

# LIVING 50-PLUS

EMBRACE THE AGE, ENHANCE YOUR LIFE

## Meeting the needs of a new generation of seniors

Facility received a 5-star rating from U.S. News & World Report

Liz Johnson  
Richmond News Staff Writer

**T**he aging game has changed. It's not the same as it was 10, 20 or 50 years ago. We're living longer, we're active longer and we're needing senior living communities to keep up with those changes.

John Knox Village East in Higginville is one such community that is revolutionizing retirement living that offers a range of residential options.

### The beginning: 50 years of service

Meyer Care Center and Rehabilitation (health center) was built in 1965 on land donated by George and Hilda Meyer. Originally, the care center was to be attached to a planned hospital for the Higginville community. The hospital was never built, and in 1975, the community raised the funds needed to add the first two buildings that became known as John Knox Village East. The third building was built in 1979.

"A friendly face is as simple as a walk down the hall."

KURT LORENZ

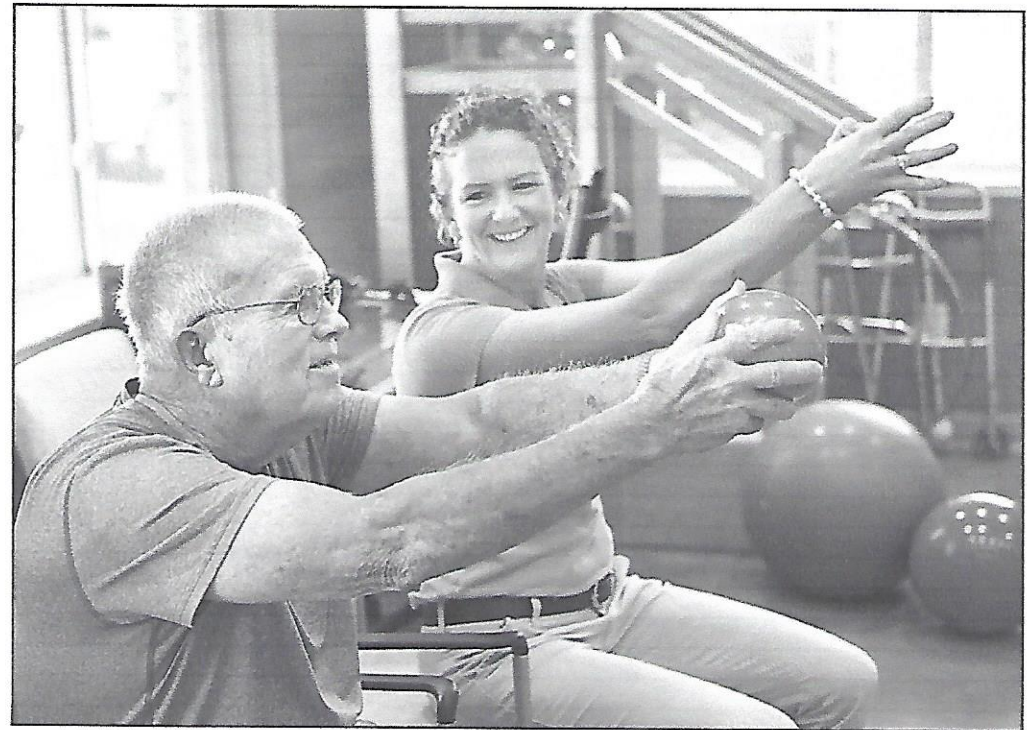
John Knox Village East

As the community began development, the board of directors partnered with Dr. Rev. Kenneth Berg, a retired Presbyterian minister, who developed retirement communities around the country as a homage to his Presbyterian background.

The name "John Knox" was included in the names of the communities. Knox was a Presbyterian theologian of the 1500s.

There are John Knox communities around the United States, including one in Lee's Summit, but John Knox Village East is not part of that group.

"We are a stand alone community," said



Physical therapist Dena Skinner, right, helps a resident exercise at the newly constructed therapy gym in the rehabilitation wing of John Knox Village East. The new gym is large, airy and has plenty of windows to let in natural light for therapy. A new spa offering whirlpool baths is just down the hall from the gym. (Submitted photo)

Kurt Lorenz, director of sales and marketing for JKVE in Higginville. "John Knox Village East is a not-for-profit community that is governed by a local board of directors."

