

Lutheran
SeniorLife

AbundantLife

WINTER 2022

Revitalizing and Growing
Our Senior Living Communities



IN THIS ISSUE: 30th Anniversary Celebration / Adoption / Telehealth

Message From The President

The season of birth, hope, life – Christmas, awakens the spirit within each of us. It is a time to reflect, be thankful and think of others.

At Lutheran SeniorLife, we are thankful for the many blessings made possible through our mission partners, donors and board members. These relationships forge a common goal to fulfill our mission to elevate health, wellness and social services for those we serve and those who serve.

Through our shared vision, we are able to provide a comprehensive array of home health services touching the lives of the “least of these...” (Matthew 25) ranging from children to older adults, to those who may need the services of palliative and hospice care.

That same vision also provides life-engaging services to over 14,000 low income, older adults throughout western Pennsylvania – helping them remain in their homes through the Visiting Nurses Association and LIFE Centers in Armstrong, Beaver, Butler and Lawrence counties.

We are thankful for the programs of the Lutheran Service Society providing social services and activities at the senior centers in Bellevue and the Center at the Mall, as well as, home delivered meals for older adults in Beaver County. We are thankful for our Rehabilitation Services team for providing in-home programs, including Physical Therapy, Occupational Therapy, and Speech-Language Therapy among others.

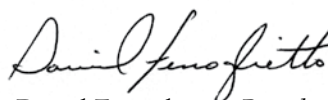
As we enter the season of hopefulness, we are thankful for our ability to offer new modernized apartments for middle-income seniors through The Residence at St. John and a new personal care neighborhood at the

St. John Community. We are also thankful for the Cottages of Passavant, providing the Hesch family with a home to reunite with their family after being apart the past 48 years (See story, page 9).

We are thankful for the volunteers and board members who give graciously of their talents, time and leadership giving us the ability to serve others with grace, dignity and kindness.

We uplift the work of the Foundation that has championed our causes over the past 30 years by collecting donor gifts to support our mission of serving. Because of these gifts, we are able to consciously, and continuously, share your generosity of time and resources through our programs and services – uplifting everyday our residents, participants and patients – an **Abundant Life**® for all!

With blessings of the season, Merry Christmas!



David Fenoglio, President & CEO of Lutheran SeniorLife



Bob and Nancy Hesch with David Fenoglio

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Revitalizing and Growing *Our Senior Living Communities*



As we celebrate the season and look forward to a new year, we reflect on the past with gratefulness in our hearts – giving thanks for everything... (1 Thessalonians 5:18).

Over this past year, Lutheran SeniorLife enhanced its ability to deliver life-changing services with the completion of several projects including, the first phase

of the small homes program, St. John expansion and the renovations to the cottages on the Passavant campus.

Continued on page 4

A Celebration Years In The Making

The sounds of laughter and engaging conversations echoed from the ballroom of Pittsburgh Field Club, as friends, partners, sponsors and employees of Lutheran SeniorLife gathered Thursday, October 6 to celebrate the 30th anniversary of the Lutheran SeniorLife Foundation.

The event recognized the generous donations of those who have supported the Foundation since its founding in 1992, with the appropriate theme, “A Celebration Years In The Making.”

“The Annual Event, appropriately provides a platform to tell the story of the many people that we serve and of the faithful people that serve Lutheran SeniorLife,” said Rev. Michael Sourwine, Foundation Board Chairman. “And most importantly, it provides an opportunity to raise the much needed funds to continue our ministries throughout the year.”

Continued on page 6





Completed small homes

Revitalizing and Growing Our Senior Living Communities



Small homes, kitchen

Continued from page 3

The Small Homes Program

Lutheran SeniorLife recently received its license to open the first of the small homes in the Island section of the City of Butler. The program is a function of LIFE Butler County, owned and operated by Lutheran SeniorLife and the Butler Health System.

The handicap accessible home can accommodate up to six, Medicaid-eligible residents. It comes equipped with appliances, an open floor plan as well as a large great room opening up to a kitchen and dining area. The home

is conveniently located a block from the LIFE Butler County center.

“The small homes program is a very unique model. The program enables qualified participants of the LIFE program to live in a new, residential home and remain active, and part of their community,” explained David Fenoglietto, Lutheran SeniorLife CEO.

LIFE Butler County will provide transportation to and from the center for the residents. While at the center, residents will have the opportunity to socialize, enjoy a meal and participate in scheduled activities. Participants will also have access to routine doctor examinations, as well as other medical services like physical and occupational therapists.

