



# Journeys

A newsletter for residents, clients, families and friends.

## Residents InVEST to help prevent falls through balance study

There are few times in life when we have the opportunity to be part of groundbreaking research that could benefit people of all age groups. Some residents are doing just that.

Nearly 40 residents at Country Meadows in Hershey and Mechanicsburg and Ecumenical Retirement Community in Harrisburg, are volunteers in a medical research study that could help reduce fall risks among older adults. The four-month study is part of The InVESTED Project—a University of Arkansas and Motion Therapeutics research study using a BalanceWear® vest. Researchers will document BalanceWear's impact on balance and mobility for seniors who have non-neurological balance issues.

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Ecumenical Retirement Community resident and InVESTED Project volunteer Pat Matjesic is assessed to determine the exact placement of weights on her vest to improve balance, reducing her fall risk.

### Inside:

- 🌀 Color helps guide care
- 🌀 Program assists veterans
- 🌀 Achieving goals step by step

## Country Meadows expands, breaks ground for new campus *See story on page 2*



  
**COUNTRY MEADOWS**  
RETIREMENT COMMUNITIES

*Life gets better.®*



**Ecumenical Retirement  
COMMUNITY**

Journeys is published by Country Meadows Retirement Communities and Ecumenical Retirement Community.

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### **Our Mission**

Country Meadows Retirement Communities helps seniors lead purposeful lives and enjoy independence, friendship and respect.

Country Meadows operates retirement communities in Allentown, Bethlehem, Forks, Hershey, Lancaster, Mechanicsburg, South Hills of Pittsburgh, Wyomissing as well as two locations in York. Country Meadows also owns a community in Frederick, Md.

Ecumenical Retirement Community is a not-for-profit retirement community managed by the George M. Leader Family Corporation, which also manages Country Meadows.

Country Meadows and Ecumenical Retirement Community do not discriminate in resident admission on the basis of race, ancestry, religious creed, age, sex, handicap, disability or national origin, provided the resident, in the sole opinion of Country Meadows or Ecumenical Retirement Community, can be cared for legally and responsibly.



## Country Meadows expands, breaks ground for new campus

Country Meadows is growing.

As a new generation seeks fresh options in retirement living, Country Meadows recently broke ground for its 11th retirement community. Located in the Lehigh Valley in Forks Township near Easton, Pa., Country Meadows of Forks will accommodate 115 residents in varying levels of care including Independent Living, Personal Care and Memory Support.

The \$15 million project, built on a beautiful 21-acre suburban campus, is expected to open in early 2016.

“We are very excited to grow our Country Meadows family with a third location in the Lehigh Valley. Our Forks campus will have many of the most modern amenities and upgrades that today’s seniors are looking for in retirement living,” says Michael Leader, president and CEO-Country Meadows, who adds the new campus will bring approximately 70 new jobs to Lehigh Valley residents.

The campus will offer well-appointed, upscale amenities as well as garden and courtyard areas for residents and guests to enjoy the country setting. Residents will have their choice from several floor plans that include studio, one- and two-bedroom apartments, most with contemporary kitchens and bathrooms.

Just like other Country Meadows Retirement Communities, seniors will have access to a fitness center managed by a fitness professional; opportunities for spiritual enrichment; and an award-winning community life program offering activities, outings and opportunities for volunteer service. Visit our website for regular updates.



Country Meadows of Forks artist rendering

## Art contest brings out residents’ creativity

The holidays might be just a memory, but residents’ talents keep getting better.

For the third year, residents were invited to enter winter- or holiday-themed artwork into Country Meadows’ and Ecumenical Retirement Community’s annual Holiday Card Art Contest. More than 60 entries were received, and the winning entry was used for the organizations’ annual holiday card.

President & CEO Michael Leader along with his sister, Jane Leader-Janeczek, were tasked with judging the entries to select one winner and 10 finalists. This was no easy feat. “Really, any one of the entries would make a beautiful holiday card,” notes Leader.

Ultimately a painting by Ecumenical Retirement Community resident Evelyn Martin was selected as the winner. The picture features a tan dog opening the door to a cat to come in from the cold. “It evokes the feelings of friendship, welcoming and warmth that we share here at Country Meadows,” says Leader-Janeczek.

