

# The Phyllis Siperstein Tamarisk Assisted Living Residence

## A Conversation With Sydelle

This month I would like to introduce everyone to Sydelle, a long-time resident of Tamarisk.

Q- How long have you lived at Tamarisk?

A- It has been 7 years now.

Q- In what way did moving to Tamarisk make your life easier?

A- I knew that it was time to give up the responsibilities related to owning my house.

Q- Do you miss anything about owning your house?

A- Not really. I especially do not miss cooking at all. I enjoy that all my meals are taken care of at Tamarisk.

Q- Did you have a hard adjustment moving to Tamarisk?

A- Not really. I did not know what to expect, but I was so happy with how the staff helped me acclimate. I have issues with my eyesight, so it was nice that they went out of their way to help me in every way possible.

Q- What are some of your favorite things to do at Tamarisk?

A- I enjoy the conversations with my friends in the dining room the most. I also enjoy visiting the country store.

Q- What advice would you give to someone thinking about moving into Tamarisk?

A- Mainly to accept receiving assistance when you need it. Do not be afraid of change.

Q- What would you like to say to your family?

A- I have the best family. They have always been so helpful. I love them for all that they do for me. I am very blessed to have them in my life.

For further information about Tamarisk, Director of Marketing and Outreach Susan Adler can be reached at (401) 732-0037 or [susana@tamariskri.org](mailto:susana@tamariskri.org).



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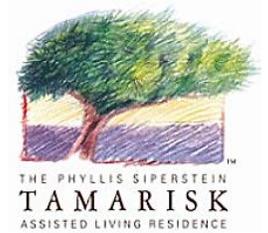


Sydelle enjoying one of Tamarisk's activities.

# Message From Our Executive Director



## *A Daughter's Perspective*



As most of you know, my mother is a resident at Tamarisk and as her 95<sup>th</sup> birthday fast approaches, I have a few sentiments and observations about her life here that I would like to share.

After my father passed away in 2001, my mom became the primary caregiver for my brother, Bruce who is disabled. While their relationship is a beautiful one and she has me, Roy, our daughters and the great grandkids around, her social circle and interaction with people her own age had become non-existent. She had become quiet and shy and very much homebound.

If not for several falls and broken bones resulting in a lengthy rehab stay, she may not have come to Tamarisk, but thankfully she made the move here nearly 18 months ago and both of our lives changed dramatically.

Mom's personality has blossomed! She has several friends and is very involved in the home theater programming, book club, wine and cheese nights and fireside chats with her buddies. She told me last week that she "feels like I'm back in high school laughing and gossiping with the girls!" She is eating well and getting her medication on time and says she has never felt better. She helps new residents settle in, visits with ones that aren't feeling well and has even given a tour to a perspective new resident. Mom still sees my brother whenever he is able to visit within COVID restrictions, but now she has new purpose and meaning in her life and for once, it's all about her!

As her daughter, this makes my heart sing! I know she is safe, and that someone is there for her 24/7 should she need assistance, but beyond all of this I see that funny, caring, gentle woman that once made her the favorite mom in our neighborhood. To be honest, I never would have predicted this! I owe it to the wonderful staff and residents at Tamarisk who brought her into the fold and encouraged her to let them spoil, entertain and care for her. As Mom so eloquently puts it, "No one wants to leave their home and come to an assisted living but, if I had known what I know now about Tamarisk, I wouldn't walk here, I'd run! This place is amazing!"

Happy Birthday Momma. I am so very proud of you and thank you for being such a stellar member of our extended Tamarisk family.

Sincerely,

**Roberta Ragge, MS ALA**  
**Executive Director**

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# Spotlight On Staff

## *Director of Resident Programming*

### **Jo-Ann Marzilli**

For the past 15 years, Jo-Ann Marzilli has been a loyal team member of Tamarisk. Her growth as an individual has been extraordinary to witness.

Jo-Ann began her journey as the dining room coordinator of Tamarisk. Her experience working in the food industry was a welcome addition to our team. With swift ease, Jo-Ann brought her touch to the dining room. She was professional with the staff and always welcomed the residents with a big smile to the dining room. Jo-Ann took great pride in that position and everyone at Tamarisk took note.

Soon thereafter, Jo-Ann promoted to the Director of Concierge Services and was in that role for 5 years. She did a phenomenal job organizing the drivers, appointments and resident requests. Her organizational and people skills really shined in this role. Once again, Jo-Ann's hard work was noticed and another promotion was on the horizon.

For the past nine years, Jo-Ann has been shining in her role as the Director of Resident Programming. Her activities are varied and meet the needs of all our residents. Shirley Z, a long-time resident of Tamarisk reflects on the following about Jo-Ann. "I enjoy the activities offered at Tamarisk. I appreciate how Jo-Ann listens to me and knows me so well. She knows which activities I like to attend. I am grateful for all that she does."

Jo-Ann's creativity is of no surprise to anyone. She worked for eleven years at Calart Flowers and even opened up a small business called JW Creations. Jo-Ann has always provided the best theme dinners and activities at Tamarisk. We are always anxious to see what she creates next.

Jo-Ann has created a family like atmosphere among all of our residents. "The residents are like my family. I enjoy having the opportunity to be creative for them," Jo-Ann said about her job. With 100% certainty, we all know that Jo-Ann has created a well-rounded library of activities that meet all of our resident's needs!

Executive Director Roberta Ragge had the following to say about Jo-Ann. "Jo-Ann really shined during this pandemic. She came up with creative ways to conduct activities and adjusted her calendar at a whims notice. This was no easy task, however Jo-Ann stepped right up to the plate making sure our residents never felt alone. We are all extremely proud of her."

Thank you Jo-Ann for being a wonderful Tamarisk team member!



**Jo-Ann Marzilli**

**Director of Resident Programming**

# Family Testimonial

I am writing to express my gratitude to the management and staff of The Phyllis Siperstein Tamarisk Assisted Living Residence. In February of 2021, my 90-year-old father and 86-year-old mother contracted the SARS-CoV 2 virus. My parents were living alone in a free-standing home and became very ill requiring several hospitalizations as well as a post-acute COVID placement. They were medically unstable, and my mother's previously diagnosed dementia necessitated further placement. I was living in Illinois and along with my brother (also out of state), had to manage their care from a distance.

I turned to a longstanding high school friend, Roberta Ragge, MS ALA, who happened to be the Executive Director of Tamarisk. In the middle of a pandemic, where placement was a challenge, she was truly a caring advocate and a valuable resource. My mother was transferred from the hospital first, and then my father followed. The transfers went smoothly.

They were placed in temporary respite care and then mom moved to Renaissance Memory Care and dad to traditional Assisted Living at Tamarisk. This presented certain challenges as they were functioning at different levels. At every step of the way, their medical, psychological, physical, nutritional and spiritual integrity were top priorities of the entire staff and they have begun to recover, stabilize and thrive, each at their own pace, in their own individual way.

My mother has found new friends, loves the food, and is participating in a wide range of stimulating activities. My father received physical therapy for reconditioning, enjoys newfound dining partners and friends, and is encouraged to visit my mother and continue their relationship in a way which is therapeutic to both of them. His medical follow-up was attended to and Roberta and the staff nurses, therapists, and aides made sure he received the medical management, specialist visits, and transportation needed to allow for optimal post-acute and ongoing care.

I would highly recommend Tamarisk to anyone searching for highly skilled, kind and compassionate care of their loved one.



Dr. Patricia A. Pimental  
President and CEO  
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