

PANORAMA

SPRING 2026

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THE SUMMIT

A LifeSpire Community



SISTER LOVE

Music, shared stories unite siblings

Twin sisters make their way to the piano. As Coretta Jones plays the prelude to “Great Is Thy Faithfulness,” her sister, Loretta Jones-Gafford, joins in singing the first stanza.

The song could be the theme music to two lives united in faith and family.

“We were each given the responsibility of looking out for ourselves and our sister and we have maintained that sense of dedication and responsibility throughout our lives,” Coretta said.

Their mother instructed them as children to always stay together. “We lived by that and I think that kind of bonded us together too,” Loretta said.

The two sisters are lifelong members a Disciples of Christ Church in Martinsville and visited The Summit for its dedication with friend, Alma Irvine, an early resident who passed away at 107 years old.

“We learned about The Summit in the early stages, but later on once the building was completed, two of our church members were among the first to come to The Summit,” Coretta said. “We became inspired and intrigued by the idea of moving here one day. It gave us the incentive that we might like to be here someday.”

Coretta worked in social services and Loretta retired as a college professor.

The sisters—born on Christmas Day—have lived together

for most of their lives, separated only during graduate school and Loretta's first marriage. The two later moved in together with their mother, who passed in 2022.

They decided to make The Summit home the following year with Loretta's husband, James.

Coretta, Loretta and James worked to downsize their large home. "We found out a lot of the things we had we didn't need to keep."

They maintained family heirlooms and in their transition found a box with their maternal grandfather's things. He was a taxi driver and kept books with dates and fares. They also found the receipts for materials used to build his home. "He had an accounting for how many nails he placed in each door," Coretta said.

The sisters are active in weekly worship services on campus and Coretta plays the piano once a month.

"We grew up around music.. Our grandmother was a singer in the church choir. Actually, she was the best singer in the choir and she would play and sing at home," Coretta said.

At The Summit, they have found more than a home. "It just seems to have been a very good fit for us, especially at this time," Loretta said. "We are losing family and the residents have just become our family and we weren't quite sure that would happen, but it has and it's been a wonderful experience."

All these years later, their sisterly bond remains strong. "I wish everybody would have, if not a twin, someone they are very close to," Coretta said.

Scan the QR
code to watch
Loretta and
Coretta's story.



Nightly dinners bring sisters together

Joanne Tucker and her younger sister, Etta Legner, walk into the cafe in Blue Ridge Commons. As they sit, Etta gives an affectionate pat on big sister's back.

“A lot of people say, ‘what is it like to have your sister around.’ It’s great, because we haven’t been together since we left home. We’ve never lived in the same place. It’s been nice reconnecting,” Joanne said.

Joanne, who lives in an apartment, and Etta, who has a new cottage, eat dinner together every night.

“A lot of people tell me they think it’s neat that I have a sister here and they frequently tell me they wish they had a sister here,” Etta said.

Both retired school teachers, the sisters attended Radford University and enjoyed teaching school.

They relocated to the Lynchburg area after retirement to be close to their mother.





Scan the QR code to watch
Joanne and Etta's story.

It was Etta's idea for the two sisters to join The Summit's Advantage Club in 2018. Soon after, they began attending events, meeting residents and getting to know the team. Etta later reserved one of the new Northside Cottages while it was still under construction. Joanne moved into an apartment, arriving at The Summit seven months ahead of her younger sister.

"I've enjoyed going to dinner at night, sitting down and being served and getting up and going back to my apartment with no dirty dishes," Joanne said.

Growing up on a farm in rural Virginia, the sisters inherited green thumbs. Etta maintains a wide variety of plants and succulents inside her cottage.

The sisters praised team members for their caring and generous spirits.

"From the first day I moved in, everybody has called me 'Mrs. Tucker,'" Joanne said. "I mean they remembered my name from the first day."

Etta, who maintains a more active lifestyle off campus as a co-owner of Timberlake Tavern, relishes reconnecting with her big sister over dinner.

"It's like we're a big family and it reminds me of being in college. The thing I've noticed here is that people seem so happy," Etta said.





Founding members of the Satellite Rotary Club include (front row, from left) Amy Robinson, Beverly Peterson, Phil Bradney, Heath Myers, Sally Mock, Kristi Martin (back row, from left) Bruce Peterson, John Bates, Al Gorman and Tom Estes.

