

Journeys

A newsletter for residents, families and friends of Country Meadows Retirement Communities.

Research project studies love for the ages

When Paul Young met his wife, Lorna, on a blind date, he recalls thinking, "She's very pretty, has beautiful red hair and the nicest pair of legs you want to see!" Today he still feels that way after 71 years of marriage.

The couple, who live at Country Meadows of York, participated in a research study with Cornell University to share their advice on love and marriage. Dr. Karl Pillemer, internationally renowned professor of gerontology, interviewed residents at three Country Meadows campuses to gather sage advice for his next book due out in 2014.



Hershey residents Andy and Lee Batdorf share a kiss. The couple met with Cornell University professor Karl Pillemer, Ph.D., to provide their advice on love and marriage. Photo courtesy Pennlive.com/Christine Baker.

Inside:

- 🌀 Resident champions Latino rights
- 🌀 Art contest winners
- 🌀 Physical therapy made fun


COUNTRY MEADOWS
RETIREMENT COMMUNITIES

Life gets better.®


Ecumenical Retirement
COMMUNITY

At Home COUNTRY MEADOWS
Personal Care Services

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Dedication builds Latino community

Delma Rivera's family refers to her as "rice."

This stunning resident at Country Meadows of Leader Heights in York, Pa., is a native of Puerto Rico and a pioneer for Latino rights and services in Pennsylvania.

"My sister used to say that white rice is a food on every table in Puerto Rico and Delma is like white rice because she's everywhere!" laughs Rivera, who shares a life story with a challenging start in Pennsylvania.

Rivera came to the United States mainland in 1950 with her husband—a physician completing his internship at Harrisburg Hospital. Despite earning honors as "Intern of the Year," Dr. Rivera felt obligated to return to Puerto Rico. "He had a scholarship in Puerto Rico and said, 'I'm supposed to go and pay back.'" The newlyweds returned home for a few years but in 1962, with their three children, returned to York, Pa., where Dr. Rivera worked in the Emergency Room at York Hospital.

It was a rocky start.

"It was not easy for me here. I was alone and he was working sometimes 24-hours around the clock in the ER. I didn't know anybody and I was alone with our two girls," Rivera says. "Sometimes I put the girls to bed

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Our Mission

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

Eight Foundation Principles guide our co-workers:

- 🌀 Promote a genuine sense of community
- 🌀 Honor the rights and independence of seniors
- 🌀 Support wellness in all of its dimensions
- 🌀 Encourage lifelong growth and development
- 🌀 Provide leadership to our team
- 🌀 Practice professional and social responsibility
- 🌀 Create the standard for quality
- 🌀 Establish a culture of integrity

Country Meadows operates retirement communities in Allentown, Bethlehem, 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 and Country Meadows At Home.

Country Meadows does 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, can be cared for legally and responsibly.



Co-worker selected Nurse of the Year

Debra Johnson, LPN, associate director of wellness-Country Meadows of West Shore in Mechanicsburg, Pa., loves her job; and it shows.

Johnson recently was awarded Nurse of the Year by the Pennsylvania Health Care Association (PHCA) and Center for Assisted Living Management (CALM).

"I was very surprised," Johnson says. "All of us deserve this honor because the nurses that I work with are awesome and try and do the best job they can do. Everyone deserves it so having gotten it, it means even more."

The Nurse of the Year Award is part of the PHCA 2012 Hero Awards. Winners were selected on the criteria that the nominee goes above and beyond his or her job requirements to improve the lives of persons living and working in a retirement community.

Johnson adds, "[The award] made me feel good because everyone likes a pat on the back and it let me know it was being noticed on a different type of level. It is a very good feeling that what you are doing for the residents is benefitting them."

"I am very proud of Debra. For more than 12 years, her dedication to our residents ensures that they enjoy a high quality of life," says Michael Leader, president & CEO-Country Meadows Retirement Communities.

Country Meadows residents agree that Johnson deserves the honor.

"I feel free that I could walk up to Debbie and tell her my problem and it's taken care of. I have no one else and I feel like Debbie is my next of kin. She's just a wonderful person," shares resident Helen Walchak.

