

January/February Issue
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From The Desk of Steve Rosedale...

It's time to take a look back at 2003 and see how we did. There have been significant changes. At the facility level we've seen an improvement in survey results, census increased significantly (46+) by year-end over 2002, AR decreased and in Cleveland Senior Care there was a dramatic improvement financially. We picked up two new facilities, Waterford Commons and Crestwood, and changed Regency Manor and Burlington House from management contract to a long term lease. We improved systems such as adding Ultipro, had a few major renovation projects, and opened several new Behavioral Care units.

Of course not everything was rosy. We had a few falls on the face, but even there we quickly recovered and fought back to make things much better than before. You could look at 2003 in terms of events and results as above, but in truth it's a story about people. In every case, in every facility, in each region and at the home office, it was people that made the difference. Family Communicare worked hard this last year. You have much to be proud of, and we begin 2004 with a good platform to launch the New Year. From where I sit it looks like a rocket taking off, so hold on to your hats! ***From the bottom of our hearts we thank you for your hard work and hard won accomplishments and cheer you on as space ship CommuniCare lifts off!***

Aristocrat Berea's Share Corner

By Ken Loeding, ICF/MR Administrator, Aristocrat Berea

Yesterday, the Junior ChildCare Association came in for a planned lunch in the ICF/MR building. If you remember, they have been a benefactor of ours for the past 10 years donating \$\$\$'s consistently, but they've never seen us. I invited hem to come, tour & have lunch. They arrived with individualized presents for each of our kids and ended up staying close to 4 hours. It was a great time, sincerely. After they left I got a call from a former employee. Her father just came into 2.4 million dollars due to the passing of his son who was disabled from an accident 14 years ago. The father wants to give back and wanted a list of our kids needs and is going shopping this weekend.

I couldn't ask for more for our folks. Additionally, the American Baptist church in Berea Women's Club, made sixty lap top blankets wrapped and brought them in last week. This is turning out to be a good year for our folks.

Focus On...

“Touching Another Heart”

By Kena Minnick, Executive Vice President and COO

WHEN ONE HEART REACHES OUT TO TOUCH ANOTHER HEART.....there is a connection that defies words, but the feeling is electric. A giving heart comforts beyond the moment and continues to comfort to know that another human being cares enough to give of their heart, time and talent to ease pain and suffering. This is THE core value of a Caring Community as expressed in our mission and so often communicated by Steve as he orients new employees on the power of one heart reaching out to touch another heart.

What I love about our company is that our people make these words come ALIVE. Over the past few weeks, we have had tragedies that took one single mother's two teenage sons, another St. Louis employee severely injured in a hit and run, while another executive lost a parent. In ALL these cases our employees, our CommuniCare Cares teams, our corporate staff and countless individuals have pulled together to give money, gifted vacation, organized fund raisers and endless words of sympathy, courage and hope. This is a Caring Community in action.

The Minnick Family experienced the bright light of our Caring community when an Angel of Mercy appeared at my parent's home on a Saturday morning in January. As many of you know, my mother is in the final stages of the terminal illness, Sclera Derma. The disease hardens the skin inside and outside the body and my mother is now suffering from painful digital ulcers on her hands. Her bones are exposed and the acute care specialists have no answers or resources to offer in the little town of The Plains, Ohio.

I'm someone who fixes problems, but my mother is in pain and I can't help her, but we have angels in CommuniCare. Last Saturday, Cathy Casey, Regional Nurse Consultant for the Rough Riders Region visited my mom to provide treatment that gave my mom "relief for the first time in a month." She taught my 74-year-old dad how to change mom's dressing and offered hope that we could heal these wounds and avoid amputation. My mom said, "I never felt her fingers on my hand, she has the touch of an angel." My mom collects angels.

I can't thank Cathy enough; in fact, I thanked her so much for giving of her personal time, she told me, "Don't thank me, its O.K., we are family."

Her words rang true for me personally and that makes all the difference in a life and in a company.

