A LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

Francis Bacon (1561 – 1626) said, “If a man be gracious and courteous to strangers, it shows he is a citizen of the world, and that his heart is no island, cut off from other lands, but a continent that joins to them.”

Bacon’s statement may seem odd and even contradictory, given that he lived at a time when people rarely traveled far beyond their counties and no mass communication existed – only spoken and written words. However, the English philosopher, statesman, orator, essayist, and author utilized all the tools available over 400 years ago. Bacon recognized needs which transcend time, place, culture and other circumstances – relationships, friends and connections.

Home design says a lot about how people live and interact. In the Victorian era expansive front porches encouraged families to see neighbors, converse and monitor their streets. In contrast, recently built homes feature decks and/or patios in the backyard. Perhaps, the overwhelming opportunities for connecting to others offers an explanation.

How do you define a friend? Is a social media friend a virtual friend or real? Does a physical presence matter? Advantageously, we can digitally connect through suggestions from mutual friends, political issues, calls to mobilize and enact change, shared experiences, critiquing a product or service, chatting on various platforms, perusing dating sites, seeking educational credentials, and much more. Given the tools, we can link in an instant to information, people and places worldwide.

In the fall 2014 issue we shared resident stories. Social bonds enrich our lives on multiple levels and contribute to our physical and mental health. This issue, themed The Original Social Network, demonstrates that relationships, friendships and connections are universally sought and necessary for survival, including our UMHNJ communities. It’s sure to warm your heart in the cold of winter!

Janet M. Carrato, Editor
After observing my mother, Collingswood Manor resident Connie Petrillo, I conclude that video calling is an invaluable tool for helping residents keep in close touch with important friends and family members. It contributes to residents’ overall psychological and emotional health and allows them to have more meaningful experiences. I would highly recommend Skype and FaceTime to any family member who wants to enhance the lives of their loved ones.

Residents organization-wide have witnessed their grandchildren getting married and other important events through these connecting technologies. When other barriers prevent in-person visits, such as illness, mobility, distance, and time limitations, social media platforms open doors.

Although born in the 1920s, Connie Petrillo benefits from video calls on the Apple iPad. Remarkably at age 91, Connie has been face-to-face video conferencing for well over a year via Skype and FaceTime. These technologies combine voice and live video. Just a few steps are required to use these programs.

Virtual visits yield fantastic opportunities for all residents. Connie’s face literally lights up when she connects to family members in California. Recently, for the first time, she saw her newly born great granddaughter, who arrived on September 11, 2014. This delight occurred due to innovative video call capabilities.

Another resident connects with her spouse every day through the IN2L (It’s Never 2 Late) technology, a picture-based touch screen interface that allows users to “touch” their way to find engaging, educational, spiritual, and personalized content. Each UMHNJ community is equipped with an IN2L. Every Sunday, Pitman Manor residents Richard and Jean Subber use Skype to communicate with their daughter. Advantageously, Pitman has a Boy Scout volunteer whose Eagle Scout project focuses on establishing Skype accounts for residents and teaching them to navigate it. Jean MacGeorge has been on Facebook for about 10 months and now finds it easy to stay current with family news, events and photos. Recently, she even invited her Facebook friends to “like” Pitman Manor! Regardless of the specific method, seniors are finding and utilizing new ways to nurture and sustain vital social connections.

Volunteering is good for the soul because ultimately it connects one to others, bringing fun and fulfillment to life. Connections keep us healthy and gratified. Isn’t that what a social network is all about?

A study in Social Science and Medicine found that the more people volunteered the happier they felt. And let’s not forget those who benefit from that volunteering!

For residents in our 10 communities it means developing relationships and connections with people of all ages, linking them to broader social networks. From businesses, to churches, to schools, to community groups, to individuals, the volunteers at Collingswood Manor bring myriad talents, gifts, abilities, and specialties.

Holman Enterprises, Sun National Bank, Subaru of America, Target, and Liberty Mutual have granted staff opportunities to volunteer during business hours. Like an informal team building exercise while bonding to residents, they have played games, taken residents for walks, given manicures, gardened, assisted with clerical work, organized spaces, and made life better!

Members of the First Unitarian Church and Christ the Light Church, both of Cherry Hill, assisted with the annual onsite Doggone Parade. They registered dogs, manned the food table and transported residents. Best of all and completely serendipitous, after discovering that their churches sit across the road from each other, they developed new friendships.

