

Volume 9 No. 1

BRANCHINGOUT

LIVING BRANCHES

Live & Grow – Together

INTRODUCING THE WILLOWS *of* Living Branches

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INSIDE THIS ISSUE: DOCK MEADOWS IS NOW THE WILLOWS OF LIVING BRANCHES



FROM THE PRESIDENT'S DESK

EXCITING CHANGES IN 2018

IN RECENT MONTHS, WE HAVE ANNOUNCED

some exciting changes at Living Branches: renaming Dock Meadows as The Willows of Living Branches, introducing a student in residence at The Willows, and announcing a new customer service initiative for staff. Each time we introduce news to staff and residents I am reminded of the importance of observing reactions and asking what people are thinking, rather than depending on our own interpretations of their behavior.

When we announced the new name of Dock Meadows as The Willows of Living Branches, one resident had a very emotional reaction. His head was in his hands and I was unsure whether he was reacting positively or negatively. After asking what was on his mind, I learned how much The Willows means to him. In this edition of Branching Out, you'll hear from Bill as he shares the significance that The Willows has in his life, both past and present.

You will also meet Jenni Agosto, a senior at Delaware Valley University and the first student in residence at The Willows. We have been diligently working to bring a student in residence program to Living Branches, as we know that residents value relationships with younger persons. They may not have specifically asked for a college student to become their neighbor down the hall, but part of our role as staff is to think about creative ways to meet the needs and desires of our residents. We need to understand the common themes and then create opportunities for those connections to happen.

This need to understand our residents on a personal level is one of the key drivers for The Living Branches Experience, a training program currently being developed that will educate staff about the standards and expectations for customer service. We cannot assume we know what residents want. We need to ask. We need to find out. And then we need to work to empower them to lead lives of purpose and joy.

I am grateful to share that the response to these new initiatives and The Willows changing name has been overwhelmingly positive. Persons have shared that the name is invitational, has a sense of warmth, and sounds like a place to call home. Many exciting things are happening at Living Branches and I thank you for your feedback, support, and involvement. We are living and growing, together.

Edward D. Brubaker

EDWARD D. BRUBAKER
President/CEO

BRANCHING OUT

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INTRODUCING THE WILLOWS of Living Branches

*Tracing the Roots and Enjoying the Blooms
of an Inspiring New Identity*

By: Danielle Leheny

SPRING IS HERE, AND WITH IT COMES RENEWAL AND AN OPPORTUNITY TO REJOICE IN EVERYTHING THAT BLOOMS THROUGHOUT THE SEASON. For the Living Branches Dock Meadows residents and staff in Hatfield, this spring holds even more reason to celebrate – as they proudly announce the brand new name of their community.

ON April 12, Dock Meadows officially became known as “The Willows of Living Branches.” Even though the swapping of everything from signs to stationary has taken place in a short amount of time, the thought process and the collaboration behind the name change first took root many months ago.

THE RATIONALE FOR RENEWAL

“We had many reasons for considering a fresh name for this community,” said Alex Metricarti, Chief Marketing and Public Relations Officer, Living Branches. “Dock Meadows itself was – and is – undergoing an exciting period of revitalization, so change was definitely on all of our minds. A discussion about a possible brand enhancement fit naturally into our broader focus on beautifying the residences, amenities, and grounds of the community.”

The main Meadow House was the first part of the renovation, followed by the North Wing, then the South Wing. Both staff and residents are also excited about the new student in residence program, and first participant Jenni Agosto is already making her own unique contributions to the community (learn more in Jenni’s feature on page 8).

“Even our leadership is new!” said Alex. “Our Executive Director, Monique Cole, who also oversees Souderton Mennonite Homes, has been here for about eight months, and she has helped lead the charge for the Dock Meadows revitalization since she came on board.”

