

DIALOG

A publication of Diakon Lutheran Social Ministries

Fall/Winter 2012

Therapeutic drumming brings rhythm and fun to residents

■ Do you think you need the rhythm of Ringo Starr to play the drums? Lou Wentz, director of community life at The Lutheran Home at Topton, doesn't think so.

A musical program, Rhythm for Retirement, offered at the Diakon senior living community in Topton, uses drumming as a form of therapy for residents, many of whom have no musical experience at all.

"Participation is high because it involves every level of capability, from those residents who are in wheelchairs to those who live independently," Wentz says. The program was introduced to residents four years ago as an experiment and has since grown to be one of the most popular activities, drawing more than 100 people to each session.

Residents Marilyn Vorhis and Ronald Fox attend the drumming sessions for very different reasons. It's a musical outlet for Vorhis, who grew up singing in a choir. "I love anything to do with music. And it gives me something to do," he says. Fox, who has arthritis, attends because it "keeps my arms moving."

According to research, drumming as therapy is beneficial in a variety of health-care settings for neurological disorders, such as Alzheimer's disease, and for a range of physical disabilities, including arthritis and Parkinson's disease. Drumming also

can accelerate physical healing, boost the immune system, and produce feelings of well-being.

Mark Seaman, founder of Earth Rhythms in West Reading, Pa., adds that drumming is empowering and pleasurable. "When you get 50 people playing the drums, emotion kicks in," he says. "Drumming brings them laughter and joy." Seaman is currently training Community Life staff to administer the program.

Funding for drums and training for Rhythm for Retirement is provided in part by Highmark, which recently donated \$10,000 to fund the senior living community's Wellness Edge program. This program encompasses a campus-wide effort to create a culture of good health for residents and staff. The effort stresses that individuals should eat wisely, move naturally, wake with a purpose, and build a social network.

Rhythm for Retirement aligns with those goals, says Wentz. "The drum circle is helping build a community and often provides a sense of purpose to our residents." ■■

Staff and volunteers spend time with residents during drum therapy sessions. From left are teen volunteers Emma Oroxom and Meghan Donat; Tyler Roach, activities coordinator; resident Marilyn Vorhis; and Kristen Kotsch, activities assistant.



OUR MISSION

Diakon Lutheran Social Ministries: *Many Hands, guided by One Heart*, transforming the lives of children, families, and older adults.

With programs ranging from adoption, foster care and at-risk youth services to counseling and comprehensive senior living services, Diakon annually helps thousands of people of all faiths through compassionate service, gracious hospitality, and charitable care.

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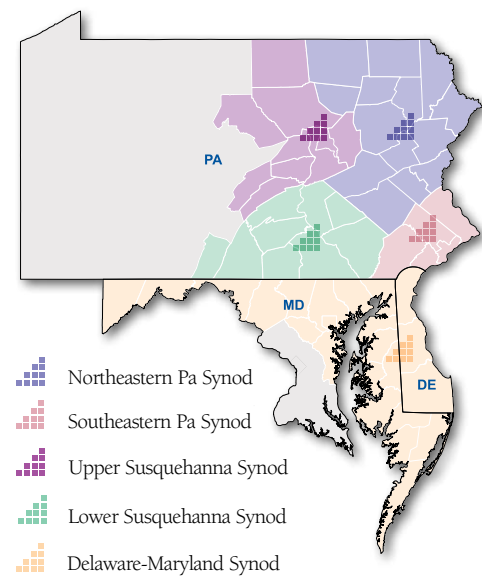
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THE PRESIDENT'S DIALOG

After Thanksgiving, the thought suddenly hit me: Hadn't I just taken these down?

That "time-warp" is something I think we all experience as we grow older—how quickly one season ends and, suddenly, we're beginning that same season again—but I also think the changes that seem abruptly and rapidly to confront us have something to do with "speeding up time" as well.

The last year or so has been very much that way at Diakon Lutheran Social Ministries. It seems as if one change has been quickly followed by another.

