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Recognizing the Need for Medicaid Spending Reform Bethesda Residents Participate in Activities to Promote Change

On the afternoon of April 4, **Shirley Witcher** climbed aboard the bus and took her seat, weary yet satisfied after completing a “job well done.”

Shirley, along with 34 fellow Bethesda residents and staff, had spent the day at the State Capitol in Jefferson City, meeting with legislators and encouraging them to address the current gap in the Missouri budget for Medicaid reimbursement.

“We are encouraging the legislators to ‘Bridge the Gap’ and allocate more money in the budget to Medicaid spending for seniors,” said Shirley.

Residents representing six Bethesda communities attended the trip, coordinated by Leadership Team members **Chris Crouch, Nathan Torno** and **Michelle Glass**. On the bus, the residents received talking points and a flyer outlining the

disparity between what Missouri’s formula has promised to provide for Medicaid spending and the actual figures.

After a lunch session with State Senator **Scott Sifton**, whose area of coverage includes most Bethesda communities, the group took to the Capitol hallways. Clad in their vibrant orange “Bridge the Gap” T-shirts, the residents met with legislators and their staffs to share their thoughts and concerns.

Bethesda Terrace residents and staff met with State Representative **Marsha Haefner**. A group met with State Senator **Jill Schupp**. Other groups discussed issues with the staff representatives of State Senators **Bob Onder** and **Jamilah Nasheed**.

As for Shirley, a Bethesda Gardens resident, she received a warm welcome from an old friend.

“Years ago, I needed physical therapy, and was referred to a



Shirley Witcher, a Bethesda Gardens resident (left), shares a special moment with old friend—and State Representative—**Deb Lavender**.

therapist named **Deb Lavender**,” Shirley said. “During my therapy, I got to know her as a person as well as a therapist. When Deb announced that she was going to run for office, I knew I had to help out.”

“Shirley may have been my very first volunteer,” said Lavender, who is now a State Rep. An advocate for Medicaid budget reform, she took the time to meet with multiple groups from Bethesda.

Bethesda has been involved in many activities in conjunction with trying to affect Medicaid spending reform. **Joe Brinker**, Bethesda’s President & CEO, wrote an “op-ed” piece that ran in the April 20 edition of the *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*.

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After a busy day of lobbying, the group from Bethesda assembled for a photo in the Capitol Rotunda before the ride back to St. Louis.



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Veteran Escort Ceremony— An Honor for Those Who Served

At Bethesda, respect for life is the top priority. Now a new program in its communities honors military Veterans in death as well.

Coordinated by **Leslie Schaeffer**, Outreach Coordinator with Bethesda Hospice Care, the Veteran Escort Ceremony is observed at all Bethesda skilled nursing communities.

When a Veteran dies and the funeral staff has prepared the body for transport, the gurney is covered in an American flag. An announcement is made that a procession will begin. Employees, family members, volunteers and residents (who are able) line the hallways and salute the passing of the body. Family members and Veteran volunteers walk beside the Veteran as the gurney makes its way to the front door, at which time the flag is removed and folded according to military procedure.

"Family members tell us they feel blessed and honored to be a part of the program," Leslie says. "They are so grateful for the way we pay tribute to their Veteran loved one."



According to Leslie, the idea developed from "We Honor Veterans," an initiative in which Bethesda Hospice Care is at the top level. "We take pride in meeting the unique needs of Veterans, listening to their military experiences, and acknowledging and honoring their military service," she says.

She believes that Bethesda's Veteran Escort Ceremony is unique to skilled nursing communities in the St. Louis area. The innovative program was presented to the Missouri Hospice and Palliative Care Association's 2018 Leadership Development Seminar in Jefferson City earlier this year.

Future plans include a similar observation for all Bethesda residents.

You can watch a video of the procession on the Bethesda website: www.bethesdahealth.org/care-services/hospice-care/ ■

New Start Time for Hospice Walk "Remembrance Ceremony"

The 6th Annual Hospice 5K/1K Memorial Walk, coordinated by Bethesda Hospice Care, will take place on Saturday, June 16, at Queeny Park. The walk begins at 9 a.m., with no charge to participate.

However, the Opening Ceremony will now start at 8:45 a.m. and include the Remembrance Ceremony, when loved ones' names are read aloud to reflect in memory and honor.

"Many early finishers leave after finishing, therefore missing the Remembrance Ceremony," says **Leslie Schaeffer**, Outreach Coordinator, Bethesda Hospice Care. "Participants will hear their loved ones' names before the race starts, and attach their ribbons to the "Celebration of Life" wreath after crossing the finish line."



Anyone who has lost a loved one is welcome. Registration is required, with free T-shirts for those who register before June 1. To register, please go to www.bethesdahealth.org/care-services/hospice-care/rsvp/ ■

Recognizing the Need for Medicaid Spending Reform

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Executive Vice President **Roger Byrne** has served on several industry committees geared toward increasing the awareness of the Medicaid funding issue.

