

GRACE HOME NEWS



NOVEMBER 2022

REPORT FROM THE CCC MEETING

On October 5, Barry, Randy and I flew to Bonners Ferry, Idaho, for the annual Senior Care Conference meeting. This was the first conference wide meeting since Covid began. It was so great to see everyone again. This newsletter will be full of points from that meeting. The actual meeting started on October 6 at 9:00 am and went through supper on October 7. Of course, we paused for night. Board members that went were: Jonathan and Holly Koehn, Floyd and Rhoda Jantz and Benny Friesen. I can't say for the others, but I came back enthused with new ideas on how to fix old problems. There were a few brand new ideas for activities, but that was definitely the smallest part of what I came back with. –Laura Koehn

Grow Your Own

Steve Lindsey, CEO of Garden Spot Village in New Holland, PA, presented a problem that their residents brought to their attention. The residents wanted fresh, ripe tomatoes in the winter. None could be found to purchase in Lancaster County, so they figured out a way to grow their own. It was not simple or quick. It took multiple years for their system to be up and running but when they were done, they had a 4,600 square foot aeroponic greenhouse where they could grow a wide variety of vegetables year round.

Another point in the same talk was to "think inside the box". For years the buzzword has been to think outside the box, but he encouraged us to use the resources we already have. We might have to think outside the box on how would be the best way to think inside the box.

This next point is taken from what I understand was a discussion in the Director of Nursing's breakout session. An employee from the community told the DONs that if we want to uphold our values in our care facilities, we need to have more Christian people working in our care facilities.

I have wondered if we are willing enough to go to the grave with a body that has been well used in the Lord's work. Or do we shrink from hard labor because we might get hurt?

Putting all these thoughts together, there is a problem that Grace Home has that we would beg you to prayerfully consider if it may be up to you to be part of the solution. If it is not your calling to be part of the solution, please pray that a solution can be found. There is a great lack of workers throughout the conference. We are especially looking at the nursing department at Grace Home. There has been great support in filling the other positions. But CNAs and licensed nurses... There is only one from our Mennonite community in each of those positions. We have some amazing CNAs and nurses from the outside community that have been here many years, but it is getting harder and harder to find people that will show up to an interview, let alone come back for orientation. We have probably less than 50% success rate with those who have handed in applications. We are looking for people that can help us further our Mission, Vision and Values statement.

(continued from "Grow Your Own")

CNA work may not seem appealing to you, and, to be honest, there are parts that are not so pleasing. But those parts are worth putting up with for the great rewards. I challenge you to come inside and ask our older CNAs what is the best part of being a CNA.

This is feasible for men, women, youth, young, middle aged, empty nesters...

Grace Home has a program to help you with schooling for either of these positions with a commitment to a length of service.. There would need to be a certain amount of screening done to be sure you were invested enough for the expense of sponsoring you through the training/schooling.

Give it some serious thought. Is it time we start tapping people on the shoulder? How do we know how much to push for what seems to be right or when should we sit back and trust in God to take care of the need? I have heard quite a few stories of missionaries being recruited. Caring for our elders is a worthy mission.

Another thought that was left by an experienced CCC committee member: We need to give our elders the same commitment we give our children. We would never put our children in a public school system and we should never consider putting our elders in a public care facility. -Laura Koehn



GRACE COMMUNITY CENTER

We have been thoroughly enjoying using the Community Center! It has made cooking/baking items with the residents feasible. Some of the ladies loved to make bread, pies, cinnamon rolls... at home. It has become nearly impossible to offer that. Now, instead of doing little instant things like pigs in a blanket, we can use the kitchen for real baking. Residents and employees look forward to Wednesday afternoons. Since it is such a big deal, we have started having baking every other Wednesday. The groans when employees find out there won't be yummy food to indulge in every other week makes me smile. I am so glad to be able to do things that are so much appreciated!