Some of these changes were prompted externally; others arose as we redefined what we call our "core ministries" or dealt with the harsh financial challenges the world currently presents.

I am grateful, however, that many of the services—Diakon KidzStuff and Diakon Inroads EAP, as examples—we determined were not part of our core services, we were able to transition to other community service-providers. Service continues in those venues as well as within Diakon. That's a wonderful thing!

Of course, with major new regulations and structures facing us in health care, I am certain there is more change ahead.

That thought brings me back to the idea of seasons.

As I write this column, we are approaching days of waiting and anticipation. In the midst of all the "busy-ness" that the Advent/Christmas season brings, it is critical that we celebrate the gift of "God with us."

While it may seem that we just took down those decorations, the approaching season is a reminder of the gift of the Christ child, who continues to renew our hope as we move into whatever future God sets before us.

And despite the changes we face, there is an amazing continuity to celebrate. Each day, staff members throughout Diakon make a significant difference in the lives of children and older youths who wait for permanent families, individuals and families facing crises, and older adults in need of accommodations and care to maintain their independence.

The changes we make in those lives are changes we celebrate!

Many of you support those loving efforts through your prayers, volunteer efforts, and dollars.

In this holy season—in the midst of all the changes we face—in the midst of life that always seems to be moving more quickly—I ask for your continued support and prayers.

Together, we form the Many Hands, guided by One Heart of love and compassion, of Diakon, daily transforming the lives of children, families, and older adults.

Mark T. Pile



Mark T. Pile, MSHA, MSW, Diakon President/CEO

Residents and local students enjoy the beauty of butterflies



Butterflies are said to be a symbol of hope, resurrection, and beauty. Thanks to Jennifer Laury, activities director at Luther Crest, residents of this Diakon senior living community got up close and personal with the insects by visiting a butterfly tent that Laury erected on campus. A group of students from Mercy Special Learning Center also visited the tent to experience a unique encounter with one of nature's most delicate and beautiful creatures.

Mercy teacher Nancy Peluso had previously taken her classroom to a butterfly sanctuary in Jim Thorpe, Pa., and the children enjoyed it. Barbara Godshall, a Luther Crest resident and volunteer at the school, invited the students to visit the butterfly tent.

The students were able to go inside the tent and feed the butterflies. "The children had a great time and it was a wonderful follow-up activity to the Jim Thorpe visit," says Peluso. "The students liked the hands-on experience of the butterfly tent. They enjoyed feeding the butterflies and learning more about them."

Laury had the idea of creating a butterfly tent last summer, but it did not come to fruition. That changed this year, when she learned the theme for National Nursing Home Week was "Celebrating the Journey," complete with butterfly symbol.

"I did a lot of research to find out how I could get live butterflies and put them in a tent for several days where residents could see them. I also wanted to have different types, such as Red Admirals, Painted Ladies, Monarchs, and Gulf Fritillary butterflies," she explains.

Through a butterfly breeder in Florida, Laury received all of the butterflies and supplies needed to care for them and to build the tent.

With the help of her husband, Laury placed the tent in Luther Crest's courtyard. Inside were a table with assorted fruits and Gatorade on plates from which the butterflies could feed. Plants were set around the tent's perimeter to provide perches for the butterflies. Residents dipped paint brushes in nectar so they could hold the butterflies.

"It was really a great program; the residents loved it," says Laury. "We had one resident who didn't want to leave the tent. We even had family members and staff members from other facilities come to visit, along with the school children."

Laury also provided educational displays in both Luther Crest's health and personal care communities describing the lifecycle of the butterfly; she also had caterpillars that went through the lifecycle, turning into butterflies, a process residents could watch. When it was time to dismantle the tent, residents helped to release the butterflies.

"We laughed a lot because we would release the butterflies and many would fly back into the tent or they would fly and land on the residents. It was funny to watch and brought smiles to the faces of our residents," Laury says.

