



*Good Shepherd Nursing Home*

In February 2014, I visited Good Shepherd Nursing Home and Residential Care in Lockwood. Good Shepherd includes a 69-resident Medicare/Medicaid Certified skilled nursing home and 20-resident residential care home, operated by a not-for-profit nursing home district.



*Cafe*

Immediately upon entering the front door, I smelled something good cooking. The front lobby has been turned into a small café with soup that is available to anyone who wants some. The area had historically been wasted space that nobody really used. Now, residents enjoy visiting in the area or coming up for a bowl of soup. The aroma of the soup stimulates appetites and encourages residents to eat more. Other snacks are also available at all times.





*Social Services Director John Veach*

Just across the hallway from the soup station is Social Services Director John Veach's office. Shelves of jars filled with candy caught my attention. John operates a free candy store in his office. Vendors and physicians sponsor the candy jars and keep them filled with treats. John says the candy store reminds residents of the "penny candy" era and helps them to feel comfortable. When residents stop in to get some candy, it creates opportunities for him to visit with them that he might not otherwise have. He also has donated stamps, envelopes, and cards in his office that he gives to residents who need them. He hopes to someday have a full "dime store" in the home.

Good Shepherd is on their culture change journey and participates with Missouri's culture change coalition, [MC5](#) (Missouri Coalition Celebrating Care Continuum Change). They address something about culture change at every staff meeting. They also encourage staff members to share ideas for improvement. They have implemented consistent staffing assignments so that caregivers better know the residents who they care for. At the time of my visit, they had just had a contest to rename the neighborhoods. The winners had not yet been announced.

They try to make the residents' experience as close to that of being in their own private home as they can. They never know how they will accommodate individual wishes until they tackle each one.

There are no visiting hours. Residents bring in their own furniture and decorate how they choose. They can also have personal refrigerators if they wish. Some choose to bring in their own beds. Rooms are painted the colors that individual residents choose. One resident, who was very patriotic, chose to have her room painted red, white, and blue.

They also try to carry on the activities that residents are accustomed to. They love cookouts. They have a BBQ grill and a smoker. They cook out a couple times per week in the summertime. Fish fries are also very popular. They take a lot of trips, which is difficult because they only have a van. They are hoping to be able to get a bus in the future. A favorite trip they make often is to the Exotic Animal Paradise.

They have big family parties at Thanksgiving, Christmas, and Valentine's Day. They also have carnivals. The residents love the dunk tank. At Christmas time, they have a Christmas tree with the residents' names and gifts they would like. Staff members take the names off the tree and get the gifts. The names go so quickly that they have had people upset that they didn't get an opportunity to take one. During the party, their Dietary Manager is dressed as Santa Claus.

The local churches are very involved. They take turns throwing monthly birthday parties. Individual birthdays are also recognized. Each resident receives a cupcake and card and everyone sings to them. They enjoy outside groups that come in for special activities. A favorite is the children from a nearby daycare center who visit often. The activity room is never locked and CNAs lead activities in the evenings.

There is an active group of volunteers, including several residents. One resident makes cards and others like to do small jobs, such as passing out napkins at mealtimes. A former resident used to help the maintenance department. One of their volunteers, who has been serving them for many years, won the National Volunteer of the Year award.

They have made improvements in food service. The dining room is always open. In addition to the daily menu, there is a list of items that are always available, including soups and sandwiches. They no longer use trays or clothing protectors (bibs). They now use large cloth napkins. They are also working with the physicians to liberalize diet orders.

The bathing rooms have been redecorated and each neighborhood has a bath aide who provides bathing assistance based on individual preferences. Most enjoy whirlpool baths.



*Abby*

One of the first residents I met was Abby, the community dog that has lived at Good Shepherd for four years. Residents may also have personal pets, but none did at the time of my visit.

I visited Shepherd's Haven (a special neighborhood that serves residents with dementia). The residents in Shepherd's Haven help cook most of their own meals. They enjoy helping and they eat better.



*Dining Room*





*CNA/Restorative Aide Eric Benson*

During my tour, there was one person who seemed to be everywhere, CNA/Restorative Aide Eric Benson. I had an opportunity to sit down and visit with Eric and was especially fascinated by his stories from his military experience.

Eric grew up in Meinert Township, population 18, which is a short distance from Lockwood. He hated school as a child and ultimately dropped out to care for his grandfather. He later cared for his mother who suffered from medical ailments.

In 1998, Eric took a job at Good Shepherd as a housekeeper. However, at that time he wanted to join the military, so he obtained his GED and enlisted in the Army. He completed his basic training at Fort Leonard Wood, and was then stationed at Fort Lewis, Washington. During his first enlistment, he was a Combat Engineer, which he didn't particularly like. He reenlisted and was trained as an Unmanned Aerial Vehicle Operator (surveillance drone).

