



PACE

of southwest michigan

Surrounding you with the care
you need to remain in the
home you love.

Newsletter

Summer 2019

INSIDE:

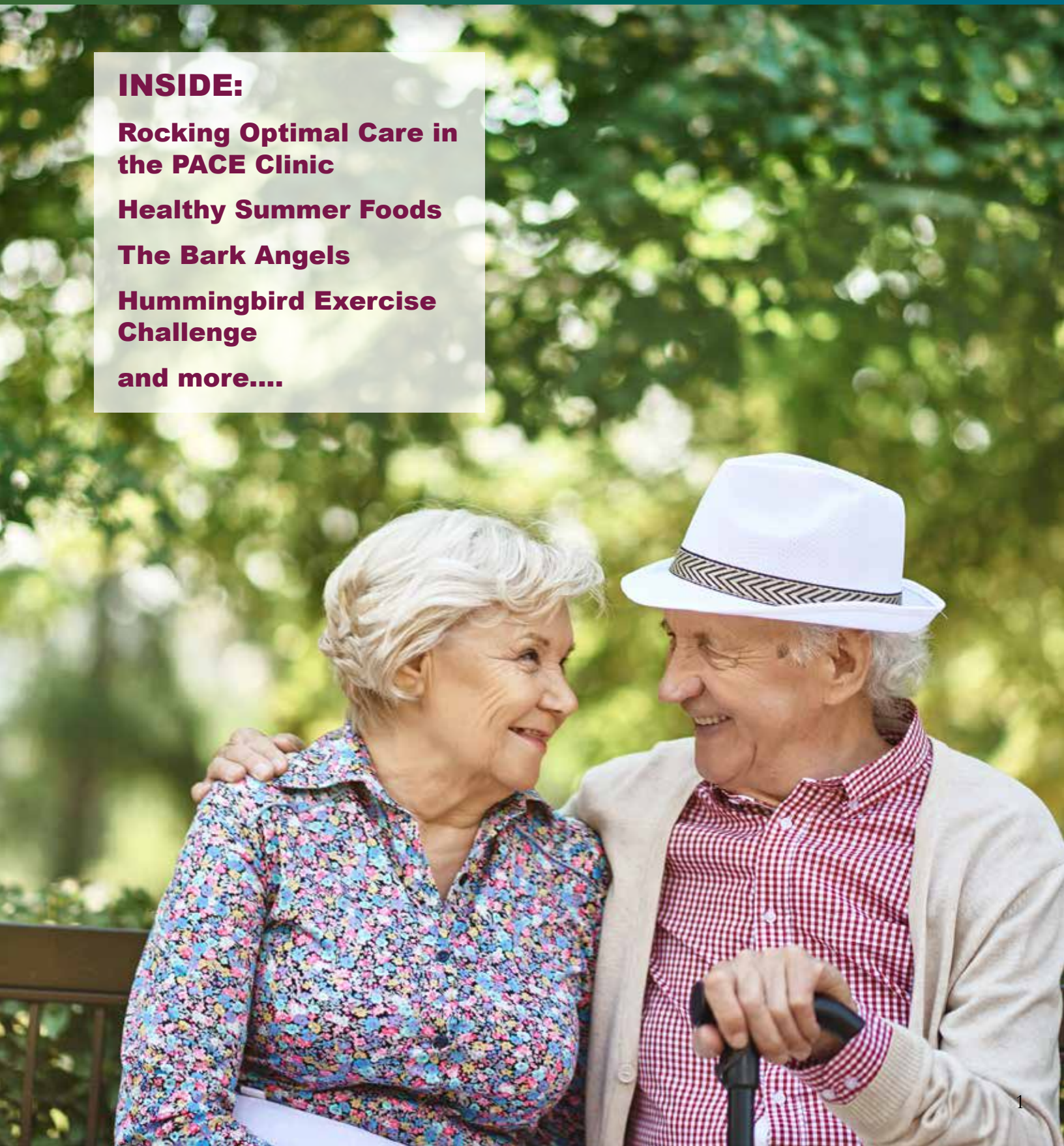
**Rocking Optimal Care in
the PACE Clinic**

Healthy Summer Foods

The Bark Angels

**Hummingbird Exercise
Challenge**

and more....





