

Phoebe Messenger

Volume 103 | Issue 1 Spring/Summer 2022

PHOEBE PACKS A PUNCH AGAINST PARKINSON'S

EXCLUSIVE:
Groundbreaking at
Chestnut Ridge



Table of Contents

Featured in this Issue

THE ART OF LIVING

- 4 Phoebe Packs a Punch
Against Parkinson's

PHOEBE AT WORK

- 8 Phoebe's Global Humanitarian
10 Innovation and Research
15 New Leadership at Phoebe
22 A Change in Careers
26 Volunteering

GIVING BACK

- 16 Planned Giving
17 In Memoriam

CHESTNUT RIDGE AT RODALE

- 18 A New Community Grows:
Chestnut Ridge at Rodale is Underway

PATHSTONES BY PHOEBE

- 24 Exciting New Plan Options
for Proactive Seniors

PHOEBE PHARMACY

- 25 On the Move in
Lancaster County

On the cover: Counter-clockwise from back left: Rock Steady Boxing resident boxers Diane Brubaker, Sandra Swoyer, Norma Zimmerman, Gladys Staab, and Sandra Leidich.

PHOEBE IS A PROUD MEMBER OF



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 communities, affordable housing, 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.

The official registration and financial information of Phoebe-Devitt Homes may be obtained from the Pennsylvania Department of State by calling toll free within Pennsylvania at 1-800-732-0999. Registration does not imply endorsement.

Copyright 2022 by Phoebe Ministries. Photographs and artwork copyright by their respective creators or Phoebe Ministries. All rights reserved. No portion of this publication may be used or republished in any form without permission.

To unsubscribe from The Phoebe Messenger, please contact the Department of Marketing and Community Relations at 610-794-5132 or marketing@phoebe.org.

Mission Statement:

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

President & CEO:

Scott R. Stevenson

Phoebe Ministries

Governing Board Chair:

Rev. Dr. Hilary J. Barrett

Editors:

Brynn Buskirk

Todd Greb

Kimberly Metz

Contributors:

Brynn Buskirk

Rachel Cavotta

Lynann Everett

Todd Greb

Lisa Hoffman

Debbie Kunkle

Kimberly Metz

Stacey Prohaska

Danielle Sanchez

Donna Schudel

JOIN US!

Phoebe's Annual Golf Tournament

*Supports Charity Care for
Residents in Need*

Monday, August 8, 2022

Saucon Valley Country Club

[Phoebe.org/golf](https://phoebe.org/golf)

PIA Generations Un-Gala

*Supports Educational
Opportunities through the
Phoebe Institute on Aging*

Thursday, September 22, 2022

ArtsQuest

[Phoebe.org/un-gala](https://phoebe.org/un-gala)

*"He redeems my soul in safety,
from the battle that I wage..."*

— Psalm 55:18 ESV

A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT



Dear friends,

A new Phoebe community emerges in Emmaus. New tools and research strengthen Phoebe's services to support residents' physical, mental, and spiritual health. Phoebe's Executive Team has a new member and a new role for a seasoned member. New volunteers are welcomed into our communities. And a group of Berks residents is fighting Parkinson's disease in a new program (and channeling the spirit of Rocky Balboa).

These are the topics you will read about in this *Messenger*, and they are also clear signs of Phoebe's rebound from the challenges of the last two years. I am grateful for the hard work and dedication of our leaders and staff, whose commitment to our ministry and diligent efforts help keep Phoebe strong.

Resiliency is defined as a means to "bounce back" from adversity and grow. You need only visit one of Phoebe's communities to meet the greatest examples of resilience there are: the seniors we serve. Whether battling Parkinson's or facing the challenges of "normal" aging, they remind us daily that we rise better when we rise together, using God's many blessings to carry out our mission—no matter what difficulties we may face.

I hope these stories will inspire you as much as they inspire me. On behalf of our ministry, thank you for your support of Phoebe's mission. Best wishes for a wonderful summer!

Peace,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Scott R. Stevenson".

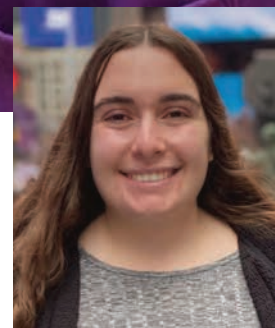
Scott R. Stevenson
President & CEO

Gerald Breining, resident and Rock Steady Boxing (RSB) volunteer coach, with Gladys Staab, RSB boxer.

PHOEBE PACKS A PUNCH AGAINST PARKINSON'S

BY DANIELLE SANCHEZ

Sanchez is a recent graduate of Lafayette College and a lifelong martial artist. As part of Lafayette's Explore and Connect Externship program, she authored this story for the Messenger after spending a week learning about Phoebe and getting to know our residents.



Residents of Phoebe Berks Village are packing a punch against Parkinson's, literally. Donning regulation gloves and letting out battle cries, they follow their enthusiastic instructor, Michelle Franks, as she takes them through an intense warm-up, workout, and closing with positive affirmations. For some, this is their third workout this week. This passion is the beauty of Rock Steady Boxing (RSB).

Rock Steady Boxing is the first of its kind in the United States. A "non-contact, boxing-based fitness curriculum" designed specifically to help participants manage the symptoms of Parkinson's disease. A way to fight back.

RSB uses scientific studies to design a program that "attacks Parkinson's at its vulnerable neurologic points," slowing disease progression and improving quality of life. Since there is no cure for Parkinson's, mitigation techniques, such as specialized exercise programs, are vital to maintaining strength, dexterity, and control over one's body.

