

# Western Pennsylvania Guide to Good Health

March 2007

## **Sherwood Oaks Provides Seniors with a Great Place to Retire, Lots to Do and a Full Range of Care (at No Extra Charge)**

By John Fries

Just a few minutes off the busy main thoroughfare that is Route 19 in Cranberry, nestled in the quiet, rolling hills, there's a charming world that has been home to discriminating retirees and senior citizens for the past 25 years. Sherwood Oaks, which was founded in 1982 by a group of local neighbors as a community to which they could retire, has grown substantially over the years--in size, number of amenities and population.

The growth continues today, and new, planned additions are currently on the drawing board. But one thing has remained constant: the community's ongoing mission to reach out to seniors from all walks of life, and to provide them with comfortable accommodations and a long list of programs and services that address virtually any and every need a senior might have. The community has become so popular, that people are waiting to get in.

"Right now, there are 50 people on our waiting list," says Mark Bondi, Sherwood Oaks' president. "The people who live here have planned carefully for their retirement," he continues. "This is a carefully planned place; one that residents choose as a living option well before the day when they move in." Residents have a number of options to choose from when they're looking for things to do. Standout activity areas include a fitness center, in-house swimming pool, library, computer room and even a billiards parlor.

Bondi believes Sherwood Oaks is unique in western Pennsylvania. One of the things that sets it apart--its point of differentiation, if you will--is its distinctive Life Care approach to senior living. Residents can experience retirement living at its finest, including a diverse range of programs and services designed to meet virtually any health care needs they might have--from independent living and assisted living to skilled nursing care. Where the difference exists, though, is that care is provided to residents if and when they need it, at almost no additional cost. The only residents who don't receive this benefit are those who arrive with a pre-existing condition. Residents also can receive discounts when they purchase long-term care insurance.

With everything that's available, you might think Sherwood Oaks' administrators would be as content and satisfied as the residents who call it home. But you'd be wrong.

"We have our challenges," admits Bondi. "One of them is how to compete with some of the brand new campuses that are springing up around the area." He notes that about 75 percent of Sherwood Oaks residents come from outside the Cranberry Township area. The majority are above age 70 and many make their decisions to move in based on the quality of the services and the attractiveness of the campus." It's very market-driven," he adds. "We continually ask ourselves if we're offering the amenities people want, and if we become aware of something that clients find desirable, we add it. Most residences today are bigger, offer more amenities and are more similar in appearance to the homes people are moving out of."

This means an ongoing effort to stay on the cutting edge and ahead of the curve when possible. For example, two of today's biggest trends in retirement communities, according to Bondi, are private nursing rooms and memory support for dementia patients. And, if a bigger, more spacious facility is what residents want, that's what they'll get.

"We just completed a renovation project that doubled the size of our fitness center," says Katherine Vojtko, vice president, "and tripled the size of our café to accommodate more casual dining. And, we plan to add wireless Internet access to some locations on campus." Plans for the near future include the construction of 25 additional patio homes, a memory support center and a 16-unit apartment building; renovating an existing nursing unit and expanding it to include 40 mostly private, skilled nursing beds.

"Our bottom line," says Bondi, "is that today's 80-year-olds are very active, and we're very responsive to our residents.

More information about Sherwood Oaks is available at [www.sherwood-oaks.com](http://www.sherwood-oaks.com).

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