



Mission: To provide care and services responsive to the individual needs of those we serve with dignity and respect in a cost effective manner placing value on the recipient, his or her family, and our staff.

## Greetings From the President/CEO

Summer is in full swing based on the calendar and based on the weather! Because of the other seasons in Wisconsin (pre-winter, winter, post-winter, and construction seasons) we try to cram as many outdoor activities and events as we can possibly handle into June, July, and August. While we are glad to see the sun high in the sky, remember to use sunscreen when outdoors. The incidence of skin cancer is rising, and a “nice tan” doesn’t provide protection from the UV rays of the sun.

On a recent fishing trip to Canada, my eldest son, a friend of mine, and I were happy for our suntan lotion after hitting a submerged rock and severely damaging our prop and lower unit. The temperature in Canada was an unusually high 90 + degrees and we were dead in the water. Besides this incident serving as a reminder of why we prepare for many unforeseen problems, it also was just one more lesson in dealing with adversity.

When we hit the submerged rock at full speed, and came to a lurching halt, there was no screaming at the boat pilot, nor cursing of our bad luck (probably just because I kept my mouth shut!). Instead, we immediately began thinking of what to do next. I was able to secure the anchor rope to a driftwood log on the rocky shoreline, wedging the front of the boat between two Canadian granite boulders rising up from the water. This allowed the back of the boat to drift onto a rock ledge where the propeller could be inspected. “How many fins on the prop do we have left?” were the first words I was able to utter. “All of them,” was the reply, “but they look like a folded-up tulip”. My fishing partner in the back of the boat determined that the propeller fins could be straightened somewhat by putting a rock behind a fin, and then beating the fin back into shape with another rock.

After an hour of re-shaping the propeller, we were ready to give it a try. We could travel exactly 2.6 MPH—at 2.7 MPH the drive shaft would vibrate. Calculating our distance back to the fishing camp via my GPS, we were in for a 3 ½ hour slow cruise, if everything went okay. While the incident kind of diminished my mood for fishing in the moment, son Steve made use of a perfect trolling speed, and landed four more fish on the journey back to the dock. Thankfully, the remnants of the motor and propeller lasted the nine-mile journey back to camp.

I was proud of how the three of us handled the situation, and as I reflect on how we kept our brains about us and began problem solving, immediately. I wonder if part of our success wasn’t one of the many lessons taught by the COVID pandemic. Early on in the COVID pandemic, conditions were changing daily. New challenges arose like finding out people could be asymptomatic but have the COVID virus. Through the whole pandemic, all of us had to continuously learn to reassess, adapt, determine new strategies and try new approaches. I must say that I never expected the COVID pandemic to have proven helpful when we found ourselves between the proverbial “rock and a hard place”, but it did serve to keep that difficulty in perspective, and to move forward with fixing the problem. After a reapplication of suntan lotion, we arrived at the dock, nicely tanned, but not burned to a crisp.

COVID now seems mostly in the rearview mirror, and we have returned to a mostly mask free environment. I think we will all enjoy this summer even more as we have returned to normal as far as attending festivals and other events. Riverfest and Independence Day were enjoyed by many. What lessons did you learn from COVID? I hope you don’t find yourself between a rock and a hard place, but if you do, I hope you are prepared to deal with it confidently. Enjoy your summer and keep the suntan lotion handy!

*Craig Ubbelohde, President/CEO*

## Retirements

Long time social worker at Onalaska Care Center, **Brad Godwin**, retired in October. **Belinda Nickelatti**, DON at BSJ Care Center – January. **Kim Scholze**, Recreation Therapy Director at BSJ Care Center – July.

## Leadership Updates



**McKenna Puls** was hired in June as the administrator of Marinuka Manor. She completed her degree in Health Care Administration from UW Eau Claire in May. During her senior year, she was an intern at BSJ Care Center, under the mentorship of Megan Feirtag. Over the course of her internship, McKenna had many opportunities to spend time with the management staff at Marinuka Manor. We welcome McKenna to MM and BSJ Corporation and are pleased to have her transition from student status to being an employee.



**Lisa Soller** joined BSJ Community Services as the Director of Laurel Manor and Ona Terrace. After 19 years as the Medical Communications Lead Dispatcher at Gundersen and 2 years in Human Resources at Winona Health, Lisa found her way to senior living and services for persons with varying abilities. After trying it out at Caledonia Rehab and CCLS, she found her place at BSJ. Lisa and her husband Tim, spend their weekends wood working and glamping!