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# Compass program helps guide co-workers to interact with residents who have dementia

Before entering a resident's room in the Connections Neighborhood at Country Meadows of Lancaster, a personal care associate (PCA), checks the doorframe for a small colored magnet. Noting that it's red, she enters the room and meets the resident at eye-level as she calls his name. Smiling, she asks him a simple yes/no question, "Would you like to hear some music?" He doesn't respond instantly, but she knows to wait at least 90 seconds. She turns on his favorite CD, pours a glass of water and places a few crackers on a plate in front of him. It's been two hours since he last ate, and she knows that although he may be unable to tell her, he might be starting to feel hungry.

These simple steps, based on awareness of the resident's needs and abilities, are part of the Compass Program<sup>®</sup> being piloted at the Lancaster Campus to improve care for residents with dementia and Alzheimer's disease. The system, which uses color-coded magnets to identify each resident's stage in the journey of dementia, was developed by Genesis Rehab Services—Country Meadows' rehabilitation therapy partner.

Residents with dementia have a broad spectrum of understanding and abilities. They may experience memory loss, confusion, communication problems, difficulty performing familiar tasks and changes in personality and behavior. Through the Compass Program, nurses and therapists assess each resident using the Global Deterioration Scale<sup>®</sup>, which is widely recognized in the medical community, and assign one of four colors based on each resident's level of dementia and current abilities.

"The Compass Program helps us tailor our care to each individual to assure that their needs are met and that their dignity remains intact," says Joel Kroft, executive director of Memory Support-Country Meadows. "It also helps us speak the same language about where each resident is in his or her journey, both within our organization and with families and outside medical providers."

Each color of the Compass represents a different stage in a resident's journey through dementia.



Executive Director of Memory Support Joel Kroft addresses a Compass Program class.

To reinforce co-workers' Compass Program training, co-workers carry "trigger cards" with prompts to remind them about the best way to approach and interact with residents in each stage. Everyone who could be involved in a resident's care including PCAs, dining associates, chaplains, nurses and therapists, will receive Compass Program training. With a shared understanding of residents' stages and abilities, and how to interact with residents at each stage, co-workers can provide more meaningful interactions and a better quality of life.

"The Compass Program puts everyone, including co-workers who don't have medical backgrounds, on track to recognize who our residents are," says Dawn Bieber, executive director of therapy services—Genesis. "The progression of dementia or Alzheimer's disease is different for everyone, and helping residents interact and communicate at their optimal level gives them a better quality of life by improving communication and assuring that they are physically engaged to the greatest degree."

Community Life co-workers use the Compass Program to group residents and tailor activities to each stage. In addition to the techniques associated with the colors, co-workers become familiar with each resident's My Life Story project, an existing Country Meadows program that provides details about the resident's life and interests. Together these tools help co-workers establish more meaningful relationships with residents that add to their quality of life.

"We're always improving our care for residents with dementia and Alzheimer's disease to give them the best possible support and quality of life," says Kroft. "Since

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# New York to new life

For more than 85 years, Laura Metti lived in New York City. She grew up in a cold-water flat near the Wall Street section of Manhattan, and moved to Queens with her husband where the couple raised a family. She loves the hustle and bustle of the Big Apple.

So when her children wanted her to move 90 miles away, closer to them near the Pennsylvania-New Jersey border, she was concerned. “I love to travel from the house, and I would take express busses to New York, or the Long Island railroad and go wherever I wanted,” she says “I realized that I couldn’t worry [my children] anymore. They were afraid that I was alone and I could fall.”

Laura Metti’s daughter, Laurie Duffy, looked for a retirement community near her home in New Jersey but quickly grew frustrated with the lack of options. “I drew a circle—a radius of miles that I felt was comfortable for me to be from Mom. I couldn’t find anything,” recalls Duffy. “There were some beautiful places, but I couldn’t find anything that I thought was economically workable.”

By chance, Duffy’s husband went golfing with a friend who mentioned Country Meadows. Knowing his wife’s frustration, he went to the Bethlehem campus where he picked up a brochure, took it home and pointed out that Pennsylvania was a mere 20 minutes away from their home. Duffy visited Country Meadows and knew it was the right place for her mother. “This



Laura Metti and her daughter, Laurie Duffy, enjoy time together.

is a beautiful, amazing place,” she says. “I called my brother and told him that we had to get Mom on the wait list.”

