

 Phoebe

# Messenger

Volume 100, Issue 1 | Spring 2019



The Meaning of *Happiness*

NEW FRIENDS  
AND OLD PASSIONS

**WELLNESS AND HOME CARE**

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**On the cover:** Generations come together: Bob Masenheimer, Phoebe Berks, conducts rehearsal for the Phoebe Institute on Aging Benefit. Read more on page 16.

*Phoebe-Devitt Homes is the official name of the 501(c)(3) not-for-profit corporation doing business as Phoebe Ministries. Founded in 1903 and incorporated as such in 1984, Phoebe-Devitt Homes is responsible for the supervision of communities, long-range planning, development, and fundraising for a network of retirement and affordable housing communities, pharmacies, and a continuing care at home program, which combined serve thousands of seniors annually.*

Phoebe Ministries is affiliated with the United Church of Christ and is a member of LeadingAge, LeadingAge PA, and the Council for Health and Human Service Ministries of the United Church of Christ.

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Mission Statement:

***A community of faith,  
called by God, to enrich  
the lives of our seniors,  
their families, and the  
communities we serve.***

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## A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

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*Greetings friends,*

I may run the risk of repeating myself, but it's a message that never tires, and a truth that never alters—it is an exciting time to be part of Phoebe.

For an organization that has been serving the community now for 116 years, there is always something new happening, and something new to celebrate. As exciting as it was to announce our newest venture, Chestnut Ridge at Rodale, it is with even greater satisfaction and excitement that we have undertaken the real task of building a community—

not just with stone and steel, but with the people who will make it come alive. In this issue of *The Phoebe Messenger*, we celebrate the history of the site where we are now putting down roots and joining our history with that of another outstanding organization.

Even as we invest in a new chapter of our history, we continue to find stories of remarkable things happening in our established communities. In this issue we explore the ways that people at Phoebe have found to enrich lives—not just their own, but those of friends and loved ones. They build friendships and extended families with the people around them. They find music and share the joy of their talents with others. Perhaps most profound of all, they find happiness and purpose in life, and with it a wisdom that comes with age.

Phoebe was founded in a simple charitable mission that has gone unchanged since the beginning. Our future is founded in our ability to evolve and revitalize—to bring new life to our communities and to the people who call our communities home.

I am deeply honored to be part of the team leading our organization toward a future that will last far beyond those working for it now. Our labors and triumphs—and yes, even our failures—are the foundation of our future, and as servants of a greater cause we can all take pride in knowing we are playing our part to the best of our God-given abilities. We are saved by faith, and by grace we live a life filled with the sharing of those qualities with others.

I wish you the best, in Christ,

A handwritten signature in dark ink that reads "Scott R. Stevenson". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first and last names being more prominent.

Scott R. Stevenson  
*President & CEO*

# A PLACE *Regenerated*



## CHESTNUT RIDGE at Rodale

CULTIVATED BY PHOEBE 

With Chestnut Ridge at Rodale, Phoebe opens a new chapter of our history while joining with the history of Rodale Inc.





*The main corporate offices of Rodale Inc. will be reinvented into one of two apartment buildings at Chestnut Ridge at Rodale. Presales of apartments are happening now!*



*The previous internal office spaces will transform into beautiful new community social spaces, like the pub shown in this artist's rendering.*



If you want to know something about Rodale—be it the people who worked there, the history of the business, or how to rewire a lighting fixture in the lobby—you're well off asking Jim Hersh, Director of Plant Operations and Facilities Management at Chestnut Ridge at Rodale, and former Director of Facilities Management for Rodale Inc.

Jim has worked in some capacity with Rodale since 1978, after completing high school and three years of trade school as an apprentice electrician. He's been a devoted employee, taking on leadership roles that advanced his career until Rodale sold its business to the Hearst Corporation in 2017, and the 36-acre property in Emmaus, Pennsylvania, to Phoebe in 2018.

When Phoebe took over the property with plans to establish an independent living community on-site, Jim was asked to join Phoebe with two of his employees; together they've been keeping up with general maintenance and building work—as well as assisting Phoebe with other projects—as development continues.

A tour around the buildings with Jim is a tour back through time. In every office space and hallway there's a story to tell, and the past sounds of keyboards clicking and phones ringing still hang in the air. A broad open space on the third floor was once where the creative team worked. At their request, Jim and his crew lowered the height of their cubicle barriers to desk-level so they could see each other and shoot basketballs and Nerf guns across the office as they brainstormed layouts and photography for health magazines.

The far wall of this work area is lined with wooden planks once used to build a shed on a Rodale property, recycled from old shipping crates. The planks still bear the printed names of the men who ordered them, messages like DO NOT DROP, and the address of a business in Trexlertown. The room is a poignant reminder of Rodale's commitment to regeneration—everything could be reused, remade, reimagined. It's a powerful message, embodied by the new plans for the site: a working and living space reinvented.

For now, the main office building—built in 1995 as headquarters for Rodale Inc.—is empty and largely silent as it awaits the extensive renovations that will transform it into Chestnut Ridge. The reimagined building will soon be home to seniors who are now eagerly awaiting their future apartments, and the now silent halls will echo with the sounds of a new community—different from before, but just as beautiful.

Jim talks a lot about the larger than life figures of Bob Rodale, CEO from 1971 to 1990, and his wife Ardath ("Ardie"), who succeeded him as CEO until 2002, and served as chairman



*Upcycled shipping crates that once covered the wall in the creative department will be put to use in the new sales center.*

