

A FAMILY WHEN YOU NEED IT MOST

# FRANCIS HOUSE



# NEWS

FALL 2015



*Elizabeth with her granddaughter Janet. Elizabeth celebrated her 100th birthday with family and friends on July 7th. Her family includes 2 daughters, 10 grandchildren and many great-grandchildren.*

## Resident Spotlight: Elizabeth Parish, Giving Lessons in Hard Work

“Sometimes the hard way is the good way,” says resident Elizabeth Parish. “You learn a lot and it makes you a better person.” And Elizabeth would know, she has worked hard in her 100 years.

Elizabeth married her husband James in 1931, when she was just 16. She left

her hometown Chittenango and moved to his family farm in Cato. “I was as green as the grass!” shares Elizabeth. But she learned farm-life fast, including waking up at 3am to milk 20 cows before the truck came at 5am. “We had no refrigerator, so everything went in a can,” she explains, “including meat. When my father-in-law butchered a cow, I canned all that meat.” And she made all their bread from scratch.

Her in-laws lived in the farmhouse with them and taught her how to live simply. “I remember the first time I peeled potatoes. My father-in-law took the potato out of my hand and said, look at all that white on the skin, you’re wasting too much of the potato! He was a kind man who taught me well.” Life on the farm meant no electricity and no indoor plumbing. Wash was done in a tub with a washboard and water heated on the wood stove. They did have a radio, and listened to the news every night by hooking it up to a car battery.

“There was no idle time. If you had a minute to sit, you used that time to darn socks or sew,” says Elizabeth. During

World War II, Elizabeth and James took on extra work. She worked at the ammunition plant doing odd jobs and he worked at the Nestle plant in Fulton. Elizabeth remembers a little time for fun—playing cards by lamp light and once in a while going to square dances with her husband. “Sunday was supposed to be the day of rest, but I would start making dinner and you could always plan on somebody showing up. By the time dinner was served we’d have a whole crowd!”

In 1963, Elizabeth and James bought and operated the Colonial Inn in Meridian, a 6-bedroom inn, bar and restaurant. She did the cooking and tended bar. James opened up at 8am and Elizabeth was there to close between midnight and 3am. Although it was a lot of work, they enjoyed their life at the Inn. Elizabeth says that’s where she learned to really talk to people. “People so appreciate telling you their stories—the good and the bad.” She says she heard a lot over those years, “I could write a book!”

*(Continued on page 7)*

## Save the Date



October 14, 2015 5:30pm-8:30pm

*See page 6 for more details.*

## FRANCIS HOUSE

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### 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

As a family, the volunteers and staff of Francis House seek to provide compassionate presence in all that we do. But what does that mean? Compassion as a word covers a multitude of behaviors. Defined as a noun it means, "sympathetic pity and concern for the sufferings or misfortunes of others." No doubt we have all been in a position where we were called upon to give or needed to receive compassion. Whichever one you choose, it may be more difficult than it seems. There is the very human tendency to "feel sorry" for another person. We may try to "walk in their shoes," to have sympathy and be empathetic. The difficulty comes when our compassion turns into problem solving or trying to convince the person that the situation is not as bad as it seems. Perhaps we use anecdotal experiences to help the person to look on the bright side. The phrase commonly used is, "This too shall pass." Good intentions and deep caring do not always equal compassion.

Presence as a noun is the "state or fact of existing, occurring, or being present in a place." In this definition, there is no call for action, no dialogue required. It simply means to "be with."

Compassionate presence is what is offered to the residents and families of Francis House. We try to be one with each other, heart-to-heart if you will. There is only listening. Hearing the story without comment. Accepting the person as he or she is at that moment, knowing that the situation can change in a heartbeat. Cancer survivor Emily McDowell created a series of note cards that she wishes had been available when she was so ill. One card reads, "I'm really sorry I haven't been in touch. I didn't know what to say." Sometimes there just aren't any words and sometimes we don't need to use words we just need to "be with". Through our body language, a relaxed posture indicates there is no rush; hands laid softly on an arm, leaning in to be sure and hear what is being said. These actions say I have time for you. That is all that is required. Compassionate presence can mend what is broken, bring healing to the heart and soothe the soul.

I thank all of those in our Francis House family and all of you who make that presence possible through your prayers and support.

