

News Communicator



A CommuniCare Health Services Newsletter Publication

Winter Issue
Volume II, 2006

Inside this Issue...

- 1 Steve Rosedale's Address
Candlewood's Corner
- 2 Focus On
Calendar of Events
Wyant Woods Corner
- 3 Share Corner
Pine Grove
- 4 Share Corner
Baldwin
Greenbrier
- 5 Share Corner
Pebble Creek
- 6 Share Corner
Pine Valley
Aristocrat Berea

CommuniCare Health Services
4700 Ashwood Drive, Suite 200
Cincinnati, Ohio 45241
(800) 989.7337
www.communicarehealth.com

Send CommuniCator Article Submissions to:
pbrueneman@chs-corp.com

From the Desk of Steve Rosedale...



Chalk up another one for CommuniCare. After a grueling more than year long battle, beset by two bankruptcies and a threatened foreclosure, where we looked like we were out of the game several times, in the last of the ninth, with two outs and two strikes against us we hit one out of the park! Green Park and Northgate are now firmly in the CommuniCare family for the long haul. A little history, we have managed these facilities since 1998 however the ownership changed a year ago and it was the last owner that put the facilities in bankruptcy. We acquired all four facilities on the last minute of the last day before foreclosure. Charlie Stoltz who headed up our acquisition team deserves a tremendous amount of credit. Charlie was ably assisted by our excellent team of attorneys (Harry Brown, Mayer Klein, Mark Rubin and Mark Derwent) who spent countless nights and weekends getting the deal done. Special thanks to our teams in the facilities who held the ship together in such stormy seas. Without them we would have been sunk. To top it off, Green Park just had a fantastic survey! This completes our strategic plan begun three years ago to convert our management contracts to leases and ownership. We now have the security we need and the dynamic teams to chart an exciting course for the future.

Candlewood's Corner

"C.H.A.N.G.E.: Community Healers Acknowledging Need Goals & Expectations"

By Angie Jinna

C.H.A.N.G.E., a group of young black men, giving their time back to the communities where they grew up, visits Candlewood the first Saturday of each month. A volunteer organization which includes Antoine Moss and other young men between the ages of 15 and 25. Resident Angel Buddha applauds from his seat during the performance, as the Plain Dealer captured the group in action performing a play, doing Thanksgiving Trivia, and reading poems to the elderly ATTENDING RESIDENTS: Tim Walters, Mary Bethune, Edwin Montgomery, Mary Shuman, Marvin Vaughn, Angel Buddha, Lillie M. Davis, Warren Burton

Calendar of Events

Focus On...

“Reflection”

By Kena Minnick, President and COO

As I reflect on 2006, it has been personally and professionally challenging, but by working together, we have solidified the company by strengthening the leadership teams, reducing turnover, reduced operating costs, increased census and improved overall profitability. We have invested over \$2,2 million in capital spending on our facilities and are positioning CommuniCare for the continued reductions in reimbursement. There is much to be done in 2007 as we strive to become more efficient while improving the care we give at the bedside. Ours is the “business of caring” and it is a tough business. It is an awesome responsibility to take care of over 4,000 residents every day and this is what we do at CommuniCare and we do that by hiring and retaining the best and brightest caregivers in the industry. YOU are CommuniCare and how YOU lead and work every day determines the quality of our company. I’m proud to be a part of this team. My message to you ALL is to take care of yourselves...first...so that you can take care of those who depend on you:

- live with intention • walk to the edge • listen hard. • practice wellness
- play with abandon • laugh. choose with no regret • continue to learn
- appreciate your friends. • do what you love • live as if this is all there is..... because it is.

DECEMBER

1st - World Aids Day - www.thebody.com/aawh/aawhpage.html

25th - Christmas Day

26nd - Jan 1st - Kwanzaa

26nd - Jan 2nd - Hanukkah

31st - New Year's Eve

JANUARY

16th - Martin L King Jr Day

Wyant Wood’s Corner

“Bill Rock's Story--30 Years of Service”

By Joe VanNostran

I went to work at Wyant Woods January 25, 1976. At that time it was called Fairlawn Chateau and I was 24 years old. When I first started, I thought it would be for a month or so. I had just finished my schooling at Robin and Arts Floral Designs School, and wanted to find a job in that field. But here I am 30 years later, and 30 years of service to Wyant Woods.

I knew after one year at Wyant Woods that I had come to love my job. I had to sit down with my dad and tell him I was staying at the Care Center. Dad had this “shocked” look on his face and looked at me like I was nuts! I decided to take Dad through the home and show him around. By the time we left to go home, Dad lit up like a light bulb. This was the first time in my life he had given me his approval in any way. Dad died the next month at the age of 50, following a long illness. Dad told me before he died that he was proud of me. I think he saw what I had seen, the way people responded when I came to work, and the way they acted when I left for the day. These people were not just my residents, they became my family.

