



# This is Personal

TRANSFORMING THE LIVES OF THOSE AFFECTED BY DEMENTIA



## The Memory Care Center – Closer Than Ever!

With each conversation of the Memory Care Center, the underlying question remains: When will it be open to Residents? Dementia is diagnosed at an alarming rate and the ubiquitous impact of COVID-19 on older adults has only increased its prevalence. Our family, friends, and neighbors need these resources and the anticipated benefits of the new Center are undeniable. Consequently, the sense of urgency surrounding the completion of the Memory Care Center seemingly intensifies with the passing of each week. What, then, can we do to hasten the project?

The sooner the \$20 million minimum campaign goal is raised; the sooner the Center will be built. The stakes have never been higher! An incredible **Matching Challenge Fund** is stepping up the pace of this campaign to get the Community to the \$20 million goal faster! This opportunity, extended through a group of Willow Valley Communities' long-time business partners and a few

Residents, provides a means for doubling your personal impact and halving the time it will take to reach the campaign goal. The **dollar-for-dollar match** gives you the key to unlocking hope for the future – for world-class amenities, cutting-edge research, tools for caregiver support, and education for dementia prevention.

The time is now—our chance to close the gap and finish this campaign. For many of us, this project is very personal. Our lives have been touched by dementia, and we yearn for the knowledge to prevent, treat, and cure this disease. Each one of us living at Willow Valley Communities will have access to the progressive care and transformative nature of the Memory Care Center. Whether we live there one day, or visit to see friends and learn about our own brain health, we should all reflect on what we can do to build this Center sooner. The rate of dementia is not slowing down, and neither should we.

## Room to Roam *Where design meets life*

As is the case in each issue of the Campaign Newsletter, we will continue to expand upon the key physical spaces of the Memory Care Center. In this issue, we will explore the Memory Care Center Performance Stage.

When a person no longer ventures into normal, public venues for fear that they may stray from societal norms—singing along with the performers, dancing in the aisles, leaving their seat frequently due to anxiety—the Performance Stage will be a safe space where a person can continue to enjoy the arts without fear of judgement. Residents of the Memory Care Center, along with their visitors, will be able to attend a program as they desire, coming and going, and joining in as they please.



Children, pets, and music are among the best themes for connecting with people who live with dementia and reigniting memories that connect them to their past. Each of these topics is tied to deep emotions within the brain. Introduction to these stimuli will elicit memories of joy, love, excitement, and belonging—likely transporting them to the time the memory was formed and their identity was developing. The Performance Stage, providing endless entertainment, is sure to stimulate the mind, body, and spirit of Residents, visitors, and Team Members.

Picture grandchildren coming in to show off their latest achievement; local high school orchestras, bands, and choirs performing their Spring Concerts; therapy animals demonstrating their trained talents; a local performer filling the space with song and dance; artists engaging the audience in wonder; and Residents highlighting their musicality.

## Room to Roam (continued)

As memory loss progresses, recognition of rhythm often remains. In the earlier stages of dementia, the ability to create and predict a rhythm is retained and can be demonstrated during sessions of active music therapy – that is, a person physically engaged in making or continuing a rhythm through mediums such as drumming, clapping, or humming. Especially good for boosting that feeling of dignity and self-worth are activities like drumming circles where a person copies a beat or finishes the beat to reflect their own style. As cognitive decline reduces the ability to mimic rhythm, the ability to recognize and recall a rhythm in song persists. In this case, passive music therapy becomes the main method for enrichment. Passive music therapy can be tailored to the individual abilities of each Resident. Everything from “Name That Song” trivia to simply having music play in the background can engage a person and evoke memories.

In 2020, the Willow Valley Communities Charitable Foundation commissioned Carnegie Mellon University’s Dr. Richard Randall to review scientific research involving the impact of music on older adults. In this review, he expounded on the varying degrees of music therapy and the methods for incorporating music in daily activities to improve quality of life. He suggested that, in addition to the biographical information collected for Residents of the Center, a personalized playlist of songs also be compiled to be implemented in the care plan. This consultation, and future endeavors, will help to fuel the possibilities for the Memory Care Center and provide the best, individualized care.

## Fostering Meaningful Moments



Gilberto Rosa can be found at Lakes and Lakeside, providing spontaneous and enthralling piano entertainment for Residents. Gilberto on the impact of music on Residents:

*“Hearing music is a very special experience for them. Residents will come up to me and share their feelings about the music. Some cry, some smile. It means a lot to touch people’s lives in this way at both Lakes and Lakeside. I enjoy it and hope one day soon I will be giving a concert at the Memory Care Center.”*

**Team Member – Lakeside Housekeeping  
Self-taught Pianist**

Stephen Gunzenhauser on the impact of the Performance Stage at the future Memory Care Center:

*“Music can reach out to the soul and bring us to a place of beauty and love. From cave man to astronauts, music can touch our innermost feelings. A facility for live music can elevate the experience of aging.”*

**SmartLife Member  
Music Director of the Lancaster Symphony 1979-2021**





## Welcome!

Mary Schreiber, a Certified Therapeutic Recreation Specialist, has joined the Willow Valley Communities Team as the new Memory Support Resource Coordinator. She holds a Bachelor’s degree in Therapeutic Recreation and a Master’s of Education from Penn State University, and has been a Certified Therapeutic Recreation Specialist since 1990. Mary has many years of dementia-related experience and is passionate about helping others by sharing her knowledge to improve quality of life.

Mary is also an educator, currently teaching Therapeutic Recreation at York College. She considers herself a people person and thrives on making positive connections and developing relationships! Mary identifies with Willow Valley Communities’ “Life Lived Forward” philosophy as demonstrated by running a half marathon for her 60th birthday—ON THE GREAT WALL OF CHINA!

While Mary is enjoying semi-retirement, she is also very excited to join our team! In her free time, Mary loves spending time with her Mini Golden Doodle Rosie, and her 3 cats – Maddie, Bella, and Toby. She can often be found enjoying the outdoors—walking, biking, or kayaking!

Mary will be working part-time to assist Supportive and Independent Living Residents, families, and Team Members. Her office is located at Meadow Ridge.

### Mary Schreiber

Memory Support Resource Coordinator  
717.490.8129  
mschreiber@willowvalley.org



## Piece of Mind: Sample the Center

Monday, July 18 | Lakes | Details to Follow

Join us for a glimpse into some of the amenities at the future Memory Care Center.

- Get a feel for the sprawling Commons building and suburban households through a new exercise route.
- Snag a taste of the Brain Café and learn about a brain-healthy diet with Chef Scott Megill.
- Immerse yourself in the life of someone living with dementia through Virtual Reality with Embodied Labs.

**In September, 2018, Willow Valley Communities founded the Willow Valley Communities Charitable Foundation.** The Foundation serves as a vehicle for Residents to make a lasting effect on the community they call home, the broader Lancaster County community—and beyond. The Foundation’s first project would be the Willow Valley Communities Memory Care Center This is Personal Capital Campaign.

**For information on leaving a legacy gift,** please call the Foundation at 717.517.3901, or visit our website: [Foundation.WillowValleyCommunities.org](http://Foundation.WillowValleyCommunities.org)



**Lauren Renahan**  
Development Coordinator  
717.464.6704  
lrenahan@willowvalley.org



**Jeff Kenderdine**  
Executive Director  
717.464.6044  
jkenderdine@willowvalley.org