

ACORN[®]S

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From the Executive Director

As December begins, I want to take a moment to wish everyone a safe, happy, and healthy holiday season.

Since stepping into the Executive Director role this spring, I've often come back to our mission statement, especially the part that speaks to helping residents live to their highest potential through dignity, respect, and compassion. My hope is that you feel that spirit in your everyday life here at Ridge Oak, in your interactions with staff and with one another. You have my commitment that this mission guides our work not just during the holidays, but all year long.

I hope you will join us for one of our upcoming holiday gatherings; they are a great opportunity to connect and celebrate together.

Sincerely,
Corey

Holiday Open House

Join us at Felmeth Hall on Tuesday, December 23, between 10:30 am and 12 pm for a delicious brunch, fun, music and festive cheer with your friends and neighbors! Santa will be here again, so make sure you dress your best for a photo! A "good will" donation of \$3 per person is requested at the door and ALL funds will be donated to the Center for Great Expectations (housing homeless pregnant women and their newborn babies). Put your CASH donation in the jar when you arrive! Please sign up by Friday, December 19 so we have enough food! If you sign up and cannot attend, please cancel by 11 am on Monday, December 22 so we can plan accordingly.

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Office Closed

The office will be closed on Wednesday, December 24 & Thursday, December 25. The office will be open on Friday, December 26; however, there will be limited staff, no recreation activities and no meal that day. Merry Christmas, Happy Hanukkah & Happy Kwanzaa to all who celebrate this very festive time of year!

Weather Delays

Winter arrives soon, bringing the possibility of snow, ice, and other weather. Before venturing out, please call the office to check whether activities, meals, or the bus are running on schedule. When conditions are uncertain, we tend to err on the side of caution and delay or cancel programs. A quick call to the office will give you the latest updates on any delays or cancellations. We will also send a message via our text/call system to inform of office closures or activity and meal cancellations.

Meal Sign-Up Updates

There's been some recent confusion about meal sign-ups. We're working on adjustments to make sure everyone who wants to attend a meal has the opportunity to do so. As you know, space and staffing limit how many people we can serve at once, so we appreciate your patience as we fine-tune the process.

Beginning in December, residents signing up through Touchtown should use the following options for each meal date:

- Seated – for those attending the meal in person
- Delivery – By Office Approval Only – for residents who have been approved for meal delivery

Thank you for your understanding as we make these updates to better serve everyone!

From Congregate

Congregate offers housekeeping, laundry, personal care, and medication management. To schedule a service or meal, or ask about costs, call Shannen at the office or email srivers@ridgeoak.org.



Homemade Quilt Drawing



Pat Roaldsen (Bonnie's sister) has made a beautiful 47"x58" throw/lap blanket.

If you would like to purchase chances on the throw, call or email the office and let us know how many you would like. You will be billed in January. Tickets are \$2 each or \$20 for 12 tickets and are being sold only to Ridge Oak residents, their family members, staff and Acorn readers.

The winner will be drawn at 12 pm on December 23. What a perfect holiday gift for yourself or a friend! Funds raised will go to the Basking Ridge First Aid Squad. Even if you do not want to buy a ticket, monetary donations are welcome!

Holiday Gifts

We know that many of you want to give something extra to the staff that serve you throughout the year, so we set up closed boxes on the side table in Felmeth Hall for the month of December to drop off your gift. No checks. Cash only. No specific staff person should be "named" for gifts as they are split between all members of the respective team. There will be separate boxes for the following:

- Bus Drivers
- Housekeeper & Laundry Service
- Maintenance Team
- Meal Delivery Staff

Giving Tree

Ridge Oak is setting up a "Giving Tree" in Felmeth Hall to collect NEW, unwrapped "Toddler Toys Ages 2-4." We are asking for specific items designed to keep little hands safely busy, including **Play-Doh, Play-Doh tools, wooden puzzles, coloring books and sticker books**. Please leave your offering under the tree by Monday, December 29. All donations collected will be taken to the Center for Great Expectations in Somerset, which supports homeless pregnant women and their infants. If you have any questions about the collection, please contact Emma at the office.