In peace and gratitude,

Nancy Light, Executive Director

## Mark Your Calendars: Gazebo Memorial Mass

December 1, 2015 at **Blessed Sacrament**

Location: Blessed Sacrament Church, 3127 James St., Syracuse

Look for our mailing in November to dedicate lights on our gazebo for your loved ones. Beginning November 1st you will be able to complete the form online at [www.francishouseny.org](http://www.francishouseny.org).



# Francis House Welcomes Barbara Carranti

We are pleased to welcome Barbara Carranti, MS, RN, CNS as the newest member of our Francis House Board. While Barb may be new to our Board, she is not a stranger to Francis House. Over 10 years ago, Barb worked as an on-call-administrator, providing weekend coverage for our home. She has also been an instructor for our care staff. A long-time supporter, Barb holds the distinction of being a winner of the Francis House St. Patrick's Day Raffle as well.



New York, College at Morrisville. She began her nursing career at Crouse Hospital in Syracuse. She has served on a number of not-for-profit boards and has been instrumental in placing registered nursing students at Francis House for both community nursing and administrative track field work.

When asked to join the Francis House Board Barb replied, "You know I love Francis House. I was waiting for you to ask me."

Barb is a Clinical Associate Professor and Assistant to the Provost for Student Learning Assessment in the Le Moyne College Department of Nursing. Prior

to joining the Le Moyne faculty, Barb was a Nursing Instructor at Syracuse University, Keuka College Division of Nursing and the State University of

We are very grateful to Barb for taking on this new role and look forward to working with her for the next three years.

## Farewell to Beth Meisinger



Beth Meisinger, FrancisCorps volunteer, sitting far right, with the Francis House staff said "Thank you for showing me what can be accomplished as a team and that it's always worth it to go the extra mile. Thank you for embracing me as part of the Francis House family. You are truly such a special group and I feel so lucky to have met you, learned from you and to call you friends."

## Welcome: Scott Allen



We are pleased to welcome Scott Allen (pictured with Sister Colette, Household Coordinator) to the Francis House family. Scott is responsible for maintenance inside and outside the home.



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

## SAVE THE DATE!

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 14, 2015

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

HORTICULTURE BUILDING  
NEW YORK STATE FAIRGROUNDS

### MAJOR SPONSORS

*Teri and Ed Perry*



*with  
The Murphy Family*

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

Special  
thank you  
to our event  
sponsors:

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Salli and Jim Tuozzolo  
Upstate Radiation Oncology

## RAFFLE

# YOU COULD WIN!

★ (2) round-trip non-stop JetBlue airline tickets *Donated by JetBlue*

★ \$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.*

# Mobile Bidding for the Silent Auction!

We are excited to team up with GiveSmart, to provide mobile bidding for our silent auction items. Guests (and those who can't attend the event) have the ability to bid on a smart phone, iPad, tablet or computer.

You may start bidding two weeks prior to the event and throughout the night of October 14th. You will receive notices when you've been outbid and if you are the winner.

**How to register in advance:** Go to <http://tnplh2015.auction-bid.org> and click the "Register for Auction" tab at the top of the page. It is a secure site and your information is confidential. Fill out the information, accept the terms and conditions and input 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.



It is a fun way for our out-of-town supporters to be a part of the excitement of the event.

**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!

We hope our out-of-town benefactors and family members will be a part of our event though mobile bidding.

## MOBILE PRIZES INCLUDE

### WALT DISNEY WORLD:

(4) one-day hopper passes to Walt Disney World

### BUFFALO SABRE GAME TICKETS:

(2) tickets to regular home game for the 2015-16 season

### THE FAN HOUSE:

Barnvard, Vermont, (2) nights for (2) couples

### BELIZE VACATION:

7-night stay for (2) people only - one bedroom at Chabil Mar Villa, Placencia, Belize, Central America

### THE OTESAGA:

Twosome of golf and (1) cart at The Otesaga's Leatherstocking Golf Course

*And Many More!*

## Volunteer Spotlight



Brigid Ristau and Judy Murrett

Every day we hear how the Francis House garden areas are so beautiful. It isn't accomplished without the help of two dedicated leaders of a group of 40+ volunteers. Judy Murrett, master gardener and Brigid Ristau and their crew have devoted countless hours of watering, pruning and lots of love for our gardens.

As a Navy spouse, Judy spent much of her life traveling the United States. She used her gardening skills to become involved in each community she lived. Judy volunteered with the Virginia Zoo in Norfolk, VA as a horticultural volunteer, and became a master gardener in Norfolk.

