



The Laurel Spirit

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Supporting Communication and Quality of Life for Guests with Dementia

Improving the quality of life for all of our Guests is a core component of The Laurel Way. Last spring, **The Laurels of Mt. Pleasant** began working with representatives from Central Michigan University with the goal of enhancing the lives of Guests with dementia. For this project, Assistant Professor Natalie Douglas and her team individually met with Guests with dementia/cognitive impairment to learn more about each Guest's past in order to gather insights that will help Associates better care for them today.

The program has three main objectives:

- Identify visual signs and cues to increase independence and quality of life
- Identify visual signs and cues to support orientation, memory, and communication
- Identify ways to provide meaningful activity participation to support social networks, quality of life, sense of well-being, and overall physical health



Guests with dementia at The Laurels of Mt. Pleasant are participating in a sensory stimulation group. Stimulation items were provided through a program with Central Michigan University.

Professor Douglas' team interviewed Associates as well as participating Guests and their family members to learn more about the Guests' lives, former professions, etc. These insights will help caregivers and families identify more meaningful ways to connect with our Guests now that cognitive impairment has stripped them of their memories. Although our Laurels Associates have great training, the time and expertise given by the CMU partners will enhance their ability to care for our Guests and provide a better quality of life.

In addition, Professor Douglas' team has recently purchased many items that Mt. Pleasant Associates have begun using for a sensory stimulation group. Sensory stimulation has been shown to decrease agitation and restlessness for Alzheimer's patients.

Administrator Jason Alexander says, "We look forward to continuing this partnership with CMU well into the future so that we can continue to enhance the quality of life for our Guests." ■



Words of Thanks

Often, Laurel Health Care Associates go above and beyond the call of duty, reaching out in the communities they serve and demonstrating The Laurel Way of Caring. Here are a few of the letters of appreciation we have received commending these Associates for their extra efforts.

The Laurels of Norworth

There are no words adequate to express our gratitude for the Tender Loving Care given to William (Bill) Cole by the entire staff here at The Laurels. We thank you for your immense compassion in making his final days comfortable for him and his family, always welcoming, 24 hours a day. Your efforts were above and beyond all expectations. From administrative support facilitating his move to be here with his family, to the kitchen staff making a BLT to order just for him, to the outstanding quality of care he received from nurses and aides...AMAZING! You leave us in awe with your loving kindness in the most difficult of circumstances. You make a difference. We give thanks for you.

The William J. Cole Family

The Laurels of University Park

I was so touched to receive sympathy cards from The Laurels, including the clipping of my mom's obituary. That was so thoughtful and reflected the personal aspect of your facility. ("Facility" sounds so clinical; you're far from that!) My mom, Patricia "Catherine" Bergstrom, spent 11 days in Rehab in July. We were both touched by the roses welcoming her, the books to read, and even the silly graduation celebration. She moved to my home for hospice care, returning to The Laurels on August 7th for her final days. Thank you for helping me to care for her those last few days. I love that someone from Activities read to her and located a CD player and some classical music. Every staff member I encountered was caring and helpful, validating our decision to seek care with The Laurels. I'm deeply touched by the care and condolences. It's a great comfort while I grieve my mom's passing.

Jenni Treadwell

The Laurels of Sandy Creek

After hip replacement surgery I was sent to Sandy Creek for therapy. My recuperation there went well. Well-trained therapists took care of me in an organized and thorough manner in a pleasant environment. Thanks for the excellent service. It is very much appreciated.

John B.



Words of Thanks

Two letters of thanks from Guests and their families came in the form of original poems. These heartfelt poems express both the challenges and struggles faced by Guests on their journeys toward restored health, as well as deep gratitude for the skill and care of Associates who help Guests achieve their hard-won success.