SERVICE ABOVE SELF

Rotarians launch satellite club on Summit campus

John Bates grew up admiring the men in his local Rotary Club. They were respected leaders in his community.

“I grew up in Rotary, my father was a Rotarian and I joined as soon as I could,” John Bates said.

A lifelong love for Rotary International led Bates to spearhead a satellite club at The Summit.

The Rotary Club of Forest (District 7570) teamed with The Summit to make an on-campus club happen.

“People like me and some of the members starting up this satellite club have been in Rotary for years and this provides a chance for us to stay active in Rotary and be here in our community,” Bates said.

Rotary Club of Forest President Dale Reed said local Rotarians were excited to work with The Summit.

“If anyone wants to help out and feel like they are involved, we didn’t want to leave them out,” Reed said.

Reed attended the first satellite club meeting to induct founding members and elect officers.

The Summit Executive Director Kristi Martin, a member of the Forest Club, said the satellite group will provide more service opportunities.

“Our mission of LifeSpire is to be socially accountable and to give back to our greater community and by being a member of the Rotary Club, we are able to do that,” Martin said.

Al Gorman, another longtime Rotarian, said he and other residents are excited about the satellite club.

“We are going to get to relate and develop with each other and with the Rotary Club of Forest and do more things for the community,” Gorman said.

Bates is now a member of the Rotary Club of Forest and the satellite club. He worked with Rotarians and The Summit to design and establish a Peace Pole near campus in Wyndhurst.

He is glad to offer residents a convenient way to being involved in Rotary.

“It’s just a wonderful feeling,” Bates said.

If you are interested in making a difference in the larger community, consider joining the satellite Rotary Club. Meetings are second Monday at 5:30 p.m. (PDR) and fourth Monday at 3 p.m. (Commons). Please call 434.333.2138 for more information.

ROTARY CLUB VIDEO

Scan the QR code
to watch



“Our mission of LifeSpire is to be socially accountable and to give back to our greater community and by being a member of the Rotary Club, we are able to do that.”

— Kristi Martin, Executive Director of The Summit —



Team members tour expansion

As construction continues on The Summit's \$80 million expansion, team members toured the Life Plan Community's Memory Support Neighborhood.

With a planned opening in summer of 2026, the new memory support neighborhood will offer a secure, compassionate environment for those living with Alzheimer's disease or related forms of memory loss.

Memory Support is one of several active construction projects on campus, including new Hybrid Homes and the Blue Ridge Commons, which will include a wellness center and new dining venues.

Two Hybrid Homes will be ready by the end of 2026 with construction of two more to begin soon.

If you would like to learn more about our new Memory Support neighborhood, please contact the Marketing Department. We are now forming an interest list for our Summer 2026 opening. This transition may also create future availability in Assisted Living as residents move to Memory Support.

The Summit recently launched a monthly video series to keep residents, Advantage Club members and the community up-to-date on the campus expansion construction. Each video goes behind the scenes for construction updates from the site superintendent.

**Scan the QR code to
watch the campus
update videos**







ENGAGING RESIDENTS

Design team seeks feedback on new furnishings

Gary and Marcia Marples take turns sitting in dining room chairs inside the community room.

The Marples are joined by dozens of other residents eager to offer feedback on proposed furnishings as part of The Summit's \$80 million expansion project.

One station includes four different dining rooms chairs and fabrics. Another is for outdoor umbrella fabrics. There are theater and reading room chairs to choose from.

Each resident selects their top two favorites as interior designers from SFCS answer questions.

"As we continue with our Summit expansion project, we are offering the residents an opportunity to engage with the selection process," Executive Director Kristi Martin said.

CAMPUS EXPANSION

Immerse yourself in the details of The Summit's expansion project.

***Scan the QR code
to learn more***





“Resident engagement gives the opportunity to be part of the process and take ownership of what is being planned on campus.”

— Kristi Martin, Executive Director —

Resident engagement is a hallmark of life at The Summit and team members and leaders have consistently sought input throughout the construction process. Similar engagement sessions were hosted prior to the start of construction on the Blue Ridge Commons, Northside Cottage Neighborhood and Hybrid Homes.

The first depositors for cottages and Hybrid Homes received individual sessions to select finishes for the new homes.