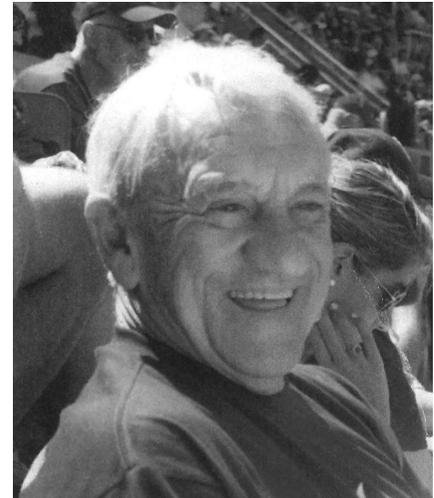
Brigid, who has lived in the Syracuse area most of her life, has always had a passion for the outdoors, especially gardening. When Judy reached out to her to help lead the outstanding group of 40 she graciously agreed. Brigid said, "I know how good I feel when I'm gardening and to know that we are helping the Francis House residents and their families enjoy the view of the gardens is more than I could ever hope for."

Judy and Brigid agree, nothing would be possible without the entire garden group, the shrubbery crew, mulch crew, mowing crew and all the companies who help maintain the gardens throughout the year. Special thank you to Peter A. Guinta and Sons for providing plants and flowers for our gardens.

Sister Colette Walter, Household Coordinator says, "The Garden Group is dedicated to making the grounds of Francis House beautiful and inviting. They are a pleasure and easy to work with and are very generous with their time and talents."

If you are interested in becoming part of the Garden Group please contact Sister Colette Walter at 315-475-5422

## Goodbye to Our Dear Friend



Francis House lost a beloved member of our family, Ron Himberg, on May 10th. Ron touched every aspect of our ministry from being a house volunteer to serving on our Board of Directors. Many people recognize Ron from helping with Auxiliary pin sales throughout the area. Ron said the most important lessons he learned in life were: love your family; enjoy your friends; believe in God; respect all beings, people and animals; and be optimistic. Ron taught us all these things and to live life fully with love.

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.

# Donor Spotlight: For the Love of Lillian



Lillian and Dr. Edward Cohen

Says Dr. Cohen, “There is a famous quote by Einstein, ‘There are two ways to live life. Where nothing is a miracle or where everything is a miracle.’ For my mother it was no contest.”

Lillian Alper Cohen was born the oldest daughter of six siblings in Gloucester, Massachusetts to parents from Eastern Europe. She, her brother and her four sisters remained very close throughout their entire lives. And at time when few women did, she graduated from college at Simmons in Boston and later earned a Master’s degree in education from Syracuse University. She was happily married to Dr. Edward Cohen, a Syracuse dentist, and together they had four children, who gave them 10 grandchildren and 8 great-grandchildren. Ten

Every person has their own reason for reaching out to help others. For Dr. Paul Cohen, the reason is simple—his mother Lillian. Throughout his life he was touched by her grace, her joy, and her compassion for anyone who was sad or suffering and by her generosity. How fitting that Francis House has received special support in her name, for she embodied the spirit of living each day to the fullest.

of their children and grandchildren including spouses are dedicated practicing physicians today.

Lillian had a remarkable generosity of spirit that extended beyond her family. She loved teaching typing and basic business skills at the Johnson Vocational Center. She was a wonderful mentor and role model to many young women aspiring to become self-sufficient and support to their families. She had a love of music, and gave each of her children and many grandchildren a piano for their home. One of Dr. Cohen’s gifts to Francis House was an electronic piano for our chapel.

Dr. Cohen has continued to support our mission with needed gifts from cookware to comfortable chairs. It makes him happy to know residents will be comforted in his mother’s name, for she lived with unconditional acceptance of others, an important value of Francis House.

Another of Lillian’s lessons was the importance of gratitude. “Even in her final moments, she told us how grateful she was for having a beautiful and magnificent life that was filled with love.” She had a good word to say about everyone and never said an unkind word of others. For her—only the high road!

We are grateful for the many lives Lillian touched during her life and the legacy of her love continues to touch the lives of our residents.

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## Resident Spotlight *continued from page 1*

After James’ passing in 1972, the Inn was sold. Elizabeth kept busy with craft projects and volunteering. She cooked meals for seniors in the community and also drove those who needed a ride to doctors appointments, shopping and other errands. She also traveled and took a wonderful trip to Europe.

Elizabeth was always crafty. Family members treasure the handmade, beaded ornaments she made. One winter she decided to quilt and made seven quilts before the winter was over!