Holiday Decorations

Seasonal/holiday decorations should be enjoyed inside your apartment only or on your apartment door utilizing an over-the-door or magnetic hanger. Personal items put up in any common area, including laundry rooms, lobbies, hallways, on bulletin boards and in trees or shrubs will be removed.

Stove Safety

When preparing for a recent inspection, we found a surprising number of apartments with flammable items stored inside or on top of stoves. Never store paper, cloth, or any flammable materials on, in, or near your stove. Even when the burners are off, residual heat or accidental activation can cause a fire.



Heating Tips

Ridge Oak's heat turns on when the outdoor temperature drops below 68°F. As the colder weather arrives, follow these tips to stay warm:

- Make sure all windows and doors are closed and locked.
- Turn off all air conditioners.

If it feels chilly:

Villages 1–11: Turn the thermostat up to 5. After 30 minutes, lower it to your comfort level.

Villages 1A, 9A, 12: Turn the thermostat higher, wait 30 minutes, then adjust as needed.

In Sympathy

Our thoughts and prayers are with the family and friends of:

Tom Dolan Village 6
Alberto Alvarado Village 5



Care Fund

The Care Fund subsidizes meals and personal care. Many thanks to the following people who have made recent donations to Care Fund:

Bob Boye

In Memory of Paul and Carole Mueller

Dana and Terri Hanson in Memory of Susan Paulsen's 100th Birthday

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!



December Birthdays

If you would like your birthday published in ACORNS, call Suzanne at the office.

3 Linda Sohl 208
4 Carol Sutton 138-F
9 Chunjie Guo 204-A
11 Charles Latora 202-B
15 Sue Kim 202
15 John Dobash 201-B
17 Khadijeh Tabtabai 134-A
19 Arlene McHugh 210-B
21 Martha Herrera 199-D
22 Sihe Wang 168-B
23 Vera Perez 129-G
26 Mary Alice Golden-Koether 116-A
28 Lan Zhou 117
30 Edwina Geiger 118-A

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.

Brain Booster

Looking for some crosswords and word searches to keep your mind sharp? Contact Emma in the office for a copy.

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.



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.

Mahjong

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

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 4-5pm 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.

Located in the lower-level Wellness Center.





Ridge Oak residents came together to bottle 68 lbs. of honey from our apiary! 135 bottles were handed out to our residents and members of the local community.

Holiday Decorating

All are welcome! Join your friends and neighbors on Monday, December 1 as we decorate for the Holidays. First, we will set up the Giving Tree in Felmeth Hall at 11 am, followed by the Village 12 tree at 2 pm. Treats will be served to those who join in the holiday cheer. No sign-up is required.

Coloring & Coffee

Join us on Tuesday, December 2 at 10:30 am in Felmeth Hall for an hour of coffee and coloring. Come find out why coloring is such a great skill to continue throughout your life and enjoy a hot cup of coffee with friends. Coloring has been shown to reduce stress, improve focus, and support fine motor skills. Supplies will be provided. Sign-up is required.

Pokeno

Come out on Tuesday, December 2 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 continues on Wednesday, December 3 at 10 am in Felmeth Hall. Led by Pastor Dave from Bishop Janes UMC, these weekly discussions welcome all perspectives & life experiences. All faith traditions are welcome. Materials are provided.

Out to the Movies

The bus will leave from Felmeth Hall at 12:45 pm on Wednesday, December 3, and head to the Bernardsville Cinema for a viewing of *Wicked: For Good*. The run time is about 2.5 hours. Please bring money for snacks. *No outside food allowed.*



Shredding Event

On Thursday, December 4, our maintenance team will collect papers for shredding. Sign-up is required by Tuesday, December 2, so we can deliver designated shredding bags to your home. Have your bags outside your front door for pickup by 10 am on December 4. We will not be knocking on doors to pick up your bags!

