

Artman



Thank You for a Banner Year

With 113 golfers and 42 sponsors, this year's Artman Golf Outing raised over **\$90,000** net for Artman's Benevolent Care Fund. Residents find comfort in knowing that they always have a home at Artman - even if their financial situation changes.



Winners:

With a score of 58, Jason Woelk, Darren Heisse, Andrew Simpson and Michael Love placed first in this year's outing.

Visit artmanhome.org/golf-outing/ to view more photos!

Lutheran Congregational Services



Improving Pennsylvania's Disaster Preparedness

Pennsylvania's weather is becoming hotter, wetter, and more unpredictable. At the same time, significant cuts to the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) are requiring state and local communities to take greater responsibility for disaster preparedness and recovery efforts.

Lutheran Congregational Service's Julia Frank, who brings more than 20 years of experience in disaster response work, holds leadership positions at both the state and national Voluntary Organizations Active

in Disaster (VOAD) levels. Through her extensive network, she is leading a collaborative initiative with the Pennsylvania Emergency Management Agency (PEMA) and partners within PA-VOAD.

To support these efforts, the Evangelical Lutheran Church of America (ELCA) Lutheran Disaster Response program provided a three-year, \$300,000 grant to LCS. These funds will be used to strengthen community capacity and resiliency, laying the foundation for a stronger, more coordinated disaster response system within Pennsylvania.

Collaborating with local and state government agencies, congregations, and community organizations, this initiative includes:

- Building volunteer capacity through recruitment, education, and training.
- Sharing stories of how communities like the Eastwick neighborhood of Philadelphia have strengthened resiliency in vulnerable neighborhoods, while encouraging others to build agency by applying both lessons learned and best practices from these communities.
- Strengthening disaster response outreach, communication, and coordination among all partners.

As disasters become more frequent, LCS, Lutheran Disaster Response, PEMA and PA-VOAD are preparing Pennsylvania to respond with compassion, coordination, and resilience.

Meet Catherine E. Williamson, Executive Director for The Hearth at Drexel

Catherine's lifelong dedication to service defines both her personal values and her professional career. From establishing a non-profit for underserved youth during grade school to her active engagement as a Girl Scout, her foundational years were rooted in helping others.

This commitment deepened during her college years when she joined Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc., a public service organization, and it has since continued through her extensive service on numerous non-profit boards.

Her calling to senior living was sparked by a joyful, shared family experience. "It was the Fourth of July," Catherine recalls. "My brother in law worked for Holiday Senior Living. We donned red, white, and blue wigs and drove a van styled like Uncle Sam in a parade for his community that he worked for. Watching families laugh, sing, and celebrate together with games and live music completely won my heart."



Transitioning from a successful career in hospitality, Catherine committed herself fully to the field of aging, earning a Master of Science in Gerontology, summa cum laude. Her education and expertise is complemented by her hands-on advocacy as a certified Long-Term Care Ombudsman and a Medicare/Medicaid Counselor for the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

As an Executive Director, Catherine champions a culture of mutual care, operating on a simple but profound philosophy: by supporting and nurturing her staff, she ensures that residents always receive the highest standard of heartfelt care.

Brikena Calaku Named Manager of the Year



Liberty Lutheran is proud to share that Brikena Calaku, Dining Room Manager at Paul's Run, was named Manager of the Year in Leading Age PA's 2026 Distinguished Service Awards.

For more than 26 years, Brikena has been a driving force at Paul's Run, leading with compassion, integrity, and an unwavering commitment to service. From her role as a hostess, she quickly grew into an extraordinary leader as manager.

Brikena continues to shape countless careers while strengthening the culture of Paul's Run. Grounded in her belief that people flourish when supported and valued, she inspires her team to create a dining experience that brings joy, dignity, and connection to hundreds of residents daily.

Frank Beech, Executive Director of Paul's Run, says it best. "Brikena is the kind of leader who transforms a workplace into a community. Her commitment to service, her ability to inspire excellence, and her dedication to developing future leaders make her an extraordinary force at Paul's Run. Her impact is felt in every meal served, every staff member supported, and every resident whose life is brighter because of her."

Meet Pat Herbert - Victorian Village at Hatboro

Pat Herbert and her husband Jim moved into Victorian Village in September of 2019. Pat admits that moving from their house to an apartment was a difficult decision.

As they entered retirement, they wanted to downsize and were impressed with Victorian Village. They discovered that the spacious, 2-bedroom apartments with 1,850 square feet, plus a personal storage unit, would provide plenty of room for them.