Volunteering contributes to psychological and emotional health and may provide connections not experienced in everyday life. Thank you volunteers everywhere!

Cherry Hill High School West staff member Stary Sandak and student Ryan Cullen (first and fourth from left), present a Participation Award recognizing Collingswood Manor for supporting the West Structured Learning Experience Program to Mary Moloney, volunteer coordinator; Shari Neidich, executive director, and Leslie Elman, wait staff server (second, third and fifth from left).
According to the International Council on Active Aging, many seniors’ main predictor of successfully sticking to their fitness programs over time is the tried and true “buddy system.” Therefore, surround yourself with like-minded people and together, you can motivate and support one another.

Iron-Clad House of Cards
By Alice M. Coghill

Jean and Margaret became friends over a card table more than 30 years ago.

“I was employed at Glassboro State College when I met Dolly Dorman,” said Jean MacGeorge, 93-year-old Pitman Manor resident. “One day she asked if I would join her pinochle group and the rest is history.”

At that initial card game she met Margaret Thomas, Daisy Cliff, Vi Mihlebach, and Peg Lease, who would later become neighbors at Pitman Manor. The close knit group of six ladies looked forward to their weekly games, took turns hosting and always ended with dessert. Margaret and Jean discovered their strong Pitman connection.

“It’s funny, but we used to sit around the card table, laugh and say someday we’re all moving to Pitman Manor,” quipped Jean.

Dolly moved in first and even then, the group kept the games going. When it was Dolly’s turn to host, she’d set up a card table in the lounge, get a pie from the farmer’s market and ask someone from the kitchen to bring up beverages and snacks.

“When Dolly passed away, Mildred Bell joined and later moved to Pitman Manor,” remembers Jean.

The pinochle players’ bonds extended beyond the card table. Jean and Margaret fondly remember annual trips to the Lenox Warehouse followed by dinner at the Crab Trap and festive holiday parties.

“I was living alone when I learned that Jean was moving to Pitman Manor. I called and requested a studio. Jean and I were best friends and we wanted to be neighbors as well,” said Margaret, now 100-years-old.

“Margaret and I are as different as night and day. However, what I like best about Margaret is that she always makes me laugh. And even though we live on the same floor we have our liveliest conversations over the phone — just like the old days,” concludes Jean.

Alice M. Coghill is Marketing Coordinator at Pitman Manor.

While this may be the age of online connections, Sharon Sandusky focuses on connecting with people face-to-face. Sharon, having lived in Montclair, New Jersey since 1977 and more recently as a resident at PineRidge of Montclair, is very much connected with the greater community. And from speaking with her, you readily understand her passion for seniors and how she uses her people skills to make things happen.

As a member of the Montclair Senior Citizen Advisory Committee, Sharon has been a driving force in helping this committee become one of the most active in Montclair. “We have basically moved mountains to get attention for senior issues in Montclair, which has had few auxiliary programs for them.” This has included successes like having the senior bus cover the entire town, annual “Seniorama” events highlighting timely senior topics like alternative medicine and grandparents raising grandchildren; advocating for universal design in senior housing; and conducting a survey in the summer of 2013 of age 50+ residents of Montclair. This was the first time such a survey was conducted.

Sharon’s involvement is not limited to the town of Montclair, but also extends to serving as president of the PineRidge Resident Council for six terms. Sharon noted that while the town made multiple attempts to address the parking needs, no workable solutions were forthcoming. Finally, she recruited a group of PineRidge residents to join her at a town council meeting where she spoke to them about the need to quickly resolve the situation. The effort made an impact and additional parking spaces were soon secured.

Sharon attributes her success to talking directly with people, experience she gained while working many years for the Army and Air Force. While she feels that technology can be useful, Sharon doesn’t use Facebook, Twitter, etc. “I always found, unless it was something really minor, that a face-to-face talk was much better and much more productive, even than a telephone. It’s too easy to say no and hang up when you’re not facing someone.”

It’s easy to see that Sharon is a master of the “original social network.”

Kevin Daly is Legacy Advisor for the United Methodist Homes Foundation.

Master of the Original Social Network
By Kevin Daly

Sharon with Tanika Jackson-White, PineRidge’s social service coordinator, at the Essex County Division of Senior Services Legacy Writing Contest awards in 2011.

