



A NEWSLETTER BY VIRGINIA BAPTIST HOMES | VBH.ORG | SUMMER 2015

Community Matters

Meeting a New Pal for the First Time

In October 2014, Diane Bahr, who teaches second grade at Mount Vernon Elementary School in Yorktown, VA, contacted The Chesapeake to suggest a Pen Pal program between her students and residents at [The Chesapeake](#). Diane said, "Our society often neglects the wisdom of our elders, and I wanted my students to bond with seniors and learn that they are not so different after all." Susan LaFrance, The Chesapeake's Director of Programs and Resident Services, embraced the idea with enthusiasm. Letters and cards were exchanged for several months.

On June 3, 2015, the Pals met each other for the first time. When the

children arrived at The Chesapeake, the names of the students' Pen Pals were called, and the residents stepped forward to greet their young friends. It was like watching old friends greeting each other with hugs and smiles. The children felt very much at home at The Chesapeake.

The Pen Pal program began with an interview questionnaire created by the students for the seniors. Among the questions were: Did you have a job before you moved to The Chesapeake? What are your favorite colors? What do you like to do for fun? Soon they were corresponding about painting, gardening, service to their country, traveling, etc., and the children were



Grace Wilson and Leila

so open to sharing about their favorite things in life. The residents answered with cards and photos for the students to display on their desktops. The children created cards and posters and wrote letters. Eighteen students were

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When Life Takes a Turn

Retiring several years ago, Louise Batten had worked for Virginia Baptist Homes for more than 20 years. She and her husband Clarence are very active members of Culpeper Baptist Church, so they have long been very familiar with [Culpeper Baptist Retirement Community \(CBRC\)](#).

In 2013, life took a turn and Clarence and Louise would look at CBRC in a totally different light. Clarence suffered a heart attack, requiring major

surgery. Following surgery, he was recuperating at the hospital and looking forward to returning to their home of 35 years. However, his doctor informed them that Clarence would need six weeks of rehabilitative therapy.

This surprise set things in motion for the decision as to where Clarence would receive rehab. They considered their options, and the choice was made—Clarence would receive his rehab at CBRC.

Upon arriving at the Community and throughout his stay in the Health Care Center, Clarence felt at home and was completely happy with the care he received from the staff and the quality of services he received at CBRC.

"It was hard," Louise recalled staying alone at their home and going back and forth to visit Clarence as he underwent rehab. Though she readily mentions how much she enjoyed visiting with friends who lived at the Community

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Our Heart's Center is Benevolence

For 60 years VBH has been providing quality life care to seniors within each of its communities. From the time it was established in 1947, VBH has undergone many transformations—from building expansions to entirely new communities. Although there has been substantial growth and change throughout the years, our mission-centered and resident-focused philosophy continues to be at the heart of everything we do. And at our heart's center is benevolence. Ensuring that a resident is not asked to leave due to insufficient funds is not just our goal: it defines our purpose.

The [VBH Foundation](#) was established with the goal of providing resources for all of our communities—wherever the needs are greatest. A strong Foundation allows VBH to continue to provide the blessings of independence, fulfillment, security, and quality of life to seniors.

Benevolence, whether it is awarded through one of our community benevolent funds or one of our endowed funds,

ensures that our current residents, regardless of financial hardship, will continue to have the security of Lifecare. Through the first five months of 2015 alone, we have provided \$455,244 to meet the needs of 54 residents—that's more than the first six months of 2014, so the need is rising.

Benevolent support continues to be VBH Foundation's primary goal. It is a vital part of what we stand for, and it is ultimately what drives our ministry, propelling us to an even brighter future.

As you consider your annual philanthropic gifts this fall, please consider sharing your bounty with a gift to support the benevolent mission of the VBH Foundation. You may let us know if you want your gift to go where the need is greatest or if you want to designate it to a specific community. Contact Patricia Morris in the Foundation office at (804) 521-9229 or pmorris@vbh.org for more information.

