

2010

Storybook



A look into the roles of members, families, guardians, providers, county resources, and employees in promoting independence.

Who Is Care Wisconsin?

Care Wisconsin is a nonprofit, mission-driven organization that specializes in the integration of health and long-term care services. For more than three decades, we have been filling gaps in services and helping people in our community who are most at risk—low-income frail elders and people with developmental and/or physical disabilities.

We have roots as a human services agency. With the support of community volunteers, Care Wisconsin started the region's first adult day center in a church hall in Madison in 1976.

Today, we manage two of the State's public health and long-term care programs: Family Care and Partnership. We also have our own two adult day centers, transportation, rehabilitation and a dental clinic. Our service area includes Columbia, Dane, Dodge, Green Lake, Jefferson, Marquette, Sauk, Washington, Waukesha and Waushara Counties.

To ensure members of our programs have choices, flexibility and access to high-quality services, we build strong provider networks. Our care model makes us unique. We place members at the center of care and develop personalized care plans to ensure each member's needs are met. A similar collaborative approach is taken for our members' families and guardians, advocates, providers and government agencies.

How Do We Help People Live Independently?

Care Wisconsin partners with others in the community to put in place services that help frail elders and people with disabilities to live as independently as possible. Our public health and long-term care programs—Family Care and Partnership—serve more than 4,100 members living in south central Wisconsin along with their families and guardians.

We place members at the center of care. Our local care teams and providers help members achieve their personal goals, receive quality care and access the services they need. How does this all work?

Let Our Real-Life Stories Show You.

Visiting Angel Jon Krantz watches over Waukesha County Family Care member and his wife.



CARE WISCONSIN KNOWS WHAT A difference our providers can make in the lives of our members. But a recent example shows just how priceless a good care provider can be.

Henry Swope, a Waukesha County Family Care member since April 2009, has Alzheimer’s disease and lives in his apartment with wife Lula as his primary caregiver. Shortly after Henry joined Care Wisconsin’s Family Care program, Lula, who has diabetes, was hospitalized for a week. Even though Lula had set up his medicines and called him from the hospital with reminders, Henry had difficulty managing his medications. He was also staying in bed all day.

Henry’s care team discussed these issues and called Visiting Angels, a living assistance services group. The team was able to approve three hours per week of respite for Lula through a check on Henry from Visiting Angel employee Jon Krantz.

Henry and Jon hit it off, and Lula quickly grew fond of Jon as well. The Swopes treat him like family and refer to him as “the angel” rather than by his name—a rather funny coincidence considering Lula’s extensive collection of angels in their apartment.

Recently, Jon was visiting Henry when Lula started to faint. The “angel” was able to keep Lula from falling and called emergency assistance. During Lula’s hospitalization, Henry’s care team quickly approved a daily one-hour check on him from Jon.

Visiting Angels not only helped this Care Wisconsin member stay safe while Lula was in the hospital, but the “angel” also saved Henry’s most important caregiver and family member. While Jon’s work with the care team helps Henry and Lula stay independent in their home, the couple has helped Jon earn his wings. 🏠

Mike Hahn's team partners with others in the community to keep him working, independent—and bowling.



GREEN LAKE COUNTY FAMILY CARE member Mike Hahn, who has a developmental disability as well as chronic mental and physical health conditions, relies on his care team and others in the community to help him stay focused and living well.

When Care Wisconsin RN Care Manager Mary Johanknecht and Care Manager Chris Wright found out that Mike loves to bowl, and that his former Special Olympics bowling team was no longer in place, they turned to bowling alley owner Ralph DeRuyter in Green Lake for support. Mike now bowls on Ralph's own team with a competitive 179 average—and the social interaction has improved his outlook and behavior tremendously.

Mike has always disliked using the phone, but now he eagerly makes a weekly phone call to remind the care team that he needs a cab ride to bowling, says Monika Bori, administrator at Diverse Options. She adds that even talking about bowling has become

a good refocusing tool when he starts to get upset: it “brings him back to a place where he feels good and has a sense of pride.”

