

WINTER 2025

SENIOR Living

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Kathy's Chronicles

Happy 2025!

Now that the holiday season is behind us, many of us are turning our focus to the new year. I thought it would be fun to explore the top 10 resolutions people often set. It turns out, many of these have made their way onto my own list over the years. Good intentions, but not always the follow-through, which I find somewhat amusing! Maybe some of these will look familiar to you as well. While I believe there is real value in New Year's resolutions, I think starting with one realistic goal might be a great way to go. Regardless, here's what I found on *Mint.com*: **Mental wellness through fitness: 10 simple habits that can make a big impact**. I hope you'll enjoy a laugh as I did while reading through these and relating to many of them!

- **Daily routine:** "This year, I'll wake up at 5 AM!" By week two, it's snooze city, and waking up before noon feels like an Olympic achievement.
- **Eat healthier:** "I'll eat only salads!" says the person who suddenly craves double cheeseburgers when they enter 2025. Salad dreams, burger realities.
- **Lose weight:** "New year, new me!" sounds great until you remember pizza exists. By February, gym memberships turn into the most expensive keychains.
- **Save money:** "No more online shopping!" Then comes a midnight Amazon sale, and boom—budget busted. Who knew socks with LED lights were so essential?
- **Quit smoking:** "This is my last cigarette... for real this time." But then stress, boredom or that one friend who still smokes makes this resolution disappear faster than smoke rings.
- **Learn a new skill:** "I'll learn French this year!" Cut to: January 10th, still struggling with "bonjour". It turns out that Netflix subtitles don't count as a language class.
- **Travel more:** "I'll see the world!" Translation: Scrolls Instagram travel posts while chilling on the same old couch. Flights are expensive, okay? Envy while checking others' photos, not!
- **Spend more time with family:** "I'll be present for my loved ones." Then spends weekends binge-watching shows, ignoring texts from momma asking when you're visiting. The same old story!
- **Get organized:** "This year, no mess!" One week later: Junk drawer overflowing, and the 'organization' app is buried under a pile of unopened notifications.
- **Screen time:** "I'll limit my phone use." Two minutes later: "Let me just check Instagram, WhatsApp, Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn, YouTube... wait, what was my resolution again?"

All my best for 2025,



OUR MISSION

is to provide quality, personalized healthcare for a lifetime.

OUR VISION

to empower health and well-being together.

WE VALUE

integrity, compassion, accountability, high quality, innovation

Here & There

Emergency Preparedness

COVID-19 changed the way we think of the global supply chain of goods, foods and services we utilize every day. If you have forgotten, remember the great toilet paper shortage? There were positives that came from these shortages in goods, foods and services. For example, in healthcare we became very good at finding solutions and alternatives to supply shortages, we were forced to think "outside the box". We had local volunteers sewing us masks, and creating alternative eyewear to protect us.

As a general rule we do not think of hurricanes as being a threat or disruption to our normal activities or supply chain here in Minnesota, but last fall, hurricanes again created shortages in various supplies across the nation that healthcare systems depend on. Lakewood Health System has positioned itself as an independent organization able to plan, mitigate and prepare for whatever mother nature may send our way. Through our Emergency Preparedness efforts of mitigation, training and education to staff and leaders, we have been able to continue to deliver the personalized healthcare we strive to.

Our Senior Services team is very comfortable and competent in utilizing the Healthcare Incident Command System (HICS) to address and manage whatever emergency comes their way. The team is always willing to participate in drills and exercises with great engagement from our staff and leaders. This participation and engagement enhances their ability to respond appropriately to any and all emergencies.

Quality of Care Initiatives

At our care center, we are dedicated to enhancing our residents' quality of life, with a specific focus on pain management. Our team is training staff to better recognize subtle signs of pain in residents who may not be able to communicate it directly. Additionally, we are prioritizing efforts to improve the quality of sleep for our residents, ensuring they receive the rest they need to thrive.

Our home care and hospice teams are also working to strengthen communication with patients, particularly after hours. To improve responsiveness, we now offer a dedicated phone line that connects patients directly to the RN case manager on call, providing peace of mind and timely support.

In the assisted livings, we are actively addressing feedback from our recent Quality-of-Life Resident Satisfaction survey. Two key areas of focus are enhancing the dining experience and expanding the variety and engagement of activities to better meet the needs and preferences of our residents.

