

A FAMILY WHEN YOU NEED IT MOST

# FRANCIS HOUSE



# NEWS

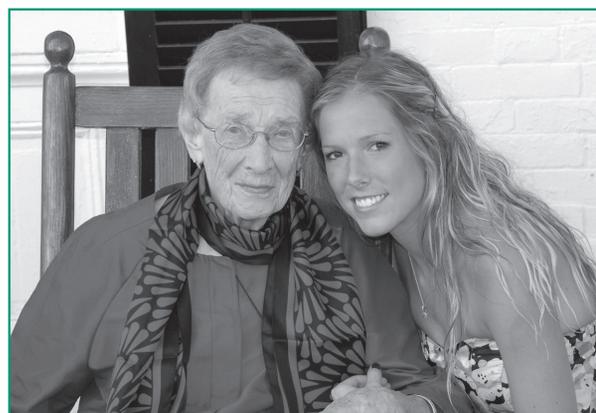
FALL 2014

## Resident Spotlight: Miriam “Mernie” Swift, MD

Born in Norway, Maine, the youngest of four sisters, Mernie Swift never dreamed she would one day be a physician with a specialty in pediatrics. But physicians were a part of her story from the age of one. Mernie tells about the day, one year after she was born, when her father, a Congregational minister, met the doctor who delivered Mernie on the street. The doctor asked what name had been given the little girl because in reviewing his records he found that he had never recorded the birth. Mernie’s mother’s name was Miriam. With each successive birth, Mernie’s father, Robert Bruce, wanted to name the child after his wife but she wanted no part of it. She didn’t want to have a “little” Miriam and she did not want to be called “old” Miriam. However, on this particular day, as the opportunity arose, Robert Bruce answered,

“Her name is Miriam Brenneman, after her mother.” Mernie laughs and says, “my mother found out about the name when she read it in the Norway Advertiser a week later.”

Mernie attended Northfield School in Massachusetts. Because she was so good at science, her father inquired if she had ever considered a career in medicine. He also believed that more women would be going into the medical profession. She had never considered it but while at school, Mernie lived across the hall from the school physician, a woman and Harvard graduate. Upon learning of her interest in medicine, the doctor allowed Mernie to accompany her to the clinic. Mernie’s love of the profession grew. She attended pre-med and then medical school at Syracuse University where she met her future husband, Ed. They were both in the last class to graduate from the Syracuse University Medical School. They were married



*Mernie with her granddaughter, Maggie.*

in 1943 and travelled to New York City for internships.

In 1944 Ed enlisted in the Army Medical Corps. He served in the USA and Europe for the duration of the war. After completing his residency in Minnesota, Ed and Mernie settled in Syracuse where he practiced as a general surgeon and she engaged in a public practice through community clinics. Mernie worked with the Syracuse University Health Service and College of Human Development, the Syracuse City School District, and the Family Medical Center. As Director of the Family Medical Center, she oversaw a comprehensive program that offered medical and counseling services to families from Onondaga County Social Services.

*(continued on page 5)*

## Save the Date



October 15, 2014 5:30pm-8:30pm

*See page 6 for more details.*

## FRANCIS HOUSE

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Nancy Light

### NEWS FROM OUR HOUSE

is published three times a year by Francis House. The newsletter is distributed free to friends of Francis House. For more information, comments or address changes contact:

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## Executive Director's Message

Dear Friends,

Fall in Central New York is one of the loveliest times of the year. Although we lament the brevity of our long-awaited summer, the fresh, crisp air on a fall morning is invigorating. We awake to low lying fog, but by mid-morning the sun is up, the sky is brilliant blue and the clouds billow white overhead.

The leaves begin to turn beautiful shades of red, orange and gold, painting a bright palette across the hills and mountains. It is Mother Nature at her best. Flocks of migrating birds land, covering the fields, looking for the food they need to continue their long journey. The birds have no promise of food or shelter. Instinct tells them what direction to fly and where to land in order to be nourished and safe. They follow time worn and traditional paths that have proven positive for them in the past. They fly together, taking turns in the lead, always moving forward as a group. Never looking back.

