

The Bulletin

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What a career

On Feb. 10 Teresa Lawson stepped away from a 24-year career at KCDC that largely focused on helping seniors age with dignity.

Since 1998 Teresa served as either a case manager or a supportive services coordinator, first for Bridgeview Independent Living at Isabella Towers and then for The Manor at Northgate Terrace. Before her time with KCDC, Teresa worked with children at Lakeshore Mental Health Institute, chronically mentally ill adults at Ridgeview Behavioral Health Services and youth in group homes.

“It appeared to be a ‘meant-to-be’ thing,” Teresa said. “I was working as a sitter with an agency and they wanted me to go be at a place for a shift each week — Sunday nights — so, steady hours. My supervisor, Cathy, said that it was with elderly living in housing and called Bridgeview. The next day I received a call from a former supervisor and friend, Judy Allen.

“She told me that I needed to interview for a job — case manager — at KCDC for their program called Bridgeview,” she added. “Cathy encouraged me as it seemed to be a

‘meant to be.’ The rest is history.”

The Manor is a program that offers independent living with supportive services to the elderly who experience issues with the aging process.

“It is a rewarding job,” Teresa said. “Our elders are our living history. We learn/I’ve learned, we grow/I’ve grown. We’ve even helped rescue some elders. They needed out of their situation due to safety concerns and when they move in, they feel cared about and safe.”

She mentioned a woman who moved in after being referred by Adult Protective Services because she was in the hospital for malnourishment.

“Her ‘caregiver’ kept borrowing her money and left the elder without enough groceries to cover the whole month,” Teresa said. “When staff brought her first meal with us she asked what she owed them. They explained that it was part of the program, so she didn’t have to pay them. She cried and then of course they cried, all just over a simple supper.

“For most, we are truly their only option —

they can't afford assisted living and they don't qualify for nursing homes," she added.

"The Manor makes a difference and I have had the honor of helping them, of being a part of this."

She loved every aspect of the job, even down to just listening to residents' stories.

"I love knowing, without a doubt, that we are helping our elders," Teresa said. "For most, we are truly their only option. And, most — even though some are grumpy — are happy to see us. They like to interact with us. They care, too. Oh, and no two days are alike."

Retirement had been on Teresa's mind for about four or five years, but she stayed because "a person could always have a reason to stay." That included working with a good team, navigating through the COVID-19 pandemic and helping recover from a fire, flood and full evacuation of Northgate. Then rehab began, and she didn't want to leave without properly training her replacement.

With Grae Potter as her successor, Teresa said she knew she could step away knowing The Manor was in good hands.

"I've seen so many keep working instead of enjoying their personal lives fully. I have woods and a chainsaw, time to pull the cord and and let it roar," she said laughing.

"Really, sometimes you just know it's time."

Teresa said she plans to take advantage of her free time by putting up a greenhouse, building a chicken coop, planting bushes and trees and seeing friends who live elsewhere.

Although Teresa's no longer with KCDC, there's always a possibility you'll see her again.

"I'm like a bad penny, never know when I'll show back up," she said. "I may be leaving but my love for our elderly and the program does not leave with me."

Coworkers say their goodbyes

Several of Teresa's peers gathered on her last day to celebrate her retirement and share fond memories. Some residents also left handwritten notes on a poster.

Included in the bunch was Assistant Property Manager Denise King, who's known Teresa for 18 years while at Northgate.

"Personally, I'll miss her feistiness around here," Denise said.

Danielle McLaughlin has known Teresa for more than year, but only finally met her a couple months ago when she became acting property manager for Northgate and The Manor.

"Teresa has been amazing since the moment she walked in to meet with me," Danielle said.

"Teresa is one of those people that is a team player and just hits the ground running whenever we need to solve a problem or gets things done."

Danielle believes Teresa's legacy will be her willingness to share her vast knowledge to help others.

Grae echoed Danielle's sentiments, noting he hadn't felt as closely to a manager as quickly as he had with Teresa.