Elizabeth say she likes to read and visit with friends and family. Volunteers and staff love to visit with Elizabeth because she has

such a wonderful sense of humor. “It’s like the times at the Inn,” she shares. “Someone says hello, you ask how they are doing, and before you know it you are learning a lot about the person. And they so love to have someone listen.”

We are blessed at Francis House to have Elizabeth as part of our family for the smiles and the laughter she shares.

On July 7th, Elizabeth’s friends and family gathered to celebrate her 100th birthday. She doesn’t make much of this milestone. “It’s just another day and here we are!” When asked what her advice is for living such a long life, she replied, “I’m not sure, but keep your nose to the grindstone!”

# Thank You...

☞... Thank you to Don Geisser for continuing to coordinate the Maureen Geisser Golf Day and Barbeque in memory of his wife and beloved Francis House volunteer. Over \$5,000 was raised at the event.



Thank you Elden Elementary for your extremely successful paper towel drive.

☞... Thank you to everyone who gave a donation through United Way of Central New York the CFC (Combined Federal Campaign) and SEFA (State Employees Federal Appeal) this year.



Thank you to the Youth Auxiliary for an amazing year. We are grateful for your hands on help at the house, at our events, and for collecting over 3,000 rolls of paper towels this year!

☞... Little Difference Makers, a grass roots group teaching young children how to make a difference in our community, donated proceeds from a lemonade stand in August to Francis House in honor of former Phoenix Mayor and Francis House resident, Tony Fratto who passed away on August 5.



*Pictured: Savannah and Abigail*



☞... Thank you to all who volunteered at the Ironman 70.3 it was a spectacular day! Special thanks to Francis House staff Colleen Haggerty and Lesa Wiedemeier, for their leadership in organizing over 45 volunteers for the day. Thank you to the Ironman Foundation for their donation in appreciation of our efforts.

**The mission of Francis House**  
is to provide a home and an extended family 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.

# 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 Debit Authorization Form included on our website [www.francishouseny.org](http://www.francishouseny.org) or call or email to receive form and mail it back to Francis House. As with every donation you make, we 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 a statement of your donations in July and January. All of your donation remains tax deductible as permitted by the IRS.
- If at any time you wish to cancel this program, 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).

## *The Caring Fund* in honor of Sister Kathleen Osbelt

Your gift to the Caring Fund will continue to support our residents for many years to come.

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.

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 475-5422.

## WISH LIST

### MISCELLANEOUS

8 ½ X 11 white copy paper  
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: fudge, vanilla, cream cheese  
Fruit in flavored gelatin snack cups  
Fruit snack cups  
Gravy: chicken, beef, pork  
Honey  
Juice: cranberry juice cocktail, apple  
Mayonnaise  
Mushrooms (small cans)  
Pancake syrup  
Peaches or pears (canned)  
Peanut butter (16 oz. jar - creamy)  
Pie fillings: cherry, apple, blueberry  
Pineapple (canned) crushed & chunks  
Quick bread & muffin mix: blueberry, banana, apple cinnamon, chocolate chip  
Soda (cola, orange, no ginger ale)  
Soup: cream of chicken, chicken noodle, tomato  
Sugar: granulated, brown  
Tomatoes: stewed, diced, crushed  
Tuna (cans): solid white & light

### PAPER GOODS

Coffee stirrers  
Flexible straws  
Freezer & storage bags (all sizes)  
Parchment paper  
Plastic cups (small)  
Plastic wrap  
Snack & sandwich bags  
Tissues & Napkins  
Toilet paper

### HOUSEHOLD

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

### SUPPLIES

Alcohol pads  
Baby wipes

## 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). Many of you have asked for this option for your convenience and to save Francis House resources.

## We Pray for Our Residents Who Have Died From June 1, 2015 through August 17, 2015

John “Jack” Adams

Denise Berger

Rosemary Boyle

Jeanne Case

Gilda Connelly

Evelyn Courto

Eleanora Daloia

Joanne Devendorf

Anthony Fratto

Joseph Galuski

Debra Goldghen

Johanna Hemmes

Robert Hobson

Nancy Houppert

David Kelly

Angele Khanzadian

Adrien Kolozsvary

Thomas “Craig” Langley

Nancy Madden

Anthony “Tony” Maresca

Earla Mills

Frederick Nellenback

Charles Owens

Jeanne Rhines

Jessie Smith

Robin Smith

Virginia Steigerwald

Frances Stiles

Frances Wheeler

