

Like Disney for Adults: Life in Freedom Village

By

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Abstract

With an increasingly aging population, American society needs to more effectively address living options for the aging population in the present and future. Older adults have unique needs due to their age, physical and mental condition, varying needs for medical and health care and assistance with their daily activities. Freedom Village is an example of a very successful continuing care retirement community (CCRC) in Holland, Michigan. Using a case study approach and structured questions to ask two residents of Freedom Village, her aunt and uncle, over a period of several months, the author learned that they have lived very happily at Freedom Village since 2009. The community provides them and other residents with a safe environment; high quality medical care options that are flexible enough to change as their needs change; opportunities for social contact with both their peers and with younger people; and caregivers who are trained in and understand the unique needs of an older population. One disadvantage of Freedom Village, however, is its steep cost, both to buy in and to pay the monthly maintenance fees. The author concludes that care for older adults should be the responsibility of both their families and the state/federal governments, through policies and legislation that encourage family members to care for their older parents. This will ensure that livable communities such as Freedom Village will be as accessible to older adults with limited resources as they are to those with more extensive means.

Keywords: Freedom Village, continuing care retirement community, life care community, older adults, quality of life

INTRODUCTION

With an increasingly aging population, American society needs to more effectively address living options for the aging population in the present and future. A key issue includes quality of life in all its dimensions: physical, emotional, and spiritual well-being, that contribute to a good and meaningful life (Galambos 1997:27). Older adults need safe environments; high-quality medical care options that are flexible enough to change as needs change; support for activities of daily life such as bathing, cooking, cleaning, etc.; opportunities for social contact with both their peers and with younger people; and caregivers who are trained in and understand the unique needs of an older population.

In the past, the needs of older adults as they aged were met in various ways. In the 1700s, there were public

poor houses; in the later 1800s, more humanistic not-for-profit homes for the aged; and by the mid-1900s, less humanistic, particularly propriety nursing homes. (Tobin 2003:53). In large families, one child was often responsible for the care of one or both parents as they aged. On farms where the family members worked the land, this was not as much of a challenge as in cities where home and work were separate spheres. In modern households where two or more adults work, there may be no one at home to care for one or both elderly parents. Also, for many older Americans, a prime consideration in planning for old age is figuring out how best to get into the appropriate institutional care at the appropriate time and to have sufficient resources to stay there until death. (Case 2015:501).

The content of this article is based on a series of email exchanges between the author and her aunt and uncle,

between May-July of 2016, and on a telephone interview between the author and Steve Stickel, Director of Sales and Marketing at Freedom Village, on July 25, 2016.

FREEDOM VILLAGE

One very successful example of a facility that has evolved in addressing the changing needs of the older population is Freedom Village in Holland, Michigan (<https://www.brookdale.com/communities/freedom-village-at-holland/>). The history of Freedom Village, including websites to pictures of this community, can be found in Appendix A at the end of this article.

This article focuses on how Freedom Village provides a community that meets the quality-of-life needs of older adults as well as a safe and fulfilling environment for them, allowing them to stay in independent living for as long as possible until they need to transition to more services and care, all within the same facility. Importantly, Freedom Village provides supportive care for activities of daily life for residents who do not need medical care on a daily basis but who do need support for bathing, cooking, cleaning, etc, prolonging the ability of older adults to remain in independent living longer than they would otherwise be able to. Communities such as Freedom Village mimic living arrangements and services that were previously provided by towns and villages. The author's aunt and uncle have lived at Freedom Village since 2009 and report that they are very happy with how it has met their needs over those years. Importantly, they are also confident that it will continue to meet their needs as they age and might need more care and services. For demographics of current residents, see Appendix B at the end of this article.

Freedom Village distinguishes itself from other retirement centers, such as independent living facilities, nursing facilities which offer short-term rehabilitation and long-term assisted living, and facilities with only lock-down Alzheimer's and dementia units, in at least three ways. **First**, it is owned and operated by a for-profit corporation. It does not rely on Medicaid and endowment funding but instead uses the resources from the lump sum payments and monthly maintenance fees of residents to fund its operations. Due to its for-profit nature, Freedom Village is able to maintain a high ratio of staff to residents: approx. one staff for every 4-5 residents (430 full- and part-time staff and 500 residents.)

