



STAFF:

ATTENTIVE TO INDIVIDUAL NEEDS

“But to each one of us grace has been given as Christ apportioned it...to prepare God’s people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up...” (Ephesians 4:8,12).

Losing the train of thought. Missing antics of children and pets. Living in the past. Reluctant to do physical therapy. Feeling bored. Simply slowing down. These realities of aging frustrate people who experience them and worry their families.

But now Edison Christian Health Center (ECHC) employees have a new tool to engage residents—four new interactive technology stations called “It’s Never 2 Late” (iN2L). This person-centered technology calms anxious residents, perks up drowsy ones, and makes for easier family visits.

Read on to learn why Esther Heerema and ECHC staff are so pleased with iN2L and so hopeful about what can happen when it is fully implemented

Esther Heerema has a long and happy history with Edison Christian Health Center. “I started here right out of college as a part-time social worker in 1994. My goal was to work here for six months. But it grows on you. You just fall in love with the residents,” she says.

Over the years she’s worked here both part time and full time. “My work has gradually changed. I’ve been director of social services, director of admissions, and now I’m assistant administrator, working full time alongside Todd Nyeholt. I recently passed the Nursing Home Administrator (NHA) exam for State licensure.

“I implement new regulatory requirements from Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) and help facilitate ethical decisions about what’s medically appro-

priate. Maybe a family wants a treatment not supported by research. Or there are questions about how to control pain yet maintain highest functioning. We reach solutions as a team of staff and medical professionals, along with the resident or a family member who has power of attorney,” Esther says.

At various times, while working here, she has also worked at a hospital, taught college students, and published 300+ articles about Alzheimer’s disease and other dementias. So, when she, Todd Nyeholt, and Gayle Dykema (director of nursing) saw an iN2L presentation at a conference, they were intrigued. “We thought it would be so exciting for our residents to engage more meaningfully with technology,” Esther recalls.

She completed a lengthy application and received a State of Michigan grant to buy and install four iN2L stations, train staff, and pay the annual subscription fee.



Esther Heerema, Assistant Administrator

ECHC received the grant and expects to be awarded subscription fees for years two and three.

These picture-based touch screens arrived on December 13, 2019, and are incredibly easy to use. Two very large screens are permanently mounted in the front day room and west lounge. Two portable stations get used throughout ECHC.

“Our primary goals with iN2L are, first, to reduce use of psychotropic medicines for depression, anxiety, and psychiatric disorders, and, second, to improve residents’ quality of life. If a resident is feeling anxious and can’t sleep, instead of offering an anti-anxiety medication, we can redirect them to an iN2L option. This might be nature scenes; games ranging from jacks to Wheel of Fortune; old TV commercials that spark memories and conversations; art work; or musical channels. We can also offer Facetime, so residents can see family members on screens much larger than on cellphones,” she explains.

The stations can be raised or lowered, which can help physical therapists ease a resident into exercise. One video on iN2L shows a therapist bringing up Google Earth on the iN2L screen, so the person could see what had changed in the old neighborhood. “Once they start talking, residents don’t even realize they are standing and exercising,” she says.

She and other staff members notice that family members have fun using the stations with residents, especially to play interactive games. The screens are in almost constant use.

(continued on page 4)



FROM THE ADMINISTRATOR



Our spring newsletter features interdisciplinary staff utilizing It's Never 2 Late interactive technology stations to benefit our residents. Programming is specifically designed to enhance the lives of older adults by offering meaningful engagement through games, reminiscing, music, virtual travel, and more. It's Never 2 Late's philosophy fits well with our goal to help our residents live life abundantly. We were blessed to receive

a grant that covers the full cost of this equipment and programming for our residents.

Through service awards and an annual banquet, our board members honor staff members who have reached milestones of 5, 10, 15, 20, 25, and more years of service. You can see recent award recipients pictured in this newsletter. We are thankful for the stability that long-term staff members provide for our facilities, and we value each member's unique contribution to our ministry.

At our website, www.edisonchristian.org, you can read about our three facilities—Edison Christian Health Center, Edison

Christian Assisted Living, and Edison Christian Independent Living. You will see details on job opportunities and different ways to give to Edison Christian Life Services. You can also link directly to:

- Barnabas Foundation (for free estate planning help)
- LeadingAge Michigan, our state association (to support programs and policies to benefit older adults in Michigan).

