



GENACROSS DONATES GROUP HOMES FOR NEIGHBORHOOD IMPROVEMENT

The shared vision of three local organizations to rejuvenate neighborhoods and provide home ownership opportunities has resulted in the transformation of four former group homes owned by Genacross Lutheran Services. The lengthy process took unoccupied houses and transformed them into quality, safe and affordable homes for new owners.

Over a year ago, Genacross recognized the opportunity to turn its four unoccupied group homes on Seaman Street in east Toledo into assets for both the community and potential buyers. Seeking a purposeful way to revive the properties while addressing housing needs, in March of 2024, Genacross gifted the four houses to NeighborWorks Toledo Region (NTR) to be rehabilitated for homeownership.

“Partnering with NeighborWorks allowed us to gift the unused properties in a way that would make a positive impact on our community,” stated Rick Marshall, Genacross President/CEO. “We are thrilled to see these four houses be renovated and used to provide a safe and affordable option for each new homeowner.”

“We are very grateful for having been selected by Genacross for this partnership,” said Bill Farnsel, NeighborWorks Toledo Region CEO. “The supply of single-family homes in our community that are both affordable and energy efficient is very short. The successful completion of the homes on Seaman Street represents a major neighborhood improvement and evidence that neighborhood partnerships work.”

continued on page 3



Extensive renovations were completed on the homes, including the dwellings located at 2412 (top) and 2416 Seaman St., before new owners took possession.

IN THIS ISSUE

- CEO Column, page 2
- In Memory, page 3
- Core Value, page 4
- Youth Services, page 4

- Napoleon Campus, page 5
- Foundation, page 6
- Donations, pages 6-7

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
Wolf Creek Campus
**Genacross Home &
Community Based Services**
Genacross at Home
**Genacross Family &
Youth Services**
**Genacross Lutheran Services
Foundation**

Connect on Social Media:



A note from Rick Marshall

President and CEO



A Case for Social Ministry

Martin Luther taught that being saved by grace frees each of us to serve others. He put this into practice by establishing the Common Chest, a fund to support orphans, widows, education, and medical care. This wasn't just charity – it was a way to break cycles of poverty and build stronger communities. As Lutherans immigrated to America and established churches, they also built schools, hospitals, and care institutions; laying the foundation for modern social ministry.

Today, over 300 Lutheran health and human services organizations, like Genacross Lutheran Services, stand as a continuing testimony to the legacy of Martin Luther. Lutheran social ministries are trusted, community-centered organizations that have long supported the well-being of individuals in need. Our work includes strengthening families; upholding dignity, independence and choice of older adults; championing full and meaningful lives for people with disabilities; and fostering stability and purpose for veterans and others.

Recently, funding for our valuable services has come under tremendous scrutiny. Funding has been halted without regard for the individuals whose needs are impacted and those that give their lives to serve them. At times, organizations have been called out on social media for receipt of funds without an understanding of how the money is used to make a positive impact on families and our communities. Medicaid, which covers the cost of services for low-income individuals, older adults, children and individuals with disabilities, is consistently in the cross hairs when setting national and state budget priorities.

Though these are difficult and tumultuous times, I am heartened by the outpouring of support for Lutheran and other faith-based organizations. Communities are rallying around ministries to highlight the positive impact they make and how vital their work is in serving those less fortunate. They are pointing out the years of service and how these organizations have adapted to changing needs of society. Many, like Genacross, have been serving their communities for over 100 years.

Lutheran social ministries are beacons of light, calling all of us to serve. Though the ground beneath us may shift, our commitment to compassion and services remains steadfast. As we take each step, whether firm or faltering, we do not walk alone. God's presence sustains us in every moment of service, every act of love, and every offering of hope.

Blessings,

GenacrossLutheranServices.org

In Memory of Michael J. Hollie Sr. (1938-2025)

Genacross Lutheran Services lost a faithful servant when Michael J. Hollie Sr., a former member of the Genacross Board of Directors and a loyal donor, passed away on January 10, 2025.

Mr. Hollie served two terms on the parent board, from 2012-2020. Over the years, he served on numerous board committees, including the Governance and Nominating committees. Prior to joining the parent board, he had served two full terms on the Genacross Lutheran Services Foundation Board, concluding as its president.

"Michael was on the board when I arrived at Genacross and served for a few years thereafter," stated Rick Marshall, President/CEO. "He was a good man who led a dynamic life. His band played at the retirement party for Dave Roberts, my predecessor, and Genacross was honored to serve him in the Health Center at our Wolf Creek Campus at one point as well."

