

# Journeys

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

## Leader family serves seniors for half a century

Fifty years.

For many of us, the half-century mark went by in the blink of an eye.

Fifty years ago, in 1962, President Kennedy demanded the removal of Soviet missile bases detected in Cuba; "The Beverly Hillbillies" and a new night-time comedy show, "Here's Johnny" with Johnny Carson, ruled the TV screen; "Big Girls Don't Cry" was at the top of the charts; Marilyn Monroe died from an apparent overdose of sleeping pills; and a gallon of gas cost just 25 cents.

In Pennsylvania, a former governor and his wife embarked on the next chapter of their lives; one that made a tremendous impact on older adults and nearly every person reading this story.

Gov. George M. and Mary Jane Leader started their venture in the senior health care field.

Over 50 years, their leadership helped evolve the stereotypical nursing home into assisted and personal care living options which provide seniors care with dignity and independence.

In 1962, Gov. Leader undertook a business venture with a partner to purchase three nursing centers. Things didn't go well. In an effort to salvage the business, Gov. Leader bought out the partner. That was the beginning of the Leader Nursing & Rehabilitation Centers. . . and the family's legacy in senior living.

"[It] turned out that was the beginning of my dad, once again, turning lemons into lemonade," says Jane (Leader) Janeczek. "One thing I know about Dad, I think he saw [nursing homes] as not just an investment but something that he could make better. He always has been focused on the disenfranchised so the care of seniors who were fragile was just another pull for him. He's the kind of guy who sees things that are not just and wants to correct them."

### Historical Photo – Early 1980s



*Michael Leader, Country Meadows president & CEO (left), and former Pennsylvania Governor and Country Meadows Founder George M. Leader, stand with a building rendering on land that is now home to the first Country Meadows campus in the South Hills of Pittsburgh.*



### Inside:

- 🌀 Donations aid struggling co-workers
- 🌀 Resident CPR program
- 🌀 Travel opportunities



**COUNTRY MEADOWS**  
RETIREMENT COMMUNITIES

*Life gets better.®*



**Ecumenical Retirement**  
COMMUNITY

*At Home* COUNTRY MEADOWS  
Personal Care Services

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

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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.

The 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.



## Foundation aids co-workers experiencing financial distress

"What a Godsend! It came at a time I really needed it."

Country Meadows co-worker, Mary (not her real name), expresses tremendous gratitude for a grant she received from the Country Meadows Co-worker Foundation. Created in 2010, this not-for-profit, tax-exempt organization assists Country Meadows, Country Meadows At Home and Ecumenical Retirement Community co-workers who experience an urgent financial situation.

Funded from donations made by residents, families, co-workers and the Leader family, the Co-worker Foundation awards non-taxable grants of up to \$2,000 to co-workers for unexpected emergencies that may include fire, theft, death of a loved one, damage from a natural disaster and other situations. Since the Co-worker Foundation's creation, nearly \$46,000 has been granted to 31 co-workers.

Mary certainly qualifies.

Mary's life was forever changed by a car accident, caused by a drunk driver, which took the life of her husband. She suddenly found herself widowed with two children. The accident was a few years ago and Mary continues to cope with the emotional toll of losing her beloved husband. "We get through by the grace of God. My faith in God has enabled me to stay where I'm at, keeps my mind strong," she says.

Unfortunately she also is enduring a financial struggle.

Collecting Social Security benefits from her late husband, the government informed Mary that she made too much money last year. As such, her benefits were temporarily withheld.

"I was stuck in a situation and I didn't know how I was going to pay my bills," she says. "I didn't want to [ask for help] but I didn't have a choice at the time."

She applied for and received a grant from the Co-worker Foundation that brought current her mortgage, utilities and other needs. "I consider it a great blessing. When you are in need and [your employer] offers something like this, I think it's a wonderful thing. I don't know where I would be if I didn't have the help."

Situations like Mary's are exactly the reason the Co-worker Foundation was created.