For Johnson, the key to success in her job is simple: respect. "I try to treat people like I want someone to treat my parents, and like I want to be treated one day. If I can't give respect when [the residents] deserve so much for what they've done for us, then I shouldn't be here. These people fought in wars, went through the depression...there's so much to learn from them. I wish I had more time to sit down with them and learn their life stories. They've done things that you and I wouldn't even begin to think about."

Johnson also was recognized in 2012 with a Champion for Seniors award from the Assisted Living Federation of America.

At the end of the day, Johnson stresses how much she loves her job. "I come in early because I like to get my day started and check in on the residents. There's always something going on—you don't notice that you came in and eight hours have passed. That also lets me know that I'm doing my job well and not watching the clock. I'm enjoying what I do." 🌀



Nurse of the Year Debra Johnson enjoys time with resident Helen Walchak.

Virtual reality makes physical therapy fun

Residents at Country Meadows of South Hills Nursing and Rehabilitation Center near Pittsburgh, are chasing grapes, dodging foxes and engaging in physical carnival games and bingo that require sitting and standing. It's all done with a new toy that puts any video gaming system to shame.

OmniVR™ is a three-dimensional virtual rehabilitation system that uses gaming technology to make therapy fun. According to Anita Kozel, program

manager, "We see a lot of residents who want to have [the OmniVR] added to their program. They say it doesn't feel like they are working or exercising because it's fun. For the therapist, it gives a measurable piece of data to use to gear the resident's goals and treatment plan."

Mounted above the television, a special 3-D infrared camera reads the player's movements in real time to show the muscles used when a person is sitting, standing or stepping. It helps the physical therapist isolate areas of weakness on which to focus in the individual's program.

Kozel notes that while the Nintendo Wii® is an activity to get residents involved in therapy, OmniVR provides ways to engage the resident in a fun rehabilitative activity. Another plus is that fear of technology is not a factor with the OmniVR system, which operates by an easy-to-use touch-screen. Designed for older adults, the system does not utilize hand controllers or special mats and platforms on which the gamer must stand. Six different skilled exercise modes are available and include options for participants to use the machine to accomplish seated exercise, upper extremity, balance, walking and cardio.

As one resident uses the OmniVR for therapy, he laughs as he attempts to pick grapes while avoiding a hungry fox. The resident is having fun and doesn't notice that the machine is isolating areas on which he needs to work such as using proper technique to go from a seated to standing position. According to Program Manager Michael Jobes, "It shows that he has difficulty with side-stepping and with this system, I can change the level of difficulty. The camera is identifying his technique and is able to determine the efficiency of the activity whereas a therapist, using their eye, might judge it differently. It helps us target specific deficits that [the resident] may be experiencing. For example, if the left side is weaker or more challenged than



*A client uses the Omni VR system to strengthen her upper body and practice balance. She is playing a game in which she is attempting to catch bunches of grapes before a fox can snatch them.
Photo courtesy of ACP*

the right, we can have the system focus on that specific area and develop tasks to have the resident work on such as balance, walking, trunk control and more."

The concept is simple according to Jobes. "A kid can sit in front of a TV playing video games for hours without thinking about it. But if you tell that child 'I want you to sit and stand for hours,' they are going to get bored. That is the same idea here; residents enjoy the system because it is fun and interactive."

Another resident, who is recovering from knee-replacement surgery, plays a game set in a vegetable garden. Her objective is to pick vegetables and to do so, she must align her body with the vegetable and squat to pick up a shovel. The better she does, the more challenging the game becomes. What she doesn't realize is that therapists programmed the game to stretch her quad muscles and increase her endurance.

Kozel says, "If you tell someone to do 33 squats, they would say, 'oh no.' But with this system, they don't realize they are doing those squats because they are so immersed in the game."

Using OmniVR, physical therapists can conduct tests on performance, endurance and quantity of activities performed to track progress over a period of weeks. It also has a component to play games involving memory tasks and speech therapy.

The system is as popular with residents' families as it is with the residents themselves.

"Family members see that [their loved one] is doing more and getting stronger to possibly return home," says Kozel, as she explains the family fun that comes with the game. "It's nice because a lot of family members' grandchildren come play because they can compete against each other. It's nice to get them involved and interacting with their grandchildren using a technology the kids know."