"Her vision for the program, but more specifically for the elderly individuals who live on The Manor, has been instrumental in making sure the program thrives and meets the needs of our residents," Grae said. "I gladly follow in her footsteps, but I know it will be a while before I can measure up to the vision and capacities Teresa's brought to The Manor. Her impact also extends beyond these walls as she has become known for her grasp of community resources. ... Her retirement will undoubtedly have reverberations which are not only felt by KCDC but by the entire senior services community in Knoxville."



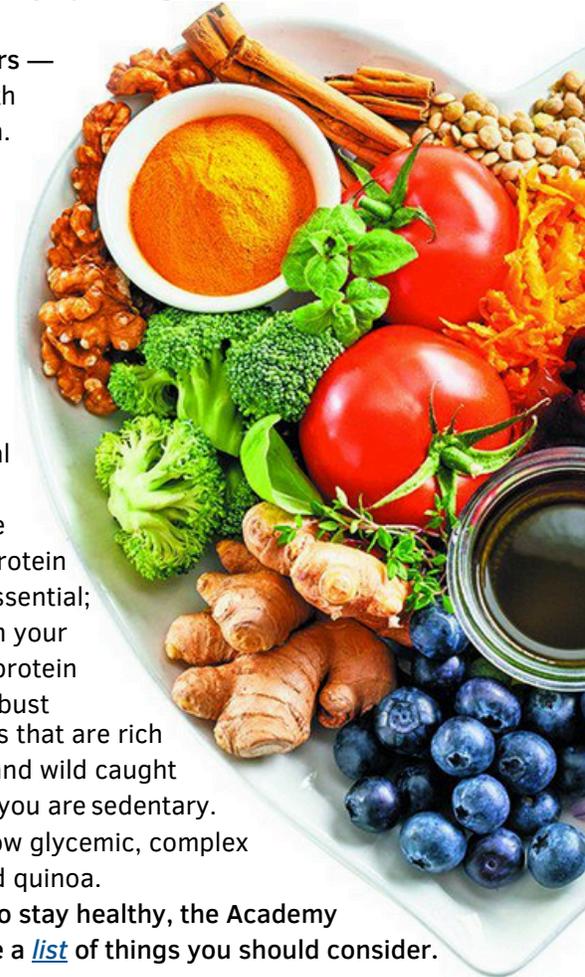


Health & Wellness

By Matt Rogers

As part of National Nutrition Month being observed in March, here are some healthy tips to digest — no pun intended.

- **Drink half your bodyweight in water** — Crucial to help your body maintain homeostasis, blood pressure, muscular contraction, heart rhythm, etc.
- **Read food labels** — Make sure to be cognizant of what you are putting into your body. Foods with fewer ingredients in them are usually closer to their whole food form and have less processing. If you cannot pronounce an ingredient on the label, pause and reflect.
- **Understand a serving size** — You will need to read the label to familiarize yourself with servings sizes to regulate your portion. For example, a serving of carbohydrate is 15 grams. That would be 1/3 of a cup of cooked rice.
- **Dietary staples should consist of whole, real foods** — Utilize the outer perimeter of the grocery store to acquire whole, real foods that you will eat. Frozen broccoli (not outside perimeter) would qualify in this category. The fewer processed foods you eat, a healthier outcome is easier to manifest.
- **Stringently reduce added sugars** — There is no nutritional value with added sugar, just added insulin. Be careful of sugar-sweetened beverages especially — this includes sweet tea, non-diet soda, fruit juice, etc. If you are going to eat sugar, try to eat naturally occurring sugar such as that in fruit. While this is healthier, that does not give a green light for unlimited natural sugar.
- **Know your macros** — There are three macronutrients (carbs, protein and fats). Protein and fat are essential; therefore, you must eat them in your diet. Make sure to eat enough protein to maintain lean mass and a robust metabolic rate. Incorporate fats that are rich in Omega 3 such as avocados and wild caught fish. Limit carbs, particularly if you are sedentary. If you are active, incorporate low glycemic, complex carbs such as sweet potato and quinoa. For more information on how to stay healthy, the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics made a [list](#) of things you should consider.



Mobile Mammography Unit

Knoxville Comprehensive Breast Center will be outside the main office at 8:30 a.m. Thursday, May 18, to offer mammograms. To schedule an appointment, please call 865-583-1003 or 1-800-456-8169, Extension 1003.