Mr. Hollie worked as an insurance agent for 38 years before retiring in 1999. He also was an avid jazz musician and drummer, as well as a man of strong faith. He had been an active member of St. Philip Lutheran Church in Toledo, Ohio, for decades. He served many years on the finance board at the church and as chairman of the church and/or head elder.



Besides Genacross, he served his community as a member of the board of the Neighborhood Improvement Foundation of Toledo, later becoming its chairman. In addition, he served as regional governor for Toastmasters International and on the board of the African-American Legacy Project.

He is survived by his wife, Ireatha, of 34 years; his five children; 15 grandchildren; 21 great-grandchildren; and a host of other family and friends. A funeral service was held on January 21, 2025, at St. Philip.

Donation of Group Homes - *continued from front page*

After careful planning and with the help of resources, including Local Initiatives Support Corporation (LISC) Toledo Core City funds – a grant program that supports the acquisition, rehabilitation and sale of properties to address blight, increase homeownership and stabilize neighborhood property values – NTR completed the targeted restorative efforts at each home by October 2024.

Renovations ranged from roofs, windows, driveway and foundation replacements, to remodels of kitchens and bathrooms. Once renovations were complete, NTR sold each home. The homes were all occupied by early 2025, with the initiative having created opportunities to access homeownership without the barriers of often costly and unexpected repair costs.

"It is rare that you get the opportunity to acquire and redevelop four houses in a row and create new homeowners. This is truly a transformative neighborhood project that shows the value of partnership for making a positive and lasting impact for Toledo," stated Tom Kroma, Executive Director of LISC Toledo.

For Genacross, LISC Toledo and NTR, the decision to pursue the project was clear. Aligned with each organization's mission, renovating the homes marked a milestone in the effort to revitalize local neighborhoods, fostering community stability and resilience for the benefit of current and future generations.



Year to Focus on Stewardship of Resources

During 2025, Genacross Lutheran Services will be raising up its sixth and final Core Value: Stewardship of Resources. This value works in conjunction with the other Genacross values to help guide decision-making and shape the organization's culture.

"We conclude a tradition of celebrating a Genacross Core Value each year with gratitude," stated Rick Marshall, Genacross President/CEO. "Our goal through this six-year process has been to shine a light on our organizational values and align them with our day-to-day operations, so the organization operates more effectively and with a strong purpose."

“We conclude a tradition of celebrating a Genacross Core Value each year with gratitude.”

– Rick Marshall, Genacross President/CEO

The Stewardship of Resources Core Value being celebrated this year means Genacross exercises faithful stewardship of its financial resources and physical assets, and is responsible and accountable for their proper deployment in the work of its ministry.

One definition of stewardship is “the careful and responsible management of something entrusted to one's care.” It falls on all employees of Genacross to uphold the value and care for that which is entrusted to them, whether it is money, a piece of equipment, or a resident/patient in need.

“Our recent affiliation with Radiant Alliance aligns with our core values and exemplifies stewardship of resources,” Mr. Marshall said. “Through this partnership, we will achieve cost savings, access best practices to better manage our operations, and expand our reach to help more individuals.”



Donated MYC Library Creates Space for Growth

The Genacross Maumee Youth Center (MYC) has received a generous donation that promises to impact significantly the lives of its residents. Thanks to a local donor, Rebecca Jaessing, MYC received hundreds of books, new bookshelves, chairs, tables and even carpeting, creating a new and inviting library space for the youth.

“The library is important for our kids because it provides information, history and truth,” stated Craig Thames, a MYC team leader. “It also helps our kids develop fundamental learning and life skills.”

This vibrant and welcoming space provides the young residents with not only reading and educational materials, but also a space to foster personal growth and exploration. For the MYC youth, the new library is already making a difference in their daily lives.

“I really enjoy reading and having access to so many books helps a lot,” shared one youth in care. “Being in the library is really cool; there are so many books in there,” expressed another youth.

“This donation is more than just books; it's a tool for empowerment and self-discovery, offering the children



Youth browse through the books available to them in the new MYC library.

at Maumee Youth Center a valuable opportunity to expand their knowledge and build essential life skills,” said Executive Director Katie Zawisza. “The Family and Youth ministry is grateful for this contribution, which will continue to inspire and support our young residents on their journey toward a brighter future.”



Napoleon Campus Partners with Soaring Arts Studio

After months of restoration and more than a year of envisioning, the chapel at the Genacross Lutheran Services-Napoleon Campus has finally been renewed — and with it, a stunning new mural that tells a story of resilience, collaboration and artistry.

