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COMMUNITY MATTERS

summer / 2025

ART AROUND
THE TABLE

Pg. #6

TEAM
ROWLAND

Pg. #8

REDEFINING
FREEDOM

Pg. #12

*Celebrating
Wellness*

IN ALL ITS FORMS

LifeSpire
of Virginia
Faith. Wellness. Community.

CONTENTS

- 01 Empowered to Live Well
- 03 Trustees | 80th Anniversary
- 04 A Circle of Support
- 06 Art Around the Table
- 08 Team Rowland
- 10 A Space to Call Home
- 12 Redefining Freedom
- 14 Wellness in Action
- 16 Volunteers & Influencers

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EMPOWERED TO LIVE *Well*

As summer concludes across our communities, I'm reminded of the simple joys that nourish the body and spirit: morning walks, shared meals, creative pursuits, and quiet moments of reflection. This issue is dedicated to wellness in all its forms.

At LifeSpire, we view wellness holistically, embracing emotional, intellectual, spiritual, physical, and social well-being, along with access to quality health services. We understand that wellness isn't one-size-fits-all. It is personal, evolving, and deeply rooted in the rhythms of daily life.

Through our communities and AgeSmart, we see wellness expressed in many forms, some of which include art, gardening, music, therapy, learning, social events, and volunteerism. Our team members create environments where people can thrive, and our residents continue to inspire us with their energy and wisdom. Whether its residents discovering new expressions of healthy living, a family rallying around a cause, or team members fostering access to the arts, these stories reflect our ongoing commitment to wellness and purposeful living at every stage of life.

I hope this issue sparks new ideas and reminds you of all the ways wellness is already part of your daily life. Thank you for being part of a community that values well-being, purpose, and connection.



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Tracey Jennings".

- Tracey Jennings
Chief Operations
Officer, LifeSpire of
Virginia

A TAX-SAVING WAY TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE

See Your Kindness in Action

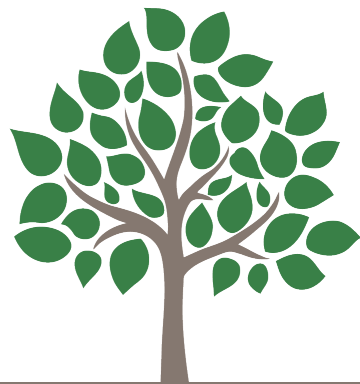


As the need for our programs continues to grow, there is a simple but significant way for you to help seniors live purposefully in a loving environment today.

If you are 70½ years old or older, you can transfer any amount, up to \$108,000, per year directly from your IRA to the VBH Foundation—without paying taxes on the amount you transfer.

WHY THIS IS A POPULAR GIFT OPTION:

- You could potentially lower your annual income taxes.
- It can create a gift that pays you reliable income for life.
- You can satisfy any required minimum distributions.
- You'll enjoy watching your legacy take shape and improve lives.
- Your gift can be designated to a specific Lifespire community.



Exciting Option!

You can now use your IRA to create a gift that pays you through a charitable gift annuity.

Because this option comes with special rules, we'd be happy to discuss whether this gift is right for you.

YOUR BENEVOLENCE CAN IMPROVE LIVES

Throughout LifeSpire of Virginia's almost 80-year history, it's the community of caring people like you who have supported our residents who, at no fault of their own, outlived their financial resources. Your simple act of kindness today could change countless lives in the future. Explore the many ways of giving the gift of a loving home today at <https://vbh.planmylegacy.org>.

We'd be happy to work with you to find the options that work best. Contact Jodi Leonard at (804) 521-9213 or jleonard@vbh.org today to learn more about this tax-smart way to make a lasting impact.

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Welcoming NEW TRUSTEES

LifeSpire is excited to welcome two additional trustees to our board and is grateful for the wealth of community and professional expertise they bring to our mission. Read on to learn more about their backgrounds and the unique perspectives they will share.



