



Lyngblomsten Lifestyle

Winter 2018

Out of the Shadows:

*Parish nurses help older adults
find light in darkness caused by
mental health struggles*



MORE IN THIS ISSUE:
Tenants create winter care kits
for local homeless youth

Clay project blooms with creativity
2018 Pull-out Calendar

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Letter from the Editor

*People overestimate what they can do in a year
but completely underestimate what they can do in a lifetime.*

—Unknown

Dear Readers,

I marvel at the busyness within all areas of Lyngblomsten. There is no room for complacency when the heartbeat of an organization is passion—passion for improving the quality of life for older adults. This past year has been marked with accolades from external organizations, a couple of which you'll read about in this edition. We are thrilled for the recognition but know that there is much more to do. It's easy as an organization to overestimate what we can accomplish in a year. Our fervent hope, though, is that we never underestimate what we can do in the lifetime of our organization and the impact we can have on the lifetimes of all those we serve.

The quote above is featured on the enclosed calendar. As you refer to it throughout the year, I hope you will be inspired to think about your plans and actions for this year in the context of your dreams and purpose for your lifetime.

Don't just live; leave a legacy!



Patricia A. Montgomery | Editor



Lyngblomsten Lifestyle is published by the Marketing Communications Department in cooperation with the Lyngblomsten Foundation/Community Engagement.

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**Lyngblomsten Lifestyle can be found online at
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On the Cover: Mary Nordtvedt, Parish Nurse Ministry Resource Network Coordinator for Lyngblomsten, listens to and prays with an older adult during a visit.

OUT of the SHADOWS

Parish nurses help older adults find light in darkness caused by mental health struggles

By Brandi Jewett

ADVOCATING FOR A HEALTHY mind, body, and spirit on behalf of others is a way of life for Mary Nordtvedt. For more than 20 years, she has served as a parish nurse, helping people through troubled times with an open mind and ready ears.

Parish nurses, also known as faith community nurses, focus on bringing together faith and health to educate, counsel, and support people. Assistance they provide does not come through direct medical care but rather through roles as personal health counselors, advocates, referral agents, and more.

No matter what role a parish nurse fills, one element that guides his or her work is the ability to listen.

“Listening and being present is a gift to give to people so they can share their story,” said Nordtvedt, who works as the parish nurse at Augustana Lutheran Church in West St. Paul, a Lyngblomsten corporate congregation. She also serves as Lyngblomsten’s Parish Nurse Ministry Resource Network Coordinator.

The stories she hears often only emerge after a foundation of trust is built between herself and the person she visits, especially when the individual’s struggle is stigmatized or its severity is downplayed by society. In cases of those who may be struggling with their mental health, sharing their story at all can be daunting.

Louise Nesdahl, who has served her home congregation of Salem Lutheran Church in West St. Paul (also a Lyngblomsten corporate

congregation) for 16 years as a parish nurse, understands the importance of listening and the comfort it may bring to someone who is living with a mental health issue.

“It’s an honor to hear someone’s story, and everyone has a story,” she said. “Everybody wants to be heard.”



“It’s an amazing thing to watch those people become part of our congregation and be loved back to wholeness by the congregation.”

–Louise Nesdahl, RN, Parish Nurse

The struggle of mental illness is one shared by an estimated 44 million Americans who live with some form of a documented condition, according to a 2012 survey conducted by the National Institute of Mental Health. It’s likely that more are living undiagnosed.

The number of older adults living with mental health issues can be difficult to pin down, but entities such as the World Health Organization and the American Association of Geriatric Psychiatry generally agree about 20 percent of adults ages 55 and older likely have some form of mental illness. That means nearly 240,000 older adults in Minnesota are living with a mental illness. Nationwide, that number grows to about 15 million people.

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NEARLY
240,000

OLDER ADULTS in MINNESOTA
are living with a mental illness



44
AMERICANS
are living w

A CHALLENGING SUBJECT

Older adults face several types of challenges when it comes to diagnosing and treating mental illness.

In general, a negative stigma surrounds mental illness and often conjures feelings of shame, embarrassment, and hopelessness for those who are living with it. These feelings, coupled with a perceived need to keep the illness private, can create a barrier that prevents them from reaching out for support or seeking treatment. In other cases, people may deny they have an illness, or manifestations of paranoia or phobias resulting from the illness may keep them from seeking care.

Broaching the subject of mental health with friends and family can be difficult, and some older adults instead choose to share their stories first with parish nurses like Julia Nordling.

“If people trust you, they will talk to you, tell you their innermost feelings, talk about all the negative things that have happened to them—anything,” said Nordling, who has served as a parish nurse for 11 years at Centennial United Methodist Church in Roseville, a Lyngblomsten corporate congregation. “You know by what they’re saying to you that they trust you.”

For older adults, there is an added stigma to overcome: the belief that mental health struggles are just another part of getting older. This

misconception may keep some older adults from being properly diagnosed with conditions such as depression.

“There are many things the medical community or people in general attribute to the normal aging process. For example, some people may believe that feeling sad is just a part of growing older,” Nordtvedt said. “And no, it’s not. It’s not okay that you’re feeling sad more often. That shouldn’t be just because you’re aging.”

Health organizations, such as the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), emphasize depression is not a normal part of the aging process, but older adults are at an increased risk of developing it. Being diagnosed with severe medical conditions, watching family members and friends pass away, and losing aspects of independence all have the potential to have a negative impact on an older adult and his or her mental health.

In some cases, health care professionals may mistake an older adult’s symptoms of depression as a natural reaction to these types of life changes and leave the real illness untreated. The CDC stresses that depression is a true medical condition that is treatable just like physical afflictions such as hypertension and diabetes.

Even if an older adult is diagnosed with a mental illness, he or she still faces challenges in receiving successful treatment. In a 2015 interview with the National Alliance on Mental Health, Dr. Dilip Jeste, a geriatric psychiatrist and director of the University of California—San Diego Center for Healthy Aging, notes that the biological changes experienced by the body as humans age can make treating conditions with medication tricky.

“If people trust you, they will talk to you, they will tell you their innermost feelings, talk about all the negative things that have happened to them—anything. You know by what they’re saying to you that they trust you.”