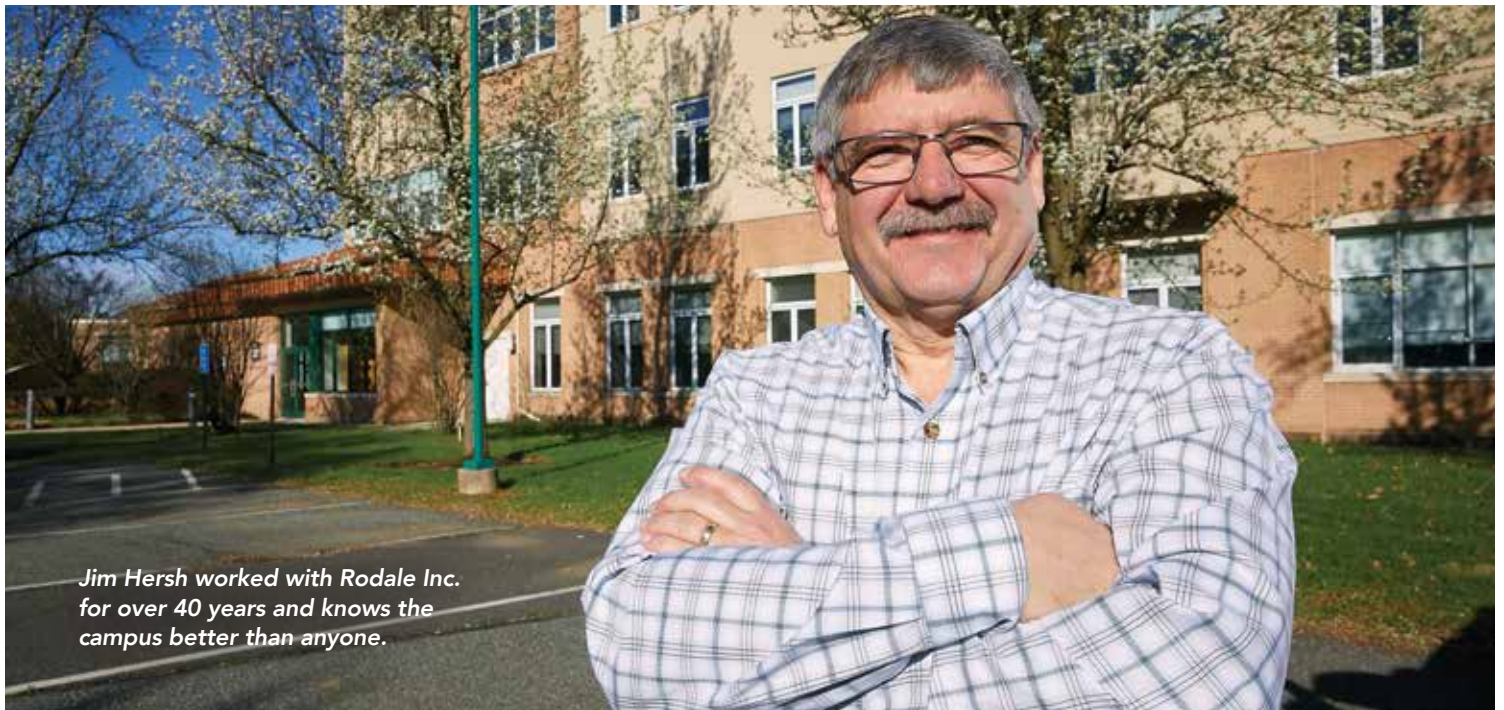


*Looking out over the "Bunker", which will be replaced with the horseshoe-shaped South Building and connector with the swimming pool.*



*A pin board at the Rodale offices shows off past magazine and book covers.*





*Jim Hersh worked with Rodale Inc. for over 40 years and knows the campus better than anyone.*

from 1990 to 2007. It's not just that he knew them well; it's that the culture they established at Rodale has become such an integral part of the place. "Ardie loved to change things up, paint the walls bright colors, move things around," he says. "Things were always changing here. Constant growth, constant change. It was exciting."

The Rodales understood that surviving meant adapting to new circumstances, seeking improvement—not only greater efficiency, but greater quality of life and business for the people that worked there every day. That search resonates with Phoebe's intention for the property, a wellness community focused on making life better for older adults. When the building reopens it will house 122 independent living apartments, and potentially more than 200 older adults—not to mention an innovative work place for Phoebe employees.

Adjacent to the three-story building is another, older, structure built half-underground during the 1980s when solar-power and turf roofs were all the rage. A unique energy-saving office space, what Jim and Rodale veterans referred to as "the Bunker" will make way for a brand new apartment building: four stories in a horseshoe shape, connecting to the original three-story office building on the ground floor. Construction on the

new building will be simultaneous with the remodeling of the old one, so that when they move in, residents will be living in a completed community and not a construction zone.

The Rodales understood that what they had built might one day be adapted for a new purpose. Jim recalls when they were planning the office building, one conversation led to an uncanny foresight of its future use: "When we sat down with the architects to talk about this building, I remember us asking ourselves, 'What could be a second use for this building?' And one of the answers was apartments." Twenty-five years later, that foresight will prove true as Phoebe opens its newest offering to the community and the Rodale name enters a new era embodied in a new purpose. 🌿

**Visit [ChestnutRidgeAtRodale.org](https://ChestnutRidgeAtRodale.org) to learn more.**



**Keep up with developments about Chestnut Ridge at Rodale online. Follow us on Facebook @ChestnutRidgeAtRodale.**



**The Chestnut Club**

**Become a member of the Chestnut Club today and discover a new kind of retirement living. Call 610-794-6581 or visit [ChestnutRidgeAtRodale.org](https://ChestnutRidgeAtRodale.org) for more information. Apartments are selling fast!**





# FINDING "HAPPY"

*The Rev. Jamie Moyer showed the film documentary "Happy" to residents at Meadow Glen, and shared discussion with them about the idea of happiness.*





**R**esidents of Phoebe Richland are gathered around a flat-screen TV watching documentary footage of a young rickshaw driver in India sharing his views about happiness. His material circumstances are very different from those of the average American, but the film reveals that, statistically, he is just as happy.

So begins the discussion facilitated by the Rev. Jamie Moyer, chaplain at Phoebe Richland, in a series she ran this winter. What makes you happy? Who is the happiest person you know? What can you do to increase your happiness? The residents responded with intimate stories, personal struggles, and lifelong wisdom.

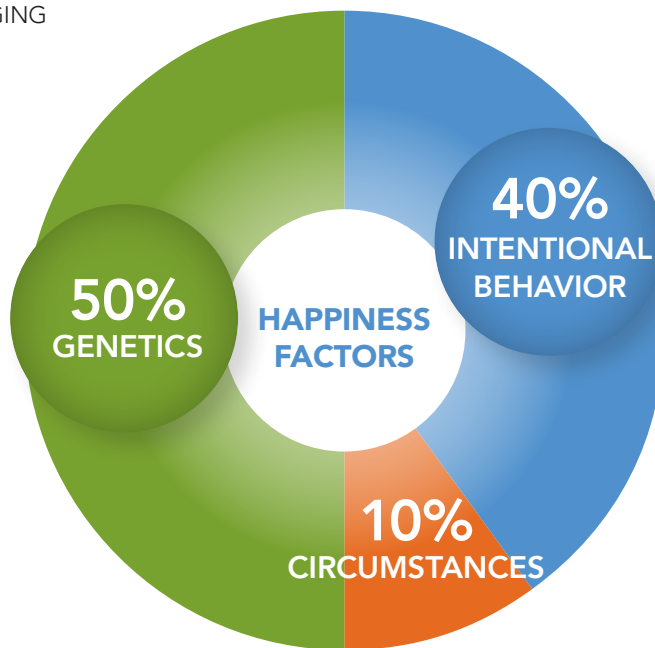


*Rev. Jamie Moyer spends time with  
Phoebe Richland Health Care Center residents.*

Inspired by the documentary film “Happy” (2011), Rev. Moyer was curious about the knowledge of the older adults she interacts with daily. For several weeks in February, she screened parts of the film for groups of residents and led a discussion using educational questions. She was so inspired by the results that she expanded the group to include more screenings in the health care center and the neighboring personal care community, Meadow Glen at Phoebe Richland.

Muriel Miller, a resident of Phoebe Richland, spent over 35 years as a public school teacher and reading specialist in Brooklyn, New York. When asked what happiness was to her, she replied: “Doing something bigger than yourself.” She continues to share her knowledge and passion for learning by actively participating in daily educational programming and brain games offered by the community life department.

