



Happy Spring from Pomperaug Woods!

We've got Spring Fever, and we're embracing that seasonal energy of growth and excitement here every day with fresh opportunities to **CONNECT & THRIVE**. **CONNECT** — residents recently came together at our Art Unveiling to celebrate the beautiful art created by our many talented residents that is now showcased throughout our halls. **THRIVE** — residents are on the move in new exercise classes we piloted in honor of Heart Health Month. We're all making this Spring one to remember, whether it's by tapping our feet to a jazz concert, cheering for an Irish dance performance, or letting go of our stress in a guided meditation class. Welcome Spring!

Warmly, **Vicki Gyba-Marshall**, *Executive Director*

Residents Celebrate the Joy of Mardi Gras with a **Blue River Jazz Band Concert**



The Blue River Jazz Band

Pomperaug Woods knows how to celebrate Mardi Gras in style! The highlight of Fat Tuesday was a lively performance by the Blue

inspired meal — savory po' boy sandwiches, flavorful Cajun chicken, and sweet treats like pecan pie and traditional King Cake. The music was excellent, and the food was wonderful!"

Resident Glenn Anderson thoroughly enjoyed the concert. "The jazz band was great!" said Glenn. They had a saxophonist with a very big sound, an exceptional pianist, and an excellent drummer. The performance made for a spirited celebration, and everyone absolutely loved it."

"The music was superb," said resident Peggy Gloria. "After a long, cold winter, the jazz wakes up your spirit. I couldn't help but hug Lisa. She gave us a great afternoon of wonderful music that makes you feel alive. The Blue River Jazz Band is something special. I can't wait for them to come back and perform again."



Resident Peggy Gloria

River Jazz Band. "This band is known for their traditional 'hot' jazz and swing music," said Lisa Huebenthal, Director of Community Life. "They played classics from jazz legends like Louis Armstrong and Duke Ellington. *When the Saints Come Marching In* was the big finale, and we had everyone marching in a big conga line around Wilson Hall. It was tremendous!"

"Once Tom hears music, he has to dance," said resident Karen Hasemann about her husband. "The whole afternoon was very joyful! After the concert, the dining room served a Mardi Gras

Check the Activities Calendar for dates/times of upcoming entertainment events.

Last Putnam Apartments Left!

Everyone loves the Putnam apartment home floorplan! These cozy 1 bed/1 bath apartment homes offer panoramic views of the Connecticut countryside.

BIG SAVINGS! Make a deposit on a select second floor Putnam floor plan apartment by June 30th, and you'll be awarded a one-time incentive of \$30,000 off Entrance Fees.

Resident Muffy Barhydt is thrilled with her Putnam. "It is perfect for me," said Muffy. "It is amazing how much a Putnam can accommodate without being at all crowded. Everything fits beautifully."

Why choose Pomperaug Woods?

- Gourmet Dining
- 5-Star Services & Amenities
- Friendly Residents & Staff
- LifeCare Peace-of-Mind



* Incentive applicable on select second floor Putnam style floor plans only. Must make a deposit by June 30, 2025. 80% Return of Capital Agreements only.

**SAVE
\$30,000*!**



HURRY! Schedule a visit today and grab a Putnam apartment for yourself before they're all gone!

Schedule a visit TODAY: 203-935-3734

Finding Peace Together: Guided Meditation Class

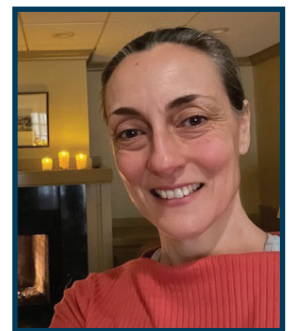
Wellness Coordinator, Megan Boyd, started the Guided Meditation class at the request of residents in the Walking Group. "Everyone wants to find a productive way to deal with worry and anxiety," said Megan. "With guided meditation, I lead participants through calming visualizations and breathing exercises. Unlike traditional silent meditation, guided meditation offers a spoken journey that helps focus the mind and settle the body. Guided meditation can help deal with stress and anxiety, reduce depression, promote better sleep, and even lower blood pressure. Many residents report feeling more centered and refreshed after each session. I hope they find guided meditation is like a reset button for their day."