As human beings we, too, follow tried and true paths as we plan and make decisions about our lives. At the end of the day, we hope that we are going in the right direction and will reach our goal. There are times, however, when tried and true paths may not be sufficient for our needs. Times when we do not have the promise of the outcome we desire. It is at these times when we, like the birds of the air, must have trust. Trust that when we do not have the ability to see with human eyes, we will see with our hearts and know that there is something, someone, a higher power at work in our lives. That trust will enable us to move forward, not looking back but keeping steady on the path we have been given to walk.

Francis House was founded as a tangible example of the love God has for those most in need at the end of life. When residents come to live at Francis House, they are trusting that they will receive what they need while in our care. It is our sacred responsibility and promise to uphold that trust, every hour of every day.

Trust in God and in all of you who support this ministry has been our mainstay. Because of your prayers and generosity, we know we will be here for those who need us. Our prayer every day is that you may be blessed in abundance for the care and compassion you show to our brothers and sisters at Francis House.

In Peace and Gratitude,

*Nancy Light, Executive Director*

## Mark Your Calendars: Gazebo Memorial Mass

December 9, 2014 at **Blessed Sacrament**

**NEW** location: Blessed Sacrament Church, 3127 James St., Syracuse

Look for our mailing in October to dedicate lights on our gazebo for your loved ones



# Welcome Sally

While Sally Manahan has been part of the Francis House family for the past three years as an on-call administrator, we welcome her into the newly-created position of Assistant Resident Care Coordinator. In this position, Sally will work with Lynn Hallowell, Resident Care Coordinator, to oversee resident care and referrals.

Sally's mother, Jeanne, volunteered for Francis House and always shared her experiences with Sally. "I came to Francis House to honor my mother and her generation for all they taught me about nursing and service. They truly knew how to heal and care. I was so very fortunate to have been taught by the very best...Now I just want to pay it forward and be on this highly regarded esteem team of service."

Sally's 30-year nursing career includes working as a clinical nurse specialist, a nurse practitioner and teaching at Crouse School of Nursing. Recently she was teaching a course on Spirituality in Nursing. "You can never underestimate the soul of a person and its power to heal," shares Sally. "You need to take care of the person's spirit as well as their body."

That is why Sally feels she's meant to be part of the Francis House family. "Whatever challenges terminal illnesses can bring, our caregivers have always responded with a loving, calming presence. It is truly holistic caring." And

it extends beyond resident care. "Staff members also treat each other with respect and care. Actions speak louder than words. I am proud to be part of this team."

Sally still lives in her hometown, Marcellus. She loves to bike and is a member of Bike America, having biked in 30 states. She also enjoys hiking. A picture of her climbing the Grand Tetons hangs in her office.

Nancy Light, Executive Director, says "I knew from early on that Sally possessed special qualities, she has a depth of kindness and understanding that puts you immediately at ease. You know you are heard and respected. Sally has a spirit



*Sally Manahan, Francis House's Assistant Resident Care Coordinator.*

that is both strong and gentle. I am sure that our ministry will be blessed because she has taken on this new role."

## Let's Talk

*Many groups and organizations have asked us to speak at their meetings and gatherings. We are grateful for the opportunity to share the story of Francis House and the wonderful things we have witnessed in our ministry.*

*If you are interested, contact Beth Lynn Hoey, Director of Development at 475-5422 or [blhoey@francishouseny.org](mailto:blhoey@francishouseny.org)*



## We Remember...

Our prayers to the family and loved ones of four former Francis House volunteers who devoted many hours to Francis House: Frank Hahn, Cecile Ianno, Betty Piacquadio, and Jeanne Shanley. We were blessed by their hard work and dedication to our ministry.

