How Living at Ingleside Can Make Life Better and More Meaningful

Some might assume that an octogenarian would relish a leisurely retirement, but Barbara Murry doesn't conform to expectations. This busy resident of Ingleside at King Farm serves as the chairman of the cultural arts council, organizes a portion of the community bazaar, and participates in fitness classes and line dancing. "I just took up painting in my eighties," Barbara says, "and I'm having great success, finding out that it's something I can do. I had never done it before, and it was possible because of where I live."

Ingleside's three premier Life Plan Communities — Ingleside at Rock Creek, Westminster at Lake Ridge, and Ingleside at King Farm — are intentional about creating an environment to promote engaged living. Residents have access to events and activities that keep their mind and body active, and there's also the opportunity to become deeply involved in campus life by joining a committee or resident council.

"It's not like you have management off in some building someplace else that kind of makes all the decisions," says Judy Hingle, who has been a resident of Westminster at Lake Ridge for just under a year with her husband, Lee. "From the beginning, we felt like we were part of what's going on here."

Weaving new residents into the fabric of the community starts from day one. "We're a military family and we've moved around, and we've never been welcomed anyplace like we have been here," Judy says. This sentiment is shared across Ingleside's communities. Barbara says that her neighbors at the King Farm campus take a genuine interest in each other.

That sense of community was a major contributing factor for Julie and Dale Bennett, residents of Ingleside at Rock Creek. "After researching the various types of retirement communities in the DC area, we decided a not-for-profit community with strong roots in the District and a proven track record would fill the bill for us," Dale says. "During our four wonderful years here, we have never once looked back while enjoying the company of 300-plus delightful and like-minded neighbors. Our fellow residents have diverse and interesting backgrounds that never cease to amaze."

When you have neighbors who have had a career in the arts or working in the Arctic or for NASA, your curious side comes out. And this is an area where Ingleside combines its philosophy of engaged living with residents' skills and experiences. For example, those who want to share their knowledge are invited to lecture or give a presentation, and visual artists are able to submit their works for curated art exhibits that adorn the community's public spaces.

Dale and Julie Bennett

Resident-run committees also organize other cultural activities, like trips to museums and historical sites, and continuous learning events, featuring outside educators and speakers. Dedicated Ingleside staff help bring the committees' vision to fruition.

As the chairman of the cultural arts council, Barbara is proud of their internal programming and the performers they're able to attract, who always ask when they can return. "They are impressed with the space, and they're impressed with the sophistication of the audiences and the back-and-forth dialogue during the Q&A," she explains.

Julie and Dale echo this sentiment, saying, "We love the weekly concerts and lectures that our Cultural Arts Center attracts. Ingleside at Rock Creek has special relationships with the Levine School of Music and the Washington Conservatory of Music."

In addition to these unique experiences, residents form interest-based groups, like book clubs, discussion, music and art groups and have access to top-of-the-line equipment, such as in the fitness center and woodworking shop.

Ingleside's communities also exhibit a strong sense of volunteerism and giving back. Judy is active with voter education and registration. She and Lee volunteered to take registrations at immunization clinics. The bazaar that Barbara helps organize donates its proceeds to a fund that supports residents who run out of money so they can remain in the community, as well as a fund that helps staff advance their education or gain citizenship.

"When you live in a place like this, you live better," Barbara says.

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