The NET Program:
An Innovative Approach to Therapy

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The PHOEBEB Messenger
NEWS FROM PHOEBE MINISTRIES Volume 95, Issue 3

The EDUCATION Issue
A Message from the President

Dear friends of Phoebe,

The Mission of Phoebe Ministries is “A community of faith, called by God, to serve the needs and to enhance the lives of our elders, their families and the broader community.” In meeting our mission, our hope is that we will honor God in all we do. In this issue of The Messenger, we highlight one component of our commitment to serving each of these constituencies through a multitude of diverse educational programs. We are thankful for both the ability to provide these programs and for the great benefits that our residents, employees and families derive from participating in them.

I would especially like to highlight the Phoebe Institute on Aging (PIA). For more than a decade, the PIA and its Advisory Board have provided educational forums to the community on aging issues, as well as serving as a regional think tank for “what’s next” in the industry. Everyone at Phoebe and the older adult community at large benefits from these significant contributions. Other stories in this issue include:

♦ Partnerships with local schools and universities
♦ Educational opportunities for residents
♦ Innovative new programs developed by our staff that are changing healthcare delivery
♦ A new documentary on the history of Phoebe Berks
♦ The most successful Upper Bucks Forum on Aging to date

“A community of faith, called by God, to serve the needs and to enhance the lives of our elders, their families and the broader community.”

We have a number of free educational opportunities for residents and the community throughout the year. The next is the Fall Phoebe Institute on Aging Conference, entitled “Building Friendly Communities: Addressing Alzheimer’s and Related Disorders,” on October 16 at DeSales University. I hope to see you there.

God bless,

Scott R. Stevenson
President & CEO
Phoebe Launches Customer Service Philosophy: Spirit of Service

This past summer, Phoebe Ministries launched a new endeavor focused on Phoebe’s ongoing effort to set the bar high: Spirit of Service, Phoebe’s Customer Service Philosophy.

Developed by one of Phoebe’s Leadership Development classes, Spirit of Service stems from Phoebe’s foundational Faith in Action values and is dedicated to creating a positive experience for our residents and clients, their families, the community and each other.

The Leadership Development class was charged with developing and recommending a customer service program, as well as determining standards and expectations, roles and responsibilities, and lastly, an implementation plan along with success metrics.

“It was an exciting project,” says Karen Carrano-Miller, class member and Assistant Controller at Phoebe. “We spent a year developing the program and a second year developing the training. We want everyone at Phoebe—residents, employees, family members, vendors—to feel welcome here.”

Over the last three months, all Phoebe staff members have been trained in Spirit of Service. Training involved communication tips; phone, email, and elevator etiquette; and even role playing through different situations employees may encounter with one another, residents, and families.

Scott Stevenson, President & CEO, says, “I firmly believe everyone at Phoebe is accountable for making Spirit of Service a success. We must always remember that our workplace at Phoebe is a home for the people we serve.”

How are we doing? Let us know!

Visit phoebe.org/spiritofservice or fill out a comment card in any of our facilities!
Terrace Residents Celebrate New Patio
Phoebe recognizes the donors who made it possible.

Residents at the Terrace at Phoebe Allentown have a new outdoor oasis to call their own.

Phoebe completed construction of a new 925-square-foot patio alongside the Terrace this August, giving residents plenty of time to enjoy the summer and fall months from their backyard. Residents celebrated their new space—and the donors who made it possible—at a ceremony on September 3.

“Our residents needed a dedicated space to enjoy the outdoors, and our donors stepped up to make it happen,” says President and CEO Scott R. Stevenson.

One of the major donors to the project was the Phoebe Home Auxiliary in Allentown. Auxiliary President Barbara Ann Moyer says the group was inspired by the idea of leaving a legacy for future generations of Terrace residents. “This is something residents will enjoy for years to come,” Moyer adds. “The Auxiliary knew this was an important project, and we wanted to get involved.”

The patio area includes a built-in grill, comfortable seating, lighting for evening events, elegant stonework, a handicapped-accessible ramp, ample shade cover, and lush greenery.

Bridgeways Residents Create Cards for Those Needing a Lift

The Bridgeways Neighborhood at Phoebe Allentown recently initiated a unique creative program that helps the residents make greeting cards and write letters to people in the local community. Bridgeways residents have written to children at Lehigh Valley Hospital, Meals on Wheels recipients, a visiting church group, Phoebe staff members, and veterans from the Veterans of Foreign Wars organization.

Creative writing is one way that Phoebe incorporates Montessori programming for Memory Support and Dementia Care patients. Writing can help an individual with memory care issues to enhance their memory, reinforce motor skills, and feel a sense of accomplishment.
Phoebe Berks Gets a New Set of Wheels
Wheelchair-accessible bus provides residents with independence

Residents of Phoebe Berks Village and Phoebe Berks Health Care Center have a new way to get around town.

After a fundraising campaign raised more than $75,000, Phoebe Berks acquired an ADA-compliant, wheelchair-accessible bus to allow residents with restricted mobility a new way to travel from the Berks campus. Residents celebrated the new bus with a donor recognition event and dedication ceremony on August 5.

“What we’re celebrating today is not just a bus, not just a mode of transportation, but an opportunity,” Phoebe Berks Executive Director Mary Kay McMahon said in her remarks. “You’ve given our residents in wheelchairs the opportunity to explore the world beyond our campus, the opportunity to retain their independence.”

Residents have already taken the bus on a number of trips to nearby destinations and on drives through the rolling hills of Berks County, reminding them of their youth when rides through the country were a regular Sunday afternoon activity.

The new bus can accommodate six ambulatory passengers and eight passengers in wheelchairs. Nancy Dettra, who contributed to the project, said she wanted to enrich the lives of her fellow residents. “This opens up new vistas for individuals in wheelchairs,” Dettra said. “It gives their lives deeper meaning.”