**Zaria Westenberg** is the new Director of the MERIT Centres. Zaria brings a variety of both leadership and direct care experiences from her work at Bright Star, Eagle Crest, and Comfort Keepers. Zaria and her husband, Matthew, are avid pet owners which include her Pembroke Welsh Corgis, Hammie & Benji and cats, Bonsey & Calypso.



**Dave Eisberner** joined us as the Director of Shelby Terrace, Welcome Home, and Windsor Place after working for ABLE, Inc as the Waiver Services Director for 19 years. Dave is a big fan of March Madness, trout fishing, and camping.



BSJCC's new Director of Nursing is **Lori Taylor** who replaces retired Director, Belinda Nickelatti. Lori comes to us from our sister facility, Norseland Nursing Home. She has many years of experience as a DON in long term care and will be an asset to our team. We are very excited to be working with her.



BSJCC's new Social Worker is **Gina Zumach**. We are very excited that Gina has returned to BSJCC. She started at BSJCC as a social worker and then worked in the Mayo Health System and now back here. She is a great asset to our team and we look forward to her serving our residents for many years to come.

### Spotlight on Benefits & Human Resources

**Med Skillz** is a program that provides financial assistance that pays towards tuition, books, class fees, uniform or equipment costs, child care, and transportation expenses related to returning to school for those pursuing a degree in healthcare. The link below gives more information. <https://www.couleecap.org/medskillz-education.html>

**Fully Paid CNA Training** -- BSJ Corporation is partnering with the WisCaregiver Careers Program to sponsor CNA Training. **This program will pay for the CNA class and certification test.** If you or anyone you know has ever considered a career in healthcare, this is an excellent opportunity to receive fully paid training. While in the training course, you can work as a Resident Care Assistant. In this role, you will orientate to the facility and start to train on some of the things you will do as a CAN, as well as assist CNAs and Nurses in tasks that you can do without your certification yet. Current staff may also choose to remain in their current roles. If you are interested in learning more about this opportunity, contact your Admin, HR, or apply online <https://www.bsjcorp.com/employment/>.

### Employees Spotlight

The BSJ Foundation would like to extend sincere appreciation to all the applicants who applied for the 2023 Adele M. Stolder Scholarship and announces that **Jennifer Barnes**, a dedicated Health Unit Coordinator at BSJ Care Center, has been awarded the \$1,000 award to support her educational expenses as she pursues an associate degree in nursing at Western Technical College. Reflecting on her experience at BSJ Care Center, Jennifer remarked, "Working here has been an eye-opening experience . . .the level of care and dedication exhibited by my colleagues is unparalleled." She is deeply committed to contributing her time and skills to the care center, both during her studies and beyond. Two Runner Ups for the scholarship are Ava Kloehn from OCC and Alexis Smith from BSJ Care Center. They each will receive \$100 towards their education.



*Amanda Acklin, Fund Development Director*

Congratulations to all of our graduates. We have had several staff members graduate from high school and college this past winter and spring.

The new infection control nurse at Onalaska Care Center is **Amanda Bratager**.

### Staff Interests

Traveling -- Community Services staff are enjoying a lot of post Covid Vacations. Some of the highlights include, **Lorrie Linberg** (Ona Terrace Housing Assistant) traveled to see her daughter graduate from University of Central Florida with a Doctorate Degree in Physical Therapy, **Emerson Molstad** (Shelby Terrace TCA) visited grandparents in Florida, **Dean Howe** (Maintenance) traveled to Georgia for his daughter's wedding at a llama ranch, **Nicki Larson** (Ona Terrace Housing Assistant) was off to Jamaica, **Alison Denio** (Activity & Events Coordinator) visited her son in Paris, **Trudy McGowan** visited Florida, and **Linda Kugler** (Lead Program Assistant at MERIT North) traveled to San Antonio, Texas, to see her son be promoted to Air Force Chief Master Sergeant, just to name a few!

BSJ Assisted Living Communities and Ona Terrace were excited this spring to share the joy of **Sandy Strittmater's** (Director of Prairie Home and OnaMain) first litter of German Shepherd puppies.

Salem Terrace and Mill St Manor staff took a break and tried their hand at Axe Throwing, a very unusual and fun activity!

### In The News

BSJCC was chosen by the community to be named La Crosse County's 2023 #1 Nursing Home! To celebrate, every BSJCC staff member received a t-shirt to proudly display this award. Thank you for all your hard work and care in helping us to win this title!

*Megan Feirtag, Administrator*