

THE BETHESDA LETTER

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

HERITAGE
of Care

Support for Bethesda Comes in Many Forms

It's no secret that the last few years have had all kinds of challenges for Bethesda Home. What has made the pandemic bearable, though, has been the incredible support of so many people in the Bethesda community.

Cherie Reimer is one of those people. Cherie started working for Bethesda five years ago as a nurse. At the time, she had been working in a hospital setting, and was looking for a change. Although she applied to multiple places, Bethesda was the only one that called her back, something that she sees as the hand of God.

"Emotionally and spiritually, I was in a pretty rough spot," shared Reimer. "Bethesda became a place of healing for me, a place I could get myself set right. It's absolutely where God wanted me to be."

This year, Cherie was looking to pick up extra hours, and although she considered working somewhere else, she noticed that Bethesda had a housekeeping position open.

"I started because I figured it would be easier to merge schedules. However, it's added a lot of nice diversity to the work I do. It's nice to shift to a different role and to see the organization from a different viewpoint. After working in housekeeping a few weeks, I now view the trash as my job rather than leave it for someone else later. The physical exercise is making me stronger. Mopping floors has become an easier task."

Ultimately, Reimer sees housekeeping as another way to care for people.

And at the end of the day, that's what working for Bethesda is all about - caring for people, no matter what role you're in.



Cherie Reimer

What's Inside?

- Message from the CEO
- Life Enrichment Report
- Development Update
- And more!

REMINDER

Please send us your email address if you would like to receive the newsletter and other communications electronically.

Send an email to
mlehmanwiens@

bethesdahome.org

or call 620-367-2291.

Current and past newsletters can be viewed on our website

www.bethesdahome.org
under the "About" heading.

Follow Bethesda's current news and resident activities on our Facebook page.

"Like" us!

We welcome your comments.

Just Clowning Around



Denise Nickels, enjoys participating in the contest.



Nicole and Kelli take part in the fun!

In July, Bethesda held a Carival Clown Costume Contest. This event provided entertainment for residents as well as the staff at Bethesda Home! Thanks to Ariel Kraus for organizing the event!



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CEO's Corner



Sara Hiebert, CEO

To say the last 2+ years have been difficult is an understatement. The whole world has experienced multiple changes to how we live and work, and Bethesda Home is no different. These past 2 years I have found comfort in reading “Heritage of Care” a History of the Mennonite Bethesda Society by Kristine Flaming Schmucker.

I have read this book multiple times throughout the years but these readings most recently have provided me encouragement and insight that in the 123 years of Bethesda’s history, there have been many tough times. However, the community which supports the mission and vision of Bethesda has always pulled through to provide the necessary things in order for Bethesda to continue to push forward. My hope and prayer is that the community will once again step forward so that Bethesda can continue to prosper and flourish for many, many years to come.

Here is a recap to provide you with some of the events that Bethesda has faced these past few years.

- March 13, 2020 was the day we were instructed by CMS to close our doors to family and friends and even some staff. COVID was on the rise and to protect the safety of the residents we were no longer allowed to have “non-essential” people coming into the building.
- December 23, 2020 was our first outbreak of COVID affecting residents. This outbreak lasted until February 2, 2021. This was a very long month and a half for staff and residents alike. We had many resident deaths and a large percentage of our staff tested positive for COVID during this time.
- From mid-February through November our census never went above 34. We are licensed for 45. This is a significant decrease in revenue. Families/Residents were choosing NOT to move into Long-Term Care Facilities due to the restrictions on visitation. During this time, we also saw a decrease in employment. People were choosing not to work and many nursing professionals were leaving the industry completely due to burn-out. During this

time, we went at least 10 months without one application for employment. We were already short-staffed but this put a significant toll on our current employees. We were thankful for the agency help we could find, but even that was slim and the rates were extraordinarily high.

- For months the Board met to discuss scenarios with the decrease in census and the demand for employment. It was decided that by mid-November 2021 all residents who were still living on Willow would move to Sunflower or Cottonwood neighborhoods and we would close Willow until we had enough staff to open it back up.
- Around this same time, all COVID funding had stopped coming in. Not only were we down 25% of our budgeted income from the closure of Willow neighborhood, but now there was no additional funding. In addition, we were also paying significantly higher rates to employees as well as agency staff.

This brings us today. Bethesda remains “full” at 30 residents due to the closure of Willow. In the last 9 months, the need for resident beds has increased substantially. Each week we are saying no to 1-5 residents who are in need of long-term care. We would love to open up Willow neighborhood to meet this need but our staffing needs will not allow this. Not only are we short nursing personnel but for the first time in my 11 years at Bethesda we are also in need in almost every other department as well. We need housekeepers, dietary workers and transporters. We continue to rely on agency staff to help with nursing needs but we have had to pull nearly all of administrative staff from their duties to help in other departments. It is not uncommon to see any of us cleaning or helping where we can on the floor. I will say that our staff is beyond amazing in the ways they have stepped up. The number of hours that our staff work to meet the needs of the residents is incredible. I don’t think you would see this most any other place. Our staff’s ability to pitch in wherever is awe-inspiring! I am blessed to work with such a great group of people who will do whatever it takes to make sure our residents get what they deserve as well as what they want!