At 103 years old, Naomi Cressman\* found joy in her biweekly “play dates” with Trinity, the seven-year-old daughter of nursing assistant Kim Bordner. Trinity did as well. “I always had a lot of fun with Naomi,” says Trinity. “She loved to play with me and I made her smile.” Every other Saturday, Trinity came to work with mom so she could play balloon volleyball, hide-and-seek, and card games, or just share her contagious silliness with Naomi. When asked what brought her happiness, Naomi answered, “Being around young people!”



“It is so heartwarming to see the joy on the faces of both the residents and kids when they are together,” says Phoebe Richland Executive Director Tracy Roman, who encourages intergenerational activities throughout the community.

“Happy” was created by Academy Award-nominated director Roko Belic, who was inspired by a New York Times article that ranked countries based on the population’s happiness. He was amazed to find that despite its abundant wealth, the United States ranked 19th out of 156 countries surveyed for the World

Happiness Report in 2019.<sup>1</sup>

Belic traveled to 14 countries, including the poverty-stricken Kolkata region in India. The people he interviewed consistently identified six concepts they associated with happiness: connection to a community, sharing kindness, engaging in playfulness, life-long learning, practicing gratitude,

**\*Naomi Cressman found happiness in the company of young people, like Trinity, who came with her mom to Phoebe Richland twice a month to play with Naomi.**

**Naomi passed away peacefully during the production of this issue.**



<sup>1</sup> Helliwell, J., Layard, R., & Sachs, J. (2019). World Happiness Report 2019, New York: Sustainable Development Solutions Network.



and experiencing “flow.” The concept of “flow”—named by Mihály Csikszentmihályi in 1975 for the experience of being fully immersed in an activity, losing sense of time and space—was a common theme for many Phoebe Richland residents, who said they had experienced it while painting, sewing, doing puzzles, or playing the piano.

According to research cited in the film, 40 percent of a person’s happiness is open to their control including their reactions and life choices. Fifty percent is predetermined through genetics, and ten percent is circumstantial (economically or situationally based). These were astounding percentages to Rev. Moyer, who specializes in Gestalt Pastoral Care—a healing ministry rooted in the Christian tradition of grace while integrating Gestalt growth work, spiritual companionship, and prayer. She enthusiastically supports the connection between happiness and healthy living. “As we move through our healing journey in life we realize that we need joy to be a whole person” she says.

Rev. Moyer first saw “Happy” in 2011, when she was working as a chaplain at Wernersville State Hospital. “I was fascinated by the concept that happiness can change brain chemistry,” she says. She started using the documentary as inspiration for discussion and counseling for those struggling with mood disorders and depression. She witnessed profound healing and self-awareness arise in those with whom she shared it. When she began her ministry at Phoebe Richland in 2015, she found happiness and was overwhelmed by the wisdom she encountered in the residents every day. “I don’t think they realize how much I receive from them!” she says.

Even with the abundance of positive wisdom, there is also the reality of sadness, loneliness, and loss for many older adults. For some attending Rev. Moyer’s discussions, it was difficult for them to name something that they were happy about. “I wanted them to find the good in their day and change their outlook,” says Rev. Moyer. She found that gratitude was the turning point for many. One resident who struggles with her recent loss of independence said, “You can look at being in a wheelchair as a good thing. I no longer have to cook meals or clean!” This comment brought a round of laughter to the group, and residents began listing things they were grateful for. Music, grandchildren, a good book, painting. No matter how much they had lost, they found something profound to be grateful for.

Gertrude McDonald, who lost the use of her hands in 2014, paints landscapes using a modified brush that she



can put in her mouth. Through everything, Gertrude persists. “In the beginning it’s always challenging—then all of a sudden I take off, I’m in flow,” she says.

More than anything else, the experience of sharing and discussing “Happy” was a life-affirming activity. “Oh Lord, may I give, give, give to live,” said one participant whose life story includes an ongoing healing journey from a painful childhood. Giving back, gratitude, sharing community, flow—these are all lessons that Rev. Moyer gives and receives daily at the home of her friends at Phoebe Richland. “All this wisdom makes me beam!” she says as her face breaks into a huge smile, clearly reflecting what brings her happiness. ☸



**Have you seen “Happy”? Tell us what you think and share how you found your “happy”!**

**Tag us on Facebook @PhoebeMinistries #FindingHappy.**

**Find your “happy” at Phoebe. Visit [Phoebe.org](http://Phoebe.org) to learn more about what we offer older adults and their families.**

# The Path to Wellness

Wellness is a term that comes up often in long term care—but what does it really mean, and why is it important? Learn what wellness means in your life, and what Pathstones by Phoebe does to help you maximize it.

Wellness can mean a lot of things. Many people immediately associate wellness with physical health alone, or with the idea of being happy or mentally “well.” But it’s much more than either of these. Wellness is the concept of a person’s overall health across multiple dimensions, each of which is impacted by and balanced with the others: physical, emotional, spiritual, vocational, social, intellectual, and environmental.

These dimensions are the focal point of Pathstones by Phoebe, a continuing care at home program that cultivates wellness in its members, establishing a baseline and working from there to build a customized plan that evolves with each member over time. Members work directly with the Pathstones wellness coordinator to develop their own plans, and the coordinator follows up regularly to make sure everything is going smoothly.

“Our philosophy is to be both proactive and preventive with health,” says Mimi Leinbach, wellness coordinator for Pathstones by Phoebe. “We want our members to maintain full, healthy, and positive lives. With a few painless lifestyle adjustments, we can help our members live their best lives in every dimension of wellness. As wellness coordinator, my main priority is to get to know our members and their wishes so that we can customize their wellness plans to both their current and future needs and goals.”

An initial wellness visit consists of a brief assessment based on a number of standard questions, as well as a physical assessment. An assessment is performed each year after that, covering updated medical information, a depression screen, a cognitive assessment, and a fitness assessment. At the initial and subsequent meetings, the wellness coordinator and the member discuss goals for the year and how to work those into the custom plan.



**Addie Turk leads an active, healthy lifestyle, fostered by her membership with Pathstones by Phoebe. She meets with Wellness Coordinator Mimi Leinbach regularly to keep up with her personal wellness plan.**



Each plan is different; but all are custom-tailored to each member, and all are built with the same basic goal: to maintain and improve overall health and well-being. The wellness plan always revolves around the seven dimensions of wellness, with one goal for each dimension. For each goal, the wellness coordinator establishes interventions or ways to achieve the goal. For example, in physical wellness, the goal might be to improve balance. The intervention would be to attend a Matter of Balance class weekly, and perform single leg stands daily at home.

Pathstones member Addie Turk is a strong advocate of wellness—for her, it was one of the chief draws to the program and she takes it very seriously. “My goal is to keep active and to keep interested, not become somebody who just sits around!” she says. Turk exercises at a gym every day, works with a trainer once a week, and performs balancing exercises at home to keep herself in shape. During her regular wellness visits, Leinbach tests Turk for balance as well as for cognition, memory retention, and emotional health.

