COMMUNITY MATTERS

Fall / 2025

LAKEWOOD'S ACTIVE AGING WEEK

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Reflecting with Gratitude



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# Giving Thanks

As we reflect on another remarkable year, we extend our heartfelt gratitude to every donor, volunteer, and friend who has supported LifeSpire through the Virginia Baptist Homes Foundation. Your generosity has fueled our mission to uplift lives across our communities—providing benevolent care, spiritual enrichment, educational opportunities, and crisis support to those who need it most.

By the end of the year, we will have funded over \$1.2 million in benevolent subsidies to our residents in need; awarded over \$40K in education scholarships; and granted program support to our chaplains for activities that foster a sense of community and connection to faith among residents. We are well on our way to providing over twelve thousand hours of community service and providing assistance to local organizations near and dear to our hearts.

A final congratulations is in order to the 2025 class of Influencers—those champions at each of our communities who are positively impacting the lives

of their friends and neighbors. Influencers embody the core values of LifeSpire of Virginia through their spirit, their engagement and their generosity. I personally want to thank Melinda, Dean, Dan, Sue, Shirley and Jim for being great examples of using one's talents to provide for others.

Scan to read more about our 2025 Influencers!



Thanks to you, our mission continues to thrive, and our funds are making a lasting impact where it matters most. Together, we are building a future rooted in dignity, purpose, and community.

Jodi / conard

- JODI LEONARD

Vice President, VBH Foundation

# COLONIALWEBB

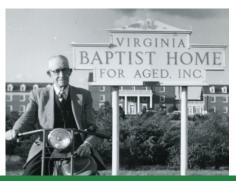
A SYSTEMS **USA**. COMPANY

ColonialWebb of Comfort Systems USA is the regional leader of superior installation, maintenance, and service of building mechanical and electrical systems. They have partnered with LifeSpire of Virginia and the Virginia Baptist Homes Foundation for many years.

ColonialWebb with Comfort Systems was the Featured Sponsor of the 2025 Volunteer Appreciation Celebration season.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT!







## **80 YEARS OF VIRGINIA BAPTIST HOMES**

## LOGOS THROUGH THE YEARS



#### 1960's

Virginia Baptist Homes, now known as LifeSpire of Virginia, didn't have a formal logo until the late 1960's. Prior to that, letterhead with illustrated artwork of Culpeper Baptist Retirement Community was used.



#### 1970's

Virginia Baptist Homes received its first logo reflecting the style of the 1970s, printed armchair and all!



#### 1990's

Virginia Baptist Homes updated their look to reflect changing architecture and audiences.



Faith. Wellness. Community.

#### 2016

Virginia Baptist Homes became LifeSpire of Virginia.



#### 2025

As LifeSpire enters its 8th decade, we've updated both our community and organizational logos to reflect our growth across the Commonwealth.



Scan to learn more and to check out our brand new website at LifeSpireLiving.org!

## Construction

# **UPDATE**

## Building Across LifeSpire Communities

#### The Glebe

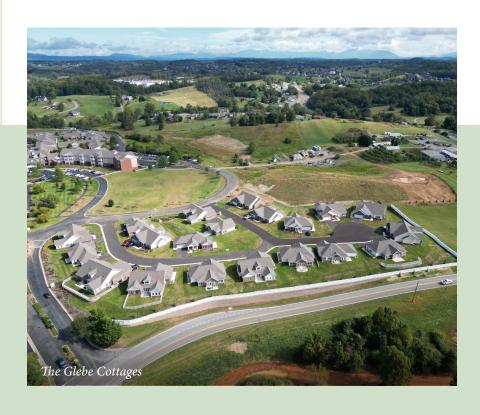
All 22 new cottages are now complete, marking a major milestone in The Glebe's expansion. Finishing touches continue throughout the main building, including new flooring, painting, and updates to dining and gathering spaces such as the Tavern, the Marketplace, and Botetourt Room. Outside, work has begun on a gatehouse, and landscaping and exterior work are wrapped up, giving the community a fresh, welcoming look.

