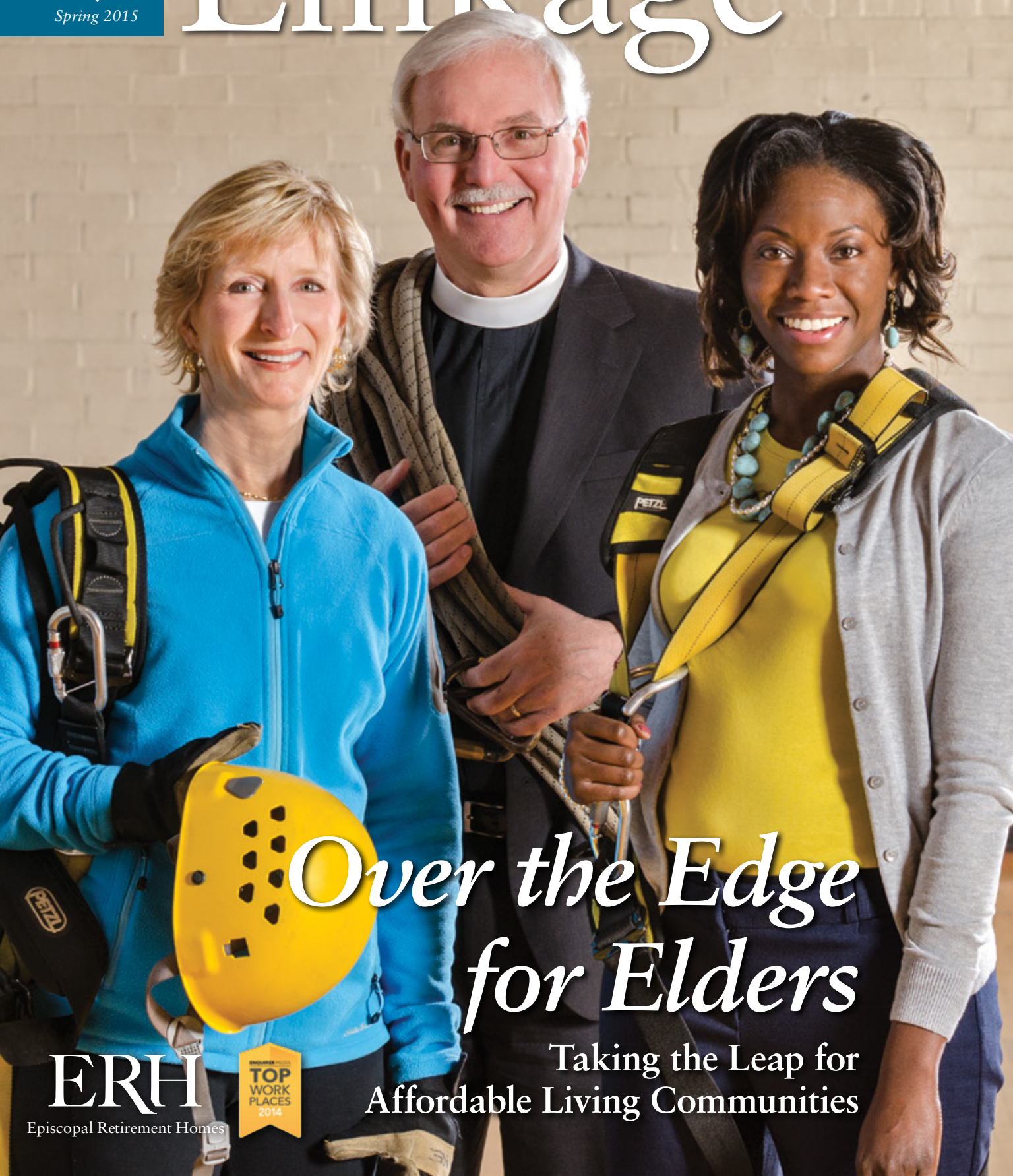




Spring 2015

INSIDE: 2014 ANNUAL REPORT

Linkage



Over the Edge for Elders

Taking the Leap for
Affordable Living Communities

ERH

Episcopal Retirement Homes





Over The Edge For Elders

Taking The Leap For Affordable Living Communities

by Rick Bird / Photographs by Steve Ziegelmeyer & Gary Kessler

Photo caption: Elders live with security and dignity at our Affordable Living Communities. A weekly yoga class sponsored by Project Yoga, a Cincinnati nonprofit, is an example of the life enrichment at St. Paul Village.