More on CCC Meeting

The first lecture on Thursday morning was by Steve Lindsey, CEO of Garden Spot Village. His talk had nine main points. The first one was Mindset of an Explorer. He talked about Lewis and Clark and how they prepared and set out to find a waterway from the Mississippi to the Pacific. They got their boats and hired men that were good with boats. When they reached the Rocky Mountains, they reached the end of what they had set out to do. There was no waterway through. They could have given up and said they had failed, but they changed their mindset, got Sacajawea to help them, got the proper equipment and headed on. We are facing our own mountain range now where the boats of the institutionalized nursing facilities are no longer adequate to get us over the mountains we are facing. Mountains of regulations, technology, demographics, economic and marketplace, and lack of workforce. There are two job openings for every person that wants to work. When the rate of external change exceeds the rate of internal change, disaster is imminent. He showed a visual of a circle that exemplified routine. When we do the same thing, we get the same result.

Then he showed a visual of an outward spiral that signified change. When we change things up, we can grow.

(continued on next page)

“More on CCC Meeting” continued...

Point 2: Be mission driven. Talk and dream together. The mission statement at Grace Home is “by love serve one another”. Can we let that drive us? We can dream our own dreams, but if we dream together, our dreams grow into realities.

Point 3: Solve a problem or create an opportunity. We don’t need more novelties, and if we are doing more than these two points, it becomes entitlement spending.

Point 4: Think inside the box. Too much money causes problems. There is power in creative restraints. Ask propelling questions and use the resources you already have to your greatest advantage. We can have the scarcity mindset or the abundance mindset. The scarcity mindset says we can’t because... we don’t have the money or time, there are too many regulations, everyone else is too negative, we don’t have the right people to pull it off. This causes comparison and competition and does not build a team. Cooperation and collaboration are far more useful building blocks. The abundance mindset says “We have enough! We can if...” Before Jesus’ time there was the saying “May you be covered with the dust of your Rabbi.” This was said to the disciples following these Rabbis. As we follow Jesus, may we be covered in His dust and have his mindset.

Point 5: Corps of Discovery. Assemble your corps of discovery. We have been misinformed into thinking that success is a one man job. It isn’t. There are Idea Monkeys and Ring Leaders and they will drive each other nuts. Idea monkeys have so many ideas and the ring leaders can never keep up. Ring leaders need to pick the good ideas, put together ideas to make a good decision to move forward with.

Point 6: Be curious. In times of change, learners inherit the earth while the learned find a beautiful world that doesn’t exist. Curate (to pull together, sift through in order to present) in order to create.

Point 7: Everything is a remix. Steal like an artist. An artist never paints something for the first time. There is no need to think that our work is so wonderful. We are just stealing others’ ideas. The future is already here. It is just distributed unevenly. Don’t copy and paste, but make something new.

Point 8: Fail Forward. We need to not give up easily, but sometimes there is a time to call time of death after we just can’t find a way through. It is okay to fail, and we need to show it. It makes us vulnerable, but if our employees can’t see us fail humbly then they won’t feel safe failing sometimes. Learn from our failures. What didn’t work? Why didn’t it? Anytime you come up with a new idea, there will be sabotage. You have to look beyond the fear of change.

Point 9: Diplomacy.= the art of dealing with people in a sensitive and effective way. Be a diplomatic rebel. Don’t forget that there is great value in those who have gone before us. There are values that we need to hold on to. Only break the rules you understand. Build a tribe. Write love letters. Let other people shine. Mario Andretti said, “If everything seems under control, you aren’t going fast enough.”

After break, Steve Lindsey talked on Healthy Organizational Charts and Employee Wellbeing. The lecture on Healthy Organizational Charts was directed mostly at the board members and a bit to the administrators. The lecture on Employee Wellbeing was about creating a culture of wellbeing. Building community helps us meet our authentic needs, unlocks potential, nourishes our spirit and increases understanding of ourselves and others. Create a place to belong. Culture is a total of learned behavior- the way we do things around here. A leader’s job is to help shape the culture of your community. Treat employees with the same care you treat the residents. When hiring someone, make sure they know the values that come with our Anabaptist roots and that they can fit into those values. Develop a culture that motivates. You want your employees to have a voice, be tied to a thing bigger than themselves and to excel. When striving for this, leadership will look different. 8 tips for leaders: 1. Focus on the fundamentals. Instead of doing evaluations, take a coaching approach. 2. If you want to awaken the culture in others, you have to be living the culture. 3.

