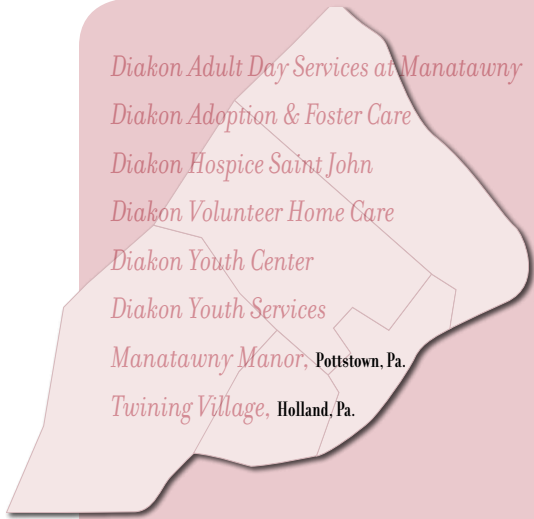


TWINING VILLAGE ‘VETERANS’ SAY EVERYTHING IS POSITIVE ABOUT THEIR LIFESTYLES



Jack Wicks

They met in 1978 as the first residents of Twining Village, a Diakon Lutheran Senior Living Community, Holland, Pa. Twenty-eight years later, they remain good friends. Jack Wicks and Violet Swartz, who have since both lost their spouses, have supported each other as they share many memories of life at the retirement community.

Wicks enjoys every moment at Twining Village. A retired businessman and native of New Jersey, he and his wife, Phoebe, moved to Twining Village to be closer to a daughter living in New Hope. “In the late ’70s, there were not a whole lot of retirement communities to choose from and we just got lucky,” says Wicks. “The community was under construction and we liked the plans and the promises that they were making. The rest is history.”



Violet Swartz

Swartz echoes Wicks’ sentiments. She moved with her husband, Richard, from Maryland, where they owned a large property that eventually became too much to handle. “My brother spotted this community being constructed and when we traveled to see it, I knew this would be our next home,” she says. “We were the first residents to move in, and we lived alone here for three months. My husband was very active here with the Residents Association. We had happy years together here.”

Wicks, a world traveler for business, has co-authored a book, “On Being 90,” and has sold copies to friends and family. “It was very exciting to collaborate on this project with my friend Wayne Umbreit,” he says.

Both Wicks and Swartz appreciate having a health care center on campus. Mrs. Wicks had a stroke and when her husband couldn’t care for her any longer in their apartment, she moved into the nursing center. Wicks remains independent with the use of a walker. Swartz recently moved from her apartment

to the nursing center. “I now require nursing care,” she says, “and though I hated giving up my apartment, at least I am able to stay in the community and still see my friends.”

And friends like Jack Wicks keep Swartz positive and happy every day. “We did a lot together for many years and really enjoyed each other’s company,” she recalls. “Our spouses passed away 12 years ago and we helped each other get through it. Jack always checked in on me and offered to buy me groceries when he went shopping. He is a caring person.”



WISH LIST

MANATAWNY MANOR

- Computer with Internet access for resident use
- Seasonal altar cloths
- Run-about tilt-in-space wheelchairs
- Digital camera with printer
- 35mm camera with film

DIAKON ADULT DAY SERVICES AT MANATAWNY

- Microwave
- Toaster
- Electronic shuffle board
- Big-screen television

TWINING VILLAGE

- Digital camera
- DVD for lounges within each level of care
- Indoor shuffleboard court
- Piano for nursing care center
- Wall clocks for resident rooms
- Outdoor benches for shuffleboard court
- Waterfall fish pond

Diakon Place: Helping to Change a Neighborhood

In early October, Diakon staff and board leaders and local community and governmental officials dedicated Diakon Place, a major investment in an economically challenged East Baltimore neighborhood. Formerly an auto center and supermarket, the abandoned building, now completely refurbished, houses offices for Diakon Housing & Community Development and Diakon Family Life Services – Maryland and Diakon KidzStuff's state-of-the-art child-care center.

