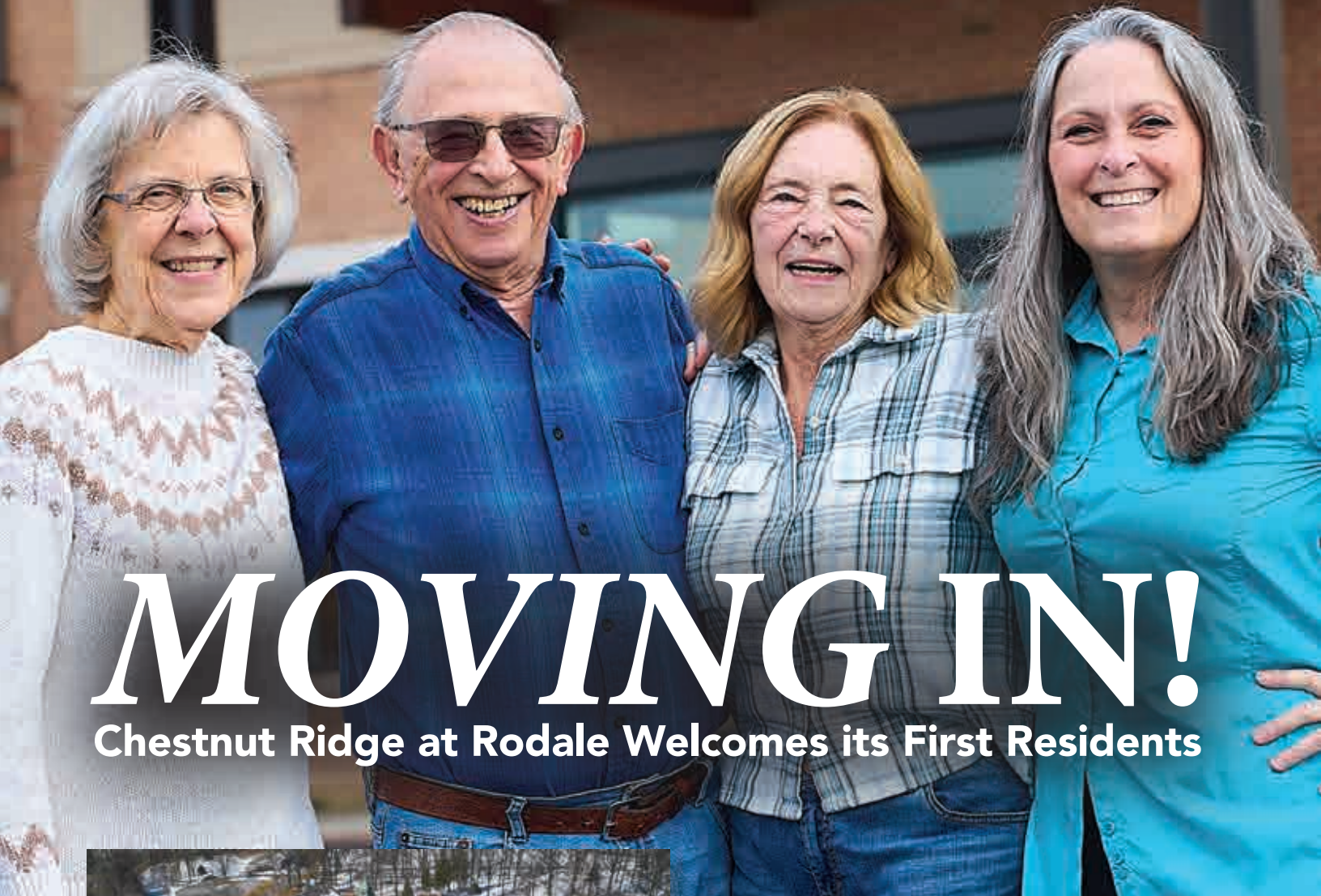


 Phoebe

Messenger

News from Phoebe Ministries

Volume 105, Issue 1 | Spring/Summer 2024



MOVING IN!

Chestnut Ridge at Rodale Welcomes its First Residents



Plus: Phoebe Acquires
the Jesuit Center

Table of Contents

CHESTNUT RIDGE AT RODALE

4 Residents Take Root at Chestnut Ridge

PATHSTONES

8 Spotlight on Theresa Eaman with Pathstones by Phoebe®

THE ART OF LIVING

22 A Year of Fun at Phoebe!

CAMPUS SPOTLIGHT

24 The Marion Dawson Charitable Sewers at Phoebe Allentown

PHOEBE AT WORK

10 Achieving Your Goals Through Rehabilitation

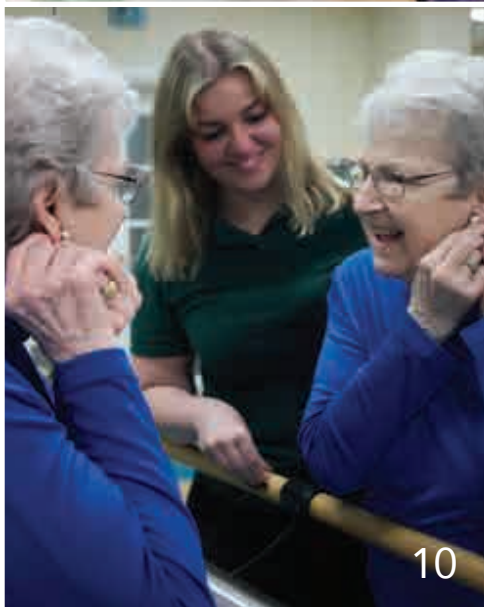
14 Sponsor Spotlight—Care Patrol™

16 Developing a Sacred Landscape Vision: Phoebe Acquires the Jesuit Center for Spiritual Growth

26 Through “The Glassdoor”

PHOEBE PHARMACY

20 Celebrating a 25-Year Legacy of Dedication and Innovation: Cynthia Richart



On the cover: *Left to Right:* Chestnut Ridge at Rodale residents Elinore Gold, Ron Schwartz, Linda Richards, Lori Epler

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.

