

## Roots to Roam

You won't find any dust collecting or moss growing on Wilma Markle. Although her April 2011 move to Greencroft Middlebury gives her new roots in northern Indiana, she doesn't stay put for long. Wilma loves to travel, to see new places and return to those she likes. She flows as though on an air stream. Well, more accurately, *in* an Airstream.

Wilma was born in Peoria, Illinois. When she was about 13 years old the family moved to Gary, Indiana, where her father took a job in the steel mills. During high school she played sports, "Everything a girl could enter," she recounts. Wilma had five brothers and no sisters, so she grew up playing ice hockey and tackle football with the boys. She especially enjoyed basketball and soccer.

After high school Wilma went to Indiana University for two years studying physical education. During World War II she went to work at the Kingsbury Ordnance Plant, which produced munitions near what is now the small town of Kingsbury, south of LaPorte, Indiana. Wilma met a sailor in the Coast Guard and they married. Living in Gary, they had two daughters. When the

youngest went to school Wilma went to work for Illinois Bell. She started as an operator and retired 25 years later as a manager.

Wilma's husband passed away at 58 years old. She was a widow for about 13 years then remarried. He also died, in 2008. "Family is important," Wilma states. Greencroft Middlebury is located between her daughters, who also live in Indiana—in Portage to the west and Albion to the southeast. Wilma has four grandchildren as well as three great-grandchildren who live in Fort Wayne.

When Wilma became a widow she started travelling. She started with a little pick-up camper. But then she sold her home and bought an Airstream trailer and a bigger truck. She started out going to Texas for winters where



there were singles groups in the San Benito/Brownsville area. She was involved in many activities there and also joined to an Airstream club that took caravan trips.

She travelled a lot with her second husband. Those Airstream caravan trips have taken her just about everywhere. "I've travelled to every state in this Union," says Wilma. "I like the southwest. I also like the Great Smoky Mountains in the east."

She's also been with the caravan to Mexico, Canada, South Africa and many countries in Europe. On the other continents everyone rents vehicles in which to travel. She also took a safari in South Africa. "I like

(continued on page 3)



*Wilma Markle with her late husband George Jacobsmeyer and their 1995 Airstream Wide Body.*

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**What we do/mission** – In keeping with our Mennonite values and high standards of care, Greencroft Middlebury is committed to creating a dynamic community that embraces the creativity, contributions and challenges of aging for all.

**Who we are** – Greencroft Middlebury is a not-for-profit community for people age 55 and older. We are an affiliate of Greencroft Communities, Goshen, Ind. We offer independent living in duplex and fourplex homes of varying sizes. Residents have priority access to assisted living and healthcare services at any of our Indiana Campuses. The Middlebury Senior Center is located on this campus and is available to all area seniors.

**How to find us** – Our sales office is located in the model home at 507 Greencroft Parkway, Middlebury, telephone 574-825-6756. The Middlebury Senior Center number is 574-825-6785. Mailing address: 701 Windridge Drive, Middlebury, IN 46540. Entrance is from Wayne Street, east of Das Dutchman Essenhaus and Conference Center.



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## First Impressions

Driving into Middlebury for the first time I enjoyed the beautiful landscape of the countryside. My first impression of Greencroft Middlebury was the quality of the homes and fine craftsmanship that went into building them. But what was the most lasting impression is the warm welcome I received from the residents of Greencroft Middlebury.

Each person told me a different story on why they choose to live here, but one thing was the same — they came to enjoy their independence. Residents enjoy a maintenance-free lifestyle so they can pursue their passions. Whether their passion is golf, crafts, volunteering, woodworking or RV-ing, living in Greencroft Middlebury gives them freedom to enjoy it, plus the peace

of mind of knowing if they ever needed assisted living or skilled care it's just around the corner.

This summer when you take in a show at the Blue Gate look for the Greencroft Middlebury insert in the program, then schedule a tour of our beautiful community and enjoy a free show on us. Look for our advertisement in local restaurants for more details. And don't forget to stop by and take a look at our beautiful Quilt Garden.

Discover Greencroft Middlebury today. To schedule a tour or for more information call me at 574-825-6756 and live here, for the Best of Your Life!

