



# VOICE

A HOME AT THE HEART OF THE UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON SINCE 1907 | SPRING 2013

## A THANK YOU TO THOSE WHO SHARE



Sunday, April 28, was devoted to sharing the warmth and dedication that is evident every day at Pres House with those who donate their time and/or treasure to the ministry.

In the 4:30 worship service, Michael Hillestad and his musical team demonstrated one of the great draws to Pres House ministry—music that speaks to the faith and involves many dedicated students who share their own musical talent. Hannah Weinberg-Kinsey, student intern for 2012–13, shared a moving message on “The Plan,” demonstrating with her own story for students the need to be open to wherever God leads them, whether or not it is the plan they have in mind.

Following worship, a catered dinner and program drew attention to all the volunteers and donors who further the mission and ministry of Pres House. Pres House staff recognized the community members who come early and stay late to set up the dinner, who bring food so that Pres House worshippers can share life and love together over a meal each week. As Pastor Mark said, “Each volunteer is distinguished and has played a role in helping Pres House grow for the eighth straight year.” He noted with enthusiasm the contributions of the board members who will be leaving their directorships at the end of

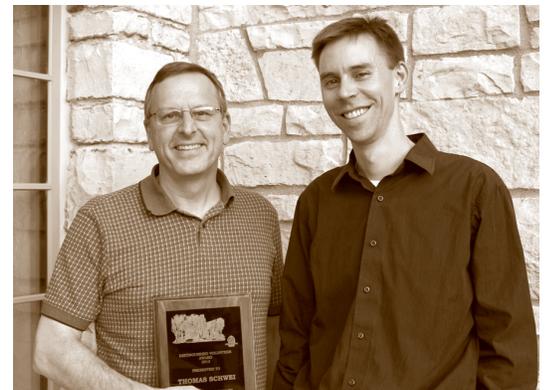
their term—students Alicia Powers, Alicia Maxwell, Chris Facklam, Peter Carroll, and community members Wrede (Bud) Smith, Craig Howard, and Dan Meyer. Chelsea Cornelius, a student board member, will become the student intern for the next academic year.

The recipient of this year’s “Distinguished Volunteer Award” is Tom Schwei. Tom served on the board of directors for six years, providing vital help with the \$17 million apartment building project as he coordinated financial arrangements with staff, board members, consultants, bankers, and property management companies. He served as president of the board for three years. For the past several years, Tom has

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Tom Schwei and Pastor Mark Elsdon



served as chief financial officer making the lucrative salary of \$0 per year. In that volunteer role, he oversaw a complicated but successful refinance of the remaining debt (required by the initial borrowing contract). This involved countless conference calls with bankers and lawyers, driving back and forth to the Presbyterian Synod offices in Minnesota, and helping the staff and board understand myriad aspects of the financial arrangements.

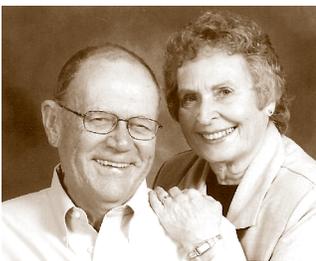
As if his financial expertise were not enough to recommend him for this award, Tom's involvement with the ministry itself is notable. He has co-lead two spring break service trips with students, one to Kentucky and another to Missouri. He has helped lead three men's small groups, and on multiple occasions he has opened up his own office to students and community volunteers for "phone-a-thons" to Pres House alumni and friends. Pastor Mark remarked that whenever he sent Tom a spreadsheet, financial document, or contract, "no matter how obscure or arcane the contents, he would always read it in detail and provide immensely helpful feedback."

The special event ended with attendees enjoying the delectable desserts prepared by Mynda Pull, office manager at Pres House. Just imagine the thrill of tasting any of her creations: apple nut pie, bread pudding, chocolate fudge cake, chocolate mousse, peach-hazelnut cheesecake, vanilla custard with sautéed pears, or woodland medley pie.

The service and dinner and desserts were enough to make anyone attending feel greatly appreciated. ❀

-Alice Honeywell

## LOVE STORY: COLEMANS



*Since the "Voice of Love" edition of Pres House Voice was published, we have received numerous stories from alumni. The response has been so profound that we have decided to add a new story in each publication. Please keep sending stories of your time at Pres House. We love hearing from you and sharing them with the rest of the Pres House community.*

In 1955 I was a poor farm boy with no room and very little money who wanted to become a Chemical Engineer. Mac Barlass and I were both members of Rock Prairie Presbyterian Church in Janesville, Wisconsin. He suggested that I apply to Pres House. I was accepted and became a member of the Royal Order of Janitors and Hosts (ROOJAH).

