



The Jenkins Senior Living Community Serves Seniors with Compassion, Excellence and Integrity

Becoming Myself Again

Healing is a matter of time, but it is also a matter of opportunity. - Hippocrates

In the spring of this year, I had a frightening experience with a flair-up of my neuropathy. It caused a number of other symptoms, and I knew that I needed help. So after a week at home with this condition, and having trouble walking, I was admitted to the Upper Chesapeake Hospital. I spent several days there, and they actually never came up with a clear diagnosis of what was wrong. After a battery of tests and x-rays they recommended that I have rehabilitation therapy in a nursing center before going home. It was clear to me that I needed what they recommended. I think that we all realize at some point in our lives that we may need to receive nursing care; however, we hope that we will never have to. So, I chose to go to St. Elizabeth for my rehabilitation. It was the best decision I could have made.

Arriving at St. Elizabeth using a walker and being placed in a wheelchair was a new experience. I had visited St. Elizabeth many times over the years in the course of doing my job as Director of Human Resources for Catholic Charities and after I retired as a volunteer. My experience with St. Elizabeth went back to when the center was called the Jenkins Memorial Nursing Home. Whatever the name, it has always had a great reputation, and I was glad to be there.

From the beginning of my stay, I felt comfortable and taken care of. The first night, I had a good night's sleep—the best in a long time. The next morning and each morning after, I was greeted by Margie the Geriatric Nursing Assistant, who would take my vitals and ask me what I wanted for breakfast. Let me say that, from breakfast through dinner, the food was excellent. The selections were varied, tasty, and served in the family dining room. After breakfast I had Physical Therapy for an hour



Virginia Mellendick and Margie Grieves, GNA

and learned all of the exercises that were going to make me better—and they did!

My therapist was Gredrivus Valaitis. He made me feel that it was as important to him that I got well as it was to me. After lunch, I had Occupational Therapy. It surprised me that I needed to go through the activities of daily living—making a bed, scrambling an egg, and doing a load of wash—but I did. Meg Otake, my Occupational Therapist, was ever cheerful as she had me practice things that I had done all my life. She made it fun while I regained my confidence in my ability to live on my own and care for myself.

A highlight of my day came at 2:00 in the afternoon—Snack Time. In addition to great meals, snacks are always available in the dining room. However, at Snack Time one of the staff brings the Snack Cart around. My favorite—and ordered by Dr. Yi—was a milkshake to build up my strength. Every day was a different flavor. It was hard work, but someone had to do it!

continued on page 8



From Accounting to Elder Care

The privilege of a lifetime is being who you are. – Joseph Campbell

I fell into the long term care field after I had been in accounting for ten years. I was working for Wholesale Bakery Distributors when a colleague told me about an accounting opportunity with Dulaney Towson Health Care Center—now Manor Care—in accounts payable and payroll. After I had been working there a while, I found that I enjoyed working with the residents, families, and staff on the financial side of the business. I would describe myself as a people person, and I guess that's how I came across. Still I was somewhat surprised when the administrator suggested that I try admissions. With some trepidation, and frankly because it was a promotion, I gave it a try. The rest is history.

I can't say that I loved it at the beginning. It was a steep learning curve. I had to learn the ins and outs of Medicare and Medicaid, and about the financial, clinical and emotional issues that the residents and their families were facing. However, once I got all of that under my belt, which took several years, admissions became compelling and absorbing work. Although guiding families through the process of admitting a loved one to short-term or long-term care can be stressful for all involved, it became very rewarding for me to be able to support families in the process.

I have now been the Director of Admissions at St. Elizabeth for four years, and I see that it's what I am meant to do. I have always had a love for elders, which goes back to my early family experiences. Two elders in particular made a great impression on me: my great grandmother and my grandmother. I had the privilege of admitting my grandmother to Dulaney-Towson when I worked there, and was therefore able to see her every day and be with her in her last years.