Nursing care is provided on site 24/7 for all levels (independent living; assisted living; skilled nursing; memory unit). When a resident pulls an emergency cord in an apartment, trained medical staff respond. In not-for-profit retirement centers, the responder is sometimes a concierge who then calls 911, delaying assistance. **Second**, a continuum of care (independent living; assisted living; skilled nursing; memory care) is guaranteed at Freedom Village. **Third**, unlike other retirement facilities, there is a contractual agreement between the residents and Freedom Village which guarantees services for life, even if the resident's resources are exhausted during his or her lifetime.

Decision to Move to Freedom Village

The author's aunt and uncle both had parents who lived in retirement living centers in their last years, which paved the way for them to consider such a center for their senior years. In 2009, when they were in their late seventies, they felt the upkeep on their house and garden was getting to be more than they wanted, so they considered moving into a condo. One downside of moving to a condo, though, was that they would have to move again if they needed more services in the future. Moving to Freedom Village would allow them to start in independent living and then move to assisted living, memory care, and skilled nursing, if the need arose. They had the luxury of being able to carefully consider their decision since both of them were healthy at the time, with no hasty decision necessary due to a hospitalization or other crisis. In addition, Freedom Village is in the same town where they had lived for 20+ years, and they had friends who were already living there. It was somewhat difficult for them to downsize after having lived for many years in a larger house. They hired a "downsizing expert" who helped them decide what to discard or give away and what to keep. Their adult children removed their belongings from the house's basement as well, in anticipation of the move. The author's aunt and uncle were able to give to their children some items of sentimental value and were also fortunate to have their children's help in preparing for the move to Freedom Village.

Application for Admission and Finances

Residents: An applicant's overall wealth must reflect a good probability that the resident won't outlive his or her assets. The admissions staff at Freedom Village rely on an insurance model, taking into consideration government longevity statistics and physical limitations of the applicant. Potential residents with fewer resources can apply on the basis of resources of family members or others. That is, a potential resident must either have significant resources on his or her own or he or she must have family members or others whose resources can be considered.

In addition to a thorough analysis of an applicant's financial resources, the admissions staff look carefully at the applicant's age, overall health, and physical limitations. Parkinson's disease, dementia, and brittle diabetes disqualify an applicant from admission, since those diagnoses guarantee that the applicant will require a longer stay at a higher level of care and will, most likely, exhaust his or her resources before death. Rejecting applicants with disqualifying diagnoses protects the financial stability of Freedom Village and prevents existing residents from incurring additional costs.

Admissions staff assist accepted residents in choosing the appropriate size apartment. They make every effort to put residents into the largest apartment that is sustainable by their assets. Apartments range in size from studios to luxury two bedroom/two bath units. Regardless of the size of the apartment, residents receive the same level of care. The services are all-inclusive, even in independent living, and include everything in the resident's apartment except for breakfast, lunch and phone service.

There are several buy-in plans at Freedom Village. The author's aunt and uncle chose to pay a fairly large "lump sum" when they moved in to the facility. The amount of their upfront payment gives them a discount on their monthly maintenance fees and also ensures them lifelong care even if they exhaust their resources before their deaths.

When a resident dies or leaves Freedom Village voluntarily, it is possible that some of the lump sum payment may be refunded to the resident's estate or to the resident, if alive. The amount of the refund, if any,

depends on the contract that the resident chose initially.

The monthly maintenance fee, which ranges from \$2,200 to \$6,000, includes electricity; heat; air conditioning; transportation to doctor's appointments; special entertainment; fitness classes; swimming and sauna facilities; weekly housekeeping including vacuuming and scrubbing the kitchen and the two bathrooms; security practices; and a daily food allotment that can be 'spent' in one of the five dining rooms or in the Bistro (a feature added in 2014).