Don’t leave your dirty dishes in the sink. 4. Talk about what’s important... a lot! 5. Encourage people to feed their curiosity and fuel their passion. 6. Find ways to tell the story (of good employees such as “I saw _____ giving a resident a foot massage while they were putting their shoes on for the day”) We as leaders are not the heroes. 7. Practice vulnerability. It is the root of social connection. It takes humility and courage to be vulnerable. 8. Have fun. Write the book you want to read. The question was asked if we should be hiring for the skill or for the heart. The advice given was “Hire for the heart. Teach them the skill.”

“More on CCC Meeting” continued...

After lunch break, Steve Lindsey gave another small presentation on dining before we split up into our department groups. There were a lot of new faces this year, ones that had replaced those who have moved on as well as those from new facilities. We spent a bit more time getting to know each other this year which was interrupted by a tour of Sunset Home. We as Activity Directors discussed how we/our residents feel about using YouTube and how/what resources we use for Armchair Travel. What websites are great for resources? How have we managed with regulations? When do we stream funeral services over the speaker system? We shared several months of calendars along with our top ten activities and some of our fun days. We discussed how to get resident participation, what we can do to engage the men in more meaningful activities, where each home is at with volunteers and the possibility of using high school students as volunteers, different ways that work for the elderly to package tracts, craft & cooking ideas, different ways to play Bingo and how to compensate the Bingo points, evening activities, Sunday School and Bible Study. I came back quite enthused with new ideas on how to make old problems work out better. After supper, there was a meeting that the congregation was welcome to attend. Those of us that wanted to continue our workshop were free to do so. Activities decided to listen to the service and finish our workshop over lunch on Friday.

Friday morning began with an introduction about the candy bomber post WWII. About ten years ago, some reporters went to interview the children who had been recipients of the candy. They found these elderly people who were overcome by the thought that someone had cared about them so much. The point was that your actions will be forgotten to all except those who received them.

After Introduction, each department had designated someone to bring a report on their breakout sessions. That was followed by introductions by Homes. We paused for morning break before Gideon Berniko gave a presentation on sounds, sights and smells of a living environment. Environments don't just happen. Culture and environment need to be intentional. What would be important in each sense to have in an environment? The most important sense is feeling. You can live without all the senses but feeling. Feelings of security, safety and God's love are very important. Also, feeling of hot, cold and pain are so important to our survival. He asked us what sounds created a living environment- as in an environment that is not dead. Some of the thoughts were: chime clock, laughter, employees laughing (they need to be at peace with one another to laugh together), children and babies, chickens, music, running water, dryer running. Smells that help to promote a living environment: peppernuts, popcorn, baking bread. He brought to our attention that store bought prepared food does not have the smell when it is baked that homemade food has. Taste, smell and sight are so connected. An appealing plate is very important. Meal time is not just something to get through. It is an activity. In thinking of a buffet where the residents serve themselves, many think of the spread of germs, yet we can serve ourselves and it is fine. The thought was that there weren't that many more germs on a resident's hand than on ours and that is not a good enough excuse. When you walk into the facility, you need to be met with a "living" environment: Plants, chairs to sit and visit, animals, possibly running water... With decorating, you need to be focal without a lot of clutter. It should be bright, fresh, seasonal and attractive at a glance. If the décor is never changed out, it starts to leave a stagnant feeling. The importance of pets was addressed. It is impressive when you walk into a facility and see pets. It says quickly that this facility goes beyond the necessary. They provide companionship and give the residents a feeling of ownership. It also gives them something to think about other than themselves. Children are attracted to pets and will sooner want to come visit if there are pets. There will be messes in the process but animals aren't the only ones who make messes. They can be cleaned up. But it takes more than one person to get a pet established in a facility.

With our stomachs full of amazing food, we listened to Steve Koehn talk about the forward look- planning for the future. To look forward, we must also look backwards. The old nursing home model was built for efficiency. Then the Eden Alternative became popular. That brought attention to the three plagues that were rampant in the old model: loneliness, helplessness and boredom. It was a place where people went to die. That should not be the point of our homes. Our seniors should be going into senior care for a life enriching program. Is aging in place a realistic option? It is our God-given responsibility to care for our elders. Nurture a culture of wellness, a culture that draws and contains trust, empowerment, security. Recognize and reward goals met in your employees. Work to mitigate stress. Promote mental, emotional and spiritual health in residents and employees. Provide a robust exercise program. Is it time to consider putting in pools for our elders? Provide technology, space and workshop space for residents. How many have an in house general store where the residents can purchase items? Make the dining experience more meaningful with an open kitchen, bistro, flexible dining, family and event dining. Intergenerational activities are very important. Be ahead of the game. Understand the needs of your support group. Have an independent living component.