Pathstones provides more than just a regular checkup. Members enjoy regular access to exclusive social events—movie days, hockey and baseball games, art shows, trips to theaters—“I love all that!” says Turk, an avid art and theater enthusiast. “I take advantage of what they offer and it keeps me mentally engaged.” Twice a year members gather for a luncheon, greeting new faces and catching up with friends, and hearing from experts on topics like fall prevention, cyber security, and Medicare.

“The wellness coordinator looks at things I wouldn’t notice,” says Turk. “She comes twice a year and gives an assessment, she tests me in various capacities, and looks over the house to make sure things are as they should be: no loose rugs, that sort of thing.” The relationship and her Pathstones membership above all offer Turk peace of mind. Her two children each live more than an hour’s drive away, so having a local resource to turn to is invaluable. “If anything would happen to me, I know that I always have someone to call on who would help me in an emergency situation,” she says.

Pathstones is also on hand to help with making decisions about future care, and continues providing services to members who move into retirement communities. Through it all, members can rest easy knowing their wellness is in the hands of experts who care. 🌿

**Join Pathstones for a seminar to learn more about wellness and what Pathstones can do for you. Visit [PathstonesByPhoebe.org](https://PathstonesByPhoebe.org) for seminar dates and locations.**

## UNDERSTANDING WELLNESS

The seven dimensions of wellness are recognized and promoted by the National Wellness Institute. Pathstones by Phoebe uses the seven dimensions to create custom wellness plans for each member.



### PHYSICAL

Maintaining a healthy lifestyle through nutrition and exercise for maximum quality of life.

### SOCIAL

Relating to and connecting with other people and having positive, meaningful relationships with friends and family.

### EMOTIONAL

Understanding ourselves and our emotions by recognizing and expressing our feelings in healthy ways, and coping with life’s challenges.

### ENVIRONMENTAL

Caring for and about our surroundings in a way that positively impacts our well-being both personally and globally.

### INTELLECTUAL

Engaging in creative and mentally stimulating activities to expand knowledge for optimal brain health.

### SPIRITUAL

Exploring the purpose of our lives while expressing our beliefs, values, and ethics, to achieve peace and harmony.

### VOCATIONAL

Getting personal satisfaction and fulfillment in life through work, volunteering, and hobbies.

Visit [PathstonesByPhoebe.org](https://PathstonesByPhoebe.org) to learn more.

# Getting to Know HOME CARE



**Angela Clarke,**  
*Community Relations  
Coordinator, Comforting  
Home Care by Phoebe*

*Angela Clarke has been with Comforting Home Care for several years as a direct care supervisor. She has a passion for helping clients remain independent and in their own homes. In her free time, Clarke is active in several nonprofit organizations as a dedicated volunteer.*

**Comforting Home Care by Phoebe is the region's premier home care provider. We are not a corporate franchise owned by for-profit investors. We are managed by health care professionals dedicated to serving our community. Partnered with Phoebe, we are proud to continue more than a century of tradition of caring for the elderly and disabled in our community with kindness and respect. Serving Lehigh, Berks, and Northampton counties, we have offices at two Phoebe communities.**

**What are home care services?** Home care services include basic errands, companionship, meal preparation, transportation, shopping, medication reminders, light housekeeping, and assisting with daily personal care and hygiene needs. Comforting Home Care by Phoebe provides nonmedical post-rehabilitation/hospitalization care and so much more! Health and lifestyle enrichment is a huge part of why we do what we do. The client sets the schedule based on their needs. Having services is not a negative, it's a positive! We're here to make every day a little easier, whether that's very minimal services or fulltime assistance. The goal is to keep our clients in their own homes.

**How do I know if I or someone I love needs home care services?** Knowing when and how a loved one needs services can vary; signs can range from difficulty opening a medication container or putting on socks, to recognizing an unsteady gait or a lack of involvement in daily activities. Everyone is different and many people find it difficult to ask for the help—this is where we all come together. We recognize and we show compassion. Comforting Home Care by Phoebe can provide resources to caregivers and loved ones who have doubts and questions about what qualifies as a need, and what we can help with.



**Will I get to meet the caregiver**

**beforehand?** It is an option depending on the circumstances. We can set up an introduction between the caregiver and client family, although this cannot always be accommodated due to schedules and timing. You may also ask to be assigned a new caregiver if for any reason you are dissatisfied. Finding the perfect match is important. We want our clients to remain independent, enjoying life and hobbies, focusing on health, with help there when needed to make it all a little easier!

**Am I locked into services?** No. You may cancel services at any time. You may also start them back up at any time. We offer short term and long term care services, weekends, and holidays. All schedules are flexible. Comforting Home Care by Phoebe provides services to two Phoebe continuing care retirement communities, and in the outside community. We are available 24 hours a day, seven days a week. ☎



**Find out more about Comforting Home Care by Phoebe by visiting [ComfortingHome.com](http://ComfortingHome.com), or call 610-628-1008.**

## **Comforting Home Care by Phoebe provides a range of services to suit every need.**

### **HOURLY SERVICES**

Age in place without limiting your independence: hourly home care is ideal for people who just need a few hours of assistance every month to meet changes in health or family schedules. This can include daily chores or emotional support.

### **24-HOUR CARE**

Available in short term or long term living arrangements, 24-hour care is based on an assessment and consultation with a registered nurse. It is designed for patients who need constant care but do not wish to move to a nursing community.

### **ALZHEIMER'S AND DEMENTIA CARE**

Home care for patients living with Alzheimer's and related disorders (ADRD) can include help with activities of daily living, such as bathing, cooking, dressing, or walking. Caregivers also provide mental stimulation and physical activity to keep patients engaged.

### **MULTIPLE SCLEROSIS (MS) CARE**

We work to provide the best possible living arrangement for people living with MS, fostering independence and providing emotional support in addition to physical assistance.

### **CANCER RECOVERY**

Personal home care provides patients the option of recovering at home instead of at a hospital or rehabilitation facility. Even short term arrangements make a big difference in the recovery process. Personal care allows patients the freedom to focus on fighting cancer.

### **INDEPENDENT LIVING**

Home care is available even in independent living communities; we provide hourly or round-the-clock service just as we do in traditional homes.

### **HOME TRANSITION CARE**


The Comforting Home Care by Phoebe Transitions<sup>SM</sup> program is ideal for home recovery following hospitalization, surgery, cancer treatment, and other medical issues. Our service fills the gap between institutional medical care and life at home. You or your family member can focus on health instead of daily tasks thanks to our focus on personal care needs. No long term contract is required, so patients regain their independence at their own pace.