The staff at Diverse Options stays in close contact with Mike's care team and guardian. They manage the group home where Mike lives, monitor his medications and guide him in his cleaning habits and personal cares—while respecting his independence.

Ed Schuh, manager at Fox River Industries (FRI), has also seen Mike's behavior improve. At FRI's prevocational services program, Mike does a variety of packaging, assembly, inspection and light manufacturing tasks. Ed and Mike's care team agree that the friendly, yet structured, work environment works well for him.

Keeping Mike motivated and getting everyone on the same page has really made all the difference. What's more, “Chris and Mary are willing to put in whatever it takes to see that he's healthy and also happy,” says Monika. 🏠

Partnership member Cheryl Depp enjoys “giving hope to somebody instead of being on the receiving end.”



Dane County Partnership member Cheryl Depp, left, values both the knowledge and personal connection her team RN Tammy Coplien brings to the job. “Tammy held my hand, but she made me do the work of getting better,” says Cheryl.

IN SEPTEMBER 2009, DANE COUNTY

Partnership member Cheryl Depp had a unique request for her team RN, Tammy Coplien. She asked for permission to nominate her for Fox 47's monthly "Nurses Touching Lives" segment. Tammy was honored, and the local network chose their story to spotlight on the nightly news.

Since she joined Partnership in July 2008, 52-year-old Cheryl has a new lease on life. She calls Tammy her "guardian angel" and credits her with not just saving her life, but greatly improving the quality of it.

When Tammy met her, Cheryl could only get up to take medicine before returning to her couch. She had never smoked, but her lungs looked like those of a 20-year smoker at three packs a day. The pressure in constricted arteries to her lungs was elevated, causing additional stress to her heart in order to pump blood into the lungs. Even on constant oxygen, Cheryl had to remain sedentary.

When Cheryl was diagnosed with primary pulmonary hypertension, Tammy recommended infusion therapy, which required surgery. Tammy came over daily for two months to help administer the medication, which Cheryl is now able to mix, adjust and give herself; the treatment has been hugely successful.

Tammy integrated all of Cheryl's health issues into her care plan. She accompanied her to doctor's appointments, expressing concern about Cheryl's symptoms. Cheryl was diagnosed with diabetes. And now she uses a sleeping wedge and breathing therapy machine to help manage sleep apnea. Cheryl's home has also been modified to make it safer and help prevent falls.

Every time Cheryl required urgent attention, Tammy either came herself or sent another

team member who is familiar with her case. "Tammy held my hand, but she made me do the work of getting better," Cheryl says.

Now receiving only laundry assistance at home, Cheryl goes to physical therapy twice weekly. There, she's increased her stamina and lung capacity to the point that she can do 30 minutes of aerobic exercise with constant monitoring of her pulse and oxygen levels. She's lost 70 pounds and is 25 pounds away from the potential for discontinuing daily insulin shots.

Team Social Worker Jackie Krohn has connected Cheryl with many community resources and accompanies her to her psychiatric appointments for a bipolar disorder. But there are fewer appointments, now that Cheryl is more stable and happier than she's been in years.

While Care Wisconsin has cared for Cheryl's "mind, body and spirit," she too has helped the care team work as it should. Her honesty about a previous morphine addiction helped her care team safely manage her neuropathy (nerve pain). And Cheryl has followed the instructions for her infusion therapy so carefully that her doctor asked her to help a 68-year-old patient get through a similar post-surgery adjustment. Cheryl says, "It's great to be giving hope to somebody, instead of being on the receiving end."

Cheryl says that she's never met someone who cares as much as Tammy: "It's beyond my comprehension that she could be this good to everybody." And while Tammy understands how important clinical experience and professional relationships are with members, she also feels a personal connection with those she helps. It seems Cheryl has picked up on that. 🏠

Sara Gerke admires that Family Care member Jayme Memmel doesn't let anything get in the way of his hopes and dreams.



