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Cassia News

Fall/Winter 2020



“They were always caring and compassionate, giving me what I needed before I knew I needed it.”

Graduating from COVID Support Site—and the Kindness I Found There

By Donna Breidenbach

Donna Breidenbach moved to Cassia's Park View Care Center in October 2019. She recently returned from a stay at Redeemer Health and Rehabilitation Center after recovering from the Coronavirus there.

I grew up on a farm near Shenandoah, Iowa—and liked everything about it! I went to a one-room country school, where my favorite subject was math. After high school, I studied to become a medical technologist and worked twenty-five years at St. Louis Children's Hospital.

I moved to Buffalo, Minnesota to be closer to my brother and niece. I like all the activities at Park View. Right now we are socially distant, but I enjoy whatever we do.

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When I tested positive this year for the Coronavirus, I moved from my home at Park View to the COVID Support Site at Redeemer Health and Rehab to recover. Staff members were always caring and compassionate, giving me what I needed before I knew I needed it.

Staff will bring you iPads so you can visit with family—or computers they can program with activities just for you. They will do anything they can to make sure you have things to do that interest you.

The nurses and aides I remember are named Claire, Kathy (at Redeemer 40-plus years) Dorothy and Dominic. They asked what I like and I said I enjoy reading the paper. They made sure I got the paper every day.

When I left, Kathy and Dominic cried and said, “Come back and see us!” I asked about how many people go home. They said the vast majority return home, while others go to Redeemer’s skilled nursing area.

I just want people to know there is no reason to be scared about recovering from COVID at Redeemer. It is a comforting place with nice, private rooms—and you won’t feel lonely there.

Donna’s Park View friends and neighbors are happy to see her again. Thank you to our donors who provided much needed dollars for technology and other features at Redeemer that enhance residents’ experiences.

The Freedom of Giving: A Missionary’s Story

As a child in Des Moines, Iowa, Carol Wilson attended Evangelical Covenant Church, which had many pastors but not one missionary. “I sure didn’t think it would be me,” she says.

In fact, Carol did become a missionary, serving thirty-six years in France. Four years ago, she moved to Valley View Village, which is across the street from her church.

Missionaries like Carol rely on the generosity of others for living expenses. She herself helps support nine missionaries and doesn’t have a lot left over.

Yet, when she received a gift of \$1,000 recently, Carol donated all of it to Valley View Village for the community’s new chapel. “It brought many people to faith. By supporting this renovation, I am helping the chapel continue on that path for years to come,” she says.

Carol loves how the chapel brings people together, including a couple who got married last year. Though some may say she is sacrificing too much, Carol says, “I feel a freedom, not being attached to things of this world. There’s a pleasure you get from helping others. It’s pure joy.”

Thank you, Carol, for bringing joy to so many.

Though missionary Carol Wilson depends on the generosity of others, donating to Valley View Village is a priority to her. Seen here with Chaplain Mike Evans, Carol believes giving brings joy and freedom to her life.



Life-changing Gifts

What's the best way to leave a legacy conveying your values while helping others for generations to come? Gifts by bequest enable us to improve the quality of life for the inspiring residents we serve. Donations may be made using cash, securities, IRA and other retirement accounts, real estate or tangible personal property.

Gifts are deductible to the full extent of the law; consult an attorney to be sure. You'll also want your attorney to verify that the provision states our legal names: Augustana Care, Cassia or Elim Care Ministries. Please inform us of your bequest so you may be acknowledged and we may better plan for the future. For more information about planned gifts and other donations, **please contact Matthew Crawford@cassialife.org or call 952-855-5181.**

Mission and Partners

Cassia's mission is to foster fullness of life for older adults in the spirit of Christ's love.

Cassia works with Centrex Rehab, Grace Hospice, Guardian Angels + Elim Care Home Care and Hospice and Pro Rehab to provide home health, hospice and rehabilitation throughout our communities.

