

# ACORN<sup>®</sup>S

RIDGE OAK, INC. 150 MANCHESTER DRIVE, BASKING RIDGE, NJ 07920  
908/221-0266  
[www.ridgeoak.org](http://www.ridgeoak.org)

## From the Director of Operations and Property

*Reflections at Six Months: Learning, Leading, and  
Looking Ahead*

When I stepped into the role of Director of Operations and Property six months ago, I knew I was joining a community with a long history and a strong sense of purpose. What I've come to appreciate, and what I'm building upon, is just how much care, coordination, and quiet teamwork it takes every day to make Ridge Oak feel like home for so many wonderful people.

Over the past few months, we've made progress in several areas that may not always be visible but truly make a difference. We updated our fire alarm system to reduce unnecessary alarms. We also rolled out a free resident Wi-Fi network, giving our community the option to meet internet and streaming needs at no cost. In addition, we prepared for and completed my first NSPIRE inspection here at Ridge Oak III with a near-perfect score, reflecting the care and attention our staff bring to their work every day.

Ridge Oak is more than a collection of buildings. It's a place where people live, connect, and build routines that matter. I look forward to continuing this work, getting to know more of you along the way, and supporting Ridge Oak together.

- Robert Montemarano

## Office Closed

The office will be closed on Monday, February 16, for President's Day.



February 2026

Volume 49, Issue 2



## Ridge Oak Invoice Payments

Effective February 1, we will no longer be able to process credit card payments in the office. Please consider signing up for an automatic deduction or being invoiced via email where you will receive a secure link to pay via credit or debit card on your personal device. If you do not have access to email via a personal device, you will be able to make a payment using the resident computer in the basement of Felmeth Hall outside the Wellness Room. If you are used to paying in person at the office, please contact Susan to arrange your new method of payment.

## Care Fund

The Care Fund Subsidizes Meals and Personal Care. Many thanks go to the following people who have made recent donations:

Julie Man *in honor of Meilian Zhang & Zaixin Man*

Edward Peyton *in honor of Julia Twomey*

Betty Pearthree *in memory of family & friends*

Candy Butler *in honor of Ridge Oak staff*

Ralph Beiran *in honor of Josefa Alvarez-Villar*

Sherrie Boatman *in honor of Sherry Palmer*

Scott Cushing *in honor of Arlene Cushing*

Laura Cummings *in honor of Ridge Oak Staff*

Mary Mazzetta *in memory of Alberto Alvarado*

Natalka Bukalo *in memory of Richard D. Shaffer*

Barbara Baker *in honor of Ridge Oak*

Bonnie Kauffman *in honor of Ralph Thomas Xuezhi Liu*

Eleanore Yuan *in honor of Dinghua Wen*

Patricia Ledwith *in honor of the Ridge Oak staff*

Robert Pilkington *in honor of Bonnie Kelly*

Betz Moreck *in honor of Dorothy Vann*

Nancy Reddick *in honor of Ridge Oak staff*

Hajir Shariati *in honor of Heybatollah & Homa Shariati*

Lin Wu *in honor of Lixian Cheng & Mozhong Ji*

## Giving Tree Donations

Thank you for your wonderful donations during the holiday season. We collected over 50 puzzles, coloring books, and other wonderful toys, along with a cash donation of \$203 from our holiday open house. Every little bit helps, and the mothers and children at The Center for Great Expectations in Somerset, New Jersey, are deeply grateful for your generosity. With your help, Ridge Oak has been donating to The Center for Great Expectations for 20 years!



Emma Lanese presents Noreen Whittemore with Ridge Oak Giving Tree donations at The Center for Great Expectations in Somerset, NJ.

## December Drawing Winner

Congratulations go to our very own Marketing and Leasing Specialist, Patrice Wessel, who won the beautiful red and green holiday quilt handmade by Pat Roaldsen (Bonnie's sister). Thank you, Everyone, who bought tickets and donated. We raised \$220 for the Basking Ridge First Aid Squad.

## Tax Preparation at Ridge Oak (2025 Income Tax)

Once again, the VITA team (Volunteer Income Tax Assistance) from the Bernards Township Library will be scheduling appointments at Ridge Oak to help the residents who need to file income tax. The date is Friday, March 13.

