

FALL 2017

“Three Great Loves”

Rev. John Dorhauer, President of the UCC, has invited us, as a Health & Human Services ministry of the UCC, to respond and celebrate our part in the “THREE GREAT LOVES” initiative, which is focused on a “just world for all”.

The initiative, which was introduced during the General Synod meeting in Baltimore, June 2017, focused on how UCC related organizations are impacting and transforming the world through our “LOVE OF NEIGHBOR, “LOVE OF CHILDREN” and “LOVE OF CREATION”.

Rev. Dorhauer asks us to make two commitments to this initiative; first, planning how we will answer the call to this initiative by reviewing how our organization will respond to the needs of children and to the suffering of our neighbors, challenging us to look beyond our stated mission, “to provide actively aging adults affordable, welcoming homes in communities that embrace living”, and to answer the call to be good stewards of God’s creation through sustainable practices. Second, he is asking us to commit to find a way to tell these stories to the rest of the denomination and, in doing this, to create a connection and sense of shared purpose between all of us.

During the first half of 2017, we responded to this call in a number of ways. We replied to our “LOVE OF CHILDREN” by taking part in the “blue ribbon project” in DuPage County. The residents and employees of Peace Memorial Manor worked together as a fun activity to elevate awareness of child abuse by placing large blue ribbons on the trees around their community and participated in information sessions about child abuse.

We responded to the “LOVE OF NEIGHBORS” and “LOVE OF EARTH” by participating in a service project connected with this year’s General Synod. Our employees and residents worked together to create “ugly quilts” (sleeping bags) for homeless persons in Baltimore, the host city of the General Synod in

June. As described in the last issue of the Quarterly Embrace, each of our participating housing communities put their own special touch on the bags they made. Some of the residents prayed together for the recipient of the bag as they completed the final stitches, some created a written prayer that was tucked inside the bag and signed by the people that worked on the bag and others decided to include a surprise pillow and some sundries inside the bag! The bags were definitely a labor of love for both residents and employees.



Bonnie Condon, Embrace Living Board Member, & Susan at UCC Synod presenting bags

Another way we are responding to our LOVE OF THE EARTH is through our commitment to expanding our gardening programs at each one of our communities. The number of raised beds built at our communities continues to grow each year, not only giving our residents a chance to “dig in the dirt” and grow vegetables that are too expensive for many residents to buy in the store, but also we are sharing our experiences with other housing providers and encouraging them to start their own gardening programs.

The overarching mission of this initiative is to show the world that these “THREE GREAT LOVES” can change the world in a positive way. Thanks to every employee for the part you are taking in making this world a nice, caring place!



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Communities

Affordable. Welcoming. **Home.**

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Providing actively aging adults affordable,
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SHARE YOUR STORY TODAY!

We want to let everyone know how you make a difference

Ask your manager to email your community stories to Cindy Westfall.

31st UCC General Synod



Our booth at the UCC General Synod

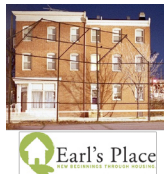


Susan & Exec Director of United Ministries

In early July in Baltimore, Maryland, over 3,000 attendees from UCC churches from all over the US attended the General Synod 2017 and shared conversations about the two themes of "MAKE GLAD" and "BUILDING A JUST WORLD FOR ALL."

Susan Sinderson represented Embrace Living Communities at an Exhibit that highlighted several services of health and human service organizations related to the UCC. She met with Sheila Helguson, Executive Director of United Ministries in Baltimore, who organized the "Sleeping Bag" service project. Sheila was so very grateful for all the work our residents and employees had put into our generous donations, noting that the bags would be distributed to people experiencing homelessness in Baltimore. The bags serve two purposes: to keep people warm this winter, but also the bags show "to people, who often feel forgotten and invisible that they matter."

Susan had the privilege of visiting "Earl's Place", a place run by United Ministries that provides transitional housing to homeless men.



The General Synod is a beautiful gathering that focuses on church business, policies and initiatives for the coming year, but also is filled with friendship, fun and a sense of common purpose.

