

HERITAGE of Care

THE BETHESDA LETTER

BETHESDA HOME...independence, respect, dignity since 1899



Christina Valdois says Bethesda feels just like home and is just the right fit.

Bethesda CFO: Christina Valdois

Sometimes finding the right place to work is difficult but for Christina Valdois it was easy. The right fit was Bethesda and she knew it from the moment she stepped on campus and met with the administrative team.

“It just felt like home and everyone here feels like my family,” she said.

Spending many years in small towns in Kansas, Valdois finds the small town family atmosphere at Bethesda to be refreshing.

“My childhood years were spent in the panhandle of Texas. I moved to Kansas when I was 12 and lived in small towns surrounding Fairfield High School. I really love small towns. I excelled in track and received a track scholarship to Hutchinson Community College where I decided to study accounting. My education continued to Friends University where I received my Bachelor’s and MBA in Accounting,” said Valdois.

Hard work has never been something that Valdois has shied away from.

“I have worked my way all through college and my masters program,” she said.

“Working for Kroger in the pharmacy division and IdeaTek Communications as an accounting manager have all provided valuable experience.”

Valdois feels that her set of values matches the core values of Bethesda’s very closely.

“I really feel that the faith based non-profit structure of Bethesda fits me very well. I like the Wednesday devotionals and am impressed that residents join in with staff on that too,” she said.

“The people are by far the best part of working here. Everyone treats each other with respect and care. It’s not very often that you find an employment opportunity where you feel like you are working with your family,” said Valdois.

Valdois is married and has three children who all happen to be boys. Kyle, age 11, Gage, age 5 and Conner, who is 7 months old, complete her family.

“My husband and I are constantly busy with sports and activities the kids are involved in. We really enjoy spending time with our family and friends. My parents and grandparents all live in Hutchinson

What’s Inside?

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In May of 1991 Barb Abrahams started working part time at Bethesda Home as an accounting manager. Over the next 25 years Barb added a number of different tasks to her plate, moved to full time and assumed the role of Chief Financial Officer.

In small organizations everyone wears a number of different hats. In Barb's 25 year tenure, she has worn a lot of hats and helped with everything on the administrative side of the organization; accounts payable, accounts receivable, resident billing, Medicaid and Medicare billing, being Bethesda's go to for all insurances (Health, Dental, Life, Supplemental), payroll, worker's compensation and benefits administration. Until recently, Barb was also the go to for information technology needs like changing and updating passwords and security access. Of course all of these additional tasks went on amidst the daily financial work, annual audit, monthly financials, facility budget and bank deposits.

Barb has had incredible dedication and commitment to Bethesda. You can see in her daily work and daily interactions that the residents are a priority. Her conservative approach to budgeting and expenditures have served Bethesda

tremendously in being able to stay fiscally sound amidst lowering reimbursements, increased regulations and increasing costs.

Barb will be missed at Bethesda, but will hopefully not be a stranger. We would like to extend an invitation to come and celebrate Barb and her service to Bethesda on Thursday afternoon, March 30 from 2 to 4 in the Bethesda chapel.

In February we were pleased to add two great additions to the Bethesda family. Christina Valdois is Bethesda's new Chief Financial Officer. Christina comes to Bethesda with great experience and a master's degree in accounting. We have already been impressed with her abilities and knowledge and look forward to many years of her working with Bethesda staff and residents.

Shari Wiens also joined Bethesda in February as our billing coordinator. Shari is not a stranger to Bethesda. Many would recognize her from her work as a barista in the coffee bar, and if not Shari herself, her baked goods which are sold at the coffee bar. Many of you would also know Shari's mother-in-law, Arlene Wiens, who worked for many years at Bethesda. Shari's positive approach, work in the banking industry, and commitment to the Goessel community have already made for a great start, and we look forward to many years of her working at Bethesda.

- Eric Schrag, CEO



Thanks Barb!

Bethesda would like to thank Barb Abrahams for her 25 years of dedicated service. You are invited to come and celebrate with us on Thursday afternoon, March 30 from 2 to 4 in the Bethesda chapel.

Food for Thought

“Money is like manure; it is not worth a thing unless it is spread around encouraging things to grow.” - Thornton Wilder

“The meaning of life is to find your gift. The purpose of life is to give it away.” - William Shakespeare

“Do all the good you can, by all the means you can, in all the ways you can, in all the places you can, at all the times you can, to all the people you can, as long as you ever can.”