#### The Summit

At The Summit, construction continues to progress smoothly across the new cottage neighborhood. All homes have received certificates of occupancy, with final paving, fencing, and landscaping near completion. The new Memory Support neighborhood has entered the framing stage, and progress also continues to be made on two Hybrid Home buildings and the future Blue Ridge Commons, a dining and wellness amenities space.

### The Chesapeake

Construction is underway on a new outdoor pavilion, which will serve as a flexible gathering space for residents to enjoy events, recreation, and time together outdoors. More updates will follow as the project takes shape.





# LAKEWOOD

## Flipping the Script on Senior Living: Lakewood Celebrates Active Aging Week

Active Aging Week, held October 6–12, kicked off at Lakewood with residents and team members climbing, literally, to new heights. Twenty-four feet above the parking lot, resident Sheila Wheeler reached the top of an on-site climbing wall during The Ageless Ascent, Lakewood's high-energy opening event.

"I've never climbed before," Sheila said. "But I wanted the challenge."

The Ageless Ascent was one of many activities designed to challenge stereotypes of what senior living looks like. Throughout the week, residents and team members explored creativity through hands-on art programs and gained new perspectives during an intergenerational panel.

The week brought imagination to life through two mystery-theater events: the Masquerade Tea, complete with intrigue, decadent treats, and afternoon performances, and the evening production Masquerade at The Cascades, where actors and unexpected twists kept everyone guessing until the final reveal.

Residents also took on a digital challenge by rehearsing and filming a dance for TikTok, and they collected scavenger hunt clues from each of the week's activities, with some clues posted on Facebook.

One event, 20 Miles, Zero Limits, brought together residents and team members for a bike ride along the Virginia Capital Trail, where Lakewood cyclists met up with participants from The Chesapeake for lunch in Charles City. Later in the week, resident Joe Kent completed Joe's Big Pedal, a 62-mile ride around Lakewood's campus to raise awareness and funds for Alzheimer's research. Residents also trained for months in order to participate in an overnight hiking trip to the Peaks of Otter.

Reflecting on the spirit behind the week, Community Outreach Liaison Sally San Soucie shared, "We tell people all the time what a vibrant place Lakewood is. Our residents come here and begin a whole new chapter of their lives, having more fun than they imagined was possible."

The week concluded with the Parade of Hope to End Alzheimer's, which raised awareness and introduced Lucky Duck, Lakewood's new mascot. Later that evening, at the Flip the Script Block Party, Lucky had a line of residents waiting to dance with him as music, food, and classic carnival games closed out the week. From start to finish, Active Aging Week took movement, creativity, and living well to new levels, showcasing what it means to age well at Lakewood.









# Step by Step

#### LAKEWOOD'S WALKING CLUB



At Lakewood, staying active and connected is part of everyday life. With input from Memory Support Manager Kathy Reich and Memory Support Program Coordinator Connor Ash, resident Walter Ayers helped launch the Walking Club, an ongoing volunteer program that brings movement and companionship to residents in Memory Support.

"Being a senior citizen living in a retirement community does not mean that the opportunity to serve others no longer exists," Walter said. "To the contrary, new opportunities surface."

Volunteers accompany residents on outdoor walks twice a week, sharing conversation, encouragement, and the joy of fresh air, one step at a time.

Read more at bit.ly/LWWalkingClub.





## LIFESPIRE & VBH FOUNDATION

# 2025 Employee Education Fund Scholarships

At LifeSpire of Virginia, we are committed to caring for our residents and our dedicated team members. One way we fulfill this promise is by investing in team member growth and well-being through contributions to the Employee Education Fund.

Each year, the Virginia Baptist Homes Foundation awards scholarships to current team members—and their children or grandchildren—who are pursuing higher education. This year, over \$40,000 in scholarships was awarded to 35 recipients enrolled in accredited colleges and universities. These awards are more than just financial support—they are an investment in the future of compassionate caregivers, dedicated team members, and aspiring professionals.

