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A message from the president

The Wonder of Autumn

A hickory leaf, wondrously transformed into botanical gold, is loosed from its parentage of wood and gently drifts, this way and that, to a multi-colored carpet below.

It is a season of change.

Brushes of evergreen appear intermittently among the reds and oranges and yellows of the forest.

It is a season of beauty.

A chill in the air pierces one’s garments and touches the bones.

It is a season of preparation for new and exciting experiences.

Squirrels scurry between treetops and the ground, burying their treasure.

It is a season for provisioning.

The moon rides high in the night sky, its beams flowing through wide eyes and bathing the heart.

It is a season for love.

A fire leaps and dodges as it plays among the logs in a fireplace.

It is a season for dreams.

Popcorn causes a staccato sound in its vessel, and the smell of hot chocolate permeates the room.

It is a season for sharing friendships.

A figure kneels in the twilight shadows, and an earnest prayer is offered.

It is a season of reflection.

Songs of praise enliven the soul.

It is a season of gladness.

Autumn, truly, is a special time of year.

May the messages of God’s love and grace, delivered through the wonder of His creation, inspire and draw you closer to Him, this autumn season and beyond.

Sincerely,

Beecher Hunter

OUR COVER MODEL:
Lisa Lay, vice president of Treasury for Life Care Centers of America

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By Heidi Tompkins, Life Care Public Relations

On Aug. 30, 2016, Life Care received three awards during the Tennessee Health Care Association’s awards luncheon in Knoxville.

Sheila Rowland, director of nursing at Life Care Center of Morgan County in Wartburg, won the Nurse of the Year Award, while Lucien Lamontagne, executive chef at Life Care Center of Hixson, received the Excellence Affiliate Member of the Year Award for Dietary, and Lisa Jackson, environmental services director at Life Care Center of Hixson, won the Excellence Affiliate Member of the Year Award for Environmental Services.

Sheila Rowland – Nurse of the Year

Rowland has been the DON at Life Care Center of Morgan County for 12 years and served the building for more than 20 years. She started her career as a certified nursing assistant and has been a licensed practical nurse, a floor RN, a unit manager and a staff development coordinator.

During the award ceremony, Rowland was praised for her patient-first attitude, her commitment and her leadership skills. “Others before self has been her direction with the staff, and it shows throughout the building,” said Scott Hunt, executive director. “Our facility is a five-star building, and that is thanks to the leadership of Sheila.”

Rowland has also used her personal experience as a patient to grow professionally. In 2015, she had double knee-replacement surgery and did her inpatient rehabilitation at her facility. Going through that gave her greater insight into patient needs.

The Nurse of the Year Award was a surprise to Rowland, who said, “It humbles you so much. It’s the recognition of a lifetime, and it’s not just for me – it’s for the facility I work at and the people I work with.”

Lucien Lamontagne – Excellence Affiliate Member of the Year Award for Dietary

Lamontagne has been the executive chef at Life Care Center of Hixson since the building opened in 2011, and he was with Life Care prior to that. His illustrious career includes serving in the Pentagon under the Joint Chiefs of Staff.

At the facility, Lamontagne not only prepares food but also helps with fundraisers, spearheaded an annual car show, conducts community food seminars, makes special food for residents who will not eat and creates hospice menus. He has been known to cook at patients’ bedsides, and he has brought Christmas gifts for residents who had no family support.

Other Life Care centers have benefitted from his expertise in setting up new ice cream parlors and designing resident menus. “Lucien knows how to manage his department and has the best diets for our residents,” said Mae Petty, activity director at Life Care Center of Hixson.

About the award, Lamontagne said, “It’s an honor, though I don’t really look for the rewards. I get my rewards every day. Work for me is my playground. I get to create. I get to do what I love.”

Lisa Jackson – Excellence Affiliate Member of the Year Award for Environmental Services

Jackson has been with Life Care since 2008 and with Life Care Center of Hixson since its opening. She makes her own natural cleaning products, and she has shared with residents and community groups how to make them.

