

Providence Benedictine

A Publication of Providence Benedictine Nursing Center Foundation

SUMMER 2008

A Timely Occasion

ALITTLE OVER TWENTY-FIVE years ago, Sister Lucia Gamroth, administrator of Providence Benedictine Nursing Center, and Joe Layton, maintenance director, buried a small but significant time capsule on the grounds of PBNC. The capsule was filled with a variety of items contributed by nursing center departments.

“We made and buried the time capsule as a legacy to those who would follow in service to the Benedictine Nursing Center,” recalls Joy Smith, former director of nursing. “In addition, the time capsule and the related celebration were the culmination of an early 1980s \$2.3 million expansion and renovation project at the nursing center.”

Joy retired in 2003 after 25 years of exemplary service as nursing director. Her positive impact on the center is legendary. And her memory of what might be inside that time capsule is pretty impressive as well.

“As I recall, we included billing rates, menus, the resident list, staffing information, staff listing, and samples of equipment we used,” Joy says. “I think the capsule might even include a copy of our five-year management plan – that would be an interesting document to review!”

Each department was also encouraged to contribute items that were significant to their operating and care experiences. I also remember that Unger Funeral Chapel donated a baby casket to enclose the information to keep it from deteriorating.”

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On Feb. 12, 1982 Sister Lucia Gamroth, PBNC administrator, and Joe Layton, maintenance director, bury a time capsule as part of the celebration to mark the end of the PBNC \$2.3 million expansion and renovation project.

OUR MISSION

As people of Providence, we reveal God's love for all, especially the poor and vulnerable, through our compassionate service.

OUR CORE VALUES

Respect, Compassion, Justice, Excellence, Stewardship

OUR VISION

With enthusiasm, commitment and integrity, it is the vision of the Providence Benedictine Nursing Center Foundation to develop funds and "neighbors in spirit" that serve the Center to continue yesterday's legacy, today's promise of excellence and extraordinary services, and tomorrow's commitment for innovation.

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A Time to Reflect on Our Past, Present and Future



Emily Dazey

Dear Friends,

Time capsules are fascinating because their contents allow us to pause and reflect on the changes that have occurred since the capsule was buried. In August, we will unveil a time capsule buried by our staff 25 years ago. When the contents are revealed, we will reflect on our important heritage and celebrate the many transformations that our Providence Benedictine care community has experienced over the years.

Some changes came about because of the growth of new models of care and the increasing needs in the community, which led us to build a PBNC community offering a continuum of care – from a child development center to home health care, assisted living apartments, outpatient therapy clinics and our well-established skilled nursing care. We could not have fully foreseen these enhancements to our PBNC community, but our desire to serve the greater community's needs compelled us to develop new service offerings.

All the changes came out of the hard work and creativity of our dedicated employees and the vision of the leaders who have been part of this organization. We continue to build on the contributions of the many who came before us, and to work together to serve the community.

Nationally, long-term care is engaged in a "culture change," which involves re-examining everything we do and how we do it in order to make services more person-centered. Here at PBNC – while we remain committed to the values instilled in the beginning by the Benedictine Sisters, and while the Providence Mission remains at the heart of all we do – we are working on our own cultural transformation. We are actively looking into how we can continue to serve the community in the best way possible, well into the future.

I hope you will join us Aug. 8 as we take time to reflect on how far we have come, to honor those who have made it all possible, and to celebrate our continued commitment to excellence.

Emily Dazey
Executive Director

A Timely Occasion

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When asked about the changes PBNC has seen over these last 25 years, Joy is reflective. "Some of the most significant changes were the openings of our Home Health Agency and Child Development Center in the 1980s, becoming part of Providence, and the opening of the Orchard House assisted living in 1998. Other big changes would have to include additional remodeling and upgrading, the increasing acuity of people served in our skilled nursing facilities, and increasing the number of Medicare-certified beds.

"Today, people served on our skilled or short stay unit, for example, are provided care in a much more hospital-like environment, and rehabilitation is done with greater intensity. Even the length of stay has changed from months to days," Joy says.

"I think when the time capsule is dug up in August, the capsule's contents will prove that 'We've come a long way, baby!'" ■



B N C

BENEDICTINE NURSING CENTER

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BNC Celebrates Completion







Top left: Sister Lucia Marie presents plaque to Betty Dunagan.
Lower left: Frank Biasca receives plaque in memory of Sister Agnes.
Right: Staff proudly displays new BNC flag.

The Forget-Me-Not flower, the official flower of the BNC, decorated the halls of the Benedictine Nursing Center during the recent celebrations which marked the completion of the BNC's \$2.3 million expansion and renovation project. Special activities, including an Open House, were provided for residents, staff and families.

On Friday, February 12, the staff and residents officially kicked off festivities with a flag-raising ceremony featuring two special flags. One was an American flag loaned for the occasion by **Betty Dunagan**, widow of **Will Dunagan**, former assistant administrator of the BNC. The other was the new, custom-designed BNC flag, bright and yellow, which states "We Care". As staff and residents gathered around the flag pole, **Art Geier** played the "Star Spangled Banner" on his bugle, accompanied by **Bill Knuth** on the drum.