St. John Community: Accepting Personal Care and Residential Living Applications

One of the first residents to move into Edgewood Grove, personal care is 90-year-old, Alice Vogel, the grandmother of Samantha Rapuk, Executive Director of the St. John Community. “It’s a real blessing to have my grandma so close to me,” explained Rapuk. “We have such a close bond and I know she is being cared for by the best team.”

It has been a little more than a year since the first shovel broke ground to expand residential and personal care living options at the St. John Community. The project relocated the personal care neighborhood of Edgewood Grove to the fourth floor of St. John with 39 modernized apartments. It also created 27 new residential living apartments —The Residence at St. John.

The St. John Community is a continuing care community, and includes The Residence of St. John and Overbrook Pointe, residential living; Edgewood Grove, personal care; RoseCrest, assisted living with memory care, and St. John Specialty Care, skilled nursing.

A capital campaign is currently underway to support the project. To make a donation, contact Jane Bittcher at 724-316-5843.

Passavant Renovations Provide Residents New Home Experience

Bob and Nancy Hesch of the Passavant Community in Zelienople had become accustomed to travelling the country since purchasing their RV in the early 2000s. Years later, the Hesch, who have been married for 52 years, decided to build a retirement home in Townville, South Carolina. They knew at some point, they wanted to move into a continuing care retirement community just like their parents. However, they hadn't planned on moving so soon. A late Christmas card delivered in January of 2019, marked the beginning of an "incredible journey" to move closer to their twin daughters that they hadn't seen since birth (See story, page 9).

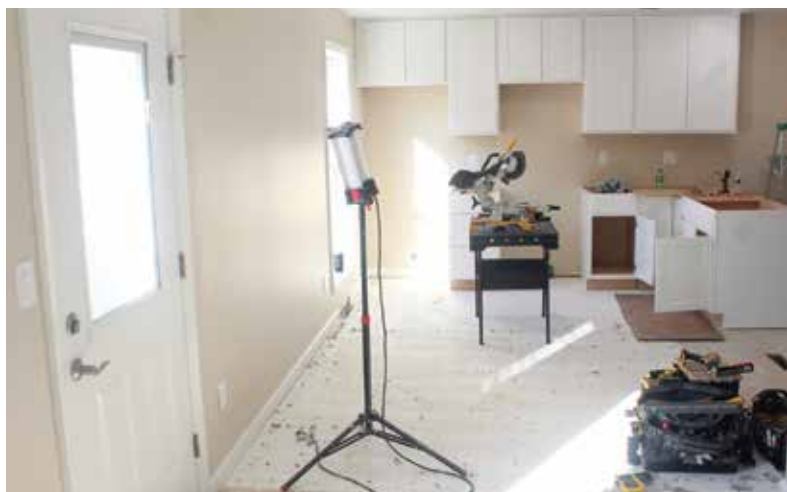
The Hesch were well aware of the Passavant Community after living in Cranberry Township for over 30 years. "We took a tour of this (stand-alone cottage) and said: 'That's it', we love downtown Zelig, that's where we wanted to live," said Nancy.

They had their choice of new cabinets, handles, counter top, paint and flooring. According to Nancy, "We were expecting to do our own work, such as painting and other renovations, but all we ended up doing was picking and choosing what we wanted to change, and the rest was taken care of."

"We couldn't have been any happier with the process." ❖



The Residence at St. John, new entrance and lobby



Passavant Community cottage, kitchen renovation



A Celebration Years In The Making

The celebration included a silent auction with all the proceeds supporting the Foundation Mission Fund, which supports our programs and services, explained Jane Bittcher, Foundation President. Lutheran SeniorLife is well known for its two continuum care retirement communities – Passavant in Zelienople and St. John in Mars. However, each year, we also help 14,000 older adults remain in their homes through the Visiting Nurses Association of western Pennsylvania (VNA), Living Independence For The Elderly (LIFE) programs, and the Lutheran Service Society (LSS).

The VNA provides home health, nursing, palliative and hospice care while the LIFE programs offer health and wellness programs, pharmacy, and other services to those who qualify. LSS, through the Housing and Urban Development, offers low-income senior housing options, as well as, foster and adoption services. For example, in 2021, LSS provided adoption and foster care services to 208 children and families throughout western Pennsylvania.