"From time to time people have crises in their lives that may be the result of a serious illness, tragic accident, fire or even flood. Sometimes we learn about those things at the Home Office but not always. We started the Foundation to develop an organized way to

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*Members of the Country Meadows Co-worker Foundation board of directors at a recent meeting. Seated, left to right: Gina Fetter, treasurer; Rev. Norma Llewellyn; Tracy Newcomer, co-chair; Rev. Howard West, co-chair; Nancy Beahm. Standing, left to right: Rev. Martin Romaine; Brandi Levenduski, secretary; Kathy Burrows; Troy Smith.*





Gov. Leader continued to work, with another company, to support his college-bound children and asked his wife to take on the position of administrator for a 100-bed nursing home. She worked to straighten out that nursing home and did what she could to keep the business afloat.

"At the onset she was unexcited about the nursing home business," recalls Gov. Leader. It turned out that "she took to it like a duck to water. Soon she was managing one of the homes full time."

During an interview in late 2010, Mrs. Leader said, "It took off with me, it really did. I liked the people I worked with and I think it was my calling." She wanted to create a home-like feeling and ensure that the centers were staffed by the best people possible.

"My mother always wanted the best for others," says Country Meadows President & CEO Michael Leader during the same interview.

Because of his parents' vocation, Michael Leader has been involved in senior care in various fashions since the ripe young age of 16. "When I was in high school, I was mowing the lawn, driving the family lawn mower over to the nursing facility, mowing the lawn and bringing it back. I also worked in the kitchen sometimes; I worked one summer as an office manager; and I helped to construct the Leader Nursing Center in Camp Hill as a laborer," he recalls.

After college, a stint as Washington DC's coordinator for Pres. Nixon's second inauguration and law school, he returned to the family business. "Law school was the back up plan if this didn't work out," he says with a smile. "If my dad and I didn't get along, I was going to be a lawyer."

While he jokes, Michael Leader notes that it has been a blessing to work beside his family members every day.

Leader Nursing & Rehabilitation Centers were later sold when the company ran low on capital following rapid expansion in the 1970s. Gov. Leader, never one to rest on his laurels, launched his next adventure. At age 65, he incorporated the George M. Leader Family Corporation in 1983 and that same year, opened the first Country Meadows Retirement Community location—a nursing and rehabilitation center in the South Hills of Pittsburgh, Pa.

Two years later, Country Meadows' first Assisted Living accommodations opened in Hershey, Pa. Country Meadows was one of the first providers in Pennsylvania to provide Assisted Living services in residences constructed specifically for this purpose.

#### Historical Photo



*Mary Jane Leader in her role as nursing home administrator.*

The Leader family notes there have been many changes over the 50 year span, almost all of them positive.

According to Michael Leader, "People are living longer; they're more active and are continuing to contribute to society for longer. The level of activity in retirement communities is much greater today. People are more involved in the community, want more to do and continue to have fun."

He also notes positive changes in exercise programs. "Fitness used to be chair exercises in the morning and now it's resistance exercise, walking, yoga, tai chi, swimming and more, in addition to morning stretch."

Perhaps most importantly, Leader says the goals for most senior living providers have changed. "In the old days, the idea

was to keep people safe, secure and as healthy as you could. It wasn't to make people's lives wonderful; it was to protect them from harm rather than to enrich their lives," he says. "Now we take it for granted that we are going to protect them but the number one goal is to enrich residents' lives, give them purpose and make their lives better."

Gov. Leader turned management of Country Meadows over to his children 14 years ago. Just one year later, he founded another retirement living community, Providence Place, which has grown to four locations.

Today as the family celebrates its 50<sup>th</sup> year of delivering services to older adults, the Leaders remain very involved in Country Meadows. Gov. Leader, 94, serves on the board of directors as chairman emeritus and his wife also served as a director until her death last March. Sons Michael and David work as President & Chief Executive Officer and Chief Operating Officer, respectively. Son-in-law Ted Janeczek is Chief Financial Officer.