Jackson’s day-to-day duties include cleaning rooms for new residents. “She is very concerned about how our facility looks and smells, and keeping our residents safe,” said Petty.

For customer service, Jackson started a program to meet and greet all new admissions, even though this often means she has to stay late.

Jackson serves her fellow associates too. She prepared meals and cleaned house for the sister of an associate when the sister was battling major health problems.

About the award, Jackson said, “It caught me off guard at first. You don’t expect a reward. But it means a lot – it made me feel really special.”
By Heidi Tompkins, Life Care Public Relations

They may not wear capes, or fly, but Life Care has many heroes among its associates.

Every year, each Life Care facility awards four of its top associates: one Team Spirit Award winner and three CNA of the Year winners. From these associates, a region-wide Team Spirit Award winner and a region-wide CNA of the Year winner is chosen.

To honor these winners, many regions host Rewarding Excellence banquets. Different areas of the country have different traditions and themes for their celebrations. For example, the Mequite Region in the Southwest used a theme tying into the Summer Games this year, “Life Care’s Olympic Team,” and the Sun States Region on the Space Coast of Florida used a “You Make a World of Difference” theme.

The Northeast Division especially went all-out for its two 2016 Rewarding Excellence banquets.

Attendees for the Patriot and Walden Regions’ banquet dressed up and arrived in limousines.

“It was a magnificent sight!” said Zo Long, Northeast Division vice president.

The Lakes Region banquet took on a superheroes theme, complete with comic-book style decorations and brightly colored capes adorned with superhero words, such as “Bam!” and “KaPow!”

“For the past few years, we have hosted the event at a botanical garden, and each year we have a different theme,” explained John Polturanus, Lakes Region vice president. “While last year’s theme was ‘Survivor,’ we thought the superhero theme would be appropriate to celebrate the accomplishments of our unsung heroes.”

Stroke survivor and author Julia Fox Garrison spoke at both Northeast banquets, sharing her inspiring story of her journey as she recovered from the stroke. She talked about her experience as a patient and how much the compassionate acts of caregivers meant to her.

The highlight of the banquets for Garrison was hearing the stories of the honorees.

“The people, the stories – they energized me,” said Garrison. “The executive director would say why this person or that person was chosen, and I couldn’t stop crying. Most of these people who do these acts of kindness aren’t looking for recognition. They do these things because it’s innate in who they are. The theme ‘Superheroes’ really suits all your employees.”

Beecher Hunter, Life Care president, shared, “Life Care associates daily prove their commitment to serving our residents with their professional skills and compassion, often doing acts of service that go beyond their job requirements. We are delighted to recognize and thank them for their work through these Rewarding Excellence banquets and other awards programs. They represent thousands of other caregivers in our company and show by their actions what our mission is all about.”
By Beecher Hunter, Life Care President

It all began with a long-shot, cold call. At 8 a.m. on a summer day in 1967, Forrest Preston and a friend, Farrell Jones, knocked at the door of a nursing home company in Wenatchee, Washington.

They hadn't telephoned the owner of the company, Carl Campbell, to say they were coming, but had risked the drive to central Washington from Oregon the night before in hopes of seeing the businessman and presenting to him their venture idea.

“We had blind faith we’d find him in,” Preston recalls.

The door was locked, but moments later the lanky, soft-spoken Campbell rounded a corner of the office to arrive for work.

He knew one of the men at his doorstep. Jones, an Eastern Washington-based contractor, had done plastering and other exterior work for several of Campbell’s nursing home projects. But Campbell had never laid eyes on the 34-year-old Preston, who made his home 3,000 miles away in Cleveland, Tennessee.

“Farrell, I feel badly, but I’ve got a full day planned,” said Campbell, when told his early morning visitors wanted to discuss a nursing home proposal with him. He explained he would be piloting a single-engine plane on an inspection tour of several of his nursing centers in Washington and Idaho communities.

But then the congenial Campbell paused, thought a moment, and said: “However, if you guys aren’t afraid to fly with me, we can talk about your project as we go, and we’ll be on our way.”