It all began with an unexpected disaster. A broken sprinkler head in the ceiling above the chapel unleashed a flood of water that poured into the chapel, lobby, surrounding offices, and even the bake shop of the Napoleon Campus. What followed was an extensive restoration process that stretched over eight long months. When the dust finally settled and the chapel was ready to welcome visitors again, one significant feature stood out — a large blank wall, waiting for a new beginning.

Casey Amonette, the Napoleon Campus Executive Director, was determined to bring beauty and inspiration back to the space and sought out a mural to grace the chapel wall. She connected with Soaring Arts Studio, a local nonprofit organization affiliated with the Filling Homes in Napoleon that empowers artists of all abilities to explore their talents and express themselves through the arts.

Filling Homes is a Four Lutheran Agencies of Northwestern Ohio ministry partner with Genacross, and this partnership enabled the organizations to collaborate on a project and benefit both of the populations they serve.

Using a small painting as inspiration, the Napoleon Campus worked closely with Soaring Arts Studio to recreate the

artwork on a larger scale. Six talented artists from the studio each took part in bringing the mural to life, carefully painting sections of the wall with dedication and skill. Their teamwork and creativity transformed the once blank space into a piece of art, adding warmth and meaning to the chapel.

“The final result is more than just a painting; it’s a symbol of community, perseverance, and the power of art to restore not just buildings but spirits,” said Mrs. Amonette. “We are incredibly grateful for the artists’ hard work and the opportunity to collaborate with such a meaningful organization. This mural now stands as a reminder of the journey we’ve been through and the beauty that can emerge after a storm.”



Artists from Soaring Arts Studio and Genacross President/CEO Rick Marshall (far right) stand in front of the new chapel mural at the Artist Meet & Greet and Mural Reveal Celebration in February.



Sharing Christmas Spirit Becomes a RE/MAX Tradition

For the second year in a row, team members from RE/MAX Preferred Associates in Toledo made the Christmas season one to remember with their gifts to Genacross Family & Youth Services. The group donated gifts for every child in care at the Genacross Maumee Youth Center, as well as donating a huge basket of treats for caregivers.

Arlene Gerig, a RE/MAX preferred agent and an active member of the Genacross Lutheran Services Foundation Board, spearheaded the endeavor along with John Mangas, head of RE/MAX Preferred. Ms. Gerig also purchased a new flat screen TV for the children in care at the Maumee Youth Center.

At the February meeting of RE/MAX Preferred agents, Genacross Lutheran Services Foundation Executive Director Mike George presented homemade thank-you cards created by the youth in care. Mr. George read the words written by one young boy who was

clearly overwhelmed by the gifts he had received, and he thanked the agents for their generosity.

“Our agents did not hesitate to give,” commented Mr. Mangas upon accepting the thank-you cards. “When they heard this would be the first Christmas gifts some of these kids had every received, they wanted to make a difference in their lives. No child should be forgotten at Christmas.”



IN MEMORY OF

Nov. 1, 2024 -
Feb. 28, 2025

Dean Asmus

by Jim & Judy Hill

John & Amelia Beins

by Michael &
Sandra Lininger

Kenneth & Louise

Beins by Michael &
Sandra Lininger

Donald R. &

JoAnn V. Boyd by
Joette Boyd-Randall

Dorothy Clark

by Paul Clark

Joann Coakly

by Joyce Douglas

Fred & Marge Dais by

Fred & Lynda Dais

Husband, Walden

“Bud” Damschroder,
by Mary A Damschroder

Clarence & Edna

Dierksheide by Rose
Mary Schroeder

Sue Dinar

by St. Paul, Clyde

Marie Eberle by Diane

& Rob Morgan

Family Members by

Jane & Jack Comune

Calvin Gerwin

by Evelyn Gerwin

David Gerwin

by Evelyn Gerwin

Glenn & Dorothy Goos

by Nancy & Jeff Wellman

Deborah Hammersmith

by Darlene Carstensen

Mrs. Janis Hawkins by

James & Rachel Nissen

Ann Hill

by Jim & Judy Hill

Sandra Hotmer

by Paul Hotmer

Emma & Julius Kahrs

by Lillian Keller

Robert Knight & Other Loved Ones

by Linda M. Knight

Henry & Minnie

Koester by James &
Sandra Koester

Lois Kohlman by Clark

& Carol Price

Betty Lay by Jean

Winkelman

My Husband, Thomas

J. Longanbach, by
Charmaine Longanbach

Beth Motsinger

by Jim & Judy Hill

Carl & Mary Nelson by

Calvin & Marvel Nelson

Charlotte Price

by Randy Germann

Evelyn Richason

by Barbara Bamm

James Richason Jr.

