



The Friendship Quilt

A newsletter highlighting news and trends affecting senior living in our community.

H₂O hhhh...

Warm-water physical therapy pool now open



Friendship's new warm-water therapy pool has enhanced the therapy experience for patients.

Friendship Retirement Community® has opened a warm-water pool devoted to physical therapy, providing a comfortable and accommodating environment to patients recovering from injuries or illness.

The hydrotherapy pool, at Friendship's outpatient therapy center on Hershberger Road, is designed exclusively for therapy, so patients don't have to share a pool with recreational swimmers or exercise classes. At between 90 and 92 degrees, the pool is a good 10 degrees warmer than standard pools, making therapy easier on the body and more enjoyable.

"The temperature itself makes it more comfortable for patients who are in pain to exercise," explains Sara Ruhlman, a physical therapist and manager of Friendship's outpatient therapy center. "The heat also increases circulation, which helps to

increase flexibility of joints, and warmer water helps patients relax."

It's not just balmy water. Having a dedicated therapy pool lets Friendship therapists spend more time with patients in a pool designed to make recovery easier. It includes a hydraulic lift and submersible platform to accommodate wheelchairs and underwater steps with benches for sitting and climbing. There's even a resistant swim jet for patients to swim or walk in place against resistance as a way to improve strength and balance.

Located at the outpatient therapy center on Hershberger Road, the 1,300-square-foot expansion houses a pool that's 16 feet long and 12 feet wide. The pool is 4 feet deep, with a section 8 feet deep.

If the water's too warm, the pool's temperature can be lowered for patients who cannot tolerate 90-degree

Continued on page 4.

Welcome



Welcome to *The Friendship Quilt*, a newsletter about trends in senior living and health care offered by the people at Friendship Retirement Community®.

In this issue you'll learn about our new warm-water hydrotherapy pool and its benefits for therapy patients. You'll also meet a team of bowlers having fun and getting exercise without stepping on a lane.

It's the people at Friendship who make this a special place. You'll enjoy meeting one of our Care Unlimited professionals and a 100-year-old resident she's bonded with, a volunteer who brightens the day for some of our residents, and a 102-year-old who's still very independent.

With more than 40 years of trusted service, Friendship is home to almost 900 residents on two campuses, making it one of the largest retirement communities in Virginia. A not-for-profit organization, Friendship offers nursing care, assisted living, independent living, personal care service and a broad range of medical services, including outpatient rehabilitation and orthopedic care.

And, as you'll read in this issue of *The Friendship Quilt*, Friendship provides an innovative approach to today's senior care.

Stan Huffman
President and CEO
Friendship Retirement Community

Visit us at www.friendship.us

Contents

- ▶ Therapy Pool
- ▶ Independent Centenarian
- ▶ Wii Bowling
- ▶ Companion Care
- ▶ Friendship's Greeter

Friendship does not discriminate against any person on the basis of race, color, national origin, disability, or age in admission, treatment, or participation in its programs, services and activities, or in employment. For further information about this policy, contact the Corporate Compliance Officer (540) 265-2222.



Independent Centenarian

Friendship's living options can suit any age



Nat Back at home since 1986.

There's nothing like being in your own home. Even when you're 102.

"Going on 103," clarifies Nat Back, who has lived independently in his tidy home at the end of a cul-de-sac on Friendship's Lakeview Circle since 1986. "It's comfortable, close to everything. I have great neighbors and the people are very nice. It's well located."

Back's house is one of 26 floor plans for independent-living apartments, houses and townhouses offered by Friendship. Residents enjoy life as they would in any home – but they don't have to worry about mowing the lawn, fixing the sink or any other home maintenance.

In Back's case, neighbors help him get around and he gets visits from family, including five grandchildren and two great-grandchildren.

The retired economist with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and the Department of Agriculture first retired to Wytheville in 1971, drawn to southwest Virginia for its pastoral countryside and similarities to Kentucky's horse country. Back was born on a farm in New Jersey and always enjoyed his agrarian roots.

He later moved to Friendship, where he is active in the residents' association and instrumental in establishing Friendship's Residents' Center. Today, he stays active by joining other residents for games of bridge, or even a little pool, before settling back in his cozy house.

"I like the fact that it's a separate home," he says. Everything is on one floor, including two bedrooms, den, large living room, garage and fully equipped kitchen.