I have wrestled for months to write this and share the reality of what is happening behind our doors. It is not easy to share our struggles but I am then reminded of the stories shared in “Heritage of Care”. Because of this great

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CEO's Corner cont.

community and the desire to provide outstanding care to those in need, I want to be transparent and share our needs. I hope that as in the 123 years previous, the Bethesda Community can once again come together to get us out of this darkness. I hope that as you read this, you will join me in prayer that Bethesda will have applicants who want to make a difference and choose to work at Bethesda. I pray that local people will want to give of their time and talents to help provide for those that need the services Bethesda offers. I pray that Bethesda will continue to be financially supported by those near and far and I pray that the mission and vision of Bethesda will only grow stronger in the coming years.

-Sara Hiebert, CEO

Pillars Banquet Corporate Sponsors

Last year, Bethesda Home replaced their traditional sit-down Pillar's Banquet with a drive-thru meal for the second time. Elaine Unruh, Lynette Duerksen, and Laura Unrau stepped forward and volunteered their time and money to prepare and serve all the food. Additionally, many businesses in the Bethesda Home community stepped forward as corporate sponsors. We are so grateful to each of these businesses for their support:

Abraham's Engine Service
Assurance Partners
Citizen's State Bank
Coyote Gulch Farm

Excel Industries
Funk Electric
Goering Hardware
West Branch Excavating

Overall, this Pillar's Banquet was one for the record books, made possible only because of the special community that supports Bethesda Home. In 2019, the Pillar's Banquet raised \$28,187.31; in 2020 we were amazed to receive \$32,987.73. However, this year people went truly above and beyond, helping to raise \$58,766.54. This incredible generosity will allow us to replace the bridge that connects our Main Campus to the Meadowlane Duplexes, with any remainder going to the Benevolent Care Fund.

Activity Update

Fall is always an exciting time for activities here at Bethesda! The air is starting to cool off, and we can enjoy more time outside. The biggest thing we are looking forward to this season is the annual fall picnic. This event is not the same as it used to be, even though much of the world has returned to pre-covid happenings, we in the nursing home world are not there yet. We will have our residents gather altogether outside in the courtyard to share a delicious meal together, and entertainment provided by the Bethel Steel Drum Band. And this year we will have a photo booth for residents to get

nice portraits to keep or gift their families. This is our big fall event for the residents of Bethesda. Some other things we are looking forward to this season include getting to know this year's Goessel 5th grade students through "Generation Bridge", a scarecrow scavenger hunt, Goessel Elementary School Halloween costume parade, a Halloween party, fall craft projects, and harvesting pumpkins from our pumpkin patch we planted this summer.



Ariel Kraus





Eldon Epp

Chaplain's Chat

I loved autumn, the one season of the year that God seemed to have put there just for the beauty of it." -Lee Maynard

I like trees. I drove once through the ancient redwoods of California, listening to the Mormon Tabernacle Choir, and had a spiritual experience. I almost cried – those awesome

old trees...they seemed like living beings. It was a holy moment.

Indeed the redwoods ARE living beings. Scientists tell us trees can communicate with each other. Imagine the majesty of being in the presence of living things several thousand years old – still there, constant, alive, and maybe even aware!

Trees also remind us of the seasons. With Autumn comes falling leaves, cooler days, evenings and nights. Summer's heat is behind us, and winter's cold ahead.

At Bethesda we work among friends in the Autumn of their lives. The years have dimmed the eyes, stooped the shoulders, and slowed the steps. We are reminded of our mortality.

Yet, like the old, magnificent redwoods, with age comes maturity, perspective, discernment about what actually matters in life. There is beauty in lives well lived. Imperfectly – yes – but in the Presence of our wonderful, ever loving and always faithful God.