Following the ceremony the staff entertained the residents with stories reflecting fond memories of construction days, and a humorous skit depicting life at the BNC 25 years from now. Despite the unfavorable weather, a time capsule was buried by ad-

ministrator **Sister Lucia** and **Joe Layton**, plant manager. As a legacy to those who follow in service to the BNC, it will be retrieved in the year 2007. The day's festivities culminated with refreshments and reminiscing.

Enthusiastic and interested families and friends participated in the dedication ceremonies on Saturday, February 13. Betty Dunagan and family accepted a memorial plaque in memory of her husband. The plaque now hangs in the new north wing, which was dedicated to the memory of Will Dunagan. Will had worked at the Center for 14 years.

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The completion of a \$2.3 million expansion project was cause for celebration.

You are invited to join Providence Benedictine Nursing Center staff for the unveiling of the PBNC time capsule. The event will include a sharing of stories along with food and entertainment.

Friday, Aug. 8, 2008
3 to 5 p.m.

A Recipe for Success: Choice Menu

IT'S AMONG THE MOST BASIC OF human desires – to have a voice, a choice, in one's life journey. For most of our lives, we wake up each day and get to decide, for instance, what and when we will eat. By the time residents arrive at PBNC, some feel a deep loss of control in many aspects of their lives. Not the least of these losses is their choice of meals and of when those meals will arrive.

Describing the Choice Menu's positive outcomes, Cheryl says: "We have seen residents eating more at meals, decreased weight loss, and decreased use of nutritional supplements for at-risk residents. Residents who used to eat only a small percentage of their meals and complain about the food are completing their meals with smiles. We hear more positive comments about food, and

ticed that residents were asking for seemingly simple menu alternatives. Because of the existing systems for food purchasing and preparation, the staff couldn't fulfill residents' requests without special trips to the grocery store. Dietary staff put their thinking caps on and devised a plan to equip the kitchen and reorganize the staff to accommodate residents' desire for food choices and, when

“But, honestly, the best reward is watching a resident eat the food she wants, when she wants it, and watching her smile...enjoying every bite because it is exactly what she ordered. I don't know how to really explain it, but watching that sense of happiness in a person makes me know we are doing the right thing!”

Cheryl Havens, PBNC's registered dietitian, was part of the team that recognized this issue as a challenge that, if remedied, could greatly improve the lives of residents. With a financial grant from The Oregon Community Foundation, the dietary department at PBNC has been able to reconfigure and equip the kitchen and staff for an innovative program known as "Choice Menu."

This program offers long-term care residents and short-stay patients a menu – for each meal – that provides several options for entrees, side dishes and beverages. There's even a plan to provide a room service option for short-stay patients.

that translates into improved resident satisfaction and overall better living situations. We are better able to accommodate residents' special preferences and to make meals more resident-directed."

An ongoing goal at PBNC is to give residents the basic right to choose with regard to care, and the Choice Menu program fits perfectly into this goal. As Cheryl notes, "It is our passion to provide the best possible care we can give our residents...in every aspect in which we serve them."

The concept for Choice Menu began about seven years ago. Cheryl had just started with PBNC and no-

appropriate, room service. All that was needed to complete this plan was funding. That's when The Oregon Community Foundation stepped in and awarded the grant monies to launch the program.

Cheryl says the goal of this successful program is to provide customer satisfaction and thus improve residents' lives.

We think Cheryl described the program perfectly. Choice Menu: a recipe for success. ■

Therapy Garden Blossoms

PROVIDENCE BENEDICTINE began to explore in earnest the benefits of its beautiful outside spaces in 2004. As it happened, Polly Youngren, R.N., assistant director of nursing, was finishing a horticulture therapy certificate program. “Upon the completion of my certification, I was asked to spearhead the development of PBNC’s Therapy Gardens,” Polly recalls.

“The idea was to create a horticultural retreat – a green-space respite for residents, visitors and staff. Additionally, we wanted to incorporate a multigenerational aspect to the garden’s development and to make sure the garden supported some of the therapeutic needs of our residents. It was a tall order to fill, but now that the garden is almost complete, I think we captured the essence of what we were originally trying to achieve.”

Therapy gardens date back to ancient times. In the 1100s, St. Bernard described the therapeutic benefits of a hospice garden created at a monastery in Clairvaux, France – privacy, green plants, bird song, fragrance.

Today, the positives of such gardens are well documented. Studies show that residents are happier in the presence of a therapy garden; feel more engaged in their surroundings; and often respond more readily to a care program that involves nurturing the

garden’s plants and grounds. Enhancing people’s psychological, physical and social well-being is the reason the PBNC gardens were dreamed of and designed.

Especially, Polly says, the gardens have enhanced the total community. “We see families and residents strolling and visiting together along the garden’s pathways. Our staff take their breaks by walking through the gardens, sometimes having their meals there, and notice all the big and small transformations that occur with each seasonal change.

“Physical and occupational therapy staff move residents outside for exercising in the garden – from walking, to holding a spade, to planting some seeds. There are physical and emotional gifts on every soil mound in this garden.”

