

DIALOG

A publication of Diakon Lutheran Social Ministries

Fall 2008



Alice Bridges Roche recalls the pride of bringing home a medal for her country.

SUMMER GAMES INSPIRE MEMORIES OF OLYMPICS PAST

■ For Alice Bridges Roche, life at Cumberland Crossings, a Diakon Lutheran Senior Living Community in Carlisle, Pa., is going swimmingly. And that is, appropriately, how it should be: The charming 91-year-old is the proud recipient of the bronze medal in the women's 100-meter backstroke, earned at the famous 1936 Olympic Games in Berlin, Germany.

That event “was a big part of my life—going to the Olympics and having an experience in a foreign land. It was great. I was very fortunate to be one of the winners,” she says.

Roche's swimming career began in her teen years while living in Massachusetts. She and her twin sister took up swimming on a doctor's recommendation to heal a chronic cough. For Roche, swimming came naturally, and she smilingly recalls a coach's words: “Alice, you've got potential. Alice, you could make a name for yourself.” He was right. Thanks to her diligence and hard work, Roche broke 20 national swimming records as well as three world records and found herself standing on an Olympic podium, receiving a bronze medal.

“I was so proud to see that American flag go up on the field for little old me,” she recalls. “That American flag was in third place, I grant you, but it was an American flag and that was my country.”

The 1936 games took place in Germany under Hitler's Nazi regime. There was talk of a boycott of them by the United States, but that didn't happen.

Instead, Roche boarded a steamship for Germany, along with the rest of the Olympic team. Little did she know at the time she would come very close to Germany's notorious leader. While waiting to take the field for opening ceremonies, she found herself an arm's length away from Adolf Hitler.

“I just stood there and looked at him and thought, ‘he's supposed to be so famous and he's just so ordinary looking.’”

In addition to the pride she feels over winning the bronze medal, she fondly recalls learning to know Olympic track and field star Jesse Owens, who brought home four gold medals. “We all got to know him. I admired him greatly,” she says.

Reflecting on her life since those games, Roche considers herself fortunate to have had a wonderful family. Now a great-great-grandmother, she is happy to live at Cumberland Crossings.

“I'm very delighted and contented here,” she says. “And I'm glad they have a pool here because it's such good exercise. But I don't do laps much anymore—I just enjoy myself.” ■

Alice Bridges Roche, now a great-great-grandmother, still swims for exercise.



The 1936 Olympic bronze medal in the women's 100 meter backstroke is won by Alice Bridges of the United States.



Fun Fitness Promotes *Healthier Kids*

Where in but the imagination of a 3-year-old could a yellow foam disk become a steering wheel or a microphone? Who but a young child would appreciate the command to “bend and smell your toes?” That’s the point of JumpBunch®, a unique program for preschoolers that teaches basics about sports and fitness and builds self-esteem—keep it kid-sized and make it fun! JumpBunch has really hit the mark at Diakon KidzStuff, the organization’s child-care center in East Baltimore, Md.

In one recent session, little bodies moved joyously, and young voices filled the air with constant laughter. One minute they danced, stretched, and balanced with red bands, which then became red wigs. The next minute, they chased “snowballs” of white yarn, all while an energetic instructor kept them focused and lively music sustained the beat of the activities.

Through JumpBunch, children are introduced to different sports through activities and exercises that help to build coordination, develop motor skills, and foster self-esteem. Participants also practice listening skills and use their knowledge of shapes, colors, and letters as they play. “Each week features a different sport or physical activity,” explains Gwen Chadwick, Diakon KidzStuff director. “It’s really helping to develop coordination and body balance. The message is that it’s good to be active.”

Generous donation makes JumpBunch possible

Diakon KidzStuff is offering JumpBunch for students ages 2 to 5, thanks to a donation from Trinity Lutheran Church in Boonsboro, Md.

The Rev. Joseph Donovan III visited Diakon KidzStuff last fall and was so impressed by the program that he shared his excitement with his congregation. In turn, the congregation chose to make a donation to the program to honor Donovan’s 30 years of service to the congregation.

“I was overwhelmed by their generosity,” Chadwick says. “It helped us to get JumpBunch started for our kids, and you can see that it brings them so much enjoyment. I have fun just watching them.”

The JumpBunch program, and other programs of Diakon KidzStuff, are made possible by donations from companies, individuals, and congregations such as Trinity Lutheran Church.



YOU’RE NEVER TOO OLD TO DANCE

Residents of Twining Village, a Diakon Lutheran Senior Living Community in Holland, Pa., have found that dancing is a wonderful way to add years to their lives and life to their years.