Preston and Jones jumped at the chance. In the plane’s small cabin during a morning of short flights, they described their vision. They wanted to build a nursing home in Cleveland, Tennessee, that would elevate the quality of long-term care in that community and rival any nursing center in the nation.

The facility would be attractively furnished and staffed by well-trained, highly motivated personnel who would deliver the care in a spirit of love and compassion. It would offer engaging activities, foster warm friendships and create an environment where residents were treated with dignity and respect, not warehoused waiting to die.

But the two young entrepreneurs lacked the resources to make their dream come true. They needed financial backing, and they hoped Campbell, a successful nursing home entrepreneur, would embrace their idea and co-sign a bank note in return.
for part ownership of the facility in the South.

Although Campbell had never met Preston before, he had heard his father – Benjamin Preston, a Seventh-day Adventist minister – speak on several occasions. And there was something about Preston that attracted Campbell. “He had a lot of fire,” Campbell said, “and he was quite a talker. I liked him immediately.”

That afternoon, at an outdoor table under a canopy of a drive-in restaurant in Coeur d’Alene, Idaho, Campbell agreed to support their venture. Preston and Jones had accomplished their mission.

Shortly after their visit to the Northwest, Preston showed up at my office at “The Cleveland Daily Banner.” We had been friends for several years, working together on civic activities, such as the Cleveland Jaycees and the YMCA.

There was a radiance on his face and excitement in his voice as he announced that he was going to build a new nursing center in Cleveland. And that was good news, because there was only one other such facility in town, operated by the local hospital.

I was invited to the groundbreaking, and as the construction trailer was located on the site, once in a while, I would stop the car, walk up the hill and check on the progress. Preston would roll out the plans and provide updates. When the building began to come out of the ground, occasionally we would walk through it.

And when it held its grand opening on Jan. 4, 1970, people were greeted by chandeliers, beautiful furnishings and appointments throughout, as well as attractive carpeting. It was truly the Ritz of nursing homes of that day. It was named Garden Terrace Convalescent Center.

Preston believed that other nursing centers, grounded in the same vision for care and service, could be built. By 1976, he had developed five more facilities – four others in Tennessee and one in Florida. Realizing that he couldn’t personally manage all six, he proceeded to incorporate Life Care Centers of America – on Jan. 6, 1976 – to be the management company of these six and others that might be built or acquired during a future of “serving and dreaming of greater service opportunities.”

In 1979, Jones decided to start his own long-term health care company, and he sold his stock in Life Care to Preston. In 1981, Campbell elected to sell his Life Care stock in order to devote more time to his own properties in the Northwest. Preston today is the sole stockholder in Life Care Centers of America.

In appreciation of the role he played in starting Life Care, the company’s Campbell Center in Cleveland is named for him. The organization’s highest honor bestowed on a volunteer, presented annually, is named the Carl W. Campbell Wind Beneath My Wings Award.

The company has continued its growth until today, when it operates 209 skilled nursing facilities in 28 states and 45 assisted and independent living buildings in a sister organization. Its mission has never changed: to be a premier provider of senior living and health care.

Residents remain the highest priority – serving them and, in return, being positively impacted by them.

Those who enter a Life Care-affiliated center find that each resident has a story to tell and a lesson to share. “You are blessed when you visit,” Preston says. “You receive more than you give.”

Forrest Preston

Carl Campbell and Preston

Life Care Center of Cleveland
“I absolutely love what I do,” confessed Lisa Lay, the vice president of Treasury, as she displayed an affable smile and navigated the complex explanation of the role the Treasury department fills at the corporate offices.

“Treasury consists of accounts payable, cash management and payroll,” Lay continued. “We are responsible for managing the cash and ensuring that all invoices are paid timely and accurately and all payrolls are sufficiently funded. We manage hundreds of bank accounts on a daily basis and must account for every transaction that occurs within those accounts.”

When a department or facility receives money to be deposited or an invoice to be paid, whether it is for rent, taxes, supplies, insurance reimbursements or anything else one could imagine, Treasury is involved. Treasury coordinates depositing the cash into the correct bank account and is responsible for recording the cash. The requests for payment are processed and submitted by the appropriately designated departments or facility. In the end, however, those transactions all complete their journey in the Treasury department at the corporate offices in Cleveland, Tennessee.

