



Medford Leas *Life*

50th Anniversary Issue

AUGUST 2021

CELEBRATING 50 YEARS! 1971-2021

REFLECTING AND LOOKING FORWARD AT 50 YEARS

Dear Readers,

We hope you will enjoy this interesting series of stories concerning our dynamic community. Fifty years to reflect, celebrate, and look forward has been an inspiration.

Celebrating anniversaries for notable occasions is always a special experience. Not only is this a historic anniversary, but during the past year we have also risen to the challenge of a global pandemic.



Staff, residents, and their friends and families have done their best to maintain everyone's overall safety and keep residents engaged as we look back and plan for the future.

This special edition reflects on the history of the community, its leadership, traditions, culture, values, and activities, which will all contribute to the future. The articles describe the community from its early days, highlighting changes and significant events that enhanced residents' lives. Resident volunteerism and engagement have always been hallmarks of the entire community since its founding and they continue to be today.

Residents whose names are listed on the last page with their responsibilities have contributed to this

special publication. A number of current and retired employees have also helped us with research and review of articles. The efforts of all involved are greatly appreciated. Like so many of the projects we work on in the community, this edition, as well as all of our regular monthly newsletter issues, reflect collaboration between staff and residents.

We recognize this special year with shared thoughts about the past, present, and bright future of Medford Leas. Thanks to everyone for being a part of this community.

Sincerely, your *Medford Leas Life* staff.

HISTORY

EARLY DAYS AND GOVERNANCE

A group of Friends (Quakers) opened a boarding home in Haddonfield for elderly Quaker ladies in 1911 and named it "The Estaugh" after John Estaugh, an early Friend. The Estaugh Board was soon founded in 1914 with the goal of managing the home to ensure proper support for the residents.

It has frequently been stated that good governance requires a shared common goal. Leadership at Medford Leas has a strong history of sharing the common goal of providing support for seniors. Authority involves responsibilities at the strategic and managerial levels, as well as agreement and understanding among the governed.

In the late 1960s, **Rebecca J. Evans**, Board president, found the need to develop a plan for the future when the Haddonfield property housing the women could not be upgraded to comply with new fire codes. Although an effort to move to Moorestown was not successful, the Medford Township mayor suggested the Mickle Farm as a site to build a senior community not limited to Quaker women.



Under the leadership of Quakers, including **Tak Moriuchi** and **Lew Barton**, construction started on Medford Leas in 1970, and the community

opened in 1971. **Gladys Fleming**, who moved into the community on March 2, 1971, was the only resident for the first two weeks. **Louise** and **Harold Olesen** then moved in as the first couple to take residence in the community. The Olesens were prime movers in ways that you will read about.

These early residents and many other “pioneers” gave us an exceptional start — initiating the Residents Association, Art Studio, Library, Workshop, Knitting and Sewing Group, and Gift Shop. They also passed on to all of us the spirit of a special caring way of life.

Onsite management developed as more residents moved into the community, and in 1979, **Lois Forrest** was appointed executive director. Under her leadership many significant changes were instituted. She remained in that position for 21 years. **Jeremy Vickers**, the current CEO, is the second-longest serving person in that role. He started here in October 2010. Currently, his team’s leadership during the COVID-19 pandemic reflects concern for the needs of the residents.

As mentioned above, early residents quickly developed an organization that could address their needs with management. An organizing committee was established in 1971. In 1972, the Medford Leas Residents Association (MLRA) was founded and a constitution was approved, with updates in

2005 and 2016. The first MLRA Council officers were: President **Ralph Derr**, Vice President **Elliott Lee**, and Secretary **Margaret Milne**.

The MLRA’s purpose is “to work to understand and promote the common interests of the residents.” The association is organized through an 11-member Council elected by residents. Members are elected to two-year terms. The president and vice president are then elected by Council members to serve one-year terms as officers. The MLRA has been instrumental in ensuring that the needs of all residents on both campuses are supported, primarily by sponsoring committees and activities and communicating with the Board and Administration.

By tradition, MLRA has honored past presidents, including current residents **Jack Akerboom**, **Lefty Alderfer**, **Kay Cooley**, **Joe Costanza**, **Kit Ellenbogen**, **Dave Eynon**, **Joyce Koch**, **Sally Miller**, **Barbara Trought**, and **Beth Wray**.

In 1999, on the Lumberton Campus, the Interim Liaison Committee, consisting of **Harry Harrison**, **Don Kocher**, and **Helen Vukasin**, was formed to discuss with the Administration resident needs specific to the Lumberton Campus. It then evolved into the Lumberton Campus Residents Association (LCRA), which has continued to provide support for campus residents by sponsoring committees and activities.

The Estaugh Board continues to plan strategies to ensure stability for addressing the needs of residents. Trustees include Rebecca Evans’ son, resident **Walt Evans**, currently the longest-serving trustee.

The CEO continues to meet with MLRA representatives to provide appropriate services and overall support as the community moves into the future.

There are other interesting early history-related references in subsequent articles. Leadership at the multiple levels — the Board, the Administration, the MLRA, and the LCRA — has always been crucial regarding the continuous improvement and viability of Medford Leas.



TRADITIONS

“Tradition” comes from the Latin word, *tradere*, meaning to hand over or give for safekeeping. It involves customs or beliefs that are passed on.

Some of the traditions of Medford Leas are: the Flower Show, the Reception Desk Flowers, the Residents Assistance Fund, the Employee Appreciation Fund, and the Employee Holiday Show.

The Flower Show

Early records indicate that our residents have ALWAYS been interested in flowers, gardens, and nature. Perhaps lured by our lovely grounds, they decided to show and display their blooms for others. As early as the fall of 1972, there was a Flower Arrangement and Cutting Garden Committee. The Pressed Flower group, also started in 1972, made lovely designs to be hung in various public areas. The Flower Show tradition continues each year.

Reception Desk Flowers

Many of the early residents had beautiful gardens. It was decided to form a committee to oversee a process to put flowers at the Medford Campus Reception Desk and Lounge for a week at a time.

A committee led by **Ruth Smalley** got together to provide floral arrangements in the Health (now Wellness) Center, the Infirmary (now Woolman), the windows and tables in the Atrium, the Dining Room, the Auditorium (now Theater), and Lounge. Being aware of others and providing joy through nature — certainly a Medford Leas tradition.

Residents Assistance Fund

This fund was established when it was learned that some residents had exhausted their resources. Early residents had the foresight to realize that healthy living and good care can lead to long and satisfying lives — sometimes outlasting financial resources. In the beginning, residents contributed to this strictly confidential fund through donations, memorial gifts, and charitable gift annuities. Contributions have kept this fund viable and the awareness of it allows trust in the future of Medford Leas. It is still supported by various activities, including the Golf Outing, Jeans Day for staff, charitable gift annuities, estate gifts, and other donations.

Employee Appreciation Fund

This fund was developed by residents as a way of showing appreciation to the staff. It was determined that a percentage based on each employee's hours worked would be given annually as a holiday bonus. The gifts were given in early December so the employees would have money for holiday gifts. Senior administration was not included as their bonuses came from a different source. Our tradition of honoring employees at holiday time seems to have started in 1971 when each staff member received the bonus AND a fruit cake!

As a thank-you, the employees started the...

Employee Holiday Show



It is a highlight, a not-to-be-missed event. Most employees from the beginning (and now) are happy to be involved in this expression of gratitude. The idea seems to have evolved as a thank-you for the financial gifts given to employees each year. For many years, **Gerry Stride's** creative imagination spearheaded this event. She was sure to say, though, that several others contributed ideas. In the past, the line for tickets (with dinner either before or after the show) was long and popular!



Those of us who remember **Bill Murphy**, former Director of Operations, may be interested to learn that he performed in every production (more than 40 years!) while he worked here.

These traditions, mostly started in the early 1970s, continue today. They bind us to our past and carry us to our future.

QUAKER VALUES



The founders of Medford Leas were devoted Quakers (members of the Religious Society of Friends), and Quaker values were incorporated from the start in the culture of the new continuing care retirement community. Quakers refer to these tenets by the acronym SPICES:

Simplicity, Peace, Integrity, Community, Equality, and Stewardship.

At Medford Leas, simplicity continues to be taken very seriously. Any improvements to the buildings or the beautiful natural setting are made with this in mind. Additions and interior renovations are not elaborate, but functional and attractive.

Stewardship is a primary principle for staff and residents. Resident volunteers are active in committees related to nature, such as Trails, Nature Center Library, the Farm, and the Greenhouses, and are also represented on the Estaug Arboretum Committee. The Arboretum is celebrating its 40th anniversary now and is still undergoing improvements.

The sense of equality is present in all phases of life at Medford Leas. Friendliness, combined with an emphasis on community, creates a caring atmosphere. For instance, volunteer residents lead a network of Friendly Visitors and Cluster Leaders, who welcome new residents, pass on information, and check on others' well-being. For the whole community, the many committees headed by residents offer a wide range of activities and events.

