



*Life Care Center of Waynesville*

In November 2012, I visited Life Care Center of Waynesville (LCCW), which is a 120-resident Medicare/Medicaid certified skilled nursing home. In addition to Medicare/Medicaid certification, they have additionally obtained Joint Commission accreditation. LCCW is operated by Life Care Centers of America, which manages more than 220 skilled nursing homes, sub-acute, and Alzheimer's Centers in 28 states. LCCW has been recognized by Life Care Centers of America as "Facility of the Year" for the Central Division, which includes 35 homes in four states. They were also included in the US News and World Report's 2012 Best Nursing Home List. Admission/Marketing Director Dawn Payne showed me around and introduced me to residents and staff.

LCCW benefits from incredible community involvement. Students from a local college and a local high school CNA program both complete the practical portions of their training there. They receive a lot of donated items, such as books, books on tape, and magazines. The local quilting guild recently donated homemade quilts to all veterans or veterans' spouses who live there. A local hotel even donated 32" televisions for the residents' rooms.

Missouri Credit Union provides Christmas gifts for the residents each year. The Activity Director Sandi Brewer told me that one year she decided to develop a wish list for each resident so that Missouri Credit Union could choose a gift for each resident from the lists. She was surprised when not only did they provide each resident with a gift; they gave everything on the lists.

In addition to supporting LCCW with their resources, community members provide their time too. Local churches take turns leading services and Bible study. One of the more popular volunteer groups is [Georgia and the Gang](#), which is a musical group that includes 92-year-old singer and pianist Georgia Primas. Georgia and the Gang perform every Thursday afternoon and are known for beginning every show by playing Jingle Bells on the harmonica.

Not only do residents benefit from outside volunteers, there are many residents who do volunteer work as well. When someone has an article of clothing that needs mending, Yun Su Gorski is ready with her needle and thread. Joanne

Toney makes and gives out homemade birthday cards. Mona Duke likes to help clean up the dining room after meals. Others like to help fold the home's laundry.

Each year, LCCW shows their appreciation for their volunteers with an annual Christmas Thank You Dinner and presentation of the Volunteer of the Year Award. During an interview for an article recently published in the [Waynesville Daily Guide](#), Activity Director Brewer said she occasionally finds herself with more volunteers than hours in a day. She also said they are not promoting a place to die, "This is where you're living your life."

There are many activities residents can participate in. One of the favorites is taking the van to play bingo at nearby Lakeway. They also enjoy many special events like Military Appreciation Day, the Alzheimer's awareness candlelight ceremony, and Alzheimer's Walk. Resident Vicki Alfred enjoys Christmas music and singing, so she sought out resident volunteers and formed a Christmas Choir. Another favorite is watching the local deer enjoy the feeder and salt lick out back. There is also an activity kitchen that is available to residents and their visitors.



*Resident Lyle (Pat) McCallister showed me the bracelets she made, with her loved ones names.*

I especially enjoyed hearing about the "Senior Prom." They received donated jewelry, dresses, jackets, and ties and the residents dressed up for an evening filled with fancy food, drink, and entertainment. The ladies were pampered by the local cosmetology students who did their nails and hair. They then received flowers from and were escorted by [Young Marines](#). Family members were also invited and photos were taken. The hit of the night was "The Beach Boys" band.



*Operation Christmas Child gifts*

During my visit, they were packing Christmas gifts for Operation Christmas Child, providing gifts for children affected by war, poverty, famine, or natural disasters. They also had [Christmas in July](#), when they, along with State Representative Steve Lynch and Maranatha Baptist Academy 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> graders, packed 135 Operation Christmas Child boxes with toys, candy, and hygiene items. The residents were also very giving to the victims of the Joplin tornado.

The Rehab-to-Home Unit is a particular source of pride. They have eight full-time Therapists who integrate the home's activities into their therapy program. Everyone celebrates when residents are able to successfully move back to their private homes.

