



# Generations

fall 2010

newsletter for residents, families, and friends of Rae-Ann

## Rae-Ann Suburban Named One of "America's Best Nursing Homes"

by U.S. News & World Report

Rae-Ann Suburban Skilled Nursing & Rehabilitation Center is one of only eight facilities in Ohio to be designated one of "America's Best Nursing Homes" by U.S. News & World Report.

The U.S. News rankings, featured in the February 2010 U.S. News & World Report magazine and online at usnews.com/nursinghomes, are based on data gathered by Nursing Home Compare, a program run by the federal Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS). CMS analyzes data on thousands of nursing homes nationwide enrolled in Medicare or Medicaid in the areas of health inspections, nurse staffing, and quality measures.



Rae-Ann Suburban earned a five-star overall score in the latest CMS evaluation, the highest possible rating, putting Rae-Ann Suburban in the top 1% of the nation's nursing facilities.

"Our family has been committed to providing excellence in health care and rehabilitation for more than 35 years, and we are proud to be nationally recognized as an exceptional care provider," says owner/administrator John Griffiths. "We believe that careful evaluation, individualized care plans, family involvement, and an interdisciplinary team approach are essential to successful rehabilitation."

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A special focus at Rae-Ann Suburban is the rehabilitation of orthopedic patients and those requiring specialized wound care.

**Rae-Ann Skilled Nursing & Rehabilitation Facilities**  
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# The Belvedere Hosts Lake Erie Crushers Catcher Joel Collins for the 2010 Baseball Season



The original assisted living host family, The Belvedere of Westlake, is once again hosting a player from the Lake Erie Crushers minor league baseball team. Catcher Joel Collins moved into the "Lake Erie Crushers Suite" at the start of the 2010 season, and has quickly become a welcomed addition to The Belvedere family.

which he was introduced to "Belvedere Blitz," the facility's own version of corn hole, and challenged to a few rounds of baseball trivia.



Last year, The Belvedere garnered national media attention with coverage on CNN.com and ESPN by becoming the first assisted living facility in the U.S. to serve as the summer home for a minor league baseball player. The impact on the senior living community has been so positive that four other area senior housing communities are also hosting players this summer.

A native of Ontario, Canada, Joel is enjoying his private suite, which boasts a king-size bed, internet access, cable television, and washer and dryer. But the greatest benefit of his unique living situation may be the built-in fan base of 33 residents who enjoy sharing their life experiences and love of the game with their new neighbor.

Although Crushers practices and games leave little down time for Joel, recently he joined residents and staff for a BBQ party at

"I am just so proud that our idea to host a player has taken off this way," says owner Cindy Griffiths-Novak. "It's a win-win situation for the player, the residents, the facility, and the whole senior living industry."



Belvedere resident June Green enjoys a chat with Stomper, the team mascot.

## The Belvedere Rolls Out Its "Crushers" PT Cruiser



For 10 years, The Belvedere residents inconspicuously traveled around town in the facility's Chrysler PT Cruiser on their way to and from weekly activities. But those days are gone!

# Transitional Stay-to-Home Program Restores *Blanche Darus* to Independence

“This summer has been an unexpected gift,” shares Linda Clark, as she explains how Rae-Ann’s Transitional Stay-to-Home Program restored her 86-year-old mother Blanche Darus to the independent life she never expected to live again.



After a four-week hospitalization in the summer of 2009, Blanche entered Rae-Ann Suburban for rehabilitation. She made great progress over the first 90 days, learning to use a walker for short distances, regaining some strength in her arms, and gaining back some of the 60 pounds she had lost during her illness. At the end of three months, she wanted to try and move home. But after two weeks on her own, she found herself back in the hospital.

That’s when a member of Rae-Ann’s Admissions team suggested the

Transitional Stay-to-Home Program. Following a rehabilitative stay at any of Rae-Ann’s skilled nursing facilities, the program enables individuals

to continue their recovery at The Belvedere of Westlake assisted living facility. While enjoying the amenities The Belvedere has to offer, individuals can reinforce the skills learned through therapy while testing their independence-readiness in a safe environment.

Blanche and her family decided to give it a try. She moved into one of The Belvedere’s fully furnished private suites, complete with full bath and kitchenette. Her medical information, plan of care, and therapy goals accompanied her, providing a smooth transition with no need

for re-evaluations. With a nurse on call 24 hours a day, daily resident safety checks, and medication monitoring, Blanche could work toward her goal of moving back into her condominium while living in a comfortable and secure setting.

“My mother was safe, yet independent,” her daughter Linda notes. “She never felt like the staff was hovering over her, but at the same time, she didn’t feel ignored. And I didn’t have to worry about her well-being.”