Every Thursday evening, about a dozen residents participate in a line dancing class taught by two professional teachers who inspire residents and share their joy of dance. The class has been meeting for several years, and the group performs a few times a year for the others residents.

Leona Herman, group organizer, says the activity is a fun way to socialize with others while enjoying the love of dance. “We have all skill levels participating, and we offer each other a lot of encouragement. We even sing along to the music.” The group learns many different styles of line dance including country, the waltz, the cha-cha, and the polka.

Research indicates that regular exercise is necessary to improve and maintain one’s quality of life and the line dancing class encourages the residents to lead a more active, healthy lifestyle.

For Ruth Nuss, the class is challenging for the mind as well. “The class keeps me mentally alert, because I have to remember the steps and there is no time to make mistakes,” she says. “You can’t let your mind wander or you will get off track.”

The dance group’s biggest fan is Len Lazarick, an active Twining Village resident who directs the “Spring Fling,” at which the group performs. Every Thursday, he shows up at the dance class to cheer on participants. “I would like to dance myself, but I can’t walk and chew gum at the same time, so I don’t think dancing would work out for me,” he chuckles. “These dancers really know their stuff and I enjoy watching their progress.”

TWINING VILLAGE HAD RESIDENT SONGWRITER

Ethel Lodge may not be a familiar name to everyone, but if you ask residents of Southampton, Pa., the community in which she lived and taught music, she is known as the teacher who published a song.

A recent resident of Twining Village, a Diakon Lutheran Senior Living Community in Holland, Pa., Lodge was proud to talk of her love for the piano and to produce a folder filled with newspaper articles about her and “Pennsylvania,” a song she wrote that was published in 1966.

Lodge’s musical gift of living by giving kept the 92-year-old young at heart.

At the age of 6, she began playing the piano by ear. She went on to study music at West Chester University and then taught at Shelmire Elementary School in Southampton.

Music was part of every aspect of her life, including home, family, friends, school, and community. “I think of music as a basic of life, not just an added flourish,” she said at a recent interview. “Focusing on music and teaching has helped me through good and bad times in my life, including the early death of my husband, and having to raise my one daughter on my own.”

While teaching at Shelmire, Lodge won the Pennsylvania Excellence in Teaching Award. However, the highlight of her career was winning the Pennsylvania Song Writing Contest for “Pennsylvania” and having it copyrighted by Ring Music Publishers in Elkins Park, Pa.

“I was so surprised to have won. Even though I made it to the finals, I didn’t think I had a chance,” Lodge said. “I wrote the song from my heart, and it truly expressed how proud I was to be a resident of Pennsylvania.”

Taking a seat at the piano in Twining Village’s community room always put a smile on her face. She would begin to play, singing along to the music of “Pennsylvania,” demonstrating beautifully that the piece was always her favorite song to perform. ■■

Diakon expresses condolences to the family of Ethel Lodge on her recent passing.



Ethel Lodge

OUR 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 Lutheran Social Ministries is a leading provider of senior living accommodations and social services, including adoption, counseling, home care, and youth programs in Pennsylvania, Maryland, and Delaware. With many hands and one heart, Diakon staff members each year touch the lives of more than 70,000 children, families, and older adults. Diakon’s mission is to respond to God’s call to serve the neighbor, and we are proud to continue a 140-year tradition of hospitality and care for people of all faiths.

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Dialog is published three times annually by Diakon Lutheran Social Ministries, Office of Corporate Communications
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Fall Edition 2008 Volume 8 No. 2

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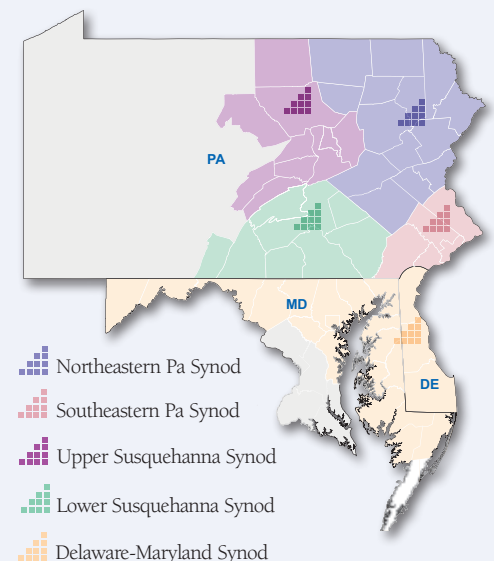
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DIAKON SERVICE TERRITORY



Line dancing class encourages residents of Twining Village to lead a more active, healthy lifestyle.