As a lifelong martial artist (I say as I'm only 22 years old), I am no stranger to the incredible benefits a martial arts lifestyle can have on a person. I have taught children and adults, and I have invaluable experiences from childhood through my teenage years and into adulthood. However, I never got to see firsthand how martial arts has benefited older adults. Learning about the incredible Rock Steady Boxing curriculum warmed my heart, further fueled my passion for martial arts, and showed me even more positive impacts of the practice.

Phoebe Berks Village is the first Phoebe campus to implement the Rock Steady Boxing program after completing a rigorous certification process to gain a yearly license. The topic came up in conversation with Jean Gerhard, the Director of Wellness at Phoebe Berks Village, when a resident with Parkinson's mentioned the program. Franks also recalls a group of residents visiting a place that offered RSB and sharing their rave reviews with her. Unfortunately, the COVID-19 pandemic threw a wrench in the initial plans, putting the project on hold time and time again. Still, the love and desire for Rock Steady Boxing remained strong through it all. RSB was finally established at Phoebe Berks Village in August, 2021. Gerhard says it best when she claims "it was meant to be."

This incredible program includes a physical therapy assessment and a flexible in-class curriculum so that residents at all stages of the disease have the opportunity to benefit from exercises catered to what they need.

Residents with Parkinson's have access to four 90-minute classes a week where they can get their fill of stress-busting, Parkinson's butt-kicking action, channeling their inner boxer training for the biggest fight of their life. In just one class, residents can sit, stand, and walk while landing powerful hits to punching bags, work through balance and strength-training circuits, and learn one-on-one with coaches.

Stretching and positive affirmations bookend the rather intense workout, uniting mind, body, and soul. Rock Steady Boxing does more than just improve participants' physical health through this curriculum. It also boosts mental and emotional health, showing the world that they are forces to be reckoned with. Franks calls the curriculum a "big basket of different techniques," all designed to help combat Parkinson's in unique ways.

These influential residents are doing more than fighting the disease; they also fight against the stigma surrounding older adults and older adults living in senior living communities. As Phoebe Berks Village resident and RSB volunteer coach George Biechler states, "there are no victims among the RSB participants, and no pity parties...make no mistake; the RSB boxing maneuvers are legitimate." And the instructors are too.

To become a licensed Rock Steady Boxing instructor, Franks underwent over 20 hours of online training, including a written and practical exam. She doesn't regret a single minute of it. "It's the inspiration. I could have a million things going on in my mind, and I will not let anything distract me from that class. We are a family. We fight together," says Franks.

Rock Steady Boxing is just one way Phoebe Berks Village provides the healthiest lifestyle possible for all residents, showing that they don't just live here—they thrive—and the residents participating in RSB are definitely noticing the benefits.



Jean Gerhard, Director of Wellness; Michelle Franks, Wellness Coordinator and RSB Instructor; Lisa Hollinger, Fitness Instructor and RSB Instructor.

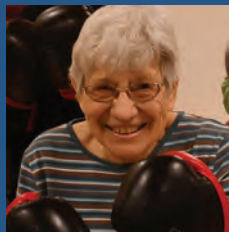
"When I'm walking back [after RSB], I am walking better. I feel more coordinated," says ten-year resident Sandy Leidich. She saw other residents going to RSB before her Parkinson's diagnosis. She knew, after being diagnosed, that going to Rock Steady Boxing would be "the best deterrent to slow the progression." Leidich also plays in a piano quartet, helps residents with basic technology questions, and loves being social while pushing forward with her incredibly positive attitude. "My glass is always half full," she says enthusiastically.

There are plans to extend Rock Steady Boxing to other Phoebe campuses and even extend participation to the public. The hope is to reach as many people with Parkinson's as possible, providing them with all the tools needed to fight back against the disease and find their inner strength. It's clear from all the warriors I have spoken with—they're strong, fierce, and ready for the fight. 🥊

NORMA ZIMMERMAN:

From Half-Marathoner to Rock Steady Boxer

Phoebe Berks Village resident Norma Zimmerman has traded her running shoes for boxing gloves. An avid sewer of beautiful quilts, Zimmerman is also a dedicated member of Rock Steady Boxing and has experienced the physical and mental impacts of the program firsthand.



At first, she was uncertain, wondering how the curriculum would benefit her, but her skepticism quickly vanished. "After a couple of months, I was so impressed at what I was able to do at that point then...shuffling to the left and right," Zimmerman said, the excitement in her voice bringing a smile to my face.

The benefits go beyond just the physical. "There is a bond together with the eight of us," Zimmerman stated, regarding her fellow Rock Steady Boxers, "they felt more accepted and in tune with what's going on." The cycle of encouragement is truly inspiring.

And this half-marathon runner has always had martial arts in her heart.

"I wanted to do the kickboxing or the karate, but I never followed through with it...maybe that's why I enjoy it as much as I do," she said.

We bonded over our love for the sport and ended our call with promises that I would come to teach her some kickboxing. A promise I can't wait to keep.

DIANE BRUBAKER:

A Lifelong Learner Fights Back

As a former early childhood professor and preschool teacher, Diane Brubaker is well versed in the critical developmental stages of children. Her passionate drive to understand behaviors and dissect brain functions comes in handy as she tries to figure out how Parkinson's affects her own day-to-day life, and how programs like Rock Steady Boxing help her fight back.



Brubaker, a cottage dweller at Phoebe Berks Village, naturally uses her academic and scientific skills to examine her thinking, movement, and behavior. "I notice subtle physical changes and even differences in the way my brain processes," says Brubaker, "but I keep going. I don't let Parkinson's define me."