"You wouldn't know you're in a retirement community," Back says. "This is the only way I've known it and I wouldn't want it any other way."

To learn more about independent living at Friendship, call (540) 265-2230.

A Wii Bit of Fun

Assisted-living residents take bowling to a new lane



Friendship's Wii bowling team thrives on competition.

Every Monday, a normally quiet room in the basement of Eastwood Assisted Living erupts with the sounds of pounding bowling balls, crashing pins and cheering fans.

No, there's no bowling alley down there. But if the enthusiasm and skills of residents on a Wii bowling team is any indication, it might be time to consider building one.

What's generating so much excitement is Eastwood's new Nintendo Wii video game system. With the Wii, players hold a controller that mimics a player's physical movements and then displays the virtual results – hopefully a strike, not a gutter ball – on a television screen. For these bowlers it's a way to rack up points – without leaving the building or having to wear those charming bowling shoes.

Like their grandchildren, members of the Friendship team say they're hooked on Wii for its realistic experience, exercise, fun and camaraderie.

"There are some people who feel that we're a bunch of old fogies in assisted living who don't move very much," says bowler Beth McGavock. "We're showing that's just not true."

"I used to bowl, but now I can't see," says Claudine Nichols. "The nicest part is that my family thinks it's absolutely great. Half blind and still bowling!"

For some, Wii bowling brings back memories of youth.

"I started bowling as a teen-ager because the boys were pin-setters," says Grace Fabio. "Wii is an activity you can participate in with fellow residents, it's fun and it gets everyone active. It's nice to be active."

Keysa Sexton, Eastwood's activities director, says most anyone can participate because players can bowl while sitting down on a chair or wheelchair or

standing with a walker or cane.

Susan O'Malley, RN, Eastwood's administrator, explains that residents benefit from the exercise, and even those with decreased cognitive function can participate. "So the benefits are really great as far as health and well-being aside from fun," she says.

Friendship's bowling team has big plans. A tournament with other retirement communities is in the works, and they want to be at the top of their game.

"We're getting good, actually," says Steve Fleshman. "We get into it. It's fun playing and we're very competitive." His secret? It's all in the wrist. "You have to press, swing and release," he says.

The team is anxious to try other Wii sports such as golf and boxing, but for now the team, clad in Friendship blue T-shirts, is preparing for the next match with another retirement community.

"I've been here eight years and my daughter calls me every day to ask what I'm doing," says Juanita Harner. "She's got me spoiled. I love it here. We don't have any old people here."

To learn more about assisted living at Friendship, call (540) 265-2244.



Companion Care

Care Unlimited keeps seniors independent



The right care can keep seniors independent.

You're never too old to make new friends. Just ask Elsie Spicer, who just turned 100. Her new friend, Marie Tinsley, helps to keep her independent.

Tinsley is a caregiver for Care Unlimited, Friendship Retirement Community's at-home personal care service. She visits Mrs. Spicer four or five times a week to provide typical household activities like laundry, housecleaning, organizing and meal preparation and also takes her shopping, to doctor visits and the hair salon. She's also available to help Mrs. Spicer bathe or get dressed.

But there's more to their year-long relationship. They've formed a bond.

"I feel safe with her," says Mrs. Spicer, an independent-living resident at Friendship for 13 years. "Marie is an all-round good person. I enjoy her company as well as her skills. She helps to keep me home."

"Everyone feels better in their home," adds Tinsley, who's been with Friendship for eight years. "People dread the idea of leaving home and the idea of change is very uncomfortable for any age. There's no place like home. Our goal is to keep our clients safe and provide any care they require to make them comfortable and gratified not to have to leave their home."

Mrs. Spicer, Roanoke native, is the third of eight children. A 1926 graduate of Jefferson High School, she raised four children and worked in the trust department at the First National Exchange Bank. Today, she enjoys visits from 11 grandchildren, 18 great-grandchildren and one great-great grandchild.

In good health – she credits not smoking or drinking and good genes – she enjoys playing

cards with fellow residents and reading mysteries and romantic novels.

"She's a joy to be with, just a lot of fun," Tinsley explains. "She lifts my heart. When I leave there I feel like I was able to provide positive energy to make her day better."

Tinsley comes from a family of care-givers. "I have an instinct to care, the skills to do it and a heart for it. I make a difference and I get that good feeling every day. It's a joy and a privilege."