—Julia Nordling, RN, Parish Nurse



MILLION

ANS

with a documented mental illness



“When we acknowledge the reality of mental health challenges, we can care for people and give them hope. We can shine a light in the darkness.”

–Mary Nordtvedt, RN, Parish Nurse

“Because of age-related changes in the functioning of liver, kidneys, and brain, older people can only tolerate lower doses of most medications and are at a greater risk of developing a number of side effects,” Jeste said.

He also points to a shortage of geriatric psychiatrists that is expected to worsen in tandem with the growing population of adults 55 years and older. As a result of these and other challenges, the American Psychological Association says research indicates as many as two-thirds of older adults with a mental disorder are not receiving adequate treatment and services.

GETTING HELP

Bridging the gaps between older adults and resources that could help improve their mental health outlook can be done by a variety of people, from parish nurses to family caregivers to doctors. As a referral agent, parish nurses such as Nesdahl, Nordling, and Nordtvedt can connect older adults with agencies and professionals who can help.

“We can be a listening presence and guide, but there are times it’s absolutely imperative you make a referral,” Nordtvedt said. “But making an appointment with a counselor is not an easy thing for some people. Part of my role is coaching and supporting them and even helping them determine what their insurance covers as well as finding the right match, because the first counselor you see may not be the right one for you.”

In addition to making referrals, parish nurses, church staff, and congregation members can play a role in breaking down the stigma that accompanies mental illness. Providing a sense of safety and community can be key to older adults opening up about their struggles. Nesdahl has seen first-

hand the positive impact from her home congregation embracing individuals and supporting them on their mental health journey.


“It’s an amazing thing to watch those people become part of our congregation and be loved back to wholeness by the congregation,” she said.

For congregations in the Twin Cities, 2nd Half with Lyngblomsten’s upcoming Older Adult Ministry Forum offers a chance to explore the realities of mental illness in older adults and provide congregation members with tools that can help make their faith community more welcoming to those with mental illness.

Reverend Hollie Holt-Woehl, who holds a Ph.D. in pastoral care and counseling, will present “Supporting People with Mental Illness in Your Congregation” from 10 AM to noon on March 14 in the Newman-Benson Chapel at Lyngblomsten.

Registration is required by March 11 and can be completed by calling (651) 632-5330 or emailing 2ndHalf@lyngblomsten.org. For more details, see page 18 of this issue.

Raising awareness of mental health challenges faced by older adults and resources available to them through events, training, and conversations are ways a congregation or individual can help bring the issue out of the shadows.

“If we continue to avoid the conversations about mental health, we continue the stigma behind it,” Nordtvedt said. “When we acknowledge the reality of mental health challenges, we can care for people and give them hope. We can shine a light in the darkness.” 

Figuring out where to turn to seek support and treatment for mental illness can be challenging. These resources are starting points for those in need of assistance on their mental health journey.

Metro Area Mental Health Crisis Response is a mobile crisis outreach service that seeks to stabilize immediate crises at home, work, school, or in the community through numerous services.

- Anoka County: (763) 755-3801
- Carver and Scott counties: (952) 442-7601
- Dakota County: (952) 891-7171
- Washington County: (651) 777-5222
- Ramsey County: (651) 266-7900
- Hennepin County: (612) 596-1223

National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI)—Minnesota offers numerous resources, including support groups, advocacy, and classes. Visit www.namihelps.org, call (651) 645-2948, or email namihelps@namimn.org.

Minnesota Department of Health provides a collection of resources, including program and service descriptions, contact information for agencies, and more. Visit www.goo.gl/C7Zzhz or call (651) 431-2225.

Senior LinkAge Line can connect older adults with a variety of resources, including mental health services. Call 1-800-333-2433.

Community-University Health Care Center at the University of Minnesota offers mental health care for income-based fees to the public. For more information, visit www.goo.gl/1wU3T6, call (612) 301-3433, or email cuhcc@umn.edu.

Volunteers of America—Minnesota offers mental health services for older adults, including assessments, medication management, and therapy. Call (763) 225-4054 or read a fact sheet online at www.voamnwi.org/pdf_files/senior-mental-health-fact-sheet.

Emotions Anonymous is a 12-step program that helps participants improve their emotional well-being. To find a meeting in the Twin Cities, visit www.emotionsanonymous.org.

Mental Health Ministry Toolkit from Pathways to Promise is designed to help faith communities develop organized, effective ways of supporting people as they face the challenges of mental illness. Visit www.pathways2promise.org/pages/mental-health-ministry-tool-kit to learn more.

LeadingAge Minnesota is offering a workshop: Improving Behavioral Healthcare in Older Adult Services, on February 6, 2018. Details at institute.leadingagemn.org.

Parish Nurse Grant Awarded to Local Faith Community

The Lyngblomsten Parish Nurse Ministry Resource Network, through funding provided by the Lyngblomsten Foundation, has awarded grant money to the following faith community to enhance its current program to benefit the health and wellness of older adults in 2018.

Salem Lutheran Church, West St. Paul

Parish Nurse: Louise Nesdahl, RN

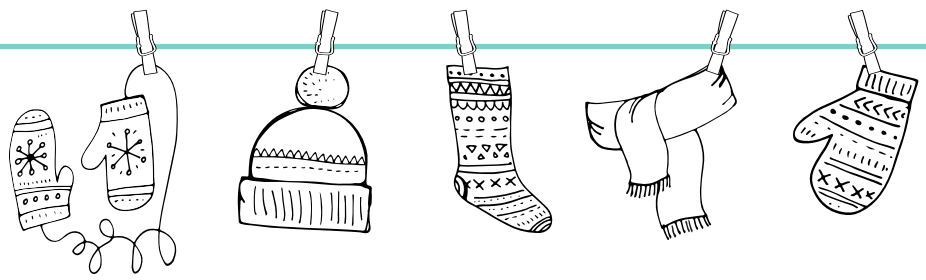
Grant Project: Fun, Fit, and Falls Prevention

The program will offer weekly exercise classes to improve older adults' strength and balance, which will reduce the risk of falling. The classes, facilitated by a certified instructor, will create and promote community around health and wellness.