The celebration also included a social hour, dinner, and entertainment by violinist, Steven Vance, who fulfilled requests ranging from “The Flintstones” theme song to “What a Wonderful World” by Louie Armstrong.

“We have been so blessed to receive the financial support from our funders, supporters and friends over the past 30 years,” said Bittcher. “Because of their generosity, Lutheran SeniorLife will be able to continue its mission to transform health, wellness, and social services throughout western Pennsylvania.” ❖



ABOVE: left to right – Brian Lindauer, Robb Oelschlager, Pastor Kirk Bish, Dr. Frank Baker

BELOW: left to right – Larry John, Pastor Robert Musser, and Tony Bonidy



ABOVE: left to right – Leslie Kisow, Amy Stewart, Christine Namey, Amy Ferrill-Olson

BELOW: left to right – Martha John, Linda Bonidy, Paulette Musser



ABOVE: Christine and Lance Whiteman



LEFT:
Signature
Sponsor,
Grant
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LEFT: seated, left to right –
Jennifer Reitzell, John Harmon,
Laura Roy, Elizabeth Garrett;
Back row – Michael Yoon,
Christine Whiteman, Lance Whiteman,
Jeanne Louis, Ken Louis, Anne Harmon



ABOVE: left to right – Paul Vey, Adam
Warhola, Tom Bonidy



LEFT: seated, left to
right – Kurt Hansmann,
Joe Lenkey, AnnaMae
Lenkey;
Back row, left to right –
Shannon Galgan, Karen
Glagan, Amy Hansmann,
Pastor Erin Evans,
Pastor Brian Evans, Susan
Traverso, Kent Taylor

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We are grateful for our generous sponsor support, which made the evening possible.

Card Re-unites Family After 48 Years Apart

Bob and Nancy Hesch of the Passavant Community had become accustomed to travelling the country since purchasing their RV in the early 2000s. Years later, the Hesch, who have been married for 52 years, decided to build their retirement home in Townville, South Carolina.

They knew at some point, they wanted to move into a continuing care retirement community just like their parents. However, they hadn't planned on moving so soon. They received a late Christmas card in January of 2019, marking the beginning of an "incredible journey" to move closer to their twin daughters that they hadn't seen since birth.

"It's a Hallmark movie," exclaimed Bob Hesch. "You can't write a script like this..."

The Heschs were out for their afternoon walk with their dog, Benson, and picked up the mail. Little did they know how their lives were about to change – bringing their past, present and future together.

Once inside, Bob went to his office, and Nancy went to her little nook beside the kitchen. She opened a letter to find a Christmas card with a hand-written note tucked inside. She read the note, and placed it in the wastebasket. She then retrieved the note,

and summoned Bob to the living room. Nancy handed Bob the note and began to sob. As Bob read the note, tears swelled up in his eyes.

The note read:

*Dear Mr. and Mrs. Hesch,
My name is Judy Deer. My twin sister and I were born on Oct. 7, 1971 and adopted in Pittsburgh. I recently applied for a copy of my original birth record and found the names of my birth parents that may match you. I am interested in any family history information that you are willing to share. I have sent this Christmas card, hoping you'll realize this is not some sort of scam. I will respect your privacy should you desire not to be contacted again.*

You can contact me through Facebook (send a friend request). My profile picture matches the family picture on the card.

The note brought back painful memories for the Hesch, "not worthy" of these young women described how they felt, explained Nancy. The card set in motion a 5-month email exchange between Bob, Nancy and their twin daughters, whom they had not seen in 48 years. Visit: www.LutheranSeniorLife.org for the full story. ❖



2019

TeleHealth:

Keeping Your Loved Ones Home for the Holidays

For the healthiest amongst us, decorating, wrapping gifts and cooking holiday meals can be challenging. Add an unforeseen injury or illness requiring a trip to the hospital and the best-laid plans become even more complicated. When the unexpected happens, Lutheran SeniorLife's Telehealth program offers the life-engaging services you need to help you return and remain at home.

BELOW: Seated, left to right – Granddaughter holding great granddaughter, Jenna Harrold and Emmy Harrold, Geraldine Kaylor, Daughter-in-law holding great granddaughter, Deb Kaylor and Parker Harrold. Standing, left to right – great grandson, Wyatt Loomis (hiding face), granddaughter, Lisa Loomis, great grandson, Jaxon Loomis and son, Braden Kaylor



Telehealth: Virtual Home Safety Visits

It's not ideal to be laid up in a hospital bed anytime of the year, but with the addition of virtual home safety visits, our Rehabilitation Services team can have you home before you know it.