RETIRING BOARD MEMBERS BROUGHT HALF-CENTURY OF DEDICATED SERVICE TO DIAKON

The Diakon Lutheran Social Ministries Board of Directors plays a pivotal role in guiding the organization in setting long-term strategic direction as well as on connections with Diakon's many constituents.

Four members who recently completed terms on the board together provided more than 50 years of consecutive service to the organization, because all four served both on the Diakon board and on the boards of the organizations that created Diakon in 2000.



Rev. Wayne Muthler

"I just give thanks to God for ... Diakon and its predecessor agencies, and to the numerous persons touched by their ministry over the years," says the Rev. Wayne Muthler, pastor of St. Matthew Lutheran Church in Shamokin Dam, Pa., and St. Paul Lutheran Church near Middleburg, Pa.

He first became involved with Tressler Lutheran Services, one of the organizations that created Diakon in 2000, when he was a first-year field education student and was assigned to a Mechanicsburg, Pa., congregation involved in refugee resettlement. He was nominated to the Tressler board after he was called to St. Matthew.

"I am extremely grateful for the brothers and sisters in Christ that I have had the honor of working with the past 20 years. I cannot even begin to measure the positive impact that they had on my own parish ministry. I just have always marveled at the commitment and dedication shown by board and staff members to this ministry of service in our Lord's name."

Diakon is very much a partner in the ministry that Lord Jesus has entrusted to the church, he believes. "Diakon is a leader in the whole arena of social ministry... reaching out and touching the lives of needy persons in the name of Jesus. My synod, my congregation members,

and I cannot on our own address the ever-escalating needs of people around us. Diakon, on our behalf, in the name of Jesus, pools resources and people to confront needs that the rest of society often ignores. I am most hopeful for [this] ministry," he says.

"Wayne is one of those very special, compassionate, and insightful pastors in the Lutheran church," says the Rev. Daun E. McKee, Ph.D., Diakon president/CEO. "His passion for serving 'the least of those among us' was a beacon of light that directed many of our board discussions. He had great respect for the ministry of Diakon, and he is always ready to support and interpret the work we do on behalf of the church."



Robert Hobaugh, Jr.

For many years, Robert Hobaugh, Jr., an attorney with the Reading, Pa., law firm of Stevens & Lee, has made community service a part of his life. Before serving on the Diakon board from 2000 through 2007, he was a member of the predecessor Lutheran Services Northeast and The Lutheran Home at Topton boards.

He counts among the boards' greatest achievements during those years the affiliation between Lutheran Services Northeast and Tressler Lutheran Services that created Diakon, the decision by the

Diakon board to adopt a policy-governance model, and the designation of the Continuing Care Retirement Community as Diakon's model for senior living services.

His board involvement prompted membership on the advisory council of Luther Crest, a Diakon Lutheran Senior Living Community in Allentown, Pa. "I served as chair of the council and continue today to serve with the group, following my board membership," he says.

Hobaugh believes Diakon has succeeded because it links its mission of providing benevolent care with a wise business perspective.

"Acts of service' is the vehicle by which we carry out the mission and it is the model for the board, staff, and volunteers," he says. "To this vehicle, we have joined a business model that tries to achieve efficiencies in operation and to anticipate future models of care. Underlying this success, and at its core, is the dignity and respect Diakon provides to its staff and to those whom it serves."

Hobaugh wants to see Diakon remain a leader in senior and children's services, while maintaining congregational services and its focus on benevolent care. "This is our heritage and, I would hope, our future."

"Bob has been a trusted and respected board member," says McKee. "He was attentive to important details, committed to Diakon's best interests, and involved in many events and activities in addition to his board work. His leadership continues beyond his retirement from our board."



Susan Wambaugh

A financial advisor at the Giles Financial Group in Wyomissing, Pa., Susan Wambaugh began her long association with the organization as a volunteer with The Lutheran Home at Topton. In 1991, she was asked to chair the organization's community ministries committee; she joined the Topton board in 1994.

"I have a long connection with Diakon and am very proud to have been a part of the organization as it has adjusted and accommodated to the changing environment," she says.

"It has provided a sharing of God's love through a spectrum of services

ranging from long-term care for seniors to foster care and adoption services, as well as character-development services for adjudicated youth and support for families and congregations," notes Wambaugh.

"Diakon has a superbly talented team of dedicated individuals who deliver care beyond reasonable expectations and with due respect for the legacies of individuals and congregations who originally created and continue to sustain the organization to serve our neighbors as Christ commanded us," she says.

Wambaugh's inquisitive and reflective spirit often helped the board think "outside the walls" of the ordinary, says McKee. "She supported Diakon both financially and with her public voice. Sue has been an interpreter of our ministry to many who questioned our decisions and our policy directions. Her deep commitment to Diakon helped others understand the value of our ministry."



