



Finding Fitness

Area 55+ and Retirement Communities offer plenty of options beyond shuffleboard!

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TURNING 55? 65? A HIGHER NUMBER?

Are you becoming increasingly sedentary, or as others may say, well, lazy? Watching instead of doing? Is capability replacing willingness in your vocabulary? Do you talk about the “old days” when you were trim, fit and active?

Take a look in the mirror. A *good* look. Staying or getting in shape shouldn't be something that *other* people do. You *may* down-size your house, closets and property but you shouldn't downsize your active lifestyle. If anything, you finally have the time to focus on your health. Whether it's walking a mile or completing a 5K, you can muster what it takes.

But what's out there? Are there places where seniors can thrive? More specialized than the local gym, with the right kinds of exercise equipment and loads of classes? Appealing fun activities? Are there any truly new ways of thinking about senior fitness? Equally important, what about those around you? Are they active and inspired?

NO EXCUSES

You'll find a wide variety of activities at senior communities in County Lines country.

On the east side of Newtown Square is the large retirement community of **Dunwoody Village**. Management calls it “decidedly different.” Dunwoody has a pool, fitness center, 18-hole putting green, and popular pickle ball court: like tennis, but played with a wiffle ball on a smaller court.

Dunwoody also has a wildlife refuge—birding is a popular hobby—and spaces for croquet, woodshop, card games and other activities. Local golf courses and public tennis courts are available nearby. The community, in short, is quite engaged and has many choices for keeping fit and active.

At the other end of County Lines country is **Pleasant View Retirement Community**, located in Manheim. At its health club—open to anyone over 40—fitness begins with a heated indoor salt-water pool, sauna, hot tub and golf simulator. Not to mention its gym, cardio and free weights. The club also recently added *HydroRider bikes* in the pool, attractive because of their high-calorie burn, lean muscle-building, increased circulation and low joint impact.

You'll also find over 25 different fitness classes at Pleasant View's club. A recent addition is *Aqua Stand-Up*—basically, stand-up paddle-boarding. Set to music, the class delivers a full body workout, incorporating balance and stability, cardiovascular training, muscle conditioning, yoga, pilates and stretching in 45 minutes. Just imagine you're in the Caribbean.

At **Meridian Eagleview**, a 55+ apartment complex north of Exton, there's 11,000 square feet of space devoted to its health club—larger than some public gyms—and 10 miles of trails for walking and cycling nearby. It has an indoor pool, group fitness classes, spa, cardio equipment, free weights, golf simulator, yoga studio, stationary bikes and even more variety to challenge your fitness level.

SPECIALIZED AND EXPERIMENTAL PROGRAMS

Also in Newtown Square, **White Horse Village** has the usual recreation facilities of a full service senior community: large pool, gardens and woodlands, walking and bike paths, cardio and strength training gym, along with numerous classes: yoga, tai chi, pilates and the like. And the community has interesting specialized programs. One, called *Fall-In*, is intended to help reduce the incidence and impacts of falls. Designed with a military theme—for the men—Fall-In promotes camaraderie, determination, consistency, training, discipline and a quest for improvement.

Because balance becomes a priority among many seniors, White Horse Village uses equipment with brand names like *Biodex*, *MoveMor*, *Core Stix*, *Quick Board* and *WAV Proprioception*. And to overcome some seniors' fear of negative effects from intense workouts, White Horse Village is experimenting with heart rate sensory technology where participants get real-time feedback and learn the value of high-intensity interval training.

Kendal-Crosslands, an assisted living community in Kennett Square, also offers state-of-the-art programs. Investing heavily in cycling, it has about 100 participants whose health—that is, their blood pressure, heart rate, cadence, time and distance—will be measured over time in a long-term study. The program may expand its number of water cycles, initiate indoor spin classes and lead to creating a campus share-a-bike program.



Pleasant View Retirement Community

The parent organization, Kendal Corporation, has additionally created *Vitalize 360*, a multi-dimensional, holistic approach to wellness used by over 30 retirement communities nationwide. Over a hundred Kendal-Crosslands residents in the program are currently reaching wellness milestones, including maintaining current health and mobility, dancing at a granddaughter's wedding, and becoming more engaged with others in the community.

NEW COMMUNITIES EMPHASIZING MOVEMENT

Opened in 2017 and offering apartments for the 55+ population, **Canvas of Valley Forge** has an active community, featuring an outdoor pool, fitness center and *Fitness Concierge* to help residents with cardio equipment and strength exercises. *Transformation Fitness*, a company that supplies the instructors, offers a host of weekly classes—aqua fitness, stretch and tone (similar to yoga), meditation and various dance classes such as Swing, Rhumba and Ball Room.

In **SageLife's** Echo Lake community in Malvern—other SageLife communities are in Wallingford and Daylesford Crossing, plus several outside County Lines country—the approach to fitness is called “aging well.” Echo Lake will have 4,500 square feet of space devoted to wellness, boasting “everything from a sports simulation lounge to a state-of-the-art fitness center.” Its partnership with Main Line Health puts “specialists right in the community.”