In an on-going communications campaign, Bethesda employees, volunteers, residents and their families were encouraged to go to the website: www.bethesdahealth.org/Medicaid-budget-underfunding-seniors/ and click where it says to "Join the Conversation."

This website link provided quick access to their legislators, and a few very simple steps allowed for the sharing of their opinions.

To access a video of the residents' trip to Jeff City, please go to: www.BethesdaHealth.org and scroll to the video entitled "Bethesda Seniors Lobby Lawmakers."

A special thank you to Executive Director Bill Bates of LeadingAge Missouri for coordinating the legislator visits and handling other logistical issues at the State Capitol. ■

Hearts for Our Homes “Kicks Off” 2018 Campaign

The 2018 *Hearts for Our Homes* campaign has begun, and the activities coordinated by Bethesda staff, residents, families and volunteers are underway.

Hearts for Our Homes raises funds for residents who have exhausted their financial resources and can no longer pay for care and services. In 2017, the campaign raised more than \$160,000 from personal gifts, corporate sponsors and fun-filled activities to benefit Bethesda’s *Humanitarian Care Fund*, which last year provided nearly \$14 million in uncompensated charitable assistance to Bethesda seniors.

The campaign **encourages those connected with Bethesda to pledge their generous support** for senior care and services. Anyone donating \$50 or more receives a neck wallet. Employees who donate at least 1% of their salary



or \$1,000 receive a day off with pay.

The campaign concludes with the Trivia Night & Silent Auction, 6:30 p.m., June 8 at Bethesda Dilworth. The night features trivia questions, a silent auction, a 50/50 raffle and table contests. Gather some friends or co-workers and join in the fun!

In addition to the staff-led Ambassadors group, this year’s campaign unveils the “Community Booster” program. Many residents and family members are involved,

practicing peer fundraising and asking friends and family to become donors and sponsors.

Consider how you can make a difference in the lives of our seniors by supporting *Hearts for Our Homes*—as a donor, sponsor, community booster or Trivia Night team member. More details are available at bethesdahealth.org/giving-to-bethesda/hearts-for-our-homes-2/ or from the Bethesda Health Group Foundation at 314-800-1981. ■

Recognizing Good People Doing Good Things

The Bethesda Terrace Housekeeping Team

The Housekeeping Department is often overlooked—not because of importance or value, but rather because having a clean apartment or area to enjoy often is taken for granted.

Debbie Gould, housekeeping supervisor of Bethesda Terrace, and her team are among those who often go above the call of duty.

Once, Debbie and her team (**Melissa Geisler**, **Tanja Halilbasic**, **Emina Tutundzic** and **Lisa M. Wilson**) dug through a dumpster searching for a pair of dentures (valued at \$12,000) that mistakenly had been thrown away. They found and returned the dentures to the grateful resident, who had just about given up any hope that the dentures would be found. The resident cited their effort as a testament to the character of Bethesda employees.



The Bethesda Terrace Housekeeping team (L-R): **Melissa Geisler**, **Debbie Gould**, **Emina Tutundzic** and **Tanja Halilbasic**. Not pictured—**Lisa Wilson**.

Debbie also supports *Hearts for Our Homes* by selling her professionally decorated cookies.

The BHG Foundation recognizes the Bethesda Terrace housekeeping team as “Good People Doing Good Things.” If you know of a Bethesda employee—or employees—going above and beyond, contact the BHG Foundation at pedempski@bethesdahealth.org or call 314-800-1981. ■

Women's Board, Legacy Society Attracting Great Authors as Presenters

Did you know more than 15,000 captured Germans and Italian soldiers were brought to Missouri during World War II, and were held in 30 camps sprinkled throughout the state?

Were you aware that more than 50 years ago St. Louis had a second baseball team—one that played the Cardinals for the 1944 World Series championship?

You would if you attended the Bethesda Women's Board meeting in April and plan to



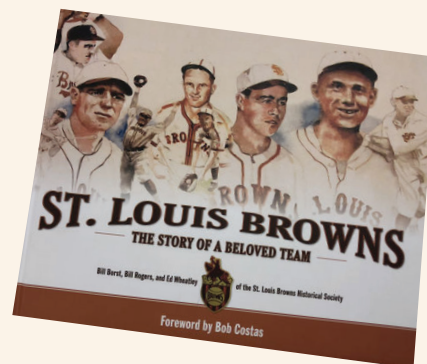
David Fiedler

David Fiedler, author of "The

Enemy Among Us," recounted this fascinating chapter of history to the more than 50 attendees. He explained how POWs lived in these camps and Missourians worked with them. Dave, a Washington University graduate and former officer in the U.S. Army, received the Governor's Award for Humanities and frequently presents on this topic.