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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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“Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways submit to him, and he will make your paths straight.”

Proverbs 3:5-6 NIV

A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Dear friends,

The year 2024 has been an exciting one so far, and we are grateful for the many blessings we have received. We continue to see Phoebe grow and expand.

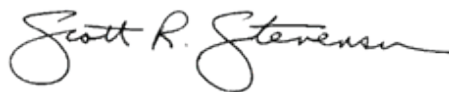
In this edition of the *Messenger*, you'll read about the opening of Phoebe's newest independent living community—Chestnut Ridge at Rodale in Emmaus. Residents have moved into their new state-of-the-art apartments, with our first residents moving in on Valentine's Day. We also feature our newest acquisition, the Jesuit Center, a former retreat center sitting on more than 250 acres adjacent to our beautiful Phoebe Berks campus.

We will share how our independent living residents utilize therapy services at Phoebe Berks and Phoebe Richland. By offering these services at all four of our Continuing Care Retirement Communities, we help to promote wellness and independence for our residents. We also welcome back former board member Bob Miller, who rejoins our Governing Board. And, we bid farewell to Cindy Richart, Vice President of Phoebe Pharmacy, who retired in 2023 after 25 years of service.

Many wonderful things are taking place at Phoebe, and I am proud and honored to lead this organization at this moment in our history. I hope these stories will inspire you as much as they inspire me. On behalf of our ministry, thank you for supporting Phoebe's mission.

Best wishes for a wonderful summer!

Peace,




Scott R. Stevenson
President & CEO



Scott Stevenson with Diane Dyson celebrating 40 years of service at Richland.



Ruth Powers, Chestnut Ridge at Rodale resident, visits with Lisa Nichols, Administrative Assistant.



Residents Take Root at Chestnut Ridge

On Monday, February 12, 2024, Eastern Pennsylvania residents were preparing for a large snowstorm. Milk and bread could not be found on local store shelves. Schools were closing well in advance of the first snowflake falling to the ground. Local meteorologists were anticipating a snowfall of at least a foot.

Most importantly, Chestnut Ridge at Rodale residents were preparing to move, never again having to worry about the inconvenience of shoveling their driveway!

When Scott Stevenson, President & CEO of Phoebe Ministries, finalized the purchase of the former Rodale property on November 2, 2018, no one anticipated that the world would soon pause for a pandemic. Everyone put projects, events, and, most importantly, lives on hold to support those responding to this unique crisis. The construction of Chestnut Ridge would wait.

As lives adjusted to a new normal, the Phoebe leadership team, future residents of Chestnut Ridge, and the supportive Emmaus community celebrated the long-awaited construction on May 2, 2022. Eager to rejuvenate the former Rodale campus, Emmaus Mayor Lee Ann Gilbert shared her excitement about welcoming Phoebe to Emmaus. “Chestnut Ridge at Rodale will be a tremendous asset to seniors who want to remain independent and enjoy everything the Borough offers,” she said.

While the construction phase of the project took longer than originally anticipated, the result is stunning and has been worth the wait: a luxury retirement complex featuring 126 state-of-the-art apartment units.

The Chestnut Ridge at Rodale campus offers amenities such as a pub and outdoor dining, a wellness studio, an indoor pool, and several community gathering spaces. Residents can also enjoy the luxury of having a beauty salon on site, a



Timothy Strella, Executive Chef and Dining Manager of Culinary Services for Chestnut Ridge, presents a freshly baked specialty pizza to eager residents at The Foundry restaurant.

marketplace, and a library. Outside amenities include ample parking, covered parking spaces, charging for electric vehicles, an amphitheater, and raised gardening beds for personal use.

Chestnut Ridge, an active, independent living community for those 60+, is a part of Phoebe Ministries' Continuing Care Retirement Communities. This means that if needed in the future, residents have access to Phoebe's full range of health services, including priority admission to a local Phoebe campus.

Many residents at Chestnut Ridge at Rodale are familiar with the 121-year legacy of care Phoebe has provided older adults. Some have had family members in Phoebe's care, while others worked or volunteered at one of Phoebe's campuses.

These residents began moving into their new homes at Chestnut Ridge on February 14. Karen Sinkovits, Independent Living Manager, and Amanda Laporte, Executive Director, worked closely with residents, their moving companies, and the Chestnut Ridge

maintenance team to choose a convenient date and ensure a smooth process. Now, close to two years after shovels met dirt in Emmaus, residents are settling into their new lifestyle.

No longer worrying about day-to-day maintenance such as cutting grass, shoveling snow, or even changing lightbulbs, residents can relax and enjoy well-maintained walking trails, delicious coffee with friends in the courtyard, or one of the many programs put on by Kristin Pekarik, Lifestyle Specialist at Chestnut Ridge. Pekarik is responsible for the planning and implementation of the daily recreational programming at Chestnut Ridge.

Pekarik works hard to provide residents with a variety of activities to enrich their body and mind. Some of her favorite programs include professionally facilitated fitness and wellness classes, regional cultural experiences, and engaging musical performances. "I also really enjoy the nature walks with our residents, especially when they bring their dogs along! It's a nice

way to enjoy the beautiful scenery and trails that Rodale originally created on this campus,” Pekarik says.

When strolling around the campus, visitors may think residents have lived here for decades, not just two or three months. Our dedicated staff has worked hard to create a sense of community, which is now evident in the joy and social camaraderie forged long before they stepped foot into their new homes.