Diagnosed four years ago, Brubaker began her quest to battle Parkinson's by staying as physically active and mentally informed as possible. She and some Phoebe friends were part of the force that brought RSB to Phoebe's attention. "I read about Rock Steady and found a class close by, but it was really expensive," says Brubaker, "that's when we approached the Phoebe team."

Today, Brubaker attends as many classes as possible. "From the first class, I noticed how much better I slept," she says, reflecting on her early experience and the notable influence of the session.

"Rock Steady also helps with my speech," she explains as she describes how the gym coaches encourage group "shout-outs" to combat the onset of common voice issues associated with Parkinson's.

Brubaker describes a "team spirit and enthusiasm that helps keep me going." She and her boxing buddies are clearly very tight. "We're not going down without a fight!" she says with a determined smile.

GEORGE BIECHLER:

Phoebe Berks Resident and RSB Volunteer Coach

George Biechler might not have Parkinson's, but that does not stop him from supporting his fellow Phoebe Berks Village residents as they fight back against the disease. Believing he has a "personal score to settle with Parkinson's" after watching his wife, Nancy, battle the disease, Biechler assists residents during Rock Steady Boxing classes. He has earned the honorary title of "Coach."

"I am just amazed at their resiliency," Biechler said, emphasizing the dedication the participants have to this program while also demonstrating his commitment to them. He is responsible for ensuring the RSB participants keep their balance, helping them remember the punching combinations, and keeping them motivated even when they get tired.

Franks, he claims, is the real motivator behind it all. "At the end of each session, they form a circle around a participant, and Michelle leads them in a chant: 'You scream, I scream, we all



scream for dopamine!' She gets them yelling and celebrating no matter how tired they are." Gratitude and admiration fuel his words.

"Some of them [RSB participants] were reluctant to socialize at the beginning, and they have become more outgoing and open to sharing their emotions," Biechler claims, and the same goes for him. I first learned about Biechler and his experiences through a beautiful and passionate article he wrote about his life and his Rock Steady Boxing journey. Biechler had little room for emotion in his writing projects as a financial and technical writer. Still, writing soon became an outlet for him. Other than going "to the gym six-seven days a week," Biechler found writing as a way to express his emotions. Paired with his RSB coaching, it has helped him tremendously.

PHOEBE INSTITUTE ON AGING
AND TRUIST PRESENT:

2022 GENERATIONS

UN-GALA

September 22, 2022 | 5:30 p.m.

ArtsQuest, Bethlehem, PA

PHOEBE'S *Global Humanitarian*

Phoebe's mission is specific—a community of faith, called by God, to enrich the lives of our seniors, their families, and the communities we serve—but it's also a little fluid. The mission sets no boundaries for what defines a community. Neither does Reverend Gomes Pedro, a man whose global humanitarian work provides a wealth of experience and insights that help him serve Phoebe's seniors every day.



Reverend Gomes Pedro, Phoebe Chaplain, delivers blankets and other items to the people of Angola.

Gomes Pedro works in the Pastoral Care Department at Phoebe and is chaplain at the Wyncote and Richland campuses, but his calling goes far beyond just those two geographical locations.

According to Rev. Dr. Scott Brooks-Cope, Regional Director of Pastoral Care Services and Education at Phoebe, Pedro's personal account is incredible. "Gomes' history and struggle, ultimately finding freedom here in the United States, is an incredible story of resilience. And yet, he has used his status as a U.S. citizen to continue to care for and love the people of his home country," says Brooks-Cope.

Pedro is originally from Angola, a nation whose varied terrain encompasses tropical Atlantic beaches and a mazelike system of rivers in the sub-Saharan region of Africa. Despite extensive oil and gas resources, diamonds, hydroelectric potential, and rich agricultural land, Angola remains poor and struggles to survive as a third of the population relies on subsistence agriculture.

The challenge is compounded by the fact that there is only one home for aging citizens in Luanda, the capital of Angola. "Last year, I visited an elderly home called Beiral, which the government operates," recalls Pedro. "Most of the residents do not have family support, and they rely on the assistance of government and some community organizations, such as churches. Living conditions are deplorable; food, water, and clothes are scarce. Generally speaking, these friends live one day at a time by the grace of God."

Since 2011, Pedro has made the return trip to Angola at least once a year. And it is no quick trip. "Depending on the itinerary, it takes between 14 and 16 hours of travel. There are no direct flights into Luanda, so I have to connect with other flights in Europe, the Middle East, or Africa."

But the travel time is undoubtedly worth it, says Pedro. "The purpose of my trips is to visit my relatives and engage in humanitarian work with and among vulnerable groups in Angolan society, especially the elderly, children, and single parents. I visit hospitals, the elderly home, and schools in rural areas in Bengo and Luanda, distributing school and baby supplies, quilts, and hygiene kits acquired through donations by the Lutheran World Relief."

It's easy for Pedro to represent the Phoebe mission—to enrich the lives of our seniors, their families, and the

communities we serve—while traveling so far from Richland and Wyncote.

Pedro's return visits to his homeland carry much value as he reflects on each trip. "I learned the importance of being present, to see and to listen to the people who are so grateful for my visit. I become more empathetic and compassionate by seeing and listening to their needs—both material and spiritual—prompting me to put my faith into action."

Pedro is also passionate about education for young people. Due to a lack of resources, he could not begin school until he was ten years old. In Angola, four out of ten school-age children have no access to education due to a lack of sufficient classrooms and teachers to cover the demand. "This is something I am striving to change," says Pedro.