Tinsley says the key to caring for seniors is just to be there for them. "I allow them to do what they can do for themselves," she says. "I'm just there to help. Sometimes we just go out and have fun or go to lunch together. Every day is different."

It's clear Mrs. Spicer and Tinsley have a great deal of respect for each other.

"When I first met her I knew she was the one. She was very kind," Mrs. Spicer says. "She didn't treat me like I was an old lady."

"She has a wonderful attitude," Tinsley adds. "Sweetness just seems to come out of her."

Care Unlimited attempts to make the best possible matches between caregivers and their clients.

"She turned out to be one of the most wonderful people I've known in my life," Tinsley says. "A lot of people at that age have lost so many people and so many changes in their bodies and lives, they can live in depression. They start to believe they don't matter any more. But they do matter."

"Marie really cares about people," Mrs. Spicer says.

"Well," Tinsley quickly adds, "it's the least I can do to make a difference in someone's life."

To learn more about Care Unlimited, call (540) 265-2193.

Friendship's Greeter

Gary Sherman volunteers with simple acts of kindness



Gary Sherman (left) helps brighten the day for residents.

A couple of times a week Gary Sherman walks the halls of Friendship's Health and Rehab Center looking for someone to talk to. It's not that Sherman is lonely – he's just making sure the residents have some company.

"It's like this," Sherman explains. "I just like to run my mouth off."

Sherman, a restaurant worker and cook, is one of dozens of volunteers at Friendship spending time with residents who don't have family or friends nearby.

He first got the bug to volunteer while recovering from knee replacement surgery at Friendship's inpatient therapy and later getting physical therapy at the outpatient rehab center.

Sherman had never volunteered for anything before – until he made an observation: "When I see older ladies and gentlemen in a lot worse shape than me still with a smile on their faces, boy, if that doesn't get you..."

Today, he drops by after therapy three times a week. "I like to visit them and just talk to them," he says. "They hardly have any visitors. I'm there to just spend time with them, to chat with them. I'm trying to give back. Some will never have a chance to get out of a wheelchair. All I had was a little pain in my knee. I can still walk around. If I can only give back a little to make one person smile."

His approach is simple: "I approach everyone to say 'Hey, how are you?' Is there anything I can do for you? Anything I can get for you?"

Sherman has an idea Friendship administrators ought to consider: If Friendship ever needs a greeter, like the ones at Walmart, he's ready to go.

"Well, I sure have the mouth for it," he says.

To learn more about Friendship Health and Rehab, call (540) 265-2100.

Continued from page 1.

water, such as those with multiple sclerosis.

With its convenient location in the same building as outpatient therapy, patients won't have to go far to get into the water.

"The biggest difference is more access to the pool," says Virgil Thompson, Friendship's director of therapy. "Right now our therapy is being done in a communal pool (at Friendship's Residents' Center), so this gives us more time to work with patients, there's better availability for appointments, more room in the pool and better control over who goes in the pool and when. That really enhances the therapy experience."

Physical therapy patient Joyce Jones certainly agrees. She's in the water twice a week to help treat fibromyalgia and diabetes. "We do exercises on my arms and legs and walking in the water is much easier for me," Jones says. "The benefits I receive from water therapy is improved mobility and less pain. I'm able to use muscles I wasn't able to before. I feel that water therapy far outweighs land therapy. When you have limited mobility, getting in the water is easier on your joints and you get a lot of benefits. Your body feels better and you feel better."

Hydrotherapy is used for one-on-one therapy as well as small groups to help people recover from surgery or injury. As part of a broader rehabilitation plan, pool therapy is especially helpful when a patient is in too much pain or can't tolerate exercise on land.

"The water makes it easier to move," Ruhlman says. "Hydrotherapy is a tool to progress to a greater functional level with less pain." Sessions in the water typically run one to three times a week for 45 minutes each.

"The benefits are pretty clear, and now we're proud to have an outstanding facility for our region," Thompson added.

To learn more about physical therapy at Friendship, call (540) 265-2199.



Pool Facts

Location: Friendship Outpatient Therapy™, 327 Hershberger Road.

Temperature: 90-92 degrees.

Size: 16 feet long and 12 feet wide.

Depth: 4 feet and 8 feet.

Benefits: Dedicated pool for hydrotherapy means less stress on joints and better therapy experience.

Innovations: Hydraulic lift for wheelchairs with submersible platform; resistant swim jet; translucent light panels for extra underwater lighting.