The Lyngblomsten Parish Nurse Ministry Resource Group is a resource and networking group that connects nurses serving in faith communities to educational and professional support. Annual membership benefits include opportunities to apply for grants, monthly network meetings, registration for Older Adult Ministry Forums (see page 18), and more.

If your faith community is interested in learning more about parish nursing, contact Mary Nordtvedt, RN, Parish Nurse Ministry Resource Network Coordinator, at (651) 632-5380 or mnordtvedt@lyngblomsten.org. More information is available at www.lyngblomsten.org/parishnurse.

Helping Hands: Tenants create winter care kits for local homeless youth



By Brandi Jewett

One by one, Lyngblomsten tenants tucked scarves, hats, gloves, and socks into bags in an effort to bring comfort to young members of the Twin Cities community.

The bags of winter gear assembled on November 11 by tenants of The Heritage at Lyngblomsten and the Lyngblomsten Apartments also included homemade cards that they hoped would brighten the day of the homeless youth receiving the care kits.

“There are lots of people out there who have difficult lives that need a lot of nurturing, and this is a small way of giving a contribution,” Heritage tenant Luan Muller said.

A public health nurse for 40 years, Muller assisted many with health and housing needs within Minneapolis, including youth. Heritage tenant Marlene Genung also spent her career helping others as a preschool teacher for 33 years.

“I worked with economically and socially disadvantaged children, and this fits right in with something I am interested in,” Genung said of the event.

A dozen kits assembled by Muller, Genung, and seven other tenants didn’t have far to go to make an impact. They were taken on a less-than-five-minute journey to the Booth Brown House, located on Como Avenue just a few blocks south of the Lyngblomsten campus.

The Booth Brown House, operated by the Salvation Army, provides emergency shelter to youth ages 18 to 21 and supportive housing to young people ages 16 to 24. Its emergency shelter can house 16 individuals while its supportive housing program manages 35 efficiency apartments.

In addition to housing, the Booth Brown House offers educational opportunities, case management, assistance in finding employment, and other services to help the youth it serves overcome obstacles.

Youth staying in the emergency shelter are required to leave each day at 9 AM and are given bus tokens to help get around the city and back to the shelter at night.

“Because they’re out there during those daytime hours, I thought having some cold weather gear would be great,” Booth Brown House Program Director Erin Foss said of the winter care kits.

This is the second time The Heritage’s Creativity Craft Club has assembled care kits for the shelter. In November 2016, club members gift wrapped items such as socks and toiletries in boxes for the shelter’s youth.

“We thought that because of Thanksgiving and being thankful for what we have, it would be a good time of year to reach out and help,” said Caryn Erickson, Activity and Service Coordinator for The Heritage at Lyngblomsten.

Erickson first learned about the youth emergency shelter and its needs during a statewide regional

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Caryn Erickson, Activity and Service Coordinator for The Heritage at Lyngblomsten, shows Georgine Bellotti, a Lyngblomsten Apartments tenant, a pair of gloves.



Scarves, gloves, socks, and hats rest on a table before they are placed inside bags to form winter care kits for homeless youth.

service coordinator meeting hosted two years ago at the Booth Brown House. With an idea for a service project in mind, she approached the Creativity Craft Club and asked its members if they would be interested in dedicating their November meeting to the project. Club members were supportive and adopted the proposal.

“They are very giving people, and it’s a nice way for them to continue to give,” Erickson said.


This year’s event was opened up to tenants of the Lyngblomsten Apartments and featured Foss as a guest speaker.

“In the last year, we’ve served almost 200 youth through our shelter,” Foss told event participants. On any given night, there are around 480 home-

less youth in the Twin Cities metro area, accounting for about 60 percent of the homeless youth population statewide. Foss said during the winter, the Booth Brown House’s emergency shelter is usually full.

Foss’ presentation created a unique aspect that distinguished the care kit assembly from a traditional craft activity, Erickson said.

“Our tenants here, they like to gather information and know a little more,” she added. “The event was a good way for them to learn how they’re helping these homeless youth.”

Learn more about the Booth Brown House at www.salvationarmynorth.org/community/booth-brown-house. 



Supporters Appreciation Event honors those central to Lyngblomsten's mission | By Brandi Jewett

Members of the Lyngblomsten community came together for an afternoon of fellowship, recognition, and fun during the organization’s annual Supporters Appreciation Event.

More than 200 people gathered on November 12 at Vadnais Heights Commons for the event, which is held each year to honor the hundreds who support Lyngblomsten through their donations, volunteerism, and partnerships.

Supporters were thanked by Lyngblomsten board chairs and staff at the event, as well as by residents, tenants, and program participants through a special video presentation.

“The volunteers and supportive staff make Lyngblomsten a place where I can continue to delight in life as I age,” said Joanne Randen, a tenant of The Heritage at Lyngblomsten.

Many supporters were recognized for service, including Dr. Les Grant. Grant received the Anna Quale Fergstad Award, which honors individuals for their distinguished service to Lyngblomsten.


Grant has helped progress Lyngblomsten and improve the lives of older adults on and off its

Dr. Les Grant (L) receives the Anna Quale Fergstad Award from Jeff Heinecke, President & CEO of Lyngblomsten.



campus through his work as a board member, educator, researcher, and volunteer. He is an associate professor in the University of Minnesota—Twin Cities School of Public Health and director of the university’s Center for Aging Services Management.

Also honored were dozens of individual and organization donors, volunteers, corporate congregations, educational partners, corporate volunteer groups, scholarship winners, and others whose contributions to Lyngblomsten have helped it succeed in its mission of providing compassionate care and innovative services to older adults.

To watch the video shown at the event, please visit www.lyngblomsten.org/get-involved. View more photos from the event in an online gallery at www.lyngblomsten.org/news-events/events-photo-gallery. 

Lyngblomsten wins innovation award in McKnight's Excellence in Technology Awards competition for eMenuCHOICE® software tool

By Brandi Jewett

Lyngblomsten's continued focus on improving the experience of its residents earned it an award at a national technology competition.

In October, Lyngblomsten won the Innovator of the Year Bronze Award in McKnight's Excellence in Technology competition for its web-based software tool eMenuCHOICE®.

