

Positive Aging – Shirley McGahan

Ms. Shirley McGahan is a positive force for aging well. She tells us that she was not sure when she moved to assisted living at Woodland Ridge if it was for her. But since she has been there, she has been an ambassador and friend to those living there as well as in the community at large.

Born in Cincinnati to a family of seven, Shirley moved to Somerset Kentucky at age eight. She married her husband, Richard while he was serving in the Army. The family later moved to Smyrna where he worked for Lockheed as an engineer and Shirley worked for Hanover Insurance Company as an accountant.

After she retired, she began a second career as a substitute teacher in Cobb County, where she loved working with the kindergarten and first grade classes. She is regularly active with in Woodland Ridge's intergenerational program with Nickajack Elementary School, where she is part of the weekly volunteer reading program, encouraging others to join in. Shirley was active in both Macland Baptist and Hurt Road Baptist. She states she has been involved all her life in counting money, including for her church. She just steps in wherever her gifts allow.

One of Shirley's gifts is being an encouraging friend while sharing her love of jigsaw puzzles. Her hobby has created a natural outreach that Woodland Ridge residents enthusiastically embrace. Shirley can be found at the puzzle table with residents who have been there a while or those just moving in. She inspires others to try their hand at it, have fun and become part of the family of friends at Woodland Ridge. She has an extensive collection of puzzles and has started a group that gathers daily to work on the latest puzzles. She even recruited a family member to assist the club in expanding their collection of puzzles.

Ever the encourager, Shirley chimes in when potential new residents are touring Woodland Ridge and lets them know that if they want to make friends, Woodland Ridge is a great place to do it, as well as a wonderful place to live and enjoy life. Shirley has been a world traveler and loves sharing stories about her travels. She relates well to everyone and as the community navigated Covid Shirley encouraged everyone, including those outside the community to get vaccinated. At ninety-one, Shirley McGahan is a Profile of Positive Aging.