"I think most of us, no matter what our age, have chased butterflies at some point, but being able to hold them and see them up close is a neat experience. The program had an educational component and for our residents with memory-related illnesses and for the students, who have special needs, it was a wonderful sensory experience as well." ■■

Left, Mercy Special Learning Center student, Austin, admires a butterfly perched on a nectar-soaked paintbrush. Right, Jennifer Laury, activities director at Luther Crest, is the creator of the butterfly tent.



New Bocce court encourages friendly competition

Fun is the name of the game at Buffalo Valley Lutheran Village.

That's why, on any given Saturday morning, weather permitting, a group of "Cottagers" gathers at the Diakon senior living community's newly constructed bocce court, located outside the Common.

"This court is great to have here on campus," says Chris Whitmer, a cottage resident. "It promotes fellowship and fun—lots of fun. It's a chance to get outdoors with friends and just enjoy the game."

Standing in the court watching one of her opponents prepare to roll the ball, she

Fred Bigelow throws the ball while opponent Chris Whitmer watches from behind.



lightheartedly teases him in reference to his strategy. He disagrees and laughter fills the air as sunshine peaks through the clouds. The play is made in Whitmer's favor and she throws her arms in the air in a victory cheer.

Friendly, competitive banter is all part of the game that attracts up to a dozen senior living residents, including players of all skill levels. Although the games are informal and governed by a sporting agreement, the residents are playing on a serious court.

"The court is state-of-the-art," says John Vought, resident and bocce ball organizer, who often officiates games. "It's designed for tournament play."

Complete with a wooden boundary, the court is level and topped with crushed oyster shells. Two covered benches offer respite to waiting players on both ends of the court.

A popular pastime for people of all ages, bocce can be played by two people or teams of two to four people. One player begins by rolling a smaller ball, often called a jack ball, onto the court. Players then try to roll

additional balls closest to the jack ball.

"For me, it's not about the game, it's the camaraderie," says Mary Usher. "I am still learning the rules," she chuckles.

As she learns the rules, she and her peers are also learning to develop strategy. Stimulating mind and body, the game increases hand-eye coordination and offers exercise.

Frederick Bigelow, a cottage resident who also plays bocce regularly, believes the game offers opportunity for self-improvement. "I challenge myself to do well. It's not so much about the competition with others, but it is about doing my best," says Bigelow, whose wife, Janice, also plays.

The driving force behind the ball is different for everyone, but one commonality exists—they all enjoy the game.

As a group of bocce players concluded their morning games and gathered their belongings, Bigelow called out to his fellow players, "I hope to see you next Saturday." ■

One man's vision and a labor of love build a Bocce court

The late Dan Baylor had a vision for Buffalo Valley Lutheran Village—one that included community, fellowship, exercise, and fun in the form of a bocce ball court.

As an avid bocce player, Baylor along with his wife, Audrey, played the game during winter stays at their retirement residence in Florida. For 12 years, the duo looked forward to the camaraderie.

"We played about twice a week. It was a great way to meet neighbors and friends and to get out," says Audrey Baylor, smiling.

Her husband's skill won him the title of "Winner of the Best of Bocce Tournament" during a community competition. Wanting to bring the excitement of bocce to his hometown of Lewisburg, Pa., he discussed the possibility of funding the court's construction at Buffalo Valley.

"My father realized that bocce was a great activity that residents at Buffalo Valley Lutheran Village could enjoy, so he was willing to make a gift," says Gary Baylor, Dan's son.

Around campus, the Bayers have hosted picnics, served on committees, and made financial contributions to various projects. To Dan Baylor, a bocce court was just another way to foster community.

"The Baylor family really understands how to enhance the lives of the greater community and the lives of the residents of Buffalo Valley," says John Allison, a major gifts and planned giving officer for Diakon. "They have a history of serving the campus and providing incredible insight."



Audrey Baylor, left, with her son, Gary.

Unfortunately, before seeing his vision become reality, Dan Baylor passed away in 2007. But his vision was recently revived.

"John Vought was instrumental in picking up the interest again," says Audrey Baylor.