Highest Attendance Ever at Upper Bucks Forum on Aging

The 9th Annual Upper Bucks Forum on Aging, held on Wednesday, May 7 at Benner Hall in Phoebe Richland, attracted the highest attendance to date with more than 170 attendees.

The Forum on Aging is a free educational program of the Phoebe Institute on Aging, and the event is held in honor of Older Americans Month. The purpose of the forum is to seek public input and encourage local citizens age 55 years or older to learn about aging services and resources in their community.

Highlights from this year’s forum included:
❖ Fall prevention and treatment related to hip fractures
❖ Dementia prevention tips from Kelly O’Shea Carney, Ph.D., CMC, Director of Phoebe’s Center for Excellence in Dementia Care
❖ Medicaid planning information

The forum is organized by Tracy Roman, Executive Director of Phoebe Richland, along with senior community members and Phoebe Richland staff. Roman joined the event committee when she transitioned from Phoebe Allentown to Phoebe Richland two years ago. “It is hard to believe that so many forums have passed already,” she says. “It is an honor to be able to work with my team to provide the community informative, free education and access to resources. I look forward to continuing into the future and I am very excited to be coming up on the 10th anniversary of this event!”

Keep an eye out for future Upper Bucks Forum on Aging events, as the program is expected to grow and expand its services and education to seniors.

The 9th Annual Upper Bucks Forum on Aging was attended by 170 citizens from the Richlandtown area.
Phoebe Berks Captures Past and Present on Film

The Phoebe Berks Campus had a touch of stardust in May when a documentary film crew interviewed residents, staff and board members in addition to filming daily activities in all levels of care.

The documentary-style film will feature the rich history of the land on which Phoebe Berks is built, and those who have ties to the farmhouse that stood on the grounds until the end of the last century.

Bill Fisher, a cottage resident whose front door faces the ruins of the old buildings that were once part of the farm complex on the land, vividly remembers the stories his father told of his birthplace. It was these stories which inspired independent living resident Maggie Rice to encourage Mary Kay McMahon, Executive Director of Phoebe Berks, to consider documenting the living history still present on the Berks Campus. It just so happened that her son, Andy, is a professional filmmaker who volunteered his time to the project.

Andy flew from Hawaii and stayed with his mother in her cottage during the filming. “Working on the project with her offered some precious time for the two of us, something that is so meaningful to me, and with us living in Hawaii, doesn’t happen that often. We had time to create some lasting memories, and those will live on in this film,” says Andy.

As the interviews continued through the week, a theme began to emerge, greater than the original history-focused subject matter of the film. “A common theme of friendliness and true compassion was evident in everyone we spoke to,” Andy says.

As with feature films, much work remains to be done on documentary films after the director yells, “Cut!” The finished film is expected to premiere at Phoebe Berks this winter.

If you are interested in attending a viewing, please email tbrady@phoebe.org.

“After I moved to Phoebe Berks three years ago I had the pleasure of sitting next to Bill Fisher at the Cottage picnic and he told me about the connection his family had to the land,” says Maggie Rice, Phoebe Berks Cottage resident (left). “I thought that someone should preserve what he knows and when I mentioned it to my son, Andy, he told me he would like to make the film for Phoebe because I am so happy here.”
Allen Square Gets a Brand New Look

The Allen Square Neighborhood of Phoebe Allentown has a newly renovated environment that is warmer, friendlier, and less clinical than before. Updates to the entrance from the Trexler Building, the hallways, and the resident rooms include new furniture and flooring that add color and style to the space. Additionally, photographs of local historical buildings and sites are hung throughout the neighborhood to brighten the walls.

Improvements to Phoebe’s Housing Communities

Improvements were recently made to Phoebe’s affordable housing communities in Berks County. John F. Lutz Apartments in St. Lawrence (left) and Furnace Creek Manor in Robesonia (right) now feature updated color schemes, new carpet, furniture and artwork in all of the communal spaces. John F. Lutz even has a hand-painted mural of a Parisian street scene in the community’s dining and activity area. Residents have been very enthusiastic about the recent updates and are enjoying the vibrant new communal living spaces for social interactions and events.
Phoebe Services Pharmacy Utilizes Pharmacist-Driven Order Entry to Benefit Seniors

Long term care nursing facilities will soon be required to transition to electronic health records, and government agencies are only just beginning to regulate and require standardization of these digital documents.

One area of concern is the electronic medication administration record, or “eMAR” piece of the electronic health record. Typically, eMARs are part of a software package implemented by pharmacy service providers. There is great competition among these eMAR providers, but most require that nurses electronically input medication orders at facilities. With facility budgets shrinking and pressure on nursing to do more with less, an eMAR can often pull nurses away from patient care duties rather than help to streamline the administration of medications.

Phoebe Services Pharmacy, a comprehensive pharmacy service provider for long term care facilities in six counties, recognized the potential problems involved with this model early on due to the staff’s experience with senior service providers. When an electronic health record interface was developed for the organization’s own use, it was decided that all medication orders would be entered by registered pharmacists to maximize efficiency and eliminate the extra work that would normally be anticipated from nurse order entry.

The pharmacist order entry method is what truly places Phoebe’s electronic medical record system ahead of the competition. By having the pharmacists drive order entry, there is immediate identification of the medication brand availability, since many pharmaceuticals are from different companies. Missed doses due to a delay in access to medication are also avoided.

In addition to staff and clinical pharmacists, Phoebe employs clinical nurses who implement roll-outs with expertise in software management and the practical knowledge of the day-to-day duties of nurses caring for residents. New technology always involves a learning curve, and by utilizing pharmacy nurses to train facility nurses, the experience gained in the four years that Phoebe Services Pharmacy has had a working interface is put to good use.

The teams at Phoebe have been very transparent in fielding questions about their model from organizations at a national level. Campus leadership at Phoebe communities has documented remarkable positive changes as a result of the electronic bridge between Pharmacy and Nursing. As a provider of senior care, Phoebe ensures the best possible pharmaceutical delivery method because of the years of experience in the field.
Roy Reifsnyder credits God for being alive today. The number of close calls he experienced while serving in the Navy in World War II, including having his helmet knocked off by the wing tip of a Kamikaze plane, was just too many for him to doubt that a greater power kept him alive.