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For questions or feedback, please contact Jenna.Zark@cassialife.org or 952-855-5168.

Chaplain To Go Program Brings Chaplain (and Chickens) to Those In Need

At Cassia, we believe spiritual life is essential to healing. That's why we created a Chaplain To Go Program for sites that don't have an onsite chaplain. Through the program, Chaplain Erik Doughty visits public housing locations where we provide care and services.

Chaplain Erik sees numerous residents, including those with anxiety heightened by fear of the Coronavirus. Residents say they appreciate how Chaplain Erik takes time to listen and pray with them.

The Chaplain To Go Program was funded by generous individuals who are passionate about spiritual life being available to all Cassia residents.

Donors include sponsors, Augustana Care Golf Tournament participants, foundations and churches, including Lord of Life Church, which allowed Cassia to purchase communion and sensory devotion supplies for those with dementia.

Chaplain Erik, who has fond memories of childhood on a farm, was delighted when one location brought in chickens for residents to care for temporarily. "The opportunity to care for the chickens allowed residents themselves to be caregivers, moving their energy away from stress and toward compassion, even joy," says Chaplain Erik. That is exactly what the Chaplain To Go Program hopes to achieve.



Our new Chaplain To Go Program allows Chaplain Erik Doughty to visit sites that would not otherwise employ a spiritual leader. Caring for chickens is just one of the activities Chaplain Erik uses to reduce residents' anxiety.

Technology Plays a Vital Role in Residents' Lives Now— Because of YOU

We often say donors are the backbone of Cassia. This year proves it.

When visiting rules were first affected by the current pandemic, we turned to our Director of Technology Integration and Education Kate Ingalls-Maloney. In previous years, Kate facilitated a donation of eight Beam telepresence robots for remote virtual visits. This year, robots are helping more families stay connected.

Last spring, Cassia's Philanthropy Department worked with Kate to identify residents' needs and asked donors to help. Your response enabled us to increase communication and activity technologies like It's Never 2 Late, which offers material tailored specifically to residents' interests.

Technologies like these are possible because donors gave close to \$140,000 to fund telehealth and the following devices:

- 83 Echo Dots and Dot wall holders
- 82 iPads
- 40 IN2L tablets
- 31 rolling tablet stands
- 26 IdeaCom tablets
- 17 Amazon Echo Shows
- 15 magnifying floor lamps
- 9 robots
- 4 intercom sets for window visits
- 2 video camera kits with tripods and lights
- 1 laptop

“Donors are making life better every day for the people we serve,” says Kate. “These devices help residents and families stay connected socially and emotionally—an essential part of life for us all.”

Director of Nursing Melan Chen's mother Chun and sister Christine practiced using intercoms before sharing the technology with residents at our Cornerstone campus. Staff purchased intercoms with rechargeable batteries instead of power cords to make the devices better suited to window visits.



Newly Built Haven Homes Defies the Times to Welcome Residents



The new Haven Homes is a testament to the determination and support of residents, families and staff who want to provide a state-of-the-art environment for older adults in their community.

When Cassia's leaders recognized the need for a new Haven Homes building to enhance the quality of residents' lives, they didn't hesitate to begin work on it. The community of Maple Plain where Haven Homes is located came together to complete the project—and we are thrilled to announce the new Haven Homes will open in December.

Apartments offer more space, says Administrator Katie Novotny, and a new chapel can accommodate more worshippers. There is also a fitness center, theater, larger beauty salon and themed lounges. The skilled nursing area

will now offer private rooms, while a separate rehabilitation wing is available for residents and the local community.

Chaplain Greg Loomis looks forward to welcoming worshippers to a chapel with twelve-foot windows. "There's room for socially distanced services now," he says.

One hundred percent of the chapel's funding came from generous donors in Maple Plain and surrounding areas. We are so grateful for what they accomplished.



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Residents, staff and YOU—our supporters—give us countless reasons to be thankful this year. We want to wish you and your family a blessed holiday season.