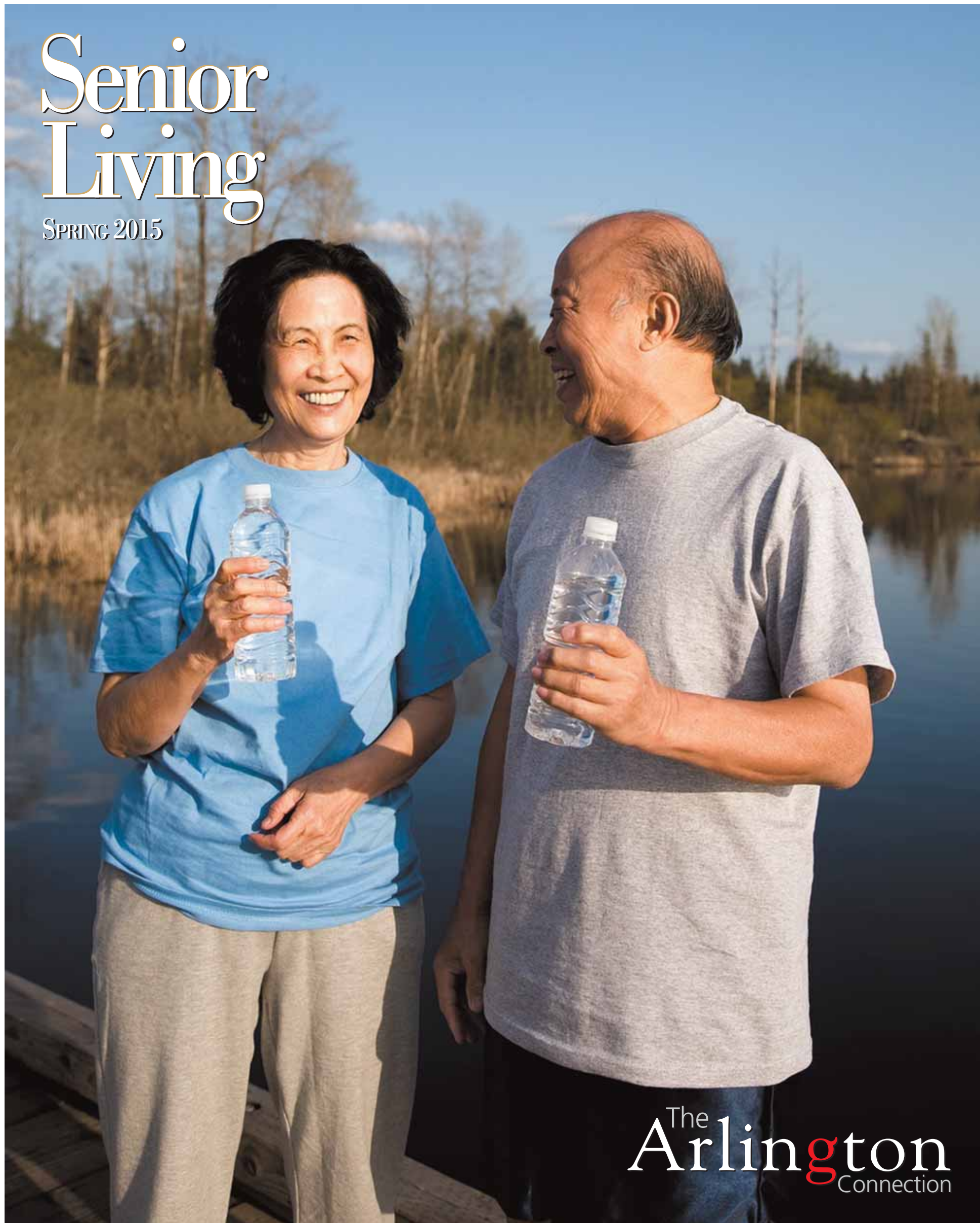


Senior Living

SPRING 2015



The
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Why do some people reach age 80, 90, and older living free of physical and cognitive disease? National Institute on Aging (NIA) researchers on the Baltimore Longitudinal Study of Aging (BLSA) are exploring this question through the IDEAL (Insight into Determinants of Exceptional Aging and Longevity) Study. Although research exists on the relationship between long life and functional decline, we still know relatively little about why certain individuals have excellent health well into their 80's while others experience disease and physical decline earlier in life.