TRISH WHITE-BOYD

Trish White-Boyd brings extensive experience as a home health agency administrator in the Roanoke region. A strong advocate for the elderly, she has been deeply involved in her community through roles with Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Girlfriends Inc., the Roanoke Women's Foundation and more. She served as vice mayor of Roanoke from 2020 to 2022 and as a member of the Roanoke City Council from 2019 to 2024. White-Boyd's leadership skills and deep community ties will greatly enhance the board's efforts to further LifeSpire's mission.

Brian Carlton, a seasoned leader with over 35 years in the CPA and professional services industries, joins as a strategic advisor. Carlton served as regional managing partner at a leading CPA firm, overseeing its growth from 15 to 250+ employees. His expertise in business development, strategic planning, and employee retention will be invaluable in supporting LifeSpire's growth.

BRIAN CARLTON



80 YEARS

Celebrating 80 Years of
Virginia Baptist Homes



On March 25, 2026, LifeSpire, formerly known as Virginia Baptist Homes, will celebrate our 80th anniversary of serving seniors across the Commonwealth. What began in the mid-1940s with a vision of compassion has grown into a thriving ministry where faith, wellness, and community flourish.

Over the coming months, we'll share memorable moments, milestones, and stories that reflect eight decades of compassionate service across our communities. If you have a special memory or historical story to share, contact Jodi Leonard at jleonard@lifespireliving.org or 804-521-9213.

A CIRCLE OF SUPPORT

T.L.C. at The Culpeper Offers Belonging & Connection

“It’s morning again in the foothills,” begins a poem by a resident at The Culpeper. “...and the ladies of this small community prepare to gather, to share their lives, to talk with others about life’s high and low moments, favorite memories, and to share a laugh or two.”

That small community is the T.L.C. group, short for Talking, Laughing, Caring, which recently celebrated its first year of intentional conversation, friendship, and shared growth among women residents at The Culpeper.

The idea began with resident Shirley Kelly, a retired counselor and group facilitator. After moving to The Culpeper in 2018, she participated in several grief support groups and recognized the value of meaningful community conversations.

With encouragement from Clinic Nurse Manager Brenda Bond, she brought the idea of a women’s discussion group to team members Susie Hatfield and Dawn Kenyon-Smith, who immediately supported the vision and helped bring it to life. Together, they launched T.L.C., a group designed to create space for women to reflect, share, and build community.

“When Shirley approached me last year and asked what I thought about having an all-women’s group so the ladies of The Culpeper could chat and get to know each other better, I told her I thought it was an amazing idea, and I offered to help in any way I could,” said Susie.

While sessions often center on a specific topic, the format remains flexible. Sometimes, residents choose to share more personally with the group.

“We’ve had several residents share their life stories with the group,” said Dawn. “It’s completely voluntary, but it’s been a meaningful part of our gatherings.”

Betty Payne, a group participant, agreed. “This gives me a perception of people beyond the surface. I get to know where they’ve come from and what they’ve done. It’s wonderful.”

New resident Dottie Heilman shared that the group has made a big difference in her transition to community life. “Since I’m new here, I would meet people at dinner, but I wouldn’t remember names and didn’t really get to know anyone,” Dottie said. “A group like this has been very helpful for me.”

“T.L.C. provides a setting where women of The Culpeper meet to chat and to connect with caring individuals, forming friendships that enhance our lives,” Shirley shared.



While attendance varies, the group consistently draws strong participation and interest, sometimes outgrowing the intended meeting room. The turnout speaks to the inherent value of connection, and how a space to be seen, heard, and encouraged can make a lasting impact.

At the conclusion of the group's anniversary gathering, a small, printed quote was passed around that captured the group's heart. It came from the familiar sage, Charlie Brown:

"To make a difference in someone's life, you don't have to be brilliant, rich, beautiful, or perfect. You just have to care."



Scan the code with your phone's camera to read the full poem inspired by the T.L.C. group's one-year anniversary →



ART AROUND THE TABLE

Creative Community at Lakewood

On any given afternoon at Lakewood, it's not unusual to hear laughter filtering out of the Creative Arts Room. Listen more closely, and you might hear a resident sharing a memory sparked by color or texture, or someone offering a word of encouragement over a project still in progress. These are all signs of creativity, connection, and wellness at their best.

