



SPRING
2009

Moments *at* MARYCREST ASSISTED LIVING

A decade of excellence, a legacy of care.

OUR MISSION

Marycrest Assisted Living is a legacy of the Sisters of St. Francis. We provide compassionate and comprehensive services in a comfortable and dignified environment for persons with disabilities and for seniors. By serving those most in need we honor and maintain the mission of our founders.

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The Director's Slate

Paula Padilla, Executive Administrator

In my last message, I marveled at the amazing year we experienced in 2008. Our nation's political landscape changed dramatically, and energized thousands of people in the process. The nation's economy experienced some of the worst months in half a century. In some ways, the last year has been a roller coaster ride on a grand scale: fast, high, low, scary and exciting.



Here at Marycrest Assisted Living, we celebrated our first decade of caring for low-income seniors and for younger adults with disabilities. We were looking ahead to our transition to new ownership and working hard to develop funding sources to underwrite pacesetting programs.

Exciting times continue across the nation and at Marycrest Assisted Living. Our nation's challenges continue to affect all of us: residents, employees, donors and friends. Still, we celebrate Marycrest Assisted Living's next decade with a very real sense of renewal and well-founded optimism.

We continue our drive to fulfill the mission and vision of our founders, the Sisters of St. Francis. Our ties with the Sisters are as strong as ever, and in these difficult times, their faith strengthens all of us. Our transition to become part of

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Director's Slate...continued

Legacy Senior Services went off without a hitch, making no discernable difference in the operation of Harmony and Serenity residences.

Our hard work during the last two years has resulted in a strong base of donors who have underwritten programs that serve residents, and funding to complete much-needed capital improvements to both Harmony and Serenity residences. We are thankful to these individuals, churches and foundations beyond what words can express.

I am looking forward to our celebration of the completion of renovations at Harmony Residence, and the new emergency call system serving both residences. I am looking forward to introducing our funders to residents so that they can appreciate more deeply how their support of Marycrest Assisted Living means giving individuals the support they need to live lives of independence and dignity as long as possible.

There is a lot of work ahead of us, in maintaining the best environment for residents, in assuring that all our staff are up-to-date on best practices in care, and in assuring that all programs continue regardless of the economic climate. I trust that the right people will be at the right place, at the right time, to assure that we continue to deliver the highest quality of care at Harmony and Serenity residences.

As we welcome springtime to Colorado, and look upon the new green grass, blooming flowers and the lengthening days, I hope you will share our sense of optimism and renewal.

With warmest regards,

Paula



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Marycrest Assisted Living

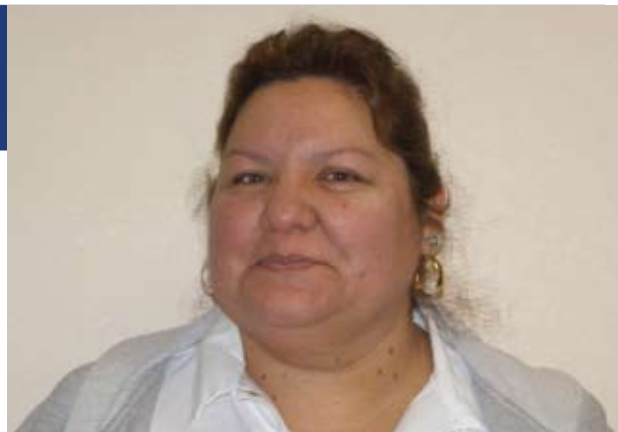
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A community of Legacy Senior Services

Employee Spotlight: Carolina Puente

If you ask Carolina Puente “What’s cookin’?” you are likely to hear about all sorts of good things. Carolina is one of the cooks in Marycrest Assisted Living’s kitchen. Born in Chihuahua, Mexico, Carolina is one of four children. Her family immigrated to the US in 1999, settling in Denver. She has been married to Fernando for 21 years, and they are the parents of two daughters. When she is not cooking for the 148 residents of Harmony and Serenity, Carolina keeps busy. Her hobbies include cooking and working puzzles.



She proudly reports that last year she earned her GED. She loves to go dancing with her husband and shopping with her daughters. Marycrest Assisted Living is lucky to have you. Thanks for feeding us so well!

