



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

THE SOUTHERLANDS AND WARREN COUNTY FIRE AND RESCUE PARTICIPATE IN FULL EVACUATION OF SENIOR LIVING COMMUNITY

October 26, 2010 -- In conjunction with the Warren County Fire and Rescue Dept, The Southerlands held a full mock evacuation drill of their community. The drill coordinated by The Southerlands management and Lieutenant Gerry Maiatico with Warren County Fire and Rescue included multiple personnel, trucks and rescue vehicles to simulate a true evacuation experience. The purpose of the exercise was to advocate a true emergency in order to give staff, residents of The Southerlands, and the WCFR an idea of logistical needs, concerns and expectations. Because of the secrecy, all staff and residents were taken by surprise and forced to react to a building filled with artificial smoke. All parties experienced the chaos that comes with a true emergency and how each organization's fire plan and evacuation procedure works. WCFR is hopeful other senior living organizations will take advantage of similar training opportunities for the benefit of their residents.

“This was a true learning experience for not only the staff and residents of the Southerlands Community but also the Fire and Rescue Staff,” stated Fire Chief Richard E. Mabie, “this was as real as we could get without actually having a true fire incident, the way the staff and residents acted and operated was above expectation. The total building was evacuated in less than 3 minutes and all residents and staff remained calm throughout the process. It was not until the drill was complete and everyone was told it was a test did they realize it was not real.”

The Southerlands is locally owned and operated and is a registered Continuing Care Community with the Commonwealth of Virginia. In addition to serving the active adult and senior community of the Shenandoah Valley, members of The Southerland's staff strive to play active roles within the community in areas such as Rotary and various religious and civic organizations.

(History: The Southerlands Retirement Community opened in 1996 by three local businessmen, Courtney Carbaugh, Gray Blanton, and Dr. James Williams, as the first continuing care retirement community for residents of Warren County and surrounding areas. It has been the number one choice for carefree, comfortable retirement living with its services, amenities, and scenic location. “The Southerlands is more than a home. It is a family.”)

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