His late start didn't stop him from becoming highly educated, however. As an example, Pedro speaks four languages fluently—Kikongo, his maternal language; Portuguese, the official language of Angola; Lingala, the dominant language of Democratic Republic of Congo, Republic of Congo, Gabon, and North of Angola; and English. He also speaks Spanish and French conversationally.

In addition to his global visits and humanitarian work, Pedro also finds time to preach, which is the main component of his career at Phoebe. He brings immense compassion and an easy and relaxed presence to his work. Brooks-Cope adds, "Gomes is a fantastic pastor and chaplain. He is greatly committed to justice and peace in the world, and he is a deeply spiritual person as well. If you haven't heard him preach, I highly recommend that you make an effort, as it will be worth it. Gomes preaches straight from his heart with tenderness and intensity, and he brings the good news of Jesus Christ in word and action."

Being a preacher is a calling, and it is abundantly evident that Gomes Pedro received and answered that call. He lives every day to serve, and as Brooks-Cope remarks, "people just want to be around him." We believe that the people wanting to be around Gomes can learn to be more like him and make this world a better place for everyone. ☞

To learn about ways to support Phoebe's mission, here and in the greater community, please call 610-794-5132 or visit Phoebe.org/giving.



Left to right: Creating Results staff members Jessica Ruhle, Sales Specialist and Project Manager; Katie Beaver, Account Director; Kimberly Hulett, President and Co-Owner.

LEADING THE WAY THROUGH INNOVATION AND RESEARCH: **Phoebe Asks “What if?”**

Phoebe has a long track record of embracing and integrating innovative ideas and services that support the highest quality of life possible for our residents and the most cutting-edge resources for our employees. Guided by an open-minded leadership team, Phoebe’s passionate vision to “lead the way with innovative services” inspires staff to strive for the highest good by asking the question, “What if...?”

To address this evolving question, Phoebe uses several forward-thinking idea pipelines. Our Institutional Review Board (IRB) is a formal committee established to review proposed research while protecting our residents’ rights, welfare, and privacy. “Bright Idea” forms also are available for any employee to share a new suggestion that could benefit our residents, families, or employees.

Over the last few years, Phoebe’s forward-thinking staff has asked “What if?” in some big ways.

“What if we partnered on research that tested the air quality in the Health Care Center?”

In 2016, LifeAire Systems, an Allentown-based company specializing in advanced air purification technology (AAPT), approached Phoebe’s IRB committee with a research proposal. They asked to install their technology on one of Phoebe Allentown’s Health Care Center neighborhoods to study air purification effects in a senior care setting. Phoebe Allentown would be the first long-term care community to install this cutting-edge, medical-grade air purification system.

LifeAire's proposal included installing their air purification system to study the air quality and the consequential remediation of airborne pathogens and volatile organic compounds (VOCs) at no cost to Phoebe. The IRB committee unanimously agreed to participate in the study, and the collaboration began.

Phoebe Allentown and the LifeAire team worked to determine where and when to install the custom-made, patented LifeAire technology in the historic Phoebe Allentown building. Additionally, Phoebe formally enlisted a third party to conduct a thorough, double-blind research study.

After extensive planning with Phoebe Allentown's Environmental Services team, led by Director Kelly Bock, a crane lifted the expansive AAPT unit onto the roof of the Health Care Center in August of 2019. Shortly after that, the 15-month study began.

The outcomes were overwhelmingly positive. The AAPT reduced the levels of infectious airborne and surface pathogens by 89.1% and 88.9%, respectively, and the levels of VOCs by 90.2%. The number of secondary

health effects like falls, which underlying infection-related issues can cause, decreased. Additionally, as a pilot, the economic impact was notable, and there was a reduction in staff call-outs due to decreased illness.

Phoebe was honored to be the first skilled nursing community to pilot this cutting-edge, health-changing technology.

"What if we challenged a faith tradition to serve our seniors better?"

As a dedicated chaplain working at Phoebe Berks, Emily Southerton witnessed "disrupted holistic end-of-life care" for many individuals during the COVID-19 pandemic. This was caused by the critical mitigation guidelines set by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) for residents living in group settings.

Creating and connecting senior adults to important rituals and sacraments is a vital part of Phoebe's ministry. "As pastors, we often have the honor of supporting seniors as they die," says Rev. Dr. Scott Brooks-Cope, Regional Director of Pastoral Care Services and



LifeAire Systems unit on the roof of the Phoebe Allentown Health Care Center.



Emily Southerton with Sigmund Sobiesiak, Phoebe Berks resident.



Emily Southerton, Chaplain, Phoebe Berks.

Education at Phoebe. “Formal and informal rituals often mark this profound experience,” says Brooks-Cope, “some of which have great spiritual significance and bring important comfort.”

A chaplain educated and trained in the Roman Catholic tradition, Southerton witnessed COVID-positive seniors who were unable to participate in commonly practiced death rituals, including the Anointing of the Sick, which, according to Roman Catholic canon law, can only be administered by a bishop or priest. As a result of CMS guidelines, outside community clergy could not always visit senior communities during the pandemic.

Always encouraged to ask “What if?” when approaching seniors’ quality of life, Southerton investigated this situation. She hoped to create a healthy debate among her Roman Catholic colleagues by writing an abstract challenging current practices and proposing new solutions.

In her paper “A Lonely Death: Dying While Living During COVID-19,” Southerton assesses the Roman

Catholic sacrament of Anointing of the Sick, examines the visitor policy for nursing homes and hospitals set in place by the CMS, and proposes some alternative suggestions, followed by an optimistic declaration of “hope for the future of ritual.” She submitted her thoughtful abstract, titled “I Have Called You by Name: Human Dignity in a Secular World,” to the 21st annual conference at the de Nicola Center for Ethics and Culture at the University of Notre Dame. She was honored with an invitation to present as part of the panel “It Was Then That You Comforted Me,” a group discussion that examined topics about grief and loss.

