

# SWEET CHARITY

A GOOD SHEPHERD PUBLICATION



VOL 118 ISSUE 1 • FALL 2025



## What Makes a Home

Finding a New Way to Build  
After Tragedy



# Boundless

## *A Good Shepherd Rehabilitation Podcast*

Boundless gives voice to Good Shepherd Rehabilitation's patients and their families. Hear the compelling, real-life stories of people who have braved the trials, triumphs and tribulations of rehabilitation — and the boundless possibilities that lie on the other side of that journey.

Thanks to our partners at Lehigh Valley Public Media, Boundless: A Good Shepherd Rehabilitation Podcast, is available on all major podcast streaming services and YouTube.



**Listen Now:**

**[goodshepherdrehab.org/podcast](https://goodshepherdrehab.org/podcast)**

Where Can I See

# Gifts of Love?



**Sweet Charity's Gifts of Love section is now virtual!**

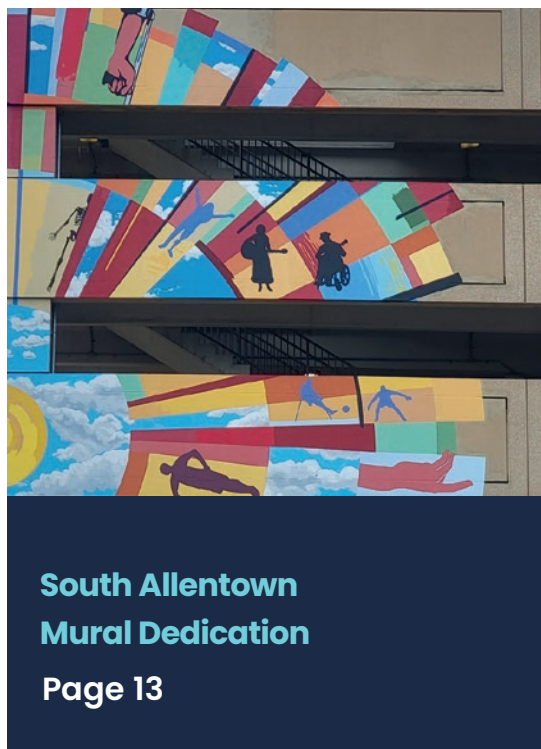
Use the URL to see the generous families and friends who honor their dear ones with memorial and living gifts. These gifts help support Good Shepherd's mission of service to people with disabilities, many who otherwise could not afford the therapies or long-term care they need.

**[goodshepherdrehab.org/giftsoflove](https://goodshepherdrehab.org/giftsoflove)**



# Blessing of the Animals

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## South Allentown Mural Dedication

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**On the cover:** Eric (middle) surrounded by his loving family.

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## Our Mission

Motivated by the divine Good Shepherd, and the often complex physical and cognitive rehabilitation needs of our communities, our mission is to enhance lives, maximize function, inspire hope, and promote dignity and well-being with expertise, innovative care and compassion.

**Good Shepherd**  
Rehabilitation

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# 10 Years, Infinite Potential

## *Reimagining Rehabilitation Care*

In a bold step forward, Good Shepherd Rehabilitation and Lehigh University have launched an ambitious 10-year partnership to bridge the gap between groundbreaking research and hands-on clinical practice.

For too long, the worlds of academic research and patient care have existed separately. Researchers make important discoveries in laboratories while clinicians work tirelessly on the front lines, often unaware of emerging innovations that could transform their patients' lives. This collaboration changes that, bringing researchers into the clinical environment where real-world challenges and breakthroughs happen every day.

The partnership is already generating exciting initiatives.

Among the projects taking shape: **adaptive toys for children with disabilities, an intuitive app designed to help people with mobility challenges navigate medical facilities and wearable technology that could change how we monitor and support recovery.**

By bringing researchers into direct contact with patients and the clinicians who serve them, this partnership ensures new technologies and techniques address real needs rather than hypothetical problems. Thank you to everyone who helped make this partnership a reality! ■



**Scan the QR code to watch a video about the partnership.**

**"We think that's really going to speed up the identification and the development of new techniques, new technology and new innovations that are going to make the lives of people living with disabilities far better."**

Michael Spigel, PT, MHA, President and CEO of Good Shepherd Rehabilitation.



