



God at Work in Our Midst

Stories of the Called Ministries of Lutheran Homes Society
May 2015



On a daily basis, Lutheran Homes Society impacts hundreds of residents, clients and families. The stories told here reflect the mission of Lutheran Homes Society to care for needy youth and elderly with compassion. Sharing these stories lets you know your support is truly making a difference in people's lives.

SANDUSKY CAMPUS

It gives Lutheran Memorial Home staff a very good feeling to be able to assist individuals in need, so when word reached them that one of their former co-workers had lost everything in a house fire, staff members sprang into action. They pulled together and purchased "Mary" a new living room set, kitchen cookware, and bathroom accessories. Mary was so surprised by the unexpected gesture that she could not stop smiling. She is grateful for the kind and generous support during this devastating time in her life.

NAPOLEON CAMPUS

"Emilie" came to Lutheran Home at Napoleon after a total knee replacement. She was somewhat younger than the typical orthopedic patient, and her goal was not only to go home, but to get back to work. Emilie's job was extremely important to her, and she was very proud to have worked her way up to a supervisory position. She was highly motivated in her therapy and quickly met her goal of returning home. Once at home, Emilie returned to the Napoleon campus for outpatient therapy so she could get strong enough to go back to work. It was not long before Emilie and her new knee were ready to return to work. Not only did Emily have a new, strong knee, but she also had new friends that she made during her recovery at Lutheran Home at Napoleon.



FAMILY & YOUTH SERVICES

When 11-year-old Luke first came to LHS Family and Youth Services, it was easy to see his positive qualities. He was friendly, caring and inquisitive. He enjoyed activities with peers and staff, and he was helpful during chore time. Luke would also offer positive encouragement to other youth when they were having difficulties. However, it was also apparent why he had come to LHS. Luke often became anxious and threw tantrums when he did not like something or when he did not get his way. When Luke threw a tantrum, he would sometimes put himself in unsafe situations, such as running out of the house and across the street without looking for traffic. These tantrums were the primary reason Luke's foster parents had notified his case worker that they could not care for him anymore. The case worker then looked to LHS for the help Luke needed.

While at the Oregon Treatment Facility, staff provided Luke with structure and routine, in addition to a caring environment. They developed a behavior plan. Luke was also taught new verbal skills, and staff practiced these with him every day. Luke responded positively and used his new skills set to find the best ways to handle himself in different situations. Instead of throwing a tantrum, he would let staff know when he was becoming upset. Negative incidents decreased, and frequent meetings with his therapist bolstered his confidence. Luke's case worker was happy with his progress and emotional growth. The next step for Luke was to step down to a new foster home. His case worker was able to locate a potential foster family that was well-versed in serving youth with emotional and behavioral challenges. They had helped a number of children in the past and had even adopted several. The initial meeting with Luke and the couple went well, and everyone agreed that it appeared to be a good fit. Traveling a couple of hours each way, LHS staff took Luke to his prospective new home for day visits. Day trips turned into weekend visits, and eventually Luke stayed for a week-long holiday visit. The day finally came when he went to live with his new foster parents. Today, Luke continues to make strides in improving his well-being and is developing into a happy and healthy adolescent.

HOUSING & COMMUNITY SERVICES

“Marlena” came to the Service Coordinator requesting assistance with her prescriptions. She had recently switched to a mail order system for her prescriptions, but she was having difficulty with it and also with obtaining three of her medications. Marlena explained that she hadn’t received those medications in over a month. Furthermore, she was told that it would cost about \$250 to get them, which did not make sense to her since she receives the low-income subsidy and reduced cost prescriptions. After much discussion, Marlena decided that she wanted to discontinue the mail order system and go back to the local pharmacy. She was more comfortable with being able to talk face-to-face with a pharmacist. First, they called her prescription drug insurance company to find out why the prescribed medications that she needed were so expensive. It was determined that she would be able to pick up the prescriptions at the local pharmacy, utilizing generics that had already been authorized by her doctor. As a result, the cost would be much less – about \$10 for the medications instead of \$250. Second, they called the local pharmacy and asked about switching the rest of her prescriptions from the mail order company. The local pharmacist indicated that he would take care of transferring them over. The Service Coordinator explained everything to Marlena, who was pleased with the results. The coordinator’s support saved Marlena over \$240.

TOLEDO CAMPUS

“Betty” had knee replacement surgery and two days later came to The Labuhn Center for her rehabilitation. Staff members were happy to see her when she was admitted, since Betty and her sisters had been regular visitors in the Care Center when their mother was a resident. For Betty, coming to the Lutheran Home at Toledo campus for rehabilitation was like coming home to people that she already knew. “I loved everybody from before,” she stated. Betty’s sister “Cindy” had also been in The Labuhn Center last year. In Betty’s room, the sisters compared notes on their rehab experiences and on how quickly they bounced back. They also joked that this was where they came to rehab after “getting replacement parts.” Betty had a positive and determined attitude (which she probably got from her mother) that served her well during therapy. Very quickly, she was getting around in her room without a walker. A week after she was admitted, Betty was able to return home. A couple of days after her discharge, Betty reported that she was doing all of her exercises at home, was going up and down stairs, and had even been out grocery shopping.



WOLF CREEK CAMPUS

Sylvia worked in a factory for 27 years, and she had developed the habit of continuously drinking water there to the point of taking in too much liquid. Her legs and ankles became so swollen that Sylvia couldn’t walk, and she was unable to leave her apartment. Sylvia had severe leg pain, and her legs were leaking because the skin was so stretched. Her daughters helped with her laundry and grocery shopping. One day, Sylvia did not feel well, was breathing hard, and was afraid. After calling 911, she was admitted to the hospital for four days. During her stay, excess fluid was removed from her legs and from around her heart.

Sylvia was then admitted to Lutheran Village at Wolf Creek for rehabilitation in order to build up her strength. She was bound and determined to walk again. At first, therapy was very hard for Sylvia. Her body was stiff, but she continued to lose the excess water, and her weight was also dropping. Sylvia’s breathing improved as well. She started making huge gains, and her determination has carried her through the hard times. After four months, Sylvia is ready to be discharged and is moving into a new home. She has purchased a Creekside condominium on the Wolf Creek campus and is excited about moving in. She says that she feels as if she is moving into a palace, and this is her dream home. Without the Wolf Creek therapy and her determination to get well, none of this would be happening. Sylvia is very thankful for the loving care she received during her recovery and is looking forward to living on the Wolf Creek campus.