Interacting and engaging with others stands as an important and powerful way to combat depression. A report from the American Sociological Association concluded that depression and loneliness are strongly related. Surround yourself with the people you love best.
WHY FRIENDS ARE IMPORTANT:

The need for friends is instinctual. Our survival once depended on having close friends to comfort and help us. They helped us hunt and find food, build shelter, and keep our families safe. They also offered companionship. Good friends add a special meaning to life. They help you share the good times and overcome the difficult ones. While strong relationships with friends can be a huge source of fun and pleasure, they are also important for your physical and emotional health. Because of the role friends play in relieving stress, they can help you fight illness, speed recovery, and even prolong life.

Good friends can:

• Improve your mood. Happiness can be infectious. Spending time with happy and positive friends can elevate your mood and boost your outlook.

• Help you to reach your goals. Whether you’re trying to get fit, give up smoking, or otherwise improve your life, encouragement from a friend can really boost your willpower and increase your chances of success.

• Reduce your stress and depression. Having an active social life can bolster your immune system and help reduce isolation, a major contributing factor for depression.

• Support you through tough times. Even if it’s just having someone to share your problems with, friends can help you cope with serious illness, the loss of a job or loved one, the breakup of a relationship, or any other challenge in life.

• Support you as you age. As you age, retirement, illness, and the death of loved ones can often leave you isolated. Having people you can turn to for company and support can provide purpose as you age and be a buffer against depression, disability, hardship, and loss. Staying socially engaged as you age keeps you feeling positive and boosts your happiness.

While in high school, Brianna Plaxe, a former Bristol Glen volunteer, whole-heartedly embraced a mission—to assist resident Margaret “Peggy” Kovach in publishing her autobiography. During their weekly visits Peggy shared that as a wife, friend, mother and grandmother, relationships are the most valuable part of her life. A great portion of her book chronicles the years at Bristol Glen and contains many happy pictures with her beloved husband Les and close friends.

Now a widow, Peggy remains passionate about traveling and the importance of fulfilling dreams, including writing her personal story as a legacy to her family. Although Peggy came to Bristol Glen to retire, she created and capitalized on an opportunity. Without extensive writing experience and at age 91, Peggy completed the book, A Lifetime of Memories; The Extraordinary Life of An Ordinary Girl.

An excerpt reads, My name is Margaret Kovach but all my friends and family call me Peggy or Peg. I was born on August 15, 1921 in Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, a beautiful city on the prairies of western Canada, the second child of Annie and Samuel Terrence. My paternal ancestors were from Cornwall, England, where the ancestral home, Terrence Manor, is located. Today, Terrence Manor is a designated National Historic Trust site and, as such is maintained inside and out so it can be open to visitors.

When Brianna went away to college, Bristol Glen volunteer Nancy Weiss continued with the technical aspects of page layouts and design. While the book is a wonderful heirloom to pass through the Kovach generations, the larger unintended and positive consequence remains enriched lives.

The book signing in June 2013 represented years of hard work by many people who came together for a greater purpose. Brianna learned so much from Peggy.
A 2009 study from the American Academy of Neurology examining stress and dementia confirms that people who are socially active may be less likely to develop cognitive impairment.


Thanks to online websites such as eHarmony.com, Match.com and others, “the dating industry has expanded at 3.5 percent a year since 2008 — right through the recession — to become a $2.1 billion powerhouse.” Analysts expect the acceleration to continue over the next five years,” writes Steve Yoder in The Fiscal Times.

Despite this high tech phenomenon, two Francis Asbury Manor residents — strangers until this year — have quietly fashioned a solid and loving relationship based on friendship, compatibility, encouragement, and laughter.

No texts. No tweets. No online memberships. This is their story:

Gloria Hurley, a Jersey girl from birth, is a good-looking 88-year-old widow with short, silver-white hair who, with her late husband, raised three sons. She returned to New Jersey from Florida and in January 2014 became a resident of Francis Asbury Manor.

“If Gloria wasn’t here,” Fred Fecher says, “it would be a very lonely existence for me.” At 91, Fred, a retired chiropractor, closed his successful Long Island practice at age 85! Twice a widower and the father of one adult daughter, Fred moved into Francis Asbury Manor in May 2014. He cuts a handsome figure, which early on, did not go unnoticed by Gloria.

They quickly found compatibility in religion – both Lutheran. “We have a strong faith in the Lord Jesus Christ,” Fred says. “With that in mind, we’re able to handle life.”

Both Fred and Gloria agree this relationship is very different from their marriage relationships. “We have a real concern for one another,” Gloria says. “What began as a great friendship has developed into something more,” she adds as she looks over at Fred and smiles.