If the author's aunt and uncle transition into a different level of care, i.e. assisted living, acute nursing care, memory unit, etc., there will be an additional charge each month. For example, skilled nursing costs \$275 per day. However, since they made a large lump sum payment when they bought in to Freedom Village, they are guaranteed lifelong care even if they exhaust all of their funds.

The residents do not use cash in their daily transactions; everything is done with their Freedom Village credit card, which results in a monthly bill. Residents are not allowed to tip employees, waiters, servers in the dining area, etc. Instead, since the staff in the dining areas are mainly high school or college students, a Scholarship Committee, consisting of eight residents, solicits and accepts scholarship applications. All staff who are college students (or who will be in college in the upcoming academic year) are eligible to apply. The committee interviews each applicant, examines transcripts, essays and recommendations, and then agrees upon who will receive the scholarships and in what amount. In 2016 the Scholarship committee is awarding 30 scholarships for a total of \$37,500. Funds come from an endowed Scholarship Fund, consisting of the original endowment plus proceeds from a pancake breakfast, which is prepared every Saturday by volunteer residents. Participants contribute whatever they wish for the breakfast, and all proceeds go to the Scholarship Fund. However, given that Brookdale's current CEO earned compensation of approx. \$8.8 million in 2015, it seems disconcerting to the author that so much effort goes into raising \$37,500 for the Scholarship Fund to be split among 30 college student staffers when the Brookdale CEO earns millions of dollars each year.

Freedom Village: Freedom Village has a track record of financial stability. For the last 2-3 years, its independent living units have had an average occupancy rate of

98% of capacity, which is high for the industry and contributes to the financial stability of the center. When it is necessary to increase the monthly maintenance fees, the administration levies a smaller percentage increase to existing residents than to new ones. For example, existing residents might see their monthly maintenance fees increase by 3.5% while new resident monthly fees would be 4.5% more than for new residents previously.

Living Arrangements

Of the many apartment location and floor plans to choose from, the author's aunt and uncle chose a first floor, 1,344 sq. ft. unit. They appreciate being near the many trees and vegetation outside their patio, and they also make good use of walking paths out to the famous Windmill Island nearby. Other residents choose apartments on the upper floors so they can look out over the trees, etc., to the pond and river leading to Lake Michigan. Freedom Village also provides guest rooms which residents can rent for a minimal cost. The author's cousins, the son and daughter of her aunt and uncle, along with their spouses, have stayed many times in the guest accommodations.

The apartment of the author's aunt and uncle includes a large (16' X 23') living room, two bathrooms, two bedrooms (one of which they use as a den/TV room), a kitchen, a laundry room, many closets, and a 9' by 16' patio with screens and windows. They have plenty of room for the furniture they chose to bring with them from their house.

There were many aspects of the apartment that they were able to customize before they moved in, including: the layout; the direction the apartment faces; paint (or wallpaper); floor covering (they chose carpeting, but their neighbors across the hall chose hardwood flooring); ceiling light fixtures (they chose to bring some special fixtures from the house they were leaving after 20+ years and had them installed in the apartment); laundry facilities (they chose to have a washer/dryer installed in the apartment rather than using the shared laundry room available on each floor of the building); window treatments (they installed honeycomb blinds with no curtains while other residents have draperies, curtains, and venetian blinds); kitchen cabinet finishes, counter tops, and appliances.

Buildings/Grounds/Location

The Freedom Village campus consists of two buildings: first, a seven-story building in the shape of the letter 'H' with roughly 40 apartments on each floor which is divided into the five 'legs' of the 'H.' The entire building is referred to as The Lakes because each of the five 'legs' is named after one of the Great Lakes. The author's aunt and uncle live on the first floor of the Lake Erie leg facing east, which gives them a good early morning view of water and trees from an island where an authentic Dutch windmill is located. It is also nice in the late afternoon when they sit on their porch and relax while enjoying a snack and perhaps a sip of a locally brewed beverage.

