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By Lisa Vidaurri-Bowling

RIVERVIEW — With more than 30 years' experience in the health care industry, Charles Dunn believes a friendly, hotel-like atmosphere combined with personal attention and care from licensed staff and specialists is the best prescription for rehabilitation.

Dunn, a licensed nursing home administrator, is the owner of Belle Fountain Nursing and Rehabilitation Center, 18591 Quarry Road.

Licensed by the state, the 50-bed facility specializes in knee, hip and stroke rehabilitation, including physical, occupational and speech therapies, pain management, home-care assistance and intravenous therapy. The 24-hour staff consists of skilled nurses and certified nursing assistants and has a total of 50 employees.

“Our goal to provide the highest-quality rehabilitative and therapeutic services while maintaining excellence in customer service to our clients — 100 percent satisfaction is our ultimate goal,” said Dunn, who purchased the location formerly known as Marion Manor.

This is the third nursing and rehabilitation Dunn has owned. He owns and operates facilities in Detroit and Westland.

“In 1948, this building was called the AAA Hotel, and in 1961 it was converted into a nursing home,” he said. “The result of this multimillion dollar extreme make-over with extensive exterior and interior renovations is a beautiful and functional state-of-the-art nursing and rehabilitation facility. It’s like a five-star hotel.

“If it wasn’t for the help of state Sen. Ray Basham (D-Taylor), the state of Michigan and the city officials of the city of Riverview, this vision would have never become a reality. They were very helpful. The nursing home was very close to closing down. They helped me with my vision to resurrect this building.”

Dunn said the renovation started in 2006, and the \$3.5 million project was completed in August.

“The only thing we kept the same was the bricks and the mortar,” he said. “Everything has been replaced — the windows, the floors, the furniture. We built a 3,000-square-foot physical therapy room. It’s been an extreme makeover. We only kept the frame of the building, and we added air conditioning and 100 percent smoke detection. We meet all the current standards with the state.”

Patients' semiprivate rooms have individual flat-screen televisions, Internet and telephone access, custom cabinets and colorful walls with artwork.

The facility has a dining area where patients are offered a variety of food options and a fireplace room for family and friends who visit anytime day or night.

Twenty rooms at the center are equipped with oxygen and suction equipment.

For added security, all doors have magnetic locks and alarms.

Dunn said the majority of the center's patients come to the facility after having knee, hip or back surgery.

"If they've had a mild stroke or fracture or if they've fallen and they need short-term rehabilitation so they can get back home, that's basically what we specialize in," he said. "Our facility is a short-term rehabilitation center, although we do have some long-term care residents here."

He said the importance of a short-term rehabilitation program is necessary because after surgery a patient will need 24-hour care that is available through Belle Fountain's staff of physicians, nurses and rehab specialists.

"Facilities like Belle Fountain allow patients from local hospitals to be close to their homes and families," Dunn said. "Many patients and their families tell us that it doesn't look or feel like a nursing home."

Treatment plans are based on each patient's medical stability, need for nursing care, rehabilitation goals and home support system.

The average stay at the facility is seven to 20 days, depending on the patient's needs.

According to Roberta Wade of Gibraltar, the center's administrator, physicians from Henry Ford Wyandotte Hospital and Oakwood Southshore Medical Center in Trenton regularly refer patients to Belle Fountain.

Wade has worked in the health industry for 26 years; the last 10 have been in administration.

"When patients and families come to the center, they say it looks just like a hotel," she said. "Patients and their families can visit before surgery to tour the facility and select the room they'd like to stay in. We'll make every accommodation to see they'll have it."

Wade said the center also offers respite care. Accommodations can be made by contacting the center.

Dunn said that in the short time the center has been open, it's build a reputation to be proud of.

“The Downriver community is a small community, and word has spread very quickly about the facility,” he said. “We have had 80 patients receive care in our facility since August, and that I’m very proud of. What excites me the most is that every patient and every family has been 100 percent satisfied, and that I am extremely proud of.”

Belle Fountain Nursing and Rehabilitation Center

Location: 18591 Quarry Road, Riverview; 1-734-282-2100

Opened: August 2008

Owner: Charles Dunn

Services: Fifty-bed facility specializing in knee, hip and stroke rehabilitation, including physical, occupational and speech therapies, pain management, home-care assistance and intravenous therapy.

Employees: Twenty-hour staff consists of skilled nurses and certified nursing assistants.

Certified: Medicare and Medicaid.