Our mission is "To provide quality, personalized healthcare for a lifetime" and these initiatives are part of our efforts to exceed expectations!

Calling Home-Based Services

Our Home-Based Services Department is excited to announce a new process for reaching nursing staff for your after hour home care/hospice needs! Previously, patients routed their calls through our Emergency Department and waited to receive a call back from nursing staff. Our new process allows patients to call an after hours phone, bringing them directly to the nurse on call. If you are a current home care or hospice patient, please call **218-296-2321** to reach the after hours, on-call nurse directly.

Season of Lights Recap

The 29th year of Lakewood's Season of Lights event took place on December 6th. This celebration is a beautiful way to honor and remember those who have passed, and to acknowledge the journey our team shared with them and their families. This year, over 100 individuals were remembered and honored with a personalized remembrance ornament. We offer a heartfelt thank you to all families who entrusted us with the care of their loved ones.



Here & There, con't

Food for Thought Committee and Activities Department = A Perfect Pairing!

We're thrilled to share that the Food for Thought Committee is expanding its focus! While delicious meals remain at the core of our efforts, we're now teaming up with the Activities department to bring even more enjoyment and engagement.

From exploring new food ideas and tasting events, to discussing exciting activity options, we'll be dedicating part of our time to gathering your thoughts. We want to know what activities you'd like to see, as well as hear your feedback on recent events. This expanded focus is all about building connections, sharing laughs, and making dining and activities a true highlight of everyone's day.

Recipe - Jamaican cornmeal porridge

4 cups water, separated
13.5 oz. can coconut milk
1 cup fine yellow cornmeal
1/2 teaspoon vanilla extract
1/2 teaspoon ground cinnamon
1/2 teaspoon ground nutmeg
1/4 teaspoon ground all-spice
1/2 cup (or to taste) sweetened condensed milk

Directions:

1. Add 2 1/2 cups water, 1 can coconut milk to a 4 quart, heavy-bottomed pot. Bring to a boil over medium-high heat.
2. Meanwhile, add 1 cup cornmeal and 1 1/2 cups water to a large mixing cup and whisk until smooth.
3. Once the pot begins to boil, whisk in cornmeal mixture and continue to whisk for about 1 minute, ensuring no lumps. Reduce heat to low and cover with a tight fitting lid.
4. Cook over low heat for 15-20 minutes, stirring occasionally. When there are about 5 minutes left, stir in vanilla extract, cinnamon, nutmeg and all-spice. Remove from heat and sweeten with condensed milk.
5. Serve and enjoy.



What & Where

Six Tips for Beating the Winter Blues *(attributed to PharMerica)*

The cold, dark days of winter can be hard for anyone, but they can be especially difficult for residents. During the winter months, seniors are at high risk for seasonal affective disorder, a type of depression that cycles with the seasons, and vitamin D deficiency. Both of these conditions are tied to lack of sunlight and can be detrimental to mental and physical health, causing changes to appetite and sleeping habits, irritability, loss of interest, and low energy.

Here are six tips to boost energy, enhance moods, and help seniors stay positive throughout the season.

1. Let the sunshine in

Sunlight can raise vitamin D levels, help fight depression, and reduce the effects of seasonal affective disorder. Increasing exposure to natural light is an easy way to elevate moods and boost energy. Make sure that curtains or blinds are open during the day to let in as much light as possible. If weather permits, outside activities are a great way to get some sun.

2. Plan events

Having social events on the calendar gives seniors something to look forward to as well as a chance to socialize. Plan activities like movies, coffee hours, or craft classes and share the event calendar with residents so there's always something fun to anticipate.

3. Encourage routines

On a gray winter morning, residents might be tempted to stay in bed. But it's important to help them stick to routines during the winter months. Participating as usual in everyday activities, like meals or exercise classes, can help seniors stay connected and moving forward.

4. Promote a healthy diet

Eating well is important for many reasons, but in the winter it's especially critical. Remind residents that a balanced diet can help improve moods and boost energy levels, which can reduce the temptation to disconnect and hibernate.

5. Provide ways to stay active

Physical activity is a great way to lift spirits during the winter months. Whether it's walking, a group exercise class, or some easy stretching, give residents options to stay active – essential to keeping a positive outlook.