Another reason for the name change was a purely logistical one: people sometimes confused Dock Meadows with the larger Dock Woods community in Lansdale. Even more frequently,

visitors thought that Dock Meadows was located at Dock Woods – an easy assumption to make since the larger Dock Woods encompasses Dock Acres, Dock Terrace, Dock Gardens, and Dock Manor. There are plenty of stories about folks showing up for a Dock Meadows appointment at Dock Woods!

everybody, and everything about it makes it a welcoming, warm, caring home.”

One resident, for example, has taken it upon herself to make daily calls to any fellow resident who is currently staying in the hospital. Other residents join in on the outreach by making “get

“All of our Living Branches communities have a culture of love and care, but there’s something very special about the closeness of the Dock Meadows staff and residents”

“But the biggest reason we decided to pursue a new name for Dock Meadows is that this community absolutely deserves its own unique identity,” said Alex. “The ‘Dock’ part of the name was confused with Dock Woods, and ‘Meadow’ is one of the most frequently used words in senior living brands. We knew we could discover a name that helped tell the story of the people who live and work here.”

Since its opening in 1942, Dock Meadows has served as a small, close-knit community, and today, it remains a unique option for potential residents. As a solely Personal Care community, most of its residents move in directly from their homes, and because the community is smaller, residents often have a much easier time making the transition.

“All of our Living Branches communities have a culture of love and care, but there’s something very special about the closeness of the Dock Meadows staff and residents,” said Alex. “Everybody knows

well” cards and small care packages. Due in part to the closeknit nature of the community, residents at Dock Meadows have traditionally been able to stay in Personal Care longer than those in other communities – making it an ideal choice for residents with the wish to only move once.

“There were so many reasons to push forward with a unique name for this unique community,” said Alex. “After we had discussed all of the whys of the name change, the only thing left to discuss was what name do we choose?”



A COLLABORATIVE PROCESS.
A CELEBRATORY “REVEAL.”

Living Branches worked with a senior living marketing firm to generate naming possibilities in every direction they could imagine. Concepts ranged from aspirational (e.g. joyous), to location-based (e.g. Hatfield), to words that drew on the Mennonite faith. One choice stood above the rest from the very beginning, and participants in the focus groups were continually drawn to it.

“The campus backyard is a beautiful nature preserve with a lovely willow tree, and both residents and staff enjoy watching the wildlife that visits the area,” said Alex. “It came as no surprise that the word ‘willow’ evoked a feeling of peace and joy, and focus group participants repeatedly confirmed that this choice perfectly captures the spirit of the community.”

Alex and her team presented the chosen name, The Willows of Living Branches, to the residents’ council first, and they embraced it immediately. That same afternoon, all residents enjoyed the “Big Reveal” at a community party, complete with ice cream, cake, and of course, memory sharing.

“It’s amazing how many people in the community have lovely memories of willow trees,” said Alex. “Some planted a willow tree the year they got married. Others fondly recall climbing in willow trees as children or hiding inside an umbrella of graceful branches, feeling safe and protected from the rest of the world – much like they feel here in this community.”

A PERFECT NAME. A BEAUTIFUL FUTURE.

Soon, the lovely willow tree of The Willows of Living Branches will again be in full bloom to the delight of residents, staff, and visitors. But this year, that bloom will hold even sweeter meaning for the community.

“Our willow tree has long delighted everyone who sees it, and now, it serves as a tangible reminder of the special beauty and closeness of The Willows and its people,” said Alex. “As it blooms this spring, so too will the community. Our revitalization will continue to enhance the daily lives of all who live and work here – and now, we have a brand new name that perfectly reflects who we are as a unique community of love and care.”

COMING
FULL
circle

**Connects One Resident
to His Treasured Past**

During the “big reveal” of Dock Meadows’ new name, the Living Branches staff noticed that one resident, Bill Tidey, was visibly affected by the news. He placed his head in his hands when he first heard the name “The Willows of Living Branches” – and he seemed at a loss for words. The staff feared that he didn’t like the choice, but when they asked him what he was thinking, they couldn’t believe what he had to say.