The next generation is just starting to work at Country Meadows. According to Michael Leader, "We have five members of the next generation—one of my children, two of my sister's children as well as her son-in-law, and one of my brother's children—involved with the company. I think it's encouraging that they want to join this business, that they see the rewards of working with a great team of co-workers to make life better for our residents and clients. They joined the company not because we recruited them, but because they see the satisfaction that it has brought their parents, their aunts and uncles, being able to be on the leading edge and serve as role models in our profession. They see the rewards, the emotional and social benefits of being part of Country Meadows." 🌀

## Foundation aids co-workers *continued from page 2*

help these co-workers,” says Country Meadows President & CEO Michael Leader.

The Foundation is administered by a board of directors comprised of eight co-workers who oversee confidential grant applications and award approved funds.

Tracy Newcomer, vice president of Human Resources, co-chairs the Co-worker Foundation’s board. “There is a definite need for this program. It really humbles you to realize how one unplanned event can spark a spiral that people just can’t get out of. Whether it’s a death, loss of job or natural disaster, they aren’t equipped with an emergency fund to get them through it and as a result, they fall behind,” she says. “Frequently these are the dedicated co-workers who are there whether it’s raining, snowing or sleeting, who give 100 percent to our residents. When you look at their financial picture at home, it would be very easy for them to carry their problems into work and they don’t. It reminds me how wonderful our co-workers are. They really put the residents first.”

More than \$85,000 has been donated to the Country Meadows Co-worker Foundation since it started.

“This is an important and concrete way that the Leader family shows that they, and the company, care about the people who work here,” says Howard West, executive director of Spiritual Life and Co-worker Foundation co-chair.

For grant consideration, co-workers complete a confidential application that goes to the board. The approval process moves quickly.

In addition to grants, co-workers also may be referred to the REACH Employee Assistance Program—a free benefit provided to all co-workers—to receive counseling on budgeting and managing finances. According to Newcomer, “The Foundation can give them the money they need and REACH can provide resources to help them manage so they don’t find themselves back in the same situation.”

Newcomer adds that serving on the Foundation’s board is incredibly rewarding. “The Foundation exemplifies that Country Meadows is really about family and takes care of its co-workers. For me, it goes back to the philosophy that we don’t just say that our co-workers are important; we do things that show them they are important.”

Mary is grateful for the Co-worker Foundation and expresses how blessed she is to work for an organization that provides this valuable benefit. She is especially thankful to donors whose generosity makes grants possible.

“The residents always want to thank us for this and that. I always tell them that it’s my job to help make sure they are taken care of,” she says. “I don’t know what I would have done without them.” 🐾

**To make a tax-deductible contribution, please send a check addressed to “Country Meadows Co-worker Foundation,” 830 Cherry Drive, Hershey, PA, 17033.**

## Choking scare inspires resident CPR program



*Left to right: Anne Zarlenga, LPN; Ginny Morris; Wilma McGuigan. Morris performed the Heimlich maneuver to clear McGuigan’s airway during a choking incident at breakfast. As a result, Zarlenga scheduled CPR classes designed specifically for residents.*

Wilma McGuigan, a resident at Country Meadows of Leader Heights in York, Pa., credits her life to fellow resident Ginny Morris.

It happened during breakfast where McGuigan and Morris are table mates.

“She was eating raisin toast. All of a sudden she started coughing, she has asthma and I thought maybe that’s what it was. I looked and I could see she was in distress; she was starting to get a little blue,” recalls Morris, a retired nurse.

Another resident immediately ran to get help and Morris sprang into action. “I never had any second thoughts, I just jumped up and told her to get up,” she says as she tells about performing the Heimlich maneuver on McGuigan. “I was so grateful I was there because [the residents] were saying ‘what are we going to do?’”

Most of all, McGuigan is glad Morris was there. “I think it was terrific, I really appreciate it and I owe my life to her.”