The Inn, which is connected to The Lakes, is the second building on the Freedom Village campus. It houses the rehabilitation unit, the assisted living section, acute nursing care, and the memory unit. The author's aunt used the rehabilitation in 2015 after a knee replacement, and she was very happy with the care she received. The Inn has been under construction in 2016 in order to convert it to single rooms, and the entire area is being given a much-needed refreshing. The author's aunt and uncle will transition to those areas when needed as they age.

The town of Holland, Michigan was named one of America's Prettiest Towns in 2013 (Giuffo 2013). Freedom Village is located within walking distance to the downtown Holland area and to Hope College. The author's aunt and uncle take advantage of the close proximity by walking in the area as often as possible: she on foot, and he on his scooter. Freedom Village has a close relationship with the college since the president and some faculty members from Hope were instrumental in its founding. Freedom Village offers field trips to cultural events at Hope such as plays, concerts, etc. In addition to the college, there are many things to do in Holland. See Appendix C for a list of things to see and do in the surrounding community.

Services/Amenities

There are a myriad of services and amenities available at Freedom Village, including: Health/medical: occupational, physical and speech therapy; physician on site; nurses available 24/7 to respond to

emergencies; transportation to off-site appointments; social workers; vision clinics. Other: Post office with a locked mailbox for each resident and ability to post outgoing mail; beauty salon; barber shop; small grocery/convenience store; computer lab, including a computer coach; gym, including a variety of exercise machines, a walking track, table tennis and daily fitness classes; pool; bank; in-house library with magazines, books, assisted reading devices, computers, and talking books, as well as transportation to the city library; bus transportation several days per week to various grocery stores and shopping malls; bus transportation to the airport (45 minutes away) for a nominal charge; and bus transportation to church, movies, concerts, etc.

Local churches provide buses from Freedom Village to their Sunday services as well, at no additional charge. In addition, residents may have their own cars, and complimentary valet parking is provided. The author's aunt and uncle take advantage of this service and appreciate the convenience of having their car brought to the front door of their building when they need it. As at Disney, the services and amenities at Freedom Village contribute to an environment where safety, courtesy, and efficiency are top priorities. (Disney's Four Keys to a Great Guest Experience. 2016).

Staff

Freedom Village enjoys a high ratio of staff to residents: approx. 1 to 4-5. There are approx. 430 staff, many of whom are part-time. The largest number of staff work in three areas: nursing (including CNAs) to maintain 24/7 coverage; housekeeping; and dining services.

Dining

The food is one of the selling points of Freedom Village, which is known throughout the community as 'the place to be invited for dinner.' The author's aunt and uncle usually prepare and eat breakfast and lunch in their apartment and then join friends in one of the five dining rooms for dinner. Residents can pay for guests to join them for dinner. Residents order from a menu, which changes daily and includes a variety of main entrees, accompaniments, desserts, and an extensive salad bar. There is a registered dietician on site who is responsible for accommodating special dietary

needs such as vegetarianism.

The dining rooms resemble restaurants both in the variety of options and in the tableside service; no buffet lines. The dining rooms offer free wine on Saturdays and are open Monday-Saturday for the noon or evening meal. On Sunday the dining rooms are open for brunch only.

Mealtime is an opportunity to socialize, and a large percentage of residents, 85%-90%, eat at least one meal together with others in one of the dining rooms. It is easy to make new friends, if one wishes, by asking to be seated together at the dining tables, which accommodate two, four, six or eight people. There is also a Bistro, open 7:00am-8:00pm every day, with snacks, drinks, and full meals available. All of the meals in the dining rooms are part of the monthly dining bill. Residents never need cash; they just swipe their meal card. The dining room servers are part-time high school and college students. Residents often become acquainted with them and enjoy the interactions with young people.

