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Independent Senior Housing

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Classic Cars with passion

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25 years of quality senior living

Realife Cooperative provides low-maintenance housing for the nearly-independent

By **NICOLE BILLING**
Editorial Assistant

Realife Cooperative is a housing development in Waseca for people 62 years and older and has been in operation since the late 1980s. It celebrated its 25th anniversary on August 1, 2014.

The facility is for people who can be independent and can do things mostly on their own. Most of the people living there do their own cooking, while some of them receive Meals on Wheels.

There are 22 rooms at the facility; three with two bedrooms and laundry; 13 with two bedrooms; and six with one bedroom. Currently 21 rooms are occupied with one two-bedroom unit up for sale. Five people have paid to be on a waiting list so far, but most are not ready to leave their house yet.

“During my time of being here, we have only been full approximately nine months,” stated Caryn Wendt, housing director. “There are people who have been living here for over 20 years.”

The building has a board of five members: president, vice president, secretary, and two directors who meet once a month, every fourth Thursday, to discuss business.

Each person actually owns their own unit, paying around \$30,000 for it. The only thing they have to pay utility wise in the unit is the phone and Internet charge. There is a laundry room on each end of the building that people can use free of charge. The facility is mostly maintenance free, with someone doing lawn care and snow removal. If members of the facility would like to paint the walls of their unit, they will have to do so at their own expense, as well as cover the expense of painting the walls and cleaning the carpet after they move out. The facility has 14 garages located inside the building. They are planning to build eight more that will be located outside. The garage deposit is \$1,500 with a monthly fee of



NEARLY INDEPENDENT – Realife Cooperative housing director Caryn Wendt is proud to enable people to stay independent and even put up guests.

Star Eagle photo by Nicole Billing

\$45 on top of it.

The Realife building was first thought of back in 1986, with waiting lists starting to appear in February of 1987. In the beginning of 1989, they began construction, and the building finally was able to move in to on August 1, 1989. Standard features are single level conveniences, basic cable television, water, heat and trash included, air conditioner, and a separate storage space. Common area amenities are a social room with full kitchen for events, guest bedroom for out of town vis-

itors for \$20/night, whirlpool room, craft/exercise room, onsite coinless laundry, and a library. There are monthly social events for members and they are also able to sign up on a sheet for any event they want to hold in the room. The guest bedroom holds up to four people and has a TV, dressers, closet, and a private bathroom.

“It’s cheaper than staying at a hotel, and they are able to be with their families longer,” said Wendt.

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Passionate about vintage cars

Steve, Doris, and Dennis Stadheim of S&S Motorsports are world popular 'go-to' people for classic vehicles

By TROY THOMPSON
Contributing Writer

Sitting with Steve and Doris Stadheim of S&S Motorsports, the couple can easily pick out specific memories from the many used cars they've sold and owned through their business located between Ellendale and Hope. And they speak passionately about them.

"We actually went for a ride in that one," says Doris when asked about a 1967 Amphicar listed on their website. It was the weirdest thing. We took it for a cruise around Clear Lake in Waseca. You should have seen the looks from the people driving by on the old Highway 14."

And when she says they took it for a "cruise around the lake," she literally means they were cruising "in" the lake. There were only 4,000 Amphicars ever built. It was an amphibious convertible-top roadster made in Germany and designed to go from highway to water complete with dual propellers on the back.

S&S Motorsports isn't your typical 'used car' lot. In fact, it's not even a 'lot.' The business operates out of two pristinely-kept farmsteads separated by only a few miles along a quiet, rural stretch of County Road 82 in Steele County.

"It started in the late sixties when we were actively farming the properties," said Steve Stadheim.

Now, together with their son and Company President, Darren, S&S Motorsports buys, repairs, sells and consigns classic vehicles for customers all over the world.

"My grandfather and mom were both car people," says Stadheim. "I can tell you every car my parents ever had, and they were all Chevy's."

Stadheim's passion for cars traces back to a '55 Chevy his parents had when he was 15.

"I still have the last car they ever bought, too," he said.

Stadheim recalls the first car he ever restored - a '62 Corvette - and says he's been in love with the iconic sports car ever since.