“As an example, when a request for payment is submitted to Treasury, we are responsible for determining the legal entity that needs to make the payment and then determine if the invoice is to be processed with a check or paid electronically. The information is sent to Treasury, and we process the actual payment,” Lay explained. “The same is true when money comes in. We track where it’s from and what department or facility it belongs to, determine which bank account it needs to be in and then move that money to where it needs to be and record it.”

On a monthly basis, the Treasury department processes approximately 45,000 invoices using a document imaging system called Image Now. Image Now enables facilities to scan and route invoices directly into the Treasury department, where they are released in the accounting software used by Life Care and Century Park.

Lay is also responsible for opening, closing and updating signers on any bank account the company needs, including local accounts for facilities. Just like anyone manages his or her checkbook, Treasury has to manage the checkbook of every facility, as well as for the corporate offices, processing around 35,000 checks each month. Treasury is also responsible for ensuring that all payrolls at corporate and at the facilities have been funded timely and accurately. All cash moves through Treasury, which is responsible for it going in and out.

“Every morning we pull in electronic files from the banks that enable us to compare all of the transactions that we initiated with all of
the transactions that occurred at the bank,” said Lay. “We ensure that all ins and outs are accounted for. The files received also contain check images of reconciled checks. The check images are then attached to the invoices in Image Now and stored electronically. We also submit a daily file to the bank containing about 150 different types of transactions which are processed electronically. We fund all payroll, reimburse facility petty cash bank accounts, process various electronic

Transferring to Tennessee Technical University in Cookeville, Lay received her bachelor’s degree in accounting and then went on to become a certified public accountant. She then worked for a public accounting firm in Dalton, Georgia, for a few years before being hired at Life Care.

“In April of 1995, I started at Life Care,” shared Lay. “In May of 1995, I passed my CPA exam, and in June of 1995 I was married. A lot happened that year!”

Lay’s initial position with Life Care was financial controller for the Eastern Division. That position eventually became part of Facility Financial Services. Her original office was in what is now the museum building, before it was moved down the street from where Garden Plaza at Cleveland is today.

“In June of 1998, I became the director of Treasury, and I’ve been in Treasury ever since,” Lay said. “Around 2005, I became vice president of Treasury, which now includes both Treasury and Payroll.”

Lay acknowledges that Treasury is a complicated department to wrap one’s head around, so she keeps her life outside of work simple and relaxing.

“I enjoy exercise; I love outdoor activities and being on the water,” said Lay. “Most of my free time is spent with my children, though.”

Lay has three children, ages 18, 16 and 12. Her husband was a general contractor for several years, but currently oversees the operations for Lambcon Ready Mix. She and her family are active members at First Baptist Church, where Lay volunteers her time at church functions, as well as school events when needed. Recently, her oldest child enrolled at Lee University in Cleveland, reminding Lay that there are always changes to be managed, at home and at work.

“A lot of things have transpired during my time with Life Care,” recalled Lay. “I’ve seen a lot of upgrades and a lot of systems change, which is very exciting. For example, we have transitioned from a decentralized accounts payable system to a centralized cash and accounts payable system in which all of the images are now stored electronically. We have done away with manual hard copies. The movement is toward a more electronic system, both submitting and receiving payments electronically, which can be very challenging, but exciting at the same time.”

Those challenges are managed by Lay’s team so that facilities operate without interruption.

“We talk to the field daily,” Lay said. “In one month, Payroll processes about 1,600 help desk calls. This total doesn’t include the Treasury support calls. We’re here to provide support for them, so they have more time to be there for our residents.”

“We have such a great group of individuals to work with,” added Lay proudly. “I oversee the department and am responsible for leading it, but it could never work as smoothly without all of my incredible associates and the hard work they do.”

tax payments and corporate expense reports and fund the 401(k) on a daily basis as needed.”

There is a large group of associates in the Treasury and Payroll departments, and Lay’s function is to make sure it all goes smoothly and correctly.