The Laurels of Coldwater

To all the people who healed me:

*Unable to walk, unable to stand,
They brought me to you on a stretcher
And now I walk.*

*You kept pushing and pushing and pushing me
To frustration and anger,
But they brought me to you on a stretcher
And now I walk.*

*You worked with harshness and encouragement,
With total disregard for my pain,
And love, with coaxing and lies.*

*But Penny, you said if I walked here I could sit.
"You can walk a little farther"
But Maria, I will fall down, I can't.
"It's all in your mind, it's all in your mind."*

*I finally did it just to shut you up already.
They brought me to you on a stretcher,
And now I walk.*

*I walked to the mailbox
To send all of you this love letter.*

They brought me to you on a stretcher.

Michael Vande Walker

The Laurels of Worthington

This letter is dedicated to all of you on staff at The Laurels of Worthington. Today, in particular, this client's family would like to recognize all who participated in the care of Leslie Nateman after she faced several catastrophic health issues. Your efforts and patience recognized what Leslie could not and helped her on the journey to survive, gain back her memories, and become semi-independent again.

Every single one of you can have a significant impact on a life. Every call, visit, and touch is a pivotal contact that strengthens or guides a Resident so that they can find their way to living in a restricted world they did not build for themselves.

On behalf of the Nateman Clan, thank you all for your passion and dedication.

David, Barry, and Cheryl

[The following is a poem shared by the Nateman family in thanks for the recent care of their family member, Leslie.]

I am your Resident

I can be a challenge mentally and physically.

*I have my days when you see me content, angry,
happy, frustrated, low, laughing, crying, singing,
yelling, quiet, and engaged.*

*I have days when I know I'm different from other
people, and my emotions and behaviors are like a
broken thermostat running high and low until I run
out of steam.*

*I have emotional and cognitive swings that are often
magnified because I'm kind of broken and it's scary.*

I feel lost and sorry for myself.

You keep me safe from harm until I calm down.

*You treat me like I'm a normal person and help me
live, not just exist.*

*You help me see that I can do things, be
independent, feel I have value.*

You give me respect and make me aware I am visible.

You show me Humankindness.

I am your Resident and I have feelings and dreams.

That's the Spirit!

Veterans at The Laurels of Shane Hill Participate in Honor Flight



Activities Director Kimberly Harter has been working since May on a very special plan to ensure that veterans staying at The Laurels get the recognition they deserve. This October, her efforts paid off when three gentlemen from **The Laurels of Shane Hill** participated in the Honor Flight program, which honors veterans with a free trip to Washington DC. In the wee hours of Wednesday, October 7th, Kimberly escorted our Guests to the Air Force base in Fort Wayne, where they flew out with a group of 156 veterans for their day in the Capital.



Each veteran had a one-on-one volunteer who stayed with him for the entire day. Everything for the veterans was free, and the volunteers paid \$300 each for the opportunity to give back to those who have served our country. Doctors, nurses, and respiratory techs also donated their time for the day. The veterans were pampered all day long! Three buses full of veterans toured the city and monuments with a police escort. A Facebook page was updated almost hourly so everyone back home could follow their adventures. So much fun!

They returned that night to Fort Wayne International Airport to a fanfare of 2,000 people welcoming them home. Bands played and Junior Honor Corps was there along with busses of students from several schools. Kimberly says, "Words cannot express the humbleness and honor that I felt to be part of this homecoming."

Gaylord Hoffman, WWII Navy Veteran, summarized the day best: "To me, the day was spectacular. The best day that I've ever spent in my life. It was mind-boggling what I saw and it's something that I'll remember for the rest of my life! I liked The Arlington National Cemetery the best because of the way it was laid out. You could drive by and see nothing but crosses. To others it may not mean as much... but to me it made me feel like I was walking on top of the world. I just loved that! The whole trip was wonderful but that was the most outstanding!"

Olympic-Sized Fun at The Laurels of Hillsboro

Guests at **The Laurels of Hillsboro** know how to show their team spirit! A large team representing the facility participated in the 2015 Scioto County Senior Olympics—all dressed as the iconic Minions from the hit family movie "Despicable Me". One Guest won second place in the horseshoe competition, winning a medal and a DVD player. The facility also won a rocking chair for the team's overall spirit and good nature towards other fellow Olympians. (It would be hard to beat these Minions for enthusiasm!) It was a fun day filled with lots of games and activities. Competing or not, everyone found something to enjoy. The Senior Olympics has become an event to look forward to each year.