"It is a wonderful feeling to know that I am supported by the place I love to serve," notes team member Kelly Bennett, a scholarship recipient studying for her nursing degree. "I am not sure that I would be as successful if I didn't have the prayers, kindness, and generosity of everyone at The Culpeper and LifeSpire."

#### The Glebe



## **Employee Education Fund Scholarships:**

Aniyah Johnson, Dining Braydon Whorley, Dining Colton Bowman, Dining Emily Campbell, Home Health Emily Dimon, Nursing Lindsey Boone, Dining Bethany Laymon (Darlene Martin, Transportation)

## The Glebe / Resident Council Awards:

Chanel Andrews
Carson Edwards
Leonard Travis Goad
Kirsten Mitchell





The VBH Foundation's Employee Education Fund provides awards on an annual basis. The fund relies on the generosity of donors for sustainability. The LifeSpire team is grateful for the kindness of residents, families and colleagues who give to the Foundation to assist team members financially with scholarships and crisis awards.

To learn more about the programs providing support to team members, visit lifespireliving.org/give/employee-support

## The Culpeper



Abigail Claveloux, Dining
Alayzia Robinson (Celeste Lee, Med Tech)
Carla Alvarez Mendez, Dining
Danielle Mays-Patterson, Assisted Living
Joshua Sewordor (Alba Sewordor, Dining)
Kelly Ann Bennett, Assisted Living
Megan Newman, Healthcare
Oscar Wentz (Carolyn Wentz, Dining)
Sadie Wentz (Carolyn Wentz, Dining)
Shanice Thomas, Memory Support
Teresa Lewis, Administration
Zana Tibbs (Tanya Tibbs, Staffing Coordinator)

### Lakewood



Anthony Lewis (Vernita Lewis, Healthcare)
Austin Burks, Dining
Cadence Goodnight, Dining
Elijah Johnson (Vernita Lewis, Healthcare)
Elizabeth Clair Duffey, Dining
Jannie Torrico, Healthcare
Julie Hahn, Dining
Lexi Brooke Dull (Amy Curry, Administration)
Mariah Whiteside, Dining
Prince Babonye, Healthcare
Tiffany Coleman, Healthcare

## The Chesapeake





Camila Piovano, Home Health Hassana Sparks, Culinary Katie Riter, Culinary

#### The Summit





Adrianna Reynolds (April Ruff, Nursing) Ryenne Flood (Marjetta Flood, Assisted Living)

# THE SUMMIT

## Residents Reflect on CIA Careers

The Summit now has three women in residence who had clandestine careers. Hazel Harrison was recently joined by Liz Leukroth and Barbara Dobos. These ladies worked at the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) for a total of over 90 years during the time of the Korean War, the Vietnam War, and the Cold War. All worked parts of their careers at CIA Headquarters Building in McLean, Virginia and other times, they volunteered for assignments domestically or on one or more of five continents.

Some of their assignments were as short as a few days or as long as several years. All three worked in the administrative field.

Sometimes, their responsibilities were broader when stationed overseas. Regardless of the assignment, duties included: preparation of reports either for superior officers or to transmit back to Headquarters; serving as a finance officer for the area in which they were assigned; providing logistics support to the station by contracting for the necessary administrative supplies; providing other tasks as directed by the officer in charge such as organizing events in support of VIP visits, or interface with other government agencies.

Working at the CIA was definitely not a 9 - 5 job. Many times, they might be required to work seven days a week or to be on-call 24 hours a day. This was especially the case when assigned overseas.

If assigned to dangerous or "hardship" posts, they normally received additional financial compensation. Many times, each experienced being called into the office to handle details within their individual scope of expertise.

In addition, they might have to assume the responsibilities of another officer to ensure the mission was accomplished. It was always to their advantage to learn the duties of every person assigned to their office.

In their positions, they were keenly aware of the classification of documents, information, and areas of intelligence. The three basic classifications were "Confidential, Secret or Top Secret."



They were not allowed to discuss work outside of the work place or even with spouses or roommates. This requirement was known within their circle as "the need to know."