Caring between residents and staff is still a very strong component of our culture and community. Many form strong friendships. Events are shared, such as the summer Boardwalk Night, when families enjoy typical boardwalk food in the Arts & Social Wing parking lot on the Medford Campus.

The highlight of the year, however, is the hugely successful Employee Holiday Show, put on for applauding residents.

For Quakers and non-Quakers, a Worship Meeting is held here every Sunday. Although the number of Quakers is diminishing throughout the country, their values remain basic to our life at Medford Leas.

NATURAL SETTING

THE FARM

Medford Leas gardeners have an early resident to thank for the Medford Leas Farm. Before moving to Medford Leas in 1973, **Grace Ober** asked if land could be set aside for "full-fledged" farming. As a result, two acres were allocated for "The Farm." In those early years, Grace farmed a half acre herself, growing a wide variety of fruits and vegetables and inspiring others to join as farmers.

By 1976, there were 18 active gardeners with two resident farm "managers," Grace and **Maurice Collins**. By 1981, a tool shed had been installed and named the Ober Barn.

Varmints have been a perennial topic in the Farm's history. In 1999, resident gardeners and landscape workers trapped and released 27 groundhogs. In recent years, the growing deer population on the Medford Campus came to a head in 2019 when the night-roving animals took out many gardeners' crops. A deer fence was installed that winter which has had the added benefit of deterring the groundhogs.

Water is another perennial topic among gardeners. In 1998, irrigation at the farm was converted from well to creek water. Now, with an aging and unreliable irrigation system, plans this year will convert the system back to well water.

The Farm has also provided opportunity for community engagement. Master Gardeners of Burlington County has had a "donation garden" here since 2003, with food banks receiving their produce. Resident gardeners also donate their produce. In 2011, an Eco-Tots Club, sponsored by the Pine-lands Garden Club, met at the Farm, and 20 tabletop gardens have been constructed by Eagle Scouts.



Today's Farm is reduced in scale to perhaps a half acre with 17 gardeners and 19 plots, along with the 20 tabletop gardens behind the Nature Center that support another 17 gardeners.

The newest additions to the Farm are picnic tables and six gates painted "Deep Space Blue." You can't miss them.



THE BARTON ARBORETUM AND NATURE PRESERVE

The Barton Arboretum and Nature Preserve of Medford Leas covers more than 250 acres, 168 on the Medford Campus and 88 on the Lumberton Campus. From the beginning, its mission has been to provide a beautiful landscape for residents, with something to enjoy all year round. We now celebrate its success and its 40th anniversary.

1979, she also became devoted to the idea of surrounding residents with a wide variety of trees and shrubs. On a visit here, Ernesta Ballard, head of the Pennsylvania Horticultural Society, suggested the creation of an arboretum. Lew and Lois sought help from the Morris Arboretum in Philadelphia and especially Paul Meyer, staff member. In 1981, the Lewis W. Barton Arboretum (now the Barton Arboretum) was officially recognized.

As with any collection, the Arboretum requires continuous maintenance and recordkeeping. Over the years, there have been additions: new conifers in the Pinetum alongside the Estaugh Building and a Meditation Garden, partially surrounded by woods, near Parking Lot B. The Katzell Grove of hardwood trees is maturing near the Bridlington area, and the meadows on both campuses are giving pleasure. Both meadows underwent three-year restoration programs that replaced invasive species with appropriate grasses, wildflowers, and native shrubs. The ultimate goal of the projects was to make the areas more colorful and sustainable. Residents, guests, and local wildlife, in particular birds and butterflies, will be the ultimate beneficiaries.

A particularly happy event was the restoration of the silo at the Wilkins Station Road entrance in 2018. Residents were delighted to see the conservation of a local landmark and a reminder of our farm heritage.



American Holly

Lewis W. Barton, one of the founders of Medford Leas, was passionate about trees, but originally there was only one on the Mickle farm property. That was the American Holly tree near the Community Building parking lot, which Roy Mickle planted in 1930 beside a water tank and a windmill. Now well over 40 feet tall, the

holly has recently been named a Champion Tree on the New Jersey Big Tree Registry.

Lew's fascination with landscaping and eagerness to enrich the plantings led him to search for interesting and diverse species, as well as native trees. When **Lois Forrest** became executive director in



- | | | |
|---|---|---|
| 1 <i>Nandina domestica</i> 'Wood's Dwarf'
Nandina | 8 <i>Ilex x alternata</i> 'Fosteri'
Ilex | 15 <i>Hypericum patulum</i>
St. John's Wort |
| 2 <i>Acer granulosum</i> 'Opus'
Sycamore | 9 <i>Nandina domestica</i>
Nandina | 16 <i>Andromeda</i> 'Jolly' |
| 3 <i>Chrysothamnus virginianum</i> 'Superstar'
Chrysothamnus | 10 <i>Iris cristata</i> 'Iris Bluebird'
Iris | 17 <i>Ilex cornuta</i> 'Burfordii'
Ilex |
| 4 <i>Aster</i>
Aster | 11 <i>Hydrangea</i> x pan 'Phantom'
Hydrangea | 18 <i>Rosa alba</i> 'Princess Williams'
Rosa |
| 5 <i>Carex obovata</i> 'Everest'
Carex | 12 <i>Sansevieria</i> 'Sudiflorans'
Sansevieria | 19 <i>Liriodendron</i> 'Monroe White'
Liriodendron |
| 6 <i>Hydrangea</i> 'Dispanica'
Hydrangea | 13 <i>Desfontainia</i> 'Maryland Dwarf'
Desfontainia | |
| 7 <i>Fuchsia</i> 'Terminata'
Fuchsia | 14 <i>Dioscorea</i> x <i>grandiflorum</i> 'Sheffield Pink'
Dioscorea | |

COURT 29

The 32 Courtyards on the Medford Campus, an integral part of the Arboretum, contain individual planting designs and

bring nature to the residents' front doors. Each year, the Arboretum Committee, composed of staff, residents, Horticulturist **Debbie Lux**, and Arborist **Ken Hutz**, identify and renew overgrown plantings.

Recordkeeping began in a modest way in 1983, with resident **Miriam Evans** recording trees and their locations on 5" x 8" cards. Now there are legible signs at the foot of each significant tree with its

name for identification. This information is recorded using software and includes other facts about the tree and its location. In 2005, the electronic GPS database for trees on the Medford Campus was created by professional surveyors.

Since **Dave Bartram** began the process in 2009 in Medford (and in 2018 for Lumberton) to update all the information, we can currently access the database for both campuses on Google Drive, where there is also other Arboretum-related information. See <https://sites.google.com/medfordleas.net/medfordleas-arboretum>.

The Arboretum has welcomed many visitors over the years, but the pandemic has temporarily halted that. However, for residents and staff alike, being in a community set in nature has been incredibly valuable.

There have been no traditional *Evening in the Arboretum* celebrations since 2019, but there were still special occasions. In 2021, residents on both campuses received beverages and hors d'oeuvres so that they could toast the important milestone at 6:00 pm with their neighbors, followed by a gourmet dinner, if desired. Fifteen minutes of fireworks at the Medford Campus Meadow topped off the evening.

When Medford Leas purchased the Medford property in 1970, nature took its course. Sweetgum, a pioneer species, which moves into abandoned fields because it thrives in sunlight, had invaded the Medford Campus Meadow.

Eventually pioneer species give way to trees such as oak, maple, beech, and hickory, which grow up in their shade to form a climax forest. Without human intervention, the Medford Campus Meadow would have become a sweetgum stand. In October 2011, there were about two dozen 10- to 20-foot tall sweetgums in the meadow beyond the houses at the end of Bridlington Way North.

Along with the tall sweetgums growing among the cedars, there were hundreds of small sweetgums on both sides of the Red Trail that passes through that area. In November 2011, **Dave Barclay** and **Gordon Brummer** began removing sweetgums in

the meadow near their homes. Dave used a chain-saw on the large trees. When completed, their work saved a part of Barton Arboretum on the Medford Campus.

The Lumberton Campus was designed as a 100-year flood basin for the new construction. The open space around culverts and drains was seeded with grass but became filled with mugwort, an invasive species, and non-native plants. Control of mugwort was a priority and was eventually achieved, but efforts must still be maintained.

In 2014, work began to form a Lumberton Campus Meadow of native plants that residents would monitor. The Arboretum Committee worked with Larry Weaner Associates. It was a four-year project, and expectations for the spring of 2015 were modest. Thankfully, the meadow produced coreopsis and blue star, and someone had also added in red poppy seed, which thrived that summer.

Since then, the Lumberton Campus Meadow has bloomed every year. More plants are added, some reseed themselves outside their original locations, and different species bloom throughout the spring and summer. A variety of grasses thrive.