Vought, a Buffalo Valley cottage resident, shares a love for the game. Wanting to honor his friend's legacy, Vought purchased equipment, spearheaded bocce games in his own yard, and contacted village administration about the project. He even

assisted with feasibility studies regarding court construction.

"Dan was a very important person in my life," says Vought. "In his memory, I wanted to see if we could organize bocce ball games and construct a court. It took a long time, but we finally did it."

This fall, thanks to donations from the Baylor family, the Edna Sheary Trust, Creative Landscapes, and an anonymous resident donor, Dan Baylor's dream became a reality.

"The court was a real labor of love by a number of people," says Allison. "We are grateful to all who have supported it."

Lennea Brown, Buffalo Valley executive director, says the new bocce court is another way to connect the village to the community. "We are excited about the possibilities."

One certainty is that Dan Baylor's legacy will bring joy to many.

"I am pleased to have helped finalize my father's intentions by enhancing the appeal of Buffalo Valley by offering bocce entertainment," says Gary Baylor. "If Dan were here today, he would be thrilled," adds Audrey Baylor. "There is no doubt that he would be on the bocce courts leading the pack every Saturday morning." ■

Family gives back to Diakon after receiving the gift of a child

Steve and Lori Roth thought they were prepared for a foster child when they were contacted by Diakon Adoption & Foster Care. "We had a pink nursery and a closet full of dresses," says Steve. There was only one problem: The child they were being asked to parent wasn't a girl, but a boy named Cayden.

The Roths' prior adoption experience had been an attempt to adopt a baby girl from China.

"We felt risk was minimized because those little girls had been abandoned and we wouldn't have to deal with the possibility of a birth mother changing her mind," says Lori. At the end of five years, however, they still didn't have the child they wanted.

As heartbreaking as the experience was for them, Lori believes it happened for a reason. "I don't think we could have opened our hearts to a program called legal-risk when we first explored adopting a child," she explains. "We needed time to educate ourselves and meet the right people that led us to Cayden."

With legal-risk, a family faces the possibility that the child may be reunited with his or her birth parents or the child may be unable to be legally adopted. Joyce Riche, permanency supervisor with Diakon Adoption & Foster Care, realizes that type of uncertainty can be unnerving, especially for people who view placement as a final goal.

"We want families who will commit to adoption because it is the most therapeutic thing to do for the child," says Riche. "But with legal-risk placements, there is the chance a family could lose a child."

The Roths' concerns lessened after Lori discovered that a child she taught in Sunday school had been placed with a "forever family" through Diakon. "I made the call that day."

Shortly thereafter, Diakon staff contacted the Roths, asking them to consider fostering 13-month-old Cayden. They had only 15 minutes to make a decision.

"We had to place everything in God's hands and trust that He had a plan," says Lori. Totally unprepared and caught off guard by the request, they said "yes." Somehow, they knew he was the right child for them.

In fact, they adopted Cayden in April of last year, 14 months after he became their foster child. "A year is a long time to hold your breath waiting for the court to tell you that this child is going to be yours forever, especially when you felt that he was yours the moment they placed him in your arms," says Lori.

The Roths' experience with Diakon has been and continues to be extremely positive, they say. On Oct. 18, the Roths served as guest chefs for Dining with Diakon – Eastern Pennsylvania, which benefited the adoption program.

The Roths say they know that they can't predict the future but are open to "whatever plans God has," including possibly adding to their family. Either way, they say they are blessed to have Cayden in their lives. ■

For more information regarding Diakon Adoption & Foster Care, please visit www.diakon.org/adoption.

Dining with Diakon raises money for adoption and foster care

About 300 guests recently enjoyed an evening of food and networking in support of Diakon Adoption & Foster Care. Featured speaker Anthony Robles, 2011 NCAA Wrestling Champion, shared the inspirational story of how he overcame obstacles involved in being born with only one leg. Many local wrestlers attended the Dining with Diakon – Eastern Pennsylvania event to hear his message.