Resident of the Month: Bette Conlon

Bette Conlon wasn’t born in Colorado, but she got here as soon as she could. She came to Denver as a bride in 1955 to be closer to her husband’s family. Bette is one of three siblings and recently gathered with relatives and friends to celebrate the 80th birthday of her sister Lorraine. Bette describes her half-century in Denver as “a wonderful life.” She and her late husband are the parents of two daughters. In addition to raising her family, Bette worked for many years at a Denver



law firm. Bette moved to Serenity in October 2008 and loves her new home. She sends a special thanks to the friend who referred her to Serenity! We are delighted to have you, Bette.

CAMPUS CORNER



The Annual Easter Party will be at Serenity on Friday, April 3, 2009 from 9:00 am to 11:00 am. We will have pictures with the Easter bunny and an Easter egg hunt, coloring activities and refreshments. Residents and all family members and employee’s little ones are invited.

Watch for information on the Cinco de Mayo festivities coming up in May.



It’s not too late to say THANK YOU to those who made a bright Christmas season for Serenity and Harmony residents. Jeff King provided live holiday music, Santa made an appearance for pictures with the young at heart. Katie Stickle and Mike Audino provided Christmas gifts for residents, as did the Colo Red Does Red Hat Ladies and the parish communities of St. Mark’s Catholic Church in Westminster, and Our Lady of Mount Carmel Church in Denver.

The More You Know: April is Stress Awareness Month

Our reactions to stress are instinctive and physical. How we choose to deal with stress has a great impact on our physical health and well-being.

Few of us need a formal definition of the word **stress**: "...a condition or feeling experienced when a person perceives that demands exceed the personal and social resources the individual is able to mobilize."

Everyone knows that we feel stress when we feel we do not have the time, experience and resources to manage a situation. We experience even greater stress when we feel we cannot handle the demands put on us.

Scientists call the instinctive stress response "fight or flight," to describe the automatic ways that the body responds to stress. These include increased heart rate and breathing, heightened awareness and the surge of adrenaline and other stress hormones that allow us



to act quickly to avoid impending danger, and even display unusual physical strength in an emergency.

These physical responses were critical to the daily survival of primitive man. Today's stressors are less likely to be threats to physical survival. Today's "saber-tooth tigers" are traffic jams, bounced checks, missed deadlines and relationship struggles. Even so, the "fight or flight" instinct has only one mode, and that is to pump out stress hormones, bypass rational thought and fight to survive.

As Dr. Neil F. Neimark writes:

We can begin to see how it is almost impossible to cultivate positive attitudes and beliefs when we are stuck in survival mode. Our heart is not open. Our rational mind is disengaged. Our consciousness is focused on fear, not love. Making clear choices and recognizing the consequences of those choices is unfeasible. We are focused on short-term survival, not the long-term consequences of our beliefs and choices. When we are overwhelmed with excessive stress, our life becomes a series of short-term emergencies. We lose the ability to relax and enjoy the moment. We live from crisis to crisis, with no relief in sight. Burnout is inevitable.

Stress does affect your health.

Stress hormones can cause increased blood pressure, weight gain, and susceptibility to a variety of illnesses. Extensive research has linked chronic stress with heart disease, substance abuse, headaches, irritable bowel syndrome and even cancer. For many people, symptoms of anxiety, irritability, poor concen-

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tration and depression can signal high levels of stress. All of these affect our ability to work effectively and enjoy life.

How you cope with stress can keep you healthier.

Each of us has the ability to “re-program” our responses to stress, and choose more productive ways to cope with stress in our daily lives. Here are a few strategies for managing stress.

Change the external environment (your “reality”). This means making the environment where you live safer. Physical safety means getting out of toxic, noisy or hostile environments. Emotional safety means surrounding ourselves with friends and people who genuinely care for us, learning better communication skills and time management skills. Spiritual safety means creating a life surrounded with a sense of purpose, a relationship with a higher power and a resolve to release deeply held feelings of shame, worthlessness and excessive guilt. Specific ways to do this include:

1. **Identify the sources of the stress** in your life and look at how you currently cope with them. Explore different ways to handle these stressors: a budget might be helpful in dealing with financial stress; regular walks in the evening may help you relax after busy workdays.
2. **Avoid unnecessary stress.** Learn to say no to requests that will cause you anxiety or excessive fatigue. Avoid the people who make you feel stressed, even if that means finding new friends or activities. Take control of your environment by reducing your “to do” list.
3. **Alter those situations that create stress.** Talk about your feelings with others, and discuss ways to change the situation.

