

“FOR BOOMERS ONLY”

1st Quarter 2005

LIVE FOR TODAY versus PLAN FOR TOMORROW

One of the most prominent considerations for Baby Boomer children of an aging parent is determining the most appropriate life-enriching environment for their loved one. As the availability of senior housing options increases, focusing your family’s attention toward your parent’s underlying psychological, social, and emotional needs is essential in finding the right option for your parent’s future.

The traditional approach of senior housing providers has been to orient their programs, their design, and their marketing approach toward the concept of health care. Regardless of the actual type of community, independent, assisted, or CCRC, the underlying message is, “We will be able to accommodate the health care needs of your loved one regardless of what might happen in the future.”

If your parent is already confronted with an imminent health challenge, you will be well served by exploring these traditional options. Depending upon the extent of his or her existing problems and the likely time frame for further deterioration, you will be able to determine the best course of action. Our experience indicates that at least 50% of all seniors 75 and older should make their lifestyle choices based upon health considerations. For these families, planning for tomorrow is a practical necessity.

Unfortunately, the need to plan for tomorrow will force your family, and your loved one in particular, into a social environment that revolves around the negative implications of failing health. There is simply no way that such a community can overcome this reality. If a community is dedicated to “aging in place,” and the vast majority of existing communities are, the management focus must be on softening the psychological impact of having its residents constantly exposed to the harsher realities of the aging process.

If your family is led toward this type of a health care facility for your Mom or Dad, it is important that you take it upon yourself to provide an uplifting and positive support mechanism. Your parent’s psychological well-being is critical for his or her quality of life and your family’s willingness to be continually involved is the most important factor in maintaining that psychological well-being.

For the other half of seniors 75 and older, modern medicine, improved diet, the elimination of smoking, and a variety of health maintenance advancements, have given them a very real opportunity of living another 10 to 20 years of quality life. These seniors do not need to dwell upon the inevitable realities of failing health, and they should not live among those who do.

It is precisely for this group of families that we have pioneered the total hospitality approach that is the hallmark of a Parc community. Within the atmosphere of a luxury hotel, we provide all of the amenities that one would expect in an upscale senior community, but we do so with a unique approach to serving our residents. The subliminal message that we communicate to our residents and their families is “live for today” and make the most of every day.

Both the management and staff of Parc Communities is dedicated to the proposition that we can extend lives and dramatically improve the quality of those lives if we treat our residents as if they were 20 years younger than they actually are. While discreetly monitoring health issues, we focus our efforts on making the residents feel as if they are living in an elegant resort. From our gourmet dining, to our elaborate

array of activities, to our everyday attitude of interacting with our residents, the Parc goal is to make sure that our residents wake up every morning with great anticipation of the day to come.

The result of the Parc approach is that our residents are generally happier and more optimistic than they could ever be while living alone or in a community that “ages in place.” Not only do we relieve our “Boomer” family from the burden of serving as the primary psychological support for their parent, but we create an environment that is perfect for the whole family to truly enjoy their loved one’s “Golden Years.”

If your parent is among those who are not dealing with the prospect of an imminent health challenge, consider the “Parc” option. Our ability to extend the quality and enjoyment of life for your parent is without peer and our dedication to this goal is absolute. Your job is to recognize which of the lifestyle options is right for your loved one. If your Mom or Dad is truly one of those who should be focusing on a “live for today” approach to life, you must ensure that they begin to do so, regardless of where they are currently living. It is never too early, but often too late, for your family to adopt this strategy.

Ask yourself the question, “Is Mom’s life today all that it could be?” If the answer to that question is “No,” give us a call. We would be delighted to share with you the results from our annual satisfaction surveys of both residents and families so you can see first hand what our expanding family thinks about the Parc program. Your family will be amazed by what we are accomplishing.