Anne Zarlenga, LPN, responded to the dining room. “We arrived and found that Wilma’s airway was clear. We were really happy about that,” she recalls.

A certified Red Cross CPR trainer, Zarlenga was concerned about the incident and realized it may happen again. She came up with an idea to offer a CPR course for residents. “I’ve learned a lot over the years I’ve been here. I often see residents helping other residents whether it’s helping them go get a cane or walker, helping them with their wheelchair or even pushing them down the hall. To me, that goes back to the family atmosphere. I’ve always felt like this is my Country Meadows family and I see that from one person to the other,”

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# Resident's art talents displayed in many forms

From a young age, Bob McConkey immersed himself into the world of artistry; drawing, painting, studying with famous artists, woodcarving beside world-class carvers, and showcasing and selling his work around the country.

A resident of Country Meadows of Leader Heights in York, Pa., McConkey proudly displays his talents around the apartment he shares with his wife. He has been honing his talents most of his life.

When young McConkey was busy dreaming about college and becoming an art teacher, World War II began and he suddenly found himself living life on the sea aboard the Queen Elizabeth, serving as a medic for the United States Army. As far as his art-teaching career was concerned, "well, that was the end of that," he says.

It wasn't the end of McConkey's art career, however. Shortly after being discharged from the army he began painting. "I started to paint and never quit," he says. "I just wanted to paint, I always loved art."

McConkey's love of art eventually led him to art school, where he spent most of his evenings. He primarily studied oil painting and had the opportunity to learn with some of York's finest artists; Andrew Case, the retired dean of art at Penn State, and William Faulkner, the head of York Art School. McConkey says Case moved to York, "Because he loved the rolling hills here, to paint." William Faulkner was well known in York for painting historic buildings.



*Bob McConkey holds one of his many beautiful wood carvings.*

After retirement, McConkey found a new hobby—woodcarving. Inspiration first struck him when he stepped inside an art exhibit full of wood-carved wildlife. "I had never seen a carved bird like that before," he recalls. The carvings were the center of attention at the two-person show. When he, too, was captured by the beauty of the majestic birds, he thought, "That's for me."

Along with participating in carving clubs, McConkey also enjoys meeting fellow woodcarvers. He has carved many different animals, walking sticks, and various other pieces throughout his woodcarving career. He also did a bit of traveling, where he sold his masterpieces in galleries in Florida, New York and Arizona. His specialty

is his carved ducks which have won him blue ribbons at a state show while he was living in Tucson, Arizona.

McConkey also had the honor of displaying some of his carvings in the York Township Building, upon their request, for the town to admire.

"It is a gift, there's no two ways about it," says Dorothy Mish. Mish is in awe when she holds one of her husband's unique carvings—a colorful wizard holding a crystal ball. "When I saw this from the start, a block of wood," says Mish suddenly at a loss for words. "It's my favorite."

No doubt these beautiful creations are the result of a deep spiritual connection to the items he carves. As he describes it, "It's a labor of love." 🐾



*Regional Marketing Director Kathy Cox, left, congratulates Getaway Giveaway winner Magdalene Foster. Foster won the contest prize of one month free rent.*

## Resident wins Getaway Giveaway

Magdalene Foster, resident at Country Meadows of Hershey, was excited to learn that she was the winner of the community's "Getaway Giveaway" contest.

Prospective residents who toured the community during the last quarter of 2011 were entered into the contest to win a one-month stay at Country Meadows. Foster's name was pulled as the lucky winner.

When Foster toured Country Meadows, she moved in. As the winner she will enjoy one month's free rent.

In her short time in residence, Foster enjoys living at Country Meadows. "I like the fitness and volunteer activities," she says and adds that she is already making new friends. 🐾



# Life gets better.® at C



Country Meadows of Bethlehem residents who regularly attend group fitness and Nautilus classes earn points towards a monthly day of spa-like pampering at the Bethlehem Vocational Technical School. Residents were treated to lunch, facials and manicures.