Save HUD 202 Rally!

HUD 202 Rally in Washington, DC

June 27th was an exciting day in Washington, DC. The first ever rally to show support for the continued funding of our beloved 202 program was organized by LeadingAge.



Susan Sinderson marched up Capitol Hill with thousands of senior citizens to let lawmakers know how important funding the 202 program is to the elderly citizens of this country.

Many members of congress joined the group to show support for the program. It was a great day with the seniors making their voices heard! Even better news, as a result of the rally, many calls to legislators and rallies held at 202 communities across the nation (see picture of Bethel Greencastle residents below), there is great support by Congress to continue funding the HUD202 program!

HUD 202 Rally at Bethel Greencastle

Residents from Bethel Greencastle rallied on Monday, July 10 in support of 202 housing. After receiving an email from Leading Age about the potential cuts to the 202 program, our office assistant, Angie Cervantes, had the idea of getting residents together dressed in red and taking a picture holding a banner expressing our support. We had 20 residents show up for the picture from both of our buildings and we had fun doing it. Residents helped with the banner and we sent these pictures to Leading Age. They asked if they could publish them in their newsletter so it may show up there.



Residents at Bethel Greencastle North & South

4th of July

Greencastle of Bayonet point residents celebrated the July 4th.



Residents at Greencastle of Bayonet Point

Raised Beds

Summer has brought bountiful goods to many of our housing communities. Each year we surpass the last with housing communities growing fresh fruits and vegetables in their raised beds, and most communities bring these offerings inside their doors for their residents to enjoy. If you have not already built your beds and planted your gardens, reach out to some of the communities whose pictures are listed below and hear how they did it. It is easier than it looks and the rewards are immense! Enjoy the fruits of our labor.



Greencastle of Mulford



Greencastle of North Aurora

Solar Eclipse Viewing

Many residents and staff stepped outside to view the eclipse on August 21st. Greencastle of Barrington had a celebration potluck lunch while learning about eclipses. Residents reminisced about eclipses they had seen or heard about from other family members. There are ancestral tales of a dragon, dog, black squirrel, pair of wolves or an ancestor who is owed money swallowing the sun. Thanks to Cernan Earth and Space Center at Triton College, we were able to get certified solar eclipse viewing glasses. Despite the clouds, we were able to see much of the eclipse safely. We did not see any animals swallowing the sun however! Lots of OHHS, AHHS and fun!



Residents at Greencastle of Barrington

Residents at Bethel N & S had eclipse viewing glasses and shared them with those who did not have them. There were probably more residents outside at one time than ever before. We were fortunate to be in the path of nearly 100% coverage and it was pretty incredible.



Residents at Bethel Greencastle North & South

Staff at Oak Brook also watched the eclipse. Although a bit cloudy at times, the beginning and end were visible.



Oak Brook Staff watching the eclipses

LeadingAge National Leadership Program Participants Visit CASL Senior Housing



LeadingAge Leadership Program Participants at CASL

On July 12, 2017, over 50 leaders, who are a part of the LeadingAge Leadership Program from all over the United States, visited Chicago's Chinatown for the first time! They were warmly welcomed by the CASL employees, as well as several leaders from Embrace Living Communities.

Our guests were treated to a tour of the community, where they heard the interesting history of CASL, saw a Tai Chi fan demonstration and got to participate in a Tai Chi class!

They were excited to read the "AS I AGE" board, which is written in both Chinese and English, and interacted with Embrace Living leaders in a discussion about how the culture & values of Embrace Living are "lived out" every day in our work.

Each visitor was given a 'special surprise' that was made by our CASL staff. As our guests got on the bus and said goodbye, they reported that "this was the best, most memorable tour they have been on this year". A great experience for the visitors & employees!

Celebrating Summer!

Residents at Greencastle of Bayonet Point celebrated the beginning of summer on June 21st.