“I’m so grateful to be here,” says Elinor B. Gold, who became a depositor in 2020. “I’ve made so many friends since this process began. We were already a community when we moved in,” she explains. “And I have the most beautiful apartment! I love sitting in my living room and looking at the trees and South Mountain. It took me some time to unpack because I kept stopping to sit and look out my window,” she says from her sun-filled living room.

Welcome home, Chestnut Ridge residents. 🏡

To learn more about Chestnut Ridge at Rodale, call 610-510-7726 or visit chestnutridge.org.

*Lori and Gerard Epler
unpacking in their new home.*



Benches for Those Who “Walk This Way”

The beautiful nature path that winds along the woods between South Mountain and Chestnut Ridge at Rodale is a favorite community trail. Considered an easy walk, the trail provides scenic views of area wildlife, the South Mountain, and Chestnut Ridge.

“We love to be outside,” says Chestnut Ridge resident Bonnie Krause. She and her husband, Bob, enjoy taking walks along the trail. They decided to support Phoebe at their new home by donating a bench that serves as a resting place for all who use the trail.

“My husband loved to walk this trail,” explains Elinore Gold, a Chestnut Ridge resident whose apartment also faces the trail.

“We used to come walk here together,” says Gold. Unfortunately, her husband, Glenn, passed away. Gold donated a bench and chose a favorite spot along the trail to memorialize Glenn’s love for this land and nature. The plaque on his bench reads, “For Glenn, who walked this way.”

To donate a sustainable bench along the Chestnut Ridge at Rodale trail or at one of our other campuses, contact the Office of Philanthropy at 610-794-5132.



*Top: Rev. Dr. Paul Knappenberger,
and Karen Sinkovits, Independent
Living Manager.*



Bottom: Bonita and Robert Krause.

Spotlight on Theresa Eaman with Pathstones by Phoebe®

Since becoming a Pathstones member and a resident of Phoebe Berks, Theresa Eaman says that she has not had one “unhappy day!” Eaman grew up in the Reading area as an only child. She graduated from Reading Central Catholic High School and then from Chestnut Hill College with a major in history and a minor in music. Her first job was with the Department of Navy in Philadelphia.

While working for the Navy, Eaman vacationed in Hawaii with a friend. One day, while lounging by the pool, a handsome stranger named Jim Eaman approached her. It turned out to be a fateful meeting that resulted in Jim and Theresa being married in 1967.

They began their married life in southern California. While Eaman enjoyed the California sun, she missed her parents, who still lived across the country in Pennsylvania. In 1970, the Eamans left California to move into their newly-built home in Sinking Spring.

Together, they raised three daughters, Theresa, Mary, and Liz. Jim worked for Carpenter Technology, and Eaman worked at Holy Rosary Church, playing the organ and directing the choir, a position she held for 52 years.

In 2020, after a five-year battle with cancer, her beloved husband passed away. After his passing, Eaman wanted to remain in the home she and Jim had shared. Her daughters supported the decision but were concerned about how they could assist her in staying there. Two of Eaman’s daughters, Theresa and Mary, lived out of state. Liz lived relatively close by, but had a very busy career.

While researching options, one of the daughters came across an ad for a virtual information session on “Successfully Aging in Place” presented by Pathstones by Phoebe. After participating in the session, she felt that Pathstones was the resource her family



Top: Theresa and her two daughters, Liz on the left and Mary on the right.

Bottom: Theresa leads the Choraleers at Phoebe Berks.

had been looking for. She shared the information with her sisters, who also liked the peace of mind Pathstones would provide regarding their mother’s home, assets, and journey through a complex healthcare system.

With everyone in agreement, Eaman became a member of Pathstones in April 2021. She felt this would allow her to remain in the home she loved for a long time. However, one snowy day in March of 2022, as Eaman looked out her window at the accumulating snow, she realized that she no longer wanted to remain in the home she loved for so long. She didn’t want to worry about having someone take care of the snow, the yard, or the myriad of other things being a homeowner entailed.

After discussing her feelings with her daughters, they again sprang into action to help research alternate living opportunities for their mom. They toured several senior living communities,



including Phoebe Berks. While touring Phoebe, Eaman saw an apartment with a large balcony that overlooked a gazebo. She instantly realized this was the place she wanted to call home. It was also helpful that, as a member of Pathstones, she could receive a discounted entrance fee for the apartment.

With the help of a senior moving company recommended by the Phoebe Berks staff, Eaman became “free of stuff” and moved to Phoebe Berks in May 2022. On the first night she was there, Eaman’s neighbor invited her to attend the Reading Philharmonic Orchestra concert at the gazebo. She immediately knew that she had made the right decision.

Eaman is now a very active resident of Phoebe Berks. She enjoys participating in tap dance and playing the organ and has recently taken over as director of the Choraleers, the Phoebe Berks resident choir.

Eaman appreciates the accessibility living on campus provides, especially with undergoing recent knee and hip replacements. Eaman is able to receive follow-up in-house therapy from the Phoebe Rehabilitation team without ever needing to leave the campus.

Pathstones by Phoebe is a membership-based program. Active older adults join Pathstones when they are in good health and do not need any services. As life changes, Pathstones serves as a partner to support their needs. Services include coordinating and paying for care when needed. There are some similarities to long-term care insurance, but payment requirements are less restrictive and there are no waiting periods. 🏠

To learn more about how Pathstones supports its members in living their best lives while protecting their assets, please call Pathstones at 610-794-6700 or visit pathstonesbyphoebe.org.

Pathstones®
by Phoebe

A little more about Pathstones by Phoebe: Q&A with Lisa Hoffman, Executive Director of Pathstones by Phoebe

Q: What is an individualized approach to care?

A: Wellness means different things to different people. Pathstones by Phoebe gets to know each member personally to develop a plan specific to their needs and desires. However, Pathstones also recognizes that life changes. So, while a member may join Pathstones thinking they want to remain in their current home for as long as possible, sometimes an event like the passing of a spouse changes the desire to stay at home. Pathstones’ individualized approach easily adjusts to this desire and works with the member to find a new home that meets their needs and desires.