Mitch Possinger

Mitch Possinger, president and founder of Cura Hospitality in Orefield, Pa., began his board service in the early 1990s with The Lutheran Home at Topton, a predecessor organization based in northeastern Berks County, Pa.

"Mitch is a churchman in every aspect of that word. Words such as dedicated, loyal, supportive, challenging, and always insightful best describe him," says McKee.

"His entrepreneurial nature contributed greatly to helping Diakon develop into a very special kind of ministry. For Diakon, his

leadership on the board, his very generous financial contributions, and his persistent public support have been significant and inspiring. He has been at the heart of our governance and policy direction," he adds.

Possinger believes the board has provided direction and support in creating a strong, regional social ministry with the resources to serve more people in need, in Christ's name.

"We must keep Diakon financially and operationally strong; grow to generate the economies of scale needed for efficiency; and provide unique quality programs and services to keep Diakon a compelling brand . . . all while remaining true to our tradition as a Christian social ministry organization," he says.

"Diakon and its founding organizations have unrelenting commitment to making the world a better place for all, regardless of one's background, personal wealth, or social status—as Christ would have it."

Diakon's leadership is deeply grateful for the significant skills these individuals brought to the board over the last two decades.

YOUNG GIRL AND HER “BUDDY” ATTAIN GOALS TOGETHER

For one 10-year-old girl named Jenna and one much-older “girl” named Carolyn, the Girls on the Run® 5K race held June 2 at Lehigh Parkway in Allentown, Pa., was more than just a race. It was a moment of accomplishment and camaraderie shared between a program participant and this Diakon employee/volunteer, a joining of two generations in a quest for satisfying a mutual goal—to finish the race.

Of course, that was much more easily accomplished by the smiling fifth-grader than by her 40-something “running buddy,” who only recently began running. Each young runner was paired with a mentor/buddy as part of the program’s focus on helping girls achieve a lifetime of healthy living.

*My personal account of the experience follows.—
Carolyn Darnell, editor*



Jenna

Trying to keep pace with Jenna, I struggle to answer the questions she asks me with too-much ease. Yes, I do have a pet. (We each have a dog, we discover.) I learn that her favorite animals are dogs and horses, and I tell her I like dogs and monkeys. We talk about animals and our families and school and her home. (Actually, she does most of the talking and I do a lot of deep breathing.)

Dubbed the team cheerleader by her school group, she runs some lines past me about the cheer she and her friends can do after the race. As we pass the two-mile mark, I get a high-ten. (It was high five after one mile, two hands after two, and I wonder what we’ll do when we reach the three-mile mark.) Jenna’s energy increases and mine seems to decrease at an incredible rate. We pass a runner or two, then she sprints ahead for a while, then slows to allow me to catch up. Along the way I learn that she plays softball, probably one reason she is very fit and quite an excellent runner.


As we approach the final stretch, even though my role is to be an encouragement to her, I find that she is encouraging me as well. “Let’s give it everything we’ve got all the way,” she shouts with joy. We do, but I know there is no way I have the energy left that she obviously does! It is time to let this little bird fly free. “Go ahead, Jenna,” I tell her. “Go on and give it your all, don’t worry about me.”

This is all she needs to hear. With those words, she is off and around the final bend. Instead of catching up to her, I cut off the end of the loop and run around front, arriving just in time to see her pass through the hot-pink, lime-green, and white-balloon arch (better known as the finish line) with a smile from ear to ear.

This is her moment, and yes, she definitely shines. The joy on her face is my greatest reward, despite the fact that I too have (barely) finished my very first 5K. Jenna finishes 29th out of the 70-some participating girls in 39 minutes (very impressive statistics are obtained by every girl), but the Girls on the Run program also helped Jenna realize the race and other activities are not about winning—they’re about finishing what you start.

As a matter of fact, when I ask Jenna about her time in the 12-week, after-school program, she says, “They taught us about gossip, and how it hurts people.” She quickly adds that participants were also taught how to run, and how to set a pace, but it sticks with me how her first thoughts about the program had nothing to do with running.

It seems to me that the lessons learned go far beyond the race. And these are the lessons that a young girl named Jenna can carry with her as she grows into a wonderful young woman. ■

 *Girls on the Run® is a life-changing prevention program for girls in third through eighth grades. The non-profit program’s mission is “to educate and prepare girls for a lifetime of self-respect and healthy living.” Two offices of Diakon Family Life Services sponsor Girls on the Run programs in Lehigh and Lycoming counties in Pennsylvania. The program is made possible by the generous donors and volunteers who give of their time and resources. For more information on the program, visit www.diakon.org/gotr.*



FAMILY HONORS MOTHER'S MEMORY AND CARE STAFF

More than anything, Roxane Romano felt helpless.