Edison Christian Health Center is upgrading our west elevator. We are replacing the elevator controller, which is original from when we installed the elevator in 1977. The new controller is a solid state microprocessor-based controller with a solid state motor starter. The elevator is being brought up to current code with wiring, cables, and controls, as well as replacing the doors and ceiling panels. A required telephone and fire alarm panel is being added to the elevator.

Thank you for your continuing support through prayers, gifts, and volunteer time. Please consider donating again to help us meet residents' needs. We praise God for his grace and blessing in our ministry.

—Todd Nyeholt

Try This Free Way to Help Edison Christian Life Services

It cost them nothing to make the change. It didn't take much time. Yet many prudent people did something that made a big impact on our ability to serve Edison Christian Life Services residents.

What was this simple action? At some point, these people accepted an offer of free help with their wills and estate plans. They decided to include a bequest in their estate plan for Edison Christian Life Services or Edison Christian Foundation (though it's fine to receive help and not give to us).

The top reasons people give for making bequests to us are: to express appreciation for care provided to a loved one; to support work they've witnessed while volunteering here; to help older adults because they're aware of the need here.

Almost everyone wonders how to pass property to a surviving spouse, provide for orphaned children, or avoid heavy estate taxes. But many Christians have extra questions. Those who have faithfully tithed from their income want to know how to use their will to tithe from their estate. You can follow the lead of more than 9,000 people who have already accepted a generous offer from the Barnabas Foundation. At no cost to you, Barnabas staff will help you work out a plan to provide for loved ones and give to Christian causes. This plan can also include answers to key questions, such as:

- How will my property be distributed when I die? (You need a will.)

- Who can manage my property if I lose my ability to think straight? (You need a durable power of attorney for finances.)
- Who will make health decisions if I become unable to do so for myself? (You need a durable power of attorney for health care.)

Steve Baker and Amy Bakker Baty, the local Barnabas Foundation representatives, have practiced law in business and estate planning. Steve Baker is the senior estate planner, and Amy is the director of planned giving services. Typically, they need to meet with you just once, for only 60 to 90 minutes, to develop a free written analysis for you to bring to an attorney. Steve or Amy can recommend attorneys who know how to include charity in wills and estate plans. Gifts to the Barnabas Foundation are neither solicited nor encouraged, because 200 Christian member organizations support the foundation. So you won't be asked for a "donation."

Simply phone (616) 956-1232 or (888) 448-3040 and ask to speak with Steve Baker or Amy Bakker Baty. Their email addresses are sbake@barnabasfoundation.com and abaty@barnabasfoundation.com. Their office is at 601 3 Mile Road NW, Suite 200, Grand Rapids, MI 49544. For free, confidential advice on estate planning, you may also phone Todd Nyeholt at (616) 453-2475.

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November 2019 - February 2020

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(continued on page 5)

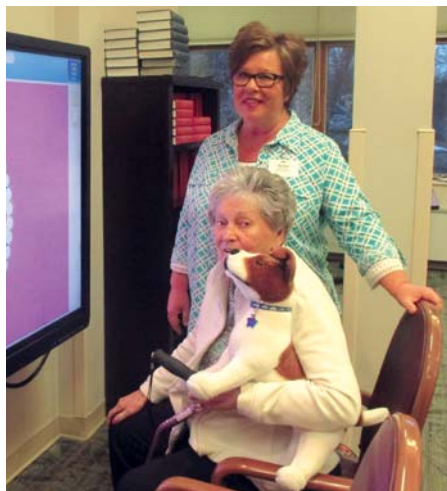
ATTENTIVE TO INDIVIDUAL NEEDS *(continued from page 1)*

Monthly usage reports show that these programs are most popular: 1) film and jukebox; 2) games and puzzles; 3) travel and live webcams; 4) health and wellness; 5) reminiscing. “When you can look up, say, what downtown Grand Rapids looked like long ago, it prompts memories and conversations. You see a store you knew or a place you visited often, and great conversations emerge,” Esther says.

