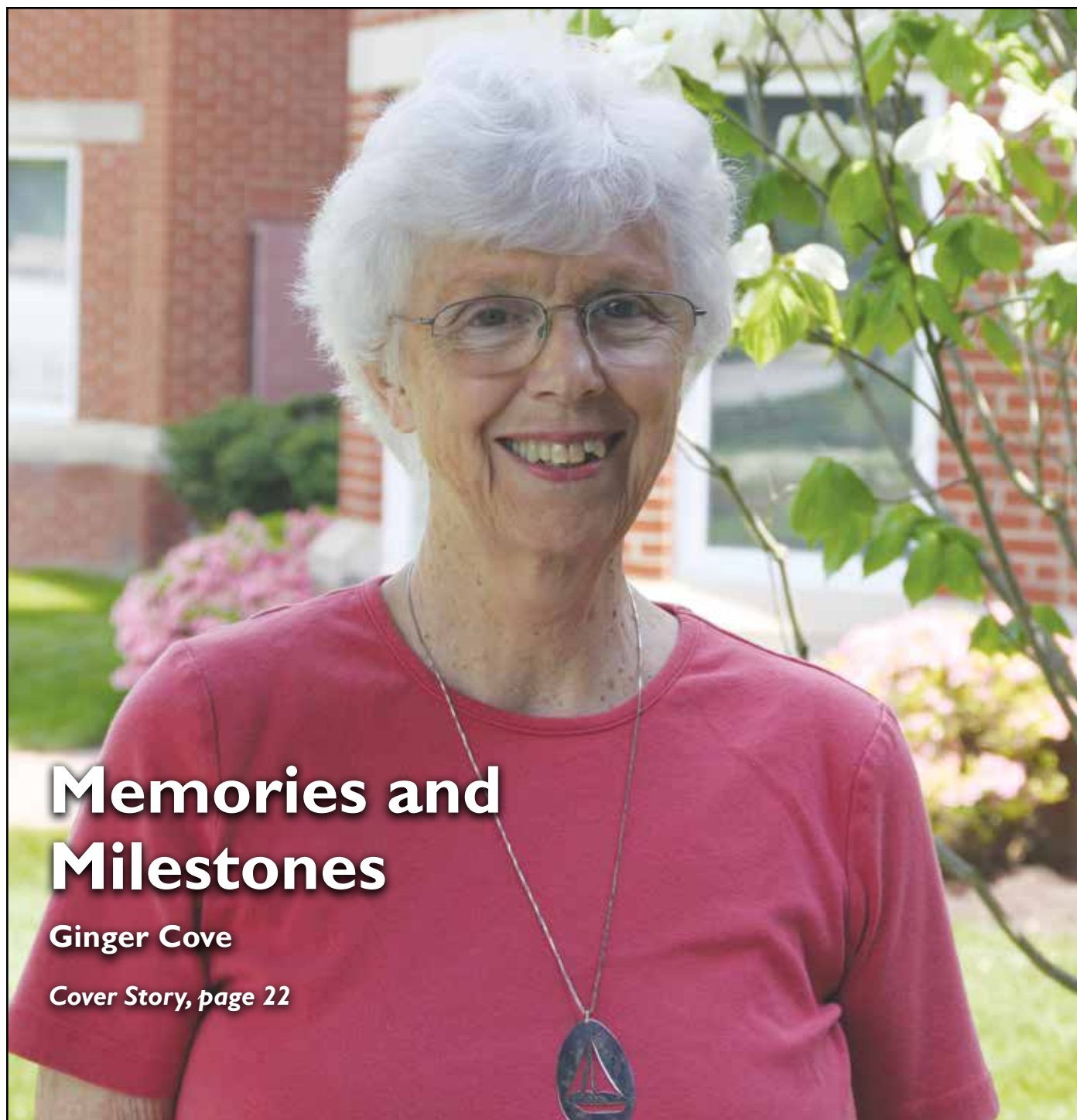




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Memories and Milestones

Ginger Cove

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Memories and Milestones

By Christy Brudin

Anniversaries are a time for reflection, a time to relive happy memories and anticipate future milestones. Martha Moore Wooldridge has celebrated quite a few anniversaries in her life, but she never thought she would be celebrating two very different milestones in such a short time period.

The 78-year-old newlywed celebrated her second wedding anniversary in March. She is also one of the many residents who are preparing to observe the 25th anniversary of Ginger Cove, the CARF-CCAC-accredited continuing care retirement community (CCRC) in Annapolis, Md., that they call home.

A native of Pennsylvania, Martha attended college in Vermont before marrying and moving to the Philadelphia suburbs. An English major, Martha worked at several nearby college libraries before leaving work to raise her two children.

When her children were older, Martha returned to the workforce and discovered a passion for desktop publishing. "I was working at Bryn Mawr Presbyterian Church, and I learned desktop publishing, and I really loved the computer; I love what the computer can do," recalled Martha.