For each of them, there were some long days, but many times they might have a once-in-a-lifetime experience such as meeting and shaking the hands of the sitting U.S. President, seeing the Bob Hope Show in Vietnam while on the front row, attending a dinner at a National Palace, going on a safari in Africa, traveling on the USS Constitution, seeing the Berlin Wall, or traveling in the Australian Outback.

They have lived in Africa, Europe, South America, Asia, and Australia. Hazel, Liz and Barbara all agree that working for the CIA allowed three gals from Virginia, West Virginia, and Pennsylvania to have wonderful and challenging careers that also gave them the opportunity to see the world. Now, they are happy to call The Summit home.

# **S**IZAGESMART

with LifeSpire

## **Community Connections**

Carolyn and Rich Velletri enjoy the variety of activities at Lakewood: Monday night entertainment, art classes and exhibits, Happy Hour, and more. But for them, the highlight is the friendships they've made along the way.

"The best part of all of these activities is making new friends," they shared. "It is comforting to know we have connections at Lakewood now and for the future."

The Velletris are members of AgeSmart, LifeSpire of Virginia's innovative program for adults 55 and older who want to age in place in their own homes instead of, or before, moving into a LifeSpire community. AgeSmart combines independence with peace of mind by offering care coordination, asset protection, and long-term care services that are all designed to support members and their families in their own homes.

Along with the security of a trusted plan for the future, AgeSmart members enjoy opportunities to connect with LifeSpire's communities. Every LifeSpire of Virginia community is a Life Plan Community, offering a full continuum of care on campus at a predictable cost. That means when needs change, residents and members alike can trust they'll be cared for by a compassionate team in a community they already know. AgeSmart members find that being part of community life adds friendship, connection, and peace of mind.







Interested in finding out more about AgeSmart? Visit AgeSmartVA.org or call us at 804-420-1952 to learn more or sign up for an informational seminar.

# THE CULPEPER





## A Night Under the Stars, Hawaiian Style

In Hawaii, the "Aloha Spirit" is more than a greeting. It's also a cultural concept that refers to a way of life rooted in mutual regard and respect, extended with warmth to all people. It's no surprise, then, that The Culpeper perfectly embodied that spirit during its annual Night Under the Stars, where residents and team members brought the islands to Virginia with a Hawaiian-themed evening of food, music, and community.

Residents and guests were welcomed with leis and vibrant décor that transformed the space into a tropical retreat. The evening began with a dinner that transported diners to Hawaii through a menu inspired by traditional island flavors. Entrées included opakapaka, a delicate red snapper prepared with a macadamia crust, and slow-braised kalua pork, a classic Hawaiian dish infused with smoky richness. Side dishes paired beautifully, from coconut lemongrass jasmine rice to charred Maui onion and 'ulu (breadfruit). Dessert provided a sweet finale with pineapple upside-down mochi cake and a selection of bite-sized tropical treats.

Following dinner, the Silver Tones Swing Band, sponsored by the VBH Foundation, filled the night with lively music that set the perfect tone for dancing and conversation. The evening was a joyful reflection of the aloha spirit, uniting residents and team members in a shared celebration of warmth, community, and connection.









# THE CHESAPEAKE

## The Chesapeake's Iron Chef Celebrates Culture

Renowned food writer Anthony Bourdain once said, "When somebody's offering you food, they're telling you a story. They're telling you what they like, and who they are." The Chesapeake's recent Iron Chef event showcased the talents of two team members who created meals that were crafted around their culinary heritage and the experiences that shaped them.

Rather than a judged competition, the event was a way to experience new dishes and learn more about the team members that prepared them. Hosted by executive chef Julian Spainhour as master of ceremonies, the evening highlighted the history and cultural significance behind each recipe that was presented. Behind the scenes, chefs Korey Ellis and Kebba "KB" Secka led a talented team who prepared the featured dishes in The Chesapeake's kitchen, transforming traditional recipes into a three-course dining experience for residents to enjoy.





For his first time participating in Iron Chef, Chef Korey Ellis featured A Taste of Jamaica. His menu included Ackee and Salt Fish, Authentic Jamaican Oxtail, and Jamaican Rum Cake, dishes deeply tied to the island's history and his own family roots.