After completing his second enlistment, which included two tours in Iraq operating surveillance drones from Camp War Horse, and being stationed in Germany, he decided it was time to return home and go back to work at Good Shepherd.

Eric enjoys his work as a restorative aide. He picks up residents after therapy and helps them to continue to work toward or maintain their therapy goals. He helps them walk, perform range of motion, and participate in exercise groups. Each individual has specific goals and programs designed by the therapists.

Eric described himself as being somewhat closed to change. However, as he learned about culture change he has been supportive. I was impressed by his depth of knowledge of culture change concepts.

We discussed the improvements he has seen at Good Shepherd over the years. He said the residents' phone used to be at the desk where there was no privacy. Now it is in a private lounge. They used to have a four-person room. Now the most they have is two and he is looking forward to the day when all rooms are private.

There are a lot more choices now. They used to "encourage" residents to get up in the mornings. Now they don't bother people who are asleep. Residents go to bed and get up when they choose and receive assistance to do what they want to do. He doesn't even like the word "encourage" anymore.

They used to serve the same breakfast every day. Now, residents can have whatever they want. Dining hours have been opened. Lunch is from 11:00 until "whenever." The only "hard" time schedule is scheduled activities. Residents are more relaxed and have real choices, not limited choices between two options. They also quit charting meals, except for residents who have weight concerns.

His duties also include taking vitals and getting weights. He does it when it is convenient for the residents, usually after they are finished with breakfast. He typically only weighs residents once per week, unless there is a specific reason to do it more often. He also offers them the choice of whether or not they want to know their weight.





*Residential style laundry for residents/visitors*

There are several areas for visiting. They have WIFI throughout and they assist residents who don't have personal computers to access the internet if they wish in the activities department. They also have a residential type laundry that residents and their families can use if they choose.



*Resident Sidera Gardner*

I met 82-years-old Resident Sidera Gardner. Ms. Gardner grew up in Ridge Farm, Ill. Her father was a farmer and her mother was a housekeeper. She got married and moved to Palm Springs, CA with her husband when she was only 17-years-old. He was 20.

They owned, and her husband operated, an asphalt grading and paving service. They raised five children together. He passed away from cancer in 1986. She remarried and moved to Golden City, MO. Her second husband passed away in 2011.

Ms. Gardner has lived in nursing homes four times since she had a stroke in 1999. She has been at Good Shepherd for a year-and-a-half. She enjoys reading, watching television, and visiting with other residents. She has several friends at Good Shepherd. She chooses not to participate in organized activities, other than going on outings, which she really enjoys. She recently visited Lake Stockton.

Good Shepherd staff members are friendly and helpful. She determines her own schedule and gets out of bed when she feels like it. She prefers to eat her meals in her room and has her breakfast brought to her around 7:30 or 8:00. She said, "The food is good."

I visited the "Good Endings Room" for residents who are nearing the end of life. It has an adjoining room for family and friends, so they have a comfortable space that is nearby. It is comfortably furnished and has a sofa bed.

They used to have a resident who was a minister who frequently visited with residents about end-of-life decisions. Staff members who have developed relationships with residents are involved in those discussions now.

Deaths are handled in accordance with the residents' and family members' wishes. They check on the families often and offer support. They typically send flowers or a plaque. They recently planted a tree in memory of a resident. Residents also send flowers. They have no timeframe and don't pressure families to pick up the residents' belongings after a death.



*Residential Care Neighborhood*





*A residential care apartment*

During my visit to the residential care home, I noticed a resident's belongings out in the hallway. Her carpeting was being replaced and she was busy making last minute preparations for the workers to come in and install it. We also walked past another apartment that was being entirely renovated. All of the residential care apartments are private, except for some married couples.



*Amanda Robinson, RN*

Nurse Amanda Robinson was originally from Litchfield Park, AZ. She moved to Greenfield, MO in 2002 and attended high school there. She has two brothers and one sister. Her sister is currently in nursing school. She has three children, two boys and a girl, and is currently engaged. She enjoys the lake and swimming.

Amanda graduated nursing school at St. John's in Springfield. She originally wanted to work in a hospital, but took a job at Good Shepherd because it was close to home. She has now been there two years and loves it.

In the short time she has been there, she has seen improvements. Night shift staff used to get the residents out of bed before they left. Now they sleep in and come and go as they wish. They have also implemented open dining and liberalized medication passes to am and pm. She told me about one resident who likes to sleep until 11:00. With liberalized medication passes, it works well. Residents enjoy exercising, bingo, and going to the hairdresser. They pay attention to the activities schedule and make sure they are there.