Lisa Hoffman, Executive Director of Pathstones by Phoebe

Q: Why is it important to have a proactive plan for life?

A: Aging is a journey, and everyone's journey will be different. By being proactive and planning ahead, unexpected health events will become manageable and less overwhelming. Pathstones helps navigate the complicated health care system and coordinate care as needed.

Q: How will Pathstones protect my financial assets?

A: By paying ahead for future health care costs, Pathstones members never need to worry about depleting their assets to pay for care. Members pay a one-time membership fee based on age and an ongoing monthly fee. In exchange, Pathstones pays for care for life, whether the care is received in the member's home or at a care community.

Q: What if I already have long-term care insurance?

A: Pathstones coordinates with long-term care insurance companies to cover gaps in waiting periods and inadequate limits. Pathstones also has different requirements for payment, which means Pathstones will pay for care when long-term care insurance may not.

Q: I don't want to be a burden to my family; how can Pathstones help?

A: Caring for an aging loved one can be overwhelming, especially if your loved one doesn't live close by or you have a family to care for as well. Pathstones handles all the details of providing and coordinating care, giving loved ones the peace of mind of knowing that a plan is in place if and when care is needed.



Dana Seyfert, Physical Therapy Assistant (PTA), and Erma Gajewski work on balance during a therapy session.

Achieving Your Goals Through Rehabilitation

“I grew up on a farm with two older brothers,” explained Erma Gajewski, a retired administrative office manager and independent living resident at Phoebe Berks. “I was a super active kid, kind of a ‘tomboy,’” she laughed.

When Gajewski was diagnosed with Rheumatoid Arthritis (RA) at age 26, this energetic family dynamic—and lots of therapeutic exercises—would help her continue through life with the strong persistence necessary for someone facing such potentially devastating health news.

RA is an inflammatory autoimmune disorder that chronically affects joints, causing painful swelling that eventually leads to bone erosion and joint deformity. Although some medications may improve symptoms, physical therapy (PT) plays a crucial role in reducing pain and helping to maintain independence. Gajewski’s doctors explained early on that she would need therapy for the rest of her life.

When Gajewski, her husband Don, and their cat, Smokey, were looking to move into a retirement community, her therapists in Kutztown recommended Phoebe Berks. Independent living residents of the Phoebe Berks Continuing Care Retirement Community (CCRC) are supported by the wellness team and, when requested or needed, evaluated for physical, occupational, and speech therapies.

Gajewski works on lower extremity exercises like back and side leg kicks, heel lifts, and marching. Specifically recommended by the PT staff at Phoebe, these exercises help her relieve pain, prevent further joint damage, and reduce risk and functional impairment in her daily living activities. “My goal is not to fall!” says Gajewski. She is determined to stay active.

“Erma approaches her diagnosis and daily life with a positive attitude and resilience, showing up to therapy appointments with a smile and a determined attitude to not let anything hold her back,” says Dana Seyfert, Physical Therapy Assistant (PTA). “RA can be very discouraging to live with. But even on the hard days, Erma’s committed strength helps her overcome significant obstacles,” she explains.

The occupational therapy (OT) staff at Phoebe works with residents to identify their most important values, goals, and activities in their daily lives. Gajewski has developed several important goals that she is working on with Megan Donohue, a Certified Occupational Therapy Assistant (COTA).



Megan Donohue, Certified Occupational Therapy Assistant (COTA), helps Erma Gajewski reach an important self-care goal.

“I always wore earrings to work every day and really enjoyed picking them out,” explains Gajewski. “But with my RA, I’ve struggled with putting them on. Megan has been helping with that!” she says excitedly. “She’s also helped me get organized by buying me a date book to keep all my many appointments straight,” she says.

“Stories like Erma’s are why it’s easy to come to work and why I chose to be a therapist,” says Donohue. “I admire her hard work and dedication despite her challenges.”

The occupational therapists at Phoebe also assess residents’ home environments to identify anything that may challenge their independence, safety, or quality of life.

“Megan noticed that Smokey’s litter box was a trip hazard where we had it,” said Gajewski. “It was a simple change that I never would have thought of. It made a big difference,” she said.

“The dedicated therapy teams on all of our campuses make a big difference in the daily lives of our seniors,” says Susan Lynn, Regional Director of Rehabilitation and a physical therapist for over 35 years. “Our skilled therapists assess all forms of function: physical [walking, exercising], speech [chewing, swallowing issues, memory, and cognition], and occupational [dressing, washing, and engaging in favorite activities],” she explains. “Our team offers screening, evaluation, and activity testing like watching someone’s gait and balance. Then they design a person-centered program for each individual,” explains Lynn.



Joan Davies works with Occupational Therapist Josh Pail.

Joan Davies' blue eyes light up when she visits with her granddaughter, Beth Ann Davies, in her Meadow Glen personal care apartment at Phoebe Richland.

Born in Staffordshire County, England in 1937, Davies and her husband John moved themselves and their two small children to the United States in 1968. Everyone at Meadow Glen knows her cheeky personality, English history, and zest for life.

Davies and her husband were automobile enthusiasts who built several cars. Her close-knit family happily pulls out photos of the ivory-colored Jaguar convertible that her husband made piece by piece—with his wife's assistance—and the cherry red Austin-Healey Sprite.

Given her resilient life, surviving World War II in war-torn England, moving her family 3,000+ miles away to the U.S., working in a garage with her husband, and working in housekeeping and dining in a hospital for more than 25 years, it's no surprise that she is a strong woman who still has a drive and passion to live life to the fullest.



Davies with her granddaughter Beth Ann.



When Davies needed PT for an injury, she responded well to in-patient and outpatient therapy with the same sparkling sense of vitality.