"Looking for new and innovative ways to improve the experience of our residents has long been part of the Lyngblomsten culture," Lyngblomsten President and CEO Jeff Heinecke said. "With so much emphasis being placed on greater choice, staff efficiency, and food cost containment, the only real way to accomplish this was by developing technology designed specifically for a senior living campus."

The award recognizes senior care organizations that use technology to improve quality of care and cost savings. More than 100 entries were received for the overall competition, which honors five categories of award winners.

"This annual event recognizes providers who have harnessed technology to make life better for their residents," Elizabeth Leis Newman, senior editor for McKnight's Long-Term Care News, said in a statement. "This is an extremely competitive contest, and to be selected as one of the few honorees is a notable accomplishment."


eMenuCHOICE is a web-based mobile software application designed to improve the accuracy and efficiency of communication among residents, servers, and kitchen staff during the meal-ordering process. The system features photos and audio descriptions of menu items and can call attention

to allergies, special diets, and diet changes.

"It was the goal of Lyngblomsten to bring greater choice and better customer service to all the residents across our campus during their mealtime experience," Heinecke said of the software's development.

Residents can use iPads or tablets to select their meals. The app also is accessible to family members, allowing them to be involved with the meal-selection process. The software streamlines dietary management across an organization from the food service side of operations. It has proven successful in resident satisfaction, operational streamlining, and cost savings.

Lyngblomsten launched eMenuCHOICE for internal use in 2013 and began offering it commercially to other organizations in 2015. At this time, thousands of senior care residents in a variety of facilities across the United States use the application for their meal-selection process.

The McKnight's Excellence in Technology award is the second major honor eMenuCHOICE has received since its inception. In 2015, eMenuCHOICE was awarded LeadingAge Minnesota's Leading Change Innovation Award, which recognizes top innovative programs and ideas from older adult service providers. 



To learn more about eMenuCHOICE, visit www.emenuchoice.com.

★★★★★ **Committed to Quality:**

Lyngblomsten Care Center Earns Five-Star Quality Rating

from the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services



Clay project blooms with creativity from *The Gathering* participants, volunteers

By Brandi Jewett



Buzzing bees, a bird's nest teeming with eggs, and plump berries greet onlookers passing by gardens created this past summer by 2nd Half with Lyngblomsten program participants.

The gardens containing these elements did not grow from regular watering and abundant sunlight but rather from the imaginations of its creators, who shaped each piece of it by hand from polymer clay.

Nearly a dozen participants of The Gathering group respite program and their volunteer partners created pieces for the "Gathering in the Garden" art project over the course of six sessions this past summer. The Gathering is a program that provides a day of brain-stimulating activities to older adults with memory loss and also grants a five-hour break for their caregivers.

As part of the sessions at The Gathering site hosted by Centennial United Methodist Church in Roseville, participants crafted small polymer clay tiles adorned with fruit, vegetables, leaves, flowers, and other elements reminiscent of summer gardening and fall harvest. Other tiles featured stamped impressions of birds, bugs, frogs, and flowers brushed with eyeshadow to shine.

"They really ran with the possibilities, and that's what got us all so excited about it," Lyngblomsten Community Dementia Care Specialist Carolyn Klaver said. "I love their personal additions. A pumpkin? No, we're going to make it into a jack-o'-lantern. A bird's nest? We need to add some birds. The creativity was huge."

1) Artist Deb George (left) discusses the arrangement of polymer clay tiles with Lyngblomsten staff members Andrea Lewandoski, Director of Lifelong Learning and the Arts; Carolyn Klaver, Community Dementia Care Specialist; and Betsy Hoffman, Community Services Team Coordinator for The Gathering.

2 & 3) The Gathering in the Garden project produced several finished pieces arranged from dozens of polymer clay tiles crafted by participants.

The tiles were combined to form several "story quilts," which reflect the personalities and abilities of the participants. Throughout the pieces are a variety of colors, textures, and compositions. While teaching artist Deb George showed examples of possible tile creations, participants were encouraged to add their own twist.

"We'd hoped participants would personalize their projects in some way, and they did," George said. "There were many special moments where they took their project a step further, or connected in a special way with the materials. I particularly enjoyed watching the creativity come out and hearing memories that a project elicited."

Marlys Nelson has volunteered with The Gathering for the past two years and found Gathering in the Garden a fun and engaging activity that allowed participants to express themselves to the best of their creative abilities. Seeing the finished tiles also put a smile on caregivers' faces, she added.

"Their caregivers are happy to see they have done something like that because that's quite a task," Nelson said.

The Gathering in the Garden project began as an idea in a time of need. The Centennial site was without a lead volunteer—the volunteer who organizes The Gathering activities for the day—and



Klaver was looking to create options such as kits that any substitute lead volunteer could use at the site.

A canceled art class presented an opportunity to take the artists committed to the classes and transfer their talents to The Gathering for the polymer clay and other projects. Gathering in the Garden was experimental in nature, but Klaver said it was a success.

“I was very moved by how you could take people in early-stage, middle-stage, and late-stage memory loss and have them all produce beautiful pieces,” Klaver said.

The project’s success laid a foundation for similar programming throughout 2nd Half with Lyngblomsten and underlines the importance of lifelong learning for adults. Andrea Lewandoski, Lyngblomsten Director of Lifelong Learning and the Arts, noted that older adults participating in art activities often come into it with some experience such as quilting, woodworking, or needlepoint, but may not have worked with materials such as the polymer clay.

“The arts really play a key role for most of the people that we serve in continuing that learning process throughout life,” Lewandoski said. “Hopefully throughout that process, they’re finding joy in what they’re doing, connecting with others more, and really tapping into that creative part of themselves that they may not have had opportunities to do so otherwise.”