Candlewood's Award Corner

By Angie Bates, Director of Admissions, Candlewood

We at Candlewood just started an Administrator's Cup Award (which is like the employee of the year), except the nominations have to have perfect attendance and no corrective actions in their file for the year. ***Congratulations Administrator's Cup Award Winner for 2003 Serina Perry.***

This employee has gone above and beyond the call of duty. Sacrificing her own needs to make sure the residents are taken care of. This employee has taken on her shift and many others, she has taken on nursing (STNA) and cleaning to make sure everything is wiped down and straightened up in the resident's closets. If it is asked of her she does it, with no problem and you can bet that it will be done right. All the residents love her, staff and families warm-up to her, she knows how to motivate you and she is one heck of a fundraiser in getting you to open your hear for the residents when and event comes up to help make it an enjoyable program. She is so dedicated that sometimes you have to tell her to go home and just when you think she has, she is right back in full force with a smile on her face. These qualities are hard to come by and when you find them it is a blessing.

TUNE INTO THE FORGETTING; A PORTRAIT OF ALZHEIMER'S AIRING JANUARY 21ST AT 9 P.M. ON PBS

The Alzheimer's Association is a national partner for the PBS campaign to raise public awareness of Alzheimer's disease through *THE FORGETTING; A PORTRAIT OF ALZHEIMER'S*, which airs Wednesday, January 21 at 9 p.m. The program provides viewers a deeper understanding of the disease, the science behind it and the experience of those who suffer from its tragic effects.

The 90-minute documentary explores the latest Alzheimer research and the devastating toll Alzheimer's takes on people with the disease and caregivers. *THE FORGETTING* focuses on several families whose lives have been steadily ravaged by Alzheimer's. Like so many coping with this tragedy, these families are drawing on reservoirs of strength and compassion to stay focused on the person they love even as personalities and capabilities change from day-to-day.

A half-hour follow-up special will be hosted by award-winning actor David Hyde Pierce, best known for his role as Niles Crane in the NBC comedy *Frasier*. Pierce has experienced Alzheimer's first-hand through both his grandfather's and his father's illnesses. Therefore, he has been a tireless advocate in the fight to find a cure. Pierce will bring together a panel of experts to answer commonly asked questions and direct viewers to organizations and resources that can offer help and support.

Financial Outlook

CASH, The King

By Charles Stoltz, CFO

Many of you have heard the phrase "Cash is King". They aren't talking about England (they have a queen, anyway), nor are we talking about Elvis (for those who Believe, he just had another birthday last week), they are talking about the way that our company - and all companies run. Cash is used to pay staff, pay benefits, pay for supplies & other services, and pay for improvements to our facilities. In the past year, our facilities have faced significant pressures: Medicaid has reduced payment rates, Worker's Comp. premiums have risen, all other insurance (including health insurance and benefit program) premiums have also risen. While the Business Office normally handles the billing and collection of patient accounts, collecting cash is EVERYONE'S RESPONSIBILITY.

In 2003, our facilities will not collect \$1,750,000 (not a typo!) which is due from our patients because they can not, do not, or will not pay for their services. The Business Office must rely on many departments (Admissions, Nursing, Social Services, etc.) to obtain the information necessary to prepare complete and accurate patient invoices. Collection of this information improved dramatically during 2003, but there is always room for improvement.

WE NEED YOUR HELP! For our facilities to continue to pay for staff raises, fund additional benefits costs, improve our physical plants, etc., we need your help collecting money. Everyone, whether you realize it or not, has some impact on the collections process. Many are directly involved (Admissions gets critical paperwork upon admission, the nursing departments

gather and submit accurate and timely MDS information, etc.). In the coming year, to combat some of the increasing cost pressures and Medicaid rate reductions, we have set a goal to reduce bad debt expense by half. This will allow us to continue to pay our people, our suppliers, and invest in our future together.