I have found my calling. I hope to work another 13 years, making me 67 years old. I will have worked for 43 years at the job I love so much. I had the chance to know the people I cared for by sitting down and listening to their stories of how life was for them. One of my residents, who had been a slave, ran away from the south at the age of 10, eventually coming to Akron. He worked in a tire factory, all by himself and very much alone. I had a chance through the years, to hear many more stories like this one from a lot of people by working at Wyant Woods. It’s no wonder that 30 years has passed by so quickly. Who needs a book when you can hear it first hand? Wyant Woods is one big family. My residents, nurses, all of the people who make up our team, have made my life brighter and richer.

Pine Grove's Corner

"Gone But Never Forgotten"

By Debbie Smith, Pine Grove

People that are recognized by only one name are usually individuals of great fame and accomplishment. Whether they are liked or not, names such as Oprah and Madonna are known world wide for their accomplishments and their fortunes. Some even consider them role models and heroes.

Here is a list of my heroes: Becky, Tommy, Michael, Renee, Tony, Robert, Tamiko, Brenda, Bobby, Pam, Delbert, Debra, Mara, Patrick, Lydia, Harvey, Eddie, Ruthie, Bernice, Eric, Calvin.

For those of us that have been associated with Garden Level, now called Pine Grove, these names need no explanation. They are the names of our residents that have passed away. Some have been gone for over 30 years, yet hearing only a first name, we conjure their faces in our minds.

We now add another name to that list. One of our long-time heroes that we've known since 1979 passed away on November 10th. He died surrounded by family and friends and I swear I saw the corners of his lips turn up into a smile as he met his mother who has been waiting for him since she went to Heaven a few years ago. His sister said he and his mother were running on a beach... something he couldn't do while he was down here.

All these people despite their outward limitations have left an indelible mark in the hearts of those lucky enough to have known them. How is it possible that ones with so little compared to the world's standards were able to make such an impact?

I can only guess that their conditions prevented them from absorbing the ugliness in the world around them. They didn't cheat, lie or gossip. They had no pretense, no false front. They had little of material value so they shared what really counts - they shared themselves. They lived their lives carrying the burden of their past and present with grace and dignity. By the world's standards they were limited, handicapped, impaired and fragile. To us they are Heroes and we will never forget them.

"Our Staff..."

By Marie Habicht

The Briar Patch is the name of the newsletter created for those of us who work at Greenbrier/Pine Grove monthly. I was reading the November edition, and was startled to read that our "fearless leader" (as she is called by some of our employees), has been with us for 28 years. Now, I've been around for 37 years, myself, but thought: how could someone as energetic as Debbie Smith, be around for that many years. (Deb does not take a compliment well, sorry Deb!)

Then I became a bit nostalgic, as I tend to do (the older I get), and recall that our Office Manager has 30 years in, and our Clinic Coordinator has 27 years in. Debbie Fratus, promoted over the years, from Program aide/Habilitation Aide, to Staff Trainer, to Office Manager. Michele Dooling, promoted over the years, from Program Aide/Habilitation Aide, to Habilitation Coordinator, to Clinic Coordinator. Debbie Smith: Physical Therapy Assistant, Program Director, QMRP, Director, Administrator. I've done quite a bit myself over the years: Medicare Nurse Coordinator, Inservice Director, Nurse Manager, to name a few. Adding up all of our Pine Grove Core Team members years of service, (there are four of us), we have 122 years. So, for a brief moment, I wondered, how could four very different, very strong willed, (very young) woman have survived, not only in health care for that many years, but working with the same population for that many years. I could only come up with one word: DEDICATION! A strong commitment to what we do! I wanted to take this opportunity to salute and honor these women that I have worked side by side with, all of these years, and say that thru all the trials, tears, and tribulations, I wouldn't have wanted to "take this ride" with any other team! We've "done that, been there" and will continue to!!!

Baldwin's Corner

"Letter to My Staff"

By Richard Valentic, Executive Director

Not long ago I ran across an article that addressed the differences in people, and specifically those things that were drivers in individual lives and how they related to certain outcomes and results. One of those drivers or characteristics that was of particular interest to me was the presence of a definable moral code, under which some people live and conduct their day-to-day lives. This moral code, while specific to the individual, has several common threads that influence behaviors. Entwined in this fabric are core values that are similar to the ones that guide our company. Additionally, self discipline, an awareness of one's personal character, a sense of the virtues that contribute to a meaningful life, a sincere interest in the well-being of others, and a willingness to subordinate a personal agenda to the greater need, are some of the aspects of the moral code embodied in many of us.