"More from CCC Meeting" continued...

If you have no profit, you can not fulfill your mission. Bring money in from the outside. Net profit of a restaurant? Be open-minded to what may come down the pipe. Ensure no elder is left behind because they can't afford to be in our senior care facility. Funding is an obstacle, not a roadblock. Embrace the commitment we have to the children. We would not send them to a public school. We start a new congregation and there is a way to teach our children without sending them to public schools. It needs to be just as much a priority to offer our elders a Christian facility.

Tim Penner spoke on Talent and Burnout- Recognizing an employee's talent and compensating them professionally (especially in new homes). His main thought was: A farmer doesn't take his crop and sell it for 80% of what is the going rate and say he doesn't need the other 20% because he is working for a mission. Should we expect that of our employees? If we run our care facilities like a foreign mission, the employees should have homes and vehicles provided.

Aaron Koehn gave a captivating talk on Financial Budgets- the guidance and trust they provide. He told us how they do it at Oakwood and made budgeting look appealing. Next year's meeting will be in Michigan. After a scrumptious supper and some sad farewells, the conference was concluded.

The enthusiasm displayed in this meeting was phenomenal. The lectures and breakout sessions were great, and the overall enthusiasm really inspired me and made it worth going. -Laura Koehn

WHAT DOES SUPPORT LOOK LIKE?

This is a shout-out to those who have really stepped up to the plate! Merle Loewen messaged me one day wondering if he could bring his RC airplanes for the residents to watch. Then he set up another time and unless I am mistaken, he plans to do it more, much to the residents delight. The youth have called multiple times asking if they could sing. Many people have been willing to test to come in the building for church service or singing. Several times, there has been yummy break left in the break room for staff. A teacher told me she would gladly bring her class once a month to interact with the residents. Several ladies have been willing to come in to wash dishes so the load could be more bearable in the kitchen. Board members are showing up to talk with employees and residents once a week. A dad of young children has volunteered to volunteer approximately four hours a week at whatever we would have for him to do. I am sure I am not thinking of near everything or everyone. It has been such a drastic improvement from before Covid. We have singers just about every time with very few cancellations.

Taking an even bigger step back to when I first started at Grace Home, we have men coming in for devotions once a month, a few are quarterly. Most of these men have been doing this for close to 7 years. I am extremely thankful for them coming in! I have to do it once a week and every once in awhile twice a week.

The residents much prefer a man's wisdom over my little inspirations. Yes, they have told me that.

From the time I started until now, the kitchen department has had huge shift towards employees with our set of values.

It is a heavy load since we are only three local congregations, but I believe God has given us the resources. Let's not let them go to waste. Thanks so much for your support!!! -Laura Koehn

NEW HIRES

Pawandeep Kaur– CNA

Angelica Castellanos– Housekeeping & Dietary

Bemenet Kebede– CNA

Brenda Jimenez– LVN

We lost some long time employees this quarter. Beth Mazelin has been with us for 19 years, and Gary Wiggers has given us 18 years. We lost 37 years of experience just like that. But Beth is moving over by her grandbaby and Gary is working on his own doing vehicle mechanics. They are missed a lot!!!



IN LOVING MEMORY

ANNA DIRKS

ACTIVITY HIGHLIGHTS!