THIRTY-EIGHT-YEAR-OLD JAYME MEMMEL says he was arrogant prior to a car accident that left him a quadriplegic at 25. “It’s a good thing this happened to me, because where would I have ended up, if I didn’t have the humility of this?” says Jayme, a Columbia County Family Care member.

Before the accident, Jayme worked on helicopters, using his electronics technology degree and Army National Guard avionics diploma, played minor league baseball and partied with his buddies. All that changed when he rolled his Isuzu Trooper on his way home from a wedding.

He dislocated his neck, which caused spinal cord damage. “It’s funny: the guy in the room next door broke 42 bones in his body. Six

weeks later, he walked right out of there. I dislocated my neck by centimeters and spent a year in rehab.” But Jayme also feels blessed: “I wasn’t supposed to have my arms back, so that’s major independence.”

After his accident, Jayme enjoyed the activities and accessibility of living in Madison, where he was enrolled with Community Living Alliance. But he found it difficult to obtain in-home assistance and eventually he had to move home. He returned to an accessible apartment in his grandfather’s home in Columbus, with his mother living above; his new wife, Sonia, joined him there after their August 2009 wedding.

“We have a great relationship. Our Christian faith is probably the most important

thing in our relationship,” he adds. When he met her, Sonia was working with children with special needs. She has become one of Jayme’s major supports, both emotionally and as a caregiver.

Jayme started working with Care Wisconsin Care Manager Sara Gerke when he enrolled in Family Care in the summer of 2008. The first thing Sara and Jayme did was to develop a care plan that allowed him to self-direct his supports. “Previous to Care Wisconsin, Jayme had agency support coming in, and he worked his schedule and activities around their calendar,” says Sara.

Now Jayme can plan help around his commitments. In addition to being a student, Jayme works as an underwriter at WJWD-TV; leads a bible study; works at ministry camps; has done motivational speaking for Guard units, schools and churches; and has a very active social life.

Jayme is happy with Care Wisconsin: “I feel like I’m never going to be left out in the dark with Care Wisconsin. I have a say in the way I’m taken care of and in my goals.” Jayme goes to Sara with questions about what he can and can’t do—and he appreciates her willingness to help.

Sara admires Jayme because he doesn’t let anything get in the way of his hopes and dreams. He recently completed his bachelor’s degree in human development from Amridge University and began his master’s in rehabilitation psychology at UW-Madison in January 2010. His goal is to become a Christian counselor for people with disabilities. With his physical disability and his experience with a developmentally disabled brother—also a Family Care member—he’s inspired to help others.



Jayme and wife Sonia share many common interests, a deep faith and a desire to make a difference.

While he’s grateful for all he has and the benefits available for people who are disabled, Jayme emphasizes the need to be an advocate for oneself. He identified and received a free travel ramp that he uses everywhere—and is obtaining a quad exerciser to supplement his daily exercises.

Jayme has learned to find ways to help himself and can’t wait to get settled in his new career. With his positive outlook, energy and enthusiasm, he’ll undoubtedly be successful at showing others how to see the opportunities in their lives. 🏠

Steve Haen's parents have one less worry, knowing that his care team and local providers are working well together.



JOE AND NANCY HAEN OF WEST BEND ENJOY visiting their four children and numerous grandchildren. They balance their own wishes and the needs of their family beautifully.

Their youngest, Steve, is almost 40 and lives nearby in West Bend. As an infant he was sick with influenza and meningitis; Joe says “last rites were administered four times.” This illness led to Steve having developmental disabilities.

Steve cleans, does laundry, cooks and works nearly full-time, doing prevocational work at The Threshold, Inc. (TTI). But he’s unable to manage his finances, and he struggles with shopping for necessities, working in uncontrolled environments and interacting

with others. He drove at one time, but now takes a bus or taxi to work.

