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# Primetime

A monthly look at local lifestyle news for those over 50

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## New home sweet home

Making the move to a retirement community: Residents tell their stories

**R**etirement communities vary widely, from apartment buildings with a few services to assisted living facilities that provide round-the-clock help. To find out what it's actually like to live in different types of communities, we asked several seniors about their experience.

Pete and Jean Henderson, both 82, live in Evanston at the Mather. It's a continuing care retirement community that offers independent living as well as assisted and nursing care. The complex also provides meals and activities.

**Q: How long have you lived at the Mather?**

**A:** (Pete) We've lived here since January 2012.

**Q: How big is your apartment?**

**A:** (Jean) We have a two-bedroom unit with 1,350 square feet. It's quite spacious. But it's less than half the square footage of the house we had before we moved here.

**Q: Where did you live before?**

**A:** (Pete) We lived in a house in Winnetka.

**Q: What did you do before retirement?**

**A:** (Pete) I was an associate dean at Northwestern University's Kellogg School of Management, and I also worked as a business consultant.

**A:** (Jean) I worked briefly as a school teacher, but spent most of my time raising our seven children.

**Q: Why did you move?**

**A:** (Pete) As we got closer to age 80, we recognized that we might need more help in the years ahead. We've had the experience of caring for older relatives and we didn't want our children to have to do that for us. We decided on a continuing care community because we could get 24-hour care if we needed it.

**A:** (Jean) We picked the Mather because of the location in downtown Evanston. We can walk to restaurants, shops, Northwestern University, the trains and Lake Michigan. It's an absolutely perfect location.

**Q: What else do you like about the Mather?**

**A:** (Jean) There's so much to do here. I love the pool and doing water aerobics.

There are wonderful classes in the gym. That's where Pete usually is.

**Q: What surprised you about the community?**

**A:** (Pete) When we picked the Mather, we thought it was all about location, location, location. But it's really all about people, people, people. There's a remarkable spirit here. People are upbeat and enthusiastic.

**A:** (Jean) There's so much joy in the community. I didn't expect to have the pleasure of being a part of this group of remarkable and active people.

**Q: Any advice?**

**A:** (Pete) Don't wait too long. We're glad we made the move when we could still deal with downsizing. It's been a wonderful adventure.



Pete and Jean Henderson

SEE NEW HOME, PAGE 7