DELAWARE-MARYLAND



UPPER SUSQUEHANNA



Roll in the New, Donate the Old

When Diakon Lutheran Social Ministries began to replace all of its nursing care beds with new electric ones, staff members had no idea their decision would help people halfway around the world. When the two Diakon senior living communities in the Upper Susquehanna Synod—Ohesson Manor at Lewistown and Buffalo Valley Lutheran Village in Lewisburg—rolled in the new beds, the older electric and manual ones were rolled out and donated to several causes.

Ohesson donated nearly 100 manual beds to the Upper Susquehanna Synod, which in turn sent them to Liberia.

“The hand of the Lord is in all of this,” says Dr. Robert Bradford, global missions facilitator for the synod. “This project came at a particularly good time.” Just as a group of synod volunteers returned from Liberia, where they helped to rebuild Curran Lutheran Hospital, Zorzor, damaged during the Liberian civil war, they received word of Diakon’s

gift. “The volunteer work crew put a new roof on the hospital, replaced walls, laid new tile on the floor, and completed general renovations,” says Bradford. “It was ready to receive patients again—it just needed beds.” Rebels had stolen the beds and, without the means to replace them, the hospital could provide only outpatient care. But with Diakon’s contribution and the synod’s effort to help rebuild the war-torn country, the hospital will once again function as a hospital should. Responsible for shipping the beds to Liberia, the synod also has worked to raise funds to purchase new mattresses.

“We are so pleased that our beds will be used to care for others, continuing Diakon’s mission to serve those in need,” says Cork Leiter, Ohesson Manor executive director.

Buffalo Valley’s donation of beds benefited those involved in a different reconstruction effort.

Once a month, since Hurricane Katrina’s devastation of the Gulf Coast, volunteers from Christ Wesleyan Church, Milton, have been helping to rebuild area homes. During a recent trip, the crew transported five donated electric beds to offer to older adults or those with special physical needs. “We will be making life a whole lot easier for people,” says Russell Davis, facilities director at the church. The remaining 13 electric beds, out of an 18-bed donation, may be used for the homebound and terminally ill among its 1,200-member congregation. The beds could also serve area individuals from all faiths as Christ Wesleyan Church participates in a community effort, the Hands Up Foundation.

“This is just another example of how Diakon is resourceful in serving as many people as possible,” says John Allison, Buffalo Valley executive director.

LOWER SUSQUEHANNA

Violin's Tradition Leads to Special Gift



Every year Kim Elicker would buy a Christmas gift—usually a toy or a piece of clothing—for a child served by Diakon's foster care program. As she perused this last year's gift list, something caught her eye.

It was a request for a violin.

A musician, Elicker was intrigued. Just how serious was the child about playing? Investigating, she came to learn

that a teenage girl, who had played the violin for six years, had made the request because her instrument had been sold when she entered foster care.

Touched by the youth's situation, Elicker immediately approached her fellow musicians in the Hershey Symphony. One woman quickly raised her hand, offering to donate a violin that belonged to her.

"For her to say, 'here,' was a huge, huge thing," says Elicker, noting that the instrument was more than 100 years old with an intriguing story behind it. "From the beginning, this violin was always given, never sold, except for its original purchase. The girl would be the fifth owner."

The donor was no longer playing the violin and believed it was time to pass it on. "She wanted to keep the tradition of the violin alive and give it to someone who would appreciate it," says Elicker. "She even cleaned up the violin and added new strings."

The opportunity to share the holiday spirit with children and youths served by Diakon is a long-standing tradition at Zion Lutheran Church, Hummelstown. When Elicker returned to her congregation with news of the donated violin, other members stepped forward to make sure the gift included a new case, bow, shoulder pad, chin rest and other accessories, as well as Hershey Symphony tickets.