Events, Activities and Volunteer Opportunities

Freedom Village is a very active, social place if residents choose to participate, and the majority do so in varying degrees. Options include: heated pool and hot tub with daily exercise classes; gym with exercise equipment and classes; game room equipped with board games, jigsaw puzzles, computers and room for small groups such as the bridge club and regularly-scheduled meetings of church groups that have members who are Freedom Village residents; woodworking shop with a lathe and tools to make a variety of bowls, trays, jewelry, etc.; arts and crafts room for quilting groups, knitters, and the residents who volunteer to mend and alter clothing (proceeds go to the Scholarship Fund); dance classes; dominoes; reading groups; choir; bicycle groups; movies; Sunday worship service; a pool table; a card and game room that offers a variety of weekly card games; book groups; billiards room; among many others. One or two evenings a week there is a scheduled lecture or musical performance. Transportation is provided by bus to community events and events at the college.

Social interaction is an integral part of life at Freedom Village. When the author's aunt and uncle lived alone in their house, their social activities had to be much more planned and scheduled. At Freedom Village, contact

with others occurs in the hallway, elevator, dining room and elsewhere, making social contact part of everyday life. Also, residents are expected to always wear their name badges in public areas. Wearing name tags allows new residents to quickly know the names of others and allows them to greet each other by name, adding to the sense of connectedness among the residents.

In addition, many volunteer opportunities are available to residents at Freedom Village. For example, the author's aunt belongs to a volunteer group of about 20 residents called "Baggie Books." Freedom Village provides bus transportation for "Baggie Books" volunteers to go to a local elementary school one half day each week. Each volunteer is assigned to a classroom for the year; they follow a curriculum and work with the teacher to read one-on-one with each student in the classroom. The author's aunt enjoys getting to know the students, observing the diversity in the student body (her school has a majority of non-white students), and seeing the improvement in reading ability of the students.

Resident Participation in Freedom Village Governance

There is an elected Resident Advisory Council (RAC), which meets monthly and consists of two members elected from each of the seven floors of the building. Representatives serve 2-year terms and one half of the representatives are up for election each year. Officers of the council are elected by the representatives for a one-year term. All residents are welcome at the meetings and are encouraged to attend if they choose. Residents are also encouraged to communicate opinions, ideas and suggestions to council representatives. Following each monthly meeting, a report is distributed to all residents including an extensive written report of the business section of the RAC meeting, a report from each of the standing committees, and a report from Freedom Village's Executive Director, keeping residents informed about the administration of Freedom Village.

In addition, there is a standing Food Committee to which residents are invited to submit suggestions to assist in planning dining options. To encourage submissions, each month the committee draws one suggestion from the over 100 monthly comments, and the winner receives a free dinner for a guest.

There is also a standing Activities Committee that provides suggestions for the myriad available options

which Freedom Village might "sponsor." Many times these activities require transportation that is provided by the two Freedom Village buses, one of which is equipped with a lift for wheelchair occupants.

Families/Visitors of Residents

Many residents at Freedom Village have visitors. Guests may park free-of-charge in the public parking lot. There is no charge for guests to visit private residences, but there is a charge for guest meals and accommodations. Children are always welcome, and may use all of the facilities (pool, gym, etc.) while they are there. There are no ongoing activities for the children.

Daily Schedule

There is no structured or required daily schedule that all independent living residents follow. However, there is a daily schedule of events and activities, which are available if residents choose to participate. All residents in independent living must pull a cord that hangs in the bathroom before a certain time every morning to signal that everything is okay. If the cord not pulled, the front desk will call to check. This practice provides a level of comfort for the residents. In other parts of Freedom Village, i.e. rehabilitation, memory unit, extended care, and skilled nursing, there is a more rigid schedule to accommodate the needs of the residents in those units. Since the author's aunt and uncle are in the independent living area, they are free to do as they wish when they wish, just as they were when they lived in their previous houses.

Quality of Life

All of Freedom Village's services contribute to the quality of life of the residents. In addition, the staff help residents form support groups for issues such as grief; vision impairments; and Parkinson's disease. Pets are allowed: one dog, or a maximum of two cats, is allowed in any first-floor apartment. A maximum of two cats per apartment is allowed on any floor. No dogs are allowed on the upper floors. Pets are not allowed in any common area, and there is a nominal additional charge per month to keep a pet. Research shows the benefits of human-

animal bonding, including a positive physiological effect on the heart, a reduced need for medication, and assistance for persons with disabilities. Pets also give love and friendship that boosts morale and raises the self-esteem of their owners. (Hoffman 1991).