Over the past months, I have had the opportunity to meet a very high number of the caregivers who work with our residents every day. Oftentimes, as I am touring our facility and greeting our staff, I am filled with a deep sense of pride and humility to be working with such wonderful people. The fact that all of us get up each day and are guided by our own moral code towards spending our workdays with our residents and ensuring their safety, comfort, and in meeting their needs, is a tribute to each of us and to all of us. The work that we do in caring for and providing a community for the elderly requires people of strength and a deep rooted personal commitment to doing the right thing. I said it earlier this week and I meant it, and that is, we are privileged to serve with each other in the care of our residents. We should be thankful for the gifts of talent and ability that enable us to complement each other in this worthy cause.

Finally, as we go into this Holiday Season, I want to leave you with a quote from William Arthur Ward. " Each of us will one day be judged by our standard of life, not by our standard of living; by our measure of giving, not by our measure of wealth; by our simple goodness, not by our seeming greatness." On behalf of the entire leadership TEAM at Baldwin Health Center, we wish all of you a Happy Holidays!

Greenbrier's Corner

"Our Wonderful Accomplishment"

By Nancy Skube

I wanted to send a quick message on another wonderful accomplishment at Greenbrier. In collaboration with Parma Hospital and Greenbrier we hosted our annual CME event for area physicians at our facility. We had 70 in attendance. The team came together and pulled off another huge success!

Our culinary department was here at the crack of dawn preparing made to order omelettes for our guests. The comments that floated throughout the atrium were wonderful compliments to Greenbrier. I overheard many doctors saying "they don't miss this CME because they are so well taken care of at Greenbrier and you can't go wrong with the breakfast!" Now you know its hard to impress physicians, but the culinary department did just that. Of course I had to sample the food & Joe and his team did an awesome job! Everything was delicious. I just wanted to brag a little on the capabilities we have here because this truly is a World Class Facility.

Pebble Creek's Corner

“The Daughter of a Soldier”

Submitted By Jim Egli, Pebble Creek Executive Director

Last week I was in Atlanta, Georgia attending a conference. While I was in the airport, returning home, I heard several people behind me beginning to clap and cheer. I immediately turned around and witnessed one of the greatest acts of patriotism I have ever seen.

Moving thru the terminal was a group of soldiers in their camo's, as they began heading to their gate everyone (well almost everyone) was abruptly to their feet with their hands waving and cheering. When I saw the soldiers, probably 30-40 of them, being applauded and cheered for it hit me. I'm not alone. I'm not the only red blooded American who still loves this country and supports our troops and their families.

Of course I immediately stopped and began clapping for these young unsung heroes who are putting their lives on the line everyday for us so we can go to school, work and home without fear or reprisal. Just when I thought I could not be more proud of my country or of our service men and women, a young girl, not more than 6 or 7 years old, ran up to one of the male soldiers. He kneeled down and said “hi,” the little girl then she asked him if he would give something to her daddy for her. The young soldier, he didn't look any older than maybe 22 himself, said he would try and what did she want to give to her daddy. Then suddenly the little girl grabbed the neck of this soldier, gave him the biggest hug she could muster and then kissed him on the cheek.

The mother of the little girl, who said her daughters name was Courtney, told the young soldier that her husband was a Marine and had been in Iraq for 11 months now. As the mom was explaining how much her daughter, Courtney, missed her father, the young soldier began to tear up. When this temporarily single mom was done explaining her situation, all of the soldiers huddled together for a brief second. Then one of the other servicemen pulled out a military looking walkie-talkie. They started playing with the device and talking back and forth on it.

After about 10-15 seconds of this, the young soldier walked back over to Courtney, bent down and said this to her, “I spoke to your daddy and he told me to give this to you.” He then hugged this little girl that he had just met and gave her a kiss on the cheek. He finished by saying “your daddy told me to tell you that he loves you more than anything and he is coming home very soon.”

The mom at this point was crying almost uncontrollably and as the young soldier stood to his feet he saluted Courtney and her mom. I was standing no more than 6 feet away from this entire event unfolded. As the soldiers began to leave, heading towards their gate, people resumed their applause. As I stood there applauding and looked around, there were very few dry eyes, including my own. That young soldier in one last act of selflessness, turned around and blew a kiss to Courtney with a tear rolling down his cheek.

We need to remember everyday all of our soldiers and their families and thank God for them and their sacrifices. At the end of the day, it's good to be an American.

“Back From Iraq...One Day at a Time”

By Paula Mangus and Jim Egli

Pebble Creek Senior Care Residence held a community event on August 17th to honor area soldiers who served in Iraq. There were approximately 250 people in attendance including Senator Kevin Coughlin and Mayor Plusquellic of Akron. There were also active duty Marines and Army servicemen represented along with several veterans. We honored each of the servicemen who served in Iraq with a special “World Class Medal of Honor” from Pebble Creek.

