

Journeys

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

Seniors learn, dance and create in the spirit of independence

This past July, residents celebrated their independence twice; once without fireworks, picnics or parades.

For the first time, Country Meadows and Ecumenical Retirement Community hosted a "Celebrating Independence"

conference. Nearly 200 residents attended the day-long event that offered a variety of sessions from fitness to education to alternative therapies and more. Held at the Harrisburg-Hershey Holiday Inn & Conference Center in Grantville, Pa., the conference was designed to celebrate active aging with sessions to nurture and fulfill the mind, body and spirit.

"We're excited to present our residents with a broad range of programs from politics and weather trends to Facebook and Zumba," says David Leader, chief operating officer-Country Meadows Retirement Communities. "Their interest and response to the conference demonstrated their commitment to staying active, both mentally and physically, which research shows plays a huge part in the state of our health in our older years."

The free conference was offered as part of the Community Life curriculum provided at all campuses. While on-campus events regularly include opportunities for learning, entertainment, art exploration and more, this external conference presented a number

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Country Meadows Executive Director of Fitness Kim Eichinger leads a Zumba Gold class specially designed for older participants. Zumba is the latest craze in dance fitness.



Inside:

- ☞ Resident maintains private airport
- ☞ Using yoga to fight dementia
- ☞ Famous voice moves to Country Meadows


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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.



A note from your editor

As we enter the final quarter of 2012, we reflect on a year filled with celebration... honoring the Leader family's 50th anniversary of providing services to seniors.

It began in 1962 when Gov. and Mrs. Leader founded Leader Nursing Homes and the tradition continues today through Country Meadows, Ecumenical Retirement Community and Providence Place Retirement Communities.

It has been a particularly exciting year for all of us. As a member of the organization's Communications team, we have enjoyed telling the Leader family's story as well as planning special celebrations and collecting well wishes.

Throughout this edition of *Journeys*, you will read random notes of congratulations and reflections made to the family by residents, family members, co-workers and friends. These notes are but a few of the many, many messages we received.

Thank you for sharing your thoughts and comments with us. I hope you enjoy reading them as well as the entire newsletter.

Respectfully,
Kelly S. Kuntz, Editor
Director of Communications



“*I, too, have a dream...*”



for the elderly that they will be revered and appreciated for what they have given us as individuals and a nation.

That their love and loyalty to friends, family and country will not be ignored but returned a thousand fold.

That they will be given the freedom to work and participate in our economy and society as long as they wish to.

That the researchers and health workers wage war against diseases such as Alzheimer's with the same energy they would give to diseases ravaging the young.

That all the rest of mankind will lift their hearts and voices in praise and appreciation for the heritage they have bestowed upon us.”

—**Gov. George M. Leader**, 1993



Veteran honored by Pennsylvania legislature

All veterans deserve honor and thanks. For one Country Meadows of York resident, thanks came on the floor of the Pennsylvania House of Representatives.

Clifford Chronister, 88, flew more than 50 missions as a flight engineer on board a B-17 bomber aircraft. He was visibly moved when he attended a ceremony at the Pennsylvania state Capitol to receive a citation marking his service. "The whole House, 200 people, stood up and applauded me. It was very remarkable," he says.

In addition to his visit to the PA House, Chronister, along with his son and seven Country Meadows of York residents who also served in the military, also met with Gov. Tom Corbett.

It all began when a young Chronister made a decision to enlist in the Air Corps.

"All of my friends were heading off [to war] so I decided to. I asked to be in the Air Corps," he recalls. "I served in 1943, 1944, and 1945."

A total of seven months of training across the country from Texas, California and South Dakota, prepared the 20-year-old to become an aircraft mechanic. Chronister served as a member of the 32nd Bomb Squadron, 301st Bomb Group, in the 15th Air Force. All of his missions were flown over the European theater, mostly in Austria, Greece, Germany, France, Hungary, Yugoslavia and Czechoslovakia; he was stationed in Italy.

"I flew in over 50 missions," he humbly states. "Most men stopped at 25 missions but we were allowed to fly over that if we wanted."

Throughout his enlistment, Chronister kept a diary. He can tell you what happened on any exact date and when and where he dropped bombs from a B-17. Although he was an engineer, he was in charge of the two guns at the top of the aircraft and also repelled the bombs.

50 missions alone are remarkable. But the fact that he had only one close call throughout his years is astonishing. On



Cliff Chronister is honored by members of the Pennsylvania House of Representatives. Chronister flew more than 50 missions on board a B-17 bomber during World War II. Very few men achieved that number of missions.

that occasion his plane was hit and the 10 men on board had to unload the entire plane, including guns and ammunition, to make it lighter so they could maintain air speed to get home to base 400 miles away. "Oh my God, yes, I was scared! We had to fly into German guns. Some factories had over 250 aircraft guns and they'd take you out! If another plane was hit, we had to watch for the number of parachutes that opened because that was the number of prisoners of war we had to report."

Chronister also remembers some of the roughest moments of his service. He had to wear an oxygen mask due to the height of missions, and heated suits to protect him from frostbite.