So Laura Metti moved in and started a new phase of life. The city pace may have slowed but not this strong lady. At 91, Laura Metti has made lots of friends, discovered a talent for painting and is enjoying life like she is living at a resort. In fact, her son-in-law compares Country Meadows to a resort, and he loves checking out the game room and bocce ball court

when he visits. Best of all, Laura Metti’s children are thrilled to see her living in a place where they know she is safe and enjoying new hobbies.

“We wanted to make sure that Mom wasn’t living a secluded life or feel that she was alone in her home,” recalls Duffy. “We wanted her in a community because she’s a very social person; a very active person, a very independent person. We wanted her to keep experiencing that independence, and she does that here.”

When she shared the news about her move, Laura Metti says, “A lot of my friends said that, ‘where you’re going it’s like a hotel.’ It’s true, it is a new life.” With a new life, Laura Metti had time to explore new hobbies. One she particularly enjoys, and has a gift for, is painting.

Her family is so impressed with her artistic talent that they used her paintings to create greeting cards. According to Duffy, “We thought it would be great for Mom to use them to write to her friends, and they could see the artwork that she’s doing. She has impressed upon her friends, through the artwork, that [Country Meadows] is a great place.”

Laura Metti’s paintings fill her apartment at Country Meadows, along with home-baked treats she offers her neighbors, family members and visitors. In fact, a large kitchen was on the list of “must-have’s” that her children sought when looking for a retirement community. And while she doesn’t have to worry about the fuss of maintaining a large kitchen in her apartment, there is a full country kitchen just across the hall she can use whenever she wants.

“Mom was always a great cook, and we wanted her to still be able to do that,” says Duffy. “She is still the

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Laura Metti is a gifted artist. Her family used her paintings to create greeting cards.

## Metti article *continued from page 8*

pastry chef of the family. If I have something going on at the house, Mom's making cookies. I don't have to buy dessert because Mom's baking."

Laura Metti says her neighbors also love her cooking. "I make cookies, and they smell baking and come running!"

Duffy is in awe of her mother's bravery. "Unlike her family members and friends in New York, Mom is the only one who's in a retirement community. So many of them are frightened of retirement communities; fearful of letting go of a home and leaving the familiar community," she notes. "What impresses me about Mom is her fortitude and bravery, and how difficult a move this must have been for her, but she did it."

Laura Metti adds, "I didn't want [my children] to feel they were abandoning me. They found a place where I made a new family, and the people here are nice, they really are."

Her family is happy to see her thriving. According to Duffy, "When my head hits the pillow at night, I know Mom is secure. And if anything is wrong I would know immediately. We found the place for Mom. And at 91, Mom's kickin' it!" 🐾



While on vacation to Avalon, N.J., with Country Meadows residents, Laura Metti makes eggplant parmesan for the entire group.

## Art contest *continued from page 2*

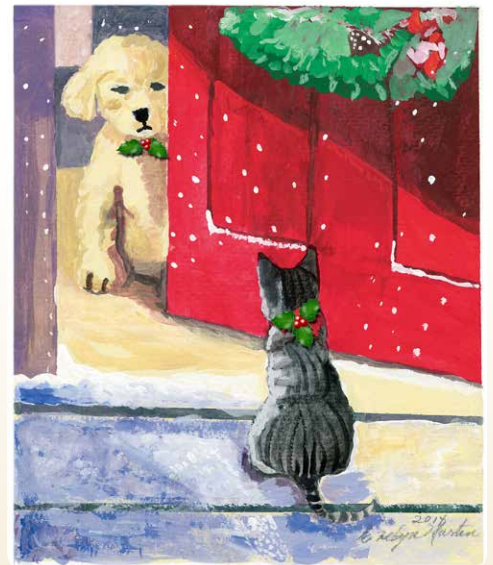
When Martin moved to Ecumenical Retirement Community four years ago, she had never painted in her life. In fact, as a nurse for more than 48 years, she had no time to develop a hobby. However, when she saw painting classes on the Community Life schedule at Ecumenical, Martin jumped at the chance to learn something new. It quickly became a favorite hobby. "Painting is one of the things I enjoy best," she says. "I look forward to class, and I enjoy giving my art to people as gifts."

As the winner, Martin received a premium dinner party for 12 people, professional framing of her winning painting and a \$350 gift to the charities of her choice. She split the gift between the Ecumenical Connections Neighborhood activity fund and the Humane Society of Harrisburg Area.