Phoebe is proud to support critical thinkers like Southerton. Through thoughtful and respectful analysis, she expressed her passionate advocacy for seniors. We are grateful that her peers recognize her as a forward-thinker, willing to ask, “What if?”

“What if we asked the senior community what they want in their future housing and care?”

In 2017, the Phoebe President’s Council—a diverse group of non-senior care regional leaders assembled by Scott Stevenson, President & CEO—revealed an important brand insight. They expressed that, as a whole, the greater community recognized Phoebe as a leader in skilled nursing care. However, they felt community members were not generally aware of Phoebe’s full array of senior care offerings.

This Council of regarded professionals, chosen for their community-wide expertise, helped Phoebe identify that strategic external communications were essential for Phoebe’s continued success. Market research would help uncover the authentic wants and needs of the seniors Phoebe aspires to serve.



Brandy Drago, Sales Advisor, Chestnut Ridge at Rodale, left, with Kimberly Hulett, President and Co-Owner, Creating Results.

Enter Creating Results, Inc., a marketing firm specialized in the 55+ senior living industry. After interviewing several senior-focused marketing firms, Phoebe chose Creating Results because of their high integrity and knowledge about seniors. “Creating Results’ market research was impressive,” says Brynn Buskirk, Vice President, Marketing and External Relations. “Working with them gave us a better understanding of what senior consumers look for in housing and what families care about most,” says Buskirk.

Market research led to the realization that, like it or not, Phoebe had a particular brand perception that evolved organically over 119 years. We were often referred to as “the Phoebe Home on the hill” in Allentown, evoking the idea of a nursing home setting. But the Phoebe Allentown campus, along with our three other continuing care retirement communities, also had thriving independent living and personal care communities that potential consumers didn’t fully recognize. Additionally, the community needed more information about Phoebe Pharmacy, a comprehensive pharmacy serving thousands of seniors, Pathstones by Phoebe, a forward-thinking continuing care at home program, and Chestnut Ridge at Rodale, a new exciting 60+ community in Emmaus.

With a small, four-person marketing department, Phoebe needed more support, guidance, and expertise. Significant research was required to capture how consumers perceived the Phoebe brand. According to Creating Results, “research is most powerful in the form of aided and unaided surveys of various audience segments.” They surveyed groups from the general public who had varying levels of familiarity with the Phoebe brand. They also asked current residents,

prospects, and their families about their wants and needs, which provided additional insights about how to offer the best quality of care for our existing customers.

This multilayered, research-focused approach helped Phoebe understand its strengths, showed how the outside community perceived the organization, and revealed how the “inside” community—our most valued brand ambassadors—Phoebe residents, families, and employees, perceived us.

Based on this market research, Phoebe and Creating Results developed new brand pillars and value statements. The marketing department partnered with Creating Results to roll out integrated marketing campaigns that featured strategic messaging. The brand refresh communicated Phoebe’s broad spectrum of senior services, which offers a multitude of lifestyle choices, not only skilled nursing care. The organization made significant progress in educating the wider community, resulting in stronger and more consistent results for Phoebe’s sales and admissions teams.

The success of the strategic marketing plans and our partnership with Creating Results was recently re-confirmed in 2021 with another market assessment, which showed significant gains in the greater communities’ perception of Phoebe’s different offerings.

Embracing new ideas and solutions helps Phoebe stay financially sound and continuously helps us evolve to provide the highest quality of care for senior adults in the 21st century. We regularly revisit that question—“What if?”—and the results abound within Phoebe’s tradition of 119 years of innovation and excellence in senior care. 🌱

New Leadership at Phoebe

Phoebe kicked off 2022 with the announcement of two key leadership promotions.

Robert Richards, CPA, pictured left, was appointed Chief Operating Officer (COO), and Thomas Baer, CPA, was appointed Senior Vice President of Finance and Chief Financial Officer (CFO). Both appointments followed the retirement of COO Lisa Fichera, a 43-year veteran employee.


As the COO, Richards is responsible for managing Health Care Services, Pharmacy Services Operations, Marketing, Human Resources Administration, and Retirement Housing Operations. Richards also serves as the staff liaison to Phoebe's Governing Board and board committees and is a member of the subscriber committee for the Phoebe Reciprocal Risk Retention Group.

Richards, hired by Phoebe in 2015 as the Senior Vice President of Finance, was promoted to Chief Financial Officer in 2017. Prior to joining Phoebe, Richards served as Vice President of Finance/CFO of Good Samaritan Health System in Lebanon, Pennsylvania. Before that, he was the Vice President of Finance at Montgomery Hospital in Norristown, Pennsylvania.

Richards, who lives in Lebanon with his wife, Anne, graduated from Thomas Jefferson University (formerly known as Philadelphia University) with a Bachelor of Science in Accounting.

Tom Baer now serves as the Senior Vice President of Finance and CFO and establishes and guides Phoebe's financial policies and direction. In this role, he oversees the Billing and Revenue Cycle department and is responsible for directing the Finance, Contract Services, and Information Technology departments. Additionally, he works closely with the Audit, Finance, and Investment Committee, a sub-committee of the organization's Governing Board, on strategic initiatives under consideration.

Phoebe hired Baer in 2007 as the Corporate Controller and promoted him to Executive Director of Finance in 2014. Before working at Phoebe, Baer was a public accountant for Campbell, Rappold, and Yurasits LLP.