Because for Bill Tidey, The Willows isn’t just a name. It’s everything. It’s a life coming full circle.

STEPPING BACK IN TIME...

Bill was born in 1926 – the same year that Bill’s father and his four brothers built a beautiful cottage in Knoebels Grove, a family-owned and operated park, picnic grove, and campground in Elysburg, Pennsylvania. From the time he was born until he finished high school, Bill spent weeks at time with his family in their Knoebels Grove getaway.

The cottage sat by the edge of a large stream, which was graced with a lovely willow tree perfect for climbing. Inspired by its peaceful beauty, the family decided to hang a plaque on their cottage that would name their summer home for decades. They called it “The Willow.” And much like the tree it was named for,

“I was thinking about how my brother and I would climb that willow tree by the stream. It was a place that we felt safe and free. We feel that same security here at The Willows.”

The Willow provided a safe haven and countless happy memories through even the most turbulent of times.

“The Great Depression hit my family hard,” said Bill. “My grandfather’s business had gone bankrupt, and my father lost his job as electrician. The times were challenging, and we had very little – but our shared ray of hope was the joy we felt every summer as we travelled to The Willow in Knoebels Grove.”

In the mornings, Bill and his brother would walk down to the park and watch the workmen getting the grove ready for visitors. Sometimes, they were treated to free rides on the amusements or a snack from the concession stand. In the afternoon, they splashed through the stream by the cottage and explored the wonders of nature around them. Bill and his family also grew close with the neighboring families who lived in the other cottages in Knoebels, and every day offered the same perfect simplicity, as well as a brand new adventure.

“It would be hard to pick any one moment as a favorite,” said Bill. “For all of us, our time at The Willow simply meant peace and home. For me, it was all the wonderful moments

spent with my father, mother, brother, and sister – away from any troubles in the real world.”

In his teenage years, Bill and his brother frequently popped by Knoebels’ new roller skating rink, which offered an excellent opportunity to meet girls. Bill is quick to laugh at the memory, but also quick to point out that the right girl didn’t come along until years later, when he was a college student at Bloomsburg University.

“It was a classic blind date,” said Bill. “My roommate had a date one night, and I asked if his date could bring a friend. It was one of the best nights of my life. Meryl and I have been happily married for 68 years.”

On July 3, 2015, Bill and Meryl moved into Dock Meadows, and instantly knew it was home. Soon after they moved in, Meryl experienced a fall that required nursing care, and the couple quickly learned that residents and staff alike rally in support when someone in the community needs it.

“Meryl’s recovery was a challenging time, but the special care she and I both received helped restore our peace and calm,” said Bill. “It reminded me of the feeling my family and I felt

in the small, caring community in Knoebels – and reinforced our view of Dock Meadows as our home and family.”

AN ENDURING CONNECTION

Concerned with Bill’s emotional reaction during the reveal of the new name, a staff member asked Bill if he didn’t like the name The Willows.

“Not like it?” he said. “I love it. It’s perfect.”

Bill’s special story and connection to the community’s name has been shared with many people in the Living Branches family.

“Since hearing of our new name, I’ve been spending a lot of time reminiscing about my youth and our precious days at The Willow,” said Bill. “Just recently, I was thinking about how my brother and I would climb that willow tree by the stream. It was a place that we felt safe and free.”

“We feel that same security here at The Willows,” added Bill. “It’s right. It’s home. It was part of the first and is now part of the last chapter in my life. And I’m so grateful to God for working to bring us here.”





Student *in* Residence

PLANTS SEEDS FOR SPRING ACTIVITIES
AT THE WILLOWS

By: Danielle Leheny



JENNI AGOSTO loves to bring together diverse passions to spark new opportunities – both for herself and for the people in her life. And that’s exactly what she’s doing as the first participant in the new student in residence program at The Willows of Living Branches!