PACE Advocacy

On May 7th, PACE of Southwest Michigan along with 11 other Michigan PACE programs, participated in our 4th Annual Day at the Capital. The goal of this day was advocacy for PACE participants and education about the PACE model of care. We discussed stories about the elderly we serve each day and how important it is for the legislators to support our all-inclusive model of care. We educated the legislators on the positive impact the PACE participants experience through our coordinated care model compared to the often fragmented negative impact they experienced in the fee-for-service world. We discussed the importance of growth to ensure all eligible seniors have access to PACE as a long term care option. It was a successful day. We met with 10 State Senators, 29 State Representatives and over 75 legislative staffers.

More good news is the Center for Medicaid and Medicare Services recently released regulation changes for PACE. Many of the regulations specify increased flexibility for PACE programs, allowing us to better care for our participants.

Finally, we are fast approaching our 7th anniversary at PACE of Southwest Michigan. We have served hundreds of seniors in our community, providing interdisciplinary care to keep them in their homes with the highest level of independence and quality of life. Thank you for the opportunity to serve you. Thank you to all our PACE staff who show their dedication daily to our unique and transformative model of care.

Enjoy your summer!

Therese Saggau, CEO



Rocking Optimal Care in the PACE clinic!



When asked why she decided to join PACE as Clinic Operations manager, Qiana Harrison said: “When I saw everything they do, how could I not?”

Formerly Center Manager for two MedExpress Urgent Care locations, Qiana’s task at PACE is to maintain a smooth and efficient center of participant medical care – the clinic within the PACE Day Center. Since taking on her new role in January, Qiana “has made a major impact on the flow of the clinic,” says Clinic Supervisor, Jessica Sims. “She has been a great resource for the clinic staff. She encourages us to search for different solutions to difficult situations – to think outside the box. Even though things still get hectic in the clinic, it’s comforting knowing Qiana is there to support us,” said Jessica.

“Qiana learned PACE very quickly,” said PACE CEO Therese Saggau. “She focused on quality, clinical excellence and staff support. She has the ability to see the big picture and also to work out the details with her team to implement positive changes.”

Qiana implemented a clinic clerk position to triage telephone calls regarding participant medical issues. “Having a live person deciphering calls is important in determining priorities,” she said. “The clinic clerk position allows acute situations to be handled ASAP without delaying care,” Jessica said.

Qiana says her decision to increase the presence of PACE nurses in participants’ homes is also showing benefits. “Moving some of the care from the center to home is supporting our mission,” she said.

The uniqueness of the PACE model prompted Qiana to develop standardized job tool kits for every position in the clinic. “That way everyone gets all of the information they need to be the best they can be.” She collaborated with human resources staff members to outline the specifics of each clinic role. “Qiana really cares. She cares for the staff, too,” said Andreja Plantak, participant Nail Care Technician. “She is really organized and has made the clinic function better. She listens and always tries to find solutions. She works hard,” Andreja observes.

“It’s all going very well for me,” participant Lois said of her medical care. “They’re working their butts off. They are all dedicated. They wouldn’t be in that field if they weren’t.”

Participant Buddy said: “PACE has been thorough.” When he had his initial evaluation by clinic staff, they asked a lot of questions. “They’re checking on everything I mentioned even in passing,” Buddy said. “If I’d have said something about a hangnail, they’d have someone coming around to look at it,” he joked. “They do cater to your needs.”

Qiana senses the trust that participants have for the PACE staff. She believes that relationships are deepened within the “one-stop shop” format of the PACE model. “That’s the beauty of what we offer,” Qiana said. “We’re an extension of their family. It’s really cool. I love people. I love investing in people!”

Healthy Summer Foods

and the Culinary Club



Here in southwestern Michigan, there are so many great, fresh summer foods and many of them are really good for you!



Watermelon is one of the yummiest, most hydrating summer foods. It also contains lycopene which is a heart-protective compound. Try watermelon drizzled with olive oil and tossed with feta cheese or enjoy it all by itself as a sweet summer dessert.



Grilling or baking are healthy ways to prepare fish. Salmon contains heart-healthy Omega-3 fats and white fish like halibut or lake trout are great sources of lean protein. Try other ways to enjoy fish like fish tacos, kebabs, or add fish to a summer salad.