Almost daily, she visited her mother, June Sedlock, in the Horizons Community at Manatawny Manor, a Diakon Lutheran Senior Living Community in Pottstown, Pa. The Horizon's Community serves people with Alzheimer's disease.

Yet she couldn't fight the feeling there was nothing more she and her family could do for her mother other than visit and be with her as much as possible. "It's a very difficult disease," Romano says. "To have to see someone suffer that you care so much about...there's so little you can do. It's very devastating."

Yet Romano did find a way to help. When she learned that Manatawny staff members were planning to participate in a fund-raising walk for the Alzheimer's Association, Romano and her twin sister, Renee, decided to join the effort. "If that could make a difference in some way, then we had to do it," she says. The walk raises funds for Alzheimer's research and education.

Although their mother passed away two years ago, Romano and her sister continue to support the walk. Sometimes other family members join in, too.

Romano's connection to the Manatawny Manor staff remains strong. "We felt safe having Mom in the Alzheimer's unit," she says. "The staff remained the same every day, and we felt that was important and helpful to her. We can't say enough about the staff. They were always caring and attentive, going above and beyond."

Even though their mother, who enjoyed a long and successful nursing career, could no longer communicate with them, "we always felt that Mom still knew my father and my sister and me," Romano says. "She always maintained her quiet sense of dignity and that was comforting to us." ■



Manatawny Manor's Forget-Me-Not team raised more than \$2,000 in last year's Alzheimer's Association Memory Walk.

Student volunteers aid homebound senior



Students and teachers of the Life Skills class at Line Mountain High School in Herndon, Pa., prepare a meal for a client who has recently undergone surgery.

When Sue Carl learned about Diakon Volunteer Home Care, she knew it was a program her students could help—and that could help her students.


Carl's Life Skills class at Line Mountain High School in Herndon, Pa., serves as a school-to-work transitional program for students ages 14 to 21. Student activities focus on job skills, interpersonal communication, and community projects within local churches, senior centers, and community hospitals.

"They are learning skills they will need when they leave here," she explains, adding that she works closely with her eight students and their parents to seek out new experiences for them.

Her excitement over working with Diakon Volunteer Home Care, an ecumenical program whose volunteers provide short-term, non-medical assistance to those in need, grew when her students were asked to prepare a meal for a client who had just undergone surgery.

"They determined the menu, went to Giant and comparison shopped before paying for their purchases," Carl says. "They made one of their specialties—spaghetti pizza—a salad, and dessert."

Such experiences help students grow, she says. "They are learning how to love people and share compassion." ■

 Diakon Volunteer Home Care is made possible only by generous volunteers who freely give of their time and talents. For more information, please call 1-877-DIAKON-7.

THE FUTURE AND SENIOR LIVING

DIAKON STRIVES TO BE A LEADER IN EXPLORING,
TESTING CUTTING-EDGE TECHNOLOGY

■ Innovation and technology do not drive change, they enable it.

Dave Baker, Diakon's chief information officer, tends to live by that motto he has tacked to the wall in his office.

As technology moves at warp speed, Diakon is working diligently to keep up, making sure that clients of the organization's many programs benefit from cutting-edge innovations.

"Technology is about change and we are a constantly changing organization," says Baker, who outlines some of the projects on Diakon's horizon:

- A pilot project for Internet-based technology to monitor the safety of senior living community residents
- Lighting strategies to conserve energy and best serve older eyes
- Technology to enhance communication within senior living communities, and much more.

"I weave through all the different technologies to determine what will work best for our organization," says Baker.

He should be familiar with technology.

As a commissioner for CAST—the Center for Aging Services Technologies—Baker is part of a national coalition of more than 400 technology companies, aging services organizations, research universities, and government representatives. CAST is focused on helping older adults maximize their independence, support the needs of professional and family caregivers, improve the quality of care and life, reduce health-care costs, and increase service efficiency.

"There is a great opportunity for the use of technology in providing senior services," he says. "People are willing to use technology to keep them independent."

Baker currently serves on CAST committees related to protecting health records and to piloting new projects.

"When residents go to the hospital, for example, they don't have all their information," he explains. "We could send those records to the hospital electronically, but we need standards by which to transmit that information safely." The pilot project committee oversees the testing and applicability of new technology.



GrandCare

As part of one such pilot project, the Village at Robinwood and Ravenwood Lutheran Village, two Diakon Lutheran Senior Living Communities in Hagerstown, Md., are serving as locations for a CAST test of GrandCare Systems, Inc.—a technology designed to monitor and track movement throughout the home to safeguard residents' health.

