



Pennsylvania Alliance of Retirement Community Residents

Joan W. Martin, Newsletter Editor

parcrpost@parcr.org

The PARCR POST

Welcome to ***The PARCR POST's*** April 2024 newsletter, featuring the following information:

President Lowell Starling shares activities from the organization's busy first quarter, and informs members about Board position openings. [Click here](#)

Operations Director Susan Martin welcomes members to participate in an in-person Quarterly Meeting at SpiriTrust Lutheran, The Villages at Sprenkle Drive in York, PA. Live streaming will also be available. She notes that members must register by April 1, 2024 for this meeting, and that online registration is now available. [Click here](#)

Upcoming Meetings are previewed. [Click here](#)

Legislative Affairs Director Joan W. Martin reviews opportunities for PARCR members to participate in budget advocacy with our partner, leadingAge PA.

[Click here](#)

Information Sharing: SpiriTrust Lutheran, The Villages at Sprenkle Drive in York shares information about their Community Garden and their Sensory Room.

[Click here](#)

PARCR Leadership Team: PARCR Officers. [Click here](#)

The July 2024 edition of ***The PARCR POST, Issue 11.1***, will be released in late June, 2024. 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 June 14, 2024.

THE PARCR POST

A QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER FOR

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

President's Message by Lowell Starling

As the first quarter of 2024 ends, this report shows what an eventful quarter it has been for the organization and the Leadership Team.

Bill Hunter's Passing

In January, Steve Lindsey, the CEO of Garden Spot, informed me that board member Bill Hunter had passed away suddenly. Bill's passing created a second opening on our board. He also had two other responsibilities which we have filled: 1) serving as Susan Martin's backup in Operations has been filled by board member Gene Burk, and 2) participation, along with Joan Martin, on the financial review team to review our financials for the previous fiscal year has been filled by board member Jim Markell. I would like to thank Gene and Jim for stepping up to fill these roles.

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Quarterly Meeting

**April 10, 2024 at SpiriTrust Lutheran,
The Villages at Sprengle Drive in York**

**10:00 Social Time with coffee and
refreshments**

**10:30 to 12:30 in-person meeting
(also live-streamed)**

12:30 Lunch for those preregistered

1:15 Tour or Management Update

**Presenter: Amy Castleberry, Manag-
ing Director, Ziegler Finance**

Topic: CCRC Finance Fundamentals

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VISION STATEMENT

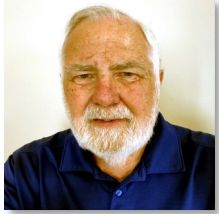
Recognized as an enhanced educational and informational environment for PA CCRC residents



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

LeadingAge PA Letter to Their Members About PARCR

Last fall I informed you about the joint letter we and LeadingAge PA (LAPA) planned to send to CCRCs that were only members of one organization, but not the other. The goal was to build membership in both organizations to increase our voice in Harrisburg and our ability to influence legislation and regulations. In the final analysis, there was only one community that was a PARCR member but not a LAPA member, while there were roughly 120 CCRCs that were LAPA members but not PARCR members. LAPA has since shifted the approach to having a CCRC CEO who is affiliated with both of us send a letter to their peers encouraging them to support their residents becoming PARCR members. Jonathan Hollinger, CEO of Pleasant View, who is one of our advisors, has agreed to sign the letter. The letter went out the week of March 4 2024, to 122 CCRCs.

Online Meeting Registration and Payment

Given the prospect of potential growth and some of the challenges we have had with our current manual meeting registration and payment process, Dale Meadowcroft our web master, Susan Martin, Operations Director, and I initiated a proof-of-concept prototype project to determine the feasibility of adding an option for online meeting registration and payment via credit card to our website. To support the prototype, we had to upgrade the WIX platform that runs our current website to the version that supports Electronic

Commerce at a cost of \$492 for a two-year license. The prototype was successful, and we showed a demo of it to the board and deployment was approved on March 11, 2024. We will use it for the April Quarterly Meeting. For information about how it will function, see the website report in the minutes of the March 11, 2024, board meeting or the operations report in this edition of the PARCR POST.

Successful January Quarterly Meeting

We had a very successful meeting with high attendance despite the dismal weather and the meeting got mostly positive reviews in our post meeting survey. We did have some technical issues which highlighted our dependence on the capabilities of the host community for our meetings. The good news is that the Rife Center at Bethany Village is scheduled for a major technology upgrade this year so that when we return in January 2025 most of those issues should be moot. We plan to increase our assessment of the technological capabilities of prospective host communities before we commit to meeting there.

Contact at PA Department of Insurance

During her presentation at the January Quarterly Meeting, Katherine Pearson suggested that PARCR representatives make contact with an official in the Company Licensing Division at the Pennsylvania Insurance

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Lowell Starling
PARCR President
president@parcr.org

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Department as a possible speaker at a future meeting, given that this is the entity that regulates CCRCs. I followed up with Katherine to discuss an introduction and she advised that we give the new official, Karen Veronikis, some time to settle into her position. Katherine will then set up a meeting with her and some of the PARCR leadership.