Marriage has been a topic of conversation, but not an option. “At this stage of the game,” Fred says, “it’s just not important for us.”

When asked if they disagree, Fred says, “We have disagreements … but we talk things out.”

“Gloria adds, “I am so happy I’m here. I love getting up in the morning!”

Patricia Darcey is Marketing Director at Francis Asbury Manor.

Gloria and Fred take a summer stroll on the Ocean Grove boardwalk.

Alby Bruey and Randy Bailey at The Shores.

While Fred and Gloria agree this relationship is very different from their marriage relationships. “We have a real concern for one another,” Gloria says. “What began as a great friendship has developed into something more,” she adds as she looks over at Fred and smiles.

Marriage has been a topic of conversation, but not an option. “At this stage of the game,” Fred says, “it’s just not important for us.”

When asked if they disagree, Fred says, “We have disagreements … but we talk things out.”

“Gloria adds, “I am so happy I’m here. I love getting up in the morning!”

Patricia Darcey is Marketing Director at Francis Asbury Manor.

At The Shores, Chef Robert utilizes the cart for seasonal and holiday events as well as in-house events. Wafting aromas draw a crowd, and when set between both dining rooms, it strategically urges residents to make their selections before sitting down to dine. At Pitman Manor twice a month, Chef Chad prepares seasonal offerings and does monthly cooking demonstrations. Collingswood Manor has permanently ensconced the chef cart in the dining room, where tempting menu items are offered two or three times a week. It appears at the weekly happy hour, where residents sample numerous creative freshly-made foods and beverages.

At Bristol Glen the cart has become part of the Sunday brunch’s made-to-order omelets and carving station. On Tuesdays and Thursdays it morphs into a build your own seasonal salad station. Each month, Town Hall brings Chef Mark’s very popular demonstration series. Under Chef Lloyd’s direction at Francis Asbury Manor, the cart personifies versatility. Occupying the first floor dining room, it brings morning made-to-order omelets or pancakes, and later, a carving or create your own pasta stations.

Chef Stage Center creates wonderful buzz, resident anticipation and involvement, creative opportunities for the culinary staff, and direct connection with residents. The unanimous vote extols, “Keep on rolling, Chef Stage Center!”

Stephen Davis is Area Executive Chef for Sodexo.
By Kevin Daly

Everyone enjoys a good, old fashioned potluck whether it’s at church, a family get together or elsewhere. This communal meal dates back to the Middles Ages in Europe where leftover food was never discarded, but rather kept warm in a pot and later used to feed people on short notice. Today’s potluck usually signifies a group of people who each contribute a dish to be shared among all. More importantly and beyond the comfort of food, people experience warm interaction and fellowship and may even form new friendships.

Bristol Glen residents recently started hosting their own onsite “neighborhood picnic.” Sylvia Anderson, first suggested the idea to the Community Life Committee and was asked to lead it along with co-chairs Maud Rowan, Adele Rosen and Rev. Dick Carlson joining her in organizing it.

Sylvia said, “We were going to the local parks for picnicking and so I thought, ‘Why can’t we use our courtyard in the good weather?’ Why do we have to go on the bus? It just expanded ... everybody seemed to enjoy bringing a dish.”

WINTER HOME MAINTENANCE
GIVING YOU SECOND THOUGHTS?

Perhaps the responsibilities of homeownership have gotten away from you? Or perhaps, over the holidays, you’ve observed a loved one in need of assistance? Consider the freedom and benefits our thriving senior communities offer. We invite you to an Open House or a Lunch and Learn at Bristol Glen, Collingswood Manor, Francis Asbury Manor, Pitman Manor, or The Shores. Visit http://www.umh-nj.org/openhouse for the schedule.

Maintaining social connections with others can decrease the impact of pain according to a Harvard Medical School study. People coping with chronic pain report the positive effects of participating in support groups with others who are dealing with the same challenges.


A UCLA study demonstrated that loneliness decreases the efficiency of the human immune system. Several other studies also confirm that people with strong social connections exhibit stronger immunity against disease.

Our Sacred Mission
Anchored in Wesleyan Beliefs
By John Callanan

Many of you chose to live in a UMHNJ community, or helped your parent(s) choose one because our faith-based foundation reassures you that our relationship with God defines our identity, inspires our service and frames our mission. However, like all relationships, our relationship with God requires care and nurture to remain vital. Toward that end, we have been engaged in an in-depth exploration of our mission at all levels within UMHNJ over the last two years.