I stayed during the 1955-56 year and the first semester of 1956-57. My courtship with my high school sweetheart (Eileen Geiger) continued while she was in Nurses Training at Methodist Hospital. We had many happy days during this time which included Pres House.

On February 2, 1957, Eileen and I were married at our home church (Rock Prairie). Rev. Jim Jondrow brought a carload of ROOJAHs to the wedding. They were Dick Wolf, Mac Barlass, Jim McEathron, and John Miller. Cal and Betsy Parker also attended. Eileen and I were so happy they came to share our wedding day. We have been blessed with 56 years together, three children and six grandchildren.

I am grateful for Pres House and appreciate all the things that it contributed to my life at the university and beyond. I never would have been able to attend UW-Madison without Pres House. ❀



# GENEROSITY MULTIPLIED

Ellen Foley, a Wisconsin community leader and communications expert, was intrigued by Pres House after hearing about it from her neighbors Bud and Lisa Smith. She became smitten when she got to know us through some paid communications work she did for Pres House. Recently, she became a donor.

Ellen's journey from interested observer to supporter embraces the new energy at Pres House to capture support for our unique mission and programming. Ellen was the first female Editor of the *Wisconsin State Journal* newspaper and now works as Vice President of Corporate Communications at Wisconsin Physicians Service, one of the Madison area's largest employers. Previously Ellen worked as a public relations and communications consultant, and Pres House engaged Ellen to provide consulting support in communications.

In addition to strategic communications services, Ellen led two retreats for our Board of Directors on how to tell the "Pres House Story." At our last retreat in February Ellen helped us develop "elevator speeches" so board and staff members can quickly and effectively share what is exciting about Pres House with members of the larger public. Be warned: If you end up in an elevator with one of the Pres House board members, you will get his or her speech first hand!

Like many donors, Ellen became a supporter of Pres House after learning about who we are and what we do. What makes Ellen's gift special and unique is that she donated it in honor of one of our retiring board members, Bud Smith. A longtime member of the Westminster Presbyterian congregation in Madison, Bud Smith is completing six years on the Pres House Board of Directors. Bud has provided excellent leadership as vice president, president, and past president of the Pres House Board of Directors. Bud has been a core member of the Property and Finance Committee through many major changes to our budget, property management, and debt financing. As an attorney, Bud has provided invaluable guidance in legal matters. You may even have spoken to Bud on the phone as he has volunteered to call donors to thank them for supporting Pres House! Bud deserves to be

honored for his service to Pres House and Ellen has generously done just that with her gift. Truly, generosity begets generosity.

"Bud introduced me to the terrific mission of Pres House several years ago," Ellen said. "I encourage others to join me in giving funds in Bud's name. He's a great guy, and as a UW-Madison alum I wanted to honor his commitment of time and talent to a faith-based organization that embraces University of Wisconsin-Madison students. "I don't have a lot of money," Ellen said, "but my modest donation is my family's endorsement of the Pres House mission of being a home at the heart of campus for university students. Believe me. You can find your sweet spot for giving at Pres House. And you will see your dollars at work here in Wisconsin."

Like any vibrant and growing organization, Pres House is successful because of the generosity, commitment, and investment from many different people. From volunteers to donors, staff to students, alumni to board members, Pres House is what it is only because of all of the people from the past, present, and future who make it the special home that it is in the heart of the UW Madison campus.

Is there someone at Pres House past or present who has touched your life or inspired you with their service or leadership? Perhaps a former pastor, intern, or board member? Perhaps a fellow student, alum, or other staff member?

Consider making a donation in his or her honor. All gifts made in honor of someone special by June 30 will be noted as such in our 2012-13 Annual Report. ❀



Bud Smith  
Retiring Board Member



*Is there someone at Pres House past or present who has touched your life or inspired you with his or her service or leadership? Consider making a donation in that person's honor. All gifts made in honor of someone special by June 30, 2013, will be noted in our 2012-13 Annual Report.*

*Donations can be mailed to: 731 State St. Madison, WI 53703 or given online at: [www.preshouse.org/donate/](http://www.preshouse.org/donate/)*

## FOOD FOR THOUGHT

I was told that my time at the University of Wisconsin would be more wonderful than I could possibly imagine. Although it took me a while to find my niche, moving to the Pres House Apartments was one of the best decisions I have ever made.