Baer, who lives in Whitehall with his wife, Kelly, and their son, graduated from Shippensburg University with a Bachelor of Science in Accounting. 



Trust in Phoebe

Phoebe's Governing Board Members Provide a Legacy of Care

EMMETT M. LIEN

Emmett Lien's confidence in Phoebe was built by watching the organization operate both from the outside, as a family member of residents and rehab patients, and from the inside, as a member of the Governing Board. "On every front, I was so favorably impressed with the level of service and Phoebe's heart for charitable work," he says.

In appreciation for the care and service Phoebe provides to the community, Emmett and his wife, Carol, have included Phoebe Ministries in their charitable plans. Like many Phoebe donors, the Liens choose to make distributions through an IRA. They receive charitable deductions at full, fair market value while reducing capital gains impact. "It's a way to support Phoebe, save on taxes, and make a gift that costs you less than the benefit it delivers," says Emmett.

"Our generation is next," he quips of himself and his wife, Carol. "We support a lot of senior care organizations because we'll be next."



JOHN T. LAWTON

As Governing Board Treasurer and former member of the Strategic Planning Committee, John Lawton recognizes that as people move from their homes into a living community, the transition is important. He appreciates that Phoebe handles each situation with care and attention. "The service stands out. They do a fantastic job of caring for and serving older individuals, more so than many other places," he says.

John feels strongly about the quality of care Phoebe offers to the community, and trusts in the process and people at Phoebe to continue to carry out its 119-year mission. "Think about what's important to you and lead with your heart," he advises. "Then find the organization that matches, and find the timing and gift amount that best make sense for you."



Phoebe offers creative options to maximize contributions that can provide an immediate tax deduction, provide income to the donor and a loved one, and ensure long-term financial support to Phoebe's mission. A non-cash donation can allow donors to give more than they could with cash.

For more information and to find the gift that best meets your charitable, family, and financial goals, please visit myphoebelegacy.org.

My Memories of Gladys Lerch

Shared by Debbie Kunkle, Occupational Health Administrative Assistant

Whenever Gladys Lerch and I parted, we would say, "I'm so sad our paths have to bifurcate."

In a nutshell, this phrase describes Gladys. She was a longtime resident volunteer and a vocabulary sponge with impeccable grammar, stellar editing skills, and a quick, dry wit that, for 19 years, always made me chuckle.

The "bifurcate goodbye" grew out of a story I told her after encountering a bicyclist who used the word while asking for directions. I had no idea what it meant, so I asked our "resident" word expert Gladys the next time I saw her. "It means to divide into two branches or to part," she told me. From there, it became our thing.

I first met Gladys in 2003 when I started working in the Occupational Health and Human Resources department at Phoebe. I loved her from the beginning. Already a seasoned volunteer, she began helping out in 2000 after she moved into the Terrace, Phoebe Allentown's independent living community. Her mother was a resident of the Health Care Center, and Gladys wanted to be close to her. She cared for her parents for many years. She never married or had children, but instead saw Phoebe as her family.

After teaching business for 34 years at Liberty High School in Bethlehem, her alma mater, it was no secret that her grammar and proofreading skills were flawless. She made an ideal volunteer for both Human Resources and Occupational Health.

Gladys came to our offices every Tuesday and Thursday morning and helped with typing, employee mailings, filing, and proofreading. The team ran all writing by her with confidence. Completed exactly as instructed and with great efficiency, we all knew every project would be perfect. We all thought that she was the best proofreader, both east and west of the Mississippi!

She stopped walking over to our office in 2015 after experiencing some health issues, so I started to deliver our newsletter to her apartment to proofread. It was a delight to see her at home, always eager and dressed beautifully, awaiting my visit in her charming, perfectly-organized apartment.

Gladys was also passionate about music. She was an excellent pianist who volunteered for Phoebe worship services, both for her friends at the Terrace and the

residents at the Health Care Center. She knew what songs the residents loved to hear, including her ending signature hymn, "How Great Thou Art."

A lifelong member of Lower Saucon United Church of Christ (UCC), Hellertown, Gladys also shared that her mother used to can fruits and vegetables for residents back when community UCC churches would donate food to Phoebe during harvest season. Although very humble, Gladys gratefully shared financial gifts with Phoebe too.

With all her gifts, Gladys was more than a volunteer. She was a member of our team and the Phoebe family.

Because of her generous spirit, our whole team wanted to create a special Gladys-centered writing spot in the lobby of the Terrace. Please take a moment and visit her desk. And as you leave, remember to say, "I'm so sad our paths have to bifurcate." ☘



Gathered at the desk dedicated to Gladys Lerch's memory are (left to right): Debbie Kunkle, Occupational Health Administrative Assistant; Faye Johnson, Lerch's sister; Cherie Heffelfinger, Occupational Health and Safety Manager.

Gladys (pictured top) was a member of Phoebe's Legacy Society, for donors who included Phoebe in their estate plans, Century Circle, for donors who give \$1,000 or more in a year, and 1903 Club, for donors who support Phoebe consecutively for ten years or longer.

The new year has brought significant movement on the Chestnut Ridge at Rodale community! Demolition kicked off in late fall, followed by formal construction in Spring. The first residents plan to move in summer 2023!



CHESTNUT RIDGE
at Rodale

CULTIVATED BY PHOEBE 

CHESTNUT RIDGE AT RODALE IS UNDERWAY!



The center of the roof on the North Building is removed and the courtyard is being framed out. The outdoor courtyard will be accessible through the pub and feature group seating areas, al fresco dining tables, and urban chic décor.

All apartments in the North Building feature a full balcony or Juliet window (if overlooking to courtyard), upscale finishes, and high ceilings.