6. Offer opportunities to socialize

This may be the most important tip of all. Feelings of isolation are particularly difficult for seniors and can be amplified during the cold and darkness of winter. Being with other people is crucial to seniors' wellbeing. Encourage visitors and help bring residents together whenever possible.



Dr. Julie Benson
Senior Services Medical Director

Resident Voting

Thank you to the local election judges who came to the care center to assist residents with voting on October 29. A total of 25 residents exercised their right to vote.



Volunteers

We're always looking for volunteers to help out in various Senior Services departments, including the Care Center, Memory Care, Home Care, Hospice and others. Some areas in which we need assistance are hospice, taking residents fishing and for rides, CNA test out days and more. If you're interested or would like to learn how you can help brighten the day of a resident or tenant, visit <https://www.lakewoodhealthsystem.com/patients-visitors/volunteering/> or email humanresources@lakewoodhealthsystem.com

Spotlight

Alexis Close, RN: Director of Lakewood Pines

Alexis has been at Lakewood since August 2019 and recently transitioned into her new role at Lakewood Pines where she is learning from some of Lakewood's amazing leaders, while continuing to manage the nursing needs of the assisted living residents. She most enjoys coming to work and making a difference in the lives of the residents. More times than note, residents are elderly members of the community who are leaving their previous home of decades. For them to accept assisted living as their new home, and trust in the care we provide, is very fulfilling to her.

Alexis is a wife, mother (of four boys), and a nurse. Those three words pretty much sum up who she is. She enjoys her work at Lakewood ALMOST as much as she enjoys being a wife and mother. As family, they love to vacation, be outdoors camping or fishing, and participating in or watching sports.



Activities

Effective November 1, 2024, the Activities department expanded their hours to add a 6:30 p.m. activity on Tuesdays and Thursdays. The evening activity is called Brain Games where residents and staff work on thinking games to increase cognitive stimulation. We also started elegant dining again in January. This is a special dining experience for residents where they are invited to eat in the specially decorated dining room. Every resident is asked and we continue to invite throughout the months until all who wish to participate have participated. Some evening music will also be starting in the coming months.

Walk with a Doc

During the warmer months, some of our residents and staff take a 'walk with a doc' (Adrienne Moen) and her walking team once a month. We've heard positive comments from residents about getting outside to enjoy the doors, see the country side, and giving the volunteers some exercise. We all look forward to getting back outside again soon!



Activities, con't

Rollin' for Railroad Days

Staples' annual Railroad Days was held at the end of August and residents, tenants and staff had a great time taking part in or watching the parade.



Caribbean Cruise: September 9-13

Last fall's annual Care Center Cruise took place in the Caribbean! Activities included flamingo bingo, a food show with a drive-in movie, Virgin Islands trivia, tropical fishing, 'meet me at the beach' crafts, a painting class, and more. Unfortunately, the cruise was cut short due to an outbreak of COVID, but the captain's dinner was rescheduled and held in November. Thank you to everyone who puts in so much work to make this week enjoyable for the residents!



Cupcakes for Seniors

A special thank you to local mobile coffee and desserts truck, Something Good, for their 'cupcakes for seniors' initiative which gave customers the opportunity to donate to give a homemade cupcake to our care center residents. And thank you to everyone who donated!



Activities, con't

Welcoming Royalty

The 2024 Staples Motley Homecoming Court visited the care center, as well as Lakewood Pines and Manor, and chatted with residents and tenants.



Don't be Square!

Some local square dancers came to the care center to practice while the residents became their audience. The caller sure keeps the dancers going and our residents certainly enjoyed it!



To Dye For

Tenants at the Pines used their artistic talents to make some tropical tie dye shirts.



Family Social

We were honored to host residents and their families for our annual family social. It was a beautiful day, complete with yard games, socializing, and a picnic. Thank you to everyone who made time to join us!



Roses are Red

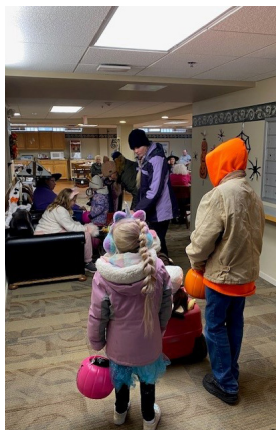
The Staples Rotary generously donated roses from their annual sale to residents and tenants. Roses were displayed around the care center and assisted livings for all to enjoy. Thank you to the Rotary for this kind gesture that brightened the day of many!