In my second year of living at Pres House, I created the "Food for Thought" Micro-Community with the help of the church. My group, Food for Thought, was not only a leadership opportunity for me, but it allowed me to explore a topic I am interested in with friends who were willing to engage and discuss with me. We learned together, bonded together, and were able to discuss varying relationships to food and the science of food together.

While there were times when we disagreed, being able to discuss our views was delightful. We found the most differences of opinion while reading the book "In Defense of Food." We read a chapter a week and discussed the arguments at bi-monthly meetings. This text discussed strong opinions that contradict much of what is said in common society. Because of this, it sparked many discussions about the validity of each side of the argument, especially with regard to how much meat a healthy diet needs and how healthy health food claims really are.

To add to the educational value of the micro-community, we showed the

documentary "Food, Inc." to Pres House Apartments and provided snacks. Following the documentary, we had a discussion about the food industry with the people that attended. It was very enlightening! I was especially excited for the people who had never been exposed to this type of material before. Their enthusiasm and shock over the images shown in the movie was great to see. I felt as though the community was helping people within Pres House apartments understand something they would not otherwise have been exposed to. Also, each member of the micro-community got to practice cooking the foods that they enjoyed that were also healthy, and we were able to experiment with different cooking techniques and styles to see what complemented the foods we tried.

We also had a wonderful time cooking for the Pres House church second semester. While it was a great challenge to prepare a meal for so many people, it was a great bonding experience and time management exercise.

Another challenging experience of the group was our week "living below the line." During this time, each member ate only the food they could afford with \$1.50 per day for five days. All we could afford were bananas, rice, potatoes, and pasta. At the end of the five days, we all ate as much as we could of higher calorie nutritious foods. It was a great exercise in empathy for people who do not have access to the kinds of foods our group encouraged people to eat.

As a cap to the end of the year, we went to the Farmers Market as we did at the beginning of the year. It was wonderful, and we were all interested to see what kinds of foods are available in the different seasons and to interact with the farmers who make it possible for us to eat as well as we do. I could not ask for a better year or experience. I speak for everyone in my micro-community when I saw that I will forever be indebted to Pres House for giving me such a wonderful place to live and grow.

Thank you. ♣

- Maggie Traeger



# Living at the Heart of Campus

## APARTMENT HIGHLIGHTS

It's been a great year at Pres House Apartments. From our Welcome Raffle and Ice Cream Sundae party to our final Afternoon Tea and Conversation of the semester, students have made the PH Apartment values—academic success, community, personal responsibility, and spiritual exploration—a living reality. Some highlights of the year stand out:

- The Food Micro-Community invited residents to the Capitol Farmers Market and hosted a viewing and discussion of the film "Food, Inc."
- Residents flocked to the monthly Drop-in Dinners, enjoying the free food and chance to get to know their neighbors.
- Afternoon Tea and Conversation became part of our weekly Wednesday routine, allowing students a study break, conversations about life after college (or maybe just life), and the much-needed snack time to get through "hump day."

- The Pres House Apartment Fellowship sponsored the first ever Taste of Pres House cooking competition. The food was varied and delicious, making it well worth attending.

- The Student Veteran Community were regulars at PH Apartment events, as well as actively participating in Vets for Vets events throughout the year, including their participation in the Veterans Day roll call on Bascom Hill for fallen service men and women.

Summer activities planned for residents include possible trips to Devil's Lake, the State Fair and a Mallards game.

