



The Lamplighter

Summer 2011

News of The Danish Home of Chicago
5656 N. Newcastle Avenue, Chicago IL 60631

Goals: Grow Home's success and occupancy

Scott Swanson takes post as new Executive Director

The Danish Home welcomed Scott L. Swanson, as the community's new executive director, May 2.

During his first weeks, Swanson quickly began to learn some of the distinctive characteristics of The Danish Home and to set a course to grow the Home's success as a continuing care retirement community (CCRC). "There's a lot of success here; we've just been too quiet," Swanson says.

Backed by his 25 years of experience, Swanson is about to change that. He plans a greater marketing push and to offer opportunities that haven't been available before, such as direct access to the Health Care Suite, respite programs and more.

Swanson has a proven track record in redeveloping programs and properties of quality, not-for-profit continuing care communities. He's headed administrative and marketing efforts for top-notch facilities across the Midwest, including St. Matthew Lutheran Home in Park Ridge, Ill., and Lutheran Life Communities in Arlington Heights, Ill. He has an M.B.A. degree from Northwestern University's J. L. Kellogg Graduate

School of Management.

"I enjoy the whole spectrum of what we do in a continuing care retirement community. It will be fun to get the initial turnaround done," Swanson said.

"My whole career has been spent in keeping nonprofits thriving. The thing I like about nonprofits is that they're mission-based. You have to break even and be a good steward of funds, but any additional funds you make or that are donated go toward the residents, to delight them and to make their community stronger," Swanson said.

In fact, delight is first on the list of questions he puts to residents. "I'm asking them how they would define and plan a delightful day on their own. What are the things that really delight you?" Swanson says.

"I want to get to know our residents, to explore what makes The Danish Home unique, and to tell each resident that he or she is an integral



The Danish Home's new Executive Director Scott L. Swanson, with resident Marge Dobbs at an open house event.

part of The Danish Home community." He's set an initial goal of growing occupancy from 20 to 40 residents. Swanson lists features he feels will be most attractive to new residents: "We're intimate. No one can hold a candle to our dining services. We're in a quiet neighborhood. Residents and

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Hjertelig tak (many thanks)!!

Leif Nielsen retires after 25 years at the helm



Mr. Nielsen displays plaque commemorating his years at The Home, presented to him by resident Edna McClain at left.

Danish Home residents, board members, friends and staff recognized retiring Administrator Leif Nielsen for 25 years of service during a special dinner May 13.

Mr. Nielsen, the longest-serving administrator in the Home's history, said how much he has appreciated the good work and support of the trustees, board members, the Women's Auxiliary, the many faithful volunteers and the excellent staff and employees.

Mr. Nielsen, who came to the U.S. in 1974, was well-suited to those tasks with his Danish language fluency, a nursing home administrator's certificate, experience in resort management and a degree from the Aarhus (Denmark) Business and Commercial College. Both residents and staff have many fond memories of the Home's long-term administrator. The Danish Home community wishes him the best in his retirement. ●

Scott Swanson *from page 1*

staff all know each other. We'll welcome all who are looking for a true boutique community."

Swanson and his wife have four children, ages 23, 20, 15 and 13, at all points of the schooling spectrum: graduate (medical) school, college, high school and middle school. His wife, Amy, a nurse with a master's in gerontology, teaches at Harper College, Palatine, Ill. ●

In Memoriam

Erik Haxager 1922-2011

Frances Crow 1922-2011

Kathrine Vicki Christensen 1916-2011

Erna Valsted 1919-2011

Sommerfest!

June 26, 2011



Come and enjoy wonderful music, food, friends and fun at The Danish Home's annual Sommerfest, Sunday, June 26 at 12 noon.

You may want to invite some friends to hear the mellow sounds of the Bjornson Male Chorus, the Brotherhood of Harmony and the Danish Pearls.

Who wouldn't want to share delicious Danish open-faced sandwiches (*smørrebrød*), hamburgers, hotdogs and an icy cold Carlsberg beer or soft drink?

The kids can get in on the fun with family activities like a petting zoo and children's games. There will also be special drawings and opportunities to buy baked goods and Scandinavian souvenirs. Admission for adults is \$3. Children under 12 are free. See you at Sommerfest June 26! ●

Annual meeting highlights

Jeffrey Anderson elected president

Jeffrey Anderson was elected president of the board at The Danish Home's annual meeting February 10. Anderson previously chaired The Danish Home's long-range planning committee. He replaces Al Iversen, who now serves as second vice president. Paul Roge is first vice president, and John Delort is the board's secretary.