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THE CONNECTION NEWSPAPERS

Senior Living



Women of the Nova United, part of the National Senior Women's Basketball Association get exercise with a team sport. They are part of a new fitness trend.

Fit for the Golden Years

Fitness programs for seniors are part of a trend

BY MARILYN CAMPBELL
THE CONNECTION

One night each week, Sue Thompson can be found dribbling a basketball down the court, leading her team, the Nova United, to victory. Thompson, who is in her 60s, is one of the youngest players in her league, the National Senior Women's Basketball Association.

"There are women who play with me who are 80 and living out their dream to play basketball. We were way before Title IX," said Thompson, who is also a professor of physical education at Northern Virginia Community College in Annandale and Alexandria, Va. "The women are fit, but with seniors, the social part is really important. Some of the ladies have been widowed or have spouses with health issues. They've really been a support group for each other."

According to the American College of Sports Medicine, Thompson is part of a national fitness trend: fitness programs for older adults, including strength training and team sports. Fitness programs for the now-retired and retiring baby boom generation are increasing in popularity.

New research continues to show the benefits of exercise, aerobic

and strength training, range from delayed cognitive decline and a boost in social functioning to an ability to manage chronic diseases and even turn back time.

"There are a lot of benefits for the aging population," said Lisa M.K. Chin, an assistant research professor at George Mason University's Department of Rehabilitation Science in Fairfax, Va. Exercise "slows physiological changes that come with aging. ... The other thing that exercise manages is chronic diseases that come with aging, such as cardiovascular problems or diabetes."

Mark Brasler, a 69-year-old who lives in Springfield, Va., has been active for most of the past 20 years. He moved into a retirement community four months ago and got a fitness assessment in the property's gym. The results led him to up his fitness game.

"I still walk every morning and do weights and resistance machines every other day," said Brasler. "I was also told that I needed to take balance class. We focus on agility, how to stand up straight and how to get up when you fall. We also do stretching, yoga and Pilates. I feel more confident about myself."

Such fitness classes can help preserve mobility and cognitive function, say researchers. "It helps in terms of preserving bone mass and maintaining mobility longer," said Chin. "If you're using your muscles, especially during weight-bearing exercises, ultimately it re-

SEE FIT, PAGE 6

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Senior Living

'Your Life Is Today and Tomorrow'

Residents of local senior living communities share their experiences.

BY ANDREA WORKER
THE CONNECTION

“I didn’t want to come here,” said Bill Woessner, referring to Brightview Assisted Living Community in Great Falls.

“That’s right,” agreed Sheila, his wife of more than 50 years, with plenty of her native Scottish brogue to be heard in her voice. “He really didn’t. We have a lovely house here in Great Falls and I don’t think he was ready to budge. But how long after we got here did that change?” she turned to her husband and asked.

“At least a day,” he laughingly replied. “Seriously,” said Bill Woessner, “it probably wasn’t more than the first 48 hours.”

What changed his mind, especially after what many would call a major life-upheaval?

“The food!” was his answer. “We have



PHOTOS BY ANDREA WORKER/THE CONNECTION

Always ready for a few hijinks around Brightview Assisted Living Community in Great Falls are L-R: Sheila Woessner, Porta Nickles, Sophia Coulopoulos, Bill Woessner, and director of Community Sales, Joanna Banks.

gourmet food at every meal, served by the nicest people in the most beautiful surroundings, and we never have to cook it or clean up afterwards.”

According to Sheila, while the food really is that good, what probably impacted her husband’s initial attitude was “the amazing staff, the friendly and interesting residents, and the freedom. Of course, we’re retired, so we’re not bound to the responsibilities of work.” But neither are the Woessners bound to home maintenance concerns, housekeeping, cooking and cleaning.

Or “shoveling snow, like we would have been doing last month if we weren’t right here,” gloated Bill. “We have the time to do what we like, to try new things and meet new people, without that worry.”

Bill and Sheila Woessner chatted about their experiences as residents in a senior living community with friends and fellow residents Porta Nickles and Sophia Coulopoulos, over lunch in the Brightview dining room.

Porta Nickles, who is 99, admitted to a bit of a sweet tooth. “My father owned a candy and ice cream shop in upstate New York,” she said, recommending the homemade coffee ice cream for dessert.