TRAILS AND MORE



One of the many natural gems here at Medford Leas is the system of trails that thread through our Medford and Lumberton Campuses. In 1973, two years after the first resi-

dents moved into Medford Leas, **Lew Barton** laid out the first trails on the Medford Campus. Lew's vision of our trails was that they be relatively narrow, have a natural surface, and take the wanderer through the varied botanical communities on the campus.

Medford Campus

Assisted by several residents, Lew established a trail that came to be known as the Red Trail that runs as a loop around the periphery of the campus. With a few alterations in routing, that trail endures today. Marked by red discs, the trail today is slightly less than two miles long and takes a hiker through woodland, meadow, and wetland to enjoy the flora (and sometimes fauna) in those areas.

Walking the trail today, one sees that nature's bounty has been augmented with plantings of fern and wildflowers taken from the former homes of some early residents. There are multiple places where a wanderer can enter and leave the trail.



In the early 1990s, **Don Horton**, chair of the Woodland Trails Committee, a paleontologist by vocation and a naturalist by avocation, working with Ted Gordon, a prominent naturalist specializing in habitats and flora of the Pine Barrens, together with members of the committee, surveyed all botanical communities on the campus. Their

work led to the creation of looped and stub trails that became our Yellow Trails network. These trails, numbered 1 through 17, branch from the Red Trail, allowing access to points of particular interest. After the purchase by Medford Leas of the property in 1997, the Orange Trail was established in the far northeast quadrant of the Medford Campus bordering the Rancocas Creek with Camp Dark Waters on the far side. This is a loop trail with connections to the Red Trail and segments of several Yellow Trails. There are about 4.8 miles of trails on the Medford Campus.

Gordon Clift, who, with his wife **Anne**, moved to Medford Leas in 1994, quickly became a prominent member of the Trails Committee. With his talents and training as a mechanical engineer, he used his surveyor and cartographer skills to create detailed

maps of the Medford Campus tract including roadways, buildings, trails, and even bench locations. Maps were richly detailed to include distances along trails and between features on the trails.

To this day, Gordon's maps are the basis of all renderings of trail routes throughout the campus. Gordon also built plank bridges carrying trail segments over boggy areas. He described members acquiring the planks for his bridges by retrieving floating lumber carried by rising waters on Sharps Run. Gordon also described how portions of concrete flooring from an "old Woods Cottage" became the 23 stepping stones conducting Yellow 10 through a swampy area near the canoe dock on the Rancocas Creek.

In more recent history, the Woodland Trails Committee cooperated with several local Boy Scout troops and coordinated the completion of projects by eight boys that permitted each to achieve the rank of Eagle Scout, the highest award in scouting. The efforts of these Scouts resulted in 20 raised-bed planting tables behind the Nature Center, canoe racks near the dock for 16 canoes or kayaks, 20 bluebird houses distributed on both campuses, and new split-rail fencing leading to a footbridge near parking circles A and B. A major refurbishing of the canoe/dock area was completed in May 2021.

Home base for the committee is the Lois Forrest Nature Center, which opened in 1988. This building houses the Nature Library, a greenhouse with an attached work area, and a tool room. During the pandemic, monthly meetings normally held in the Nature Center took place using Zoom. Members continue to actively maintain the trails system. They remove fallen trees and branches and manage trail markers to guide newcomers and visitors.

Lumberton Campus

Residents began hiking in their woods almost as soon as they moved in. Pioneer **Osborn Cresson** walked his dog there daily and marked their paths with wooden stakes. Other residents followed. Soon, volunteers formed a Trails Committee and began making improvements: colored trail markers, wooden bridges in areas where the water level often rose, and paths covered with wood shavings.

The work was seasonal and ongoing, most of it done by residents though Boy Scouts (Scouts BSA) also helped as part of their merit badge program. Their most notable project was the bridge bordering the swamp, designed and built to fulfill an Eagle Scout requirement.

During the pandemic, outdoor work continued, including the completion of a Soggy Bottom bridge, replacing one that floated away. Constructed from old deck lumber, it is anchored by steel rods formerly used for holiday bazaar signs.

In 2016 and 2017, **Dave Bartram** walked the trails with his GPS and then created a map of them, overlaid on an aerial photograph of the campus. The trails network goal was to keep the woods as unchanged as possible, but safe for hikers. Narrow paths create a sense of walking in the woods and offer a good way to see plants and animals in their habitat. Though the trails currently total 1.62 miles, a thorough exploration can take as long as you like.

BRICK, MORTAR, AND WIRES

INFRASTRUCTURE — THEN, NOW, AND SOON

Medford Leas may be 50 years old, but is ever new and modern. As we celebrate the community's special anniversary, residents may be unaware of how our community evolved since its opening in 1971 and completion of the Community Building in 1972. Much of the early building was conducted by McVaugh Construction Company, whose two owners, brothers **Ed** and **Jack**, became residents. Their firm also constructed Woolman Commons, Estaugh, Haddon, Woolman, and in 1984, the Independent Living Rushmore patio homes.

Woolman Commons has come and gone. Opened in 1985 in Mount Holly, this satellite campus provided eight one-bedroom and 13 two-bedroom apartments. The setting was for those desiring an urban atmosphere. When it was sold in 2005, remaining residents moved to the Medford Campus.

Independent Living areas had been expanded beyond the Courts and Rushmore by the opening of

Bridlington townhouses in 1988, with one or two bedrooms, and finally Lumberton Leas townhouses in 1999, which offered one-, two-, and three-bedroom models. Some homes facing the meadow have basements featuring both windows and doorways that provide easy access to the meadow's walkway. An added feature was the outdoor Olympic-size swimming pool adjacent to the Community Center that has a Fitness Room.

The Coffee Shop opened in 1993, originally to provide services for the staff, a bequest of resident **Ruth Bump**. At that time, the Garden Dining Room offered a dinner buffet for the residents, while the Colonial Dining Room offered meals served by wait staff. Dress codes were formal in that era. Women wore dresses; men wore jackets and ties. The dress code didn't ease until the beginning of the 21st century.



The next major expansion of the Community Building was the completion of the Arts and Social Wing in 2007, adding the Art Studio and the

Holly Room.

In 2011, solar panels were installed on Estaugh, Woolman, and Haddon as part of a roof replacement project. The panels would provide 12% of the electricity consumed in the three buildings, offsetting the cost of the panels in approximately four years. Fiber-optic cable replaced copper wire in 2016 as Wi-Fi and high-speed connections became a part of the Medford Campus.

The Haddon and Estaugh ground floors were renovated in a project which began in 2018 and was completed in 2020. The pharmacy was expanded and moved to its current location next to the Wellness Center entrance.

The Thrift Shop was relocated to the ground floor under Haddon, across from the offices for Resident Services. The former Thrift Shop area is now occupied by Rehabilitation Services, Dentistry, and Podiatry. Our new Wellness Center is attractive

and more spacious. It also has new carpeting, brightly lit hallways, and freshly painted walls that display welcoming photographs and works of art.

An interesting photograph of Medford Leas under construction in the early days hangs outside the entrance to Rehabilitation. It is shown on page two. Likely taken in the late 1970s, it shows the Courts and Community Building surrounded by farmland.

Fourteen additional rooms were created in the building of Haddon Court for Assisted Living in 2016. The focus of the facility is sensory support and includes a social area with floor to ceiling windows, fireplace, and a large outside porch.

Estaugh Court, a part of Assisted Living, was also created, adding nine rooms. It concentrates on enhancing the quality of life such as socializing, dining, family visiting, and activities. The **George and Rolfa Rogers** Residence, consisting of 21 rooms, was designed to provide memory support — thanks to Rolfa's very generous contribution to the cost of construction.



In the Courts, gas was installed to provide hot water and heat to the apartments. The 2016 conversion of the heating system from electricity to gas means that now both heating and ventilation come through the attics.

Independent Living homes are ever being refurbished to meet new residents' desires. In Bridlington, bathrooms have been enlarged, screened porches have been transformed into closets, and decks have become four-season sunrooms. Rushmore has had covered entrances added and porches converted to four-season rooms. New roofs were installed as part of the renovations.

The Courts have had apartments combined, extensions added as sunrooms, or simply expanded living rooms with additional windows installed. Walls have been removed to create open-concept designs. New appliances and cabinetry with granite

countertops have been installed. With the new heating and ventilation systems, the Courtyard apartments have been stripped to the studs and the ventilator units removed, creating additional space in each room.

One project that has gone unnoticed by many over the past few years has been the replacement of the boilers and chillers that heat and cool Estaugh, Haddon, Woolman, and the Community Building. The energy source has changed from oil to gas, reducing annual energy costs by hundreds of thousands of dollars and helping Medford Leas do its bit to help reduce the effects of climate change.

In the Atrium garden, we are enjoying a repaired waterfall and fountain, completed in late September 2020. A native weeping redbud has been added for vivid color, replacing the former crabapple. The garden will have something in bloom every season of the year, providing colors to enjoy.

