

ORCHARD MANOR, INC.

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Ms. Mona Henglesberg
UHL Construction Co., Inc.
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Diane E. Robinson
Administrator

Dear Mona:

On behalf of the Board of Directors, Residents and staff, I am pleased to provide input for the submission of Orchard Manor's Expansion/Renovation Project to the Master Builders Association's "2003 Building Excellence Award." Our project was especially challenging in that as a Skilled Nursing Facility, all work had to be carried out safely while the Nursing Home maintained twenty-four hour per day operation, including new admissions throughout the project, without compromising our high standard of care, as well as while adhering to Resident's Rights and all pertinent regulations. In reviewing the Master Builders Association's criteria, I would like to share the following:

Design and Craftsmanship: The renovation portion of the project included remodeling an institutional hallway into *Sunshine Way*, our homey, cheerful and functional Alzheimer's/Dementia Unit, transforming four antiquated central shower rooms into comfortable, dignified bathing rooms while meeting stringent State and Federal regulations, eliminating two enclosed porches to expand solaria, updating the Nurse's Stations to accommodate increased staff, additional work areas and compliance with the new HIPAA laws and forming existing spaces into offices. The new construction included a round room for *Sunshine Way*, a three-stall garage, addition to the boiler room, new offices, a Multi-Purpose Room, a huge central Supply and Storage area and a Personal Care Residence, complete with a beautiful Dining Area and Kitchenette, spacious Living Room, Bathing Room and sunny Outdoor/Recreational Space. The Resident Rooms were found to be so pleasing and spacious to licensing agencies that instead of licensing for fourteen beds as planned, the Personal Care has been licensed to accommodate twenty-four Residents. Naturally many issues and concerns arose during the project, especially with the renovated areas. Each issue and every concern was addressed and resolved with the best interest of the Residents and Orchard Manor consistently the top priorities. As you know, the "experts" in Alzheimer's care who have toured *Sunshine Way* are both impressed and thrilled that Orchard Manor is able to provide a much-needed service with such a functional and original design. Furthermore, the words "elegant" and "beautiful" are common responses during the many tours conducted through the Personal Care Residence, as one stands in awe of the oak trim and breath-taking light fixtures, to name but a few of the area's highlights.

Excellence in Project Teamwork: Both Residents and staff made many friends during project. All the "players" in the project became members of the Orchard Manor team as familiarity turned into genuine, mutual concern between the Residents, families, staff and construction workers. Often times I witnessed an electrician giving a "progress report" to a Resident who had been presented with a hardhat or a Plumber who rearranged his schedule so a Resident could occupy a Bathing Room without having his routine interrupted. Carpenters, Drywallers, Painters and other laborers planned their tasks for the day around Resident's mealtimes and other activities, including daily events and our annual picnic. Uhl Construction, as well as subcontractors, went to great time and expense to partition off areas so that noise and dust levels were kept to a minimum and to ensure that areas were hazard-free. Extensive planning and coordination were necessary on a daily basis for outside work, such as new parking areas, paving, digging, etc. so that staff and visitors were given advance notice and explicit instructions for changes in parking and temporary entrances. Although many issues were discussed and planned during our weekly construction meetings, a large percentage of the successful orchestration of the project was carried out daily between construction workers and Orchard Manor staff.

Innovation in Construction Techniques or Materials: Perhaps one of the most innovative and skillfully challenging parts of the project was the Round Room on *Sunshine Way*. The creation of the Round Room is a profound example of the attention given to the owner, the desire of everyone involved to meet the Resident's needs and the flexibility and creativity of the designers and builders. A request was submitted to the Architect, after the project was underway, to add a round room at the end of the hall on *Sunshine Way*. The request included that the Round Room be constructed so that it would have as many windows as feasible to give Residents an open, airy feeling of freedom and reality in as pleasant and safe a manner as possible. After that request had been met and the Round Room was being constructed, we again asked that a change be made to create a high, unique ceiling, as opposed to a regular, eight-foot ceiling. "Magnificent" is a common response from those who enter the Round Room, which included many challenges such as efficient and effective heating, air conditioning, video surveillance, lighting and sound systems. In fact, one of the biggest challenges the team encountered was the circular handrail found in the Round Room which meets it's purpose in providing assistance to those who need it, as well as compliance with State and Federal regulations. The design of the Round Room is surpassed only by it's interior which includes a tastefully simple décor of wood trimmed windows and sandstone "slate" ceramic tile.

Meeting the Challenge of a Difficult Job: During construction, the PA Department of Health, including both the Nursing Facilities and Life Safety Divisions, conducted numerous inspections, as did the PA Department of Public Welfare, Mercer County Area Agency on Aging and OSHA. As Orchard Manor is a non-profit Nursing Home, budgetary issues were constant and were discussed openly and honestly, as team members strived to make the best possible decisions efficiently. More often than not, "What would you do if this were your home?" became the deciding factor in doing things economically as well as correctly. Again, I cannot stress enough the success with which everyone met the challenge of ongoing operation during every minute of construction.

Excellence in Client/Service/Customer Satisfaction: While the true measure of success will be whether or not Orchard Manor reaches and maintains full occupancy and provides care to our Residents as we would wish that care to be provided to each of us if we were in need, we have certainly been given the physical environment to meet that goal. The Expansion/Renovation Project that had taken over ten years to evolve through careful analysis and planning by the Independent Order of Odd Fellows and Rebekahs who sponsor the Home, the Board of Directors which is comprised of Odd Fellows and Rebekahs and the Administrative staff, and more than a year to develop with the input of staff members at all levels, became a reality for Orchard Manor. In fact, the project was of great magnitude to us in not only monetary terms, but also as a risk we viewed as necessary for success. For many of us it was the first time for such involvement in a construction project and we will always value the knowledge we gained from the individuals involved in the project and from the project as a whole. We are pleased with the results of our efforts. Believe me, deciding on the Round Room as the focus for the *Innovation* criteria was a difficult decision in itself, when considering the many points of interest such as the beautiful peaked roofs, efficient design and construction of offices and storage space to truly meet our facility needs, new lighting throughout all hallways and Resident rooms, the landscaping completed, as well as the possibilities for future lavishness with flowers and greenery and updated plumbing and electrical services. In addition, I would be remiss if I didn't mention the attention and effort given by so many to the exact coordination with new and existing brick color and design!

There are many additional facets of the project that have not been addressed in my letter which were successfully completed during construction, such as the installation of new HVAC units, Uhl Construction's assistance with financing issues and the adaptation and continuation of work from summer to fall to winter to spring weather conditions. The rain this year certainly tested the retention pond, roof, gutters, etc.! We are pleased with the outcome of our project and feel that our success is a direct result of the people involved in the planning, design, coordination and building of our beautiful new facility. The Board of Directors is confident that the right decision was made in its selection of Ligo Architects and Uhl Construction, and the various subcontractors. Our staff members are happy with their new facilities and most importantly; our Residents are pleased with their "new" Home.

Sincerely,



Diane Robinson, NHA
Administrator