



# Sweet Charity

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A Good Shepherd Publication

## Finding Bonnie



# Be a Life-Changing Donor

Dear Friends,

You never know when life will throw you a curve ball. For Bonnie Stickel, who is featured in this issue, the curve ball came on a trip to Houston, Texas with her husband Todd. While taking in the sights on a Segway, Bonnie hit a curb, fell off and suffered a concussion. It was a life-changing moment for Bonnie, leaving her with vision problems and greatly affecting her ability to function as she once did.

But there has been another life-changing experience in Bonnie's life and that is Good Shepherd's renowned Vision Therapy Program. The results have helped Bonnie get back to doing some of the things she loves. Her experience with us has been so positive that Bonnie now volunteers as a Patient Ambassador.

I am immensely proud of our Vision Therapy Program, which began in 2011, and the people who make it so successful. This program has become the largest of its kind east of the Mississippi with nine occupational therapists and two physical therapists trained in behavioral vision therapy. Word of our program's excellence has spread. Demand for our services is so great there are about 40 people waiting two to four months to start therapy.

The need for this kind of therapy has motivated us to expand the program. We've hired a neuro-optometrist and invested in additional staff training. And we are adding and outfitting two neuro-optometry rooms and six more vision therapy rooms in the Health and Technology Center in Allentown and expanding services in select outpatient sites.

What's helping to make this possible? Our donors. We've received several significant gifts for which we are deeply grateful, but we need your help. Whether or not you've been helped by our Vision Therapy Program, or know someone who has, I hope you'll join those who have already lent their support by making a gift today and becoming part of something that can change lives for the better, like Bonnie Stickel's.

Thank you.



John Kristel, MBA, MPT  
President & CEO

# Finding Bonnie

When Bonnie Stickel suffered a concussion in a freak accident, she turned to Good Shepherd's Vision Therapy Program to help her get back to enjoying life again.



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Cover photograph: Randy Monceaux



## The Comeback Kid

Raker resident Tammy Santee has been battered by life's storms, but is rebounding with help from her Good Shepherd family.



## Color Her World Happy

Jackie Quinton never cared much for painting or coloring. But a stroke changed all that in a wonderful way.



## Answering the Call of Hope

A mother and father's love for their son goes the distance in getting him walking again.

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### *Our Mission*

Motivated by the divine Good Shepherd and the physical and cognitive rehabilitation needs of our communities, our mission is to enhance lives, maximize function, inspire hope, and promote dignity and well-being with expertise and compassion.



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# D

onnie and Todd Stickel had a lot to celebrate. It was the one-year anniversary of Todd's heart transplant, and the couple decided to celebrate by attending the Transplant Games of America in Houston, Texas. "We went and took the entire family," says Bonnie, explaining that the games are a bi-annual Olympic-style competition for recipients and organ donor families featuring events ranging from ballroom dancing to volleyball. "It was wonderful."

It was July 2014, and Bonnie, Todd and their two girls decided to stay a couple of extra days and do some sightseeing in Houston. And what better way to do that than on a Segway? As the tour was wrapping up, Bonnie's Segway hit a temporary curb. The jolt flipped her backwards landing smack on her head and cracking her helmet. The impact caused Bonnie to briefly lose consciousness. She was taken to a local hospital where doctors told her she likely had suffered a concussion.

"I had no idea what that meant," says Bonnie. "People get those every day. I thought, I'll be fine. I'll just rest a little bit."

Bonnie returned to her home in Macungie, thinking little more of the accident, and returned to her job as an event coordinator at a local country club. It quickly became apparent though that something wasn't right.

"I tried to go back to work part time, but completing the simplest of tasks was very difficult," says Bonnie. "Everything was spinning. I had such a headache and I couldn't talk right. Everything was stuck. It was a very dizzying environment with more than one per-

son talking to me at one time, and I had a really hard time filtering out the other people or the background noise. My employer tried to accommodate me the best they could."

Other problems quickly surfaced. Driving a car made Bonnie nauseous and anxious. Often she would forget where she was going or how to get to a destination, making it difficult to attend family or social events.

"I became a hermit of sorts because I could not take too much stimulation," says Bonnie. "Going out to dinner and selecting food from a menu was a challenge, as was going to the grocery store. I chose not to drive at night because the lights made it difficult. I didn't know who I was. There was just a different person inside me. I was so frustrated."

Bonnie sought out a doctor specializing in sports concussions who referred her to another health care facility for occupational and vestibular therapy. Bonnie went for four months, and while she saw some improvement, her symptoms still made it difficult to function.

Bonnie's physician recommended she look into Good Shepherd's Vision Therapy Program for people suffering from vision-related problems caused by neurological disorders or injuries. "I was willing to try anything at that point," she says.

Bonnie was re-evaluated by concussion specialist Kyle Klitsch, D.O., of the Good Shepherd Physician Group. She began vestibular therapy at Good Shepherd Physical Therapy-Macungie before coming to the

*Bonnie has found joy and healing with her ever-faithful dog Willie.*

# Finding Bonnie

*This is my fight song  
Take back my life song  
Prove I'm alright song  
My power's turned on  
Starting right now I'll be strong  
I'll play my fight song  
And I don't really care if  
nobody else believes  
'Cause I've still got a lot of fight  
left in me*

— From "Fight Song"  
by singer/songwriter Rachel Platten





outpatient Neurorehabilitation Program in Allentown for therapies to help with her concussion symptoms. Bonnie was assessed by Jeffrey Becker, O.D., and in February 2015 started vision therapy.