The majority of residents enjoy the games. One says, "I didn't realize I did so much when I played those games." 🍷

Art contest a smashing success

Artist talent abounds at Country Meadows and Ecumenical Retirement Community.

The first-ever Holiday Card Art Contest invited residents and clients to enter winter-themed artwork. The winner's masterpiece was used as the basis for the organization's 2012 holiday card.

We were thrilled to receive more than 80 entries! The winner was chosen by co-workers as well as Leader family members.

David Livirrie, resident at Country Meadows of Bethlehem, submitted the winning entry. His painting, "A Winter Evening," was inspired by the building in which he resides.

"When I take a walk I go down to the road, up the sidewalk and walk the rest of the campus. I have a nice little walk," he says. "I always stop and look back at this scene—we have a beautiful campus here. So I came up with this idea for the contest and all I had to do was make it a holiday scene."

Livirrie's painting had some stiff competition. In fact, co-workers and members of the Leader family were so impressed with all the entries that a Finalist category was created to honor exceptional work. Even selecting finalists was difficult.

"I was overcome when I saw all the wonderful paintings, collages and projects laid out together in the same room," says Michael Leader, president & CEO. "I spent a lot of time in that room admiring every entry. The amount of talent in our communities is absolutely amazing."



David Livirrie holds his winning entry in the Holiday Card Art Contest, "A Winter Evening." As part of the prize package, Livirrie's winning painting was professionally framed.

16 finalists were selected and their work featured on a large poster displayed at Ecumenical Retirement Community and all Country Meadows campuses. (See below for names of finalists.)

Livirrie was shocked when he received word that his painting won the contest. "I was speechless. No way did I think I would win. I thought I might be in the running, but not the winner!" he marvels.

Livirrie also was honored by the Assisted Living Federation of America (ALFA), when another one of his paintings was selected as a finalist in the national ALFA Senior Living Art Showcase.

He began exploring various forms of art following his retirement from AT&T in 1985 where he worked as an industrial engineer for 35 years. He credits his late wife with starting his rewarding hobby.

"My wife was quite an artist, she'd be pleased," Livirrie says. "Her mother painted and I think she inspired [my wife]."

In addition to painting, Livirrie also enjoys working with wood. His Country Meadows apartment is filled with his creations including replicas of historic Bethlehem, Pa., buildings, a carved blue heron, hand-painted media cupboard and wooden three-dimensional wall art.

He encourages his friends and neighbors to take up a hobby.

"Everybody has a talent but a lot of people don't use it. Life is too short. Everybody can do these things; you just have to have the will to do it, to try it. Those are hobbies, everybody should have a hobby," he concludes. 🐉

The Holiday Card Art Contest was such a success that it will be held again in 2013. More information about the contest will be coming soon.

Finalists—Holiday Card Art Contest

- **Doris Allamong**—
Ecumenical Retirement Community



- **Nona August**—
Country Meadows of Hershey



- **Frida Barbernitz**—
Country Meadows of Wyomissing



- **Helen Forman**—
Country Meadows of West Shore



- **Lester Hammaker**—
Country Meadows of Hershey



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and I sat down and cried. My life was so empty."

Her life turned around when Dr. Rivera purchased a private internal medicine practice and, recognizing a need, Rivera volunteered at York Hospital as a Spanish interpreter; a role she loved.

"One time I was an interpreter for a lady that was having a baby. [The hospital staff] thought that she had abdominal pain and didn't realize that she was having the baby," she recalls as she cites this example to demonstrate the critical need for an organization to serve the needs of Latino residents.

Together with her husband, Rivera helped organize a volunteer group that eventually established the York Spanish Council and from their efforts, the first Spanish American Center of York. "I was so happy when it opened because it was like nobody knew that Spanish-speaking people were here; we were never mentioned," she says. "When [the Center] opened, we were invited to different activities and meetings; it was completely different."

Her daughter, Delma Rivera-Lytle, recalls the opening and says, "Mom and Dad got started because they saw that people needed translators for medical purposes and it expanded from there. They thought, 'we need a Center to provide all this.' That's when Mom and Dad looked through the city with their group of five or six people, found a property, cleaned it up and that was the first Center. They outgrew that and eventually moved to another building."