The ice cream is made using the recipe of the area’s beloved Thelma Feighery. Brightview is built on the site of Thelma’s Ice Cream, once the hotspot for local gathering in Great Falls. Thelma and her husband Frank

started with a gas station on the site in 1950. Thelma took over and served her own recipe ice creams and other goodies after Frank’s death in 1988, until her own in 2001.

Long-time Great Falls resident Sheila Woessner said she used to go to Thelma’s “just to catch up on all the local doings” even though she’s not one for sweet treats. “I think Thelma would be pleased. Not only do we have our own “Thelma’s” on site and make ice cream to her specifications, but it’s still the place for us to gather and keep up with what’s going on.”

Porta Nickles came to Brightview after living the last 70 years in Middletown, N.Y., where she helped run the family’s Coney Island hot dog franchise, and later went on to enjoy a career in education with the local school district. Having lived somewhere that long, it’s understandable that the move took some adjusting to, but Nickles found herself comfortable and more than content in short order. “I was lonely there,” she said. “And I didn’t even know how lonely until I got here, starting making new friends, finding out there were so many things I could still do and learn and enjoy. And now I get to see my kids, grandkids and great-grand kids.”

“And so do we all,” added Bill Woessner. The youngsters in Porta’s extended family (many of whom live close by) are favorites at family related social events held at Brightview, holidays, birthdays, and some “just because” occasions. Having family nearby, the visits, and having opportunities designed to promote interaction with different age groups, all help make Brightview

a home environment in the estimation of this group of residents.

The Brightview Great Falls location has only been open since September of last year. Sophia Coulopoulos, who had lived for several years in the Maryland suburbs around the District, actually came here from another area community, where she lived with her ill husband until his death. Speaking of him caused a quick smile, but also brought a hint of tears. Porta on her one side and Brightview Community Sales Director Joanna Banks seated on her other side, were immediately offering hugs, pats and encouragement.

“Get involved and take advantage of your time,” was Sheila Woessner’s advice for new

SEE ‘YOUR LIFE.’ PAGE 4



With Dale Jarrett on the piano performing some of the residents’ favorites, Garrey Stinson, owner of Dancing With Garrey, Therapeutic Ballroom Dancing for Seniors, brings a smile to Sophia Coulopoulos.

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Your Life Is Today and Tomorrow

FROM PAGE 3

residents.

Sheila Woessner has always been a game player “and she knows the words to every song going,” Porta Nickles said in admiration.

During her days with the British Information Services in New York City with Bill, Sheila Woessner took home some hefty prize money by playing on the televised “Name that Tune” game show, money that she used to finance their wedding. The couple even appeared on Johnny Carson’s “Who Do You Trust?” game show. Nowadays, Sheila uses her ability to help out at the community’s sing-a-longs.

Many activities are organized and facilitated by Brightview’s Vibrant Living Director, Josh Graf.

Bingo is Sophia’s favorite. She’s been pretty lucky, winning often enough to splurge with her earned Brightview “bucks” at the monthly “gift shop” where you never know what interesting items might be on offer.

Brightview Great Falls is part of Baltimore-based Brightview Senior Living, LLC with a number of communities in Virginia, Maryland and beyond. Brightview Great Falls offers independent living, assisted living, and accommodations for residents with Alzheimer’s and memory impairment. The community also offers outdoor space with unspoiled views and a Natural Wildlife Habitat accreditation.

Transitioning to senior community living is not always as easy as the lunch lunch at Brightview experienced. Sometimes the move starts with heartache or circumstances that speed up what should be a more lengthy and considered process. That was certainly the case for both Jim Draper and Rachel Garbee,

residents at The Hermitage in Alexandria.

Draper was a pastor for many years in the southern portions of the Commonwealth. He and his wife of 53 years were actually engaged in ministerial duties when she fell and hit her head. “It was a simple fall outside a Wendy’s, could happen to anyone.” Two weeks later, Draper was a widower. He continued on, but experienced several medical episodes associated with his own health issues. Eventually, the decision was made for him to move to Northern Virginia, close to family. “It’s been hard,” he admits. I really had my heart set on a retirement place near Richmond. And I miss my wife so much.” To make the transition more difficult, because of his medical condition, Draper can no longer drive. “That’s a real blow,” he said.

