

# BRANCHING OUT

LIVING BRANCHES

*Live & Grow – Together*



*Embracing Change*  
TO **STRENGTHEN**  
*a Tradition of Care*

INSIDE THIS ISSUE: DEMENTIA CARE STRATEGY UPDATE





## FROM THE PRESIDENT'S DESK

# REFLECTING ON A CENTURY OF SERVICE

### AS WE NEAR THE END OF 2017 AND THE

conclusion of the centennial year of Souderton Mennonite Homes, I feel led to pause and reflect on the story, the purpose, and the legacy of this incredible place. What began as a groundbreaking idea – a place for seniors to live and be cared for – has become a vibrant community where persons of all ages are living and growing together.

One of the most fascinating things this year has been talking with persons and hearing their memories of Souderton Mennonite Homes. Many remember it as a dark, quiet place from their childhood. Others remember the orchards and fields that used to be. One such example is looking through the scrapbook collection of Paul and Esther Moyer. Paul and Esther served as administrator and assistant administrator from 1978 to 1993 and now reside in the apartments. In this edition, you will hear memories and stories about great change that took place during their time in leadership and also in their time as residents.

Paul and Esther are the first to tell you about administrators who came before them and staff who devoted their lives to the work of Souderton Mennonite Homes. It calls to memory a verse from Hebrews, “Therefore, since we have so great a cloud of witnesses surrounding us... let us run with endurance the race that is set before us” (Hebrews 12:1). When we reflect on our history, it is clear that there is a great cloud of witnesses who have run the race before us. They laid the foundation, continued in mission, and carved a legacy of service to seniors.

Throughout this entire year, we have celebrated the 100<sup>TH</sup> anniversary in various ways: a special event with John Ruth, concerts and programs, quilting and apple butter demonstrations, and service projects. These celebrations were intentionally planned as an opportunity for the Souderton Mennonite Homes family to remember and relive important moments from the past. The connections between family and church family, and the themes of service and community are truly the DNA of Souderton Mennonite Homes. It is my hope that in reflecting on the past, we will be encouraged to carry on in the race with the same endurance as those who came before.

EDWARD D. BRUBAKER  
President/CEO

## BRANCHING OUT

A PUBLICATION OF LIVING BRANCHES

*Together we empower older adults and families to lead lives of purpose and joy, guided by the Mennonite tradition of care and service to others.*

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## Table of Contents

### 4 Embracing Change to Strengthen a Tradition of Care

*An interview with Paul and Esther Moyer*

### 8 Community Updates

*New executive director at Souderton Mennonite Homes and Dock Meadows, new signage at Dock Woods, renovations at Souderton Mennonite Homes*

### 10 Dementia Care Strategy: A Year in Review

*Music and Memory program, research study with Drexel University, summer intern, and more!*

### 12 When Music Becomes Your Medicine

*The benefits of music therapy for persons with COPD and other health issues.*

### 14 Campus Happenings

*Annual Chicken BBQ, BuxMont Help End Alzheimer's! Walk, New England weekend away, horticulture therapy*

### 17 Annual Report

*Fiscal Year 2017 Financial Performance*





# Embracing Change TO STRENGTHEN a Tradition of Care



## AN INTERVIEW WITH PAUL AND ESTHER MOYER

By: Danielle Leheny

### IN 1976, PAUL AND ESTHER MOYER WERE HIRED TO HELP INSPIRE GROWTH AND

change at Souderton Mennonite Homes. As the community's last couple in leadership, they led the charge for a multi-decade period of expansion and advancement – which allowed Souderton Mennonite Homes to serve more residents and provide an enhanced level of care. When recently asked if the many changes were difficult to implement in such a traditional and long-standing community, Paul and Esther glanced at each other with amused, knowing smiles.

“Yes, you could definitely say there were challenges associated with the changes,” said Paul. But, in the same breath, he quickly added, “It was all worth the effort though. Just take a peek around you.” As he gestured to the bright, bustling Souderton Mennonite Homes lobby, residents and staff were sharing their day together – enjoying a morning snack



and catching up on the latest happenings – just as they had 100 years ago.

Much like the modern, yet homey, Souderton Mennonite Homes lobby, Paul and Esther represent not only the community's impressive changes over the past few decades, but also its enduring constancy. Now residents in the apartments, Paul and Esther were more than happy to share their memories from their days as administrator and assistant administrator and to reflect on the many changes that have allowed Souderton Mennonite Homes to continue its treasured traditions of community, togetherness, and care.