**Learn more at [ComfortingHome.com](http://ComfortingHome.com).**









*The Phoebe Berks Piano Quartet rehearses at Parkland High School with the Strolling Strings in preparation for the Phoebe Institute on Aging Benefit in March.*

# OF MUSIC

Music is a language that speaks to everyone in different ways; as we age, it becomes an integral part of our identities and forms of expression to ourselves and others. For some Phoebe residents, music remains part of a daily pursuit of happiness and involvement in their community.

Rita Bieber can remember the moment she realized she had perfect pitch. Her mother was practicing on the piano, and Rita was listening when she heard a wrong note. “That E doesn’t sound right,” she piped up. Her mother stopped playing and looked at her.

“What E?” she asked.

“That E you just played,” said Rita.

“How do you know it’s an E?” asked her mother, bewildered.

As Rita explains today, she thought it was just something everybody knew: that intrinsic and unshakeable confidence in the note, as clear and definable as a word. Her lessons in music began around that time, first with her mother, and then with local teachers in Tunkhannock, the small town near Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania, where they lived.

Rita—whose full name is Marguerite—grew quickly as a musician. She studied music and organ at Pennsylvania State University (class of ’48). She taught music in public school as well as to a few private pupils over the years,

and played with her mother as a church organist every week. Today Rita lives in Meadow Glen, the personal care community that opened at Phoebe Richland in 2016.

Even in retirement, Rita Bieber kept busy with music. For more than ten years—up until she was almost 95—she played at McCool’s at the Red Lion Inn in Quakertown, Pennsylvania, just down the road from her previous home in Kintnersville. Along with perfect pitch—a rare gift even for professional musicians—Rita has a remarkable talent for playing by ear. “She’s pretty incredible,” says Jan Hench, owner of McCool’s. “She had lists of titles for people to look at and you could just spout off a title at her or start humming the tune and she’d start playing. She never used sheet music.” Rita was a popular act with diners, who, in many cases, came just to hear her play.

“I play whatever there is to play,” she says. “I do a lot of my own composing, too—just for fun!” Some of Rita’s compositions for church music were published in a monthly magazine called *The Choir Herald*. “I’ve enjoyed music all my life,” she affirms.

Early memories of music are common with practiced musicians. At Phoebe Berks Village, the independent living community of Phoebe Berks in Wernersville, Pennsylvania, Sandy Leidich and Bob Masenheimer both recall the strong impact music had on their formative years.

“I remember my parents getting me an LP of waltzes by Richard Strauss,” says Bob, “and I just thought that was the greatest gift in the world.” As a child, Bob spent hours listening to classical records on a small record player his parents had given him. At age 9 he began taking singing lessons. In high school he took organ lessons from Ed Huff at Zion’s “Liberty Bell” Church in Allentown, and played tuba in the band at South Whitehall High School (now Parkland High School).

Bob and his wife moved to Phoebe Berks in 2010 but even before that he had become involved with musical life there. The director of the resident choir, the Phoebe Choraleers, had broken her shoulder before a Christmas concert and the executive director of Phoebe Berks, Chuck Galley, asked Bob to step in. The following spring the Masenheimers moved to Phoebe Berks, joined the Choraleers as singers, and a year later Bob took over as director. Within another year he had established the hand bell choir, which is going strong today, and about four years ago established the piano quartet.

“I arrange music on my computer using a software program,” Bob explains. “I was working on a piece and I thought, ‘This would be great on a piano duet, or even for



*Rita Bieber plays for a worship service at Phoebe Richland.*



two pianos!” He showed it to two friends of his, Marie Ohlinger and Sandy Leidich, and they agreed to give it a shot. Virginia Schaffer joined the group, which began giving concerts at Bern United Church of Christ and Phoebe Berks once a year, facilitated by the gift of a new grand piano by Ron Rider, fellow resident of Phoebe.

Though he lives in a retirement community, Bob could hardly be called retired. He is currently minister of music at St. Paul’s UCC in neighboring Robesonia, plays for chapel and mass at Phoebe Berks, and keeps up with the quartet and Choraleers. “A body can only do so much!” he laughs, saying he isn’t planning to take on any additional roles, but that he will keep up with what he’s doing now.

His friend, Sandy, feels much the same way, and confirms that she has been busier than ever since moving to Phoebe Berks—though she isn’t complaining. She says anyone moving there can be as involved as they want to be and that was what attracted her to the retirement community.

Sandy has been playing piano since the age of five, when she began taking lessons from her elementary school teacher who gave private lessons at home. “She taught me how to read music very, very well,” says Sandy, who finds her particular strength is in sight-reading. She began giving lessons herself when a friend of her daughter wanted to learn, and taught for 30 years, taking up organ

along the way. Before she retired in 2005, Sandy was head organist at her church, but piano is really her true love, and accompanying others is one of her favorite ways to play. So it came as a natural fit when Bob formed the quartet, and when Sandy met Al Incledon, a gifted violinist at Phoebe Berks who played by ear. She and Al became fast friends, and played many times together before he passed away in 2018. “I think I was destined to be here just to get together with Al,” says Sandy. She and Bob both keep very busy at Phoebe Berks, where the running joke is that retirees often find themselves involved in so many activities and events that any idea of “retirement” is laughable.

Rita, Sandy, and Bob are only a few of the many musicians and talented artists that call Phoebe home, and continue to exercise their art and their passion as they age. 🎹



**How has music impacted your life? Join the conversation and tell us your experience on Facebook @PhoebeMinistries #LifetimeOfMusic.**

**To learn more about the opportunities that await you at Phoebe, visit [Phoebe.org](http://Phoebe.org).**



***Sandy Leidich practices with the Phoebe Berks Piano Quartet.***

# FRIENDSHIP ACROSS PHOEBE

Event calendars at all of Phoebe's communities are numerous, full, and ever changing. At each campus and level of care, there are both scheduled and impromptu events happening daily. The events that fill Phoebe's activities calendars all have one thing in common: they are created for—and often by—our residents.

While some resident activities are formally scheduled and planned by our community life departments at each community with weigh-in from the residents, other groups or activities occur organically through a common identified interest or hobby. It's well known that keeping a busy social calendar can improve cognition, stave off depression, and even have physical health benefits for older adults. Residents and staff alike agree that the more activities residents involve themselves in, the happier they are.

## PHOEBE ALLENTOWN

The Terrace at Phoebe Allentown hosts a myriad of planned monthly activities like musical performances, happy hour, board game nights, Wii bowling, and movie nights, but the scheduled activities aren't all that's happening at the independent living community. A group of residents unofficially known as the "Coffee Clutch" gets together in the Terrace lounge every morning around 8 o'clock. The group varies depending on personal schedules, but five to seven regulars can be found in the lounge daily, sipping coffee or tea and discussing current events, cracking jokes, and greeting people as they come through the main entrance to the community.

Charlie Geheb is known as the "founder" of the group, which started shortly after he moved to the Terrace in 2015 when he decided to have his morning coffee in the lounge area of the first floor instead of in his apartment.

(Clockwise)  
Chester Westgate, Marjorie Beck, Luke Stever, and Helen Tice toast to new friends at Phoebe Richland.