"It was rough. You did everything to stay alive," he recalls.

According to Rick Barley, executive director-Country Meadows of York, "We're really proud of Cliff and all our veterans. He is a hero to all of us."

Karen Benn, community life director, contacted state Rep. Seth Grove to share Chronister's service record—very few men made it to 50 missions. Grove was impressed and arranged for and presented the citation to Chronister.

"When you hear the stories about the heroism of men like Mr. Chronister, it is very humbling," says Grove. "The World War II generation did so much for America and for the entire world. I am thrilled to recognize Mr. Chronister, and I hope stories like his motivate America's youth. He has shown a passion for service and a willingness to protect our nation at any cost."

For his bravery, Chronister received many medals. He earned seven Bronze Stars, the Air Medal three times, the European Theater Award and the American Theater Award. However, the recognition he received at the state Capitol will remain with him for many years. "[I feel] honored to get this. They make you feel proud for what you've done." 🌟

"I consider this place my home away from home. Thank you to the Leaders and my fellow co-workers for making my job here a learning and great experience."

—Karen Staley, Country Meadows of Hershey Co-Worker

Resident keeps head in the clouds and feet on the ground at his own airport



Irv Baughman shows off a restored 1937 plane that is boarded at his private airport—the Lazy B Ranch Airport.

At 84, Irv Baughman is still flying high... literally.

A resident at Country Meadows of York, Baughman holds a pilot license and manages his own 42-acre airport—the Lazy B Ranch Airport near Dover, Pa. The location is home base for 27 planes. “We like to call it the largest little airport in Pennsylvania,” he says with a smile.

The idea for an airport was conceived when Baughman and his wife, Helena, purchased a 13-acre farm. During the next several years, the couple purchased adjoining land four times for a total of 42 acres. Originally Baughman built a simple grass airstrip but over time it morphed into a licensed location with a three-quarter mile concrete runway.

“I got leftover concrete from plants and laid it all myself,” he says proudly. “It took me 12 years.”

As a pilot and airport owner, one might assume that Baughman was involved in aviation most of his life. However, it was a career that began in his later years.

Following his military service as an Air Force cryptographer in World War II, Baughman attended auto mechanic school and got a job at a Harley Davidson motorcycle dealer. Often he was tasked with working on motorcycles used by the local police department. “I met several

policemen and they convinced me to apply for a police job.”

He applied and for more than 16 years, worked as a motorcycle patrolman for the Spring Garden Township Police Department in York County, Pa. During his tenure as a police officer, Baughman chuckles as he recalls one of his assignments and the irony it has today. “One of my assignments was escorting Gov. Leader’s car when he was making a speech at the York Inn,” he recalls. “Mrs. Leader was pregnant so we were told to be careful going across the railroad tracks!”

Baughman says his police service was an interesting time. “My 16 years was fairly routine except for being shot at twice and stabbed once.”

To support his fast-growing family—a wife and seven children—Baughman needed to supplement his police salary. He took a second job working part-time in construction. Eventually he left his patrol uniform behind and founded Baughman Construction Company—a company dealing primarily in concrete. It was a family affair.

“My wife drove the dump truck and my children helped,” he says. “I think the kids had enough hard work because after high school, they all went on to higher education. Our children attended eleven colleges, universities and medical schools.”

All this time Baughman had one goal that remained unrealized: flight.

“I rode motorcycles for years and flying gives you even more freedom than a motorcycle. With a motorcycle you are connected to earth,” he says.

He began to take flying lessons along with his only son, Bart, and the two purchased a 1946 airplane. Their father-son love of aviation even made them witnesses to history when they flew their plane to Florida to watch Neil Armstrong and Buzz Aldron’s famous moonshot. “We were a quarter-mile away and you couldn’t believe the racket,” he recalls. “Instead of the rocket going up, I thought Florida was going to go down!”

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Irv Baughman makes daily trips to his farm to pay a visit and feed his animals.



Pet donkey, JB, greets Irv Baughman.

Bart Baughman went on to attain the rank of 2nd Lieutenant flying in the Air National Guard. Sadly, in 1978, he was killed in an auto accident caused by a drunk driver.

Soon afterwards, perhaps as a tribute to his son, Baughman purchased the farmland that would become the Lazy B.

In 2009, the Pennsylvania Bureau of Aviation licensed the airport for public use. Baughman has built several airplane hangars on the property which are rented to private pilots. He continues to manage the property keeping up maintenance, working with the FAA and overseeing airport operations. "We have runway lights that are turned on by radio signals from airplanes. And with Camp David being so near here, the FAA calls me when Camp David is going to be active so we can notify our pilots to keep a 10-mile radius [away from it]."

Baughman's love for flight was passed on to his daughter and grandson who both hold pilot licenses. "A real thrill was having my grandson, at age 17, fly a

rented aircraft, solo, from New Jersey to our airport."

While Baughman is hardly retired, he and wife, Helena, enjoy living at Country Meadows of York. According to Helena Baughman, "We don't need all that space anymore and the convenience and help here is terrific." Irv Baughman chimes in, "I wouldn't mind living here when I was 30 years old—they do everything!"