In the admissions process, the first thing that I have to do for families, when they are contemplating having their loved one come to St. Elizabeth, is to put them at ease and help them to make the best decision possible dealing with all of the financial, clinical, and emotional issues involved. The apprehensions that most families have are natural, and our job is to guide and support them in what can be one of the most difficult decisions they will



Steven Meehan
Director of Admissions

ever have to make. Every family and their situation is a unique one so I have to tailor my approach by listening and observing. More times than one would think, humor and laughter can play a healing role.

No day is the same for me in admissions. It's a constant learning process with the elders and their families with whom I work. Each day brings new challenges. I never tire of hearing the life stories of the elders and their families. Getting to know them helps me to be able to recommend the best placement within St. Elizabeth for the care of the elder. The reward for me is being able to make a difference in the life of elders and their families. St. Elizabeth is a place where families can expect to receive the best care possible in a loving environment. In a very real sense we believe that we are working in the elder's home, which happens to be in St. Elizabeth. Our interdisciplinary team's focus is to ensure that the elders live life to the fullest while we take care of their clinical and rehabilitation needs. I love this work. It's who I am, and I'm glad to be able to lighten the load of elders and their families by guiding them through the admission process with compassion, excellence, and integrity.

Beulah Wyatt

Nothing will work unless you do. – Maya Angelou

Beulah, my mother, and her sister Eddie Mae moved to Baltimore from Birmingham, Alabama in 1940 when Beulah was 12 years old. They followed their older sister Versey Mae, who came first to find work. Soon after, their mother Lessie Mae also came to Baltimore. The family settled in east Baltimore. Lessie Mae, in addition to being the matriarch of the family, was a registered nurse. She was also the neighborhood “Healer”—the go-to person for her neighbors for cures of all of their aches, pains, and medical needs. Beulah attended public school in Alabama. There she worked a variety of jobs, often with her mother and sisters, as a cook and housekeeper.

Once in Baltimore, Beulah worked in the Orioles’ Cafeteria, and for many years she worked in the home of one of Baltimore’s prominent doctors. Always wanting to better living conditions for her family, she went to work for the Baltimore City School system as a cafeteria worker. Beulah raised me and my two brothers and three sisters: Willie Henry, Joseph, Versey Mae, Elizabeth, and Betty, in the Greenmount neighborhood, with her extended family close around. Her neighbors knew Beulah as the “Bread Lady,” for her baking prowess, particularly for her “mean” biscuits and carrot cakes. In the early ’70s Beulah was able to buy a house on Boone Street. She retired from the Post Office as a General Services Administrator worker in 1975, and in 1996 Beulah married Charles Wyatt. He enjoyed being part of our large family with all of the gatherings and trips. After his death three years ago, Beulah came to live with me and my husband Malcolm in Cowdensville, and for the past two years has attended St. Anne Adult Day Program.

I currently attend Essex Community College, working on a degree as a Medical Coder, and my husband works as a professional truck driver. The

highlight of our week is Sunday worship, which rotates between three churches: Grace AME, where Malcolm is an usher; St. Matthew United Methodist Church, where Beulah has been a member for almost sixty years (sang soprano in the choir and was an usher), and Mount Calvary Freewill Baptist Church, where Betty and I are long-time members. When Beulah was an active usher at her church, she wore the traditional white outfit and is known as a classic dresser. She has a collection of 20 hats to “crown” her outfits for Sundays. Not surprisingly Beulah’s favorite activity at St. Ann is singing spirituals. Among her favorites are: *A Closer Walk with Thee*, *Nearer My God to Thee*, and *Precious Lord*.

Other favorite events that we look forward to are the Mitchell Family Reunions where 30 to 40 family members gather for family day cook-outs, cruises, and trips to Virginia Beach. The Mitchell Family includes Beulah’s 14 grandchildren, 25 great grandchildren and 6 great-great grandchildren. With all of these activities that Beulah has going on in her life, she will say that she would still like to have a job to make “a little bit of money,” and that she often thinks about the home on Boone Street that God lent to her!