Planning for a November 15 opening in Glen Mills, **Ivy Creek** is in “pre-rental” now. It will have a full fitness exercise room, complete with air-compression equipment, which produces a more consistent and controlled resistance than traditional machines. In addition, it touts off-site excursions—horseback riding, rafting, zip-lining—as examples of activities to keep its residents active and healthy.

In April of 2019, **Brightview** will open by Whole Foods in Devon, providing long walkable trails as one amenity. Overall Brightview has 42 facilities in eight states, mostly between Boston and Washington, D.C. The Devon location will have a fitness center and refers to its wellness philosophy as *SPICE: Spirit, Physical, Intellectual, Cul-*

WHEN YOU'RE READY TO COMPETE

For some, the primary motivation for fitness is competition. Maybe it's the trophy, the recognition, the new personal best. In any event, some folks want to win.

Others are satisfied with cheering for the Eagles or the Sixers. Perhaps they'll even get excited enough to elevate their heart rate. Yet there remain those who still want to mix it up and prove themselves.

In May 2019, for the 37th time, Chester County will conduct its annual **Senior Games**—three weeks of events, including softball throw, bowling, bocce, horseshoes, darts, table tennis, hot shot basketball, Frisbee putting, football throw and corn hole. Usually accompanied by a picnic, the Senior Games are generally held at the Brandywine Picnic Park in West Chester. The Games are conducted by the County's Department of Aging and medals are awarded to winners.

Delaware County has its version of the Senior Games, too. Also in May, these games are held at various venues and feature competition in bowling, golf, table tennis, track and field, shuffleboard, pickle ball and more.

Be aware though. Participation in the games is open to anyone 50 or older. Well, at least you have six months to get in shape!

tural and Emotional. It expects 50–75% of the residents to participate in some aspect of the fitness center and has contracted with **Bayada Home Health Care** to run it.

FITNESS WITHOUT FRILLS

In downtown West Chester, the **Hickman**, almost 130 years old but architecturally updated earlier this year, emphasizes its eight fitness classes. Accompanied by upbeat songs, these classes focus on improving strength, balance, range of motion and flexibility. Using balls, bands, weights, bean bags and multiple exercise techniques, the Hickman's classes include tai chi stretch, strength and balance, cardio and seated yoga.

Five Star Senior Living spans 280 facilities and 32 states. In *County Lines* country, that includes **Glen Mills**, **Exton** and **Devon Senior Living** in Pennsylvania, as well as **Shipley Manor** and **Foulk Manors North and South** in Wilmington. Under the rubric *Ageility Physical Solution*, Five Star communities offer strength training, orthopedic rehabilitation, fall prevention, pain management, balance and gait assessment and more. Featuring complimentary screening as well as

55+ DRIVER DISCOUNTS

Interested in a 5% or higher discount on your auto insurance? For those 55 and older, check out the Mature Driver Improvement Courses.

Take the course online, while sitting on your couch sipping ... better make that a cup of tea than a glass of wine. Or get out of the house and head for a classroom setting to feel like a student again. Either way, class is usually around \$20.

No matter the method, these courses cover a range of topics from aggressive driving to how drowsiness can affect you behind the wheel. You'll also learn about distractions while driving, the distance to keep between two cars, age-related visibility concerns, effects of medications and alcohol when driving, and road rage.

And the discount isn't the only benefit. The class reminds experienced drivers of safe driving techniques and shares information

about new safety technology now available on cars. So if you're wondering how back-up cameras work, how warning systems alert you when someone's in your blind spot, or other safety technology on newer model cars, this course is for you.

If you're thinking about cost/benefit, know that in Pennsylvania the course is seven hours of instruction for the standard course and just four hours for the refresher—required hours vary from state to state—and the discount lasts for three years before you have to renew.

Some course providers are AAA, AARP and Seniors for Safe Driving. For details, check online and with your insurance company to make sure the one you choose saves you that extra cash.

Not yet 55? You may still qualify for an insurance discount by taking a defensive drivers course. Check with your DMV.

one-on-one training, many of its services—personal fitness, trainers, classes and circuit training—are open to the public for a fee.

OPTIONS IF YOU STAY AT HOME

For a modest fee, [Surrey Services](#) provides a variety of services to seniors who

wish to stay in their homes and operates its fitness center in Devon. Its gym includes weight machines, treadmills, recumbent bikes and elliptical machines, while its low-impact, air resistance machines—they're easier on the joints—are “designed specifically for older adults.”

Surrey also conducts an extensive set of classes, including zumba, tai chi, pilates, yoga, chair yoga, meditation, strength & stretch, balance/strength, line dancing and yoga stretch plus *Silver Sneakers*, *Silver & Fi* and *Drums Alive!*

For more information about fitness options in our area, check out the Guide following this article. ♦

