

The logo for PACE of southwest michigan, featuring the word "PACE" in a large, green, serif font, with "of southwest michigan" in a smaller, green, sans-serif font below it. The logo is set against a white background with a green border.

PACE

of southwest michigan

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

Newsletter

Summer 2018

A photograph of an elderly couple sitting on a dark metal mesh bench. They are viewed from behind, looking out over a lush green golf course. The man is wearing an orange long-sleeved shirt and green pants, and the woman is wearing a grey top. The background is filled with tall green trees and a clear sky.

**Advance Care Planning
at PACE**

PACE in SPACE!

**Participant
Needs Fund**

PACE Memorial Table

And more.....



Advance Care Planning at PACE

Many of you know the importance of planning for vacations, planning for parties or even planning your funeral but have you given much thought to planning your end of life care? At PACE, this is an important plan to have in place long before you think you might need it because no one knows when an injury might happen or a serious illness might develop. The time to discuss your end of life wishes is long before you are experiencing a serious illness or injury.

“Speak for Yourself, Plan Your Care” is the community wide effort to offer facilitated conversations about your end of life wishes and assist with completing your advance directive. PACE has been part of this effort since the beginning. At PACE we have six trained Advance Care Plan facilitators on staff. Over 85% of our participants have had an advance care plan conversation with PACE staff and completed their advance directive. This means they have identified what they want their end of life care to be. It also means they have identified a patient advocate to make their wishes known in the event they can no longer speak for themselves.

Think of those around you who will be your support if you become ill or injured. They want to know what kind of care you want, but do they? If you want to die at home, or in a hospital, if you do not want to be on a breathing machine—do they know this? If not, they should. This is an important conversation to have but it can also be very difficult. Few people want to talk about death, CPR, breathing machines, feeding tubes, pain or suffering. Our trained facilitators can help and support you with these challenging conversations.

It is important for your family and friends to know your end of life plan. It is important for PACE to know your last wishes so we can honor them.

Please let your Social Worker know if you would like to have an advance care plan conversation. That is the first big step. Just start the conversation.

Peace,

Therese Saggau, Executive Director



The Two Sides of Matt Skornog



Matt hangs out with participants at the PACE St. Patrick's Day party.

As PACE Quality Manager, Matt Skornog has a behind-the-scenes role, but he welcomes any chance to have fun with participants in the day center. “When I walk through, participants will stop me. I enjoy talking to them, and hearing some of their amazing stories,” Matt said. For holiday celebrations and special events, Matt joins right in. “I like to dress up, be festive, and have fun,” he said. Clad in a green suit with shamrocks, Matt handed out “gold coin” chocolates to the participants at the St. Patrick’s Day party.

In PACE, Matt sees southwest Michigan as having its own pot ‘o gold. “I love the mission and vision of PACE,” he says. “We are a very unique organization and provide care to our participants unlike any other entity. In my role I get to help push PACE to constantly better itself, and be the best it can be.”

A Michigan State grad with a degree in biomedical laboratory science, Matt was an analyst at Sparrow Hospital in Lansing before moving to Stevensville. He joined PACE in 2016 as Clinic Applications Analyst. During the 2017 annual audit by the

Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS), Matt’s perspective was broadened. “Working with the auditors gave me an understanding of exactly how we do what we do—and why,” he said. He was promoted to Quality Manager later that year.

“Now I get to look at our PACE organization as a whole and identify areas for improvement. I set goals and create a plan to help us monitor our progress and reach those goals,” he said.

Matt is currently working with clinic and therapy staff to identify participants who are at risk of falling. “We will use that information to implement a fall prevention and home exercise program for those participants,” he said.

Matt constantly sets the bar higher for the serious business of providing quality care for participants. At the same time, he graces the atmosphere with a lighthearted persona. “I won the staff ugly holiday sweater contest in 2016,” Matt said with a big smile on his face.



PACE IN SPACE!