Currently a senior at Delaware Valley University, Jenni is pursuing a major in psychology and a minor in horticulture – and she is aiming for a career path that can combine both interests. In her junior year, Jenni discovered Delaware Valley University’s horticulture therapy certificate program, and she immediately knew that she’d found a way to unite her passions.

As a next step, Jenni wanted to put what she was learning in the program to practical use. She explored internship options through the university’s Center for Student Professional Development and came across the Living

Branches posting about the student in residence program.

“When I interviewed with the Living Branches team, I learned more about the many possible opportunities to use my horticulture knowledge to enhance the lives of residents,” said Jenni. “The more we talked, the more excited I became about the possibilities ahead.”

Jenni spends about eight hours a week at The Willows. She helps oversee various events with the residents, shares meals and stories with them, and gathers input and advice

about the growing list of activities she has planned for the spring.

“I always look forward to the warmer weather, but this year, I’ve been wishing for spring even more than I usually do,” said Jenni. “Once we can get outside, we’ll have a lot more opportunities to get our hands dirty – literally! Horticultural activities can help with everything from enhanced cognitive abilities and memory to physical benefits, such as stronger muscles and improved coordination, balance, and endurance. Plus, it’s just plain fun to grow things!”

As someone with a knack for combining passions, Jenni is always on the lookout for ways to merge horticulture with activities the residents already love. For example, she recently hosted a horticulture-themed bingo, so the residents could learn more about the flowers and vegetables soon to be growing in the garden.

In a relatively short amount of time, Jenni has already done much to plant seeds of new possibilities at The Willows – but she is quick to admit that the residents have done even more to enhance her life.

“I came into this program as someone who doesn’t have any living grandparents, and now, I have many adoptive grandparents!” Jenni said. “My professional passions have broadened as well. Before Living Branches, I thought my career would focus primarily on children – something still on my wish list – but because of this experience, I’ve been deeply inspired by the restorative and social benefits of horticulture in a senior community. Every week, the residents share their wisdom, experiences, and love with me, and I will be forever grateful for the warm welcome into their world.”

THE GIFT OF A *Loving Decision* AND *Community*

As The Willows of Living Branches celebrates its exciting next chapter, one family reflects on the impact the community has made in their own personal journey.

By: Danielle Leheny

“It’s hard to believe my parents moved into The Willows well over a year ago,” said Paula Della Penna, daughter to residents Joan and Tom McArdle. “My parents seem so at peace and so connected to the other residents and staff, that it’s easy to imagine they’ve lived there for many years. Every time I visit with them, the stress I once felt over making such a large decision feels like even more of a distant memory when I see how happy they are in the community.”

Like many adult children, Paula and her sister found themselves faced with a pressing need to work together as a family to address a care solution for their aging parents. Tom’s earlier diagnosis of cognitive impairment had progressed to Alzheimer’s disease, and Joan was facing several physical health challenges, including the need for two hip replacements. Once neither Tom nor Joan could drive, the couple became more socially isolated, and daily tasks, such as preparing healthy meals and getting exercise, were more and more of a challenge.

“My parents had retired in Sea Isle, New Jersey – and had enjoyed some peaceful years there together,” said Paula. “My sister and I knew we had a tall order for any community we would choose for our parents. They’ve been married for 48 wonderful years, and my sister and I wanted this next chapter of their lives to be just as blissful.”

They explored options that were close to both Paula, who lives in New Hope, and her sister, who lives in Emmaus. They wanted their parents to maintain their independence, and yet have easy access to the daily care they were increasingly needing.

“As we talked, our wish list grew and grew – and so did our anxiety – but then one day, by the grace of God, we found Living Branches, and we saw that proverbial ‘ray of hope,’” said Paula. “The first person we met was Charlene Rogers, Sales Counselor, who shared her own family experiences with us, and made us feel like we weren’t alone in our journey.”

The discussion soon centered around The Willows, as everyone in the conversation felt that Tom and Joan would benefit from both the personal independence and the 24-hour support offered in Living Branches Personal Care. They also felt the couple would thrive in the close-knit and relatively small community at The Willows, which specializes solely in Personal Care.

