



# God at Work in Our Midst

Stories of the Called Ministries of Lutheran Homes Society  
September 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.

## HOUSING & COMMUNITY SERVICES

“Jeff” is a HOME Choice community client who is enjoying a new place that he can finally call home. Jeff was in a nursing facility for about nine months, and, with the help of the HOME Choice program and Lutheran Homes Society, he received resources and funding to help him transition back into the community. Before going into the nursing home, Jeff had been homeless and lived out of his car for over a year. Due to his limited income, an LHS Service Coordinator was able to utilize several resources to assist Jeff. One of the major resources was the Recovery Requires a Community program. Funding obtained through this state program helps pay his rent and also assisted Jeff in resolving a past utility bill that would have kept him from obtaining new housing. Jeff also receives assistance through Job and Family Services and the local Community Action Center. All of these programs are making it possible for Jeff to lead a much better life. His transition back into the community has been a positive experience. Jeff is really happy to have overcome some of his past struggles and is now thriving.

## NAPOLEON CAMPUS

“Celebrate good times. Come on!” So goes the popular song from the 70s. “Elsa” had one remaining goal in life and that was to make it to her 90th birthday, and she wanted to celebrate the milestone. Staff at Lutheran Home at Napoleon was delighted to hear that her family wanted their help in planning a surprise celebration. The wonderful activities staff organized nearly the entire event. It was exciting to see her family assembling in the chapel, awaiting her arrival. Members of the community and some of her friends, who she had sustained relationships with for decades, came out to celebrate her. Even Chaplain Genter and his wife called Elsa from Delaware and sang “Happy Birthday” to her over the phone! There were tears all around as staff watched this lovely lady enjoy the surprise party that obviously meant so much to her. Elsa’s dream had become important to everyone, and staff members were honored to be a part of it. They believe it was a very fine reason to celebrate!



## SANDUSKY CAMPUS

“Sally,” who fell at home and broke her leg, was admitted to Lutheran Memorial Home after a short hospital stay. She had undergone surgery to repair the fracture and was unable to place any weight on her left leg for six to eight weeks. The Therapy Department worked with Sally to strengthen her upper extremities and right lower leg during this time. After multiple x-rays, her status was upgraded to “gentle weight bearing as tolerated.” She was excited to start walking again. Getting strong enough to walk again, however, was only one of Sally’s challenges. When she had arrived, staff discovered that Sally had been virtually homeless, with limited family support due to a substance abuse and bipolar history. She had no clothes or shoes. The staff of Lutheran Memorial Home and a local home health agency donated clothes, undergarments, toiletries, and a pair of shoes. Sally was appreciative of all the items donated and thanked everyone for “going above and beyond for her.” She often tells other residents of how we helped her in her time of need. Staff also has arranged for Sally to receive services upon her discharge through the PASSORT Medicaid waiver program, Meals on Wheels, and Serving Our Seniors. These organizations will provide her with support as she returns to the community. “I’m glad I came here and would suggest others to come here,” Sally stated. “I’m thankful for all you’ve done for me.”

## WOLF CREEK CAMPUS

“Marilyn” has always been active, keeping up with her home and yard, even after she had hip replacement surgery ten years ago. Over the past year, however, she began experiencing pain in that hip and noticed that she was limping. Doctors recommended that Marilyn have additional, “reconstructive” surgery. While it was successful, the surgery was more extensive than the first. After being bedridden at the hospital for two weeks, Marilyn was in need of physical therapy. She arrived at Lutheran Village at Wolf Creek rehab as non-weight bearing and very weak. Therapists had to start from scratch, teaching Marilyn how to do many activities that she used to be able to do. “I really appreciate how the nurses and aides treated me during my time here at Lutheran Village at Wolf Creek,” Marilyn said. She even told an aide that she was an “angel sent to her from heaven.” After four weeks of therapy, Marilyn walked out of Lutheran Village at Wolf Creek and returned home. She has very little pain and is very pleased with her progress. Marilyn attributes her success to the Wolf Creek Therapy Department. Furthermore, she has decided to return to the campus for her outpatient therapy.

## TOLEDO CAMPUS

“Tom” and his wife enjoy sitting out in their yard late at night, watching planes fly overhead and trying to guess where they are headed. It was sometime after one of these evenings spent together at home that Tom remembers lying down for bed. The next thing he remembers is his grandchildren and dog visiting him at The Labuhn Center on the Lutheran Home at Toledo campus. Tom has no recollection of the days in between that he spent in the hospital or his first few days in The Labuhn Center. Being a hard-working, motivated, and fiercely independent man, he is the kind of person who takes charge and doesn’t want help, especially being pushed down the hall in a wheelchair.

It is this determination, along with the dedication of his therapists, that helped Tom to improve. He went from being unable to sit up on his own or feed himself to walking down “that long hall” and out into the courtyard where he has spent many hours with family members. Tom said that he was challenged in therapy, especially on the exercise bike, where he was consistently encouraged to keep going just a few more minutes. He kept at it, and his hard work has paid off. Tom is looking forward to getting home to his close-knit family. His family is familiar with Lutheran Home at Toledo because his mother was a long-term care resident there. His wife likes the fact that the campus is close to home, and she does not have to drive very far to visit Tom. “Now that I know what’s going on around here, I would...come back if I needed rehabilitation again,” Tom stated.



## FAMILY & YOUTH SERVICES

When “Randy” arrived at the LHS Maumee Youth Center, staff was warned to be on guard because of his past history of aggression and sexually inappropriate behaviors. Staff was informed that he would act out over little things, go AWOL, self-harm when upset, and refuse to follow most directives given to him. After a couple weeks, some of these behaviors appeared on more than one occasion. Randy was very quiet, kept to himself, and did not like being told what to do. He did not have interest in his peers or activities. With consistency, the efforts of a dedicated staff, and a trusting environment, the Randy living at the Maumee Youth Center today is nothing like the Randy who first arrived. He hardly ever has an incident report due to aggressive behavior. He is very helpful when it comes to assisting staff with projects and tasks. Randy is very friendly and is almost always in a pleasant, upbeat mood. There have been no issues of self-harm or aggressive behavior toward peers or staff, and he excels in school. Randy will participate in almost all activities and events in a positive manner and even encourages his peers to make the right decision if they seem to be heading toward a crisis. Randy has become a great role model in his living unit and leads his peers in a positive way. He has come a long way, and staff members look forward to seeing what the future holds for him.