- John Wesley

“Strive not to be successful, but rather to be of value.”

- Albert Einstein

“Hardships often prepare ordinary people for an extraordinary destiny.” - C.S. Lewis

Bethesda Friendship Meal Program

– a community ministry

The Goessel community was served by the AGAPE Senior Center that served noon meals to the community for many years. When the State ceased funding support for the center, Bethesda Home determined that it could fulfill the friendship meal program ministry as it so aptly falls within Bethesda's mission of serving the frail and elderly in the community. The program began providing hot noon meals on April 1, 2012, delivering to the homes of area residents who qualify. The AGAPE closed in July, 2012 and a portion of the proceeds of the building sales were donated to the Goessel Community Foundation to be used for funding the friendship meal program.

Noon meals are offered Monday through Friday excluding New Years Day, Memorial Day, July 4, Labor Day, Thanksgiving and Christmas. Recipients must complete an application from the Dietary Office or the Administrative office. Each application is considered on an individual basis in meeting one or more of the following criteria:

- Must be age 65 or older OR disabled per Social Security, Railroad or Veteran's Administration.
- Physically or socially homebound.
- Unable to prepare meals for him or herself due to limited physical mobility, cognitive impairment, or lacking the knowledge or skills to select and prepare nourishing and well-balanced meals.
- Lacks an informal support system such as family, friends, neighbors, or others who are willing to provide meals – or the support system needs to be temporarily or permanently supplemented.

Following is a summary of the program for 2016:

- 2,261 meals were delivered to 13 households in the community (avg. of 188 meals/mo).
- Each recipient paid \$5 for the well-balanced meal generating \$11,305.
- The total costs of supplies and food preparation was \$17,981 leaving a deficit of \$6,676.
- \$900 was received from Goessel Community Foundation from the proceeds of the sale of the AGAPE.
- \$1,000 donation was received from a private donor.
- \$4,776 was subsidized by Bethesda Home operating expenses.

Meals are delivered by a cadre of 20 volunteers coordinated by Ruth Goertzen of the Alexanderwohl Mennonite Church. (Dan & Joyce Bergen, Howard & Anna Beth Birky, Art Flynn, Mary Lindeman, Ruth & John Peters, Arlie & Kay Schroeder, Mary Schmidt, Becky Wedel, Connie Wiens, Myron Schmidt and Marj Shoemaker. Jerry & Leann Toews, Darrell & Judy

Unruh and Ruth Goertzen are substitutes.)

Recipients are very grateful for the program.

"The food tastes very good, the variety is great and they are always on time."

"These meals provide me with a great balanced meal each day. I can do breakfast and supper on my own."

"Please keep these meals coming."

"This is my principal meal for the day. I look forward to it."

The menus are rotated on a five week basis and include entrées such as baked steak, BBQ chicken, roast turkey, baked fish, roast beef, pork chop, spaghetti & meatballs, roast pork, chicken strips, bierrocks, etc. Sides include baked



Pictured is a balanced meal of roast pork, potatoes, layered lettuce salad, hot scalloped apples and vanilla pudding.

sweet potato, rice pilaf, scalloped potatoes, mashed potatoes and gravy, baked potato, potato chips, green beans, mixed veggies, broccoli, corn, peas, zucchini and tomatoes, fruit, etc. Desserts include cherry pie, ice cream, pudding, brownie, German chocolate cake, apricot moos, lemon bar, peach pie, pecan pie, chocolate éclair desert, cookies, etc.

If you would like to contribute to this ministry, make your check payable to Bethesda Home and designate it for the Friendship Meal Program. You can also contribute to the Goessel Community Seniors Endowed Fund so their annual 5% distribution to the project would be greater.

If you would like to apply for a meal contact the Dietary Office at 620-367-2291.



Dan Bergen delivers a meal to Mary Jane Janzen.

Activities Report

“Variety is the spice of life” may be an overused cliché, but it’s a truth the Activities Department personnel at Bethesda believe in. We strive to provide a wide assortment of activities, knowing that residents are individuals. As individuals, they each have their preferences of things to do.

