



A Ministry of the SCN Family



VINCENTIAN
COLLABORATIVE SYSTEM

Insights

Autumn 2012

In Full Bloom



When visiting Marian Manor, Sister Christina Marie Janusek and Sister Madalyn Chlebowski invite you to stop and smell the roses! Beautiful flower gardens that surround Marian Manor's buildings are the fruit of their labors. Look closely, and you'll find statues, figurines and inscribed stones donated by residents and their families nestled amid the colorful blooms. Above, resident Helene Kirow admires the blossoms. 🧡

Neighborhood Spirit



Remember the days when neighborhoods weren't merely a row of houses on a street, but a friendly support system? Vincentian Villa residents do. While they pursue separate interests and carry on with life, they also enjoy a full schedule of get togethers, both planned and spur of the moment. Above, Barb and Tom Zelch prepare burgers and dogs on the grill. 🧡

Gardens Spring Forth and the Bounty is Plentiful

Soil in your hands and the sun on your skin, the scent of fresh herbs, birds chirping melodies nearby, the sweet burst of fresh tomatoes... a garden is a delight for the senses. It elicits memories of simpler times, grants the pure satisfaction of hard work yielding a harvest, and fulfills a fundamental value in providing for others. For any number of reasons, gardens bring people together.

Residents at each of our homes enjoy gardens of one variety or another while staff and families lovingly assist them in gaining the benefits. The gardens come in many forms: from flower beds carefully planted by Sisters' hands, to the row of tomatoes tended to by a resident, to raised gardens built by caring volunteers.

"I've gardened since I was a little girl with my dad. I didn't think I'd ever do it again, and now I am!" exclaims Ruth Craig of the newly-formed Garden Club at Vincentian Personal Care.



For the garden club at Vincentian Personal Care, Tuesday mornings bring garden photos and journal entries, digging in the dirt, weather permitting, a bit of vegetable tasting, and discussion of progress and planning for their garden's future health. The Garden Club is run by Susan Volle, a Robert Morris University graduate student, and the raised gardens were built by a local Eagle Scout.



Employees from Home Depot visited Vincentian Home one June morning armed with tools, supplies, plants and soil. These volunteers joined resident Joe Kasunich, filling the courtyard with the sounds of hammers and saws and a buzz of energy as they constructed garden beds. Friends and residents stopped by to share in the excitement. By day's end, Joe and other residents had filled the gardens with plants and flowers for all to enjoy.

Resident Joe Kasunich at Vincentian Home and the ladies of the Garden Club helped plan and plant new gardens in two locations. There is no stooping in these gardens; raised frames allow residents to stand or roll right up in wheelchairs to tend to the plants. Joe, a 99-year-old retired farmer, visits daily to water and weed while Garden Club members track their garden's progress and journal about their experiences.

In addition to beautifying the surroundings, the gardens create centers for learning and socializing. Onlookers share memories of Victory Gardens, humorous tales of garden mishaps, and family recipes.

"The garden will be a blessing for years to come," said Janet Walters, assistant activities manager. "Whether working in the garden or simply enjoying its beauty, the positive feelings it brings are therapeutic." 🧡

The President's Corner

Dear Friends,

The people, places and events in this issue show that Vincentian is a dynamic community. Our Vincentian ministries and the Sisters of Charity of Nazareth have stood the test of time because they have always adapted to changing environments. We soon mark 85 years here in Pittsburgh and are celebrating our 200th year in Bardstown, KY. Standing still is not the Vincentian Way.



Though the environment around us changes, our Mission and Values are a constant guidepost in being good stewards for our residents; their well-being drives our every action. With our nation facing significant healthcare reforms, Vincentian is doing all that it can to prepare for the changes those reforms will bring and to meet tomorrow's challenges.

In recent months you may have seen a variety of activities as we embark upon the process of evaluating all of our facilities to determine needed renovations. We are committed to identifying solutions that will ensure our ministries continue far into the future. Through this evaluation process we are learning much to help us make the best decisions, but as you can imagine, such careful deliberation is neither fast nor easy. This situation leads to questions and speculation because at times in the course of a journey there are roads to follow and at other times there are paths to choose. We are committed to sharing those choices and decisions with you as they unfold.

Today, our Vincentian System is a strong and vibrant ministry with an exciting future. The leaders who came before us had the courage to make thoughtful decisions regarding which roads to follow. Our past guides our future.

I want to express my thanks and appreciation to all of you for your patience, support and prayers as we continue on our journey of this wonderful Ministry.

Yours in Service,



Raymond E. Washburn
President and CEO
Vincentian Collaborative System

It's the Two J's! Vincentian Welcomes New Administrators

They arrived at Vincentian by different paths, but share the love of mission. Jenifer Brown is the new administrator at Marian Manor and Jennifer Pruett has been welcomed back at Vincentian de Marillac.

A native of a small town in Missouri with not even a stop light, Jenifer Brown moved to Pittsburgh from Green Bay two years ago and is enjoying the shorter winters, bike rides with her family and attending her children's sporting events. Through various roles in healthcare she has always enjoyed working with the elderly. "It's a high demand job, but I love it," she says. "The opportunity to make a difference in the residents' lives is what gets me up every day and brings me to work."

Every football season, Cleveland native Jennifer Pruett endures some good-natured ribbing from her coworkers. That hasn't dampened her enthusiasm for working at Vincentian de Marillac, however. After taking a break from her 12-year stint there as social services director and earning her Nursing Home Administrator license, Jennifer has returned to the facility she loves.