### A BLESSED OPPORTUNITY – AND A PERFECT FIT

The Moyers and Souderton Mennonite Homes came together at ideal times in their respective histories. Paul had been working for his family's feed, coal, and fuel oil business for over 30 years and was ready for a change. Both Paul and Esther had spent many years volunteering for their church and within the community. They were interested in a new opportunity that would allow them to continue their tradition of volunteering, but with four children, they needed a steady income.

They expressed their wishes with their pastor, who shared the couple's story with the Souderton Mennonite Homes board. In 1975, the board came knocking on the Moyers' door – although Paul and Esther asked for some time to think about their decision. Esther began volunteering at the home, and she participated in a wide variety of activities to give her a feel for the daily happenings throughout the community.

“Even though Paul's father had lived here, we knew we had much to learn about life here – and we needed to make sure we were the right fit for the opportunity,” said Esther. “Every day, I would return home and share information about what I saw and learned with Paul, and we would talk through the decision. I was on board first, so eventually, those conversations mostly included me working to convince Paul!”

Esther was successful in her convincing, and on February 2, 1976, the Moyers joined Souderton Mennonite Homes. They were the first couple to live off-site, and this fact – as well as the overall transition itself – offered the Moyers challenges that required patience, commitment, and compassion.

“Curtis Mininger, who had been the steward when we came to the home, was involved in almost every aspect of the residents' lives,” said Paul. “He did everything from assist with nursing care to fix broken glasses. His office drawers were overflowing with tools he used for maintenance and repairs. The

residents were accustomed to this level of involvement, and in the early days, the residents were hesitant to turn to Esther and myself, as we weren't residents ourselves.”

The Moyers spent much of their early days quietly weaving themselves into the fabric of life at the community – and earning residents' trust.

“We didn't hesitate to come when we were needed,” said Esther. “We often drove out to the home in the middle of the night if there was a thunderstorm, so that we could sit with the residents in the chapel, where they felt the safest. We wanted every resident to know that we were there for them.”

As time passed, residents began to seek out Paul and Esther about their needs, and in turn, Souderton Mennonite Homes became a second home for the Moyers – but they knew it was a home that needed change.

“None of the rooms had private bathrooms, and there was absolutely no air conditioning anywhere,” said Paul. “Staff and volunteer residents worked in multiple areas, so it wasn't unusual for someone to work in laundry in the morning, dining mid-day, and then housekeeping in the afternoon. There was zero departmental structure, and given our steady growth in residents – as well as the progress of the outside world around us – we knew that we had a lot of work to accomplish.”



“HITTING THE GAS” ON A VISION FOR THE FUTURE

“When the board approached us about coming to Souderton Mennonite Homes to help them with changes and growth, they already had the plans in their hands!” said Paul. “So, once we stepped into our roles, it didn’t take long before we started to implement them.”

The first plans included an expansion that would add 45 nursing beds and four-plex cottages – projects that were completed by 1980. In 1982, another expansion added the Summit dining room and 58 additional accommodations including nine personal care rooms, 18 studio apartments, and 11 one-bedroom apartments.



“Very early in my role as steward, one of the board members said to me that someone really needed to hit the gas on the needed changes at the home,” said Paul. “Years later, when we were busy with yet another large project, he approached me again at a meeting and joked that now we needed to hit the brakes!”

Paul and Esther were dedicated to improvements wherever they were needed. Esther, an organizer by nature, helped set up individual departments for services like laundry, housekeeping, and dining.

“Throughout the 1980s, changing regulations impacted almost every aspect of our daily operations,” said Esther. “It was a new way of thinking – but one that ultimately not only allowed us to meet the new requirements, but also enhanced our ability to provide a higher level of service and care.”

A common concern for the residents was that their costs might increase with all of the enhancements to the home – but the board worked hard through each project to ensure a solid financial foundation for every stage of growth.

“Every expansion was met with demand from new residents who wanted to live here,” said Paul. “In many cases, apartments were sold before they were even fully built – tangible proof that the work we were doing was allowing us to better serve

the growing needs of the broader community.”

NAVIGATING THE CHALLENGES OF CHANGE

Even though the growth allowed the Souderton Mennonite Homes family to expand, as well as offered the residents enhancements to their lives that they enjoyed, change always presents challenges.

“We are a traditional community, and as we expanded over the years, helping residents through those changes was an integral part of our role as administrators,” said Esther.

Residents weren’t shy about expressing their feelings about the many physical changes they saw – from the loss of the apple orchards in one of the expansions to the new carpet added in the main building. Furthermore, with every new regulation and process enhancement, residents and staff alike needed to adjust to further tweaks in their daily activities.

“Communication and compassion were essential to helping the community understand what – and why – particular changes were happening,” said Esther. “Many a great idea came from interactive discussions with residents and staff!”

