

THE Messenger

Friendship Haven to celebrate 75 years

Legacy Week to honor past, present and future



Messenger photo by Kadin Luhmann

Jen Lane, the engagement director at Friendship Haven, and Steve Ehrhardt, a 50-year employee, stand in the chapel of Friendship Haven.

Friendship Haven will mark its 75th anniversary by hosting Legacy Week from June 25 to June 29.

The five-day event aims to celebrate the past, present and future of Friendship Haven, according to Jen Lane, the retirement community's engagement director.

“It’s been really fun to see the progression of how Friendship Haven came to be,” Lane said. “We broke ground in ’49 and to see that this started off as a cow pasture in a field to what it’s become today is pretty incredible.”

Lane said that the flagship event of the week will be Legacy Night, which will take place on June 27.

“Legacy Night is our big event for the week and our annual fundraiser for the Good Samaritan Fund,” Lane said. “It’s going to be a really fun night for people to gather with lots of camaraderie and fun.”



The bell formerly from the Chapel on the Hill is now located at the main entrance of Friendship Haven. It will be rededicated during a ceremony at 4:30 p.m. on June 25.

Legacy Night will also feature live entertainment and other amenities for attendees.

“We’re bringing in the Dueling Pianos of Andy Anderson and Mike Leeds,” Lane said. “We’ll also have a dessert bar, a raffle that people can participate in and conclude the event with a fireworks display.”

Lane said tickets for Legacy Night include access to all activities and refreshments that day, cost \$20 per person and can be purchased on the Friendship Haven campus.

The first day of Legacy Week will feature the re-dedication of the bell from the previously demolished Chapel on the Hill.

“The Chapel on the Hill was a building here for years where people gathered for worship and other activities,” Lane said. “When the building was demolished, we kept the bell, so we have refurbished the bell and it will be displayed permanently outside our Welcome Center.”



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The bell is located at the main entrance of Friendship Haven. It will be rededicated at 4:30 p.m. on June 25.

Lane said the re-dedication of the bell ceremony aims to honor the founder of Friendship Haven, Clarence Tompkins.

“The re-dedication will be in honor of Rev. Clarence Tompkins, the founder,” Lane said. “The event will take place at 4:30 p.m., with a press conference, ribbon cutting and a reception following the event.”

Steve Ehrhardt, a 50-year employee at Friendship Haven, has researched the history of the retirement community to prepare for Legacy Week events like the bell ceremony.

“I’ve been looking at a lot of history books and we’ve been looking at pictures and getting an idea of things that have gone on over the years,” Ehrhardt said. “I was one of the fortunate people that worked here with Dr. Clarence Tompkins, so I’ve always kind of known what his dream was and we want to keep it going.”

Friendship Haven will hold a memorial walk on June 28 and a church service on June 29 to close out Legacy Week, with both events being open to the public.

“Everything but Thursday is open to the public,” Lane said. “We’re giving the residents and their families a time to gather and celebrate the present, but people can join us throughout the week for the pieces that are of interest and fit into their schedules.”

Ehrhardt said he looks forward to seeing people associated with Friendship Haven in the past and present on campus for Legacy Week.

“It’ll be nice to see all the different people in the past coming back, employees, residents and families,” Ehrhardt said.

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