Activities, con't

Trick or Treat

First things first: We want to extend a big thank you to staff and community members for the generous donations of candy to give our trick or treaters! Due to the large quantity received, we were able to distribute candy to the care center and assisted livings. Residents and staff spent several days assembling candy bags in preparation for the trick or treaters. At the care center, the Nutrition Services team got in the Halloween spirit and gave out iced apple cider. YUM. Between the three facilities, residents and tenants saw more than 200 trick or treaters. Everyone had a great time, and we're already looking forward to next year!



Activities, con't



Halloween

Halloween isn't just for the kids! Residents did some tricking of their own and made staff give them treats, while tenants got creative and decorated pumpkins.



Recognition & Appreciation

New CNAs

Congratulations to the recent group of CNA student graduates!



Thank You

We are so thankful and grateful to the care center team for the care they provided our mom. What you do on a daily basis does not go unnoticed. Keep up the good work!

-Resident family member

STAR Awards: Service & Teamwork Award Recognition

The STAR program recognizes Lakewood Health System employees for outstanding performance in the delivery of service to internal and external customers. Employees are nominated by patients or staff members, and voted on by a group of employees who have been designated by their respective department.



Dr. Julie Benson
Provider



Kari Davis
Assisting Living



Rena Dewald
Nutrition Services



Martina Hendrickson
Environmental Services



Lillie Payne
Assisted Living



Kyle Quast
Care Center



Nicole Theiler
Home-Based Services



Debbie Toth
Home-Based Services



Sara Wegscheid
Home-Based Services

News & FYIs

WELCOME!

We would like to welcome all the new residents and tenants who have joined us at Lakewood Health System Care Center and assisted living! We look forward to getting to know you, and hope to see you participating in our daily activities.

IN MEMORY

We remember your loved ones who have been part of the Lakewood family. Thank you for giving us the opportunity to get to know your loved one. They touched our hearts, and will be remembered.

NEWSLETTER ONLINE

All Senior Living newsletters can be found on our website: lakewoodhealthsystem.com. Under the **Senior Living** tab, click on **View Documents** to download current and past editions of the newsletter.

100 CLUB

Jeanette Olson

What's the secret to making the 100 Club, according to Jeanette: I exercised every day. Even during TV time, I was exercising. I did yoga; it's great for your body. I eat carrots almost every day. I also had five children. The last two were twins, and then we said 'Amen'!



our team

Chief Executive Officer

Lisa Bjerga

Vice President of Senior Services

Kathy Dobson

Senior Services Medical Director

Julie Benson, MD

Senior Services Advanced Practice Clinician

Amber Rasinski, FNP

Chief Medical Officer

Christine Albrecht, MD

Chief Finance Officer

Joe Reycraft

Assisted Living

Alexis Close, RN - Director

Rhonda Ekholm, RN - Director

Home-Based Services

Deb Toth, RN - Director

Care Center Nursing

Ashley Wallgren, RN - Director

Quality Improvement

Jacque Bartczak, RN - Manager

Social Services

Amy Dummprope, LPN - Case manager

Barb Trantina, LPN - Case manager

Lindsay Kirk, MSW - Licensed social worker

Paul Johnson - Chaplain

Activities Coordinator

Alyssa Cole

Business Office - Resident Accounts

Tracy Brand Esler

Michelle Lundquist

Nutrition Services

Bobbijo Rinas - Manager

Maintenance

Alan Schmidt - Senior campus supervisor

Environmental Services

Chris O'Brien - Director

monthly activities – the pines

Activities, dates & times are subject to change.