For those who enjoy social events, we have many group activities including coffee time and Reminisce. If residents find meaning in religion, we have morning devotions, Wednesday morning devotions in the chapel, noon devotions, Bible Study, Sunday Chapel and Gospel Hour. Our full-time chaplain is available for individual counseling as well.

For those who like educational-type programs and cognitively stimulating activities, we have “On the Road Again,” “It’s in the Bag,” Bible Trivia, Hymn Stories, Match-up and Story Weavers in addition to time for table games.

For residents’ physical health and well-being, we offer Bend and Stretch each morning, an exercise group Tuesday afternoons and Tai Chi once a week. The physical therapy room offers equipment where additional exercise can take place. Manicures are offered each week as well, and we have an in-house salon for hair needs.

Some residents enjoy homemaking duties, so those are the ones who come to baking group or sewing group.

Those who enjoy children are in luck, as we, in connection with the grade school, have a program called Generation Bridge, in which fifth graders come to do activities with our elders each week. We also have the Kinder Haus preschoolers



Generation Bridge 5th graders make peppernuts with residents.



A Valentines party featured the Goessel High School Elbiata singers and brownies.

come visit once a month and soon we’ll also have a daycare group come visit twice a month. It’s a special treat during the summer when our Jr. Volunteer Program is in full-swing and the place is abuzz with 10-14 year olds.



Music is a big part of Bethesda, and we give plenty of opportunity for residents to take part in Sing a Long, Hymn Sings, Name That Tune and Kazoo Band in addition to programs provided by various local groups and our in-house Bethesda group. We have churches and other individuals who donate time and energy to bring programs and activities to Bethesda. We do Read Aloud and Story Time, a Low German Conversation Group and offer a movie on Saturday afternoons. If our in-house entertainment isn’t enough, we also take various outings with the residents—from a drive through the country, to the museum in Abilene and a lot in between.

Some residents consider themselves to be “home bodies,” so we do our best to ensure they have reading material (large print if needed), audio books, a working television, adult coloring books, music to listen to via their iPod Shuffle music players and headphones and/or DVD players, and opportunities to go outside for a walk or a rest in the sunshine. Those who enjoy pets are paid a visit by our therapy dog or moody in-house cat!

“Activities” may sound a bit simplistic and may be narrowly defined in our minds. But those of us who work in the Activities Department realize that it’s through the above-described activities (and more) that many residents find fulfillment and meaning for this time in their lives. This is a challenge that we love to tackle!

- Gayle Voth, Activities Director

Summary of 2016 Financial Partnership in the Bethesda Ministry

Thanks to each of you who committed your God-given resources to support the Bethesda ministry of caring for the frail and elderly family, friends and community members who are no longer able to fully care for themselves. We are blessed to have nearly all of the items on our Christmas gift ideas list funded. Your contributions impact the lives of many.

- 268 (316 in 2015) different individuals/organizations contributed a total of \$146,684 in cash and in-kind gifts – ranging from \$10.00 to \$15,270 per individual annually. (\$160,152 in 2015)
- \$15,129 was received from in-kind gifts (\$25,757 in 2015)
- 4 individuals and 2 organizations contributed over \$5,000 each (5 total in 2015).
- 34 individuals contributed over \$1,000. The challenge presented last year was to have 100 donors contributing \$1,000 or more (32 in 2015) (2 each were gained the past two consecutive years).
- 10 business /organizations contributed \$30,340

Six different funds were the beneficiaries of the majority of the contributions:

- Benevolent Care - \$81,952 toward offsetting the \$382,000 annual Medicaid shortfall (\$71,073 in 2015)
- Resident / Nursing care equipment - \$14,759
- Endowment Fund - \$9,785 (\$8,400 in 2015)
- Maintenance equipment - \$8,719
- Commercial Laundry Dryer - \$6,420
- Resident room renovation - \$2,100

The 2017 challenge – to have 100 donors contributing \$1,000 or more (An \$84/month contribution/automatic bank withdrawal will accomplish that threshold – that’s \$2.80 per day). We are VERY grateful for the generous year-end gifts received. However, our financial obligations are throughout the year. Monthly and quarterly contributions are also very much appreciated. Start now to get a jump start on being one of the 100 donors. For details check the “How to begin monthly EFT...” box on the reply envelope or contact Pete Flaming at pflaming@bethesdahome.org.