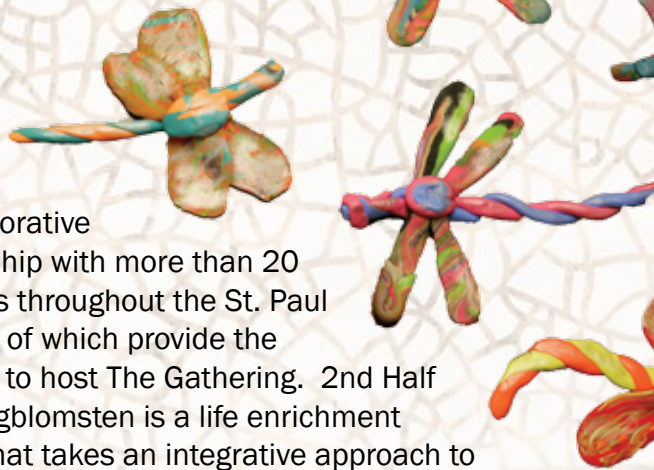
The Gathering is an award-winning program offered through 2nd Half with Lyngblomsten

in collaborative partnership with more than 20 churches throughout the St. Paul area, six of which provide the facilities to host The Gathering. 2nd Half with Lyngblomsten is a life enrichment center that takes an integrative approach to supporting adults aging well in their communities. In October, The Gathering won the national Rose Dobrof Award from the Brookdale Foundation Group for providing excellent dementia programming to persons living in the community (see page 12 for the complete story).

A dedicated group of more than 200 volunteers are specially trained and then paired with participants at The Gathering sites. Volunteers are essential to the success of the program, and new volunteers are always welcome to join its ranks. Those interested in volunteering with The Gathering would work one-on-one with participants, with comprehensive training provided. The program is held at church sites in Roseville, West St. Paul, White Bear Lake, and Woodbury.

For more information about volunteering with or participating in The Gathering, see “Get Involved with The Gathering” on page 13.

Art admirers will have a chance to own pieces created from the Gathering in the Garden project. Some of the artwork assembled from the tiles will be auctioned at the Lyngblomsten Foundation Spring Gala on April 20, 2018. See page 19 for more details about the Spring Gala. **L**



Lyngblomsten Community Services wins national Rose Dobrof Award for excellence in dementia services, programming

By Brandi Jewett

For nearly two decades, a Lyngblomsten program has sought to ease the journey of memory loss for people with dementia and their caregivers.

The Gathering group respite program's positive impact has been felt throughout the Twin Cities community through the people it serves and the dedicated group of volunteers who make a break possible for caregivers.

These efforts were recently recognized when Lyngblomsten Community Services won the national Rose Dobrof Award, which honored the organization for its outstanding programs and services for those living with dementia in the community and their family caregivers.

"This award recognizes what can happen when a group of dedicated people and organizations come together with a shared vision and spirit to make a difference," Lyngblomsten Director of Community Services Julie Pfab said.

Lyngblomsten Community Services, which provides programming for older adults through life enrichment centers called 2nd Half with Lyngblomsten, received a \$10,000 award in addition to the honor, which was presented by the Brookdale Foundation Group on October 20, 2017, during the Brookdale National Group Respite Conference in Denver. Lyngblomsten Community Services was selected from a group of six finalists for the award.

For the past 17 years, Lyngblomsten has served the Twin Cities community through The Gathering, a program that provides brain-stimulating activities for those with memory loss and gives a day of respite—a break from caregiving duties—to their caregivers, who also receive support and resources from the program.

"We believe we're helping people with dementia and their caregivers in a big way by supporting from many different angles and trying to reach as



(L-R): Mary Ann Van Clief, Brookdale Foundation Group Vice President; Valarie Hall, Brookdale Foundation Group Grant Coordinator; Carolyn Klaver, RN and Lyngblomsten Community Dementia Care Specialist; Julie Pfab, Lyngblomsten Director of Community Services; and Carmen Mendieta, Brookdale National Group Respite Program Technical Assistance Consultant, pose with the Rose Dobrof Award, which honored Lyngblomsten Community Services' leadership and commitment to excellence in community dementia services and programming.

many people as we can," Lyngblomsten Community Dementia Care Specialist Carolyn Klaver, RN, said.

Since its inception, The Gathering has touched the lives of hundreds of participants, who sing, create art, exercise, hear guest speakers, and do much more as part of their brain-stimulating program experience. Each participant is partnered with a volunteer specially trained to understand the distinctive needs of people living with memory loss.

"Gathering volunteers are a group of folks who feel called to work with people with various types of dementia," Klaver said. "These volunteers are patient and flexible. On a one-on-one basis, the volunteers help our participants feel valued and dignified."

Having a skilled volunteer base for The Gathering is part of Lyngblomsten's mission as a Service Enterprise, a certification granted in May 2017 by

the Service Enterprise Initiative. Lyngblomsten received the certification for strategically engaging volunteers and their skills across all levels of the organization to deliver successfully on our social mission.

The Gathering relies on a dedicated group of more than 200 trained volunteers who provide approximately 20,000 hours of service annually. The size of The Gathering's volunteer base sets it apart from similar programs, including the other finalists for the Rose Dobrof Award.

"Our volunteers truly have made strides in how to do excellent dementia programming," Klaver said. "They work to entwine the participants' life stories into the activities and discussions. We cannot do The Gathering without the volunteers."

The Gathering program is offered through 2nd Half with Lyngblomsten in collaborative partnership with more than 20 churches throughout the Saint Paul area, six of which provide the facilities to host The Gathering. 2nd Half with Lyngblomsten is a life enrichment center that takes an integrative approach to supporting adults aging well in their communities. Offerings include education and the arts; social activities and outings; health, wellness, and spirituality; service opportunities; and resources and supportive services.

"A word that comes to mind in the wake of this award is gratitude," Pfab said. "The Gathering is a unique community program that relies on many for its success. I am grateful for all who are involved with The Gathering—participants, family caregivers, volunteers, staff, churches, donors, community partners, the Lyngblomsten Foundation. I am grateful for the terrific team from Lyngblomsten that makes this happen."

The \$10,000 accompanying the Rose Dobrof Award will contribute to the Lyngblomsten Foundation's fundraising efforts to provide ongoing financial support for the continued offering of dignified, enriching programming through The Gathering.


In addition to the fees paid by program participants, each year the Lyngblomsten Foundation raises approximately \$80,000 through grants and individual donations to support caregiver services,

which includes The Gathering. Each funding source plays a vital role in making The Gathering a sustainable program and allowing it to continue enriching the lives of participants and caregivers alike.

Lyngblomsten was chosen as the award winner by a vote of members of the Brookdale National Group Respite Program Network. The network is facilitated by the Brookdale Foundation Group, which works to advance the fields of geriatrics and gerontology and to improve the lives of older adults.