When the Haens moved here five years ago, Joe says they were “blessed to find amazing support.” Early on, they began working with Mary Deering, now Steve’s care manager in Care Wisconsin’s Family Care program. She collaborates with RN Care Manager Tara Margelowsky on the care team and others in the community to help Steve achieve his outcomes.

Steve lives in a supervised apartment program through Homes for Independent Living. His program coordinator there works well with Steve and his team to help him take care of things at home.

Bob Ott of TTI says Steve has good attendance, learns jobs with relative ease and is willing and able to do both tedious and more complicated assembly and inspection tasks. Although previous retail jobs were overwhelming for him, it’s a goal for Steve to again work in the community.

Bob says “working with other clients at TTI has taught Steve greater patience with others’ limitations.” He also understands TTI’s systems and enjoys learning games—including a Wii to help build online search and other skills, and TTI’s Jeopardy game, testing work-related and general knowledge.

These games help with social interaction—another important goal for Steve. His care team recently enrolled Steve in a computer class. He’s excited about the topic, and his care team likes the social aspect of it for him.

With their own health concerns and travel, you would imagine Joe and Nancy worry about Steve when they’re gone...but they really don’t. They know he has the support—and independence—he needs. 🏠

The flexibility of the Family Care program helps this Marquette County family succeed.

BRENDA VETTER, MOTHER OF 19-YEAR-OLD Marquette County Family Care member Tabbi, has adapted to many changes over the years. One thing she really appreciates is that Family Care “is easy and flexible: if our situation changes, we revise our care plan,” says Brenda.

While the Vettters are happy with Tabbi’s Care Wisconsin Family Care care team, the feeling is mutual. RN Care Manager Gail Schmitt and Care Manager Laura Ahrens enjoy all the Vettters—busy stay-at-home mom and caregiver Brenda; father Jon; Tabbi; and her two sisters: Madi, 9, and Sami, 4.

Tabbi was born with cerebral palsy and is blind, requiring 24-hour care and assistance with most of her activities of daily living. Jon works two jobs, while Brenda cares for Tabbi and home schools the girls.

As with so many families, tough economic times have affected the Vettters. Brenda considered finding work outside the home, which would have meant finding alternate placement for Tabbi. With the Self-Directed Supports option in Family Care, Brenda was able to use the informal support system already in place to keep Tabbi where she is most happy—at home.

The care team coordinates weekend respite and Tabbi’s week-long attendance at Camp Wawbeek to everyone’s benefit, giving the Vettters time to “recharge” and Tabbi time with peers in a safe and therapeutic environment. And when Tabbi’s van lift broke, her care team quickly helped the family out.

The Vettters have planned well. Jon designed and built an accessible home with a private suite for Tabbi, where she enjoys journaling and emailing on her computer. The computer has an innovative program she uses in Braille to write in Morse code, which is then



Jon Vetter put care and creative thought into building an accessible home for his daughter, Tabbi—including this swing.

translated into spoken words that produce printed words on the computer.

Tabbi loves swimming in the above-ground pool, helping with the chickens and weeding the garden outside. Brenda became a reiki master to assist with Tabbi’s care; Tabbi liked it so much that she’s also become a master in the holistic therapy.

The care team helps Brenda balance the needs of her daughters. Tabbi, who once loved riding horses, has developed an intense fear of them which makes it difficult for Brenda to be involved with the younger girls’ riding. The care team is working with the family to find ways to help Tabbi overcome her fear.

The Vettters’ home reflects the loving and proactive attitude of its members. The care team enjoys working with this positive family, and the Family Care program helps the Vettters to succeed. 🏠

Family Care member Randy Logan is a racing fan who enjoys life's ride.



Demonstrating feisty determination and a great sense of humor, Jefferson County Family Care member Randy Logan lives one day at a time, cherishing his relationships with those close to him. He doesn't plan for tomorrow or next year, and strongly believes that "you're not sick if you don't let them tell you you're sick."