A resident at Furnace Creek Manor, Phoebe’s affordable housing community in Robesonia, Berks County, for almost four years, Reifsnyder didn’t talk about his experiences until his move to Furnace Creek. As president of the resident council, he planned entertainment in the evening. When one of the musicians had an unexpected scheduling conflict, Reifsnyder filled the time by telling the story of his experiences in World War II. This chance occurrence led to him educating school students, the men’s group at his church, and residents of Phoebe Berks. He was even asked to appear as a special guest at the famous World War II Weekend held at the Reading Airport in June.

As a special guest, Reifsnyder was scheduled on the main stage to recount his time serving at Iwo Jima and Okinawa, two of the most famous battles in the Pacific Theater. He also had a chance to talk to attendees at his booth and sign autographs. “I enjoy doing it now,” he says. “People are asking the right questions and they are truly interested,” he says.

Reifsnyder’s military journey started in 1943 at the age of 18, only a few days after high school graduation. “I graduated on a Friday night, and by Monday morning I was in the Navy,” he remembers. He served on the USS Colhoun D.D. 801 as a Gunners Mate 2nd class and a Gun Captain on a 5th gun mount, and was a witness to the historic flag raising on Iwo Jima, after so many American servicemen were lost. “All of the ships were blowing their horns. We had finally taken control of the highest point on the island. That still gives me chills to think of it.”

Only a few days after his ship participated in the battle at Okinawa, Japanese Kamikaze planes began to attack the Colhoun when it went to assist the Bush, another vessel that suffered under the enemy’s air offensive. The Colhoun had to be sunk after irreparable damage was done by the Kamikaze planes punching holes into the ship’s hull, deck and keel. But throughout the onslaught, the gun crews of which Reifsnyder was a part continued to fire and take down planes.

Tokyo Rose, a Japanese radio announcer who purposefully gave inaccurate information, broadcasted that the Colhoun was sunk and that all the men went with it. When Reifsnyder and the rest of the crew arrived in California 18 days after the sinking, he was finally able to call his family, who thought he had been dead for more than two weeks.

His appearance at the World War II weekend meant a lot to him, knowing the respect that so many people have for members of the Greatest Generation, of whom so much was asked at such a young age. “I am honored to have served my country and thankful to be a survivor,” Reifsnyder says.
Neurocognitive Engagement Therapy “Nets” Positive Results for Phoebe

According to data from the Center for Medicare and Medicaid services, approximately 60% of all residents in skilled nursing care are experiencing cognitive impairment. Despite such prevalence, individuals with Alzheimer's disease, dementia and other cognitive impairments have historically been underserved by physical therapy, occupational therapy and speech therapy.

In addition to their treatment for changes in their mental status, individuals with cognitive impairment often need therapy services to address underlying physical impairments resulting from illness, deconditioning or inactivity. But because of their cognitive deficits, these individuals often have difficulty engaging in therapy, following directions, or independently executing therapy tasks and exercises. As a result, they may be deemed inappropriate to receive therapy services or be discharged prematurely.

Recognizing that there are few approaches designed to meet the rehabilitation needs of this population, Phoebe’s Therapy Department, along with the Center for Excellence in Dementia Care, sought to develop a conceptual model to better serve this group of seniors. They developed an innovative rehabilitation model that is now known as Neurocognitive Engagement Therapy (NET). Jennifer Howanitz, Director of Physical Therapy at Phoebe Allentown, describes it as “an innovative approach to effectively provide therapy services to individuals with cognitive loss or dementia.”

The NET model is unique because it integrates best practice dementia care strategies into the rehabilitation process. The model was developed by an interdisciplinary team including occupational, physical, and speech therapists and a psychologist. This team created a conceptual framework for providing care that incorporates knowledge, strategies and insights from a range of disciplines, e.g. mental health, social services, activity professionals, nursing and therapy. When implemented in the rehabilitation setting, the goal of this approach is to fully engage all members of the interdisciplinary care team to provide the best possible therapy experience in a way that is customized to suit each patient’s particular needs.
Counting repetitions has helped to motivate Mary Lou during therapy sessions at Phoebe.

Dan Collier, Physical Therapist, says, “One of the challenges when working with a resident with cognitive impairment is that they don’t follow traditional guidelines or activities, so you need to find new ways to engage them.”

NET is designed to incorporate Montessori techniques, and begins with a life review to identify functional tasks and activities that are familiar and enjoyable for the resident. For example, a gentleman may have enjoyed playing soccer in younger years, so instead of asking him to do repetitive leg lifts in the gym, the therapist might roll a soccer ball for him to kick. This activity serves as a creative and functional mechanism for strengthening his legs. Speech Therapist Robin Howard adds, “The exciting part has been learning more about the residents. Once we knew more about them, we could add activities they liked and could engage in.” Other backgrounds that were incorporated as part of the NET program ranged from world traveler to dancer to stenographer.

One early participant in the NET program was Mary Lou of Allentown. She came to Phoebe Allentown for rehabilitation services after she broke both her arm and leg in a fall. Mary Lou has frontal temporal dementia and has difficulty understanding spoken language, but is very good at following directions from physical cues. Her family shared this information with the therapists, and they relied more upon nonverbal communication and cues in her training. She also focuses on numbers, so the therapists used that knowledge to count repetitions with her, which served as a motivator for Mary Lou. Family members shared that “the specialized rehab was effective to help her recover quickly and successfully so she could return to her normal activities.” Additionally, they were pleased with how Mary Lou was “treated with dignity and care.”

In an effort to confirm the benefits of the NET model, a research study was recently completed. The first step in the study was to ensure that the therapists involved were provided with the proper training and support they would need to work with this specialized group. A selection of 18 occupational, physical, and speech therapists was provided 12 hours of NET training and 90 hours of mentoring to better prepare them to work with individuals affected by dementia. Howanitz says, “the training is modeled on best practices in dementia care to learn how to fully engage the patients.”