Bring your insurance card, if applicable, and an acceptable form of ID. If you do not have insurance, the out-of-pocket cost for a mammogram and radiologic interpretation is \$170 and due at the time of your exam. Please do not wear lotion, deodorant or powder on the day of your appointment. Deodorant will be provided for use following your mammogram.



Identification includes:

- State or federal government-issued document that includes your photo and full name
- VISA (U.S. government issued)
- Passport
- Employer-issued photo ID or badge that includes your full name

Showcase

IT Department

By Joe LaCroix

A [1958 article](#) published in Harvard Business Review defined several types of Information Technology. Those include techniques for the fast processing information, the use of statistical and mathematical models for decision-making and the “simulation of higher-order thinking through the use of computer programs.”

Sixty-five years later, IT refers to everything that businesses use computers for.

IT is building communications networks for a company, safeguarding data and information, creating and administering databases, helping employees troubleshoot problems with their computers or mobile devices or doing a range



Joe LaCroix

Eric Bellamy

Jeff Ferrell

of other work to ensure the efficiency and security of business information systems. [\(1\)](#)

But the true basis of IT is based on people. Computer systems are tools used by our people to reach the goals of KCDC. Our real work begins and ends with service to the people who are responsible for caring for the residents in KCDC communities. Our IT professionals understand that customer service is our business, and technology is our tradecraft.

Some examples of the systems we focus on in support of our customers include:

Communications — Internet, email, VoIP phones, cellphones, websites

Cybersecurity — Firewalls, anti-virus, anti-malware, endpoint detection and response, identity and access management, encryption

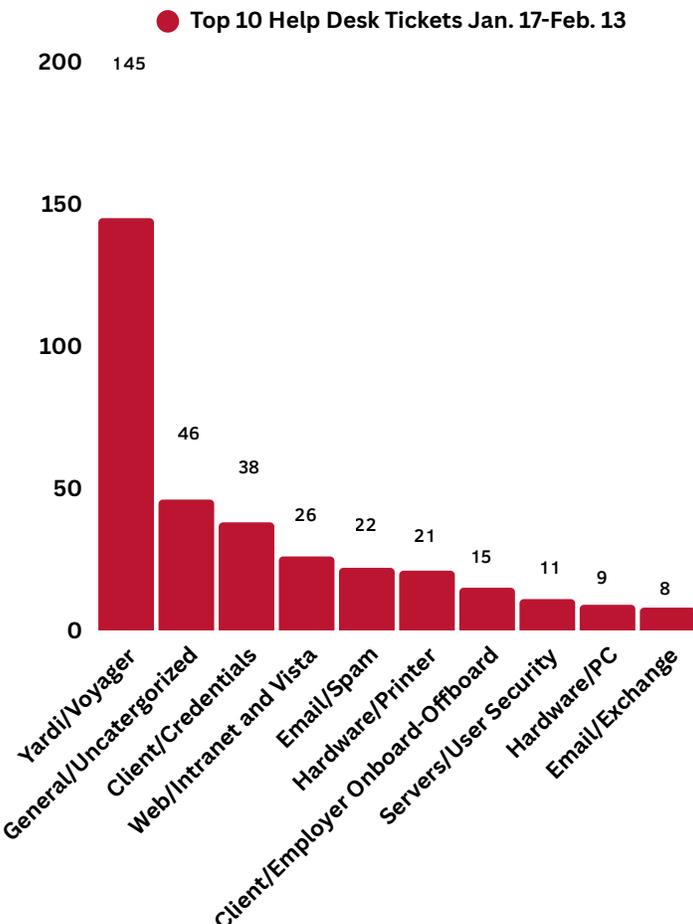
Software systems — Yardi, Vista, Exchange, Adobe Acrobat, Microsoft Office

Server systems — Microsoft Windows Server, Microsoft SQL Server (database server), Virtual Machines

Hardware — Switches, routers, computers, laptops, mobile computing devices, multi-function printers, cameras, audio-visual systems

Data — Backup and restore

Editor's Note — Thank you to the IT Department for all their hard work getting us back up and running.



On Location



'It's who we are'

By Matt Magráns-Tillery

Ms. S., a woman in her 80s, recently walked into the Section 8 office aided by her walker.

