

The FRIEND

GENACROSS LUTHERAN SERVICES



VOLUME CVII No. 2 SUMMER 2021

HYBRID ANNUAL MEETING RECAPS A HISTORIC YEAR

Coming out of the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic and having canceled last year's Genacross Lutheran Services annual meeting set the stage for an unusual one in 2021. Moved to June 11, the 161st Annual Meeting of Member Congregations was held at Hope Lutheran Church in Toledo, with attendees having the option to attend virtually or in person.

While the evening's agenda still featured a heartfelt testimonial, the annual CEO report, and the business meeting, it did not include food, ministry displays, entertainment, or a worship service. Nearly 70 individuals, including 41 delegates representing 23 congregations, attended the abbreviated meeting.

"Our bylaws did not allow us to hold an all-virtual annual meeting, so we implemented a hybrid model for this year," explained President/CEO Rick Marshall. "We are very pleased that we were able to engage with our member congregations in a way that made them feel comfortable."

During the evening, Genacross recognized directors who had completed their terms. Those recognized included: Robin Burkett, Jennifer Fehnrich, Susan Minch, and Christine Spohn from the Genacross Lutheran Services Board of Directors, and the Rev. Matthew Lash from the Toledo Campus ministry board.

Attendees also listened to a moving testimonial from former Genacross rehab patient Sean Lyons, who spent more than three weeks in The Labuhn Center on the Toledo Campus recovering from the debilitating effects of COVID-19. Following his inspiring story and his grateful response toward Genacross, attendees gave him a standing ovation.

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With the technical help of the Rev. Kevin Maxey, Hope's pastor, the meeting was available to virtual attendees.



President/CEO Rick Marshall recognized retiring board member Robin Burkett.

Sean Lyons' testimonial spoke to the outstanding care provided by The Labuhn Center staff.



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OUR MISSION

Inspired by the Christian faith, we embrace individuals and families with compassionate care and services throughout life's journey.

OUR VISION

Through our faith and work, we strive to be a forward-thinking, compassionate organization that improves the lives of current and future generations.

OUR VALUES

Faithfulness to Christ
Equality and Justice
Wholeness of Life
Integrity
Quality of Service
Stewardship of Resources

OUR MINISTRIES

Genacross Lutheran Services
Napoleon Campus

Genacross Lutheran Services
Toledo Campus

Genacross Lutheran Services
Wolf Creek Campus

**Genacross Home & Community
Based Services**

Genacross at Home

**Genacross Family &
Youth Services**

**Genacross Lutheran Services
Foundation**

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A note from RICK MARSHALL

President and CEO



Coming Out of COVID-19

COVID-19 has impacted all of our lives for the past 18 months. While the pandemic is not yet behind us, we believe that there is a light at the end of this dark tunnel. We praise God for the emergence of vaccines, which have been phenomenal in their success rate. Nationally, COVID-19 deaths in long-term care facilities have dropped by over 98% since the introduction of the vaccines. All of our Genacross campuses and programs have been free from the virus for several months.

With the progress made, life is slowly but surely returning to where we were before 2020. One of the more difficult aspects of the pandemic was the limits placed on visitation. I am pleased to report that many of the restrictions have been lifted. Genacross currently follows CDC guidelines, which continue certain masking and distancing requirements while allowing for in-room visits. In addition, group activities and dining have been restored. Our residents and their families have exhibited incredible patience during these difficult times, and it is heart-warming to see them enjoying time together and a return to more normalcy.

We are grateful for the support of our member congregations and community partners. Each of you stepped in with needed supplies, meals, and letters of encouragement. We are most thankful for your prayers that sustained us throughout this past year.

As I reflect back, I am proud of how we responded as an organization. We leaned in and asked how we could best serve our communities. One example was the state-certified isolation centers established on our Toledo and Wolf Creek campuses, which provided rehabilitation services to COVID-19 positive patients discharging from hospitals. We were two of only eleven certified isolation centers in Ohio. We had the space and willing team members, so we asked "if not us – then who?"

Throughout the pandemic, our Genacross team members continued to serve with compassion. For most, especially those on the front lines, it has been mentally, physically, and emotionally exhausting. I often referred to it as a marathon of perseverance. With God as our source of strength, our Genacross team members have stood tall, responding to the call and never wavering. Thank you to everyone at Genacross. You are all truly Heroes of Caring.

Blessings,

Annual Meeting - continued from front page



President/CEO Rick Marshall presented his annual report, highlighting challenges and opportunities for the organization.



Delegates from member congregations approved three amendments to the Code of Regulations and elected several board members.



to one-year terms on the Nominating Committee.

Following the installation of all board members, the annual meeting concluded with a prayer by the Rev. Dr. James Dumke, Vice President for Mission Integration.

