



Press release: 1-24-07

## PINES VILLAGE AND PARKS DEPARTMENT PARTNER TO SERVE OLDER ADULTS

“It is my pleasure to announce that Pines Village Retirement Communities, Inc. (PVRC) and the Valparaiso Parks and Recreation Department (VPRD) have formed a partnership to provide older adult services for the residents of the greater Valparaiso community. This partnership will bring a public and a private organization together to enhance the quality of life for older adults,” said Laurie Mullet, chief executive officer for PVRC.

VPRD is responsible for 19 different park lands representing both community and neighborhood parks that provide year-round programs for people of all ages. For older adults, it operates the Banta Activity Center.

PVRC, a nonprofit retirement community, has been the leading provider of housing with services in Valparaiso since 1983. It offers apartments with services on the Pines Village campus and homes with services on the Meridian Woods campus. Additionally, it owns and operates Campbell St. Café. The café is a unique combination: a public restaurant welcoming all ages and a community center for older adults.

“There is a growing interest in aging successfully,” said Steve Doniger, VPRD director. “We need to find ways to offer comprehensive support systems that address the physical, emotional, social, spiritual, intellectual and vocational needs of older adults. That’s why we are partnering with Pines Village; they are the experts in providing older adult services.”

The two organizations will work together to make Valparaiso an “ElderStyle” community. “Focus groups have revealed that people want to remain in their own homes as they age. That’s why we want to create a community that promotes this lifestyle and have coined the term, ‘ElderStyle’,” said Mullet.

To create the “ElderStyle” community, VPRD and PVRC have established three initiatives as the focus of the partnership. January 1, 2007, PVRC assumed all responsibility for managing the Banta Activity Center. Next, VPRD will create public parks on the Pines Village and Meridian Woods campuses where intergenerational activities can take place. And for the third initiative, the two organizations will assess services and establish and coordinate a referral network of programs and services for older adults.

“We want Valparaiso to be a community where people live vibrantly as they grow older,” said Mullet. “By working with the Parks Department we hope to help older adults achieve this goal. Our overall mission is to offer older adults a network of community choices to live well. The possibilities are endless; this is a very exciting venture for both of our organizations.”