Rivera worked tirelessly volunteering to help Center clients find employment, medical care, services and, when necessary, she accompanied clients to the office of assistance and other locations. Her advocacy work was noticed and she was invited to speak at schools to enlighten students about Latino culture and Center activities. She proudly states, "Spanish-speaking people finally felt like they had a place in York."

She also worked with the local school districts to obtain Spanish-speaking teachers. "How do you expect kids to learn when they don't know what the teacher is talking about?" she says, puzzled. "It was not easy because the minute they hear your Spanish accent, people pushed back. But I said, 'I don't care. I'm here and I'm doing a job.'"

Over the years, Rivera served as secretary and president of the Center's advisory board, fundraising chairwoman, resource person and acting director. She also served on the Governor's



Delma Rivera, left, enjoys time with her daughter, Delma Rivera-Lytle. Rivera's daughter is very proud of her mother's numerous accomplishments to make life better for Latino residents of York, Pa.

Council for Hispanic Affairs and, in that capacity, visited the White House where she met then-President George W. Bush. She chuckles as she shares a story that made the Secret Service snap into action. "I was sitting in the second row and when he finished his talk, I jumped over to where he was and I grabbed him. The Secret Service zoomed over and I said, 'no, just a second. I just want a picture,'" recalls Rivera. "I wanted a picture because my son told me not to come home without a picture with the president. I told [Pres. Bush] that and added that it also was my birthday. Then he asked, 'how old are you?' and I said, 'Mr. President, you never ask a woman how old she is,' and then we started laughing!"

Later, Rivera met former First Lady Laura Bush at an event in York. According to Rivera-Lytle, "When Mom and Laura Bush greeted each other, it was like they were long-lost friends. [Mrs. Bush] appreciated all that Mom had done for the community."

Rivera also volunteered with the Salvation Army, Diversity Committee for the Girls Scouts of America Council, York County Medical Auxiliary, York/Adams Mental Health Mental Retardation, Long-range Planning Committee-Central York School District, church and many more organizations. She served as a Board of Directors member for the York Health Corporation and United Way.

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Delma Rivera and former Pres. George W. Bush share a laugh together about his faux pas of asking Rivera her age.

Life gets better.® at C



Love and laughter were in the air at Country Meadows of West Shore when five couples competed to determine who knew their partner best in a Not-So-Newlywed Game. Bill and Sonny Moats were the runaway winners of the game which featured questions such as "Would your wife say she spends more time reading books or the newspaper?" and "If your husband was stranded on a desert island, what would he absolutely not eat?" The Moats won a gift certificate to a restaurant of their choice.

Congratulations! Country Meadows of Bethlehem's bocce ball team, under the direction of head coach David Livirrie, came back from a 10 to 1 deficit to win the annual Michael Leader Bocce Tournament with a score of 16 to 10. The game was played at Country Meadows of Allentown's bocce court. The Bethlehem campus team has won the tournament three years and Allentown one year. A four-time win will retire the trophy.



Residents took to the field to celebrate the Super Bowl at Country Meadows of Allentown. Two teams answered trivia questions to achieve better field position to throw a football into an inflatable football player's arms for points.



Country Meadows

Residents at Country Meadows of Allentown served lunch to local emergency responders when the campus hosted a “We Love Our Firemen and EMTs” luncheon. Pictured, resident Carole Scott and Chef Chris Reibman prepare to serve a delicious meal to brave volunteers in appreciation for their service.



Gloria Miller, resident at Country Meadows of Bethlehem, received a visit from three mounted policemen and their equine partners, to thank her for her generous donation to the mounted police program. Miller is a passionate animal lover and remembers accompanying her stepfather as a child when he “patrolled” a Nazareth-area quarry on horseback.

She enjoyed the visit. “I loved it. You should have seen the faces and everyone was so excited,” she says.

During the visit she received a photo plaque along with thanks from horses Raven, George and Pharaoh.



Sage advice celebrated

Co-workers at Country Meadows and Ecumenical Retirement Community are honored to work with older generations as each day, lessons about life are passed down. Co-workers value every resident's contributions.

Last fall, more than 380 pieces of advice were collected in the Life Gets Better® Advice Contest during which residents were asked to provide their philosophies and tips to lead full, productive lives. The overwhelming response is further evidence of the wisdom residents have to share.