Directly after his election, Anderson told the board he is looking forward to continuing his family's long pattern of service. He is grateful, Anderson said, to have Board members who work hard and give of themselves every month to keep the Home on a solid footing. Two Board members, Jerry Andersen and Donald Petersen, officially retiring from the Board, received the Board's thanks for their many years

of service. In other business, board members discussed ways to grow the Home's occupancy, including new admission plans and advertising initiatives. ●

Activities Roundup

Bowling tournaments, Candlelight Dinners and monthly outings kept residents in shape and active from January to May.

Both competitive **tabletop and Wii bowling** were popular through the winter and a February snowstorm.

During that storm, which shut down most of the city for two days, some staff remained overnight and assumed other jobs, maintaining normal services.

Residents sent a gift of more than \$300 to Honor Flight, which helps bring World War II veterans to Washington D.C. to be honored for their service and sacrifice. Marjorie Tracy chaired the Honor Flight fundraising committee.

Many also chose to take part in "**Memories and Prizes**," a new **creative writing group** that helps participants recall memories and preserve fine motor skills needed for writing.

The monthly **Candlelight Dinners** began to feature ever-more creative desserts, as The Danish Home's baker

constructed confections "that really look like works of art," said Activities Coordinator Ed Lim.

Candlelight Dinner themes included January's "Prince of Denmark," showcasing traditional Danish delights; February's focused on a variety of pizzas by The Danish Home's culinary staff and songs by the Home's Hootenannies singing group; March's theme was St. Patrick's Day, highlighted by corned beef and cabbage, and in May, a special Cinco de Mayo coffee offered treats to celebrate Mexican traditions and heritage.

From expeditions to **Lincolnwood Mall in Skokie** for shopping, to lunches at the **Olive Garden** or the **Omega Restaurant**, residents were out and about, thanks in large part to the many volunteers who on a weekly and monthly basis help to run programs and curtail costs." They contribute so very much to our residents' well-being," notes Activities Director Karen Simon.

2011-2012

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*non Board member

As the weather warmed, residents and staff attended the **2011 Life Services Network at Navy Pier**, participating in educational seminars on services to seniors.

In April, residents participated in the Chicago aldermanic election and attended a "Safe Walking" workshop offered by the city to educate residents and staff about safe walking practices in the neighborhood. ●



Ann Hansen, above on right, and guest enjoy the Spring luncheon. Krista Nielsen, above right, and lower right, Edna McLain, were among those modeling fashions at the event.

Women's Auxiliary stages 53rd Annual Luncheon in April; Salad Luncheon in May

Danish Home models walked the runway with grace, while residents and guests enjoyed a delicious lunch at the 53rd annual Danish Home **Women's Auxiliary Luncheon**, April 9. A spring fashion show was the highlight of the event, held at the Old

Orchard Country Club in Mount Prospect, Ill., and attended by nearly 140 women and men, including 12 residents.

"We had quite a nice turnout," said Women's Auxiliary president Carol Vashinko. "Sharlene Roge narrated the fashion show, telling us about the outfits and the models.

"The models were all from The Danish Home, including residents Edna McLain and Krista Nielsen, as well as Auxiliary members and volunteers."

Each lady's lovely ensemble came from the inventory of Coldwater Creek at Old Orchard Mall in Skokie, Ill.

Paul Roge, 1st vice president, treated each resident to a round of drinks.

New Danish Home board president Jeffrey Anderson and retiring administrator Leif Nielsen spoke at the luncheon. Mr. Nielsen also received a retirement gift recognizing his 25 years of service. (See p. 2)

The Women's Auxiliary followed up this successful event with the ever-popular and healthy **Spring Salad Luncheon** May 25 at The Danish Home. Some 106 participants enjoyed



Table overflowing with salads greets guests at the Auxiliary's Spring Salad Luncheon.

The Danish Home's famous chicken salad, 21 other salads, and exciting door prizes. Proceeds from Women's Auxiliary events go to support the work of the Home. ●

New Resident

Ann Struben



The Lamplighter is published periodically by The Danish Home of Chicago; President of the Board of Directors, Jeffrey Anderson; Chairman of the Board of Trustees, Paul E. Roge; President of the Women's Auxiliary, Carol Vashinko; and Executive Director, Scott L. Swanson.

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THE DANISH HOME, founded in 1891, is a not-for-profit organization, privately financed and endowed, providing comfortable, dignified lifetime care for elderly persons.

Gifts and plans for bequests are needed for The Danish Home to maintain its long tradition of caring, cheerful service to the elderly, mindful of their needs as individuals. A letter to the Executive Director Scott L. Swanson, will bring you more information if you wish it. The address is 5656 N. Newcastle Avenue, Chicago, Illinois, 60631; the phone number is (773) 775-7383. For your convenience, an addressed envelope is enclosed for your contribution to The Danish Home.



Check out our website!
www.danishhomeofchicago.org