- ◇ WALK AROUND THE WORLD– INDIA
 - ◇ SMILE PARTY
 - ◇ BEACH PARTY
 - ◇ BANANA SPLITS
 - ◇ COOKING
- ◇ OLD SCHOOL DAYS– SPELLING BEE, REMISCING ON RULES AND STORIES
 - ◇ CAMPING PARTY-PLAYED CHARADES
 - ◇ TEA PARTY
 - ◇ PAINTING PUMPKINS
 - ◇ DIETARY APPRECIATION PARTY
 - ◇ LAWN PARTY– 3RD-5TH GRADES FROM LMS JOINED US
 - ◇ 5TH AND 6TH GRADERS FROM GMS COMING TO SING
 - ◇ MAKING CINNAMON ROLLS
 - ◇ COFFEE BAR
- ◇ OUTINGS: FROSTY KING FOR ICE CREAM, JOSEPH GALLO PARK FOR PICNIC

CAMPING CHARADES- THESE WERE WRITTEN ON SLIPS OF PAPER AND THE RESIDENTS HAD TO ACT THEM OUT. EVERYONE ELSE HAD TO GUESS. BLOW OUT BURNING MARSHMALLOW, ROASTING MARSHMALLOW, PARKING RV, RIDING BIKE, SWATTING MOSQUITOES, BUILDING A FIRE, DRINKING COFFEE, COOKING OVER FIRE, PUTTING ON SUN-SCREEN, FISHING, ROWING BOAT, BLOWING BUBBLES, PLAYING HORSESHOES, CHOPPING FIREWOOD, PUTTING ON BUG SPRAY. THEN FOR SNACK WE HAD TEDDY GRAHAMS FOR “DON’T FEED THE BEARS”, SWISS ROLLS FOR “LOGS”, CHEESE PUFFS FOR “FLAMES” AND BLUE GATORADE FOR “LAKE WATER”. THIS WAS ONE OF THE MORE ENJOYED PARTIES IN A LONG TIME.

OLD SCHOOL DAYS– RULES & REMINISCING THAT THE RESIDENTS REMEMBERED: Girls could not wear slacks or jeans. Starting in high school, pants were allowed. In gym, shorts were required. Horrible spinach from cafeteria! Mennonite girls did not wear head coverings to school. They wore their hair in a braid. They brought horses from home and raced them at school. They walked to school with snow on the ground. Dresses made from flour sacks. One fad was wearing white shirts, so Mennonite girls tried to sneak their dad’s Sunday shirts. Skirts were store bought, blouses may have been home sewed.

Favorite subjects: Della– History, Bertha– Spelling, Bette– English, Wilda– English, Randy– History, Charlotte– Spelling.
The residents wanted me to put this in the newsletter along with a story:

In seventh grade, Lena Toews (Justina’s sister) was my rival (always getting a better grade than I did). There was a county wide contest with an essay on “Why I am Glad I am an American” in which the entire school participated. Later, when the report came back on whose essay won– first, second and third place– third place went to a different school. Second place went to Lena Toews. My jealousy popped up! Then she announced, first place– Bette Esau!! I was so astonished! -story written by Bette Koehn

Covid restrictions are easing! Visitors are allowed to come and go freely but masking is required. Screening is still required but done passively by door signs. Entrance doors are now unlocked during daytime hours. This took a while to implement. Keys were misplaced during the two plus years of locked doors. It is taking the nurses quite a while to get back into the habit of unlocking the doors in the morning so please bear with us while we try to get this back to normal. Employees also are still required to wear masks. Covid vaccination or exemption for employees and volunteers is still a requirement. The mandate for testing only applies if we are in outbreak status, have symptoms, or been exposed. Physical distancing among residents is no longer a requirement. It is so wonderful! There are still a few covid regulations that hinder. However, it is so much better, how can we complain?

“To keep the heart unwrinkled, to be hopeful, kindly, cheerful, reverant that is to triumph over old age.

-Thomas B. Aldrich

Housekeeping Appreciation– September 11-16

Dietary Appreciation-October 3-7

Joys of being a CNA

E H L Y K E E P T H E M F R E S H E D Y L H O A
T S H U B P L Y Q D X X C S T Z C X Y G U P A H
N X O S N N O X L F G I N A U Y K G W R Z S Q X
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V G M Q X P J G P T X I B Q D E T W F W V F A S
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U U Z Z M E H T H T I W E C S I N I M E R X W Y
D Q A S F B E C O M E F A M I L Y W V K V L P L

walk with them become family make them look nice keep them fresh
glean their wisdom listen to their story reminisce with them sing to them
comfort the dying watch them thrive good sleep meet their family
share their tears laughter hold their hand doing what they can't
smiles hugs