Life advice tidbits covered friendship, love, spirituality, stewardship, smiles and many more areas. Every piece of received advice was excellent and five winners were randomly selected for their submissions. Winners received lunch with members of the Leader family and a \$100 donation made in each winner's name to the charity of their choice. Winners include:

- **Robert Smith**, *Country Meadows of Wyomissing*
Advice: Be happy. It's comforting and reassuring to all those around you.
Donation to the Alzheimer's Association
 - **Carper (Hutch) Hutchison**, *Country Meadows of Lancaster*
Advice: Live one day at a time.
Donation to the Alzheimer's Association
 - **Betty Brucker**, *Country Meadows of South Hills*
Advice: Follow your heart
Donation to Little Sisters of the Poor
 - **Arlene Uhler**, *Country Meadows Nursing Center of Bethlehem*
Advice: You won't believe what you will endure emotionally, financially and morally, if you think you can get grandchildren from the situation.
Donation to Hope Lutheran Church
 - **Anna Santa-Maria**, *Country Meadows Nursing Center of Bethlehem*
Advice: Just be good.
Donation to Country Meadows Co-worker Foundation
- Please keep your advice coming. After all, we never stop learning and growing. 🍀



Finalists *continued from page 4*

- **Fenton Hanchett**—
Country Meadows of Allentown

- **Doris Hetrich**—
Country Meadows of Wyomissing

- **Susan Koppenhaver**—
Country Meadows of West Shore

- **Dorothy Kortz**—
Country Meadows of Bethlehem

- **Mary Jane Kreider**—
Country Meadows of Hershey

- **Mary Lou Loomis**—
Ecumenical Retirement Community

- **Victor Norris**—
Country Meadows of West Shore

- **Pat O'Connor**—
Country Meadows of Hershey

- **Lois Patterson**—
Ecumenical Retirement Community

- **Theresa Tucciarone**—
Country Meadows of Leader Heights

- **Dorothy Zeigler**—
Country Meadows of Hershey


Journeys in... PURPOSEFUL SERVICE

Journeys in Purposeful Service is a regular feature. Each edition highlights a resident who regularly engages in service both to the retirement community in which he/she resides as well as the community-at-large. If you would like to nominate a resident for recognition in this feature, please contact Kelly Kuntz, editor, at kkuntz@countrymeadows.com.

Giving back any way he can

Volunteering has been a staple in Glenn Fitze's life since a very young age.

A resident of Country Meadows of Hershey, Fitze, 61, started volunteering when he was just 15 years old. "A lot of my volunteering [was instilled] by my mother," he says. "No matter where I go, what I do, [my mother] is watching me."

His mother would be proud.

Fitze has led a life full of volunteer service. Since moving to Country Meadows, he spends at least one morning every week at the local Ronald McDonald House where he helps sort donated items such as food, personal items, toys and more. "I do whatever needs to be done whether it's putting cribs together or changing light bulbs," says Fitze.

The Ronald McDonald House offers lodging for families of a sick or injured child receiving critical medical care at Penn State Hershey Children's Hospital. Every Tuesday, Fitze looks forward to sharing his time with the charity. "This morning when I walked in the door, three of the kids were there waiting for me. I thought, 'What did I do to deserve this?' It makes me happy," he says, smiling.

Fitze's "whatever needs to be done" attitude has helped numerous charitable organizations. In 2007, his efforts were recognized when he received the Governor's Citizen Crime Prevention Volunteer Award. Fitze spent 40 years as a volunteer for his hometown police department. As a graduate of the Abington Township Police Department Citizens' Police Academy, he assisted with accident investigations, neighborhood patrols and DUI checkpoints. Serving in this role spurred him to volunteer with the Police Athletic League. According to Abington Township Police Chief William Kelly, "Mr. Fitze has been an active figure for years in the success of crime prevention



Glenn Fitze enjoys volunteering at the Ronald McDonald House in Hershey, Pa. This day his job is to sort personal items donated for use by families staying at the Ronald McDonald House.

and youth-oriented programs in our township." Fitze averaged 400 volunteer hours per year during his time volunteering with the police department.

In addition to logging volunteer hours, Fitz continues to work a part-time job at a local grocery store. "I'm the type of guy who cannot sit still; I always have to do something, no matter what time of the day it is," he says.