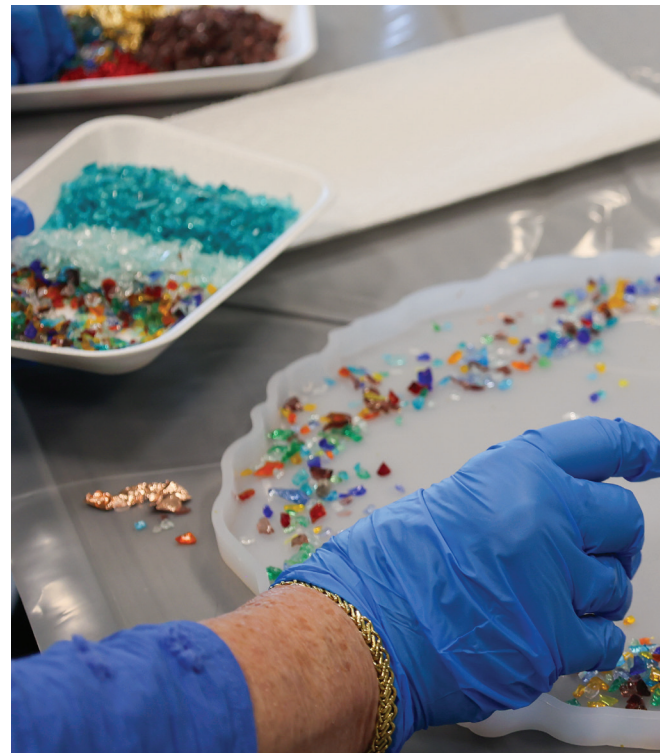
At the center of it all is Jenny White, Lakewood's Art Programs Coordinator. After an 18-year career in advertising, Jenny stepped into the brand-new role in 2023, created in response to resident interest. "There's a lot of practicing artists here," she said. "It was definitely on their list of wants and needs."

What started as a part-time position quickly expanded. "I ended up going full-time in January, and I can't schedule enough classes," she said. "They're always full, which is great."



I always tell people that
if you don't feel creative,
maybe you just haven't found
your medium yet.

- JENNY WHITE
Lakewood Art
Programs
Coordinator



The programming includes traditional fine arts classes like painting, drawing, and pastels, but also unexpected mediums like felt, wood décor, and even resin pouring. For Jean Holzbach, who's lived at Lakewood for 15 years, the classes offer exposure to something different. "These are the most unique classes I've seen come my way."

For others, the programs have made creative expression more accessible. "I've always liked crafts," resident Emily Johnston shared, "but I never had the opportunity before I came here."

Jenny's creative influence reaches beyond the classroom. She recently painted a colorful mural on the BeeHaven building, used by Lakewood's resident beekeepers.

Even for those who don't create art themselves, exposure to art has proven benefits. Studies show that viewing visual art can reduce stress, improve mood, and stimulate memory. A bright mural or a hallway gallery can bring beauty to daily routines and invite moments of reflection.

Conversations flow easily around the tables, creating new connections and tapping into the therapeutic benefits of creative expression. "A lot of times you'll find that what people make connects to something from their past," Jenny said. "Maybe childhood, or when they got married, or had their first baby. And then that opens up a conversation."

Art at Lakewood supports more than creativity. It's a doorway into self-expression, memory, purpose, and friendship. The key to continuing wellness, much like creativity, is finding what works for you. As Jenny puts it, "I always tell people that if you don't feel creative, maybe you just haven't found your medium yet."



TEAM ROWLAND

The Glebe's Ellie Rowland and Family Ride for a Cure

Any cyclist knows to expect the unexpected: shifting weather, changing terrain, a sudden equipment issue. For The Glebe resident Ellie Rowland, life took an unplanned detour when her son Michael, who lives in Birmingham, Alabama, was diagnosed with Parkinson's at age 54.

