



Pennsylvania Alliance of Retirement Community Residents

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The PARCR POST

Welcome to ***The PARCR POST's*** January 2023 newsletter, featuring the following information:

President Lowell Starling previews upcoming meetings and urges members to step forward to carry out PARCR's mission. [Click here](#)

President Lowell Starling previews the speakers and locations for the January, April and July meetings in 2023. [Click here](#)

Membership Chair Susan Martin welcomes members to once again participate in the Quarterly Meeting in person at Bethany Village in Mechanicsburg. Live streaming will also be available. [Click here](#)

President Lowell Starling provides a review of what's on the PARCR website. [Click here](#)

Legislative Chair Gail Stelger recaps the Department of Health's new nursing home regulations, and other timely updates from LeadingAge PA. [Click here](#)

Information Sharing: Sue Paul, Wellness and Brain Health Director, Asbury Communities, shares information on brain health and a number of initiatives occurring at Bethany Village. [Click here](#)

New At-Large members have been added to the PARCR Leadership grid. [Click here](#)

The April 2023 edition of the ***The PARCR POST, Issue 9.4***, will be released in late March 2023. If you have an item to contribute, please ask your Community's Staff Contact Person to email parcrpost@parcr.org for details and guidelines. The deadline will be March 3, 2023.

THE PARCR POST

A QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER FOR

PENNSYLVANIA **A**LLIANCE OF **R**ETIREMENT **C**OMMUNITY **R**ESIDENTS

President's Message by Lowell Starling

The October PARCR meeting had a great turnout with 57 people attending in person at Garden Spot Village with another 12 attending virtually via live stream. The atmosphere was festive and the responses to the survey questions showed great appreciation for being able to meet in person again.

The next Quarterly meeting is at Bethany

Village on January 11, 2023 (who knew that the year is almost over?). More good news; since the pandemic seems to be moderating, we will again be meeting in person. Based on the majority of responses to the survey question on meeting format, we will again have a two-hour morning session followed by lunch, and then (continued on page 2)

QUARTERLY MEETING

**January 11, 2023 at Bethany Village
in Mechanicsburg**

**10:00 in-person meeting and also
live streamed**

Presenter: Brigitte Brady, RD LDN

Topic: "Food As Medicine"



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VISION STATEMENT

Recognized as an enhanced educational and informational environment for PA CCRC residents



Pennsylvania Alliance of
Retirement Community Residents

MISSION STATEMENT

Promote the exchange of ideas, education, and civic responsibilities of CCRC residents and encourage them to aid in decision making within their communities



Lowell Starling
PARCR President
president@parcr.org

Our Future is Now!

(continued from page 1)

an optional tour of Bethany Village. Since the survey responses also showed strong support for resuming some iteration of an afternoon session, we will revisit that question after the January meeting.

The keynote speaker in January will be Brigitte Brady, RD LDN, a Registered Dietitian with Sodexo speaking on “Food as Medicine.” The timing should be great to help you keep some of those New Year’s resolutions (unless you have already broken them by the 11th).

Also, we will hear from LeadingAge PA and NaCCRA about what is happening in Harrisburg and Washington which may affect us as seniors and/or the communities in which we live. The final presentation of the morning will feature the work being done in Bethany Village and throughout the Asbury System on improving brain health.

This is another example of how PARCR is building a bright future now in positively affecting the lives and pocketbooks of Pennsylvania’s Retirement Community Residents. We have some great speakers already lined

up for the 2023 meetings. You can read more about them in the Program report on page 3 of this issue of *The PARCR POST*.

We continue our mission to “Promote the exchange of ideas, education, and civic responsibilities of CCRC residents and encourage them to aid in decision making within their communities!” Our new Strategic Plan outlines the vision driving that mission and identifies the building blocks to help us get there. We have completed some of the work on the building blocks. We will continue to implement the Plan as we move through the new year.

One of the encouraging outcomes of the October meeting was that two more people expressed an interest in joining the PARCR Executive Committee to help build our future.

As I commented in my last edition’s report, we have a nucleus with great talent on the Executive Committee, but we need to expand the team to be all that PARCR can be for its members. The winners will be the retirement community members we serve.

Lowell Starling
 President



Program Update

January 11, 2023, Quarterly Meeting

The keynote speaker at the January 11, 2023, meeting at the Rife Center at Bethany Village will address a topic near and dear to all of us: FOOD! Registered and licensed dietitian Brigitte Brady, who specializes in geriatric nutrition and weight management, will address the topic of FOOD AS MEDICINE!

While there is no single definition of the “food as medicine” concept, it generally refers to prioritizing food and diet in an individual's health plan, with the goal of either preventing, reducing symptoms of, or reversing a disease state.

