

# NEWSLETTER

## Celebrating 25 Years of Living and Working Together

On a frigid January 1985 morning, Rochester Mayor Chuck Hazama cut the ribbon proclaiming the opening of Charter House. Soon after the ceremony, the first residents began to arrive, and by the end of the day nearly thirty people – some from as far away as California and Arizona – had moved in. The Charter House Welcome Committee greeted each newcomer with friendly smiles, a plant, and a selection of warm breads. During the first year, 195 people moved into Charter House from sixteen states. These people came from varied backgrounds but together formed a rich tapestry of life experience. And all shared a pioneering spirit.

In 2010, twenty-five years since residents first called Charter House home, several events are underway to commemorate our silver anniversary. A banner displaying the theme *Celebrating 25 years of living and working together* adorns the skyway that connects Charter House to Mayo Clinic, and a DVD about Charter House has been produced. In January, Charter House staff members were treated to a lavish banquet in Edwards Hall with music provided by a regional band. The following day, residents were in the spotlight and invited to an elegant dinner in Skyview. Following the meal, they gathered in Edwards Hall to enjoy live music and a dessert and liqueur buffet.



Continuing the good food theme, a Charter House cookbook of resident recipes is now available in the Corner Cupboard. A Taste of Charter House event in Edwards Hall is also planned during which residents prepare and serve cookbook favorites. And musically speaking, Charter House Administrator

Tony Enquist has tossed his baton into the Aspiring Conductor contest, vying to be chosen as guest conductor for the Rochester Symphony Orchestra's April performance. Throughout the year, many more events and reminders of this Charter House special year will take place.

Anniversaries provide good times to reflect on the past and look forward to the future. Much has changed in the past twenty-five years, with major improvements in 1988 (the third floor health center), 1992 (the skyway link), 2000 (a four-floor addition on the east side of the building), and 2004 (the Fitness Center and renovated Corner Cupboard). In addition to building changes, continuous improvements have

been made to dining services and programs offered, all done in the spirit of responding to the needs of the residents. What hasn't changed since Charter House opened long ago is the belief "It's the people that make Charter House so special." The residents, the staff that faithfully serves them, and the Charter House leadership team together will guide us confidently into the future.





# 25th Anniversary Celebration



**1977**  
Christ United Methodist Church proposes Retirement Center to Rochester Methodist Hospital



**1981**  
Charter House Information Office/Model Apartment opens



**1983**  
Charter House Groundbreaking



**1983**  
Charter House Christmas Star tradition begins



**1985**  
Charter House opens



**1986**  
Mayo Clinic acquires Charter House



**1987**  
Dick Edwards becomes Administrator



# Living And Working Together

## John Patrick O'Grady



After retiring from satisfying professional careers in 1987, John (known as Pat to his friends) and Betty O'Grady began looking for retirement housing. The things most important to them included high-quality medical care, comfortable accommodations, and excellent food service.

When they didn't find a retirement community near

them in the Twin Cities that met these needs, they extended their reach to Charter House. Pat says, "Betty and I moved here in October 1988. We felt welcomed right away. I found it interesting that although residents live near one another, everyone respects each other's privacy. For example, it's typical that residents call before a visit rather than knock on your door unannounced. I think neighborliness remains one of Charter House's strongest draws."

Pat recalls, "Betty fell in love with our twenty-first floor apartment because of its panoramic view of Rochester. She and I enjoyed all that Charter House has to offer – for example, the many social activities, the Higgins Library, the fitness center, weekly movies, day trips, and the interesting people who make Charter House their home." He added this about the staff, "They are so cheerful and efficient. We respect what they do, and they respect us."

Several years ago, Betty moved to Charter House Supportive Care due to health issues. Sadly, she passed away a few months ago. "One of the main Charter House advantages," says Pat, "is that during this time I could easily be with her, and she could easily visit our apartment. How comforting that was. Also, the outpouring of care and concern from those in Charter House has meant so much to me."

## David Perrotte

In the latter part of 1984, a Charter House full-page employment opportunity advertisement in Rochester's Post Bulletin caught David Perrotte's eye. He submitted an application, was called in for successive interviews, and then offered a weekends-only custodial job. David recalls, "I believe that several thousand people applied for work. When Charter House called to offer me the job, I said, 'Sure!'" David started December 27, 1984, several days before Charter House opened its doors to residents. He's currently one of only eleven original staff members at Charter House.

As one might expect, the Charter House initial days were hectic. On opening day, following the ribbon cutting ceremony, about thirty people moved into their apartments. David recalls, "I would say it was kind of crazy. The contractors were still here doing final touch up while residents were moving in, but all went well."

Soon after the Grand Opening, David accepted a full-time custodial position. Later he became a Charter House painter and, after fifteen years in that job, he moved to the General Maintenance department where he's currently employed. David commutes from Mazeppa, where he, his wife, Imelda, and their sons, Darren and Anthony, make their home.

David likes the fact that he doesn't have a typical Charter House day. He says, "Some days I'm repairing washers and dryers, other days changing light bulbs, other days cleaning drains. I really like helping residents with whatever maintenance-related things they need done. What we do is try our best to put their needs first. We're like a family here; it's a very good place to work."