Satisfaction

The author's aunt and uncle are extremely happy with their living situation at Freedom Village. Overall, they love the non-institution atmosphere and appreciate very much the freedom that they have to live their lives independently. At the same time, Freedom Village provides them with safe accommodations; easy access to medical care; and a variety of social events/activities.

The author's uncle's Parkinson's disease causes his need for assistance to vary; he knows that he can easily and quickly receive the help he needs. He uses an electric scooter to get around, and the building is designed to accommodate walkers, scooters and wheelchairs: no steps, convenient elevators, and large hallways. When they need rehabilitation services, as the author's aunt did in 2015, these services are readily available in-house. If their needs change in the future, the author's aunt and uncle will be able to easily move to assisted living, memory care, or skilled nursing, without leaving Freedom Village. In addition, they have many friends at Freedom Village, including some from before they moved there and many more from their time living there. They appreciate living in close proximity to the other residents, most of whom share their values and interests. Both speak very highly of the staff as well.

CONCLUSION

The Freedom Village community offers a successful model of living options for the aging population. The Village addresses quality of life issues of older adults by providing many options for the physical, emotional, medical and spiritual well-being of its residents. The Village also provides a safe environment, including appropriate security; flexible medical care options that adapt to the changing needs of its residents, including skilled nursing, memory care, and rehabilitation services; opportunities for social contact with both peers (i.e. other residents) and with younger people (i.e. staff); and caregivers who are trained in and understand the unique needs of an older population.

The life spans of residents are increased by 10%-15% due to living in Freedom Village. Within six months of moving in, residents are consistently happier and healthier than when they arrived. Their improved health and happiness are due both to the peace of mind that comes from having all of their needs met and from the myriad of available social activities (Stickel 2016). Almost 20 years earlier, Moorhead and Fischer (1995:316) reported a similar finding about mortality among residents at CCRCs: "The overall...mortality experience...indicate(s) that the selection techniques, living conditions and residents' sense of security produce the excellent mortality experience of many CCRCs."

One disadvantage of this model of a continuing care retirement community, however, is its cost. The author's aunt and uncle put down a considerable lump sum in order to buy into Freedom Village. Their steep monthly maintenance fee would be out of the reach of many elders. A tax break might be available for all or part of the lump sum (Tax Break Helps Pay for CCRC Fees 2013) but even with potential tax credits, more effort needs to be put into providing communities such as Freedom Village for lower-income seniors, so that they, too, can enjoy its benefits.

The author agrees with Wise (2002) that caring for seniors should be the responsibility of both their families and of the state and federal governments. In regard to the latter, specifically, state and federal policies should be enacted to give families both financial and other types of support (i.e. respite care). Such multi-level policies would make it possible for adult children to support their parents and would reward them for doing so. Wise (2002: 565-566) points out that such policies would benefit the elderly, their families, and the state. For example, senior care tax credits, similar to existing child care credits, should be offered to adult children who support their parents. There should be additional options for older adults who lack the necessary financial resources to apply to continuing care retirement communities. In the case of Freedom Village, the author further asserts that both Brookdale and the local social services agencies should provide financial support for potential residents who do not have the resources that are necessary to apply.