Alice Donlan, Regional Director of Therapy Services, says, “It was great seeing how much the team cared about the needs of each resident with dementia because it was challenging to balance training while continuing daily tasks in a working environment.”

The NET program was first piloted at Phoebe Allentown in January by providing treatment to 50 seniors. Phoebe worked with research partners Peter Lichtenburg, Director of the Institute of Gerontology at Wayne State, and Kay Malek, Director of DeSales University Doctoral Program in Physical Therapy, to help collect results and assess the program’s effectiveness.

The NET program resulted in significantly greater engagement in the process of physical, occupational and speech therapy. In other words, individuals with cognitive impairment paid more attention and were more active in NET therapy than in traditional therapy. Data analysis revealed that the individuals who received NET therapy also had significantly improved function in day-to-day activities. The team observed anecdotally that the improvement in function gained through NET therapy allowed a few individuals to return home, who may not have been able to do so otherwise.

Equally important to the study was that the physical, occupational and speech therapists who were trained in the NET model demonstrated significantly greater knowledge of dementia and an increased sense of comfort and confidence in working with individuals living with cognitive impairment. As a result, a 20-minute training video that describes the NET model and its impact was developed to be used as a tool for Phoebe staff and others. The video will also be used to help share the program model with other senior care providers.

Phoebe has been invited to present the NET model at two national conferences in the coming year: the American Physical Therapy Association’s Conference and Exposition, and the Gerontological Society of America’s Annual Scientific Meeting.

We are extremely grateful for the grant support we received from The Alzheimer’s Foundation of America’s Brodsky Innovation Grant and The Scholler Foundation, which provided the funding to launch this successful program.
Dr. Marietta Scanlon, an engineering professor at Penn State Lehigh Valley, was inspired by her mother’s diagnosis of Alzheimer’s disease to collaborate with Phoebe Allentown on a project that would benefit her engineering students as well as residents with memory impairment.

Scanlon contacted Phoebe and proposed the idea to Dr. Kelly O’Shea Carney, a licensed psychologist who specializes in geriatrics and leads the Phoebe Center for Excellence in Dementia Care. The mission of the Center for Excellence includes demonstrating leadership in research and innovation, which made Scanlon’s idea an intriguing proposition.

“We’ve worked with other colleges and universities before, but it was primarily in a health care or psychological capacity,” said Carney. “The idea of working with engineering students was something new, but seemed like it could be a great fit.”

With Phoebe on board, Scanlon took the idea to her students, hoping for some interest. Scanlon pitched the idea during the Fall 2013 semester to engineering and biology majors, asking if anyone would be interested in designing products that could help individuals with Alzheimer’s. The project would be on a volunteer basis and not for credit, but would give them valuable experience in engineering design. Scanlon was pleased when about twenty students showed interest, many of them citing their personal experience with a family member as their motivation.

It wasn’t until the students had the chance to visit residents in the memory support neighborhood at Phoebe that they truly began to realize who they were designing for. Some students found it difficult to interact with them.

“You could tell that some students were really outside of their comfort zone, but that was part of what this project was about,” said Scanlon. “Pursuing a major in engineering is very rigorous, full of algorithms and equations, but it also has a very important human side. They need to know that, and I also want them to learn the importance of giving back to their community.”

As the project progressed, the time left in the semester began to dwindle. Scanlon didn’t want this to be just a theoretical exercise. She wanted the students to see a project through from concept to completion and delivery. She also felt they deserved to receive academic credit for their work, especially if it would continue in the spring semester. To that end, she approached campus administration about offering it as an Engineering Design 452/453 course. Twenty-three students enrolled, most taking the course as an overload to their already packed schedules.

With their concepts approved by Phoebe, the spring semester was about designing, building, and ultimately delivering their projects. On May 15, Phoebe staff, residents, and the students’ parents gathered to watch them present their projects at Phoebe Allentown.

Executive Director Michell Staska-Pier praised the students’ efforts. “You did this without any promise of credit. That’s what we look for in future leaders,” said Staska-Pier.
The impact, both on Scanlon and her students, has been immense, and it started during that first visit to the residents at Phoebe. “It has been such a blessing to work with these kids, to watch them get this résumé-boosting experience and a new perspective on humanity. As potential engineers, the value of that is hard to quantify,” said Scanlon. “It has also helped me come to terms with my own experience and inspired me to make this a sustainable program.”

The treatment of Alzheimer’s and other dementia diseases is not solely a medical issue. The professor sees many opportunities for students across disciplines to participate alongside engineers in meaningful ways. “I am so grateful that I have been allowed to honor my mom in this way,” said Scanlon. “It doesn’t lessen the pain. I still miss her. I miss who she was, and most of all, I miss how she was with my kids. But she is ultimately the reason I’m on this path with these students creating something positive.”

And that is a legacy that Alzheimer’s can’t take away.

Allison Goodin is the Assistant Director of University Relations and State of the Valley Adviser for Penn State Lehigh Valley (http://www.lv.psu.edu).

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DeSales Students Train at Phoebe Richland and the Terrace at Phoebe Allentown

DeSales University has a strong reputation for its excellent undergraduate and graduate medical degree programs. To prepare its students for a professional working environment, DeSales partners with local hospitals, medical facilities, and nursing homes to allow students to practice alongside experienced doctors and nurses in the field.

Recently, students from DeSales’ nontraditional ACCESS nursing program trained at the Terrace at Phoebe Allentown. The ACCESS program allows adult learners to earn a Bachelor of Science degree in nursing by taking classes on evenings and weekends. This group of ACCESS students visited the Terrace once a week for seven weeks. They practiced applicable skills such as safety awareness, assisting with range-of-motion exercises, taking vital signs, personal hygiene care, and documenting patient progress. The students worked with six of the residents at the Terrace.

