

## Graceworks news

**Bethany Village expansion to be completed by spring:** Construction of two major elements of the \$47 million Bethany Village expansion project is completed and new residents are moving into the Continuing Care Retirement Community in Centerville. Three other elements are nearing completion.

In January 2008, the newly renovated Tower building was renamed Vista Place, emphasizing the expansive views from the 11-story building. As of November, residents had moved into 25 of the 30 spacious new villa residences.

Two parts of the project are scheduled to open by January 2009. The new Village Center will provide space for social events, physical fitness, education, art and casual food and beverages. Park Ridge Place will feature 30 large apartments, a plaza deck for community events and a parking garage.

The new Memory Support Center will be completed in spring 2009, providing state-of-the-art care for 56 individuals with Alzheimer's disease and other memory impairment.

**Graceworks Housing Services improves communities:** Graceworks Housing Services is using savings from refinancing apartment communities to make \$455,000 in repairs and capital improvements at St. Paul Trinity Community in Maysville, Ky.; Shepherd of the Valley Community in LaGrange, Ky.; Lutheran Community in Lawrenceburg, Ind.; and Trinity Community in Union City, Ind. The improvements include a new community room, roof replacements, parking lot resurfacing, intercom replacements and energy-efficient windows.

"The money has given us the ability to provide for enhancements to the property that positively impact resident quality of life," says Lisa Berkemeier, Administrator of Graceworks Housing Services.



**Graceworks**  
Lutheran Services

6430 Inner Mission Way, Dayton, OH 45459  
www.graceworks.org

Non-Profit  
Organization  
U.S. Postage  
PAID  
Dayton, OH  
Permit No. 388

# Graceworks

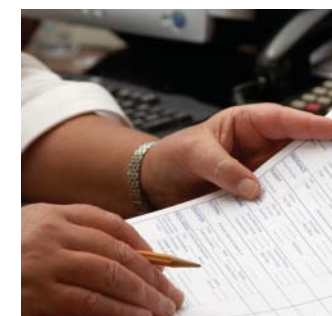
 Security in our homes, jobs and finances helps us experience stability. In this issue of *Graceworks*, discover how Graceworks Lutheran Services helps individuals meet uncertainties and challenges so they can achieve stability.

Meet Dan, one of 10 Graceworks Enhanced Living residents who enjoy living in a new home for individuals with mental retardation and developmental disabilities in a new neighborhood where they now feel safe to be outside.



Meet Steve, who began working at Bethany Village as part of a special education student program and has fulfilled his sense of purpose as an exemplary employee for 13 years.

Learn how Consumer Credit Counseling Service helps homeowners avoid foreclosure through the story of Ron and Dorothy, who had to rebuild their finances during their retirement years.



These stories offer a glimpse of how Graceworks Lutheran Services lives out our commitment to Faithful Caring in more than 50 locations as we seek to help people experience dignity and wholeness in relationship with God, family and community.

# Ron & Dorothy

Ron and Dorothy (not their real names) saw foreclosure staring at them from the mail. When Ron retired in April 2007, their income was reduced to a disability benefits check. They had to start paying their own health insurance premiums. They let bills go unpaid so they could keep up mortgage payments.

“I got four shutoff notices at one time: my heat bill, water bill, phone bill and electric bill,” said Ron. “By the time I got all of that caught up, I got behind on my mortgage payments.” Then came medical emergencies. The couple took out emergency “payday” loans. Soon they were paying \$575 a month for payday loans. Their mortgage company began the foreclosure process.

Then Ron and Dorothy found Graceworks Consumer Credit Counseling Service (CCCS). Since 1980 the program has helped individuals solve credit problems and manage their finances.

Due to the rapid increase in foreclosures – Ohio has one of the nation’s highest rates – CCCS increased efforts this year to help hundreds more individuals avoid foreclosure. CCCS hired additional certified housing counselors this year with the help of national and state grants. “We’re seeing people every day who, often through no fault of their own, are losing a roof over their heads,” said Melodee Sheils, CCCS Director.

Housing counselor Rachel Klopfer helped Ron and Dorothy “make a budget that works.” She worked with the Graceworks Once Around Shop and Preble County Emergency Assistance Program to assess the Eaton residents’ needs and find resources. Rachel recommended they describe their new budget plan to their mortgage company and propose a payment they could afford if they could extend the length of the mortgage. They wrote to the lender with their request: “Please give me the opportunity to try. I don’t want to lose my home.”

The lender stopped the foreclosure process, then offered to reduce the mortgage payment by about \$200 a month. Ron called Rachel and said, “What does this mean? Is this true?”

“It was almost unbelievable,” said Rachel. “I was very happy.”

Homeowners who are falling behind or at risk of foreclosure can call CCCS at 937-643-2227 or 800-377-2432 or visit [www.graceworks.org](http://www.graceworks.org). CCCS has offices in Dayton, Springfield, Sidney



and Richmond, Ind., to serve a 12-county area of southwest Ohio and eastern Indiana.