"I knew a lot of older people that had Parkinson's," she says. "I didn't know anyone that young."



← To read more about the ride, visit teamrowland.org



Despite living in Schenectady, New York at that time, Ellie and her husband, Gene, still wanted to find some way to help. After researching, she came across the Michael J. Fox Foundation and its nationwide bike rides to fundraise for Parkinson's research.

"We got the newsletter, and I saw there were three rides," Ellie says. "I walked into the kitchen and told my husband, 'Guess what? We're going to Greenville, South Carolina!'"

Longtime recreational cyclists, the Rowlands signed up and planned to make the trip. Then, after she extended a casual invitation to their four children, the event became a family endeavor.

"Well, they all jumped into it. And they were all very supportive and raised money too."

On their first ride, Team Rowland brought in over \$65,000. Over time, the event grew along with its impact.

"After the seventh ride, we hit one million dollars," Ellie says. "And we're at over \$1.6 million now."

Eventually, the family launched their own fundraising ride in Birmingham, with Michael and his family taking over responsibility for planning and logistics. What began as a single ride has grown into a full weekend celebration, complete with a golf tournament, donor

dinner, breakfast and lunch provided by donors, and a team of volunteers making it all possible.

Now officially a Road Series, the event welcomes all ages, from 30-mile cyclists to families with children on scooters and babies in strollers for a "Roll and Stroll."

"My granddaughter pushed her daughter in a little buggy," Ellie says. "We even have cheerleaders with shakers."

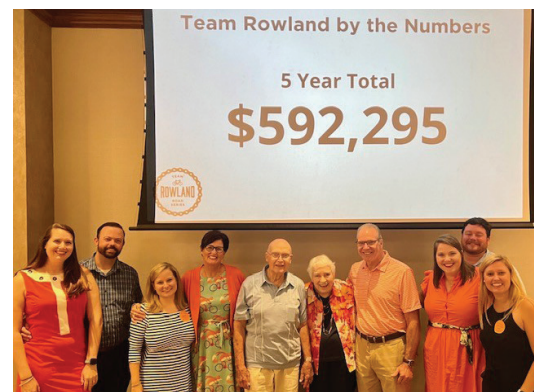
During the pandemic, Ellie and Gene rode virtually from home. This year, despite Gene's passing in late 2024, Ellie plans to participate in person again.

"It's a fabulous thing," she says. "The whole family has jumped in, and that's what makes it so wonderful."

And while the ride can't change Michael's diagnosis, it's given Team Rowland something essential: purpose.

"You feel absolutely like there's nothing you can do," Ellie says. "But to be able to find something we could do, to put our thoughts and energies towards that, has meant so much."

Though Ellie is quick to credit the larger family and team that now lead the ride, it all started with one decision. Faced with uncertain terrain, Ellie did what cyclists do. She shifted gears and kept going, pointing her family towards hope.



A SPACE TO CALL HOME

Expansions Offer New Ways to Thrive at The Summit

If there were ever any doubts about the power of shared spaces to shape daily life, Tiffany Coffey, Director of Resident Services at The Summit, puts those to rest. Her perspective illustrates just how much these gathering places matter, and how The Summit's ongoing expansions are already enriching their community:

"In one corner of the Commons, members of the Library Committee can be heard deliberating on new book acquisitions. On the right, residents enjoy card games, sharing laughter over who holds the best hand. As you approach the TV lounge, you'll find residents discussing the news or reminiscing about recent PGA tour events. The café serves as a gathering place where both residents and team members savor the daily special while sharing stories about their weekends or planning their next big trip. This newly renovated area has already brightened many faces and has residents eagerly anticipating future expansions."

Newly updated areas like the Creative Arts Room, Four Seasons Porch, and fitness center are being embraced by residents eager to connect, create, and move. Even the addition of a salon for nail services has brought a touch of self care and luxury to daily life.

"We have already observed a notable increase in social interactions among residents and team members," Tiffany added.