In fact, two of the board members are residents of JKVE. Additionally, the community is managed by, and in partnership with LifeCare Services, a senior housing industry leader based in Des Moines, Iowa.

### What is different about JKVE?

John Knox Village East is a continuing care retirement community — this means that there are different levels of care: independent living, assisted living, skilled nursing and rehabilitation. All of these levels of care

are included on the same campus.

In addition, JKVE is a Life Plan community, in which a person pays a one-time entrance fee and then the monthly fee remains the same regardless of the level of care offered. By locking in a monthly rate, residents have a predictable monthly cost.

Life Plan communities offer more than one level of care on a single campus; focus on a healthy lifestyle; and are integrated into the community with an emphasis on giving back and being socially responsible.

"Life Plan sets us apart in the ease of transition between levels of care and support for spouses," Lorenz said. "It helps relieve the

burden of health center visits and travel."

Higginville was recently ranked as fifth in the top 10 places to retire in Missouri in 2016 by [www.niche.com](http://www.niche.com). Niche assesses key factors that are important to retirees, such as climate, crime rate, housing costs, amenities and the number of retirees living in the area.

Located on 40 landscaped acres, JKVE also has a bocce ball court, horseshoe pit and private courtyard. There is also a gazebo that is central to the campus. There are lovely views from just about anywhere on

SENIOR LIVING

Cont. on page 8

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## SENIOR LIVING

*Continued from page 6*

the campus.

Residents are even able to cast votes during elections without leaving the premises.

"They can vote in the activity room," Lorenz said. "We are our own precinct."

A brand new kitchen was added in a recent renovation to the property.

"The kitchen hadn't been thoroughly updated since the facility was built," Lorenz said. The kitchen staff serves meals to the entire complex each day, amounting to approximately 6,000 meals a month. The facility has an onsite dietary director, DD Averill, who has a background in hotel and restaurant management.

A dietician comes twice a month and meets with new residents to assess dietary needs. The kitchen is able to accommodate residents with special needs that include gluten free, diabetic, vegan and vegetarian diets.

There are activities offered for the various levels of care on site that include: hymn singing, manicures, movies, Pinochle, Pitch, exercise, storytime, yoga, Bingo, Bible study and church on Sunday.

### Independent living

There are three buildings of apartments on the independent living side. The apartments range in size from studio to two bedrooms. Each has a complete, functional kitchen, dining area, living room, large bath and bedroom, including a large closet space, as well as a balcony overlooking the lush campus.

"We even have guest rooms on the premises for a fee, so family members who come from a distance to visit don't have to travel to a motel," Lorenz said.

The apartments are cleaned by staff members twice a month.

Independent living residents also have their own mailboxes on site. Included in the amenities are a beauty shop, convenience store, a friendship lounge, an activity room, a computer room, a puzzle room and areas scattered throughout the independent living area where residents can sit and socialize with each other.

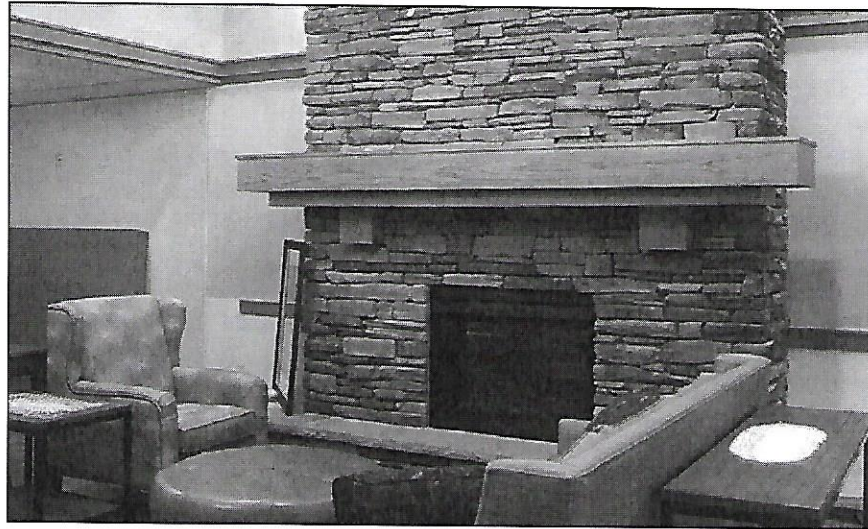
"We have two billiards rooms, too," Lorenz said. "The ladies play each week and the men play every night."