Baughman still flies on occasion and says pleasure flights are his favorite. He cannot help but reflect on the various paths taken in his life.

"Life is full of changes considering my grandfather progressed from oxen to mules and horses; my father went from horses to tractors; and I went from tractors and trucks to airplanes. Now, with cell phones and computer chips, what is next?" 🐾

Country Meadows and Ecumenical Retirement Community among best employers

It's been said that a compliment is like verbal sunshine. If so, Country Meadows and Ecumenical Retirement Community are basking in a heat wave.

Both organizations were recently honored as best employers. Honors include:

- Country Meadows Retirement Communities—Best Places to Work in Pennsylvania-Large Employer Category.
- Ecumenical Retirement Community—Best Places to Work in Pennsylvania-Small Employer Category.
- Country Meadows of Frederick, Md.—Best Place to Work in Frederick County.

"It is an honor to be chosen as one of the best places to work and we're delighted to be number one in Frederick County, Maryland, and selected in Pennsylvania again," says Michael Leader, president & CEO. "This tribute belongs to our co-workers and they should be very proud of the culture they helped to create at Country Meadows and Ecumenical Retirement Community."

Debbie Savageau, Country Meadows of Frederick marketing director, says that the Leader family leads by example. "We run the business by the Golden Rule that says 'do unto others as you would have them

do unto you,' and that is a philosophy that comes from the top."

Frederick County Best Places to Work campaign criteria included enhanced workplace culture, strong professional development, benefits and amenities to provide work and life balance, encouragement of community and social responsibilities and providing tools for healthy living.

Country Meadows and Ecumenical Retirement Community will learn their respective ranks in Best Places to Work in Pennsylvania at a ceremony later this year. 🐾

"I moved in 2004 with no idea about my surroundings... Here I am almost eight years later, happier in life than ever... I enjoy helping others and seeing them happy just like myself. There is no other place I would call home. Country Meadows is my home."

—Mildred Landis, Country Meadows of Hershey Resident

Memory support program uses ancient science to fight Alzheimer's and dementia



Yoga/Reiki Master Heather Ferri leads a Kundalini Yoga class at Country Meadows of South Hills. This form of yoga is used to combat the effects of Alzheimer's disease.

When residents, co-workers and guests stroll by one of the fitness centers at Country Meadows of South Hills near Pittsburgh, Pa., they may hear strange sounds and wonder what is happening inside.

"Saa...Taa...Naa...Maa. Gee...Ohhh..."

The answer is Kirtan Kriya, a practice of Kundalini Yoga that combines chanting with breathing and stretching exercises to achieve a beneficial bio-chemical transformation in the brain.

According to Heather Ferri, Yoga/Reiki Master, it means "the awakening of the potential of a human being. It's the complexity of science that cleans the organs, balances your energies and opens the channels so that you are your greatest potential."

Country Meadows co-workers are using this ancient practice as another weapon in their arsenal to fight the effects of Alzheimer's disease and dementia.

Maureen Sirianni, memory support coordinator-Country Meadows, tries everything she can to help residents with Alzheimer's disease and dementia maintain or improve their cognitive function. "I needed [Heather] to work with residents who have anxiety, are recovering from a stroke; I put a lot of fragile people in her hands and I've seen residents walk out of this room with a better gait than when they walked in, increased vocabulary, and a peer support among residents."

According to the Alzheimer's Research and Prevention Foundation, yoga holds tremendous potential to bolster the effects of strategies used to slow or prevent Alzheimer's disease. A decade of clinical research has shown that practicing this form of yoga for 12 minutes a day can improve

cognition and activate parts of the brain that are central to memory.

The Foundation also believes it may hold the potential to reverse memory loss and has conducted years of research with partners including UCLA, University of Pennsylvania and University of California.

According to Ferri, the science of Kundalini Yoga offers extensive breath work and medical meditations to develop a good brain. The respiratory control center is located in the lower brain stem and by doing conscious breath work and chanting, persons can alter the brain and change their state of being.

"When putting these sounds together, they create vibrations by the way the tongue is placed; it creates healing within different mechanisms," explains Ferri. "So if my tongue goes to the roof of my mouth, it hits the liver meridian which goes up to the brain. You have 84 meridians in your mouth so when you think of the power of word and vibration, there is a lot of science behind chanting."

Sirianni and Ferri connected when Ferri worked privately with a resident and left behind information about yoga and the research supporting its use with people with Alzheimer's disease.

The information piqued Sirianni's interest. "It cannot hurt to try everything and anything. Sometimes you have to jump out of the airplane and hope the parachute opens," she says.

Residents enjoy twice-weekly classes and participate fully, regardless of their ability level.

"What has shocked me is how hard [the residents] work, how willing they are...I call them my warriors," says Ferri as she chokes back tears. "I feel more appreciated by them; they have changed me and that's why I want to work more and more with seniors."

She adds that she admires Country Meadows for trying

new tools to help residents with cognitive impairments. Sirianni agrees. "The Leader family are pioneers. Everything they touch they take to the next level. I think that we, as co-workers, feed off that."