We started the celebration with a senior dance troupe, compiled of all local seniors, who have been dancers through out their lives, three of them are our residents. They always put on a great show and incorporate our residents into the dance routines. It is always a fun activity for all of our residents. The residents continued the celebration by playing games, having a squirt gun "fight", cooking out, etc. All in all it was a great day.



Local Senior Dance Troupe entertaining residents at Greencastle of Bayonet Point

Baby Gender Reveal!

Greencastle of Palatine had a "Baby Gender Reveal Party" for Siarra McNeil, our Lead Social Service Coordinator and the results.... It's a boy!



Siarra's "Baby Gender Reveal Party" at Greencastle of Palatine

SHARE YOUR STORY

Ask your manager to send your community story or employee highlights to Cindy Westfall

Talk About Mobile...



Maureen McKinney, of Greencastle of Sterling noticed there was quite a bit of negativity in the community room so she put this mobile together. Read the pyramid and the topics for conversation hanging from the mobile.

It's Twins!

Greencastle of Elmhurst now has a set of twin treadmills and the residents are thrilled with how their 'workout room' is coming along. Once we pull down the walls and do some decorating in there, we will have a ribbon cutting ceremony!!



New treadmills at Greencastle of Elmhurst

A County Fair

For another fun activity for our GC Mulford/Allerton residents, we hosted our own version of a "County Fair". We had a pie tasting contest with prizes for all, in which residents submitted pies that they baked and we also served a lunch that included corn dogs, watermelon, cotton candy and sweet corn. Our maintenance team created a mini putt golf green, a plinko board, bag toss game, a ring toss game and a bottle toss game. After lunch the residents stayed and played games, competing for prizes and had so much fun doing it.



A "County Fair" at Greencastle of Mulford/Greencastle of Allerton

Garden Party

A "Welcome to Our Garden Party" celebration was held on July 20th at Greencastle of Bienterra. Residents celebrated on the patio and enjoyed the blooming flower pots and vegetables that were planted by our residents. They had ice cream bars and cookies that were made by one of the residents.



Garden Party at Greencastle of Bienterra

A Wedding!

On July 27, 2017, Greencastle of Bayonet Point had the honor of being the site of a wedding for one of our residents. She is 85, met a gentleman online who is 88, they fell in love and decided to get married. Her dog was the ring bearer. Another resident volunteered to walk her "down the aisle". Other residents got together and supplied "finger" food for a reception, another resident played the organ. There was laughter, dancing, happy crying, a very joyful experience and we are so glad that she decided to have the ceremony in our community room to include staff and residents.



Wedding at Greencastle of Bayonet Point

One, Two, Three Hold...

The son of a new resident at Bethel Greencastle recently offered to lead exercise classes for residents. He is a certified personal trainer with experience working with seniors and offers simple, strength building exercises that even those in wheelchairs can do. He also shares information on nutrition. The group is meeting twice a week in the north building and we are looking at expanding it to the south building in the coming months.



Exercise Class at Bethel Greencastle

ONWARD & UPWARD

One of the things that separates Embrace Living Communities from our competition is our culture, knowing who we are as employees and as an organization and working with that common goal in mind. The lateral and upward movements of employees within our organization only strengthens our culture and identity, and the more years of service we have together, the stronger our bond as a company grows. With that being said, lets take a few moments together to celebrate some of the recent promotions we have seen across Embrace Living Communities.

- ★ **IRIS BERG**, Senior Director Social Services & Quality in Oak Brook
- ★ **JUANITA BOEHM**, Manager at GC of Loves Park
- ★ **JOHN BROWN JR.**, Lead Maintenance at GC of Woodlawn II
- ★ **CINDY CUPPINI**, Manager at GC of Allerton
- ★ **JOHN DIEHL**, Senior Director of Housing Operations in Oak Brook/Rockford
- ★ **HAROLD EICH**, Senior Manager Mission Services in Oak Brook
- ★ **SUSIE GUERRERO**, Assistant Manager at Immanuel Residences
- ★ **JACKI KRESTEL**, Manager at Patten House
- ★ **IRENA LAZAROV**, Senior Accountant in Oak Brook
- ★ **MARGIE MICHALEWSKI**, Manager at GC of Barrington
- ★ **DAVE OPITZ**, Senior Director Mission Services in Oak Brook
- ★ **KATHY PEDIGO**, Lead Manager of Immanuel Residences & GC of N Aurora
- ★ **ERICA SCOTT**, Manager at GC of Bienterra
- ★ **DEDE SMITH**, Manager at GC of Mulford
- ★ **NICOLE TURNER**, Assistant Manager II at GC of Garfield I and II
- ★ **GREG WATSON**, Director of Housing Operations in Oak Brook

