

# The Leading Edge

*A quarterly newsletter of COVENANT METHODIST SENIOR SERVICES, a strategic alliance of United Methodist Homes & Services and Covenant Retirement Communities.*

## CMSS Walks to Fight Alzheimer's



The above photo is of those CMSS staff who braved the weather to walk in the Alzheimer's Association's Memory Walk in September. Team CMSS is proud to announce that with the generosity of staff, residents, clients, family and friends of CMSS, that we raised and donated over \$4700.00 to the Alzheimer's Association. Thank you to all who supported our efforts!.

## In This Issue:

- ❖ CMSS Walks to Fight Alzheimer's
- ❖ President's Message:
- ❖ Marge Ford: A Profile in Professional Courage
- ❖ Cell Phones for Seniors
- ❖ Ethics at the Bedside
- ❖ From The CMSS Mailbag
- ❖ Employees of the Month
- ❖ November is National Alzheimer's Disease Awareness Month
- ❖ Community Events at CMSS

## President's Message

*Make no little plans; they have no magic to stir men's blood.*

That was my favorite of the quotes that my grandfather hand wrote on a piece of birch bark that hung in the boyhood bedroom I shared with my little brother. That Daniel Burnham quote is timeless.

I am reminded of John F. Kennedy's promise in the early 1960's that we would put a man on the moon by the end of the decade. What a night it was in July, 1969 when that promise was realized!

It seems that we are lacking today in that bold leadership that rallies a sense of patriotism and unifies and motivates the country. I keep thinking that we need a leader to say that we will be completely independent of foreign oil by 2020. Now wouldn't that be something to get behind. We could wage that war at home in the laboratories and think tanks without losing a single life in the line of duty.

The thing that takes the most courage is to state your goal knowing that it is basically a desired state, the means to get there not fully developed. I have found in my time at Covenant Methodist Senior Services (CMSS) that stating that goal and starting down the path is the most important step. You can always find reasons not to do something but forging ahead and tinkering along the way has been the formula for most of the significant

growth at CMSS. Glenwood Apartments for Low-Income Seniors, Covenant Methodist Home Care, and United Methodist Home Maintenance are all examples of innovative service offerings for older adults that started with a bold idea that blossomed once we had the courage to state our goal and begin down the development path. Our board of directors, who foster entrepreneurialism in developing programs for seniors, have always encouraged us to take that scary first step.

And now as we plan for the future, we realize that if we are going to be a significant force in the service of older adults on Chicago's north side, we will have to develop programs and services that serve people in their own homes. Ten years ago, we began transitioning from an organization that provided housing and facility-based healthcare to one that also had an array of community-based services.

Over the next year our management team will be "brainstorming" in search of a plan that rallies the organization behind a direction that motivates us as we strive to be of optimal service to our constituency. Hopefully, we will be able to make a bold prediction before long.

William A. Lowe  
President and C. E. O.  
[lowe@cmsschicago.org](mailto:lowe@cmsschicago.org)

# Marge Ford: A Profile in Professional Courage

It is 8:30 a.m. and Marge Ford is arriving at The Methodist Home (TMH) where, since April, she has been Director of Nursing. Still on her mind is the call she received earlier from her husband, John, who is a resident of The Hartwell, Covenant Methodist Senior Services (CMSS) memory support assisted living community. John calls every morning to assure Ford that he loves her. Ten years ago John was diagnosed with Parkinson's, a degenerative disorder of the central nervous system, and is among the 40% who develop dementia.



Marge Ford

Ford's career began at the early age of 15, when she began training to be a nurse. She was a licensed RN by 19 and would go on to earn her MSN and become a clinical instructor at Northwestern University. She transitioned to pharmacy nursing after marrying John 26 years ago.

During the summer of 2007 John, who was still living at home, began forgetting to take his medicine and prepare himself meals during the day. Ford admits, despite many years as a nurse, caring for

John was often overwhelming.

"I didn't want to be his caregiver, I wanted to be his wife," said Ford. "You can't do both because the caregiver takes over."

Ford considered professional home care, but knew that John's quality of life would be enhanced in a place he could interact with others. A member of her church suggested The Hartwell.

Visiting The Hartwell, Ford said, made a great impression. It was warm and inviting.

Janette Foley, Director of The Hartwell, mentioned during the visit that she would be hiring a part-time nurse to start a medicine administration program, a requirement for memory support assisted living communities. Ford saw there may be something at The Hartwell for herself, as well as John.

John's resistance to the move, however, prompted Ford to take a slower approach. She was offered and accepted the job at The Hartwell, while continuing her full-time job and caregiver role. She would occasionally bring John with her to The Hartwell, to acquaint him with the residence.

In February of 2008, Ford concluded the time had come for John's move to The Hartwell. "There is a certain amount of guilt when you put a relative

in an institution, even though you know it has to be done," said Ford.