Brigitte will review popular eating patterns (read diets), the health claims surrounding them and whether following these diets will improve health or cure diseases. She will introduce the latest research conducted by nutrition experts to determine which “food as medicine” interventions are most successful. She will also discuss who benefits the most from these interventions and how to implement them most effectively.

We will also get updates from Austin Cawley of LeadingAge PA on what is going on in Harrisburg that will affect senior living, and from Dan Seeger on the latest from

NaCCRA. The morning will be rounded out with a presentation about initiatives to improve brain health at Bethany Village and throughout the Asbury System.

April 12, 2023 Quarterly Meeting

The keynote speaker for the April 12, 2023, meeting at Londonderry Village, in Palmyra will be Garry Pezzano, CEO of LeadingAge PA. In addition to updating us on the plans and goals of LeadingAge PA, we will ask him to address issues of concern to seniors in Pennsylvania. Specific topics identified in the survey after the July 2022 Quarterly Meeting, include in order of voting, 1) regulatory issues affecting senior living, 2) state funding options for senior living, 3) pros and cons of aging in place, and 4) the legislative process.

July 12, 2023 Quarterly Meeting

The keynote speaker for the July 12, 2023 meeting at Masonic Village in Elizabethtown will be a principal from MediPlanConnect speaking on Medicare. MediPlanConnect specializes in helping Medicare beneficiaries select the product most appropriate for their health and finances given the many options seniors face during open enrollment every fall. The information will be general in nature, rather than individualized.



Susan Martin
PARCR Membership Chair
membership@parcr.org

We will gather in person again for the Quarterly Meeting on January 11, 2023 at Bethany Village in Mechanicsburg for a program on “Food as Medicine” presented by Brigitte Brady, RD LDN. To accommodate individuals who prefer not to gather in person for health reasons or distance in wintery weather, this meeting will again offer the option of live streaming. The survey results indicated the members preferred the morning meeting concept followed by the option to interact with other members during lunch. Meeting attendees will have the opportunity to register for a tour of Bethany Village following the lunch.

Since the meeting notice is arriving just as we enter the real hustle and bustle of holiday season, please note the deadline for registration and payment to attend the meeting. Registration and prepayment by check for the lunch must arrive in the mail by **January 3, 2023**. We do not accept credit cards. Members and interested community members are welcome and encouraged to attend the meeting. The host community attendees must send their registration to Susan Martin and the payment of \$15 for lunch if they intend to stay for the lunch. Please note that you have the option to register for

the meeting at no cost but not stay for the lunch.

The Executive Committee attempts to plan programs around topics in which the membership has expressed interest. There are a great deal of logistics that goes on behind the scenes in planning and preparing interesting programs for the quarterly meetings. The Committee continues to encourage the member communities and the delegates to take an active and involved role in PARCR. We encourage individuals to become involved and work with the chairs of the different committees. Becoming actively involved helps the members to understand the value proposition PARCR has in being recognized as an enhanced educational and informational environment that promotes the exchange of ideas, education, and responsibilities of CCRC residents in the decision-making process within their communities.

As Lowell Starling noted in his President's Message, page 2, “we need to expand the team to be all that PARCR can be for its members.”

If you have an interest or questions about the commitment, please contact either one of us.

Susan Martin

PARCR Membership Chair



Website Update for PARCR.ORG

Yes, You Can Find it on the PARCR Website

Recently, I got an email from a PARCR member asking for information about the January 11, 2023, Quarterly Meeting. While I answered their question, it occurred to me afterwards that this information is publicly available on our website, www.PARCR.org.

So, here is a brief reminder about the wealth of information on our site. There is a lot of basic information about PARCR (pronounced “parker”) including our Mission Statement, four past issues of *The PARCR POST*, previous and upcoming meetings, and who is part of PARCR leadership (with contact information). There are slide presentations, if available, from our four previous Quarterly Meetings.

In addition, we have links to information useful to CCRC residents including how to locate their PA legislators, information from LeadingAge PA, links to access the PA Department of Aging’s services, a link to the National Continuing Care Residents Association (NaCCRA), and general information tailored to seniors.

The public can access the above information. We also maintain a Members Only section of the web site that contains additional information including communications between members, minutes of past Quarter-

ly Meetings (and access to video recordings), Executive Committee meetings, and our by-laws.

There are two kinds of members: 1) the three delegates of PARCR member communities (community dues are \$60/year), and 2) individual community members who are interested in taking an active role in the organization (individual dues are \$20/year). To join PARCR, click on the Membership link at the bottom of the home page and fill out the appropriate form.

To access the Members Only information on the website, begin by clicking on the login button at the top of the page. If you haven’t already established your access credentials, submit the New Member Sign Up form. You should receive a response from our Webmaster within 24 to 48 hours. When you have received approval, login using the information you entered earlier. You may be asked to authenticate the first time you login.