Employee Spotlight

Kenyae Hooker, Assistant Manager, Greencastle of Morgan Park & Beverly



Another employee of Embrace Living Communities graduated in June with honors. Kenyae Hooker has been an employee for 10 years, starting out at North Orchard Place as a Rental Office Assistant before her promotion to Assistant Manager at her current building. Kenyae attended National Louis University earning a Bachelor of Arts degree in Applied Behavioral Science. She is also a member of "The National Society of Leadership and Success". Kenyae earned her Associate of Arts degree in December, 2013 from Malcolm X College as member of Phi Theta Kappa Honor Society. Due to Kenyae earning extra credits while at Malcolm X College, she completed her Bachelor of Arts degree in fourteen months.

The amount of work was non-stop because Kenyae was also working a full-time job. She was very determined to finish and pressed through it. Some of the courses were on-line while others required class participation. To save time and to complete her homework assignments, Kenyae would sometimes prepare two meals at a time. There were sacrifices but it was all worth it.

Kenyae is a single parent to four beautiful daughters. She prioritizes her life to make a home for her children. Kenyae has supported them and been a positive role model in their lives. By returning to school, working full-time, and balancing a family, she has shown her daughters that anything is possible for them to achieve. Earning her degree was a life-long dream and it demonstrates that all goals can be accomplished. Kenyae and her daughters know the adversity and obstacles that were part of the journey, but the feeling of accomplishment was well worth it. Congratulations, Kenyae!

We Need You!

Thank you for taking the time to read the latest edition of YOUR newsletter, The Quarterly Embrace. The Newsletter Committee has really put an effort into making this an easy, enjoyable and educational read for you. In order to keep this going, we need YOU! The Newsletter Committee (Dave Opitz, Harold Eich, Cindy Westfall, Mary Jo Porter, Teresa Memler, Libby Smolik) will be reaching out to your communities for content. PLEASE share your stories with your Embrace team members. We are all better together, and love learning and sharing our stories and successes together. Send your content to any one on the Newsletter Committee.

Recipe

Apple Cinnamon Roll Bake

Recipe submitted by LIBBY SMOLIK, Housing Community Office Assistant, at Greencastle of Palatine. "We plan on making this to celebrate the upcoming Autumn Season with residents."

Serves 4 – 6

INGREDIENTS

2 packs cinnamon roll dough with icing
4 eggs
½ Cup of Milk
1 Tablespoon cinnamon
1 Teaspoon Vanilla Extract
2 Tablespoons butter
2 granny smith apples diced
1 Cup brown sugar, packed
Vanilla ice cream



PREPARATION

Preheat oven to 375 degrees C.

Cut the cinnamon roll dough into 3 even strips, then cut those strips in 3 pieces, making 9 pieces total per cinnamon roll. Set aside the icing.

In a medium bowl, combine eggs, milk, cinnamon and extract stirring until smooth. Set aside.

In a pan, over medium heat, combine butter, apples and brown sugar, cooking until sugar starts to caramelize, about 10 minutes. Remove from heat.

Sprinkle the cinnamon roll dough pieces evenly in a 9x13 baking pan. Pour the egg mixture on top, followed by the apples. Drizzle the reserved icing on top.

Bake for 25-30 minutes, until golden brown. Serve with ice cream!

Three Days of Learning, Socializing & Fun!

Annual Housing Community Meeting, Manager Meeting & Illinois Company Picnic