Designed for persons living alone and independently, GrandCare utilizes discreet movement sensors as well as call buttons and "tele-wellness" sensors to provide real-time data on movement and health. Diakon will partner with Eskaton, a similar provider of senior services from northern California, to test the system's usability for staff and residents.

Sensors can relay such motion-related information as people walking, doors opening, temperature changes, and, perhaps, the opening and closing of a medication drawer. The information is then transmitted through a private Internet connection to caregivers and family members.

"Instead of days or weeks going by that we don't know that the resident hasn't taken his or her medications, now we can catch it in hours," says Baker.

In addition, tele-wellness sensors in home-health devices such as a blood pressure cuff, glucose meter, or scale automatically transmit readings to caregivers so they may monitor changes in health, he notes. Constant access to such information may provide medical staff members with trending information to order medication changes or suggest medical appointments or tests.

GrandCare Systems, Inc., also offers a communications component for family members and friends to send messages, photos, reminders, calendar appointments, and more to a special display monitor in the resident's home.

"This is a concept we are testing," says Baker. "Technology is not the driver; rather, the driver is the people who need the help that technology can provide."

TouchTown

Communication is key to the use of technology to improve the lives of older adults, and Diakon's focus on technology is geared to improving this function.

For example, technology designed to enhance community-wide communication has been added at Ohesson, a Diakon Lutheran Senior Living Community in Lewistown, Pa.

TouchTown is more than an in-house television system, Baker explains. The technology allows users to unify internal communications instead of using separate systems for managing in-house television, printed calendars, Web sites, and more.

"I log on through the Internet and see what content has already been loaded. If we have a special event, I can make a special design that will display where I indicate," says Harold "Cork" Leiter, Ohesson executive director.

Using Internet access, users can log into an administrative site and change what is displayed on Ohesson's closed-circuit television channel, independent monitors, or digital signage to display information in public areas.

Residents' families may view those same messages by accessing the TouchTown Web site, convenient for those who want to follow the activities experienced by their loved ones.

The future of lighting

Imagine an apartment in which timed clocks reduce interior lighting when natural light streams through windows, in which shades automatically cover windows to protect eyes from harsh sun light, or in which a push of a button changes to "night" mode.

While that technology may seem futuristic, the future is arriving for Diakon.

Diakon is working with Lutron, Berks County, Pa., to explore ways to improve the quality of life for older adults by understanding how lighting compensates for the changes that commonly occur in aging eyes.

"We can use technology to achieve optimum lighting levels for our residents and guests and, at the same time, conserve energy," notes Baker.

For example, when that "night" button is pushed, outside lights come on, inside lights go down, and sensors enable low-level lighting to turn on automatically when motion is detected—such as to light the floor in a hallway leading to a bathroom. In addition, controls turn off lights in areas not being used, security systems are activated, and heating levels decrease.

Bridgeway, a new community of apartments planned for the campus of Luther Crest, a Diakon Lutheran Senior Living Community in Allentown, Pa., will have an upgrade option to include such innovations to improve vision and conserve energy.

In fact, public areas including lobbies and hallways will include technology to transition between lighted areas. "When you enter the building when it is dark outside, lighting will gradually increase as you move into the building, allowing your eyes to gradually adjust," says Baker. This gradual adjustment will help to reduce fall risk, as well as save energy.

"By cutting our use of fluorescent, even by just 10 percent, we are knocking off an incredible amount of energy use," he says.

This technology will also help residents to see better in the wellness center under construction on the Luther Crest campus. "We will be changing the lighting environment to increase ambient light levels, upgrade task-area lighting, minimize glare, increase contrast, balance luminance levels, improve color perception, and provide gradual transitions between spaces in common areas," says Baker.

Plans are in place following these tests to expand this lighting technology into other Diakon senior living communities, he adds. "These are things that we can do for people today to help them remain independent."

Game system scores big



Ruth Hirt grinned and her friends cheered. The Manatawny Manor resident had just scored a spare, bowling with activity assistant Ashley Burkhammer. But they weren't in a bowling alley.

With the help of a new Nintendo Wii system, Hirt and Burkhammer were "bowling" in the activities room at

Manatawny Manor, a Diakon Lutheran Senior Living Community in Pottstown, Pa.

"We got the system to bring the world of video technology to residents," says Janet Swiecicki, activity director. "It's a wonderful tool for eye-hand coordination, balance, and strength. It gives residents the ability to reconnect with a leisure interest they may have had in the past."

Bowling is the favorite game so far at Manatawny Manor; the system also features golf, tennis, baseball, and boxing. Players simulate movements of the various sports using the Wii, whose sounds bring the experience to life.