Martin's favorite art subject is animals. "I love them, I really do," she says. "I love animals so much and give them my best; I spoil them rotten! They're so giving and loving, and they give you triple what you give them."

In addition to the winning entry, ten pieces were selected as finalists. The winning and finalist entries were featured on a holiday poster displayed at every campus.

The annual contest has become a tradition, and residents are encouraged to start work on their 2015 entries. Contest details will be available this spring. 🐾



"Holiday Encounter"  
Winning painting by Evelyn Martin

**Note:** You can peruse all the entries online. Visit [www.CountryMeadows.com/holiday-art-contest-2014](http://www.CountryMeadows.com/holiday-art-contest-2014).

# Life gets better.® at Country Meadows and Ecur



Country Meadows of York resident Don Wagan built a model of a small blue house as “brain therapy.” Depression, frustration and just not feeling well had him in a slump. Community Life Director Bonnie Geisinger was so impressed with his model

that she asked him to put it on display. The duo added a barn, stable, country church, snow and even Santa. Wagan ordered a train and before they knew it, an entire holiday village was on display for the community to enjoy.

Country Meadows of Frederick celebrated the 13 members of the campus Walking Club who walked more than 7,000 miles in 2014. Four members walked more than 500 miles each, and received a purple sneaker pin as well as a pair of sneakers to congratulate their achievement. Pictured left to right: Don Hinderleiter, Addie Childs, Barbara Baker and Anna Kowalewski. Congrats and keep on moving!



Bethlehem campus residents worked hard to build a gingerbread replica of the Wehr Covered Bridge located in the Lehigh Valley. The group painted “shingles” and “siding” out of Golden Grahams cereal and

linguini noodles. The finished product won the 2014 Arts Quest SteelStacks Gingerbread House Competition!

According to Community Life Director Heather Brown, “We started the process of building the house in October. The competition is fierce and over 50 percent needs to be covered in gingerbread, and everything visible must be edible!”



# Ecumenical Retirement Community



Throughout the year, Country Meadows of Allentown residents fill backpacks with food for needy students in a local school district. For Thanksgiving, volunteers packed boxes for 25 students' families filled with all the fixings for a complete holiday meal.



To mark Veterans Day, Country Meadows of Wyomissing resident William Berkey receives a pin and certificate commemorating his military service.

Wyomissing residents gather to honor veterans on Veterans Day.



Country Meadows of Allentown residents Wayne and Delores Johnson dressed as snow people to greet Halloween Trick-or-Treaters. Everyone received a "warm" welcome.



Country Meadows of Leader Heights in York is offering electronic tablet and iPad lessons to residents and community members. Offered by Generation Connect, a technology company created specifically to teach technology to seniors, the classes teach participants the basics as well as how to video chat with family members, surf the internet, download applications and much more.



# Preserving independence one step at a time

Stepping on the Ecumenical Retirement Community bus for the first time in nine months, Mary Thomas was greeted with cheers from her friends, many she hadn't seen for several months. With Restorative Care Coordinator Angelina Arriaga by her side, Thomas was on her way to Sunday morning mass, a goal she set seven weeks earlier.

An active, independent resident of Ecumenical Retirement Community in Harrisburg, Pa., Thomas fell in November of 2013. Living with multiple sclerosis for 40 years, she was accustomed to an occasional spill. But this time the pain in her ankle wouldn't go away. Turns out that her ankle was broken, and she spent six months in a rehabilitation facility building her strength to return to her home at Ecumenical Retirement Community.

"I felt as though I was coming home," says Thomas. "I was in some good places for rehabilitation, but I felt like a foreigner out there, and I wanted to be closer to home. I was very happy to get back here."

Thomas' return to Ecumenical Retirement Community was possible because of a new restorative care program which provides short- and long-term assistance to individuals who need more support than what is offered in a traditional personal care setting. Through the program, residents set achievable goals that help them improve and preserve their independence. Services to help residents reach those goals may include physical, occupational and/or speech therapy.

"This is a program of hope for residents who have more physical disabilities than a resident in personal care," says Arriaga. "We don't just focus on physical abilities or limitations, but look at the spiritual being of our residents—what their thoughts and feelings are. We are basically encouraging and motivating them to reach their specific goals."