Learn to Line Dance

Join us for line dancing with Dave Farrell on Thursday, December 4 at 2 pm in Felmeth Hall. This is a beginner class—no experience or partner needed! Come to watch or come to dance; everyone is welcome! Sign-up required.

Festival of Trees

Friday, December 5 at 2:30 pm the bus heads over to the Annual Festival of Trees at the Environmental Center. Sign-up is required.

The Festival of Trees transforms the Environmental Education Center into a joyful spectacular featuring a remarkable display of over 45 holiday trees, designed and created by local groups, clubs, businesses, and individuals. Come and see the tree that your very own Ridge Oak residents created!



Winter Market & Homespun Holidays

Saturday, December 6, the bus will leave at 12 pm and make the short trip to Bishop Janes United Methodist Church in downtown Basking Ridge for their Winter Market and Homespun Holidays sale run by the United Women of Faith. There will be a variety of vendors for holiday gifts, hot food for lunch and festive spirit. Sign-up is required.

Share a Song

Monday, December 8 at 1 pm, join Emma in the lower-level Wellness Center of Felmeth Hall for some fun listening to music. Bring the name of a song you would like to share with the group. We will listen to a recording, reminisce, engage in conversation, and sing along. Emma will access the music using YouTube. Sign-up is required.

Notables Holiday Concert

It's an annual tradition! The Notables will perform on Monday, December 8 at 7 pm in Felmeth Hall. Our own Bonnie Hawkins, Marthe Terry, and Marilyn Senn are part of the Notables. Sign-up is required.



Lynn's Holiday Boutique

It's time for holiday shopping! Lynn Kaplan and friend Mary Pagel of Village 6 will be here to sell Lynn's jewelry, scarves and other lovely items on Tuesday, December 9 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.

Winter Decoration Craft

On Tuesday, December 9 the bus will depart from Felmeth Hall at 1:30 pm for a quick trip up the road to Create Studios on South Finley Avenue. Owner Kristen Gannon will lead a workshop where you'll design and decorate your own charming Putz houses—miniature glitter village homes that bring vintage sparkle to any mantel, centerpiece or Christmas tree! Cost of the workshop is \$5 and you will be billed in January.



Let's Make Lotion

Join Michele on Wednesday, December 10 at 2:30 pm in the Wellness Center for another workshop in our self-care series. Everyone will leave with two bottles of scented lotion that you create and decorate—perfect for winter or as a holiday gift! Sign-up is required.

RHS Choir Concert

On Thursday, December 11 at 11 am, the Ridge High School A Cappella choir will be here to sing for us in the Village 12 Community Room. This is a true highlight of the holiday season that you will not want to miss! Sign-up is required.

Holiday Movie



Thursday, December 11 at 2 pm in Felmeth Hall we'll have a festive screening of the 2018 Netflix Film, *The Christmas Chronicles*, starring Kurt Russell as Santa Claus. Follow siblings Kate and Teddy as they team up with Santa to save Christmas! Light snacks will be provided.

Karaoke Sing Along

Come to Felmeth Hall on Monday, December 15 at 2 pm for an hour of music. Whether you sing or just want to enjoy the music, all are welcome!

Holidays at Hunterdon Hills Playhouse

The bus departs Friday, December 12 at 10:00 AM for the Hunterdon Hills Playhouse Holiday Musical & Luncheon, featuring festive music, dance, and a table-served meal with dessert buffet and beverages. Cost is \$25, billed in January. Space is limited—sign-up required. Cancellations must be made by 11:00 AM, Wednesday, December 10, or the \$25 fee will be charged.



The Story of Hanukkah

Hanukkah starts on Sunday, December 14 and runs through December 22. This is a very festive Jewish holiday of lights. It commemorates the Maccabees' (Jewish freedom fighters) victory over the Seleucidan (Greek) occupiers of Jerusalem.