At the Country Meadows campus, Fitze likes to encourage his neighbors to come out of their apartments and socialize. He even teamed up with a chaplain to start a billiards club.

Fitze says volunteer service makes his life rewarding and encourages future generations to contribute however possible. "I encourage [young people] to do volunteer work. Besides going to school, volunteer. Someday you're going to need some help too." 🍀

Best Places to Work

Country Meadows—Placed #19, Best Places to Work in Pennsylvania, large-size companies

Ecumenical Retirement Community—Placed #52, Best Places to Work in Pennsylvania, small-size companies

Country Meadows of Frederick—Chosen #1, Best Place to Work in Frederick County, Md.

BEST PLACES
to work in **PA** 2012

Congratulations!

Research project *continued from front page*

Pillemer formed a relationship with Country Meadows and Ecumenical Retirement Community last summer when he served as the keynote speaker for the organizations' Celebrating Independence Conference. At that event, Pillemer spoke about his book, "30 Lessons for Living," for which he interviewed more than a thousand people over the age of 50 to gather advice on numerous topics. Since that book, he frequently is asked by younger people for sage advice on love and how to have a long marriage. Hence the new book which will be titled "Lessons for Loving."

Pillemer reached out to Country Meadows as an interview resource for his next book after meeting vibrant residents at the conference. In January, he visited three Country Meadows campuses to interview residents about love and marriage. He plans to conduct dozens more interviews over the telephone and regards advice from older adults as priceless. When his research is completed, Pillemer will speak with more than a thousand seniors across the country.

"Although older people may not be up on the latest electronic gadget or TV reality show, I believe they are the best experts we have on how to deal with problems of living," he says. "They have been through everything young people worry about and research shows that older people are generally happier than younger people. We need to take advantage of these sages in our midst while they are still with us."

Paul and Lorna Young told Pillemer that prayer is a cornerstone of their marriage. "We do a lot of praying," says Paul Young. "When we had problems, we'd take them to the Lord and 99 percent of the time he helped us out."



Hershey resident Alma Bobb, 99, says that sharing core values is key to a successful relationship. Photo courtesy Pennlive.com/Christine Baker

The couple's other top advice is "Remember to always communicate;" "Never go to bed angry;" and "Don't take on too much debt." Lorna Young adds, "Always be truthful and talk about your differences, do things for each other and be polite."

Another resident at Country Meadows of York agrees that a strong spiritual base is critical to a solid marriage. "We made a commitment to one another and also to Christ to stay together for life, through good times and bad," says Gerald Barbor. "Commitment is so lacking in today's society. If you have that commitment, you bounce over those rocky places."

Jim Diehl, another York resident, agrees. "Give and take and believe in the Lord." His wife, Dolores, adds, "Remember your marriage vows until death do you part and have faith that things will work out, and they do."

Pillemer also paid a visit to Country Meadows of Hershey where he met with several residents who provided their advice.

Residents Rene and Jessie McCurdy have been married 63 years, raised eight children and today their family has grown to include 21 grandchildren and 17 great-grandchildren. The couple agrees with the York residents that faith and patience are two traits critical to help navigate tough times.

According to Jessie McCurdy, "We had things that might have disrupted our marriage if we didn't have what it took to deal with it."

Alma Bobb, another resident at Country Meadows of Hershey, has been a widow for more than 30 years and still misses her late husband. Bobb enjoyed a thriving career as a dancer in Europe and gave it up to return to Hershey and marry the man she refers to as the love of her life. "He was very special and I still miss him."

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A newspaper reporter interviews residents at Country Meadows of York about their participation in a Cornell University research study to gather advice from seniors on love and marriage. Left to right: Lorna Young, Jim Diehl, Dolores Diehl, Millie Barbor, Gerald Barbor.

From the desk of... G. Michael Leader, President & CEO



Listen to your elders

My mother instilled many values in her children. One piece of advice I remember well is, "listen to your elders." As I continue my journey through life, I realize more and more the incredible truth in that piece of advice.

This sentiment is one that we live by at Country Meadows and Ecumenical Retirement Community. The average age of our more than 2,000 residents is 85 and as such, they have much wisdom to impart.