— *Pete Webb*



### Meet Pete!

We would like to take this opportunity to introduce Pete Webb, Senior Living Consultant at Greencroft Middlebury. Pete brings to us over 18 combined years of experience in the marketing/promotion/advertising and sales profession(s).

Pete's personal experience included helping two parents at different times enter the care continuum. His real life insight into the care of seniors and the related dynamics with their adult children has compelled him to want to help others by gaining employment in this industry. Pete has a bachelors degree from Indiana University, Bloomington; as well as additional specialized training in sales, management and leadership.

Pete will be promoting and selling the full continuum of care and services at Greencroft Middlebury.

## Tell Us Your Story!

Many people's lives have been touched by Greencroft Middlebury. How has your or a loved one's life been affected by the mission and services of Greencroft Middlebury?

These stories need to be told! Please help us share the stories of our communities by sending us your story or a note asking us to talk with you. Send it to Matthew Lentsch at the Greencroft Communities Foundation, PO Box 819, Goshen, IN 46527-0819 or by e-mail to [matthewl@greencroft.org](mailto:matthewl@greencroft.org).



*Wilma Markle enjoys plants and has many on her patio and around her home at Greencroft Middlebury.*

## Roam (continued from page 1)

Europe,” she says, adding that her mother’s family is German. “I like Spain. It’s beautiful, with the old, old buildings.”

Wilma still has and uses an Airstream motorhome. “I’m still travelling by myself,” she says, and adds with a big smile, “I’m a gypsy.”

But she roams with new roots at Greencroft Middlebury. “The reason I’m here is my children kept after me,” she chuckles. “I need to settle down, to establish roots. To have a place, just in case.” But a retirement home? “At first I didn’t go along with the concept,” she states. But the more she looked at the idea, she knew it made sense.

She looked at a number of places but chose Greencroft Middlebury because it’s located between her two daughters. “They can come here or I can visit them.” She also likes the fact that it is affiliated with the Mennonite Church. Wilma is Lutheran, and now attends St. Paul’s Lutheran Church, which is right across the street

from the Greencroft Middlebury campus.

Wilma is already enjoying the friendliness at Greencroft Middlebury. “Everyone makes you feel welcome,” she says. She laughs that she has learned how to play the card game Euchre since moving in. She also appreciates the lunches offered by REAL Services in the Greencroft Middlebury Senior Center.

Wilma loves flowers (“I have tons of them”) and birds. Her feeders already attract hummingbirds, orioles and finches. She also likes the wetlands and open fields adjacent to the campus that she can see from her home and patio.

“I was very hesitant,” she says about moving to a retirement community. Although it took her awhile to look at options she agrees that it indeed has many positives. “It’s a good idea to be with people of your own age group,” for the similar interests and circumstances. “And there are all the activities they offer here,” she notes. And

there are the people themselves. “It’s easy to get acquainted. If you need anything there are people who will help you.”

Her new roots are growing well. But it doesn’t tie down Wilma. “You can hibernate and die early,” she says, only half-jokingly. She’s still active and on the go, enjoying where her travels take her and also enjoying interacting with her new neighbors and friends at Greencroft Middlebury. “I believe fellowship is important.”

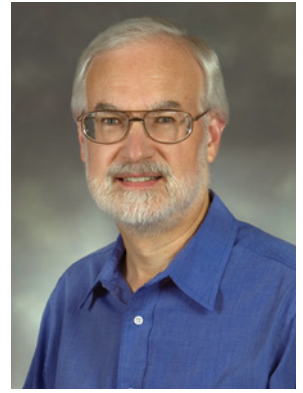
Wilma, the gypsy at heart, says “I still have my independence. I wasn’t ready to settle down, but yet I understood,” she acknowledges. “I like it that I did. It’s wonderful here.”

## From Dan's Desk

Summer has finally arrived. After the cooler spring we had, the warmer weather with the nice sunshine is a very welcome sight. The Quilt Garden has been planted, residents have flowers planted, gardens are being planted and the grass is being irrigated as the ground is getting dry. The sunshine and warmer weather lift ones spirits, making one happier to be outside more and to think of having picnics with family and friends.

Our model home is now open for limited hours on Saturday and Sunday afternoons. When having the desire to be outside in the nice weather, consider stopping by and going through the model home and visit with the current residents who are here.

– Dan Wolfer, *Community Manager*



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