



STAFF:

HELPING RESIDENTS EXPERIENCE GOD'S CARE

"You are familiar with all my ways" (Psalm 139:3b).

Isn't it a comfort to read Psalm 139 and remember that God cares about all our concerns, no matter how small? We often experience God's care through human hands, especially as we age. Our residents need caring attention in every way—physical, emotional, spiritual, mental, and relational. Every level of our nursing staff works together to round out this care.

Meet three employees at Edison Christian Health Center (Christian Rest Home), all of whom see their work as a calling. Each has worked—or plans to stay working—here for a long time.

Jane Gotberg has a long and happy history with Edison Christian Health Center. "My Grandma Peterson lived here, and so have other relatives and church members. I worked here as a nurse aide during summers while I was in nursing school. I started here as a part-time RN in 1994," she says.

Still, some days she feels surprised to still be here. She and her husband, Kevin, lived in the Chicago area for the first six years of their marriage. Jane loved doing intensive care in a hospital there. When the Gotbergs moved back to Grand Rapids, she started as a second shift supervisor here, expecting that she would soon return to hospital work. But she says she loves the people and work too much to leave. "I'm very thankful to be able to work closely with my residents and families," she says.

Jane now job-shares with another RN, Deb Mroz, as unit manager of the east wing, which includes Ritzema Hall, the dementia unit. Unit managers work day shifts. There are two each on the east and west wings and one on the south. "We all work

together to schedule our shifts, and we each do one weekend every five weeks. We stagger our arrival times to overlap with the nursing supervisors on duty from 3 p.m. to 11 p.m. and 11 p.m. to 7 a.m.," she says.

Whereas a nursing supervisor oversees the entire building, unit managers focus on taking care of their specific wings. "We go to several interdisciplinary meetings, do resident assessments, work on care plans, and are responsible for the charge nurses and CNAs (certified nursing assistants). We schedule how CNAs will care for which residents and make sure that care plans reflect best care for all shifts. We're in frequent contact with physicians, pharmacists, and families," Jane says.

Technology and acuity are among the biggest changes she has experienced as a unit manager. "We've gone from all paper records to computerized records, and there are lots more state requirements to track. Acuity has changed, because people wait longer to come to a nursing home, so most come in with a higher degree of

need. Ritzema Hall opened since I began working here, and I love working with the geriatric population, especially those with dementia. Every person with dementia is a little different. I enjoy those differences and like the challenge of figuring out the best ways to help each person.

"One thing that hasn't changed about my job is that I still have lots of personal interaction with my residents and their families. I know all my residents by name, and we have worked with wonderful, phenomenal families over the years. We have the staff longevity to build strong friendships with each other and the families. This level of comfort helps families feel free to express concerns, frustrations, and happinesses with us—and that communication helps us provide better care," Jane says.

She appreciates how employees, residents, and families live out their faith by having devotions, praying at mealtimes, and being open in talking about Christian hope. "I love that we can be witnesses to each other. At the end of their lives, so many residents say, 'I'm just ready to go home,' by which they mean heaven. Residents and their families often tell us they pray for us and the work we do," she says.

Jane and Kevin, a tooling company salesman, live in Grandville. They go to First Evangelical Church, where they volunteer each Sunday with the Friendship Ministry for people with intellectual disabilities. Their older son is married and teaches government and economics at Allendale High School. Their younger son is a senior at Grand Valley State University. "I love winter, downhill skiing, hiking in all seasons, and reading," Jane adds.



Jane Gotberg

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FROM THE ADMINISTRATOR



Our spring newsletter features our nursing department, which provides all aspects of daily medical services and clinical care to our residents. We employ over 140 caring nursing staff, including RNs, LPNs, and certified nursing assistants (CNAs). The nursing staff members faithfully carry out many ongoing tasks, including clinical assessments, medication administration, medical treatments, incontinence

care, bathing, dressing, grooming, feeding, and transporting residents. The care and concern shown by our nursing staff greatly improves the quality of our residents' daily lives.

Through service awards and an annual banquet, our board members honor staff members who have reached milestones of 5, 10, 15, 20, 25, and more years of service. You can see recent award recipients pictured in this newsletter. We are thankful for the stability that long-term staff members provide for our facilities, and we value each member's unique contribution to our ministry.