“Seventy percent of what we learn is through our vision. That’s where it starts,” says Donna Andrews, O.T.R., one of Bonnie’s occupational therapists in the vision program. “What we see is what we take in. We began with eye movement exercises to and from different targets to get the eyes working together. We have special computer programs that work on depth perception for that purpose.”

Bonnie’s therapists employed a variety of tools and technologies throughout her therapy. Because eye coordination with the brain is a critical part of vision rehabilitation, Bonnie’s therapy included the Interactive Metronome. This technology challenged Bonnie to improve her brain’s timing and processing skills through the use of whole-body exercises with a computer-generated beat. Good Shepherd is the only rehabilitation facility in the region using this technology with adolescents and adults.

For Bonnie, being able to function in a grocery store was an important goal, so the Bertec Balance Advantage System was also used to help improve her balance in multi-sensory environments. Standing in the Bertec, Bonnie

*Occupational Therapist Donna Andrews gets Bonnie ready for a session in the Bertec Balance Advantage System.*

looked at virtual reality images of grocery store aisles on an 180-degree screen and was challenged to navigate the store. A dynamic force plate beneath her feet responded to subtle variations as Bonnie shifted her weight to maintain her balance and showed movement patterns on the screen which were recorded on a computer for the therapist to analyze.

Simpler tools were also used including blocks, a rocker board, a low-level balance beam, even a small trampoline to help with Bonnie's eye-hand coordination. Gradually, her cognitive endurance and ability to process multiple stimuli increased.

Still another dimension of care was needed for Bonnie and it continues to be a part of her recovery: the emotional and psychological aftermath of her concussion. "I lost Bonnie," she says. "I had to relearn a whole new me."

Helping her on that journey is Mary Brownsberger, Psy.D., head of neuropsychology at Good Shepherd. "Mary helped me accept and sort of mourn the loss of the old Bonnie," says Bonnie. "It's so hard to describe to other people because unless you have had a concussion, you don't understand what it's like. People say, 'Oh, you look so good,' and that's a big struggle because a lot of family or friends don't understand why I have to leave a social gathering based on the way I feel."

Bonnie shared her frustration with Donna and asked if she knew any other patients who could relate to what she was going through. Bonnie found out she was not alone, and a Post-Concussion Support Group was formed.

Bonnie has made tremendous progress and continues to do vision therapy through a web-based program on her iPad. "It really is a cool program because Dr. Becker can go in and monitor my progress or see if I regress and change things around," says Bonnie. "It's really mind boggling that he can do that remotely."

Bonnie also now is able to work part time as a secretary at Good Shepherd's outpatient Performing Arts Rehabilitation

*continued on page 21.....*

## **More About the Vision Therapy Program**

*Good Shepherd's Vision Therapy Program is for older teens and adults who suffer from vision-related problems caused by neurological disorders or injuries such as concussions, strokes, tumors, multiple sclerosis and related medical issues. Problems related to neurological vision deficiencies include: poor balance, double vision, limitations in the field of vision, risk of falling, difficulty reading, learning, driving, navigating the environment, and memory. For more information, call 1-888-44-REHAB (73422) or visit us on the web at [GoodShepherdRehab.org](http://GoodShepherdRehab.org).*

## **Post Concussion Support Group**

*Good Shepherd's Post Concussion Support Group meets the fourth Thursday of every month from 5:30 to 7 p.m. at Good Shepherd Health & Technology Center, middle level conference room, 850 S. Fifth Street, Allentown. Refreshments are served. For more information and to register, call Donna Andrews at 610-776-3247.*

Tammy Santee remembers the dark days, when hope was gone and her prospects in life bleak.

“I thought that my whole life was going to be nothing,” she says. “I didn’t think my life would have happiness.”

Now, the 46-year-old Good Shepherd resident not only is happy, she’s bringing her joy to others at the Good Shepherd Raker Center where she’s lived since 2014. “I volunteer here,” she says. “I love people. I love everybody here.”

Tammy’s sunny outlook comes after enduring a string of hardships that would test the most resilient of souls. In October 1994, her fiance and the father of her two daughters was jumped and fatally stabbed on the Eighth Street bridge in Allentown. Tammy, battling depression and alcoholism, wandered down a path that isolated her from family, and led to a brief and frightening period of homelessness. Her fiance’s parents took in her daughters.

Another romantic relationship developed, but that turned sour. “He got abusive,” says Tammy. “I got a black eye. He was an alcoholic.” Food and alcohol became escapes, and Tammy’s weight ballooned to 488 pounds leading to cellulitis and other health problems. One day, Tammy struggled to catch her breath. She called her daughters, Rebecca, now 24, and Thomasie, now 25, who rushed to Tammy’s side and called 911. Tammy was admitted to a local hospital. “I had pneumonia,” she says, “and we found out my heart was enlarged, and my lungs had filled up with fluid. I went into cardiac arrest three times.”

