the familiar faces we see around Trinity Woods. They are ordinary people who answered an extraordinary call to serve.

Each November, Veterans Day gives us an opportunity to recognize the men and women who have worn our nation's uniform. But beyond the medals, military branches and years of service are remarkable stories of courage, sacrifice, friendship and commitment.

For many veterans, military service was a defining chapter in their lives. Some served far from home, while others fulfilled important responsibilities stateside. They experienced challenges, formed lifelong friendships and learned lessons that continued to shape their lives long after their service ended.

At Trinity Woods, we are privileged to have veterans among our residents and employees. Their experiences are woven into the fabric of our community, reminding us that history isn't just something we read about in books. Sometimes, it sits right across the dinner table.

And while Veterans Day is an occasion to honor military service, it is also an opportunity to listen. Every veteran has a story worth hearing. A simple conversation can reveal remarkable experiences, unexpected humor, treasured memories and a perspective that only comes from having served.

As Trinity Woods celebrates 70 years of serving others, we recognize a meaningful connection between our mission and the example set by our veterans: a commitment to something greater than ourselves. Their dedication reminds us that service, in all its forms, leaves a lasting legacy.

This Veterans Day, we encourage everyone to take a moment to thank a veteran, ask about their experiences and truly listen to their story.

To the veterans of Trinity Woods, we salute you. Thank you for your courage, your commitment and the example you continue to set. Your service is part of our nation's history, and your presence is a treasured part of our community.

By Weldon Tisdale, Chaplain

Thanksliving!

A LIFESTYLE OF GRATITUDE

November naturally turns our thoughts toward Thanksgiving, a special day set aside to count our blessings and gather with loved ones. But what if gratitude were more than a holiday? What if it became a way of life? That's the heart of Thanksliving.

The Apostle Paul encourages us, ***"Give thanks in all circumstances; for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus" (1 Thessalonians 5:18).*** Notice that Paul doesn't say give thanks for all circumstances, but in all circumstances. Gratitude is not dependent on perfect conditions. Instead, it is a choice to recognize God's presence and blessings, even amid life's challenges.

At Trinity Woods, we witness Thanksliving every day. It is reflected in a helping hand offered to a neighbor, a friendly smile in the hallway, a volunteer's generous service, or a caregiver's compassionate touch. These everyday acts remind us that gratitude is not merely spoken; it is lived.

Studies have shown that practicing gratitude can improve emotional well-being, strengthen relationships, and increase resilience. As people of faith, we know gratitude does even more. It opens our hearts to God's goodness and helps us focus on the gifts He provides each day.

This month, as we celebrate Thanksgiving, let us also embrace Thanksliving. Consider taking a few moments each day to reflect on your blessings, write a note of appreciation, offer a word of encouragement, or pray a simple prayer of thanks. Small acts of gratitude can have a lasting impact on both the giver and the receiver.

May we carry the spirit of Thanksgiving beyond a single day and into every season of life, living each day with thankful hearts and joyful spirits.

"Let them give thanks to the Lord for His unfailing love and His wonderful deeds for mankind."
Psalm 107:8 NIV

Happy Thanksgiving and happy ThanksLIVING from all of us at Trinity Woods!

Wednesday, November 11, 2026 at 2:00 p.m. Westervelt Hall I Community Life Center

Please join the entire Trinity Woods community as we honor and give thanks for those among us who have served faithfully in defending the freedoms we all cherish here in the United States of America.

By Betty Swindle, Trinity Woods Resident

Gratitude IN A CAN OF WORMS

Dr. Laurie Santos, a recent speaker at Tulsa Town Hall, reminded her audience that gratitude is one of the essential elements of happiness. Recognizing it. Acknowledging it. Practicing it. Giving thanks is important to our wellbeing.

Gratitude can move beyond the here and now and enter the realm of recollection. And, once there, one may find that some of the most awful moments of the past have become treasured memories of thankfulness.

I recall such an occasion when I was a girl of maybe 11 or 12. Our family was planning a trip to northern New Mexico where my father particularly enjoyed fly fishing in the mountain streams, and this summer I was going to try it for the first time. We were also going to take some fat earthworms from his garden just in case the fish weren't interested in our flies. A wise father knows that fishing trips need to yield fish either one way or another. Plus, digging for worms gave us many opportunities to explore the intricacies of baiting a hook or changing a fly or gutting a fish. My confidence grew as the worms filled my coffee can.