“Our first impressions of The Willows counted heavily, because our parents weren’t well enough to make the journey until the actual move,” said Paula. “Even though a lot was resting on that visit, the primary emotion I felt during the tour was an overwhelming sense of calm. It was clear, from the moment we stepped into the community, that this was a place of care, support, and peace.”

Tom and Joan’s move to The Willows was just as calm and peaceful, and since then, Paula and her sister see constant evidence that the decision has enriched the lives of their parents over the past fourteen months.

“I was deeply touched when I found out that the Living Branches staff connected my parents to the local Roman Catholic Church,” said Paula. “Faith has always been an important part of their lives, and maintaining this connection has been a critical factor in their happiness and continued growth.”

“Faith has always been an important part of their lives, and maintaining this connection has been a critical factor in their happiness and continued growth.”

Paula also credits the Living Branches Memory Café with many of the positive enhancements in their daily lives. The Memory Café program offers regular meetings to support and educate caregivers of a loved one with Alzheimer’s disease. The program also includes fun and valuable activities for residents with memory issues.

“I’d heard of similar programs at places like the University of Pennsylvania, so to find such cutting-edge support within an intimate community like The Willows felt like the best of both worlds,” said Paula.

Both Joan and Tom were lovingly whisked into other activities and support routines as well. Joan joined The Willows residents’ council, which led to her involvement in a range of community pastimes and events. The couple quickly formed new friendships, which supported them through the transition – and continue to keep their calendars full and vibrant every day of the week.

Whenever she is asked when she knew that her parents had fully transitioned to life at The Willows, Paula maintains that

it wasn’t one moment in particular – but it was right away – which minimized her own stress during the transition.

“I could see their happiness from the very first visit, and I could hear the

lack of stress in my mom’s voice when I called her on the phone,” said Paula. “She had been dealing with so much on her plate before the move, and now, she can focus on what brings her joy.”

Paula and her sister have also been inspired by the positive health improvements they’ve seen in their parents. Joan attends regular physical therapy sessions, and the easy access to healthy food, medical care, and genuine support has made a tangible difference – physically, mentally, and spiritually.

“As we look back, we realize that the decision placed before us as a family was truly a gift – not just for my parents, but also for my sister and me,” said Paula. “With the beautiful knowledge that my parents are so well supported and cared for at The Willows of Living Branches, we can continue to enjoy our parents as ‘mom and dad.’ Every visit, every smile, and every new memory has been a part of this gift, and we look forward to continuing to see that gift blossom as both our parents – and The Willows itself – explore this lovely next chapter in their journey together as a community.”



THE POWER OF MUSIC *for Persons with* DEMENTIA

By: Maureen McShea
Life Enrichment Coordinator, Dock Woods



ONE OF THE MANY BENEFITS OF LIVING IN A PERSONAL CARE COMMUNITY IS THE VARIETY OF MEANINGFUL PROGRAMS AVAILABLE FOR RESIDENTS ON A DAILY BASIS.

These activities are purposefully chosen, developed, and implemented to meet the specific needs and lifelong interests of each and every unique resident. Research has shown the tremendous importance of involvement in leisure activities for the healthy aging of older adults, as well as the many benefits provided from activity engagement in all domains of well-being. Not only do the available programs improve quality of life for each resident, but they also provide opportunities to create lasting friendships, foster meaningful social interactions, and create an overall sense of community.

One of the new activities in our Memory Care community is the Music and Motion program I developed for Living Branches. When I first started working as a life enrichment coordinator in Oakwood Court

and Harmony House, I began to observe the positive participation and engagement in activities that involved music, especially Harmony House worship with Pastor Ray, the Chimes Choir led by Deb Lipsi, and the variety of community-wide musical events provided by Eileen Burks. I also began to notice the increase in sustained attention and engagement in activities that involved some form of physical movement, including balloon and ball games, chair aerobics, and the Harmony House bowling league.