If you know of any resources that would benefit PARCR members, please contact me at president@parcr.org and we’ll take a look at it.

Lowell Starling

President



Gail Stelger
PARCR Legislative Chair
legislative@parcr.org

If you are like me and haven't been following new proposals from the Department of Health (DOH), and need an update, here is a refresher. On July 31, 2021, the Pennsylvania Department of Health officially announced it is revising the Commonwealth's long-term care nursing facility regulations which had not been updated since 1999. The DOH announced the first proposed revision would be increasing the time staff are required to spend with nursing home residents from 2.7 to 4.1. In addition, other packages were released for comments.

LeadingAge PA, with input from members and key taskforces, identified some primary issues of concern with the updated regulations. LeadingAge PA drafted its own public comments on behalf of members, and LeadingAge PA President & CEO, Garry Pezzano, offered testimony at the Independent Regulatory Review Commission (IRRC) meeting.

On Oct. 28, 2022, the IRRC voted to approve all four final form regulation packages from the Department of Health (DOH) for long-term care nursing facilities. During testimony and voting proceedings, the IRRC commended the collaboration that had taken place between associations, such as LeadingAge PA, providers, and the department throughout the process, and urged DOH to continue to collaborate with LeadingAge PA and the other associations. Also, this collaboration had been instrumental in securing additional Medicaid reimbursement funding in the most recent state budget.

Package one is designed to update the state long-term care nursing facility regulations to be more aligned with the federal regulations.

Package two addresses Life Safety Codes including

new construction of long-term care nursing facilities.

Package three is designed to add transparency during the process of changes of ownerships for long-term care nursing facilities.

Package four relates to nursing-to-patient ratios. Through negotiations with the Department of Health, LeadingAge PA was able to mitigate the originally proposed 4.1 Nursing Hours Per Patient Day (NHPPD) and associated ratios. The Administration agreed to 2.87 NHPPD (effective July 1, 2023) and 3.2 NHPPD (effective July 1, 2024) with no further increases at this time. DOH has also committed to supporting providers through continued efforts on workforce initiatives.

LeadingAge PA has been busy providing Educational Seminars for Nursing Home Staff and others employed in Senior Services. Here are several recent offerings:

- ◇ Update on 2023 PA Nursing Facility Regulations
- ◇ Accountable Staffing and Employee Benefits Solutions
- ◇ Video! How Senior Living Organizations Can Use Videos to Capture and Nurture Leads to Drive Revenue
- ◇ Understanding the Impact of Alzheimer's and Dementia and Resources for Support in Providing Quality Care
- ◇ COVID-19 Emergency Temporary Standards (ETS) for Health Care Employers

Stay tuned for more information on LeadingAge PA's Legislative Priorities for 2023 including Work Force, Additional Funding, Affordable Housing, Home Health, and Industry Reforms.



Is Your Brain as Healthy as Your Heart?



In the past two years Bethany Village, along with other communities in the Asbury Communities system, has been working to answer that question and take steps to improve resident's brain health.

The first problem to be solved is how to measure brain health. When you compare measurements of brain health with measurements of heart health there is a vast gulf. For heart health we have ECGs, Echocardiograms, MRI's, CAT scans, and the list goes on of tests to look at how your heart is functioning. For the brain there are few equivalents to identify deficits and even fewer strategies to prevent decline.

Bethany Village began its journey to address brain health when Asbury Communities partnered with the Asbury Foundation to introduce a partnership with REACT Neuro to conduct a pilot of their technology. REACT Neuro is a Boston based company

founded by neuroscientists that is focused on measuring brain health by using Virtual Reality headsets. The VR units study metrics that can't be measured through traditional cognitive testing, including eye movements and verbal fluency. This data is uploaded to their servers for analysis and reporting. The input of the Asbury residents has been critical for helping design the process of using virtual reality with older adults, as well as contributing to the database of test results that will be used to inform predictive models in the future.

But beyond React Neuro, there is a whole host of brain health offerings coming to Bethany Village. Earlier this year, Bethany Village launched an initiative called The Super Seven to provide some academic learning on how our brains function along with a series of exercises to improve cognitive (continued on page 8)



Is Your Brain as Healthy as Your Heart? (continued from page 7)

functioning. The “Super Seven” refers to the seven primary neuro-cognitive domains used by physicians to diagnose impairment. The Super Seven include:

- ◇ Sensory-Perceptual-Motor
- ◇ Attention
- ◇ Memory
- ◇ Executive function
- ◇ Processing speed
- ◇ Language
- ◇ Social cognition

It is important to understand that cognition is more than just memory. Super Seven is intended to expand residents’ understanding of the human brain, its complex functions, and strategies to improve those functions. The first four 6-week sessions were provided by Dr. Rob Winningham from Western Oregon University via live Zoom presentations. His presentations provided insight into the seven domains, where they reside inside the brain, and how each contributes to cognitive function. The Super Seven program, which has been implemented synchronously across all Asbury campuses, lays the foundation for the bigger brain health program coming to Bethany Village in 2023.