# Volunteer Spotlight

## Genevieve “Gen” Saya

Gen admits that she was apprehensive the first time she walked into a resident’s room to ask questions for quality assurance. “I thought, why did I volunteer for this? Will this make me sad and depressed?” shares Gen. She soon understood it would be the exact opposite experience and the most fulfilling volunteer job she ever had. Gen interviews every resident and family members for quality assurance, asking them to share their experience on their care, their room, food and more.

“I’ll never forget Walter. I walked in, he greeted me with such a big smile. We talked about his life and learned we shared many interests. When I left I said, ‘I’ll see you later,’ and he replied, ‘How much later, you know I’m 92!’” We both laughed. I visited him many times after that and he always made me smile.”

There are countless moments with residents that Gen says she will never forget. Bill, who stopped his cancer treatment so he could enjoy Kentucky Fried Chicken with his grandkids; Lloyd, who liked his breakfast cooked just so and drew a picture of how his plate should look for volunteers to follow; and Mary, who always dressed to perfection and kept her family pictures surrounding her. Gen remembers Mary with a smile. “I was leaving Mary’s room one afternoon and she said ‘I love you’ and I said ‘I love you too!’” She passed away that evening.

Gen has talked with hundreds of residents and family members over the years. She is not only a volunteer, but friend. She visits residents and family members at least once a week. “You realize that here you receive so much more than you give. Although I get to know some residents quite well and feel sad at their passing, it is comforting to know that they were at peace during their final days. When I think of them I remember the smiles that greeted me even when the end was near.

And the family members also benefit from Gen’s support. “They are so happy to be ‘home’ with their loved ones. My favorite saying from a family member is “Francis House is a foyer for Heaven, filled with angels.”

Gen was first introduced to Francis House when she received an honorary degree from Le Moyne College with our Founder, Sister Kathleen Osbelt, in 2001. She told Sister Kathleen she’d like to do something after she retired. Gen worked for 50 years at Le Moyne College beginning as a secretary and advancing to a Vice President and currently serves on its Board of Regents. A few weeks after Gen retired in 2003, Sister Kathleen called and said, “You’re retired, it’s time for a visit to Francis House.” Gen has been an important part of our ministry ever since that day.

Volunteering at Francis House has had a tremendous impact



*Gen Saya (right) enjoys a beautiful afternoon on the porch with resident Genevieve C.*

on Gen’s life because she witnesses everyone truly living the mission. “Every staff person and volunteer has his or her own responsibilities, but when something needs to get done, it gets done. It doesn’t matter what your title is, every person is happy to help, from cleaning to helping residents.”

This June Gen completed nine years of service on Francis House’s Board of Directors, including serving as Board Chair for the past 5 years. She says it was a “privilege to serve alongside men and women who share my belief in the Francis House mission and values.” Gen was the first lay Chair of any of the ministries of the Sisters of St. Francis. “Gen once again led by example,” says Nancy Light, Francis House’s Executive Director, “She is the embodiment of a servant leader and the Sisters knew she always put the care and dignity of residents first.”

Outside of the Board, Gen has volunteered at the house and for many activities and events including There’s No Place Like Home. She has also served on various boards in the community. Gen never arrives empty handed. She bakes cakes, breads and brownies for both residents and staff members at Francis House and other organizations.

Gen says volunteering at Francis House is different from anywhere else she has given her time. “Everyone lives the mission. I see love and unconditional acceptance in action. I get to know the residents and learn about their lives and they encourage me. I am also inspired by the staff, they are the heart of this ministry, and I enjoy their friendship. I leave here so happy.”

Gen has enjoyed being a part of the Francis House family for the past ten years and looks forward to continuing to volunteer. “I have seen Francis House grow stronger over the years. Family is the thread that keeps this ministry strong. In order to move forward, you have to look at the past and know what is at the core of what you do...here, it is love.”

# A New, Easier Way to Give

We are grateful for the many Francis House benefactors who make gifts to our ministry throughout the year. We are excited to offer you the opportunity to make monthly or quarterly gifts through ACH (Automated Clearing House) debits.