Many of you are aware of the role you play in our facilities and how it affects our collection efforts. If you are not certain, ask your Administrator or your Business Office Manager how you can help. Some innovative examples I have seen:

- Social Workers get involved with the resident and their families when Social Security checks are being diverted from the facility (i.e. stolen).
- When accounts are behind or resources go uncollected, the floor nurses let the Business Office Manager or Administrator know when a family member or other individual involved in the residents' financial affairs comes for a visit.
- When taking an off hour admission or covering for an Admission Coordinator who is out of the building (marketing, sick, vacation, etc.), ensuring that all paperwork is complete and reviewing the paperwork with the Business Office Manager before the family leaves.

These are a couple examples of things I have seen our facilities do that help improve collections. Collecting the cash is everybody's business because everybody complains when there is not enough money to pay for raises, not enough money to pay for facility improvements and not enough money to keep suppliers happy. We all have a responsibility to ensure that we receive what is due to us by our clients.

Share Corner *from Our Facilities*

Activities Month at CommuniCare at Waterford Commons

By Anne Kimmey, Director of Marketing, CommuniCare at Waterford Commons

This month at Waterford Commons (WC), we celebrated "Activities Month." We dedicated this month to our very special Activities Department, Debbie Sickmiller and Cassandra Joshaway. The girls are irresistible and want everyone to love life as much as they do. You can't help but fall in love with them.

These two ladies have a special talent for speaking for the heart, for nurturing, for making WC a place where the residents they love can feel safe, comfortable and at peace. It's a simple thing that comes from the soul, but it shines from within, it's a spirit that surmounts. They've stolen our hearts in case you can't tell. How happy we are to have them here at WC.

The residents know before they're awake...there's no other place they would rather be than in their peaceful dining/activity room, overlooking our Garden Lake Parkway. The morning is all theirs to inhabit fully, with a leisurely meal. We can see quite well our angels in the corner preparing the residents breakfast. The room has a feeling of warmth and sunshine that stretches to eternity. You cannot ask for two more dedicated employees. Their top priority is always the residents. They always go the extra mile for them.

The girls are always marketing for the facility. They have a very good reputation in the community due to their involvement. Many family members will come back to visit or volunteer after their loved one has left the facility. They are the first to greet a new employee or resident to make them feel welcome. They are always there to do whatever is needed.

We salute you, Debbie and Cassandra, and we thank God every day that you are our Activity Department and on our team. We are so proud of you both!

Holiday Tragedy Strikes at Pebble Creek

By James Egli, Pebble Creek Administrator

The phone call that all parents fear, your child has been in a car accident, please come to the hospital. Those were the words that were spoken to Becky Evans, Housekeeper, while she was working at Pebble Creek Senior Care Center on January 1, 2004. Except in her case, two of her children were involved in a fatal car accident that took the life of her youngest son, Jess E. Evans who was only 17 years old at the time of the accident. Jess died one day prior to his 18th birthday, her other son, Eric suffered a broken neck and is recovering from the accident. I didn't know Jess very well, but what I do remember is that he had a very

good work ethic, was polite and considerate to the staff and residents at Pebble. Whenever we had family events Jess would often come in and help Activities and Maintenance putting up and tearing down tables for the event. He would never complain and always expressed a positive attitude and work ethic. Being a parent myself I cannot imagine what Becky is going through, a parent should never have to lose a child in such a tragic way. If I have learned anything from this, it is the fact that so many people have gone above and beyond my expectations at Pebble Creek. The staff has pulled together in such a way that words cannot describe how I feel about them, all I can say is I am proud to be a part of this facility and to have had the pleasure to have known Jess E. Evans. I would also like to thank Corporate and the other facilities that have donated items to Becky.

Calendar of Events

JANUARY

- 1st – New Years Day
- 15th – National Mentoring Day
- 19th – Martin Luther King, Jr. Day
- 22nd – Chinese New Year

FEBRUARY

- 2nd – Groundhog Day - Will we see the groundhog's shadow this year?
- 12th – Lincoln's Birthday
- 14th – Valentine's Day
- 16th – President's Day
- 22nd – Washington's Birthday
- 25th – Ash Wednesday