Interest in baseball isn't required to be entertained by the history of the St. Louis Browns. **Ed Wheatley**, along with co-authors **Bill Borst** and **Bill Rogers**, wrote "St. Louis Browns—The Story of a Beloved Team," to make sure that the legacy of the Browns is not forgotten. The book features a forward written by **Bob Costas**, and attendees will hear stories about the team's colorful history.

The program will be presented as a panel discussion.



"We're very pleased to be able to bring presentations of this level to our supporters," said **Pam Dempski**, Corporate V.P. and Director of the BHG Foundation.

The Bethesda Legacy Society is comprised of donors who have donated at least \$500 to the Foundation.

For more information on how you can become a member of the Bethesda Legacy Society or the Bethesda Women's Board, please contact the BHG Foundation, 314-800-1981. ■

BHG Foundation Receives \$30,000 Grant

The Bethesda Health Group Foundation received a \$30,000 grant award from the East Missouri Foundation, in support of our efforts to reduce hospital re-admissions among seniors.

The East Missouri Foundation is a private foundation established to offer grants to nonprofits that provide services directly to senior citizens. It especially focuses on services for low-income seniors and veterans in the St. Louis area, including affordable housing, services that promote independent living, food services, dental and optometric services and no-cost medical services.

Bethesda is directing this financial support—as specified by the East Missouri Foundation—toward the support of the Bethesda interdisciplinary team that combines our Point-of-Care Program (featuring technology-based, bedside lab diagnostic testing equipment) with our innovative Bethesda C.A.R.E.S. (Communicate About Resident Empowerment Strategies) program.

"Receiving this grant represents a huge vote of confidence in supporting Bethesda's efforts in this important area of senior health care," says **Pam Dempski**,

Bethesda Corporate V.P. & Director of Fund Development.

"We at the East Missouri Foundation are happy to be supporting Bethesda Health Group, as it is such a worthwhile organization in our community," says **Joseph Frimel**, president of the East Missouri Foundation.

East Missouri Foundation uses the tagline of "Gifts that matter... for hope... for life" to continue and expand the dreams of Mrs. Merrydelle Gambrill May, who was instrumental in the founding and support of the Gambrill Gardens assisted living community up until its sale in 2016. ■

Hires and Promotions

Bethesda is pleased to announce the following hires and promotions within its Management Team:

Michelle Glass has been promoted to Corporate Vice President, Senior Living and In-Home Services. Michelle will add the oversight of five of the six communities that offer independent senior living (the leadership for Village North Retirement Community will remain with **Kiel Peregrin**) to her existing responsibilities leading Bethesda Hospice Care, Bethesda Senior Support Solutions, St. Andrews & Bethesda Home Health and the Bethesda Care Management team. The Senior Living responsibilities were added when **Ken Bass** retired



Michelle Glass



Ken Bass



Wade Hachman



Todd Meury

after nearly 19 years of service to Bethesda.

Wade Hachman has been promoted to become the Administrator of Village North Retirement Community, which includes Village North Health Center. Wade joined Bethesda in 1994, and served as the General Manager at Bethesda Orchard for 11+ years. This is his first position as an Administrator. Wade reports to Kiel Peregrin, Corporate Vice President, Long-Term Care.

To replace Wade as General Manager at Bethesda Orchard, **Todd Meury** has been promoted from his position as Director of Dining Services at Bethesda Hawthorne Place. This is Todd's first General Manager appointment. However, Todd has many years of experience at Bethesda Orchard, having served as Dining Services Director for many years. He also has served as Transportation Manager for the organization. Todd will report to Michelle Glass.

Congratulations to all! ■

Remembering Earl Dille



The Bethesda family fondly remembers **Earl Kaye Dille**, a former Chairman of the Bethesda Board of Directors and long-time supporter of the organization, who passed away peacefully on January 31, 2018, at the age of 90.

Earl retired as President of Union Electric, and had been active in many area businesses and community organizations. He served on the Board of Directors of several organizations, including Bethesda.

A recipient of numerous professional awards, Earl received the Norwood Award in 2003 in recognition of his distinguished service and commitment to Bethesda.

In addition, Earl was a long-time member of Bethesda's Advisory Board, and his wife, Martha (Martie), is a member of the Women's Board. ■

Al Schweitzer—Bethesda's Hall of Famer!

Bethesda Barclay House residents can now say they live in the same community as a Hall of Famer!

On March 17, **Al Schweitzer** was inducted into St. Louis Media History Foundation's Media Hall of Fame in recognition of his 36-year career in the art department at the *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*—including five years of drawing the iconic "Weatherbird."

