

DIAKON CONNECTION

FALL 2003

SLV Work Camp More fun than work

The name doesn't conjure up images of fun, but that's exactly what the program has been for area youths.

And it's been just that for a dozen years.

It's *Susquehanna Lutheran Village's* annual Work Camp.

"It's been a really good experience for both residents and participants," says the Rev. Charles Oldland, chaplain of the Millersburg village. For 10 years he has been helping to organize the two- and three-night camps that involve students from area junior and senior high schools in a range of projects stressing intergenerational activities and experiences.

And fun.

The camps begin on Sunday afternoons with a worship service for students. Before long, the youths find themselves immersed in their experience and on the road to making new friends.

"We coordinate with activities, maintenance, dietary and laundry," says Oldland, adding that the students—drawn from throughout upper Dauphin County and occasionally from the Harrisburg area—do

everything from transporting residents and calling bingo to serving meals and participating in a work project.

"This year we had a number of things the senior-high students could work at. They made six bird feeders and did planting, weeding, and landscaping," the chaplain says, adding that past projects have included building a picnic table, bench, and wheel-chair-height flowerbeds.

"During their first project back in 1991, they actually poured the cement for sidewalks and began construction of a fence around the village's Garden of Memories."

In this year's junior-high camp, students made a baptismal banner for the SLV chapel.

Sean Gilligan, a four-year veteran of the camps, says he enjoys the work outdoors as well as meeting residents.

The camp "is a real nice experience. It

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Adoption Services

Family Life Services (*Tressler Counseling*)

Frey Village, *Middletown*

Perry Village, *New Bloomfield*

Refugee & Immigration Services

Senior Centers (*Cumberland County*)

Susquehanna Lutheran Village, *Millersburg*

TresslerCare

Volunteer Home Care



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Work camp participants on the job and posing for photos.



Gene and Kathy Carnes Children find adults who care enough

Mission: In response to God's love in Jesus Christ, Diakon Lutheran Social Ministries will demonstrate God's command to love the neighbor through acts of service.

Diakon serves nearly 60,000 persons annually in Pennsylvania, Maryland, and Delaware through adoption, foster care, refugee services, volunteer home care, retirement villages, housing accommodations, congregational ministries, hospice services, and more.

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Eight years ago, Gene and Kathy Carnes of Susquehanna Township became *TresslerCare* foster parents for the first time. Three adoptions later, they continue to welcome children into their home.

As a special education aide, Kathy Carnes came to know a young boy who visited their home on weekends. When he became eligible for foster care, the Carnes, who had had three children born to them, were on their way to a new era in their lives.

The couple's love for children was a driving factor in their decision to become foster parents. "Everybody talks about babies and the older kids seem to be left out," says Mrs. Carnes, explaining why they choose to foster-parent teenagers.

"I tell everybody, 'If you've got any room in your heart, infants aren't the only ones who need you. When [children] get to be in their teens, they need you even more. In order for them to grow up and have good relationships, they need to have loving relationships.'"

And loving relationships definitely are what the Carnes' foster children receive.

"Not many kids leave our home when they come. We are here for the duration," says Mrs. Carnes. "When they graduate, we send them on their way."

They've reached out to children through not only foster care, but also adoption. In October of last year, they adopted a 13-

year-old who had come to live with them five years earlier in foster care. "We really connected," says Mrs. Carnes. "He won our hearts over."

Two other boys also won their hearts. They "came to visit us for respite care 15 months ago and stayed," she says, adding that their adoption was finalized in June.

With three grown children, the Carnes felt as if they were starting over when they adopted the boys.

"My husband and I both have a strong faith. We thought this was the direction God was leading us," says Mrs. Carnes. "After we adopted [our first child], we decided he couldn't be an 'only child.'"

The family currently also includes three foster sons. Mrs. Carnes says one of the biggest challenges is getting them to believe that not every adult is going to mistreat them. "One of the things the kids have always told us is that we are very fair," she says. "When our children were here, there weren't separate rules [for them]."

Last spring, she left a full-time job to focus her efforts as a stay-at-home mom.

"It's amazing. Even though these guys are teenagers, they love me being home," she says, adding that the love she gets back is 100 times greater than she could ever give. "Even at this age, it is amazing to watch them find security in knowing there are adults out there who care enough."

