



### Michael J. Keenan

President and CEO  
Good Shepherd Communities

### Resources to Help Seniors Stay Healthy

## Welcome

The first day of spring arrived a couple of weeks ago and with that good news comes the opportunity for us to get busy with our spring activities.

Our Spring Cleaning story can serve as a reminder of how important keeping things organized is the older we get. When doing your cleaning, try to keep only the items that bring you joy everyday. Some of your clothes, shoes, furniture... might bring a smile to the face of someone less fortunate. Our local Salvation Army and Thrift Shops will be glad to take these items off your hands.

And, while you're cleaning, it's the perfect time to think about downsizing. We offer some handy tips in this issue to help make the process less stressful for you and your family.

Many people are able to stay in their homes because of the support they receive from the Broome County Council of Churches' Faith in Action program. In this issue you can discover how you can support them in maintaining people's independence in the community.

Be sure to keep an eye out for information about our upcoming 150th Anniversary. Good Shepherd was one of the first not-for-profit organizations incorporated in Broome County; something our board, staff and the community at large can be very proud of.

Enjoy your springtime endeavors, prepare for the future, and remember, "It's All About Living Well®!"

# It's All About Living Well<sup>®</sup>

### Good Shepherd Communities Foundation

32 Village Drive, Endwell, NY 13760  
607-757-3100

### Good Shepherd Fairview Home

80 Fairview Avenue, Binghamton, NY 13904  
607-724-2477

### Good Shepherd Village at Endwell

32 Village Drive, Endwell, NY 13760  
607-757-3100

### Good Shepherd Rehab & Wellness

80 Fairview Avenue, Binghamton, NY 13904  
607-724-2477

### Chase Memorial Nursing Home

1 Terrace Heights, New Berlin, NY 13411  
607-847-7000

For more information please visit  
[goodshepherdcommunities.org](http://goodshepherdcommunities.org)



# ITEMS OF INTEREST FOR SENIORS

The following experts offer their advice on issues of interest to seniors throughout the Southern Tier.

If you have any questions concerning the following information, contact us at (607) 584-3901 or DB@GoodShepherdCommunities.org.



## Spring Cleaning and Decluttering 101

Whether you're downsizing or just tidying up, spring is a great time to clean and declutter! Here are the basics on sprucing up your nest (in case it's been a while) and keeping it clean and neat.

- **Take it one room at a time.** Begin with a small area first, so you don't get discouraged right off the bat. Attack the "heavy lifting" in the room, then move on to dusting and vacuuming. It's much easier to tackle big problem rooms only after you've had some success cleaning a smaller space that is not overly cluttered.
- **Clean out your storage areas.** Get after those closets, utility rooms and the garage. Clear out unused items by recycling or discarding everything you don't really need. Be ruthless! When you make space in your storage areas, you'll be pleasantly surprised that you can now move quite a bit from your living areas to the storage areas.
- **Weed out your wardrobe.** Once the temperature has warmed up enough that you can put away the heavy sweaters and coats until next year, clean and stow away your winter clothing to make room for spring and summer clothes. Vacuum-sealed storage bags can come in handy for this. Or just use that newly cleaned closet. Don't forget to donate or sell what you don't need.
- **Commit to a donation schedule.** If you donate items to Salvation Army or other goodwill organizations, make it a scheduled to-do so you don't put it off. April and October might be a good rhythm. Or make donations more often if you buy a lot of clothes and other items. Remember, when one item comes in, another should go out.
- **Keep on top of the small stuff.** You know that "junk drawer" where all the odds and ends go? We all have one. Do you really need 40 pens and pencils? And what about old, expired medicines and toiletries? Properly disposing of old medications and clearing out the medicine cabinet is good for your health as well as your state of mind. Purging the old stuff from drawers and cabinets is very freeing. It also makes room to stash items you do use but don't want out on the kitchen counter or table.
- **Use and keep less paper.** This is a big one. Bills, envelopes, and receipts pile up quickly and add to the feeling of messiness. Go with paperless billing as much as possible. For papers you feel you must keep, scan them, organize them, and save them in files on your computer instead of that big filing cabinet.
- **When in doubt, throw it out.** This good rule of thumb says if you think you won't use it, you probably won't. So chuck it! However, the best way to keep your home clean and neat is to avoid bringing unnecessary items in the front door in the first place. Before you buy anything, it's always smart to ask yourself if you're really going to use it. If you don't need it, just say no!