PASSING THE BATON – AND ENJOYING THE REWARDS

In 1993, Margaret Zook – a bright leader whom Paul and Esther had hired to help with human resources and public relations – became the first sole administrator for Souderton Mennonite Homes. The expansion efforts that Paul and Esther had shepherded continued under Margaret’s strong leadership, beginning with an impressive



75-apartment expansion – a project that allowed the community to welcome even more residents home.

Even though they were no longer administrators, the Moyers remained closely involved in life at Souderton Mennonite Homes. Paul helped with the sales of the apartments for a short time, eventually settling into a nine-year role as the groundskeeper. He enjoyed the opportunity immensely, as it kept him close to the community he loved and allowed him to be outside for much of his day.

Esther continued to help Margaret drive the winds of change. She served as the director of finance for a time, and was then tasked with setting up a brand new department as the first director of purchasing, a role she held for nine years.

In December 2004, Paul and Esther became residents at Souderton Mennonite Homes, and today, they take full advantage of the thriving community they helped nurture during their years of service. They are quick to praise the hard work of every department – although Paul clearly has a special place in his heart for the dining team, headed by Ted Gody, whom Paul hired over 20 years ago.

“Ted and the dietary department deserve an award for every meal they prepare,” said Paul. “Esther and I savor each entrée that comes across our plate – from corn on the cob in the summer to the latest fall desserts of pineapple upside-down cake and German chocolate cake. We haven’t felt the need to cook in years!”

The couple participates in a wide range of activities, such as movie and game nights, special events, and community walks.

“Since we’ve lived here, there have continued to be many wonderful changes that offer new opportunities at every turn,” said Esther. “For example, Tasia Coblentz, fitness center coordinator, is constantly introducing new ideas to encourage both health and togetherness.”

Esther is quick to point out that you won’t find Paul or herself on any committees (since their voices “were heard for long enough”) – but even as residents, the Moyers serve as a daily reminder of the impact that comes from embracing change to strengthen a foundation of constancy.

“Who we are as a community has never changed,” said Esther. “We are a family of people dedicated to God, to each other, and to traditions of care and service that endure. The changes we made together over the years have allowed us to continue those traditions and to serve an even greater number of residents.”

Looking back on their many decades of service – 28 years for Paul and 30 years for Esther – as well as on their happy years as residents, the Moyers remain grateful for that first knock on their door by the Souderton Mennonite Homes board over 40 years ago.

“We gladly welcomed the opportunity before us, and we are honored to have played a role in the growth of this home and community,” said Paul. “We learned a lot about change in the process, and to this day, our best advice to new residents is to be open to the diverse experiences this home offers. Change – and life – are what you make of them, and there are countless joys to be gained by opening your heart and mind to new possibilities.”

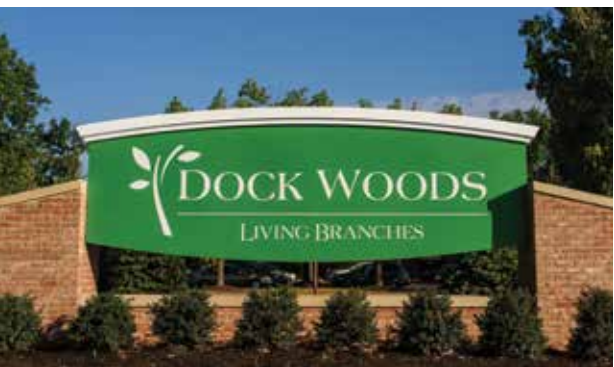




**NEW EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR  
FOR SOUDERTON  
MENNONITE HOMES  
AND DOCK MEADOWS**

We are pleased to welcome Monique Cole to Living Branches as the new executive director for Souderton Mennonite Homes and Dock Meadows.

She officially joined the organization in September, after first serving as a judge at the Pennsylvania Dutch baking contest at the Chicken BBQ in August. Monique comes to us from The Lutheran Home at Topton, where she served as their executive director. Monique’s entire work experience has been with senior adults. Monique has also served in various roles at Coventry Manor Nursing Home in Pottstown, Kindred Transitional Care in Wyomissing, and Atria Senior Living in Kimberton. Monique has a bachelor’s degree in business administration from Alvernia University, a nursing home administrator license, and a personal care home administrator license. Monique enjoys gardening, running, participating in activities with her church, and spending time with her husband, Ben, and two children, Gabriel and Jacob.



**NEW SIGNAGE AT DOCK WOODS**

In 2014 when Living Branches updated the organization and campus logos, it was decided that it was time to unify signage at all three communities. The signage at Dock Woods was in the greatest need of repair, so updates began there. The goals for the new signage package were to reflect the vibrancy of our communities and also to be legible, concise, and clear. It was a very long process that involved months of communication between our sign fabricators and Towamencin township, but we are very pleased with the end result. The Dock Woods signs on Detwiler and Gehman roads are much larger and readable. And the wayfinding signs on campus have been improved for easier navigation. We thank the operations and environmental services teams at Dock Woods for their dedicated work on this project.