At our updated website, edisonchristian.org, you can read about our three facilities—Edison Christian Health Center, Edison

Christian Assisted Living, and Edison Christian Independent Living. You will see details on job opportunities and different ways to give to Edison Christian Life Services. You can also link directly to:

- Barnabas Foundation (for free estate planning help)
- LeadingAge Michigan, our state association (to support programs and policies to benefit older adults in Michigan)

Edison Christian Health Center recently spent \$55,900 for Life Safety Code upgrades. We replaced our outdated fire panel, our oldest smoke detectors, and audible alarms. We also replaced worn electrical outlets and are repairing or replacing fire doors, as required by new regulations. We will soon begin a second phase of Life Safety Code upgrades to modernize all devices throughout the building that connect to our new fire panel. We are committed to meeting all current standards for nursing home fire safety to keep our residents safe from fire danger.

Thank you for your continuing support through prayers, gifts, and volunteer time. Please consider donating again to help us meet residents' needs. We praise God for his grace and blessing in our ministry.

—Todd Nyeholt

Try This Free Way to Help Edison Christian Life Services

It cost them nothing to make the change. It did not take much time. Yet many prudent people did something that made a big impact on our ability to serve Edison Christian Life Services' residents.

What was this simple action? At some point, these people accepted an offer of free help with their wills and estate plans. They decided to include a bequest in their estate plan for Edison Christian Life Services or Edison Christian Foundation (though it is fine to receive help and not give to us).

In 2018, we received four estate gifts totaling \$152,995. That is more than a fifth of all our charitable income.

The top reasons people give for making bequests to us are to express appreciation for care provided to a loved one, to support work they have witnessed while volunteering here, and to help older adults because they are aware of the need here.

Almost everyone wonders how to pass property to a surviving spouse, provide for orphaned children, or avoid heavy estate taxes. But many Christians have extra questions. Those who have faithfully tithed from their income want to know how to use their will to tithe from their estate. You can follow the lead of more than 9,000 people who have already accepted a generous offer from the Barnabas Foundation. At no cost to you, Barnabas staff will help you work out a plan to provide for loved ones and give to Christian causes. This plan can also include answers to key questions, such as:

- How will my property be distributed when I die? (You need a will.)
- Who can manage my property if I lose my ability to think straight? (You need a durable power of attorney for finances.)
- Who will make health decisions if I become unable to do so for myself? (You need a durable power of attorney for health care.)

Steve Baker and Amy Bakker Baty, the local Barnabas Foundation representatives, have practiced law in business and estate planning. Steve Baker is the senior estate planner, and Amy is the director of planned giving services. Typically, they need to meet with you just once, for only 60 to 90 minutes, to develop a free written analysis for you to bring to an attorney. Steve or Amy can recommend attorneys who know how to include charity in wills and estate plans. Gifts to the Barnabas Foundation are neither solicited nor encouraged, because 200 Christian member organizations support the foundation. So you will not be asked for a "donation."

Simply phone (888) 448-3040 and ask to speak with Steve Baker or Amy Bakker Baty. Their email addresses are sbake@barnabasfoundation.com and abaty@barnabasfoundation.com. Their office is at 601 3 Mile Road NW, Suite 200, Grand Rapids, MI 49544. For free, confidential advice on estate planning, you may also phone Todd Nyeholt at (616) 453-2475.

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November 2018 - February 2019

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* Gifts designated for Edison Christian Foundation

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Matt Stevens

Matt Stevens, who has worked his way up from kitchen staff to CNA to LPN, describes himself as “kind of old fashioned” and sees his job through the lens of caring.

“I grew up going to my grandpa’s house. His house was on the street behind ours. I liked watching ‘Gunsmoke,’ ‘Bonanza,’ and other TV shows that many residents like. It’s easy for me to connect with older people,” he says.

His aunt, Nancy Zerfas, works in the Edison Christian Health Center (ECHC) kitchen, and Matt began working in the kitchen in April 2009. “I really liked working here, so, two years later, I got certified as a CNA. In 2014, I got my LPN degree at Grand Rapids Community College. I now work three 12-hour shifts, 7 p.m. to 7 a.m., on Thursdays, Fridays, and Saturdays,” he says.

During his overnights, there is one RN supervisor for the whole building and one LPN per wing (aka hall or unit). Matt works on the west wing. “We usually have four CNAs per hall on second shift (3-11) and three on third shift (11-7). Most residents are awake for the first few hours of my shift, although one man, a former truck driver, is often up eating snacks half the night. I pass medications, confer with CNAs, and do treatments. We do rounds every hour or two to check on, toilet, and turn people so they don’t get bedsores. I spend an hour or two per shift on charting,” he says.