Tammy was put on a ventilator and had a tracheostomy. She also had a feeding tube inserted. She remained hospitalized for three weeks, much of that in a medically-induced coma. “My mom was there the whole time,” she says. “She didn’t leave my side once. My whole family was there too.”

# THE Comeback Kid



*Tammy at Raker Stock 2015, an annual event at the Good Shepherd Home Raker Center featuring performances by local bands.*

Tammy was transferred to the Good Shepherd Specialty Hospital in Bethlehem. With her feeding tube now removed, she faced a long and difficult recovery. "I had to learn how to swallow, how to eat and how to talk again," she says. "I was very depressed."

After more than two months, Tammy was transferred to the Good Shepherd Rehabilitation Hospital in Allentown. The compassionate care she received at the specialty hospital continued with care givers who nurtured her soul as they built up her physical strength, teaching her how to walk, shower, and dress on her own. "I felt helpless," says Tammy.

Tammy's crisis had an unintended benefit: it brought her family closer together. Tammy went to live with her mother, and began rebuilding her fractured relationship with her daughters. "I do believe that what brought me back was the Father saying he wasn't ready for me," says Tammy. "I really do believe that."

But Tammy's challenges were far from over. Pneumonia landed her back in the hospital followed by stints at two assisted living facilities because she was too physically challenged to care for herself. But there was one thing Tammy had her heart set on, and that was coming to live at Good Shepherd. When a bed finally opened up, Tammy was overjoyed. "There's so much to offer here," she says. "There's activities, the gym, trips. It's amazing."

Tammy's life at Good Shepherd and the support she gets from newfound friends and staff has given her the incentive to start losing weight. She signed up for an off-campus weight-loss program where she learned how to read nutritional labels and better understand the role carbohydrates and sugar play in her health. So far, she's dropped 159 pounds. "It

was hard," says Tammy, who still has a tracheostomy to help her breathe. "I like my pancakes and goodies, but what kept me motivated was keeping a plan every day. And I wanted to feel good about myself, feel happy, and know that I did it on my own. I didn't think I could do that."

Tammy is rightfully proud of how far she's come. She delights in her daughters and four grandchildren, who are frequent visitors, and loves volunteering. She helps two residents fill out weekly menu plans, and enjoys doing the little things that people can't do for themselves.

Tammy loves participating in the many special events at Good Shepherd, especially the annual resident ball. One year she was named a Lady of the Court. She participates in the ceramics group every Wednesday morning, and has been on several outings to places like the Crayola Factory, the King of Prussia Mall, and restaurants.

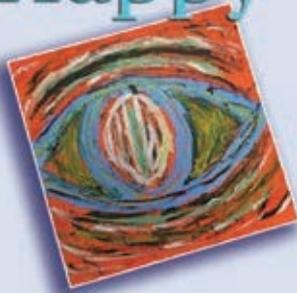
"Good Shepherd means the world to me," says Tammy. "It feels like home. I feel loved here, and it makes me feel independent. When I was in rehab, I hated myself. I had no self-esteem. Now I have a lot of faith and hope in myself. Now I can say I love myself and I am beautiful."



# Color Her



# World Happy



**F**our years ago, Jackie Quinton, then 51, was living a full and busy life as a Zumba instructor and receptionist when she had a stroke. But during Jackie's recovery, something quite extraordinary developed: a newfound artistic talent for coloring and painting.

Jackie is both mystified and delighted by this unexpected discovery. "From the time I was little I didn't care about painting or coloring," she says. Her favorite hobbies were knitting and crocheting, but she had to abandon those pastimes because her right hand was affected by the stroke.

But adversity can be the mother of invention, and Jackie began using her left hand to compensate. Then, in September 2015, long after

her stroke, Jackie started coloring in adult coloring books. Now the fifty-five-year-old Emmaus resident spends hours coloring and painting original works of art which she gives to friends and family members.

Jackie's paintings often include two recurring themes: eyes and sunshine. "Three years ago when I had the stroke, the eye and sunshine is what I saw," she says.

Every year, more than 795,000 people suffer a stroke, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Relatively few, like Jackie, develop new abilities. Some, however, have pursued their newfound talents with great success. Jon Sarkin, a chiropractor turned artist from Gloucester, Massachusetts, is among those whose story has been well publicized. He has been the subject of articles in *GQ* and *Vanity Fair*, a biography, and television documentaries. Actor Tom Cruise reportedly purchased the rights to Sarkin's life story which is detailed in the 2011 biography, "Shadows Bright as Glass," by Amy Ellis Nutt.

Sarkin was 35 in 1988 when he suffered a stroke while golfing. A portion of his brain was removed. Afterwards, Sarkin developed a compulsion for drawing known as "sudden artistic output," ultimately becoming an accomplished artist. His work includes sculpture, portraiture and collage, and has been published in magazines and exhibited in major cities.

At the invitation of Jerry Werner, director of the MS Wellness Program, Jackie started taking Wednesday art therapy classes with members of Good Shepherd's MS Wellness group. Jerry noticed Jackie, who came to Good Shepherd for therapy after her stroke, sitting in the lobby of the Health & Technology Center working in adult coloring books while

waiting for bus transportation home. Although Jackie doesn't have multiple sclerosis, Jerry thought Jackie would benefit from the group's creative and therapeutic camaraderie.