For years, Al has shared stories and shown prints of his "Weatherbird" artwork to his fellow residents during luncheon presentations. He has invited esteemed Post-Dispatch colleagues such as columnist **Bill McClellan** and current "Weatherbird" artist **Dan Martin** to participate in these presentations with him.



Al says he is honored and humbled to have been selected for the Hall of Fame induction. "It's an honor that I never expected, and at 96 years of age, I'm very appreciative," he says. ■

Al Schweitzer holds his "Media Hall of Fame" plaque in the lobby of Bethesda Barclay House.

Bethesda Gardens



Barnes-Jewish Extended Care



That's a Busy Bunny!

The Easter Bunny paid multiple visits to Bethesda communities in 2018, spending time at Bethesda Southgate and Bethesda Gardens, and providing eggs to be decorated at Barnes-Jewish Extended Care. ■



Bethesda Southgate

Chocolate, Chocolate and More Chocolate

True chocolate lovers want nothing more than to visit a factory where chocolate is produced. They therefore would be quite envious of this group from Bethesda Hawthorne Place, who made the journey to the Chocolate Chocolate Chocolate factory and candy kitchen. ■



A Grand Re-opening for the "Sometimes Shoppe"

Bethesda Meadow Auxiliary Board members **Ruth Kohl**, **Fran Burns** and **Dianne Mollet** hold a scarf "unveiling" to celebrate the re-opening of the Sometimes Shoppe (which received its name because sometimes it's open and sometimes it's closed!). The shop is run strictly by volunteers and members of the Auxiliary. Resident and staff shoppers who attended the re-opening were pleasantly surprised to see all of the improvements, as well as the new items now available. ■

Painting Donated as Part of "Lasting Impressions" Program

Longtime art lovers and Bethesda Gardens residents **Kathryn** and **Eldon McKie** have donated a print of John Stobart's painting "Night Stop on the Mississippi" to Bethesda Gardens as part of the BHG Foundation's "Lasting Impressions" program.

The painting is being displayed on the third floor at Bethesda Gardens, across from the Fitness Center.

"Kathryn and I like how the 'Lasting Impressions' program couples compassion with aesthetics," says Eldon, who serves on the community's Art Committee. The couple, who have lived at Bethesda Gardens since 2009, chose to designate their contribution for Humanitarian Care.

"Humanitarian Care is a vital feature of Bethesda's commitment to providing life-long care to seniors," says Eldon, explaining their choice of gift designation. "A sense of security is as important as daily meals and a full spectrum of care and activities."

To join the McKies in beautifying Bethesda communities by giving through "Lasting Impressions," please contact the BHG Foundation at 314-800-1981, or give online at www.bethesdahealth.org/giving-to-bethesda/lasting-impressions/. ■



Kathryn and Eldon McKie sit with the painting they donated to Bethesda Gardens as part of the "Lasting Impressions" program.

Did You Know...

...that Spellman Brady & Co. earned an award in the EFA Design Showcase for its interior design coordination at Bethesda Hawthorne Place?

...that the 2018 Norwood Award honorees have been selected? One is a former Bethesda executive; the other a husband-wife team who volunteers at Bethesda Dilworth.

...that the next group of President's Roundtable honorees will be announced soon?

Information on these and other Bethesda initiatives and stories will be included in the Summer 2018 edition of the *Pulse*. ■

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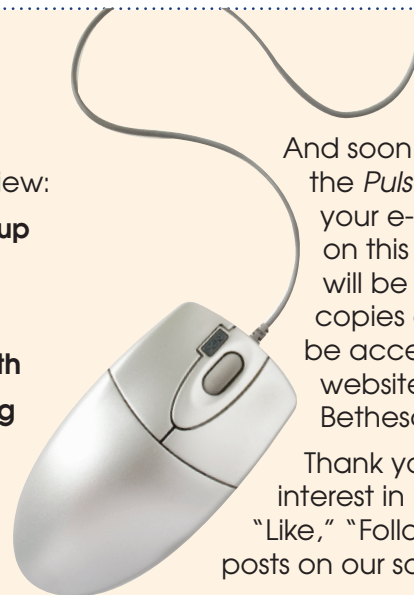
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Some of the Bethesda communities have Facebook and Google+ pages of their own. Those pages can be accessed on the platforms above and entering in the community name of choice.

In addition, the Bethesda Corporate Marketing department is getting ready to unveil an electronic newsletter (e-newsletter), which will be sent directly to the e-mail accounts of those interested in receiving the newsletter. This newsletter will include content not included in the *Pulse*.



And soon, electronic versions of the *Pulse* can be sent directly to your e-mail! More information on this distribution option will be forthcoming. Back copies of the *Pulse* continue to be accessible on the Bethesda website (under the "About Bethesda" heading).

Thank you for your continued interest in Bethesda, and please "Like," "Follow" and "Share" the posts on our social media platforms! ■