Pictured, residents Peg Conroy, in red sweater, and Ruth Saalfeld, enjoy manicures from the Cosmetology students.



Residents in the Connections Club at Country Meadows of Allentown gathered to make pine cone bird feeders. The project was born out of the group's regular meetings during which residents talk about bird species and expressed concern about their food availability. When feeders were complete, residents hung the feeders outside their windows and are enjoying watching visits from appreciative feathered friends.



Lancaster campus residents collect donated items throughout the year as part of Lenore's Helping Hands—a resident-led program named for a former resident who was committed to helping others. Residents delivered the items to Clare House—a shelter for homeless women and children in Lancaster County.

Pictured from left to right are Jennifer Powell, executive director-Clare House, Bertha Courtney, Heather Modjesky, office assistant-Clare House, and Ann Tomlinson.



# Country Meadows



Marty Cooke takes a close up look at a vintage jeep which was on display along with a weapons carrier at Country Meadows of West Shore in Mechanicsburg, Pa., in celebration of Veterans Day. The vehicles belong to John and Carolyn Henderson. Mrs. Henderson's father is a resident at the campus.



It was a day of pampering and elegance, entertainment and delicious treats for the women of Country Meadows of West Shore in Mechanicsburg, Pa. During a *Winter Wonderland for Our Fair Ladies* event, three beauty shops were set up for hair and makeup, facials and hand massages in preparation for glamour photographs. The ladies also enjoyed a Sweet Delights Happy Hour and musical entertainment. Co-workers, family and friends pitched in to make the event a reality.

Above: Florence Burke enjoys a shampoo given by Elaine Bussolletti, executive director.



Country Meadows of Frederick residents enjoyed New Year's Eve at a casino-themed party. Residents tried their luck at roulette, blackjack and poker while enjoying appetizers and cocktails. Pictured from left to right are Jimmy Santis, Lillian Walker, Al Lopez and Fran Davis.



## Life skills relay

Created by the Country Meadows fitness team, the Life Skills Relay employs techniques to strengthen muscles used in everyday activities.



- A clothesline supports gross motor skills such as side-stepping, weight-shifting and reach, along with fine motor skills required to clip the clothespins.
- A laundry basket-dash serves as a get up and go assessment to measure balance and mobility. Residents pick up a basket, carry it to a table, fold the laundry that is on the table, place it in the basket, carry the basket back to the chair and sit down.
- Shopping bag stepping stones require participants to carry bags while watching where they step and change direction. During the exercise, residents hold shopping bags to mimic an outing to the mall.
- Brooming for balance uses a household broom to challenge balance by addressing trunk movement, coordination, weight shifting and stepping in various directions.



## Use your noodle, have a ball, get moving

Country Meadows is leading the way in senior fitness and sharing its expertise with other providers of services for seniors.

Kim Eichinger, executive director of fitness-Country Meadows, recently led a presentation for fellow fitness professionals in Florida at the International Council on Active Aging conference. Her presentation entitled “Use your noodle, have a ball, get your residents moving,” was highly attended.

“We really do go the extra mile with our fitness program. That puts us in a leadership role and along with that, it gives us a certain responsibility to share with others, to not treat our program like it’s a secret. Instead, open the doors and recognize that these folks have something to share,” she says as she credits Country Meadows for investing in senior fitness and sharing the value of good health as we age, with other providers.

Along with Renee Harlow and Brenda Kennedy, fitness coordinators at Country Meadows of West Shore and Country Meadows of Bethlehem respectively, the conference presentation demonstrated a variety of exercises that can be performed with budget-friendly props and equipment. Activities included life skills relays, obstacle courses and a variety of exercises with foam noodles, resistance bands and balls. The program taught fitness professionals how to engage individuals with exercises that use familiar tools such as clothespins, brooms and laundry baskets and how to adapt those activities for all levels of ability.

Conference attendees from other Pennsylvania retirement communities found the presentation quite innovative and requested a day with the Country Meadows fitness team for some one-on-one coaching.