Phoebe Richland also hosted 56 students from DeSales’ Master of Science in Physician Assistant Studies (MSPAS) program in early 2014. They were first-year students who visited in small groups to complete patient histories and physical exams on the Gateway short term rehabilitation neighborhood.

“The Physician’s Assistant Program is beneficial to Phoebe Richland because it exposes future health care practitioners to long term care, memory support, and short term rehab patients,” says Tracy Roman, Executive Director of Phoebe Richland. “Hopefully, some of them will find their passion in geriatrics and enter this growing field. Having them here allows the community to see what a great place we have, and they can share their experiences with others.”
Education and Innovation: The Phoebe Institute on Aging

The Phoebe Institute on Aging (PIA) was created in 2001 as an umbrella under which Phoebe Ministries could promote its image as a forward-thinking, education-oriented aging services provider. It is guided by a community Advisory Board that includes representatives of governmental agencies, hospital and medical personnel, human service providers, and academics from local colleges and universities.

The stated mission of the Phoebe Institute on Aging is to provide forums for discussion and learning, including educational programs, cooperative ventures and outreach activities, which promote improved quality of life and care for the aging and their families in the region Phoebe serves.

Dr. Deborah Sieger, who has served as chair of the Advisory Board since 2012, says, “One of the most rewarding aspects of the Phoebe Institute on Aging is that it provides an informal forum for governmental executives, hospital staff and administrators, physicians, educators, other nonprofit organizations and Phoebe staff to report about and explore the impact of aging policy initiatives that affect the work we all do throughout our community.”

Collaborations with area colleges and partnerships with local health care networks have been fostered for Phoebe and the broader community because of the important volunteer work completed by the advisory board members. Phoebe’s reach and reputation have been enhanced, and its goal of promoting older persons as valuable educational resources to the community has been achieved through the help of the involved community leaders.

“Collegial and informative exchanges based on services provided by each entity, and shared experience gained from both successes and failures, really help us achieve our mutual goal of providing the best services and care for the aging community and the community at large,” Sieger continues. “Facilitating this kind of synergy is a hallmark of Phoebe’s mission and has contributed to our success for many years.”

The Phoebe Institute on Aging Program Committee

Until recently, John Mehler, Director of the Northampton Area Agency on Aging, served as chair of the Program committee. Dr. Joseph Vincent, chair of the Advisory Board for the first 10 years of its existence, accepted the position of Program Committee chair in August.

Members of the Phoebe Institute on Aging Program subcommittee lend their valuable time to attend four to six planning meetings per year in order to brainstorm topics related to quality of life and care of the aging, and honoring those who serve this population. Their expertise in these fields assists Phoebe staff in organizing informative and
cutting-edge educational programming that features noted speakers who enlighten professionals and members of the public on a variety of issues.

For the last five years, Phoebe's annual fall conferences have been held at area colleges through a campus sponsor who serves on the committee. This allows for greater involvement by students in nursing and human services programs because the conferences are included in the syllabi of multiple related courses. Conference attendance typically exceeds 300 students, clinicians, caregivers, and community members.

For two years, the Institute has also offered a spring conference centered on the more spiritual aspects of aging issues, such as end of life and caregiving from an interfaith and multicultural perspective. The workshops were held at Allentown's beautiful Temple Beth El and educated local spiritual leaders and health care workers, including members of the area's Jewish, Muslim, Hindu, Buddhist and Hispanic communities.

The Phoebe Institute on Aging dramatized the books of Lisa Genova and Gail Sheehy as part of the annual conferences. The performances by veteran actors provided exposure on topics related to quality of life and care for the aging in the local media.

A local public radio station interviewed NPR's Dave Isay about his keynote at a fall conference in which he conveyed the power of telling our own stories through the Storycorps initiative. A national project, Storycorps captures brief but poignant moments in the lives of American families. Phoebe was interested in Isay as a speaker because of the organization's investment in capturing the stories of residents as part of pastoral care programs, newsletters and especially through Montessori programming in which activities are geared to individuals depending on their lives and backgrounds. The dignity and well-being of the seniors served in the community are foundational in all of the educational opportunities created by the Phoebe Institute on Aging Program Committee.

The Phoebe Institute on Aging Dementia Committee

The newly formed Dementia sub-committee of the Phoebe Institute on Aging is led by Suzanne Weaver, a social work professor at Cedar Crest College and long-time member of the Phoebe Allentown Ethics committee. She is joined by other representatives from community organizations and by Dr. Kelly O'Shea Carney, Executive Director of the Phoebe Center for Excellence in Dementia Care. The committee will collaborate with local organizations to create programs and educational opportunities that focus on Alzheimer's disease and related disorders. Creating a dementia-friendly community—one of the goals of this committee—will also be explored in the Institute's fall conference, “Building Friendly Communities: Addressing Alzheimer's and Related Disorders” at DeSales University on October 16.

Objectives of the Institute

Through the involvement and guidance of the advisory board, the Phoebe Institute on Aging has been able to accomplish the following objectives annually since 2001:

- Development of educational programs which enhance understanding of aging and its many dimensions: physical, spiritual, intellectual, emotional and social;
- Facilitation of collaborative initiatives among those concerned with quality of life and care for the aging;
- Promotion of research on healthy aging and quality care;
- Serving as a resource to the media and community in establishing links with experts and information related to quality of life and care for the aging;
- Promoting older persons as educational resources to the community.

continued on next page
The many members of the local community who comprise the PIA Advisory Board and its Program and Dementia Committees have guided Phoebe on a path that creates opportunities for aging services professionals, family caregivers and students to learn more about the seniors who are important in their lives. They have volunteered their time, connections, knowledge and expertise to benefit the greater good in order to pave the way for the future of aging services in the area served by Phoebe.

At the PIA 2013 Spring Conference, which was held at Temple Beth El in Allentown, Rabbi Dayle Friedman spoke about the spiritual aspects of dying. A panel of representatives from area spiritual communities discussed the cultural differences and similarities surrounding this topic.

