

BUSINESS

Property Brother

Retired minister guides families

Story and photo by
Bobby Anderson, Staff Writer

Ross Pruitt spent most of his life tending to the needs of the church family. But even in retirement, the former minister is still helping people find their way.

Pruitt is a retired Baptist minister who - after 35 years ministering in churches from Oklahoma to California - was more than ready for the golf course.

But he still felt a pull.

"I retired after those years, I guess, with still a lot of energy left," he said. "I didn't want to stop helping people. I got my real estate license and that's exactly what I get to do now."

"I'm not beating the bushes to put in 50 hours a week like I used to but I do get to help people and that's important to me."

Licensed in 2014, Pruitt has continued serving others as a Realtor and certified senior real estate specialist through Metro Brokers of Oklahoma.

It puts him in a unique niche, helping families decide what to do with property that's no longer needed or being used, but still has sentimental value.

As a certified senior real estate specialist, Pruitt is often called upon by families who have to take on the task of what to do with a parent's estate either after a death or a move into a new living arrangement.

"That is what's stressful for them," Pruitt said. "Every time I've done it I've been glad I had the experience I had working with people intimately because emotions sometimes run high."

"After all those years I pretty much know when to hold hands and when to stand back."

Homes and property take on a new meaning when they're no longer needed. Oftentimes, family members will be torn or even at odds on what to do next.

And there are legal ramifications and processes that most are unfamiliar



At 76, Ross Pruitt helps families navigate through life changes.

with.

"What I enjoy the best is helping people. Sometimes the paperwork and all that will bog you down," Pruitt said. "If it helps people I'm all about it. At the end of the day if I was

any assistance to them during one of the biggest decisions of their life, then that's good.

"Most of the time most stress isn't about the property and the value of

Continued next page

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PRUITT

Continued from Page 14

the property, most of the time it's on the family."

Pruitt said he will often get clients who will come to him after they've tried to tackle the task on their own. Trying to sell a home without guidance can be daunting at best, and financially disastrous at worst.

"About 90 percent of people underestimate all that goes into it," Pruitt said. "It's stressful."

Pruitt realizes that family members will often bring emotion into the situation. He knows when to interject and when not.

Whether it's 20 acres or fine china, at the end of the day it's always about the people for Pruitt and helping them make the best decision possible for their situation.

"Usually it's an adult son or neighbor or family member they trust and that person is really just trying to get by day-by-day to help the family get all the possessions sold and all the paperwork," Pruitt said. "I'm trained in this and I can take a lot of the load off their shoulders. It's really a blessing for them to be able to rely on someone they can trust and someone who has the skills and knowledge to do it."

Call Ross at 405-593-0134 or send him an email at rossmetbro@gmail.com.

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VillagesOKC Combating Social Isolation Among Seniors

By Marilyn Olson,
Executive Director,
VillagesOKC



VillagesOKC members enjoy socializing over burgers during a recent cookout.

The U.S. Surgeon General recently issued an advisory calling attention to the public health crisis of loneliness, isolation and lack of connection in our country. Dr. Vivek Murthy officially gave the label of “epidemic” to loneliness.

“Our epidemic of loneliness and isolation has been an under-appreciated public health crisis that has harmed individual and societal health,” Murthy said. “Our relationships are a source of healing

and well-being hiding in plain sight – one that can help us live healthier, more fulfilled and more productive lives.”

A Surgeon General’s Advisory is a public statement that calls the American people’s attention to an urgent public health issue and provides recommendations for how it should be addressed. Advisories are reserved for significant public health challenges that require the nation’s immediate awareness and action.

We know that loneliness and isolation are especially acute among older adults. VillagesOKC exists to help fill the gap for seniors in the Oklahoma City metro. Regular social connection is as essential as food and water for survival. Lacking social connection has serious health consequences including increased risk of heart disease, stroke, diabetes, depression, anxiety and premature death.

In 2021, 49% of Americans reported having three or fewer close friends compared to 27% in 1990. This lack of social connection may be deadly – as dangerous as smoking 15 cigarettes a day, according the Surgeon General’s advisory. The rate of loneliness and isolation is increasing every year and was exacerbated by the pandemic and screen time –

television, computer, smart phone.

VillagesOKC is committed to turning the tide by providing a robust calendar of events which offer members opportunities for learning, planning and helping others. Every event is an opportunity for human interaction. It might be a daylong event like the Day of Positive Aging held at Rose State College in May and Southern Nazarene University in June. It might be a cookout at a members house, a lunch gathering at a local restaurant or a tour of a local landmark.

For the past four years, VillagesOKC has provided trusted connections for mature adults through organized friendships. Often people become members after attending a coffee or free educational presentation. Some become members when an adult child purchases a VillagesOKC membership for Mothers Day, Fathers Day or a birthday. Others become members when the pastor or someone in the faith community urges joining. But most often membership happens when a friend reaches out because he simply wants to share the joy of aging with vitality and positivity.

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ISOLATION

Continued from Page 18

organization a small town feeling of connection. The television show Cheers had it right; it's good to go where everyone knows your name.

A 501(c) tax-exempt organization, VillagesOKC is part of a "national

village movement." These villages are intentionally bringing like-minded people together to embrace aging and practice positivity. VillagesOKC membership includes a modest annual membership fee and background check. For more information, go to: <https://www.villagesokc.org/> or call (405) 990-6637.

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