Due to the available trainings, workshops, and informative presentations provided by Living Branches and the Music & Memory program, I learned about the significant benefits that music has on individuals with dementia and the importance that physical activity plays in the improving functional abilities in older adults and persons with dementia. By combining this new knowledge, observations about musical activities, information I knew about each resident, and my past education in therapeutic recreation and geriatric care, I decided to create a new

program. The goal was to involve music in a meaningful way, sustain the attention and engagement of those participating, and improve the overall quality of life for each resident in multiple domains of health.

The goal of the Music and Motion program I developed is to sustain cognitive, physical, emotional, and social functioning. It is a weekly program that lasts 30-60 minutes and involves music, instruments, dancing, physical activity, coordination, direction following, individual expression, and social interaction. Each resident holds an instrument while familiar upbeat, rhythmic music is played. The activity typically starts with the group following the leader's movements in smaller, fine motor exercises to stretch the muscles and gain active participation from the residents (e.g., shrugging shoulders). As the activity progresses through the music, movements become more gross motor (e.g., shake instruments side to side), and eventually more complex (e.g., out, out, in, in, clap, clap). As the activity continues, the role of the leader shifts from life enrichment coordinator to the residents. Residents are encouraged to lead the group in a personalized movement that the rest of the group follows, creating opportunities for residents to express themselves and experience positive self-worth and reinforcement. It was stunning to watch all the residents move in unison and in beat as a group, while positively interacting and reinforcing each other's movements.

One resident in particular who caught my attention was a woman with progressed dementia who often gets upset

during seated exercise sessions because of her frustration and difficulty with following some of even the most simple movements. However, during Music and Motion, her rhythm and motions were synchronized with the entire group, even during some of the more complex movements! I was absolutely amazed to see how the rhythmic music drastically improved that resident's ability to follow directions and sustain attention. In addition to the increased cognitive functioning exhibited during the activity, the resident's overall mood, emotional regulation, and social engagement with others in the group also improved. She was socially engaged with the other residents, laughing and smiling throughout the entire session, and even took a turn leading the group in a movement she created. It was incredible to personally witness, and not just hear about, the power of music in those with dementia.

The available programs, opportunities for socialization, and activity approaches to maintaining healthy functioning are just some of the many benefits and services available in Personal Care. Personal Care communities assist individuals in participating in all the things they love to do, regardless of functional decline, in order to improve well-being. It is the benefit of having activity professionals in Personal Care communities who are able to identify resident's interests and wants, and provide resources so residents are able to engage in the things that bring them joy.





THE HOLISTIC Approach

By: Jaclyn Carson
Social Services
Souderton Mennonite Homes



From a social work perspective, *Personal Care is so much more than assistance with activities of daily living. It is about enriching the physical, mental, spiritual, and social wellbeing of each individual resident and the persons who form their support network. Personal Care is designed to maintain independence, dignity, and the overall quality of a person's life.*

Personal Care at Living Branches is just that: an individualized experience, taking into account each resident and their values and beliefs. As a social worker, I strive to promote a holistic approach that focuses on the physical, mental, and spiritual wellbeing of each resident. Beyond the idea of offering personalized physical care and management, Personal Care focuses on personalizing the mental, spiritual, and social wellbeing of both residents and their families.

When a person and their support network make the decision to move to Personal Care, they can expect to receive physical health services designed to meet each resident's current needs. We provide support for residents' mobility, dressing and bathing, continence, medication

management, and more. Residents are empowered to maintain their independence while receiving supportive services from our staff to supplement their daily care. We strive to keep residents independent and safe in Personal Care for as long as possible.

In order to meet each resident's social, emotional, and spiritual needs, we offer a plethora of programming and community events. Our residents and their support networks are engaged mentally and socially. Staff encourage ongoing involvement in support groups, religious programming, and daily activities. We know that some residents enjoy solo activities and others enjoy group activities. There are programs and activities to meet each resident's needs. We value the

input of our residents to ensure we offer programs that are of interest to each resident.