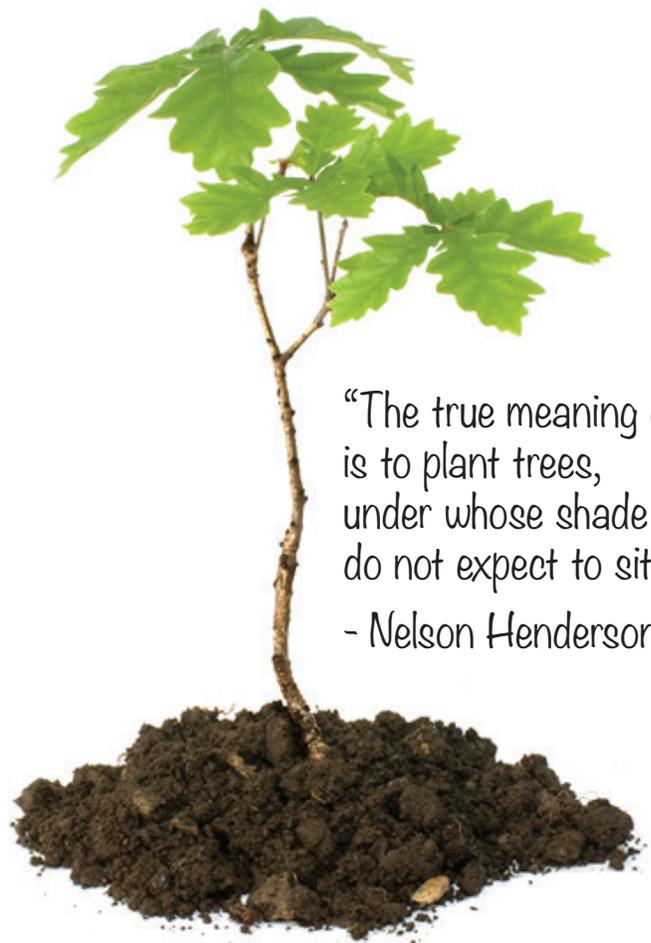
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and my husband’s parents live in Haven, so we have a lot of family close by,” she said.

Some of the challenges of this new job will be learning the software and the reporting that is required for medicare and medicaid.

“I really think that Bethesda strives for excellence and does a great job of caring for the residents both physically and spiritually. I really enjoy getting to know the residents and their families,” she said.

Feel free to stop in and make Christina feel welcome in her new home at Bethesda!



“The true meaning of life is to plant trees, under whose shade you do not expect to sit.”

- Nelson Henderson

Do you enjoy reading the Bethesda newsletter? A donation of \$5 would help us keep the Bethesda Letters coming in the future. A gift of any size is a blessing to our residents and is greatly appreciated! Thank you.

PEAK Award

Kansas Department for Aging and Disability Services Secretary, Tim Keck, presented Bethesda with an achievement award Wednesday, February 22. Bethesda Home received a Promoting Excellent Alternatives in Kansas Nursing Homes (PEAK) award for providing person-centered care for its residents.

"I am here today to acknowledge Bethesda Home's ongoing commitment to person-centered care and to providing a strong sense of community to the residents of this facility," Secretary Keck said.

"Bethesda Home has consistently demonstrated PEAK values by providing personalized and quality care to elder Kansans in a homelike setting that gives them more control over their daily lives," said Keck. "I want to congratulate administrator Eric Schrag and the staff at Bethesda Home for their achievement."

KDADS oversees the PEAK Nursing Homes Initiative. PEAK 2.0 awards are issued annually to homes that accomplish significant improvements toward person-centered care in the targeted areas of resident choice, staff empowerment, home environment and meaningful life. Person-centered nursing homes have moved away from the institutional model of nursing home care and toward a more home-like environment

in which residents have a say in their day-to-day lives.

"We have more than 350 adult care homes in Kansas, and more than 200 of them participate in the PEAK 2.0 program," said Secretary Keck.

"The PEAK award is special recognition given to adult care facilities like Bethesda Home that go above and beyond to provide the best medical care as well as the best emotional care in the industry to their residents."