"I saw the connection of her interest in creating and using color, so I asked her if she would like to take one of our MS art classes," says Jerry. "She was very enthusiastic at the suggestion, and has done very well with generalizing her talent for pencil and paper to brush and canvas."

Painting, says Jerry, uses tremendous amounts of concentration, focus, visual eye/hand coordination as well as color blending skills, depth perception and 3-D interpretation and replication. "Jackie's consistent use of her left hand with the coloring has helped her brain to 'rewire,' and the outcome is that she has trained her non-dominant hand to do wonderful works of art," says Jerry. "Jackie has discov-

ered a new talent and she seems very proud of her accomplishments. That in itself is a great comeback story."

Jackie's art may not make it into the Metropolitan Museum of Art, few artists do, but fame is secondary to a much greater reward. "I'm expressing myself in a way that I couldn't before," says Jackie. "Coloring relaxes me, and painting takes me into another world. I just paint what I want to paint. I am happy."

*Read Jerry Werner's blog about the therapeutic benefits of adult coloring books at [www.goodshepherdrehab.org/blog/coloring](http://www.goodshepherdrehab.org/blog/coloring)*



# ANS



# WERING the Call of Hope

— by Lynn Gerlach, Public Relations & Communications Specialist, Good Shepherd

Gary and Mary Seelye know that life can forever change in an instant. They also know that hope can come in many forms and at any time.

In 1997, Mary and son, Nathan, then 14, were on their way to school when another driver ran a stop sign, crashing into their vehicle. Nathan, an eighth grader at the time, was ejected from the car and suffered a traumatic brain injury (TBI). He was life flighted to Presbyterian (now UPMC) Hospital in Pittsburgh, near the family's home in Brownsville, and spent approximately two weeks in intensive care and three weeks in an inpatient step-down program. For much of that time, Nathan was in a medically-induced coma to reduce brain swelling.

When Nathan was discharged, he was transferred to a local facility to begin rehabilitation. Nathan, who excelled at basketball and academics, and was president of his school's Jr. National Honor Society, was unable to respond, eat or walk. What had once been simple tasks were now major undertakings.

Equally hard was the impact the accident had on his siblings, Joel, Joshua and Bethany, and his many friends. Over time, with few exceptions, the once-numerous visits from friends dwindled. Gary and Mary empathize, adding that it is hard to understand the impact of a TBI unless you have witnessed the profound changes it can cause.

"We initially expected Nathan to bounce back to his former self and pick up where he left off," says Gary. "Nathan was a really bright, outgoing kid. His body was recovering, but with the support of family and friends, we slowly had to accept that the person we knew was gone."

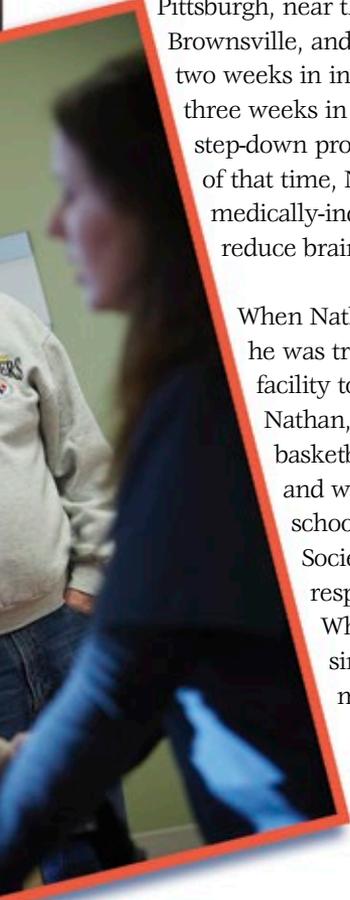
After nine months of inpatient rehabilitation, Nathan progressed enough to return home. He could communicate but was in a wheelchair and had a feeding tube to ensure proper nutrition.

While life had changed, it also had to go on. One of the first priorities was to ensure that Nathan continued his education. The Seelyes believed, as did Nathan's physiatrist, Richard S. Kaplan, M.D., of Uniontown, that mental stimulation was crucial to his recovery and insisted he attend high school.

After graduation, coincidentally with his younger brother Joshua, Nathan worked for

*Opposite page: Physical Therapist Nicole Yenser helps steady Nathan Seelye in the Ekso from behind with help from Carol Domzalski, R.N.*

*(Inset photo) Gary Seelye watches his son walk 19 years after the accident.*



friends who owned a restaurant, cleaning tables. It gave him a sense of purpose, according to the Seelyes. After the restaurant was sold, Mary and Gary attempted to find other employment opportunities for Nathan, without success. These days, Gary and Mary try to keep their son mentally stimulated with trips to the mall, the park or the YMCA, as well as physical therapy and (of course) watching every Steelers' game.

But something was about to enter Nathan's life that would bring a ray of hope. While visiting Good Shepherd Rehabilitation Network in Allentown, Nathan's doctor was introduced to the Ekso bionic exoskeleton, a bionic walking device that helps spinal cord injury patients learn to walk again. Good Shepherd, the largest clinical Ekso user in the world, and Dr. Kaplan felt that the Ekso could help Nathan.