**LIVING U  
EXPANDING  
IN 2018**

Living U, the Living Branches lifelong learning institute, held its inaugural semester in spring 2017 with one three-session course about chocolate. Current residents were invited to register, and we were thrilled to have over seventy residents participate. In fall 2017, Living U grew to a semester of 8 courses and eighteen sessions. We were excited to extend the invitation to persons on the waitlist and were very encouraged when over twenty future residents registered! The Living U curriculum council is now planning for the spring 2018: A Spring of the Arts. We are excited to open Living U to persons in the wider community in 2018! If you’re interested in learning more or receiving spring course information, contact Karen Davis at Karen.Davis@livingbranches.org or 215-368-4438 ext. 44204.



**COMMUNITY CENTER RENOVATIONS  
AT SOUDERTON MENNONITE HOMES**

In September, renovations began on the 2000 level at Souderton Mennonite Homes which includes updates to the lobby, Corner Store, Apple Orchard Café, and therapy room. The Corner Store was closed in late September, but had a grand reopening on October 2. The store received a fresh new coat of paint, new carpet, and new countertops. The therapy room was also closed for a short time in late September. It too received new flooring and paint. Shelving and desks were also installed. The second phase of the project will be new carpet, paint, and furniture in the café and lobby. Renovations are expected to be complete by the end of the year. Rest assured, the apple tree

isn’t going anywhere! We invite you to stop by to see the updates, and then stay for a meal and some shopping.



**Holiday  
Shopping  
at Living  
Branches**

**THE CORNER STORE**

**Tax Free Shopping**

Friday, December 15  
New items, free gift wrap, and specials!

**Extended Holiday Hours**

Fridays, December 1, 8, 15, 22  
Open until 7:00 p.m.

**THE ACORN SHOP**

**Free ornament with gift purchase  
over \$20 (WHILE SUPPLIES LAST!)**

Fridays, December 1, 8, 25, 22

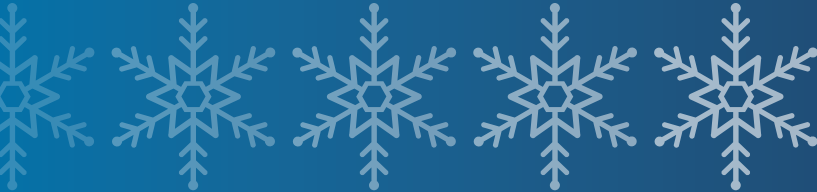
**25% off gift of your choice and  
free tote with purchases over \$25**

Thursday, December 7 and Friday, December 8

**Extended Holiday Hours**

Fridays, December 1, 8, 15, 22 –  
Open until 8:00 p.m.

Saturdays, December 2, 9, 16, 23 –  
Open until 5:00 p.m.





# DEMENTIA CARE STRATEGY: A Year in Review



## MUSIC AND MEMORY



In April 2017, Living Branches held numerous showings of the documentary *Alive Inside*, which highlights the incredible impact of music in the lives of persons with dementia, Alzheimer's disease, or other memory related issues. When listening to their favorite music, persons truly come alive and begin to sing, dance, laugh, and reminisce about their lives.

Living Branches launched its own Music and Memory program the following month. Kathleen Roberts has been working to build a team of volunteers who upload CDs to iTunes, create playlists based on genre or resident preference, and then download the playlists to iPods. The program received an initial boost in funding when it was selected as the charity for the spring fashion show by Franconia Heritage Gift Shop. The money raised at that event, along with donations from donors, has been used to purchase additional iPods and headsets.

If you are interested in getting involved with the Music and Memory program, Kathleen extends an open invitation to the volunteer meetings she has each month at both Dock Woods and Souderton Mennonite Homes. She is also accepting donations of iPods, CDs, or monetary gifts that will be used to purchase those items.

## DREXEL UNIVERSITY RESEARCH STUDY: CAREGIVER BURNOUT

Over the past six months, Kathleen Roberts has been working closely with Drexel University College of Nursing and Health Professionals to embark on a collaborative research partnership. The purpose of this relationship is to explore and learn about dementia care. The first topic that Drexel wanted to study is caregiver burnout, as there is little existing research about the topic. Drexel views Living Branches as an entire caregiver organization and proposed a study that engaged with persons in three distinct groups: residents with a dementia diagnosis, family caregivers, and staff caregivers. Focus groups were held in late September for data collection. The end product for Living Branches is that Drexel will create customized training modules for each of those three groups. These modules will teach us about implementing proper self care and offer recommendations on how to decrease caregiver burnout. We are very pleased to be partnering with Drexel University and hope this is the start of an ongoing, mutually beneficial relationship!

