

“Meth-Wick has been a blessing”

When Dick and Linda Andersen moved to Greenwood Terrace in September 2014, they embraced the new opportunities that came with the new address: coffee clubs for women and men, on-campus volunteering, and programs at Meth-Wick’s Live. Laugh. Learn. Center. They also continued long-held interests such as biking, active membership in their church and volunteering for St. Luke’s Hospital.

Giving to others, together

They began volunteering for the St. Luke’s Spiritual Care department in 1996. In 2010 they completed seven weeks of training to become on-call chaplains. Dick and Linda took shifts together, sleeping at the hospital in case they were



Linda Andersen looks forward to a summer of riding on Meth-Wick’s new tandem bicycle with husband Dick, who has Alzheimer’s.

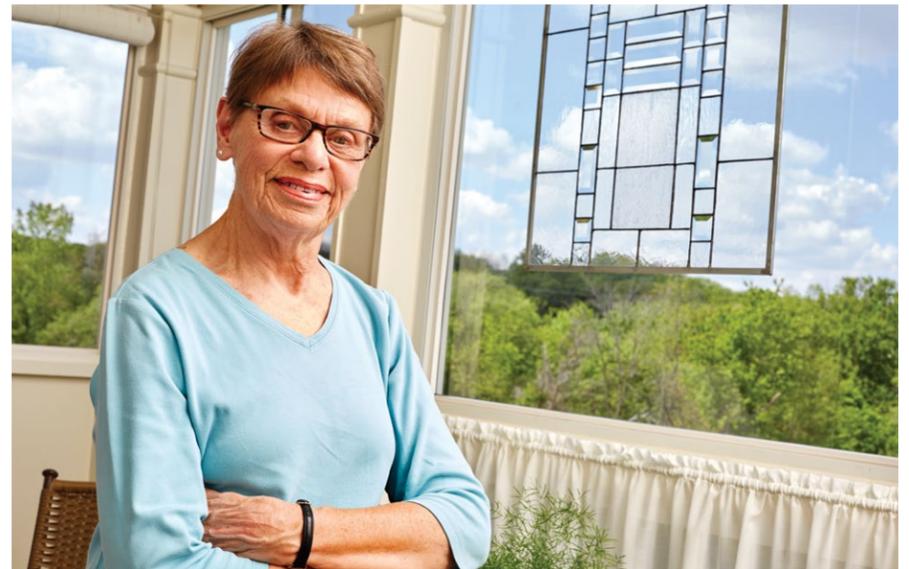
summoned by pager to the ER. “We learned we were not there to replace the chaplain, we were there to offer comfort during a crisis,” Linda says. “Whatever the family needed, we were there to give support.”

Sharing their story

Dick was diagnosed with Alzheimer’s disease in May 2015. True to their benevolent nature, the couple discussed Dick’s diagnosis with their coffee club friends as well as friends outside the Meth-Wick community. “We hoped it would help others, and it has,” she says. “People call me with questions or ask for advice on what to do and how to learn more.”

Today Dick lives at The Woodlands, where he is cared for by staff with special training in Alzheimer’s and other forms of dementia. Living on the same campus makes it easy for Linda to take daily walks from her Greenwood Terrace home to visit her husband of 55 years.

Linda is involved in many volunteer activities, saying, “I believe that’s how I stay mentally and emotionally healthy.” She provides administrative support for St. Luke’s Spiritual Care one day a week, folds Meth-Wick’s newsletter twice monthly, and works at the Greenwood Terrace front desk once a month.



Resident Linda Andersen poses beside a stained glass piece of her own creation. It hangs on the enclosed balcony of her Greenwood Terrace home, catching the sunshine and beauty of the scenic Meth-Wick campus.

She participates in Meth-Wick fitness and cultural programs and recently completed training on Meth-Wick’s tandem bicycle. (See story, page 2.) She is excited at the prospect of resuming bike rides with Dick and predicts it will be a prominent activity on the couple’s summer agenda.

Although Linda has a degree in education, she is also drawn to creative arts. She looks forward to taking an off-campus watercolor class this fall. Her talents also include stained glass design; two of her pieces hang in her home.

Living their best lives

Meth-Wick volunteers and staff play an important role in helping Dick live his best life. Campus volunteers make sure Dick gets to The Manor to work out twice a week in the exercise equipment room with help from fitness staff.

Volunteers also drive Dick to his Monday morning men’s coffee at Greenwood Terrace, an activity he enjoyed when he was a resident there. His friend Jerry Elsea meets Dick at the door and walks with him to the group.

The couple has two sons: Peter, described by his mom as a ‘free spirit’ who works at a Chicago bike shop, and Bradley, a software engineering consultant in California. Both give Meth-Wick a thumbs-up because it has enabled their parents to continue to live the life they love, including bike rides, socializing with friends and spending time together.