"You can see the response," Swiecicki says, watching bowling pins fall left and right on the screen. The excitement on Hirt's face says it all.

Continued from Page 10

Rehab program blends technology with mind and body fitness

A new rehabilitation program at Ravenwood Lutheran Village, a Diakon Senior Living Community in Hagerstown, Md., includes a comprehensive suite that assists residents to practice the activities of daily living one needs to master in order to live independently. Clients can practice skills used in all areas of home life including those in kitchen, bath, and living-room environments.

In addition to traditional physical, occupational, and speech/language therapies, the program strengthens body and mind through technology such as the Wii and [m]Power.

“While Nintendo Wii is used to strengthen the body and increase range of motion, [m]Power will be used to strengthen the mind,” says Jodi Murphy, executive director of Ravenwood Lutheran Village and nearby The Village at Robinwood.

[m]Power is a computer-based brain-fitness system manufactured by Dakim, Inc., to help older adults stay mentally sharp. The fully automated system combines fun with rigorous mental exercise, focusing on six different mental brain functions including long- and short-term memory, critical thinking, computation, visual-spatial orientation, and language. It utilizes touch-screen technology so persons with little or no computer skills can enjoy the program.

“We are excited about this cutting-edge opportunity for our residents to rehab their bodies and minds using the latest technology available,” says Murphy.



And on another technology front ...

For the last two years, Diakon has donated older computers to Mission Central, which refurbishes them for use by people around the world. The computer ministry is overseen by the Rev. Jim Rudy and a small staff of volunteers who refurbish donated computers.

To help Mission Central—a ministry of the United Methodist Church—meet its operating budget, volunteers also recycle gold, silver, and aluminum from computers received.

JOHN TESH DELIVERS LAUGHTER AND SONG



Contemporary Christian music and humorous stories highlighted the performance of entertainer John Tesh at this year’s Diakon Benefactors Dinner, held at the Sovereign Performing Arts Center in Reading, Pa.

Tesh challenged the nearly 1,000 persons present to “find work you love and make it your ministry. I spent most of my life living for myself. Now I am focused on helping others.”

The event marked the 20th anniversary of the dinner, which over the years has raised millions for the work of Diakon within eastern Pennsylvania. In opening remarks, the Rev. Daun E. McKee, Ph.D., Diakon president/CEO, introduced the dinner’s founders, William Deibert and Col. Harry Yoder, guests of honor for this year’s event.

(Later, when Tesh noticed the gentlemen in their seats in the side balconies, he interrupted his own comments with, “It’s like the Muppet Movie up there. Are those good seats?”)

Tesh closed the concert with a final number accompanied by photos of his wife, actress Connie Sellecca, and their daughter visiting residents of a senior living community on Mother’s Day.

The event raised an estimated \$220,000 for Diakon Adoption & Foster Care and charitable care for residents of The Lutheran Home at Topton, a Diakon Senior Living Community in Topton, Pa.

Your generosity is appreciated

Most of the Diakon programs and services depicted in *Dialog* provide benevolent care in a variety of ways. Diakon depends on generous donations from corporations, synods, congregations, and individuals to enable it to serve so many individuals and families, especially those with limited financial resources.

You, too, can make a difference in the lives of people in need. Simply use the blue envelope in this issue of *Dialog* or log onto our Web site’s convenient and secure donation form to make your gift.

For further information on how you can support one or more of Diakon’s ministries, please call the Office of Advancement at 1-877-DIAKON-7, option 2, extension 21219. Thank you!

CHANGING LIVES ...

■ ■ ■ ■ ■ Finding the courage and wisdom to reach out for support at a time of need can be difficult for even the strongest person. But for one Diakon Family Life Services client, that courage is the reason she is happy today.

“Sometimes even a ‘regular’ person can get stuck feeling more sad than happy,” says the woman, who had divorced an alcoholic husband and was having difficulty with relationships. “I got to the point where I couldn’t help myself. I knew I had to try and find someone who could help me.”

She found that someone in counselor Louisa Weber. “I had seen a couple different people over the years, but nothing really changed until Louisa,” the woman says.

Together, the two established a level of trust missing from the woman’s earlier counseling experiences. “You really have to have faith in the person working with you. I did, and it really worked,” she says. That trust allowed her to drop the curtain behind which she had been hiding and forced her to see things more clearly.

“She gave me the tools to deal with things myself, to trust in myself,” the woman says. “If it wasn’t for her, I never could have done that.”

... one at a time



Carrline Barney, right, attributes her recovery to countless sessions with Sarah Scheimreif, left, program director at Diakon Family Life Services.