DOCTORS SAID ANNETTE LORD'S 15-month-old son likely wouldn't live to the age of 3. Diagnosed with spinal muscular atrophy (SMA) with the complication of Werdnig-Hoffman disease, Randy Logan proved them wrong. He was a funny and inquisitive boy who attracted friends with his positive, accepting nature.

At 22, Randy is a self-professed “car man” and Richard Petty fan. He enjoyed a great sense of achievement when he turned the ignition to his mom's 1975 Trans Am—which he rebuilt with his former stepdad—and it started. The car can't go fast enough for him.

From his mother, a painter, Randy learned to “put himself into his art” rather than copying what he saw. By the time he graduated from Cambridge High School in 2006, Randy's portfolio included many paintings, mostly of car scenes.

“I'm not going to fear something I have no control over.”

Care Manager Toni Hrobsky has worked with Randy since he was 10, first as a case manager at Opportunities, Inc. and then with Jefferson County before moving to Care Wisconsin's Family Care program in 2008. After high school, Randy's dream of attending Madison Area Technical College for CAD drafting ended with a lack of financial assistance—and was one of the hardest things Toni has experienced on the job.

“She's there to see that Randy gets everything he needs,” Annette says of Toni. Familiar with the emotional and physical trials Randy has been through—tremendous pain, a near-death experience and 19 surgeries over the years, including two back surgeries—Toni is a valuable resource in his care. Toni works

closely with RN Janice Atwood who is also on Randy's care team and able to address health issues.

Randy has dealt with emotional hardships, too. His beloved great-grandmother died unexpectedly and, in 2007, his best friend succumbed to the same disease Randy has. When doctors gave Randy six months to live in early 2009, he laughed and disregarded the prediction. He shifted his focus to bonding with his newborn nephew.

An important outcome in Randy's care plan was to record a video as a living memorial for his friends and family. In their quest to get this accomplished, his care team landed him a spot on the Muscular Dystrophy Association 2009 Telethon. Eventually his living memorial was produced through the help of UW-Madison. Annette keeps it in her hutch until the time comes for Randy's loved ones to see his special messages for them.

Doctors say Randy is one of the oldest known survivors of this type of SMA. While he doesn't mind being asked about his outlook on life, the question of whether he fears death offends Randy: “You don't have a choice about when you leave—and I'm not going to fear something I have no control over.” This man who has been told since he was a child that he wasn't going to live says he'll “go out on his own terms.” This isn't really surprising though; he lives his life that same way. 🏠

Dodge County Family Care member Crystal Przekurat appreciates her care team.



LIFE INSTANTLY CHANGED FOR 34-YEAR-OLD Crystal Przekurat in 1995 when she rolled her vehicle, breaking cervical vertebrae at four levels. She told her husband Pat at the hospital that he was too young to deal with this, and that it was OK for him to leave her.

But he had other plans. Pat quickly planned a vow renewal ceremony for their 12th anniversary, seven days after Crystal's

accident—complete with flowers, '80s-style white tux and wedding party. The ceremony was the first of its kind at Milwaukee's Froedert Hospital. Pat's support from those first days—and continuing today—fueled Crystal's determination to recover.

Others in her hospital unit grumbled about therapy five days a week, but Crystal added therapy on Saturdays. She shocked doctors

by going off the respirator within a month of the accident. After three months she left the hospital in a neck brace, using a “sip and puff” wheelchair. And six weeks later she was able to replace the “sip and puff” with a more traditionally powered wheelchair.

Crystal temporarily moved in with her parents at their farm so that they could help reposition her every two hours. Pat continued working as a corrections officer, helping Crystal’s parents and friends to provide all her home care until 1996, when she began receiving medical assistance.