There is also a coin-operated laundry facility and fitness center with access with a nurse so a resident can be cleared to work-out.

The facility has an ice cream social twice a month as well as Vespers two times a month in addition to special activities planned throughout the year. An activity director plans a number of activities, including exercise classes, each week.

An activity room with a kitchen is available for any resident to reserve for a special function.

"A friendly face is as simple as a walk



Renovation of John Knox Village East features a new, cozy meeting area, reception and administrative offices. The new rehabilitation center is just down the hall from this gathering area. (Photo by Liz Johnson/Richmond News)

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down the hall," Lorenz said. "A lot of the independent living ladies also volunteer over at the skilled nursing and assisted living sides."

A nurse is on staff on the independent living side, "for piece of mind," Lorenz said. "Having a nurse on site helps head off a problem before it even becomes a problem."

Criteria necessary for the independent living side includes:

- Resident must be age 62 or older.
- Resident must be able to live independently.
- Financial criteria required by the facility must be met.

### Skilled nursing

The skilled nursing facility includes around-the-clock care in semi-private rooms. JKVE employs experienced, licensed professionals who see to the unique needs of each resident.

Care includes assistance with daily activities and medication management and providing required therapies and socialization.

A Juke box is set up in the dining room of the skilled nursing facility. According to a recent study described on alzheimers.net, "Music helps dementia patients recall memories and emotions."

The study showed that, "music evokes emotions that bring back memories; musical aptitude and appreciation are two of the last remaining abilities in dementia patients; music can bring emotional and physical

changes made at the facility. closeness; singing is engaging and music can shift mood, manage stress and stimulate positive interactions."

Lorenz said he has witnessed residents in the skilled nursing facility perk up when the Juke box is used and that their memories of music definitely makes them happy and relaxed.

The skilled nursing provides care under the Life Plan continuum along with being Medicare and Medicaid certified.

### Assisted living

Assisted living residents are able to enjoy access to community services and amenities, but need a little more care than those who reside on the independent-living side of the campus.

Dining is in a restaurant-style room and all dietary needs can be met by the dietary staff.

Assisted living patients must be able to manage to eat their meals without assistance and to be able to get to and from the exits in the case of an emergency.

Residents in assisted living are cared for by a licensed nursing staff, who provide assistance with medication management, meal preparation and personal needs. Therapy is available on site as well as transportation to medical appointments outside of the facility.

### Rehabilitation

John Knox Village East has recently finished construction on a new rehabilitation facility on site.

Upon entering this area of the campus, a large seating area with a cozy fireplace greets each visitor. Administrative offices will move to that area, which is already set up with a reception desk and training room.

A new logo of a tree with its branches stretching out has been incorporated into the

changes made at the facility.

"The new logo represents continuous growth and strong roots," Lorenz said. The new logo is reflected throughout the campus in new fabrics, decorations and wall decor.

The rehab unit is open to the public. The rooms offer better privacy than standard rehabilitation rooms as they are only on one side of the hall. Opposite the room is a small seating area for visitors.

Each room is equipped with a bed, lift chair, a storage closet with access for a resident in a wheelchair, cable television and a large bathroom that is wheelchair accessible.

The rehab unit provides physical, speech and occupational therapy as well as cardiac rehabilitation.

"Our goal is to return you to your prior level of living, to get you back to where you were before," Lorenz said.

The therapy gym is a large room with high ceilings and large, wide windows that provide a pleasant view for patients to enjoy while working out. The gym enables patients to focus on moving better with less pain to prevent falls and other serious issues. There is also a spa that features whirlpool spa baths within the rehabilitation wing.

Lorenz has been with John Knox Village East for just five months but has already managed to learn the names of many residents. He grew up in Corder and knows many of the residents.

"I've always had a soft spot for older folks," he said.

Lorenz previously worked in the advertising market and specialized in marketing retirement communities.

"I got privy to the types of retirement communities out there," he said, adding that he loves working at John Knox Village East.

Lorenz can be reached at 660-584-4416 or [kurtlorenz@johnknoxvillageeast.com](mailto:kurtlorenz@johnknoxvillageeast.com).



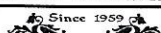
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