## DEMENTIA CARE STRATEGY SUMMER INTERN

LeadingAge PA offered the opportunity for scholarship funding to support the concept that our long term care industry needs to attract young talent. Kathleen Roberts applied for the scholarship over the winter and was pleasantly surprised to learn the Living Branches application was selected! After an interview process, Kathleen welcomed Hannah Logan to Living Branches in June. Hannah is a bio-psychology major at Geneva College and is currently in her senior year.

During the 12 weeks that Hannah was at Living Branches, she experienced every department for a day or two. This mini-administrator in training exposure was intended to provide a realistic view of our industry. At the same time, Hannah was heavily involved with dementia care strategy initiatives. She was instrumental in launching Memory Cafes, an informal time for persons with a dementia diagnosis and their caregivers to meet with others in a safe environment, and the Memory and Music program.



It was clear from that start that Hannah would fit in well with the Living Branches community. Kathleen recalls, "As I met her in the lobby for her interview, she was conversing with a resident about some of his medical issues. She was interacting with such interest and compassion that I knew she was a special young person." Hannah continued to develop deep relationships with many residents during her summer internship. We are thankful to LeadingAge PA for providing this incredible opportunity for both Living Branches and Hannah.

## MUSIC THERAPY SESSIONS

Kathleen has welcomed Seth Laucks, a music therapist at St. Ignatius Nursing Home in West Philadelphia, to Living Branches twice this year. Seth has conducted training workshops for staff about how to use music to connect with residents, specifically those with dementia. Kathleen shared, "The techniques that Seth is teaching expand our toolbox of options to use when working with our loved ones with dementia." Seth has an incredible way of connecting with others, and it was not uncommon for staff and resident volunteers to weep or share deeply personal stories during his sessions. We are excited to implement these techniques in the Memory Care areas within Living Branches.



## SHARK TANK AT LIVING BRANCHES

Last fall when Ed Brubaker and Alex Metricarti introduced Kathleen Roberts as the director of dementia care strategy and outlined the vision for her role, many staff persons in direct care positions shared ideas they had for ways to improve quality of life, life enrichment activities, and other daily happenings for residents with dementia. It became quite clear that the Living Branches staff would be instrumental in implementing change, and was ready to do so. In the spring, Kathleen Roberts ran a Shark Tank campaign for staff in the entire organization. Staff persons could submit a proposal for an idea, present the proposal to a panel, and then potentially receive funding for their idea. Some of the ideas proposed were memory journals at Dock Meadows, a baking activity program at Souderton Mennonite Homes, and spiritual activity boxes at Dock Woods. It was incredible to see staff propose these ideas with passion and compassion, as they personally know the residents whose lives would be impacted. Kathleen was proud to announce all ideas proposed through Shark Tank were funded and is excited to host this program again next year.



# WHEN MUSIC BECOMES YOUR MEDICINE

By Bart Astor for Next Avenue



AT LIVING BRANCHES, WE RECENTLY IMPLEMENTED MUSIC THERAPY TRAININGS FOR STAFF INTERACTING WITH RESIDENTS WHO HAVE DEMENTIA. THE PURPOSE OF THIS TYPE OF THERAPY IS TO CONNECT WITH THE PERSON THROUGH MUSIC THEY LOVE. THEY BEGIN TOE TAPPING, RECALLING MEMORIES, AND SHARING STORIES. IT IS AN INCREDIBLE WAY TO CONNECT WITH OTHERS, AND HELP RESIDENTS CONNECT WITH THEIR OWN MEMORIES. IN THIS ARTICLE, MR. ASTOR EXPLORES HOW MUSIC THERAPY CAN BENEFIT PERSONS WHO ARE NOT STRUGGLING WITH MEMORY IMPAIRMENT, BUT RATHER OTHER HEALTH ISSUES.

If music hath charms to soothe the savage breast, then playing music hath charms to heal the savage breast, or, more appropriately, the damaged lungs.

This is what Tom Zoe of Austin, Texas believes. So he helped create a program at Seton Medical Center in Austin, where he volunteers, to teach sufferers of chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) and other chronic lung diseases to play the harmonica as part of their physical therapy.

The blowing and drawing required to play the harmonica are excellent exercises that help patients with COPD. The exercise also improves muscle tone in lips, cheeks, and tongue.