The big day arrived and our first outing was to be on a lake. My job was to carry the can of worms. The lake was not far but it required crossing a mountain stream by way of a little wooden bridge. No big deal. It was a lovely morning with sunshine, birdsongs and flowing water. Everything was perfect. Until I dropped that can of worms! Right into the stream!

To this day, I have no idea what happened. I had the can firmly in my hand and then I didn't. I remember lying down on my stomach on that splintery bridge, frantically reaching into the frigid water trying to retrieve every one of those worms, which by this time were far down the river, if not far down the belly of one happy trout. It was the worst moment I could ever have imagined. My father said nothing at all.

As a parent now and looking back at the situation, I realize that he probably didn't trust himself to speak! As the grown woman I am now looking back at the girl I was then, I give thanks for the wisdom and kindness and love and lessons that came with that event.

And, as I remember, a few days later, my father caught a 17-inch trout just downstream from the little bridge.... I am grateful for that memory.

November Birthdays at Trinity Woods

Kay Graham.....1
Lynette Danskin.....5
Tina Pickle.....6
Jenneth Sheeler.....6
Don Snediker.....6
Bill Jordan.....7
Robert Bense.....8
Rob Freeman.....8
Bailey Word.....9
Gayle Vrooman.....10
Marilyn Berry.....14
Pat Graf.....15
Gloria Helmuth.....16
Leslie Lusk.....19
Rollie Rhodes.....19
Case Boshuizen.....21
Becky Cable.....21
Janet Word.....21
Curtis Shacklett.....22
Ruthie Zetik.....22
Bob Hensley.....23
Marwin Kemp.....23
Nancy Wilder.....24
Mark Oliver.....25
Raquel Ruben.....25
Kay Woodward.....25
Terry Seba.....27

November Anniversaries

Don and Judy Stout.....11/7/1964
Bailey and Janet Word.....11/20/2004
Phil and Lela Brinlee.....11/25/1962
Jerry and Carolyn Ehlers.....11/25/1989
Mike and Jan Reynolds.....11/27/1965

In Memory of

James "Jim" Nelson.....9/25/2026
Rochelle "Shelley" Wallack.....10/12/2026
Richard "Dick" Koger.....10/17/2026

November Events

Barry Ward Concert
Saturday, November 7 at 1 p.m.
Community Life Center, Westervelt Hall

Barry Ward, a fourth-generation farmer and stockman from southwest Kansas, shares stories and songs rooted in faith, family, and the goodness of God, always pointing us to the hope we have in Jesus. His music has been featured in The Great American Wheat Harvest documentary and the Home on the Range movie soundtrack. He has performed across the United States, Alaska, and three foreign countries, including Carnegie Hall in New York.

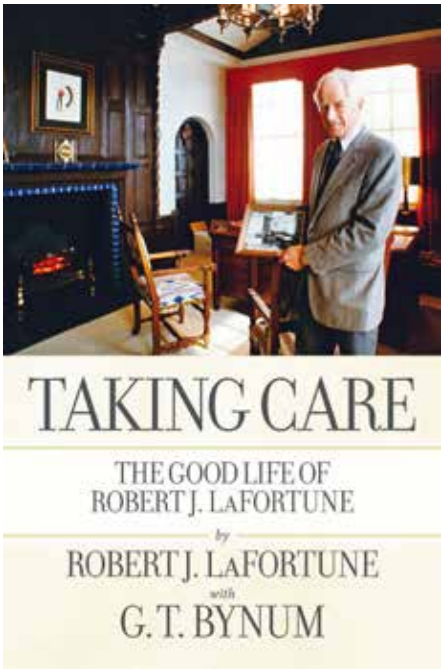
Barry has received multiple Performer, Song, and CD of the Year awards and was recognized by the Kansas State Senate for his many contributions to music and the arts, and his deep Kansas roots. With that prestigious honor, Barry is now Kansas's Official Balladeer!

Don Irwin Piano Concert
Tuesday, November 10 at 7:00 p.m.
Community Life Center, Westervelt Hall

We welcome back celebrated Steinway artist Don Irwin for an exciting and varied program featuring beautiful arrangements of patriotic favorites. Don brings energy, creativity, and a personal touch to his one-man musical performances across the country. With a wide-ranging repertoire and an engaging stage presence, he creates an experience that feels both intimate and full of life.

Community Thanksgiving Celebration
Welcoming Our Newest Members
Thursday, November 19 at 6 p.m.
Community Life Center, Westervelt Hall

Let's gather to celebrate all we have to be grateful for, especially our neighbors, new and old. Meet the newest members of our community and participate in an interactive skit presentation that will include singing, table discussion and sharing, and, of course, laughter! Enjoy a heavy hors d'oeuvres menu of Turkey and Pastrami Eggrolls, Sausage and Spinach Stuffed Mushrooms, Fresh Fruit Kabobs with Cranberry Chutney, Vegetable Crudité, Ginger Snaps w/Apple Butter Cream Cheese, and Pumpkin and Pecan Tarts.