The goal of our discernment was to identify our core values and redefine our mission as a Wesleyan-Christian, servant ministry which provides opportunities for us all to experience sustaining relationships, remain vital, and enjoy the fullness of life. We’ve invested considerable time and energy in this discussion, because how we think and talk about what we do, influences how we feel and act, shapes our ability to be in relationship, and defines how we live out our mission.

I’m excited that our new mission, vision and values statements give us strong tools to guide our relationships and inspire our service by affirming that we are called by God to provide life-giving care and choices for living full and meaningful lives. At the heart of our calling is Jesus’ proclamation, “I came that they may have life, and have it abundantly” (John 10:10, RSV). Our mission, “compassionately serving in community so that all are free to choose abundant life,” is anchored in our Wesleyan beliefs that compassion and service are vital fruits of faith and that we all can choose to thrive by embracing the fullness in life which Jesus affirmed is God’s intention for us.

Rev. John Callanan is Corporate Director of Mission and Pastoral Care.

IS YOUR MAILING INFORMATION CORRECT?

If you wish to continue receiving *engage!* in print and your mailing information is correct, there is no need to do anything. If however, any data on the addressee section is incorrect, not up-to-date, or you are receiving duplicates, please complete the form below and mail to the Home Office.

A copy of the current address imprint(s) is always helpful. Please allow approximately six weeks for reconciliation. You may also email your requests and concerns to mebert@umh-nj.org or call 732-922-9802 x2121 during business hours.

Name ____________________________________________________________
Address ______________________________________________________________________________________
City ________________________________________State ____________Zip __________________________
E-mail address _______________________________________________________________________________
Home phone _________________________________Cell phone _____________________________________

For the latest news visit www.umh-nj.org
Facebook.com/UMHNJ
Blog.umh-nj.org
Email: umh@umh-nj.org
Phone: 732-922-9800
Toll free: 800-352-6521
Home Office: 3311 State Route 33, Neptune, NJ 07753

Steering Group
Lawrence D. Carlson, President & CEO
Elizabeth P. Anderson, Corporate Director of Compliance & Risk Management
John D. Callanan, Corporate Director of Mission & Pastoral Care
Sharon D. Clapp, Vice President of Development
David G. Glenn, Vice President of Human Resources
Cynthia D. Jacques, Vice President Housing & Community Initiatives
Patty Kneippling, Executive Assistant
DaLinda Love, Corporate Director of Clinical Services
Carol B. McKinley, Vice President of Operations
Steve Rausch, Corporate Director of Information Technology
Roberta K. Velichkin, Corporate Director of Marketing & Sales
Richard D. Wilson, Vice President of Finance
Full Service Communities
At the heart of United Methodist Homes’ resident-driven services and amenities is a team of highly-qualified professionals delivering a continuum of care to adults 65 years and over:

Bristol Glen
200 Bristol Glen Drive
Newton, NJ 07860
www.bristolglen.org
973-300-5788

Collingswood Manor
460 Haddon Avenue
Collingswood, NJ 08108
www.collingswoodmanor.org
856-854-4331

Francis Asbury Manor
70 Stockton Avenue
Ocean Grove, NJ 07756
www.francisasburymanor.org
732-774-1316

Pitman Manor
535 North Oak Avenue
Pitman, NJ 08071
www.pitmanmanor.org
856-589-7800

The Shores
at Wesley Manor
2201 Bay Avenue
Ocean City, NJ 08226
www.theshoresretirement.org
609-399-8505

Independent Living • Residential Living • Assisted Living • Skilled Nursing
Memory Support • Short-Term Rehab • Respite • Hospice

Affordable Housing Communities
Senior Housing communities designed for residential living for adults 62 years and over:

Bishop Taylor Manor
33 North Walnut Street
East Orange, NJ 07017
www.umh-nj.org/bishop-taylor-manor
973-676-9057

Covenant Manor
623 East Front Street
Plainfield, NJ 07060
www.umh-nj.org/covenant-manor
908-791-9430

PineRidge of Montclair
60 Glenridge Avenue
Montclair, NJ 07042
www.umh-nj.org/pine-ridge-montclair
973-746-0003

Wesley by the Bay
2401 Bay Avenue, Suite 2
Ocean City, NJ 08226
www.umh-nj.org/wesley-by-the-bay
609-399-6701

Wesleyan Arms
9 Wall Street
Red Bank, NJ 07701
www.umh-nj.org/wesleyan-arms
732-936-0760