# Empower 2gether

On July 23, Good Shepherd Rehabilitation's Women's Giving Circle joined forces with United Way of the Greater Lehigh Valley to host Empower 2gether. Members of both female-led philanthropic groups, with a common goal of improving the health and wellness of local families, attended the event at Good Shepherd Rehabilitation Hospital. ■



## 1908 Raker Society Annual Luncheon

On October 10, the 1908 Raker Society Annual Luncheon honored Society members for including Good Shepherd Rehabilitation in their estate plans, demonstrating their commitment to the future of Good Shepherd. ■



# BLESSING OF THE ANIMALS



Good Shepherd Home - Raker Center residents participated in a Blessing of the Animals on October 2. The Blessing of the Animals occurs near the feast day of Francis of Assisi, patron saint of animals and the environment. Raker Center staff brought in pets for the event, including three dogs (Bennie, Bella and Chapo), as well as two lizards, Scott and Spike.

Good Shepherd Home - Bethlehem residents also blessed the facility pets, Charcoal, Felix and Oscar, following Sunday morning worship on October 5. ■





# Reflections

By Rev. Roxi Kringle, BCC

The phrase “winter is coming” from G.R.R Martin’s book series, *A Game of Thrones*, is an ominous warning of a long season of change and upheaval. “Winter is coming” in eastern Pennsylvania does not evoke the same bloody dread as in Martin’s books, yet there are plenty of people who bemoan the cold that lingers deep in their joint, or the depth of snow from the latest Nor’easter.

Winter is also time to curl up with a blanket and book in front of a fire. Winter is the season of cozy sweaters and wool socks, a season of introspection.

This time of coming in begins with a flurry of holiday activities, all of which pushes against the coming cold, none of which allows much time for self-reflection. All of which comes to a screeching halt in the days following the New Year.

What is it about the change of the year that we make resolutions? It is as if the message to self is acknowledging the pieces of ourselves that no longer fit the way they used to, a desire to set something right—or at least better.

Perhaps it is the wish for things the way they were, or the longing for something new and different. We may tell ourselves that change is possible, and with enough practice, enough discipline, enough self-control, we can become the person we dream of being.

Such determination lasts at most two weeks; then it is back to the same old patterns and habits. Perhaps that is part of winter, that even though the cold, snow and dreary gray days drag the spirit down, winter days provide an intentional time to relish the warmth of cozy time of home. That in the light of candles and warmth of fires we can at last slow down and savor this one moment. ■



# WHAT MAKES *a Home*

Jessica fondly remembers the house her father, Eric, built from the ground up — a place filled with love, safety and the warmth of family — where every corner echoed the joy of her childhood.

**“It was more than just four walls,” she says. “It was a testament to his dedication to family, his love for us and the foundation of our childhood”**

Eric was known throughout Kunkletown, Pa., as the go-to neighbor you could count on — always fixing, building and helping others. To Jessica and her siblings, he was a quiet, dependable presence. Looking back, she understands now that his constant projects and woodworking weren't just hobbies. They were his way of coping with grief.

Years earlier, Eric and his then-wife had suffered an unimaginable loss when their first child, a son named Daniel, tragically passed away in an accident at their family home.

Though that grief never left, they went on to raise three children in a home filled with love, faith and family traditions: holidays surrounded by Eric's extended family, Sunday mornings at church and long afternoons on the property Eric built with his own hands.

When Eric and Jessica's mother divorced, some things changed, but the values her parents instilled remained strong.

“My father's hard work, my mother's devotion and the strength of our community gave me a sense of resilience that I could come to rely on later in life,” Jessica says.

That resilience was tested when Eric fell from the roof he was framing, landing on his head.

“I remember everything, including the fall and the life-flight to the hospital,” Eric says.

Eric suffered a spinal cord injury, which left him paralyzed from the neck down. **As someone who spent his life building homes and working with his hands, the news was life changing.**

Eventually, Eric found a new home at Good Shepherd Home – Raker Center. It was here that Eric's emotional healing and spiritual journey began to deepen when, a decade ago, members of the local Mennonite church started visiting Raker residents.



**"When I'm going to freak out, he[...] makes me feel worthy, validated, heard and seen. He reminds me [to] walk in purpose."**

**-Jessica, Eric's daughter**

"What struck me about them and drew me toward them was their sense of humility," Eric says. "They were kind and loving and showed me things that I never knew. It felt like peace."

Eric began attending church weekly and quickly embraced the Mennonite faith and his church family. However, for Eric to attend fellowship lunch after service presented a challenge; someone needed to be able to suction his trach.

Respiratory therapists Al and Richard taught members of the church how to do it so Eric could join the lunches — meals like the ones he shared with his kids in their family home.

Eric's faith has helped him find peace with the struggles he went through in life. He reflects, "Jesus said to die to self, or to deny our own selfish desires and instead live for God and as God would, so that's what I try to do."