I have seen the power of a holistic approach over the three years that I have worked in Personal Care. Upon assessment, I usually meet residents who have been isolated in their own home with little or no community contact. Personal Care offers community contact while giving residents the opportunity to have privacy and alone time. I reflect on one resident that I met who had lived alone their entire life; they were depressed and anxious. Since moving to Personal Care, the resident has flourished. I am now greeted with a smile each morning; the resident comes to activities and is engaging with their peers.

By using a holistic approach, we are able to engage with our residents beyond their health care needs. When residents come into Personal Care at the appropriate time and are able to enjoy the services provided to them, they thrive.

Connections of Care

Living Branches partners with Drexel University to boost knowledge, collaboration, and innovation in dementia care.

KATHLEEN ROBERTS, the Living Branches director of dementia care strategy, has always believed that partnerships make a huge difference in what you can accomplish – both at work and in life. As a matter of fact, more than two years ago, Kathleen made a connection in her personal life that eventually sparked exciting partnership opportunities between Living Branches and Drexel University that will help shape our collective Memory Care understanding and capabilities.

"I was attending a conference hosted by the American Alzheimer's Association to learn more about how I could better support my mother," said Kathleen. "One of the speakers was the Dean of Drexel's College of Nursing and Health Professions, Gloria Donnelly, and she spoke so beautifully about her personal experiences with her parents – and had so much knowledge about the subject – that I walked up to speak with her more. After we talked, I had her business card in my hand and plenty of inspiration in my head."

A year later, soon after Kathleen accepted her new role in dementia care strategy, she found Gloria's business card and re-opened the conversation – this time focused on a potential partnership with Living Branches. Kathleen and Gloria set up a meeting for a range of attendees from both sides to discuss possibilities, and as the discussion unfolded, the collaborative ideas flowed from both organizations to discuss.

"We wanted to choose a project where we could hit the ground running," said Kathleen. "We eventually identified 'Caregiver Burnout' as our first area of study, because it isn't something that has been widely examined."

Living Branches hosted four focus groups with residents, staff, and family caregivers – and the Drexel team identified common themes and areas for improvement. Together, they

selected communications as the first topic for follow-up training.

"The challenges that arise from communicating with someone suffering from dementia can be overwhelming for any caregiver," said Kathleen. "Through this new training, we want to help staff and family members alike discover ways to connect with residents with dementia – whether through music, memory-sharing, or other acts of caring communication."

Because one great partnership often leads to others, the collaboration with Drexel enabled Living Branches to receive a grant from LeadingAge PA for a new, three-year, student scholarship program.

"We want to inspire the next generation of caregivers and help them understand the joy and diverse opportunities of working in long-term care," said Kathleen. "Last year's student intern received a wide range of hands-on experiences in all aspects of care, as well as oversight and ownership of several new projects for residents that ties directly into the work we're doing with Drexel."

And Kathleen and her team are just getting started! Drexel's College of Nursing and Health Professions just welcomed a new dean, Laura Gitlin, who is excited to build the alliance. The next collaborative project will focus on the impact of different forms of physical exercise for persons with dementia.

"When I think about the future of this partnership, all I see is possibilities," said Kathleen. "Every member of this collaboration brings unique creativity, insight, and experiences to the table – and together, we will continue to make a real difference in care – for our own residents and for the broader community."

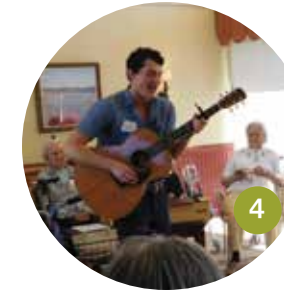




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WWW.LIVINGBRANCHES.ORG



1

FRIENDS DINNER (1)

The Annual Friends Dinner was held in late October at Dock Woods. Residents, staff, board members, vendors, and friends gathered for an evening of fellowship, food, and entertainment. Guests enjoyed a delicious meal prepared by dining services and a wonderful concert by Higher Call quartet from Minnesota. We are pleased to report that over \$20,000 was raised for the Sharing Fund, which benefits residents at Dock Woods and The Willows. Thank you for your very generous support. Your gifts make a difference.