Advantages of a Charitable Gift Annuity

A Charitable Gift Annuity with Virginia Baptist Homes offers distinct advantages:

Secure Income for Life at attractive payout rates for one or two person's lives

Tax Deduction Savings—a large percentage of the assets you transfer is tax deductible as a charitable gift

Tax-Free Payout—a significant portion of your annual annuity payment is tax free

Capital Gains Tax Savings—when you contribute appreciated securities for a gift annuity, you may enjoy an added tax advantage

Personal Satisfaction from helping to ensure that benevolence at VBH communities continues uninterrupted.



The funds that we raise help eligible residents who outlive financial resources needed to cover the cost of their care. During the first five months of 2015, we have provided more than \$450,000 to 54 residents in our four communities.

Virginia Baptist Homes (VBH) operates four exceptional communities that welcome people from all faiths and share the steadfast mission of providing *Dignity in Living*.

Let Us Hear From You.

For more information about [Virginia Baptist Homes Foundation](#), visit www.vbh.org or call 804-521-9229. Our communities may be contacted at the numbers below:



Culpeper
(800) 894-2411



Newport News
(800) 345-0474



Richmond
(866) 521-9100



Daleville
(877) 994-5353

Relationships Build Wellness Success

Personalized fitness plans are at the core of [The Glebe](#) Wellness program. Wellness for residents is based on relationships between residents and Rachel Carson, Wellness Coordinator, and Tricia Cronise, Aquatics Instructor. In addition to swimming for pleasure, many residents benefit from classes that increase their flexibility, etc.

“People have to be comfortable and feel welcome or they won’t come back,” says Rachel. Rachel and Tricia get to know residents and are familiar with their specific physical challenges. The personalized plans they create include exercises to help their long term fitness as well as short term challenges stemming from injuries or for recovery from other health issues. Also, the pool is a salt water pool which uses a chlorine generator and electrolysis, which is preferable because there is no chlorine odor and it helps prevent skin irritation that may occur in chlorine pools.

Rachel helps residents understand that any movement is beneficial; they are encouraged to try—most have become regulars in the Johnson Aquatics Center and the Wellness Center. She says, “Sometimes we have to help break the stigma of showing vulnerabilities with their friends and neighbors. Once they get acclimated and into a routine, residents are usually the ones encouraging others to join. They are supportive of each other’s effort and celebrate successes together.”

There are many interesting success stories among the residents. Romona Williams, a retired nurse, is a very active lady, walking every day and working in the resident woodshop at The Glebe, not allowing her need for oxygen or a walker to slow her



**Top, Romona Williams
Left, Jane Daniels and
Tricia Cronise**

down. She is a faithful attendee of water aerobics classes and states that her balance and strength have improved, along with a reduction in joint pain and stiffness. Romona beams when she says that her clothes fit better, too, even her skinny jeans! With Romona’s busy schedule, Rachel and Tricia created, printed, and laminated a personalized workout plan for her use whenever her schedule causes her to miss a class.

When Jane Daniel, who resides in the Health Care Center, first expressed interest in the pool, staff made a trip to purchase a swim suit and water shoes for her (her family was out of town). Jane, who uses a wheelchair, expressed a determination to walk unaided again. When she first arrived

at the Johnson Aquatic Center, she was not able to enter or exit the pool or spa without assistance. She currently comes once a week for a one-on-one session, and now she is able to walk in and out of the pool independently as well as climb the steps in and out of the spa. She participates in water aerobic exercises and activities, and particularly enjoys aquatic dancing to Sinatra music from the ‘40s and riding an aquatic noodle like a bicycle. Recently, her grandson visited and joined her in the pool—he is a breast-stroke swimmer on the Men’s Swim Team at Ferrum College and was able to show Jane his swimming skills. Now, Jane is learning the breast stroke so she can show him what she has learned!

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Want to Live to 100? Do these 9 things

“Blue Zone” is a term that was made famous by Dan Buettner, a correspondent for *National Geographic*. They are places around the world where people lead measurably longer and healthier lives. Some well-known Blue Zone areas are:

- 1 Sardinia, Italy
- 2 Okinawa, Japan
- 3 Loma Linda, California
- 4 Nicoya, Costa Rica
- 5 Ikaria, Greece

Residents of Blue Zones have the highest percentage of centenarians in the world, and they also remain remarkably disease and disability free throughout their lives. They have limited occurrences of heart disease, diabetes, cancer, dementia and Alzheimer's. Americans typically suffer the last three years of their lives fighting these ailments; however Blue Zone residents struggle with these ailments less frequently and for shorter time periods.