Signup begins March 25 for those who will be going “Over the Edge for Elders” on June 12 and 13. “Edgers” will rappel down a 10-story building as part of the summer fundraiser for the Episcopal Retirement Homes Affordable Living Communities.

The event will take place at the Central YMCA, where the top six floors are being renovated by ERH into 65 limited-income senior apartments. Organizers project that more than \$200,000 will be raised.

The two-day event kicks off with the ERH annual fundraising BBQ and dinner, CELEBRATE!, where 10 “celebrity edgers” will rappel down the building.

ERH is partnering with Over the Edge, an organization that stages these special, signature events for nonprofit organizations. The events are designed to get communities talking about a good cause tied to a public adventure sports spectacle. The event offers participants a once-in-a-lifetime, supervised chance to rappel safely off a tall building. Those who have taken the leap testify that it can be an empowering experience, not to mention a pretty cool adrenaline rush.

Here’s a look at three of our top edgers who will strap on the ropes and pulleys to take their own unique leap of faith in support of quality, affordable living.

A Chance to “Toss Your Boss”

Susie Lane is the newest ERH Board Member and one of the first to sign up for the rappelling effort. She agreed to become the chair of the event and is no stranger to taking leaps from tall structures.

“Three years ago, I did a zip line off the roof of the Olympic Stadium in Munich. It seemed like a good idea at the time,” Lane says, who was in Germany on vacation when her husband spotted the attraction. “It was worse climbing up to the roof than rappelling off.”

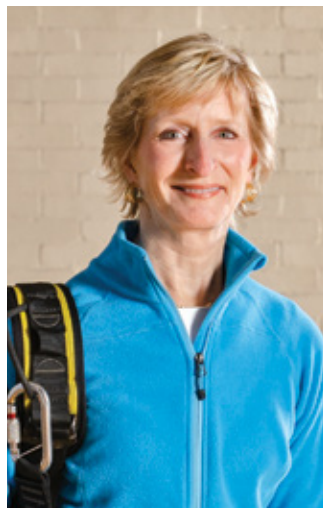
Lane has explored her artistic side as a painter and has done more volunteer work since selling her monogram and embroidery business. She decided to get more involved with ERH after her parents moved into Deupree House a year ago.

“ERH has done a wonderful job, and when they talked to me about joining the Board, it seemed like a very good place to be.”

Lane has been busy recruiting other edgers and is especially excited about the “toss your boss” category where employees can donate to see their bosses take the plunge. Lane notes that she gets funny looks at first when approaching businesses. “One manager said, ‘You want me to rappel off a building, and for me to pay you to do it!’” He did eventually sign up.”

Lane says her parents were split on the idea. “I told them I need to raise \$1,000. My dad said, ‘I’ll give you a thousand.’ My mom said, ‘I’ll give you a thousand not to do it.’”

Lane admits her physical activities of choice are more grounded, such as walking and playing golf or tennis. She’s finding that most people she contacts are leaping at the chance to do this.



Susie Lane

OTE Chair and ERH Board Member

A Leap of Faith

The Reverend Canon Jack Koepke confesses to some initial reluctance to go “over the edge.” As he puts it, “I don’t know that it was on my bucket list, but I’m going to put it on there now and get extra bucket credit.”

Koepke says his rappelling and rock-climbing experience has been limited to “climbing on indoor walls and that’s about it.”