I wanted to bring together elements of my classical training and my Jamaican heritage.

- Chef Korey Ellis



"I wanted to bring together elements of my classical training and my Jamaican heritage," Korey said. "It was a blend of my culinary style and a way to showcase a flair I enjoy incorporating into my recipes."

He said what he enjoyed most was "the friendly competition with KB and getting to work with my team to create recipes that are not typically served in the community." Sharing his culture with residents made the experience even more meaningful. "It gave me a chance to share a piece of my story through the ingredients," Korey said. "My favorite part of working at The Chesapeake is the residents and getting to know them."

Chef Kebba Secka, known as KB, also brought his culture to the table with A Taste of Gambia, Africa. His menu featured African Fish Pie, Jollof Rice, and Chakry, representing everyday recipes from his family.



What I enjoyed most was sharing these recipes with the residents and cooking with my father.

- Chef Kebba "KB" Secka



"These are recipes from Africa that are prepared daily by families and represent the culture my father brought with him," KB said. "He came to America in 1999 and started at The Chesapeake in 2001. He still works here, and we enjoy working together."

Having cooked alongside his father for the event made it even more special. "What I enjoyed most was sharing these recipes with the residents and cooking with my father," he said. "The people, the residents, are my favorite part of working here."

At The Chesapeake, stories are shared daily around tables. This year's Iron Chef showed that sometimes the meal itself tells the most powerful story.



#### **ACKEE AND SALT FISH:**

The national dish of Jamaica, consisting of sautéed ackee tree fruit, fish, vegetables and herbs. Its history is deeply intertwined with Jamaica's colonial past.

#### **AUTHENTIC JAMAICAN OXTAIL:**

Initially, oxtail, a less desirable cut of beef, was given to enslaved people who transformed it into a flavorful and hearty meal through slow cooking and the use of local spices and herbs.

#### **JAMAICAN RUM CAKE:**

Thought to have originated with British colonists, who began settling on the islands during the 18th century, bringing with them recipes for steamed fruit puddings.

#### **AFRICAN FISH PIE:**

A popular West African street food with roots in British colonial influence. Typically filled with spiced sardines or other fish, are enjoyed as a convenient snack.

#### **JOLLOF RICE:**

Benachin, also known as Jollof Rice, originated from the Wolof region of the Senegambia region before spreading to the entire West Africa and beyond.

#### **CHAKRY:**

A sweet, creamy West African dessert made with couscous or millet (a small, nutty grain) mixed with sour milk or yogurt and lightly sweetened with sugar.

# THE GLEBE





# New Neighbors, New Spaces at The Glebe

Despite being in the midst of major changes, The Glebe is still finding ways to welcome both new faces and new spaces to its community. All 22 cottages in the expansion are now complete, with final residents moving in over the coming months. With more than 40 new neighbors now calling The Glebe home, the sense of connection continues to grow.

As finishing touches were being made on the cottages, The Glebe team shared the excitement with the broader community by hosting a neighborhood block party.

Nearly 150 guests gathered for an afternoon filled with nostalgic charm: bluegrass music, hot dogs on the grill, Coke in glass bottles, and moon pies for dessert. Guests also toured the new cottage floor plans, which feature light-filled living and dining spaces, walk-in closets, private driveways and two-car garages, and patios or porches perfect for enjoying Blue Ridge living.



Among the new residents settling in are Jim and Carol Corson. "We're still very active and independent and wanted the extra space that a cottage floor plan offers," they said. "We like the life plan/continuing care The Glebe offers and were ready to give up the responsibilities of home ownership."

"We love the comfort of our new cottage, getting to know our new neighbors (fun), the security the community offers from cottage maintenance to personal well-being, and exploring the many activities The Glebe has to offer. There is lots to enjoy!" the Corsons shared.

They've also made time to explore one of the newest gathering spots. "We have visited the Fireside Café & Bake Shop and have enjoyed the coffee and lunch time salads. We enjoy the option of going there and seeing others enjoying the casual atmosphere."