The current members of The Phoebe Institute on Aging’s Advisory Board include:

- **Kelly O'Shea Carney**  
  Phoebe Ministries
- **Barbara Coffin**  
  Formerly of the Berks County Area Agency on Aging
- **Scott Brooks-Cope**  
  Phoebe Ministries
- **Robert C. Dorney**  
  Community Representative
- **Lisa Fichera**  
  Phoebe Ministries
- **Dr. Peter E. Fisher**  
  Health Network Laboratories
- **Hope J. Horowitz**  
  Northampton Community College
- **Adam Marles**  
  Phoebe Ministries
- **John R. Mehler**  
  Northampton County Area Agency on Aging
- **Mitchell Possinger**  
  Cara Hospitality, Inc.
- **Cori Rolón**  
  United Way of the Greater Lehigh Valley
- **Dr. Francis Salerno**  
  Formerly of Lehigh Valley Health Network
- **Winona N. Schappell**  
  Lehigh Carbon Community College
- **Deborah A. Sieger**  
  Professor Emeritus, Kutztown University
- **Scott R. Stevenson**  
  Phoebe Ministries
- **Alan C. Tjeltveit**  
  Muhlenberg College
- **Dr. Joseph E. Vincent**  
  Lehigh Valley Health Network
- **Virginia Wagner**  
  St. Luke's University Hospital
- **Suzanne L. Weaver**  
  Cedar Crest College
- **Donna M. Zimmerman**  
  Lehigh County Aging and Adult Services
Art Appreciation Grows at The Terrace at Phoebe Allentown

Residents of The Terrace at Phoebe Allentown have recently enjoyed a number of exciting opportunities to indulge their artistic and creative sides.

In early April, local art instructor Roey Ebert visited the Terrace to host a painting party. Ebert is a painter and muralist, and the owner of Roey’s Paintbox Parties on Hamilton Boulevard in Allentown. She has held painting classes for groups of all ages. Of the group at the Terrace, Ebert says, “Some of the ladies had never painted before, and some had painted quite frequently in their early years but had stepped away from it to raise their families or have careers.”

The group enjoyed talking while painting a beautiful canvas of bright red poppies. “During the class, the act of painting usually conjures up memories of places visited or art instructors from the past,” Ebert says. “The sharing of stories while painting makes the time pass so quickly. It is a wonderful time where creativity is the tool that unlocks the treasures in some of these women’s minds. Their stories are priceless.”

Bill and Louise Cosgrove of Allentown have also been sharing their love of art with Terrace residents for several months. Inspired by the residents’ desire to continue learning, Bill, a history buff and photographer, and Louise, an artist and retired art teacher from Salisbury school district, have combined their talents to lead art appreciation classes at the Terrace on the first Friday of each month. “We aim not just to entertain, but to educate. So many of the residents have a high level of education and the desire to keep learning,” says Bill.

At each of these art history classes—complete with slide shows—the Cosgroves share information about selected artists from different parts of the world. Bill draws from his history background to help interpret the artwork as he believes the artist would have intended. Louise interjects to offer information about the painting process and different techniques that would have been used to create each painting. So far, the list has included LeBrun, Baldini, Cole, Tanner, Stein, Vermeer, and Rembrandt. “We try to associate the month with the artist,” says Louise. “In February, we talked about Tanner because it was Black History Month.”

The Cosgroves have also led bus trips to various local museums and galleries, including the Siegel Gallery at Lehigh University, the Allentown Art Museum, and recent exhibitions at Muhlenberg College. “We had more people signed up than the bus could hold,” says Louise, “which was a great encouragement.”

“Phoebe is truly a garden where we can help people continue to grow,” says Bill. “These art classes have been a blessing to us in that we are able to show God’s power through the beauty of the artwork that we share with the residents.”
The Eldercare Method

I watched with dismay as the nurse abruptly moved a table in front of a confused and agitated resident trying to leave the dining room. “Sit down!” she told him in a stern voice. “Dinner will be here in an hour!”

Those of us in long term care have undoubtedly witnessed similar incidents where residents become agitated and staff members don’t have the tools to prevent or manage their distress. Psychologists—who could offer such tools—are largely limited in the current reimbursement model to providing individual services to cognitively intact residents.

Using mental health expertise

The Eldercare Method, developed by psychologist Kelly O’Shea Carney, Ph.D., CMC, Executive Director of the Phoebe Center for Excellence in Dementia Care at Phoebe Ministries, harnesses the training of mental health professionals to successfully address the gap between what’s known in the mental health world about how to handle challenging behaviors and how they’re often managed in long term care.

The method uses interdisciplinary teams facilitated by mental health professionals (psychologists and licensed clinical social workers) to examine the causes of resident distress and to identify ways to prevent it. Team members include representatives from the nursing department and other direct care staff such as dietary, housekeeping, and aides.

Needs assessment

The first step in the Eldercare Method is to assess the overall behavioral health needs of the facility and to establish training programs and annual service goals. This dramatically increases the focus on behavioral health as compared to facilities that provide behavioral health training sporadically, often after an incident occurs, missing the opportunity to prevent problems on an ongoing basis.

Team approach

The interdisciplinary team, called the Community Care Team (CCT), “is responsible for collaborating on the development of behavioral plans, trainings and environmental and systems changes that will address the needs of the residents.” The CCT meetings occur weekly or every other week, straddling the change of shift in order to obtain information from as many staff members as possible. Phoebe tries to incorporate the meetings as much as possible into care planning and other already occurring events in order to minimize additional work.

In our conversation, Dr. Carney gave an example of a confused resident who was combative in the mornings. Through the use of behavioral tracking, the team determined that incidents occurred at mid-morning. Further investigation revealed that the man had been a farmer and was used to waking early, going out to work in the field and returning for a large breakfast. The team changed him to a double portion at breakfast and
the problem resolved. In another case, staff members shared the discovery that turning the television to ESPN during care calmed an elderly sports enthusiast.