Iced tea is one of the joys of summer! There are so many types of tea with great health benefits. Try green tea, which has disease-fighting antioxidants. If you are stressed, try chamomile tea which has a calming effect. Add lemon wedges and a bit of sweetener, to customize the taste.



Let's face it! Salads are easy to make and summertime yields fresher fruit and vegetables you can add to your salads. Add tuna, an egg or low fat cheese for a good source of protein, and make a meal out of your salad. Nuts are also great to add to salads, as are healthy avocados.



PACE STARTS NEW CULINARY CLUB!

PACE's first Culinary Club, lead by PACE Registered Dietician Shannon Kramer, took place on June 24th, with 10 participants in attendance. The purpose of the club is to provide an educational opportunity to share simple recipes that participants can recreate at home. The Culinary Club is an additional opportunity for mental stimulation and social engagement. For participants who are no longer able to cook, culinary demonstrations can trigger reminiscence and encourage conversation.



Inspired by hummingbirds!

The latest PACE exercise challenge

It's remarkable how tiny hummingbirds can migrate so far. It's also remarkable the strides made as PACE participants "travel" on the NuStep machine. Their latest therapy challenge project was a virtual trip along the hummingbirds' migration path. It was also a real journey toward greater physical well being.

With every exercise step they took, the participants followed the hummingbirds' trip to Michigan from Mexico's Baja peninsula. The distance is 3,053 miles. One virtual mile equals 2,500 steps on the NuStep machine.

The hummingbirds are rewarded in reaching their breeding grounds. PACE participants are rewarded with greater strength and endurance. "It's amazing how motivated they are," said Physical Therapy Assistant Karen Hill. "We see the physical difference and so do they."

Exercise improves joint mobility and cardio-respiratory endurance. It also helps to control pain. Physical Therapist Heidi Harrell says exercise also enhances cognitive performance in older adults.



Activities Coordinator Chelsea Hipshear set up a hummingbird feeder that participants can view as they ride the NuStep machines. "They love the hummingbirds," she said. Participants learned about the amazing little beauties through Day Center activities. "Some already have

vast knowledge," Chelsea said. Participant Robert brought in his Birds and Blooms magazine with articles on hummingbirds. He has a feeder at home, and has visited a hummingbird aviary in Arizona. "They'd come and light on you. It was a really nice feeling," Robert recalled.

Participants color and cut out hummingbirds and move them along the PACE display board showing the birds' migration path to Michigan. "They're really into it," Chelsea said.

Since their last virtual challenge, the PACE NuStep machines have been replaced with an updated model that allows for easier on and off access. It can serve a wide range of participants with varying disabilities. "It's like a stair-stepper, but the participant can sit down so you don't have the impact on the joints.

The hummingbird challenge is the seventh virtual "trip" on the NuStep machines. Participants visited all the lighthouses on the eastern shore of Lake Michigan on their way to the Mackinaw Bridge. They followed the Monarch butterflies' migration to Mexico. They journeyed down Route 66, and traveled to Disneyland and back. They orbited Earth on the International Space Station, and sailed from Los Angeles to Hawaii. What's next? Stay tuned!

PACE hosts Cornerstone Chamber Business After Hours

Members of the Cornerstone Chamber of Commerce and community friends of PACE had a wonderful time at the Cornerstone Chamber Business After Hours hosted by PACE at the Day Center in St. Joseph.

Over 60 attendees networked while enjoying beverages and delicious hors d'oeuvres from CK Catering.

Therese Saggau, CEO and Connie Didonato, Marketing and Community Outreach Coordinator spoke about how PACE started in 2012 and how it has grown to over 220 participants since that time.

Guests were invited to tour the PACE facility. Boards representing PACE services were placed around the Day Center and representatives from

each department were present to help explain how their department contributes to participant care and how it all works together to provide the care seniors need to be able to stay living at home.

One of the many special guests who attended was State Representative Pauline Wendzel. Representative Wendzel was first elected to the Michigan House of Representatives in November 2018. She represents the 79th District, which includes part of Berrien County.

PACE will be hosting another Business After Hours with the Greater Niles Chamber of Commerce at The Berkshire in Niles, Michigan on August 22nd. We hope to see you there!



