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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**SC Seniors are Out of Their Rockers and On to Wii**  
**Lutheran Homes of South Carolina hosts 1<sup>st</sup> Annual Wii Bowling Tournament**

Irmo, SC—April 27th, 2008—On Friday, May 2, 2008, Lowman Home will convert their Hoefler Gallery into a bowling alley as seven teams of active seniors from across the state don their wrist straps and use their remote controllers in a frame-by-frame virtual battle to win the coveted honor of ‘*Wii Bowling Champions.*’ The seven teams represent residents from the full service retirement communities of Lutheran Homes of South Carolina—Franke at Seaside (Mt. Pleasant), Lowman Home (White Rock), Rice Home (Columbia), RoseCrest (Inman), and Trinity Lutheran Home (Aiken). With remote controls in hand, the senior bowlers will direct their own personalized Mii characters to mimic the actions of rolling the bowling ball down the virtual lanes to play against their fellow retirees in a three-match elimination tournament.

Lutheran Homes introduced the Nintendo Wii console and sports game package during Active Aging Week last September to bring the virtual ball field, tennis court, boxing ring, golf greens and bowling alley to each retirement community. Each player can create their own Mii character to act on the screen. Some go to great lengths to personalize their Mii to resemble them—choosing its hairstyle, clothing and facial features.

The game uses a motion-sensor bar and the Wii remote to detect the actions of players and then moves their characters on the screen. Using the motion-sensitive technology the senior players to act out their moves -- swinging their arms as they hold the remote like a bowling ball as they follow through their swing and watch as their virtual ball rolls down the alley for a strike or the dreaded virtual gutter on the screen.

So far, Wii is a hit as a new way for older adults to exercise their minds and bodies.

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"We had folks that were curious and showed up just to watch the first few times, but once they played, they were hooked," notes Cindy Curtis, Lutheran Homes' BeWell Program Manager and tournament chair.

Residents regularly enjoy the benefits of the virtual sports packages--especially those who have been able to participate again in the games that arthritis or injury forced them to abandon. .

Dottie Leighliter, 85, from Franke at Seaside in Mt Pleasant was an avid bowler in her younger years belonging to several leagues. While other teammates stand, she can still bowl *sitting down* in front of a big screen.

Tomas Mendez, the fitness director at Franke at encourages residents to participate in Wii to get a good cardio workout. "You can get your heart rate up maybe 15-20-25 beats-per-minute and that's enough for some of these folks in their 70's and 80's," Mendez said.

With cheerleaders in poodle skirts and bowlers in classic 1950s apparel, the 4-person teams will compete in two qualifying matches prior to the championship match. From the Franke KingPins to the Rice AlleyGators, bowlers, cheerleaders, and spectators alike will relive the heyday of bowling, enjoying classic 1950s drive-in food, music from the early days of rock-n-roll, and the natural camaraderie and cajoling that comes with competition.

Denise Dickinsen, Lutheran Homes' Director of Program Development notes that playing Wii helps break the stereotype that seniors are not active in their later years. "We're seeing our older seniors residents get out of their rockers, and on to the Wii! They are more physically active and socially engaged with Wii. An added benefit is found for some who've reached a new status their relationships with their grandchildren-it's hip to play Wii."

### **Lutheran Homes of South Carolina, Inc. and BeWell:**

The Wii tournament is sponsored by Lutheran Homes of South Carolina's BeWell Program. As their standard for wellness and life enrichment, BeWell—*Bringing Everyone Wellness Enrichment for Lasting Life*—includes programs and services that support successful

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For more information on this topic or to set up press coverage of the event, please call Denise Dickinsen at 803-749-5141 or e-mail [Ddickinsen@lhomes.org](mailto:Ddickinsen@lhomes.org)

**Lutheran Homes of South Carolina  
1<sup>st</sup> Annual Wii Bowling Tournament**

**Hoefler Gallery –Daily Life Center  
Lowman Home  
2101 Dutch Fork Road  
White Rock, SC 29177**

**Friday, May 2, 2008.**

- 10:30 am:** Senior teams arrival
- 11:00 am:** 1st Round - seven teams playing with two lowest scoring teams eliminated.
- 11:45 am:** 2<sup>nd</sup> Round - five teams playing with two lowest scoring teams eliminated.
- 12:15 pm:** Lunch
- 1:00 pm:** Championship Round – 3 teams playing with 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> place award based on their final score
- 1:40 pm:** Award Ceremony
- 2:00 pm:** Tournament ends, senior travel home.

**Directions:**

From Columbia take I-26 towards Spartanburg, take Exit 101A toward Ballentine/ White Rock, stay on US 76 through Ballentine and into White Rock. Turn left at light onto Lowman Home Barn Road. The Hoefler Gallery is in the Daily Life Center on the left.

Phone: Lowman Home: 803-732-8800