“I chose accounting because of a love of math and problem-solving,” revealed Lay. “I’m very analytical and detailed, and I find math intriguing. I understand it because it’s not abstract. Math is what it is – one plus one is always two.”

Lay is a native of Cleveland, graduating from Bradley High School before getting her associate’s degree at Chattanooga State, where she received a basketball scholarship.
Margaret Christenson, an 82-year-old resident at The Bridge at Orlando, Florida, connects with the world around her by pursuing life with curiosity and passion. An avid learner, Christenson graduated from the University of Minnesota with her bachelor’s degree in occupational therapy in 1956. After marrying her husband, Carl, Christenson began working in long-term care. From an early age, Christenson was passionate about working in geriatrics.

“I used to visit a nursing home every Sunday night,” said Christenson. “I began to realize that if the geriatric population had more resources they could have stayed in their own homes or lived in a more homelike environment.”

This sentiment never left Christenson’s mind, and after receiving her master’s in public health, she began to brainstorm ways to help the elderly modify their homes to create a safer environment.

In 1980, Christenson founded Geriatric Environmental Concepts, a company designed to find practical modifications for aging individuals. As her company grew, Christenson realized that technology could speed up the writing process and provide in-home accessibility to a much larger audience. With the expertise of her son, a local software developer, she began to design and write a software program, which was later successfully alpha and beta tested. The company’s name was changed to Lifease©, and the first copy of the software sold in the fall of 1992. The program was so successful that the concept of the software is still used today.

Though she no longer runs a company, Christenson is constantly engaging her mind and finding innovative solutions for her friends at The Bridge. When she noticed that a few residents couldn’t read the regular hymnals during a church service, she found a company online to send the facility large-print hymnals.

When asked what words of wisdom she’s passed on to her four children, Christenson replied, “Life is about learning to accept that things won’t always go the way you planned. You have to stay curious, keep your mind active and never become complacent.”

For V. Fletcher Nipper, a 96-year-old resident at Remington Heights Retirement Community in Omaha, Nebraska, keeping connected is encapsulated in the pursuit of knowledge, expertise and new experiences. Fortunately, technology has equipped him with the tools to push that even further. Following his service in the Navy during his 20s, Nipper went to school to earn a degree in electrical engineering from the University of Nebraska. This was the beginning of his love for computers. Nipper worked primarily in electrical system architecture, designing and laying out the groundwork for large electrical projects during constructions. His expertise eventually offered him the opportunity to partner with a major architectural firm, but he chose to decline when his wife’s health took a turn for the worse. While he entertained the idea of becoming an attorney, Nipper continued working in electrical architecture until he was 82. But that didn’t end his relationship with technology or his pursuit of knowledge.

Today, Nipper uses his computer to stay connected to the world around him. He uses email to stay in touch with family and friends, specifically his daughter in Omaha and his son living in Georgia. In addition, Nipper uses his computer to access topics of interest to him, specifically non-fiction books and political articles. Passionate about his beliefs and opinions, Nipper also types up letters to congressmen expressing his opinions and concerns — all things he considers part of a day’s work.

“Working was one of my greatest pleasures in existence,” shared Nipper. “Being able to go and see your work on a table before you, it was wonderful. But I feel like I’ve changed every five to 10 years, and my opinions are different now from when I was younger. And I think it’s important that the older generation is heard.”

Nipper’s desire to stay connected extends beyond computers, however. He proudly explains that he attends all programs at the facility in order to keep learning. In addition, he has a love for classical music, stemming from his years as a trumpeter, as well as photography, a hobby he still participates in today.
We are proud of the people we serve every day. Our residents keep connected to their loved ones and communities through their adaptability, curiosity and zeal for life. We celebrated their influence on our lives during National Assisted Living Week, September 11 – 17, 2016.

Jerry and Elaine Ramsey

Jerry and Elaine Ramsey, both 76-year-old residents at Harbor Place at Cottesmore in Gig Harbor, Washington, are a perfect example of what true love looks like.