Rachel Garbee was living in North Carolina and “doing pretty good.” Then one night her furnace exploded. Living alone, she had no one with her to handle the situation. “It was very scary. I didn’t really know what had happened, couldn’t figure out how to turn off the alarms. I went to my neighbors for help and that’s when we found out about the furnace.” Luckily, Rachel Garbee and her home survived the experience, but when her son received the call in the middle of the night, “I was packed up pretty quickly and here I am.”

Both Jim Draper and Rachel Garbee have taken some time to adjust, but things are getting better with the help of staff like Lynette Mitchell, The Hermitage director of marketing and outreach. “She’s a special lady,” said Draper, “really made for the job.” Other residents have also helped Jim, Rachel, and others settle in to this new phase of their lives.

Gladys Laclède knows what it’s like to be a “newbie” from out of state. Moving here to be closer to her sons, she offers support and assistance where she can.

Peg Bixler remembers when Jim Draper



PHOTOS BY ANDREA WÖRKER/THE CONNECTION

In the lounge at The Woodlands Retirement Community in Fairfax, Col. James McAllan (US Army-Ret) with Riley on his lap and Linda McAllan offered up some thoughts on their senior community living experience. The McAllans were celebrating their Woodlands one-year anniversary that day.

first arrived. “I remember when we met in the elevator,” she told him. “I could tell it was hard.” She recalls telling him to just “Wait a bit. It does get easier.”

Of course, by the description of her daily activities, it sounds like Peg Bixler doesn’t have much time for waiting. A former nurse, she volunteers at the Kennedy Center, with the Wounded Warrior and Honor Flight projects, and more. She also fits in some serious walking to keep fit and limber, as well as activities offered at The Hermitage and visits with her daughter who lives in the area. Peg is grateful that she is still in good health and still able to be “a fairly quick walker.”

She tilts her head at friend Bea Larson, who is laughing that Peg “nearly finished me off” when she took Bea for their first few walks together.

Rachel Garbee also walks, but mostly sticks to Hermitage hallway strolls, often in the evenings after dinner. “It’s quiet then, and where else could I take a walk in my pajamas, bathrobe and slippers?”

The Hermitage offers its residents a number of activities and amenities, although Peg, Bea and Gladys think that more people should take advantage of what’s on offer. Gladys Laclède was on the community’s activities committee and they were always on the lookout for something new and fun to get the residents involved.

Peg Bixler offered advice to those who might have such a move coming in the future. “Get rid of a lot of stuff as soon as you can. Don’t wait. And do what you can to make it easier on your kids.” Bixler thought she had done a good job of downsizing before the move, but still found herself “with a lot of stuff I just don’t need.”

Rachel Garbee encourages other “newbies” to not be afraid to ask questions or ask for help, especially if your move to senior community living is an abrupt one like hers.

“All of my questions and concerns have been met with nothing but genuine care and helpfulness here.”

“Be open,” is what Gladys Laclède advises. Pastor Jim Draper, who has started using more of his time to help others in need around the community, thinks just speaking to everybody and actively looking for friendship is key to making the most of this next life chapter.

Bea Larson certainly hasn’t lost her sense of humor with her new living arrangements. “My advice,” she said, “is don’t be hard of

hearing!”

Col. James McAllan (U.S. Army Ret.) and his wife Linda, who retired from an administrative career with the IRS, started their research on retirement living options six years ago. As you would expect from a military intelligence officer (Army, Civil Defense/FEMA) and a woman who made order and efficiency part of her life’s work, these two had a plan and a checklist of requirements. While living in Falls Church, they visited dozens of communities over the years.

“We didn’t want one of the really big places,” said Col. McAllan. “We were looking for someplace with a diverse population and where we could comfortably remain, even if our health circumstances changed.” The couple also decided they would prefer a community that was locally owned, and better still, locally managed. Their extensive research and personal inspections eventually took them to The Woodlands Retirement Community in Fairfax. “It checked all the boxes.”

The community is, in fact, locally founded and operated by the Bainum family. The size fits for the McAllans, as well, with only 102 units. The Woodlands is also what is known as a Continuing Care Retirement Community (CCRC), meaning that residents can avail of a lifetime range of care, from the independent living that the McAllans now

enjoy, to more assisted living through to advanced nursing care without having to uproot and move to a completely new community.