In addition to trying new techniques, Country Meadows' overall approach to memory support is unique. While most retirement communities offer memory support in secured neighborhoods, Country Meadows also has an early-stage program called Connections Club. The Club meets daily to go over the day's events, build camaraderie among members and provide opportunities to alleviate frustration and



Maureen Sirianni, memory support coordinator, helps a resident correctly repeat a syllable during a chant. Chanting works by engaging various body meridians.

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Residents compete in the Olympics



Country Meadows of York residents show off their medals earned in the York County Senior Olympics. Left to right: Jack Hyde, Patricia Hyde, Jane Dolton, Dan Meckley, Jessie Fix, Paul Young

Residents of Country Meadows campuses in York and Bethlehem, Pa., competed in their respective locations' Senior Olympics this summer.

The Senior Games are designed to promote healthy lifestyles and fitness for men and women over the age of 50 through competitive and non-competitive activities. Events included basketball, swimming, golf, Wii® bowling, lawn dice, bean bag toss, shuffleboard and ladder golf, to name a few.

Medalists included:

Country Meadows of York



Gold Medalists

Jessie Fix—Wii Bowling

Jack Hyde—Hearts, Wii Golf, Poker

Patricia Hyde—Hearts

Dan Meckley—50-Yard Backstroke

Paul Young—Ladder Golf



Silver Medalists

Jack Hyde—Wii Bowling

Patricia Hyde—Wii Bowling

Paul Young—Wii Bowling



Bronze Medalists

Jane Dolton—Wii Bowling

Paul Young—Poker

Country Meadows of Bethlehem



Gold Medalists

Joe Merola—Stationary Bike

Eileen Sabulish—Target Lotto

Lou Schor—Golf, Stationary Bike

Emma Serencsics—Lawn Dice

Donald Tetamore—Stationary Bike



Silver Medalists

Theresa Hoffman—Golf

Charles Kovacs—Stationary Bike

Eileen Sabulish—Basketball



Bronze Medalists

Margaret Conroy—Shuffle Board

Hilda Hess—Basketball

David Livirrie—Stationary Bike

Julia Maso—Lawn Dice, Bean Bag Toss, Target Lotto

Marjorie Stefke—Golf

Walking to end Alzheimer's

Country Meadows of South Hills



Residents from Country Meadows campuses as well as Ecumenical Retirement Community participated in the Alzheimer's Association's "Walk to End Alzheimer's." Teams were organized at various locations in Pennsylvania and Maryland.

Country Meadows of Leader Heights



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Residents of Country Meadows of Bethlehem enjoy a summer evening around the campfire. The group had such a great time they didn't want the evening to end.



Residents and co-workers from Country Meadows of South Hills enjoy a day with the animals at the Pittsburgh Zoo.

Residents of Country Meadows of West Shore in Mechanicsburg, Pa., enjoyed a visit from the All-American Dinosaur Show. Field paleontologists presented real fossils and hosted a dinosaur game show. Pictured, Steve Hodgson daringly puts his head in the mouth of an Albertosaurus.



Country Meadows of Hershey residents Alma Bobb and Guy "Buzz" Miller tear up the runway as models for the Penn State Hershey Medical Center Association of Faculty and Friends fashion show fundraiser.



Country Meadows

Country Meadows of West Shore in Mechanicsburg, Pa., hosted a fundraising carnival to benefit the Alzheimer's Association. Pictured, Community Life Coordinator Patricia Childs smacks a pie in the face of Jim Bryan, executive director of the community's Connections Neighborhood.



Country Meadows of Hershey residents Randy Gehret, Violet Lesher and Lenore Bricker enjoy a visit from therapy chickens. The chickens are tame as a result of being handled since a very early age which allows the audience to experience touching the birds. Residents could feel the differences in feather textures as well as get a close-up view of the variety of colors, shapes and sizes of the different breeds.

Three abandoned kittens were fostered at Country Meadows of Hershey until they were ready to be adopted. The kittens provided many hours of entertainment for residents and co-workers alike. Pictured: Resident Betty Stern, who also is a client of Country Meadows At Home, and Renee Reisinger, home care associate, delight in the antics and affections of one of the rescued kittens.



Country Meadows of Allentown hosted their annual All Breed Dog Show with the Lehigh Valley Owner/Handler Club. Dogs competed for Best in Show as well as fun awards such as Best Tail Wagger, Best Kisser and Best Dressed.



Broadcast veteran makes Country Meadows home

When people meet Bob Smith, they wonder why he seems familiar. Well, if you've shopped at Boscov's Department Stores, his voice is like an old friend.

Smith, a resident at Country Meadows of Wyomissing, worked as the voice of Boscov's, recording radio advertising spots and in-store promotional announcements for nearly 20 years.

He laughs that people always ask him to say, "Did you Boscov today?"

Smith got the job as Boscov's announcer during his 35-year career in broadcasting. It began when he worked a remote radio broadcast at a store owned by Solomon Boscov, father of Boscov's Department Store Founder Albert Boscov. "I met Al while he was stocking shelves and we stayed in touch," says Smith.

