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The Villages at Pine Valley Offers Tips for Older Adults who are Considering Downsizing

(PHILADELPHIA, PA) – Moving from one home to another can be stressful for anyone. But for older adults who are downsizing from a long-time home to smaller quarters, it can be overwhelming.

“The idea of paring down a lifetime of possessions can be physically and emotionally daunting,” says Holly Ballay, a representative of The Villages at Pine Valley, Holy Redeemer Health System’s active-living community for adults age 55 and older. “Many times people don’t know where to begin.”

The moving process often begins with downsizing, says Steve Godfrey, also of The Villages. “For older adults moving into a smaller home, downsizing is a great way to simplify life,” he says. “It helps you get rid of items you no longer need, allows you to move into your new space comfortably and saves you money, because the more items you discard before your move, the lower your moving bill will be.”

To help older adults downsize, Ballay and Godfrey offer the following tips:

- **Obtain a room layout** – Before you move, find out how much space each room has in your new home. With this information, you can create a floor plan (note – most retirement communities can provide you with a floor plan already drawn up). The floor plan serves as a roadmap for your move, because it will help you decide how many possessions you can keep. It also provides added assurance that each piece of furniture will fit.
- **Hire outside help** – Choose a moving company that can meet your needs. For example, some companies will not only move you, they’ll also help you sort and dispose of excess belongings. Look for a company that specializes in moving older adults.

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- **Plan the move** – Generally speaking, movers are busiest at the beginning and end of each month. If possible, hold your move until mid-month to secure lower rates. Also, ask for a written estimate. Estimates should be based on an actual inspection of your home, not a phone conversation.
- **Start to sort** – The key to starting your “possessions audit” is sorting. Begin in areas of the house that you are currently not using because it will be least disruptive to everyday life. These areas often contain a lot of items that have not been used for a while and will not be missed. Once you have your room picked out, start with the large items and work your way down to the small items. Put things you want to keep in one pile and things you don’t need or want into another. If you can’t make a decision about something, set it aside and think about it until you do come to a decision.
- **Dispose** – Once you’ve gotten your pile together of items you don’t need or want, you can then start putting those items into categories. These categories include: items you’re passing on to family or friends, items to be sold at a garage sale or auction, items to be given to charity and items that will be thrown away. Separate each pile and mark the piles with stickers. Keep a list of your decisions. Then begin calling your charity of choice, making arrangements for family and friends to get their items and putting the items you are throwing away into garbage bags.

Conveniently located in Northeast Philadelphia, The Villages at Pine Valley offers maintenance-free living in both condominiums and apartments. For more information about The Villages or to arrange a personal tour, call Holly Ballay or Steve Godfrey at 1-866-870-8601 or visit www.thevillagesatpinevalley.com.