"We haven't been working for national success. We have been working for success that's one participant, one activity, one morning, one Gathering day at a time," Klaver said. "The award is recognition that we are hitting the mark and making a difference. I can't tell you how happy that makes me and the rest of the team."

The Rose Dobrof Award is given in memory of Dr. Rose Dobrof, a nationally recognized expert in the field of aging. Dobrof was instrumental in the development of the pilot program that became the Brookdale National Group Respite Program.

For more information about volunteering with or participating in The Gathering, see "Get Involved with The Gathering" below. 

Get Involved with The Gathering

Are you interested in making a difference in the lives of older adults and those who care about them? Then consider volunteering with The Gathering! Volunteers work one-on-one with participants, with comprehensive training provided. The program is held at church sites in Roseville, West St. Paul, White Bear Lake, and Woodbury.

- For more information about participating in The Gathering, visit www.lyngblomsten.org/thegathering or contact Betsy Hoffman at (651) 414-5291 or bhoffman@lyngblomsten.org.
- For more information about volunteering with The Gathering, contact Peggy Cerrito at (651) 632-5406 or pcerrito@lyngblomsten.org.

Volunteers find purpose through service with Lyngblomsten

By Brandi Jewett

The answer to a two-word question landed John Wright behind the wheel of a bus.

While driving on his way to the airport two years ago, he spied a Lyngblomsten bus with a sign asking, “Drive me?” with a phone number printed below the text.

“I wrote it down and gave them a call,” Wright said. “I was looking for a volunteering opportunity.”

Ever since, Wright has picked up shifts as a volunteer bus driver, taking Lyngblomsten residents, tenants, and program participants on rides to a variety of destinations. It’s a fun way to spend an afternoon for Wright, who retired from the St. Paul Police Department after serving as an officer for about 30 years.

As a driver, Wright is treated to plenty of stories by his riders. He sees many on a regular basis and enjoys taking them where they need to go, whether it’s to the doctor or on a fall leaf tour.

“I think it goes without saying, it’s important to volunteer, but I think I get more out of this than I put into it—it’s a great experience,” he said.

A positive aspect of the Lyngblomsten volunteer experience Wright emphasizes is that opportunities are tailored to what a volunteer’s skills and strengths are. As a certified Service

Enterprise organization, Lyngblomsten strives to strategically engage volunteers and their skills across the organization.

For many volunteers, one strength is being a friendly face that greets residents, tenants, participants, families, and staff on the Lyngblomsten campus. Volunteers Bob Lundgren and Toni Merth are two of those faces and can be found behind the counter at Anna’s café & gifts. Lundgren got his start volunteering nearly two years ago after his mother moved into the Lyngblomsten Care Center and remained there until her passing a few months later.

“I volunteered because it was easier for me to go visit her before and after volunteering,” he said. “After she was gone, I just kept volunteering.”

Working as a part-time mall security guard leaves Lundgren with time to spend helping others. In addition to serving at Lyngblomsten, he also volunteers at an after-school program. Lundgren’s shifts at Anna’s keep him busy, and that’s just the way he likes it. He enjoys organizing the café’s inventory of items and visiting with the numerous customers who come through the line.

“You feel like you’re productive and contributing to society,” Lundgren said of volunteering. “You’re helping a good place. My mother was here, and she got good care. That’s why I volunteer.”

Merth, who works part time for the Lyngblomsten Foundation in addition to volunteering, also loves visiting with customers who come through the café and



Volunteer driver John Wright smiles from his seat on the Lyngblomsten bus.



Anna's café & gifts volunteer Bob Lundgren poses with the decorative mannequin located near the eatery.

gift shop line. The personal interactions she has with them is one of the highlights of every shift.


“Volunteering at Anna’s allows me to meet many other people—residents and staff of the Care Center, tenants of the apartments, and other volunteers,” she said. “I also enjoy reconnecting with some of the people whom I already know but do not see very often.”

A volunteer since 2010 when she retired from Travelers Insurance Co., Merth first came to Lyngblomsten to volunteer on the recommendation of a friend. Now, she speaks to other friends about the volunteer opportunities available through the organization and encourages them to find one that fits them.

Lyngblomsten is always looking for new volunteers, especially drivers and Anna’s café & gifts workers, but there are dozens of other opportunities for anyone ages 13 and older. Lundgren, Merth, and Wright all agree it’s an uplifting way to give back.

“Volunteering is a way I can express my gratitude for all my blessings and help other people at the same time,” Merth said.

Interested in becoming a volunteer?

Learn more at www.lyngblomsten.org/volunteer or contact Peggy Cerrito at (651) 632-5406 or pcerrito@lyngblomsten.org. 

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES TO ENHANCE THE LIVES OF OLDER ADULTS



Lyngblomsten is currently in need of volunteers for the following activities:

- **Music & Memory:** Visit with residents as they listen to personalized playlists on iPods, or update playlists with songs from an extensive iTunes library. Flexible scheduling.
- **Friendly visits with residents:** Spend time with residents by reading a book, playing a game, listening to an audiobook, accompanying them to an appointment on campus, or just talking! We’re also looking for new “pet volunteers” to visit our residents! If you have a friendly dog or cat, we’d love for them to visit with you.

In September, October, and November, a total of **433 volunteers** (including volunteers for The Gathering) gave **8,150 hours of service**. Another **86 group volunteers** gave **534 hours**.

Upcoming New Volunteer Orientations:

- Saturday, January 20, from 10 AM–Noon
- Thursday, February 15, from 6–8 PM
- Tuesday, March 20, from 6–8 PM

To learn more or register for new volunteer orientation, contact Peggy Cerrito at (651) 632-5406 or pcerrito@lyngblomsten.org, or visit www.lyngblomsten.org/volunteer.

Educational opportunities for Lyngblomsten volunteers in 2018

Lyngblomsten offers numerous continuing education and development opportunities for current and prospective volunteers.

Learn more about these sessions and how to register at www.lyngblomsten.org/get-involved/volunteer (click on the “2018 Continuing Education for Volunteers” link).