Besides his department store fame, Smith is a trusted name and voice in Berks County, Pa., where he worked the reporter beat at several radio stations. His reason for entering the world of broadcasting following his Navy service might be attributed to divine intervention.

"I was laying on the couch at home and suddenly I sat up and put my coat on. My wife asked, 'where are you going,' I said 'I'm going into town to see if I can make it for broadcasting,'" he recalls. "I went into town and [the first station] flunked me. So I went to WRAW [radio]. They needed someone desperately so they hired me."

Smith had absolutely no broadcasting experience. "I didn't go to college, I didn't even graduate from high school. I didn't do any of that stuff but I figured it out. When I opened that [microphone] I was [nervous] talking to thousands of people and instead, I thought, 'I'm going to talk to Mrs. so-and-so who is making dinner for her family,' and that made all the difference in the world. It was a career."

From WRAW, Smith went on to positions with WHUN and WEEU radio and was part of the team that founded TV-51 in Reading, Pa.

"I was a reporter and there's nothing I haven't seen or done—Nothing. You can meet up with the nicest thing you could imagine and you could come up against the crummiest, terrible, most ridiculous stuff you could see in your life," he reflects as he shares tales of meeting celebrities, covering important governmental meetings, mine disasters and gruesome crime scenes. One of his favorite media memories is riding three times with the famed U. S. Navy flight aerobatic squadron—the Blue



Bob Smith records a message for Boscov's Department Stores. His voice is synonymous with the phrase "Did you Boscov today?"

Photo courtesy of The Reading Eagle

Angels. "From the moment [the pilot] released the brakes on the ground and threw in the afterburners, until he arrived at 11,000 feet going in a barrel roll, took 60 seconds. That lets you know that you have skin on those bones. . . oh what a thrill that was!" he shares.

After a fulfilling career in broadcasting, Smith went to work for his home county as a community relations director. His office was located in a county nursing home and he loved his time working there. "I

became well associated with the people who lived there. I loved it. I'd go down the hallway in the morning, past the rooms and say 'good morning.' It reminds me of when I came here."

A relatively new resident to Country Meadows, Smith says the decision to move to a retirement community was difficult but one he's glad he made. "When you come into a place like this it's a dramatic change. People that finally reach the age of 85, 90, they've seen it all, they've done it all. . . except for this!" he says as he emphasizes how glad he is that he made this change. "I came here and that was the best move I ever made in my life. I'm 82 years old and I love it here, it feels like home." (Read Smith's personal observations on moving to Country Meadows on the next page.)

He enjoys interacting with his neighbors as well as co-workers. In his six months in residence, Smith already has served as the campus Memorial Day speaker, narrator for the community's production of "South Pacific" and gone on many trips and outings. One of his favorite activities is going on country rides. "We drive around Berks County and that brings back a lot of memories. I sit there and say to myself, 'oh, I remember that' and they are just pleasant memories," he says.

He is humbled that residents and co-workers regard him as a celebrity and says that he is frequently asked to say, "Did you Boscov today?" But that's okay with Smith—it is an experience he's gotten used to, especially when he shops at Boscov's. "A lot of times I'd be out of town and wind up going into a store. People would say, 'you sound just like that guy that's talking,' and I'd say, 'well, that's something. . . it is me.' They are surprised."

Smith has a positive attitude towards life and encourages others to do the same. "You might as well enjoy every doggone minute and make it happy and pleasurable. I have had a wonderful trip through life." 🐾

As a writer and former reporter, Bob Smith observes the world with a questioning eye. Below he shares his insight on moving to Country Meadows.

Life is what you make it when you move to a retirement community

By **Robert E. Smith**, resident-Country Meadows of Wyomissing

From the moment one moves into a retirement community such as Country Meadows, a number of emotions immediately come into play. And how one reacts to the challenge of relocating from the outside to a completely new life in their home, will dictate that person's comfort level for the future.

One will be quick to realize the difference in the attitudes and dispositions of their new friends and neighbors. Some will be happy in their new surroundings, others will be sad leaving the comfort of their home and family...maybe for some even emotional. But all will quickly recognize a new challenge, and how one faces that challenge will determine their own happiness for the future.

Some of your new family will be outwardly friendly...others will be reluctant to join in whether it be in conversation or activities, and a negative attitude of others could even challenge your own comfort level. Also, the different outlook by some could be the pressure of medical difficulties.

But, don't worry.

Here's what you can do, how you can play a big part in leveling the playing field. The most important thing you can do is always smile...it can be contagious. Be happy...it's comforting and reassuring to all those around you. Engage a newcomer in conversation; learn their name, show that person you care about them and their well-being. Be helpful in showing them around and introduce them to all the available activities indoors as well as scheduled bus trips to church, banking, shopping and country rides. Make them really feel at home.

