



# Chez Nous

## ARBOR LANDING AT OCEAN ISLE

**If** I was asked to give Arbor Landing at Ocean Isle a secondary name, it would be “Chez Nous” — words of great comfort to me as a child in my French-speaking home. Translation: “at our house,” “at home.” That is exactly the premise of Arbor Landing — for people to be at home in this spectacular new option for retirement living with assisted services.

My curiosity magnet brought me to Arbor Landing shortly after it opened on September 10, 2010. I had passed the beautiful new building set well back from the road several times during construction and it was time to go inside and take a tour. Staff members were full of enthusiasm about their new treasure and anxious to walk me through it. Everyone I met seemed to be a perfect fit for the job they were given.

STORY BY CLAIRE K. CONNELLY

PHOTOGRAPHY BY ???????

# Chey Mow



I returned almost a year later to meet with Executive Director Mark McKeithan, Director of Community Relations Amy Causey and several other staff members. Causey was about to greet a new resident and take her to see her new unit for the first time. Perfect timing. The woman was accompanied by her daughter and obviously excited about her new home. When the daughter referenced having looked at other facilities, the woman quickly interrupted with a firm “no, no, no.” No question in her mind that Arbor Landing was the strong first choice.

McKeithan describes Arbor Landing as “an independent retirement living community, a neighborhood, and much like the living environment of a five-star, first-class hotel.” The atmosphere obviously supports the description. There is a hum of activity at Arbor Landing that reminded me of the



Above left: A new option for retirement living, Arbor Landing is located between Ocean Isle Beach and Shallotte.

Above right: From communal meal to games and music, residents have many opportunities for social interaction.

concept "It Takes a Village." The residents I saw engaged in various activities were also actively embracing that concept.

Arbor Landing has 70 units, with 30 residents at the time of this writing. Full occupancy will mean a total of 80 to 85 residents. Residents must be 55 years or older. It is one of ten communities belonging to Ridge Care, Inc., headquartered in Kernersville, North Carolina. Nine of those communities are located in North Carolina and one is in West Virginia, but the facility is one of a kind in this area.

The facility offers assisted services for those with extra needs, such as medication reminders, assistance with dressing and/or bathing, and more. The director of assisted services is a full-time RN with a staff of certified nursing assistants. All of those extra services are addressed for each resident by these qualified staff members. Residents wear an emergency necklace, which gives them added feelings of security.

The staff of Arbor Landing takes particular care with transitioning residents to their new home. The six managers meet personally with each new resident for the first few days and discuss their needs in detail to create a total feeling of comfort. Most new residents have made multiple visits prior to their move-in day, and that helps with transitioning, too. Plus, residents are allowed to bring their pets with them to Arbor Landing. It's all part of having all of the comforts of home.

The accommodations available are cozy and attractive. Residents can choose a studio, a one-bedroom or a two-bedroom unit. All are equipped with a kitchenette if the resident decides to stay in the unit and prepare his or her own meals rather than eating in the dining room. Three meals are served daily, and the favorite menu item for both staff and residents is the homemade meatloaf.



From top: The elegant yet comfortable setting is for residents age 55 and older.

Below: Arbor Landing's staff members seem to really enjoy their jobs.



Food Service Director April McDonald's famous meatloaf was an original recipe handed down from her great-grandmother, who had actually been blind since the age of 16. Every one of McDonald's great recipes has an interesting story behind it. She follows strict nutritional guidelines, which she feels is an asset to the residents and assists them in maintaining an independent lifestyle. McDonald has introduced Asian, Spanish and continental cuisine, to the delight of residents, and her homemade desserts are popular.

McDonald wears many hats, supporting other departments and helping out with various events. She is excited for the coming first-year anniversary celebration and being involved in the event and meal planning.

Visitors are welcome at Arbor Landing at any time and may choose to enjoy one of the daily meals with a resident. During my visit a gentleman was at the piano in the dining room playing musical requests. He and his wife regularly visit Arbor Landing to share his piano-playing talent. Gathered around the piano, the residents were sharing family histories and stories, deciding who was the oldest, smartest, best dancer, etc.

Social Director Tina Scott has the perfect personality and attitude for her position. Her interaction with the residents is heartwarming, and her list of activities is long — bingo, bridge, Scrabble, card and board games, off-premise outings, a library, wine and cheese socials, and much more.

"This is absolutely the best job in the world," says Tina. "I have the most wonderful residents who truly 'travel' home with me in the evenings. They become a part of your heart."

The beautiful back porch at Arbor Landing is always busy with the residents relaxing or enjoying conversations. An impressive garden behind the porch area has produced tomatoes, cucumbers, peppers, zucchini and herbs. Once again, the total home — garden included!

McKeithan says he feels that each day he and his staff are not working in a facility but in the homes of the residents. That's why "Chez Nous" is such an appropriate feeling here. It has enhanced some old memories for me, and I have put myself on the guest list for the well-loved meatloaf!

*Arbor Landing is located at 5490 Arbor Branch Drive, SW on N.C. Highway 179 between Ocean Isle and Shallotte. You can schedule a tour by telephoning them at (910) 754-8080. ■*



From top: Arbor Landing has 70 units, with a capacity of up to 85 residents.