Upcoming events include:

- **Monday, January 22:** Lifelong Learning & the Arts Volunteer Continuing Education—Music & Movement
- **Friday, February 16:** Volunteer Development Series: Elder Abuse—Private Tragedies with Public Consequences

Dancing in the 2nd Half of Life



By Melanie Davis,
Chief Development Officer
Lyngblomsten Foundation

“1-2-3, 1-2-3, 1-2-3” was the count running through my mind recently as I was learning to waltz with my husband, Tom. Taking ballroom dance lessons was a big step for me. You see, growing up, my family didn’t dance. And it wasn’t the custom to have dances at weddings down South. Even the small-town high school I attended prohibited dancing. Years later as an adult, I felt inadequate and self-conscious whenever I had an opportunity to dance. “I’m not a dancer” was my mantra. Unfortunately, I let those feelings and my fixed mindset keep me from realizing that dancing was something I could learn and even enjoy.

Fortunately, my thoughts have changed. Through my work with Lyngblomsten, I’ve had the privilege to see firsthand the enormous potential that exists within older adults and the powerful value that continued learning and socialization holds for us, particularly as we age. Although I understand the sense of angst and fear of failure we can have when confronted with trying something new, I also believe that at the end of the day, it’s our mindsets that truly limit us. Often, we believe that you either have talent (as a painter, a dancer, an athlete, a writer, you name it) or you don’t. But in reality, we can continue to develop all types of abilities as we age. And learning something new can change not only how our brains function but also the way we feel about ourselves.

What I have observed and learned through my work with Lyngblomsten has changed my life. I’m working to let go of a fixed mindset that says “I can’t” or “I don’t have what it takes” and instead embrace the belief and the power that comes from focusing on the joy of learning and from being open and vulnerable with others as we discover together. It is a beautiful and freeing thing.

2nd Half with Lyngblomsten is built upon the research and philosophy that lifelong learning and engagement in a community can be powerful and life-enhancing. I am proud that Lyngblomsten is a Minnesota pioneer in providing such innovative, impactful community services to adults ages 50+ through our 2nd Half with Lyngblomsten life enrichment centers. And I am proud to be one of a growing group of community members who are supporting 2nd Half with Lyngblomsten with a financial gift. Together, our gifts subsidize the costs of these life enrichment centers so program participation fees remain affordable for persons of all income levels.

So what are you waiting for? There is so much to learn and explore and so many friends to make through 2nd Half with Lyngblomsten! Maybe you’re like I was and aren’t ready to give dancing a try. But there likely is something that you’ve been wanting to do for years that 2nd Half with Lyngblomsten will be offering. Check out our Winter 2018 catalog for a complete list of opportunities from January through March (www.lyngblomsten.org/2ndHalf).



***** Thank You *****

Thank you to our corporate congregations **Augustana Lutheran, Holy Childhood Catholic, Como Park Lutheran, Incarnation Lutheran, Jehovah Lutheran, Lutheran Church of the Redeemer, Prince of Peace Lutheran, St. Anthony Park Lutheran, and Gloria Dei Lutheran** for their participation in our annual Spirit of Giving Christmas gift collection. Their generosity made it possible for all Lyngblomsten residents and tenants to receive gifts this year for Christmas. Thank you for helping us continue this wonderful holiday tradition for residents and tenants!



Corporate Connections

By Tim Overweg, Manager of Volunteer Services & Special Events




Industrialist Andrew Carnegie once suggested that his epitaph should read, “Here lies a man who was able to surround himself with those far cleverer than himself.” I am not suggesting this for my epitaph, but I have discovered that here at Lyngblomsten, I am surrounded by some whip-smart people.

Here’s an example. At the Lyngblomsten Supporters Appreciation Event on November 12 (see page 8 for a recap), we recognized and thanked our Corporate Sponsors. Each company was listed in the program. After the event, I received an email from a coworker. She was a friend of an executive from one of the companies that we recognized as a sponsor. She took the program, handed it off to her friend, and expressed her gratitude that his company supported the work and mission of Lyngblomsten.

Very smart and very insightful. Here was an individual who took the opportunity to let a company know that she was aware of and appreciated its philanthropy.

It is up to me to make sure our readers are aware of those generous companies and organizations that support the work of Lyngblomsten. Then, if you are connected with someone from those companies, tell them you know of their support. Thank them and let them know how important their support is. And if you know someone in an organization who would make a good partner with Lyngblomsten, introduce us. If you and I reach out together, some great things are possible.

For more information, please contact Tim Overweg at (651) 632-5319 or toverweg@lyngblomsten.org, or visit www.lyngblomsten.org/get-involved. 

Corporate Volunteer Groups (Jan. – Nov. 2017)

Thank you to the following corporate volunteer groups who have given of their time this year!

- Allina Health
- Best Buy
- Crystal D Creations
- Cummins
- Meridian Services
- Midwest Sign & Screen Printing Supply
- Northern Tool + Equipment
- Optum
- Pearson VUE
- Target
- UnitedHealthcare Medicare & Retirement

Corporate Volunteer Stats

(September – November 2017)

Volunteers: **41** Hours: **130**



On November 29, volunteers from Allina Health and Pearson VUE helped deck the halls of the Lyngblomsten Care Center and The Heritage at Lyngblomsten for Christmas.



A volunteer from Pearson VUE and Ray Erickson, a tenant at The Heritage at Lyngblomsten, finish topping off the Christmas tree in the lobby of The Heritage.

Volunteers from Allina Health enjoy Christmas cookies with residents of the Care Center.



OUR MISSION:

Influenced by Christ, Lyngblomsten provides a ministry of compassionate care and innovative services to older adults in order to preserve and enhance their quality of life.

OUR GUIDING PRINCIPLES:

For our **participants**, Lyngblomsten promotes dignity through informed choices for living options, respecting individuality, and orchestrating the best life possible.

For our participants' **families**, Lyngblomsten supports their needs through careful listening, traveling alongside them as they walk the journey with their loved ones.

For our **employees**, Lyngblomsten strives to foster an environment that encourages compassionate care-giving, innovative thinking, problem-solving, and opportunity seeking.

Through our **community** of donors, volunteers, corporate congregations, and socially responsible corporations, Lyngblomsten encourages the individual to live one's personal ministry by enhancing the lives of older adults.

