

Westminster Place

A Non-Sectarian Member of Presbyterian Homes

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Westminster Place Residents Take Flight and Paddle Away During Adventure Week

Evanston, IL (August 30, 2011) – Adventure Week swept over the Westminster Place campus of Presbyterian Homes last week with opportunities to take a small craft airplane ride over the lakefront, kayak down the Chicago River, go for convertible rides, try out a Segway or go for a ride on a Duet bike (one person pedals while the other rides in a wheeled chair in front). Adventure Week was planned to create “bold and audacious” adventures for residents of the retirement community.

“Adventure is an important component of wellness,” says Muriel Brunger, director of community programs at Westminster Place. “It stimulates our senses, challenges us and helps us learn at all stages of life. These experiences help to set the stage for other ‘adventure’ opportunities that are to come in the following months.”

On Monday, Aug. 22, a group of residents took off from Chicago Executive Airport (formerly Palwaukee Airport) in Wheeling in two Cessna “Sky Hawk” aircraft provided by Windy City Flyers. From there they cruised over the Bahai Temple, Northwestern University, Wrigley Field, Navy Pier, Millennium Park and around the Willis Tower.

Resident Ruth Osgood, 87, who was a licensed taildragger pilot in the ‘40s, sat up front in the right-hand seat and was able to take the controls for a short time while flying straight and level. “I never miss an opportunity to get up in the air. It was a beautiful day and a lot of fun,” said Ruth.

Another resident, Bill Redlich, 90, had been a flight engineer on a B29 during WWII. When asked how it felt to be up in the air again he said “The last time I flew this route was 65 years ago, but it was at 30,000 feet. This was a much different and more intimate flying experience where you could watch the pilot and see the amazing colors and details of the landscape below.”



Bill Redlich, 90, looks over the controls in the Cessna Sky Hawk before takeoff.
(Photo courtesy of Melissa Diep Photography)

On Wednesday, August 24, residents and staff chose a canoe or kayak to make their way down the Chicago River for a picnic lunch with the assistance of Chicago River Canoe and Kayak. Resident Reverend Carl Hatfield, 97, said “I’ve always had an adventuresome spirit and I had never kayaked before. It was exhausting, but wonderful and scenic. I call it a ‘satori’ or mountaintop experience. Along with the sense of accomplishment I felt, there was joy and beauty in the experience. I’d like to go up in a glider plane next.”



Westminster Place resident Ralph Westfall kayaks for the first time on the Chicago River. (Photo courtesy of Jill Koch.)

Other Adventure Week activities included convertible rides, a pig roast dinner, a Cubs vs. Braves game and a presentation by WTTW’s Wild Chicago host Ben Hollis.

ABOUT PRESBYTERIAN HOMES

Founded in 1904, Presbyterian Homes is a not-for-profit, non-sectarian organization with a national reputation for creating extraordinary retirement communities. Presbyterian Homes serves more than 1700 older adults through its residential and healthcare programs on campuses in Evanston, Lake Forest and Arlington Heights. The organization is accredited by the CARF/CCAC, the nation's only accrediting body for retirement communities.