LOBBY MAKEOVER (2)

Renovations in the lobby at Souderton Mennonite Homes were completed just before the year's end. The new entrance now boasts a beautiful patterned floor, new furniture, fireplace, and a front desk that is more open and accessible for residents and visitors. We have received very positive feedback from residents and staff. Additionally, dining services is now serving flavored water at the beverage station. We hope you stop by to see the new look. And be sure to have a refreshment while you're there!

VALENTINE SOCIAL (3)

Gordon and Velda Beidler were gracious host and hostess again this year at the valentine celebration at Souderton Mennonite Homes. The featured entertainment was The Coventry Singers, a choral group from the Pottstown area. Residents enjoyed their musical selections and hors d'oeuvres provided by the dining services team following the concert. This event is always a bright spot for residents during wintertime.



1

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JULY 1, 2017 THROUGH DECEMBER 31, 2017



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**COMMITTED TO ANNUAL GIFTS OF
\$500 OR MORE**

Bruce and Deborah Alder
Cindy and Joel Alderfer
Rodney and Carolyn Allebach
Anonymous

Will and Glenda Bergey
William and Anne Bishop

Edward and Lucy Brubaker
Kathryn Buckingham

John and Nancy Butterwick
Doris Camburn

Kenneth and Gayle Clemmer
Charlotte Dimmig

Nancy and Tom Donnelly
Ralph and Carol Folcarelli

Jeff and Donna Godshall
Ted Gody

Keith and Betsy Heavener
P. Scott Heckler

Robert and Beatrice Henning
Bryan and Barbara Hunsberger

J. Kenneth and Nancy Jones
Richard and Colette Karuschkat

Frank and Elva Keenan
Vernon and Elizabeth Kratz

Wilbur and Marilyn Kriebel
Bill and Donna Kriner

Bill and Floss Kuhfuss
Sandy and Steven Landes

Pat and Spencer Lee
Cheryl and Anthony Loftus

Donna Longacre
Henry and Carol Longacre

Alexandra and Bill Metricarti
Alice T. Moore

J. Phillip and Betsy Moyer
K. Leon and Dawn F. Moyer

Steve and Georgia Myers
Miriam Nyce

Sam and Gladys Nyce
Barry and Carol Pratt

Ray and Nancy Scherfel
Bonnie and Dean Scott

Randy and Sylvia Shelly
Arlin and Esther Shisler

Katherine and James Shott
Joan Stitzinger

Kenneth Truscott
Norm and Janet Vincent

Dean and Julia Wimmer

Margaret and Wilmer Zook

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Silver

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John Garis Homes, Inc.
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275 Dock Drive • Lansdale, PA 19446
ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

**The Willows
of Living Branches**
2343 Bethlehem Pike
Hatfield, PA 19440
215-822-0688

**Souderton
Mennonite Homes**
207 W. Summit Street
Souderton, PA 18964
215-723-9881

Dock Woods
275 Dock Drive
Lansdale, PA 19446
215-368-4438

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MARKETING DISCOVERY TOURS

Discovery Tours are designed for first-time visitors to Souderton Mennonite Homes and Dock Woods. Each event begins with light refreshments and a brief presentation to explain the communities and help you become better acquainted with Living Branches. Then you'll take a tour of the community center and residents' homes, visiting a villa, a cottage, and an apartment. There is no fee for this event, but registration is required. *To register, visit www.livingbranches.org/events.*

Souderton Mennonite Homes

May 8 – 1:30 p.m.
May 22 – 1:30 p.m.

Dock Woods

May 1 – 10:00 a.m.
May 16 – 1:30 p.m.

