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The Palace Gardens, a truly idyllic addition to the Homestead area

BY BILL KRESS

If Helen and Jacob Shaham's overarching desire is to provide a better quality of life for the aging, they have certainly accomplished their goal with The Palace Gardens in Homestead, an amazingly beautiful state-of-the-art facility for memory care and assisted living.

On Dec. 8, more than 400 members of the aging-care community and representatives from companies involved in the construction of the facility joined with the Shahams, founders of The Palace, to celebrate the grand opening of the new Palace Gardens. City of Homestead's Mayor Jeff Porter and Vice Mayor Patricia Fairclough also were on hand for the ribbon cutting and to present a proclamation to the Shahams and their staff.

"The Palace Group is a true player in this community. They entered into a partnership and have since become so much more than just another business coming to town," said Mayor Porter in presenting the proclamation and declaring Dec. 8 as "Palace Gardens Day" in Homestead.

Vice Mayor Patricia Fairclough echoed his remarks by adding, "It's amazing to be in paradise. The Palace is engaged in what we're doing in Homestead. Congrats on such a 'grand' opening."

Recognizing the growing needs of seniors who wish to remain in the communities where they have resided, this resort-like facility is the Shaham's most recent business accomplishment, replacing an existing Palace Gardens rebuilt after Hurricane Andrew.

"It is a continuing mission of The Palace Group to incorporate advanced methods of care that are constantly improving congregate living," said Jacob Shaham, president of The Palace Group. "We want to make the experiences of our residents and their families the best they can truly be and exceed what is found elsewhere."

The \$36 million community brings much-needed luxury memory-care residential living to Homestead as well as assisted living in a casual, tropical paradise. A total of 201 private studio apartments are in the community, ide-



Helen and Jacob Shaham (center, cutting ribbon) are renowned for their leadership in caring for seniors.

(Photo by Shay Cohen)

ally located on a 10-acre site across from Baptist Health South Florida's Homestead Hospital.

Residences range from beautifully decorated private studios to one-bedroom apartments that are fully furnished with window treatments. They also have a 24-hour emergency call system, daily maid service, personal laundry, and pets are welcome.

Health-related services include assistance with dressing, bathing, feeding, grooming, ambulation, and personal care. They offer supervision of medications, licensed nurses on duty, and a supervised fitness center.

Residents enjoy breakfast, lunch and dinner served in the beautiful dining rooms, continental breakfast for those who like to sleep late, and room service when medically necessary.

There is a wide range of social activities at The Palace Gardens. Residents enjoy diversified social, cultural, and recreational programming specifically designed for those with cognitive impairment, as well as special parties, outings, and holiday celebrations. There's a gated, zero-entry heated pool with water exercise classes, an ice cream parlor, free Wi-Fi in common areas, a full-service beauty salon, and religious services are available.

Of course The Palace Gardens has 24-hour manned security, but also offers a "Wander Guard" alert system that allows those with memory impairment and other at-risk residents the ability to move freely about the facility.

"We started The Palace Gardens 35 years ago as Calderwood Lodge," Shaham said. "We created our reputation and image there. And so this new community is not by accident. Our goal was to create the best assisted living and memory care community in the state of Florida."

The vision for The Palace Group is to specialize in senior living and provide the very best in care for seniors and their families. They have since have become a paradigm in senior living communities, with accolades from industry, business, consumers, and media for their leadership in caring for our nation's seniors in the Florida area.

They continue to realize their dream.

Today, the company is one of South Florida's leading privately held companies specializing in senior housing and care with communities serving over 1,400 residents and 1,100 employees. The Palace Group also plans to open its ninth senior living community in the Florida area, in Broward county next year.

The Palace communities have received many industry accolades including six "Gold" Awards in the 2014 Best of 50-plus Housing Awards competition from the National Association of Home Builders' 50-plus Housing Council for The Palace Coral Gables. Opened in 2013, the community is a partnership with the City of Coral Gables and offers 243 apartments including 198 one-bedroom and two-bedroom residences for independent living, and an additional 45 apartments designated for assisted living with special services. The Palace Coral Gables also was selected as the "Best 50-Plus Independent Community" in the country.

Additionally, The Palace Group has been awarded prestigious accreditation by the Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities (CARF) for The Palace Renaissance and Royale in Kendall and The Palace Gardens in Homestead. The accreditation is similar to a five-star rating in the hospitality industry.

The new Palace Gardens is located at 3100 Campbell Dr., Homestead, FL 33033. For information, call 305-247-0446 or visit <www.ThePalace.org>.



The common areas at The Palace Gardens are uncommonly beautiful and tastefully furnished.

(Photo by Bill Kress)