"I just think they're cool," he says, smiling. "I really like them."

Members of a Corvette Club, both Steve and Doris fondly tell of their many weekends spent at car shows over the years.

That passion and experience was passed down to their son, Darren, who now stores the bulk of S&S Motorsports' inventory on his property two miles south from his parents.



A CAR BUILT FOR MINNESOTA – Steve Stadheim (in passenger seat) enjoys a spin on Clear Lake in a 1967 Amphicar, made in Germany. Submitted photo

"His first restoration was an S-10 Baja," said Stadheim of his son, Darren. "There were very few of them ever made. He then traded that for a red '84 Corvette when he was sixteen. He drove the same car as the New Richland School Superintendent at the time. He was working in our shop and helping to run the farm as a way to put himself through college. He's now one of the few people I know that's actually making a living doing what they went to school for."

Darren went to college for auto body and continued on to earn his degree in business management. That has helped to grow S&S Motorsports into an international family affair.

In the past year, the Stadheims have helped buyers from all over the country, as well as in Canada, Norway, Belgium Sweden and Australia all connect with the cars of their dreams. And it's that passion for classic automobiles that helps reward the family for their work.

"I remember the time a guy flew in from Denver," says Doris. "He wanted to buy the exact car his wife had earlier in her life and we had that same silver and black Corvette. He was tickled pink. And then there was a guy that bought a '68 Roadrunner from us as a present for his dad for Father's Day. That's cool stuff to be able to help people with that. That's the really fun part, help-

ing people and seeing them get their dream cars."

"People want the cars they grew up with," says Steve. "We can help them find those and when they're happy, we get repeat business. We just sold a Corvette to a really nice gentlemen for his 70th birthday. He probably could've afforded one sooner, but he wanted one at this stage of his life. It was really fun to see him get it."

The business opened up a traditional car lot in Owatonna in the recent past and operated that location for about five years, but they say it became too much like a typical used car business and they decided to revert back to their idyllic locations in the country with the advent of the Internet.

"The internet has really helped our exposure all over the world," says Steve. "But honestly, we've been doing it for so long and gotten to know so many people, that people come to us with their cars."

Stadheim says they used to travel all over and go to auctions to find the rare and classic vehicles they specialize in. Now, those vehicles find them.

"We obtained a yellow 1940 LaSalle that was absolutely gorgeous," he said. "It had been sitting



MOST LOVED – Steve stands proudly by an example of the popular and indestructible 1964 Chevy Impala. All the S&S cars are personal projects. Star Eagle photo by Troy Thompson

■ S&S Motor

from Page 4

in a garage for fifty years and someone called us up and said, ‘you have to come take this.’”

He still has a poster of the car, and a trophy he won with the car sits prominently behind Doris’ desk.

Nowadays, Darren, sharing the same passion and love of cars, is taking over more and more of the business. Steve says the Corvette sitting in pieces in his shop is the last restoration project he’s going to undertake, and much of the mechanical work for their vehicles is currently being farmed out to Certified Mechanics in New Richland.

“We don’t have the time to go to all of the shows on the weekends anymore, and it’s getting more difficult to work on the cars themselves,” says Steve. “We used to go every weekend, now we focus more on spending a lot of time with the grandkids.”

Stadheim is eager to show off the prizes that sit on the other side of the window from their small office.

A 1947 Packard Clipper Limousine is first in line.

“She’s something else,” says Stadheim, giving the unique vehicle a loving scan. “Look at that interior.”

He’s also quick to travel the two miles south to Darren’s shed and lift up the cloth car covers for a quick peek at the memories underneath.

Among the treasures are a ‘69 Chevelle Malibu, a ‘67 Ford Mustang Coupe, a ‘69 Plymouth Roadrunner and a ‘32 Chevy Confederate.

Of course, being a Corvette man, he saves the best for last.

“This is a 1957 Corvette Convertible,” he says, drifting off into a happy place as he peels back the draping a quarter of the way off.

The car is a startling onyx black with silver Inca core and Venetian red interior. The front chrome grill sparkles with confidence and quality.

