

# View from the Porch

News from Friends Home in Kennett

Fall/Winter  
2005



## Here Come the Red Hats!

This summer an enthusiastic and creative group of residents gathered in the activities room to make one-of-a-kind red hats, covered with red and purple feathers, ribbons, flowers, beads and bows. "Each hat was so different and unique," commented Activities Director Patrice Bradour, the ringleader of the group. "Some were simple and dignified, and others were just wild and very creative. We had so much fun." Mary Lea West and Susan Clark volunteered to help the women with their projects, and Kim Dziembowski accompanied several residents from Linden Hall who also joined in the fun.

"The next thing we did," continued Bradour, "was we wore the hats and went out to lunch. We were so outrageous and rowdy that they gave us a private room!"

***"We believe silliness is the comedy relief of life... Underneath the frivolity, we share a bond of affection, forged by common life experiences and a genuine enthusiasm for wherever life takes us next."***

***- from the Red Hat Society motto***



*Friends Home Red Hats pose for a photograph before heading out to another fun luncheon. Pictured are, back row, Dottie McNew and Jeane Petterson, and front row, Julia Truger, Stella Smith and Eleanor Hawthorne.*

The Red Hat Society is a national organization of women that began as a result of a few friends who decided to greet their later years with enthusiasm and humor. Their motto is: *"We believe silliness is the comedy relief of life... Underneath the frivolity, we share a bond of affection, forged by common life experiences and a genuine enthusiasm for wherever life takes us next."*

What is the next adventure for the Red Hat ladies? "We're using the hats as an excuse to go out and have fun," laughed Bradour. "Our next trip will be to a tea room where we'll enjoy all kinds of delicious food. Who knows ... we might become an official Red Hat Chapter!"

So beware ... if you're ever out to lunch in the vicinity of the Home and there's a joyous group of women wearing outrageous, beautiful red and purple hats, it just might be the Red Hat Ladies of the Friends Home in Kennett!

# Life at the Home

## Two residents tell their stories

The below articles have been used in the Home's recent advertising. You may have seen them in the Daily Local News.

Meet 89-year-old Pete Bodine. He has resided at Friends Home in Kennett for more than nine years and says "there is no where else I would rather live."

A native of New York State, the retired mail carrier and World War II veteran was living alone after his wife of 33 years, Virginia, passed away.

"My son Danny and his family live in Chester County," Pete explains. "He didn't like me living by myself. So I came down here to see if we could find a place for me.

"We visited a lot of different places," he continues. "But I knew right away that Friends Home was the place for me."

Pete says that it was the warm and friendly atmosphere that he noticed right away.

"I love the personality of the Home," he says. "And I can't say enough great things about the staff."



Pete especially appreciated that care after a recent eye operation. "I needed special eye drops at 8 pm every night. One night I didn't feel like taking them and said I would do it tomorrow. At exactly 8 pm a staff person knocked on my door and said 'I've come to give you the eye drops that you're supposed to have.'" He laughs. "They are really dedicated and give you excellent attention."

His social life and activities calendar are full. "I have made quite a few friends here," he notes. "I also enjoy taking the day trips they plan for us. Two of my favorites were going to see the USS New Jersey in Camden and taking a dinner cruise on the Spirit of Philadelphia – what a ball we had."

Pete even has special praise for the food and kitchen staff at Friends Home in Kennett.

"I am a very picky eater and can be a big complainer," he says with a smile. "The people who work in the kitchen go out of their way to help you and I can always get something I like."

Pete concludes that Friends Home's Assisted Living provides the perfect balance of independence and assistance.

"You always have the help you need but you also have all the privacy and freedom you want."

*"You always have the help you need but you also have all the privacy and freedom you want."*

Betty Rittenhouse never lies about her age. It might be because she looks decades younger than her actual number of years.

"I'm very proud that I am 98," she says with a smile. "I grew up in Caln Township at the end of the horse and buggy age."

A former school teacher who lives in an Assisted Living apartment, Betty has called Friends Home in Kennett her home for the last 11 years.

"I lived alone for a while after my husband died 25 years ago but my children were always worried about

*"Everyone is so very friendly and nice. And you have all the choices in the world."*

me," she explains while sitting in her apartment decorated with photos of her parents, children, grandchildren and extended family members. "I used to come and

visit my life-long friend Harriet here and always thought what a wonderful place it was. So when it was time to move, there was never a question where I was going."

