

Durham Provides Retirement Haven for UNH Alumni

By *Maggie Paine*

UNH Alumni Association

DURHAM, N.H. -- The University of New Hampshire Alumni Association and the developers of a Durham retirement community have formed an innovative partnership to provide retirement housing to UNH alumni who want to live near the UNH campus, Ernie Gale, executive director of the alumni association, announced today.

The partnership is similar to affinity programs that UNH and other universities across the country operate with credit card and other financial services companies. Such popular programs provide competitively priced services to alumni and revenue to support alumni associations.

Thousands of retirement-age alumni live within a few hours of Durham, Gale said. "When we look at this type of program, we want to see a quality product that can meet the needs of our members," he explained. "We worked with Spruce Wood to develop this program because we feel that Durham is a great place for people to retire—especially for UNH alumni." vSpruce Wood developer Jack Farrell, who graduated from UNH in 1977, agrees. "We could spend our money trying to attract potential residents in lots of different ways," he explained. "By using the affinity approach, we get a double bang for our dollar because we get the exposure we need, and the university gets a new revenue source."

Gale points to the success of joint ventures between universities and retirement communities in Pennsylvania, Florida, Massachusetts and other states. Retired people want to be in places that are intellectually stimulating and provide activities and ways to stay connected, according to Gale. "If you think about it," he said, "with all the things there are to do here, can you imagine a better place to spend your retirement than in a university setting?"

Spruce Wood at Durham is a planned-unit retirement community under construction on a wooded site on Mill Road just 1.5 miles from UNH and Durham's business district. The 157 units currently proposed will be built in phases.

The first phase consists of a clustered community of cottage-style condominiums, each with two bedrooms and two bathrooms. The units are designed for independent, active adults 55 years and older. Features include barrier-free, single-floor, low maintenance living with on-line security and fire-suppression sprinklers. In-home health care and housekeeping can be arranged. Units are available for sale now.

The second phase, now slated to begin construction in spring 2000, will include apartments and assisted living in a central facility that will be called the Inn at Spruce Wood.

Farrell plans to expand the connection between the community and UNH. He hopes to include transportation to events, offer customized courses, create retiree-student mentor programs and provide access to UNH research facilities and on-line services.

For more information, contact Farrell at (603) 742-0083 or Rob Hare, associate director of the Alumni Association, at (603) 862-1742. Spruce Wood is online at at www.Sprucewood.com..

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