“Providing that resident engagement is critical to the success of the expansion process,” Martin said. “It gives the residents opportunity to feel part of the process and take ownership of what is being planned here on campus.”

Since The Summit is part of the LifeSpire of Virginia family of not-for-profit senior living communities, residents are assured that high-quality investments are made in building materials and furnishings, Gary Marple said.

“We are helping pick out the types of furnishing and finishings,” Marple said. “The residents are engaged in the process. Then we have to like it because we picked it out. It really is helpful for us to go through that process.”

Morgan Weber, an interior designer with SFCs, said resident feedback is invaluable to the final interior design work.

“This is their home. So we want them to feel comfortable and we want them to give us that feedback so they really enjoy the spaces we are designing for them,” Weber said.



AgeSmart Care Coordinator Brandi Friday (left) meets with AgeSmart members Richard and Carolyn Velletri.

AGESMART

Care coordination no matter where you call home

Brandi Friday, a Care Coordinator, is dedicated to developing trusted, long-term relationships with AgeSmart members.

From home safety assessments to annual care plans, Friday works to help AgeSmart members live well in their homes.

“One of the main benefits of care coordination is we follow a member through their entire lifetime. In addition to being available to members as needed, we check in with them over the phone quarterly and with an in-home visit every year. So really we work to predict what future needs might come up and we are proactive in anticipating those needs.”

AgeSmart with LifeSpire is available in Lynchburg. This innovative program supports healthy, independent adults aged 55 and over who wish to remain in their homes while planning ahead for future care.

By providing access to comprehensive care coordination, asset protection, and long-term care services, AgeSmart ensures peace of mind for members and their families. This program empowers individuals to maintain their independence while having a trusted plan for future care needs.

“When LifeSpire decided to start AgeSmart seven years ago, it was for people that wanted to stay at home and age in place,” AgeSmart Executive Director Tammy Huffman said. “We offer care coordination, pay for care as you need it, and may help you stay well longer through program activities and interventions.”

Established in 2018 as Lakewood at Home, AgeSmart was the first program of its kind in the Richmond area. Recognizing the growing desire among seniors to remain in their homes, LifeSpire of Virginia expanded this innovative continuing care at home program across the Commonwealth. AgeSmart continues to

“Our members are very social, they’re very active and they are still living amazing lives. I just find them very inspiring.”

— Brandi Friday, AgeSmart Care Coordinator —



evolve, providing members with the resources and support needed to age confidently at home.

Friday said a home safety assessment provides peace of mind to members. “One of the big things that we offer to our members is a home safety assessment that’s conducted by a licensed physical therapists. That helps us determine how safe they are to live in their home currently and how safe they are to live in their home in the future,” Friday said.

Once a year, AgeSmart conducts an annual care plan for each member.

“We go out to members homes and really get an in-depth look at how they’re doing physically and mentally, and how their home is providing a safe environment for them,” Friday said.

AgeSmart helps relieve burdens for members and their families by vetting trusted home care providers. “Our care coordinators handle scheduling and coordination, taking that responsibility off the member and their loved ones. For those without nearby family or adult children, this support can be especially valuable. We can also assist with filing long-term care insurance claims, removing another layer of complexity,” Friday said.

Huffman said Age Smart program brings caregivers to you in your home, wherever that home is.

“If you ever need more care than what we can provide in your home, you may choose to move to a LifeSpire community, such as The Summit, or another community of your choice, where healthcare, assisted living, or memory support services are available. This gives people peace of mind because they know they have a plan — to stay well at home, protect their assets, and access quality care if and when it’s needed,” she said.

AgeSmart can work alongside long-term care

insurance for those who have a policy, while also supporting members who do not. “With long-term care insurance, you typically must need assistance with two to three Activities of Daily Living (ADLs) before benefits can be used. With AgeSmart, care can begin earlier — often when assistance with just one activity is needed. Members also have the benefit of working with the same dedicated care coordinator over time. With traditional long-term care insurance claims, you may speak with a different representative each time you call,” Friday said.

Friday says one of the most rewarding parts of her role is developing long-term relationships with members. “Over the years, we really get to know our members well, and they come to know and trust us. When they pick up the phone, they know they’re reaching the same person,” she said. “My favorite part of being a care coordinator is getting to know the members.”

The program is now offered in the Lynchburg region.