The October evening raised more than \$137,000 in support of Diakon Adoption & Foster Care. Congratulations to Dr. Christine and Mike Caverly, who won the

"Chef Challenge" contest, raising the most support out of a group of 19 chefs. ■



The Lutheran Home at Topton's Chef Ashlyn Musser, left, helps prepare Farmers Vegetable Rague for celebrity chef Kathy Craine, news and weather anchor and producer for WFMZ-TV News.



Steve and Lori Roth, with Cayden, as they pose for pictures for Dining with Diakon promotional materials.

Dialog Digest

Diakon donates land for ambulance station

Staff members from The Lutheran Home at Topton, a Diakon Senior Living Community, recently participated in a groundbreaking ceremony for a new station for Berks County Squad 575, the Topton American Legion Community Ambulance Service.

Diakon donated land along Home Road that was part of The Lutheran Home at Topton campus to the association so that it could build a new station.

The 4,200-square-foot building will include administrative offices, a three-bay garage to house ambulances, medical storage rooms, and sleeping quarters as well as living room and kitchen.



Taking part in the groundbreaking for a new Topton ambulance station are Paul Moriarty, left, and Kevin Jones, right, of The Lutheran Home at Topton staff. In the middle is the Rev. Jeremiah Sassaman, president of the ambulance association.

Renewed greenhouse program delivers strong vocational education

■ Nearly two years after shuttering its doors, the Wilderness Greenhouse at the Diakon Wilderness Center in Boiling Springs, Pa., is back in full bloom.

The reason for its renewed success? Instead of simply offering horticultural education, the program is working toward becoming self-sustaining by growing and selling annuals. At the same time, the program delivers strong vocational education to youths who participate in wilderness center programs. The center serves youths who have been adjudicated delinquent or dependent by county juvenile court or children and youth services.

“Corey Carothers [Diakon Youth Services executive director] and I developed a new business plan—it became our ‘North Star,’” explains Chris Edenbo, greenhouse gardener. “We asked ourselves, ‘Can we earn incrementally more each year by learning to grow bedding annuals for landscapers?’”

Before they could answer that question, they had to repair elements of the greenhouse and reach out to landscapers who might be interested in partnering with the program.

“I started getting some really great feedback and interest. Two great connections came out of that,” says Edenbo. One is John Baer of Ashcombe Farms in Mechanicsburg. “He has allowed me to come in and follow his greenhouse growers and learn from them. He’s been at the other end of the phone anytime I had a question.”

The second connection was Brickman Landscaping, which provides landscaping for a number of Diakon Lutheran Social Ministries’ properties.

“They were the first landscaper to give us an opportunity,” says Edenbo, adding that the firm initially purchased 36 flats of petunias and 18 potted grasses that would be used for a few Diakon campuses. “That was the foot in the door that we were looking for. I went after a lot of folks to get people to buy in to this idea. They gave us a chance.”

With the order in hand, Edenbo turned to Baer for guidance on how to price the flowers, what containers to use, etc.

“I was breaking into the world of ‘how to speak greenhouse grower talk,’” Edenbo says. “I can’t tell you how many hours I spent on the phone or inviting people out here for lessons on watering.”

With his newfound knowledge, Edenbo put students in all of the Diakon Wilderness Center’s programs to work. In addition to large well-organized projects that required many hands, he also organized small projects in which he worked one-on-one with students. In this intern-style offering, students receive individual instruction for operating a greenhouse and growing plants.

The societal benefit arises as “students become familiar with basic work skills, how to work with a boss,” says Edenbo, adding that he provides opportunity for students to take on leadership roles. “The students typically don’t have a lot of success stories to build confidence.

When you get them into a hands-on project, they come alive.”

The inaugural spring growing season for the revitalized greenhouse resulted in “breaking even with outputs and inputs,” says Edenbo. His next step was to grow cut flowers in the greenhouse. But when Baer suggested he select just one or two flowers to grow and sell to landscapers, Edenbo shifted gears and spent the summer seeking additional business contracts.

“This fall we provided pansies, kale, and a few smaller items to Brickman and a local college,” Edenbo says. “We now have two separate accounts, more than doubling our production from the spring time.”