Every single time we survey co-workers to find out what they love most about their jobs, the answer is always the same: the residents. Co-workers enjoy special relationships with residents and clients, and often seek advice from the people for whom they provide care. Some of the pearls of wisdom they've been told include, "Caring will keep you smiling," "Togetherness is what counts," and "Make sure to laugh everyday."

In fact, these relationships and respect are such an integral part of life at Country Meadows and Ecumenical Retirement

Community that our organization uses pieces of resident advice in our advertisements and even held a "Life Advice" contest last summer. (See article on page 8.)

I, along with my co-workers, enjoy paying tribute to and honoring our residents and clients in this way. As we move further into 2013, we will continue to collect more life advice from residents and clients—gems of positive thoughts they have given, received or which have always inspired them to live a better life. We are collecting all pieces of advice whether in parenting, love, friendship, spirituality or just being a good human being.

Eventually we intend to share these tidbits via our website. It is rewarding to have such a valuable resource. After all, there is a reason that our residents and clients are referred to as the "Greatest Generation." 🌿

To share your advice, send an email to CommunicationsTeam@CountryMeadows.com



Save the date—July 24 Join the celebration

The time is coming to celebrate residents' independence.

Watch for information this spring about the second-annual Celebrating Independence Conference scheduled for July 24 at the Double Tree Resort in Lancaster, Pa.

The Conference provides opportunities for residents to participate in engaging workshops on a variety of topics to nurture mind, body and spirit.

Join us to celebrate independence! 🌿

Dedication *continued from page 5*

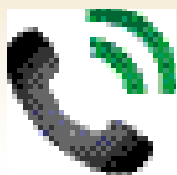
According to Rivera-Lytle, "Mom was a pioneer for people to start embracing the culture. There wasn't the influx of Latin music and food like today. My friends still comment about Mom's food. That was their first exposure to anything ethnic."

Rivera chimes in, chuckling, "You should have seen all those kids in my house. They'd come and play, always around dinnertime."

While Rivera is proud of her accomplishments, she believes that her greatest achievement is her family. "I am blessed our kids have a college education because that was our dream."

It can be said that through Rivera's work, she helped the dreams of others come true. As such, Rivera has been honored with numerous civic and community awards including the Exceptional Citizen Award, Christian Service Award and Dorrie Leader Award for Advocacy presented by the YWCA. She also is the proud recipient of the Key to the City of York to recognize her commitment to the York Hispanic community.

Rivera-Lytle shares an email in which her mother is honored for her civic service. She tears up as she reads, "She has the beauty of Sophia Loren and the service of Eleanor Roosevelt, the courage of Harriett Tubman and the compassion of Mother Teresa." 🌿



Do you have a story to share?

Call our story hotline at
855-772-2734.

Inside:

- 🌀 Resident champions Latino rights
- 🌀 Sage advice helps young love
- 🌀 Physical therapy can be fun

Research project *continued from page 10*

Bobb has wonderful memories from her marriage and is happy to share them to help guide young people in their relationships. She says that finding someone who shares the same core values is key, as is mutual respect and coming from similar backgrounds. She advocates taking time to get to know a potential spouse before marriage. "Have different experiences before you marry, see what kind of person they are and if they stand up to responsibility," advises Bobb.



*Dr. Karl Pillemer,
Cornell University*

Pillemer says there are many pieces of advice that stick in his memory from his Country Meadows visits. The most common themes include:

- Marriage will be a lot easier with someone who shares the same basic core values.
- Go into marriage realizing that you cannot change your partner.
- Friendship is as important as romantic love.

Pillemer also notes that most of the interviewees to whom he's spoken believed they were marrying for life and divorce was not an option. They felt obligated to stay together and that helped them compromise to make things work.

He concludes, "If there's one thing the oldest Americans know, it's how to live well through hard times. We need to tap their practical advice for living because it truly can enrich all our lives." 🌀

If you are over the age of 60 and would like to share your advice on love and marriage, you may do so by visiting the research project website at:

[http://blogs.cornell.edu/
themarriageadviceproject/](http://blogs.cornell.edu/themarriageadviceproject/)

Readers may also mail their thoughts to:

The Marriage Advice Project
BCTR, Beebe Hall
Cornell University
Ithaca, NY 14853