Let's answer the big question; "Do I or do I not have to file?" If you are over 65 and single you do not need to file income tax forms unless:

- Your income in 2025 from sources other than Social Security was greater than \$16,550
- One half (50%) of your Social Security plus all your other income was greater than \$25,000.
- You had taxes withheld from your pension or earnings and wish to file for a refund.

If anyone has a question about filing for our volunteer, Joe Ryder, leave a message at the Bernards Township Library, 204-3031 ext. 2, and he will get back to you.

Appointments can be made (started January 16) by calling the library on the above number.



## Welcome, Vasile!



Ridge Oak is pleased to welcome our new maintenance technician, Vasile Ivan. Originally from Romania, Vasile has worked

in maintenance and repair for all eight years he has lived in the U.S. Outside of work, he is a craftsman, an avid fisherman, and serves as a priest for the Romanian community in New York. Most of all, he enjoys spending time with his wife and 4-year-old son. Make sure to say hello!

## New Residents

We are happy to welcome the following residents to our Ridge Oak family.

- Annette Murphy *Village 9A*
- Michael and Barbara Stanisci *Village 2*
- Sharifian and Khadijeh Sadeghi *Village 2*

## Moving Out

We bid a fond farewell to those who are moving on.

- Rose Gregory of *Village 9*
- Patricia Ann Kern of *Village 1*

### Forwarding Address:

Patricia Ann Kern  
2011 New Bedford Road  
Apt 223  
Wall, NJ 07719



## February Birthdays

If you would like your birthday published in ACORNS, call or email Suzanne at the office – sreino@ridgeoak.org.

12 Eloisa Medina 211  
12 Ganna Chechel 129-B  
17 Leyda Ramos 160-F  
17 Betty Pearthree 204-D  
17 Janet Somers 149-C  
23 Wayne Lambert 120-A  
24 Yong Qin Ma 207-B

## Mark Your Calendar

Sign up for activities using Touchtown or Call (908) 221-0266. Email

Elanese@ridgeoak.org or  
Sreino@ridgeoak.org with any questions.

## Recreation Reminder

Need a ride? The transporter is here and someone can always pick you up. Just call the office the "day of" the program.

## Word Puzzles & Coloring Pages

Looking for some crosswords and word searches or even some coloring pages to keep your mind sharp and your hands moving? Contact Emma in the office if you are interested!



## From Congregate

Please bring containers for leftovers and let us know if you need a ride to dinner. Meal orders and cancellations are due by 11 AM the business day before the meal—late cancellations will be billed.

Congregate also offers housekeeping, laundry, personal care, and medication management.

In the dining room, please be patient and kind to others and the Galley Crew. Avoid using your phone at the table—step out if you need to take a call.

To schedule a service or meal, or ask about costs, contact Shannen at the office or email srivers@ridgeoak.org

## Shopping Bus

Sign-up is required.

Departure time is 10 am.

Check the calendar for daily shopping destinations. Shopping time is determined by the bus driver. **Please plan for the time you will need to check out.**

Label shopping bags with your name and apartment number.

Only two bags per person. If you are feeling sick, please stay home!



### Wii Bowling

Bowling games are played on Mondays at 9:30 am: No experience required. Stop by and watch a game to see if you might be interested in joining!



### Chess

Chess is played on Mondays at 11 am in Felmeth Hall. If you would like to play, call Angela Navatta, 908-566-7441, for more information.

### Mahjong

Mahjong is played on Wednesdays at 10 am in Felmeth Hall. Contact Emma in the office if you are interested in learning.

### Table Tennis

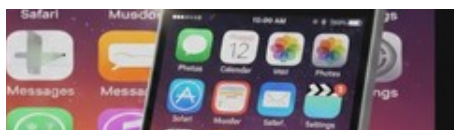
Every Tuesday in Village 12, there is Table Tennis "open play" from 11:30 am to 4 pm. The patio door at the rear of Village 12 will be unlocked during this time and all equipment will be provided.