Like most things parents do for their children, the decision to bring Nathan to Good Shepherd for therapy every week was a labor of love. In May 2015, Gary started making the five-hour drive from western Pennsylvania to Allentown for Nathan's weekly Ekso sessions. Although Mary was unable to make the journey, she was with her son and husband every step of the way. "While his mother did not come every week, she was really supporting this whole venture, staying at home taking care of things," says Gary. "That requires effort."

Without a doubt, say Gary and Mary, the travel was worth it to see Nathan's progress. During his first time in the Ekso, Nathan walked 101 steps. Every week, the father and son joked about how far Nathan would walk that day. When Nathan did 685 steps, it was an achievement worthy of celebration.

"It's hard to describe the emotion everyone feels when a patient walks again for the first time," says Nathan's physical therapist, Nicole Yenser, D.P.T., N.C.S. "Eighteen years had passed since Nathan's accident, so walking is an incredible accomplishment."

Nathan's brain injury also affected his vision. Nathan was evaluated by Jeffrey Becker, O.D., of Good Shepherd's Vision Rehabilitation Program, and occupational therapist, Andrea Nichols, M.S., O.T.R./L., developed treatment to help Nathan overcome a left-sided vision deficit. As a result, Nathan can now read words in their entirety.

Nathan's Ekso and vision sessions continued until the spring of 2016 when the family's insurance denied continuing coverage. As disappointing as that was, Gary says that the therapies Nathan received at Good Shepherd make everyday tasks easier, like getting in and out of the shower, because he can better balance himself.

"We just love the practitioners at Good Shepherd," says Gary. "They were fabulous in supporting Nathan and helping him achieve whatever level he was able to do. They went way beyond the support that we had received from other practitioners in other health care settings."

For the Seelyes, it is clear that the time Nathan spent at Good Shepherd was more than just a weekly rehabilitation session. After so many years, it is about never losing hope and never giving up. It is about quality of life and independence. It is about doing all you can do to give your child every opportunity to succeed. And that is the best therapy of all.

***Watch the video of Nathan walking at [www.GoodShepherdRehab.org/Nathan](http://www.GoodShepherdRehab.org/Nathan).***

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To request your free printed guide, complete the form below or contact Jeannette Edwards, senior planned giving officer, at **610-778-1075** or **jedwards@gsrh.org**. You may also download the lesson and record books at [www.SweetCharityOnline.org/plannedgiving](http://www.SweetCharityOnline.org/plannedgiving).

Good Shepherd encourages you to meet with your advisors to review your will and estate plan.



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Have you already included a gift for Good Shepherd in your will or estate plan?

Please let us know so we can thank you and invite you to our next 1908 Raker Society event:

Yes, I have included a gift for Good Shepherd in my will or estate plan

Return this form in the envelope provided, or mail to: Planned Giving Office, Good Shepherd Rehabilitation Network, 850 S. 5th Street, Allentown, PA 18103