Before, Carrline Barney thought that life wasn’t worth living. Depressed, suicidal, and lost in the throes of addiction, she wanted to end her life. But all of that changed, in part because of Diakon Family Life Services counseling. “I still have my life because of the counseling I received,” she says.

As an alcoholic, she felt in charge of her life, though it was really spinning out of control. Picking up her first drink as a teenager, Barney, now 64, says she made poor choices throughout her life. She found herself in abusive relationships, used crack cocaine, and by her own admission could be a vicious person at times. “You wouldn’t have wanted to know me then.”

Fueling her addiction was the need to block out a horrific past, which included abuse and rape as a child, a missing father, and a child of her own at age 17. She married young, and when one marriage didn’t work out, she tried another, then another. “I wanted to escape from my life,” she says.

Although she had additional daughters and found joy in her children, that happiness was dashed when they became adults and one died of cancer and another was murdered. “There is nothing like losing a child. When they died, I died,” she says. She held onto memories and turned to alcohol for comfort.

To conquer her addiction she attended self-help groups such as Alcoholics Anonymous, but she needed more. Then the West Branch Drug & Alcohol program referred her to Diakon Family Life Services.

Ten years have passed since she turned to Diakon counselors for healing. “Counseling has helped me to grow. The counselors had patience with me and they have given me a chance to live and love who I am.”

Sarah Scheimreif, director of Diakon Family Life Services – Upper Susquehanna and Barney’s counselor for the last five years, says it has been a gift working with her. “It is amazing,” she says. “Carrline is spirit-filled and spirit-led. She is taking a Godly approach to the healing process.”

One of Barney’s goals was to obtain work with an organization that assists people with developmental disabilities. “She wanted to be in the helping profession,” says Scheimreif. “For several years she tried, but she just wasn’t successful until she got her life on the right track. Because of therapy, she can now connect with others.”

Barney recently attained her goal. “God put me with Sarah. I really got my balance, physically and emotionally. Without Sarah, I wouldn’t have been able to get my job. I was always someone, but because of counseling I now know I am someone special,” she says. “God has a plan for my future, and I can’t wait.” ■ ■ ■ ■ ■

Diakon Family Life Services offers counseling at locations throughout the Capital, Northeastern Pennsylvania, and Upper Susquehanna regions:

Diakon Family Life Services

– **Capital Region** offers private-fee counseling and family-based services through centers strategically located in Mechanicsburg, Carlisle, Duncannon, and Loysville, Pa. Capital Region accepts most major insurance plans, participates in Medicaid and Medicare programs, and also offers a sliding-fee scale for those with limited financial resources. The program also provides a number of home-based services for at-risk youths.

Diakon Family Life Services – Northeastern Pennsylvania offers sliding-fee private counseling at multiple locations. The fees are based on income levels and number of dependents.

Diakon Family Life Services – Upper Susquehanna offers private-fee counseling through centers in Williamsport and Lewisburg, Pa. Upper Susquehanna also provides a range of school-based counseling and other services in school districts in Lycoming and Clinton counties, including Girls on the Run®, a life-changing, non-profit, prevention program for girls in third through eighth grades. In addition to most major insurance plans, Upper Susquehanna participates in Medicaid and offers a sliding-fee scale.

KNITTING GENERATIONS TOGETHER WITH YARN AND LOVE

■ ■ ■ The Girl Scouts arrived with knitting needles and yarn in hand. The skilled knitters at Twining Village, a Diakon Lutheran Senior Living Community in Holland, Pa., greeted them with smiles, ready to teach and share.

For the members of Troop 2633 of the Eastern Pennsylvania Council, creating a yarn and fabric arts badge required knowledge, so they reached out to Twining's experienced knitters for guidance.

Troop leader Kathy Lemly seized the opportunity for yet another reason—to connect the generations so that the girls could appreciate that growing older is a natural process.

“We thought this would be a great experience for both our troop and the knitters from Twining Village, because



each group could learn from the other,” she says. “It seems like the idea worked. They’re also enjoying themselves.”

Katie Leister had just begun knitting and was eager to learn all she could from Twining resident Charlotte Goldberg. “I made a scarf for my stuffed animal before, but I want to learn more stitches so I can make more things,” says the Scout. “The ladies at Twining Village have been doing this for a while, and if we make a mistake, they will know what to do.”

Ruth Bogia, a veteran knitter and Twining resident, says it has been great to see residents working side-by-side with the girls. “It’s a lesson in knitting for the troop, and a lesson in love for us.” ■ ■

For Girl Scout Kendall Oakley, laughter and learning go hand-in-hand as she enjoys her time knitting with Twining Village resident Antoinette Edenhofner.



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