Resident Glenn Anderson is an enthusiastic participant. "I've always been interested in meditation," said Glenn. "By doing a guided meditation in a group setting, I'm seeing many benefits. Megan creates a peaceful setting with candles and music, and her narrative helps me to understand my thinking and give me support to change unhelpful habits. I look forward to it!"

"No matter how I feel when I walk in, I always leave feeling great," said resident Larry Arthur. "As Megan says, let stress exit from the bottom of your feet. I feel very peaceful afterward."

Resident Neil Yarhouse has never meditated before and makes it a point to go to every class. "After just 30 minutes, I know I'll always walk out of there feeling calm and relaxed," said Neil.

The Guided Meditation class meets the second and fourth Thursdays of the month at 9:30AM in the Pine Hill Lounge.



Wellness Coordinator
Megan Boyd

Residents find Joy in the Series

Craft in America



When Lisa Huebenthal, Director of Community Life, watched the acclaimed PBS documentary series *Craft in America*, she immediately knew she had to share it with the residents. “*Craft in America* celebrates the history, artistry, and cultural significance of American craft traditions,” said Lisa. “Each episode explores the stories of talented artists across the country who dedicate their lives to mastering skills like woodworking, pottery, quilting, and glassblowing. Each episode offers a behind-the-scenes look at how these crafts are created and why they continue to hold meaning in contemporary society. The stories behind the artists are so powerful. You really get to appreciate the time and care that goes into every piece. This series is a celebration of heritage, creativity, and the enduring power of handmade art that connects generations and communities. I knew our residents would love the series as much as I did.”

“I found the pottery episode particularly inspiring,” said resident Joanne Jewell. “They profiled an artist who took the outer layer of a wasp nest, soaked it, wrapped it over a mold, and when it dried it was the most gorgeous bowl. The creations were just so imaginative and beautiful.”

Resident Larry Arthur was impressed with the breadth of craft exploration in this series. “One minute we’re learning how different cultures treat wool for weaving,” said Larry, “and the next we’re watching how an artist uses a chain saw to carve sculptures. It’s all fascinating. I’m looking forward to see what new crafting avenues we’ll explore.”

Check the Activities Calendar for dates/times of upcoming lectures.

The Needlers Group: Crafting Friendships and Fun!

Pick up a new hobby and join the Needlers Group! “Whether you’re a seasoned expert or just picking up a pair of knitting needles for the first time, the Needlers Group offers a warm and encouraging space to knit and then some,” said Lisa Huebenthal, Director of Community Life. “I provide the yarn and needles, and together we learn new techniques. I have plenty of reference books on the needle arts to reference, plus experienced knitters all happily share their skills and advice. Our first project was a simple knitted neckerchief. And now we’re tackling a felting project. The Needlers Group offers good company and the joy of making something by hand. Come for the knitting, stay for the camaraderie!”



Resident Ellie Crystal

“I have been a needler all my life,” said resident Ellie Crystal. “Lisa is an expert knitter and artist. It’s so inspiring to learn from her. When we worked on the neckerchief project, I wore mine the day that I made it. It was such fun to knit!”

Resident May Bernhard learned how to knit when she had young children. “I had stopped knitting for a long time, but was excited to join the Needlers Group and pick it back up again,” said May. “It’s so relaxing to chat with friends while you knit.”

“I’ve been knitting for 60 years, and there are still things to learn,” said resident MaryAnn Slocomb. “I’ve never done felting before, so this is all new to me. I like the challenge. But most of all, I thoroughly enjoy the friendships of the group.”

Check the Activities Calendar for dates/times of Needlers Group gatherings.