# Reflections

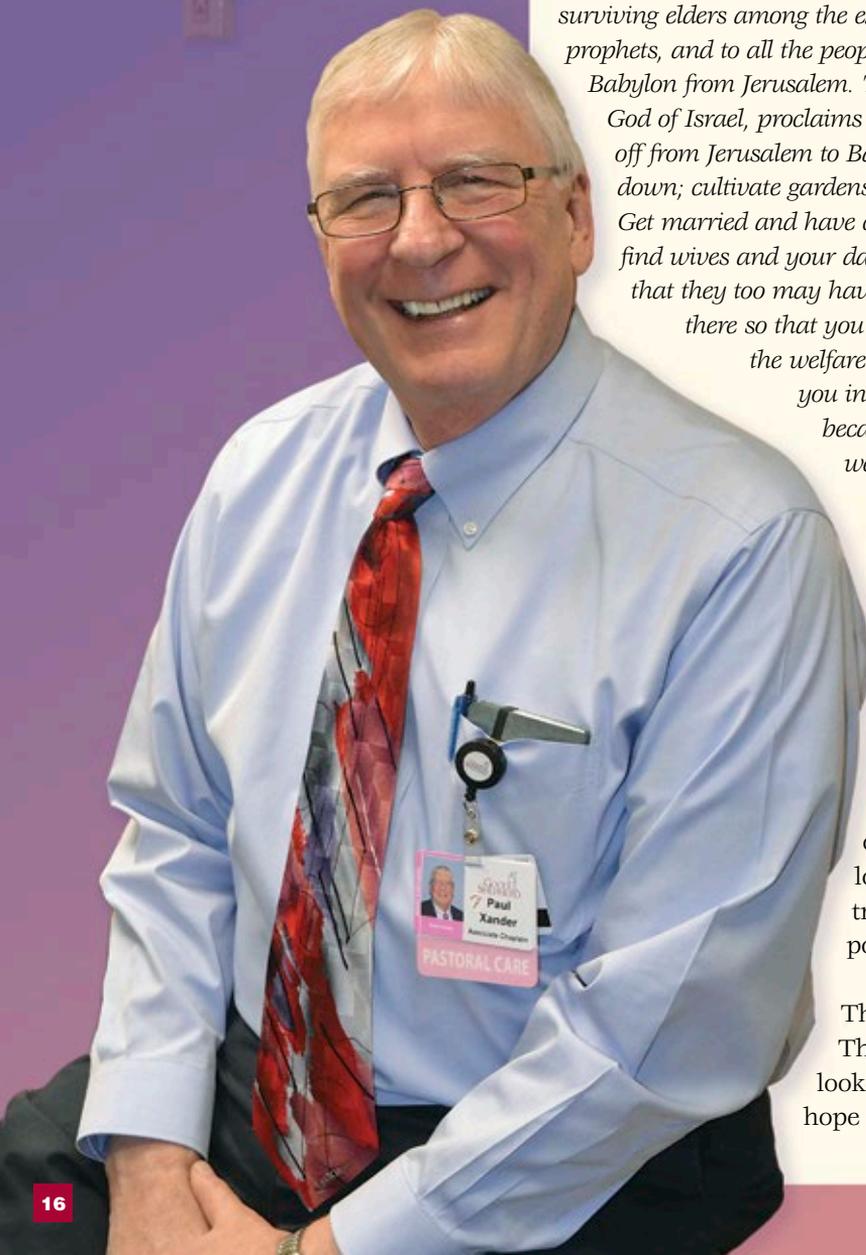
— by Chaplain Paul Xander

## God Always Finds Us

*"The prophet Jeremiah sent a letter from Jerusalem to the few surviving elders among the exiles, to the priests and the prophets, and to all the people Nebuchadnezzar had taken to Babylon from Jerusalem. The Lord of heavenly forces, the God of Israel, proclaims to all the exiles I have carried off from Jerusalem to Babylon: Build houses and settle down; cultivate gardens and eat what they produce. Get married and have children; then help your sons find wives and your daughters find husbands in order that they too may have children. Increase in number there so that you don't dwindle away. Promote the welfare of the city where I have sent you into exile. Pray to the Lord for it, because your future depends on its welfare." (Jeremiah 29:1, 4-7)*

During the late fall of last year, on the property of the Jesuit Center in Wernersville, Berks County, I was shocked to find that a logger had cut down about a dozen beautiful ash trees that had been killed by blight caused by infestation of the emerald ash borer. The logger also had to fell other trees that were endangering power lines.

The results weren't pretty. The area under the power lines looked like a clear-cut forest. I hope that in time, someone will



remove trunks, branches and stubble, smooth the ground, and, perhaps, plant wild flowers. But on that day what was once beautiful was a mess. It was an unwelcome surprise.

The mess brought to my mind the sight of my three-year-old daughter's forehead after she had stitches many years ago, or my clear-cut self after surgery nine months ago, or our yard in Chester County immediately after the house was built and we moved onto dirt and rubble. I also have seen photos of cities in Europe and Japan immediately after World War Two.

The earth does heal. Foreheads do heal. Lawns do fill-in where there once was bare dirt. Lives get to wholeness after disruption. Cities and nations that have been torn apart by civil unrest, start functioning again. Our nation will heal from its current ugliness. Nations around the world, like Syria, will once again flourish. Things will heal because God wants wholeness and comes with "healing in his wings." Transitioning occurs because God always finds us.

Even if God did lead the Israelites into exile in Babylon, as the people of that era understood causality and God's role in history, God would help the beloved people make successful homes in Babylon and, in a later development, bring them home to Jerusalem. God wouldn't abandon them. Israel would heal. Jerusalem would be rebuilt. The Law would be restored.

By now we know that God doesn't cause playground accidents or cancers or civil unrest or wars between nations. Life takes

its toll, accidents happen and surprises like a clear-cut woodlot appear. God is the one who hears our cries of distress. It is God who initiates conversations that, in even the bleakest places and times, bring healing.

Granted, God might seem absent and uncaring when problems last longer than we can bear. But God is still God. The darkness cannot quench the light. Evil cannot run the table. Yes, it takes faith to say that. Some seasons of darkness seem impervious to good. But death is never the final word in creation.

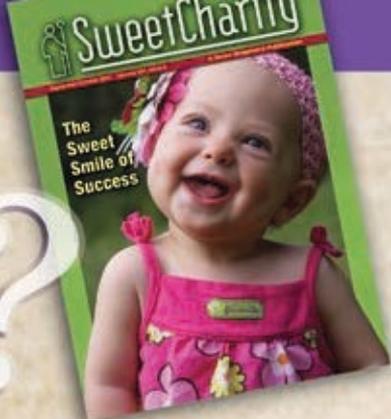
When I talk about the "what next" of my tree story, I try not to blame the logger for being overzealous, an arborist for finding the diseased trees, or nature for causing a tree blight. We can set out to plan a response. A new project beckons. I think that's where God comes in: when we are dealing with the aftermath and wondering how we can possibly move forward.

Tragic moments in both our personal lives and in American life are always playing out. The awful carnage in Syria has not yet seen its conclusion. But in the end, God has and will continue to give us the strength and wisdom to deal with anything. God being present with us challenges us to cooperate in fashioning the "what next" healing responses.

*"Promote the welfare of the city where I have sent you into exile. Pray to the Lord for it, because your future depends on its welfare."*

# WHERE?

*Are They Now?*  
EMALINE MUSSON



*Melanie and Rick Musson believe in miracles for one very good reason: their six-year-old daughter Emaline.*

In 2011, the Mussons traveled across the country from their home in Bozeman, Montana, to get Emaline the care she needed when she wasn't developing normally. When she was only five months old, Emaline started having spasms that alarmed her

*This page: The September/October 2011 issue featuring Ema; pictured (above left) with sister Lyla. Opposite page: Holding a favorite doll; in the yard at home with her parents, Melanie and Rick, and Lyla.*

parents who also noticed she wasn't tracking them with her eyes and didn't react to sound.