For more information about AgeSmart, call The Summit marketing team at 434.333.2138.

AgeSmart Lunch & Learn

Join The Summit for an AgeSmart Lunch and Learn at Oakwood Country Club on either April 21 or April 22 at 11:30 a.m. Choose a convenient date to join us at Oakwood Country Club.

Register by calling the Marketing Office at 434.333.2138 or scanning the QR code to visit the events website.







NEW YEAR'S TOAST

Residents and team members spent New Year's Eve making friendly wagers, enjoying tasty treats, dancing to live music and toasting to 2026.



Scan the QR code to watch the fun!





GOODBYE, WINTER BLUES

With a heavy mix of snow and ice this season, The Summit hosted a Winter Blues Mixer for residents and Advantage Club members.





HOLIDAY MARKET

The Summit hosted the annual Holiday Market and Santa Brunch to raise money for the Virginia Baptist Homes Foundation. The brunch included live music, local vendors selling holiday gifts and of course, a visit from Santa and Mrs. Claus.



Upcoming Events at The Summit

Summit Club Spring Mixer | Wednesday, April 15 @ 1 p.m.

Join us at The Summit for an exclusive mixer for Advantage Club and Crown Club members and residents.

AgeSmart Lunch & Learn | April 21 or April 22 @ 11:30 a.m.

This event will take place at Oakwood Country Club (3409 Rivermont Avenue, Lynchburg, Virginia). AgeSmart with LifeSpire is now available in Lynchburg.

Meet the Artist Reception | April 3 & May 8 @ 2 p.m.

Join us for Meet the Artist Reception for:
April 3 - Sherry Pope
May 8 - Dave Keebler – 100 percent of art sales from the May exhibit support The Summit Team's Walk to End Alzheimer's fundraising efforts.

Next Chapter Expo | Wednesday, May 6 @ 11 a.m. - 2 p.m.

We invite Advantage Club and Crown Club members to join us for our Next Chapter Expo, where you can connect with trusted local experts in real estate, downsizing, estate planning, moving services, and donation support. Enjoy helpful resources, lunch, and time to connect with fellow members as you gather ideas and confidence for planning your next chapter.

This event will take place at Boonsboro Country Club (1709 BCC Drive, Lynchburg, Virginia).

BUNCO Fundraiser | May 27 @ 1 p.m.

Join us at The Summit for a fun afternoon of BUNCO! Tickets are \$20, with proceeds supporting The Summit Team's Walk to End Alzheimer's fundraising efforts.

Caregivers Support Group

The Summit hosts a Caregiver Support Group the second Wednesday of each month at 1:30 p.m. in the Prayer Chapel. The support group is provided in conjunction with the Alzheimer's Association.

Register for events by calling 434.333.2138 or online at SummitLynchburg.org/Events.

Team Members of the Month



Sarah Canfield
December 2025



Mitch Rodhe
January 2026



Darryl White
February 2026



Brittney Rockford
March 2026

MEET YOUR NEIGHBOR

LIZ HODGES

Liz Hodges keeps her favorite photo with her late husband, Bill, close.

“I was married to one of the most wonderful men on Earth,” Liz said.

The couple spent 17 happy years on campus with friends that became family.

“Bill loved it here. He was happy here. If Bill’s happy, I’m happy. That’s still the same,” Liz said.

Bill felt his health was deteriorating and thought it best to leave their 100-acre farm and move into a lakeside cottage at The Summit in 2004.

“It was a very small place then and there were needs on the campus. Bill Hodges was an affable guy who moved in on music, gardening and everything,” said Liz, who served as the campus librarian for years.

The Hodges spent years cultivating flowers around their cottage and working in raised beds in the community garden. Bill worked on campus landscaping and together with Wayne Greenlaw and Leonard Johnson created a walking trail around Summit Lake.

After his passing, Liz moved into an apartment, maintaining close relationships with friends and family.

“I have a great many friends on a campus where communication is good and the program is good, but now it is a big community and I sense the same community spirit and I’m terribly grateful for that,” Liz said.

An avid reader and genealogist, Liz has authored several books and maintains a wonderful collection from her trips around the world with Bill.



A 22-year resident, Liz knows The Summit is a special place.

“I’ve visited friends on other campuses and this is a good one,” she said. “It’s a community.



THE SUMMIT

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