Speaker on Artificial Intelligence for July Meeting

In February, Vice President Bob Newell and I had a virtual meeting with Nick Patel who is the CEO of ThriveWell Tech which is the technology subsidiary of Asbury Communities. We discussed having Nick speak on Artificial Intelligence at our July meeting. He was just back from the Consumer Electronics Show (CES) and briefed us on some exciting technologies they saw at the show aimed at senior living, as well as some technologies that ThriveWell is working on. We are looking forward to hearing from Nick in July on how advancing technology can affect seniors' lives.

Multi-State Meeting

In February, Vice President Bob Newell and board member Mike Vandenberg and I participated in the national Zoom meeting of the multi-state group. That is a loose consortium of statewide residents' organizations like PARCR, with participants from both the east and west coasts, that meets via Zoom every other month. Many of the organizations are passionate about resident's rights, to the point of hiring their own lobbyists to advo-

cate for legislation such as mandating residents being on the boards of their CCRCs. We learned that one of those organizations spends \$25K a year on their part time lobbyist, and another spends \$18K a year. We also discussed working with LeadingAge in other states.

Board Turnover

June 30 is the end of our fiscal year, and the end of terms for some officers and board members. I will not stand for re-election as President this June, and Treasurer Terry DiGruttolo will not stand for re-election as Treasurer. In the March board meeting we began the nomination process with elections to be held during the June meeting. So far, Vice President Bob Newell has been nominated to be President, and our web master, Dale Meadowcroft, has been nominated to be Treasurer. We still need at least one nominee for Vice President. We began the month with two board vacancies, and Charley Sproule, Terry Digruttolo and Susan Digruttolo also announced that they would not run for a new term, for a total of five openings. We have two nominations for directors, leaving three openings. Job descriptions for all PARCR positions are posted on our website at www.parc.org. I urge members to take a look and consider joining the PARCR Leadership Team.

Lowell Starling
 President



Susan Martin
PARCR Operations Director
operations@parcr.org

You have received the email notice of the forward moving change for the meeting registration processes of PARCR. PARCR is springing forward with the implementation of an online registration system. The new process will streamline the registration and payment process for our meetings. The option will still be available for individuals who wish to print the registration form and submit a check for payment. The process will have definite closing dates and times. This will be especially important with the Easter holidays falling just before the April 1st deadline for registration.

When you submit your registration information and payment online, you will receive a registration confirmation by email. You will need to bring the confirmation with you to the meeting on April 10 to show it at the registration table for your name tag. At this point in the transition to online registration, you can only enter one registrant and payment at a time. This will be our challenge upon which to improve as we move forward.

As the PARCR Board approved moving forward with online registration for our meetings, it is also time for our member communities and individual members to

begin the renewal process and thinking about inviting neighboring communities and residents that are not already members to join the PARCR organization. We currently have thirty CCRC communities as members and sixty individual members. The renewal memberships are due by June 30, 2024. This would be an excellent time to begin preparing your Council or Association to complete the form and prepare for the payment of the dues by the deadline. The 2024-2025 renewal forms will be available on the website. We will be transitioning to online renewals. You will be informed when the online renewal option is ready. The community membership dues of \$60 entitles three individuals to serve as Council/Association liaisons between PARCR and the community's independent residents. Individual community residents are encouraged to join and become active in PARCR meetings and activities with the payment of \$20.

Susan Martin

PARCR Operations Director



Upcoming Meetings

July 10, 2024 Quarterly Meeting

The keynote speaker will be Nick Patel, CEO of ThriveWell Tech (an Asbury Communities subsidiary). His presentation will be on the benefits of Artificial Intelligence and other advanced technologies to CCRC residents, and ThriveWell Tech’s participation in AARP’s AgeTech Collaborative for Senior Living. As always, we will have updates on legislative and regulatory issues from LeadingAge PA and NaCCRA, as well as information from our host community, Quincy Village in Waynesboro, PA.

Quarterly PARCR Meeting Date	Meeting Location
Wed. Oct. 9, 2024	Pleasant View Communities Manheim, PA
Wed. Jan. 8, 2025	Bethany Village Mechanicsburg, PA
Wed. April 9, 2025	To Be Announced

If your community has the needed facilities and you are willing to host a meeting, please contact Charley Sproule, PARCR Meeting Coordinator, at cfsproule@verizon.net or call him at 717.790.2040. Information on the facilities, equipment and services needed to host a meeting will be provided to the interested host communities.



Joan W. Martin
PARCR Legislative Affairs Director
legislative@parcr.org

Following the Governor’s Budget Address on February 6, 2024 and the Appropriations Committee Budget Hearings in early March, LeadingAge PA has launched its budget advocacy for funding for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2024. The Governor’s budget did not include any increase to Medicaid funding for a rate increase for nursing homes or for the LIFE program. LeadingAge PA is strongly advocating on the need for additional Medicaid funding in the FY 2024-2025 budget for a 3.5% (\$70 Million) rate increase for nursing homes.

