

25th Anniversary
1991–2016
CELEBRATING 25 YEARS

A FAMILY WHEN YOU NEED IT MOST

FRANCIS HOUSE



NEWS

SUMMER 2016

The Gift of Francis House

Blake Daly has participated in FrancisCorps for the last year as a member of the Francis House family. FrancisCorps volunteers will apply their experience of service, community and the values of Francis and Clare of Assisi to their careers, relationships and community, and so help build a more just, peaceful and fraternal society.

As I end my year of service at Francis House I am blown away with the number of unbelievable memories that I have to take with me and the deep friendships that

I have formed. This has truly been an incredible experience that will take a lifetime to digest. From the incredibly strong staff of women I have learned how to work with

passion while remaining joyful and faithful to a mission. The volunteers - you guys are the engine of this place and you have all taught me so much about true service. Then, of course, there are the residents, who have welcomed me into their home and who have been the most sincere teachers of life and love.

On my first day I was greeted at the door by Nancy and Rea. Their friendly welcome threw me off. I thought “why are

these women so happy in a home for the dying, shouldn't they be serious and somber?” As I watched them closer over the next few weeks I found out that I was right, they weren't just happy - it was much deeper than that - they were JOYFUL. The entire staff, from the caregivers to the administrators, were filled with the sincere Joy that comes from finding the place in life where you are supposed to be and doing the work that you are meant to do. This incredible staff of women (my inherited family of sisters and mothers!) have shown me what it means to work hard and to lead by example.

The volunteers at Francis House have been the salt and flavor of my days (no pun intended kitchen team!) You are all so unique and amazing and I thank you all for that. By getting to meet the weekly and monthly volunteers I have had the pleasure of developing amazing relationships with so many of you and cannot express my thankfulness enough (especially for teaching me how to cook!). You are all an

(continued on page 8)



Blake (pictured with Sister Kathleen Bruzga) entertains volunteers and residents on the patio.

FRANCIS HOUSE

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Maureen Drescher, Chair
Stephen Block
Barbara Carranti
Dennis DePerro
Todd Klaben
Heather Hennigan
Matt Lumia
Patrick Murphy
Kirk Narburgh
Kevin Pole
Peter Rhodes
Sister Maria Salerno
Benjamin Sio, Ex-Officio
Nancy Skahen
Nancy Light, Executive Director

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Betsy McLane
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Dorothy Wagner

ADVISORS

Sister Kathleen Osbelt
Beth Lynn Hoey
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:

Francis House
108 Michaels Ave
Syracuse, NY 13208-1718
(315) 475-5422
E-mail: info@francishouseny.org



Executive Director's Message

As we approach the mid-point of our 25th Anniversary year and reflect on the distant and recent past, gratitude is a central theme. "Gratitude is more than a mental exercise, more than a formula of words. We cannot be satisfied to make a mental note of things which God has done for us and then perfunctorily thank God for favors. To be grateful is to recognize the love of God in everything God has given us and God has given us everything."
— Thomas Merton

How would we have begun if not for the dream of the Sisters of St. Francis? So we are grateful for their vision and perseverance. A small home expanded to meet the ever-increasing need for a place where death with dignity may be found.

As the numbers of people wanting to come into Francis House grew, the vision and leadership of the Francis House Board of Directors led to discussions about how we would meet the need. We are grateful for their decisive and bold action which enabled us to expand and build to increase the number of people we were able to serve from six to eight to sixteen.

We are grateful for the many volunteers who give of themselves to make our house a true home and for the caregivers who provide for the peace and comfort of our residents, giving presence and reassurance that, "No, you are not alone."

Donors and volunteers stepped forward to enable us to open our original home on Michaels Avenue and continued their support, both

financial and physical, as rooms were added and a new house was built. We are grateful for the faithfulness and commitment these generous individuals showed to our ministry. Because of them, we were able to care for not only additional residents, but many more family members as well.

We remain most sincerely grateful for all the residents who have blessed us with their faith and trust. I was asked recently to share one thing about Francis House for which I was grateful. There are so many different blessings; it was hard to narrow the choice. But, on reflection, I responded, "I am grateful for the faces of our residents." Throughout my eighteen years serving this ministry, it has been the faces, the eyes, the expressions of pain, then pain relieved, the smiles, the tears of joy, the peaceful and serene countenance at the moment of death that cause me to be grateful every day for Francis House and my place here. To know that what we do really makes a difference is both gratifying and very humbling.

"For the grateful person knows that God is good, not by hearsay but by experience. That makes all the difference." —Thomas Merton.