Change your perceptions of reality. This includes changing our mental perspectives, our attitudes, our beliefs and our emotional

reactions to the events that happen to us. Changing our perceptions of reality is best illustrated by the proverbial saying, “when life gives you lemons, make lemonade.” Without actually changing our reality, we can alter our experiences. For example:

1. **Bring a positive perspective** to a stressful situation or a problem. That may sound easier said than done, but changing your attitude really does change your experience. In the “big picture” of your life, most problems important in the moment are not so important to your life. Consider whether adjusting your expectations will change your satisfaction.
2. **Exercise!** Even five minutes of brisk exercise can burn stress hormones and stimulate the endorphins that give a naturally happy feeling.
3. **Learn to adapt to the stressors you cannot change.** Do not try to control the uncontrollable. Instead, reach out to others, share your feelings and learn to forgive.
4. **Make time for fun and relaxation.** After all, the point of managing stress is to live a longer, healthier and more satisfying life.

Both Harmony and Serenity residences have books, periodicals and other resources on dealing with stress. Links to online resources on stress reduction and stress management can be found at our web site, www.MarycrestAssistedLiving.org/resources.html.

CAMPUS CORNER



Many thanks to the Irish Step Dancers from The Bennett School of Irish Dance who performed for residents on Friday, March 13, 2009 and gave us a head start in celebrating St. Patrick's Day. The dancers “kicked off” a lively mood that lasted through Tuesday for the day of St. Paddy himself, when we celebrated the wearin’ o’ the green, and that’s no blarney!

Harmony Residence Has a Fresh, Vibrant Look

On March 31st, donors and friends will visit Harmony Residence to see the newly redecorated first floor public areas.

Designer Jan Andreson of Denver Design Direct brought in soft shades of green and bold purples, as well as new flooring and comfortable new furnishings. Direc-

tor of Maintenance Bob Ramirez and his staff deserve special recognition for their tireless supervision of the work, and attention to make every detail perfect. *continued on next page*



Before



After

Special thanks go to the residents and staff of Harmony. During the month-long construction period, residents cheerfully dined in the living room, and adjusted their lifestyles around scaffolding, tarps and paint cans. The result is comfortable and contemporary, and designed to meet residents' needs for better accessibility in the dining room, library and living room.

We are very pleased that the Harmony renovation was funded fully with charitable donations and grants. This project is the first phase of Marycrest Assisted Living's first capital funding effort, now nearing completion. Other components of the capital effort include the new parking lot to the west of Serenity, electrical system upgrades and replacement of the emergency call system in both the Harmony and Serenity residences. •

A Word Of Thanks...continued from back page

On behalf of the 138 residents of Serenity and Harmony, we thank the donors listed below for all the ways that you make Marycrest Assisted Living a welcoming home. •

- | | | | |
|---------------------------------|-----------------------------------|-------------------------------------|---|
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| John Duncan Charitable Trust | Gini Krattenmaker | | |
| Veronica Durand | | | |

A Word Of Thanks

Last year was a banner year for Marycrest Assisted Living.

We celebrated a decade of serving low-income seniors and younger adults with disabilities, we moved from the ownership by the Sisters of St. Francis to that of Legacy Senior Services, a nationally recognized non-profit operator of assisted living residences and nursing homes. We are especially proud that so many donors – individuals, churches and charitable foundations – have stepped up to support innovative programming and capital improvements to serve our residents.

THANK YOU!

Because of your support, residents have better access to health care through the On-Site Physician Services program. With generous funding of the Resident Life Program, Harmony is a vibrant “neighborhood.” Volunteer service has brought cheerful parties and the very popular Wednesday Night Texas Hold ‘Em games.

Moments at MARYCREST ASSISTED LIVING

Marycrest Assisted Living
2850 Columbine Road
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MARYCREST ASSISTED LIVING

SAYS...

Thank you



In-kind gifts of items have made the residences more comfortable and fun, and donated gifts have made residents feel recognized on special days and holidays. The monthly Country Store at Harmony and Serenity is only possible with the tremendous support of the Red Hat Ladies, who organize and stock the store, then donate the sales tax to maximize residents’ buying power. They also donate Country Store gift certificates that resident councils award. *continued on page 7*

CAMPUS CORNER

At Marycrest Assisted Living we love a party. Whether it is the birthdays of the month, national holidays or just for fun, we welcome individuals and groups to come to visit and spread cheer. We are now planning activities for Memorial Day weekend and Flag Day (June 14), and recruiting groups to help with our big Independence Day Blowout in July. If you or your group would like to host or help with festivities for our very appreciative residents, please call the Activities Department at (303) 433-0906.