Gene and Kathy Carnes, left and center, pose with adoptive sons, Lee, second from left, and Donald, front, and Cumberland County Judge Kevin A. Hess during the boys' adoption finalization in June.



Grant gives program life

Thanks to a \$141,000 grant from the Carlisle Area Health and Wellness Foundation, *TresslerCare* has brought in-home services to Perry County families.

Modeled after the successful *TresslerCare* Aftercare and Prevention Program, the *PERRYfamilies Initiative* features individual and family counseling for up to six youths and began July 1.

"Perry County does not have any in-home services except for Medical Assistance wrap-around," says Joan Lotz, clinical director. "They are a small county with limited funding." The new program, which has opened an office in New Bloomfield, fills this void.

Participating families are eligible for up to one year of services. "The families we work with are usually working-class or middle-class families who need intensive services," Lotz explains. "They either don't have insurance or their insurance won't pay for the level of services needed."

Targeting 13- to 18-year-olds referred by county Children and Youth Services or juvenile probation, *PERRYfamilies Initiative* will help to prevent recidivism, as well as assist with youths' transition home from placement.

"In addition to individual and family counseling, we also keep in regular contact with the school to ensure that the youths are doing well academically and behaviorally," Lotz says. "We have respite, or temporary, foster care, as a back-up for the parent who has lost control of the youth."

The program stresses skills building, specifically in such areas as anger management, drug and alcohol abuse, and conflict resolution. The program "teaches skills that they don't have, but that they need," Lotz adds.

TresslerCare's emphasis on family therapy has earned the aftercare program an excellent reputation since its start in 1995, and it is expected to do the same for the *PERRYfamilies Initiative*.

"You can work with a troubled youth and have him do very well in residential services, but when he comes back home, he is still dealing with the same issues that troubled him before he went away," she says.

"The youth may come back changed, but the family still has all those unresolved feelings and problems from when the youth went away. The youth has to learn how to be a respectful family member again, as well as function in the school and community. The family therapy helps a great deal."

Perry Village hosts Senator Mowery

Sen. Hal Mowery (R-31) recently visited the residents and staff of Perry Village, New Bloomfield. In a "town meeting" format, the senator discussed the nationwide nursing shortage, high cost of prescription drugs, and the nursing-bed assessment to be levied by the state.



SLV work camp

Continued from Page 3

helps you get ready for what you will run into later in life," he says. "The residents are pretty easy right from the start. They were like my grandparents. They just want our help, and we want to help them."

Despite the camp's name, there are plenty of fun activities, usually with an intergenerational focus. And whether they are enjoying pizza parties and movies or participating in outdoor games, the students—who "camp out" at night in the village chapel—are guaranteed to make new friends.

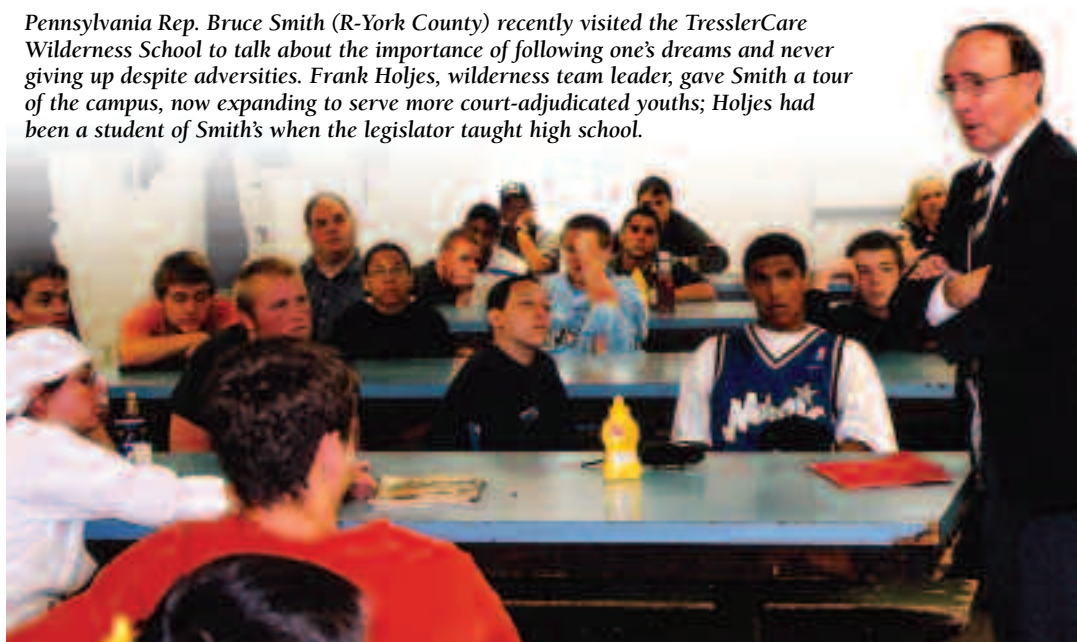
"We have a scavenger hunt where we ask the students to find a resident who is over 100 years old, who owned a Model T, or who was in World War II," says Oldland. "We want them to get an idea of the experiences residents have had."