ACH debit allows you to make your donation electronically. It is a more efficient, cost effective program for both you and Francis House. Here is how it works:

- You fill out the ACH Debits Authorization Form (below) including whether you would like to make monthly or quarterly payments. Attach a voided check.
- Mail it back to Francis House in the envelope included with this newsletter. As with every donation you make, we will keep your banking information confidential.
- We create your ACH debit schedule between our bank and your bank. You will be notified by mail that this has been completed.
- On the 15th day of every month, your gift is automatically withdrawn from your account. If you choose quarterly payments, your gift is withdrawn on the 15th day of January, April, July, and October.
- You will receive an acknowledgment of your donations in July and January. All of your donations remain tax deductible as permitted by the IRS.
- If at any time you wish to cancel this program, you can call Beth Lynn Hoey, Director of Development, at (315) 475-5422. You will be sent a form to sign to confirm your cancellation.

We thank you for your interest in this program. It is an easy way to make your donation while saving time and resources. If you have any questions, please contact Beth Lynn Hoey, Director of Development, at (315) 475-5422 or [blhoey@francishouseny.org](mailto:blhoey@francishouseny.org).

## Resident Spotlight

*(Continued from cover)*

In their 61 years together, Mernie and Ed raised four children: Cheryl, Doug, Brad, and Steve. She delighted in her children, seven grandchildren and eight great-grandchildren, and recalls many happy summers spent at Mexico Point on Lake Ontario where Ed's parents owned a cottage. That cottage has remained in the family for four generations and is still enjoyed by her children today.

When asked about Francis House Mernie replies that when her husband Ed was a resident here in 2004. "Everyone

was so warm and friendly, loving and supportive, that I told my family, if I have to go somewhere, I want Francis House." When asked if there is one thing she would like people to know about her Mernie replies, "The best thing I ever learned from my children is to be flexible and open-minded. And that is hard for a mother to do!"

We said goodbye to Mernie on July 10, 2014. We were blessed to care for a woman who touched so many lives in our community.

## Make a Difference in Someone's Life ... Become a Volunteer

Join our Francis House family and make a difference in the lives of others.  
For more information, contact Rea Carver, Volunteer Coordinator at (315) 475-5422.



# There's <sup>no</sup> place like home

## SAVE THE DATE!

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 15, 2014

5:30 P.M. - 8:30 P.M.

HORTICULTURE BUILDING  
NEW YORK STATE FAIRGROUNDS

### MAJOR SPONSORS



*Howard and Janice McCarthy*

*Teri and Ed Perry*



Enjoy delicious food stations and live music.

Purchase keys to unlock doors with a chance to win wonderful prizes.

Proceeds from the event will help us to provide loving care to our residents with terminal illnesses.

Questions? Contact Adrienne Kelley, 475-5422 or [akelley@franchishouseny.org](mailto:akelley@franchishouseny.org)

Special thank you to our event sponsors:

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NBT Bank

Upstate Radiation Oncology

## Donor Spotlight: Wendy's

We are grateful to have the support of Wendy's as a Major Sponsor for the second year in a row. Howard McCarthy, Event Chair, says, "It is encouraging to see the dedication of Jeff Coghland and Anne Williams, Wendy's franchise WendBing/WendCuse owners, have shown towards Francis House. They model the Wendy's commitment to community."

Dave Thomas, founder of Wendy's, instilled values that are the foundation of Wendy's culture today. He personally created the Dave Thomas Foundation for Adoption of which Jeff Coghlan is a Board Member. Thomas also inspired Wendy's franchise owners to get involved in organizations that supported their own community. One of Thomas' famous quotes reads "Live your life with honesty and integrity... remember, you earn your reputation by the things you do every day...do the right thing. Treat everyone with respect...give something back."



# Wendy's

We thank Wendy's for leading the way towards the most successful event to-date and making a difference in the lives of our residents.