Restorative care coordinators work alongside therapists to learn specific exercises that can help residents between scheduled therapy sessions. In addition to helping with personal care tasks as needed, care coordinators provide two daily programs such as exercises in the morning and an active game that incorporates movement in the afternoon. They also collaborate with Community Life coordinators to assure residents have ample opportunities for spiritual and emotional fulfillment through participation in music programs, planned entertainment and games.

"This is just such a blessing. Without this program some of our residents might not be able to maintain the skills they need to be here," says Arriaga. "We



Mary Thomas achieved her goal to regain strength so she can ride the community bus to church every Sunday.

are able to provide a little more care and help them be able to do those things, like propelling their own wheelchair or walk longer distances so they can stay in a place that's familiar and comfortable to them. It's their home after all."

After getting to know Thomas, Arriaga asked what goal she'd like to set. Thomas, a devout Roman Catholic, hadn't been able to attend mass since her fall, and she missed it. Her right leg was still too weak to allow her to climb the steps to get on the bus that transports residents to church each week.

To achieve her goal, Thomas needed to be able to climb the steps as well as walk from the church entrance, down the aisle and to her seat. Arriaga was Thomas' cheerleader as she rode the exercise bike to build stamina, did leg exercises, and stepped on and off a stool to mimic the motion of getting on the bus. As Thomas got better at going long distances, Arriaga arranged for her to practice twice a day getting on and off the actual bus she would take on Sundays. Finally Thomas was ready. Arriaga came in on her day off to cheer on Thomas as she achieved her goal.

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# Free Service Helps Residents Find Benefits and Extend Resources

Eileen Kutzler, director of Financial Planning Services at Country Meadows Retirement Communities and Ecumenical Retirement Community, loves it when she receives a hug from a thankful resident. As the “go to” person for helping residents and their families extend financial resources as far as possible, she’s played a role in helping many residents move into or remain at Country Meadows campuses and Ecumenical Retirement Community.

A few years ago, Kutzler was a marketing director at the Bethlehem Campus when she offered to help a resident apply for Veterans Administration (VA) benefits. That small gesture grew into a valuable service that helps residents make the most of their benefits from the VA, long-term care insurance, PACE/PACENET, Medicare, and even changes to employer-sponsored benefits.

“Let’s face it; no one is beating down your door to make sure you’re aware of the benefits you can tap into,” says Kutzler. “It is often up to the individual to find them, and then they have to work through many barriers to receive them. It can be quite overwhelming for anyone. I’ve assisted people from all walks of life including doctors, attorneys, accountants and public officials.”

With a background in insurance, Kutzler worked for AARP’s health insurance division and CIGNA’s life insurance division, so she understands the “lingo” which can be confusing to the average person. This helps her develop strategies for handling claims and appeals and speak to community groups, as she is frequently asked to do. Her presentations, with names like “Medicare in Plain English” and “Affording Senior Care,” are always well received.

“There’s nothing better than having someone wait in line after a presentation just to say, ‘Thank you, that’s the first time someone has explained this to me in terms I can understand,’” says Kutzler. “That just makes my day.”

Kutzler’s assistance often is requested by residents’ children. She brainstorms with families to find ways residents can extend their resources whether it’s through benefits or considering options like moving to a less expensive apartment. She notes that while third-party providers are available to assist families with applications for benefits, Country Meadows is a trusted partner with a vested interest in helping residents. Her efforts on behalf of 156 residents results in \$2.2 million in benefits received each year.

## *About Aid and Attendance*

Many wartime veterans don’t know about the Aid and Attendance pension benefit that is available through the Veterans Administration (VA). The benefit is for wartime veterans who have limited income and are in need of the regular aid and attendance of another person to perform personal functions required in everyday living.

To be eligible, the veteran must have served during World War II, Korean Conflict or Vietnam.

During the application for this benefit, the VA will consider assets, income and medical expenses.

Country Meadows Director of Financial Planning Services Eileen Kutzler can assist you with considering whether you should apply for this benefit as well as the application process. She can help you gather the necessary paperwork, complete the application, and assist with follow-up and post-award VA correspondence. To learn more, call Eileen toll free at 1.855.838.5094 or e-mail her at [vetbenefits@countrymeadows.com](mailto:vetbenefits@countrymeadows.com).

“When you’re looking at someone who is reaching into finite savings each month for their rent, a benefit of \$1,100 a month is going to make those savings last much longer,” says Kutzler.