After several days getting to know one another, students and residents conclude the camp with a social event. This year, the youths scooped ice cream and made root beer floats for the residents.

"They love having them around. There is very good interaction," says Oldland of the residents and students. "It's been a really good experience for everyone."

Legislator speaks to Wilderness School youths

Pennsylvania Rep. Bruce Smith (R-York County) recently visited the TresslerCare Wilderness School to talk about the importance of following one's dreams and never giving up despite adversities. Frank Holjes, wilderness team leader, gave Smith a tour of the campus, now expanding to serve more court-adjudicated youths; Holjes had been a student of Smith's when the legislator taught high school.



Program offers tools for parenting children with attachment disorder

Starting in October, parents of children with reactive attachment disorder, or RAD, will have a new resource in their parenting efforts.

“Re-Parenting 23/7: How to be therapeutic between therapy sessions” is an educational group program open to parents and members of a child’s treatment team.

“This program focuses on specific skills as well as understanding what makes these kids tick,” says Anne Leedy, MS, LPC, director of Diakon’s *Family Life Services – Capital Region*. “Due to lack of attachment in early infancy, the brain wiring was disrupted [in children with RAD]. You can’t turn it around, but you can try to form new connections to help children overcome the common issues they deal with.”

According to Leedy, the program is meant to offer parents support and understanding. “They will learn different activities they can

do with their children, how to communicate verbally to help facilitate attachment, what other services exist in their communities that can help them, and most importantly, how to take care of themselves,” she says.

There are currently very few resources for parents dealing with this issue, says Faye Hall, co-facilitator of the program. “There is a lot of philosophy that we have to take and figure out how to implement in our own homes,” she says. “We wanted to make our work very practical.”

Hall co-facilitates the program with Jeff Merkert, a therapeutic staff support. The two developed the program, which has had tremendous results. “Because of the positive outcome of the whole program, clients have seen people from the past who can’t believe they are the same child,” Hall says.

The pair recently began collaborating with Family Life Services to bring the

program to clients. “We want to give parents the tools and the interventions to understand where the behaviors are coming from. Then they can go back and re-parent their children” with that understanding, says Hall.

“When you understand where those behaviors are coming from, you don’t react to them. You can classify them and act appropriately.”

The three-hour class, to be mandatory for parents of all children new to receiving Reactive Attachment Disorder counseling through Family Life Services, will be held one night a week for six weeks, with child care provided. For more information, readers may contact Family Life Services at (717) 795-0330.

Although there is a charge for the course, Thrivent Financial for Lutherans has donated \$1,200 to be used for scholarships for eligible families.

Diakon hosts legislative breakfast in state capitol

Diakon Lutheran Social Ministries hosted its first legislative breakfast earlier this summer. The event was held in the state capitol just off its main entrance.

“Diakon is the

largest non-profit, long-term care and retirement services provider in the tri-state area, as well as a more-than-century-old provider of children’s services throughout Pennsylvania,” notes the Rev. Daun E. McKee, Ph.D., Diakon president and chief executive officer.

“Not a lot of legislators may know that, and we wanted to help them to

become better acquainted with us and all that we do in employing and serving Pennsylvania’s citizens.”

Numerous senators, representatives, and their aides attended the informal event, at which Diakon staff members described the agency’s historic mission, its vision for services, and the issues that confront health-care and social-service organizations today.

“We are grateful that so many of our elected leaders took time out of their busy schedules to be with us and to learn more about all that Diakon does,” McKee said.