Mary Nixon and Janice Peischel enjoy a glass of chilled wine together over happy hour.

Friends at the Terrace gather for coffee and chit-chat every week.









The lounge is just off of the lobby of the Terrace and adjacent to the mail room where the coffee maker is kept, so it was an obvious choice for Charlie to set up shop there. Charlie is known to greet staff, residents, and visitors with a smile as they come in, and even makes an effort to keep an eye out for new residents and assist them in finding their way around. Shortly after Charlie started his daily coffee routine in the lounge area, fellow resident Irene Bigatel joined him, and the group soon expanded to attract other social coffee and tea drinkers including Joyce Schelly, Harry Hubig, Albert Fraind, and Don McLean.

Joyce's participation in the "Coffee Clutch" is just one of the few social events she takes part in. "There are more activities offered here than you can fit into a week!" she says. "There's a lot of good entertainment, including some great singers and musical groups." Members of the Coffee Clutch have some other common interests as well. "Al and I like to chase the women, but we can't catch them," jokes Harry.

Charlie enjoys the social aspect of this group, saying, "This is a good place to meet people. It breaks the ice with newcomers." Charlie also says he enjoys the monthly happy hours held at the Terrace. "He likes to sit closest to where the bartender is," Harry quips.

Since life at the Terrace frees residents from the burden of home maintenance and housekeeping, they have ample time to attend both scheduled events and non-formal activities like the Coffee Clutch. "I don't have to worry about anything—the maintenance team takes care of the heavy lifting!" says Charlie.

Joyce is mindful of the advantages of staff help in bad weather. "The staff does a great job of cleaning the snow off of our cars in the winter," she says. "It's nice to not have to worry about that." While the Coffee Clutch formed from a few residents sharing a common interest, it's clear that what keeps them coming every morning is the lasting bond they've formed over the years.

## PHOEBE BERKS

What started as a kind deed by one resident of Phoebe Berks has turned into an ever growing group of friends with a common hobby. Ruth Gerhart moved to the independent living community Phoebe Berks Village in 2011. She has been knitting and crocheting for most of her life, and upon moving to Phoebe Berks, Ruth continued to crochet prayer shawls and donate them to local organizations. Some other women who wanted to learn or already knew how noticed her crocheting in the activity room off the central lobby and joined her. Once the group became substantial enough, they decided to come up with a consistent meeting schedule and settled on every Tuesday and Thursday from 9 to 11 o'clock in the morning. At least seven women, ranging from one who has lived at Phoebe Berks for 13 years to another who just moved in five months ago, now gather weekly. They crochet baby blankets and prayer shawls and donate them to local organizations and individuals in need, including residents of Phoebe's own adult day memory support center, Tranquility Place.



*Cheers and making friends at Meadow Glen.*





**Left to right: Ruth Gerhart, Barbara Shattuck, Ursula Pohl, Mary Anne Kimberling, Gloria Tatro, and Lois Rutt gather every week to crochet prayer shawls.**

Ursula Pohl has a personal connection to one of the organizations that benefits from their work. The crochet group donates prayer shawls to Penn State Health St. Joseph Cancer Center in Reading, Pennsylvania, where her daughter—who is a cancer survivor—is an employee. “My daughter always makes a point to be there when we visit to drop off the donated prayer shawls,” she says.

Ursula is a German native who moved to Phoebe Berks two years ago. “When I first moved here I didn’t know anyone,” she explains. “I felt like a fish out of water. I have moved nineteen times in my life and I was worried it would be difficult adjusting to moving again.” Things changed quickly when she settled in. “When I met Ruth and started to crochet with her, my worries about moving went away. When I chose Phoebe and moved in, I knew I had found my home here.”

Ann Grobowski and Barbara Shattuck are two of the community’s newer residents, and the crochet group’s newest members. The women say it’s not all business when they get together to crochet. They discuss happenings around the community, share wedding stories, sob stories, and stubborn husband problems.

Ann moved to Phoebe Berks Village six months ago and says, “This is our therapy.” Barbara, who has called Phoebe Berks home for just five months, spent years traveling around the country with her husband in their motor home. “We decided to park at Phoebe Berks and we’re really enjoying it here!” she says.

Gloria Tatro and Lois Rutt both knitted for many years but had stopped for a while prior to moving to Phoebe Berks. After moving to Phoebe Berks and learning there was a group of women who crocheted together, they picked the hobby back up again. Both women raved about how easy it is to make new friends at Phoebe Berks.

“It is a great place to live,” says Gloria. “If you’re not content with the number of activities offered, you are missing something and need to reach out to people. We make a point to introduce ourselves to new residents moving in.”

“If you don’t get out to do things you won’t meet people,” Lois insists. “We want more people who are new to Phoebe to join our group.” A former nurse, Lois also spoke to the kindness of the staff and residents alike: “I can’t get over how friendly everyone is here. The feeling radiates.”

The crochet group offers comfort to others in their craft, but they also provide each other with support. When Ursula needed surgery a few months ago, she knew that Phoebe—which provides short term rehabilitation just around the corner from her apartment—was the best place for her to recover. “My friends were constantly checking in on me, even when I didn’t want them to!” she laughs. Ruth, too, received support when her husband received rehabilitation at Phoebe Berks after surgery. His proximity made it convenient for her to simply walk over from her apartment and visit him any time she wanted to. “After the level of care my husband experienced here,

I would never go anywhere else for rehab,” says Ruth. “Phoebe is top-notch.”

Watching and listening to the women interact with one another, it’s no surprise that their group continues to expand. They spend just as much time laughing as they do crocheting, alternating between glancing down to check on their hook and thread placement and pausing to say hello to someone outside of their group who walks into the activity room to check their mail or play a game of pool. “I can’t wait for Tuesdays and Thursdays to get together with this group,” says Ursula. “It’s good for my mental health.”



*Lois Rutt and Ruth Gerhart confer over some stitching.*





*Happy hour at Meadow Glen.*



## PHOEBE RICHLAND

When a new resident asked Jessica Jackson, Community Life Coordinator at Meadow Glen, if she could have a glass of wine, Jessica took the question and ran with it. She instituted an official happy hour for personal care residents at Phoebe Richland. “We started out hosting the happy hour every other Friday, but decided to increase the frequency to every Friday due to its popularity,” she says.

Resident attendees are given a choice of white, red, and blush wines along with nonalcoholic sparkling cider. Community life staff members bake appetizers to pair with the wine. Happy hour at Meadow Glen typically attracts around 15 residents, and community life staff always makes an effort to invite new residents to attend and get to know their new neighbors. During one happy hour in March, a new resident who had just moved in three days prior joined a table of women and introduced himself. When asked how he was settling in, he responded, “Look at me, I’m the only man at this table with four other women! I’m doing pretty well.”

Many of the residents who attend happy hours live on opposite ends of the building or on different floors, so the events are a way for them to cross paths with

some new faces and spend time together. “This is a great opportunity for new residents to jump right in and participate in a social event to meet their new neighbors,” says Jessica.