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APPENDIX A

History of Freedom Village

In the late 1980s, a group of thoughtful and insightful leaders from the Holland, Michigan (<http://www.holland.org/>) community envisioned Freedom Village. The leaders included the president of and some faculty members from Hope College (<http://www.hope.edu>), a 4,000-student Christian liberal arts college located in Holland. Initially Freedom Village was funded by Freedom Group, Inc. after the Holland visionaries pitched the idea to Mr. Steven Roskamp, a Freedom Group partner. Freedom Group applied its expertise in retirement communities and its financial backing to the project. In July of 1998, American Retirement Corp acquired Freedom Group (American Retirement Corporation entry in Mergent Online 2016), and Brookdale Senior Living acquired American Retirement Corporation (ARC) in July of 2006 (Brookdale Senior Living entry in Mergent Online 2016). Brookdale (<http://www.brookdale.com>), of Brentwood, Tennessee, remains the owner of Freedom Village. When Brookdale acquired ARC, many of the ARC staff remained, including the CEO. Since Brookdale is a for-profit corporation, the goal of Freedom Village is, first, to care for its residents in the best way possible and, second, to generate a profit. Brookdale owns and operates over 1,200 facilities nationwide, including other Continuing Care Retirement Communities, defined as offering independent living, assisted living and nursing home care all in one campus (<http://www.aplaceformom.com/senior-care-resources/articles/continuing-care-retirement-communities>). Brookdale considers Freedom Village to be a national model and the benchmark for Brookdale's other retirement communities, including in the areas of occupancy, staffing levels and low turnover of staff, and various financial metrics. It is a for-profit model. Freedom Village is licensed by the state of Michigan for their skilled nursing, and they are licensed by the state as a Home for the Aged (http://www.michigan.gov/lara/0,4601,7-154-63294_27717-245180--,00.html). They accept Medicare for rehabilitation services.

Many of the Freedom Village staff members are local to the Holland area and have worked there since it opened 25 years ago, providing consistency and continuity.

Photos of Freedom Village <https://www.flickr.com/gp/51367313@N05/78ND5D>

APPENDIX B

Demographics: Residents and Facility

Currently there are 500 total residents at Freedom Village; the majority are in independent living units, with fewer in assisted living. There are 118 beds available in skilled nursing and 39 Medicare beds.

The minimum age to buy in is 55, and residents range in age from 55 to 106, with the average age in the mid-to-late 80s. The socio-economic background of the residents varies widely. There are 7 bookkeepers and accountants; 2 lawyers; 17 ministers and missionaries; 10 physicians; 101 teachers and professors; 16 registered nurses; 4 librarians; 31 homemakers; 12 psychologists, counselors and social workers; 4 chemists; and several farmers and factory workers; as well as many who were in business of various kinds. The majority of Freedom Village residents are well-educated. The author's uncle is a retired university professor and her aunt is a retired school counselor. However, there are also residents who would not have been considered "professional" in their younger years, including women who were homemakers before the time when it became more common for women to work outside of the home, who contribute a perspective that is useful and interesting to the others. There is no racial diversity. Because of the importance of Hope College in the community, many Freedom Village residents are or have been connected with the college.

APPENDIX C

Area attractions include:

Holland State Park

<http://www.holland.org/includes/redirects/webcount.cfm?listingID=22;>

Big Red Lighthouse

<http://www.holland.org/includes/redirects/webcount.cfm?listingID=372;>

DeGraaf Nature Center

<http://www.holland.org/includes/redirects/webcount.cfm?listingID=55;>

DeKlomp Wooden Shoe & Delft Factory

<http://www.holland.org/includes/redirects/webcount.cfm?listingID=56;>

Holland Museum

<http://www.holland.org/includes/redirects/webcount.cfm?listingID=59;>

Nelis' Dutch Village <http://www.holland.org/includes/redirects/webcount.cfm?listingID=63;>

Veldheer Tulip Gardens

<http://www.holland.org/includes/redirects/webcount.cfm?listingID=73;> and

Windmill Island Gardens

<http://www.holland.org/includes/redirects/webcount.cfm?listingID=74.>

There is also an annual Tulip Time Festival, held each spring, which was named the "Best Small Town Festival" by Readers Digest and USA Today's 2016 Best Flower Festival (<http://www.hollandsentinel.com/x407219020/8-decades-of-Tulip-Time>).

Livability.com ranked Holland as a Top 10 "Best City for Families" and one of the Top 10 "Affordable Places to Live" in 2016 (<http://www.livability.com/mi/holland>)

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