The couple met at a point in college when Jerry needed Elaine’s support and encouragement. Jerry worked very hard throughout his college years, in order to leave school debt-free. Because he worked nights, Elaine would leave a note on his windshield under the wipers saying “I love you, I’m on my way.”

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Jerry and Elaine Ramsey have been married for 49 years and are already looking forward to 50 together. Over the years, and still today, the couple is constantly learning new things.

Jerry and Elaine Ramsey

Jerry and Elaine Ramsey have been married for 49 years and are already looking forward to 50 together. Over the years, and still today, the couple is constantly learning new things.

Jerry and Elaine Ramsey keep connected with friends in North Carolina and family members in Missouri through video calls on their tablet and computer. “I can sit there and look at my friend in North Carolina, like he’s in the room,” said Jerry. “We can talk with complete conversational ability, like we’re right across the table.”

Jerry and Elaine also keep connected by giving back to the community through various endowments. Most importantly, their zeal for life and passion for literature is a gift they willingly share with friends and family near and far.

Marilyn Temple

Marilyn Temple, an 86-year-old resident of The Bridge at Greeley, Colorado, uses technology to stay current on historical and current events and keep in touch with her family and friends.

One of the ways Temple uses technology to stay connected is through social media. She has been using Facebook since its early days, making posts to friends’ walls and sharing photos. She also has a Pinterest account to help her keep up with beauty trends.

“My family told me about Facebook,” said Temple. “They said, ‘Why don’t you join Facebook so we can communicate?’

Facebook was very new and different to Temple at first. She admitted she made mistakes, but she learned by trial and error. Now, she uses Facebook to keep track of relatives and to pass the word along to the rest of the family when someone is ill or passes away.

Another way Temple uses the internet is to research subjects that interest her, including medical and historical facts.

“I look up things I may have forgotten from my school days, such as wars and other things,” said Temple. “I want to start learning how to do genealogy on the internet.”

In addition to using the internet to stay connected with friends, family and the world, Temple is also an avid texter. She said she is learning to be faster at texting so she can keep up with her children and grandchildren.

 “[The grandchildren] all have texting now,” said Temple. “They almost [always] have to have a phone when they go to school. My granddaughter has three kids, and she uses texting to keep up with her kids, especially when it comes time to pick them up from school.”

Having grown up on a 160-acre farm in Emerson, Nebraska, Temple said the way people use technology today is completely different from the way it was used when she was growing up.

“We had telephones with a line with seven or eight other people,” said Temple. “It wasn’t a private line, and people used it more or less for their business or what had to be done. You didn’t use it to call somebody on a whim, and you definitely didn’t use long distance a lot.”

Temple said that, although it can be misused, she thinks technology has improved communication today.
Life Care Center of Hendersonville, North Carolina, recently got to be part of Narcia Ridenour’s amazing journey of recovery from partial paraplegia.

Ridenour suffers from scoliosis, a condition that causes the spine to curve sideways instead of straight. In May 2014, she had her first back surgery, which was followed by another one in November 2014, another one in December 2014 and a fourth one in December 2015. In January 2016, she went to the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill Medical Center for examination by a team of doctors.

After assessing Ridenour’s spine, the doctors decided she needed surgery on a compression fracture of the spine the next day.

“I was informed there was a strong possibility of no walking, paralysis from the waist down because the spinal cord does not heal like the rest of the body,” Ridenour remembered. “After surgery, the surgeon talked to my husband and explained the screws from previous surgeries were pulling out from the bone due to the bones being weak.”

From there, it was watch and wait. Ridenour’s vital signs were good, but she could not move from the waist down. Her memory was also diminished due to being put on narcotics, but once she was taken off this medication, her cognition improved tremendously.

The next step in Ridenour’s recovery happened after the surgeon noticed her moving her big toe during one of his follow-up visits. She went to a therapy center in Asheville, North Carolina, for five to six weeks, where she regained just enough mobility to stand.

When she was ready to move closer to home, Ridenour came to Life Care Center of Hendersonville, North Carolina, on Feb. 24, to continue her rehabilitation journey. She needed complete assistance with all types of mobility and self-care, from walking to getting out of bed to bathing and getting dressed. Physical and occupational therapists worked with her in an intense and supportive rehab program.