“The therapy staff at Phoebe are so respectful and responsive,” says Beth Ann Davies, an OT herself. “Any questions I have, they answer,” she said. “They also listen to family members’ suggestions, like offering my grandma vanilla pudding and tea to make things easier.”

“Our therapy staff use creative engagement techniques to help residents meet their goals,” says Linda Gertsclauer, Lead Therapist at Phoebe Richland. “Joan loves talking about English musicians, like Engelbert Humperdinck,” explains Gertsclauer. “Knowing our seniors personally and understanding what’s important to them helps us help them.”

All four of Phoebe’s CCRCs offer a full range of short-term rehabilitation services for individuals needing an extensive rehab program following an illness, injury, or surgery. Phoebe Berks, Phoebe Allentown, and Phoebe Richland offer a community-based outpatient rehabilitation program for people living in their homes who are in need of rehab services. Our in-house teams of professional therapists provide patient-centered care using the latest techniques and equipment. For residents with dementia, Phoebe offers specialized memory care therapy. 🧠

For more information about outpatient rehabilitation services, visit www.phoebe.org/rehabilitation, or call 610-794-5075.

Six Important Signs

You Might Need Therapy



1. **Difficulty standing up from a chair**

Therapy can help improve your mobility and muscle strength.

2. **Walking slowly or shuffling**

A shuffling gait can occur in people who have health conditions affecting the nervous system, joints, or muscles.

3. **Recent surgery**

Recovering from surgery often means taking steps to help regain full range of motion and strength.

4. **Fear of falling**

Fall risk and balance issues can be helped with therapy and exercise.

5. **Chronic pain issues**

Back pain, joint pain, neck pain: if you’re having consistent pain, that’s a sign to consider reaching out for an assessment.

6. **Problems with chewing or swallowing your food**

A speech-language pathologist can help you avoid choking and aspiration.



Sponsor Spotlight Spring 2024

Care Patrol™ of the Lehigh Valley and Upper Bucks



Left to right: Niki Alban, Mary Ann Pickell, Robert “Bob” Pickell, Carol Frawley, and Chloe Pickell.

COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIP

Mary Ann and Bob Pickell are the owners of the Lehigh Valley and Upper Bucks County regional Care Patrol™ franchises, which they purchased after Mary Ann Pickell had spent the previous five years working for the original owners. During her time as an employee, she saw the opportunity to pursue her passion of caring for others. As the youngest in her family, Pickell witnessed the kind and loving care

bestowed upon her elder generation. She knew that this was a mission that spoke to her heart.

“We are deeply invested in our clients’ lives,” says Pickell. “They truly become a part of our own family. We know that they look to us for guidance and that what we do provides them with tremendous comfort and relief.”

Care Patrol’s wealth of resources extends beyond the detailed knowledge of the senior living communities they

recommend. They also have a ready list of trusted attorneys, real estate agents, moving companies, and financial advisors. They are senior care advisors—not just a placement agency, but a true source of solutions for their customers. As such, they are supporters of the Phoebe Institute on Aging and believe strongly in providing essential education needed to make the best decisions for ourselves and our loved ones.

Their attention to the whole family sets them apart from the many apps and search tools available online. Care Patrol team members meet with all involved participants and get to know their medical, social, and financial needs. They become a part of the entire process and help to alleviate pressure that many families feel when deciding what best suits their needs, both now and in the future—all of this is provided at no cost to their clients.

As a HIPAA-compliant organization, all client information is kept private and secure. Unlike other agencies, families won't be overwhelmed by multiple calls from various facilities trying to sell their services. The team at Care Patrol provides an essential piece to the puzzle of long-term care and look out for their clients' best interests.

“Care Patrol is sincerely invested in the right placement for their customers, and the partnership between them and Phoebe is invaluable. Mary Ann's seamless collaboration with our staff has streamlined the process for families seeking quality care and showcased her commitment to excellence in senior living. Together, we are dedicated to providing compassionate solutions, ensuring everyone receives the exceptional care they deserve,” says Kimberly Metz, Executive Director of Marketing and External Relations for Phoebe Ministries.

When asked what advice Care Patrol can offer the Baby Boomer generation, as they begin searching for quality care for their parents, they recommend to start by making a plan not just for your parents, but for yourself! This will help alleviate any stress your own children may have when they find you have already explored options and have a plan in place.



Compassion in Action: Putting the Care in Caregiving



Keynote speaker Stephen W. Trzeciak, MD, MPH addresses the sold-out crowd at the PIA Conference.

Over 230 attendees assembled at DeSales University on the morning of Thursday, April 18, 2024, to attend the Phoebe Institute on Aging (PIA) Conference. This year's theme was Compassion in Action, which featured a day of medical and senior care experts examining the benefits of incorporating compassion into their work.

The day featured presentations that covered a wide array of topics, including the importance of open and affirming diversity, equity, and inclusion; thoughts on compassion in long-term care; and navigating grief. Keynote speaker Dr. Stephen Trzeciak, an accomplished author, medical professional, and researcher, delivered a compelling presentation on the current state of the healthcare system and where a greater focus on compassion can lead to empirically proven health benefits for patients and providers alike.

Attendees left the day feeling rejuvenated and with a renewed sense of how empathy and compassion make a difference in their careers and throughout all aspects of life.

We are grateful to our PIA Committee members and speakers for making the 2024 PIA Conference a valuable resource for those who serve our aging population. We also thank our sponsors, Care Patrol, St. Luke's, Working Dog Press, Cura Hospitality, GHR Healthcare, and Campbell, Rappold & Yurasits, LLP for their generous donations.

We invite you to Save the Date for the 2025 PIA Conference, Empowered Aging: A.I. Solutions in Senior Healthcare, which will be held at DeSales University on Thursday, May 29, 2025. Dr. Laura Adams, Senior Advisor for the National Academy of Medicine, will be the keynote speaker. The PIA is now accepting proposals to be a presenter at the conference. Please visit phoebe.org/piaconference for criteria and information on submitting your application.