Diane Lynch



Diane Lynch & Beulah Wyatt

Creating Home

On October 14th, the Jenkins Pavilion and the Neighborhoods of St. Elizabeth Rehabilitation and Nursing Center were formally dedicated. The Jenkins Pavilion is a fabulous new place for the community to gather, and the Neighborhoods are at the core of our commitment to keeping community central to the philosophy and mission at St. Elizabeth. Our philosophy is to provide person-centered life to the elders we serve. In traditional long term care facilities, residents spend their days held to the routines built around efficiency and the convenience of staff. At St. Elizabeth, we build our days around the wishes, preferences, and simple pleasures of the elders. The ability to maintain autonomy over the events of your day, and having those events occur at your own pace, are hallmarks of independence. Sharing your day with others, while both giving and receiving love, is a hallmark of community. Having embraced this philosophy at St. Elizabeth, we were thrilled to celebrate the beautiful renovation of our home. The environment that surrounds us now better matches the feeling in our hearts, the feeling of home.

We invite you to visit us and see what we have to offer by contacting our Director of Admissions, Steve Meehan at 410-646-6519.





Me and My Dad

Any man can be a father, but It takes someone special to be a dad. – Anonymous

My dad, Ken Peacock, was born in 1944 in Maryland. He served in the army during the Vietnam War and started his family after he met my Mother, Rita, when he was stationed in Germany. I am the youngest of three children. My older brothers are Mark and Kenny, whom we call Junior. I was born in Winchester, Virginia. Our family also lived in Severn and Glen Burnie. My Mom and Dad moved to Laurel after we all grew up and moved out. Mom passed on June 3, 2000, and we all took it pretty hard.

My dad is a tall man—6'4". He worked for many years in the upholstery business, most recently for the last seven years at Georgetown Refinishing.

He became so skilled in the upholsterer's art that his work can be seen in several museums in D.C., as well as in the White House. Although I knew that he loved his work and was dedicated to his company, I wondered whether he was thinking about retiring when he came into his 60s. So several years ago at a family barbecue, I asked him how much longer he was going to work. He told me then, "I'm not ready to retire." That did not surprise me since he was so good at his job. It was two months later on May 7, 2007 that he had a stroke. The next three years were a roller coaster ride for us as he recovered at George Washington University Hospital and then Kernan Hospital. It was hard for me to see him in a wheelchair and with the use of only one arm. He had been so strong and was looking forward to continuing his work. After he had completed rehab at Kernan, I knew that he could not live on his own. Although he could walk some, his speech did not fully come back. I was looking at several options, and feeling out of luck. Then one day during one of my computer searches, the Caritas House web page popped up on my computer screen.

Caritas House has been a Godsend. My dad is still a young man, and his mind is active. It's hard to see him not being as independent as he would like to be. Sometimes you can see that this makes him sad; however, he has taken it in his stride, and it's good for him to be around the other people, participating



Ken Peacock and Michelle Starks

in the activities and going on trips with them. He has made friends with a number of the staff, and you can see his face light up when he sees them.

Another reason that Caritas House worked for our family is that both my husband Shelby and I work, so Dad could not live with us. However, Shelby has renovated our house so that my dad can come to visit regularly and on holidays. Caring for Dad is still a family business as my brother, Junior, and I take him out and to his appointments. I could do it by myself; however, Dad, as I've said, is a tall man, and it is hard for me to help him in and out of his wheelchair. I had a neck injury on the job several years ago that caused me to retire from the Police Force after 15 years. Dad is still positive most days, although sometimes he does get a little down. The staff at Caritas House call me whenever they think something is going on with him that they think I need to know about. For that I'm grateful, and I felt confident enough in his care this summer to take a vacation for six weeks. Shelby and I did a road trip tour of America. I usually get over to see Dad two or three times a week and sometimes bring my dogs Moose and Gizmo to visit him and the other seniors. I tell my dad that I bet \$5 if I set him down in front of a sofa he could still re-upholster it to museum quality one-handed!