L-R: Laci Cornelison, PEAK Coordinator; Kellis Willis, Dietary Manager; Sara Hiebert, Asst. Administrator; Tim Keck, Secretary KS Dept. of Aging; Nicole Duvall, Asst. DON; Eric Schrag, CEO; Connie Campbell, CNA; Codi Thurness, Survey Certification & Credentialing Commissioner; Mary Rauh, Homemaker; Gayle Voth, Activities Director

Bethesda Home Junior Volunteer Program

Bethesda will again be offering a Junior Volunteer Program this summer. This program is for youth ages 10-14 years of age. Volunteers learn the value of giving of themselves, expecting nothing in return. The interesting thing is what you DO get in return!

- Friendship with elders
- Skills in communicating with others
- Experience-based knowledge of how to care for others
- Relationships with professional staff
- Exposure to a wide variety of people
- Beginning knowledge of what it's like in the work place

This program is limited to 18 youth.

If you or someone you know is interested in volunteering 1-3 hours per week this summer, call Bethesda Home at 620-367-2291 and ask for Gayle Voth.



Walkers Available

Over the years many families have been generous and donated walkers to Bethesda when their family member no longer needed them. This has been a blessing to many residents who have not been able to afford to buy their own.

However, the blessings of walkers over the years have multiplied and exceeded our needs. Now we would like to bless you. If you have need for one or more walkers for your home, church or family member, please contact Mark Woelk, Eric Schrag, or Sara Hiebert at (620) 367-2291.

A donation of any amount, if so inclined, will be accepted for the walker(s) selected. We are here to serve your needs.



Bethesda Butterfly Garden

– a place of beauty and tranquility

The Butterfly Garden at Bethesda is a place of enjoyment for residents, staff and community members. It is a destination for residents to explore, see what's new and find the flowers that have opened that day. The garden is a calming place for a tense resident or a get-away lunch spot for staff.

The garden is sponsored by the Town and Country Garden Club of Goessel with contributions from many donors. As the



Salvia, Oakleaf Hydrangea and Harry Lauder's Walking Stick. Butterflies are attracted to plants like the Coneflowers, Butterfly Bushes and Sedum.

Volunteers keep the garden looking its best, whether on a weekly basis or on special work days. Alexanderwohl and Tabor Mennonite Church have had service days, donating time and help for sprucing up the garden. If you would like to volunteer and help with weeding and maintenance, notify Nancy Stucky at 620-367-2610 or bnstucky@mtelco.net.

"Mathilda" is a 6 inch metal sculptured lady (white figure in photo below), that moves to a new spot in the garden each time the volunteer gardener has been there - often highlighting the newest blooms, and adding interest for visitors. The garden, on the north side of the main building, is open for all to enjoy. Come find "Mathilda" and enjoy the flowers.

- Nancy Stucky, Project Coordinator



club celebrated its 50 years in 2016, they noted in their files that the development of the butterfly garden started in 1998 with groundwork and installation of sidewalks. There was some doubt that anything would grow in the Goessel "gumbo soil," but shrubs were planted and club members brought plants to fill the spaces. They mulched and watered and soon it flourished. A gazebo and trellis over the patio were added for shaded seating and several bronze statues accent the flower beds.



Almost 20 years later, the garden is a flourishing place of beauty. As you walk through the garden you will notice bushes and flowers that you may remember from your childhood - daffodils, hollyhocks, daisies and roses. Not-so-ordinary plants may also catch your eye - Cleome, Black and Blue

In Memory

Since November, 2016

Eunice Schmidt	11/16/2016
Irvin Reimer	11/24/2016
Daniel Franzen	2/26/17



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To enable us to communicate more efficiently in this electronic world,
please send your current email address to pflaming@bethesdahome.org

Pete's Opportunity for Philanthropy

How can you assure that your charitable goals or wishes are in place?

As you make your plans for 2017 and future years, I would encourage you to think about creating a generosity plan. Our friends at Everence® have provided the following checklist to help you think about potential updates to your charitable goals or wishes:

- Are any new charitable recommendations in order?
- Have you experienced life changes that may warrant a will or trust update?
- Are you looking for creative giving tools that also provide you with income?
- Are charities listed as beneficiaries on your life insurance or IRA?
- Have you reviewed your financial plan with an advisor?
- Are you considering any planned gifts to increase your charitable impact?
- Are there any gifts you know you would like to make this year?

For more information contact Pete Flaming pflaming@bethesdahome.org or your financial advisor. Mitch Stutzman, Stewardship Consultant for Everence, is also very willing to help - (620) 327-4043 or by email at mitch.stutzman@everence.com.