Zoe emphasizes that no musical knowledge is necessary, just a willingness to use the harmonica as a therapeutic tool. In classes, he teaches students the basics of making sound from the harmonica and how to play simple songs. They use a method that shows which

note to play and whether to draw in or blow out.

Zoe says the patients enjoy the classes much more than just doing breathing exercises, because they all get to play songs together and feel like musicians, not patients.

And whether they're playing fairly easy songs like *You Are My Sunshine* or blowing a blues harp, harmonica players exercise their lungs effectively.

## WHY MUSIC IS A MULTI-FACETED THERAPY

Music therapy has been around for a long time — Hippocrates was known to have played music for his mental patients as early as 400 B.C. — but only recently became a recognized medical discipline with board certification.

It is a helpful tool for therapists in treating mental health disease, developmental and learning disabilities, dementia, and acute and chronic pain.

Music therapy also provides therapists with important clues to help assess emotional and physical health — we've witnessed how up-tempo and dance music sparks toe-tapping, even in individuals with late-stage dementia. And music from the distant past, often when they were young adults in their early 20s, will elicit a response and singing along from patients who are otherwise non-communicative.

But so-called "harmonica therapy," or the playing of an instrument that produces music, is a tool that therapists have just recently endorsed to make physical and occupational therapy more interesting and more effective.

While musicians have long gone to physical therapists seeking help because playing their instrument had caused pain or dysfunction, harmonica therapy turns the whole thing around. As Zoe observes, "It gives me pleasure to hear how all these people talk about how much it helps. They've worked hard to develop the ability to play, and they get a huge reward, both physically and emotionally."

together much more enjoyable to the kids as we competed to earn that one solo line she would award. As she aged and became riddled with arthritis, she told me that rather than just do the exercises that her physical therapist had assigned to help with her dexterity, she would sit at the piano and try to play. It frustrated her, for sure, because she could no longer dance around the keys as she used to.

*"we've witnessed how up-tempo and dance music sparks toe-tapping, even in individuals with late-stage dementia"*

## LIFELONG, PROVEN BENEFITS OF PLAYING MUSIC

In her article, Joanne Loewy, director of the Louis Armstrong Center for Music and Medicine, explains how playing a wind instrument like the harmonica or recorder not only builds lung capacity but also helps patients control their breathing and regulate heart rate and blood pressure. She writes of an asthma patient who, for many years, had relied on a quick-relief inhaler when experiencing shortness of breath. Through learning to play the recorder, she learned breathing techniques she can now use instead of her inhaler.

I recall my own introduction to music therapy from my aunt Sally.

When I was a kid, she would sit at the piano and hammer out tunes at every family function. We all gathered around harmonizing, making those family get-

But playing tunes, albeit more slowly, made the exercises fun, and both she and her therapist were convinced it helped her physical condition.

My aunt Sally was a natural, playing piano by ear. But since not everyone has that gift, there are many websites that offer instruction on playing harmonica, as well as most other instruments. As Zoe encourages, "Learn to play an musical instrument and it just might change your life."

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#### 42<sup>ND</sup> ANNUAL CHICKEN BBQ

The 42<sup>nd</sup> Annual Chicken BBQ at Souderton Mennonite Homes was held on Saturday, August 26. We were thrilled to have record attendance at the event as we celebrated the 100th anniversary of Souderton Mennonite Homes. In addition to the traditional chicken platters, the Apple Orchard Café was open and serving hot dogs, hamburgers, sausage and peppers, corn on the cob, and Jesse's BBQ pulled pork. Curbside Creamery food truck arrived midday serving Lancaster ice cream. New this year was Peaceable Kingdom Petting Zoo and a live animal show from Lehigh Valley Zoo – they were both a huge hit as we had many young families with children in attendance. And of course, every one's crowd favorite, the Phillie Phanatic, made an appearance attracting children of all ages. A huge thank you to the volunteers and staff who made this day a success and to all who attended!





LOBSTER, LIGHTHOUSE,  
AND WHALES

In September, residents took a weekend bus trip to Cape Code, Massachusetts. On their first full day, the group toured the John F. Kennedy memorial, the Korean War memorial, and Hyannis Port before heading to America’s hometown: Plymouth. Later they climbed aboard a Lobster Tales Cruise and helped to haul lobster traps out of the ocean. This was one of the highlights of the trip! On their second day they toured the local lighthouses and embarked on a whale watching experience. They were able to see Humpback, Minke, and Fin whales – a dream come true for some residents! Before returning home, the group toured the New Bedford Whaling Museum, a 19th century whaleship and visited Seaman’s Bethel (Whale Man’s Chapel), made famous by Moby Dick. And of course, they dined on lobster, scallops, and other fresh seafood during their stay. It was the perfect fall weekend in New England!