### Weekly Book Delivery

Emma will stop at the Bernards Township Library each week to pick up any books you have on hold and deliver them to your door. This service is separate from the Monthly Book Buggy — only specific holds you have requested will be picked up.

### Tech Support

Each Monday, volunteers will be available in Felmeth Hall from 4-5 pm to assist with tech support. They will help with setting up devices, troubleshooting tech issues, and navigating apps or websites. Volunteers speak both English & Mandarin. Sign-up is required.



### St. James Eucharistic Adoration

Every Thursday, schedule permitting, the bus will depart from Felmeth Hall at 10 am to take residents to St. James Catholic Church. The bus will pick up residents at 11:30 am and return them to Ridge Oak. Sign-up is required.

### Happy Hookers

Come and join your neighbors and friends on Fridays at 10 am in Felmeth Hall for an hour of conversation and handwork. Knitters, crocheters, cross stitchers, quilters and embroidery lovers are invited.



### Bingo

Bingo is played on Fridays at 1 pm in Felmeth Hall. The cost of each card is \$1. Sign-up is required each week.

### Exercise Series

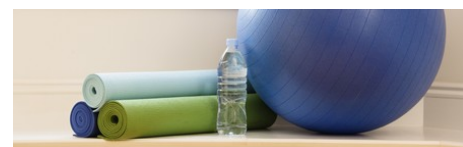
**Breath & Balance: Yoga & Meditation** is offered on *Mondays at 1:00 pm* and is led by Michele Gorka from Fellowship. This class focuses on breathwork, seated and standing yoga postures, and concludes with a guided meditation. It's designed to be accessible for all fitness levels.

**Perfect Posture** is offered on *Tuesdays at 12:30 pm*, also led by Michele Gorka. Participants will learn to become more mindful of their posture through targeted stretches and exercises aimed at improving alignment and body awareness.

**"For the Men" Fitness** is held on *Wednesdays at 11:30 am* and is led by Jim Stamateris. This class is designed specifically for men and focuses on core strength, flexibility, and functional movement.

**Functional Fitness** meets on *Fridays at 12:30 pm*, led by Jim Stamateris. This dynamic class incorporates strength training, circuit-style routines, and varied monthly formats to keep workouts fresh and effective. It's designed to challenge muscles and improve overall functional movement.

**Sign-up is required for all exercise programs.**  
It's located in the lower level Wellness Center.



### Lynn's Winter Sale

Just in time for Valentine's Day, Lynn Kaplan and friend, Mary Pagel of Village 6, will be here to sell Lynn's jewelry, scarves and other lovely items on Tuesday, February 3, from 9:30 to 2 pm. This is a CASH ONLY event. Checks and credit cards will not be accepted. Proceeds from this sale will benefit the Basking Ridge Rescue Squad.



### Pokeno

Come out on Tuesday, February 3, at 2 pm for a game of Pokeno in the Felmeth Hall Annex. Bring at least fifty pennies with you. Sign-up is required.



### Bible Study

Bible study will continue Wednesday, February 4, at 10 am in Felmeth Hall and meet additionally on February 11 and February 25. Led by Pastor Dave from Bishop Janes UMC, these discussions welcome all perspectives and life experiences. Come one week or come all. All faith traditions are welcome, and all materials are provided. Sign-up is required.

### Share a Song

Wednesday, February 4, at 2 pm, join Emma in the lower-level Wellness Center of Felmeth Hall for some music listening. Bring the name of a song you would like to share with the group. We will listen to a recording, engage in conversation, and sing along.

### Afternoon Movie

Join us at Felmeth Hall on Thursday, February 5, at 2 pm for a special movie matinee and popcorn. In celebration of Valentine's Day and the legendary work of director Rob Reiner, we will be screening the 1989 classic *When Harry Met Sally*, starring Billy Crystal and Meg Ryan.



### Hunterdon Hills Playhouse

The bus departs Friday, February 6, at 10:30 am for Dr. K's Motown Revue at the Hunterdon Hills Playhouse. From the Four Tops to the Temptations, and the Supremes to Marvin Gaye, Junior Walker, Smokey Robinson, Gladys Knight, and Mary Wells, you'll hear all your favorite Motown hits performed live and with stunning accuracy along with a table-served meal with dessert buffet and beverages. Cost is \$25, billed in March. Space is limited—sign-up required.