Book Review by G.T. Bynum, Co-Author of Taking Care
Tuesday, November 24 at 7 p.m.
Community Life Center, Westervelt Hall

Tulsa native Robert J. LaFortune began his career in the oil and gas industry before entering the world of public service with seven elected terms—three as a commissioner for the City and four as Tulsa's 31st Mayor. LaFortune was known as a man of strong character. Faith and family were the cornerstones of a life well lived. Taking Care is his story, told in his own words. Between the lines is a heartfelt and personal history of his beloved hometown of Tulsa.

G.T. Bynum, grandson of Robert J. LaFortune and former Mayor of Tulsa from 2016 to 2024, will be the facilitator. G.T. was named Public Official of the Year in 2024 by Governing Magazine and was inducted into the Tulsa Hall of Fame. He currently serves as the Vice President of Community and Government Affairs for Saint Francis Health System. Books will be available for purchase and signing, charged to your Trinity Woods account.

Kick Off Christmas with the Cascia Hall Chorus
Monday, November 30 at 1 p.m.
Community Life Center, Westervelt Hall

Talented young people from Cascia Hall will present a 30-minute Christmas program and then look forward to mingling with you as we kick off the glorious Christmas season. Don't miss it!

Meet Nicholas Hatzgionidis, Security Manager

When it comes to keeping people safe, Nicholas Hatzgionidis brings a world of experience to Trinity Woods! With more than 25 years in law enforcement, security and emergency management, Nicholas has dedicated his career to protecting others.

His career has taken him across the United States and around the globe, including Iraq, Afghanistan, Pakistan, Qatar, and Dubai where he met his wife. He has served as a police officer, Federal Air Marshal and emergency management specialist at the U.S. Embassy in Baghdad. He also spent more than two decades working with the U.S. Army and Department of Defense.

What inspired this impressive career? Nicholas says it was simple: "To serve my community and make a difference."

For Nicholas, security is about more than policies and procedures. His favorite part of the job is "interacting with the residents and employees and learning from all of them."
As he settles into Trinity Woods, Nicholas looks forward to growing together as a team and building relationships throughout the community. He also has one playful goal: converting as many people as possible into LSU fans!

Please join us in welcoming Nicholas to the Trinity Woods family!

Welcome to the Woods!

Jane McKinney
Patio Home

Jane McKinney – Patio Home

For Jane McKinney, a love of learning and helping others has always been part of her story. And if you were a teacher in Tulsa during the 1980s or 1990s, chances are you remember The Apple Tree!

Originally from Lyons, Kansas, Jane attended Phillips University in Enid, Oklahoma, where she earned her degree in education. She spent approximately 10 years teaching first and second grade before turning her passion for education into a business.

In 1980, Jane and fellow teacher Susan Ham opened The Apple Tree, a specialty store offering classroom supplies and educational resources. What began as a 1,900-square-foot shop eventually grew to nearly 9,000 square feet! For 26 years, Jane enjoyed helping teachers find creative classroom materials. One of her favorite memories was helping young children who dreamed of becoming teachers select lesson plan books and stickers for their pretend classrooms.

Jane enjoys reading, sewing and needlepoint. She also has a special collection of Nativity scenes, a tradition that began when a first-grade student gave her a small manger scene as a gift.

Having lived in Tulsa most of her adult life, Jane was familiar with Trinity Woods through church friends and acquaintances. After exploring other communities, she kept finding herself drawn back here. Since moving in, Jane has especially enjoyed the wellness opportunities, including yoga, swimming, tai chi and exercise classes. She's also looking forward to making new friends through activities like card games.

Mary Kevin McNamara – Villa

Some people leave their mark on a community through the lives they touch. For Mary Kevin McNamara, that has meant a lifetime of believing in young people and helping them find their way.

A Tulsa native, Mary Kevin attended Monte Cassino before earning a degree in special education from Oklahoma State University and a master's in social work from the University of Oklahoma.

Her career eventually led her to the Tulsa County Juvenile Bureau, where she helped establish, Phoenix Rising, a school for students involved in the juvenile justice system. As its director, she worked to give students who had struggled in traditional classrooms another opportunity to succeed. "If you treat them with respect, they will treat you with respect," she shared. Seeing students graduate and go on to successful lives remains one of her proudest accomplishments.