## Upcoming Events

APR 27	Walk to End Alzheimer's – Registration 9 a.m./Walk at 10:30 a.m. – Binghamton University West Gym
MAY 2	Faith in Action Lives of Commitment Breakfast (see below article for more information)
MAY-JUNE	Living Healthy Workshop for Chronic Disease Self-Management – This six-week workshop is for those who would like to better manage conditions such as diabetes, heart disease and chronic pain (call 778-2411 for more information)
JUNE 19	Office for Aging Senior Picnic & Fun Fest at SUNY Broome Community College (call 778-2411 for more information)
SEPT 12	Good Shepherd Communities Foundation Annual Golf Tournament – Traditions at the Glen

## Helping Hands for Independent Living



The Broome County Council of Churches Faith in Action Program will be holding their annual Lives of Commitment breakfast on May 2nd at 7:30 AM at the Doubletree Hotel and Conference Center in Binghamton. This breakfast event honors one volunteer from Faith in Action, one from the Council of Churches, and one from the community. Debbie Thorpe is the Faith in Action

Honoree and Jeff Kellam is the Council of Churches Honoree.

The Faith in Action Program pairs volunteers from the community with older adults age 60 and over to allow them to remain in their own homes and maintain their independence. Volunteers may provide transportation to physician appointments, grocery shopping or light housekeeping. The Faith in Action Ramp it Up Program builds handicapped access ramps which prevent residents from being home bound.

The Sew 'n Sews is the Community Honoree. The Sew 'n Sews is a group of women from the Whitney Point United Methodist Church who meet weekly to design and sew dresses for girls from impoverished communities all over the globe. The group forwards the dresses to the New York State Dress a Girl Around the World Chapter located at Angels of Mercy in Rochester, NY. The Sew 'n Sews have created over 10,000 dresses shipped to girls from adolescents to teens.

Dr. Linda Biemer will be the Keynote Speaker at the breakfast. The breakfast is the largest source of revenue for these programs. Sponsorships for tables of eight and individual tickets are still available for the event. To support these wonderful programs, contact Paula Johnson at the Broome County Council of Churches at 607-724-9130 ext. 318 or at [pjohnson@broomecouncil.net](mailto:pjohnson@broomecouncil.net).



## No Time Like the Present

Dear Mom & Dad,

Thank you from the bottom of our hearts. You took a huge weight off our shoulders when you took control of your future by thoughtfully planning for your retirement, long-term care, and your final wishes. It will make everything so much easier on all of us, knowing that your minds are at ease, your care is assured, and your wishes will be honored.

Love,  
Your children



Does this thank-you note sound like your family? Well, there's no time like the present to "have the talk" with your adult children and make your thoughts and wishes known.

Here's a quick checklist of the kinds of considerations you'll want to have, write down, and discuss openly and honestly with your family.

- ✓ Living at home versus a retirement community
- ✓ Wills, living wills, health care proxies and directives including any Do Not Resuscitate (DNR) wishes
- ✓ Naming of executors and powers of attorney
- ✓ Location of important documents (e.g., wills, property deeds, financial records, etc.)
- ✓ Funeral, celebration of life, memorial, cremation, or burial wishes

It's not an easy talk to have, but it is so important. Peace of mind for you and your family depends on it.

# It's All About Living Well®

## Taking the Stress Out of Downsizing

For most older adults, there comes a time when you need or want to downsize – the kids are gone, the house is too big, the lawn takes too much work, or you're ready to move into a retirement community. It can be a stressful experience but we have some tips to make the process easier.