The McAllans hadn’t planned to move in when they did. “My knees really made that decision for us,” said James. But once they decided, they found that only one apartment was currently available. Not wanting to risk a long encampment on the waiting list, they went ahead and closed the deal on their two bedroom, 2.5 bath apartment with separate kitchen, dining room and den. Their daughter, who lives just minutes away, told them it was “all meant to be.” And the icing on the cake was that The Woodlands would accept the other member of the immediate family, 4-year-old shih tzu Riley, who has been dubbed “The Mayor” by many of the other residents. Riley is not particularly fond of the only other four-legged community dweller, but he adores visiting – and being properly fussed over by – residents, staff, and visitors.

“Coming down to the lobby is his favorite activity,” said Linda. “I think he fakes some of his requests for his outside needs,” she added, “since half the time when we get down here he suddenly finds plenty of time to check out whoever is around.”

The Woodlands offers physical and entertainment activities, including an indoor heated pool and a well-equipped exercise room, but Linda noted that the variety of groups, clubs, lectures and discussions available.

“We’ve had the first Ambassador to Israel as a speaker, a violinist who spent 40 years with the Washington Opera orchestra, a retired opera singer, and so many more, in addition to book clubs, poetry clubs, gardening,” Linda McAllan said. A presentation by the authors of “Worry Free Retirement Living” was on the March schedule, and “Aging Well: Aging is Not a Spectator Sport” is on the April agenda. The McAllans also like that co-founder and manager Kevin Bainum holds monthly “Kevin Talks.” There are other regular town hall-type meetings and several councils or committees, but in Mr. McAllan’s words, it’s “this kind of relaxed, open communication that really brings us all together.”

Betty Marshall, whose apartment is frequently used as a stop on any tour of The Woodlands, couldn’t agree more with her neighbors, the McAllans. A Fairfax resident for more than 25 years, Marshall,

who was born on Cyprus when her South Carolinian mom followed her father to his native Greece for a time, has also seen a bit of the world thanks to her husband’s military postings in Alaska, Okinawa, Greece and Paris. Like the McAllans, Betty did quite a bit of planning for this move. When her husband, Col. Charles Marshall (Ret) died in 2013, she put those plans into action. Picking which pieces to take with her from a lifetime of international travel wasn’t as hard as she thought it would be. Of course, Betty Marshall, a music major who taught the instrument wherever the couple went, couldn’t leave the piano behind. Nor could she leave her favorite furnishings and artwork, many from her Okinawa days.

When not busy with activities outside of The Woodlands world like volunteering at the Fair Oaks Hospital gift shop or heading up the Flower Guild at the Providence Presbyterian Church, Betty is involved with the goings on in her own community. “And the people here make it easy on every level.” Betty sings the praises of the maintenance and facilities staff, in particular. “They are so willing to do anything you need. Hang a picture, move furniture, fix anything. They even prepare the plots for us gardeners. I just have to get out there and do the planting.” Of course, she does reward them with the fruits of their combined labor. “Zucchini bread for everyone this year!”

Having learned flower arranging, Betty teaches those skills as well as crafting to interested residents. She’s also organizing

a Caribbean cruise for a group of residents and family members. The Woodlands staff will be handling the transportation to and from Baltimore when the travelers embark on their sea-faring adventure.

“I would just tell people to never look back,” Marshall said. “Keep the memories, they are what made you. But your life is today and tomorrow. Keep looking ahead. Plan. And find a place where you can really thrive.”

If it’s time to start contemplating the transition to senior independent or assisted living for yourself or a loved one sorting through the information and the available properties and options can seem overwhelming.

There are properties that resemble four-star resorts. There are communities that are extensions of a particular faith institution or religion. Others, like non-profit Vinson Hall in McLean were founded to serve our large commissioned military officers population and government workers of equal rank. There are properties set in rural locations, while others like The Jefferson, a Sunrise Senior Living community located steps away from the Ballston Metro and Ballston Common Mall in Arlington, are set right in the thick of things. Westminster at Lake Ridge and Ingleside at King Farm in Maryland offer small town living right in the Washington area. There are communities offering every possible range of care, service and amenities in all price ranges.



Gladys Laclède, Bea Larson, Jim Draper, Rachel Garbee and Peg Bixler share a table and a photo op in the library of The Hermitage, a senior assisted living community in Alexandria. Peg is the veteran in the group and does her best to welcome newcomers.