The Rev. Keith Hunsinger, Board Chair, and President/CEO Rick Marshall welcome newly elected board members Kathy Martin and Paul Sieben.

SENIOR CONNECT PROGRAM WINS INNOVATOR AWARD

Genacross Lutheran Services was recently honored as the recipient of the first annual Innovator Award from Lutheran Services in America (LSA). The Innovator Award recognizes an LSA member organization that is pioneering new solutions, technology or business practices to solve complex issues.



Luther Haus Service Coordinator Arlena Williams completes an assessment with resident Kathleen Kelsey.

Genacross received the award in recognition of its work with the LSA Senior Connect program in its housing sites. The Senior Connect program provides older adults with a model

of care that addresses social determinants of health in ways that enable them to age in the home and community of their choosing.

"Much of the credit for the development and implementation of Senior Connect goes to Amanda Schroeder, Vice President of Home & Community Based Services; Jackie Petersen, Director of Housing and Service Coordination; and the service coordinators at all of our housing sites," said Rick Marshall, President/CEO.

The service coordinators continued to work through the COVID-19 pandemic to develop and implement the program. Through the creation of a detailed assessment, these coordinators were able to identify gaps in care and implement plans to address resident needs. In 2020, Genacross service coordinators conducted 890 assessments, identifying 787 gaps in care and accomplishing 673 goals with residents.

"Senior Connect has allowed us to meet the needs of our affordable housing residents in an effective manner that retains their independence," Mr. Marshall explained. "With the collaboration of fellow Lutheran Services in America members, we look forward to scaling this new framework to serve older adults across the country, improving health outcomes while also reducing costs."

Equality remains a focal point of second core value

For more than a year, Genacross Lutheran Services has been considering the Core Values that guide every aspect of its service, beginning with the foundational one, "Faithfulness to Christ." In the newsletter's last issue, the second value of "Equality and Justice" was introduced, further defining the first and describing the Genacross way of viewing and dealing with residents, clients, and colleagues. This article specifically addresses "equality."

Since each individual is different, it is obvious that "equal" does not mean the "same." It does, however, remind people of faith that as part of God's creation, they can be confident that, even in their differentness, they are necessary and valued. The Creator loves each and every individual and all whom they serve, equally. Indeed, "God so loved [and still loves] the world..." (John 3:16).

In 1 Corinthians 12:12-31, the Apostle Paul describes the church as a body, in which all the parts, while different in so many ways, are created for a reason. All are necessary. The

differences are not accidental, and their being together is intentional: God made each of those parts in order that, though different, they might work together to fulfill His purposes.

"How fitting, then, to consider this value and the imagery of the body as we think about all who are part of the ministry of Genacross," said the Rev. Dr. Jim Dumke, Vice President for Mission Integration. "Each staff member is a necessary part of our ministry, working together with all the others to make sure that those whom we serve receive the services they need in an atmosphere of emotional, spiritual, and truly personal care.

"In addition, we are part of an even larger body, as we join with individuals, congregations and a variety of other organizations, to make clear that each person served by Genacross is an equally loved and valued child of God and worthy of our loving care and services," he added.

CONSTRUCTION CONTINUES ON ADRIAN GROUP HOME

Construction work at the Adrian Group Home is moving right along, and Genacross Family & Youth Services is expecting it to be ready for a late August opening. The exterior walls are complete with cultured stonework added to the bottom quarter of the structure. The interior floors are poured, the walls are going up to build the rooms, and plumbing and electrical lines are being installed throughout the home.

Executive Director Katie Zawisza and Director of Facilities Management John Henry meet bi-weekly with the architect, builder, and job superintendent to discuss progress, make decisions, and process needed job changes. Ms. Zawisza



Completion of the new youth group home in Adrian, Michigan, is expected in late August.

keeps the state of Michigan administrative team updated on the home's progress and the potential open date, as they continue to be eager to have Genacross serving up to 10 youth directly in the state.

Family & Youth Services interviewed several internal and external candidates to fill the Program Coordinator position for the Adrian home. This leadership role will manage the daily operations of the home, including scheduling the staff, ensuring the youth are supervised and safe, and handling all youth needs and activities.

In the end, Andrea Melendrez was hired to operate the Adrian home. She has worked for Family & Youth Services for 12 years at the Maumee Youth Center and has been a direct care staff member, a school aide, and, for the past several years, has served as the Service Support Facilitator. In this position, she is responsible for many of the same duties as the program coordinators, so the promotion was a natural fit.

"Andrea has a great attitude, supports the staff daily on site, and builds a great rapport with professionals that work with us and the individuals we serve," Ms. Zawisza said. "Andrea has worked with many Michigan youth and their families at MYC. We are happy to have her join our leadership team and bring her experience to our new facility in Michigan."