They adjusted quickly there and made friends immediately. Jim especially enjoys that he's not responsible to fixing it if something goes wrong in the apartment. Better still, with all the snowstorms this past winter, he didn't have to clear the driveway and sidewalks.



Celebrating a Life of Generosity

Jillian Clayton always found joy in giving back to others. She and her husband Peter also embraced life at The Manor, enjoying activities, happy hours, and the many opportunities to connect, celebrate, and simply enjoy the company of friends and neighbors.

After Jillian passed away, she bequeathed a portion of her estate to be used towards the beautification and enrichment of The Manor, the community she was so happy to call home in her final years. Therefore, Peter approached Robyn Fine, Director of Community Life, to discuss ideas and plans to enhance and expand the community life program.

Thanks to Jillian's generosity and Peter's suggestions, several projects around the community quickly came to life. The billiards table received a much-needed refurbishment, and fresh décor was added to the entrance area to create an even warmer welcome for residents and visitors alike.



As they talked, Robyn and Peter continued imagining new ways to enrich life at The Manor. Most recently, a lively performance by the Mummers brought music, energy, and celebration to the community.

As part of the community improvements, two new outdoor benches were installed in The Manor courtyard, where Jillian & Peter spent many spring days enjoying the beautiful surroundings. Peter and his sons wrote a heartfelt tribute to Jillian on the plaques that adorn each bench.

Today, the benches and new décor stand as a tribute to Jillian and the exuberant, generous life she lived. They welcome newcomers, invite friends to pause and enjoy one another's company, and offer a place of rest along the way.

Cheers to a beautiful legacy of giving.



Pat joined a Mahjong group that meets every Tuesday. She and Jim enjoy activities, events and social gatherings, especially happy hours at the clubhouse.

When the Victorian Village joined Liberty Lutheran in 2025, Pat transitioned from semi-retirement to become property manager. Her engaging personality, coupled with her intimate knowledge of living in the community, makes her the perfect person for that role.

A Legacy in Harmony: The Story of Sentimental Journey

Anne Gross, a resident at The Village, recalls how the band Sentimental Journey came together.

"It started by accident, really," she says. "A resident named Len Ferrara played saxophone in clubs and wanted to keep up his skills. I'm a retired church organist, so he asked me to play with him."

Anne initially declined, but Len didn't give up. He shared a book of melodies filled with chord symbols, and Anne found herself drawn in. "Using music theory, I became addicted to translating the songs and melodies onto the piano," she explains.

Before long, other residents began gathering to listen. Over time, some joined in, some of whom hadn't played an instrument since their youth.

After Len's passing in 2022, the group was determined to carry his spirit forward. Today, the band has grown to include acoustic string bass, a variety of drums, including conga and bongo, trombone and clarinet. Two outside vocalists have joined, and with support from the Resident Council, the group acquired a full drum set.

The band rehearses on Monday afternoons and performs at least every two months in the library during happy hour. Their repertoire spans big band classics to hits from the '70s and '80s, often featuring sing-along selections that bring their audience into the music.

What began as a simple collaboration has become a vibrant, shared experience—one that continues to honor Len's legacy while building community through music.



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West Philadelphia Senior Community Center

More Than a Career

How do you say farewell to a beloved icon who has championed the West Philadelphia Senior Community Center for 19 years? On March 6, the Center pulled out all the stops to celebrate Julia Diggs, Program Manager, as she entered retirement.

Julia was surrounded by love and appreciation as staff and members shared heartfelt memories of her tireless commitment and service. Her wit, charm, and dedication helped welcome thousands of members through the Center's doors over the years. Here's what some had to say:

"God placed you in the right place at the time when you were needed most. I will forever remember you."

"Your dedication and hard work have inspired us all. Enjoy every moment of your retirement."

Throughout her tenure, Julia introduced a wide range of vibrant programs that supported healthy aging and built community. Member favorites include line dancing, annual fashion shows, community service projects, birthday celebrations, and cooking and nutrition classes.

She also organized memorable trips ranging from local outings to international excursions, always finding exciting destinations. During the COVID-19 pandemic, Julia kept everyone connected virtually through daily social media posts — often including a joke or two to brighten spirits and bring laughter during uncertain times.

"I am deeply grateful for the opportunities, support, and friendships I've experienced along the way," Julia shared. "Working with such dedicated and talented people has been an honor. Thank you for being part of such a meaningful chapter in my life."