“After the conference, [a wellness director] contacted me and asked if she could bring her team to one of our campuses to actually experience us doing the life skills relays and using the noodles and the balls. We agreed upon a day and she brought her team to learn from our experiences, programs, types and variety of classes we offer, tools we use and how we offer a combination of fitness center sessions along with classes,” Eichinger says.

The staff visited Country Meadows of West Shore for a day of demonstration with co-workers as well as Country Meadows residents. The Country Meadows fitness team explained how they work to develop programs designed to increase strength and mobility in older adults.

According to Eichinger, “Anybody can throw a bunch of exercises together but it takes someone who has expertise and understands the population to actually formulate a program using exercises that make sense, have a purpose and balance each other out. We don’t use routines; we put together exercises based on an understanding of how our residents’ bodies are changing, what their challenges are, what types of movements are going to provide balance and be most appropriate to help them through their day and what is going to be fun.”

The team also explained the value of limiting class size as well as customizing exercises to residents’ individual ability levels to ensure that every resident achieves a valuable workout.

“We had residents attend from independent living, personal care and Connections [memory support] to show how we work with all levels of

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## Travel club opportunities

The following trips are offered to residents, family members and co-workers as part of the Country Meadows and Ecumenical Community Travel Club. To register, please see information below.

All trips depart from Country Meadows of Hershey located at 451 Sand Hill Road, Hershey, PA, 17033. Transportation to Hershey may be available.

### Eclectic Baltimore

**Date: May 15, 2012**

- \$91 per person
- Registration deadline: March 9, 2012
- Package includes visits to the American Visionary Art Museum and Historic Evergreen House with an afternoon tea.

### Annapolis, MD

**Date: July 16, 2012**

- \$116 per person
- Registration deadline: May 9, 2012
- Package includes lunch, Annapolis historic driving tour, Chesapeake Bay lighthouse cruise and U.S. Naval Academy tour.

### New York City

**Date: Sept. 12, 2012**

- \$120 per person
- Registration deadline: June 30, 2012
- Package includes the Sept. 11 Memorial as well as "The Ride" New York bus tour.

### Brandywine Valley Yuletide

**Date: Nov. 28, 2012**

- \$117 per person
- Registration deadline: Sept. 14, 2012
- Package includes dinner voucher for Longwood Garden Café, a Longwood Christmas and Yuletide at Winterarthur Tour.

#### To register:

Country Meadows residents: Contact Kris Pollock at 717.533.2474, extension 10121 or email [KPollock@countrymeadows.com](mailto:KPollock@countrymeadows.com).

Friends, family members, co-workers: Contact Lois Stoltzfus at 717.464.2768, extension 3 or email [lois@executivecoach.net](mailto:lois@executivecoach.net).

### Use your noodle *continued from page 8*

care. That is important because often when you introduce an idea, people immediately say 'well, our residents can't do that.' We wanted to show them that a resident that has much more challenged mobility can do the same exercises as an independent resident or the resident with dementia. They can use the same tools and we adapt if we need to," says Eichinger. "We're changing the past image that exercise has to be done in huge groups to be successful. If you can have smaller classes where residents do things like the life skills relays, they are

getting 110 percent exercise and getting what they came for."

Harlow, who participated in the session, says that the Country Meadows team also learned from the visiting wellness directors. "In doing this we learn so much from everybody else. We get into our routines and we have our challenges and successes. We talk to other people in the industry to see how they're handling challenges, what their successes are and what are they doing that we can start here. It makes our programs that much stronger because we're always learning even as we're networking and teaching; other ideas pop up. It's awesome."

Eichinger adds, "It helps us in showing that we are open to sharing ideas that we do take time and invest in the current trends in fitness, we look at what's popular, how can we adapt that to the residents that are living here."