CCCS is a member of the National Foundation for Credit Counseling, is accredited by the Council on Accreditation and is

approved by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development to provide housing counseling. CCCS also provides credit and debt counseling, financial literacy classes and bankruptcy counseling.

*“Foreclosures are expensive for everyone: the homeowner, the lender, the community,” says Melodee Sheils, CCCS Director. “We all want to do everything we can to prevent every foreclosure possible.”*

# Steve

Steve D'Amico does his job at Bethany Village so well that his supervisor says: "It would be nice to clone him. He absolutely loves to work," says Laurie Wortham, Linden House Dining Services Manager.

His work record was one reason Steve was inducted into the Miami Valley Developmental Disabilities Hall of Fame as one of four individuals to receive a Personal Accomplishment Award on April 25, 2008.

Steve, who has autism, exemplifies the Graceworks Lutheran Services Values of Quality of Service, Integrity and Stewardship of Resources.

"He never misses a day, he's always on time and always in uniform," says Laurie. "When you have taught him how to do something once, he will do it that way every time," says Laurie. "And anybody new who starts working here immediately likes him." Other employees say they are inspired by his unceasingly positive attitude and energy level.

Steve started working at Bethany in 1995 when he was an 18-year-old student at Dayton's Belmont High School. His employment was part of Bethany's partnership with local special education programs. He has experienced dignity and stability in his own life as he has provided excellent service for residents in the Linden House who receive skilled nursing care.

"He's really blossomed," says Laurie. "He's been a real success story."

Steve pays close attention to detail, whether he is cleaning the kitchen, washing dishes or working his primary job on the tray line. "I always tell him he's my Number 1 guy," says Gina Myers, who has served as his team leader. "He's someone you can count on. He's friendly. He's willing to do whatever he needs to do."

Now 32, Steve also works hard at home, doing housework, cooking and taking care of his 28-year-old brother, who also has developmental disabilities, says his father, Ron.

When his shift ends each day at Bethany, Steve likes to go home and cook a homemade pizza, listen to music or take two dog biscuits to his neighbor's Airedale terrier, Mo. He loves to go camping, bicycling, hiking and swimming. He goes to dances sponsored by a local social group for individuals with mental retardation and developmental disabilities.

Whether he's working at Bethany or at home, Steve has one attitude about doing a job. "Do it the right way," Steve says.



*Steve, who has autism, experiences dignity and wholeness in doing his job well at Bethany Village, day after day. "He'd work every day if the schedule permitted," says his father, Ron.*





*“Our residents have the same basic desire that all of us share: to live in a safe, loving home,” says Deb Lyle, Administrator of Graceworks Enhanced Living. “That’s what we strive to provide every day.”*



**Dan** Dan looks forward to coming home in the afternoon now, where Debbie or Ramona might guide his wheelchair along a tree-lined sidewalk. He smiles at friendly neighbors strolling by with their dogs. “I love to take walks,” says Dan. “I feel safe here.”

Dan and nine other adults are enjoying a new life in a new Graceworks Enhanced Living home for adults with mental retardation and developmental disabilities. In their new life, they appreciate being outdoors, relaxing on the front porch or sipping a glass of lemonade under the patio umbrella as they smell dinner sizzling on the barbecue grill.

They couldn’t enjoy these activities in their former home, built by a different organization. Graceworks was asked to take over operation of their home after the previous provider was found guilty of diverting funds that were intended for care of these residents.

As time passed, Graceworks decided the location of the home, in a Cincinnati neighborhood that experienced increasing crime, was intolerable. Graceworks persevered to find a location in which the 10 residents could live together in peace and dignity. Most of the individuals, ranging in age from 27 to 56, have lived together for 12 years or longer and have become like family to each other.

Graceworks found such a location in the Cincinnati suburb of Wyoming in 2006. Graceworks leaders worked hard to overcome the concerns of some citizens in

the community, which had never had a group home for individuals with mental retardation and developmental disabilities.

In June 2008, Graceworks Enhanced Living opened a beautiful new home and the community opened its arms to its new residents. The mayor welcomed residents to “enjoy the benefits of living with dignity as valued citizens and neighbors.” Neighbors have brought flowers and desserts to welcome Graceworks residents and staff. Staff members feel safe walking with residents through the neighborhood or going to a local restaurant.

The new home is the result of Graceworks’ long struggle to rescue the residents from the former provider’s neglect and the dangers of their previous neighborhood.

“Home and community are two of the most important elements that help people achieve and sustain stability in their lives,” says Bill Serr, President and CEO of Graceworks Lutheran Services. “This house will provide a wonderful home and we are grateful to the citizens of Wyoming for welcoming our residents into a safe and stable community.”

“I sleep better now,” says Dan.