Join Rabbi Robert Green in Felmeth Hall on Wednesday, December 17 at 11 am for a sweet treat and a cup of coffee and learn more about Hanukkah traditions. Sign-up is required.



Ecumenical Service

Father Andrew will be here Thursday, December 18 at 10 am in Felmeth Hall to lead our monthly Ecumenical service. All faith traditions are welcome to attend.

Festive Cookie Swap

Join us on Thursday, December 18 at 1 pm in Felmeth Hall for our first Festive Cookie Swap! Bring a batch of your favorite holiday cookies to share and enjoy some sweet treats together. Please include an ingredient list with your cookies — Emma will make copies for everyone. Sign-up is required. Please contact Emma if you have any questions.

Caroling & Cocoa

Thursday, December 18 at 2 pm, we will share the holiday spirit by caroling around our neighbors' apartments. Emma and Dan of Village 2 will lead us in song (no memorization required; lyrics will be provided). Please meet us at Felmeth Hall. The transporter will travel with the group. We will finish at Village 12 with some hot cocoa and cookies.

Card Making

Friday, December 19 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. Space is limited to 15 participants. Sign-up is required.



BRPC Carols & Cookies

Sunday, December 21, the young children of the Basking Ridge Presbyterian Church are going to walk down to Felmeth Hall at 11:30 am to sing some holiday songs. They are excited to bring holiday treats to share. Sign-up is required.

Holiday Pops Concert

The bus will leave from Felmeth Hall at 2:30 pm on Sunday, December 21 and head down the road to the Ridge Performing Arts Center for the Light Opera of New Jersey's Holiday Pops Concert, a festive afternoon of orchestral music, soaring vocals, and joyful holiday spirit. This special event features the full 30-piece Light Opera of New Jersey Orchestra along with two acclaimed guest soloists. Sign-up is required.

High Notes Holiday Sing Along

Come and join the High Notes in Felmeth Hall on Monday, December 22 at 2 pm as we sing some of our favorite holiday songs. There will be sleigh bells and shakers to play and all the lyrics to sing along! Sign-up is required.

Table Games

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

New Year's Trivia & Treats

Ring in the New Year with Trivia & Treats! Join us on Wednesday, December 31 at 11 am in Felmeth Hall for an hour of festive trivia and friendly competition, complete with holiday treats. Sign-up is required.

Mission Moments- Leadership in Action



This month's Mission Moment shines a light on resident John Taylor. John wears many hats at Ridge Oak—delivering meals, transporting residents to activities, and even taping letters to your doors. But his impact goes far beyond his tasks.

John is a helpful neighbor and a loyal friend, always ready to brighten your day with his trademark sarcasm and good humor. Whether he admits it or not, John truly cares about those around him. He's always looking for ways to help. Need help with your grocery bags or taking out your garbage? You name it, John's done it. He even assists with the bees, bravely taking the occasional sting to the eyebrow in stride because he refuses to wear a bee suit!

John doesn't do what he does for recognition—he does it because that's who he is. He embodies the spirit of Ridge Oak, leading by example through kindness, humor, and service. We're so proud to have someone like him in our community.

Out & About- Local Happenings

Bernards Township Library Events

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

- Adult Game Time, Fridays in December at 1pm
- Live Concert! From Jazz to Soul -Holiday Edition, Sunday, December 7 at 2 pm.
- Virtual: Pearl Harbor: A Day of Infamy, Monday, December 8 at 7 pm.

Downtown Christmas Tree Lighting

Saturday, December 6 from 12-7pm, this Basking Ridge event includes shopping with local vendors, the Christmas Tree Lighting & a visit from Santa.

Walk to Bethlehem

Sunday, December 14 at 4 pm. Walk starts at St. James Catholic Church and concludes at the Presbyterian Church. Stop in each of the four churches as the Story of Christmas unfolds.