Betty Marshall is so noted for her gracious hostess skills that she is often called upon as an “ambassador” for The Woodlands Retirement Community. One look around her two-bedroom apartment and you know why it is frequently chosen as a stop on the

Life at Culpepper Garden

Award-winning retirement community celebrates 40th anniversary.

BY SHIRLEY RUHE
THE CONNECTION

It is St Patrick's Day at Culpepper Garden in Arlington, and there is a party underway downstairs. As the accordionist touches the black and white keys, Marilyn Jarvis stands up and makes her way to the aisle, grabs a partner, Adrianna Bustamante, and begins tap dancing to "The Sidewalks of New York."

Culpepper Garden is celebrating its 40th anniversary in Arlington in 2015. It was the first moderate-and low-income assisted residence in the U.S.

Dee Bivens, president of the Advisory Board, says there are so many things to do at Culpepper Garden that you could be busy all day and all night if you wanted to.

The activities list on the whiteboard for March 17 lists French, both traditional and gentle yoga, Spanish book club, and the Merrymakers. Movies are offered three times a week, church services on Sunday, exercise every morning and regular discussions of current events.

Bivens says that Culpepper Garden, named after a botanist Charles Culpepper, who made five acres of land available, has 15 garden plots planted by residents.

"One right at the front is Julia's and always has a variety of beautiful flowers." Bivens says gardening is therapy.

In the background you can hear the band swing into "Alive-Alive O" with the residents singing along with their sheet music.

Meanwhile underway upstairs there is a food forum feedback session with Chef Greg Riddle. A man in the corner volunteers that while 99 percent of the food is fantastic that last time they had spaghetti there wasn't enough sauce. The chef says to let a server know and he'll bring more sauce.

Eva Mayo, sitting in a wheelchair in the front of the room with her great granddaughter, Taylor, interjects that she likes sweet potatoes. The chef is writing notes. Mayo takes care of her granddaughter each day in the independent living facility.

Lorraine Thorpe, sporting a festive straw hat, volunteers that she has a recipe for "best ever cake" with pineapple and cream cheese on the top that melts into the cake. Riddle says, "give it to me and I'll figure out how to make it for 300."

In a waiting room just off the lobby Jim Daley sits in a wheelchair with his ankle in a white cast waiting to see a doctor. "They asked me what color cast I wanted and if I'd thought of St. Patrick's Day, I would have said green," he said.

Hunter Moore, senior operations officer, says Culpepper has a doctor available Thursday mornings, health care agency Tuesday and Friday and a podiatrist and dermatologist once a month.

Marvin Davis, front desk supervisor, has been there since 2003 and Moore says, "Marvin knows all about everything." Davis says his father came to Culpepper in 1982 and his aunt arrived a few years later.



During the St. Patrick's Day party Marilyn Jarvis spontaneously grabs a partner, Adrianna Bustamante, and tap dances to "The Sidewalks of New York" as Ken Kunec plays the accordion with the Merrymakers leading the residents in singing the lyrics.



Gloria Capri, director of admissions at Culpepper Garden in Arlington, is the first person an applicant sees. She makes them and their families feel comfortable, handles the questions, gives tours and helps make the transition to residency.

out 234 packets of information and gave 237 walk-in tours. "We try to be accommodating and do them early and at lunch."

Vicki Kirkbride was hired as the Interim director of Culpepper Garden in 2013. She focuses on fundraising, marketing and communications as well as board relations. She says her goal has been to establish a pattern of fundraising and a grants management program, a real development plan. "And we have started to build the blocks," she said.

Culpepper is supported by housing and nutrition grants from HUD and Arlington County as well as donations from private groups, the faith community and individuals. "Our biggest challenge has been assisted living because people there need another level of care, particularly as they get older. And for many their resources change and there isn't the same level of funding support available as for independent living," she said.

Kirkbride says, "This is an amazing place."

And the day at Culpepper is just beginning with corn beef and cabbage and Irish stew on the menu for dinner and one more St. Patrick's Day party scheduled for the evening.

PHOTOS BY SHIRLEY RUHE/THE CONNECTION



Marion Rockwell takes advantage of the 60 degree weather to sit outside Culpepper Garden with her dog, Rusty.



Chef Greg Riddle listens to feedback comments from residents during the food forum at Culpepper Garden. Lorraine Thorpe volunteers that she has a recipe for the "best ever cake" and Riddle tells her he'll figure out how to make it for 300.