So what do these people do differently than the rest of us? Turns out Buettner identified 9 key factors.

Constant moderate physical activity.

Blue Zoners have regular physical activity built into their daily routines. Examples include walking to get places, gardening, or dancing.

They have purpose. Buettner says Blue Zoner's purpose is simple, to love and be loved. Most love what they do, so there is no need to retire.

Stress-free lives. Blue Zone residents manage stress well with specific rituals. They pray, meditate, and many of them regularly take naps!



With food, follow the 80% rule.

They don't keep eating until they are full, they stop when they think they are 80% of the way full. One common Blue Zone practice is not eating family style. They plate their food and take it to the table. This keeps them from overeating.

Semi-Vegetarianism. Blue Zone residents derive most of the diet from plants, especially beans and nuts. They drink alcohol moderately such as wine with a meal in a social setting—one or two drinks at the most a day.

Family comes first. Close-knit family is like having a built-in social network. This social network is important because studies have shown that loneliness can be as bad for one's health as smoking.

They belong to a faith. Being part of a faith community is found to help provide people with a sense of belonging or being a part of something greater than themselves.



They belong to a healthy tribe.

Simply put, the people that live in Blue Zones are generally healthy. They surround themselves with people they want to be like and they are more likely to be like those people.

After reading more about the way life is lived in Blue Zones, I couldn't help but see parallels to the life Continuing Care Retirement Communities (CCRC) residents lead. Most belong to a faith. In fact, many VBH residents move to our communities because we are a faith-based non-profit. Many residents say that moving to the CCRC was a gift to their children (family-first) and that they enjoy not worrying about home maintenance or planning for the future (stress-free lives).

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and with whom she often enjoyed meals in the Community's dining room during her visits with Clarence.

Their sons, Sandy and Kevin, also visited their father at CBRC. Sandy and his wife, Robin, traveled from their home in New Jersey, so they were invited by [CBRC](#) to stay in one of the community's guest rooms to be near Clarence. Both Sandy and Kevin were very pleased with the care their father received.

Clarence, Louise, and their sons renewed long time friendships with former neighbors and others who resided at CBRC. Sandy and Robin particularly enjoyed staying at the Community. Kevin, who lives in Mechanicsville, VA with his wife whose name is also Sandy, made frequent visits, and they all enjoy spending time together. During Clarence's stay at CBRC, he, Louise and their sons became very aware of all the Community had to offer, and how life at the Community was fun, secure, provided excellent services and amenities and as well as peace of mind. The family talked about what moving to CBRC could mean for Clarence and Louise. It didn't take long for the



Louise and Clarence enjoy volunteering in the CBRC library

couple to decide to move to CBRC where they could enjoy their lives without worrying about the upkeep of their house and yard and other details of life that often times become burdensome. The family was in agreement that the perfect choice for Clarence and Louise would be to make their home at CBRC. The Battens chose a Keswick Cottage. Soon they moved in and were enjoying life with friends, wonderful meals, interesting trips, and so much more.

Subsequently, Clarence had another stay in the Health Care Center. And again, he and Louise raved about the

wonderful staff and the care he received. And this time, Louise just took a short walk for her daily visits with Clarence, and they had no worries about her being alone in a house miles away and taking care of daily chores.

“We are so pleased that we moved—we are very comfortable with our cottage and appreciate the entire staff who are so gracious and loving to us.”

Once again, it was confirmed that their move to CBRC was a good move. And, Sandy and Robin continue to enjoy being guests at CBRC when they visit with their parents, Kevin and Sandy and their friends.

“We are so pleased that we moved—we are very comfortable with our cottage and appreciate the entire staff who are so gracious and loving to us. We have met new friends and are enjoying the fellowship with them along with long-time friends. We are fortunate to be here and are very happy to call Culpeper Baptist Retirement Community our home,” says Louise.