We learned she'd recently been forced out of the place she called home due to her living and sleeping conditions. She was also having her Social Security benefits stolen as well as some of her own possessions being sold without her knowledge. She decided to move out because she felt she had lost her dignity as a person. Ms. S. moved out, and used nearly all of her remaining funds on her hotel stay. She could only afford one more day at the hotel she was staying, and checkout was at 11 a.m. Diana Willett, Section 8 admissions specialist, brought this to my attention. We recruited Kimberly Trame, special programs administrator, to see if we had any availability in one of our Moderate Rehabilitation program units.

Kimberly identified a ground-floor unit, and Michael Hodges, Section 8 coordinator, contacted McCright & Associates — KCDC's third-party vendor for Section 8 inspections — to request the unit be inspected that same day. Pamela Cash, special programs occupancy specialist, assisted with the application and required documents.



Diana entered and processed the applications where Ms. S was approved. Michael and Kimberly called KUB's Customer Care Line to waive the connection fees. Maggie Fulton, senior occupancy specialist, prepared the leasing paperwork, and the following day Ms. S. signed her new lease. The first time we saw Ms. S. smile was when she

received the keys to her new unit. It reminded us of why we do what we do each day. We had several staff members, in collaboration with Western Heights Baptist Center and CAC's Office on Aging, assist Ms. S. with a number of needed household items, including bedding, food, soap, silverware and so much more. These all helped to have a smoother transition to her new home. I'm so very proud of how this team pulled together to assist someone in dire need. I kept hearing staff say, "This is what we do at KCDC. It's who we are." One of KCDC's strengths has been the growth of multiple programs allowing for a nimbler approach to be there

to meet the needs of customers who come into our offices.

There's a lot of need out there, but it's wonderful to be in a place where we get to make a difference to people's lives in a very real way every day. Thank you, Section 8 team!

Partnership Appreciation

By Marisa Moazen

CAC's Beardsley Community Farm's mission is to increase food security in Knoxville by providing fresh produce, accessible education, and land and resources for gardening. They manage community gardens at affordable housing developments and on-site gardens for refugee gardeners. They distribute more than 7,000 seed packets and 12,500 vegetable starts to 1,300 Knox County residents each year. Cagle Terrace, Cottages on Clifton, Isabella Towers, Lonsdale Homes, Love Towers, Montgomery Village, Northgate Terrace and Western Heights have planned community gardens for this year.

Through the resident needs assessment, we learned that residents at Eastport, Five Points, Nature's Cove, North Ridge Crossing and Passport would also like to see a garden program launched. This will be a future goal to work with property managers to see if there is space to accommodate a garden plot. CAC's Beardsley Community Farm tills the land, signs up residents, checks on each garden twice a month, and provides seeds, plants and gardening advice. Most KCDC employees associate Beardsley Community Farm with Adam Caraco. He recently changed positions and has moved internally at CAC to the Commodity Supplemental Food Program role. But you will continue to see a familiar face in the gardens! Riley Douglas has moved from KCDC to Beardsley Community Farm as the community garden and distribution manager. While at KCDC, Riley worked as an AmeriCorps and was very involved in leading our garden program. We look forward to a partnership that continues to bloom and grow with Riley in the tractor seat. Garden work starts in March and will go through September/October.



KCDC Spotlight

The Spotlight aims to recognize the amazing things KCDC employees are doing to help make the community and workplace better. Email jnash@kcdc.org if you think there's someone we should highlight.

James Pruitt Property Manager

James Pruitt has worked with KCDC for most of his life. He first started working in 1984 at 20 years old as a subcontractor with his father to waterproof Western Heights and remained in KCDC's remodeling crew for five years before moving to maintenance upon recommendation by maintenance crewman Johnny Booker. From there he worked his way up and over roughly 39 years has worn several hats, including maintenance foreman, maintenance supervisor, asset manager, senior asset manager and now property manager, which has been his title for 21 years.

"KCDC's been a great place to work with," James said. "... We touch so many different lives and if we can brighten just one person's day, it is worth it."

In one way or the other James has worked at Western Heights, Montgomery Village, North Ridge Crossing, Autumn Landing, Nature's Cove, Austin Homes, Walter P. Homes, the old College Homes and now Lonsdale.