**Behavioral health consultation**

As part of the program, psychologists spend half their days seeing patients under the traditional fee-for-service model and the other half providing consultation services paid by the facility. The chance for staff to consult on a regular basis with a mental health professional not only improves the care for individual residents, it provides the opportunity for “grassroots culture change.” Team members become more aware of how the environment and their own behaviors impact upon residents’ behavior. The model leads to increased collaboration and enhanced understanding of how each discipline contributes to patient care.

**Positive financial impact**

Carney reports the outcomes of the method are being studied in conjunction with an academic partner from Penn State University. Early results are promising, indicating a reduction in falls, decreased use of antipsychotic medication, reduced staff injuries, and reduced staff turnover. The positive outcomes more than make up for the cost of the services provided by the mental health professional.

For more information on the Eldercare Model, contact Kelly O’Shea Carney, Ph.D. at kcarney@phoebe.org.

Eleanor Feldman Barbera, Ph.D., author of *The Savvy Resident’s Guide* and *MyBetterNursingHome.com*, is an accomplished speaker and consultant with over 17 years of experience as a psychologist in long term care.

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Mary Sedoti, Phoebe Allentown HCC Resident visits with Maria and Lexy, students at Raub Middle School.

Both the student volunteers and the residents look forward to their weekly visits with excitement. Club members rotate to a different Phoebe Allentown neighborhood each week, and they quickly seek out their “favorite residents” in each location. If a resident is unable to be present for that week’s activity, the students ask for him or her by name.

Last school year, the students participated in bingo games, Christmas parties, an Easter egg hunt, and picnics with the residents.

While intergenerational activities are common at Phoebe with Girl Scout Troops, the Camp Phoebe program, and other activities involving younger generations, Raub Middle School’s “Fun With Phoebe Club” is one of the more recent groups that has been visiting regularly within the past two years. The young students are always looking for new experiences, and this group of Phoebe Allentown residents shares their enthusiasm!

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“Fun With Phoebe” After-School Club Fosters Volunteer Spirit

Every Tuesday afternoon, about a dozen girls from Raub Middle School visit Phoebe Allentown as part of the “Fun with Phoebe Club.” The school is just a few blocks away—and the students have walked the distance in all kinds of weather—to spend an hour talking together, and doing crafts and other special activities with residents. Led by their teacher, Brandy Rentko, who is also a Phoebe volunteer, the girls arrive at Phoebe bright-eyed and ready to interact.

“I saw an ad in the paper last year for the Peach Festival at Phoebe, and that was my first volunteer experience there. I enjoyed it so much that I attended volunteer training soon after that and then began volunteering at Phoebe for various events,” Rentko says. She thought it would be a good learning experience for the students to become involved with Phoebe, to inspire a sense of community and to learn the value of sharing their time with others.

News of Rentko’s new after-school club spread quickly among the children by word of mouth. She even had to turn away some students because there was so much interest. “A lot of the students enjoy helping others,” she says, “and this was a great way for them to interact with the residents and give back to the community.”
Phoebe Allentown

Camp Phoebe Unites Children and Residents

For more than a decade, Camp Phoebe has encouraged intergenerational interaction by bringing together Phoebe residents and area children for a week during the summer. This year, the Indiana Jones-inspired camp theme centered on adventure: 32 campers and a handful of junior counselors traveled to Lost River Caverns to create their own fossils and quicksand in addition to a special Jordan Creek expedition. Campers rounded out their busy schedules with daily devotions led by Phoebe’s pastoral care staff. Residents were also encouraged to join in the fun. “This place really comes alive during Camp Phoebe,” says Joan Wickel, Director of Community Life. “The residents love it and the kids love it. And it’s good for children to see that getting older doesn’t mean you have to stop having fun!” Camp Phoebe is open to relatives and friends of Phoebe employees, residents and volunteers.

Terrace Residents Attend Veterans’ Quilt Unveiling

Residents of the Terrace at Phoebe Allentown attended the unveiling of a Veterans’ Quilt at Lehigh County Courthouse in May. The quilt includes the signatures of 240 veterans from across the Lehigh Valley, including multiple Phoebe residents and Phoebe’s President & CEO, Scott R. Stevenson. It was created to honor and memorialize the sacrifice of our nation’s veterans.

Terrace residents pose with the Veterans’ Quilt. From left to right: Ken Burkhart, Clinton “Bud” Kuhns, Charley Hills, Everett Arndt.

Employees Raise Money for Residents

Employees demonstrated their Phoebe pride during the 2014 Employee Giving Campaign by donating over $75,000 in support of Phoebe’s mission and ministry. Overall, more than 500 employees participated in the fundraising effort, with Phoebe Wyncote achieving an unprecedented 100% participation rate—meaning every single employee donated. “It’s inspiring to see this level of participation from employees,” says Adam Marles, Vice President of Marketing and Institutional Advancement. “It means they believe in the work they do every day and want to share their own financial resources to further Phoebe’s mission.”

Phoebe Offers Research Findings at Conferences on Aging

Phoebe staff will travel to Washington, D.C. in November to participate in the Gerontological Society of America’s Annual Scientific Meeting. The organization’s research from the Neurocognitive Engagement Therapy (NET) program will be presented at the conference. (Learn more about the NET program on page 10.) Additionally, the Spirit Alive program—a specialized Pastoral Care service designed for individuals in the mid-to-late stages of dementia—is being presented as part of a Symposium on Spirituality in Dementia.
Catherine Emery, Assistant Professor of Occupational Therapy at Alvernia College, is currently performing doctoral dissertation research on relieving post-stroke fatigue with residents at Phoebe Berks.

“As an occupational therapist, I have always been interested in working with individuals who have had neurologic impairment,” Emery says. “On a personal level, I have focused my energies on developing tools for stroke recovery since my mother sustained a stroke several years ago. My mother was inspirational in her recovery in many ways, but she also showed limitations attributable to fatigue and the sense of exhaustion she felt in trying to keep active.”

