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**For More Information, contact:**

Shelene Treptow            or  
The Hauser Group, Inc.  
(314) 436-9090

Ann Bannes  
St. Andrew's Senior Solutions  
(314) 726-5766



### **A TALE OF TWO DOROTHIES**

*Long-time St. Andrew's Senior Solutions home care personal assistants serve as shining examples of active older adults who are dedicated to serving their fellow seniors*

**ST. LOUIS, MO., OCT. 8, 2009 . . .** At 80 and 81-years-old, respectively, St. Andrew's Senior Solutions' employees Dorothy Harris and Dorothy Thomas don't yet consider retirement to be an option. Working as home care personal assistants for the organization, the women are committed to providing top-notch, high-quality home care services to their older adult clients. Each remains an integral part of the St. Andrew's staff, and serve as role models for other able-bodied seniors in the region who are choosing to remain in the workforce well past traditional retirement age. On Oct. 13, St. Andrew's recognized their dedicated efforts with a special celebration attended by representatives from St. Louis City and County who presented the women with proclamations declaring the day to be "Seniors Serving Seniors Day" and St. Andrew's Senior Solutions "Seniors Serving Seniors Day" in the region, respectively.

"As the senior population continues to grow, it will become increasingly important for active older adults to step up and take on the challenge of caring for more vulnerable seniors in their communities," said Ann Bannes, Vice President, St. Andrew's Senior Solutions. "Dorothy Harris and Dorothy Thomas are shining examples of seniors who are doing just that, and they help demonstrate how providing care for other seniors can translate into a rewarding career path for active older adults. Their efforts play a critical role in enhancing the lives of their senior clients, and we feel honored to have the chance to honor them for all that they do."

A 27-year veteran of the St. Andrew's Senior Solutions home care staff, 80-year-old Dorothy Harris works as a personal assistant with the organization. In her position, Harris spends 11-hours a week providing supportive services to older adults in their places of residence. Her duties include assisting with personal care and activities of daily living, and ensuring her clients' physical comfort by providing them with emotional, spiritual and social support designed to enhance their health and well-being. The job is a perfect fit for Harris who says she's motivated by the desire to help those who can't help themselves. Her goal is to make everyone of her clients feel special, and she achieves it by consistently going above and beyond the call of duty to serve them. Her unique touches include providing her clients with weekly bubble baths and special spa days. Outside work, Harris stays active by working out two to three times a week and volunteering with her church.

"I've tried to retire twice," said Harris. "But, I keep returning to work because I have a need to do something worthwhile. I've found that the old saying is true. If you don't use it, you lose it. I'm positive that staying active is what's helping me to stay young physically and psychologically."

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### **First and Final Add**

A former dietetic assistant for St. Mary's Hospital, 81-year-old Dorothy Thomas has been working as a Certified Nurse Assistant with St. Andrew's for the past eight years. In her position, Thomas spends 30 hours per week assisting clients with activities of daily living. Her duties include assisting with baths, cooking meals, taking clients' vital signs and performing basic housekeeping duties. Like Harris, Thomas also goes above and beyond the call of duty to enhance her clients' well-being and the overall quality of their lives. To help her clients stay active, she exercises with them daily and also plays games and cards with clients to help keep their minds engaged. For Thomas, who says she always wanted to be a nurse, her work is a natural fit.

"My job is really rewarding because it gives me the chance to help other adults in need of assistance, and I intend on working as long as I can," said Thomas.

Outside work, Thomas stays active by working out several mornings a week, tending to her garden and attending church regularly. Also an active member of the Red Hat Society, Thomas says keeping busy is the key to keeping her mind and body healthy. "If I wasn't still working, I'd be volunteering," says Thomas. "I tried retiring once, but I didn't like it. I just have to be doing something that keeps me busy."

In recognition of Harris and Thomas' work to enhance the lives of their senior clients, Oct. 13 was declared "Seniors Serving Seniors Day" in St. Louis City and St. Andrew's Senior Solutions "Seniors Serving Seniors Day" in St. Louis County. Bill Seidhoff, Director of Human Services for the City of St. Louis and Rose Terranova, St. Louis County's Director of Family and Community were on hand to present the official proclamations to the women.

"It was wonderful to have the chance to pay tribute to these remarkable women," said Bannes. "Their zest for life and dedication to serving others make Dorothy Harris and Dorothy Thomas true stand-outs in our community, and we're thrilled that St. Louis City and County could partner with us to honor them for all they do and will continue to do in the years to come."

To learn more about Dorothy Harris and Dorothy Thomas, or the home care services offered by St. Andrew's Senior Solutions, log on to [www.standrewsseniorsolutions.com](http://www.standrewsseniorsolutions.com), or call (314) 726-5766.

*St. Andrew's Senior Solutions is a private, non-profit organization that is an affiliate of the St. Andrew's Resources for Seniors System. Founded in 1961, the St. Andrew's Resources for Seniors System is not-for-profit and provides housing, health, in-home care and supportive services, as well as services and assistance to the family caregivers of seniors. To learn more about St. Andrew's Senior Solutions, call (314) 726-5766 or visit [www.standrewsseniorsolutions.com](http://www.standrewsseniorsolutions.com).*