On May 12, Ridenour was independent enough to return home with home health care services, and on July 1, she returned to Life Care Center of Hendersonville for outpatient therapy to increase her independence further.

“I have made the trip from having the ability to only move my big toe to currently walking on a walker,” said Ridenour. “Regaining balance with a cane is my next goal. Several of my doctors have called and cannot explain how this is happening and are calling me The Miracle Child. I always give credit to God, but in addition to God, the reason I can perform the way I currently am is because of the physical therapy I am receiving from Amanda Sorrill and occupational therapy from Paige Warwick.”

Ridenour added, “I have had really good sessions with other therapists at Life Care, but Amanda has been my assigned physical therapist from the beginning, and she has always treated me with a smile and hard work, like a patient and not a number.”

Ridenour continues to improve and regain functions, getting back to life and motion.
Ensuring that quality care is provided to patients is an important objective for all types of health care providers. For Life Care and other post-acute care providers, some primary risks related to quality care are sufficient staffing, the preparation and implementation of comprehensive care plans, proper medication management, appropriate use of psychotropic medications and ensuring patient safety. Life Care has developed and implemented policies and procedures to help its associates address and overcome these and other risks.

In the beginning, many post-acute and other health care providers focused much of their compliance program on ensuring appropriate billing for delivered services and that their organizations have lawful relationships with referral sources. While billing and relationships with referral sources are crucial to any compliance program, more emphasis has been placed on risks related to quality of care during the last few decades.

As part of an effective compliance program, health care providers focus on several risk areas through various elements in their programs such as written standards, auditing and monitoring, education and maintaining a disclosure program to report concerns. Life Care’s Code of Conduct and its policies and procedures are its written standards for addressing these risks. The Code is designed to be a road map, helping associates conduct business ethically and with integrity to meet their obligations in providing quality care. Its policies and procedures provide detailed guidance in meeting those obligations. New hire and periodic education on the Code as well as on various policies and procedures (e.g., regarding our abuse policy) are designed and implemented to prevent negative outcomes.

The Compliance department also publishes a quarterly newsletter, “Compliance Matters,” with articles designed to educate associates regarding various compliance topics, including those related to quality care.

We also address the performance of auditing and monitoring activities by the Compliance, Clinical and Rehab departments. These activities help ensure that company policies and procedures are in place and are effective, as well as identify opportunities for improvement. For example, the Compliance department conducts routine reviews at approximately 150 facilities a year.

As another part of our compliance program, regional associates for the Clinical Services and Rehab Services departments conduct periodic reviews at facilities to assess quality-of-care risk by reviewing samples of medical records. During their reviews, the Clinical Services reviewers assess more than 20 risk areas, including medication management, fall management, incontinence care and infection control. The Rehab Services reviewers assess compliance related to wound and pain management. Like the Compliance department reviews, these reviews are scored, and action plans are required to address the opportunities identified.

In addition to these proactive activities to identify issues, Life Care’s compliance program has a disclosure system for associates to report quality-of-care concerns. While we believe that an associate’s supervisor can best address most issues, including those related to quality of care, Life Care also provides the EthicsPoint system, consisting of a toll-free hotline and website that are available 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. EthicsPoint allows associates to submit a concern with their name and contact information, or to make an anonymous report while still allowing communication between the Compliance department and the reporter. When an anonymous report is made or when anonymity is requested, the Compliance department will make every effort to not identify the reporter. However, there may be instances when applicable laws may require disclosure of the reporter’s identity. Because our highest priority is making sure our residents are safe, Life Care has a strict non-retaliation policy regarding reporting so our associates feel they can report concerns without fear.

I want to thank our associates for caring for our patients and in discharging their responsibilities with integrity. Our team is grateful for the opportunity to provide support to our associates, who in turn keep our residents safe and sound.
Kelly Germain, certified nursing assistant, Life Care Center of Plainwell, Michigan
Germain took a resident’s sick cat home with her to nurse it back to health. She was able to get the cat to eat again and volunteered to check up on it and change the litter weekly until different arrangements could be made.