The popular PACE NuStep machines are once again vehicles to a great adventure. For the fifth virtual “trip” exercise challenge, participants are orbiting the earth along with the International Space Station. “The space station orbits the earth approximately every 92 minutes,” said PACE Occupational Therapist Sindy McCord. “So this year we are tallying minutes, and seeing how we keep up with the space station.” Sindy honors everyone who participates with a certificate of accomplishment.

When PACE participants become riders, they soon feel their greatest reward – improved overall well-being. “Making a game of the challenge adds to the fun and motivation, but the participants mostly like how exercise makes them feel better and stronger,” says Sindy. “Riding the NuStep machine increases

strength and endurance – and even helps participants think more clearly,” Sindy says.

Throughout the NuStep challenge, PACE Activities Coordinator, Meg Killips, engaged participants in related projects. “We play space trivia, have discussion groups about the planets’ locations, and activity sheets on the solar system.

Participants’ past NuStep adventures took them to the Mackinaw Bridge, to Mexico along Monarch butterflies’ migration, on a journey on Route 66, and on a trip to Disneyland and back.

For the next NuStep challenge “trip,” a participant suggested to Sindy that they travel back in time! Stay tuned to find out what Sindy has up her sleeve to make THAT happen for PACE participants! What if they pedaled backwards?

Day Center Fun!



Participant Story

When Janet Brown was nine years old, her father sold his grocery store in Niles and they moved north, near Baldwin, Michigan. Her father was a carpenter and built cabin homes. Janet loved her new wilderness life. “I had great adventures alone in the woods, making friends with the squirrels, chipmunks, birds and deer.” Her six siblings were all adults on their own and did not make the move north.

Janet rode the school bus for 16 miles one way. “That was the good ole days. But I was mischievous in school,” Janet admits. “I put a mouse in the teacher’s desk. The teacher was going to punish the whole sixth grade class so I confessed and was sent to the principal’s office.” Later when Janet put a snake in the teacher’s desk, she was the obvious culprit. “I couldn’t deny it,” she said. “I was kicked out of school for a month.” Years later, Janet apologized to the teacher, she said.

Throughout adulthood, Janet worked as an in-home nursing aide. “I loved it,” she said. When she gave up her career, Janet still had the physical energy for the work, but it was taking too great an emotional toll on her when clients passed away, she said. “I’d get too attached. My last patient, I was with for 11 years. She was just like family.”

Janet has one son; another son died in infancy. When her mother passed away, Janet moved back to Niles where most of her siblings were still living. In her apartment, Janet put to use the carpentry skills her father had taught her. “I had a wood shop. I built and sold cedar chests, dressers, chests of drawers.”

In 2013, Janet suffered a stroke and had to give up her woodworking. Now she devotes her spare time to making latch-work rugs. She enjoys arts and crafts at PACE, too – especially painting with acrylics, along with her friend, Marilyn. “We didn’t know each other before PACE, but it’s weird how much we have in common. They call us double trouble,” Janet said of PACE staff members’ teasing. They never know what Janet might have up her sleeve!



Janet poses with a rug she made.

Participant Needs Fund

Casual Fridays have a hidden agenda at PACE. Staff members donate \$2 a week to a Participant Needs Fund and earn permission to dress down. Blue Jean Fridays are an extra chance for staff to extend caring beyond the program's participant benefits.

The funds have gone toward everyday needs such as cell phones. It has purchased microwaves and bed sheets. Participants have received assistance with plumbing repairs and utility bills. They have also had help paying for short-term housing.

"Participants have been appreciative and relieved at the support this provides," said PACE Social Worker Loren Perry. "It's outside the realm of what is typically provided by PACE." Donations from staff also further an important aim of the PACE mission, Loren points out. "It supports our goal of keeping participants independent in the community."

