

## **The Village at Luther Square**

*Mark J. Gusek, Chief Executive Officer*

**“Ideals are like stars. You will not succeed in touching them with your hands. But like the seafaring man on the ocean desert of waters, you choose them as your guides, and following them, you reach your destiny.”**

**- Carl Schurz**

I am sure Dr. Gustave A. Benze is looking at his ideal, to fulfill a community need with a distinctly separate mission in name and structure which he started over 100 years ago with a private residence and \$250,000, he would be proud to see The Village is moving forward under the guidance of this dream; forward, to not only maintain, but continually seeking ways to serve the poor and other persons with limited options in the Spirit of Christian Mercy.

The Village continues to invest in itself in order to continue improving the facility to deliver a higher quality of care along with a more pleasing environment for our residents. The investment and introduction of the Accelerated Care Plus program into our therapies department has helped increase our already high “getting them back home” rate.

The continued growth of our Adult Day Care Center coupled with our community based health care delivery system is helping folks remain in their own homes for as long as they can, thereby reducing the stay within skilled nursing facilities for a better quality of life **no matter what the financial means are.** This program, known in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania as LIFE (*Living Independence for the Elderly*) is also known nationally as Program for All-Inclusive Care for the Elderly (*PACE*). As the need and call for community based health care increases LIFE-NWPA will be there throughout the entire Northwestern Pennsylvania region to deliver for those in need – that is something Dr. Benze can be proud was borne of his dream.

While we have not yet started Phase Three we are starting to see the needs of the community and we will be poised and ready. We have purchased another property in/line with those we already own and have prepped for future development in a plan to keep a medical campus atmosphere with easy access to services needed by all residents in the community.

A grant from the state, awarded to only 6 organizations through the state, for a demonstration project for Domicile Care should be completed early summer with housing for 6 people in a residential setting. This project **will** hopefully lead the state into yet another level of care option for the needy. We are setting our sight on our next center to serve even more of NWPA residents, as well as, more of the Synods congregation members.

So as we look back to 2004, when The Village saw a road ahead to be long and a climb to be steep. We knew we would not get there in a year; but at that time we were never more hopeful that we would get there.

We had our setbacks; we had our false starts. There were many who didn't agree with every decision or policy and we knew we could not solve every problem; but we did not stop – we did not lose hope – we did not consider failure as an option. We decided to re-invigorate Dr. Gustave A. Benze's ideals, and do what was done for over 100 years here – remake The Village block by block, brick by brick, and hand in hand through many sleepless nights.

Our future is bright; and while the road might not be as long and the climb might not be as high we realize that just as in this country, we rise or fall as one nation with ideals; we must persevere together to succeed with ideals.

Which why I again, and I am sure all of our social ministries, ask you to join us and help us work toward our ideals. Help us get our message out and to use every avenue that you have to tell your neighbors, congregations, and legislators that our ministries are organizations that can help fill the needs our communities.