Country Meadows residents who participated in the demonstration enjoyed sharing information from their fitness program with the visitors. Harlow beams with pride as she talks about how residents told the guests about their exercise activities. "They were so proud to sit here and say 'this is what we do'...they were going on and on. We sat here and thought 'this is awesome—they love exercising, they love what they do.' Clearly we've made a difference in their lives and it was great hearing them talk about that, unprompted, just out of the clear blue sky." 🌀

*Renee Harlow, left, and Kim Eichinger lead a "Use your Noodle" class. They held the class for visiting fitness staff from another retirement community to demonstrate how to use everyday items to promote fitness in older adults.*





*From the desk of...*

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

## Service-level name changes, care remains unchanged

Here is a bit of trivia: Country Meadows was one of the first providers in Pennsylvania to offer Assisted Living in residences designed and built specifically for this purpose. Prior, Assisted Living facilities were mostly converted schools, convents, hotels and the like.

In the senior living profession, the term "Assisted Living" has long been used to describe a level of service to assist seniors with activities of daily living. Many providers also use the term "Personal Care" to describe this service level and until now, these two terms have been interchangeable.

Times are changing.

In Pennsylvania, the Commonwealth introduced new regulations governing Assisted Living that went into effect in early 2011. For the first time, retirement living providers who offer Assisted Living services will need to license their communities as providing Assisted Living, Personal Care or both. (I should point out here that these changes do not affect our community in Frederick, Maryland, where we are already licensed to provide Assisted Living.)

Country Meadows and Ecumenical Retirement Community have been providing the full range of services needed by our residents. However, we are currently licensed to provide Personal Care but not Assisted Living. While our intentions are to become licensed for Assisted Living, we are waiting for the state of Pennsylvania to provide clarifications on requirements under the new regulations. We will apply for licensure when we are satisfied that the new level of care will be beneficial to our residents and that we are able to be in full compliance.

In the meantime, you may notice the term "Personal Care" used in places around Country Meadows and Ecumenical Retirement Community where you normally see "Assisted Living."

I understand that this temporary service-level name change might be confusing. Please rest assured that our residents receiving services via what has been termed "Assisted Living" will continue to receive the same services, offered at a high level

of quality, under the new term "Personal Care." Nothing, except the name, will change.

These new Assisted Living/Personal Care regulations are intended as a step forward because they offer more options in providing care as people age in place without needing to transfer to a higher level of care. This is important since our region has one of the highest populations of people over the age of 65 in the country.

Because Assisted Living providers could be caring for residents with more health challenges, the new regulations require additional specialized training for staff members. I am proud to share that Country Meadows and Ecumenical Retirement Community already provide more training for co-workers than

is required by Personal Care regulations. And our residents have many higher level services available, should they need them—physical, occupational and speech therapy, Pathways Restorative Care and Connections Memory Support programs are examples. In addition, Country Meadows is the first Authorized Validation Organization (AVO) in the United States to be able to offer Validation Training to co-workers as a therapy for persons who have Alzheimer's.

In conclusion, I would like to emphasize that what you will not see at Country Meadows and Ecumenical Retirement Community are changes to the services

we currently provide. We will continue to work with Genesis Rehabilitation Services, hospice, home health providers, and home care agencies such as Country Meadows At Home, to provide the fullest range of services to support our residents. And, working together, we will strive to provide a high level of service to help make life better for all residents.

Thank you for choosing Country Meadows and Ecumenical Retirement Community. My best wishes to you and your family for a happy and healthy 2012. 🌿

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*"Please rest assured that our residents receiving services via what has been termed 'Assisted Living' will continue to receive the same services, offered at a high level of quality, under the new term Personal Care."*

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# 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](mailto:kkuntz@countrymeadows.com).*



*Mary Mertz feeds the fish at Country Meadows of Lancaster. It is one of the many tasks she tackles everyday to help make life better for her fellow residents.*

### Resident makes life better for her neighbors

Mary Mertz may be a resident at Country Meadows of Lancaster, however this spry 91-year old helps out so much that she could be easily confused for a Country Meadows co-worker.

