



# *This is Personal*

TRANSFORMING THE LIVES OF THOSE AFFECTED BY DEMENTIA



## ***Introducing the Marlin and Doris Thomas Memory Center***

Anticipation of the Groundbreaking Celebration has been heightened by additional joy, now that the Memory Center officially has a name.

It was 40 years ago that Willow Valley Communities welcomed its first Residents to Willow Valley Manor, but this story begins 40 years prior, when the Thomas family opened a stand at the Southern Farmers Market in Lancaster. The Thomas' were primary suppliers of poultry and eggs at the time, and every Sunday the Thomas' would host supper in their home for friends and members of the team. Their love for hospitality and reputation for delicious meals and baked goods soon led to the opening of the Willow Valley Motor Inn and Restaurant in 1966. "Where friends dine with friends," the slogan used to say. Over the years, the Thomas' servant leadership on missions through

their Mennonite church and outreach partnerships, brought to fruition through their organized efforts, made the Thomas name widely recognized.

Friends would come from far and wide to dine at the restaurant and those passing through town were welcome to stay in the family's home. They rejoiced in the opportunity, enjoying the fellowship of those with whom they served in the community. It was not long before regular diners and travelers began to flock from all directions and, with humor and sincerity, those who had visited loyally over the years started to suggest that they might like to retire to Willow Valley. Enamored with their passion for hospitality and providing to others a sense of 'home,' the Thomas family proudly broke ground for the first Lifecare community at Willow Valley and opened its doors at Manor in 1984.





That was a big year for the Thomas'—one that nourished the vitality of this stretch of the county, and ignited more growth and hospitality than they had ever dreamed. Four decades later, the Thomas' are demonstrating their love and servant leadership through a new endeavor that will serve as a testament to their desire to foster comfort and inspire a sense of home. With this new chapter, Willow Valley Communities and the Willow Valley Communities Charitable Foundation are humbled to announce that the seven-acre campus specifically designed to address the current and future needs of our entire community, will forevermore be known as the **Marlin and Doris Thomas Memory Center**.

This project is of personal interest to so many. As the indiscriminate grip of dementia touches the lives of millions, millions more are tasked with finding a better way to provide specialized care. From a vision conceived in 2016, the Marlin and Doris Thomas Memory Center has, with dedicated effort, become a beacon of hope and a model for memory care where undeniably high quality of life will transform the way dementia and aging are viewed and experienced.



Marlin and Doris Thomas





## Join Us for the Groundbreaking Ceremony of the Marlin and Doris Thomas Memory Center!

**Wednesday, April 17 | 10:00 AM | Cultural Center Theater**

Following the program, attendees are invited to explore the Upper Level of the Cultural Center to experience a sample of amenities that will be available at the Marlin and Doris Thomas Memory Center.

To reserve your ticket in the Theater, please sign-up to attend via the Event Registration System (ERS). Additional seating will be available in the Ballroom and the program will be livestreamed on Willow Valley Channel 4. We truly appreciate the widespread interest and anticipation from friends and family who have demonstrated support of this project. In an effort to accommodate Residents and SmartLife Members, the Groundbreaking Ceremony will be recorded and available for members of the greater community to view following the ceremony.



## Welcome, Morgan Poillon!

Morgan joined the Willow Valley Communities Charitable Foundation in January 2024 as the Development Coordinator. With warmth and passion, she excels at creating lasting relationships—organically inviting others to take action. Morgan believes that engaging people in meaningful conversation provides the opportunity to connect community members with organizations that align with their personal interests and beliefs. When inspired donors support a mission that is near to their heart, it allows the entire community to feel the positive impact.

Prior to her work at Willow Valley Communities, Morgan worked in the for-profit sector. However, her skillset and strengths have found new meaning as she has bolstered support for the formation of the Memory Center—a project which holds special meaning for her, as one grandfather passed away to ALS and the other is currently living with dementia. Her years of personal experience in caring for those with memory loss have equipped her with first-hand knowledge of the challenges confronting those on the journey, making Morgan an invaluable addition to the Foundation team.

Morgan moved to Lancaster County in 2023, relocating from Schwenksville, Pennsylvania. In 2021, Morgan graduated from the Pennsylvania College of Technology with a Bachelor's degree in Business Administration and Marketing.



*Morgan Poillon, Development Coordinator*



Randy Moyer, Esquire  
Partner, Barley Snyder



Arthur Ace, CEPA  
Wealth Advisor, Truist Bank

### Estate Planning for Your Goals

**Monday, April 29 | 10:00AM | Cultural Center Ballroom**

With extensive knowledge in trusts and estate planning, Randy Moyer and Arthur Ace will join the Foundation for a panel discussion on practical tips to help you determine whether your estate planning documents accomplish your goals in crafting your legacy. Please RSVP to Morgan Poillon at [mpoillon@willowvalley.org](mailto:mpoillon@willowvalley.org) or 717.464.6044 if you would like to attend.

**The Foundation serves as a vehicle for Residents to make a lasting effect on the community they call home, the broader Lancaster County community—and beyond.** Whatever your philanthropic intentions may be, the Foundation is here to serve as a resource for you.

**To support the campaign or Memory Care endowment,** please call **717.517.3901**, or give online through our website: [Foundation.WillowValleyCommunities.org](https://Foundation.WillowValleyCommunities.org)



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