



THE Villager

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Therapy is Improving Lives

PG. 2



Patrick Laskowski, Director of Rehabilitation Services and Penny Davidson, COTA, helps Vannie Jones with static and dynamic balance therapy.

Patients thriving in new therapy and rehab services

Sunnyside Village took all of its therapy and rehabilitation services in-house this past summer and the affect has been electric as residents have greater trust in the staff and staff members have a closer affinity to patients.

“We have nearly tripled the caseload since taking it in-house in June,” said Diane Marcello, Administrator of Health Services for Sunnyside.

Over the years, Sunnyside had contracted with private companies to handle therapy and rehabilitation. Diane started as a speech therapist through one of those companies in 1995, but became administrator of Health Services, covering skilled nursing, rehab and assisted living in 1999.

“I thought we could serve residents better if we brought the services

in-house, and not have to be counting every second,” she said. So June 1, all of the services were brought under the Sunnyside Health and Rehabilitation Center.

Sunnyside Health and Rehabilitation Center has about a 90 percent success rate among patients improving or regaining balance.

It has been a huge success in just six months. “The staff takes a greater interest in the residents, an ownership. And the residents feel greater trust and empathy from Sunnyside,” Diane said.

A key to the growth and trust was hiring Patrick Laskowski, a former therapist with a private company who had been promoted by that firm

out of Sunnyside and into regional management. Diane hired him back. “He’s very visible and the residents are confident in him.”

It wasn’t a hard choice for Patrick. “I love coming to work every day,” he said. “I’m more vested in the community. It’s a whole different attitude, going to picnics, volunteering.”

Sunnyside Health and Rehabilitation Center services include rehabilitation for joints and strokes, aquatic therapy in the pool, occupational therapy to help people return to regular daily activities, strengthening, speech therapy, swallowing therapy and cognitive communication. There are also in-services for residents in independent living who do not require a lot of therapy, but just some help. “We can keep them in independent living longer,” Diane said.

Most recently, Sunnyside Health and Rehabilitation Center added balance and vestibular rehabilitation in September after Patrick received intensive training in Tampa. He said they have about a 90-percent success rate among patients improving or regaining balance.

“We’re outcome-focused,” Patrick said. “If we cannot help, we will find the right place for you.”

Plans call for continuing to add services. Next up is offering cardiac rehab. Additionally, therapy and rehabilitation is looking to increase the number of people served from the community outside Sunnyside.

The desire to expand more into the community is simple. “We have an excellent reputation for care,” Diane said. “That’s something we want to share with the community at large.”

Eileen Houseberg strengthens her arms as part of occupational therapy. Dick Eddy is aided by Stefan Austin, PTA, with shoulder therapy to increase range of motion.



THE WATOTO CHILDREN'S CHOIR

The Watoto Children's Choir tours the world sharing African dance, contemporary gospel music and stories. The children that perform have endured the hardship of losing one or both parents to disease or war. Watoto offers a holistic program to thousands of orphaned and vulnerable children.



Sunnyside residents experienced the sights and sounds of the Watoto Children's Choir. The choir, from Uganda, visited Sunnyside as part of its U.S. Tour, performing *Beautiful Africa: A New Generation*. Fred Clark personally meets one of the choir members after the performance.

Rose-transplant leaves Dietzels speechless



Reuben Dietzel shares a rose with his wife, Gertrude.

No residents have been around longer or seen more changes at Sunnyside Village than the Dietzels.

Reuben and Gertrude were the very first residents to move into the duplexes in the independent living community of Sunnyside in 1985, and only a few months ago transitioned to assisted living in Sunnyside Manor.

Reuben had developed serious health issues and could no longer live in the Sarasota house they had built in 1976. In fact, he could not even work anymore. So they chose Sunnyside Village and became the first independent residents. “No one was here when we moved in,” Reuben said. But that changed quickly as five others moved in shortly after them.

From then on, Sunnyside really began its growth in services and

facilities. “We’ve seen all this go up,” Gertrude said.