Momentum is also building around physical wellness, and it's easy to see why. The upcoming Wellness Center will include a pool, expanded fitness space, convenient locker rooms, and outpatient therapy provided by Functional Pathways. Residents will have access to physical, occupational, and speech therapy either at home or on-campus, with treatment plans tailored by therapists to meet individual needs.

"I am excited about being able to use the new pool and fitness center once the expansion is complete," said resident Judy Robertson. "The new destination dining



areas will be very nice, and I am looking forward to utilizing the new facilities."

Another highly anticipated addition is the Tavern, which will feature all the perks of a night out without ever leaving campus.

"I often tell newcomers that The Summit feels like home," Tiffany said. "With its welcoming people and vibrant atmosphere, we truly are one big family. This expansion will further enhance that vibrant living with the exciting options that lie ahead."



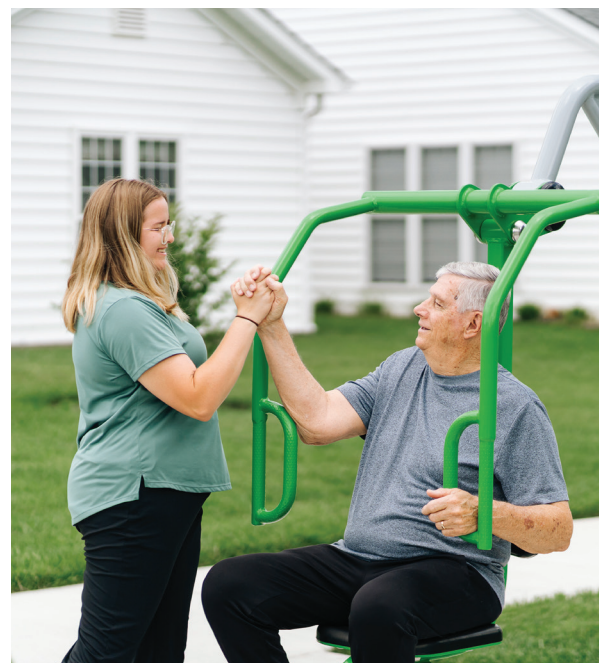
REDEFINING FREEDOM

Wellness & Purpose at The Chesapeake

For Carroll Ann and Wayne Martin, residents at The Chesapeake for almost a year, the decision to move to a retirement community has offered a surprising kind of freedom in retirement: the capacity to focus on wellness, connection, and the things that matter.

Married for nearly 57 years, the couple raised two sons in the Hampton Roads area. Carroll Ann spent years as a homemaker before working in banking, and Wayne served in the U.S. Army before working at NASA, where he focused on wind tunnel testing.

The Martins weren't always sure they would end up at The Chesapeake, but were encouraged years ago by friends who were residents to consider it. They had joined the Chesapeake Club and were enjoying community amenities when Wayne experienced a heart attack. Thankfully, because of the rehab opportunities offered at The Chesapeake, Wayne was able to continue



his cardiac rehab close to home.

“I had to complete 36 sessions after surgery,” Wayne said. “Being able to use the fitness center right here has made it easier to stick with the program.”

“We’d never belonged to a fitness center,” Carroll Ann said. “We always figured yard work was enough. But we quickly saw the benefits.”

Now, wellness looks like daily walks for Carroll Ann and regular workouts in the fitness center for Wayne. The couple also enjoys concerts, movies, mental wellness through social and intellectual programming, and they’ve even found a shared hobby of playing billiards together.

Another surprising benefit has been the dining room: “We didn’t realize how much we’d enjoy it,” she said. “It’s a huge perk, and we’re definitely walking more to make up for it!”

Referencing The Chesapeake’s tag line, *Freedom lives here*, Carroll Ann said, “It’s true, this is just a different kind of independence. It frees you up to do other things, not yard work, not maintenance, not housework.” Wayne jokes, “We definitely don’t miss the yard work!”

Sometimes wellness begins with simply making space for it. For Carroll Ann and Wayne, that space has allowed purposeful living to flourish.