## New: Mobile Bidding for the Silent Auction!

We are so excited to team up with GiveSmart to provide mobile bidding as an option for a portion of our silent auction items. GiveSmart gives our guests and those who can't attend the event the ability to bid on auction items with ease on a SmartPhone, iPad, or computer. No need to have your own device, the night of the event there will be personal shoppers, who can place bids for you.

You may start bidding two weeks prior to the event and throughout the night of October 15th. You will receive notices when you've been outbid and if you are the winner.

**How to Register in Advance:** Go to <http://tnplh14.auction-bid.org> and click the "Register for Auction" tab at the top of the page. Fill out the information, accept the terms and conditions and put in your credit card information. You will receive a text message from 684-94. Respond with YES to receive your outbid notifications. You will receive one more message and you are ready to bid.



**How to Register the Night of the Event:** Register your phone with one of the GiveSmart staff members (in red shirts) at the event. Look for your "Welcome" text message from GiveSmart.

**Unable to attend the event but would like to donate:** Open the blue link in your registration text from GiveSmart. Click the Green Donate tab and type in your donation amount. No dollar signs or decimals needed.

**To donate via text:** Respond to the text message from GiveSmart (684-94) with the word "GIVE" a space and the amount of your donation. No dollar signs or decimals needed Ex: GIVE 500 just made a donation of \$500!

## Mobile Bidding Prizes Include...

- **Two (2) New York Yankee Tickets with parking pass, value \$300**
- **Audible A3i Hearing Aids with Bluetooth, value \$8,000**
- **Four (4) One-day Hopper Passes to Walt Disney World, value \$500**
- **Overnight for two with golf package at the Otesaga, value \$1,100**
- **Overnight at Courtyard by Marriot with dinner at Joey's, value \$200**

*And Many More!*

## RAFFLE

## You Could WIN!

- **7-Day Cruise from NYC for Two, Norwegian Cruise Lines** *(Select dates apply)*
- **\$500 Gift Certificate, Donated by Nichols of Liverpool**
- **\$500 Gift Card, Donated by DestinyUSA**
- **Dinner-of-the-Month for One Year, Donated by 12 local restaurants**

*\$5 per ticket or 5 tickets for \$20  
All proceeds to benefit Francis House.*

*Please contact Adrienne Kelley at 475-5422 to purchase tickets.*

# Thank You...

✦... Kathy and Richard Pietrafesa for hosting our Annual Auxiliary Silver Tea on September 10, 2014.



✦... Mairead Rauch, FrancisCorp member, who worked with us over the past year.

✦... Sue and Al Antonini for continuing to donate flowers every season for our Great Room.

✦... David Zens for purchasing CD players for all resident bedrooms.

✦... Our gardens crew for making our yard so beautiful.



Employees from Janssen Biotech give their time on July 7th.

Anaren employees donated time again for their Community Day. Windows were washed and 92 bricks were installed in our Walkway of Blessings.

*Members of the current Leadership Greater Syracuse class came to Francis House for their community service day to learn about our ministry and volunteer their time.*



# The Caring Fund

The Caring Fund, Francis House's endowment, will provide support for those in need who come to us for care. Your gift today will continue to support our residents for many years to come. Now that the endowment is established, we hope it will continue to grow over the years.

We have received tremendous support from our benefactors who have named Francis House in their wills and other planned giving vehicles. We would especially like to recognize the following for their generosity:

- Brown Living Trust, William J. and Donna U. Brown
- Estate of Katherine E. Dailey
- Estate of Mary Dodds
- Estate of Elizabeth Lutz
- Estate of Sandra J. McMahon

We ask you to consider leaving your legacy to support our ministry at Francis House. By naming The Caring Fund of Francis House in your will or other planned giving vehicles, you will be impacting the lives of our residents and family members for many years to come.

The most popular legacy gift, or planned gift, is a bequest in your will. You can make a gift of a specific dollar amount or percentage of your assets after all designations and expenses are paid. There are other giving vehicles that provide income for you or a loved one while you are alive. There are also giving vehicles that provide for your loved ones first and give a remainder of your assets to your favorite charity.