Last year, Diakon served nearly 50,000 Pennsylvania residents, including those aided by the Statewide Adoption Network, which Diakon administers. Through its predecessor organizations, Diakon originated in Pennsylvania in 1868.



The Rev. Daun E. McKee, Ph.D., Diakon president/CEO, talks with state Rep. Patricia H. Vance (R-87) during Diakon’s recent legislative breakfast.

When wishes turn true Tree of Life and the Wilderness Center

When Sandy Brandt, a member of the social ministry committee at Tree of Life Lutheran Church near Harrisburg, saw the *TresslerCare Wilderness Center's* wish list in a recent issue of *Dialog*, she was more than happy to help.

"God's given me the ability to match lost things up with people who need them. I always seem to find the right place to put something that somebody has," she says, laughing. "As it turned out, the Wilderness Center ended up with more than they had advertised for."

Brandt is referring to the fact that she originally told center staff that Tree of Life had a refrigerator to donate. Three weeks later, the Boiling Springs-area center had the refrigerator, a freezer, a sewing machine, a dinner table, and carpet.

The congregation's willingness to help is just one of many ways members support social ministry needs, says the Rev. Richard B. Geib, Tree of Life pastor. "This was any

easy way to do something positive."

The response to the wish list has also been a positive one for Josef "Seppi" Garrett, wilderness services supervisor for the Wilderness Center, whose various programs serve court-adjudicated youths from across Pennsylvania.

Tree of Life members "were very helpful and really interested in learning about the Wilderness Center," says Garrett. "Our whole work is based on being able to improvise, whether out in the woods or here in the office. I can make do with whatever comes my way. Our instructors are very recycle- and reuse-conscious."

Wish lists for Diakon programs appear in each regional edition of *Dialog*. The lists are coordinated through Diakon's Office of Advancement.

"We have been having a wonderful response," says Carol Smith, advancement project director. "The whole wish-list concept seems to be a good idea. Some people like

to buy the item or give the item rather than donate money. We are trying to build relationships so when we have needs, we can go to the congregations and they will respond."



A number of Susquehanna Lutheran Village residents took part in the 50-Plus Visual Art Competition, part of the 50-Plus Expo held near Harrisburg in late summer. Here resident Martha Lenker holds the first-place ribbon she took for her needlework, which won over more than 15 other entries.

WISH LIST

The following Diakon programs can use your assistance! If you are able to donate any of these items or provide funding for their purchase, please contact Diakon's Office of Advancement at 1-888-582-2230, ext. 1219. Thank you!

Adoption Services, York

Proxima (\$2,000)
Digital camera (\$400 - \$500)
Digital camcorder
Overhead projector & screen
Recruitment posters and free advertising
Photo albums and scrap books

Family Life Services – Capital Region

Children's videotapes
Paper for children's drawings (large sheets)
Gift certificates for monetary donations for play room supplies
VCR tape re-winder (\$15)

Frey Village, Middletown

Draperies and hardware for nursing center (\$10,000)
Electric beds (\$5,000 - \$25,000)

Landscaping for courtyard area (\$5,000)
Garden benches (\$500 each)
Activity supplies (paper, paints, glue, bingo prizes, games, etc.)

Perry Village, New Bloomfield

Draperies for Main Dining Room (\$5,000)
Wall hangings for sub dining rooms (\$200 - \$500)
Digital camera (\$500)
Plants (\$50)
Activity supplies (paper, glue and Bingo prizes) (\$50 - \$100)

Refugee & Immigration Services

New or used in good condition:
TV (cost to purchase \$75)
Vacuum cleaner (cost to purchase \$100)
Telephone (cost to purchase \$25)
Clock radio (cost to purchase \$20)
Pots and pans (cost to purchase \$35)

Community Services for Seniors - Cumberland County

Entertainment center (for VCR, TV, etc.)

File cabinet
Refrigerator
Signage (\$200)
Copy machine

Susquehanna Lutheran Village, Millersburg

Picnic and outdoor furniture
Computer and printer
Hi-Lo electric beds
DVD players and movies
Digital hymn player
Beauty shop chairs and dryers
Donations for garden renovations
Craft supplies, puzzles

TresslerCare Wilderness Center

Lumber & drywall
Entertainment center for information/learning center
Hiking boots (men's sizes 9 - 12)
Room air conditioners (window insert) & humidifiers

Volunteer Home Care/Upper Dauphin
Display board (\$230)

Abdelrahim Eldaw



Sudanese refugee begins ‘painting’ new life

Some things in life are worth the wait. In November, Alan Dudley, executive director of Diakon’s *Tressler Refugee Services*, received word that Abdelrahim Eldaw was coming to the United States. For reasons unknown, his arrival was cancelled and it wasn’t until April of this year that the 27-year-old refugee from the Sudan arrived in Mechanicsburg.