WELLNESS IN ACTION:

A Q&A with Brenda Davis, AgeSmart Community Outreach Coordinator

When it comes to wellness, Brenda Davis believes it shouldn't feel like a burden. Her approach is rooted in energy, joy, and genuine connection. Through her work with AgeSmart, LifeSpire's continuing care at home program, she helps older adults stay strong, engaged, and confident about the future.

We sat down with Brenda to learn more about her view of wellness, the community connections she helps build, and the impact she sees every day.

Q: Tell us a little about your role with AgeSmart. What does a week in your life usually look like?

Brenda: I connect with older adults through wellness, civic, faith-based, and social activities. Some days I'm teaching fitness or Zoom classes. Other days, I'm giving talks or checking in with community members. These relationships open the door for conversations about planning ahead and learning what AgeSmart can offer.

Q: What does "wellness" mean to you?

Brenda: Wellness is about much more than physical fitness. It is about living with purpose and being connected to others. I think of it as a whole-person approach. That includes movement, mental engagement, emotional well-being, and a sense of community. Our goal is not just longevity, but quality of life.

Q: What kinds of wellness programs can AgeSmart members expect?

Brenda: We offer online fitness classes, yoga, a walking club, book club, and social outings like movies or golf. Members can also participate in some LifeSpire community activities and amenities.

Q: You're a certified senior fitness instructor. How does that background support your role?

Brenda: I'm certified to teach classes designed specifically for older adults. I focus on balance, posture, mobility, and fall prevention because those things matter in everyday life. I also try to make it fun. We move to music, and people often tell me they feel better for days afterward.

Q: What is most rewarding for you in this role?

Brenda: When someone tells me they feel better physically or emotionally after a class, or they found support through the program, that means the world. Knowing that AgeSmart makes a real impact in people's lives is why I do what I do.

Want to learn more about AgeSmart? Visit their website at agesmartva.org or call 804-420-1952 to learn more or sign up for an informational seminar.



LEVEL UP YOUR WELLNESS

AgeSmart
with LifeSpire of Virginia



You don't have to overhaul your life to take your wellness to the next level. Whether you're already active or just looking for a new spark of inspiration, these simple, achievable tips from AgeSmart can help you get started and stay strong, connected, and confident.

Feeling unsure is totally normal.

Even people who look confident walking into a gym or new experience had a “first day” once. That nervous feeling means you're stepping into something new, and that takes courage.

Choose something you enjoy and make it active.

Physical wellness doesn't have to mean strictly the gym or a fitness class. Plant flowers, go dancing, join a walking group, or play with your grandkids. Anything that gets you moving and makes you smile is a great place to start.

Make it social.

Invite a friend to take a walk, try a group class, or catch up with neighbors through an activity you enjoy. Social connection is one of the most powerful parts of wellness, especially as we age.

Let someone know you're new.

If you're trying a new class or group, give the leader a heads-up. Instructors are happy to offer modifications for newcomers and make sure you feel supported from the start.

Let go of perfect.

Wellness is not about keeping up or getting it perfect. It's about moving your body, building confidence, and noticing how much better you feel afterward, physically, mentally and emotionally!

HONORING OUR 2025 *Influencers* OF WELL-BEING

At LifeSpire of Virginia, wellness is more than a program, it's a way of life rooted in compassion, purpose, and community. Each April during Volunteer Month, we take time to recognize and celebrate the incredible residents who give so generously of their time, talents, and hearts.

This year, we are proud to honor outstanding individuals from each community as our Influencers of Well-Being: residents who exemplify what it means to live with purpose and serve with joy. Their stories reflect the many ways wellness is nurtured through volunteerism, whether by offering companionship, leading community initiatives, sharing music, or simply being a source of encouragement to others.