Resident Spotlight: Herb Slutsky

Herb has been a linksman for almost 75 years. "That's a lot of time out on the greens," laughs Herb. "And I wouldn't have it any other way."

Herb didn't grow up playing golf, but he picked it up in college where he met his wife, Helen. "I went to SUNY Cortland, and she went to Syracuse University. I was one of those guys that loved to play golf with my wife", said Herb. "She was very good. After college I went in the Army and spent 14 months in Korea with the 48th FA-survey and Recon (52-53). When I came home, my wife had a brand-new set of clubs waiting for me. I've been regularly golfing ever since."

After Herb and his wife retired, they moved to Heritage Village, where they lived for 30 years. "Helen and I would golf at Silo Point Country Club," said Herb. "It truly is a beautiful golf course. When we decided to downsize in 2016, we toured Pomperaug Woods. They told us that one of the resident perks is that all of our golf fees and cart are taken care of, for which I am very grateful. That was all I needed to hear. We didn't look anywhere else. We moved to Pomperaug Woods in July 2016, and I've been golfing courtesy of Pomperaug Woods ever since."

Helen passed away in 2022. "We were married 70 years," said Herb. "She was a beauty. I think the biggest surprise of her life was the day I gave her a BMW convertible that I won by sinking a hole-in-one at a tournament. I've had three holes-in-one in my life. I'm not sure if I have another hole-in-one in my future, but after more than seven decades on the greens I've learned that you never know when lightning will strike."

At 94 years old, Herb still golfs as much as he can. "Living at Pomperaug Woods is a wonderful experience," said Herb. "Silo Point is a beautiful private golf course, and I don't pay a thing. And when Pomperaug Woods added new walking trails to its campus last year, they also installed a putting green as well. It's been great to practice with my new putter on our community putting green."

Glad you're enjoying yourself, Herb. Hope to have more golfers at Pomperaug Woods soon!



Resident Herb Slutsky



Herb Slutsky



Helen Slutsky

Exploring Lives Well-Lived: A Class on *New York Times* Obituaries



Charlotte Evans has been collecting obituaries from the *New York Times* for over 20 years. “The obituaries that you find in the *New York Times* are really mini biographies — accounts of people who made a notable difference, for better or for worse,” said Charlotte. “They often spotlight people who had fun doing what they did — from the inventor of the Egg McMuffin to the brains behind the Great Train Robbery. Our class dives into an obituary to discuss that person’s life path and passions. Residents will often discover parallels between their own experiences and those of the people we’re

learning about. I hope everyone finds this a fun way to enjoy quality writing and learn about intriguing individuals.”

The Obits Class has been a big hit in the community. “I absolutely LOVE the Obits Class,” said resident Kate Jackson. “Charlotte was a reporter and editor for the *New York Times* for over 30 years, so she chooses wonderfully written obituaries for us to study. They’re always challenging, surprising, and often slyly funny. The class is limited to 12 people so that everyone gets a chance to participate in the discussion. And Charlotte knows how to guide the discussion to get you to consider different perspectives of a person’s life. We’ve read about everyone from Swedish actress, Anita Ekberg to Fred Scherer (the man who painted dioramas in the Museum of Natural History) to Mary Ellis (one of the last surviving female pilots from World War II who flew over 1,000 aircraft for the Air Transport Auxiliary). I especially love how Charlotte closes the class by asking ‘Who would you most like to have lunch with?’ It adds a new dimension to my perspective and gives me a different way to relate to the person.”

Check the Activities Calendar for dates/times of upcoming classes.

New Exercise and Wellness Classes Inspire Residents During Heart Health Month

Heart Health Month has brought an exciting line-up of new exercise and wellness classes designed to get residents moving and feeling great. “We want to inspire everyone to embrace healthy habits, discover new activities, and connect with familiar instructors in fun, fresh ways,” said Wellness Coordinator Megan Boyd. “I asked our fitness instructors to suggest new class options that tap into their varied skills. For our residents, it’s very motivating to try a new class with an instructor they are already comfortable with. This month, we piloted five different fitness classes: I piloted a Standing Yoga class as well as a Chair Cardio class. Vinnie piloted a Qi Gong class. Tony piloted a Zumba Gold Toning class that uses light weights. And Alyssa piloted a Chair Yoga class. Our team is excited to hear what the residents think.”