“Isn’t she something?” asks Stadheim, again exuding a love and passion for his work.

You can learn more about S&S Motorsports by visiting their website at www.ssmotorportsowatonna.com, or calling 507-455-0850.

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New technologies are helping more seniors age-in-place

(StatePoint) Nearly 90 percent of people 50 years old and up want to remain at home as long as possible, according to a recent AARP study.

If you have an aging parent or grandparent, having a discussion about his or her alternatives is important. But remember, it can be a sensitive subject, especially when he or she has lived in the same place for a long time. So before broaching the issue, be sure you understand all the options that might allow for aging-in-place at home.

"If you're considering an assisted living facility for a loved one, make sure you look at new technologies first to see if you can help he or she remain independent, secure and connected from the comfort of home," says Walt Podsiadlak, Health and Wellness Sales Manager at Linear LLC, a leading provider of wired and wireless security technology for seniors.

This starts by discussing the greatest challenges your loved one faces, such as mobility, personal care and meals, and determining what kind of technology or service addresses those specific needs.

One of the most widely used technologies by individuals aging-in-place are personal emergency reporting systems



Personal emergency reporting systems provide push-button emergency reporting, plus an activity timer can alert others, and personal alarms can be set for appointments and medication times.

(PERS), that can send for help in an emergency, amongst other functions. PERS devices have made significant leaps since TV commercials first popularized them in the 1980s. For example, new systems like the Linear PERS-4200 console still connect a wrist or necklace pendant to a central monitoring station for push-button emergency reporting, but useful new features have also been

added.

Here are some features to look for and consider when picking the right PERS technology:

- Temperature sensors can provide alerts to update central stations of hazardous conditions.
- An activity timer can be programmed to send a signal if a preset amount of time elapses before either an activity

transmitter is triggered or the console's "home" button is pressed.

- Audible reminder messages can be set on a recurring schedule to highlight doctor's visits, when medication should be taken or even social activities.

- Some consoles can serve as speaker phones, allowing for convenient communication.

- Take note of the range between a transmitter and a console. For example, if your mom likes to garden, be sure the range of the PERS is wide enough to include the yard.

- Transmitters can be wristbands, pendants, belt attachments or even appear as jewelry. Discuss what would serve your loved one most conveniently.

- Consider the battery life of the transmitter and if it's waterproof.

- As for cost, users should expect to pay an installation fee, and a monthly PERS monitoring charge. PERS device repair and replacement policies should also be considered.

More information can be found at www.LinearCorp.com.

Aging-in-place technology is truly shaping the future for seniors. Before making any major decisions, look into all your options.

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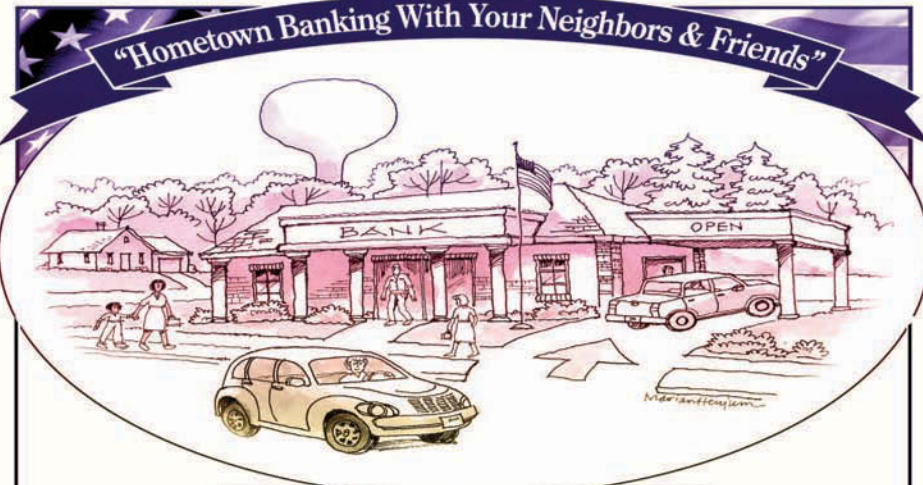
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