Betty continues that she "likes absolutely everything" about Friends Home. "Everyone is so very friendly and nice. And you have all the choices in the world. There is always a lot to do if you want an activity. If you don't, that's fine too."

One look at her large, overstuffed bookshelf – with everything from Shakespeare to Robert Frost to modern novelist Ishiguro – and you know reading is a passion for Betty. She is a member of her church's book club which reads one book a month.

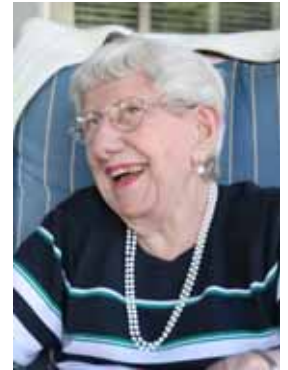
"Then we meet at a member's house to discuss the book and have refreshments," she says. "It is a wonderful group."

When it is Betty's turn to host the book club, Friends Home is very accommodating. "We meet in the parlor and the staff helps me serve the refreshments."

In addition to reading, Betty loves writing letters to friends and family, cooking and baking, arts and crafts and anything educational.

"Of course visiting with family is always wonderful." She loves seeing her four adult children and her grandchildren – but confesses the light of her life is her one-and-a-half-year-old great-granddaughter Helenka Elizabeth.

"And," she concludes. "I always have my Friends Home family."



## Admissions Director Hired

Friends Home in Kennett is pleased to announce that Tom Devinney has joined its staff as Admissions Director. Tom has worked in retirement community marketing for the past eight years.

"We knew we needed a full-time staff position dedicated to bringing new residents into the Home," said David Carter, Executive Director, "the Board discussed the creation of a position focused on admissions and our marketing consultant helped in the hiring process."

You may have read the "Changing Demographics" article in our Summer 2005 newsletter which described some factors affecting the Home's census. Decline in the 75- to 85-year-old population, room renovations, and other considerations have decreased the number of residents at the Home. Tom is working to introduce prospective residents and their families to the Home in an effort to increase admissions.

In addition to prospective residents and their families, Tom is meeting with discharge planners of local rehabilitation facilities and staff members of area retirement communities. He also attends community events representing the Home and educating the public on its services.

If you or someone you know are interested in admission to Friends Home, please contact Tom at (610) 444-2577.



*Resident Angie Esposito posing with Tom Devinney, Admissions Director. "The residents are very interested in my work and offer to help in any way they can," said Tom.*

## Medicare D: The Basics

*by David Carter, NHA, Executive Director*

You've probably heard about Medicare's new prescription drug coverage, called Medicare Part D, which starts January 1, 2006. We all know that the cost of prescription drugs has been steadily rising. In fact, healthcare inflation has gone up at a greater rate than general inflation every year during the last decade. Medicare D will offer some people significant assistance with their rising prescription drug expenses.

If you already have prescription drug coverage, you should compare the plan you have with one of the new plans that are being offered under Medicare Part D. If you don't have prescription drug coverage now, it's important for you to evaluate the Part D plans. More than 30 insurance companies have applied to become Medicare Part D providers in Pennsylvania, with different premiums, co-pays and deductibles.

Basically, Medicare Part D will be serving people who have limited incomes and individuals who have drug expenses higher than \$7,000 per year. The plan defines limited income as less than \$14,200 per year for individuals and less than \$19,300 for couples. To determine if Part D will be helpful for you, you need to examine your present drug costs and the drug formularies offered by the insurance companies. Formularies are lists of drugs by category: generic, the least expensive; preferred brand-name drugs; non-preferred brand-name drugs; and drugs which are not covered at all.

The cost for Medicare D varies from company to company, some as low as \$18 per month, with the average being \$35 per month. Most plans have a \$250 annual deductible and there may be co-pays. Generally, the plan will pay 75% of the first \$2,250 of drug costs, then there is a gap where the individual pays 100% of the cost, up to \$5,100. After that, Medicare D pays 95% of all drug costs.

