



Methodist Homes of Alabama &  
Northwest Florida  
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Birmingham, AL 35210  
(205) 951-2442

[www.methodisthomes.org](http://www.methodisthomes.org)

# Methodist Homes News

A Publication of Methodist Homes of Alabama & Northwest Florida

## Methodist Homes Communities

### Housing & Health Services

- Fair Haven**  
Birmingham, AL (205) 956-4150
- Wesley Place on Honeysuckle**  
Dothan, AL (334) 792-0921
- Wesley Gardens**  
Montgomery, AL (334) 272-7917
- Mathison Retirement Community**  
Panama City, FL (850) 215-4663
- Wesley Haven Villa**  
Pensacola, FL (850) 434-1035

### Affordable Housing Apts.

(Income-based Rent / Income Restricted)

- Wesley Acres & Wesley Acres II**  
Decatur, AL (256) 355-8281
- Wesley Apartments**  
Anniston, AL (256) 237-4371
- The Epworth House**  
Selma, AL (334) 875-6450
- Wesley Glen**  
Decatur, AL (256) 355-8281
- Wesley Park Apartments**  
Anniston, AL (256) 741-8666
- Wesley Scott Place**  
Pensacola, FL (850) 437-1400



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- [Facebook.com/WesleyPlaceDothan](https://www.facebook.com/WesleyPlaceDothan)
- [Facebook.com/WesleyHavenVilla](https://www.facebook.com/WesleyHavenVilla)
- [Facebook.com/Wesley-Gardens-Retirement-Community](https://www.facebook.com/Wesley-Gardens-Retirement-Community)
- [Facebook.com/MathisonPanamaCity](https://www.facebook.com/MathisonPanamaCity)

## DOTHAN

# Retired Nurse Finds A True Home

**Donna Hilson** has spent a lifetime caring for others. A dedicated nurse, her journey in health care began at the Birmingham Baptist School of Nursing—now part of Samford University’s Sanders and Moffett School of Nursing. After graduation, Donna embarked on a long and meaningful career as a psychiatric nurse (35 years with Southeast Health) and then as a psychiatric evaluation nurse for a company based in St. Paul, Minnesota. She traveled extensively throughout southeast Alabama—from Luverne to Russell County and all the way to the Florida line. Even after decades of service, she was still on the road in 2021 when an unexpected turn changed everything—a serious head injury that left her facing a long and arduous recovery.

For 8 months, Donna devoted herself to regaining her independence, relearning how to walk, talk, and move. After transitioning from nursing care to an assisted living community, she eventually found herself at The Rehab Inn at Wesley Place on Honeysuckle in August 2024, seeking additional therapy and rehabilitation. It was a decision that would change her life in the best way.

“My children thought I would be better off here than going back to where I was,” Donna recalls, as the family considered the changes in her medical needs. “Staff here are so cordial and I just felt like I was at home.”

Donna’s sense of belonging at Wesley Place deepened when she discovered familiar faces among the residents. One had lived in her former assisted living community, and another she had met



through a Sunday School friend and had even traveled with.

But the connections didn’t stop there. Donna discovered that one of the nursing preceptors she had trained is now Wesley Place’s assisted living clinical leader, **Nancy Thompson**. Another former trainee, Marty, recognized Donna while touring Wesley Place with her mother. Given her nursing background, Donna was able to provide Marty and her mother with a unique perspective.

Beyond the friendships and welcoming atmosphere, Donna appreciates the spiritual and social opportunities that make Wesley Place feel like home.

“One of the things that I like the most is we have devotion several times a week with just the residents doing it. And then we also have outstanding outside ministers who come in,” she said. “We have a fantastic activities director and that’s important. We have a beauty shop, we also do exercises—they are chair exercises—and we play bingo every Friday.”

Donna also enjoys the comfort of her new apartment, which she finds more

*Continued on Pg 2*



*True Home...Continued from Pg 1*

spacious than her previous one. And when her daughter encouraged her to make the move, Donna was already one step ahead. “Sugar, I’ve been thinking that all along.”

**BIRMINGHAM**

## Goodbye Loneliness, Hello Community!

For many older adults, living alone is an isolating experience. After the loss of a spouse, it often feels harder to get out of the house, engage in activities, and maintain a fulfilling social life. Many seniors find themselves in a routine of solitude, with little more than occasional trips to the grocery store or church. At Fair Haven (Birmingham), we hear this all too often: new residents and their families share how lonely life had become for their loved one. The good news? Independent living was a life-changing solution.