At one table, a handful of residents sat together, enjoying their drink of choice and passing around a photo album Chester Westgate had brought with him. Chester served in the Battle of the Bulge during World War II, and told stories of his time in Germany, which sparked up a conversation among the group about other places they had traveled. Marjarie Beck had visited both France and Germany, and spent time in Central America. Helen Tice had gone to Switzerland with her father. After sharing their travel experiences, Helen took a sip of her blush wine and said, “I haven’t tasted a wine that I didn’t like.”

Activities and resident groups across the Phoebe communities, whether they are organized by staff or occur naturally when residents find common ground, all share a mutual purpose—they are centered on enhancing life for residents. Our residents are the motivation behind every idea and action at Phoebe. 🍷

**Visit [Phoebe.org](https://www.phoebe.org) to learn more about the opportunities in our communities.**

# THE SOLDIER WITH A GREEN THUMB

Warren Birch, 97, fills his suite at Meadow Glen with a small garden, plants of all shapes and sizes taking over, covering the wall by his window. Photographs of family and friends are scattered on walls and small tables, and tucked away on shelves and under furniture are boxes and plastic bins containing photo albums—each filled to the brim with his stories, including those of his time serving in World War II.

Warren has called the personal care community at Phoebe Richland his home since 2017. After searching for months to find the right place for him and his wife, Alice, Warren's family discovered Phoebe. Before his wife passed away in 2017, Warren was able to visit her in the memory support neighborhood within the personal care building, and today he continues to stay active, socializing with other residents and staff.

Warren had an important job during one of the most pivotal battles of the end of WWII, the Battle of the Bulge. During the battle, Warren was involved in the set-up and maintenance of the telephone lines which connected directly to headquarters. It was his team's responsibility to fix the lines when they were broken in order to keep in contact with headquarters. This job proved to be dangerous, especially when active battle was ensuing near the lines. However, he and his team successfully kept the lines working, risking their lives to make sure communication stayed open.

While stationed at the Battle of the Bulge, Warren and a few of his fellow soldiers were also tasked with checking all incoming soldiers and their vehicles. One night on duty, Warren saw a suspicious looking truck approaching.

During this point in the war, Germany was desperate to get the upper hand on Allied forces. One of their tactics was to send in German soldiers disguised as Americans to gain access to enemy bases, so when the truck started pulling up, Warren knew to look out for this ruse. Though convincing from afar to an untrained eye, Warren and his team noticed that the truck looked strange and that the person in the vehicle was not an American soldier, but a German in disguise.

Warren yelled, "Stop!" to the soldier driving the disguised vehicle, but when the soldier did not stop, Warren went into immediate action. He held up his weapon, pointing it towards the German soldier, and told him again to stop his vehicle. When the soldier sped up instead, Warren pulled the trigger. "Our job was to stop them—whatever it took," Warren explained—and that's exactly what he decided to do. By taking action, and making a difficult call, he successfully stopped the enemy soldier, protecting his fellow troops.

This was not the only dangerous encounter of his two years in the military. While arriving at a new location in Belgium, Warren had to conduct reconnaissance of the area, which included searching for land mines. He was checking out the area when he heard a loud explosion.



*Belgium, February 6, 1945. The communication truck is destroyed by a land mine.*



*Warren Birch (far right) poses with fellow soldiers in 1943 at Camp Crowder in Missouri.*





*Above: Warren Birch in uniform in September, 1943. This photo was taken shortly after he enlisted.*

*Warren at home at Meadow Glen in 2019.*

Two soldiers conducting recon of an area only a few hundred feet from Warren had hit a landmine. The force of the impact launched the two soldiers through the canvas roof of their vehicle, which flew into the air and landed on top of them. Warren and the other American soldiers who heard the blast ran over to the truck. The men in the vehicle were trapped under the ruined vehicle blaring the horn for help. They were both pulled from the wreckage, their backs broken, but still alive.

Warren recalls the aftermath and being horrified by what he saw. The truck was destroyed. The blast from the mine not only blew the canvas roof from the vehicle but twisted the metal of the truck, giving it a jagged and gnarled appearance, with the wheels being the only thing left indicating it had once been a large, sturdy vehicle.

After two years of service Warren was discharged in December of 1945, almost a year after the Battle of the Bulge. When he returned home he began dating his future

wife, Alice. Alice was a neighbor of Warren's sister, Emily, and their mother asked Alice to send him letters while he was away at war. They became very close and were married not long after they started dating.

Soon after returning home he also began working at a factory that manufactured tennis rackets. One day he decided it wasn't what he wanted to do, and he walked out of the factory never to look back. He decided to go to school, and pursued a two-year horticulture degree at the University of Massachusetts, becoming passionate about growing and maintaining plants. He led a career in horticulture, becoming a grower and later assistant manager of Ralston's Florist Greenhouse, where he spent the rest of his career growing beautiful and exotic plants.

Today, Warren enjoys spending time with his large family, reading, gardening, and of course, sharing his incredible stories with anyone and everyone who wants to listen. 🌿



*A Night at the Oscars at Miller Personal Care at 19th and Chew, Phoebe Allentown: residents received "Academy Awards" in a resident-donor appreciation event in February. Karina Kane, Senior Client Manager for Highmark, with Judith Mayer.*

# High Marks for HIGHMARK

Corporate sponsorships for Phoebe's annual Benefit and Golf Tournament fundraising events provide critical support for our residents and programs each year. Phoebe is blessed to work with many vendors and corporate partners who value our mission, support us at the leadership level, and become members of the Century Circle by giving \$1,000 or more in a fiscal year. One such corporate partner is Highmark Blue Shield. Since 2004, Highmark has provided Phoebe with more than \$60,000 in support of charitable care and educational opportunities for health care workers and caregivers.

But Highmark goes even further. Key members of the Highmark staff serve on our event committees for the Benefit and the Golf Tournament. Phoebe is also blessed to work with company leaders at Highmark who volunteer to help plan and implement our yearly fundraising events.

Jane Brooks, Regional Manager of Community Affairs and Program Officer for the Highmark Foundation, has served on the Phoebe Golf Tournament Committee for nearly five years. Karina Kane, Senior Client Manager, has served on the Benefit Committee for three years.



Both women attend monthly committee meetings and lend their expertise to planning and implementing Phoebe's events.

"Phoebe embodies the Golden Rule," says Karina. "You can see Phoebe's Faith in Action values in the way residents are loved, cared for, and appreciated."

"Highmark is committed to being a good community partner and supporting organizations like Phoebe that serve those in need," she continues. "Plus, we enjoy working with Phoebe staff members and administrators. It's a good group of people who are devoted to the mission."

Each year in August, the Phoebe Golf Tournament raises approximately \$100,000 for charity care, providing funds for our seniors who have exhausted their resources. The event is held at Saucon Valley Country Club and draws 250 golfers from the Lehigh Valley and beyond.

Phoebe's annual Benefit, held each spring, raises between \$40,000 and \$50,000 for educational opportunities for health care workers and caregivers who support older adults.