by Barbara Bamm

James Richason Sr.

by Barbara Bamm

Todd Ritterback

by Nancy Wellman

David Roberts by

Pamela Roberts,
Nancy & Jeff Wellman

Herman & Alma Rohrs

by Joan Hocutt

Fred & A. Mary

Schroeder by Rose
Mary Schroeder

Harry L. Schroeder by

Rose Mary Schroeder

Lou Snyder by

Jean W. Snyder

Robert Storer by

Pamela Roberts

Harry & Dorothy

Warnke by Michael &
Sandra Lininger

Harry & Laura Warnke

by Michael & Sandra
Lininger

Richard & Ruth

Warnke by Michael &
Sandra Lininger

Larry Witt

by Margaret Witt

Eloise Yunker

by Gary & Tricia Yunker

NON-CASH

Nov. 1, 2024 -
Feb. 28, 2025

Anderson/Miller
Insurance Agency, Inc

Mary Ardner

Kari Bucher

Foodie Cards LLC

Mike George

Rebecca Jaessing

Melanie Moore

RE/MAX Preferred
Associates

IN HONOR OF

Nov. 1, 2024 -
Feb. 28, 2025

Steven Brinkman & the
Mackey's Group Home

by Paula Kirby

Caregivers

by Frederick Collins

Julian Gerken

by Carol Gerken

Herman Kohlman by

Carol & Clark Price

INDIVIDUAL DONATIONS Nov. 1, 2024 - Feb. 28, 2025

Sandy & Paul Adam	Vicky & Demetrius Harris	Lee & Jan Odegaard
Anonymous	Carey & Gary Hess	Charitable Fund
Rev. Dr. Jerry Bauer	Estate of Arthur Hickok	housed at the
Rev. Steve & Amy Bauerle	Erin & Jarrod Hirschfeld	Raymond James Charitable
Jason Beyer	Estate of J. Henry Huseman	Lynn & Joyce Olman
Hilde Boes	John & Sandra Husman	Rev. Frank & Diane Paine
Lawrence Boldt	Estate of Clayman Kabat	Bob & Sue Pfefferle
Terry L. Bossert	Kirk Family Fund	Rev. Dr. Tim & Kate Philabaum
Karen & Chuck Botzko	housed at the	Ronald Pillera
Steve & Deb Bowsher	Hudson Community Foundation	Diane Pojedynski
Bob & Eileen Brossia	Dan & Julie Kunos	Jeff & Sharon Przysiecki
Kari Bucher	Dr. Sandra Laas	Arlene Ramler
Christy Burnette	Estate of F. Lee Lichtenfels	Suzanne Riehl -Thrivent Choice Dollars
Beth Cannon	Dewayne & Bernice Lohmann	Judy & Ray Robaszkiewicz
Estate of Walter Christen	Estate of Iolantha Lohmann	Jon Russell
Bill & Carol Cook	Burt & Mary Ann Luring	Jim Saffran
Dave Coon	Rev. Steve & Heidi Lutz	Rev. Sarah Schaaf
James Cordy	Ernest & Pamela Mangold	Lorinda & Jeff Schalk
Tamara Dawson-Kynard	Rick & Janet Marshall	Karen Schepman
BSMH Donor Advised Fund for Jeffrey Dempsey	via the Marshall Family Charitable	Barbara Schlatter
Carl & Barbara Dierksheide	housed at American Endowment Foundation	Amanda Schroeder
Fred Doering	Ed Mauntler	Sharon Schwanke
Alan & Mary Ann Draves	Vince & Laurie Mauro	Jane Sharp
Jane & Rick Eakin	Rick & Becky McCann	Paul & Susan Sieben
Elizabeth Emmert	Dawn McKibben	Estate of Christine Siefert
Rev. John & Sherry Ferne	Carol Meuser	Scott Slee
Estate of Chester Foth	Callie Minier	Bob Small
Mike George	Melanie Moore	Bob Storer
Arlene Gerig	Paul Nelson	Paula Susterich
Jack & Gretchen Grigsby	Ken & Margie Nungester	Melissa & Ryan Warner
Timothy Guss - Thrivent Choice Dollars	Howard & Delores Oestreich	Linda Weaver
Bob Haaf		Doris Weis
Mary Jo & Dennis Hagey		Mary Widmer
		Chris & Mike Zawisza
		Katie & Jay Zawisza