Martha's passion for computers continued after retirement, and she found a new outlet for it when she moved to Ginger Cove. She is now editor-in-chief of the residents' monthly newsletter. In addition to editing and laying out the articles submitted by her fellow residents, Martha also contributes original articles about her peers. "The people here are just really interesting, so I try to interview them and share their stories," she said.

One of the many interesting stories at Ginger Cove belongs to Martha herself. A second-generation CCRC resident, she knew early that she wanted to plan ahead for retirement. Martha's mother was living in a CCRC in Western Pennsylvania when she suffered a stroke. "We were 300 miles away and so relieved that we didn't have to find nursing care when she got sick because the health center was part of her community. We decided then that we would move to a CCRC too," Martha remembered.

Martha may have decided to move to a retirement community early, but she found her ideal community quite unexpectedly. "We looked at lots of communities around Philadelphia," Martha said. "They were O.K., but none of them seemed exactly right."

Martha and her husband Ken were visiting a nearby



In addition to writing and outdoor activities, Martha's busy schedule also includes water aerobics.

family cottage when they decided on a whim to check out Ginger Cove. Martha recalled, "They invited us to visit. It didn't matter that we only had shorts to wear." After their initial visit, they returned to the community for dinner and quickly decided they had found their new home.

Shortly thereafter, Martha and Ken made the move to a spacious apartment at Ginger Cove overlooking pretty Gingerville Creek. Unfortunately, they were just beginning to settle in when tragedy struck. "Six weeks after we moved in, my husband died," Martha recalled. "We knew he was sick, but we thought it was going to work out, but it just didn't."

After Ken's sudden passing, Martha found support in her new community. "Even though I didn't really know anybody here, they all rallied around, and I got to know so many people so quickly," she said. With the help of her new friends at Ginger Cove and at the nearby First Presbyterian Church in Annapolis, Martha began to heal. "I cannot imagine what it would have been like if I had been alone in that big house. It would have been so lonely," she said.

Just over a year later, Martha and her family suffered another tragedy when she lost her daughter. "Again, these two new families — my Ginger Cove family and my church family — were there for me," Martha remembered. "I didn't have to be alone with my grief, so that part was wonderful."

One of the friends who offered support to Martha was Tim Wooldridge. Much like Martha, Tim lost his wife just a few months after moving to Ginger Cove. The two became friends, and a relationship grew out of their friendship. "I don't know quite how it happened," Martha smiled as she recalled. "It just sort of evolved very naturally."

On March 24, 2012, Martha and Tim were married. Their reception was held at Ginger Cove and was truly a community affair. To celebrate their first milestone as a couple, Martha and Tim had the help of many of the community's residents and staff. Martha laughs as she recalls all the friends who wanted to be her 'flower girls.' "In the end I had four 'flower girls,' and it was really hysterical, but I gave them all little duties and called them 'flower girls,'" she said.

Beyond the major milestones, moving to Ginger Cove has dramatically improved Martha's everyday life. "They take such good care of us here, and I think that lengthens our lives," she said. "I also think all the socialization this community provides helps us live longer and better."

From carefree entertaining to the 35 resident committees and countless activities, Martha and her peers can always find something stimulating to do. Martha's busy schedule includes water aerobics,

kayaking on the nearby creek, and participating in the creative writing group, as well as her work on the community's newsletter.

In addition to all her regular activities, Martha is also thrilled to be serving on the Planning Committee for Ginger Cove's 25th anniversary celebration in August 2013. The group is already busy coordinating an old

-fashioned picnic complete with a parade. "It will be a fun day, and a great chance to celebrate this wonderful community," she said.

During the past 25 years, Ginger Cove has continually expanded and improved its facilities to serve its diverse and active group of residents. Most recently, the community completed a major renovation and construction project, which added a casual dining room with an outdoor deck, a large indoor aquatics center, a Wellness Center, a spa and a business center. The project also included total renovation of the 61-bed skilled nursing and rehab center to include all-private rooms, airy family rooms and a beautiful



Martha is preparing to help Ginger Cove celebrate its 25th anniversary in August. She is a part of the Planning Committee that is coordinating an old-fashioned picnic complete with a parade.

5,000 square foot open-air garden.

Whether you are celebrating a second anniversary or a 25th anniversary, the occasion provides an opportunity to think back and to look forward — to appreciate where you have been and anticipate where you are going. As the residents of Ginger Cove plan for the community's upcoming anniversary, they are grateful to have found a home that is adapting to meet their needs while maintaining its dedication to quality care and strong connections. Those connections are perhaps best exemplified by newlyweds Martha and Tim Wooldridge, who both suffered great losses, but who, with the help of their friends and neighbors, are making new memories and marking new milestones. GRL



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