For benefits like the VA’s Aid and Attendance program, a benefit many war veterans and widowers don’t know is available to them, it can take seven to eight months of back and forth communications between a family and the VA until benefits are approved. In addition to providing forms and applications, Kutzler coaches families through the process. She is typically helping about 60 applicants at a time which helps her stay current with trends and changes in what the VA wants to see—including items that aren’t on the form.

Because timing can be critical, she encourages families to contact her about potential benefits before they are in a critical state. Time provides the ability to search for solutions as well as assure that they have the correct information about when to apply for certain benefits. She also can help families get their “ducks in a row,” so they have all the appropriate documents ready to make application when the time comes.

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“Balance is the foundation of all movement and an important component in preventing falls,” says BalanceWear founder and physical therapist Cynthia Gibson-Horn.

BalanceWear works by providing light strategically placed counter-balancing weights to address a person’s unique balance losses. A series of simple physical tests determines the precise location for each weight to be attached with Velcro, inside the front and back of the vest. This is important because moving the weight by just an eighth of an inch can change its impact. Though benefits of BalanceWear vary, improvements have been seen in common challenges seniors experience including balance, climbing stairs, ability to walk, speech and vitality.

Preventing falls and keeping seniors safe and active are top priorities at Country Meadows and Ecumenical. For adults over age 65, physical changes that impact vision, strength and balance can increase the risk of falling, and falls can result in moderate to severe injuries from hip fractures to head traumas. The fear of falling, by causing a person to limit activity, can decrease strength, balance and endurance over time, and actually increase the risk of falling.

“Becoming fearful of a fall can prevent a resident from participating in activities. They’ll say, ‘oh, I don’t want to go,’ because they are beginning to doubt their ability to take part, so it really affects their well-being. Loss of balance quickly becomes a quality-of-life issue,” says Kim Eichinger, Country Meadow’s executive director of Fitness.

Appreciating BalanceWear’s potential to reduce fall risks and help seniors maintain independence and stay more active, President & CEO Michael Leader invited the team to bring the study to Country Meadows and Ecumenical. “My family has a very personal reason for our interest in this research: One of our family members has ataxia which greatly limits her ability to walk and perform basic movements,” says Leader.” I learned about BalanceWear when attending an ataxia conference and was excited about the potential it holds. Our family member has a vest and is already participating in the BalanceWear study. Our family’s hope is it leads to a better quality of life for her and, potentially, our residents with balance issues.”

Researchers received a grant from the National Institutes of Health to study BalanceWear’s impact



on people who have MS. Now Gibson-Horn, who is based in San Francisco and travels around the nation to fit patients and teach other physical therapists how to use BalanceWear, is working with co-investigator Jennifer Vincenzo—a Ph.D. candidate in exercise science, professor, and board certified geriatric physical therapist. Vincenzo designed this study of BalanceWear’s impact on older adults as part of her Ph.D. program.

Residents at the three campuses received invitations to consider participating in the study and attended on-site presentations by made by Gibson-Horn. After meeting certain criteria established by the research team, participating residents were measured by Country Meadows Fitness co-workers to determine vest sizes. Gibson-Horn and Vincenzo conducted preliminary assessments that included evaluating the participants’ gait, turns and walking pace, and residents completed a series of physical tests to identify balance losses to customize vests.

“Country Meadows’ and Ecumenical’s support and resources have been integral in getting this study in motion,” says Gibson-Horn. “The residents and co-workers are so accommodating, and we’re just very appreciative of the commitment that everyone has made.”

“Our residents have been great. They are taking this very seriously because it’s an opportunity to improve their balance, regain confidence and

independence, and even begin to do some of the activities they have given up,” says Eichinger. “The preliminary testing was physically and emotionally exhausting, but they stayed positive and are already a powerful resource in this study. They immediately contributed ideas for altering the vest’s design to make it more comfortable.”

Participants use BalanceWear in two-hour increments, twice a day. Some are choosing to wear the vest more often. They are responsible for keeping a log of their activities, and Fitness co-workers assist with assuring that the logs are up to date and address any issues.

“I look at this for how it can help people in the future,” says study participant Anne Grasha, 93, a resident of Country Meadows of West Shore, pointing to pictures of her grandchildren. “So maybe they won’t need to use a walker to get around.”

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## **InVEST** continued from page 10

Grasha happily reports that without even thinking about it, she walks the length of her apartment free of her walker, without touching the furniture for support. "I wasn't expecting that!" she says, "Who knows what else I might be able to do. It's wonderful to be part of something that could make life better for others, too."