"The goal of the virtual home visits is to support families in adapting home environments for the use of any new equipment required to make home activities easier to manage," explained Amy Stewart, Director of Corporate Rehabilitation.

"A huge part of getting our patients home as quickly as possible is making sure that their home is livable," explained Stewart. "By conducting virtual safety visits, we are able to determine if any changes need made prior to our patients returning home following rehab."

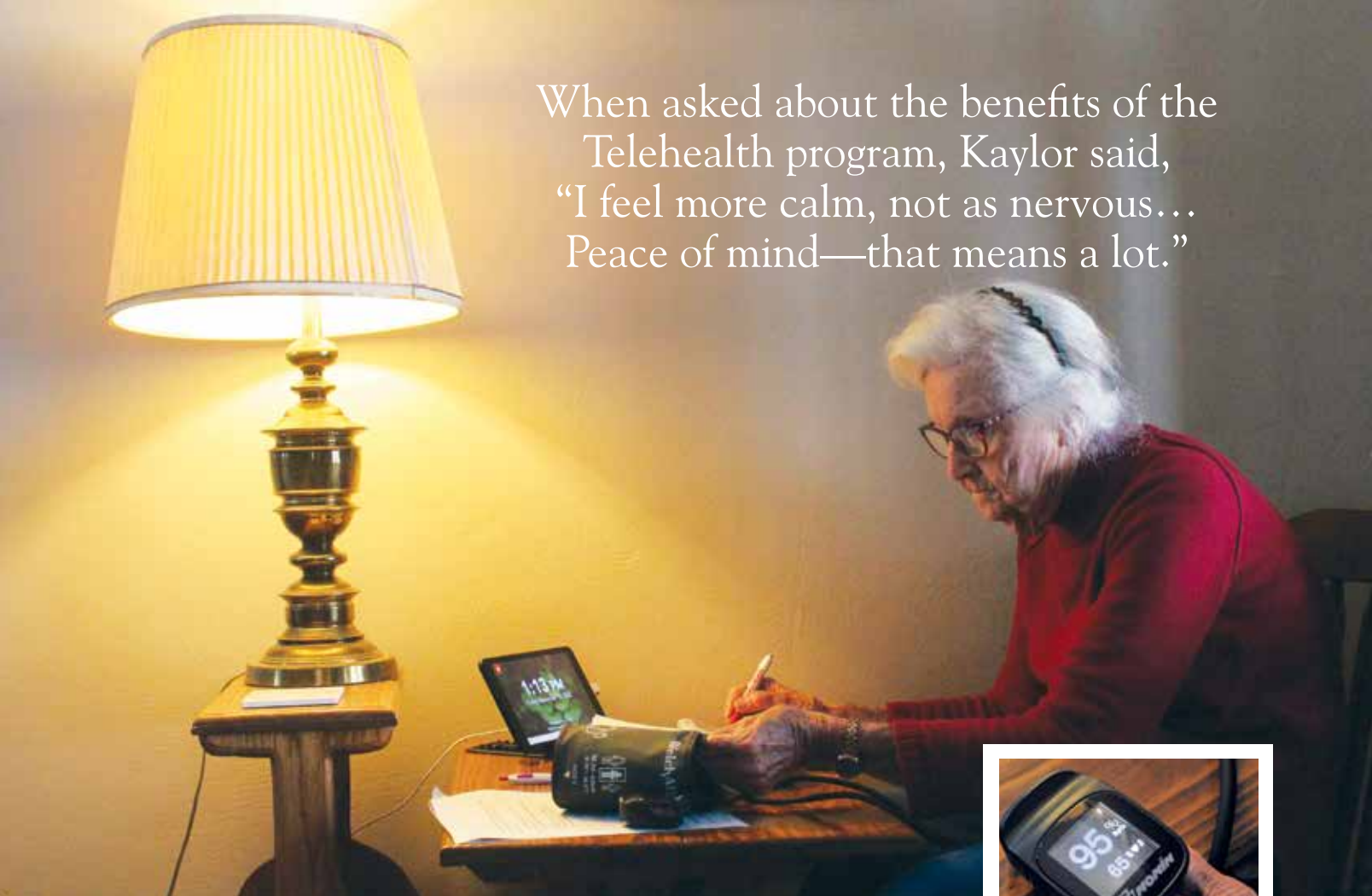
For instance, Jane recently spent a few days at the Butler Advanced Care Center (ACC) for a short rehab stay. While at the ACC, a therapist conducted a virtual safety tour of Jane's home with her son. At the request of the therapist, the son measured the stairs, as well as the height of the bed and toilet. After review, the therapist recommended a number of upgrades. Her son renovated the home per the therapist's recommendations so Jane's new equipment could function properly and be in place upon her return.