She and her husband, Jason, who is the Grand Rapids Christian High School athletic director, have five sons, ages 13 to 21. We go to lots of sporting events and we enjoy camping. I play volleyball in a rec league,” Esther says. The Heeremas live in southeast Grand Rapids and attend Madison Square Christian Reformed Church.

Unlike many of our employees, **Robin Boyce** had no connection to Edison Christian Life Services. Then, shortly after she took an early retirement offer after 33 years with Meijer, her mother-in-law, Barb Boyce, had a severe stroke.

“She developed progressive dementia and ended up in Edison Christian Health Center. I was nervous to visit, because I had never known anyone who’d been in a nursing facility. The staff quickly impressed me. They are so loving, such a blessing. Many have worked here over 20 or 30 years. That says volumes. She and my father-in-law, Bob Boyce, had always done everything together. The staff was so patient with the time it took him to accept that his wife wouldn’t be coming home. He’s met an amazing group of men



Robin Boyce, Activities Assistant

here who come to feed their spouses. It’s a beautiful thing.

“I took my mother-in-law to activities and got to know activity staff and volunteers. A part-time position opened up and they asked if I’d be interested. We’d already remodeled our summer house at Clifford Lake, and I was ready to do something meaningful,” Robin says.

She came on staff in November 2019 for three 10-hour shifts per week, leading activities on the calendar and doing one-on-one visits with residents. Robin loves iN2L. She was already comfortable with computers because she used similar technology at Meijer to help vendors and staff place products.

“Using iN2L is very easy, even if you’re not into computers. You just need to press a finger. At Meijer, the focus was on product and guests—very much a retail environment. Here, helping people use the iN2L is very fun and meaningful.

“For one game, you touch on-screen bubbles and get a point for each bubble you pop. In another, you guess how much something costs. We recently had three residents playing together. One can guess the cost, another punches it, and the third enjoys the exciting music. It’s all very engaging for audiences,” Robin says.

In fact, Robin says she uses the stations “all the time,” as background music during bingo and other scheduled activities, for one-on-ones, and to help families interact with loved ones. “The activity staff enjoys all the iN2L content. Say one of us suddenly needs the other to cover for a trivia activity. In 10 minutes you can have all the info in one place and present to 30 people.”

She’s found that iN2L’s gospel music engages “people you wouldn’t expect” to start singing or grow calmer. During a recent one-on-one, Robin discovered that the woman was fascinated by iN2L’s dog and farm videos, because the woman had grown up on a farm. When another woman confided that her mom was having a bad day, Robin took them to the big screen iN2L in the dayroom. “I found out that they liked Hawaii and showed the daughter how she could access the same content the next time she visited,” Robin says.

She and her husband, Doug, who works for a food broker, live in the Alpine Estates

Condos. They have two adult children, one in Grand Rapids and one in Florida. They love spending time with both families, which include their seven-year-old granddaughter in Grand Rapids and four-year-old grandson in Florida. Robin loves going to estate sales and auctions with her mom and cooking and crafting with her granddaughter.

Alisha Dykstra began working at ECHC almost seven years ago, a year after graduating from Sparta High School. She works full time as a CNA on first shift and works every other weekend. “I’ve visited several senior care places and think I work in one of the nicest facilities around,” she says.

Alisha took computer classes in school and says, “My grandpa, brother, brother-in-law, and I are all good with computers and cellphones. So when we got the iN2L system on Ritzema Hall [memory care unit], I messed around and figured it out. One of the small iN2L stations stays in Ritzema 24/7. It looks like a little desktop computer without a keyboard. It has a touch screen, and you use your finger, like on a cell phone.”

She works most often in Ritzema, caring for five to eight residents per shift. “There’s a lot of overlap in who gets assigned to which residents, so we get to know our hall really well. Sometimes, of course, I get pulled to another hall. I help residents with whatever they need—get them up and dressed, give a hug, help them eat breakfast and lunch, and help them through hard days.



Alisha Dykstra, CNA

(continued on page 6)

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* Gifts designated for Edison Christian Foundation

(continued on page 6)

ATTENTIVE TO INDIVIDUAL NEEDS *(continued from page 4)*

“Working here is challenging, because it’s hard to see someone struggle, especially when you see so much life in them. But it’s also very rewarding when you can help them remember something, connect with family, and get through the day. No matter what stage of dementia residents may be in, iN2L has something to offer. For many residents, it’s really improving their moods all day long,” Alisha says.