Jessica Clements was our key speaker and we honored her with a special framed “World Class Medal of Honor” and engraved plaque. We also presented her with 2 Air Tran airline tickets, a large print framed photo from Jim Gehrz, runner up for the Pulitzer prize, and a charcoal sketch of Jessica, donated by Bill Rollins, a local artist who has made hundreds of sketches of soldiers who have lost their lives in Iraq.

Our facility was very active in promoting the event including inviting the community through the local newspapers and passing out flyers. Prior to the event we conducted a live interview on news Channel 5 and were listed on their Community Calendar. Channel 19 news, Channel 3 news, and WAKR radio were present to air segments of our event on their stations the next day.

We raised over \$1300 total and donated part of the proceeds to a local widow whose husband, Sgt. Daniel Crabtree, recently was killed in Iraq by a roadside bomb.

We plan to make this an annual event at Pebble Creek so that we may always remember those who have served our country and show them our sincerest appreciation for the sacrifices they have made to protect our freedom.

Pine Valley's Corner

"Our Family"

By Ruth Hardke

About three years ago, the social worker and activities department decided that Pine Valley needed a cat. In the 1980s, there had been a dog, birds, and fish. Having a cat would be a new endeavor and after much research and policy writing, the search was on.

Claudia Ledenican, Activities Dir., stopped in at an animal shelter and found a 3-year old brown/gray tabby named Shorty. Shorty was "oriented" to the facility slowly but he was an instant hit with the residents, and it is not unusual to see him lying in the middle of the floor with people and wheelchairs going by.

Shorty seems to have a feeling of a resident being at the end of life. He will stay in the room with the family members when they sit with their loved one and be a comforting presence for them during their stay. Many family members have commented on how Shorty stayed and helped them during their time of grief.

Shorty knows which office has his treats that are kept stocked by Kim in Payroll. He has two beds, one in the lobby and one in the "treat" office, but he does sleep where he wants which is typical of a cat. He loves the enclosed courtyard and spends time outside in the summer with the residents and their visitors. Pine Valley was very lucky to find a "laid-back" cat like Shorty, who is a comfort for our residents, family members, and sometimes even employees.

Shorty now shares Pine Valley with a dog named Scruffy. On a cold winter morning two years ago, someone said there was a small brown dog outside the facility. I have two small brown dogs at home and all I could think about was my babies out in the cold. I went outside and sure enough this small brown dog came up to me and flipped on his back wailing pitifully. I pick him up and brought him inside. The staff fussed over him, fed him and gave him water. After a lot of talking and promises of care, the administrator agreed to give this little brown dog a chance to live at Pine Valley.

We had a naming contest with residents, staff and family and the winner was "Scruffy." After a few cat/dog encounters the two have settled down and have even been seen laying together. Scruffy is a great ambassador with touring families and visiting children. The residents love him--as a matter of fact sometimes the only thing that brings some residents out of their rooms is to look for Scruffy. One morning he was barking in the resident hall at 8:00 a.m. When we investigated we found that a resident had fallen and scruffy didn't stop barking until the resident was helped. Another time the front door alarm went off and Scruffy was barking again. It turned out a visitor had accidentally left the front door open and Scruffy stood between the door and a resident barking until staff came and closed the door. He is a wonderful dog with a sixth sense for the care and love of our residents. He has trained us well.

Thank you Shorty and Scruffy for joining our family at Pine Valley!

Aristocrat's Corner

"Remembering Jerry..."

By Ken Loeding (on behalf of all the Residents, Staff & Families....past, present & future....of Aristocrat Berea)

A long time ago (1998), in a city far away (Berea), Jerry Andrews walked into Aristocrat Berea's front doors & said he wanted a job. From that point, everyone's lives changed... forever!

Hired on as the Central Supply Coordinator, Jerry was afforded the opportunity to be everywhere, and everywhere he went, he made a difference in everyone's life he touched...some called it magic, others called it magnetic. Residents, staff and families alike, came to know him not just through his infectious smile & overwhelming sincerity, but for his down-home genuineness & honesty. If you were in trouble, Jerry was there for you....to talk, to listen, to hug. If you were in need, Jerry reached in his pocket or bought groceries or picked you up when your car was down. If you just wanted to laugh, Jerry was there with a shot glass, a deck of cards & a bottle of Jack Daniels. No matter who you were....red, green, black or blue, young, old, Jerry was your friend. He gave of himself willingly and selflessly, placing others before his own needs. Many nights, Jerry stayed late to help newer residents adjust to their new environment and sometimes he stayed to just remember the good old days over coffee, sandwiches and chips....further endearing himself, consistently.

On 10/20/06, Jerry Andrews left us. His passing was anticipated, but still not easy. For those of us lucky enough to have walked down the path with him, we are better & stronger & firmer in our convictions. Jerry left us with the memory of all things good, positive and what CAN be, rather than with just what is.

Goodbye, Jerry! We love you and are grateful we met you in our lifetime!