



# GOD AT WORK IN OUR MIDST

*Stories of the Called Ministries of  
Genacross Lutheran Services*

August 2019

## NAPOLEON CAMPUS

The Activities Department at the Genacross Lutheran Services-Napoleon Campus decided to take advantage of the warm summer weather recently and have some outdoor fun. The Activities Director persuaded a willing and fun-loving employee to volunteer as a “target” for a water balloon fight. Staff did not know what to expect when the activity began. Some of the residents just wanted to sit and watch, while others were eager to participate. “Lacy,” a long-term resident, and her family joined the fun outside and took great joy in throwing the water balloons at the target. Another resident, “Veronica,” was laughing too hard to get the balloon out of her hand, which in turn busted and spilled water all over her. The residents at the Napoleon Campus received much joy for that hour – being able to be silly and have fun outdoors.

## HOUSING & COMMUNITY SERVICES

“Sue” is a resident at one of the Genacross independent living communities, and she reached out to her site’s Service Coordinator about her desire to return to work. Sue had previous experience in medical coding and billing, but her resume had not been updated since 1990. She asked the coordinator to look it over. The coordinator reviewed her resume, changed some words around, highlighted certain skills, and added some missing information. Recently, Sue had an appointment with the Area Office on Aging. She had been asked to bring in her updated resume for review, and, when she returned that afternoon, she immediately went to the coordinator’s office. Excitedly, Sue shared that the Area Office on Aging was going to connect her with a secretarial position that would utilize some of her skills and enable her to earn needed income.



## GENACROSS AT HOME

“Joe” lives in a Genacross independent living community. He was staying in his apartment most of the time, because of his increased discomfort and need for an assistive device when moving about the building. One day, when Joe was out to get his mail, he saw a Genacross at Home therapist leading a wellness and exercise program for residents in the community room. He did not feel comfortable attending, but after a few days decided to watch the class. The Genacross at Home staff member reached out to Joe and made him feel comfortable enough to join the group. Joe has started to attend the regularly scheduled wellness and exercise sessions with Genacross at Home and no longer experiences as much pain. He also has learned exercises designed to increase his strength. Joe still walks with an assistive device, but he feels stronger and is becoming more active around his home.

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.

# GOD AT WORK IN OUR MIDST

## WOLF CREEK CAMPUS

The diagnosis hit “Mary’s” family like lightning, even though they were spread out all over the country. They had always been emotionally close, but now they felt their physical distance very deeply. The adult children put in hurried requests for time off – two weeks each, staggered. “Tanya,” a daughter from Columbus, put in for FMLA and settled in to Mary’s house for the duration. After much discussion, everyone – including Mary – decided that the Genacross Lutheran Services-Wolf Creek Campus was the place for her to spend her final days. The Genacross nursing staff would support Mary’s extensive care needs, and a local hospice provider would assist and coordinate additional services. The family would be free to be family.

Over the next several weeks, several generations of family members visited with Mary, spilling out into the common areas of the skilled nursing unit. Early on, they took Mary in her wheelchair on walks around the wooded, landscaped grounds. As Mary’s energy diminished, caregivers worked together to assure Mary’s comfort. The family came to know several aides and nurses particularly well, as they interacted with them day after day. Wolf Creek’s chaplain arranged for Mary to receive the Sacrament of the Sick from the local Catholic parish, and the family joined hands around her to pray. Two days later, Mary passed away. Tanya and her daughter, tired after a long night of waiting, made the necessary phone calls to other family and friends. Between the calls, Mary’s floor nurse, hospice nurse, and aide embraced them. It had not been an easy journey, but the children and extended family felt the Wolf Creek Campus had given them the gift of focusing on being Mary’s family during a very precious time.

---

## FAMILY & YOUTH SERVICES

While in foster care, many youth often miss out on the life skill lessons taught in a typical household. Workers at Genacross Family & Youth Services are trying to make up for that with a monthly series of life skill classes. The classes are held for its young adult clients in the Bridges program (the state’s extended foster care services), as well as its teenage residential clients. The first class, “Cooking on a Budget,” was held in July. Five clients began the class by preparing homemade pasta sauce, some of which they learned to freeze in mason jars for later use. Most of the participants had never chopped onions before and were surprised to learn how easily they “cried” from the task. They then learned ways to save money on their food budget, including buying in bulk and freezing food items, using coupons and reward apps on their phones, and cooking at home instead of eating out. After the classroom-type session, clients paired up and prepared part of a meal. One pair prepared taco salad, while another pair cooked Mexican rice from scratch. One young adult worked with a staff member to make strawberry shortcake. After each piece of the meal was prepared, everyone sat down to eat dinner and enjoy the meal they had created. All of the participants expressed a sense of pride at the delicious meal. Three of the youth excitedly requested to attend the next monthly life skill class.



---

## TOLEDO CAMPUS

“Mark” was reluctant to come to The Labuhn Center on the Genacross Lutheran Services- Toledo Campus, and the reason was pretty clear. When he talks about family and home, the look on his face says as much as his words: it is obvious how much they both mean to him. While in The Labuhn Center, Mark kept very busy. On the few occasions he was in his room, he was occupied on his laptop or talking to his family on the telephone. Otherwise, he could be found around the campus. It did not take him long to discover the courtyard with its fishpond, bird feeders and flower beds. At other times, he could be found with a group of residents enjoying lively conversation or sharing a meal in the dining room. When asked about his stay at The Labuhn Center, Mark said it is a “great place,” where “they do a lot of people a lot of good.” This is something he knows firsthand. When Mark first started his rehabilitation, he could only stand for a minute or two and ambulate about 10 feet. With hard work and determination, his strength and endurance have increased a great deal. Now, Mark is headed home to his family, stronger and ready to face life’s challenges.