Napoleon Campus holds field day for staff and residents

On a beautiful sunny day in late May, the Genacross Lutheran Services-Napoleon Campus held a Summer Kick-off event for employees and residents. The outside event included a barbeque, live music, and field day events, including a water balloon toss, egg race, tug of war, and three-legged race.

"The event was held to show appreciation for our staff and have some fun with our residents," according to Jessica Bostelman, Director of Human Resources. "We have some of the most dedicated staff who work and care for our residents," she added. "This past year has been especially tough on our caregivers. It was good to see everyone's smiling faces."



Resident Beverly Ruffer (above) waits for the best moment to throw a water balloon.



Staff and residents participated in a three-legged race during the field day.



Residents and family members watch the eagerly anticipated baseball game.

Toledo Campus hosts vintage baseball game

Getting back to pre-pandemic normal has proved to be rather difficult for nursing homes and assisted living centers, which still operate under restrictions from the state. Even hosting a vintage 1860s baseball game on the front lawn of the Genacross Lutheran Services-Toledo Campus proved to be a challenge, but one that was overcome on May 23.

On that sunny Sunday afternoon, residents and their families had the opportunity to watch the Great Black Swamp Frogs of Sylvania, Ohio, take on the Wahoo Base Ball Club of Royal Oak, Michigan. Few, if any, in the crowd cared who won, they just wanted to watch the game.

"We were not sure we would even be able to hold the baseball game on the Tuesday prior to the scheduled date," explained Diane Cline, Director of Activity/Volunteer Services. "The teams were not sure they had enough players, COVID-19 precautions had to be put into place, and the weather was not looking good for game day."

On Wednesday, everything fell into place and the game was on. The residents were excited that their annual baseball game was going to take place, after it had been cancelled in 2020 because of the pandemic.

"The residents enjoyed the fresh air, baseball, freeze pops, and socializing with each other, and we even made the news," Ms. Cline said. "Residents were talking about the game all week."

TWO GRANTS WILL BENEFIT GENACROSS MINISTRIES

The Genacross Lutheran Services Foundation has recently received two generous grants to further the ministry of Genacross Family & Youth Services and the Wolf Creek Campus.

The first grant came from Medical Mutual, which gave Genacross \$5,000 to create a multi-sensory environment at the Wynn Treatment Facility. This will benefit youth served at that location who require sensory stimulation. Many of them have severe ADHD, sensory deficits, and sensory processing disorders. They require both tangible stimulation and a quiet, calm place to retreat when overstimulated.



Frank W. Bloomquist (center), Vice President, Western Ohio, Medical Mutual, presents a check to Genacross President/CEO Rick Marshall (left) and Genacross Foundation Executive Director Mike George.

"We couldn't have done this without the support of community partners like Medical Mutual," said Rick Marshall, Genacross President/CEO. "They have shown their support of our mission with their generous grant, and, on behalf of the youth we serve, we thank them for their vote of confidence," he added.

The Foundation also received a grant from the Grace A. Gossens Memorial Fund housed at the Greater Toledo Community Foundation. The purpose of the Gossens Memorial Fund is to assist in supporting the daily living needs of elderly women residing in long-term care facilities in Maumee and Lucas County, Ohio.

"Our Wolf Creek Campus will benefit from this grant," Mr. Marshall explained. "We are humbled to receive this grant and honored to help the Gossens Fund achieve its goals of assisting seniors with their daily living needs."

Grants are vital to Genacross Lutheran Services Foundation, according to Michael George, the Foundation's Executive Director. "We are always grateful when our community partners support our mission," he said. "Without these grants and others, we could not accomplish the incredible work we do in our community."