New maps created with computer graphics have replaced hand-drawn ones in all the Courts, as seen on page five. They inform residents of the trees, shrubs, and perennials that distinguish each Court. They can be found on the middle of the side walls.

We eagerly anticipate the rebuilding of the Route 70 main entrance in the coming year. When Medford Leas was established, the surrounding area was quite rural; Sharps Run could handle the runoff. With extensive development in the immediate area, runoff exceeded the capacity of stormwater systems, and flooding became a problem.

The Coffee Shop and Garden Dining Room have reopened and further our movement to a post-pandemic lifestyle. We can share a social hour in the Willow Room and, soon, have flower shows in the Holly Room. Theater programs have begun, welcoming residents (and eventually neighbors from the outside community to share our experiences). Live outdoor concerts have also returned!

Plans underway include newly renovated and expanded Dining Services and venues, expansion of Nursing and Assisted Living, a new entry for the Medford Campus Community Building, Courtyard walkway improvements, and more.

TECHNOLOGY



While hardware and software technologies continuously change rapidly, as they have been doing since the 1940s, many of the needed devices and applications take time to be incorporated into the fabric of any organization.

Technology-capable residents provided support to other residents starting in 1996 when the first Computer Room was set up next to the Copy Room on the third floor of Haddon. Resident technology pioneer **Gil Goering** recalls that in those early days, many residents did not have computers or computer skills. The first three Gateway computers were financed by donations of \$10 a year.

That first primitive internet connection was by dial-up over Medford Leas' phone lines. Installation was late at night when phone usage was light. Program downloads took hours; installers took food breaks while the system did the tedious work. Netscape was the first browser. The first email address was Medleas@cybernet.net. Residents gave that address to families, and reply emails were sent to the Computer Room. As many as 40 messages per week were printed and hand-delivered. The computer-savvy volunteers provided help with the hardware and various applications, such as spreadsheets and word processing.

Many years later, when the third floor of Haddon was converted to apartments, the Computer Room was moved to a small room across from the Fitness Center. Residents needed to access it with a key available from the Reception Desk. Volunteers continued delivering residents' emails.

In December 2004, the MLRA Board of Directors, now MLRA Council, approved a proposal submitted by Gil Goering, **Maggie Heineman**, **Martin Klaver**, and **Rudy Salati** to establish an interim committee to develop a prototype website and discussion board and to develop policies, procedures, and a budget for a new MLRA committee that would be responsible for an MLRA website.

In 2005, the MLRA website was created and linked to the Medford Leas website, developed by Gil

Goering and then transferred to the Administration. Today, it carries a large array of relevant content, including MLRA and Administration documents, virtual programs, publications, new resident biographies, and event calendars.

In 2016, 20 years after the first Computer Room was established, a new home was found across the hall from the prior location in a clean bright room open all day and night. A foundation grant paid for the purchase of new equipment.

As in the beginning, Computer Room volunteers have continued to provide help, such as answering questions, diagnosing problems, finding solutions, and mentoring new users. Computer Room Committee Chair **Dave Bartram** (since 2012) has taken the Computer Room systems to another level, including automatic refreshing of PCs every night, which eliminates many potential problems and needless files being left on the machines.

Dave, as well as **Lea Beckett** and **Ann Campbell**,



have made contributions during the forced closure of the Theater by the pandemic. They supported the creation, fine-tuning, and posting of videos for the

many programs offered to the MedfordLeas.org or MLRA.org website. Residents greatly benefited.

In addition, the usage of Medford Leas' internal TV channels 2 and 15 to broadcast so many interesting programs for the residents during this pandemic has been another effective and efficient use of technology. The Zoom application, leader in modern video communications, has also been a major component of many of the MLRA committees' online program deliveries.

Technology facilities, supported by residents, include the Low Vision Center, online catalogs for all libraries, and Large Print Library equipment.

The Medford Leas Information Technology (IT) Department, led by Manager **Russell Pepe** since

2001, installed fiber-optic cable to provide the communication infrastructure that supports new services and devices. Other capabilities provided from 2016 through 2018 to benefit residents included:

- WorxHub, the application providing residents and staff the capability to enter work orders and to monitor their status
- Call-to-Aid devices, worn either as a pendant or on a wristband, to provide aid on the Medford Campus
- Upgraded phone system, which brought new capabilities to the Medford Campus buildings
- Security cameras, a secure network using the fiber-optic cable and Wi-Fi capabilities
- Internet access, a secure environment accessible via Wi-Fi, was provided with password protection. Guest access was also provided using an open-access network
- HVAC systems, connected to Wi-Fi through “smart” thermostats, so that Maintenance can monitor equipment and be notified if apartments are too hot or cold
- Access control and resident ID/point of sale cards, controlling all external doors
- Improved Reception Desk equipment.

One other major technology improvement, implemented by IT and Dave Bartram working together in 2018, was the upgrade of the audio and video system in the Theater and its sound booth. Thankfully, an anonymous resident funded the project. The large touchscreen control panel was a significant improvement, facilitating the work of resident volunteers and staff to enable the functions. The sound booth’s monitor helps operators enable and observe the Theater screen’s content. Internet access provides for public and subscription content and programs to show.

Use of DVDs and flash drives with program content was also simplified in the sound booth, especially helpful when outside presenters are here. A panel on the wall near the podium can also control sound and other functions.

Technology improvements continue to evolve. More will be implemented here when the benefits and costs are justified. Stay tuned!

FINANCIAL REVIEW



In the spring of 1973, the Estaugh Board learned that some residents were concerned that there were no residents on the Estaugh Board to report the effects on residents of

its financial decisions. The Estaugh established an ad hoc Committee, Information on Estaugh Finances. This would help residents know and understand the status of community funding. The president and treasurer of the Medford Leas Residents Association (MLRA) were members and invited others who had experience and knowledge of finances.

In early 1974, when an increase in the monthly rates became necessary, the Estaugh Board asked the Committee to study the proposed budget. The Committee then reported to residents at the February Residents Association meeting.

In 1977, **Elliott Lee**, chairman of the ad hoc committee, requested that the committee be made a standing committee of the MLRA. The change in status was made. The goal remained that of having residents understand the financial situation, as well as the decisions which affect our community, and to respond from their perspective as Medford Leas residents.

The committee’s name was changed to the Financial Review Committee (FRC) shortly after the beginning of the new century. **Ed Ferraro**, the chairman of the FRC at that time, would eventually leave the committee and serve as a resident member of the Estaugh Board.

The FRC meets with the chief financial officer and various department heads on a confidential basis to encourage members and the Administration to speak openly and in depth on issues. The resident members represent neighborhoods on both campuses. During the pandemic, the meetings were held via Zoom.

The FRC receives monthly income and expenditure reports and periodically reviews investment

portfolio performance, as well as the annual auditor's report and the AV Powell actuarial analysis.

The FRC is pleased that the Administration has made plans to improve infrastructure and the appearance of both campuses, all without burdening Medford Leas with unnecessary long-term debt.

HEALTH

WELLNESS CENTER



If you had a bellyache in the early years of medical care at Medford Leas, you would have been checked by a nurse. Not until the completion of the John Es-

taugh Building in 1973 were medical providers in place — first, one full-time physician and one part-time physician. Then a nurse practitioner was added, along with periodic visits by specialists such as an eye doctor, a dentist, a dermatologist, and an orthopedist.

The year 1975 saw the completion of the Elizabeth Haddon Pavilion, and in 1976, the John Woolman Building. Those residents needing supervised medical or nursing care received those services in Woolman. X-rays were done in the area now occupied by the pharmacy. By 1985, the concept of Continuing Care was adopted. An impressive array of medical directors assumed the care of residents. Each medical director made a huge impact on residents' health and kept residents in optimal states of mind and body. From the earliest days, Physical and Occupational Therapy Services played an important role in helping residents attain and maintain good health and function.

Before construction of Assisted Living apartments in the Haddon Pavilion, nurses would have to respond to a 3666 call anywhere on campus. Because of this demand, nurses had to learn to drive golf carts (which some were not too happy about) and answer fire alarms. The Health Center, originally called the Medical Clinic, was established in 1973 to provide routine outpatient medical care

along with sick visits and emergencies. It was renamed the Wellness Center in 2013 to more accurately reflect the range of services directed to enhancing the quality of lives of our residents in courtyard apartments. In 2019, it opened in renovated and expanded quarters on the ground floor of Haddon.

OAC (Outpatient Apartment Care) was added in 2007 to help Independent Living residents with routine nursing assistance, such as dressing changes and blood pressure checks, or to ensure consistency with prescribed medications. The Options Department was created in 2012 to help residents stay in their apartments by providing in-home assistance with activities of daily living using certified home health aides or companions. A director of Healthcare Services was added to coordinate the various health services (including state and federal compliance) related to Skilled Nursing and Assisted Living. At that time, the medical director assumed oversight for the Wellness Center, Pharmacy, and Fitness & Aquatics.