The work Crystal had loved, loading semis at Glasfloss Industries, was over. Early on, the company president promised her an office job when she was ready; she accepted his offer and still works several hours a month. To make things easier, the state’s Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR) provided a voice-activated computer.

After 10 years of relatively good health, Crystal had double pneumonia in 2005—and complications from a bedsore required surgery in 2006. When Crystal heard she would be transitioning to Care Wisconsin’s Family Care program beginning in August 2008, she worried about how the change would affect her. But she quickly came to appreciate the hard work and resourcefulness of her care team, Care Manager Megan Weber and RN Care Manager Sharon Feucht.

First, the team improved Crystal’s home care situation. Finding reliable back-up help had been challenging, but the team arranged for Individualized Care Services in Beaver Dam to work with Crystal on scheduling 42 hours per week of help. This arrangement allows her some control in her own care and makes it possible for Crystal to stay at home rather than in a nursing home when Pat has annual job

training—the only time he leaves her.

The team also coordinates her medical equipment. Equipped with a tabletop, her chair allows her to use the phone, handle a remote control and take her meds and water from a cup, making 24-hour assistance unnecessary.

Crystal continues to do range-of-motion exercises in hopes that research will lead to a cure. She says she “had more hope while [actor] Christopher Reeve was alive.” Reeve suffered a critical spinal cord injury three weeks before Crystal’s accident, but made a determined recovery to become an advocate for spinal cord injury and stem cell research until his 2004 death.

Like Reeve, Crystal sees an opportunity in her situation to help support and give hope to others with spinal cord injuries. She’s interested in organizing a support group for people with similar injuries. 🏠

Our employees care about making the world around them better.



Dane County Partnership social workers Rachael Ralston, Adrienne Allen and Stephanie Pasciak hang out with Bucky Badger after the 2009 Memory Walk in Madison.

CARE WISCONSIN'S MISSION IS A DISTINCT part of our work culture, attracting employees who are inspired by a spirit of social responsibility. This shows in many actions taken by our employees—in groups and on their own. Here are just a few.

We Walk for a Cure. Our long history of working with adults with dementia makes support of the Alzheimer's Association near and dear to us. In 2009, Care Wisconsin sponsored Memory Walks in Portage, Berlin, Baraboo,

Fond du Lac, Madison and Milwaukee. Sixty-five employees and 35 of their friends and family members participated in Memory Walks. In all, employees raised more than \$4,600 for Alzheimer's research through their participation and local office fundraisers.

We Do Drives (for Toys, Food, Blood, Movies, Wheelchairs, etc.). In fall 2009, we participated in toy drives to provide gifts for 200 disadvantaged preschoolers in six Head Start programs in south central Wisconsin.

Jefferson County employees held a holiday party in one classroom and distributed gifts. And in Waukesha County, employees partnered with provider National Seating and Mobility to support the Head Start in Oconomowoc.

We give to food donation programs in counties we serve. Employees in our Outreach and Enrollment Services department also unloaded, weighed and repackaged pasta to create nearly 2,600 servings of pasta for Second Harvest, a nonprofit which provides food to more than 400 charities in southern Wisconsin.

We hold American Red Cross blood drives on site and also encourage individual donations throughout the year.

When Tom Brennan, transportation coordinator, heard from his nephew stationed in Afghanistan that DVD movies are a hot commodity there, he was able to collect 110 movies in just a week to send to the troops. And Health Information staff added refreshments to the package.

Tracy Sveum, medical equipment specialist, travelled on her own time to Costa Rica with a group that fits people with wheelchairs donated from sites in California and Iowa. She and five other volunteers fitted 150 wheelchairs for people living in very primitive conditions.

We Have the Best Time Ever.

More than 1,500 middle school students from south central Wisconsin entered our 9th Annual “Best Time Ever” Art and Writing Contest, which encourages students to capture a memorable “best time” shared with an older adult or an individual with a disability. Contest sponsors are American Family Insurance, Mt. Olympus Water and Theme Park, Hotel Rome and Capital Newspapers’ Newspapers in Education literacy program.