God is good and for twenty five years that goodness has been showered on Francis House. Many hands and hearts, love and fidelity have made our home a place of peace, tranquility and a safe haven from the dark of fear. Yes, we are grateful and we pray every day in thanksgiving for all the blessings we have received.

In Peace and gratitude,


Nancy Light, Executive Director

Welcome New Francis House Board Members

Four new board members were elected at the annual meeting of the Francis House Board of Directors on May 26, 2016. We are grateful for their commitment to our ministry.



Heather Hennigan has been supporting Francis House since our early years. She served six years on the Francis House Auxiliary Board, including as president from 2006-2008. Heather, along with her husband Mike, served as chairs of our annual event, There's No Place Like Home, in 2013.

Heather has given hands-on help for many Francis House activities. Many enjoy her artistic flair as she decorates our silent auction at the event every year. She owns her own jewelry and design company, Born in Fire, where she works with torches, kilns and saws to create one of a kind glass designs.



Kevin Pole has been a member of our Francis House family since his wife Amy was in our care in 2012. Since that time, Kevin has volunteered at the house and organized various volunteer groups, including Leadership Greater Syracuse. For the past two years he has served on our development committee. Kevin is an attorney with Bond, Schoeneck & King, LLP. He is a 2013 graduate of Leadership Greater Syracuse and currently resides in Syracuse with his son, Jack.



Peter Rhodes was one of the original community leaders Sister Kathleen Osbelt called on for advice during the early years of Francis House. Peter has continued to be supportive over the years, including serving on The Caring

Fund campaign committee. He serves as Director of the Syracuse Chargers Special Olympic Program. Peter is Chairman of the Board of Syracuse Label & Surround Printing.



Nancy Skahen was a member of the Francis House Auxiliary, including serving as president from 2012-2014.

She volunteers at many Francis House events and activities including organizing the popular pin sales. Once a week you will find Nancy at the reception desk greeting our guests. Nancy's mother Helen was a resident of Francis House in 2012.



Annual Volunteer Appreciation Dinner

Francis House celebrated National Volunteer Month in April with our Annual Appreciation Dinner on April 20th. Driver's Village once again donated the venue and Bill LaFluer and John Borchardt from Carnegie Catering donated a delicious meal.



Pat Sacco and Marshia Witting, longtime Francis House volunteers.

Staff, Board members, Auxiliary Board members and all volunteers were recognized for giving their time and energy to our ministry.

As Francis House celebrates 25 years, our volunteers and guests viewed a "Francis House Through the Years" presentation. Blake Daly, FrancisCorps Volunteer compiled a beautiful tribute to the mission and ministry of Francis House. Blake said, "It was difficult to decide where to end the presentation, there is so much history, love and photos of passed residents, their families and all our volunteers." On each table our guests enjoyed viewing copies

of previous newsletters from the very beginning to the most recent.

Thank you to all our volunteers who are the extended family for our residents. They give of their time and support, and we are truly grateful.



Former Auxiliary Board Member, Nancy Marsden and her husband Dick Marsden, enjoy the evening's celebration.

A Look Back

Throughout this anniversary year, we are sharing excerpts from past newsletters to celebrate how far we have come, and how our mission has sustained us. Summer 1997



Lucie became a Francis House volunteer and ardent supporter of our ministry until she passed away in July 2013

To Francis House and All Who Serve There:

There were clouds and shadows over Vince his six weeks in the hospital, like a fog we all felt them hanging there. Then, Francis House, the answer to our prayers! There is a calm and serenity flowing through 108 Michaels Avenue that touches and fills all who come there...

The morning before Vince drifted into a sleep, ... my loved ones were with me. Sister Kathleen brought in some soft, soothing music... I told him that he didn't need to fight anymore. He felt peace and realizing he could not come home with me, he found renewed strength and resigned himself to the will of God. Vince is Home now.

I cannot put words here to say how much all of you mean to me... All the care, love, time, comfort and hugs. Just being there is what we needed. There is a strength we received from everyone, all dedicated, doing God's work there at Francis House... You made our six months with you a part of life so dear to hold. With my sincerest thanks and love, I leave a big part of my heart with each of you. May God continue to shed His blessings abundantly and Francis House and His angels there.

*My devotion and love,
—Lucie Murray, July 1997*

From Sr. Kathleen Osbelt: Mission Outreach



There was once a time when some people said our home for those who are dying wouldn't last past the first five years. And here we are celebrating twenty five years - what a blessing! It is with gratitude that we not only made it to two and a half decades, but that we are able to be generative about our ministry. Through the years we have reached out to help other groups and offer presentations on death and dying issues. There continues to be an emergence of individuals and groups who want to model our ministry. The latest group to talk with us was from Northern Central New York. They were hoping to get some insights as to how to start with a small home. A director from a home in Tennessee called for some advice on fundraising. In June a founder of a home about to be opened in Pennsylvania met with us.