"She was so happy to be on her way home," explained Stewart. "It's a win-win for both Jane and her family!"

Telehealth: Elevating Patient Care

Every day, Geraldine Kaylor, 94, of Butler wakes up at 7:00 a.m., eats breakfast, takes her morning medications, and reads her daily devotion. At 9:00 a.m., a voice from her wireless tablet reminds her, "It is now time to check your vital signs."

When asked about the benefits of the Telehealth program, Kaylor said, “I feel more calm, not as nervous... Peace of mind—that means a lot.”



According to Kaylor’s daughter-in-law, Deb Kaylor, Geraldine spent several weeks in the hospital with multiple health concerns. Once discharged, she enrolled in the telehealth program of the Visiting Nurses Association of Western Pennsylvania (VNA).

The process begins when the VNA receives a referral from a doctor’s office or hospital, explained Karla Pagan, Clinical Admissions Manager for the VNA. “Once we receive the patient’s care-plan, a nurse and technologist visits the patient to assess, install and educate the patient on how to use the technology.”

Each patient receives Bluetooth enabled devices including a blood pressure cup, scales and a pulse oximeter, as well as a tablet to record the patient’s vital signs. “We don’t leave the home until the patient feels comfortable using it (technology),” elaborated Pagan.

Through the program, Kaylor takes her vital signs everyday including blood pressure, weight, and oxygen levels. Her tablet automatically transmits her vital signs to a nurse to determine if Kaylor’s vital signs are within a “normal range.”

Telehealth provides a virtual pathway for the nurse to monitor any subtle changes in the patient’s health condition on a daily basis and shares the results with the doctor,” explained Pagan.

According to Deb, Geraldine’s blood pressure had been on the high side since returning from the hospital. The Telehealth program enabled Geraldine’s doctor to closely monitor her vital signs while adjusting her medications subsequently lowering her blood pressure. Thanks to Telehealth, Kaylor remained at home with her family over the holidays.

“We work closely with everyone who needs a little extra help staying safe and healthy at home,” noted Margie Walsh, VNA Executive Director.

“Telehealth does not replace home visits but elevates patient care with our monitoring capabilities,” noted Pagan. “This type of care keeps our patients out of the hospital and independent in their home.”

When asked about the benefits of the telehealth program, Kaylor said, “I feel more calm, not as nervous... Peace of mind—that means a lot.” ❖

OUR MISSION

is to continually transform and elevate health, wellness, and social services while fostering an *Abundant Life*® for those we serve and who serve.

AbundantLife is published by Lutheran SeniorLife.

To report a change of address or to be removed from our mailing list, please contact the Lutheran SeniorLife Foundation at (724) 453-6014 or FoundationStaff@lutherseniorlife.org

TOGETHER
we can make the season
brighter

The Gift Of Giving

Through the generosity of our donors and supporters, team members of Lutheran SeniorLife were able to provide programs and services to over 14,000 people during the past year.

Please help us to continue our mission of providing an *Abundant Life*® for those we serve by making a gift. Call the Lutheran SeniorLife Foundation at 724-316-5843 or email jane.bittcher@lutherseniorlife.org.

Join Us In Celebrating A New Holiday Tradition

The LIFE programs of Armstrong, Beaver, Butler and Lawrence counties are starting a new tradition this holiday season, Christmas Blessings.

Now is a wonderful time of the year to acknowledge the many blessings within our lives. If you would like to recognize someone special, you can purchase a Christmas Blessings Tribute Tag to be placed on a Blessing Tree (aka Christmas tree) located in the LIFE Center of your choice. This is a beautiful way to pay tribute to those individuals who mean so much to you, while supporting the programs and services provided by the LIFE Programs.

For more information, or to receive a Tribute Tag gift form, call the Lutheran SeniorLife Foundation at 724-453-6013.

*May the true spirit of Christmas
bless you throughout the year.*



THANK
YOU!