Highmark sponsors both events as a corporate member of the Phoebe Century Circle. Donors like Highmark are the bedrock of Phoebe Ministries and its mission and ministry. Phoebe is most fortunate to be the beneficiary of their generosity and kindness.

"Phoebe holds a special place in my heart," says Karina. "It represents the soul, character, values, and love of family, community, and stewardship. It is an honor to be a part of the fabric in a small but sincere way." 🌿

**Learn more about the Century Circle and how you can support Phoebe as a corporate or private sponsor. Visit [Phoebe.org/Giving](https://Phoebe.org/Giving) or call 610-794-5132.**



*Jane Brooks, Regional Manager of Community Affairs and Program Officer, with Verna Meckes.*

# Sanity & Grace

Legendary folk singer, artist, and author Judy Collins graced the Phoebe Institute on Aging (PIA) spring conference with a candid and touching discussion of her personal challenges with loss, addiction, depression, and healing. “Understanding Mental Health and Older Adults” focused on the types, causes, and detection of mental illness in seniors, and Collins as the keynote speaker sought to spread light and inspiration on a topic sometimes kept in the shadows.

According to the World Health Organization (WHO), mental health problems are under-identified by health care professionals and older adults themselves, and the stigma surrounding these conditions makes people reluctant to seek help. As adults age, they face a variety of challenges from dementia to chronic physical pain. There are also challenges associated with loss: loss of a spouse or loved one, loss of one’s freedom, and loss of one’s physical or cognitive abilities.

Collins drew on her own experiences of losing her son to suicide, her addiction to alcohol, her struggle with depression, and her ultimate spiritual renewal. She used her personal story to comfort survivors and to educate those who work and care for older adults so they may

better deal with these challenges.

The PIA conference also included sessions presented by geriatric professionals specializing in topics such as addiction, cognitive impairment, trauma, depression, suicide, and the moral injuries faced by many veterans.

Session speakers included Reps. Steve Samuelson and Justin

Simmons, who serve on the Aging and Older Adult Services Committee for Pennsylvania;

Psychologist Renee Cantwell, Ed.D., from Easton Neuropsychology and Behavioral Services LLC; Ming Wang, M.D., and Devon Dautrich, Ph.D., from Caron Treatment Centers; Thomas Applebach, M.P.A., Director of the Lehigh County Office of Veterans Affairs; and Cindy Richart, Vice President of Pharmacy Operations with Shane Lawrence, Director of Clinical Pharmacy Services, from Phoebe Pharmacy.

Phoebe launched the Phoebe Institute on Aging in 2001. The PIA is a forward-focused program which provides forums for discussion and learning, including educational programs, cooperative ventures, and outreach activities designed to promote improved quality of life and care for the aging and their families.

The PIA was created in recognition of more than a century of caring for older adults at Phoebe. Guided by a community advisory board and committees, the PIA works diligently to ensure that the greater community has opportunities for engagement and resources available to best serve the aging and their families.

Conferences held by the PIA attract key figures in the disciplines and communities associated with aging services, including CEOs, legislators, and award-winning scholars.

The fall conference, “West Greets East: Alternative Approaches to Aging,” will be held on October 17, 2019.

To view photos from the spring conference and learn more about the PIA and upcoming programs, visit [Phoebe.org/PIAConference](http://Phoebe.org/PIAConference). 🌿

**CALL FOR PROPOSALS:** Bring your voice to the table. The Phoebe Institute on Aging is accepting proposals for keynote and breakout sessions at the fall conference in October 2019. Please visit [Phoebe.org/PIAConference](http://Phoebe.org/PIAConference) for criteria and information on how to submit.







## PERSON-CENTERED TECHNOLOGY

“It gives me peace of mind knowing that residents will get medications as soon as possible,” says Michelle Julian, Director of Nursing for Cedarbrook Senior Care and Rehabilitation Center in Allentown, Pennsylvania. Cedarbrook is one of the many health care organizations in eastern Pennsylvania receiving state-of-the-art pharmacy solutions from Phoebe Pharmacy. The MedFlex 1000 series pharmaceutical dispensing cabinet provides real-time control of supplies and medications to support quick turnover for important emergency medications that could otherwise take valuable time to administer.

“I’m confident that whatever I need, including IV fluids, will be available and approved quickly by the doctor,” says registered nurse Jamie Langer, who frequently works with the dispensing machine.

The MedFlex system is designed for first doses and emergencies. All resident electronic Medication Administration Records (eMAR) interface directly with CUBEX and pharmacy software allowing quick and seamless action between nurses, doctors, pharmacists, and residents in need. Strategically placed in three different locations on the Cedarbrook campus, the MedFlex cabinets are custom designed for the specific needs of the facility, and distributed by Phoebe Pharmacy partner CUBEX, which recently outfitted Phoebe’s newest pharmacy in Montgomery County with MedBank Mini and Tower devices. Similar interfacing technology allows these machines to improve medication security and customer service delivery at the pharmacy site.

“Phoebe Pharmacy was one of the early adopters in the long term care pharmacy industry to upgrade their technology with CUBEX products providing the best possible care to the residents they serve,” said Michael Boivin, President of CUBEX MedBank Medical

Solutions. This feature improves workflow efficiency for nursing while increasing medication safety. “CUBEX delivers the highest accountability for medication management and makes medication dispensing safer for residents we serve,” says Cindy Richart, Vice President of Pharmacy Operations for Phoebe Pharmacy.

Heather Williams, a nurse liaison for Phoebe Pharmacy, says, “With this machine you have complete, up-to-date tracking information.” Heather works closely with the Cedarbrook nursing staff to make sure all their medication carts—including the MedFlex dispensing machine—are stocked daily and continuously updated. All software applications are serviced by CUBEX technicians and the Phoebe Pharmacy information technology project manager. “It’s easy for people who are not technologically savvy,” says Jamie. “The instructions are step-by-step.”

“We have a pharmacist available 24 hours a day,” says Heather. Antibiotics and morphine sulfate (a medication used for pain management and comfort care), are the two most frequently dispensed medications from the machines. When a doctor orders an antibiotic, it’s enormously helpful for the nurse to have the first dose on hand immediately. The MedFlex machines make that possible. For residents experiencing pain during end of life, knowing that the appropriate medication relief is only a step away is stress relieving for them, their families, and their caregiving staff. Having a seamless pharmaceutical process enables nurses to spend more time face-to-face with residents keeping their person-centered quality of life at the forefront of care. 🌿

**Learn more about how Phoebe Pharmacy serves seniors by visiting [PhoebePharmacy.org](https://PhoebePharmacy.org).**



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# HELP US REACH GREATER HEIGHTS!

Our fiscal year is drawing to a close on June 30. Renew your support or become a new donor, and help our mission reach greater heights than ever before. Your gift can mean a life-changing opportunity for an older adult in our communities.

**Visit [Phoebe.org/Giving](https://phoebe.org/Giving)  
or call 610-794-5132 to give today.**