OUR PROMISE

Lyngblomsten strives to provide unmatched person-centered experiences, valuing: who you are, where you are, and your rights to make choices and decisions.

OUR PILLARS:

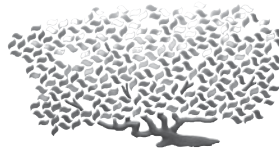
Influenced by Christ
Innovation & Leadership
Resources & Support
Person-Centered &
Dignity-Enhancing Experiences
Engaged Lifestyle

Gifts to the Remembrance Fund In Memory or Honor of a Loved One

September 1, 2017, through November 30, 2017

In Memory of

Marie Bickel	Elmer Kaardal	Lorraine Pederson
Rose M. Brisbane	Jim Kozar	Esther Peterson
Betty Ann Burch	Geraldine Lallas	Blanche Sanders
Guel M. Dostal	Milton Larson	Olaf Storaasli
Maurice & Gladys Freeman	James LaVigne	Paul A. Weibel
Anne Husby Hanson	Marcella Lundy	Elaine & Francis Wray
Marilyn Heuer	Vivian Maynard	
Pearl & Clarence Hoppe	"My parents"	
	Verna Mae Nelson	In Honor of
	Sharon Oines	Glen Strom



The Remembrance Tree is a way to make a permanent remembrance of your loved one with a gold, silver, or bronze leaf. For further information or if you have questions about this list, call (651) 632-5324.

2nd Half with Lyngblomsten Resources for Churches

Older Adult Ministry Forum: Supporting Older Adults with Mental Illness in Your Congregation

Are you involved in a caring ministry or pastoral care team in your congregation? Have you been asked to help support an older adult living with mental illness? Do you live with mental illness and wonder how you can help your congregation be welcoming? Come hear how congregations can offer support and services to members with mental illness and develop the confidence to reach out in love.

Presenter: Rev. Dr. Hollie Holt-Woehl, Ph.D. in Pastoral Care and Counseling

Wednesday, March 14

10 AM–Noon in the Newman-Benson Chapel at Lyngblomsten (1415 Almond Avenue, St. Paul)

Fee: \$10/person or \$25/group of 3 or more people from the same congregation. *To sign up as a group, please do so at one time and provide names of all registrants.*

Registration required by March 11 to (651) 632-5330 or 2ndHalf@lyngblomsten.org.

Events Calendar

Unless noted otherwise, all events are located on the Lyngblomsten campus at 1415 Almond Avenue, St. Paul, MN 55108.

Registration should be made at (651) 632-5330 or 2ndHalf@lyngblomsten.org, unless otherwise noted.

Thursday, January 11

Books-Cheese-Wine with Author Denis Gardner
Our Minnesota State Capitol: From Groundbreaking through Restoration

5:30–7 PM on the Lyngblomsten campus,
Community Room (lower level)

Learn about the history and rehabilitation of the Minnesota State Capitol. \$6. Registration preferred; walk-ins welcome.

Monday, January 22

Lifelong Learning & the Arts Volunteer Continuing Education: Music & Movement

9:30 AM–12:30 PM on the Lyngblomsten campus, Community Room (lower level)

Lyngblomsten volunteers will learn how they can incorporate music and movement activities into their service. To register: (651) 414-5297 or sbeck@lyngblomsten.org.

Friday, January 26

Fourth Friday Live Music & Dance

6:30–8 PM on the Lyngblomsten campus,
Newman-Benson Chapel

Featuring musical performers from MacPhail Jazz Quartet and dance enthusiast Christopher Yaeger. Light refreshments served. FREE.

For updates and more events, visit www.lyngblomsten.org/calendar.



Tuesdays & Thursdays, February 6–April 12

AARP Tax Assistance

9 AM–1 PM on the Lyngblomsten campus,
Community Room (lower level)

This FREE service provided by AARP volunteers will help you file your tax returns. See page 23 of the 2nd Half with Lyngblomsten Winter 2018 Catalog for more details (download the catalog at www.lyngblomsten.org/2ndHalf). Appointments required: Call (651) 999-2499. Messages will be picked up by an AARP volunteer who will return your call to schedule your appointment.

Sunday, February 11

Second Sunday Concert with MacPhail

2–3 PM on the Lyngblomsten campus,
Newman-Benson Chapel

Featuring the Lyngblomsten Community Sage Singers—Valentine's Concert. FREE.

Friday, February 16

Volunteer Development Series: Elder Abuse—Private Tragedies with Public Consequences

6:30–8 PM on the Lyngblomsten campus

Learn about elder abuse, warning signs, and resources to address it. FREE. To register: (651) 414-5297 or sbeck@lyngblomsten.org.

Friday, March 9

Older Adult Ministry Forum: Becoming a Dementia-Friendly Congregation

10 AM–Noon at Augustana Lutheran Church
(1400 S Robert Street, West St. Paul)

Learn how your congregation can become more dementia-friendly. \$10/person or \$25/group of 3+ people from the same congregation.

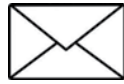
Registration required by March 6. To sign up as a group, do so at one time and provide names of all registrants.

Lyngblomsten Foundation

Spring
Gala

Friday, April 20, 2018, at Vadnais Heights Commons

Save the date to join us for a special evening as we raise funds to support 2nd Half with Lyngblomsten caregiver support programs. Special guest for the evening is Karla Hult, reporter and news anchor with KARE 11. Learn more about 2nd Half with Lyngblomsten at www.lyngblomsten.org/2ndHalf.



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CHANGE SERVICE REQUESTED

Know this face?

The *Ageless Perspectives* gallery at Lyngblomsten has 12 new portraits and bits of wisdom to share with everyone who passes by the exhibit in our Care Center entryway. The gallery is our small way of honoring all elders and the value of their life experiences and perspectives.

Stop by to see the gallery in person at 1415 Almond Avenue, St. Paul, MN 55108.



There isn't a day
I don't have
something to be
thankful for.

Renie, 88



Ageless Perspectives also is available as a calendar. Check out the printable 2018 calendar at www.lyngblomsten.org/publications, or pick up a copy on campus. Month by month, enjoy the wisdom and sentiments of these older adults and learn a little bit about their life experiences.