



God at Work in Our Midst

Stories of the Called Ministries of Lutheran Homes Society
June 2015



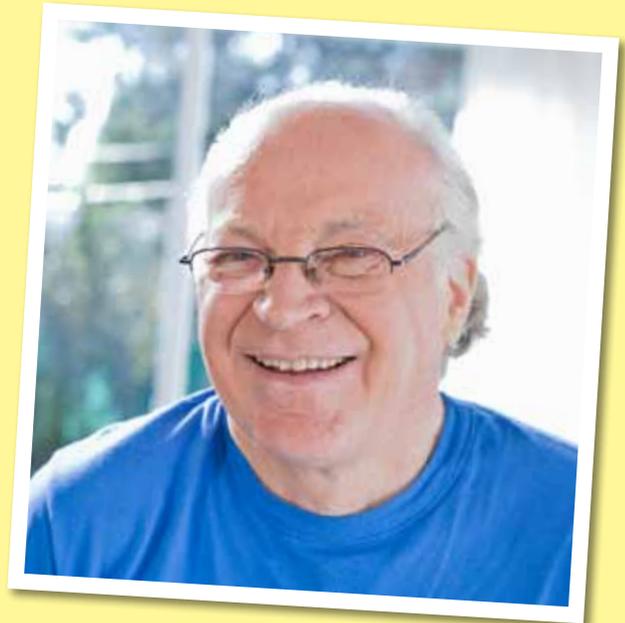
On a daily basis, Lutheran Homes Society impacts hundreds of residents, clients and families. The stories told here reflect the mission of Lutheran Homes Society to care for needy youth and elderly with compassion. Sharing these stories lets you know your support is truly making a difference in people's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

WOLF CREEK CAMPUS

In her early 40s, "Sandra" was diagnosed with cerebral palsy. She was relieved with the diagnosis, because it helped explain so much of the "clumsiness" and physical limitations she had experienced throughout her life. Sandra lived in a 55+ independent living retirement community until she fell in her bathroom and broke her kneecap in three different places. She did not require surgery, but she could not put any weight on her leg and required skilled nursing care and therapy. That's when Sandra came to Lutheran Village at Wolf Creek. After three months of rehab, she decided she did not want to go back to her apartment; so with the help of the chaplain, social services, therapy, and admissions, she was able to obtain an assisted living apartment on the Wolf Creek campus. Sandra is thrilled! She is continuing to receive therapy, and her ability to walk is improving. "Sandra is a hard worker, with great determination in therapy," states her therapist Debbie. Sandra is now able to walk with a rolling walker from the therapy gym to the chapel, and she is persistent in performing her exercises on her own. "She certainly is a pleasure to be around, and we enjoy her positive and sweet spirit," Debbie added.

TOLEDO CAMPUS

"Jim" was involved in a horrible accident last summer; the kind of accident that leaves scars far beyond the physical ones that can be seen. Jim had been a hard-working man, but following the accident he was bedridden, depressed, and suffered from PTSD. Back surgery left him in pain and unable to walk. His body needed time to heal, and Jim needed rehabilitation to get back on his feet. He chose the rehabilitation services at The Labuhn Center for two reasons. First, there was a family connection, since Jim's mother had worked at Lutheran Home at Toledo for 12 years. Second, The Labuhn Center was recommended to Jim by a friend who had recently completed a successful rehab stay. Jim worked hard in therapy and kept his spirits high. Jim explained that "I put all my problems in the Lord's hands." He continued, "Prayer works – that and good people." Jim described his stay and the staff as "absolutely awesome." He is also grateful for the support of the other residents. Last week, Jim independently walked out the front door of The Labuhn Center with a big smile on his face.



HOUSING & COMMUNITY SERVICES

"George" was referred to Lutheran Homes Society through the HOME Choice program. He had been in a nursing home for over a year and a half prior to transitioning back into the community with the assistance of an LHS Service Coordinator. Several barriers had to be overcome in order to make this transition possible, including finding housing that would meet George's physical and financial needs and dealing with a poor credit history. The LHS Service Coordinator connected George with Neighborhood Properties, Inc. (NPI), a company that provides supportive housing to people with low incomes and other physical or mental problems. NPI was a huge help to George. The LHS Service Coordinator also applied for state funding to build a wheelchair ramp and modify his new apartment for increased accessibility. This was a huge milestone in George's life, because he had been incarcerated for five years before he was admitted to the nursing home. For the first time in seven years, he is living on his own and couldn't be happier. George is thriving in his new apartment, and he cannot thank LHS enough for all the assistance he received during his transition back into the community.