But the Dietzels have not just been a fixture at Sunnyside, they’ve been a beloved fixture.

Reuben, who grew up on a farm in Michigan, loves working with his hands and has had them involved in more than a few projects at Sunnyside over the years. One of the activities he greatly enjoyed was planting foliage around their duplex. And he was good at it. Perhaps the most striking and memorable of which was the rose garden he tended to gorgeous maturity for more than a decade.

One of the rose bushes was a birthday gift he gave to Gertrude.

When the Dietzels required a move to Sunnyside Manor a few months ago, the grounds-keeping staff, led by Lynn Eby, Director of

Campus Services, hatched a plan.

While the Dietzels were in the midst of moving to their new home, Eby and his men pruned the strongest rose bushes, carefully dug them out, potted them and transferred them to a home waiting outside the Dietzels’ apartment window. The transplant was a success and Reuben and Gertrude can enjoy the rose bushes — although it might take a little while for the roses to regain their full vigor from the transplant.

“I was just so surprised at the thought that they would bring it over,” Gertrude said. She was so moved by the gesture that she wrote out a thank-you card to each of the grounds-keepers that were involved in the transplant.



Eby and his men pruned the strongest rose bushes, carefully dug them out, potted them and transferred them to a home waiting outside the Dietzels’ apartment window.



A plaque reading “Dietzels’ Rose Garden” identifies the garden.

“They were both speechless. All they could say was, ‘Oh my, Oh my,’” Eby said. “They are special people and such a part of the history of Sunnyside.”



Kathy Martineau, CNA, enjoys a lighthearted moment with Health Center resident Malinda Hershberger.

36 Years of *Caring*...and Counting

New Englander Kathy Martineau just cannot lose the Northeastern accent, which is a bit surprising considering she has been working at Sunnyside Village for 36 years!

Kathy, a certified nursing assistant at the Sunnyside Health and Rehabilitation Center, is the longest serving employee at Sunnyside.

the lives of our residents, staff and community. We are successful in doing so because of dedicated staff like Kathy," said Leona Kough, Director of Human Resources.

When Kathy started work in 1978 after a friend told her about the opportunity, there was just the nursing facility. One building with

Kathy said her co-workers also make the job enjoyable. "Good people to work for. They encourage a lot," she said. "We all work together well for the benefit of the residents. It's wonderful."

"Kathy exemplifies the qualities we look for in our staff; qualities that deliver services with a caring heart

"Sunnyside's mission is to enrich the lives of our residents, staff and community. We are successful in doing so because of dedicated staff like Kathy," said Leona Kough, Director of Human Resources.

Why has she stayed so long? "I enjoy it here. I like the people. I like hearing their stories," she said.

"Sunnyside's mission is to enrich

60 beds. She still works in that department in a renovated building. But the rest of the campus was all woods. "I've seen a lot of changes."

and build strong relationships that are built on a foundation of compassion and loving care," Leona said.

Upcoming Events at Sunnyside Village



Annual Benefit Sale

MARCH 14

The Foundation's annual benefit sale with more than 400 linear feet filled with donated items for sale, including housewares, furniture, appliances, collectibles, baked goods to name a few. Volunteers are needed for the event. Proceeds benefit Sunnyside residents in financial need. For more information about this sale, contact Michael Smith, Director, at 941-371-2750



MARCH 26

Bharat Chandra, a clarinetist whose passion for music has taken him around the world, and his quintet will perform in concert as part of Sunnyside Village's *Music in the Village*. The concert begins at 6:30 p.m. and tickets are \$15.00 per person. For more details about *Music in the Village* or to purchase tickets contact Ann Chisholm, Activities Director, at 941-371-2750 ext. 606



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Sunnyside is affiliated with Mennonite Health Alliance, Southeast Mennonite Conference, LeadingAge and LeadingAge Florida.

The mission of Sunnyside Village is to enrich the lives of residents, staff and the community by providing homes and facilities, services and programs in a Christian environment.