Next year promises to be an engaging and rich one, as we welcome two new micro-communities interested in learning about different religious traditions, a new group of students participating in the PH Apartment Scholars program, and the addition of Alex Kuehn working in Pres House Apartments in the new position of Residential Fellow. ♣



- Ginger Morgan  
Director of Residential  
Community

*We had a good feeling about this place when we saw "Elevate the Conversation" on the bulletin board. Not many apartment buildings take the time to build a community quite like Pres House does. The atmosphere of this place we call home is very community-oriented and has a family feel—something that can be hard to come by on a college campus. Whether it be Ginger's home-cooked dinners, Wednesday afternoon tea and conversation, or other social events (such as the Halloween and holiday parties), Pres House Apartments promote a socially dynamic atmosphere in which it is easy to know your neighbors. In addition to the warm feel, our home is in the heart of campus and is even connected to Subway via an underground tunnel! Other perks include laundry on each floor and the great workout room with a view of the beautiful lake. Additionally, the many study dens located throughout the building make it easy to get our work done without having to leave home – a bonus during cold Wisconsin winters and late night study sessions. Needless to say, it was a no-brainer to re-sign our lease for next year so we can continue to call Pres House our home.*

*Thanks!*

*Alyssa, Claire, Abby, Mary, Jenny, and Heather (Girls of Apartment 606)*

# BWAP: ALABAMA BOUND

During UW–Madison’s March spring break a group of 14 folks from Pres House engaged in “Break With a Purpose”, spending the week living in Birmingham, Alabama. On our first full day in Birmingham we visited an African American church in the morning, helped put on a community Easter Egg hunt at mid-day, and spent the afternoon at the Civil Rights Institute. On Monday we drove south to Selma and then walked and drove over the

Edmund Pettus Bridge and along the route to Montgomery that people marched in 1965 seeking voting equality. In Montgomery we toured the Greyhound bus station where the 1961 Freedom Riders were beaten as they sought to desegregate interstate bus travel and bus stations.

During the rest of the week our team was split into two groups. One group worked at a spring break day camp with kids. The other group built a fence and completed various other projects at Ms. Brody’s home which had been destroyed by a tornado in 2011. Before leaving Alabama on our final day we toured the 16th Street Baptist church where four girls were killed in a bombing that took place 50 years ago this year.

Our evenings were filled with thoughtful reflection on the civil rights movement, race relations, community development, and our own individual faith journeys. Since returning home we have heard participants describe the trip as: “intense,” “fun,” “challenging,” “meaningful,” “hard work,” “life changing,” and “eye-opening.”

We put together a 15-minute video about the trip which we invite you to watch on our website at: <http://preshouse.org/get-involved/video-blog/>. Two of the team members also shared very insightful reflections from the trip during our worship service on April 7. You can listen to those reflections at: <http://preshouse.org/sunday-worship/listen-to-sunday-sermons/> (click on BWAP reflections). ❀



life changing  
eye opening  
hard work fun  
meaningful  
intense  
challenging



# FOOD EQUALS TOGETHERNESS

Walk into the Pres House kitchen and you will find much more than simple cooking ingredients and utensils. As this spring's international cooking classes have shown, the Pres House kitchen is home to a loving and diverse community that embraces new culinary experiences and seeks to teach others those new techniques.

When I first heard that the spring's cooking classes would be international-based, I jumped at the idea to share a new recipe I had recently learned common to western Africa, called chicken Yassa. I loved sharing this new dish with my friends at Pres House and was ecstatic to see all of them embrace its diverse and unique flavor. In addition to teaching this dish, I had lots of fun building fellowship while learning how to make two of my other favorite foods from scratch: sushi and spring rolls.

Learning new recipes and building fellowship while cooking together at Pres House was one of the most rewarding experiences I have ever had. Not only did being greeted each week by Michael and Mynda's smiling faces make me feel welcomed to the Pres House community, but by the end of the night, it was like we were one big family. Anyone who is seeking a home away from home, from an empty stomach to love and friendship, is sure to find it in the Pres House kitchen. ❀

- Sarah Zwach



Pres House seeks to be a spiritual home at the heart of the University of Wisconsin-Madison campus. In keeping with the teachings of Jesus Christ and the Christian tradition of hospitality, Pres House is dedicated to providing a religious center and high quality student housing to promote the spiritual, emotional, and intellectual growth of residents and members of the campus community. Pres House is a ministry of the Presbyterian Church, U.S.A., and welcomes individuals of every perspective and background.



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## DID YOU KNOW . . .

Since the early days of Pres House, hospitality has been at the forefront of our mission. The same is true today. Students and staff create a warm, welcoming space that truly embodies our "All are welcome" slogan. Simple methods bring students in, from smiling faces to welcome signs taped to the front door. It worked in 1956 and it works in 2013.



. . . SOME THINGS NEVER CHANGE.