As they look ahead, they added, "We're excited about living freely in this community knowing we have professional resources through The Glebe staff and family consultations to guide us through the aging process."

From morning coffee and conversation to evening sunsets on new patios, The Glebe's growing amenities reflect the warmth, connection, and community that continue to bring people together.







## LifeSpire Unveils 2025 Holiday Card Artwork

This year's holiday greeting is unofficially named 'A View from a Friend' created by Phyllis Harvey, a resident at The Summit since 2019.

With no formal training, but an enjoyment of the arts, as a young mother Phyllis would paint at night after her children were sleeping. Prior to being married, Phyllis lived in Washington, DC with a roommate while working at the Pentagon. It was that dear friend who gave Phyllis the inspiration for this year's artwork.

After returning to Lynchburg for married life, Phyllis' roommate visited with a picture of the snow scene. Phyllis painted a couple versions of the scene, finally settling on this one. The picture is one of her favorites and reminds her of her dear friend.

Phyllis' home at The Summit displays some of her artwork, but she notes that most of her paintings are with her children. She moved to The Summit with many friends already here. She loves the family feel of the community, with great appreciation of the care provided by team members.



## Tax Law Updates: Make Giving Simple, Flexible, and Impactful

Recent tax changes were signed into law in July 2025 and will make charitable giving easier and more rewarding for donors. These updates will streamline tax rules and encourage generosity through several key changes.

#### Donor Benefits at a Glance:

#### 1. Deduction for Everyone

Even if you don't itemize your taxes, individuals can deduct \$1,000, and joint filers \$2,000, for charitable gifts.

### 2. Greater Deductions for Cash Gifts

You can deduct up to 60% of your income for cash donations.

#### 3. Estate Tax Relief

The estate tax exemption increased to \$15 million, helping families plan legacy gifts.

This makes giving simpler, smarter, and more impactful—whether you're donating now or planning for the future. These changes don't take effect until 2026, but it's important to understand how your charitable giving is treated under federal tax law—making it easier, more rewarding, and more strategic for donors.

As always, we encourage you to reach out to your financial advisors and tax professionals to determine your personal charitable giving and financial planning strategy.

**To learn more about charitable giving and leaving your own legacy,** please visit https://vbh.planmylegacy. org/ or reach out to Jodi Leonard, Vice President at (804) 521-9213.



# VBH FOUNDATION HAPPENINGS



Each holiday season, the Virginia Baptist Homes Foundation sponsors an Honor Tree in each LifeSpire community. All loved ones who were honored or remembered by a gift made to the VBH Foundation at any time in 2025 will have their names placed on the Honor Tree in the community. Ornaments are also created for those residents who passed away during the year. "Tribute Giving" is a significant way that donors give to the VBH Foundation every year.



In 2024, nearly 400 gifts were received in memory of or in honor of a loved one, generating well over \$75,000 in support.

Tribute gifts can be made online at LifeSpireLiving.org/give.



#### TIME TO CHECK YOUR

End-of-Year List

#### **MAKE A GIFT**

#### Make a gift to the VBH Foundation

Honor a loved one on your holiday gift list by making a gift to the VBH Foundation. We'll send a card notifying the recipient, and you'll get that warm, fuzzy feeling of helping a senior in need—a lot better than a fruitcake!

#### JOIN

#### **Join our Monthly Giving Circle**

Make an even bigger impact with your gift by joining the Monthly Giving Circle! Your monthly commitment helps sustain vital funding for seniors in need while also reducing our costs, since you won't receive future solicitations.

### **ELIMINATE INCOME TAX**

## Eliminate income tax on your mandatory IRA withdrawal this year!

Make a gift to the VBH Foundation directly from your IRA and take advantage of the IRA Charitable Rollover. This gift will also count towards your required minimum distribution (RMD).

# THANK YOU FOR INVESTING IN OUR MISSION TO SERVE THOSE IN NEED!

Gifts can be made using the enclosed envelope, or with a credit card through our secure online form at LifeSpireLiving.org/give. Please contact the Foundation office at 804-521-9213 for information or assistance.



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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.