As with any financial decision, you should contact your accountant or financial advisor to discover what type of gift is best for you. For more information on The Caring Fund, go to [www.francishouseny.org](http://www.francishouseny.org) or contact Beth Lynn Hoey, Director of Development, at, at 475-5422.



The mission of Francis House is to provide a family and a home to people with terminal illnesses so that they can die with dignity and experience the unconditional love of God.

The core values of Francis House are: Compassion, Unconditional Acceptance, Respect and Dignity.

## WISH LIST

### Grocery store gift cards Postage stamps

#### FOOD

Applesauce snack cups  
Bisquick  
Broth: chicken, beef  
Brownie mix  
Chocolate chips (semi-sweet)  
Coffee: decaf & regular  
Cookie mix: sugar, peanut butter, chocolate chip, oatmeal  
Cooking oils: olive & canola  
Cooking spray  
Crackers: Ritz, club, oyster, saltine  
Cremora creamer  
Flour  
Frostings: chocolate, vanilla, cream cheese  
Fruit in Gel and Jell-O snack cups  
Fruit snack cups: cherry mixed fruit  
Gravy: chicken, beef, pork  
Honey  
Juice: cranberry juice cocktail, apple  
Keurig Coffee K cups  
Mandarin oranges (11 oz. cans)  
Mayonnaise  
Mushrooms (small cans)  
Pancake syrup  
Peaches or pears (canned)  
Peanut butter (16 oz. jar - creamy)  
Pie fillings: cherry, apple, blueberry  
Pineapple (canned) crushed & chunk  
Quick bread & muffin mix: blueberry, banana, apple cinnamon, chocolate chip  
Soda: (Cola, orange, root beer, no ginger ale)  
Soup: cream of chicken, chicken noodle, tomato  
Sugar: granulated, brown, confectioner  
Tomatoes: stewed, diced, crushed  
Tuna (cans) solid white & light

#### PAPER GOODS

Coffee stirrers  
Flexible straws  
Freezer & storage bags (all sizes)  
Kleenex  
Napkins  
Paper towels  
Plastic cups (small)  
Plastic silverware  
Plastic wrap  
Snack and sandwich bags

#### HOUSEHOLD

Batteries: AA, AAA, C, D, 9 volt  
Bleach  
Dishwasher detergent gel pacs  
Disinfecting wipes  
Dryer sheets  
Laundry detergent (phosphate free)  
Liquid hand soap and sanitizer  
Lysol kitchen cleaner  
Swiffer sheets (dry)  
Toilet bowl cleaner  
Trash bags (13 & 30 gallon)  
2 gallon Ziploc bags

#### SUPPLIES

Alcohol pads



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## Receive Francis House Newsletter and Updates Via Email



If you would like to receive this newsletter and other Francis House updates through your email, visit [www.francishouseny.org](http://www.francishouseny.org).

## We Pray for Our Residents Who Have Died Since the Last Newsletter

Carrie Bergson  
John Joseph Caswell  
Eva "Suzanne" Eastwood  
Lester Fenner  
Donna Dillon  
Jacqueline Gloska  
Sandra Grenga  
James Hall  
Richard Harper, Sr.  
Ruth Ann Haws

Barbara Hodge  
Sandra Holtzman  
Frank Hubbard  
Patricia Hussain  
Paula Kasmierski  
Carole Lesczynski  
Janet Parry  
Catherine Plum  
Edith "Mae" Powers  
Victor Rivera

Ernest Saya  
Susan Scicchitano  
David Spriggs  
Dr. Miriam Swift  
Diana Trainham  
Sharon Walden  
Donald Wilcox, Sr.  
Richard Willis

## We Also Pray for Our Current Residents

Genevieve Czechowicz  
Emily DeCarolis  
Mary Rose Fragola  
Rosemary Jones

Jane Puttkamer  
Frances Wheeler  
Beverly Poffenberger  
Lois Spagnola

Margaret Stasiak  
Margaret Rand  
Nicholas Verish  
Van Williams