Through faith and his supportive home at Good Shepherd, Eric has found new ways to care for the people he loves, especially Jessica. "My dad used to say, 'I wish I could help you, I wish I could fix things around the house for you,' because that's how he took care of people," Jessica says.

Now Eric takes care of his daughter by encouraging her with his words. "When I'm going to freak out, he[...] makes me feel worthy, validated, heard and seen," says Jessica. "He reminds me [to] walk in purpose."

**Though Eric can no longer pick up a hammer or plane a piece of wood, the home he created for his children lives on, and the one he's found at Good Shepherd has given him peace, purpose and a new way to build. ■**



# In Memoriam

## Wyacheslav "Steve" Molchansky

On July 29, 2025, Wyacheslav "Steve" Molchansky went to be with the Lord. Steve was a resident at Good Shepherd Home – Bethlehem for seven years and was loved dearly.

Born in Ukraine, Steve moved to Brooklyn at 7 years old. His older sister, Marina, recalls him as happy, funny, athletic, smart and loving.

Steve took pride in his strength and appearance as a teenager. He was planning his next steps in life after high school when he became paralyzed in a swimming accident. "It was so scary for our family, and Steve became very depressed," recalls Marina.

After rehabilitation, Steve found joy and independence again. While living on his own, Steve enjoyed building computers and found success playing the stock market. When he moved to



Good Shepherd Home – Bethlehem, he initially struggled to find peace in his new situation.

"About six months in, he woke up and decided he wanted to enjoy life again. He made so many friends with residents and staff – especially the ladies," says Marina. He enjoyed regular visits, especially from his nephew, niece and great nephew. Three weeks before he got sick, the family celebrated his birthday together.

Steve is lovingly remembered by his family, especially his mother, whom he spoke to three times every day. "He was a great son, uncle and brother," says Marina.

## Flagpole Donation

Thanks to the generosity of long-time Good Shepherd Rehabilitation donor, Mr. Frank Vassa, a new flagpole has been purchased and dedicated at the entrance of Good Shepherd Rehabilitation Hospital in Center Valley. ■





# In Memoriam

## William “Will” Sharrer

William “Will” Sharrer passed away on August 29, 2025. A resident at Good Shepherd Home – Raker Center for more than 10 years, Will is remembered fondly by his father, William Sharrer, Sr., as someone who loved life, being active and spending time with family and friends.



“He was all about living life. He was always doing things and going places with his friends,” says William Sr.

Prior to sustaining a traumatic brain injury (TBI) at work, Will loved playing sports, riding four-wheelers, fishing and hiking to waterfalls in the Poconos, hanging out with friends, snowboarding and going to heavy metal concerts. Will was a self-taught guitarist and loved music in general.

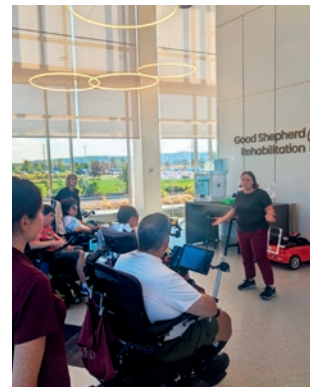
When Will moved to Raker Center, he took advantage of every opportunity to continue doing what he loved.

“He really enjoyed going to the IronPigs baseball games,” says his dad. Will even went on a boat trip one year. He also participated in music therapy programs.

Will took pride in being an organ donor and upon his passing, gave the gift of sight to two individuals. Will is missed by his loving family, friends, residents and staff at Raker Center.

## Long-Term Care Volunteers visit *Center Valley*

Good Shepherd Home – Raker Center resident volunteers enjoyed a special tour of Good Shepherd Rehabilitation Hospital in Center Valley. Every week, this dedicated group assembles admission packets, which are distributed to patients admitted to the hospital. ■





# Good Shepherd Home – Bethlehem Celebrates 25 Years



2025 holds a special milestone for Good Shepherd Home – Bethlehem as it marks 25 years of providing specialized care for residents in the long-term care home. ■

## FALLING TO FAITH

On November 3, 1986, construction worker Stephen Orzel plummeted two stories in a fall, resulting in three skull fractures and a severe brain bleed. Early in his recovery, Stephen realized the fall caused short-term memory problems. "I went through every possible emotion you can imagine," says Stephen.

Stephen received inpatient care at Good Shepherd for two weeks. Then, he came back for outpatient re-training five, four, three, two and, gradually, one day per week for a year.

"It was the toughest year of my life," says Stephen. "I asked God, why didn't he let me die? But I remembered my father's words: *'Be strong and never give up.'*"

In addition to his therapy at Good

Shepherd, the support from his family, friends and strangers motivated Stephen.

