

# 25 Years: ElderSpan Management



Clockwise from left: Pine Glen Senior Apartments, Prairie du Sac, WI; David Griffin, president and CEO with parents Greg and Carol Griffin, ElderSpan founders; residents on a pontoon ride with David Griffin.

## Breaking New Ground in Assisted Living Services

The roots of ElderSpan Management LLC reach back to the early 1990s, when Greg and Carol Griffin — a hospital administrator and a registered nurse, respectively — were seeking residential options for Carol's mother, Louise Kionka, who was battling Parkinson's disease. Not finding what they were looking for, they created a new resident-centered and health-care focused assisted living model by opening The Pines in Prairie du Sac in 1995.

"There were two key elements my parents implemented in that first location, and that we have replicated in all our subsequent locations. The first was to build a place that felt more like home," says David Griffin, Louise's grandson who is now owner and president of ElderSpan. "Back then, assisted living was still in its infancy, and many skilled nursing homes had a sterile, institutional feel to them."

The second factor that distinguishes ElderSpan-managed residences is the dedication to ensuring oversight by a licensed nurse.

"That made the most sense to my parents," Griffin says. "The primary reason they got into this business is because they thought other assisted living residences at the time were not taking the right staffing approach."

Apparently, others felt the same way, as The Pines "became very successful very quickly, and my parents decided to develop similar residences in other communities in southwest and south-central Wisconsin," says Griffin, who has a degree in human resources and management from the Wisconsin School of Business at UW-Madison and worked

briefly in the health insurance industry before joining the family business in 1996.

They established a Madison-based headquarters to oversee accounting, payroll, and other administrative logistics, allowing facility staff to focus on providing care through the company's stated values of compassion, integrity, honesty, stewardship, innovation, and excellence.

ElderSpan has become a premier senior living services company that partners with hospitals, nonprofit organizations, and private individuals to develop and manage seven senior living campuses in Baraboo, Dodgeville, Lancaster, Madison, Platteville, Prairie du Sac, and Spring Green. All told, the company provides living and care options to nearly 650 residents with its workforce of approximately 370 staff members.

The recently expanded All Saints Neighborhood in Madison opened in 2004 and is the largest property ElderSpan manages. With over 300 units of independent, assisted, and memory care living options, All Saints is owned by Catholic Charities of Madison and is a perfect example of the partnerships ElderSpan has with other organizations.

In true family business nature, Greg and Carol Griffin remain active in the senior living business, with both still maintaining offices at ElderSpan's location on Darwin Road. Two of David's sisters work at the company, and he says his own children show interest in possibly one day joining ElderSpan. That would keep everything in the family, just the way it began.