CONGREGATIONAL DONATIONS

Nov. 1, 2024 - Feb. 28, 2025

Bethlehem, Defiance	St. Mark, Fremont
Bethlehem, Pemberville	St. Mark's, Defiance
Concordia, Toledo	St. Mark's Women, Bowling Green
First, Leipsic	St. Martin's, Archbold
First St. John, Toledo	St. Matthew, Lima
First St. John Church Women, Toledo	St. Michael, Ottawa Lake, MI
Grace, Fremont	St. Paul, Bowling Green
Holy Trinity, Toledo	St. Paul, Defiance
Hope, Fostoria	St. Paul, Lakeside Marblehead
Hope, Hamler	St. Paul's, Maybee, MI
Church of the Master, Perrysburg	St. Paul, Sulphur Springs
Messiah, Toledo	St. Peter Ev., Norwalk
Olivet, Sylvania	St. Peter, Martin
Providence, Holland	St. Peter, Ridgeville Corners
Resurrection, Port Clinton	Trilby United Methodist, Toledo
Solomon, Woodville	Trinity, Wauseon
St. John, Stryker	Zion, Edgerton
St. John's Ev., Oak Harbor	Zion, Gibsonburg
St. John's, Toledo	Zion, Perrysburg
St. Luke, Wauseon	Zion, Petersburg, MI
St. Luke's, Curtice	Zoar, Perrysburg

ORGANIZATIONAL DONATIONS

Nov. 1, 2024 - Feb. 28, 2025

Kroger Community Rewards, Columbus
Merrill Lynch, Toledo
Miter Charitable Foundation, Harrisburg, PA
Napoleon Metal & Iron, LLC, Napoleon
Northwest Ohio Realtors, Maumee
RE/MAX Preferred Associates, Toledo
Rolf Goffman Martin Lang Co., LLP, Cleveland
Signature Bank, N.A. Fund housed at the Greater Toledo Community Foundation
TOPS #1648, Toledo

If we have failed to list your name or have listed it incorrectly, please accept our apologies and contact Mickey at 419.861.4965 to correct our records.

Nondiscrimination and Accessibility Requirements Notice

Genacross Lutheran Services complies with applicable Federal civil rights laws and does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, disability or sex.

English: ATTENTION: If you speak [insert language], language assistance services, free of charge, are available to you. Call 1-888-546-7745 (TTY: 1-888-546-7745).

Spanish: ATENCIÓN: si habla español, tiene a su disposición servicios gratuitos de asistencia lingüística. Llame al 1-888-546-7745 (TTY: 1-888-546-7745).

Chinese: 注意: 如果您使用繁體中文, 您可以免費獲得語言援助服務。請致電 1-888-546-7745 (TTY: 1-888-546-7745)

THE FRIEND

is published by Genacross
Lutheran Services.

Kari Bucher, Editor

Please send
address changes to:

The Friend
2021 N. McCord Rd.
Toledo, OH 43615-3030
P: 419.861.4990

Some names and
photos in The Friend
are representational.



2021 N. McCord Road
Toledo, OH 43615-3030
GenacrossLutheranServices.org

Non-Profit Org.
U.S. Postage

PAID

Toledo, Ohio
Permit No. 387



*Wolf Creek resident Helen Spieker has fun
with the Easter Bunny at the 2024 event.*

WOLF CREEK CAMPUS JOIN THE EASTER EGG HUNT

The Easter Bunny is coming! Join this iconic figure at the Genacross Lutheran Services-Wolf Creek Campus for an Easter Egg Hunt on Saturday, April 12, 2025, from 10 a.m. to noon.

The egg hunt will begin at 10:30 a.m., with little ones getting to go first. The Wolf Creek Campus is located at 2001 Perrysburg Holland Road in Holland.

While the Easter Egg Hunt may be the big draw, the event will also feature free photos with the Easter Bunny, balloon animal creations, face painting, mini horses to pet, a coloring contest for three age groups, and light refreshments.

"Our Easter celebration is one of my favorites," said Executive Director Katie Miller. "Any time we can have the community come out, especially the kids, our residents are so grateful. Many of them are unable to go out with family or friends, so we bring the fun to them. It is a great way to involve the community and our residents, as well as showcase our wonderful campus!"

For readers closer to the Napoleon Campus, an Easter Egg Hunt will also be held there at 10 a.m. the same day, with the Easter Bunny stopping by the campus located at 1036 S. Perry Street for some photo fun.



Connect with Genacross Lutheran Services on social media. We are on Facebook and LinkedIn, providing more ways you can learn about, share and comment on the latest Genacross news and events.

GenacrossLutheranServices.org