Sherman Middle School student Lizzie Snellings enjoys time with cousin AJ at a Milwaukee fundraiser for Autism Speaks; Lizzie was the grand prize winner of Care Wisconsin’s 9th Annual “Best Time Ever” Contest.

Community volunteers Michael Bloedorn and Ruth Reines of Washington County Department of Human Services, Patricia Fabian of The Threshold Inc., Laurel Peckenpaugh of PeopleServe and Kathy Wolfram of Cedar Community joined staff in our West Bend office for judging.

The judges helped select the Top 100 entries for inclusion in the contest booklet, which can be downloaded from our Web site, www.carewisc.org. Grand prize winner Lizzie Snellings of Sherman Middle School in Madison won a two-night stay at Hotel Rome and four passes to Mt. Olympus in Wisconsin Dells for her essay on spending time with her cousin, AJ, who has autism. 🏠



Ira enjoys sharing his interesting life experiences with others. His personal care provider Linda says “...he shows, more than anyone, what you can do if you have will and determination.”

AT 84, IRA PERRY SAYS HE DOESN'T FEEL his age—but jokingly adds, “I don't know how you're supposed to feel at 84.” He does know that, after four-and-a-half years of hospitals, nursing homes and assisted living facilities, it feels good to be back in the Baraboo home he bought in 1967.

This Reedsburg-born Renaissance man was hospitalized in 2005 with a life-threatening blood infection and malfunctioning kidneys. His blood sugar and pressure were off the charts. When the blood infection settled on four vertebrae in Ira's back, one vertebra collapsed onto his spinal cord, causing paralysis.

Ira's family doctor never believed he would leave the hospital, but Ira didn't give up. He continues to progress with using his walker, and puts no limits on the extent of his recovery. In addition to mobility issues, he has macular degeneration and cataracts, still takes antibiotics for the blood infection and monitors his diabetes and blood pressure.

Ira is a gregarious man who is well-liked by the Care Wisconsin care team working with him since he joined the Partnership program in June 2009. His team offers encouragement as well as coordinating personal care and rides to medical appointments.

Ira sums up his motto as “Be ready, whatever happens.” This receptiveness led to many interesting experiences for him. He worked in bakeries as a teenager and then again as bakery manager at Paul Bunyan's in the 1980s and early 90s. He went to teacher's college and taught piano, organ and guitar from his home.

Ira worked at Circus World Museum from 1964 to 1971, as secretary to circus historian Chappie Fox and as a calliope (steam piano) player. When needed, he also helped with ticket sales, daily deposits, payroll, crowd control, announcing and wardrobe. He talked with Walt Disney, and met Duke Ellington and Katharine Hepburn while employed by the museum.

Ira volunteered at an assisted living facility for 25 years. And, he helped out by providing shelter for people in the community when they had difficult times. At one time, he was housing and feeding as many as eight people, and even had three people living with him when he collapsed in 2005.

In recent years, Ira's daughter bought and renovated his home to make it accessible. Settled again, Ira is busy breaking in the new kitchen, and says he made his best bread of the past five years just last week.

Plenty has happened to make life interesting for Ira, but he's made the most of every opportunity to learn, teach and improve himself and the lives of those around him. At this rate, 85 will feel even better than 84. 🏠

Our Mission

To promote independence and quality of life by providing innovative solutions to health and long-term care needs

Our Values

Respect

We value and trust each other, and treat each other with fairness and dignity. We appreciate each person's views, needs and contributions.

Relationships

We believe in open communication, cooperation and shared responsibility. We are compassionate and nurturing.

Integrity

We are true to our word. We are ethical, honest and responsible in all we do.

Social Responsibility

We participate in our community by enhancing quality of life. We develop solutions that use resources wisely.

Excellence

We set high standards for ourselves. We strive to change what exists into something better.



Partnering for Independence since 1976

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