Live, laugh and learn with us on Facebook

Search for:

Culpeper Baptist Retirement Community
Lakewood Retirement Community
The Glebe Retirement Community
The Chesapeake Retirement Community

Web Updates

The [VBH Foundation](#) has recently updated its website with some exciting new content detailing how one would go about building a legacy at VBH. Included on the site are up-to-date gift planning tools and information. You can find it by visiting the Foundation's general site at [www.vbh.org/foundation](#) or you can go directly to the legacy giving section at: [www.vbh.planmylegacy.org](#)



UR Alumni

A Community Within a Community at Lakewood

In the VBH communities, there are numerous groups of friends of many, many years. These friendships have grown out of the church family, former employment, civic and fraternal groups, etc.

Members of one group at [Lakewood](#) are graduates of the [University of Richmond](#) (Richmond College and Westhampton College).

With Lakewood located close to the University of Richmond (UR), these alumni continue their college friendships and remain very connected to UR through attending basketball games, First Friday gatherings of Boatwright Members (graduates of 50 years or more), reunions, etc.

When Jackie Brooks (class of '55), who lived in Fairfax, VA during part of her career with IBM, moved to Lakewood, she quickly became an active member of the Lakewood UR family. Jackie says, "Living at Lakewood has allowed me to stay involved at UR. September through March, we frequently travel together on the Lakewood bus to attend the UR "Spider" basketball games. Claire and Bob Rosenbaum, Ruth Powers, Fletcher Stiers, Skee Goode, Rita Stone, and I are among those who attend the games.

Also, a group of us often carpool to the First Friday events. Typically about 25 or more alumni attend this monthly gathering. We enjoy breakfast in the Heilman Dining Room (I enjoy the omelets, and waffles with a "Spider" in the center are also very popular). Following our meal, a professor or coach speaks to the group. Among the others who attend from Lakewood are

Fletcher Stiers, Ruth Powers, Nancy Elliott, Gene Joyner and Helen Wood.

Reunions are celebrated every 5 years. The most recent was my 60th. Each class holds separate events. On Friday night, the Boatwright Society came together to induct the Class of '65. This celebration included bagpipers welcoming the new members. On Saturday evening at our 1955 dinner, we were all excited when there was an impromptu performance by two alumni who were members of the Sophisticats, a band formed during their days at Thomas Jefferson High School.

Something else we have in common is that we are on committees together at Lakewood—Nancy Elliott, Helen Wood and I serve on the Chaplain Advisory Council; Ruth Powers and

Helen Wood are members of the Lakewood Singers. We enjoy serving together here too.

Living here definitely allows us to spend more time together, and that has become a very enjoyable part of our lives. We have this common interest, and we enjoy getting together for events as well as keeping up with what is happening at UR. A new president took over the reins at UR on July 1st this year, the University will be searching for a new Westhampton Dean, the "Spider" football games will start in September—all of these events will keep us talking about UR. Just like UR is described as a Community within a Community, our Lakewood alumni are a community within a community here at Lakewood."



Seated on bench from left to right: Gene Joyner, Skee Goode, Straughan Richardson, Helen Richardson Standing from left to right: Janice Halloran, Jack Pierce, Helen Wood, Fletcher Stiers, Ruth Powers, and Jackie Brooks

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Barry Martin is currently enjoying his first ever water aerobics activities in The Glebe's pool. He is managing his heart health and working to improve his balance by coming to classes or working out on his own three times each week. His sense of humor keeps the classes on their toes.

Gerry Wilson could be the poster girl for the Wellness Department, exercising six days a week since the Wellness Center's grand opening. Gerry loves the classes she attends—land based 2 to 3 times a week, pool twice a week, and using equipment in the fitness room once or twice a week. She also loves to bring family, especially her two granddaughters, to the pool on Open Swim Saturdays.



Nancy Wingfield, who is a retired nurse, works out in the Johnson Aquatic Center 3 to 4 times a week, often completing two classes back to back. Nancy says she enjoys the water classes and finds them very motivating.

Another great perk of getting involved in The Glebe Wellness program is that residents who formerly paid for

memberships in gyms and recreation clubs now participate in unlimited classes and personal time in the pool or fitness room with no fee charged. And—they can exercise with their friends and neighbors. Friends and family who pray together...and play together... stay together. Nowhere is this truer than at The Glebe—except perhaps at the other three VBH communities.

Welcoming Longevity and Making it Worthwhile

Remarkable progress is being made in extending the length of lives, but little is being done to develop the culture, social institutions and policies that go with these increased lifespans.