"I think I've worked at every family style property they've had," James said. "I've worked at some of the high-rises. Like the wall out at Northgate (Terrace), the block wall that blocks their dumpster area, I actually was the laborer that mixed the mud for the two guys that laid that block. That was part of my five-year tenure (in remodeling)."

If we can brighten just one person's day, it is worth it.



James Pruitt, right, hands Eugene Littlejohn a resident's move-out file at the Lonsdale property office.

Throughout his life James has lived by the philosophy of being courteous to others and remaining goal-oriented.

"A good work ethic which comes from parents that instilled in us that we could do whatever we wanted and never give up, keep trying," James said.

When he's not working, James can be found visiting his parents and participating in activities at Blue Springs Church of God in Jefferson County, a place he's attended for nearly six decades and been a deacon at for about 29 years. James' 59th birthday was March 11.

James' religious belief has been a driving force his whole life mainly because he's seen the impact it can have.

"I think the biggest reason is, I can see what a change it can make in someone's life," James said. "Really working in low-income assisted housing, or affordable housing, however you want to word it, you see so many lives that are just torn apart. Of course, I've asked this question, how do you break that cycle to get someone where you don't have generation one, two, three, four going down that same road? Of course, the answer to that is Christ."

Family has also played a major role in his life. He said he's most thankful for his son and wife. Last year James' wife was diagnosed with breast cancer and is now in remission. His son spent nine months at St. Jude Children's Research Hospital 15 years ago after he was diagnosed with a brain tumor.

"He's 24 now, he's doing great — and again, the Lord's blessed us there," he said. "Then my wife, she's put up with me — we got married one year after I started working at KCDC."

Their 38th wedding anniversary is Aug. 31.

"She should be praised for that alone," he said.

Community Focus

The Focus aims to provide a little more information about each of KCDC's communities.

Cagle Terrace



Located in West Knoxville, Cagle Terrace is a community with two buildings for elderly residents at least 62 years old and those with a disability.

Cagle Terrace has been in the KCDC portfolio since 1969. The 274-unit community off Renford Road last year went through a \$6.2 million renovation that included 14 Americans with Disabilities Act units with accessible kitchens and bathrooms, roll-in showers and accessible shelf space. Work entailed new cabinets, flooring, water heaters, appliances, doors, locks and an emergency call system. Additionally, improvements were made to social areas, common restrooms and exterior spaces.



This wasn't the first time Cagle Terrace went through improvements. In the late 1990s, the Elderly & Disabled community received new kitchen cabinets and sinks, water heaters, floor tiles and a new coat of paint for all units. New windows and blinds were also installed between 2007-09.

Cagle Terrace is one of three locations that has a walk-in wellness center where Matter Health offers residents medical help on site. The other sites are Isabella Towers and Northgate Terrace. A fourth is scheduled for Love Towers later this year.

The current property manager is Rhonda Harris. Cagle Terrace includes efficiency, studio and one-bedroom units.



Partner Agency Resources

- **Furniture Ministry** — CedarBrook Outreach offers free furniture to residents in need. Furniture can be requested and donated at cedarbrookoutreach.org/furniture-ministry.

Community Resource Fairs

Below are the scheduled Community Resource Fair dates:

- Cagle Terrace — Noon March 22
- First Creek at Austin — 3 p.m. March 24
- Five Points — 3 p.m. March 31
- Western Heights — 3 p.m. April 3
- Autumn Landing — 3 p.m. April 10
- Love Towers — Noon April 14
- Nature's Cove — 3 p.m. April 21
- Montgomery Village — 2 p.m. April 27
- Lonsdale — 3 p.m. May 1
- Isabella Towers — Noon May 4
- North Ridge Crossing — 3 p.m. May 8
- Northgate Terrace — Noon May 11
- The Vista — 3 p.m. May 15

Newsletter Dates

The Bulletin is scheduled to be released every two months. Publication should fall on the first full week of the month.

- **May-June Edition:** May 1-5
- **July-August Edition:** July 3-7
- **September-October Edition:** Sept. 4-8
- **November-December Edition:** Nov. 6-10