Senior Living Fit for the Golden Years

FROM PAGE 2

duces the risk of falling and improves balance.”

An exercise class that includes both aerobic, strength and balance exercises can help preserve freedom and independence for seniors. “The key components of staying physically active are having strong muscles, reasonable flexibility and endurance, such as the ability to keep walking or doing an activity and not getting tired and fatigued right away,” said Rita Wong, professor of physical therapy and associate dean of graduate and professional studies at Marymount University in Arlington. “It’s essential to keep oneself mobile and active.”

It’s almost never too late to increase fitness levels, Wong said. “Often with older adults, people think that they can’t improve anymore so why bother. But research has shown time and time again that older adults have an ability

to improve that is as similar as young adults’.”

One fitness class that is multi-generational and incorporates aerobic exercise, balance and strength training is the newly

“Often with older adults, people think that they can’t improve anymore so why bother. But research has shown time and time again that older adults have an ability to improve that is as similar as young adults’.”

formed TRUE Fit in Arlington, Va. The goal of the all-outdoor class sessions is to marry effective exercise with camaraderie, much like Brasler’s experience.

“People need community [and are] finding it in a holistic approach to exercise at their own comfort level,” said Nina Elliot, founder of the TRUE Fit program

and co-owner of TRUE Health and Wholeness. “People work out to the best of their ability and everybody gets a workout that’s right for their body. They’re given modifications and the focus is to do

your best, have fun and enjoy exercise.”

Elliot believes exercising in groups has an accountability factor. “The number one thing that can keep you from aging is exercise,” she said. “Aging can be very isolating for some people. The more people can get out and be around people, the better.”

Mark Brasler of Springfield, Va., performs balance exercises with wellness coordinator Juanita Kuntz. Exercises that include strength training, aerobic exercise and improves or preserves mobility.

PHOTO COURTESY OF GREENSPRING



PHOTO GALLERY!

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Senior Living

Lee Senior Center in Arlington Is a Creative Hub

Painting, pottery, rock bands, and social dance are big hits.

BY EDEN BROWN
THE CONNECTION

A passer-by at Lee Center in Arlington stopped in to see the country music players the other day and left feeling this group of musicians was worth staying to hear for the whole hour.

“Wow. They aren’t bad!”

It was a particularly moving day because one of the players was showing a video of his adult daughter singing with him. The group is held together by their love of music, and the positive vibe is loud and clear.

Chuck Vasaly has been going to Lee for 11 years to play the guitar, Irish Tin Whistle, and harmonica. Chuck, a retired lawyer, also plays in the “Rocking Chairs,” a new 60s rock band which has five vocalists/players including three lawyers, and in “Lee Jammers,” another Country/Blues group which meets at Lee. The players on Monday at 11:15 go around the room, with each player doing a vocal of old favorites, like a Jazz musician taking his turn while the others follow on their instruments, nodding their heads and tapping their feet. There are banjos, guitar and zithers.

Bob Fishburne is just sitting in on this particular day. He brought his Wood Snare Conga Bonga, a box like instrument which serves as snare drum, conga drum, and Tabla. He brought his drums too, “in case anyone wanted something more Rock n Roll and loud,” he says somewhat hopefully. They welcome new players at any time.

Calvin Thomas paints at the Lee Center. Despite a debilitating brain problem, closing him off from his stamp and book collection, somehow the painting still comes natu-



PHOTOS BY EDEN BROWN/THE CONNECTION

Chuck Vasaly plays with the “Just Play’n Country” group at Lee Senior Center in Arlington.

rally. His nonagenarian art teacher, Blanche Kirchner, coaches him through his copy of a difficult Impressionist painting. Other students in the class are working on boats, fruit, and landscapes, their canvases on table easels set up in the bright studio and the paintings take shape with Kirchner’s expert advice.

There is a full pottery studio at the Cen-

ter. Tai Chi and other gentle exercise classes are also held there.

The staff at Lee say one of their most popular class is the Partner Dance Class,

held at 2:30 every Wednesday afternoon and run by a couple. For a full schedule of Arlington Senior programs, see www.parks.recreation.us



Calvin Thomas painting in Blanche Kirchner’s class at Lee Center.



Bob Fishburne playing the Wood Snare Conga Bonga. Bob sat in, offering versatile soft percussion to the group.