**1987**  
First Annual Resident State-of-the-House Address

**1988**  
Health Center Third Floor Expansion opens



**1989**  
First annual Sidewalk Sale



**1990**  
Anne B. Duncan Somsen Art Collection donated



**1991**  
Assisted Living Program begins



**1992**  
Skyway Link Project completed

**2000**  
New Assisted Living Facility opens

# Welcome New Neighbors

**Tony & Jo Ann Bianco**  
Surgeon / Nurse  
Rochester, MN

**Tom Colson**  
System Programmer  
Rochester, MN

**Mary Jo Martin**  
Hospitality Consultant  
Rochester, MN

**Ann Brey**  
Special Education Teacher  
St. Paul, MN

**Bob & Margaret Fontana**  
Physician / Physician  
Rochester, MN

**Ralph & Betty Monsees**  
Public School Teacher /  
Homemaker  
Tappan, New York

**Don & Barbara Cain**  
Engineer and Programmer /  
Public Health Nurse  
Rochester, MN

**Joseph & Josephine Gibilisco**  
Physician / Industrial Relations  
Rochester, MN

**Jack & Peg Osmundson**  
Physician / Gift Shop Manager  
Rochester, MN

**Malcolm Campbell**  
Physician  
Rochester, MN

**Barbara Hanlon**  
Homemaker  
Stewartville, MN

**David Rabak**  
Physician  
Seattle, WA

**Ruth Cleeremans**  
Medical Technologist  
Rochester, MN

**Mary Adams Martin**  
Counselor  
Rochester, MN

**Barry & Marianne Skolnick**  
Human Resources / Substitute  
Teacher  
New York, NY



## Recipe

### Fudge Puddles

1/2 cup butter, softened  
1/2 cup creamy peanut butter  
1/2 cup sugar  
1/2 cup packed light brown sugar  
1 egg  
1/2 teaspoon vanilla extract  
1-1/4 cups all-purpose flour  
3/4 teaspoon baking soda  
1/2 teaspoon salt

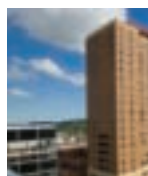
### FUDGE FILLING

1 cup (6 ounces) milk chocolate chips  
1 cup (6 ounces) semi-sweet chocolate chips  
1 can (14 ounces) sweetened condensed milk  
1 teaspoon vanilla extract  
Chopped peanuts

In a large bowl, cream the butter, peanut butter and sugars. Beat in egg and vanilla. Combine the flour, baking soda and salt. Gradually add to creamed mixture. Chill for 1 hour.

Shape into 48 balls, 1 in. each. Place in lightly greased mini-muffin tins. Bake at 325° for 14-16 minutes or until lightly browned. Using the end of a wooden spoon handle, make a 3/8- to 1/2-inch - deep indentation in the center of each ball. Cool in pans for 5 minutes, before removing to wire racks to cool completely.

For filling, in a microwave or small saucepan melt chocolate chips. Stir in milk and vanilla until smooth. Fill each shell with filling. Sprinkle with peanuts. (Leftover filling can be stored in the refrigerator and served warm over ice cream.) Yield: 4 dozen.



**2001**  
Mayo Clinic  
Short-term Stay  
Program opens

**2001**  
Mayo Conference  
Center at Charter  
House opens



**2002**  
Dedication of John A.  
Higgins Library



**2003**  
Charter House adopts  
Central Park



**2004**  
Charter House Fitness  
Center opens



**2004**  
Expanded Corner  
Cupboard opens



# 25th Anniversary Celebration



*Original Charter House staff. Left to right: David Perrotte, Bonnie Bedard, Linda Van Sickle, Lyle Johnson, Brenda Volkmann, Tom Hall, Stephanie Garness, David Garness, Lynda Kroening, Steve Murray and Ruth Weispenning. Not pictured: Rita Eyre*



*Al Abbott autographs his Charter House cookbook recipe at the Taste of Charter House event.*



*Charter House dining services staff having fun preparing garnish for the 25th Anniversary Resident Dinner.*

To learn more about the programs and services at Charter House, call (507) 266-7879  
Toll Free 1-800-533-1562  
[www.charterhouse-mayo.org](http://www.charterhouse-mayo.org)



*Charter House residents designed this beautiful tree for the 24th Festival of Trees held at the Mayo Civic Center in November. The event raises funds for Rochester's Hiawatha Homes Inc. to help them provide residential, in-home, and community-based choices for people with disabilities.*



Mayo Clinic  
Attn: Charter House  
200 1st Street SW  
Rochester, MN 55905

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## *Food for Thought...*

*From Charter House Administrator, Tony Enquist*



**I**n anticipation of our twenty-fifth anniversary, we created the theme statement, *Celebrating 25 years of living and working together*. Over the course of the past twenty-five years, more than one thousand residents have called Charter House their home. In addition, a multitude of individuals have worked here to provide the highest level of care, service, and support possible.

I am continually delighted to see residents and staff, each with his or her own personality, interests, background, and skills, weave into the larger fabric of our Charter House community. When we first opened in 1985, we didn't have a culture, a history, or a heritage. Over time, they evolved. Today, we look with pride on what we've become – an esteemed retirement community known for the energy and creativity of its residents, the staff who continually meet and exceed their needs, and the care and peace of mind we provide.

The term milestone is often used to signify the importance of an event as notable as a twenty-fifth anniversary. A milestone marks that event in time. However, in addition to being a marker, a milestone can be a turning point. For most residents, coming to Charter House is a major turning point in their lives. They may move here from another city or state. They may have just retired from a lifelong profession. I've seen that we're good at welcoming and assimilating new members into our Charter House community and helping them through the turning points in their lives.

As we look back on our past twenty-five years, we've shown that good people working together can achieve great results. I believe that we will continue to do so far into the future, and I look forward to making that journey with you.