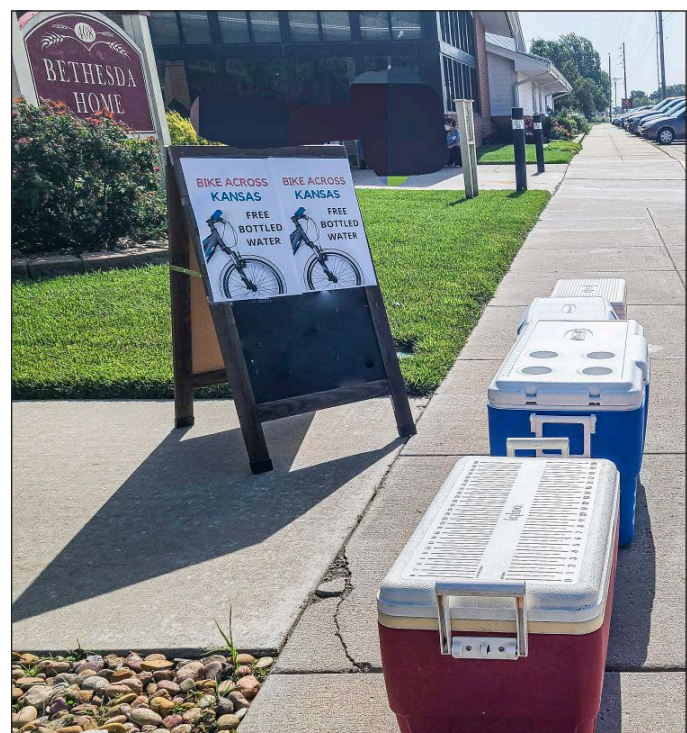
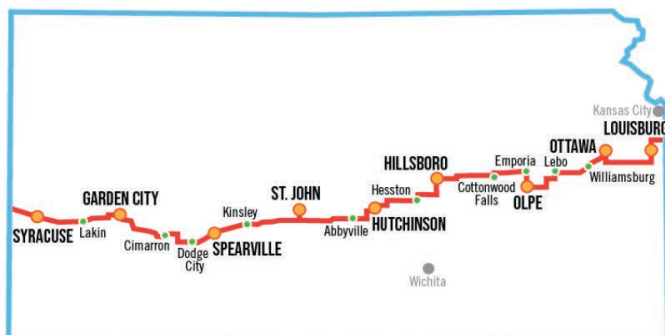
So as time marches on, let us remember our Creator – "In the days of our youth" and in all the seasons of our lives. Have a wonderful fall!

*Autumn Blessings
From Your
Friends at
Bethesda Home*



Bethesda Provides Free Bottles of Water for Bike Across Kansas

On June 15, residents and staff at Bethesda Home gathered outside to watch hundreds of cyclists pass through downtown Goessel on their eight-day, 512 mile bicycle tour across the state of Kansas. Residents offered free water bottles to thirsty riders, and a few stopped to chat while catching their breath.



In Memory

Blessed are those who mourn for they will be comforted. - Matthew 5:4

9/25/21- John Redden
 10/10/21- Bertha Koehn
 11/6/21- Geraldine Hopp
 12/3/21-Linda Deasy
 12/16/21-Vernetta Funk
 1/2/22- Arthur Boese
 2/25/22-Mary Jane Janzen

4/4/22- LeeAnn Newell
 4/19/22- Steven Spragg
 5/20/22- Carolyn Harvey
 6/30/22- Rosemary Dirksen
 7/24/22 - John Wiebe
 8/22/22 - Herman "Dee" Gilbert
 9/19/22 - Loren Harvey

Non-Cash Donations

Bethesda Home has partnered with Everence and the Mennonite Foundation to allow donors to gift a variety of other non-cash gifts via (Charitable Remainder Trusts, Donor Advised Funds, Pooled Income Funds, Charitable Lead Trusts, etc.).

Learn more about the variety of options available for non-cash giving by contacting Mitch Stutzman, Stewardship Consultant at 877-467-7294 or via email mitch.stutzman@everence.com or www.everence.com/locations-and-atms/kansas.

Farm Commodities, gifts of real estate, stocks, personal property (farm machinery, cars, car collections, etc.), Gift Annuities, naming Bethesda as owner or beneficiary of Life Insurance policy, etc.

If you have interest and/or have questions regarding any of the above, please contact Matt Lehman Wiens at mlehmanwiens@bethesdahome.org.

Tax-Free Gift Option for those 70½ and older

Persons over 70½ may make a donation of up to \$100,000 to Bethesda from their IRA account to avoid the disbursement as taxable income. Contact your account manager and have them direct your Required Minimum

Distribution to Bethesda Home. They can be set up to be distributed any time of the year. THANKS to those who have already done so.

Just For Fun...

'I'm a walking economy, you know'
 'How so?'

'My hairline is in recession, my stomach is always in inflation,
 and these two together bring me into a deep depression.'

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

BETHESDA HOME'S 34th ANNUAL PILLARS BANQUET

Sunday, November 6, 2022

Donations for the meal

Adults: \$150/plate, Children 12 and under: \$25/plate

First Time Attendees: \$75/plate

If you are unable to give the above amounts, any donation is accepted.

We don't want you to miss this event just because of the cost!

Please come and support Bethesda Home.

TABOR MENNONITE CHURCH

891 CHISHOLM TRAIL RD.

NEWTON, KS 67114

RSVP by October 28 to Bethesda Home: 620.367.2291

Or Email: shiebert@bethesdahome.org

Donations will go towards new linens throughout Bethesda Home