Resident Sam Burd was an enthusiastic participant. “Megan’s Chair Cardio class was superb,” said Sam. “The choreography was fun, and the strawberry smoothies they served afterward brought out a big crowd. And we all wore red to the class in honor of Heart Health Month!”

“We are so fortunate to have Megan,” said resident Elsie McTiernan. “She always finds new ways to keep us moving. I tried the Zumba Gold Toning class and really enjoyed it.”

Resident Larry Arthur has made it a priority to go to exercise classes ever since he moved to Pomperaug Woods. “I go to all of Megan’s exercise classes,” said Larry. “The variety of fitness options here makes it easy and fun to stay healthy.”

Painting the Desert — Residents Enjoy a Travelogue Lecture on the American Southwest

Jennifer O'Brien has traveled the world, from Japan to Australia to France, but she chose to set down roots in the American Southwest. "When you grow up in New England, the idea of living in a place that boasts 360 days of sun is intriguing," said Jennifer. "I put together a travelogue of the Southwest region to share with the residents of Pomperaug Woods. Many of them had also traveled the Southwest over the years, and we swapped stories. It was a terrific discussion!"



Speaker Jennifer O'Brien

Jennifer is a very talented artist, and she shared many photographs and oil paintings of the high desert landscapes in her travelogue. "The Southwest is a vibrant hub for artists, and towns like Santa Fe, Taos, and Marfa are known for their thriving art communities. From my home I can see four mountains that are 14,000+ feet high. They inspire me to paint every day!"

Jennifer had plenty of interesting trivia to accompany her photos. "About 10 miles northwest of Taos, New Mexico, is the Rio Grande Gorge Bridge," said Jennifer. "The bridge is 600 feet above the river, and it gives you a bit of vertigo when you walk over it. There are a herd of Big Horn Sheep that live in the gorge, and in the summer, they will climb up to the top of the gorge to cool down. The bridge gives you an amazing vantage point to watch them up close."

Resident Neil Yarhouse thoroughly enjoyed the lecture. "After I retired, my wife and I took a road trip out west that included a visit to the Georgia O'Keeffe museum in Santa Fe," said Neil. "Jennifer's photos of the Southwest brought back great memories of my own travels there."

Art Unveiling Showcases Resident Talent

The whole community recently turned out for the grand unveiling of an art exhibit created by the Creative Arts class. "The halls of Pomperaug Woods feel like a vibrant art gallery," said Lisa Huebenthal, Director of Community Life. "So many of our artists are experienced painters, but a few joined the Creative Arts class never having picked up a paintbrush before. The art they have created is wonderful. I'm so proud of everyone, and hope this event made them all feel special."

Resident May Bernhard is a long-time member of the Creative Arts class. "My painting is called *Waiting for Nemo*," said May. "I've been painting for many years, but it's wonderful to see people join the class and create art for the first time. Everyone has talent, and Lisa inspires all of us. It's fun when people stop me in the hall to talk about the art. They are always so kind."

"I have a piece of art in the show," said resident Joanne Jewell. "It's a shadowbox of a jeweled butterfly. I find the process of creating art so relaxing. I love this class!"

Resident Peggy Gloria came out to enjoy the event. "Lisa bought all the artists corsages and introduced them individually as each piece of art was unveiled," said Peggy. "Everyone had the chance to talk to each artist while they enjoyed hors d'oeuvres. It was a wonderful event."

"The art is unbelievable," said resident Gloria Kalinowski. "I see something new each time I walk down the hall. All of this original art brings so much beauty to our building."



Check the Activities Calendar for dates/times of upcoming special events.