Mary Kevin and her late husband, Steve, met on a blind date in 10th grade and were married nearly 50 years. Together, they raised four children and welcomed two more family members into their home. Today, her family includes 17 grandchildren!

And that memorable name? Her oldest brother chose it in honor of his teacher, Sister Mary Kevin.

Mary Kevin first discovered Trinity Woods through a longtime friend. After visiting friends and touring the community, she knew she had found her next home. She enjoys needlepoint, spending time with family and her dog, Gertie, and reconnecting with familiar faces.

Mary Kevin McNamara and Gertie
Villa

Get Your Trinity Woods Merch!

Did you know we have an online Logo Shop...and it's open year-round! Make sure you check it out. There are new items added all the time! Community members, families, and employees can now show their Trinity Woods spirit. For questions about ordering TW merchandise contact Heidi Garrett at 918.346.6671.

New to the Logo Shop are Christmas in the Woods shirts. Make sure to scan the QR for styles and colors!

Point your phone camera here!

November STARS Employees of the Month

Deondre Harrison – Housekeeping Team

- **Start Date:** April 2026
- **Born and Raised:** Bristow, Oklahoma
- **Enjoy most about their job:** Interacting with residents
- **Described by Coworkers:** Kind and sweet
- **Favorite Hobbies/Activities:** Video games/Chilling with little brother/Cooking
- **Something People Don't Know:** Wants to be on Survivor
- **Dream Trip/Vacation:** Go to France
- **Learning a New Skill, what would it be:** To swim
- **Favorite Meal:** Spaghetti
- **Favorite TV Show:** Friends
- **Favorite Holiday Tradition:** Cooking with mom
- **Best Advice Ever Received:** Love yourself and be yourself
- **Biggest Influence:** Mom
- **Most Proud of:** Being a positive person
- **Dinner with any Person (living or historical):** My mom
- **Three Things Can't Live Without:** Brother/A Smile/Watching Wrestling
- **Favorite Saying:** Everyday is a blessing.
- **What his supervisor says:** "Deondre is a hard worker who is highly dedicated to his job. He is a pleasure to work with and always brings a positive attitude. I am very grateful to have Deondre as an EVS Technician and appreciate the commitment and excellence he demonstrates." Amy McDaniel, Housekeeping Supervisor

Zoe Stark, CNA – Assisted Living Memory Care

- **Start Date:** May 2025
- **Born and Raised:** Locust Grove, Oklahoma
- **Enjoy most about their job:** Making the residents laugh and smile
- **Favorite thing about working with residents:** Hearing their stories
- **Described by Coworkers:** Patient
- **Something People Don't Know:** I love all music
- **Dream Trip/Vacation:** Go to Switzerland
- **Learning a New Skill, what would it be:** Play the saxophone
- **Favorite Restaurant:** Sake 2 Me Sushi
- **Favorite Movie:** Nacho Libre
- **Favorite Holiday Tradition:** Making deviled eggs for Thanksgiving
- **Best Advice Ever Received:** Spend your life learning
- **Biggest Influence:** My dad (AKA Jesse Stark)
- **Dinner with any Person (living or historical):** Adele
- **Three Things Can't Live Without:** Water/Food/My dog
- **On Their Bucket List:** Buying a 1979 Jeep CJ7
- **Pets:** Two dogs – Leo and Steve
- **Family:** Recently married
- **Favorite Saying:** The cream always rises to the top.
- **What her supervisor says:** "Zoe is a remarkably hard-working and committed team player whose servants heart brings an invaluable warmth to our community. Through her unwavering kindness, exceptional patience, and true passion for helping others, Zoe directly impacts the daily lives of everyone around her making Trinity Woods a better, brighter, and more comforting place to be." Misti Franks, Assisted Living Manager.

Trinity Woods Leadership Team

Garrett Lee
Chief Executive Officer

Crystal Creekmore
VP of Human Resources

Emilie Creswell
VP of Health Services

Bonnie J. Polak
VP of Philanthropy and Community Engagement and Editor

Jerome Steele
Chief Financial Officer

Weldon Tisdale
VP of Wellness and Chaplain

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CHANGE SERVICE REQUESTED

Save the date for
CHRISTMAS IN THE WOODS

Thursday, December 10, 2025
5:00-7:30 p.m.

All the Trinity Woods community residents, families, and employees are invited to attend this Christmas extravaganza! Be watching for more details about this Trinity Woods holiday tradition.

Ticket sales begin November 16!