The Mussons brought Ema to The Children's Hospital of Philadelphia for tests. Doctors suspected that Ema's delays were the result of a possible stroke while she was still in her mother's uterus. At the suggestion of a friend, the Mussons had Ema admitted to the Good Shepherd Rehabilitation Hospital Emily Howatt Pliskatt Pediatric Unit in Bethlehem. After six weeks of physical, recreational and speech therapy, Ema went home, vastly different than when she arrived. As Melanie said at the time, "What's happened here is miraculous. I feel like we brought in a newborn and we're leaving with a baby doing what she's supposed to be doing."

Melanie says the care Ema got at Good Shepherd "jump started" her progress. Ema continues to receive therapy and is still progressing.

"She went to preschool for three years and did so great," says Melanie, adding that doctors believe Ema has cerebral palsy. "Now she's just starting kindergarten. She knows her letters and her vocabulary is really good. She knows tons and tons of words,

but it's hard putting them in sentences. Every time she gives me information without me pulling it out of her, I am thrilled."

Ema adores her friends from church and has a close buddy at school. She loves Peppa Pig, and reading and being read to. Pink is her favorite color, and she is fascinated by bugs. "Little daddy long legs and lady bugs are her favorites," says Melanie. She also is a wonderful big sister to Lyla, 4, and baby Noelle Peace born in December 2016. The family enjoys camping in the beautiful mountains near Bozeman and even though Ema wears a brace on her right side, Melanie says she walks well and doesn't miss a step.

"I always tell her she is an actual super hero," says Melanie. "Every time she learns something it might come harder, but when she learns one little thing it's a big deal for us. We don't take anything for granted. I look at her time at Good Shepherd as so valuable. I think that just got her going on a higher level. She's determined and she's silly and she is sweet. She's kind of all that."



# good NEWS

## New Van for Residents Purchased With Women's Circle Gift

For those of us who are not wheelchair-reliant, getting out and about typically is as simple as hopping in the car and just taking off. But for Good Shepherd's 159 long-term care residents in Allentown and

Bethlehem, who cherish their independence as much as anyone else, it's not so easy. That's why we are so grateful to the Good Shepherd Women's Giving Circle whose generous donation provided for the purchase of another wheelchair-accessible van benefiting our residents. Among the many activities residents enjoy are dining out, attending concerts and other forms of entertainment, visiting family members, shopping, and so much more.

"This extremely generous donation will allow our residents to travel with dignity and reach destinations that make life full," says Ingrid Baruch Lande, director of rehabilitation services for long-term care. "We will be forever grateful to this wonderful group of women for this act of kindness that will change lives for many years to come."

Pictured with two of our residents and staff are several members of the Women's Circle, a group especially for women who want to make a philanthropic difference while experiencing the joy of camaraderie. Learn more about how you can be part of a life-changing philanthropic mission by visiting us at [SweetCharityOnline](http://SweetCharityOnline) and clicking on Ways to Give, or contact Carol Carpenter at [ccarpenter@gshr.org](mailto:ccarpenter@gshr.org) or 610-778-1044.



# great GIFTS

## Giving Back Out of Gratitude

Children can be wonderful role models, often surprising us with their wisdom and generous hearts. We had to look no further to find such a delightful role model than 12-year-old Caitlyn Keeney of Hellertown who held a successful toy drive over the holidays for children at Good Shepherd's Emily Howatt Pliskatt Pediatric Unit in Bethlehem. Caitlyn's motivation was gratitude for her own amazing recovery at the unit from a traumatic brain injury and her love for children. Caitlyn is pictured with a handmade mailbox for letters from young patients destined for the North Pole. Caitlyn's dramatic story will be featured on Saturday, June 3 at Good Shepherd's Gala in the Garden, a fund raiser for the pediatric inpatient unit. Watch for the video about Caitlyn on Sweet Charity's Facebook page and on the web at [SweetCharityOnline.org](http://SweetCharityOnline.org).



# Finding Bonnie

...continued from page 7

Center in Bethlehem, and has picked up another part time job as an office administrator at a local psychology practice. She also is giving back by volunteering as a Patient Ambassador at Good Shepherd. "My biggest challenge is becoming over-stimulated," she says. "Noise and florescent lighting is still a trigger for me, like when I go in a grocery store. I have learned how to compensate in many of these situations with yoga, and mindfulness, meditating and breathing techniques."

Aiding Bonnie in her recovery is her dog Willie, who was rescued three years ago and now is returning the favor. "He has been so instrumental in my recovery," says Bonnie. "I spend a lot of time walking him and reflecting on the simple things in life. He has taught me to really appreciate the sun rising and the changing of the moon. Before, I was always on the run."

Bonnie's time with Willie also is helping her get back to doing something she gave up after her accident because it over-stimulates her brain, making it hard to concentrate on tasks at hand. "I loved to listen to music," she says. "I still don't have the radio on in my car when I'm driving because I can't have the distraction. But when I walk with Willie, I've started listening to music on my phone because I can."