Taking up residence in a retirement community is not an ending. In fact, to the contrary; it's the beginning of all those things you didn't have time for in the past and an opportunity to relax. You owe it to yourself. And most importantly, you can assure, with confidence to your family, your happiness and your own comfort in knowing that many exciting days lie ahead. 🍷



Co-workers provide tips on Alzheimer's disease to emergency responders

The Eastern Pennsylvania EMS Council and Suburban EMS recognized three Country Meadows of Bethlehem co-workers with their "Above and Beyond" Award. Country Meadows hosted two presentations for local emergency medical service teams to provide information about Alzheimer's disease and related dementia as well as how to interact and communicate with individuals who have dementia.

The second presentation, held during EMS Appreciation Week in late May, was attended by EMS representatives from Bethlehem Township, City of Bethlehem, Wilson Fire QRS, Nazareth EMS and Suburban EMS.

Pictured (left to right): Joel Kroft, executive director of Memory Support Programs-Country Meadows Retirement Communities; Lindsay Steele, director of admissions-Country Meadows of Bethlehem Nursing Center; Una Walsh, executive director-Country Meadows of Bethlehem; Christopher Confalone, NREMT-P, education coordinator-Suburban EMS, Inc.; and Donna Klass, NREMT, director of volunteers-Suburban EMS, Inc. 🍷

"I think this place is wonderful. Everybody has treated me so nice. It has changed my life because I have improved a lot. I couldn't get out of a chair, now I can. I couldn't raise my legs, now I can. I appreciate it all."

—**Guy Baker**, Country Meadows of Bethlehem Resident

Help at home blossoms into friendship

Clark Gardner got more than he bargained for when he contacted Country Meadows At Home for some help around the house. He also found a new friend.

It all started when Gardner took a painful fall that changed his life. "It was a Monday night I remember well. I came home and I was very tired. I took a fall and dislocated two ribs and fractured three...very, very painful!" he says, grasping his side at the memory.

He went to a local hospital to receive treatment. The medical staff told Gardner that he needed to go to a rehabilitation center near his Pittsburgh, Pa., home. "They told me the places I could go and I knew every one of them. There wasn't any question in my mind—I said 'I'm going to Country Meadows.'"

He spent a few weeks in Country Meadows of South Hills Nursing and Rehabilitation Center until he was discharged. While he looked forward to going home, he had concerns about navigating his apartment. He called Country Meadows At Home to get the help he needed. "They gave me a choice of a male or a female and I said it really doesn't matter but I need somebody that is strong; I have 15 steps to my palatial two and a half room flat. I had a walker and a cane and they had to carry down garbage and laundry."

He tried a few different home care associates until he found his match in Sherrie Durr.

When spending time with both Gardner and Durr, it is obvious they care for each other as they tease back and forth while completing tasks.

Durr says, "Clark is my favorite client. He is a very interesting man and has a lot of knowledge. He knows a lot of people and everywhere we go, there's someone he knows and that's interesting. We go to libraries and he's put a different spin on life [for me]."

When asked how long the two have worked together, Gardner quips, "Seems like I know her from high school!" The pair has been together for several months.



Country Meadows At Home client Clark Gardner and Home Care Associate Sherrie Durr have fun, even folding laundry. The two have become fast friends.

Gardner receives services from Country Meadows At Home one day each week. To make the most of his time with Durr, he writes his day's goals on a 3x5 note card. He says planning is a habit that remains since his profession as an accountant.

Durr says, "We have a routine and we go to specific places but there's always something new every time. I look forward to my days with Clark. They are days that I wake up and think 'I wonder what adventures we're going to get into today?'"

This particular day the duo begins their adventures with a trip to the local barber shop,

then on to the laundromat and grocery store. Gardner reminds Durr that he needs green bananas and ice cream.

Next on the agenda is a stroll through a local mall to chat with friends, followed by a trip to the library where Gardner uses a computer to check emails and surf the internet. Gardner walks freely as he and Durr move from place to place.

Durr says that she's seen improvements in Gardner's abilities. "He's become a lot more self-sufficient since we started together. He's able to walk without a cane now," she says. "He takes the time to do the exercises which he was sent home with from Country Meadows [Nursing and Rehabilitation Center] and those have helped him get to this point."

Gardner says that he enjoys his relationship with Durr. "She's a friend. Some people don't understand friendships," he says.

Gardner is also a friend...a good, supportive friend. When he learned that Durr's young son copes with cystic fibrosis, he went to the library at a local hospital to research the illness. Durr says, "It meant a lot that Clark researched cystic fibrosis. He got me a book by one of his favorite authors. [The author's] daughter had cystic fibrosis and it's about everything that she went through."

Gardner flashes a humble smile and teases Durr about helping her study to become a registered nurse. He reminds her that while her education is important, she also needs to take time and enjoy life. "I can't teach her anything. She needs to take time to watch paint dry and grass grow," he says with a wide grin. 🌻

"I feel very fortunate to have found Country Meadows when I needed it... I have found many friends here and continue to enjoy life. Thank you, Country Meadows."

—Harriet Brightwell, Country Meadows of South Hills Resident

Journeys in...

PURPOSEFUL SERVICE

Journeys in Purposeful Service is a regular feature of Journeys. Each edition highlights one of Country Meadows' many residents who regularly engage in service both to the retirement community in which they reside 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.