By design, several groups got into the act of creating this special space. PBNC received a grant from the Society for Arts in Health to help pay for the raised beds and decorative tiles. In addition to financial support garnered through the PBNC Foundation from grants and private donations, the center received countless volunteer hours in labor from local high school students, as well as plants and soil donated by local nurseries.



The arrival of summer and warmer weather allows the beauty of the garden to shine.

Emily Dazey, PBNC administrator, was committed to the project from its inception. “Our grounds are so beautiful. I think it was just a natural extension to create a space that further focuses on nurturing our residents, visitors and staff members,” Emily says. “So many of our residents have made their livings farming and working in the soil, that green spaces like these form a bridge to their former lives. The garden provides a sense of comfort that couldn’t really be achieved in any other way.”

Polly believes the garden has enlightened the entire community about the process of life. She notes that the journey to completing the garden has taught everyone a bit more patience, wonder, teamwork, humor, and ability to relish the small successes along the way.

“Just reading our guest book inspires me,” says Polly. “One resident wrote to her daughter that ‘the garden is a beautiful place to be. When you have plentiful troubles, you can come to the garden and forget them.’” ■

Continuing the Nursing Excellence

“The award of this grant to our staff makes a real statement about our commitment to nursing excellence in every level of patient care.”

TO CONTINUE PROVIDENCE Benedictine Nursing Center’s commitment to excellence in care, the organization was awarded a \$2,000 grant from the Hartford Center of Geriatric Nursing Excellence at Oregon Health & Science University. The grant supports the cost for a nurse with a bachelor of science degree in nursing to become certified in wound care.

Sheryl Evers, R.N., who has worked for PBNC for over 25 years, recently completed the coursework and her clinicals with a wound care specialist at Providence Portland Medical Center. Sheryl was an ideal professional to be selected for this instruction, as she is the program director for PBNC’s Nursing Assistant Training Program and works as a resident care manager on the busy skilled nursing unit.

Certification is significant because it’s difficult to find certified wound care nurses, who have special expertise in dealing with the intricacies of wound care. In fact, Sheryl says she is unaware of any

other nursing facilities in Oregon that have certified wound care nurses on staff. With the completion of her training, she will be able to provide much-needed consultation and support to PBNC nurses as they serve patients and residents.

“The exciting thing about this training is that it is evidence-based, with research coming from all over the country,” Sheryl says. “So, essentially, our patients will benefit from the knowledge and studies that these other wound care medical professionals are able to share with

us. That means faster healing times for our residents and less trauma in having to regularly transport them off campus for additional treatments.”

“We are thankful to the Hartford Center,” says PBNC administrator Emily Dazey, “for funding this unique opportunity and are thrilled that one of our nurses was interested in further enhancing her medical training. The award of this grant to our staff makes a real statement about our commitment to nursing excellence in every level of patient care.” ■



Sheryl Evers, R.N., (right), has recently become certified in wound care which will enhance the care PBNC residents receive.

Providence Benedictine Nursing Center Foundation Welcomes New Board Members

Sister Joseph Fennimore, O.S.B. Mary Kohler

Sister Joseph Fennimore has deep emotional ties to PBNC. From 1994 to 2004, she served as the center's director of pastoral services. This strong attachment to the community makes her an excellent choice for her newest appointment, as a PBNC Foundation Board member.

Sister Joseph has lived and worked her entire life in the Willamette Valley. A Benedictine Sister for more than 50 years, she made education her primary vocation.

Certified as a chaplain in 1991, Sister Joseph eventually moved on to her pastoral care position at PBNC, where she stayed until her retirement in 2004. She has a master's in religious education.

Mary Kohler knows finances. She worked for 30 years at the Mt. Angel branch of U.S. Bank, many of those years as its manager. After taking a year's respite that included travel, she was hired to manage the new West Coast Bank branch in Mt. Angel.

Mary and her husband, Dave, have called Mt. Angel their home for 36 years. An active participant in the local community, Mary has volunteered for several organizations over those years. Her community service experience has included the Silverton Hospital Governing Board, Silverton Hospital Foundation Board and the Mt. Angel Chamber of Commerce Board. Besides her recent appointment to the PBNC Foundation Board, Mary currently sits on the Mt. Angel Area Development Board and the City Budget Committee.

Her hobbies are RVing, hiking, exercising and reading. She and Dave have three adult children and four grandchildren.

Thomas H. Schwab

Born in Mt. Angel and raised here through his high school years, Tom Schwab has local roots that run deep. The retired civil engineer's career path drew him into traffic engineering, in which he worked all over Oregon during his lengthy professional career. In 2000 Tom moved to Silverton, where he consults on a limited basis for the city of Portland on traffic issues.

His current interests are car restoration and car shows. Occasionally he even shows his prized autos at special events for PBNC and Mt. Angel Towers.

Tom and his wife, Name, have five adult children, lots of grandkids and even a few great-grandchildren.

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On Feb. 12, 1982 Benedictine Nursing Center staff and residents buried a time capsule. Join current PBNC staff and residents on Aug. 8 for the unveiling of the capsule's contents.

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