



Coronavirus Won't Keep Two Friends from Continuing Two Decades of Birthday Celebrations

30-foot Construction Lift Will Reunite These Long-Time Friends on Tuesday

REDONDO BEACH, CA, April 6, 2020 -- Lucy Cavazos hasn't missed Margaret Jones' birthday in 20 years, but the coronavirus threatened to break that string. Enter a 30-foot construction lift. On Tuesday, this piece of equipment, normally used by construction workers in hardhats, will be re-purposed into an airborne birthday party with Lucy on its platform. It will raise her up to Margaret's second floor window from the courtyard of The Kensington Redondo Beach for a balloon-festooned 91st birthday celebration. The friends will use walkie-talkies to celebrate through the glass of Margaret's window, keeping their two-decade tradition alive. It may just be the most unique birthday celebration of their decades-long friendship.

Lucy, and Margie (as she calls her) have been friends since Lucy rented an apartment from her in 1994, despite a 44-year age difference. "Our friendship began almost from the beginning," recalls Lucy. Margie, a real estate investor, would drop by her tenants to make sure things were going well and the two women would talk and talk. "Margie never drove, so I started driving for her," recalls Lucy. "Then she asked me to look after the apartment building where I lived. Eventually I became the property manager for all of Margie's properties."

The relationship went far beyond a business one. "She is really like a second mother to me," says Lucy. "And when my two children were born, she became Grandmother to them."

The birthday tradition for the two women runs deep. "It started when I was working for her. Margie insisted that we celebrate each of our birthdays for the whole month," says Lucy. "So, April was her month and July was mine. Every day of my birthday month I'd come into the office and we'd go on a different adventure. I never knew where we'd be going to lunch. And everywhere we went she'd say, 'You know it's her birthday' and insist they sing Happy Birthday to me. She expected the same treatment during her birthday month."

Lucy had already purchased the pink and gold decorations for this year's celebration for Margie's 91st birthday, as well as ordering the cake and the cake topper well before the coronavirus changed everything. "Obviously, this is not what we planned," she says, but she's excited that she will be able to celebrate with Margie anyway. "I'll drop off the cake and the topper to the lobby so everyone inside can have a piece," she says." Then Lucy and her 25-year-old daughter, Amber, will climb aboard the construction lift that will take them to Margie's second floor window to add yet another birthday adventure to their list.

Creative family reunions have become the norm at The Kensington, an assisted living community near Los Angeles, since they closed their door to visitors on March 10 in response to the virus. "Coming up with innovative ways to keep families in touch has been a key part of keeping our residents happy and involved," says Robert May, The Kensington's Executive Director. "We have been allowing family members to visit residents on the first floor through our 'Courtyard Visit' program where they chat through the glass using walkie-talkies. But, the second-floor residents haven't had that luxury. The delivery of our new construction lift is about to change all that. We announced it on Friday night and the response has been overwhelming. Already families have signed up to take the airborne trip up to see their loved ones on the second floor. We are particularly excited that Margaret's 91st birthday celebration will be the first."

The lift arrives at the community today and workers will set about gathering the necessary safety gear to protect the anticipated airborne visitors. They will work round the clock to make sure the lift is ready for Margaret's birthday celebration on Tuesday. Other family visits will follow, allowing one or two visitors to make the trip up to see second-floor residents. A trained operator will raise them up for 15 to 30-minute visits.

"In the midst of this outbreak it feels good to bring some happiness to our community," says May. "Families and residents finally have a little something to celebrate. We are overjoyed to be able to keep Margaret and Lucy's two-decades-long tradition alive. It's going to be a great day for smiles. You might say that piece of construction equipment is about to give us all the lift we've all been needing."

About The Kensington Redondo Beach

[The Kensington Redondo Beach](#) is an assisted living and memory care residence community. The Kensington at Redondo Beach partners with HealthPRO® Heritage, to offer comprehensive rehab services, wellness opportunities, and health education. For more information go to: [TheKensingtonRedondoBeach.com](#)

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COVID-19 (Novel Coronavirus) Update:

4/1/2020

Since the first reports of the novel Coronavirus or COVID-19, our first and foremost concern, has been to keep our residents and team members safe. Our team took early action to confirm our infection control procedures and sanitation processes, and ensure we had available supplies on hand. We continue to adapt our procedures to align with the latest recommendations provided by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the LA County Department of Public Health.

Although these are evolving, a summary of our current responsive measures is listed below.

- Family visitation has been suspended with the only exception being end-of-life situations.
- We are keeping our residents and their families connected with video chat, phone calls and FaceTime sessions.
- We also introduced a new digital communication platform, Slack, that enables family members in various locations to connect with their loved one here at The Kensington. The platform allows a group conversation where instant messages, photos and videos can be shared.
- All elective medical visits have been rescheduled.
- We have canceled outings and group activities. We are keeping residents engaged with one on one activities and visits by our team.
- We are assisting residents with social distancing when they are out of their apartments.
- Residents who are able, are having their meals in their apartments. For those who can't safely eat in their apartment, we are providing staggered seating to ensure social distancing is maintained.

- We are reminding residents, and assisting as needed, with handwashing throughout the day.
- We have increased sanitizing within the community, particularly within high traffic areas.
- Deliveries are being made at outside entrances and retrieved by our team to distribute within the community.
- All non-essential services have been suspended.
- Team members are being monitored at the start of their shift, and again during their shift, for fever and respiratory symptoms. Anyone with symptoms is being sent home, able to use their PTO and asked to contact their physician. We are following CDC guidelines regarding return to work.
- Shelter in place accommodations are available for our team members and some have elected to stay with us.
- We are monitoring residents' temperatures on each shift and at the suggestion of our Medical Director, Dr. Haider, we are now monitoring each resident's O2 level.
- Our Care Managers and Nurses are using masks when completing care activities for every resident. All other team members in the community are wearing masks throughout their shift.
- Our team is following transmission precautions which includes masks, gowns, gloves and protective eye wear when caring for residents with COVID-19 and illnesses with other communicable symptoms.

We are working closely with the Los Angeles Department of Public Health and following their guidance. They have requested they be the central point for communication of Covid-19 cases so we direct you to their website: <http://publichealth.lacounty.gov>

In this challenging time, we thank you for all of the support we've received and ask for your continued understanding as we continue to do all we can to protect our residents and team members, and prevent community spread.

Sincerely,
The Kensington Senior Living Team