Clockwise from upper left: Guests enjoy networking; Dr. Erika Nearpass and Center Manager, Rhonda Gibson; Students talk with PACE Transportation Coordinator Shauna Griffin; State Representative Pauline Wendzel and PACE CEO Therese Saggau get acquainted; Social worker Kim Harmon talks about what PACE social workers do; Chamber members networking; guests get ready for announcements and door prizes.



New Faces *at* PACE!

We are excited to welcome new staff members to PACE since our last newsletter. New staff members are April Binns, Day Center Supervisor; Tonya Wright, Medical Assistant; Karen Hill, Physical Therapy Assistant; Kanisha Holton, Receptionist; Janis Callahan, RN; Jennifer Evans, CNA; Tieasha Lewis, PCA; Shauna Griffin, Transportation Coordinator; Keshia Montgomery, Activity Aide; Tanya Jackson-Dyer, Human Resource Administrative Assistant; Tihera Hill, Activity Aide; Camil Dorris, PCA; Janie Nitz, Activity Aide; Sarah Patzer, Medical Assistant; Caitlin Johnson, RN; Darlene Bridgeman, CNA; Monique Taylor, CNA; Alixis Izumi, Physician Assistant; Shannon Kramer, Dietician; Chelsea Hipshear, Enrollment Coordinator; Sandra Lewis, Quality Manager; Qiana Harrison, Clinic Operations Manager; Kadeisha Malone, CNA; Donna Enochs, RN; Heidi Harrell, Physical Therapist; Michael Mantione, Compliance Manager; Glenda Chadwick, Staff Accountant; Lorissa Watts, CNA; Dashina Williams, CNA; Rashawn Ray, CNA; Karmin Orsburn, OT; Dr. Daniel Asabache, MD; SaChe Wysinger, CNA; Jason Gaines, CNA; Renee Greer, PCA; Natalie Gulledge, PCA; Gabriela Mancera, LPN and Alexandra Morales, PCA.



April Binns, Day Center Supv.



Tonya Wright, MA



Karen Hill, PT Assistant



Kanisha Holton, Receptionist



Janis Callahan, RN



Jennifer Evans, CNA



Tieasha Lewis, PCA



Shauna Griffin, Transp. Coord.



Keshia Montgomery, Activity Aide



Tanya Jackson-Dyer, HR Admin. Assistant



Tihera Hill, Activity Aide



Camil Dorris, PCA



Janie Nitz, Activity Aide



Sarah Patzer, Medical Assistant



Caitlin Johnson, RN



Darlene Bridgeman, CNA



Monique Taylor, PA



Alixis Izumi, PA



Shannon Kramer, Dietician



Chelsea Hipshear, Enrollment Coord.



Sandra Lewis, Quality Mng.



Qiana Harrison, Clinic Op. Mng.



Kadeisha Malone, CNA



Donna Enochs, RN



Heidi Harrell, PT



Mike Mantione, Compliance Mng.



Glenda Chadwick, Staff Acct.



Lorissa Watts, CNA



Dashina Williams, CNA



Rashawn Ray, CNA



Karmin Orsburn, OT



Daniel Asabache, MD



SaChe Wysinger, CNA



Jason Gaines, CNA



Renee Greer, PCA



Natalie Gulledge, PCA



Gabriela Mancera, LPN



Alexandra Morales, PCA

Day Center Fun!



Bark Angels Bless PACE Participants

When Oban visits PACE, her eyes light up. “She’s an older soul. She just floats around the room,” said Helen Fasano, president of The Petz Carlton dog day care and training center. Oban is a caramel standard poodle who is among the program’s graduates – the “Bark Angels.” They have delighted PACE participants for over five years. Volunteers bring their own dogs that are trained and certified through The Petz Carlton.

“The dogs love PACE,” Helen said. “Noah, a Labradoodle, hasn’t missed a visit to PACE. It’s his favorite place,” says Helen. “He thinks of it as his big blue house, and he owns the room. He’s so proud to be there. His head’s up and he’s, ‘hey, everybody. I’m back!’” Helen can tell that participant Ron, who is blind, knows Noah by his touch and his energy. “Noah and I get along real well,” said Ron.