Emery’s primary goal is to determine if stroke survivors who experience chronic fatigue can benefit from a group-based educational program about fatigue management. Participants will meet for seven weeks to discuss reducing stress, building and budgeting energy, and managing their time.

Catherine Emery, ABD, OTR/L and Assistant Professor of Occupational Therapy at Alvernia College

The first Post-Stroke Fatigue Class was held on September 5 at Phoebe Berks.

Phoebe Ministries’ Benefit Golf Tournament Raises $116,000 for Charitable Care

The Phoebe Ministries Golf Tournament netted over $116,000 for charitable care. Over 200 golfers played on Monday, August 11, at Saucon Valley Country Club. The tournament’s proceeds benefit Phoebe residents who are without personal means to pay for their own care. Since its founding in 1903, Phoebe has provided care to residents regardless of their ability to pay. Last year, charity care levels exceeded $12 million.

Don Taatjes, Jim Milcavage, Matt Linsenbigler and Thane Gehret, all with Aramark, the Title Sponsor for the Phoebe Ministries Golf Tournament, enjoyed the golf tournament at Saucon Valley Country Club in August.

Scott Stevenson, President and CEO of Phoebe Ministries, presents George Johnson of Aramark with a crystal putter in gratitude for serving as the event’s Title Sponsor.
Phoebe Richland

Phoebe Richland Employee Receives Pride Award for Bucks County

Connie Quier, Memory Support Community Life Coordinator at Phoebe Richland Health Care Center, received the Alzheimer’s Association Delaware Chapter’s Pride Award for Professional Recognition in Dementia Excellence. Quier received the only award presented to a direct care memory support worker in Bucks County.

Connie Quier (far left) received the only Pride Award presented to a Bucks County direct care memory support worker.

Phoebe Richland Expands in Bucks County

By this time next year, Bucks County seniors will have a new option for care close to home. Construction of the new Phoebe Richland personal care facility is on track to be completed in the summer of 2015. Designed as an addition to the current Phoebe Richland campus, the new 72,600-square-foot building will feature 62 studio apartments (18 allocated to memory support), 10 one-bedroom apartments, and four semi-private rooms.

Construction began on the new addition to the Phoebe Richland campus.

Phoebe Wyncote

Flying High Over Philadelphia

Phoebe Wyncote Resident Frank Fink dedicated 32 years of his life to building helicopter parts for Boeing. When LifeChoice Hospice found out about Fink’s former profession, they made special arrangements to secure a July 1st helicopter ride for Fink, his son Glenn, and his primary caregiver at Phoebe, Olive Addison.

Prior to the flight, Fink was given a special veteran’s certificate and a medal from Phoebe Wyncote staff in honor of his eight years of service in the Army during WWII. After the ceremony, the group took off from Northeast Philadelphia Airport, and enjoyed a flight over the City of Brotherly Love. Phoebe Wyncote staff were more than honored to work with LifeChoice Hospice in giving this once-in-a-lifetime gift to Fink and his family.

The group boards the helicopter with excitement.
Phoebe’s Outpatient Rehab Services Have Expanded to Allentown!

In July, physical and occupational therapy became available to the public in a new, Medicare-certified outpatient rehabilitation center on the first floor of the David A. Miller Personal Care Community located at the corner of 19th and Chew Streets in Allentown.

For more information on outpatient therapy at Phoebe Berks and Phoebe Allentown, please call 610-794-5260.

October 2014
28-29 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.  
AAA Mature Operator Driving Course  
Phoebe Berks Village, Activity Room  
Call 610-927-8513 or e-mail dbertil@dberstler@phoebe.org for more information.

29 6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.  
Trick or Treat Night  
Phoebe Allentown Health Care Center  
Call 610-794-5365 for more information.

November 2014
5 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.  
AAA Mature Operator Driving Course  
Phoebe Berks Village, Activity Room  
Call 610-927-8513 or e-mail dbertil@dberstler@phoebe.org for more information.

14 9:00 a.m.  
Power Breakfast Featuring “The Founding and History of Phoebe Berks”  
Phoebe Berks Village, Dining Room  
Open to the public free of charge as part of the Centennial Celebration of Wernersville.  
RSVP to Diana at 610-927-8513 by November 7.

December 2014
1 7:00 p.m.  
Celebration of Life Illumination Ceremony  
Tree Lighting Ceremony  
Phoebe Richland Health Care Center, Springhouse Park  
Call 267-371-4508 or e-mail kkiehstaller@phoebe.org for more information.

5 5:30 p.m.  
Grand Illumination Tree Lighting Ceremony  
Phoebe Berks Village, Auditorium  
By invitation only.

6 9:00 a.m. to noon  
Breakfast with Santa  
Moyer Hall, Phoebe Allentown Health Care Center  
RSVP by calling 610-794-5365.

THE 2015 PHOEBE INSTITUTE ON AGING BENEFIT  
MARCH 12, 2015  
The evening will begin at 6:00 p.m. with a performance by The Craig Thatcher Band while guests enjoy cocktails and hors d’oeuvres. All in attendance will enjoy a seated dinner and the evening will conclude with dessert as the band continues to play.

For more information on attending or sponsorship opportunities, contact Molly Driscoll at 610-794-5163 or mdriscoll@phoebe.org or visit phoebe.org/piabenefit.
Larry Benner made a recent $30,000 pledge for Phoebe Richland’s new building project. A naming opportunity for the New Chapel and Meditation Garden provided his inspiration.

“I am delighted to help Phoebe Richland while honoring my parents, Helen L. and William E. Benner, Jr., my maternal grandparents, C. Erwin and Esther H. Heller, and my paternal grandparents, William E. and Gertrude A. Benner.”

Contact Charles L. Fehr, CFRE to learn more about memorial giving and Phoebe Richland Naming Opportunities at 610-794-5153 or cfehr@phoebe.org