The wait was well worth it, says the young man. “America...freedom. America...good people,” says Eldaw, who speaks limited English.

With the help of Refugee Services, Eldaw found an apartment that he shares with another Sudanese refugee. He also works two jobs, trying to build a savings

while also sending money to his family—his pregnant wife and two sons, now in Cairo, Egypt—whom he hopes will join him soon.

Like anyone, Eldaw has hopes for his future in America. “I hope for good life,” says the talented artist who works in pencil, oil, and watercolors. Within one month of moving to the area, he had completed eight paintings, one of which is on exhibit at the Art Association of Harrisburg. Eldaw hopes it will attract a buyer.

Refugee Services has been very supportive of Eldaw’s artistic talent, he notes, linking him with organizations that promote artists from other cultures and encouraging him to look beyond his current situation.

The former refugee is considering an education in art that would eventually lead to a career as an art teacher, notes Dudley.

Appleby gifts aid Wilderness Center

Fae Appleby took the opportunity of her retirement not just to celebrate her accomplishments, but also to help pave the way to success for at-risk youths from across Pennsylvania.

A resident of *Frey Village* Appleby directed that gifts in recognition of her 12 years of service as vice president of the ELCA’s Lower Susquehanna Synod be designated for Diakon’s *TresslerCare Wilderness Center*, now expanding to serve more court-adjudicated youths. She retired from the synod position Aug. 31.

She received a standing ovation at the synod assembly earlier this summer as she learned that more than \$20,000 was being given in her honor to the Wilderness Center (see list on Page 10).

“We are delighted that Fae chose the Wilderness Center to receive this very generous gift,” says the Rev. Daun E.

McKee, Ph.D., Diakon president/CEO. “The school has always been near and dear to her heart. She has been a stalwart supporter of TresslerCare and indeed of all the programs of Diakon Lutheran Social Ministries. We are honored to have Fae continue to be a board member of the Diakon Lutheran Fund.”

In addition to her service on the synod and Diakon fund board, Appleby was a long-time Tressler Lutheran Services board member and officer.

The \$20,000 in gifts, given by the synod council, individuals, and congregations, is being used in the Boiling Springs-area center’s more than \$2 million capital campaign to expand and upgrade facilities. The center houses the TresslerCare Wilderness School, Wilderness Challenge Course, Challenge+Plus short-term residential program, and Weekend



Fae Appleby
(Inset: Fae dons a Wilderness Center hard hat at synod assembly.)

Alternative Program.

A room in the new Wilderness Center facility will be named in Appleby’s honor. The expansion is planned to include new housing and a gymnasium/classroom building.

Former Pirate: ‘You can do anything’

“I wanted to let the youths know that a kid from Mount Savage, Maryland, was fortunate enough to play in the major leagues,” says former Pittsburgh Pirate Bob Robertson.

That message—that you can achieve your goals with enough hard work and determination—was one the baseball player tried to instill in teens served by *TresslerCare’s* foster care and wilderness-based programs during TresslerCare’s annual trek to the Doubleday

Country Inn and Farm near Landisburg, Pa.

The farm provides a “field of dreams” for local baseball fans to play with or be coached by former big-league players.

Having donned old-fashioned baseball uniforms, youths in the foster care program played against similarly attired teens from the wilderness programs.



Play ball!

Robertson’s goal, he says, was to teach the youths you can do anything if you try.

“I was fortunate enough to play in the major leagues and World Series and have a World Series ring and find myself with a locker next to Roberto Clemente’s,” he told a local newspaper. Yet, “it doesn’t matter how big your name is if you don’t have the kindness and rapport to sit down with the kids. You have to give something back.”

Robertson began his career in 1967 with the Pirates, playing for the team through 1976. He later played for the Seattle Mariners and the Toronto Blue Jays. He played first base most of his career, taking part in the 1971 World Series, when the Pirates defeated the Baltimore Orioles four games to three.