Chestnut Ridge at Rodale | A NEW COMMUNITY GROWS





By the end of January, the third floor of the North building was completely demolished and ready for construction. The North building originally hosted offices for Rodale Publishing Corp. The offices have been reimagined into 1, 2, and 2 bedroom with den apartments, featuring large windows and high ceilings.



We still have apartments available, but they are selling fast. Call 610-794-6590 or visit chestnutridge.org to learn more.

The roof is removed from the third floor of the North Building to open it up for the soon-to-come courtyard.

IMAGES COURTESY OF WOHLSEN CONSTRUCTION



A CHANGE IN CAREERS

with Susan Kart

Making a career change within one's field of work is challenging enough—but Phoebe Allentown CNA, Susan Kart, made a significant change. For almost twenty years, Kart was a Professor of African and Global Art History, and taught for eight years at Lehigh University. As she researched twentieth-century artists, she noticed how health played a role. Many artists she spoke with and studied were concerned with public health and well-being. Kart was always interested in how creating art could affect a person's overall physical, mental, and spiritual health, and often included these lessons in her class assignments and lectures.

When the pandemic began, her personal and professional priorities shifted from academia to the immediate health care crisis. Kart felt drawn to work firsthand with those who needed care in her community, and she decided to become a Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA). In March 2021, she began working as a part-time nursing aide on the short-term rehabilitation neighborhood at Phoebe Allentown Health Care Center. From day one, she was surprised by how the work was so meaningful to her and the residents.

After working in classrooms and universities, she was worried about making such a big career change. Though her family members and colleagues were supportive of her decision, she had some concerns. It was scary to imagine leaving a career where she was an expert, to become a novice. However, her biggest worry was not knowing whether she would be a good care provider.

Kart allowed herself to confront those fears and consider some of the risks, but she did not let them stop her from stepping into the unknown. She was determined to do something which she believed could better the lives of others, and began her work as a caregiver. As she stepped into her new role as a CNA,

in nursing in the future. When reflecting on the health care staff she worked with, Kart mentions that “their willingness to support each other is amazing.” She further explains that the bonds between staff members create an effective and supportive team of caregivers, something she was unaware of when she was outside looking in. Once she began working alongside them, she began to truly recognize the efforts of each staff member—motivating her to strive for such dedication.

Kart hopes to continue her work in different ways in the future. She plans to continue volunteering and working part-time as a CNA, with a degree in nursing as a possibility for her future. Research and education



Susan Kart, Assistant Professor of Art History, with Lehigh students at the Lehigh University Art Galleries (LUAG). Photo ©2020 Christine Kreschollek

she began learning about senior health. Working in short-term rehab, she also learned about the recovery process. She began finding fulfillment in helping people learn to live their lives to the fullest again after suffering from an illness, injury, or undergoing surgery.

While working at Phoebe, she also formed a deeper understanding and respect for her fellow staff members. Kart explains that it was “incredibly significant seeing what nurses and other health care workers manage daily. This experience has given me great respect for nursing and housing staff.” She continued to explain that everyone at Phoebe inspired her to pursue a degree

continue to be important to her career. As she learns more about the field of long-term care, she hopes to approach her research and work differently. Using skill sets from both of her career avenues, Kart hopes to shed light on the intricacies of working as a caregiver and help educate future generations pursuing a career in long-term care. 🌱

Considering a career change? Visit [Phoebe.org/careers](https://phoebe.org/careers) to learn more about our open positions, competitive benefits, and passion for serving older adults.

EXCITING NEW PLAN OPTIONS FOR PROACTIVE SENIORS

Pathstones by Phoebe is a membership program that provides resources to support individuals in navigating the stages of aging. Individuals who become members of Pathstones do so because they want to age in place for as long as possible. Members understand that successful aging in place requires a plan. They are proactive about not only their health but also about their home and financial resources. By joining Pathstones, members have made a solid plan to cover their present and future physical, emotional, and financial needs.

Over the years, we've learned that the standard membership plan isn't always the right fit for everyone. To better meet the needs of more individuals, we recently developed two new membership options. Pathstones is pleased to offer a brand-new Early Advantage Plan and a revised Sterling Plan.

The **Early Advantage Plan** allows active seniors, 75 years old and younger, to begin receiving many of the benefits of Pathstones by Phoebe without paying for the financial protection piece of membership until they feel they will be closer to needing it. Membership benefits include wellness, care coordination, and priority access to Phoebe communities. When Early Advantage Plan members are ready for full membership, they will receive a discount of up to 5% on the full membership plan.

The revised **Sterling Plan** is ideal for individuals who have already purchased long-term care insurance in planning for their future health care needs. Like the Early Advantage Plan, the Sterling Plan also provides wellness, care coordination, and priority access to Phoebe communities. However, it does not offer the financial benefit of paying for care. When care is needed, Pathstones will coordinate the care and the payment from the long-term care insurance company.

There's no denying that if someone is fortunate enough to age, they will see changes. Regardless of how physically fit they are, how mentally fit they are, or their family history, aging changes everyone. The key to gracefully aging is accepting that things will change and planning to manage the changes.

By adding these two new options, Pathstones by Phoebe hopes to meet the needs of more proactive individuals who have accepted that they will age and want a comprehensive plan to meet their needs as they do. We believe this is the difference between simply aging and aging well. 🍵

To learn more about these new options, please contact Pathstones at 610-794-6700 or email us at pathstones@phoebe.org

Pathstones



by Phoebe ~ Continuing Care at Home

Phoebe Pharmacy

On the Move in Lancaster County

On January 7, Phoebe Pharmacy's Lancaster office moved from East Petersburg, PA, to a beautiful new building in the nearby town of Willow Street that offers room to grow. "The move was a huge accomplishment," said Cindy Richart, Vice President of Pharmacy Services. "Our staff worked seamlessly together to ensure minimal downtime for our clients."