### Hidden Harms of Loneliness

Loneliness isn’t just an emotional struggle—it can have real physical and mental health consequences. Studies show that prolonged loneliness is linked to increased risks of heart disease, high blood pressure, cognitive decline, and depression (National Institute of Health



(NIH)). Without regular social interaction, motivation diminishes, energy wanes, and the simple joys of life can fade. But there is hope.

### Independent Living: A Lifestyle To Overcome Isolation

Fair Haven’s independent living community is a thriving hub of activity and friendship. Life is not lived alone. It is shared with others who understand the joys and challenges of this stage of life. Residents can eat meals together, participate in games and hobbies, attend worship services if they wish, and take part in their choices of a full calendar of engaging activities.

Imagine waking up and meeting friends for morning coffee, strolling to the gift shop together, or gathering in the grand living room for a local youth choir performance. Imagine having a support

system of peers who encourage and uplift you daily. At Fair Haven, friendships form quickly because connection is built into the community itself.

### A Life Shared is a Life Enriched

Moving to an independent living community isn’t just about convenience or downsizing—it’s about embracing a lifestyle where social connection is effortless. Here, you’ll find others who have walked similar paths, but whose unique experiences make conversations rich and rewarding. Whether engaging in a favorite hobby, exploring a new interest, or simply sharing stories over a meal, the opportunity for connection is always present.

If you or a loved one is a senior adult struggling with loneliness, consider how independent living can provide not only a place to live but a vibrant community to thrive in. Fair Haven is more than a residence—it’s a home filled with warmth, friendship, and the joy of shared life.

Ready to trade isolation for connection? Call 205-956-4150 ext. 3076 to schedule a tour and see firsthand how independent living can bring new energy, purpose, and companionship into your life.

**PENSACOLA**

## Creative “Tree-O”

A trio of artificial trees at Wesley Haven Villa (Pensacola) has become a decorating hub for seasonal celebrations. Life Enrichment Director **Anita Griffin** led residents to make handcrafted decorations for a lovely Valentine’s tree. After that, the trees were decked out for Mardi Gras, and then St. Patrick’s Day.





ANNISTON

# Major Updates

Residents at Wesley Park Apartments (Anniston) and at Wesley Apartments (Anniston) have seen recent and ongoing updates to their community! Improvements include fresh paint, new flooring, updated lighting, counter tops, cabinetry, and more. Wesley Park (pictured below) received a new roof as well. The two Anniston communities combined provide 124 affordable apartments for seniors with limited income.



# SNOW DAY

January 25, 2025



Katie H, Glenda G, & Jackie C at Wesley Place - Dothan



Wesley Gardens - Montgomery



Wesley Scott Place - Pensacola

MONTGOMERY

# Mahjong: A Helpful Cognitive Exercise

Wesley Gardens (Montgomery) has begun hosting classes in the popular game Mahjong, which came on the scene in the late 1800s in China. In a 2020 study posted by the National Institute of Health, researchers concluded that 12 weeks of playing Mahjong made significant improvements in the cognitive function of elderly people. The participants played Mahjong for 1 hour, three times a week, for

12 consecutive weeks. (NIH article can be found by searching PMID: 32292385)

The classes are intended for beginners or for those looking to refresh their skills. The instructor teaches the fundamentals of the game, including the rules and strategies, with hands-on learning. Contact **Randy** or **Teresa** at 334-272-7917 to find out when there might be a seat at the next open class.





Thank you 



**CHURCHES & CHURCH AFFILIATES**

Alabama-West Florida Conference  
Alabama-West Florida Foundation  
North Alabama Conference  
Covenant Methodist *Dothan*  
Gulf Breeze UMC *Gulf Breeze*  
The JOY Class, Canterbury *B'ham*  
Leighton UMC *Leighton*  
Marion Methodist *Marion*  
Red Ridge UM Women *Dadeville*  
Trinity UMC *Birmingham*

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Our heartfelt thanks to all of our donors and friends.