The song that speaks to her and gives her inspiration is "Fight Song" by Rachel Platten. "I always call it my song," says Bonnie.

While Bonnie's new normal requires adjustments to her lifestyle, Bonnie is deeply grateful for the progress she's made and Good Shepherd's role in getting her there. "I've accepted my new life and I make the best of it," she says. "I'm thankful because I've resumed a lot of my normal activities, and I know I can do a lot of things that other brain injury patients can't."

"The Vision Therapy Program has been a life changer for me. I continue to promote it to people. It's the best kept secret in the Lehigh Valley with the most compassionate therapists and doctors. It's amazing."



*Technology lets Bonnie continue her therapy anywhere.*

## Kathy Klimek

It's not every woman who will leave her home and follow her husband to live in a foreign country with a language and customs vastly different from her own. Yet that's just what Kathy Klimek did when she was a young bride of only 18 years old and embraced the adventure of moving from Allentown to Korea where her husband, John, was assigned to serve in the military.

A resident of the Good Shepherd Home-Bethlehem, where she lived since October 2000, Kathy passed away on Friday, January 6, with her family by her side, her long battle with multiple sclerosis (MS) at an end. She was 61 years old.

Born February 3, 1955 in Allentown, Kathy lived as a military wife in Korea for a year. The couple's son, John Jr., was born not long after they returned to the United States. Kathy worked for a finance company as a purchasing agent, but she had a passion and a talent for art that was a lifelong love. "She was a very good artist," says her sister Kim Graver. "She did watercolors, oil paintings, pastels, and pen and ink. A lot of the art work was hanging in her room at Good Shepherd."

Kim remembers a sister who was a little mischievous and had a delightful sense of humor. "She was always being silly and goofy, and trying to get a laugh," says Kim. "She had kind of a child-like spirit."

Kathy was diagnosed with MS when she was in her mid-30s. The disease progressed rapidly, eventually robbing Kathy of her ability to walk and talk. But at Good Shepherd, she found an extended family who loved her, and she took pleasure listening to music, especially The Beach Boys. One Christmas, Kim gave her sister the gift of several one-on-one music therapy sessions.

Illness led Kathy to be hospitalized shortly before she passed. Kim says her sister remained unconscious for much of that week, but before she died, Kathy had one last gift to give her family. "When we walked in the door, my mom said, 'Kathy, we're here,' and with that she immediately opened her eyes and she was alert for the first time. To me, it was like a miracle that she heard our voices and opened her eyes."

Kim summoned the rest of the family while Kathy remained conscious. "I told her, 'Kathy, you've had such a long battle, and you were such a fighter. It's time for you to have peace and do what you have to do to move on.'"

Within the hour, Kathy did just that. She moved on. "It was just amazing," says Kim. "It was a good way for her to know that it was okay, and for us to be able to say goodbye."

*A self-portrait at 18.*



# IN MEM

## Jeanne Leaver

Jeanne Leaver was smart, determined and independent, refusing to let her cerebral palsy (CP) stand in her way. Jeanne made her own decisions, always looking ahead and planning. “She had Good Shepherd picked out years before she would need it,” says her sister Julie Davenport.



A resident of the Good Shepherd Home Raker Center, Jeanne passed away on January 16 at age 64, devoted to her faith as a Jehovah's Witness, and having been blessed with a large loving family of three sisters and three brothers. She was born two months prematurely and weighed only 2.5 pounds, recalls Sandra Whispell, another sister. The first two years were spent on the family farm about 20 miles from Bloomsburg in western Pennsylvania. Realizing that their daughter was going to need care beyond what they could provide, Jeanne's parents sent her to live at the State Hospital for Crippled Children at Elizabethtown where a series of surgeries attempted to improve her mobility.

“You have to love someone enough to let them go where they need to be,” says Julie.

Jeanne returned home when she turned school age, and graduated from high school in 1972. She set her sights on college, and friends and family collected donations to buy Jeanne a golf cart to get around campus. “But Jeannie didn't have any sense of direction,” says Sandra, “so the golf cart wasn't really any help to her.”

The lack of accessibility then to students with disabilities led Jeanne to leave college and return home. But living in a small town had too many limitations for Jeanne's strongly independent spirit, so she moved to Allentown when she was in her early 20s. It was while living in Allentown that Jeanne likely learned about Good Shepherd. “She had a lot of strengths,” says Julie. “You would have to, to have a disability and go out and do everything she did.”

Jeanne married in 1997. Her husband passed away in 2013. Sandra remembers how she and Jeanne spent long days at the Bloomsburg Fair. “We didn't miss a thing,” says Sandra. Jeanne loved the small, whimsically-painted rocks sold at the fair, and had quite a collection.

Old-fashioned potato doughnuts were a beloved treat, available once a year on Fasnacht when local churches made them. Jeanne enjoyed those doughnuts not long before she passed away, given to her by Sandra who had some in her freezer. Bright-colored clothes, “a bit on the wild side,” and lots of costume jewelry gave Jeanne her unique style.

Eventually, Jeanne's CP required greater care, and just as she'd planned, in 2006, Good Shepherd became her next, and as it turned out, her final home. “I wish she had lived closer to home,” says Sandra, “but she had her place there at Good Shepherd.”

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