BUXMONT HELP END ALZHEIMERS!

On Saturday, September 16, residents, staff persons, and family members from Living Branches and the wider community gathered at Souderton Community Park for the Buxmont Help End Alzheimer’s! Walk. As in previous years, persons enjoyed the various raffle gift baskets and music provided by DJ Dane Clarke, a maintenance technician at Dock Woods. Donations received at the event, raffle gift basket ticket sales, and Gertrude Hawke chocolate bar sales from the summer fundraiser all contributed to a total of over \$5,500 that was raised for the Alzheimer’s Association.



HORTICULTURE THERAPY

Each month, Marsha Galy, a horticultural therapist, comes to Dock Meadows to do a plant project with residents. Some of the projects have been decorating a wreath, make a container garden, planting a bulb, or arranging flowers in a container, just to name a few. The residents then take their creation back to their room. Gerry Moore, life enrichment coordinator at Dock Meadows, shares, “They loved watching their bulbs bloom. They began to have conversations about when they planted a bulb, how tall their plant was growing, how many buds their plant had, etc. It has been a very fun experience to see their talents emerge and hear the encouragement they give each other as they are working on their project for the day.” Thanks, Marsha, for encouraging residents to use their creative talents and for adding some color and joy to life at Dock Meadows.



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](http://www.livingbranches.org/events).**

Dock Woods

Tuesday, December 12, 1:30 p.m.

Souderton  
Mennonite Homes

Thursday, December 14, 1:30 p.m.

Annual Report  
*Letter from Chair / CEO*



Dear Partners in Mission:

Thank you for your continued support of Living Branches. As stated in our mission, we strive to empower older adults and families to lead lives of purpose and joy. And it is only through relationships with residents, staff, family members, volunteers, local businesses, and the wider community that we are able to do just that. We know that Living Branches is unique because of the persons who choose to live and grow here - together.

We are very pleased to report that the communities of Living Branches are performing well. Our financial results for fiscal year ending June 30, 2017 were positive. The occupancy for Living Branches remains above national averages in Residential Living, due to a very strong waitlist. Occupancy in Health Care is also strong, but more rapidly changing as we adjust to the higher frequency of short-term stays in hospitals. Again, we experienced some challenges with occupancy in Personal Care, but have found this to be an industry-wide trend, and not indicative of something specific to Living Branches.

In the last fiscal year, the board of directors and executive leadership team had a planning retreat for the long-term future of Living Branches. Some of the areas of focus are the changing landscape of health care, changes for Medicare and Medicaid, and new Personal Care development in the market. We focused on ways to strengthen the organization in light of these challenges.

We are proud to be part of Covenant Health Alliance of Pennsylvania (CHAPa), a network of 13 Anabaptist Providers Group members, which benefits us in regards to managed care contracts, purchasing, and relationships with health systems in our region. We also know there is much work to be done within our own infrastructure. We began master planning to determine how to best reposition the current Health Care centers and communities at large, so they will meet the needs and desires of residents in the future. Additionally, we are moving forward with a new Residential Living development on the Derstine property on Cowpath Road, which is adjacent to the Souderton Mennonite Homes campus.

Living Branches is blessed with strong leadership and many partners who join us in our ministry. On behalf of our residents, staff, and board of directors, we thank you for your support as we work toward a future with purpose and joy.