In addition to the all-private room Rehab-to-Home Unit, they have four private long-term care rooms, a private Palliative Care/Hospice room, and a guest room for residents' visitors. Residents are encouraged to move in personal belongings, furniture, and decorations. The enclosed courtyard includes a raised flower garden, raised vegetable garden, and a large lighted fountain, which was built at the request of the Resident Council. They also have Wifi throughout the home.



*Enclosed Courtyard*

Choices and individualized care are a normal part of life. Residents go to bed and get up when they choose. Assistance with baths or showers is provided based on individual choices. In addition to the big monthly birthday party with cake and ice cream, each individual receives a gift and birthday cupcake on their individual birthday too.

There are many options available when dining orders are taken, including a main meal, a substitute, or a variety of items from the Always-Available menu. Dining staff are available in the kitchen until 8pm daily and all managers take turns working in the dining room to ensure residents' needs are met. Meals are offered to visitors for only \$2.00 to encourage them to eat with their loved ones. Snacks are available at all times at no extra charge. A community refrigerator is provided for individuals who don't have their own. There is a small dining room in the Special Care Unit. A hospitality cart is also provided for hospice residents' visitors.

To help ensure that residents' and families' needs are being met, individuals are encouraged to complete their "Help Us To...Serve You Better Concern & Comment Form." Concerns are brought to the stand-up meetings and a leader is chosen to investigate and address each one. The individual who submitted the concern is informed of the outcome within 48 hours.

Staff members who go above and beyond the call of duty receive recognition and monetary rewards through their "Whatever it Takes and Then Some" campaign and their Employee of the Month and Employee of the Year awards.



*Resident Chester Dye*

During my visit, I met Resident Chester Dye. Mr. Dye was born in 1926 and was raised in Hanna, MO, which is ten miles from Waynesville. His father was a farmer and his mother owned and operated a grocery store and post office. He had seven brothers and seven sisters. He attended elementary school at Cave Springs School, which was a one-room school house. After elementary school, he attended Waynesville High School.

Two of his older brothers enlisted in the Navy and served during World War II. He got married in 1945 and was drafted into the Army and served from 1946 to 1948, shortly after the war ended. He was stationed in Tokyo, Japan, where he served as a Company Clerk.

After his military service, he earned a Bachelor's degree from the University of Missouri and a Master's degree from Drury College. He said he would not have been able to attend college had it not been for the GI Bill.

He began a 33-year career in education teaching all eight grades in a one-room school house. From there, he went to Waynesville School, where he taught 8<sup>th</sup> grade and coached. He went on to serve as Principal at Crocker, where he retired in 1988. Shortly after his retirement, Crocker built a new elementary school and named it Chester L. Dye Elementary School in recognition of his service.

He and his wife had five sons. They had been married 53 years when she passed away. His sons now live in Waynesville; Salem, MO; New Mexico; Florida; and Texas.

He has lived at LCCW a little more than a year. He said they do a good job of taking care of him. He was especially complimentary of the administration and the food. He enjoys attending the many singing and musical group presentations, particularly Georgia and the Gang on Thursdays. He also enjoys Sunday Bible study and Thursday evening church services.

I also met Resident David Allen. David's father served nearly 30 years in the Army. David was born while his family was stationed in Frankfurt, Germany. He lived there three years. He also lived in Oklahoma for two years before moving to Ft. Leonard Wood. He went to elementary school on the military base. He then went to high school in Richland. He has one brother, Jerry.



*Resident David Allen*

David has cerebral palsy and has undergone 13 surgeries. He can no longer walk, but did for 29 years. He previously worked at a gas station removing transmissions and at sheltered workshops in Crocker and Richland making fireworks and sanding cars to be repainted.

David is a lay minister. He previously lived at another home, where he served as Resident Council President. After five years there, he felt called by the Lord to move to LCCW. He said sharing Jesus keeps him going, but he doesn't push his religion on those who aren't interested. At the time of my visit, he had been there four months. He participates on the Resident Council there as well.

He said the staff "reaches out to try to meet the needs of the residents." Like Mr. Dye, he was very complimentary of the food and said the kitchen staff is "top notch." He enjoys playing bingo and attending church services. He went on to say, "Everybody has been good to me."