That's the Spirit!



A Remarkable Recovery at The Laurels of Salisbury

In March of 2012, Samuel Owen, at 71 years old, suffered a traumatic brain injury after he was kicked in the neck and jaw by a horse. He also fractured several other bones throughout his body, and the complications from his injuries led to multiple respiratory issues. When he was airlifted to the hospital, the doctors told his family that there was not much hope that he would ever recover from this. One of Mr. Owen's daughters responded to the doctor by saying, "You don't know how stubborn my daddy is."

After multiple trips to various hospitals in the Triad and Charlotte, NC areas and a stay in a long-term acute care setting, Mr. Owen was admitted to **The Laurels of Salisbury** in June of 2012. As the staff got to know Mr. Owen's family, they got to know a lot about Mr. Owen. At this point, Mr. Owen was still unable to clearly communicate, and was showing minimal progress. One day during an emotional care plan meeting with Mr. Owen's wife Linda, his son David, and his daughters Alisha and Miriam, in which everyone was extremely saddened by Mr. Owen's current condition, Mr. Owen stopped in with the assistance of his therapist and

told everyone that he had just stood up as part of his therapy. He went on to tell a few jokes. Everyone at that point began to see his true character. Overnight, it seemed he was getting better. Mr. Owen, or "Sam", as he was insisting everyone call him by this time, began to make remarkable progress. By the spring of 2013, getting back home seemed like a real possibility. In the fall of 2013, Mr. Owen did indeed make it back home.

He gradually began doing the things he enjoyed again at home—mowing his grass, drawing pictures, working in his shop, deer hunting, and eventually driving his truck. And, on July 9, 2015, he accomplished his ultimate goal of getting back on the horse. Sam's recovery has been remarkable and a true testament to his hard work, his "stubbornness," and his family's encouragement and support. Casey Baucom, Administrator at The Laurels of Salisbury, says, "It has truly been an honor for us to see all that he has accomplished."

Building Cross-Team Relationships at The Laurels of Forest Glenn

In order to maintain their exemplary Part B referral stream, as well as their excellent working relationship with the nursing staff, the rehab team at **The Laurels of Forest Glenn** hosts an annual pot luck lunch for the nursing team. Everyone eats well and has a great time. What a great way to build relationships across teams!



The Laurels Mission Statement

Creating a Legacy
By
Exceeding the
Needs and Expectations
Of Those We Serve,
While Embracing
The Laurel Way

Reflections



The Laurels of Bon Air

The Guests at The Laurels of Bon Air really know how to get into the Halloween Spirit! Everyone had a ball with the Halloween photo shoot. Guests later passed out candy to little trick-or-treaters.



The Laurels of Canton

Paging Dr. Frankenstein! The Laurels of Canton Activities Director Jan Bagget brought out her inner mad scientist for the occasion.



Associates in the Front Office, however, were feeling rather witchy. Pictured: Jessica Kline,



Administrator; Sibila Lint, Admissions Director; Christine Day, Social Worker; and Sheri Reed, Receptionist.



The Laurels of Mt. Pleasant

The Central Michigan University volunteer center brought a great Halloween party to Guests at The Laurels of Mt. Pleasant as a part of their Adopt-a-Grandparent program. They gave prizes to the Guests for the most scary, the most creative, and the funniest costumes. A good time was had by all!



The Laurels of GreenTree Ridge

The Laurels of GreenTree Ridge ramped up the scary side of Halloween with a haunted house full of ghouls and goblins.



The Laurels of New London

Associates, Guests and their families at The Laurels of New London welcomed trick-or-treaters on Saturday, October 31. Local families braved the cold to show off their Halloween spirit before the annual New London Halloween Parade. Guests donned festive costumes and enjoyed a piece of candy or two.