The new office is part of a modern business complex built in 2021. It is significantly larger than the East Petersburg location, and offers more floor space for drug storage and workstations. There is an extensive loading and docking zone at the rear of the building. A large compounding area provides more storage and a larger working surface for pharmacists to prepare medications. The spacious conference room has been a useful staging area for vaccine clinics over the last few months.

"We're loving the new location," says Pam Getz, Pharmacy Director. "We serve over 20 South Central Pennsylvania communities out of this pharmacy, and more space translates to even faster service for those facilities." It also translates to growth. The Pharmacy can now support additional long-term care and post-acute care clients in the area. 🏠



Phoebe Pharmacy has locations in Lehigh, Lancaster, and Montgomery counties. To learn more about Phoebe Pharmacy, visit [Phoebepharmacy.org](https://phoebepharmacy.org) or call 610-794-5380 today.

PHOEBE 🏠 PHARMACY

**Serving the Greater Lehigh Valley
for more than 50 years through
programming, education,
news and community engagement.**

Good  **39**
NEIGHBORS
LIVE HERE



PBS39.COM



PBS39CHANNEL

Great Rewards:

VOLUNTEERING AT PHOEBE

Phoebe's volunteers are essential to our communities—bringing fun and friendship to the lives of our staff and residents alike—and we're looking for more of them to help support the excellent work going on at each of our campuses.

Some volunteers stay for a few years, while others donate their time to Phoebe for decades. One such resident, Midge Coker, began volunteering by visiting our residents at Phoebe Allentown in 1988. They would chat, and she listened to their stories about their careers, families, and lives. Coker began forming relationships with the residents, feeling warmth and friendship during their conversations. As she continued volunteering, her connections with the residents made her want to do more, so she began working on small and large projects. Every Wednesday, Coker and her daughter would push a traveling cart room to room, sounding a bicycle horn for everyone to hear! The cart

included snacks and other small items residents may want or need.

A larger project Coker continues to facilitate each year is Operation Santa. Every holiday season, she works with Phoebe employees, volunteers, and the surrounding community to gather gifts for each Phoebe Allentown Health Care Center resident. This past year she enlisted her husband, now retired, to assist. Together they helped organize the gathering and distribution of over 700 gifts, bringing holiday cheer to everyone at Phoebe Allentown. "If I can bring a little bit of sunshine into someone else's life, it brings it into my life," Coker explains. "I love Phoebe."

There are many different projects and activities where staff could use an extra hand. Likewise, there are many ways that a volunteer can help, based on their individual preferences. Some volunteers have a talent to share, like Liz Philips, who has been volunteering for 20 years at Phoebe Allentown, playing the piano for residents. Another volunteer, Steven Filipak from Phoebe Richland, helps spread his love of reading and knowledge by bringing the library cart to residents' rooms so they can conveniently check out books. For a volunteer with administrative skills, tasks including managing paperwork, data entry, computer projects, and filing are a big help to staff. Another essential volunteer task is transporting residents to activities, meals, and religious services.

Some volunteers, like George Biechler, have a personal reason for volunteering. Biechler is a volunteer "coach" at Phoebe Berks' Rock Steady Boxing program, an exercise program that caters to Parkinson's Disease. Helping his wife Nancy manage the disease for over 13 years gave him a better understanding of the complexities of Parkinson's. Volunteering inspires Biechler and has given him even more insight into the strength and perseverance of those who live with the debilitating disease.

Steven Filipak, volunteer, Phoebe Richland.





Midge Coker, volunteer, Phoebe Allentown.

Many Phoebe volunteers become familiar faces around campus—forming lasting friendships with staff, residents, and the community. After 33 years and counting as a volunteer, Coker would tell anyone thinking about volunteering, “Don’t wait! It’s fun, and Phoebe is very kind, generous, and appreciative. It adds another positive area to your life where you can help others.” 🍀

To learn more about volunteering at a campus near you, visit Phoebe.org/volunteer.



Liz Phillips, volunteer, Phoebe Allentown.

Dream Makers

Sharon Mayers, a resident of Phoebe Allentown, lived her dream of swimming again with Phoebe’s Community Life program, Dream Makers. Mayers’ last time in the water was when she was a child, and she wanted to try swimming once again. To make this wish come true, the community life team at Phoebe Allentown worked with the Rodale Aquatic Center on the campus of Cedar Crest College to create an exciting adventure for Mayers. Everyone involved had a wonderful time, including Mayers, who lived a childhood dream of splashing through the water.



To support Community Life as they make dreams come true, please give at Phoebe.org/giving or contact the Office of Philanthropy at 610-794-5132 or Philanthropy@Phoebe.org.



1925 W. Turner Street
Allentown, PA 18104
1-800-453-8814
Phoebe.org

 facebook.com/phoebeservingseniors
facebook.com/chestnutridgeatrodale

 youtube.com/phoebeservingseniors

 linkedin.com/company/phoebe-ministries

2022



13TH ANNUAL GOLF TOURNAMENT August 8, 2022

Play the Old Course—site of the
2022 U.S. Senior Open. First come, first served.



Saucon Valley
Country Club

*All proceeds from the Tournament provide
charitable care for senior adults in need.*

For more information, including sponsorship
opportunities, contact the Office of Philanthropy
at 610-794-5132, or email events@phoebe.org.

To register, go to Phoebe.org/golf.