*Gifts received through  
March 19, 2025*

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GIVING**

In addition to the valuable support of our donors to the *Fountain of Love*, and to other projects and programs at Methodist Homes, Legacy Giving is another way to make a significant difference. Let your estate planner know how much you would like to give, and direct that the gift will be made to Methodist Home for the Aging, 1520 Cooper Hill Rd, Birmingham, AL 35210. Or call Sherri, Director of PR at 205-951-2442.

**STOCK  
GIVING**

We have a new connection with DonateStock.com that creates a PayPal-like experience for donors who wish to lighten their tax burden with a direct stock gift to Methodist Homes! Visit "Donate" at methodisthomes.org to learn more.



Learn more at [givebutter.com](http://givebutter.com), [/kindnessmatters](http://kindnessmatters) or [/letsmakeadifferencetogether](http://letsmakeadifferencetogether).



DOTHAN

# National Girl Scout Week - Troop 9750



Girl Scout Troop 9750 stopped by Wesley Place on Honeysuckle (Dothan) to bring cookies, and to share songs, jokes, and laughs. The girls told residents about their organization in honor of National Girl Scout Week, which always includes the organization's founding birthday of March 12 (1912). Residents pictured are **Wilma Davis, Peggy Woods, Freddie Stone, and Shirley Bowden.**



**CENTENARIAN CLUB**  
1st Quarter 2025  
Sara Smith - Jan 100  
Jean Waldman - Feb 101

**Remember Mother's Day and Father's Day Honorariums or Memorials!**

PANAMA CITY

# Valentine King & Queen



And the winners for Valentine King & Queen at Mathison Retirement Community (Panama City) are ...(drum roll, please)... The Fannings! **Jean and John Fanning** were selected by vote of their peers. They were surprised, humbled and honored to be chosen. The sweet couple has been a valuable part of the Mathison family since July of 2023.



YES - I WANT TO HELP YOUR MINISTRY

- \$ \_\_\_\_\_ General Contribution (undesignated)
- \$ \_\_\_\_\_ Redefining Home (capital fund raising campaign)  
For: Fair Haven (B'ham) / Wesley Place on Honeysuckle (Dothan)
- \$ \_\_\_\_\_ *The Fountain of Love* (provides help to residents)  
Designate for: Where most needed / Fair Haven (B'ham)  
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**OUR MISSION**

To enrich the lives of older adults and all those who serve them in faith-based communities, where life is celebrated, relationships are valued, teamwork is embraced, service excellence is expected, and the touch of God's love is ever-present and ageless.

METHODIST HOMES

# Sleeplessness: The Hidden Toll of Dementia Caregiving

Caring for a senior adult with dementia is a journey filled with both love and challenges. One of the most common, yet often overlooked, challenges is the impact of sleeplessness. As a caregiver—whether you're an adult daughter, son, or another family member—your nights may be interrupted by the needs of your loved one, leading to a profound lack of sleep. Over time, this sleep disruption can take a significant physical and emotional toll on your body and overall well-being. Explore these symptoms and effects of sleeplessness, then see if a dementia care community might be a solution for your loved one AND for your health.

### *The Physical Toll of Sleeplessness*

When your sleep is continually compromised, your body starts to suffer in various ways. Some of the key physical effects are a weakened immune system, an increased risk of chronic conditions, impaired cognitive function and physical fatigue and pain.

### *The Emotional Impact on Caregivers*

The emotional side of sleep deprivation is just as significant. When you're not getting enough rest, your emotional health may deteriorate in several ways, including heightened stress and anxiety, mood swings and irritability, depression, and reduced patience.

Dementia can disrupt a senior's natural sleep schedule, leading to late-night wandering, confusion, and other behaviors that keep caregivers awake. The constant vigilance required at night not only affects your sleep but also creates a cycle of exhaustion and anxiety that can be hard to break. As the night wears on, every hour of lost sleep makes it more challenging to manage the emotional and physical demands of caregiving.

A path to relief may be found through assisted living with memory care. At Methodist Homes, memory care services are available at Fair Haven (Birmingham), Wesley Gardens (Montgomery), Mathison

Retirement Community (Panama City), and at Wesley Place on Honeysuckle (Dothan), so let us know if we can help.

Families find more than just a living space for their loved ones—they find capable hands to alleviate the constant worry that fuels sleepless nights. This peace of mind is invaluable to a family member's own health and wellbeing.