Her residents love karaoke, “especially hymns and Christian songs,” the bubble game, and videos of cats and kids. One

family visits almost daily to play the iN2L version of Uno with their loved one. Residents enjoy trivia questions, such as “How much did a loaf of bread cost in 1920?” and “What is this sound?” And Alisha says that many residents do surprisingly well with Bible trivia.

“You can tell when someone’s mood is going down. That’s when we find that old time music or a happy video. One woman loves Irish music,” she says.

Alisha lives with her parents in Sparta and belongs to Trinity Christian Reformed

Church in Sparta. “I have two married siblings, a niece, and a nephew. We love being together and see each other all the time.”

In her spare time, Alisha builds furniture. “My grandpa and dad taught me. I’ve built coffee tables, a gun cabinet, cutting boards, a mantle, and a game case/playing board for my brother, who likes to play the game Settlers of Catan. I sell my creations through word of mouth, Facebook, Instagram, and I’m planning to get on Etsy,” she says.

MEMORIAL CONTRIBUTIONS *(continued from page 5)*

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Total Memorial Gifts ... \$67,140

** Gifts designated for Edison Christian Foundation*

IN LOVING MEMORY

November 2019 – February 2020

Norris Brookens	November 6	age 90	Shirley Hovinga	December 18	age 79
Beverly Roedema	November 9	age 86	Joanne VandenToorn	January 9	age 91
Ruth Schultz	November 20	age 93	Marian Kuiper	January 10	age 92
Eileen VanderMeulen	November 24	age 94	Anna Wiersma	January 19	age 95
Joseph Zalewski	November 25	age 77	Evelyn Groters	February 10	age 95
Norma Fazakerley	November 26	age 93	Genevieve Nederveld	February 12	age 96
Gloria Dettman	December 11	age 95	Shirley Idema	February 17	age 87
Martha VanWuffen	December 15	age 80			

EDISON CHRISTIAN INDEPENDENT LIVING

Edison Christian Independent Living provides senior citizen independent living and offers meals, activities, and housekeeping services.

Our residents enjoy secure, homelike comfort and Christian companionship.

**For more information and a tour, call:
(616) 453-0993 edisonchristian.org**

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Faith Community CRC
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GIFTS RECEIVED IN HONOR OF

November 2019 – February 2020

In honor of... **Ann Slade's birthday**from Douglas Slade
In honor of... **Dorothy Koll**..... from Jonathan & Joyce VanderBee

RECENT ECLS RETIREES

*In honor of your service from the
Board of Directors:*

Karen Hengeveld 34 years
Lyn Herpolsheimer 29 years
Jean Scribner..... 25 years
Rich Panches 6 years

With our appreciation for your commitment to our residents!

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5 YEARS OF SERVICE

Brianna Powell, Delia Zuniga, Beth Loef, Sheria Reed, Patti Tryc, Courtney White, Gayle Dykema, Katrina Boyles, Lia Medina-Miller, Linda Elders. **Not pictured:** Viviean Baker, Kerri Deppe, Alisha Dykstra, Terry Kline-Vrosh, Marissa Russell, Sherry Upton, Andrew Zomerlei.

10 YEARS OF SERVICE

Not pictured: Matt Stevens



15 YEARS OF SERVICE

Monica Whittemore-Beek, Cindy Borst, Debra Groeneveld. **Not pictured:** Jenny Heitzman, Andrea Kirkwood, Beth VandenToorn



20 YEARS OF SERVICE

Carol Carpenter, Debra Mroz, Jodi Twardize-Walker. **Not pictured:** Connie Jaworowski, Debra Zaideman.



25 YEARS OF SERVICE

Dawn Jermanski, Marsha Heyboer (board member), Michelle Carpenter.

40 YEARS OF SERVICE

Not pictured: Debra Ingalls, Nancy Jaglowski



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EDISON CHRISTIAN
LIFE SERVICES

NEWSLETTER

Spring 2020



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