Developing a Sacred



Phoebe is pleased to announce the acquisition of the Jesuit Center for Spiritual Growth, a 254-acre haven of pastoral tranquility that is contiguous with our Phoebe Berks campus.

For decades, the Jesuit Center, also known as the Novitiate of Saint Issac Jogues, was a spiritual retreat—a place of solace where individuals sought refuge from the chaos of everyday life nestled amidst rolling hills and lush greenery.

Beginning in 2010, Phoebe President & CEO Scott Stevenson began discussing the property's future with Jesuit Center leadership. Over the years, Stevenson forged a strong relationship with the brothers and priests, blending their respective expertise in business and spirituality.

After the acquisition was completed in March of 2023, he visited the magnificent grounds of the Jesuit Center, where a vision emerged to transform this once influential center of learning and quiet discovery into a vibrant community for seniors in Lower Heidelberg Township.

“During one of my visits, I spotted an eagle landing in a nearby tree,” said Stevenson. “The image was awe-inspiring. I could envision an active, restorative senior community emerging in the rolling hills of this sacred and stunning landscape.”

Stevenson immediately saw the possibility of transforming the Jesuit Center into a continuation of the already-active Phoebe Berks senior living campus. New construction on the Jesuit Center property would potentially include independent living homes, community buildings, additional abundant walking trails, and amenities that would cater to the evolving needs of Eastern Pennsylvania's growing senior population.

A similar pioneering vision was shared when Nicholas and Genevieve Brady, New York financiers who were close friends and benefactors of the Jesuits of Maryland, saw this amazing Berks County landscape and gifted it in 1930 as a Jesuit novitiate—a place where one learns to be a Jesuit brother or



A Landscape Vision:

Phoebe Acquires the Jesuit Center for Spiritual Growth

A bird's eye view of the Jesuit Center's main structure in February of 2024.

priest. Through the 1950s, it was a bustling place where men came to enter the Society of Jesus, a Roman Catholic order founded for missionary work. It was common to have a class of 50 or more Jesuit novices or scholastics with up to four classes on campus at a time. In the 1970s, after the number of novitiates declined, the center evolved into the Jesuit Center for Spiritual Growth, which provided men and women, both laypersons and religious, a destination for spiritual direction and retreats. In 2018, the Jesuit Center closed its doors, citing financial challenges.

With this rich spiritual history in mind, Stevenson and the Phoebe leadership team began searching for the most suitable, forward-thinking architect to be honored with the awesome task of integrating a senior community into this sacred landscape.

Ultimately, DiMella Shaffer, a Boston-based architectural planning and design firm, was chosen for their innovative

senior community concepts, ability to create harmonious architectural design within a natural landscape, and their 30+ year successful track record in creating purposeful, sustainable environments that celebrate forward-thinking solutions and creative homes for seniors to live with dignity and joy.

The evolving design concepts include variations of independent living cottages, apartments, and an assisted living community, all thoughtfully connected and informed by the landscape and existing buildings. Development plans are anticipated to unfold within three to five years.

Phoebe strives to “lead the way with innovative services that promote fullness of life,” as reflected in our vision statement. Continuing to create beautiful, forward-thinking, sustainable communities for seniors is one of the many ways we fulfill this vision. 🌿



Scan this QR code to watch drone footage flying from Phoebe Berks to the Jesuit Center.



The Chapel at the Jesuit Center



Detail of a statue in the garden.

Main image: The Jesuit Center structure and surrounding acreage.

Celebrating a 25-Year Legacy of Dedication and Innovation: **Cynthia Richart**

With heartfelt gratitude for her years of service, Phoebe Ministries bids farewell to a loyal, reliable, and hardworking figure in our health care journey. Cynthia S. Richart, RPh, Vice President of Pharmacy Operations, retired on December 31, 2023, after a noteworthy 25-year career at Phoebe. Richart played a pivotal role in building and shaping the trajectory of Phoebe Pharmacy, leaving an indelible mark on the organization, having served thousands of long-term care residents within and beyond our walls.

Richart embarked on her journey with Phoebe on March 9, 1998, tasked with establishing an in-house pharmacy that would serve our residents. While she started as the sole staff member of the small pharmacy, Richart quickly grew the business to serve other Continuing Care Retirement Communities (CCRCs) in the area. Her foresight and dedication to patient care were instrumental in the growth of the program, which now serves thousands of seniors at more than 50 CCRCs, assisted living communities, and skilled nursing facilities across the region. At the culmination of her career, Richart directed four pharmacy locations with an impressive annual revenue exceeding \$27 million.

A tech-savvy visionary, Richart spearheaded numerous technology projects, revolutionizing the pharmacy's operations. She regularly embraced technological innovation, from implementing pharmacy management software to introducing robotic packaging machines, remote dispensing cabinets, and interfaced electronic medication records (EMRs).

Acknowledging the advantages of a regional pharmacy provider, Richart emphasized the importance of proximity, bringing pharmacy courier services in-house to maintain a delivery range within one hour of driving time. This commitment ensured prompt deliveries and reasonable arrival times, exemplifying the pharmacy's dedication to its clients.

The scale and impact of Phoebe Pharmacy became even more apparent in 2020, when Richart went above and beyond amidst the challenges of the pandemic. She expanded pharmacy services to offer COVID-19 lab testing, vaccine clinics, and



monoclonal antibody infusion services for dozens of retirement communities, even those not directly associated with Phoebe Pharmacy. “Cindy’s understanding of the issues an aging population faces, especially those residing in long-term care facilities, was never more apparent than during the COVID-19 crisis,” says Shane Lawrence, PharmD, Director of Clinical Pharmacy Services. “While many managers would cope with the chaos of 2020 by narrowing their vision, Cindy looked beyond the Phoebe Pharmacy customer base. She worked tirelessly to coordinate lab testing services with numerous retirement communities in Pennsylvania and New Jersey that are not Phoebe customers to ensure the long-term care community at large would receive this vital service.”