"It was very much a community gift," Elicker insists. "Because I play the viola, I understood we would need the accessories if we wanted to make it a complete gift. With the donation of the violin, we were able to do that."

The magnitude of the gift was not lost on the girl. When Kelly Smith of Diakon Adoption & Foster Care presented her with the gift, the youth "cried for several minutes and kept repeating that it was the best gift she had ever received. Ironically," says Smith, "her high school orchestra concert was that same night and she was able to take the violin and play it at the concert."

Zion's members "have gone out of their way for years to ensure that kids get their specific requests," adds Smith. "In this situation, they were able to make a miracle happen for a very special young lady."

NORTHEASTERN PENNSYLVANIA

Bereavement Camps Offer Safe Haven

For youngsters like Jessica Adamczyk, 11, Camp Evergreen, a Diakon Children's Bereavement Program, provides a safe haven to explore and discuss the emotions experienced after a loved one dies.

"I came here to express my feelings and talk with the other kids and the counselors. My dad died in a car accident when I was just two years old and my friend, who was 8, just died in a four-wheeler accident," says Adamczyk.

In the rural setting of Camp Kresge, White Haven, Adamczyk and approximately a dozen other campers, ages eight to 14, participated in a weekend camp this summer. Geared towards helping youngsters cope with loss through therapeutic activities and peer, counselor, and volunteer interaction, the camp helps children regain normalcy in life.

"When participants meet other kids who have experienced loss, they know they are not alone," says Christina Fedorko, children's bereavement specialist and camp organizer.

"They quickly bond and support each other throughout the weekend."

Camp Evergreen offers a myriad of activities such as fishing, swimming, boating, sand art, creating memory boxes, journaling feelings, campfire time, planting flowers and a symbolic evergreen tree. Through informal and formal activities, children discuss their experiences with death with one another and the trained volunteers and counselors.

Diakon recently began an expansion of the program to enable more children to be served.

SOUTHEASTERN PENNSYLVANIA

Twining Village Purchased

Earlier in 2006, Diakon announced the purchase of Twining Village, a Continuing Care Retirement Community in Holland, Bucks County, Pa.



IN MEMORIAM

The following memorial gifts were received between October 22, 2005 and June 26, 2006. Diakon programs thank these donors within the Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod for their generous contributions.

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BOOK LOVER FINDS THE PERFECT HOME FOR HERSELF AND HER AVOCATION



Betty Renninger

Betty Renninger is proud of how her great-granddaughter, visiting with her on President's Day, got lost in a book about the country's first president. She is nearly as proud that the book came from a library she helps to maintain—the library at Manatawny Manor, a Diakon Lutheran Senior Living Community.

A resident of the assisted living community at the Pottstown senior living campus, Renninger takes pleasure in the fact the library's collection could satisfy a young, curious mind. When she came to live at Manatawny Manor 14 years ago, the library consisted only of a handful of books, open just one day a week and dependent on a single volunteer to keep it going.

Today filling several walls of shelves, the library is open all day, thanks to Renninger and other resident volunteers who solicit donations, organize book sales, and promote the library. The group has even formed a book club to share their love of reading. The library is just part of what Betty Renninger finds appealing at Manatawny Manor. The family feeling, the countless friends she's made, the fact that many members of her own family are close by all make the community just right for Renninger.

"I like the idea that they offer many services," she says. "The ministry is more defined here and I appreciate that." She believed Manatawny Manor would be the perfect home for her because she knew she needed assistance with daily activities, yet wanted to remain as independent as possible.

"I visited a half-dozen times before I came here to live," she says. "One of the best things is the feeling of security. There is help right here if and when it's needed."

She praises staff members for helping residents to stay active and in touch with the local community, as well as national and worldwide events including involvement in relief efforts to help those affected by disasters such as Hurricane Katrina.

"There's always something to do," she says, "and lots of freedom to do what we want!"