“They know ‘Dad is cared for and Mom has the support she needs.’” Linda says. “Our sons have peace of mind. Meth-Wick has been a blessing.” 

Dates to Remember

June 5 — “The Writing Lads – Local Authors,” 2 p.m., *Live. Laugh. Learn. Center*

June 8 — Barefoot Becky, 3 p.m., *Woodlands Parking Lot*

June 24 — Five Seasons Chamber Recital, 2 p.m., *Live. Laugh. Learn. Center*

June 27 — Barnes and Noble Book Review, 2 p.m., *Live. Laugh. Learn. Center*

July 31 — Book Club, 2 p.m., *Live. Laugh. Learn. Center*

Aug. 7 — Accordion Duo, 2 p.m., *Live. Laugh. Learn. Center*

Aug. 25 — Photography Club, 2 p.m., *Creative Arts Room*

Tandem bike and adult tricycle available to borrow

Summer just got better, thanks to Meth-Wick Community's recent purchase of two senior-friendly cycles.

The Easy Rider adult tricycle and the Fun2Go tandem bicycle are specially designed for people with limited mobility. "We want to give all of our residents, active seniors and those with physical limitations, the chance to enjoy a bike ride," says Eryn Cronbaugh, Meth-Wick's Director of Wellness & Recreation.

Resident tested and approved

The bikes are made by Van Raam in the Netherlands and sold by All Ability Cycles in Jefferson, Iowa, the only U.S. distributor. Last fall, All Ability Cycles brought bikes to Meth-Wick for staff and 30 independent, assisted living and nursing care residents to test drive.



Audrey Elliott is one of 30 residents who have trained on Meth-Wick's new cycles.

"The response was overwhelmingly positive," Eryn says. "Many residents told us they hadn't been on a bike in years." Eryn used a special gift to buy two bikes and six adjustable helmets, which staff sanitizes after each use. "Meth-Wick is so happy to bring an enjoyable activity back into the lives of our residents," she says.

Both cycles have senior-friendly features, including:

- Adjustable seats to ensure each cyclist can easily reach pedals, hand brakes, etc. In addition, seats can be turned for easier access on and off the bikes.
- Easy-adjust pedal straps on the Fun2Go passenger side that offer the option of securing the rider's feet to the pedals.

Flexible borrowing

Residents can borrow a bike beginning at 7 a.m. The bikes can be ridden off campus and are due back at 8 p.m. the same day. A resident must complete training on how to safely operate the bikes before borrowing one. "We need to be sure each resident has the skill and strength to operate a bike," Eryn says.

Once a resident completes training, they receive a reusable card that can be presented at The Manor front desk to borrow



As the "driver" of the tandem, Linda Andersen steers, pedals and brakes. Her husband Dick, who has Alzheimer's, is the passenger. Bike seats swivel to the side for easy boarding and pedal straps keep feet on the pedals.

a bike, which will be parked in a bike rack in front of the building. As an alternative, residents can call The Manor desk to ask if a bike is available and if one is, the bike will be held for 30 minutes.

"Those who don't meet the bike operation requirements or aren't interested in completing the training, can ride as a passenger on the tandem after signing a release form," Eryn says. Both cyclists and passengers must wear a helmet, either their own or one provided by Meth-Wick.

Senior-friendly features

The Easy Rider tricycle is designed with a low step-through and low sitting position that provides stability. On the Fun2Go, the riders sit next to each other, providing both with

a good view and making communication easy. One person steers and brakes and both can pedal. A switch lets the "driver" allow or disengage pedaling of the "passenger."

Both bikes have a chargeable electric engine to provide "power assist" when a cyclist needs help climbing a hill or in any circumstance during their ride. Each bike has a bright orange flag to increase visibility. Signs have been posted around Meth-Wick's campus to caution automotive drivers that cyclists are in the area.

"We are also happy to train family members who want to join one of our residents for a bike ride," Eryn says. "It's a great way for families to spend time together." 

Robin's Nest

Today's proliferation of electronic devices and smart technology might seem to hurry the demise of the good, old-fashioned skill of listening. Rest assured, listening is alive and well at Meth-Wick. We listen to our residents and

work daily to provide the support they need to live their best life. We also listen with our ears to the ground, hearing the approach of innovative life-enhancing improvements for older adults long before they arrive in the mainstream.

We apply those same listening skills to potential residents, who meet with sales staff, tour our living options and provide

feedback. Oakwood, our newest living option, is the result of listening.

This new condominium option at Meth-Wick Community offers independent seniors the privacy they value, along with the convenience of indoor parking



Robin Mixdorf,
President & CEO

and on-campus dining and programs. We are excited to welcome new Oakwood residents this October, when the three-story building will be ready for occupancy. Nine units are reserved and all units will be completed and move-in ready.

All of us at Meth-Wick are wishing everyone a wonderful summer of bike rides and ice cream cones. Enjoy! 