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Photos attached – Video footage available

Tecla Kern Celebrates 100 Years of a Life Well-Lived

(Paramus, NJ / Queens, NY) - Born in 1921, the youngest of five children raised in Queens, NY, Tecla Kern celebrated her 100th birthday on April 21, 2021. Currently a resident at Juniper Village at Paramus in New Jersey, where she has served as president of the Resident Council for the past four years, she delights in every day.

To mark the day, Juniper Village held a socially distanced birthday party for her with fellow residents, friends, and associates at which Tecla presented a slide show of her life and travels. It was followed by a drive-by car parade with horns honking, signs, and balloons, and a special gathering of her family in the courtyard.

“She is quite special, a terrific person,” said fellow Juniper resident Joan Little. “I’ve known her about six years, and she is very bright, very with it, sweet, lovely, I can’t say enough about her. I am extremely glad people can be recognized at this late age. Too many older folks are ignored.”

Tecla attended Queens College and later, on a scholarship from the Red Cross, attended Fordham University to earn a master’s degree in medical social work. She worked for the Red Cross during WWII at the Naval Hospital in Newport, RI. While at the Healthcare Financing Administration, part of the Federal Health Department, she was instrumental in implementing the Medicare/Medicaid program when it was developed.

Reflecting on her life, Tecla did not have one specific memory but said, “I enjoy everything. Sometimes it was a challenging life, but it paid off.”

Another resident, Mattie G. said, “We met on the first day I moved in here and she made me feel welcome. She has become an incredibly special friend.”

Tecla’s final advice, “Live the way we want and get along people.”

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