"It's different here than other places. We really do live out our values; the Sisters have given us a strong foundation," she says. "I thank God every day that I work here. It just feels like home." 🍷

Joyous Spirit Reigns at Rocking Event

A sense of community spirit resounded throughout the Vincentian ministries Saturday, June 16, as friends and family gathered for the first Rocking for Residents fundraiser. The enthusiasm was infectious:

"This is such fun. I've never seen so many smiling people as today."

"Whenever and however the Vincentian Spirit prevails, the result is positive and even overwhelming."

"The excitement, especially from the residents and families is so evident – the crowd happy and pleased."

To view event photos and read more about Rocking for Residents visit www.vcs.org. 🍷

Reunited at Vincentian Home!

Cousins Richard Mascio and Annie Mariani of Bloomfield hadn't seen each other in 35 years. Interestingly, it was Rocking for Residents that brought them together. Richard was visiting from Texas and attended the event with his daughter Jane Conley, a Vincentian Home employee. Annie is a resident there. As Richard chatted with friends in the Wander Garden, Annie arrived. "It was like a scene from a movie," said an onlooker. Their eyes locked from across the courtyard, and as Richard stood up and put his arms out, his eyes filled with tears. The two spent several minutes hugging before settling into an afternoon of talking about old times and catching up on family. 🍷

Around the System



Birds of a Feather... Feathers were flying as Stan Albert Bernhardt enjoyed a visit from a friendly group of parrots at **Marian Manor** in July.

Irene Dobies and staff member Margie Ellstrom live it up at **Vincentian de Marillac's Red Hat Tea**.



Mary Hagan teams up with a preschooler from **Marian Manor's** child care for a ring toss game as part of their Thursday activities.



Linda and her sister, Judy Brown, donated many of the herbs and flowers for the garden and beds around the water fountain.

A Labor of Love: Sally Anderson and her daughter Linda Emanuel enjoy working in the accessible garden at **Vincentian Regency** several times per week.



Giddy-up! Children at **Vincentian Child Development Center** enjoy "Roping and Riding" their horses during Cowboy and Cowgirl week of summer camp.

From Magic to Sign Chi Do: Innovative, Student-Led Programs Spark Joy

As residents at Vincentian Home can attest, variety is the spice of life. This summer, six weeks of new experiences were offered thanks to occupational therapy students from Duquesne University and the innovative coursework of Dr. Pat Crist. Though each activity was distinctly different, all offered positive benefits.

In one room, a soothing melody begins. Students lead a group of residents in an embellished sign language coordinated

with the song's uplifting verses. Peace fills the room. "This is the best part of my week," comments Anna Mae after the session.

Upstairs, residents chat about photos and mementos they've collected. A resident shares a passage from *The Women of Troy Hill*, a novel by local author Clare Ansberry, which describes life on her street. "We're getting a kick out of the interesting tidbits we learn about our residents," says activities manager Marleen Dean.

Down the hall, another group is engrossed in learning a magic trick. Looks of skepticism and concentration turn to delighted smiles and exclamations of surprise as one resident after another completes the trick for the first time. "I've done all of that already, you know," jokes Margaret DeGeorge after demonstrating magic tricks involving rubber bands, paper clips and dollar bills. "I used to work in a bank."

Each of these programs – Sign Chi Do, the Reminiscing Project, and Project



Jenny Savinis delights in completing a magic trick for the first time.

Magic – incorporates specific techniques to create rewarding experiences for seniors. Whether it's relaxation, self-expression through movement, aiding short term memory, or improving dexterity and concentration, those benefits are secondary. In all cases the greatest reward is the joy and smiles on the faces of the residents and students.

Sister Augusta, a Vincentian Home resident, says it best: "It is beautiful, and I can see that the students enjoy it too." 🍷



Duquesne student Lauren Grabowski reads an excerpt from *The Women of Troy Hill* with resident Helen Steinmetz, who is a neighbor included in the book.



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Vincentian Collaborative System
8250 Babcock Boulevard
Pittsburgh, PA 15237

Vincentian Charitable Foundation

10559722

Marian Manor

275 85964

Vincentian de Marillac

3819 40228

Vincentian Regency

517 24005

Vincentian Home

478 23883

Vincentian Rehabilitation Services

Vincentian Child Development Center

3066 32657

United Way code

Combined Federal Campaign code

Mission Statement:

Compelled by the love of Christ, Vincentian Collaborative System nurtures and sustains a ministry of compassionate care that preserves the human dignity of persons within a diverse and changing society.

Marian Manor Charity Golf Classic

Monday, September 24 Marian Manor will host its 12th annual golf outing at Montour Heights Country Club. Amateurs abound in this day of camaraderie and good times to support our elderly in need! To register or for information contact Sr. Eileen Chlebowski at 412-440-4305 or echlebowski@vcs.org



Giving Counts Year Round!

Giving comes in many forms and ways, and we appreciate all who help us fulfill our mission year round by lending their support. Gifts of any size are always appreciated. You can donate online at www.vcs.org, donate with a credit card by phone at 412-548-4059, or mail your gifts to us at Vincentian Charitable Foundation, 8250 Babcock Blvd, Pittsburgh, PA 15237.

Our residents thank you for your help! 🙏

United Way and CFC Giving: Think of Us!

The **United Way and CFC giving** season is upon us. If you participate in one of these programs through your workplace, please designate a Vincentian ministry as the recipient of your gift. Donor choice designation numbers are listed above. 🙏

Gifts to be Matched October 3rd

Multiply your gift's impact by making an online donation on October 3 through the Pittsburgh Foundation. Each of the Vincentian ministries is participating in the **Day of Giving** when a portion of all gifts made at www.pittsburghgives.org will be matched. To receive an email reminder, or for more information email cmartien@vcs.org or call 412-548-4059. You can also get information on our web site www.vcs.org. 🙏