Burdett is another participant who especially enjoys the dogs’ visits. “I give each one a good pat,” he said. “It reminds me of my dog. I can remember way back,” says the 99-year-old.

Two elderly Labradors also visit. “The old labs – people just grab them,” said Helen. “It’s the old guys with the old guys. They see into each others eyes. It’s a beautiful connection,” she said of the moment when dog meets participant.

Participants who are not fond of dogs can remain in a different room within the day center.

Helen can spot apprehension on a person’s face.

“We respect that,” she said, adding that she has seen participants who had initially kept their distance, eventually come around and warm to the furry friends.

The dogs and volunteers feel a warm “welcome mat” rolled out for them



by PACE staff and participants, Helen says. “Activities Coordinator Meg is so open. She’s why it works. When we have that kind of enthusiasm, it’s well worth our time.”

Besides the fun the dogs bring, the sensory experience of reaching and petting the fur is also beneficial for the participant, Meg says.

Between 3 and 10 dogs come for each PACE visit. Helen’s strict requirements include passing the Canine Good Citizen test. “I can usually tell in the first five or 10 minutes if a dog is right for the program” said Helen. Kathryn Kelly, Petz Carlton manager, trains, tests and certifies dogs for the pet therapy program.

While the PACE visits are “meet and greet” opportunities, the Bark Angels certified dogs provide actual therapy with stroke survivors at Pine Ridge Rehabilitation Center, and autistic children at Lory’s Place. Staff therapists at those facilities direct the dogs’ activities. Stroke survivors are “more likely to get up and walk with a walker if a dog is there next to them,” Helen related.

At PACE, a cold nose nudged a participant’s hand, rousing her from a doze. “She got the biggest smile,” said Meg. “The Bark Angels bring joy and companionship. It’s good for the staff too!”





Debbie Hoffer was born in 1953, and grew up near Lawton, Michigan, in the middle of a family of five girls and four boys. “We used to sit down and have a blast playing games,” Debbie recalls. “My mama always had games for us to play. Then she knew where we were.”

“Everybody wanted to be at our house because we had fun,” Debbie said. But the kids also learned to earn their way from an early age. “I started working when I was two or three,” she said of toddling through the strawberry field. “I’d pick the big ones to fill the box fast, so mama would think I was good.” Debbie recalls also picking red raspberries, black raspberries and cherries throughout her childhood. The children were raised by their mother and step-father. “He was a good guy,” Debbie says. “He’d play cards with us and help us with our homework. He talked to us. I told him on his death bed: ‘Pappy, thank you for all the things you did for us.’”

Debbie met her late husband, John, when she traveled to Oklahoma to visit a potential beau. It was a friendly rivalry, with no hard feelings when John got the girl. Debbie and John married and lived on a farm in Oklahoma for many years, where they grew vegetables and cultivated flowers and tropical plants. “We had hummingbirds and made stained-glass windows.” Debbie also learned to design and make jewelry.

Later John and Debbie returned to her Michigan roots. Debbie worked as an aide at her alma mater, Paw Paw High School. “They’d open up and talk to me,” she said of the students. John worked at Heritage Guitars in Kalamazoo. “He met a lot of musicians. Everybody loved John. He was like an earth angel,” Debbie said.

John passed away from cancer in 2007. Debbie says she was depressed for a while after John’s death, which was followed by her own health problems and financial difficulties. But with a strong spirituality and caring for others Debbie retains her positive attitude.

PACE has become a new source and outlet for Debbie’s humor. She learned of PACE when Intake Coordinator Natalie visited Debbie’s apartment in Paw Paw. “Little did I know that she would change my life in so many ways,” Debbie said. “Once I joined PACE, I started laughing again, leaving my home more ... taking a shower more often. I would have been content staying home with my cat, Tippers, but this was a blessing!”

Her favorite activity at PACE is the dice game. “Something magical happens. They are happy, they are pumped up,” Debbie observes of the group. Debbie says the enthusiasm is stoked by Activities Coordinator Meg. “She’s phenomenal. I just freakin’ love her.”

“When I first started coming to PACE, I was weak,” Debbie said. She exercises in the therapy gym for 15 minutes each day. “I’m feeling a difference in my leg. That gives me hope,” Debbie says. “I’m on the upswing!”