"When I was angry, I didn't realize that my life is not about me, but about the people around me," reflects Stephen.

Stephen's care team told him he would be lucky to reach 90% of his pre-accident capacity. In 2019, he graduated from DeSales University, and today, he continues to defy the odds.

"No matter how difficult things may seem, never give up on yourself and have faith in your abilities, family, friends and even strangers willing to give you a helping hand," says Stephen. "Most of all, keep your faith in God. Be strong and **never give up!**" ■



Steve Orzel after he fell two stories in the townhouses under construction.

### Roof beam breaks, builder hurt in fall in Richland Twp.

A Quakertown construction worker was injured yesterday afternoon when a wooden strut gave way and he fell two stories to the ground while working on roof trusses for a Richland Township development.

Steve Orzel was walking along the center of a series of the triangular lattice structure about 14 feet off the ground when the beam on which he stood snapped, according to a co-worker.

"I just turned around and was about to step on another truss when it gave way," said Bill Quinn, who was working next to Orzel when the accident occurred.

Quinn said he caught himself by grabbing onto the unit in a series of frames, avoiding the fall.

Orzel, he said, was unable to grab

the wooden interior of the second floor, "flipped over" and continued to fall through an open area in the floor.

The accident occurred at the site of townhouses being constructed off Quakers Way for DePaul Realty Co.

A crane operator took Orzel's pulse and another worker ran to the office to call for an ambulance. The victim remained motionless for about 10 minutes, until the Upper Bucks Paramedics arrived, Phil Harwood, a carpenter on the site, said.

Orzel was taken to Quakertown Community Hospital, where he was briefly treated. He was then taken to Lehigh Valley Hospital Center, according to a hospital spokesman. No information was available on his condition last night, an LVHC



# OUTPATIENT SPOTLIGHT:

## Macungie



Pictured right: Site Manager Tricia Butynskyi, PT, DPT

At Good Shepherd Rehabilitation – Macungie, there's a warmth that goes beyond typical clinical care – a sense of community where patients greet each other like neighbors and staff members know your story.

At the heart of this welcoming environment is Tricia Butynskyi, PT, DPT, who serves as the site's manager. With 19 years at this location, she's helped shape a culture that feels more like family than a facility.

The Macungie location offers physical therapy with several specialized services that set it apart, such as treatments for temporomandibular joint disorders (TMD) and LSVT BIG therapy for Parkinson's disease.

The team consists of Butynskyi, another physical therapist, two physical therapist assistants and one patient service representative. This small group creates an environment where collaboration thrives and personal connections flourish.

For Butynskyi, this collaborative spirit represents her favorite aspect of working at the Macungie location. The team's willingness to help one another, combined with the close-knit nature of the group, creates a workplace culture that directly benefits patient care. ■

**“The staff operates as a team, which is so impressive...When I signed up for the BIG program, I thought I would learn routines that would help with the Parkinson's diagnosis. I did, but more importantly, with the help of the entire staff, I learned that I could tackle big challenges with the support of truly caring people. There really aren't enough ways I can convey how thankful and grateful I am for all the help and support I received.”**

*– a grateful Macungie patient*

### Offered at Macungie:



Temporomandibular (TMD) treatment



LSVT BIG therapy



Aquatic therapy



Vestibular therapy

### Address:

6465 Village Lane  
Macungie, PA 18062

# Newly-Dedicated Mural Inspires and Welcomes



Good Shepherd Rehabilitation's parking deck in South Allentown brightened up thanks to a new mural designed by local muralist Matt Halm, and painted in part by Good Shepherd Rehabilitation associates and residents. A dedication ceremony took place on September 5. ■





# Mind Your Brain Lehigh Valley

On September 20, Good Shepherd Rehabilitation hosted the third annual Mind Your Brain Lehigh Valley Brain Injury Conference. The free conference connects survivors of brain injuries, families and caregivers with professionals and resources to aid them in their recovery. ■



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## Multiple Sclerosis Symposium:

*The Impact of Technology and Innovation in MS Rehabilitation*

**"As the organizer of Good Shepherd's Multiple Sclerosis (MS) Patient Symposium and an individual living with MS, I am passionately committed to supporting the MS community. Holding this event allows me to accomplish that. My goal is to bring together those living with MS for a day of education and camaraderie to ensure they are not alone in this fight.**

**This year's symposium provided education and insight from clinical experts to those living with MS and their care partners, along with offering resources to improve their quality of life from different exhibitors."**

*- Jennifer West, MS Wellness Program Manager*





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# GALA

*in the Garden*

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