Sharing music and friendship

At Country Meadows of Wyomissing, life is a song thanks to resident Caroline Beitmen.

This happy-go-lucky lady takes it upon herself to make life better through music. Every morning she gathers her CD player, religious music CDs and devotional books and heads to the lounge to lead a morning devotional.

Beitmen says she does it out of appreciation for the residents and co-workers who helped her achieve better health. "When I came here I wasn't well. Having not been well for so long, I hadn't sung at all for years. When I came here, it came out, finally," she says and adds, "I love music and I love hymns... I can still carry a tune."

Her love shows as a group of 10 residents listens intently while Beitmen reads aloud and switches on the CD player to play the next hymn for the group to sing along.

In addition to the morning service, Beitmen also leads two sing-a-longs most days of the week. "On Sunday I have a hymn sing-a-long and on Tuesday we have 'down memory lane.' It takes us all back when we used to go dancing in the Hershey ballroom. [The residents] love it—that going back and reminiscing."



Caroline Beitmen loves to share music and faith with her neighbors. She volunteers every day to lead devotional services and sing-a-longs.

She wells up as she talks about how much sharing the gift of music means to her. She leads these groups because, "I love music so much and I wasn't able to have music in my life for so long. I am thrilled to death to do this."

She also is thrilled to have made many friends. "They're all so different, you never know what is going to happen so be prepared," she chuckles. "The people in this building did a lot for me and I'm happy to be here. I'm comfortable."

Beitmen also enjoys her alone time during which she enjoys her computer, television and Philadelphia Phillies baseball games. She laughs as she

remembers coming to Country Meadows. "I didn't intend on staying—'no pictures on the wall please, I'm not staying.' Now there isn't anyplace else I want to go."

When asked if the Country Meadows' tagline **Life gets better** applies to her, she cheerfully exclaims, "That would be putting it lightly! When I came here I was a wreck. Life has gotten much better!" 🌸

"There are speakers and there are speakers, but when George Leader speaks, I am mesmerized. I enjoy listening to him. His topics are always of great interest. His poetry is beautiful and it touches the heart. Remember the TV show 'This Is Your Life?' Wouldn't his life make a great show?! Congratulations, George—you did it right!"

—Jane L. Dolton, Country Meadows of York Resident



From the desk of...

G. Michael Leader
President & CEO

Residents' talents amazing and often therapeutic

I am often very pleasantly surprised by the various talents that bless our residents and co-workers. I see works of art from painting classes, sculpture, photography, the written word, crafts and other endeavors too numerous to mention in this small space.

One of our latest art projects is to utilize residents' artistic talents for the design of our 2012 holiday card. As I peruse the numerous beautiful paintings, drawings and photographs entered in our art contest, I am again awed at the talent in our communities.

Astounded is another word that comes to mind. When we launched the contest we hoped for at least five entries. Instead we received more than 80! Our team has their work cut out for them to select a winner.

All this creativity is a reminder that our residents contribute so very much to all of us.

When I visit our campuses, I am proud that our co-workers and resident committees plan such rich Community Life calendars chock-full of activities to encourage residents to re-visit a favorite hobby or even learn a new one. Opportunities are provided in every level of care.

Some talents have even been put to use to help others. For example, many of our residents sell their artwork at art shows to benefit an organization we support—the Alzheimer's Association. I will admit that I have purchased more than one work of art created by residents.

Art is powerful. It breaks through all barriers and just like a child's laughter, can touch your heart. Art has no judgment and is never wrong. You can create anything freely, be yourself freely, express your beliefs freely...nothing can stop you.

Art gives a creative outlet to anyone regardless of their talent or ability level. For example, there is a gentleman from Lewistown, Pa., who became paralyzed from the neck down following a diving accident. Rather than succumb to his disability, he learned to paint using his mouth to hold the brush. He discovered a whole new world as an artist and even had one of his paintings used by the Christopher Reeve Foundation.

All of us can channel our inner thoughts and feelings through art, storytelling, making crafts, enjoying nature, etc.

I encourage you to consider taking up a hobby that you find enjoyable. You might find a creative outlet to be cathartic and awaken a talent from days gone by. 🍷



**ON VETERANS DAY
AND ALWAYS,
WE HONOR AND SAY
THANK YOU TO THE
MEN AND WOMEN OF
THE ARMED SERVICES
AS WELL AS THEIR
LOVED ONES WHO
KEEP THE HOME
FIRES BURNING.**



"...To achieve good care at these facilities has required the depth of thoughts by the Leader family and their oversight and caring. I owe a special thanks to many of your co-workers for their smiles and willingness to help and not to forget the delightful 272 poems that George M. Leader wrote. Thanks to all of the Leader family for their exceptional achievements."

—**Dr. Richard A. Seibert**, Country Meadows of Leader Heights Resident

Spirit of independence *continued from front page*

of session topics in one place from which residents could choose. Further, the conference provided a gathering for residents from all Country Meadows locations and Ecumenical Retirement Community, and Country Meadows At Home clients, to connect and enjoy a day of fun and education.

As groups arrived from campus locations near and far, anticipation was in the air as seniors chatted in the lobby, read course overviews and compared schedules with friends.