By February, Blanche was able to return home. “Through my mother’s positive attitude and the exceptional care she received, she has regained her independence,” Linda says, “and we will always be grateful to Rae-Ann for that.”

For more information on the Transitional Stay-to-Home program, contact Rae-Ann’s Admissions Coordinators at (440) 835-3004.



**“Everywhere we go, people ask us about the car. It has been a great way to share with the community how proud we are of The Belvedere.”** - Katie Swiggett, administrator

The PT Cruiser has undergone an “extreme makeover” and now sports a custom vehicle wrap proclaiming “The Belvedere Loves the Lake Erie Crushers!” and the autograph of The Belvedere’s newest resident, Crushers catcher Joel Collins.

Residents have enjoyed arriving at the Avon baseball stadium in their stylish “ride” on opening day and for regular Wednesday home games. The PT Cruiser even motored in Westlake’s Fourth of July parade this year.



## A Picture-Perfect Picnic

Residents from Rae-Ann Westlake and Rae-Ann Suburban enjoyed lively entertainment and delicious food at the annual God Cares Ministry picnic in June.

At the baseball-themed event, residents socialized with their neighbors from other area long-term care facilities and with the many volunteers from the Ministry

who regularly spend time with them. The Northeast Ohio organization was formed in 1994 to help meet the spiritual needs of people in long-term care facilities.

The day was filled with love and laughter, and a most excellent time was had by all. As one resident put it, "The picnic wasn't complete until we all did the Y.M.C.A.!"

## Good Luck, Tony!

### Rae-Ann Westlake's Maintenance Supervisor Retires



Rae-Ann Westlake recently bid farewell to Tony Tomatz Jr., Maintenance Supervisor, who retired after 20 years at the facility.

Tony set the tone for the Maintenance Department, teaching his team the value of treating residents with respect by taking time in his busy day to listen to their individual stories. He guided the department through the major renovation of the Rae-Ann Westlake facility in 2005-2006.

A gifted teacher, Tony conducted all Disaster and Fire Preparedness training classes and drills. He also helped many co-workers

"kick the habit" by developing Rae-Ann Westlake's own "Quit Smoking" campaign. Staff will also miss his grillmaster skills, and his "legendary" salsa.

"I worked with Tony for almost 20 years," says Anne Hicks, administrator. "His knowledge, compassion, humor, and respect are what I will remember most about him."

Tony's assistant, Jason Weimer, will take the helm and is ready to follow Tony's excellent example, while Tony uses his free time on his favorite pastimes – hunting, gardening, camping in Canada, and watching Western movies.

# Summer Fun



Margaret Schloff enjoys a patriotic popsicle.



Sharing a book with young visitors was a highlight for Nada Wager.



Lottie Siek is all smiles with her friend Robert and Rae-Ann's "Bee" Marilyn Jones.

Every Tuesday for 24 years, Father Joe Pednekar headed down from his Catholic parish of St. Patrick's to say Mass for the 45-50 faithful gathered at Rae-Ann Center.

Last spring, Center residents and staff learned that St. Patrick's would be merged with two other parishes and Father Joe would be transferred to a North Olmsted parish.

"The residents and staff really came to rely on Father Joe, and he will be sadly missed," says owner Cindy Griffiths-Novak. "He has been such an inspiration that even non-Catholics would attend the weekly Mass just to receive his blessings."

After his final Mass on May 25, residents and staff presented Father Joe with gifts of gratitude. He, in turn, expressed his gratitude to the Rae-Ann

## Thank You, Fr. Joe

Center staff: "They always had everything I needed set up and were always on hand to assist me with the practical side of my service, so that I could focus on the spiritual needs of the residents."

Father Doug Koesel, pastor of the new Blessed Trinity created through parish merges, will offer Mass once a month at Rae-Ann Center and will be on call as needed, and Eucharistic Ministers will continue to administer Holy Communion on a weekly basis. Residents will also continue to enjoy the familiar face of Sheila Birt, who assisted Father Joe with service readings and songs for many years.



In her new role as Certified Therapeutic Recreation Specialist, former Activities Director Amy Cummings now works with Rae-Ann Westlake residents to assist in the recovery of basic motor functions following injury or stroke. In collaboration with the physical, occupational, and speech therapists at the facility's Young Center for Stroke Rehabilitation, Amy is able to help residents gain self confidence and well-being along with improved physical function.

**Amy Cummings**  
Certified Therapeutic Recreation  
Specialist, Rae-Ann Westlake



A 15-year employee of Rae-Ann, Katie Swiggett is now Administrator of The Belvedere. After she successfully earned her Administrator's Certification from the Assisted Living Federation of America, owner Cindy Griffiths-Novak surprised Katie with a "Katie Swiggett: Administrator" desk plaque. Katie's cheerfulness, enthusiasm, and love for the residents are apparent every day. Congratulations, Katie!