SANDUSKY CAMPUS

While visiting friends in the Sandusky area, “Don” was involved in a terrible accident that resulted in two surgeries and a three-week hospital stay. Don’s family was unable to be by his side during this life-changing experience, so he was totally dependent on strangers in a town where he was only supposed to be for a weekend. After improving enough to be discharged from the hospital, Don was transferred to Lutheran Memorial Home. He worked very hard in therapy and followed his physician’s orders, but he had some rough days. On one of those difficult days, his STNA went to assist him and noticed that he was really sad. She discovered that Don was very disappointed that his family was unable to fly to Ohio to see him. The STNA proceeded to tell him about a free app that enables video calls. Don called his family and explained to them about the app, so they could download it. The STNA then helped him download the app and connect with the facility’s Wi-Fi. Don and his family chatted later that night and every day following. He would carry his phone with him so his family could meet the staff and see the facility. After two months, Don was discharged, but he returned to the area with his family a few weeks ago. When they stopped in to visit, it was as if they had known the staff for years. Don’s family was so grateful that people cared enough about him to mention the app, because it had kept the family connected and lifted his spirits.

FAMILY & YOUTH SERVICES

“Tanya” came to LHS Family and Youth Services’ Maumee Youth Center at the age of 16. She had been removed from a very abusive home and, prior to coming to LHS, had spent years in several other residential placements. Tanya was impulsive, depressed, and prone to running away. In the past, Tanya had also cycled through several children’s psychiatric hospitals. Her caseworker wanted a place where Tanya could complete school without having to move again. Although Tanya often appeared happy and outgoing, she was anxious and distrustful of others. She was wary of making friends and developing relationships with staff, since they had always ended abruptly in the past. Tanya was assured by staff members that they were there to help her and were not going anywhere. Her therapist worked with Tanya and helped her develop insight into her behaviors and her thinking errors. She began to see things differently and develop new tools and skills.



Tanya has an older sister, who lives semi-independently in an apartment. A plan was developed to determine if Tanya could live with her sister after graduation. The two sisters had not seen each other in years and spoke on the phone only occasionally. Phone conversations were increased, and Tanya was taken by LHS staff to visit with her sister several hours away. The visit went well and soon other visits followed. Tanya graduated from high school in May, a triumphant occasion made possible by the diligent efforts of caregivers, therapists, teachers, and administrators. Her sister and caseworker attended the ceremony and graduation party. After the party and pictures, Tanya’s sister helped her pack up her belongings. Before leaving for the next chapter in her life, though, Tanya expressed gratitude to her therapist and all the staff who had stood behind her and helped her onto the path of success.

NAPOLEON CAMPUS

“Kathy” had been an active senior prior to a fall that resulted in a hard blow to the head. After two surgeries to repair the damage to her brain, she developed a blood clot that required another surgery. Kathy needed extensive rehabilitation before she would be able to return home. Her family toured several rehab facilities before choosing Lutheran Home at Napoleon, primarily because it had a spacious rehab suite where the family could visit her as often as they wanted. It wasn’t long before Kathy and her family became a part of the Lutheran Home family. The family was pleased with the choices Kathy had for meals, showers, activities, and therapy, and they felt that the team taking care of her was accommodating and friendly. Kathy had a long way to go to get back to her prior functioning level, and she needed all three therapy disciplines to get her there. Therapy was extensive and tiring. Therapists worked with Kathy’s cognitive loss by giving her ways to accommodate memory deficits. Staff also faced the challenge of keeping her safe, because she was very impulsive and would frequently get up and walk without assistance. This was dangerous because Kathy was experiencing loss of balance. Protecting her from another fall was of great importance. Throughout her rehab stay, Kathy maintained a very positive attitude, and her family remained supportive. Due to her determination and therapy’s intense workouts, Kathy was able to meet her goal of returning home.