



GOD AT WORK IN OUR MIDST

*Stories of the Called Ministries of
Genacross Lutheran Services*



February 2020

HOUSING & COMMUNITY SERVICES

"Ted" has been a resident of a Genacross Lutheran Services' senior housing community for several years. He has experienced some health barriers in his life, having previously lived in a skilled nursing facility for over 10 years. Ted has a positive attitude, but he does not have any family support and, recently, his safety has become a concern. A service coordinator at his housing site spoke with Ted and explained that it would be in his best interest to look into assisted living, since he needs more care and supervision. Ted had a level-of-care assessment done through the local Area Office on Aging to determine if he would qualify for Medicaid to cover his assisted living expenses. After several months of coordination with the Area Office on Aging, the Genacross service coordinator and Ted have found the facility that will meet all of his needs and will allow him to live a more fulfilled life. He will be able to remain primarily independent, but will have assistance in the building when he needs it. Ted will be meeting with staff, signing paperwork and finalizing arrangements in the coming weeks.

NAPOLEON CAMPUS

Being a caregiver at home for a loved one can be a rewarding and challenging responsibility. Many times, however, wonderful caregivers of others do not take the time to care for themselves. The Genacross Lutheran Services-Napoleon Campus can help these individuals rest and recharge by watching over their loved ones for short respite stays. Recently, the Napoleon Campus provided respite services for a local couple. "John" was admitted to the campus and his wife "Margie" visited daily, but spent her evenings at home. John was able to rest comfortably, enjoy worship services, and interact with fellow residents during meal times. Most importantly, he was able to give his beloved wife the time she needed and deserved for herself. Staff members were overjoyed to help this couple during John's stay. On the day of his departure, the couple said that they will always pick the Napoleon Campus for future respite stays. Both had smiles on their faces as staff waved goodbye and wished them luck, and they pulled out of the parking lot to head home.



GENACROSS AT HOME

"Joyce" has a chronic health condition and, recently, has started to experience falls on a regular basis. When she went in for a wellness check, the primary care physician ordered skilled therapy services in her home to help Joyce regain strength and stability. After a Genacross at Home therapist completed Joyce's initial assessment, the therapist wanted a nurse to come in and review the medications she was taking. A Genacross at Home nurse obtained orders from Joyce's doctor for a visit to review her medications. It was determined after the review that she was taking meds that were counteracting each other and causing side effects that made her more prone to falls. This was communicated to Joyce's primary care doctor, who made the necessary medication adjustments. Now, Joyce is living her life without worrying about harmful falls.

Although pseudonyms are used in the above ministry stories, Genacross follows HIPAA guidelines and has either obtained permission from our residents, patients, or clients, or has sufficiently concealed their identities, thereby enabling us to use their stories of God's grace.

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WOLF CREEK CAMPUS

At the Genacross Lutheran Services-Wolf Creek Campus, a staff goal is to help residents and patients continue living as independently as they can. Whenever possible, staff members strive to help residents regain their previous function levels. For many residents, it can be hard to maintain the will to get better. A recent discharge home reflects a positive attitude and outcome. “Jack” came to the Wolf Creek Campus in the fall of 2019 with an infection in the heart and congestive heart failure. When he arrived, he was completely dependent on staff for his care. Jack was very weak and unable to get out of bed on his own. He questioned if he would ever be able to be independent again and return home. Therapy staff quickly took a liking to Jack’s positive and fun demeanor. He worked hard in physical and occupational therapy to get stronger and execute everyday tasks. Eventually, he was able to walk again, and he was recently discharged from the Wolf Creek Campus. Jack and his family are thankful for the Wolf Creek therapy and nursing staff who helped him regain his independence.

TOLEDO CAMPUS

Before becoming a volunteer at the Genacross Lutheran Services-Toledo Campus, “Sally’s” main connection with the campus had been visiting her sister, who resided there for six years after a stroke made it impossible for her to live on her own. Sally, who has been a loyal volunteer for a couple of years now, is comforted by the fact that some employees still remember her sister, and she truly appreciates the love, care and laughter that her sister encountered while living on the Toledo Campus. Sally was a fifth grade teacher for 40 years, and she has grown to love the elderly as much as the children she once served. Sally states that volunteering is “tiring but fulfilling.” She has touched many lives through her volunteer work on the Toledo Campus. There is the resident who was very depressed when Sally began visiting with her. Now, she has a more positive outlook on life and dreams of things she still wants to do with her life. Another resident loves Sally to read to her or, on good days, she will read to Sally. At Christmas time, the resident read the Christmas story from Luke and was able to complete the whole reading like she did as a child. Another resident was not doing very well and asked Sally to find the part in the Bible that describes heaven. It took Sally a while to find the right chapter for her, but when she did, the resident was comforted. Sally’s volunteer work brings peace, contentment and joy to many on the Toledo Campus.



FAMILY & YOUTH SERVICES

Many times due to the abuse or neglect they have faced, youth in care find love and affection in animals more often than in other people. This is the case for “Jimmy.” He often withdraws from others – both peers and adults alike. Staff members have identified that animals provide an escape and a sort of therapy for him. While normally gruff and quiet, Jimmy softens and shows a more vulnerable side when interacting with animals. He allows himself to show the caring and empathic version of himself. Therefore, when the opportunity arose for a student from the Liberty Education Center to help at a local farm, staff immediately identified Jimmy and wanted to make sure this happened for him. The farm breeds dogs, pigs and other animals. One day a week, a staff member, who is also an animal lover, comes in to transport Jimmy to the farm and assist him with his duties. The individual does this regardless of whether she is scheduled to work that day or not. Jimmy spends his time feeding the piglets and puppies and cleaning out their kennels. He works hard to provide them with the loving environment that he did not always have growing up. Family & Youth Services is excited to provide this opportunity for him as part of his healing and growth.