**Start slowly:** Tackle one room at a time and give yourself some breaks in between. Start with an easier room that has less emotional impact. Once you've emptied one room, use it to organize the rest of the house.

**Organize:** Figure out exactly how much space you will have in your new home, including storage. If your new space is half of what you have now, you know how much you have to get rid of. To stay organized, create piles for things you want to keep, give to family and friends, sell/donate or throw away. To make letting go easier, take photos of what you're leaving behind. To help with the decision-making process, it's sometimes easier to ask, "What do I absolutely need" or "Which is my favorite piece" and then see how much room is left for anything else.

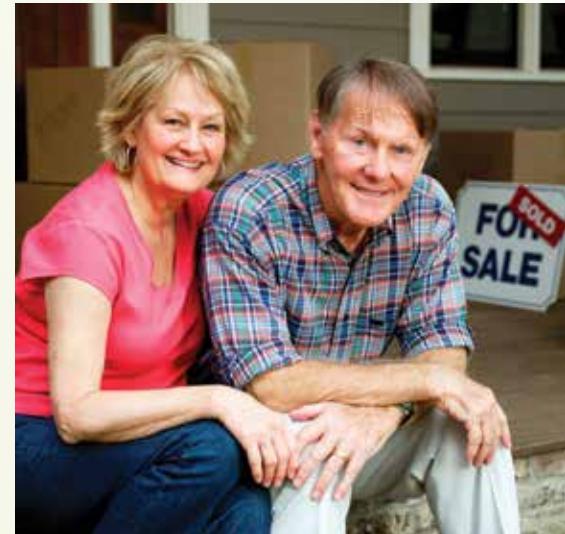
**Get help:** Because downsizing can be a painful process, both emotionally and physically, don't be afraid to ask for help. It's an opportunity to go down memory lane with friends and family. At the same time, you can give away some of those possessions to your loved ones.

**Paperwork and pictures:** Because going through old papers, personal notes, documents and photos is time-consuming, and because they often don't take up a lot of space, you can pack these items and deal with them after you move. But if you do have time, it's better to get rid of the papers and photos that no longer have any meaning. Make sure you shred any documents with personal information, account identification and especially Social Security numbers.

**Sell it or give it away:** After sorting and packing possessions, you arrive at the big task of getting rid of the stuff you chose not to keep. If you think an item is worth money, there are several approaches: auction houses, antique dealers, consignment shops, garage sales, eBay or Craigslist. Each has advantages and disadvantages, including varying costs. Whatever you can't sell, you can give away to organizations such as the Salvation Army or Goodwill or other charities. Before you donate, it's a good idea to check online or over the phone to see if your chosen charity has any restrictions on what it accepts: for example, no furniture or electronics, or only clothes and housewares. Also find out if they are willing to pick up larger items.

**Get professional help:** If you can't go it alone, there are businesses that cater to all aspects of helping with a move. A senior move manager can ease the emotional and physical demands of the transition to a new home by assisting with the planning and downsizing decision making process.

Downsizing can be an emotional challenge for many seniors, but others actually look forward to tapering down their belongings and enjoying more free time by moving to a smaller place that requires less upkeep.



## Free Speaker's Bureau

Good Shepherd Communities is the area's premier resource for up-to-date information regarding issues in senior healthcare and wellness.

Our speakers are offered to your not-for-profit organization free of charge and are available to speak on a number of issues including:

- Senior Living Options & Costs
- Falls & Fall Prevention
- Therapeutic Recreation & Ways to Keep the Elderly Active
- Senior Safety Awareness
- Medicare Insurance & Skilled Nursing Facilities
- What to look for when selecting a senior care facility
- Elder abuse and how to recognize it
- HIPAA and Patient Rights
- Advanced Care Directives & Living Wills
- Pharmaceutical Concerns for Seniors
- Good Shepherd Communities Foundation Grant Opportunities
- LSVT BIG and LOUD® – Therapy specific to Parkinson's Disease

To reserve a speaker, please call (607) 584-3901.



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