### Olympic Opening Ceremony

Join us on Monday, February 9, at 11 am in Felmeth for a special encore viewing of the Milano Cortina 2026 Winter Olympics Opening Ceremony. Coincidentally, it is also National Pizza Day, so come by to watch the highlights of the festivities and enjoy a delicious slice of pizza. Sign-up is required.



### Essential Oil Spray Making

Join Michele on Monday, February 9, at 2:30 pm in the Wellness Center for a self-care workshop focused on Aromatherapy and essential oils. You will learn about the unique benefits of various essential oils that make your own fragrant room spray! Sign-up is required.

### Watercolors With Wendy

On Tuesday, February 10 and February 17, at 10 am in Village 12, Wendy Hallstrom from The Center of Contemporary Art will be back to lead another watercolor series. Classes will continue in March. This class can be adapted for all levels! Space is limited to 10 each week. Sign-up is required.

### Winter Olympic Viewing

On Wednesday, February 11, at 11:30 am and Tuesday, February 17, at 10 am we will be showing highlights and live footage of the Milano Cortina 2026 Winter Olympics. No need to sign up, just show up and enjoy some of your favorite winter sports, including figure skating, curling, and skiing with your neighbors.

### Asian Market & Dollar Tree Trip

On Wednesday, February 11, at 1 pm the bus will make a special trip to the Asian Market and Dollar Tree on Route 22. Sign-up is required.



### Chinese New Year

Join us on Thursday, February 12, at 2 pm in Felmeth Hall for a "Year of the Horse" celebration of Lunar New Year. Bright Lin will be joining us to explain the rich traditions of the holiday, and we will enjoy delicious homemade dumplings alongside musical performances by your fellow residents and a special door prize! Sign-up is required to attend; because space and food are limited, we ask that only those who have preregistered join us for this event.

### Valentine Prize Bingo

On Friday, February 13, at 1 pm in Felmeth Hall, the YMCA Togetherhood Committee will be here to help out with Valentine Prize Bingo! Sign-up is required.

*The Togetherhood Program provides members of the Somerset Hills YMCA and the community with rewarding opportunities to give back and support our neighbors while having fun!*



### Mardi Gras Celebration

Join us for a festive Mardi Gras Celebration on Tuesday, February 17, at 1:30 pm in Felmeth Hall. We'll be celebrating "Fat Tuesday" with a look into the history of the holiday, a fun round of trivia, and creative crafts. Enjoy lively music and delicious seasonal snacks with your neighbors!

### Ash Wednesday Service

The bus will leave from Felmeth Hall at 11:30 am on Wednesday, February 18, and head to the Basking Ridge Presbyterian Church for a combined Ash Wednesday service with Bishop Jane's United Methodist Church. All faith traditions are welcome to attend. Sign-up is required for the bus.



### Ageless Grace Fitness

Join us Wednesday, February 18, at 1:30 pm in the lower level Wellness Center at Felmeth Hall for Ageless Grace, a fun brain fitness program with simple, seated movements set to music. It boosts cognitive function and daily physical skills, welcoming all ability levels. Wear comfortable clothes and shoes. Sign-up is required.

### Ecumenical Service

Father Andrew will be here Thursday, February 19, at 10 am in Felmeth Hall to lead our monthly Ecumenical service. All faith traditions are welcome to attend.

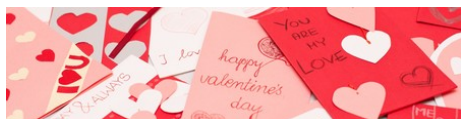
## Chair Tap Dance

You are never too old to tap! Join us for a fun, low-impact Seated Tap Class on Thursday, February 19, at 2 pm in Felmeth Hall. Come and discover the joy of movement. Sign-up is required.