Edenbo believes the program is on track to becoming a successful business venture. “So much has been improved and so many people have become involved,” he says. “Our No. 1 asset is momentum.” ■■

Volunteer Nicole Greenfield, right, waters plants with assistance from Chris Edenbo, greenhouse gardener.



Community building enhances greenhouse program

■ The flowers planted, nurtured, and grown in the Diakon Wilderness Greenhouse are distributed in a variety of outlets, ranging from the Frey Village Strawberry Festival to Leo’s Homemade Ice Cream Shop in Carlisle, Pa.

Brickman Landscaping, which serves a number of Diakon’s properties, was the first in line and has continued to support the endeavor.

“It makes sense to buy from a local company we already do business with,” says Mark Supanick, account manager. “We gave them a fall order for pansies that we will use in banks in the area.”

Supanick is one of numerous resources on which Chris Edenbo, greenhouse gardener, has relied to expand the greenhouse program’s reach within the community.

“The Dickinson College farm has been very cooperative in lending student workers [to help in the greenhouse],” Edenbo says. “The

students understand what it is to work. They have been a real asset.”

Because the greenhouse is not suited for growing vegetables, Edenbo used a garden at Cumberland Crossings, a Diakon Lutheran Senior Living Community in Carlisle, available for use in partnership with Cumberland Crossings residents. Together with students from the Weekend Alternative Program and the Turning Point Program, he is looking toward a springtime vegetable planting.

“We will be growing for the dining halls at Cumberland Crossings and Frey Village,” he says. “The chefs at both campuses will receive weekly fresh produce from our students.”

Students working in the Cumberland Crossings vegetable garden also will have the opportunity to interact with residents who enjoy gardening.

“That way we start the next step of what it means to build community through the greenhouse program,” says Edenbo. “We need



Plants grown by students at the Diakon Wilderness Greenhouse are sold to businesses in the community.

to go beyond that into building relationships with outside places so that students gain good experience.” ■■

PNC Bank praises greenhouse effort to help youths grow

■ Amid dozens of requests for support of charitable causes that cross Lori Alderman’s desk at PNC Bank every year, the proposal from the Diakon Wilderness Greenhouse stood out.

“It lit up all of us in the room,” says the financial organization’s community relations director.

PNC Bank is known for its Grow Up Great initiative supporting programs in early childhood education. The company also funds

select community development efforts. The Wilderness Greenhouse didn’t quite fit those emphases, but the bank’s charitable giving committee liked the unique approach to meeting needs of at-risk youths.

“The program offers educational, vocational, and rehabilitative experiences for these young people,” Alderman says. “Plus there is the sustainability factor with re-use of wastewater. It’s exciting for us to see such innovation.”

The greenhouse grows and sells annuals

and hanging baskets to landscapers and to the public. Youths working in the greenhouse learn horticultural and landscaping skills. The eco-friendly approach, says Alderman, is especially important to PNC Bank because, she adds, it is one of the greenest companies in the country.

“This program shows young people there is more to life. It gives them a path forward and broadens their worldview. It’s very hopeful,” she says. ■■

Tony Jefferson: Committed to kids and community



■ Ask Tony Jefferson about his job as a counselor with Diakon Youth Services’ Bridge Program in Lancaster County and he immediately makes an important point: “It’s not just a job if you love what you do.”

Jefferson—who recently was honored by his high school—graduated from Lancaster’s McCaskey

High School and, after attending college in Philadelphia on a full basketball scholarship, returned to the region to begin a career.

While his college major had been human resources, he had discovered a passion for working with young people. Back home, he went to work for the City of Lancaster counseling troubled youths, then worked as a probation officer before joining the staff of Diakon’s Bridge Program.

“I’ve always been about helping people,” he says, “especially young people in situations where they need direction and family may not always be supportive. They need to know someone believes in them.”

Jefferson recently was inducted into his high school’s athletic hall of fame. While he says he always liked school, playing basketball helped to keep him focused and he values the opportunity the sport provided him to continue his education in college.