Richart’s contributions extended beyond the confines of Phoebe Ministries, as exemplified by her recognition with the Healthcare Heroes Award in 2017. Presented by Lehigh Valley Business, this award celebrated her as the Health Care Professional of the Year. Richart was also granted the 2021 LeadingAge PA Distinguished Service Award for Leader of the Year in recognition of her extensive outreach during the pandemic.

Richart always appreciated the kind words, awards, and accolades; however, she generally preferred to stay out of the limelight, working behind the scenes to serve her clients. She was exceptionally dedicated to customer service. It was not unusual for her to be available at any time of day or night to help address urgent client needs. Even though the Pharmacy is fully staffed 24 hours per day, Richart was always personally available.

The success and exponential growth of Phoebe Pharmacy over the last quarter-century reflects Richart’s legacy of service to others. Her dedication has shaped the future of the program for years to come.

As we bid farewell to Cindy Richart, we extend our deepest gratitude for her invaluable contributions to Phoebe Ministries. We wish her a joyous and fulfilling retirement. ❀

A Return to the Board of Directors: **WELCOME, BOB MILLER**

Bob Miller has been involved with Phoebe Ministries in many ways: as a child, he participated in food drives for Phoebe Allentown with his church. As an adult, he visited his parents when they were residents at Phoebe Allentown. He has been on various Phoebe boards and committees for more than 35 years.

In June 2020, after completing his term, Miller stepped down as Chairperson of the Phoebe Ministries Governing Board.

Originally elected to the Board in April 1988 to represent the Pennsylvania Southeast Conference of the UCC, Miller served as a board member and treasurer before being elected chair in 2017. Miller rejoined the Phoebe Ministries Governing Board in November 2023. In addition to serving on the Governing Board, Miller continues to be a member of the Audit, Finance, and Investment Committee.

“I became involved at Phoebe because it was a good way to use my administrative talents to help others,” says Miller. “The more I knew about Phoebe Ministries, the more I noticed how much they care for their residents. Phoebe is a strong faith-based organization, and this is important to me.”

Miller and his wife, Judy, had parents who were residents at Phoebe Allentown, and said they were impressed with the level of care their parents received. “My mother had Alzheimer’s disease and was bedridden. She had also suffered a stroke and was very well taken care of at Phoebe,” says Miller. “Judy’s mother lived at Phoebe for more than six years and was very grateful for the services and activities that Phoebe provided. Staff members are competent and caring—they always keep the residents in mind.”

Miller cites the creation of the Phoebe Reciprocal Risk Retention Group in 2004, the hiring of Scott Stevenson as President & CEO, the expansion of the pharmacy, and the 2018 purchase of the former Rodale campus in Emmaus, which is now Phoebe’s newest community Chestnut Ridge, as his proudest achievements while leading the Board. These decisions significantly improved Phoebe’s financial health. Renovations on the Phoebe Berks campus and Phoebe Allentown’s Trexler Wing and Miller Personal Care at 19th & Chew were also completed while Miller was Chairperson.

Miller says, “I am excited about the future of Phoebe because of the outstanding staff, who are forward-looking and really care about the organization and the people they serve.” ❀



A Year of **Fun** for **Phoebe!**

Spring is a time of hope, joy, and new beginnings. Everyone is gathering and celebrations are happening on every Phoebe campus! Residents have been spending time with each other, participating in exciting and creative activities organized by staff. Here are some ways Phoebe continues to make life beautiful and fun for everyone.

ALLENTOWN ENJOYS A GOOD THEME

Independent living residents at the Terrace enjoyed trendy events and themed parties. With *Barbie* being one of 2023's most popular movies, the staff created a fantastic themed evening. The staff decorated the space like a Barbie dream house. Everyone was decked out in their favorite shade of pink while snacking on pink treats and drinks. Residents and staff participated in viral social media dance moves to the *Barbie* soundtrack, followed by a screening of the award-winning movie.

Themed cultural luncheons are another favorite pastime among the Terrace residents. At Oktoberfest, residents were served beer bratwurst, potato pancakes, and apple strudel. These festive gatherings also include live music for residents to enjoy while they mingle and eat.



An accordionist plays during an Oktoberfest event at The Terrace at Phoebe Allentown.



Bob Masenheimer leads the Choraleers at a Phoebe Berks holiday concert.

BERKS LOVES SUPPORTING THEIR ARTISTS

Phoebe Berks has many artists in residence who are always ready to share their talents! Last summer, Phoebe staff and independent living residents hosted an art show. The talent and creativity of those who participated were inspiring and unique. Artists displayed various mediums, including paintings, drawings, and textile crafts. Residents, staff, and family members who attended the show were in awe of the abundant talent at Phoebe Berks.

Musical talents are also prominent on the Berks campus. This past holiday season, residents and staff enjoyed the musical stylings of the Choraleers, the Phoebe Berks resident chorus led and directed by Bob Masenheimer. They performed Christmas carols during the Grand Illumination, which celebrates the lighting of all the decorations across the campus. Masenheimer, who turned over the leadership role to Theresa Eaman in the beginning of the year, announced more Choraleers performances in 2024 for everyone to enjoy.



Santa and Mrs. Claus visit a resident at Phoebe Richland.

RICHLAND PARTIES LIKE NO OTHER

Phoebe Richland always hosts colorful events and parties! The residents kicked off last summer outside at a Hawaiian luau. They played games, wore leis, and enjoyed tropical drinks and snacks. The luau was the first of many events held for residents to gather outside and enjoy the warm weather.