Matt notes several changes that have improved resident care. “Instead of just charting that someone had a fall, we now look for the root cause. So, if someone fell when getting out of bed to use the toilet,

we know we need to go into the room at specific times to help them out of bed.

“We used to wake up 20 to 30 residents per night to give them meds. But people are less anxious and have fewer accidents when they get better sleep. Now we bundle the meds, and only four or five residents per hall need to take meds during the night.

“When I worked in the kitchen and as a CNA, almost every resident wore an alarm that alerted us when they got out of bed. Some residents thought the alarm was an alarm clock to wake them up. Some didn’t dare to move in bed. Now very few wear alarms, and more of them are sleeping more deeply,” he explains.

Matt enjoys having so much direct contact with residents. “I feel they should be able to have an easy life and receive dignified care. I try to engage with them about what they did and where they came from. Sometimes they get confused to find someone in their room in the middle of the night. If they think they’re back in their former homes, I just go along with it, rather than say, ‘No, now you live in a nursing facility.’ Usually I can redirect their confusion.”

His main contact with families is when he needs to phone during the night to say that a resident needs to go to the hospital or is dying, so the family should come soon.

Matt makes sure that his CNAs exhibit compassionate care. “If you know how to do something, but don’t care, that’s a problem. If you care, but don’t know, I can work with that. So if I see a CNA struggling, I do the task with them to show tips they might not know. Like, when you are positioning a resident to put on a brief, there is actually a way to prevent leakage—so the bed and resident don’t get soaked and need to be changed. I help staff work smarter, not harder,” he says.

Matt and his wife, Amy, have three young children, ages 5, 2, and 6 months. She works Mondays through Thursdays in the Consumers Energy billing department. “With our schedules, no daycare is required,” Matt says. “My wife knits, quilts, and has quite a few hobbies. I don’t. I’m kind of a boring guy.” Since moving to Jenison, they haven’t found a new church, but Matt expects that regular churchgoing will be easier again when their toddler and baby outgrow morning naps.



Serida Scott

Unlike many of our employees, **Serida Scott** had no prior ECLS connection. She found the CNA vacancy on Indeed.com. Her connection came through shared Christian faith, attention to detail, and shared values in wanting to continually improve in giving good care.

“When I started here as a CNA on July 9, 2018, I didn’t know anyone, but people were welcoming. I work full time on first shift and have time off every other Monday, Thursday, or weekend,” she says.

Serida has worked in home health care, adult foster homes, and other facilities. “The first thing I noticed is that Edison Christian really has its CNA-to-resident ratio in order. During the day, we have seven or eight CNAs per wing. I’m responsible for the same six residents. I’ve worked in places where each aide takes care of 12 to 15 residents at a time, and there are way less nurses,” she says.

Having more time for fewer people lets her get to know residents better. “We get kind of close. There’s always a bond. Some of my residents like gospel music and The Bee Gees (1960s pop music group). One of my residents likes to dance. Some like to goof off. One lady likes to make engine noises before I start pushing her wheelchair,” she says.

Serida describes her job as a sequence of lining up wheelchairs and linens; toileting, bathing, and dressing residents; and helping them move through meals, activities, and naps. “In between, I answer a lot of call lights. We CNAs really get to know each other, and we help out when one of us needs another to help lift a resident or clean up a mess,” she says.

(continued on page 6)

MEMORIAL CONTRIBUTIONS *(continued from page 3)*

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* Gifts designated for Edison Christian Foundation

(continued on page 6)

HELPING RESIDENTS EXPERIENCE GOD'S CARE *(continued from page 4)*

She loves how many families make a point of knowing their loved ones' CNAs. "I enjoy being able to tell how their family member's day is going. A lot of residents enjoy bingo—it is really hot on the market here. Many like sing-alongs, too. I stick my head around the corner to see who is at which activity and how they are liking it."

Best of all, Serida likes working in a Christian facility. "I love hearing the Christian music on the overhead. Seeing so many printed Scriptures is very encouraging and inspiring. I've never worked in a place where they pray before and after meals. It definitely makes a difference. I've been able to have conversations with an

aide who was going through hard times and talk about why I'm active in church and how Christ is the One who puts you together."