Eager to get the day started, many arrived to their first session early. Morning sessions featured guest speakers who talked about politics, weather trends, living well and technology. There also were hands-on sessions like make your own aromatherapy and audience participation was encouraged in classes such as Kundalini yoga, fitness for men and cooking demonstrations.

"It is unbelievable what you did for all us," says Ruth Finnegan, a guest who is considering a move to Country Meadows. "I am so glad I came."

Finnegan attended a presentation by G. Terry Madonna, Ph.D., director of the Center for Politics and Public Affairs at Franklin and Marshall College, entitled "Election 2012: Politics, Policies, Polls." In the afternoon she attended Dance for Fitness and Better Health and afterwards was seen heading for the wine-tasting session.

As sessions concluded, big smiles lit participants' faces as they engaged in conversation with their session-mates or shared their excitement with co-workers who stood ready to assist with directions or anything else a guest might need.

Bethlehem resident Bruce Nase left the Technology for Seniors session saying, "That was really great! I really enjoyed the class, especially all the computers."

Over lunch, residents enjoyed special keynote speaker Karl Pillemer, Ph.D. as he shared results from the Cornell "Legacy Project" in which he surveyed more than 1,200 older Americans on the question, "What are the most important lessons you



Certified Reflexologist and Wellness Educator Aisha Newton leads a class on the healing attributes of essential oils. Participants also made their own aromatherapy oils to take with them.

have learned over the course of your life that you would pass on to the younger generation?" Based on this project, Pillemer authored "30 Lessons for Living: Tried and True Advice from the Wisest (and Oldest) Americans." Pillemer is the Hazel E. Reed Professor of Human Development at Cornell University and Professor of Gerontology in Medicine at the Weill Cornell Medical College.

After lunch, residents returned to their choice of afternoon classes. A popular session was with animal expert Jack Hubley who introduced conference participants to a skunk, snakes, red-tailed hawk and other critters. In another part of the hotel, men and women chose a partner for ballroom dance instruction, and in another room seniors learned how to improve connections with memory-impaired friends and family.

In yet another session, Fitness Director Brenda Kennedy chanted, "Zumba, Zumba, Zumba," as she started the "sugar cane" segment of a Zumba Gold class. More than 40 residents kept up with the beat and watched intently as Kennedy described the downward swinging arm movement of the "machete to cut the sugar cane" in the seated exercise routine.

"It was fun! There is a good spirit in the room and we're moving all the time," says Betty Spungen, a resident of Country Meadows of Frederick who was ready to Zumba her way to lunch.

Country Meadows of Bethlehem resident Ray Pelliciotti was whistling the sugar cane song and reached out to Kennedy for an impromptu dance as he left the session.

As the day wound to a close, the air of anticipation morphed into an air of fulfillment as residents boarded campus shuttles and buses, a little tired, but declaring the day a success. 🐉



Animal Expert Jack Hubley holds a red-tail hawk and shares information about the bird of prey with conference participants who also saw snakes, voals, owls and other critters.

Inside:

- 🌀 Veteran recognized in State House
- 🌀 Client and care associate find friendship
- 🌀 Woman gives gift of music to neighbors

Memory support program *continued from page 6*

anxiety that accompany early stage memory loss. The Club helps its members stay in a traditional unsecured personal care setting.

According to Sirianni, “Connections Club is a cognitive, brain stimulation program that I like to disguise as a social program; a big gang of friends. We don’t see age or dementia. We do recognize the challenges but we focus on the friendships to get through the rough spots. Age is not a number but how you feel. Dementia does not define them.”

For residents who require a higher level of memory support services, the Connections Neighborhood offers a secure environment while continuing to offer opportunities for entertainment, outings, intergenerational activities and much more.

Residents in both Connections Club and the Connections Neighborhood participate in the yoga classes. Sirianni marvels at seeing improvements in residents of both levels when they come to class. “It’s one of those moments when you see they’ve taken that next step; the brain is saying ‘yes, I’m still in here,’ the personality is saying ‘yes, I’m worth fighting for.’ You see them fighting for themselves and it works. A feeling comes over me that doesn’t have a word.”

As the residents move during the class, one can see a dramatic change in their demeanor from when they began to when they finish.

As a resident leaves the class she says, “I like everything about [yoga]. I haven’t been able to be here for a while and I missed it. It makes me feel better and we’re happy—see how happy we are now!”

Other campus residents have noticed the positive effect yoga has on its participants. “One of my favorite things is when a resident in Independent Living will look at us and ask, ‘Hey, Maureen, where are you guys going now?’ They want to know and when I say ‘The Connections Club is meeting,’ they say ‘oh, I can’t join.’ The residents enjoy this kind of special members-only club feeling, it stirs that positive outcome in all of them,” she notes as she reflects on her relationships with the close-knit group. “This is more than a job; it becomes part of who you are. I chuckle when I realize that some of my closest friends are in their 80s!” 🌀

For more information on research into Kundalini Yoga and Alzheimer’s disease, visit www.AlzheimersPrevention.org/research.htm.