Kinnections is a movement-based and lifestyle-focused program that is designed to

meet the individual needs of each participant. Using a five-part battery of assessments, global cognitive scores and domain-specific strengths and weaknesses are identified. Then a personalized “Engagement Plan” is created for each individual with recommendations for boosting cognitive performance and healthy behaviors. Programming focuses on these lifestyle components that are well supported in the research:

- ◇ Movement
- ◇ Sleep
- ◇ Eat nutrient dense foods
- ◇ Learn something
- ◇ Socialize
- ◇ Get outside

When it comes to brain health, there are several ways to increase neural connectivity and build “cognitive reserve”- that is, having as much cognitive function as possible to fall back on in the event of a neuro-degenerative condition. The brain needs blood flow and nutrients provided by both aerobic and resistive exercise, and to be challenged by learning new things. Combining those two things gives us the best bang for our buck!

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Is Your Brain as Healthy as Your Heart? (continued from page 8)



Consider the challenge of trying something that is both physically demanding and completely unfamiliar, like boxing, tap dancing, or rock climbing. These activities require learning new motor patterns and problem-solving skills, which in turn calls for elevated attention, increased memory, enhanced executive function, etc. We can also get similar benefits through exergaming, which is exercise using gamified technology. SmartFit is one such device coming to Bethany Village that requires the user to tap lighted panels as a physical response to a cognitive prompt, and we can tweak the cognitive or physical aspects for the user based on his or her needs to get just the right level of challenge. Rendeever is another product that uses virtual reality to gamify cognitive and physical exercise. It is this combination of thinking and moving at the same time that is simply more representative of “real life” than just sitting at the ta-

ble to do a crossword puzzle. The activity should be a little bit uncomfortable, but fun, to be worthwhile. This is how we build and strengthen neural “Kinnections”.

Super Seven will be an ongoing offering throughout the Asbury system, with new learning materials and guest lecturers providing ongoing education and cognitive exercises. Kinnections will be implemented at all Asbury campuses in 2023. Asbury is committed to providing residents every opportunity to maintain healthy brains and decrease the risk of cognitive impairment. The key is to understand that exercises and lifestyle changes are key to optimizing brain health and preventing cognitive decline.

Article submitted by: Sue Paul, Wellness and Brain Health Director, Asbury Communities

PARCR LEADERSHIP TEAM

OFFICERS	MEMBERS AT LARGE	COMMITTEE CHAIRS	ADVISORS
President <i>Lowell Starling</i> Bethany Village	<i>Gene Burk</i> Village at Kelly Drive <i>Vacant</i>	Legislation <i>Gail Stelger</i> Cross Keys Village	<i>Jonathan Hollinger</i> President/CEO Pleasant View Communities
Vice President <i>Vacant</i>	<i>Tony Wright</i> Bethany Village <i>Mike Vandenberg</i> Kirkland Village	Membership <i>Susan Martin</i> Normandie Ridge	<i>Steve Lindsey</i> , CEO Garden Spot Communities
Secretary <i>Monte Avery</i> Bethany Village	<i>Jim Markell</i> Quincy Village <i>Bill Stelger</i> Cross Keys Village	Newsletter <i>Joan W. Martin</i> Homestead Village	<i>Larry Zook</i> President/CEO Landis Communities
Treasurer <i>Terry DiGruttolo</i> Masonic Village	<i>Susan DiGruttolo</i> Masonic Village <i>Vacant</i>	Program—Vacant Meeting Coordinator <i>Charles Sproule</i> Bethany Village	WEBMASTER <i>Dale Meadowcroft</i> Bethany Village

OFFICIAL WEBSITES & CONTACTS

LeadingAge PA: www.leadingagepa.org

Austin Cawley, Director, Legislative Affairs

NaCCRA (National Continuing Care Residents Association): www.naccra.com

Dan Seeger, Representative

THE PARCR POST INFORMATION

THE PARCR POST is a quarterly newsletter for **PENNSYLVANIA ALLIANCE OF RETIREMENT COMMUNITY RESIDENTS**. Its purpose is to share PARCR information and ideas/happenings from PARCR member CCRCs. If you are a PARCR Member Community Staff Contact and would like to share an article of interest from your community, contact the editor at parcrpost@parcr.org.

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