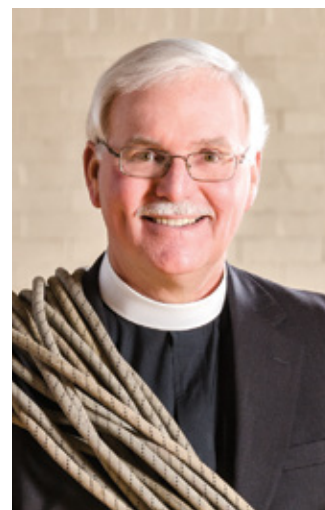
He notes that his faith in tall buildings has been questioned as he asks people to support his effort. “They have asked the profoundly theological question, ‘What were you thinking when you said yes?’”

Koepke, the Canon to the Ordinary for the Episcopal Diocese of Southern Ohio, says he is glad to represent the church in his role as the assistant to the bishop in supporting ERH affordable housing for seniors.

While ERH is a separate, independent entity, not formally or corporately tied to the diocese, Koepke says the church maintains a supportive and cordial relationship with ERH. Koepke witnessed the ERH Affordable Living mission several years ago when he was a rector at St. Paul’s in Dayton, and his congregation began a relationship with ERH’s Canterbury Court.

“I saw then that it was a terrific organization that does amazing things for people. They do a rewarding ministry that we in the Episcopal diocese want to support.”

Koepke says he probably will not look down when he rappels down the building, but will be thinking about the ERH mission. “Just mention to me as I am going off the edge that this is something I really wanted to do.”



Jack Koepke

OTE Committee

An Advocate for Elders

For Donial Curry, this leap is no sweat. “My dad’s a roofer,” Curry explains. “I’m completely comfortable on top of high buildings.”

As a teenager, Curry often climbed up a ladder to help her dad out or bring him lunch on the job. “I was never afraid of heights,” she says. And she is no stranger to rappelling, experiencing it on a recent vacation to Cancun.

Curry, a 2014 graduate of Miami University, joined ERH fund development for an internship last summer and she saw firsthand the work being done to help seniors.

“I was blown away by the care ERH has for all in its communities, especially the extra amenities ERH has in its limited-income housing. I left my internship and said, ‘If you ever need me, I would love to help out.’”

Curry now works as the annual fund coordinator at Wilberforce University. She enjoys having a chance to combine her love of adventure with her strong belief that young people should give back to the community.

“It’s important for a young professional like me to be involved and have a cause and be an advocate,” Curry says. “It’s important to show you are out in the community and you care. You never stop learning and stepping outside your comfort zone and boundaries no matter how old you are.” ❖

Over the Edge for Elders is June 13 at the Central YMCA. To sign up or donate to the effort, visit www.OTE4ELDERS.org or contact Maureen Gregory at (513) 272-5555 ext. 4292 or email mgregory@erhinc.com



Donial Curry
OTE Committee

ERH Offers Affordable Housing With An Edge



Maureen Gregory

A major fundraising goal for Episcopal Retirement Homes has been to ensure that support services are fully funded at its Affordable Living Communities. The effort is essential now that ERH has an expansion goal of operating 30 limited-income senior residences by 2020.

The “Over the Edge for Elders” rappelling fundraising event in June and the annual CELEBRATE! dinner and BBQ are important sources of funds, according to Maureen Gregory, ERH Fund Development Manager.

“As we expand,” Gregory says, “we need to triple our annual fund to have the money available to operate these support services. All of our limited-income senior communities will have extra services.”

The ERH model goes well beyond the HUD requirement of “safe and sanitary” senior housing. ERH services include a myriad of amenities at the core of quality-of-life issues that include fitness, entertainment, spiritual and intellectual activities, computer availability and training, lending libraries and transportation.

Over-the-Rhine and downtown business leaders will see Parkway Place at the Central Y as an important development for the neighborhood and support the fundraising effort. U.S. Bank and Model Group are leading the way as our top sponsors.

“One in four Ohio seniors live in substandard housing,” Gregory says. “For every apartment that becomes available, there are 10 seniors who are qualified. There is a housing crisis that is coming, and ERH is making a difference.” ❖