Pomperaug Woods Congratulates Our Most Recent **Employees of the Month!**

Pomperaug Woods is so proud of our wonderful staff members, each of whom makes such an important contribution to the quality of our community. "To spotlight exceptional employees, residents or employees can write a 'Shoot-for-the-Stars' letter, detailing an individual's exceptional dedication to our community," said Liz Sheehan, Director of Human Resources. "We take those letters very seriously and use them to nominate and select our Employee of the Month."

Meet this quarter's three Employees of the Month:

JANUARY: Suzie Cole *Resident Health Services*

Suzie joined Pomperaug Woods in June 2010. Her dedication to excellence sets the standard for her team, bringing comfort to every resident and making a meaningful difference in their lives.



FEBRUARY: Andi Martone *Environmental Services Team*

Andi joined Pomperaug Woods in June 2019. Her meticulous attention to detail creates a clean, welcoming space for all who live here. We appreciate how she greets everyone with a smile!



MARCH: Megan Boyd *Wellness Coordinator, Independent Living*

Megan joined Pomperaug Woods in July 2024. Her positivity has inspired so many residents to join a, balance, exercise, or meditation class to pursue true wellness.



We thank our Employees of the Month for going above and beyond to make Pomperaug Woods such a special place to live and work!



Pomperaug Woods Board Member Spotlight: **Tony Vas**

Tony Vas is a long-time resident of Southbury. "For 19 years, I've lived just a mile down the road from Pomperaug Woods," said Tony. "10 years ago, Lisa Whnuck, the Pomperaug Woods Board Treasurer, hired me to handle the tech for her law firm, and we've become friends. Two years ago, she asked me to join the Board, and I've been part of this community ever since."

Outside of his work on the Pomperaug Woods Board, Tony is the Managing Director of Technology for Regional Hospice. "My expertise is in IT, so I advise on technology for Pomperaug Woods," said Tony. "Right now, we are working on the upgrade to the staff computer system. As a member of the Board, I'm part of the Facilities Committee. The Facilities Committee played a big part in the upgrade to the campus landscaping and installation of the new walking paths. We also recently had the outdoor lighting upgraded to energy efficient LEDs, and we installed an electric car charger in the parking lot. We also had all the public spaces in the building repainted, so everything has had a Spring refresh. It looks great!"

Tony is impressed with the camaraderie of the Pomperaug Woods staff and Board members. "Everyone works to the good of the residents," said Tony. "To be responsible for the care and well-being of hundreds of people is huge. The staff works tirelessly to make sure every resident is happy and healthy, and the Board works tirelessly to support the staff in every way possible. It's a team that achieves great things in small ways every single day. I'm happy to be part of it."

Thank you for contributing your expertise to the community, Tony. You're a great addition to the Pomperaug Woods family.

Ashurst Academy of Irish Dance Performs at Pomperaug Woods

Residents were recently treated to an afternoon of lively entertainment as students from the Ashurst Academy of Irish Dance took the stage in Wilson Hall.

"We are delighted to showcase our students at Pomperaug Woods," said Academy co-director Craig Ashurst. "We performed a variety of traditional Irish dances, including reels and jigs. We also spotlighted light shoe dances (similar to ballet) and heavy shoe dances (similar to tap)."

"Today's dancers ranged from elementary school through high school, representing all skill levels from novice to championship," said academy co-director Christina Dolzall-Ashurst. "Irish dance has such a rich tradition, and the audience here was just wonderful. So supportive!"

Following the performance, the young dancers mingled with the audience, taking time to answer questions and share their experiences. Residents enjoyed chatting with the students about their training, costumes, and the history behind the dances.

Sam Burd and his wife, Lynda, thoroughly enjoyed the show. "It was so nice to see these talented young people," said Sam. "And what a delight to get to chat with them afterward."

"I was amazed at how skilled they all were," said resident Gloria Kalinowski. "It takes precision to perform those complicated dances. They all did such a lovely job."

