

At MonteCedro, Great Neighbors Make a Great Community

By David Weidert
MonteCedro
Executive Director

For nearly a century, Episcopal Communities and Services (ECS) has been dedicated to creating exceptional communities and services for adults 60+. We are inspired by the work we do, proud of our talented and dedicated employees, and believe in a life full of possibility.

As a non-denominational, non-profit organization, ECS is guided by a set of values and ideals that has helped us build many senior accommodations over the years. What truly defines our communities, though, are the people who call them home.

MonteCedro, our award-winning Life Plan Community in Altadena, is an example of what happens when an interesting and diverse group of talented people live as neighbors – they create a dynamic community. I am inspired every day by our residents as they continue to lead active, vibrant lives and am delighted to share some of their stories with you.

All the World is a Stage

Prior to moving to MonteCedro, Jane Schlegel spent years in and around theater. “Growing up, I saw many wonderful plays and actors, including Helen Hayes.” She also saw the original Broadway production of “West Side Story.” “It was magical,” she says.

Jane’s love of theater led her to help establish the Indiana Repertory Theater in Indianapolis. When Jane arrived at MonteCedro, she thought her theater days were behind her. However, like the plot of any good play, she discovered something unexpected – there were others who shared her passion. Together, these theater-loving residents formed the MonteCedro Theatre Group.

The group has put on many performances, including full productions, radio plays and cocktail hour readings. They perform both dramatic and comedic material including “Boeing Boeing,” a farce about three flight attendants who unwittingly get engaged to the same man. “Our flight

attendants were aged 78 to 92, and it worked,” she laughs.

For all her decades in theater, Jane had never been on stage herself and performing in public for the first time was a great thrill. Many group members have a similar experience. “Here, you can find a voice you never thought you had,” she says.

Serving up Aces

Retired Pastor Tom Brunkow has been playing tennis for nearly 70 years. At age 13, he got a part-time job as a ball boy at the local tennis club. At that time, the club pro was the legendary tennis coach Harry “Cap” Leighton. “I was lucky to get such a great introduction to the game,” Tom says.

Over the decades, Tom has competed in numerous United States Tennis Association (USTA) sanctioned events and has won the U.S. Doubles Championship for his age group 11 times, on grass, clay and most recently indoors for the 75+ age



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Now 82, Tom’s greatest victory may have come this summer when he and grandson Lorenzo, age 14, won the prestigious U.S. National Grandfather/Grandson Tournament held in Massachusetts. “I’m a good tennis player,” says Tom, “but Lorenzo was definitely the star of our team.”

This three-generation family of tennis excellence is so unique that Tom, his son and grandsons are currently part of a 10-year longitudinal study. “Who knew that practicing one’s backhand could garner such attention?” Tom says.

A Note of Thanks

Our residents and their families have told us regularly over the last 18 months how much they appreciate the hard work, dedication, and compassion of our employees. Recent times have been challenging for everyone and we are so proud of the way the team has come together to help mitigate the impact on the daily lives of those who call MonteCedro home.

bracket in 2016. He has also twice won the father/son title with his son Ben. Tom says that since moving to MonteCedro, he gets encouragement from his neighbors whenever he goes to play a tournament. “They like to remind me that I’m representing them now,” he chuckles.

“So many interesting people live at MonteCedro. The dinner conversation is never dull,” said Brunkow.

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During these unprecedented times, we are committed to helping our residents continue their lives of independence at Atherton, with their safety and wellness as a priority.



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