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
11am Catholic Mass 2pm Ice Cream Social 7pm Snack	1045am Exercise 2pm Snack 3pm Bingo 7pm Snack	1045am Exercise 11am Daily Chronicle 1pm Corn Hole 2pm Snack 3pm Chapel 7pm Snack	8am Breakfast Club 1045am Exercise 1pm Tenant Council 2pm Snack 7pm Snack	1045am Exercise 2pm Snack 3pm Fancy Nails 7pm Snack	1045am Exercise 11am Daily Chronicle 1pm Bingo 2pm Snack 7pm Snack	1045am Exercise 2pm Snack 7pm Snack
11am Catholic Mass 2pm Ice Cream Social 7pm Snack	1045am Exercise 2pm Snack 3pm Bingo 7pm Snack	1045am Exercise 11am Daily Chronicle 1pm Brain Games 2pm Snack 3pm Chapel 7pm Snack	1045am Exercise 2pm Snack Activity 7pm Snack	1045am Exercise 2pm Snack 3pm Fancy Nails 7pm Snack	1045am Exercise 11am Daily Chronicle 1pm Bingo 2pm Snack 7pm Snack	1045am Exercise 2pm Snack 7pm Snack
11am Catholic Mass 2pm Ice Cream Social 7pm Snack	1045am Exercise 2pm Snack 3pm Bingo 7pm Snack	1045am Exercise 11am Daily Chronicle 1pm Corn Hole 2pm Snack 3pm Chapel 7pm Snack	1045am Exercise 2pm Snack Activity 7pm Snack	1045am Exercise 2pm Snack 3pm Fancy Nails 7pm Snack	1045am Exercise 11am Daily Chronicle 1pm Bingo 2pm Snack 7pm Snack	1045am Exercise 2pm Snack 7pm Snack

monthly activities – the manor

Activities are subject to change.

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
11am Catholic Mass 2pm Ice Cream Social 7pm Snack	1030am Exercise 11amDaily Chronicle 1pm Bingo 2pm Snack 7pm Snack	1030am Exercise 2pm Snack 230pm Corn Hole 4pm Chapel 7pm Snack	1030am Exercise 2pm Snack 6pm Dirty Bingo 7pm Snack	1030am Exercise 11amDaily Chronicle 1pm Fancy Nails 2pm Snack 7pm Snack	1030am Exercise 2pm Snack 3pm Bingo 7pm Snack	1030am Exercise 2pm Snack 530pm Movie & Popcorn (Tenant's Choice)
11am Catholic Mass 2pm Ice Cream Social 7pm Snack	1030am Exercise 11amDaily Chronicle 1pm Bingo 2pm Snack 7pm Snack	1030am Exercise 2pm Snack 230pm Brain Games 4pm Chapel 7pm Snack	<i>8am Breakfast Club</i> 1030am Exercise 1230pm Council 2pm Snack 6pm Dirty Bingo 7pm Snack	1030am Exercise 11amDaily Chronicle 1pm Fancy Nails 2pm Snack 7pm Snack	1030am Exercise 2pm Snack 3pm Bingo 7pm Snack	1030 Exercise Manor Birthday Party! "Friendsgiving" 1pm-3pm 530pm Movie & Popcorn (Tenant's Choice)
11am Catholic Mass 2pm Ice Cream Social 7pm Snack	1030am Exercise 11amDaily Chronicle 1pm Bingo 2pm Snack 7pm Snack	1030am Exercise 2pm Snack 230pm Corn Hole 4pm Chapel 7pm Snack	1030am Exercise 2pm Snack 6pm Dirty Bingo 7pm Snack	1030am Exercise 11amDaily Chronicle 1pm Fancy Nails 2pm Snack 7pm Snack	1030am Exercise 2pm Snack 3pm Bingo 7pm Snack	1030am Exercise 2pm Snack 530pm Movie & Popcorn (Tenant's Choice)
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monthly activities – care center

Each month we have music specials along with Elegant Dining that are not on here. Activities are subject to change.

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Watch TV on TV Visiting Church @ 2:00 Card or Dice @ 4:00	Exercise @ 9:00 Catholic Communion with Jan @ 9:30 Nail Care @ 10:15 Mail Delivery 12:30-1:00 Bingo @ 1:30 Cards or Dice @ 4:00	Exercise @ 9:00 Golf Cart Rides/Men's Group @ 10:00 Mail Delivery 12:30-1:00 Church @ 2:00 Cards or Dice @ 4:00	Exercise @ 9:00 Trishaw Rides throughout the day. Bible Study @ 10:00 Mail Delivery 12:30-1:00 Rides and activity @ 2:00 Cards or Dice @ 4:00	Exercise @ 9:00 Golf Cart Rides @ 10:00 Mail Delivery 12:30-1:00 Bingo @ 1:30 Cards or Dice @ 4:00	Exercise @ 9:00 Mystery Garden Club or Story Time @ 10:00 Mail Delivery 12:30-1:00 Social @ 2:00 Cards or Dice @ 4:00	Exercise @ 9:00 Mail Delivery 12:30-1:00 Activity @ 1:15 Movie @ 2:00
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