Craig Smith, TresslerCare executive director, regards the annual baseball outing

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Experience forever changes volunteer

“I felt pretty sure I wasn’t going to be of any service, but soon I was proven wrong by a short conversation. Wow! What a difference we can make.”

That’s what Bonnie Kent, team coordinator for Diakon’s *Volunteer Home Care* in upper Dauphin County, has to say as she describes a client interaction that reinforced for her the service’s mission. “I have been forever changed by that one incident,” she says. “It was a learning experience for me.”

Kent had answered a panicked call from a son whose father had recently been released from rehabilitation. Listening to the son describe his father’s needs, she knew Volunteer Home Care couldn’t help.

“Our services do not include hands-on care. We simply are not a home health care service,” says Kent, who hung up the phone feeling sad that she could not help the family.

The son called Kent again the next day

and, as she was about to decline services again, something made her hesitate.

“I dug in and really thought about this and ideas began to come to me from working in the nursing home field for years,” she says. “If I were a social service person, what could I do?”

She toured the home with the family and identified things that could be done to help the man maintain his independence. “He was thrilled somebody finally took the time to do something for him,” she says.

The man later spoke with his physician, who referred him to the appropriate human services.

“That little act was a short amount of time on my end, but it was huge for the gentleman. Our volunteers are making things like this happen—making the magic work. They can provide something for people who can continue their independence because of an act of kindness or service. This is a powerful gift on both ends.”

SERVICE-TO-DATE

Each year, Diakon Lutheran Social Ministries touches the lives of thousands of persons throughout the Lower Susquehanna Synod. As of the end of June, the number served regionally totaled more than 4,000 persons.

Adoption Services, York
162 families

Community Services for Seniors
1,224 persons

Family Life Services
(formerly Tressler Counseling)
1,156 persons

Frey Village, Middletown
283 persons

Perry Village, New Bloomfield
399 persons

Susquehanna Lutheran Village, Millersburg
262 persons

TresslerCare Services
361 youths and families

Tressler Refugee Services
198 persons

Volunteer Home Care, Upper Dauphin
45 persons

Baseball

Continued from Page 7

as an opportunity for youths to enjoy an activity while learning that perseverance and hard work pay off.

“These kids have difficult challenges in their lives,” he says.

“The idea is to bring them out to play ball, have fun, and see that being successful requires you to work hard, deal with diversity, and be persistent.”

Despite the day’s heat, the youths enjoyed the event.

“It’s neat to wear the uniforms and play with a guy who won the World Series,” noted one teen.

Following the game, Robertson joined the youths for lunch and an autograph session. Commerce Bank sponsored the outing.

Bigelow heads Cumberland Crossings



Jan Bigelow has been named executive director of Cumberland Crossings Retirement Community, Carlisle, a Continuing Care Retirement Community Diakon has purchased and plans to begin operating Oct. 1 (see the article on the inside back cover of Dialog).

Prior to her appointment, Bigelow served as Diakon’s executive for marketing and census development, as well as interim executive for rehabilitation services. Before that, she was vice president for financial operations with an affiliated corporation, Kairos Health Systems, Inc.

A licensed nursing home administrator, she previously served Diakon as administrator of Perry Village in New Bloomfield and as administrator-in-training at Frey Village, Middletown. Bigelow has a master’s degree in public administration from Penn State University as well as a bachelor’s degree in hearing and speech sciences from the University of Maryland.

The following regional memorial gifts were received from April through June 2003. Diakon programs thank these donors for their generous gifts!

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Regional retirement services vice presidents named

Tama Carey, left, and Ann Molesevich recently joined Diakon Lutheran Social Ministries as regional vice presidents for Retirement and Health Care Services. Carey oversees Diakon’s Continuing Care Retirement Communities, while Molesevich is responsible for operations at the agency’s numerous assisted living and skilled care facilities.



IN HONOR OF DONATED BY

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Christ, Spring Grove
Christ, York
Evangelical, Greencastle
Evangelical, Mt. Holly Springs
First, Carlisle
Good Shepherd, Liverpool
Grace, Lancaster
Holy Trinity, Ephrata
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St. Paul, Hanover
St. Paul, Hummelstown
St. Paul, Littlestown
St. Paul, New Oxford
St. Peter, Highspire
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