Mertz, a native of Hawaii, pitches in wherever she sees a need. She says that she simply enjoys helping others. "I like to help people and I don't like to have a dull moment."

And she doesn't like to sit still—something she attributes to her very busy dual vocations as a full-time federal worker and a farmer. "I worked in Philadelphia at the naval yard during the day. I had an hour and a half drive to work and a two-hour drive home," she recalls. "Then when I got home, I worked on the farm. I was busy!"

While she recently sold 150 acres of her 175 acre farm, she still owns 25 acres as well as her farmhouse which she rents as four apartments. Every year she plants Silver Queen sweet corn on

three and a half of those acres and leases the rest to a local farmer.

Country Meadows residents reap the benefits of her hard work. "Twice a year I donate full crops of corn to Country Meadows [of Lancaster] for all of us to have with dinner," she says as she shares how much she loves to eat the vegetable. One of her farmhouse tenants helps her to maintain her corn crop.

Other former Country Meadows "residents" who benefited from Mertz's farm were the community's pet rabbits. "I brought back fresh alfalfa from my farm to feed the rabbits. They liked that," she says with a smile.

Mertz is a busy woman around Country Meadows. Among her many tasks are taking care of the fish daily and helping the fitness director lead strengthening classes for residents. "I don't dwell on illness; I like to move," she says.

According to Fitness Coordinator Kristin Ebersole, "Mary is a person that is always looking out for others and is a go-go personality. She helps new residents feel comfortable by taking them around when they first arrive, knits for the gift shop and I'm sure, much more!"

Another initiative Mertz has been working on is attempting to start a bell choir. "We have the bells, we just need the people," she says.

While she enjoyed her life on her farm, Mertz says she loves living at Country Meadows where she has lived for nine years and has made many friends. She chuckles as she says, "I don't have to cook or worry." 🍷

### Choking scare inspires resident CPR program *continued from page 4*

she says. "These two ladies didn't know each other when they came [to Country Meadows] and they're just like family helping each other out. That's what it's all about. That's why I decided we're going to take this one step further to see that some Independent Living residents are certified and comfortable to be able to do the skills, just like Ginny did."

The CPR course will cover the steps to help a choking person, how to recognize a heart attack, CPR and other basic rescue skills.

Zarlenga adds, "We'll talk a lot about safety even in our rooms and apartments and even in the hallways about how we can

make things safer. They'll learn to check a person to see if they're conscious and even check for illnesses that come along. They'll learn how to do the Heimlich maneuver and basic CPR."

Morris wonders if a greater power is using her nursing experience. "I think the Lord is looking down on me and using me."

Regardless, it is clear that Morris and McGuigan enjoy a special friendship, made deeper by the events over that recent breakfast."

Morris says, "She's very special to me." McGuigan responds as the two ladies share a caring glance. "You're special to me." 🍷

### Inside:

- 🌀 Leader family celebrates 50 years
- 🌀 Choking scare inspires CPR program
- 🌀 Use your noodle & have a ball

## Long-awaited project opens in Allentown

Construction is complete and a new Independent Living building is open at Country Meadows of Allentown.

To mark the completion, nearly 300 residents and their families, community members, co-workers and prospective residents celebrated at a grand opening and ribbon cutting ceremony. The campus' fourth building features 50 Independent Living apartment homes.

"The building provides Lehigh Valley seniors with a fresh, new retirement living option in the Lehigh Valley," says Michael Leader, president & CEO-Country Meadows. "We've included modern amenities and upgrades that today's seniors are looking for in retirement living." 🌀



*The new building's dining room features a dramatic stone fireplace and wooden beamed ceiling.*



*Cutting the ribbon to officially open the new building. Left to right: Diana Ponterio, vice president of operations; Michelle Hamilton, senior vice president and chief of operations; Karen Leader, board member; G. Michael Leader, president & CEO; Bonnie Mfarej, executive director-Country Meadows of Allentown; Ted Janeczek, chief financial officer and Jane Leader Janeczek, board member.*