## Millington Baptist Senior Luncheon

On Friday, February 20, at 11:30 am, the bus will depart from Felmeth Hall and head to Millington Baptist Church for their monthly senior luncheon. You're invited to bring your favorite salad, casserole, dessert, or bread to share. Sign-up is required if you plan to take the bus, so please be sure to register on Touchtown. If you prefer to drive yourself to the church, no sign-up is needed.



## Card Making

Friday, February 20, at 2:30 pm in Village 12, join Brenda Miller for card making. We will be making greeting cards using stamps, ink, and paper. All supplies provided and all crafting levels are welcome! Call the "day of" if you need a ride. Sign-up is required.

## Olympic Closing Ceremony

The 2026 Winter Olympics may be finishing up in Italy, but we're keeping the spirit alive right here! Join us on Monday, February 23, at 11:30 am for a special viewing of the Closing Ceremony. Come relive the most incredible athletic moments, see the final medal counts, and enjoy the spectacular "Beauty in Action" celebration from Verona. We'll provide light snacks and refreshments to enjoy during the show. Sign-up is required.



## Heart Healthy Program

Join us in Felmeth Hall on Tuesday, February 24, at 1:30 pm for a special Heart Month program focused on wellness and awareness. We are pleased to welcome cardiac survivor, Myra McGinley, who will share her firsthand experience and recovery journey. Following her talk, our Fellowship nurse, Eunice, will be available to answer your questions and provide helpful health insights. Sign-up is required.



## Let's Drum

Join Emma for an hour of rhythm on Wednesday, February 25 at 2 pm in the Lower-Level Wellness Center. The session kicks off with high energy cardio-drumming, using drumsticks and choreographed seated movement. Then, we will transition to a traditional drum circle. Sign-up is required.

## Table Games

Join us on Thursday, February 26, at 1:30 pm in Felmeth Hall for an afternoon of fun and games! We'll have Scrabble, UNO, Rummikub, Mahjong, and more. Sign-up is required.

## Library Cards & Books

Did you know that the Bernards Township Library is right up the street from Ridge Oak? Did you also know that you can request books to be delivered right to your door? Come to Felmeth Hall on Thursday, February 26, at 3 pm and sign up for your very own library card, and while you're here check out some books from the Book Buggy! Sign-up is required.

## Making Art!

Friday, February 27, at 10:30 am, Anne Chon will be in Village 12 leading an acrylic painting class. All levels are welcome, from beginners to seasoned painters. This fun class offers step-by-step instructions. The cost is \$10, and you will be billed. Sign-up is required.

## Mission Moments- Leadership in Action



Since Mike joined Ridge Oak in 2018, he has been a foundational part of our success and a true partner in our mission. When he was first hired, Bonnie Kelly asked him to be “hip to hip” with her, and he proved to be a dedicated teammate every step of the way.

Mike’s impact is felt throughout the entire organization, blending visible improvements with vital “behind the scenes” work. An example of his leadership was the new site lighting project done in 2019, which significantly enhanced our campus. Beyond these physical changes, he modernized many of the day-to-day systems and processes we rely on, ensuring our operations are smoother and more effective than ever.

Because of Mike’s vision and commitment, he is leaving us in great shape with a foundation that will serve Ridge Oak for years to come. We are grateful for his partnership, humor, and dedication, and while he will be greatly missed, the lasting difference he made here will remain.

## Out & About- Local Happenings

### Bernards Township Library Events

For all virtual programs, registration is required to receive a ZOOM link [www.BernardsLibrary.org](http://www.BernardsLibrary.org) or call (908) 204-3031 x6.

- Virtual: The Art of the Artificial: AI’s Impact on the Music Industry & the Arts, Monday, February 2, at 7 pm.
- Virtual: The Garden Tourist’s Charleston, SC, Monday, February 9, at 7 pm.
- Virtual: Love—Romance, Marriage and Loss expressed by the World’s Great Artists, Thursday, February 12, at 7 pm.
- In Person: Songs & Stories: A Valentine’s Glow—LIVE JAZZ concert, Sunday, February 15, at 2 pm.
- Virtual: Dick Clark’s American Bandstand, Tuesday, February 17, at 7 pm.
- In Person: The History of Mystery and Magic, Sunday, February 22, at 2 pm.