Grasha spruced up her BalanceWear vest with a collar crocheted years ago by her mother. While participants typically wear the BalanceWear vests under their clothing, when other residents see them, they are curious about the study and often comment that they wish they would have participated.

Official study results won't be available for some time, but participants' comments are positive after just two months. Jim Mitchell, 96, a resident of Country Meadows in Mechanicsburg, says he moves faster with his walker than he did before the study. He felt his balance improve immediately, and finds it much easier to get dressed and ready for the day. "This [being in a study] is a first for me!" he says, "I'm happy that I can contribute, it's been a good experience."

Ron Graham, 81, is already thinking about resuming activities he's been missing for years like playing golf. "I've tried a lot of different things over the years to address my balance problems, and this has by far been the most effective," he says. "I feel very confident when I'm wearing it, and I have no trouble walking without a cane or walker. As a result, I'm much more active, and people have even commented that I'm standing taller than I did before." 🌀

## **Compass program** continued from page 3

we put the Compass Program in place in Lancaster, we've noted that residents are happier. Co-workers tell me they are more confident about providing care because they more clearly understand where each resident is in the disease process. The system eliminates trial and error and improves communication to assure more successful interactions."

Country Meadows plans to introduce the program at each of its campuses as well as Ecumenical Retirement Community.

Bieber says, "This program elevates the fantastic care provided to the next level. When we target each resident's abilities, we enable them to perform and participate to their maximum potential." 🌀

## *From the desk of...*



**G. Michael Leader,**  
*President & CEO*

I am using my column in the first 2015 issue of Journeys to share information about our organizations. Please read the inserted letter to learn the latest initiatives and happenings. Thank you. 🌀



*Do you have  
a story to share?*

Call our story hotline  
at **855.772.2734**.

## **A best place to work**

The good news keeps coming. Both Country Meadows and Ecumenical Retirement Community have, again, made the list of 100 Best Places to Work in Pennsylvania.

Country Meadows ranked at #13 in the large-size company category and celebrates the organization's 11th placement on this prestigious list.

Ecumenical Retirement Community placed at #58 in the small-size company category.

Best Places to Work in PA was designed to identify, recognize and honor the best places of employment in Pennsylvania, benefiting the state's economy, its workforce and businesses. The program is a public/private partnership of Team Pennsylvania Foundation, the Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development, the Pennsylvania Chamber of Business and Industry and the Central Penn Business Journal. 🌀

**BEST PLACES**  
to work in **PA**

## Inside:

- 🌀 Testing new method to prevent falls
- 🌀 Meeting goals one step at a time
- 🌀 Country Meadows expands

### Service helps residents *continued from page 9*

Kutzler's Veterans Benefits Assistance services earned Country Meadows Retirement Communities a "Best of the Best" award from the Assisted Living Federation of America in 2010. For Kutzler, the greatest rewards are when a family member of a resident that she worked with over the telephone or e-mail, makes a point of coming to meet her to say, "Thank you," or when she walks down a hall and sees that a resident she has helped continues to call Country Meadows or Ecumenical his/her home. 🌀

*To learn more, call Kutzler toll free at 1.855.838.5094 or e-mail her at [vetbenefits@countrymeadows.com](mailto:vetbenefits@countrymeadows.com).*



### Connect with us online

Visit Country Meadows on Facebook for information, care tips, ideas and more at [www.Facebook.com/CountryMeadowsSeniorCare](http://www.Facebook.com/CountryMeadowsSeniorCare).

For information about a career with Country Meadows, visit [www.Facebook.com/CountryMeadowsCareers](http://www.Facebook.com/CountryMeadowsCareers).

We look forward to interacting with you online.

### Preserving independence *continued from page 8*

"Climbing onto the bus was a dream come true," says Thomas. "I saw many people I knew so it was like a reunion with old friends. Being in the church was just beautiful. I had been homesick to go to mass."

"It was great! With help, therapy, and Mary's dedication and determination, she completed her goal, and she has been back on that same bus every Sunday since then!" exclaims Arriaga, who recently held a celebration for Thomas and several other residents who achieved their goals.

Thomas says, "The combination of encouragement and activities has really helped me. I can see the benefits so vividly that I just want to get on to the next goal." 🌀