On March 4, LeadingAge PA sent a letter to the 253 members of the General Assembly urging their support of our funding requests. The LeadingAge PA government affairs team has launched a marathon of meetings with legislators to fight for this funding. These conversations will be most effective if the legislators have heard from their constituents, including the residents of CCRCs, as these entities include nursing homes.

LeadingAge PA has launched its Voter Voice tool that includes messaging tailored for residents of CCRCs to communicate with their State Representative and Senator. Go to

[LeadingAge PA \(votervoicenet\)](https://www.leadingagepa.org/votervoicenet) to see the prepared letter and to read more background information about the budget request. The letter includes the following statement: “As a resident, I know compounding financial strain, workforce challenges, and heightened regulatory requirements have made it increasingly difficult in recent years for communities like mine to maintain focus on innovative, evidence-based, and quality-driven efforts that enrich the lives of their resident communities.” There is a text box for a personal impact message, and the letter can be edited to add information or change it before sending.

The PARCR Leadership Team urges our membership to participate in the advocacy efforts of our partner, LeadingAge PA.

LeadingAge PA has scheduled their annual Lobby Day in Harrisburg for June 4, 2024 to show support for their funding requests.

Please reach out to me (address above) or to Austin Cawley at acawley@leadingagepa.org with questions.

Joan W. Martin

PARCR Legislative Affairs Director



SpiriTrust Lutheran®, The Village at Sprengle Drive in York, host of the April 10 quarterly meeting of PARCR, is one of six SpiriTrust Lutheran® Life Plan Communities. As a Life Plan Community, residents benefit from residences, amenities, and services that meet them where they are today, as well as care and services for tomorrow.

Community Garden

A popular amenity is the community garden, which flourishes thanks to a dedicated group of residential living residents who volunteer their time each spring and summer to prepare the garden for planting, nurture the plants, harvest the produce and staff a weekly market.

When the market opens in June, residents, team members and the general public are invited to choose from an assortment of fresh produce including broccoli, cauliflower, cabbage, red beets, lettuce, spinach, onions, potatoes, tomatoes, sugar beets, raspberries and more. A few items have a set price but most items can be had for a donation of the buyer's choosing. The gardeners then generously donate proceeds from the market to SpiriTrust Lutheran® and local non-profit agencies.

For the gardeners, health experts say the combination of physical activity, social interaction and exposure to nature and sunlight can have many health benefits, including lowering blood pressure, weight loss, and restoring dexterity and strength. However, that typically is not the main reason residents participate.

"I really like working in the garden, but I also like coming here to the market and having the people come and see their smiles when they can buy fresh produce that they know was picked this morning," said resident Barry Noll, the lead gardener. "That's what makes it worthwhile."

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Spiritrust Lutheran®

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Garden Planting Seeds Resident gardeners (L-R) Dave Strausbaugh, Iva Roth and Steve Bowman share a laugh while planting seeds in the community garden.



Garden Market Customers purchase fresh produce from the garden market. The produce goes fast so it pays to be there when the market opens and to know what you want!

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Sensory Room

Across campus at the skilled care center, a lounge is being converted into a dedicated space to provide multi-sensory stimulation for residents with physical limitations, dementia, and other cognitive impairments.

Mary Rinaolo, the skilled care life enrichment leader and a Certified Dementia Practitioner, recognized a need to offer innovative activities and experiences to residents who aren't able to access them on their own. A lack of multi-sensory stimulation and appropriate activities can have devastating impacts on their wellbeing and health. In a sensory room, stimulation and activities can be designed specifically for each resident based on their needs, interests, and abilities.

Working with the SpiriTrust Lutheran® Office of Philanthropy, Rinaolo was able to secure an Embracing Aging Community Grant from York County Community Foundation to design, renovate, and furnish the lounge's interior and exterior and buy supplies. The 14'x17' space opens to a 22'x8' private porch and garden. The space and its components will have the capability to be tailored to whether a resident can manage higher levels of stimulation or prefers lower and gentle levels of stimulation.

Once the room is complete, the life enrichment team will work with residents in morning and afternoon sessions each day. Some activities will be designed to relieve stress and anxiety while others will be designed to stimulate the senses and memories.

PARCR LEADERSHIP TEAM

OFFICERS	BOARD MEMBERS	VOLUNTEER STAFF	ADVISORS
President <i>Lowell Starling</i> Bethany Village	<i>Gene Burk</i> Village at Kelly Drive Vacant	Legislative Affairs Director <i>Joan W. Martin</i> Homestead Village	<i>Jonathan Hollinger</i> President/CEO Pleasant View Communities
Vice President <i>Robert Newell</i> Moravian Manor	<i>Karen Overly Smith</i> Messiah Village <i>Mike Vandenberg</i> Kirkland Village	Operations Director <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 Vacant	Newsletter Editor <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>John Berk, PhD</i> Masonic Village	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

Daniel A. Seeger, President and PARCR 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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