New Faces *at PACE!* plus promotions

We are excited to welcome new staff members to PACE since our last newsletter. New staff members are Allison Freeman, Administrative Assistant; Elaine Troehler, PT; Eric Moorman, PTA; Lori Mizwicki, Certified Occupational Therapy Assistant; Candace Rouse, Scheduling Coordinator; Mary Beth Moren Cross, Spiritual Care Coordinator; Sydney Boyle, Activity Coordinator; Brenda Shelton, RN, HCC; Cynthia Merriweather-Watson, Finance Clerk; Shayla Mosley, CNA; Rhonda Owen, CNA; Shayna Worley, CNA; and Angelique Weidner, HCC. Also, Sherri Palmer has accepted the new position of Clinic Clerk.



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Elaine Troehler,
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Erich Moorman,
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Lori Mizwicki,
OTA



Candace Rouse,
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Mary Beth Moren
Cross, Spiritual
Care Coordinator



Sydney Boyle,
Activity
Coordinator



Brenda Shelton,
RN, HCC



Cynthia
Merriweather-
Watson,
Finance Clerk



Angelique
Weidner; HCC



Shayla Mosley,
CNA



Rhonda Owen,
CNA



Shayna Worley,
CNA

PACE Memorial Table

Strong mutual bonds form as staff members have the privilege of serving PACE participants. Often there are feelings of personal loss among staff when a participant passes away. “We get close to participants like they are our family,” said a PACE personal care assistant. “We spend more time with them than we do with our own families. We are the only family some of them have.”



as a method of making participants aware of the death of another participant, Preston added.

“He was a sweet caring man, always watching out for others,” one staff member wrote of a participant who had passed. “We would sit and talk. He would tell me about how proud he was of his kids. He would tell me how he use to fly a plane. He told me his cat would always sit and have dinner with him. He loved his cat.”

When a participant dies, staff members and other participants can pay their respects at a memorial table in the PACE Day Center. A photo of the deceased participant is displayed and there is paper on hand for writing meaningful memories.

Some of the participants have had their biography written by a PACE staff member. If so, the story is shared at the memorial table. “After keeping the items on display for a little while, we pass these things on to a family member or guardian,” Mary Beth said. “It is a reminder to them that we haven’t forgotten their/our loved one. We thank them for sharing their loved one with our PACE community.”

“It’s great to have an opportunity to say goodbye,” said Mary Beth Moran Cross, Spiritual Care Coordinator. “The notes are heartwarming. Staff and participants can stop at the table to read what others have written.” The memorial table is also important

End of Life Journey

The following is an excerpt from an interview with PACE Physician Assistant, Kim B.

“Our participant did not have much family support, she lived at home alone with a roommate who was frequently out of the home. Due to her declining medical condition and need for increased supervision, she ended up in an adult foster care home, but her ultimate desire was to end up at home with her cats.

When she was hospitalized, end-of-life was a rough topic to embrace. She wasn’t ready for the conversation. However, when she ultimately came to terms with what was happening with her health, her request remained to return home with comfort care and be able to pass at home with her cats. Between our physician, Dr. Nearpass and myself, we made it a priority for the participant to pass in her own home, overcoming the challenges of providing the 24-hour care she would need. The participant was transported home, met by an aide, a hospice nurse, and myself. Once she was settled in, she was all smiles, comfortable in her own bed with her 4 cats on her lap. The PACE Team honored this participant’s wishes and met them well.

Only with PACE will your physical therapist bring you the dinner of your choice, providers stay in your home for hours to ensure your comfort and educate family, provide aides for grocery shopping, do dishes and just keep you company. I believe it was in this situation that I truly understood the beauty of PACE and the blessing that it is to be a part of this organization. We were able to provide our participant with comfort and happiness in the last hours of her life, and she passed the way she hoped that she ultimately would. This is an experience that will stick with me and has changed the way that I practice. PACE is not only medical care, therapy and home care – PACE becomes family.”

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Participants may be fully and personally responsible for the costs of unauthorized or out-of-PACE program agreement services.
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