Volunteers also played a huge role in the medical success here at Medford Leas. Back in 1985, it was recorded that over 4,000 hours were devoted to wheelchair assistance, bus trips, reading aloud, picnics, mail delivery, and entertainment. Early on, the Medford Leas Residents Association created a Health Committee (composed mainly of retired physicians, nurses, counselors, and other residents with relevant healthcare backgrounds) that works collegially with Medford Leas healthcare professionals to enhance the health and safety of all residents. It also sponsors educational programs in health-related topics. Its monthly minutes are available to all residents.

Under Medical Director Dr. **James D'Amico's** leadership, the COVID-19 Task Force has been instrumental in ensuring the safety of the community. During the height of the pandemic, from mid-March of 2020, the Wellness Center performed regular and as-needed testing of staff along with all its usual responsibilities.



ASSISTED LIVING AND THERAPEUTIC RECREATION

Early in its history, Medford Leas recognized the need for accommodating residents who could no longer live independently. Adding the Estaugh Building and forming a Nursing Department were the first steps to accomplish this. Soon the Haddon Building was added.

Executive Director **Lois Forrest**, always aware of new things in the field of CCRCs, recognized that Assisted Living (AL) residents needed meaningful activities in their new homes. In 1975, Lois and newly arrived **Ann Naulty** of the Dietary Department accepted the challenge. Ann planned suitable exercise activities. When **Linda Schultz** joined the team, they worked to provide “person-centered care,” consulting residents about their preferences and designing programs accordingly.

In a Dodge wheelchair-accessible van, Ann and Linda drove residents from Haddon and Estaugh to places such as the shore, concerts, outside lunches, Ellis Island, and Longwood Gardens. They always found volunteers to help with the wheelchairs. On campus, Ann organized cooking, bridge, and discussion groups and led exercise classes in and out of the pool.

The John Woolman Building provided short-term nursing care for those who needed it prior to returning home. Lois Forrest, the staff, and the residents embraced the new concept of Assisted Living, decentralizing the medical aspect and combining social interaction with meaningful activities. Medford Leas received the first license for this conversion in 1994.



Gerry Stride arrived at Medford Leas in 1991 as the assistant director of Resident Services. She was recruited to be the director of Assisted Living for a few years and began a long and happy tenure as head of the Activities Department, now known as Therapeutic Recreation to

describe its resident orientation.

In addition to using resident interest surveys, Gerry and her staff followed the seven dimensions of wellness in formulating a balanced activities program for the residents in AL and Nursing:

- Physical: including fitness exercises, walks, and swimming
- Mental/intellectual: including lectures, brain games, puzzles, and the Brain Gym (this offered the computer program that Gerry brought to Medford Leas for Independent Living, as well as AL residents)
- Social: including coffee socials, happy hours, game nights, and lunch trips
- Emotional: including music (especially sing-alongs), drumming circles, arts and crafts, gardening, pet therapy, and intergenerational events
- Vocational: such as sewing, knitting, crocheting, flower arranging, and volunteering
- Environmental: found in nature walks, enjoying the outdoors, including concerts
- Spiritual: religious services and hymns, and also getting outdoors

The department further defined its goals:

- Meet the needs of residents in terms of the dimensions of wellness (see above)
- Help residents find meaning, usefulness, and purpose in life
- Provide opportunities to socialize, learn, laugh, create, and remember
- Engage residents and keep them stimulated
- Allow residents to be heard
- Promote self-esteem and self-respect

Monthly calendars, full of activities, met these goals, many being intergenerational, including school children, Scouts, and church groups. Especially delightful were the bi-monthly visits of day-care children, who loved coming to see the “grandparents.”

Then suddenly came the pandemic, and with its subsequent lockdown, the Nursing and Therapeutic Recreation staffs found creative ways to support the AL residents’ wellbeing, although they were de-

prived of their usual activities. Both staffs celebrated resident birthdays and holidays with special snacks, serenaded from the Courtyards, and made weekly phone calls and, if possible, visits to make the days brighter. They provided daily programs on our Channel 15, which ran from travelogues and lectures to live music and religious offerings. There were weekly printed brain challenges and outdoor walks. The programs adhered to the seven dimensions of wellness even amidst the restrictions of COVID-19. Now everyone looks forward to the gradual lifting of all the restrictions.



FITNESS AND AQUATICS

At the beginning here, there was no physical fitness program; as at the beginning of the earth, it had no life. But **Ann and Ed Naulty**, who saw the light of possibilities ahead, began the original fitness program in what is now the Fiber Arts Studio. Evidently, a resident donated some money toward encouraging the expansion of what was then being offered.

A director of Fitness and Aquatics, **Beverly Kanengieszer**, previously in Therapeutic Recreation, was soon named. She made more than a splash with her water aerobics and exercise programs in the recently built pool. Programs began in a helter-skelter manner. Some were held in the basement apartments, and volunteers were recruited to help bring residents to their routines. Sports Day was organized and became a big draw, which involved lots of folks expending calories, while trying their expertise in such offerings as shuffleboard, croquet, and ring toss. Lots of drinks and snacks, shade, and camaraderie were included.

Over the years, the Lumberton Campus was encouraged to enroll their willing residents to participate, and the Fitness staff also covered that time. Various new programs were instituted by a vigorous new manager, **Ken Roland**, who held volleyball matches between residents and staff. The team branched out by visiting other CCRCs to challenge their teams, and individual participants were heralded as winners depending on results.

The manager also held a triathlon contest and the annual CyberCycle Madness event, which pitted our community against other CCRCs. Our staff and residents from both campuses worked hard to enable Medford Leas to win the CyberCycle Madness Challenge in April 2019 by spinning for 1,189.8 miles, overcoming 100 other CCRC teams. The cyclists' vigor and commitment brought Medford Leas the Golden Spokes trophy, which can be seen in the Atrium on the Medford Campus.



On the Lumberton Campus, the Polar Bear Dip became an annual event (no longer a happening) when some brave and hearty souls took the opportunity to jump (figuratively)

into the pool, weather permitting. Another program that was a big hit and was offered to staff members as well, was the Biggest Loser, helping those who did not have a chance to be active during the day to check in to encourage their weight loss.

Most of these programs would not have been possible were it not for volunteers transporting fellow residents in wheelchairs, helping them get from place to place on time. Volunteers are the backbone of many of the activities available to us all, and we are very proud of them for their selfless contributions.



DINING SERVICES



The scene: It's Saturday evening in September 1972, and 180 people are gathered for the official opening of our Dining Services, utilizing Stouffer's meals. Some five years later, there were 65 people as guests of the house, in perfect evening dress, being served prime rib and surrounded by swaying balloons and streamers, with an added concert in celebration of Dining Services' fifth anniversary.

In contrast, today 23,000 meals a month are being served to folks who may choose from a broad variety of menu offerings seven days a week. Residents' special dietary needs are observed and thoughtfully delivered.

In 2007, **Jen Zdunczyk** arrived as director of Dining Services. Jen had had experience with another Quaker organization and brought along the tools and experiences from there. She transitioned the department from what was a contract management concept to one being self-operated. She began working with all food-involved groups here on programming, while opening the Coffee Shop for three meals, seven days a week.



Under Jen's direction, staff began creating their own menus, using no premade ingredients, and started offering the same menu in both the Coffee Shop and Garden Dining Room. They began expanding catering to serve outside groups included in the outreach program Medford Leas offers as part of its nonprofit status.

Everyone has a soft spot for the annual Employee Holiday Show, featuring marvelous and creative performances by each department. Dining Services has supported these efforts by offering two separate seatings to accommodate the times of these performances so that residents can enter to perfectly set dining room tables. The residents literally owe their good health to the unbounded help and thoughtful service of the top-to-bottom friendly staff serving 300,000 of our meals a year! In pandemic year 2020, this show was shown on Channel 15 and available online. Special meals were delivered to residents.



ACTIVITIES

COMMITTEES, VOLUNTEERS, AND THE MLRA

The early residents of Medford Leas came with enthusiasm and myriad ideas for programs. **Gladys Fleming**, the first resident, anticipated an interest in sewing and knitting, so she set up a Sewing Room, which was soon the location for lively Wednesday morning meetings of the Sewing and Knitting Committee, now called the Knitting and Needlework Group.

One of the pioneer residents reminisced 13 years after the opening, "In those early days, none of us knew what to expect of a retirement home, but we soon knew what we wanted. Some wanted one type of program, some another, but we were willing to have a variety of committees at work. Thus, the committee system came into being. We worked hard, and in so doing, we got acquainted with each other, and we put much of ourselves into the committee tasks. A pioneering spirit was in the air."

That spirit inspired the quick development of committees, interest groups, and volunteer activities. The second and third residents, a couple, provided the first tools for woodworking; there are active workshops on both the Medford and Lumberton Campuses today. Two other early residents asked if they could clear paths in the woods, an activity that led to our vibrant Woodlands Trails Committees on both campuses. Birdwatchers formed a Birdwatching Committee, which is still organizing trips and sponsoring annual bird counts.