Zenalina Cabungcal, certified nursing assistant, Life Care Center of Punta Gorda, Florida
A co-worker and friend of Cabungcal was diagnosed with breast cancer. The disease advanced quickly, and Cabungcal was there to take her friend to doctor’s appointments, cook for her and regularly check in on her. When her friend’s mother arrived from the Philippines, Cabungcal invited her to stay with her family. When Cabungcal’s friend passed away, she helped the mother get through her daughter’s paperwork, prepare her home to be sold and organize all her belongings.

Tanya Perkins, occupational therapist assistant, Life Care Center of Boise, Idaho
Perkins sewed a custom-fit cover for a resident’s wheelchair so she wouldn’t be uncomfortable with the open back. The next day, Perkins had a second custom-fit cover ready, so the resident would have one while the other is being washed. Perkins also made a custom purse for a resident with a strap long enough to go over her shoulder and body so she could use her functional hand for walking with a cane.

Darren Antwine, maintenance assistant, Renaissance Park Multi Care Center in Fort Worth, Texas
Antwine is always helping with tasks that are unrelated to his role. He has volunteered to grill for several employee cookouts, and when someone gave him some flowers, he turned around and gave them to a resident to brighten her day.

Kimberly Bruland, certified nursing assistant, Evergreen Nursing Home in Alamosa, Colorado
Bruland donated some “Golden Age of Country” CDs for residents to sing along to, since she knew they would recognize and enjoy the songs.

Luanne Gray, rehab technician, Hammond-Whiting Care Center in Whiting, Indiana
Gray bought material to sew new covers for all of the residents with gastrostomy tubes. She selected patterns that matched each resident’s personality and style. When the residents received their covers, they were very happy that Gray knew exactly what they liked.

Adriene Angelini, activity director, Life Care Center of Reno, Nevada
When a resident needed to be picked up from the hospital at 11 p.m., Angelini was there. She left from a night out with her friends to make sure the resident was taken care of. Another resident was sent to the emergency room one night and was having a difficult time, and Angelini went to the hospital after work to help out.
If I could be 25 again, I would spend it exactly as I spent it then—happy to be in Tokyo with my one-month-old daughter and husband, an Army officer assigned there during the Korean War.

Frances Ford Watt, Garden Plaza of Greenbriar Cove, Tennessee

I would go fishing with my grandfather and spend more time with him. I would talk to him, learn more about him because I didn’t spend enough time with him before he passed away that year.

Donna Stevens, Life Care Center of Hilliard, Florida

One day at 25? Hands down, no problem! With my husband; we are making a day-long trek up to, and scrambling over a glacier to, the crest of almost 13,000-foot Mount Conness in the Tioga Pass region of the High Sierras that overlooks Yosemite.

Mae J. Martin, Garden Plaza of Post Falls, Idaho

I’d take my older sister’s hand and say, “Let’s go shopping and eat Mexican food for lunch—my treat!”

Ruth Demoney, Life Care Center of Greeley, Colorado

I would be camping with my sons and enjoying my family. 25 was the best year of my life.

Billy Lafever, Life Care Center of Sparta, Tennessee

I would love to be square dancing with my husband.

Mary Neff, Mayfair Village Retirement Center in Columbus, Ohio

I would spend the day at the farm.

Forrest Rupe, The Woodlands in Muncie, Indiana

I’d spend the day helping someone less fortunate.

Lillian Moreno, Cherry Hill Manor Nursing and Rehabilitation Center in Johnston, Rhode Island

I would love to be working for one more day.

Edward Duke, Life Care Center of Red Bank in Chattanooga, Tennessee

I would get out of this chair and play ball.

Beverly Parks, Life Care Center of Morgan County in Wartburg, Tennessee

If I could be 25 again, I would have a big dinner with my mother and father, my husband and tiny son, who would have been less than a year. And I would have hugged them all and told them how much I loved them.

Dea Pfeiffer, The Inn at Garden Plaza in Colorado Springs, Colorado
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