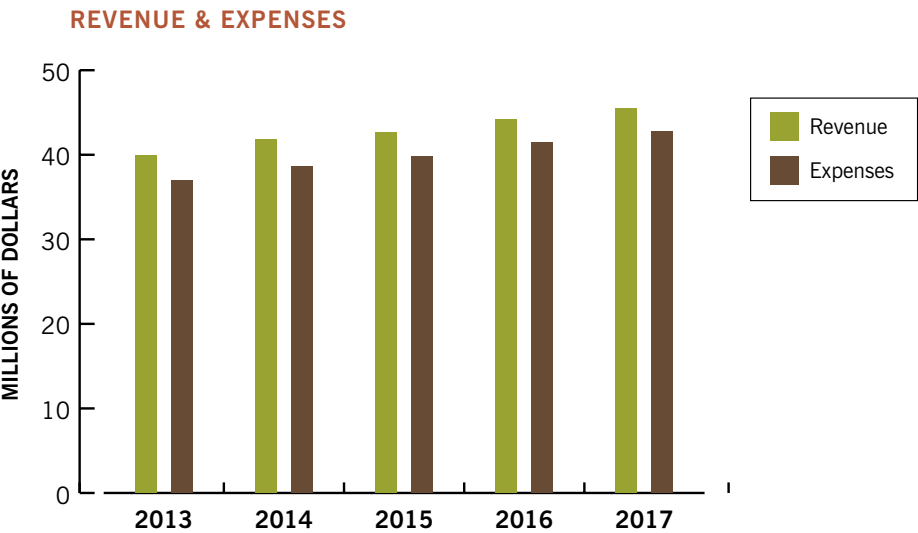
*Edward D. Brubaker*

EDWARD D. BRUBAKER  
President/CEO

*Kenneth J. Clemmer*

KENNETH J. CLEMMER  
Board Chair





LIVING BRANCHES CONSOLIDATED BALANCE SHEET  
JUNE 30, 2017

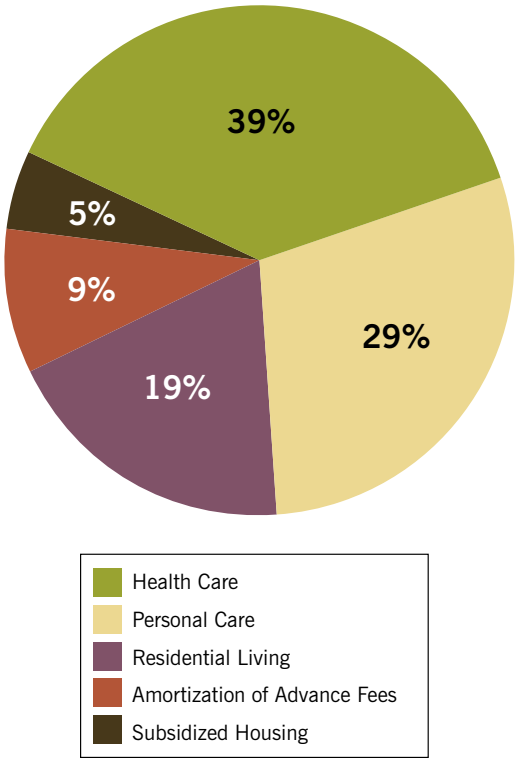
ASSETS

Current Assets	\$9,855,058
Assets Whose Use is Limited	96,080,000
Property & Equipment (Net)	62,138,875
Other Assets	377,526
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$168,451,459</b>

LIABILITIES & NET ASSETS

Current Liabilities	\$4,272,337
Long-Term Debt	5,048,844
Refundable Fees & Deposits	23,580,741
Deferred Revenues from Entrance Fees	22,640,029
Other Liabilities	72,332
<b>Total Liabilities</b>	<b>55,614,283</b>
<b>Net Assets</b>	<b>\$112,837,176</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$168,451,459</b>

2017 RESIDENT SERVICES  
REVENUE SOURCES



BENEVOLENT &  
UNREIMBURSED CARE

Health Care	\$1,431,524
Personal Care & Residential Living	1,432,574
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$2,864,098</b>

NUMBER OF RECIPIENTS

Health Care	74
Personal Care	43
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>117</b>

Benevolent and unreimbursed care is provided to residents when their savings, income, insurance, and public assistance benefits are not sufficient to fully pay for the cost of care provided by the organization.

LIVING BRANCHES  
BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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*Chair*

John W. Duerksen  
*Vice Chair*

L. Brent Kolb  
*Secretary*

James L. Rittenhouse  
*Treasurer*

J. Todd Alderfer, MD

Kenneth R. Burkholder

Angela S. Hackman

Bryan K. Hunsberger

Amy L. Kolb

Jane L. Ruth

Sylvia F. Shelly

Edward D. Brubaker  
*President*

LIVING BRANCHES  
FOUNDATION BOARD  
OF DIRECTORS

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*President*

Daryl J. Hackman  
*Vice President*

Sylvia F. Shelly  
*Secretary*

Jeffrey K. Landis,  
*Treasurer*

Kenneth R. Burkholder

P. Scott Heckler

Bryan K. Hunsberger

Henry L. Rosenberger  
*Director Emeritus*







275 Dock Drive • Lansdale, PA 19446  
**ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED**

**Dock Meadows**  
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

Non-Profit  
U.S. Postage  
**PAID**  
Lansdale, Pa  
19446  
Permit No. 152



Is Mom happy?  
**I don't worry  
about that  
anymore.**  
She's at  
Living Branches.

Stay active and independent.  
See why Personal Care  
solutions at Living Branches  
have earned rave reviews  
from residents and their families.

**Call 215-368-4438 to Schedule Your Tour**

**Dock Meadows**  
Hatfield, PA  
215-822-0688

**Souderton**  
**Mennonite Homes**  
Souderton, PA  
215-723-9881

**Dock Woods**  
Lansdale, PA  
215-368-4438



[www.livingbranches.org](http://www.livingbranches.org)