In fall 1971, residents began their regular Monday evening meetings. The Medford Leas Pioneers Association evolved into the Residents Council. In November, **Helen Porter**, **Harold Olesen**, and **Wesley Hammer** were nominated to develop Council plans and propose officers. One week later, 24 of the 32 residents were present and voted to create the Residents Council and elected **Ralph Derr** as president. This group met regularly with the Administration and kept in close communication with the resident body.

The name changed to the Medford Leas Residents Association (MLRA) on September 5, 1972, when the constitution and bylaws were adopted. Upon the election of the first board of directors, the community achieved full organization. Over time, committees became affiliated with MLRA, which supported their formation and provided oversight for their activities, allocating funds for their budgets, and collecting annual reports. Each member of the current MLRA Council serves as sponsor for several committees/activities. An annual Activities Fund was established and supports these activities. In 1975, the charge per resident was \$7.50.

By 1975, there were 14 standing committees of MLRA. Among them were Environmental Resources, Buildings and Grounds, Food Service and Health, Finance and Budget, *Medford Leas Life*, and Resident Transportation. A Program Committee coordinated concerts, lectures, movies, travelogues, and occasional teas.

Some committees have had members representing both residents and staff. Formed in 1972, the Health Committee membership comprises interested residents who have had professional experience in health or related fields. Administrative and medical and nursing staff attend meetings. The Food and Dining Services Committee serves as a liaison between residents and Dining Services.

Over the years, resident interests have changed, often reflecting changes in the society. Programs, committees, and volunteer activities reflect this. Groups were formed around interest in music and plays, with trips to performances or artists invited here. Talents of resident creators have developed through the Writers Roundtable, Art Studio, The Medford Leas Singers, and *Leas Lit*. Some groups, such as the Great Decisions program and speakers brought by the Leas Forum Committee, focus on local, national, or international issues.

Some committees developed and then dissolved as times and tastes changed, among them the Play Readers Group, Drama Club, Square Dance Committee, and Record Listeners Interest Group. On the other hand, as technology has evolved, so has the nature of some committees. Early residents

would not have envisioned some of the more current groups, such as the Website or Computer Room Committee. The most recent committee, the Buddhist Meditation Group, brings the number of MLRA committees and activities to 68.

Residents on the newer Lumberton Campus have developed 19 committees and subcommittees, including a Book Club Group, Community Center, and Social Activities Committee. Most of the committees mentioned in this article include residents from both campuses, as all residents are MLRA members. The first president of the Lumberton Campus (initially named Lumberton Leas) Residents Association was **Helen Vukasin**, who also served as an MLRA Council officer for many years.



THE MEDFORD LEAS MUSIC SCENE



It did not take long for early residents of Medford Leas to create a keen interest in musical events, both active and passive. As early as the initial year of 1971, the Medford Leas Pioneers Association, later the Medford Leas Residents Association (MLRA), created an Entertainment Committee with various subcommittees. Expenses were covered by resident donations. The Music Committee, chaired by **Isabel Richter** was added in 1973. Two years later the Entertainment Committee became the Program Committee and included eight resident subcommittees. Meetings were held monthly, and printed notices of upcoming programs were placed in residents' mailboxes and posted on the Lobby bulletin board.

Musical activities performed by residents also started shortly after Medford Leas was established. Square dancing was perhaps the earliest, initiated in 1973 by a pair of practiced dancers, **Helen** and **George Ingersoll**, and enabled by experienced caller **Florence Cadwell**, a neighbor. Later in that decade, a "Sing Along Fun Night" took place during evenings in the Lounge. More recently, in 2014, the *Medford Leas Singers*, co-chaired by **David Lewis** and **Dick Webster** and led by **Maggie Heineman**, was accepted as an

MLRA Activity. In 2016, **Conant Atwood** established the *Cool Hand Ukes*, an independent ukulele ensemble with over a dozen members performing at MLRA events.

Early musical events took place in the Lounge, now the Willow Room, which contained the only “good”



piano, a resident-donated Steinway. Enabled by a gifted stereo set, recorded concerts were also held, a precursor to our LeasMusiCast series. To allow more residents to attend concerts and to encourage performances by professional musicians, the Music Committee, then under **Eleanor Marr**, petitioned Medford Leas to purchase a grand piano for the Auditorium. This resulted in

greater concert attendance and enabled performances to be telecast to residents. Today, the MLRA Music Committee, **Marion Norcross**, chair since 2015, brings a variety of classical and jazz musicians to Medford Leas via the monthly Guest Artists Series concerts. Notable professionals who have performed here include violinist Hilary Hahn, Grammy winner clarinetist Doris Hall-Gulati (pictured here), and Philadelphia Orchestra concertmaster David Kim.

The proximity of many cultural venues in the Philadelphia region offered opportunities for residents to attend a wide variety of concerts by renowned musicians. The Medford Leas bus service to Philadelphia Orchestra concerts was in place by 1975. Later the bus service allowed residents to subscribe to performances of The Pennsylvania Ballet and the Philadelphia Opera Company. Subscriptions to the Philadelphia Chamber Music Society and Symphony in C concerts followed. Walnut Street Theater patrons used the service to attend musicals such as *The King and I* and *Les Misérables*.

Although these bus trips were halted during the pandemic, the committees were able to arrange several online programs and live outdoor performances for residents.

ART OVER THE YEARS

When Medford Leas was being constructed, the very first couple to move in were **Louise** and **Harold Olesen**. It was March 1971. Louise set up her oil painting gear in their apartment. By the next year, she was teaching classes in an impromptu art studio. The “Art Room” moved more than once, but was always situated on the lower level of the Community Building. Residents from the Hobby Shop made the artists custom cabinets for their supplies. Much of the framing was done by resident woodworkers. Medford Leas resident art has been self-supporting because of the contribution of materials, cost of framing, and sales of their work. Residents met to paint together on designated afternoons. The Art Room used to be open to very talented painters on Fridays. Later, all of the artists who wished to paint together came on Tuesdays and had a community lunch, too. The first open house and exhibition of artwork was held in June 1974.



In the 2000s, when the Arts and Social Wing was built onto the Community Building, a larger Art Studio was set up in its current location in 2007. Shows of resident art and photography

have been hung twice yearly on the walls of the lower level. There were usually lovely receptions for the openings. Occasionally, there was a juried show with prizes. There were also classes given by outside teachers, whom the artists admired. Many of our residents were and are very talented, and some had spent their careers in art or photography.

The gallery near the Theater has received a steady series of art exhibits by community artists, generally lasting two months and also opening with a reception. Through the years, including the present, the South Jersey Camera Club has run an exhibit in November of each year, and the Philadelphia Society of Calligraphers takes the walls in December. **Harry Forrest** is an excellent artist who organized, led, and taught the calligraphers.

The Lumberton Campus was developed starting in 1999 and, before long, began to exhibit art shows as well. They usually lasted three months, were initially curated by **Eve Robinson**, and receptions were held when the shows changed.

PATHWAYS TO LEARNING



The *Pathways to Learning* program is one of many life-long learning experiences that represent a core value of Medford Leas. From 2008 to 2011, Medford Leas acted as host for programming provided by Elderhostel (now Road

Scholar), thus making up for a lack of local adult education programs. Medford Leas was one of just a few CCRCs in this pilot program. Thus, Medford Leas was further established as a welcoming spot for learning to take place.

When Elderhostel discontinued its programs, **Jane Weston**, Director of Development and Community Relations, thought, “We are bright enough to do this on our own.” Jane and **Marianne Steely** of Marketing organized a committee of residents who were involved with lifelong learning at Medford Leas to develop the program. Spring and fall seasons ran from 2012 until 2020 when they were canceled because of the pandemic.

In fall 2020, *Pathways to Learning at Home* reached out to both residents and the community with recorded programs available on Channel 15 and also through links on the Medford Leas and MLRA websites. Viewers watched on their own time and could repeat programs that they particularly enjoyed. Residents and staff worked together to secure programming, implement new technology, and publicize the programs in new ways for the local community. Email blasts and Facebook posts became ways to connect locally.

Whether in person or online, *Pathways* has always been a wonderful way to introduce Medford Leas to the neighboring community. Many residents who

live here now cited Pathways experiences as a component of their decision to make Medford Leas their home. The blend of programming presented by residents, staff, and a wide variety of outside guest speakers continues to entertain and inform all participants. We have developed programs that demonstrate our flexibility to bend with the times and look forward to sharing the program in person once more, sooner rather than later, we hope.

LIFELONG LEARNING — WHAT AND HOW

Lifelong learning has always been a goal and an opportunity since the founding of Medford Leas in 1971. Records indicate that since the beginning, residents assumed a leadership role in making certain that everyone would have the chance to continue to learn by exploring many areas of interest.

