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ALMOST TWO CENTURIES OF MARRIAGE

THREE MORNING POINTE COUPLES CELEBRATE THEIR ANNIVERSARIES WITHIN DAYS OF EACH OTHER

CHATTANOOGA, TN- April 2011- 193 years of marriage! Three couples, three anniversaries, all within a few days of each other— together they joined with family and friends to celebrate and remember at their home at Morning Pointe Assisted Living and the Lantern Alzheimer's/Memory Care community of Chattanooga.

The senior living community on Shallowford road looked more like a decorated banquet hall, filled with flowers, wedding photos , sparkling cider, the sounds of music and of course a three-tiered wedding cake. All three couples sat at the head table, smiling, laughing and toasting to decades and decades of marriage.

Darcina and Donald Hale celebrated 69 years of marriage on April 23rd. They met at a party when she was just 16. And, throughout their almost seventy years of marriage, Darcina says Donald has always done little things, like bringing her flowers to make her happy. But for her, that wasn't her favorite part. "Cuddling up on the couch after supper," she adds with a smile, was. Darcina felt her days started when Donald got home from work in the afternoon, "he would get down on the floor and let the kids climb all over him," she recalls fondly.

Laura and Cleatis Blevins celebrated 65 years of marriage on the 21st of April. They met as freshmen in high school. And Laura says it nearly killed Cleatis when she was transferred to another school her senior year. Without a bike and living in different cities, their love was shared in letters. They dated through the mail. And, when Cleatis decided to propose, Laura says he hitchhiked to her home. He told me he wanted to marry me but he didn't have much money. I told him, "that's alright, I'll marry you anyway," smiling, Laura recalls the special proposal. She says she has always felt loved by Cleatis. Together they have had many adventures. They have lived in Zambia for five years, traveled to Israel, Scotland and many more places. Running her fingers over her wedding rings on her necklace, she says her favorite part of being married was just having someone to love.

Van and Emma Jean Robinson celebrated 59 years of marriage on April 19th. They met at a social and married a year later. "I just liked him. I loved him. He was my friend," says Emma. Van says one of his favorite things about being married is having a partner and doing things together. They raised four children and love to talk about their favorite family vacations. Their marriage advice to others, don't think about yourself as an 'I' but as a 'We'. "Marriage is give and take," says Van. "One day it's 50/50 another day it's 90/10 – you aren't always going to agree. Sometimes you have to sacrifice what you want for the other person," explains Van. For Emma, it's making time for just each other. Even, 59 years ago, they made it a point to have date nights. She says, Van would buy her flowers and take her on little weekend trips.

"It was such a wonderful and emotional afternoon," says Dana Smith, life enrichment director for Morning Pointe of Chattanooga. "We loved throwing the anniversary party for the couples and being a big part of their special day," adds Smith. A representative from Walgreens also helped capture the celebration for each of the couples and plan to create special memory books of the momentous occasion.

Independent Healthcare Properties, LLC, a Chattanooga, Tenn.-based senior healthcare services company, develops and manages Morning Pointe® assisted living and The Lantern Alzheimer's/Memory Care Center of Excellence communities and has 17 communities in five southern states including locations in Collegedale and Hixson. Founded in 1996 by regional healthcare entrepreneurs, Greg A. Vital and Franklin Farrow, the company's portfolio also includes Greenbriar Cove master planned retirement community and commercial real estate. For more information, please visit www.morningpointe.com or www.seegreenbriarcove.com.