It really is up to you to determine if Medicare D will be helpful for you. You can sign up from November 15 until May 15, 2006. After that, you will have to wait until the annual sign up period between November 15 and December 31. You can get additional information at [www.medicare.gov](http://www.medicare.gov) or by calling 1-800-MEDICARE.

Have you visited our website?  
[www.friendshomeinkennett.org](http://www.friendshomeinkennett.org)

# Many Thanks to our Donors

This is a list of donors who made contributions to Friends Home in Kennett between April 16 and November 29, 2005. We strive for accuracy, but sometimes make errors. If you notice a mistake or omission, please contact Brenda Riehl at (610) 444-2577 or [briehl@kennett.net](mailto:briehl@kennett.net).

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*Memorial and honor gifts may be made to Friends Home in Kennett at any time. An attractive card is sent to notify the honoree of your generosity.*

*Below, names of honorees are in bold type with donors listed under them.*

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# *Linden Hall Celebrates 25 Years of Service*



*Tom Marhsall, Board Member Emeritus, Suzanne Butler, Linden Hall Administrator, and David Carter, Executive Director, led the celebration.*

On Friday November 4<sup>th</sup>, staff, residents and friends gathered to celebrate Linden Hall's 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary. The evening began with Executive Director David Carter's welcome and introduction of Tom Marshall. As a Board member, Tom initiated planning for Linden Hall after the Home closed its infirmary in 1976 due to new State regulations. "We wanted to make sure we had a place for Friends Home residents to go when they needed extra care," he said.

At the time, Friends Home was a boarding home which offered no personal or medical care. "Adding Linden Hall made operations more complicated," Tom noted. "We had hoped to use one staff position to cover both Administrator and Director of Nursing. However, the State regulations would not allow that."

The Board hired John Hayes from Philadelphia to serve as architect for the project and then chose Mobac as its builder. The final plan called for a building that would accommodate 16 beds for skilled nursing, public

restrooms and office space. The cost was \$600,000.

"We figured that we could operate 12 to 16 beds on a monthly budget of \$10,000," Tom explained. "The daily rate was \$30."

"Hiring the staff was a task we needed some help with, so we went to Kendal and asked for the guidance of John Nicholson and Joe Savory." Mary Lou Thomas was hired as Linden Hall's first Administrator.

Following Tom's description of Linden Hall's beginnings, Mary Dugan and Judy Farkas spoke of their experiences with Linden Hall. Mary's mother, Verna Larkin, was a past resident and Judy's father, George Holten, is now a resident. Each spoke of the support provided to their parents by the staff. "I'm pleased to stand here this evening and tell you how wonderful Linden Hall is. While mother was here I told everyone, every chance I got, how

great this place is – so much that I'm sure my friends got tired of hearing it," Mary said.

Current Administrator Suzanne Butler spoke of today's operations. She began by noting that during the last 25 years Linden Hall has served more than 600 residents and their families. "We have been a community within the local community; a nuclear family within a larger extended family." She continued, "As the healthcare industry has progressed, so has Linden Hall. We have kept abreast of new regulations, policies and procedures. This year, our Department of Health inspection was 'deficiency free.' Less than five percent of nursing homes in Pennsylvania can share with us in this distinction!" Suzanne then recognized staff, both past and present, who were in attendance, presenting a rose to each of them. She concluded, "We look forward to the next 25 years of providing quality care and a high quality of life to our residents."

## In Memoriam

The Friends Home family lost a dear co-worker and friend on September 30th. Karen Trowery passed away suddenly at the age of 40. A cook in the Dietary Department since December 1994, Karen was known for her delicious meals and outgoing nature. Karen will be deeply missed by staff and residents alike.

# Friends Home in Kennett

*Friends Boarding Home of Western Quarterly Meeting*  
147 West State Street  
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[www.friendshomeinkennett.org](http://www.friendshomeinkennett.org)

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The best thing to give your enemy is forgiveness  
To your opponent, tolerance  
To your child, a good example  
To your father, deference  
To your mother, conduct that will make her proud of you  
To yourself, respect  
To all people, charity  
-Francis Maitland Balfour

*Best wishes for a peaceful holiday season*

## ***Mission Statement***



The Friends Home in Kennett is dedicated to providing quality care for the aging in a homelike atmosphere at a reasonable cost.

We encourage independence and respect the individuality and dignity of all in keeping with the concerns of the Society of Friends.