**Katie Swiggett**  
Administrator, The Belvedere of Westlake



**Kathy Armada**  
Activities Director,  
Rae-Ann Westlake

Kathy Armada has assumed the role of Activities Director at Rae-Ann Westlake. Kathy, who has worked in the activities department for over two years, is best known for developing a resident favorite Pet Therapy Program featuring her own Pug, Rogie. Kathy's enthusiasm, creativity, and super-positive attitude are great assets to Rae-Ann Westlake.

Rae-Ann  
*Staff News*



**Kimberly Eiting, LHNA**  
Administrator, Rae-Ann Center

Rae-Ann is pleased to welcome back Kimberly Eiting as Administrator of Rae-Ann Center. A Cleveland State graduate, Kim previously served as Assistant Administrator at Rae-Ann Westlake for 10 years. "My philosophy is that I would never work in a long-term care facility that I would not place my own loved one in, and that is why Rae-Ann is the only choice for me," she says.



**Teresa Walker, RN, BSN**  
Director of Nursing, Rae-Ann Center

Teresa Walker has been named Director of Nursing at Rae-Ann Center. A Summa Cum Laude BSN graduate of Florida Hospitals College of Health Sciences, Teresa began working in the long-term care industry as an STNA at age 18. She has worked in hospitals, assisted livings, medical offices, and even classrooms. She currently serves as a clinical instructor for Huron Hospital School of Nursing. "I enjoy the fact that the Rae-Ann owners are very involved," she says. "I also enjoy the teamwork. Many decisions we make occur as a team with input from all disciplines, which provides for excellent patient care."

# Rae-Ann's Gardens Take Top Honors in Gardening Competition – Again!



The Master Gardeners of Cuyahoga County who judged the entries in the City of Westlake's 9th annual "Westlake in Bloom" competition awarded all three top awards in the "Nursing Home/Assisted Living/Independent Living" category to Rae-Ann.

First Place went to The Belvedere of Westlake, Second Place to Rae-Ann Westlake, and Third Place to Rae-Ann Suburban. The judges assessed entries on the overall effect of garden design, overall quality of plant material, originality, and maintenance.

This is the second consecutive year that Rae-Ann facilities have won the top three honors. Kudos to our groundskeepers Raul Lozada and Sam Harris and their crews for continuing to surround Rae-Ann residents and their guests with lovely – and award-winning – blooms.



## Cindy Griffiths-Novak Elected Chairperson of the Ohio Assisted Living Association

Rae-Ann co-owner Cindy Griffiths-Novak has been elected Chairperson of the Ohio Assisted Living Association (OALA). She will serve a two-year term as part of the 17-member Board of Trustees.

Formed in 1993, the OALA represents 330 Ohio assisted living communities. Its mission is to promote the continued growth of quality assisted living in Ohio by providing support, information, and education.

"Being a part of the OALA allows me to interact with other professionals in all aspects of our industry, giving me knowledge and information that I believe helps make our facility better," Cindy says. "I am honored and humbled to have been elected."

## Watch the Roads for Rae-Ann's Snazzy Delivery Truck!

All dressed up in its new skin, the Rae-Ann delivery truck proudly proclaims Rae-Ann Suburban's designation as one of "America's Best Nursing Homes" by *U.S. News & World Report* as it travels between the six Rae-Ann facilities.



# Rae-Ann Wins 4<sup>th</sup> Consecutive “Best of the West” Award

Hundreds of *West Shore Live Well* readers have once again voted Rae-Ann the “Best Nursing Facility” on Cleveland’s west side.

With more businesses entering the annual competition each year, Best of the West honors have become increasingly sought after. “The fact that we continue to receive the

recognition of the community only makes us want to work harder to fulfill our mission to provide exceptional care,” says John Griffiths, who co-owns Rae-Ann facilities with his sisters Sue Griffiths and Cindy Griffiths-Novak.

*Thank You*  
to everyone who voted!



## Rae-Ann Skilled Nursing and Rehabilitation Facilities

The Belvedere of Westlake



Assisted Living  
& Special Care

Rae-Ann Westlake



Skilled Nursing &  
Stroke Rehabilitation

Rae-Ann Suburban



Skilled Nursing & Orthopedic  
Rehabilitation/Wound Care

Rae-Ann Center



Specialized Alzheimer’s  
& Dementia Care

Garden Gate



Private Skilled Nursing  
& Post Acute  
Care/Rehabilitation

Rae-Ann Geneva



Skilled Nursing  
& Rehabilitation



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