Community members came to walk through the haunted house and join in the Halloween festivities. RN Jami Sane makes an adorable zombie. We'll take a pass on ADON Sharon Fowler's "baby soup", though.



The Laurels of Hillsboro

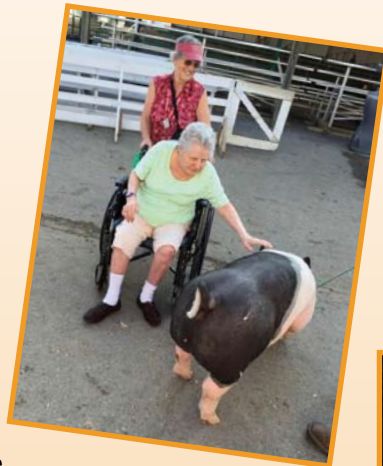
The Laurels of Hillsboro celebrated the 103rd birthday of Guest Grace McClure this fall. Guests and Associates celebrated with a Dairy Queen cake. Grace McClure is pictured here with Administrator Jo Sanborn and the Department Heads.



The Laurels of Mt. Pleasant

Guests at The Laurels of Mt. Pleasant took a fall trip to Anderson & Girls Orchard. Many of our Guests especially enjoyed the petting zoo!

The Laurels of Hillsboro
Guests at The Laurels of Hillsboro enjoyed a day at the Highland County Fair. The activities committee took several Guests to the local fair, where they got to pet the pigs and engage in other fair-day fun.



The Laurels of Steubenville

The Laurels of Steubenville celebrated “Redneck Week” with fun—and goofy!—activities for Guests and Associates. Pictured here: Associates search for prizes in the “Dumpster Dive” game.



The Laurels of GreenTree Ridge

Associates at The Laurels of GreenTree Ridge participated in the Bethal Half Marathon this fall. Pictured left to right: Jessica Hauser, Administrator; Julie Ford, Nurse Navigator; Angie Black, DON; and Melanie Morton, DOM. Congratulations, ladies!

Spirit News

The Laurel Way

We are a team of professionals dedicated to promoting the highest level of independence and quality of life for our Guests by creating a comfortable living environment and providing comprehensive health care services.

To accomplish this, we have a responsibility to:

- Treat everyone with dignity and respect
- Conduct ourselves with the highest level of integrity and ethical behavior
- Be uncompromising in our standards of quality of care and service
- Attract, train and retain knowledgeable, caring and compassionate individuals
- Challenge ourselves to grow as people, as professionals and as a company
- Earn a fair and reasonable profit for our stakeholders

We embrace these responsibilities, with commitment and enthusiasm, in our pursuit of The Laurel Way.

The Laurels of Defiance Voted “Best in Region” – Six Years Running!

Congratulations to the hard-working Associates at **The Laurels of Defiance**! The facility was recently voted “Best in Region” by readers of the Defiance Crescent Newspaper for the 6th year in a row—making six wins out of the last eight years. They held a community celebration on September 20 with a band, clown, cotton candy, three bounce houses for the kids, face painting, ice cream with all the toppings, grilled hotdogs and chips, popcorn, bingo, pony rides, and a petting zoo. Mayor Armstrong attended along with many members of the community. Now that’s a well-deserved party!



Celebrating Deficiency-Free Surveys

The Laurels of Norworth and **The Laurels of GreenTree Ridge** have both achieved Deficiency-Free Annual Surveys. Congratulations to all of the Associates who made this possible. Thank you for all of your hard work and your dedication to The Laurel Way of Caring!



Associates at The Laurels of Norworth celebrate their Deficiency-Free Annual Survey.

A Delicious Approach to the Annual Staff Survey

The Laurels of Mount Vernon held two events this fall in order to entice Associates to participate in the Annual Staff Opinion Survey. For the night shift, they had a Belgian waffle breakfast bar with fresh waffles and different fruits, nuts, and whipped cream. At the afternoon event, they made an ice cream banana split in a gutter. Associates got to add their own toppings and whipped cream. Let’s hope that didn’t skew the results!



Now that’s a banana split!