As early as the spring of 1972, a group established a schedule to present Great Decisions, the country’s largest discussion program that examines current topics of interest in the area of U.S. foreign policy. The tradition continues through the years, although the current COVID-19 pandemic has changed the format.

There was also a series of travelogues presented by residents years ago. “Meet the Candidate Night” was a popular opportunity for residents to learn about individual candidates’ approach to issues. Early in the development of the resident-led program, “Current Events,” a weekly series engaging many residents and guest speakers who were asked to discuss subjects of interest. This series has evolved into the “Leas Forum” that currently organizes programs twice monthly. Thirty years ago, the format typically included a presentation where speakers would be addressing the audience using their 35mm slides, and the program would be audiotaped for review by those who had been unable to attend in person.

In 2002, a video library was established on the third floor of Haddon. Tapes of academic programs by The Teaching Company or Great Courses, donated by residents, were available for loan. The

tradition of Vid-U evolved with a weekly series that is on hiatus during the pandemic pause.

Since Medford Leas is in its 50th anniversary year, residents still have various opportunities to continue to learn, but now they have the opportunity to learn in ways they could not have anticipated, even five years ago. The use of online programming and meeting formats, such as Zoom, has required a new way to approach traditional presentations. Residents are learning to use computer technology to virtually attend their preferred programs.

These resident-led programs continue to be supported by the MLRA Activities Fund.



LIBRARIES AT MEDFORD LEAS



Despite heroic efforts, people who are downsizing for a move find that books just insist on tagging along. Many of us have found this to be true, as did those who preceded us here at Med-

ford Leas. From the beginning, thousands of books were donated to the Library, which opened in August 1972 (with a discarded supermarket shopping cart serving as a book cart).

The activity was led by a pioneer resident, **Everett McMillin**, who suggested that the Extension Service of the Burlington County Library help with cataloguing and organizing the collection. A bulletin board announcement recruiting volunteers for the effort brought an enthusiastic response. To this day, volunteers are essential in keeping our libraries functioning.

By 1975, books were flying off the shelves into the hands of residents and to volunteers (using that shopping cart), who took them to people in the Convalescent Center. Other books left the community as exchanges, loans, or gifts. An exchange program with Kendal benefited the libraries of both communities. Gifts of extra books were made to the Burlington County Library System, the County Jail, the Friends School Library in Vincentown, and

the New Lisbon State School.

By the mid-1970s, new acquisitions in the library were listed in *Medford Leas Life*, Quaker books were highlighted, and later in the decade, book reviews began to appear.

Today, the Medford Leas Main Library has some 5,000 books and music CDs. Books are added through purchase and resident donations.

In October 1977, a long-time dream came true with the addition of a Large Print Library book collection under the direct supervision of **Ann Naulty**, Activities director, and **Linda Abrams**, Occupational Therapy assistant. It was located in the Elizabeth Haddon Pavilion, convenient for residents in the medical buildings. Supported initially by funds from the Nursing Department and Medford Leas Residents Association's (MLRA) Activities Fund, the library purchased monthly at least five books of general interest from the national Large Print Book Club.

In spring 2016, the Large Print Library expanded into a larger, more accessible location in the newly renovated Estaugh Wing. Its services also expanded, and it offers a variety of options in addition to the books in large print, including Talking Books from the New Jersey State Library. The library has been supported for many years by the MLRA Activities Fund.

As the Art Studio and Nature Center were established, they acquired books of specific interest for their libraries. The Nature Center Library maintains a collection of how-to and reference materials about local horticulture, as well as materials about birds, birding, ecology, and the Pine Barrens.

The Lumberton Campus Library, located on the Community Center's second floor, has been functioning since 2000. Although it is uncertain who started it, volunteers maintain the library and coordinate the collection with the Medford Leas Main Library, as the volunteers catalogue the books.

The libraries continue to be a vital part of life here at Medford Leas. A valuable contribution in recent years is the online catalogue, whose entries include searchable collections in all the libraries.

RESIDENT PUBLICATIONS



The first Medford Leas publication, a two-page newsletter starting in August 1971, written by staff members, was replaced in February 1973 by the comprehensive monthly *Medford Leas Life*, produced by residents and published under the sponsorship of the MLRA.

At first, newsletter committee members served rotating terms covering different specialties. The committee also selected reader-submitted articles, and interest to readers took precedence over good writing in articles. More recently, a volunteer resident staff write and edit the content, create the layout, proofread, liaise with the printer, handle business, and distribute the approximately 500 print copies, as well as electronic copies to outside subscribers and other organizations.

Initially, *Medford Leas Life* had co-editors: **Lois Bohling, Harriet Gormley, David Stern, Charles Styron, Myrtle Wallen, and Sylvan Wallen.** Co-editing continued for 13 years until **Elsie Lisovitch** was named the first editor-in-chief in March 1986. This tradition continues.

“In Memoriam,” book reviews, and a puzzle became regular features and continued, although the now popular “Who’s New” bios and the art column were not early components of the paper. There used to be a chief illustrator, and there has always been a staff photographer. All issues of *Medford Leas Newsletter* and *Medford Leas Life*, the latter in color from March 2004, are available on the MLRA website.

When Lumberton Leas (now Medford Leas at Lumberton) was built, there was discussion about whether campus news should appear in *Medford Leas Life* or in a separate publication. In May 2002, the newcomers published their first monthly newsletter, *Lumberton Leas News* (renamed *The Lumberton Campus Chronicle* in 2005), with **Hugh Jenkins** as the first editor.

After one year, **Herb Heineman** assumed the role of editor, taking the newsletter to another level,

adding more types of stories, such as personal reflections, family happenings, opinions on community affairs, poems, puzzles, and jokes. Herb worked on the newsletter for 16 years (ten years as editor-in-chief, being the only staff member for four of those years — which is amazing). The editors have always included drawings, photos, cartoons, poems, and puzzles. Starting in 2013, the newsletter became available online, showing colored photos and images.

Leas Lit is the third publication produced by residents. It started in 1998 with a “naming contest.” Founded as a literary journal for short stories, brief memoirs, and poetry, there is a twice-yearly call (previously only annually) for writings. Residents submit pieces, which are judged anonymously by the editorial staff. The chairperson oversees the process of selection and publication. **Ellen Stimler** was the “coordinator” of issue #1 in summer 1998. By issue #3 in summer 1999, Ellen’s title was changed to “chairperson.” The illustrators were originally **Edith Ellis** and **Anne Wood**.

Since 2013, *Leas Lit* has been published twice yearly. “Meet the Author” teas were popular. Pen-and-ink sketches by residents affiliated with the Art Studio complement some stories. This magazine has a smaller format than the newsletters, and its cover is printed on colored card stock. Since June 2005, the issues are also available on the MLRA website.



SHOPPING OPTIONS

GIFT SHOP

The Gift Shop was one of the earliest resident projects. **Helen Porter**, former owner of several commercial gift shops, set up a shop in a laundry room in Court 1 in 1971. It relocated to the main building in 1972, and a loan was negotiated from the Estaug Board to stock it appropriately. In addition to gift items, it sold staples such as milk, bread, and eggs. In 1974, the Gift Shop repaid the loan and consistently made a profit (the first one being \$2,000 in 1974), which it donated to various Medford Leas Residents Association (MLRA) funds each year thereafter. By 1986, it had 70 volunteers and was a popular resident service activity.

Now located in the Atrium, the Gift Shop sells a variety of merchandise including postage stamps, gift items, cookies, candy, and household goods. Having been closed during the COVID-19 restrictions, it reopened in September 2020 on a smaller scale. Following strict COVID-19 guidelines, it has also been able to hold two successful events — the annual Holi-



day Bazaar last fall, which supports MLRA funds, and recently, the Al Fresco Shop, which supported the Medford Leas Arboretum.

This Gift Shop is so much more than it appears to be at first glance. A close look at the colorful display windows is just the beginning of a favorite stop. Whether it's to see what's new in the way of inventory or to find a particular favorite chocolate bar, residents may stop by just to enjoy the attractive variety of merchandise which is known for its exceptionally low prices, or just to have a little chat with the friendly volunteers. The warm and welcoming shopping "experience" here is just a part of what makes this shop such a special little gem.



THRIFT SHOP

The Thrift Shop, a popular part of Medford Leas, became operative in November 1975. The following August, it accumulated an "astonishing" (in their words) \$3,386, with profits going to the young Reserve Fund. For decades, it has continued to be a well-run operation. In 2020, the Thrift Shop moved into its renovated location on Haddon Ground Floor.

In 2020, despite social distancing requirements, the Thrift Shop succeeded in still bringing holiday cheer to the community with their usual efficiency and some special touches. Staff sorted new donations, as always, but kept an eye out for "specials," things shoppers would like for gift giving.

In 2021, residents continued to bid on items such as furniture, artwork, lamps, and large household items displayed in the hallway. The big ticket item for 2020 was a donated car that sold in September.