Serida lives in northeast Grand Rapids. She attends First Missionary Baptist Church where she is head usher and superintendent for children's Sunday school. She has a side business in designing flyers and T-shirts and loves catch-and-release fishing at Reeds Lake and the Grand River. She has six children at home, ranging in age from 10 to 21, including a nephew she adopted after his mom passed away. "I also have two grandchildren who often visit. There's never a dull moment in my home. We have

lots of different attitudes and personalities, so it's pretty fun," she says.

When asked how she juggles so many responsibilities, Serida replies, "If you don't stay busy, then you might have room for the negative. I like to keep it positive. I went back to school to get trained as a medical assistant, but the school closed and turned out not to be accredited. That was very disappointing. So I got my CNA instead, and I'm enrolling soon in an LPN program. Meanwhile, I plan to be at Edison Christian for a long time, because I honestly enjoy everything about being there."

MEMORIAL CONTRIBUTIONS *(continued from page 5)*

Bill Veenstra (continued)

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Total Memorial Gifts....\$37,960

** Gifts designated for Edison Christian Foundation*

IN LOVING MEMORY

November 2018 – February 2019

James Bish	November 3	age 71	Edward Valentine	December 29	age 84
Betty Baas	November 4	age 86	Gloria Meyer	January 3	age 77
Marjalee Kelly	November 5	age 87	Joan Siciliano	January 17	age 90
Vincent Leale	November 13	age 89	Donna Way	January 23	age 91
Ruth VanMullen	December 3	age 97	Genevieve Schrader	January 26	age 104
Fred Jensen	December 10	age 91	David Hilton	January 27	age 78
Sandra Modders	December 14	age 76	Robert Vermaire	January 30	age 86
Alice Brink	December 18	age 80	Madeline Eyster	February 18	age 103
Lois Roosien	December 24	age 94	Ruth DeWys	February 24	age 95
Roger VandeKopple	December 26	age 92	Janet Kent	February 25	age 74
Patricia Patterson	December 29	age 90			

EDISON CHRISTIAN INDEPENDENT LIVING

Edison Christian Independent Living provides senior citizen independent living and offers meals, activities, and housekeeping services. Our residents enjoy secure, homelike comfort and Christian companionship. For more information and a tour, call: (616) 453-0993 edisonchristian.org

CONTRIBUTING CHURCHES

November 2018 – February 2019

Baldwin Street CRC	Free Ref.
Bethany URC	Grace Protestant Ref.
Bethel URC	Heritage Ref. Congregation
Blythefield CRC	Oakview Community
Coopersville CRC	Providence Ref.
Creston CRC	Seventh Ref.
East Leonard CRC	Walker URC
Faith Community CRC	Zion Baptist
First Evangelical Covenant	

RECENT ECLS RETIREE

In honor of your service from the Board of Directors:

Joan Geurink 26 years
With our appreciation for your commitment to our residents!

GIFTS RECEIVED IN HONOR OF

November 2018 – February 2019

In honor of... **Ella Horjus** from Flora & Ken Horjus
In honor of... **Margaret Anderson** from William Anderson
In honor of... **Ann Slade's birthday** from Douglas Slade

2018 SERVICE AWARD RECIPIENTS



5 YEARS OF SERVICE

Lindsay Guikema, Nicole Garbacik, Tana Fletcher.
Not pictured: Bradon Naill, Rich Panches, Amy VanDenTop.



15 & 20 YEARS OF SERVICE

Maija Silins (20), Tammy Bennett (15), Ann Christy (15), Linda Allyn (20), JoAnn Kusmierski (20).
Not pictured 15 years of service: Sheri Bronkema, Jessie DeBlecourt, Linda Scott, Beth VanderMeulen, Sarah Wabeke.
Not pictured 20 years of service: Jessie Novakowski, Audrey Wood.



10 YEARS OF SERVICE

Aimee Okorowski, Laura Brecker, Sarah DeKorne.
Not pictured: Brenda DeHoek, Sue Jingles, Elsa Mason, Sandra Pepper.



25, 30 & 45 YEARS OF SERVICE

Marsha Heyboer (board member), Jim Horjus (25), Laurie Kosten (30), Tina Pape (30), Joanne VanderSlik (45).



Edison Christian Life Services
1000 Edison Ave. NW
Grand Rapids, MI 49504



EDISON CHRISTIAN
LIFE SERVICES

NEWSLETTER

Spring 2019



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