*Scan to
read more!*



DAN & SUE CAMDEN

Champions of Compassion at The Glebe

- Dynamic duo known for their joint contributions to giving back and their motto, *Be Kind*
- Their teamwork strengthens community bonds and inspires others to volunteer
- Passionate about wellness of mind, body, and spirit



DEAN DECKER

A Legacy of Growth and Giving at Lakewood

- A retired professor who continues to serve through education
- Known for his people skills and diplomacy (especially during the Current Events program)
- His dedication to gardening has enriched the quality of life at Lakewood



MELINDA DELLERT

Bringing Heart and Harmony to The Summit

- Known for her infectious enthusiasm and ability to uplift others
- Recognized for her faith-filled presence and dedication to building a caring, connected community
- Always offering comfort, whether through crocheted shawls, kind words, or community service



SHIRLEY KELLY

The Culpeper's Encourager

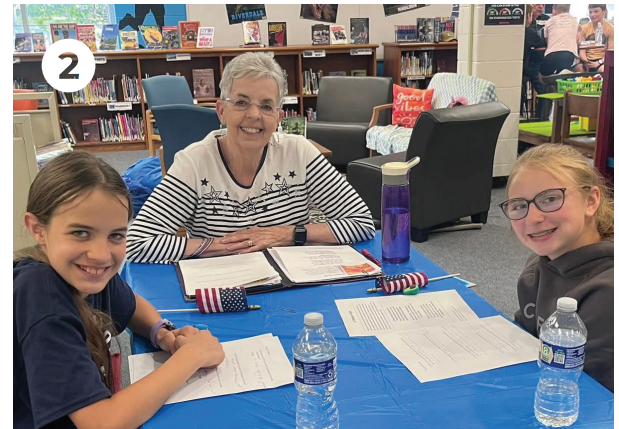
- A passionate supporter of community outreach
- Known for her uplifting spirit and weekly visits that brighten the lives of fellow residents
- Embodies compassion and inclusivity, fostering a welcoming environment



JIM LEWIS

A Steadfast Servant at The Chesapeake

- Longtime volunteer and community advocate at The Chesapeake
- Known for his leadership initiatives
- Recognized for his disciplined, faith-driven approach to service and volunteerism



1. Lakewood beekeepers care for three on-campus hives, harvesting honey to support their benevolence fund.
2. The Glebe residents build connections with students through The Legacy Program at Read Mountain Middle School.
3. The Chesapeake's first Sizzlin' Summer Sale raised \$1,225 for their benevolence fund and donated 200 lbs. of goods to the Peninsula Rescue Mission Thrift Store.

The Power of Purpose **THROUGH VOLUNTEERING**

Volunteering is more than just giving time; it's about creating purpose, building relationships, and enhancing well-being for both the giver and the receiver. At LifeSpire, we believe that staying active in service is a cornerstone of healthy aging. Our communities thrive because of residents like our Influencer Award recipients and volunteers, who lead with heart and inspire others to do the same. Whether you have a passion for teaching, organizing events, supporting wellness programs, or simply lending a listening ear, there's a place for you to serve. Here are three easy ways to contribute:

1. Visit your community's resident services department to learn about current volunteer opportunities.
2. Start a new initiative! We welcome fresh ideas that promote wellness and connection.
3. Nominate a fellow resident who's making an impact for future recognition.

Together, we can continue to build a culture of wellness rooted in compassion and contribution.



Faith. Wellness. Community.

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five communities. one vision.



WHERE FAITH, WELLNESS AND COMMUNITY FLOURISH.

LifeSpire of Virginia's five communities offer many choices of apartments and homes in beautiful and inviting settings along with access to continuing care as needed. The AgeSmart program enables members to age in place, regardless of location. Take advantage of the security of knowing the future is well planned in an atmosphere where faith, wellness and community flourish.



The Virginia Baptist Homes Foundation is the philanthropic arm of LifeSpire and provides support to residents and team members through its four funds—benevolence, crisis, education and spiritual life.

THE CULPEPER

The Chesapeake

LAKEWOOD

AgeSmart

The Glebe

The SUMMIT

TO LEARN MORE, CALL (804) 521-9214 OR VISIT LIFESPIRELIVING.ORG