As Ford and her husband adjusted to life at The Hartwell, Mary Nelson, TMH's incoming Administrator, asked to meet with Ford to discuss options for recruiting a new Director of Nursing. Ford found herself expressing interest in the position.

Nelson, claiming divine intervention was at work, quickly offered Ford the job. Ford welcomed the opportunity, knowing that it would keep her close to her husband all day, every day, and allow her an ongoing role at The Hartwell.

Ford's goal for TMH is lofty: to make it the best skilled nursing community on Chicago's north side. She is confident that improvements she and her staff are putting in place are working, citing as her smartest move to date hiring Melissa Mueller as Assistant Director of Nursing.

Ford also believes her experiences with John's Parkinson's have vastly increased her understanding of the nuanced concerns of residents' families. She embraces her role to fight alongside them, confident in her ability to make a difference. ☺

## Cell Phones for Seniors

Covenant Home of Chicago hosted a July 22 presentation of Cell Phones for Seniors, an innovative program sponsored by the Cook County Sheriff's Office that provides free cell phones to anyone over 65 who does not have access to one. The Sheriff's Office collects and refurbishes used cell phones from throughout Cook County, which are then programmed specifically to dial 911 in the event of an emergency. The phones cannot be used for purposes other than 911 calls.

Seniors are encouraged to carry the cell phones with them at all times. If they are ever in need of assistance, they will have immediate access to the 911 system.

Each of the approximately 75 seniors who attended and completed an application was given a free cell phone, charger and extra battery. The two Sheriff's policemen who represented the program made a presentation which thoroughly explained how to use the phones.

Many of the attending seniors were unaware that such a program exists, expressing their delight to learn of it and to be able to walk away with an added sense of independence. ☺

For more information on the Cell Phones for Seniors program, please call the Cook County Sheriff's Office at (773) 869-7878, or go online at: [www.cookcountysheriff.org/cellphones](http://www.cookcountysheriff.org/cellphones).

# Ethics at the Bedside with Dr. John Hardt

Medical ethics state that patients have a right to participate, in a fundamental way, in decisions that pertain to their own health.

Dr. John Hardt, an assistant professor of Bioethics at Loyola University gave a presentation on July 25th, which expanded on this subject as part of the professional CEU series hosted by The Methodist Home.

The talk, titled “Ethics at the Bedside,” expounded on how ethical issues are often communication issues at heart. “What we really need to do is better attend how we converse in medically charged environments,” Dr. Hardt said.

In all healthcare environments, from home health to nursing homes, healthcare professionals are challenged with protecting patient autonomy: defending a patient’s right to participate in deci-

sions that are relevant to their wellbeing.

Dr. Hardt’s lecture was primarily a discussion on how patient autonomy would be better served if healthcare professionals listened and worked with patients to converse at a higher level.

“I often hear complaints from doctors that a patient is being irrational or the family is in denial. I try to make the point that this may be obvious from a healthcare standpoint, but if we could do a better job of putting ourselves in their position – dealing with the threat of illness or dying – if they could do that, a lot of our conversations would go more smoothly,” Dr. Hardt explained.

Patient autonomy came about as a response to the idea that physicians

should call the shots and make all the decisions. Patient autonomy allows for the healthcare provider to educate their patient but not to make the decision for them.

“In situations where the doctor and patient can not see eye to eye on an issue, I recommend negotiation. These situations are where we need to get serious about how we communicate and if that doesn’t work, we have to accept the fact that patients will make decisions that we disagree with,” Dr. Hardt said.

“My ultimate suggestion is to appreciate how emotionally charged and psychologically, spiritually, and morally difficult the context is for patients who make these decisions,” Dr. Hardt said. “If we as healthcare professionals did a better job of appreciating the difficulty of the circumstances our patients are in, we would probably communicate better, ask better questions, and uncover the significant moral values we are trying to preserve.”



CMSS Community Relations Director, Marla Levie, introduces Dr. John Hardt.

---

## Employees of the Month

**Congratulations to September’s Employees of the Month:**

**Willie Henderson, The Methodist Home**

**Fernando Joffre, Assisted Living**

**Debbie Thrall, Home Care**

---

## Alzheimer’s Disease Awareness

President Ronald Reagan designated November as **National Alzheimer’s Disease Awareness Month** in 1983. At the time, fewer than 2 million Americans had Alzheimer’s; today, the number of people with the disease has soared to more than 5 million. By 2050, it is estimated that 11 to 16 million people will likely have Alzheimer’s.

For information, referral and support, contact the Alzheimer’s Association 24/7 Helpline at 1.800.272.3900 or on the web at [www.alz.org](http://www.alz.org).