Everyone pitches in during the holidays at Phoebe Richland. Each hallway is decorated with Christmas trees, while multiple events are happening in every neighborhood. The annual tree lighting brought community and family members to the campus to sing carols and celebrate the season together. And, the most anticipated visitor, Santa Claus, appeared and helped Phoebe staff deliver presents to residents in the Health Care Center. Almost every day in December featured new and engaging activities.

WYNCOTE CELEBRATES STORIES

One of the ways Phoebe Wyncote celebrates residents is by honoring their stories throughout the year. In March 2024, community life hosted an event celebrating Women's History Month. Judy Sherman, Executive Director of Phoebe Wyncote, spoke with other Phoebe staff and residents sharing stories and wisdom. Phoebe Wyncote (like all our communities) is filled with intelligent and kind women, making it a special and positive place to live and work. Sharing these stories creates connections between residents and staff.

Phoebe continues to encourage an environment incorporating culture, personal histories, and fun, making Phoebe not just a place to live, but a community that invites individuals to share their unique talents and interests. By working together, our staff and residents create a supportive and caring environment for everyone. 🌸



Henri Edelschein and Genester Miller shared their unique stories celebrating Women's History Month at Phoebe Wyncote.

To support engaging activities and events for Phoebe residents, go to phoebe.org/new-donate-to-phoebe-ministries and donate today!



Dorothy Sechler sewing in her apartment.

The Marion Dawson Charitable Sewers **at Phoebe Allentown**

“It’s proven that cultures who respect women do better—socially, financially, politically,” says Dorothy Sechler, retired teacher of 35 years and “captain” of The Marion Dawson Charitable Sewers at The Terrace at Phoebe Allentown. Carefully ripping the seams from a donated fitted flannel sheet, Sechler passionately explains why ensuring young women in Africa get an education is so important and how this sewing club helps make that happen.

Initiated in 2021 by Marion Dawson, a former independent living resident of The Terrace, the sewers meet every Tuesday to create kits for the “Dignity Program,” which offers washable, handmade menstrual pads to young African women as a way to help them manage their periods allowing them to continue attending school. Created by Little Dresses for Africa (LDFA), a non-profit Christian organization that offers relief to all parts of Africa and many other countries, the “Dignity Program” is

one of several initiatives supporting continued work through clean water, primary education, and community.

Dawson's sister, a United Church of Christ (UCC) liaison to the United Nations, discovered the LDFA organization. Dawson then brought the program to Phoebe, which is affiliated with the UCC. Unfortunately, Marion Dawson passed away shortly after the program began, but her friends and neighbors continue her meaningful work. Since 2021, they have made more than 11,000 washable sanitary pads for what is referred to as the "sani-panti" sewing project.

"We create the fabric kits and take them back to our apartments to sew the layers together," explains Linda Luskus, a retired teacher of 23 years and founding member of the sewing group. Each pad has three absorbent layers of cotton quilt batting and a barrier fabric layer, all covered by cotton fabric. "People donate funds and fabric to us," she adds.

Inspired by the desire to help ensure young women receive an education, this dedicated group also enjoys the time spent together. "We like to visit and work alongside each other," says Reiko Summers, a longtime member.

"Education is so important," says Sechler, who also volunteers in the ESL (English as a Second Language) program at the Literacy Center of the Lehigh Valley, "so is staying active and giving back to my community," she says.

This amazing group of women, all in their 80s and 90s, are helping to inspire young women halfway around the world to make their own history—just as many of them have done and continue to do in their story-rich and compassionate lives. ☸

To learn more about this close-knit Phoebe community, visit phoebe.org/terrace.



Counter-clockwise from bottom left: Sewers prepare kits; Marion Dawson; Finished washable sanitary pads, ready to be shipped; Reiko Summers cuts fabric.



The historic Wyomissing Club entrance, now The Senior Apartments at the Wyomissing Club in downtown Reading.

Through “The Glassdoor”

The historic Wyomissing Club, a once lively establishment widely known as the “Mecca of Reading Society” throughout Berks County, received a facelift and second chance thanks to Phoebe. Opening in 1890 as a gentleman’s meeting place, the private club contained a bowling alley, billiards room, squash courts, gym, and restaurant before closing its doors in the mid-1980s.

After sitting vacant for nearly 10 years, Phoebe began expanding its affordable housing options in Berks County and received a \$1 million development grant from the city of Reading to revitalize the historic structure. Phoebe opened the doors of the 58-unit complex in July 1999, welcoming older adults to this unique structure that preserved the original architecture of the century-old building.

The Glassdoor Bar and Restaurant, a beloved staple of Reading, existed adjacent to the Wyomissing Club. Former owner Mary Lou Gamber and her husband Mike opened the restaurant in 1978. The Glassdoor served as a hub of community life that hosted live music events and dished out delicious delicacies.

“The amount of good food that we served out of that small kitchen was amazing,” explains Mary Lou Gamber. “Spaghetti, steaks—all cooked on an electric stove,” she laughs.

After 17 years in the business, Gamber decided to close the Glassdoor Bar and Restaurant. Little did she know that one day

she’d once again be in the same neighborhood as her beloved restaurant.

Today, Gamber lives at the Phoebe Apartments at the Wyomissing Club. She enjoys her retirement with her feline companion, Frankie. After the passing of her husband and business partner in 1998, Gamber still remains a colorful and charismatic presence in Reading, emphasizing strong connections with anyone she encounters. Still caring for her community, Gamber continues to donate her time and skills by cooking for gatherings and fundraisers around town. 🍷



Mary Lou Gamber, resident of the Phoebe Apartments at the Wyomissing Club.

For more information about Phoebe’s affordable senior housing visit phoebe.org/communities/senior-affordable-housing, contact us at housing@phoebe.org, toll-free: 1-800-453-8814 or TTY/TDD: 1-800-654-5984.

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For more information, including sponsorship opportunities,
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