Jan Durbin, Thrift Shop manager since March 2006 (and previously treasurer), has an eye for fashion, especially designer labels and clothing of quality. She can

spot the occasional special item and price it accordingly. As a featured item, it is displayed apart from the regular racks of clothes. Jan also goes through all the donated jewelry, selecting pieces of good quality to be sold at a local jewelry store. Other "departments" include Women's Clothing, Household Items, Men's Clothing, and Electronics.

Selecting items for eBay is a combined effort by all of the staff. If donations are of particularly good quality or collectible-worthy (e.g., Limoges boxes, Precious Moments figures, Dickens Christmas Village, designer purses), they are given to **Sandy Konrad** for possible sale on eBay. Sandy is the first resident to handle eBay items for us.

The bottom line of any business is generally considered proof of success, and in 2020, despite serious disruptions to business and much uncertainty, the Thrift Shop raised \$20,000 that was donated to the Employee Appreciation Fund. While we are all delighted with this monetary achievement, residents agree that the Thrift Shop also supplied us with a variety of treasures, gave us a much needed opportunity to interact with our neighbors, and provided a sense of normalcy as we worked our way through all the difficulties of the pandemic.



OUR WORKSHOPS

Woodworking at Medford Leas began as the Wood and Metal Working Shop, part of the larger Hobby Shop, organized in the early 1970s. Chairman **Harold Olesen** was the originator of the Hobby Shop. Pioneer residents provided their own tools and divided their time between doing jobs for residents and improving their working facilities. They were self-supporting and received no funds from the Administration or the Residents Association.

In 1972 and 1973, the Hobby Shop made immediate progress. Three work benches, five lockers, many cabinets, and the permanent installation of some power tools made the work area much more usable. Projects completed included two cabinets for the Art Studio, a sewing machine table for the Sewing Group, a Ping-Pong paddle rack, two breakfast trays, many birdhouses and feeders, assembled benches, picture frames for the Health Center, and numerous miscellaneous items for various areas of the community. The early talented group was an instrumental part of the community, just as today's Medford Campus Residents Workshop group has become.



On the Lumberton Campus, several fortuitous circumstances aligned to make a woodworking facility possible. The original plans included a Maintenance Building behind the outside homes of Cluster 1, intended for landscaping equipment, principally lawnmowers. Before the Lumberton Campus had any lawn to speak of, Medford Leas decided to contract out landscaping, rather than make it a part of Maintenance's direct work. The building with two large doors was available to Lumberton Leas Pioneers Dr. **Anthony Cristoforo**, **Don Davis**, **Art Hartwig**, **Roy Potts**, and **Jim Suplee**, enthusiastic woodworkers, who had brought tools with them and were eager to have a nearby workspace for their projects rather than traveling to the Medford Campus and sharing an already busy shop.

The Administration gave permission for use of the building and also donated a dust collection system. Resident donations included a carpenter's bench, table saw, band saw, planer, and jointer.

Although they pursued their own projects, the woodworkers' mission was to help the residents of the new campus with jobs large and small, something they continue to this day. They assemble and mend furniture, repair lamps, and fix things as diverse as drawer dividers and awnings. They have also built shelves, cabinets, and even a quilting frame from scratch. Three examples of their work are familiar to all campus residents: the 1999 sign over the door of the Community Building, the rack that is designed to hold the frame rather than the wheel of the bicycle, and the revolving shelves that hold paperbacks in the library. Originally named Woodshop, the Lumberton Campus Workshop has been an essential part of the campus.



MEDFORD LEAS — A CULTURE OF SHARING

At least for the last 20 years, Medford Leas has offered its meeting rooms and spaces as well as some of its programs to community groups in our area. This engagement has been under the purview of **Jane Weston**, Director of Development and Community Relations, since 2002.

On a yearly basis, Jane prepares a report for the files that documents the organizations that benefit from our facilities. In 2019, just preceding the campus closure due to the pandemic, 37 organizations held over 300 meetings on our two campuses. These ranged from religious institutions to garden clubs, from book groups, quilters, photographers, birders, and radio enthusiasts to civic organizations like the Japanese American Citizens League. In addition, the Burlington County Master Gardeners manage a "donation garden" in the Medford Leas Farm. Their large plot provides seasonal produce to several food pantries in the area.

There are other ways that the broader community gets to enjoy Medford Leas facilities. Our Arboretum and woodland trails have been always open to

the public. The Leas Forum, Pathways, and Leas-MusiCast programs attract others to our campus.

These exchanges are beneficial not only to our wider community, but to Medford Leas as well. They allow visitors to experience our community and get to know both residents and staff. Our facilities, Arboretum setting, and wonderful staff help promote Medford Leas' reputation. Most of the groups who meet at Medford Leas have open meetings to which Medford Leas residents are welcome, adding additional program opportunities to enjoy. Occasionally, we recruit new volunteers through these exchanges, have benefited from Eagle Scout projects, and have received plant donations from the Master Gardeners. All in all, a win-win for everyone.



CELEBRATIONS

The etymology of the word “celebration” seems to have many origins. Here’s the one that is best suited to Medford Leas: we take part in enjoyable activities in order to show that a particular occasion is important. For those of us here, what could be more meaningful than celebrating our FIFTY YEARS from 1971 to now!

Our first event was the kickoff-themed anniversary dinner for residents and special lunch for staff on March 2, 2021. Participants enjoyed this reminder of our beginnings.

April 24 found us celebrating the Arboretum on both campuses — very different, for sure, but celebrating nonetheless. Our Arboretum is 40 years in existence and claims a truly special part of our history. Celebrations included the Gift Shop sponsoring open-air selling of garden-related items, happy hour charcuterie (hors d’oeuvres) platter items, a sumptuous dinner meal, residents toasting the 40th-year anniversary of founder Lewis Barton’s dream, and then topping off the day with fabulous fireworks on the Medford Campus.

The Employee Appreciation Day in May also continued the 50th theme. What fun it was to remember some of the “old times” and receive a special tee shirt.

Senator Dawn Addiego and Assemblywoman Jean Stanford each brought official proclamations to display in our hallways.

The Barbone Street Jazz Band, providing jazz, swing, and American songbook music with a 50th theme for all to enjoy, performed on July 20.

Representative Andy Kim will bring another proclamation on September 17.

Our Estaugh Board gathers in October, and they plan to celebrate our milestone event.

The ever-popular Golf Outing, with the traditional dinner and auction, will be held October 5.

The Employees Holiday Show (always a favorite) will be back and provide a 50th theme celebration. There will be the traditional New Year’s Eve party held on the Medford Campus.

The Lumberton Campus Social Activities Committee anticipates an event in 2022.

We also look forward to a final offsite celebration in March or April of 2022.

Lastly, the 50th Anniversary Committee is assembling a time capsule to commemorate this major milestone and show future generations what life was like here during this period. The committee has received suggestions, with more likely to come.

No summary of celebrations would be complete without mentioning how fortunate we are to have two campuses that honor and observe our traditions and appreciate everything that we enjoy.



ANNIVERSARY CRYPTOGRAM

OL ZXQJFVQ TXOL UYVWL JRJUN,
 RU'L O URZX JFV SXTXPVOURFW.
 TXU'L PXWQ FYV XTPFGL, FWX OWQ OTT,
 EOVOOAX FJ O TRPOURFW!
 UIX WXBUIOTJ-SXWUYVN GFW'U PX
 URTT UGXWUN LXDXWUN-FWX.
 NFY ZON WFU PX OVFWYQ UIOU NXOV.
 LF QFW'U QXTON UIX JYW!

Identify the author:

NFYV JVRXWQTN SVNEUFKVOEIXV

Here's the solution to the June puzzle:

THIS IS THE SOLSTICE, THE STILL POINT OF THE SUN, ITS CUSP AND MIDNIGHT, THE YEAR'S THRESHOLD AND UNLOCKING, WHERE THE PAST LETS GO OF AND BECOMES THE FUTURE; THE PLACE OF CAUGHT BREATH.

MARGARET FIABANE
MARGARET ATWOOD
 JUDITH ATWOOD

The correct solution was received from the following readers:

Helen Anderson, Maryann Beitel, Barbara Brown, Larue Evans, Barbara Fiala, Roberta Foss, Jane Fox, Linda Gaylord, Yolanda Guastavino, Pat Heller-Dow, Mike and Janet Holloway, Sandra Jamros, Joseph and Jean Jordan, Sandy Konrad, Al Migdal and Joyce Sichel, Peggy Morgan, Doris Murray, Betty Preston, Janet Siler, Miriam Swartz, Joanne Thomas, Ava van Baaren, and Nancy Young. All but one correctly identified the author.

Please send your solution via campus mail to Herb Heineman, 121 WSD, Lumberton, or email it to hsheineman@gmail.com by August 10.

MEDFORD LEAS LIFE

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