“Education is important and I stress that with the kids,” he says. “I try to help them make the right decisions, whether it’s community college, getting a job, or completing their GED.”

But, occasionally, building that relationship takes time. “A kid may just want to shoot hoops and talk about his family,” he says. “I do that, too. I’ll do whatever it takes.” ■■

Green technology provides learning experience

■ One interesting fact about the 15,000-square-foot greenhouse that sits on the campus of the Diakon Wilderness Center is that it was built as part of a water treatment system designed to take advantage of green technology.

In 2002, having found itself in need of a suitable alternative to a new septic system, the wilderness center worked with an environmental engineering firm to identify an alternative filtration system to treat about 800 gallons of waste water each day.

Engineers designed a greenhouse that recycles the treated wastewater through a misting system that waters the plants. Treated

water flows underground to the greenhouse, soaking the ground, allowing for evaporation and watering the roots of the plants. Water percolates down into storage tanks. Pumps then bring the water up to a sprinkler/misting system overhead so that each night the plants experience “rain.” Fans and vents remove the mist so that it discharges to the atmosphere outside the greenhouse.

Over time, the underground pumps filled with algae and needed to be replaced, says Chris Edenbo, greenhouse gardener.

“Without the sprinkler system, we are running at a low capacity,” he explains, adding that the pumps will be replaced this winter.

This isn’t the first repair the system needed. When Edenbo took over the greenhouse program, the underground drain pipes were filled with sand and dirt. Seeing a way to involve youths in wilderness center programs, he took advantage of the learning opportunity and had them dig up the pipes, flush out the debris, and rebury the pipes.

“They got an understanding of how [the system] worked and how it compared to other sewer systems,” he says. “They were exposed to tools of the trade, as well as engineers and project foremen who volunteered to help us. That was a unique learning experience for them.” ■■



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Twining couple puts heart into volunteer work

■ Bill and Carole Katz not only believe in the importance of volunteering, but also fell in love with each other by doing just that.

The couple, residents of Twining Village, a Diakon Lutheran Senior Living Community in Holland, Bucks County, Pa., met in 1983 while they were both volunteering at night with the Bensalem Rescue Squad.

Carole, a single mother of two at the time, was working as a school nurse with the Bensalem School District, while Bill was working as a calibrator and volunteer Boy Scout leader. Carol was going on vacation with her children and needed someone to watch her dog while they were away. She asked Bill and the rest is history.

"It is so important for us to be able to give back to the community in which we live and I have instilled that in my children as well," says Carole. "We feel it is important to use the skills we have to help people and save lives. Doing this as a couple is extra special."

As volunteers with the Bucks County Medical Reserve Corps, the Katzes volunteer in local and county emergency preparedness and response activities. The corps program

was officially launched as a national community-based movement in 2002. Major events within the United States, such as the terrorist attacks of 9/11 and Hurricane Katrina in 2005, highlighted the need for medical, public health, and non-medical volunteers to aid communities in preparing for and responding to emergencies.

"We offer our expertise throughout the year during 'normal times' as well as in times of community needs, such as an emergency," explains Bill. "We have more than 100 volunteers and are always looking for community members to volunteer, as a large-scale emergency could require thousands of trained volunteers."

Carole, who underwent hip surgery and is not as mobile as she had been, remains active in the corps. "I cannot be on my feet for a long period of time and use a walker or scooter to get around, so I volunteer at expos and clinics where I can sit and give immunizations. I will not let my limitations stand in the way of volunteering."

When they aren't volunteering with the Medical Reserve, Carole and Bill are involved



Bill and Carole Katz volunteer together with the Bucks County Medical Reserve Corps.

with activities at Twining Village. They serve on the board of the residents association and are members of the emergency preparedness committee. In addition, Carole teaches a weekly scrapbooking class.

"We want this community to be the best it can be for those of us who live here, and that is why we both are involved on committees and support various activities," says Carole. "We are not the type of folks to just sit and watch television and be idle. We like to help out in any way we can to make positive changes for the community." ■