IN MEMORY OF

Jan. 1 - March 31, 2021

Marjorie Altherr by
Cheryl & Gary Daman,
Mary Jo Keller, Jeff Mires

Wylodene Baughman
by John & Darla Huddle

Norma Carsten by
Daisy Hornyak

**My husband, Walden
"Bud" Damschroder**
by Mrs. Mary A.
Damschroder

Lilly DeChristopher
by Vivian Hartzell

Virginia Feusse by
Richard Feusse

Mary Lou Gabel by
Ronald Gabel

Helen Heacock by
Dennis & Jo Hagey

Doris Hoesman by
Kermit Hoesman

Arlene Kuckuck by
Jean Winkelman

**Elmer & Beatrice
Lanzer** by
Vivian Lanzer

Betty Link by
Jean Winkelman

John Merren by
Jean Winkelman

**Eleanor & Carl Mock
Sr.** by Dr. & Mrs. Michael
Roetter Sr.

Alma Mueller by
Lynn & Joyce Olman

My wife, Mary by
Weldon Mueller

**My departed
neighbors & friends
in 2020 & 2021 from
Creskide** by
Myra Zaenger

Todd Ritterbach by
Jeff & Nancy Wellman

Dr. William J. Rudge
by Michael & Beverly
Amstutz

Minnie Shick by
Jeannette Kubitz

June Schmidt by
Mary Schimming

IN HONOR OF

Jan. 1 - March 31, 2021

Gail Churchill by
Nancy Churchill

**The 160th anniversary of
First St. John Lutheran
Church, Toledo** by
Mr. & Mrs. William E.
Nelson

Chaplain Greg Olsen by
Mrs. Frances Wilson

Marge Reas & Family
by Nancy Churchill

Doris Riegsecker
by Anonymous

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listed it incorrectly, please accept
our apologies and contact Anne at
419.861.4965 to correct our records.

CONGREGATIONAL DONATIONS

Jan. 1 - March 31, 2021

St. Martin, Archbold
St. Paul, Blissfield
Christ, Bowling Green
St. Paul, Bowling Green
St. Paul, Defiance
Zion, Edgerton
Grace, Fremont
St. Mark, Fremont
Zion, Gibsonburg
Zion, Lafayette
St. Matthew, Lima
St. Peter, Martin
St. Paul, McClure
St. John,
New Washington
St. Peter Ev., Norwalk
St. John, Oak Harbor

Shepherd of the Valley,
Perrysburg
Zoar, Perrysburg
Zion, Petersburg, MI
St. Peter, Ridgeville
Corners
St. John's,
Stony Ridge
St. John Ladies Aid,
Stryker
St. Paul, Sulphur Springs
Olivet, Sylvania
Augsburg, Toledo
Bethel, Toledo
First St. John, Toledo
Messiah, Toledo
St. Mark's, Wapakoneta
Solomon, Woodville

INDIVIDUAL DONATIONS

Jan. 1 - March 31, 2021

Bev Apel
Judy & Ronald Ashley
Rev. Dr. & Mrs.
Gerald Bauer
Jason Beyer
Patricia Blankenship
Hilde Boes
Stephen & Deborah
Bowsher
Lanette Briley
Kari Bucher
Robin & Bob Burkett
Ruby Burkey
Christina Burnette
Elizabeth Cannon
Angela Clay
Diane Cline
James Cordy
Tamara Dawson-Kynard
Elijah Dia
Dr. Jim & Dawn Dumke

Jennifer Fehnrich
Diane M. Frazee
Phyllis Freeman
Glenn Geldien
Michael A. George
Mr. John Wilmore & Dr.
Elizabeth Halloran
Victoria & Demetrius
Harris
Darwin Gebers & Gwen
Howe-Gebers
Verlon James
Mary Jane Joehlin
Eric & Cindy Johnson
Jennifer Lee
Rev. & Mrs. Steve Lutz
Beverly Mackey
Rick & Janet Marshall
Carol L. Meuser
Melanie Moore
Shirley Munson

Paul Nelson
Robert & Marie Obrock
Rev. Dr. Tim & Mrs.
Kate Philabaum
Diane Pojedynski
David & Linda Polzin
Jeff & Sharon Przysiecki
Jon Russell
Mary Satterfield
Jeff & Lorinda Schalk
Larry & Karen Schanke
Amanda Schroeder
Jeff & Paige Schulte
Jane Sharp
Scott Slee
Sarita Smith
Doris Stuever
Janelle Tatum
Carol Taylor
Lynn & John Warren
Linda Weaver
Katie & Jay Zawisza

ORGANIZATIONAL DONATIONS

Jan. 1 - March 31, 2021

AmazonSmile Foundation, Seattle, WA
Daughters of the British Empire, Fremont
Kroger Community Rewards, Columbus
Thrivent, Appleton, WI

NON-CASH

Jan. 1 - March 31, 2021

Kelly Russell

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RESIDENTS PLANT GARDENS AT WOLF CREEK CAMPUS

Planting gardens are a yearly tradition on the Genacross Lutheran Services-Wolf Creek Campus. Assisted living and nursing care residents work with activity staff members to choose the perfect flowers and vegetables to cultivate in the raised garden beds near patios and walkway paths.

While some residents planted vegetables, such as cherry tomatoes and zucchini, others chose to plant a variety of flowers to add waves of color and charm. Geraniums, pansies, begonias, and gerbera daisies were some of the favorites.

"Our raised garden beds bring back old routines and special memories for our seniors," said Vicki Ropp, Activity Coordinator. "Many of them had gardens of their own or helped family members with farms and gardens. Taking care of planting, weeding and watering the items in the garden help keep our residents connected to the community."



Wolf Creek Campus residents Mary Burnett (top) and Myrna Purdy enjoy planting and tending the raised garden beds.



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GenacrossLutheranServices.org