But one important exception to this statement is that a primary focus

of Continuing Care Retirement Communities like those operated by Virginia Baptist Homes is to provide services, programming, and civic social opportunities for residents to enhance their lives so they thrive throughout their later years. This issue of Community Matters is a testament

to the value of “community” experienced by residents and the positive impact it has on their daily lives. The following chart shows how some people view retirement. Residents of VBH are definitely reflected in these numbers—especially the 70% committed to leaving the world a better place.

Making an Impact

Few adults today see later life as a time of endless leisure, the percentage of surveyed adults saying each of the following best describes their vision of retirement:

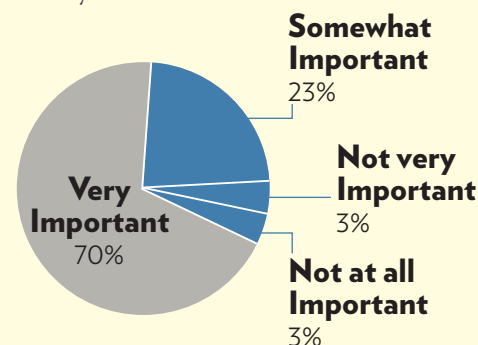
33% A time to keep working, as long as I am physically and mentally able, in order to cover my expenses and/or maintain health coverage.

20% A time to adjust my lifestyle to fit within my means.

31% The beginning of a new chapter, in which I can be active and involved, start new activities, and use my skills and experience to help others.

14% A time to enjoy a well-deserved rest, take it easy, pursue leisure activities and take care of myself.

When asked how important it is to them to leave the world a better place, surveyed adults said:



Source: Encore.org and MetLife Foundation telephone survey of 930 people ages 44 to 70, June 2011, margin of error +/- 3.02 percentage points; and an online survey of 1,408 people ages 44 to 70, September 2011, margin of error +/- 2.6 percentage points.

The Wall Street Journal

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paired with residents. Through their correspondence, they began to learn things about each other. The days the cards and letters arrived at the school were like Christmas according to Ms. Bahr; Ms. LaFrance agreed that it was much the same for the residents.

Continuing Care Retirement Communities (CCRC) like The Chesapeake, provide wonderful environments for intergenerational programs. Residents come from various backgrounds and have lots to share, and they appreciate the opportunities of getting to know the children. The lifestyle enjoyed by residents gives them unique opportunities to truly enjoy life to the fullest and make new friends of all ages.

Ted Schaller discovered that he and his pen pal, Keenan, both have red bicycles! Keenan told his teacher that he wanted to go bike riding with Ted. Tom Crittenden found that he and his pal, Landon, both loved sports. Tom says that he already felt like a member of Landon's family, but they were both astounded when they discovered that they shared the same birthday.

Louise Marchello describes her pal, Peter as happy and delightful. Doris



Above, The first gathering of the Pen Pals at The Chesapeake. Left, Ted Schaller and Kennan. Right, Marissa and Anne Downs

Shea, a lifelong educator and school administrator, was pleasantly surprised at how much today's second graders can do. Her pal, Emma, is from a military family and was born in England.

Ms. Bahr hopes to continue the program with her class next school year and commented that "The bonds were

just instantaneous! I knew from the beginning that this would be a great experience, but not until today did I realize the full impact of the relationships that had been created through the year, through cards and letters. The residents were so warm, caring, and welcoming and truly made each student feel special!"

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By becoming a resident of a CCRC, residents are automatically a part of a healthier than average tribe and are in an environment that makes social interaction occur more easily than in their homes. Research by Duke University has demonstrated that CCRC residents live longer than non-CCRC residents. Many CCRCs have integrated wellness programs that encourage residents to be active

(constant moderate physical activity) as well as community outreach programs that help add purpose to life (purpose to life). The lifestyle available in CCRCs, has a focus on wellness, and it's designed to be that way. Moving to a CCRC might just extend your life!

Are you curious about your own life expectancy? If so, check out the website, livingto100.com. You can fill

out a survey (it takes about 10 minutes) and it will tell you what your life expectancy is and give you some ideas on how to increase it. My life expectancy is 95, and apparently I need to cut out junk food and red meat.

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