## From the CMSS Mailbag

Dear Laura (Covenant Methodist Home Care),

The past few weeks have been, to say the least, extremely stressful for us. I don’t want to even imagine how much more difficult it would have been but for Debbie, Frances, Gualie and Bonnie. You made sure that he had fine, compassionate caregivers at all times.

I would readily recommend your agency to others in need of elder caregivers (I’ve done so already). You always said that you had more people in need of such services than you had superb workers; now you have a few more of those.

Most of all, thank you for finding these fine, trustworthy, devoted caregivers for our father. You do your job superbly and are a delight to work with at times of serious stress. Do be good to yourself, too, and don’t hesitate to call.

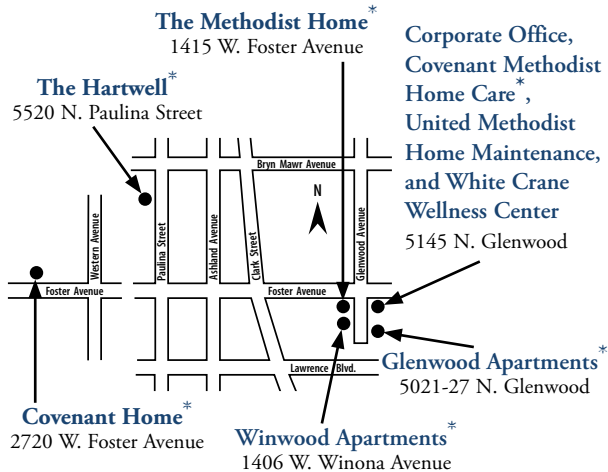
Fondly — Judy

# COVENANT METHODIST SENIOR SERVICES

1415 W. Foster Avenue, Chicago, Illinois 60640-2288

## COVENANT METHODIST SENIOR SERVICES

*Uniting Centuries of Service to Seniors*



Corporate Office,  
Covenant Methodist  
Home Care\*,  
United Methodist  
Home Maintenance,  
and White Crane  
Wellness Center  
5145 N. Glenwood

Main Phone: (773) 769-5500

[www.cmsschicago.org](http://www.cmsschicago.org)



\* CARF  
Accredited



COVENANT METHODIST SENIOR SERVICES is a strategic alliance of United Methodist Homes & Services and Covenant Retirement Communities.

### **The Methodist Home\*** ☎ (773) 769-5500

- ❖ Rehabilitation and Subacute Center
- ❖ Skilled Nursing and Long Term Care
- ❖ Specialized Dementia and Alzheimer's Care

### **The Hartwell\*** ☎ (773) 275-2400

- ❖ Memory Support Assisted Living

### **Covenant Home of Chicago\*** ☎ (773) 506-6900

- ❖ Customized Assisted Living

### **Covenant Methodist Home Care\*** ☎ (773) 769-5270

- ❖ Personalized Home Care Services

### **U. M. Senior Home Maintenance** ☎ (773) 769-9000

- ❖ Home Repairs and Improvement

### **Winwood & Glenwood Apartments\*** ☎ (773) 769-5500

- ❖ Affordable Housing for Seniors with Low Incomes

### *Collaborative Services*

### **White Crane Adult Day Wellness** ☎ (773) 271-9001

- ❖ Adult Day Wellness Program

CRC does not discriminate pursuant to the Fair Housing Act subject to any exemptions that may apply.

## Community Events

### **ALZHEIMER'S & DEMENTIA FAMILY SUPPORT GROUP**

**Date:** First Wednesday of Every Month, 5:00 P.M. – 6:00 P.M.

**Location:** The Hartwell, 5520 N. Paulina, Chicago

Alzheimer's Support Group for family members caring for a loved one with Alzheimer's or other dementia. Join us for sharing information, insights and strategies. Refreshments will be served.

**For reservations, call Janette at (773) 275-2400. Cost: Free!**

### **LADIES NIGHT OUT at Covenant Home of Chicago**

**Date:** Tuesday, November 11, 2008, 6:00 P.M. – 8:00 P.M.

**Location:** Covenant Home of Chicago, 2720 W. Foster, Chicago

Join us, ladies, for an evening of refreshments, manicures, chair massages and aromatherapy. Also learn about self-hypnosis and relaxation techniques to ease communication with loved ones from Richard L. Kramer, PsyD and Dorota Erdman, PsyD, clinical and health psychologists at Swedish Covenant Hospital. **Reservations: call Swedish Covenant Hospital at (773) 878-6888. Cost: Free!**

### **1415 CLUB HOLIDAY PARTY at The Methodist Home**

**Date:** Wednesday, December 3, 2008, 2:00 P.M. – 4:00 P.M.

**Location:** The Methodist Home, 1415 W. Foster, Chicago

Enjoy lively holiday entertainment and great food with your neighbors in the community. **Call (773) 769-5500 to make your holiday party reservation. Cost: \$5.00.**