Michelle Starks

Senior Housing Services at DePaul House and St. Joachim House

Life's a voyage that's homeward bound – Herman Melville

Often simply referred to as “the apartments,” DePaul House and St. Joachim House provide the unique opportunity for older adults to live in their own affordable space and have access to services and benefits to support their staying right here, right at home. Residents find strength in one another and through the two major service components of Catholic Charities Senior Communities: Service Coordination and the Congregate Housing Services Program (CHSP), subsidized and certified by the Maryland Department of Aging. “Home” can be created in many ways: through a room of one’s own, through the setting of a table with a hot meal, and the security of knowing that the bills will be paid and the lights will stay on.

This past May, Maryellen McHenry, Service Coordinator, met with resident Patricia Bateman and her sister to address some of Pat’s financial concerns. As a Service Coordinator, Maryellen’s goal is to educate and link residents to services and benefit programs. Pat, 78, moved into St. Joachim over 10 years ago. Maryellen reviewed Pat’s expenses as well as her current benefits and was able to help her save approximately \$100/month through a three-pronged approach: changing her telephone service to the Verizon Tel-Life program; working with the CHSP Supervisor to get Pat into the Congregate Housing Services program (including \$25 in financial assistance to help cover the costs of the program), and applying to the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) to help cover food costs each month.



Patricia Bateman & Maryellen McHenry

The mission of the Congregate Housing Services Program is to provide a helping hand to prevent injury and illness to help eliminate or delay the

need to move to another setting. The front-line staff, the program’s Helping Hands, provide housekeeping, laundry, personal services and two meals a day. The Helping Hands from DePaul House and St. Joachim, led by Jacqueline Lattimore, CHS Supervisor, recently wrote about what they have learned from another one of the program’s participants:

Ms. Elizabeth “Betty” Druin, 68, moved into DePaul House in November of 2009. Ms. Betty had suffered a stroke, which caused partial paralysis, and had several heart surgeries and



Jacqueline Lattimore & Betty Druin

other medical issues. Despite her health challenges, Ms. Betty has joined in various activities with the encouragement of the CHS staff, including participating in the 2010 Senior Prom. She says she has not danced that much in years. Ms. Betty loves having visitors and conversation and is always helping out and joining in with activities like Katie’s Kitchen Band, or making crafts to give staff and residents. She has some mobility issues but manages to volunteer during lunch, faithfully helping with place settings in the dining room. Ms. Betty enjoys the socialization of the CHSP meals, and she would have great difficulty on her own without the CHSP. Ms. Betty has taught our team that no matter what your sickness you can live a very good life.

Both the Service Coordination and the Congregate Housing Services Program have been in place since the beginnings of DePaul House and St. Joachim House; however the faces have changed over the years. Jacqueline Lattimore began her work with Catholic Charities almost six years ago as a Housing Associate in the leasing office at Kessler Park and St. Mark’s Apartments. In the past two years, Jacqueline has followed her original career path

continued on page 8



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Senior Housing Services

continued from page 7

focusing on the services side of senior housing, becoming a Service Coordinator and then ultimately the CHSP Supervisor for both DePaul House and St. Joachim.

Maryellen McHenry became officially employed with Catholic Charities in February 2010 as the Service Coordinator. She had completed a service learning project on the campus several years prior as part of a graduate program in aging studies. Maryellen retired from the National Security Agency in December of 2009 and was pleased to be able to pursue her “calling” to serve older adults, and to do so full time. Maryellen says: *“It’s all very different from my government life, but certainly some of the skills and abilities I bring to this work are things I learned in the government. For example, I’m not afraid to make a phone call, or tackle a bureaucracy, or ask critical questions. But I really feel as if I’m helping people and doing good. And I really love our residents!”*

Aileen McShea Tinney

Becoming Myself Again

continued from page 1

I lived at St. Elizabeth for 20 days. Day by day, I could feel that I was getting stronger and more capable. I was becoming myself again. Since I’ve been home, I’ve reflected on my frightening experience and how important the healing process was and how lucky I was to experience it in the setting I did. The in-home physical therapist, who came to my home for three weeks after my discharge, helped reinforce the good practices and exercises I learned at St. Elizabeth. I have worked them into my daily routine. I left St. Elizabeth very grateful for the excellent care that I received, and went back to my life actually stronger in many ways than I had been in a long time!

Virginia Mellendick