

EVANSTON REVIEW

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Mather move-in

New building
opens to the
pleasure, and
relief, of many

By **BOB SEIDENBERG**

bseidenberg@pioneerlocal.com

Longtime Evanston residents Stewart and Rochelle Grill have found a nice symmetry to their life in Evanston, spending their first quarter century or so in a house in southeast Evanston and then spending an almost equal time at a ranch home in northeast Evanston, on Roselyn Place.

"I'm just turning 75 the day after tomorrow," said Stewart Grill, talking last week while unpacking in his new residence, a posh suite of rooms on the top floor of The Mather, a 10-story building at 425 Davis St. "So I figure the last quarter of a century I'll be here."

With a view of Lake Michigan and autumn's red and yellow hues, it's not a bad place to settle.

"Rochelle goes to Northwestern to take classes one or two days a week. It's two blocks away," said Grill, a builder. "She walks to the lake, two blocks away. Everything in downtown is within three blocks — the movies, Whole Foods."

"You just go out, and everything's right here."

Community leaders were expected to join Mather LifeWays officials on Tuesday, celebrating the opening of The Mather following six years of planning and development.

Officials are not only excited about the opening of The Mather, said Mary Leary, The Mather's president and chief executive officer throughout the process, "but we are equally pleased that the second phase of

the community is moving forward as planned."

Leary was referring to the second of the fully modernized living residences, to be erected across the street on the south side of Davis Street, at the site of The Georgian, which is to be demolished.

Mayor Elizabeth Tisdahl was among city officials expected to attend Tuesday's ceremony.

"The Mather is a welcome addition to the downtown neighborhood as well as the entire city of Evanston," she said. "The fact that it has succeeded in the face of a tough economy is a great example of good planning and following through" on their commitment.

While residents have raised concerns about construction dirt and noise at times, the first building, Mather North, is playing to good reviews as a handsome structure.

The building, designed by architects Solomon Cordwell Buenz, with its Juliet balconies, fits the historic character of the neighborhood, but the amenities are strictly modern.

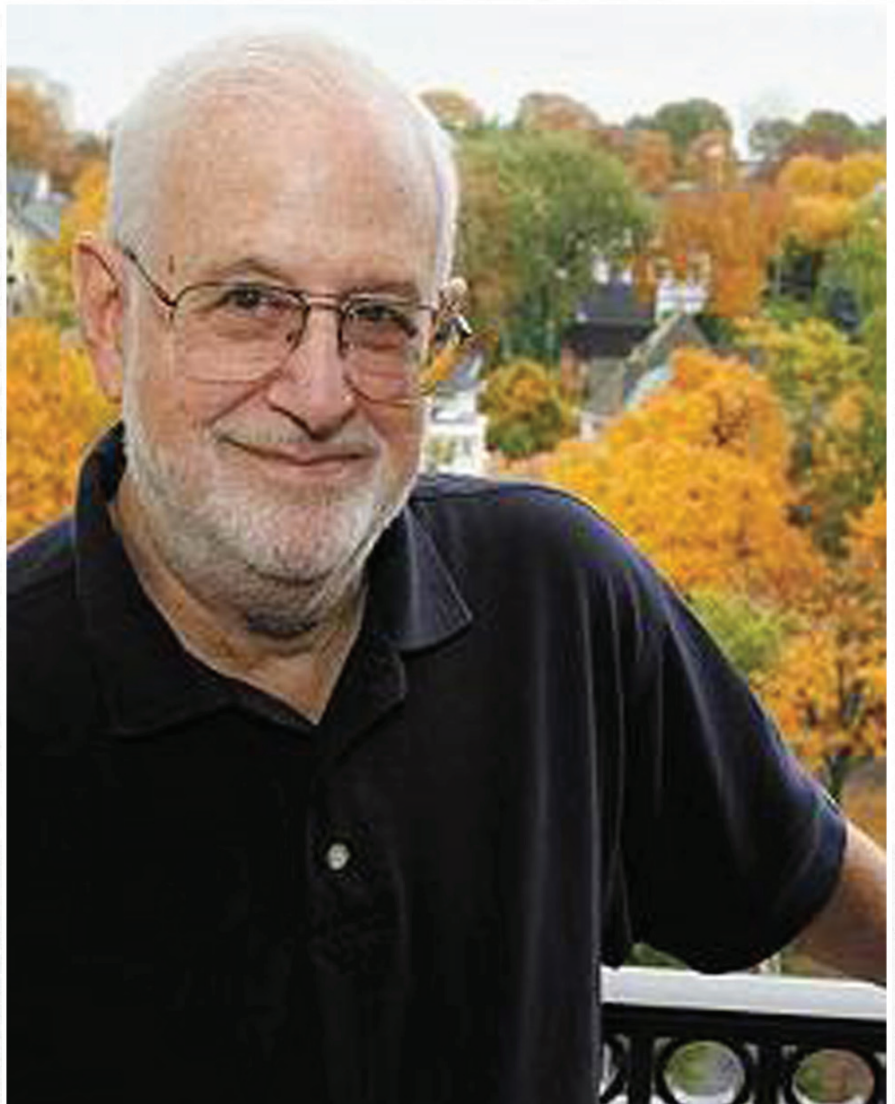
The two buildings will feature seven dining venues and lounges, 24-hour concierge service, a 10,000-square-foot fitness center with a 20-meter indoor lap pool, a whirlpool and even "plant our own garden plots" in the gardens that stretch to the east of the buildings.

So far, the "food has been a big hit," said Sara McVey, vice president/experience director. The Mather has its own trained chefs and pastry specialists.

Costs for the units range from \$339,000 to more than \$1 million. Mather offers on-site health care for residents who need it.

Officials anticipate construction of the second building to begin early next year, with the opening planned for late 2011.

"The response to The Mather



Stewart Grill takes in the glorious view from his 10th-floor apartment unit at The Mather, on Davis Street in Evanston. (Joel Lerner/Staff Photographer)

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has been tremendous — from the new residents, the city of Evanston and the neighborhood," Leary said.

Once completed, the two buildings will be connected by a temperature controlled tunnel that runs under Davis Street.

As a result of the expansion, Leary said, The Mather expects to add 100 full- and part-time employees to its work force over the next six to nine months.

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Rochelle Grill places some flowers into a vase on move-in day at her residence in The Mather building on Davis Street in Evanston. (Joel Lerner/Staff Photographer)