Nancy Light, Beth Lynn Hoey and I are preparing to travel to Michigan to attend and present at the 4th National Annual meeting of people who operate homes like Francis House. This event gives hope and encouragement to all of us as we strive to make a difference for those at end of life and perhaps change our cultural perspectives.



Please take a look at our newly updated website www.francishouseny.org

A Fashionable Success

Over 240 friends of Francis House gathered for the annual Auxiliary Luncheon and Fashion Show on May 12th at the DoubleTree by Hilton Hotel in East Syracuse. We thank Luncheon Chair Mary Currell and Luncheon Co-Chairs Caroline Calimlim and Francie Smith for coordinating the beautiful celebration.



Newly-elected Francis House Auxiliary Board Members (from left to right): Cheryl Maxian, Cathy Haley, Dawn Falge. (Not pictured: Barbara Houk)

Outgoing Auxiliary President Carol Pietraszek thanked everyone for their support and who made the past year such a success. Outgoing Board members recognized for their hard work and dedication to Francis House included Maureen Hartnett, Maria Miller, Nancy Marsden and Nancy Skahen. Board member Louise Sessa presented the Board slate for the upcoming year including new Board members Dawn Falge, Cathy Haley, Barbara Houk and Cheryl Maxian.

Treasurer Kathleen Conway presented Nancy Light, Executive Director, with \$15,000, representing fundraising profits the Auxiliary has made over the past year.

Sarah Ferranti and Connor Lundrigan, co-presidents of the Youth Auxiliary, gave a report on the many youth auxiliary activities throughout the year including helping with events, inviting other students to Francis House for Make A Difference Days, selling bracelets and writing notes of love and encouragement to residents. Several members, who are seniors in high school this year, presented a check for \$1,200 to Francis House representing bracelet sales this year.

The highlight of the afternoon was the fashion show by Jane Morgan's Little House. Owner Randi Zabriski commented. In honor of the 25th anniversary, special Francis House models included: Sister Colette Walter, household coordinator, Beth Lynn Hoey, director of development, Marie Grabowski, original Advisory Board member and Meg Bogosian, original Francis House volunteer.



Maureen Drescher (right), Francis House Board Chair, congratulates Carol Pietraszek, Auxiliary President, on a successful year and for her service as Auxiliary President.

SAVE THE DATE



Annual Auxiliary of Francis House Silver Tea



All are welcome to join us for the annual Silver Tea
Wednesday, September 14th, 1pm-3pm*
at the home of The Honorable and Mrs. Anthony Aloj
6271 Addison Loomis Cicero, NY 13039

* Please note that the time of the tea has changed from previous years.

Thank You...

✂... Thank you Lynn McMartin, Michael Madden and Gen Saya for hosting an Anniversary Gathering on June 10th.

(from left to right) Sister Kathleen Osbelt, director of mission outreach, Michael Madden, Lynn McMartin, and Gen Saya enjoy a perfect evening.



✂... Thank you Knights of Columbus #9602, Edward Witkowski Council for their generous donation in support of our residents.



Nancy Light, executive director is presented a check from Gary Schuehler, Grand Knight.

✂... Thank you St. John the Evangelist, Camden NY for inviting Beth Lynn Hoey to speak at the annual Mother's Day breakfast sponsored by their Altar Rosary Society. We are grateful for the donated items from our wish list to add to our pantry.



(from left to right) Parishioners Rich and Sharon Norton, Beth Lynn Hoey, director of development and Father Paul Mathis.

✂... Thank you Maureen and Paul Drescher for hosting an Anniversary gathering on June 29th.



(from left to right) Nancy Light, executive director enjoys the evening with Maureen and Paul Drescher.

✂... We thank Joe Mancuso for his many years of service as his board term ends. He has served on our event committee and board development committee.



✂... Thank you to an anonymous donor for providing each resident room and great rooms with a handmade Francis House blanket.



(standing left to right) Sister Kathleen Osbelt, founder, Becky Shaver, caregiver and Nancy Light, executive director. (seated left to right) Rea Carver, volunteer coordinator, Sister Colette Walter, household coordinator and Adrienne Kelley, development and special events.

Celebrity Chefs Celebrate 25 Years of Francis House

☞... Thank you Chef Chris Cesta of The Inn Between Restaurant for serving as our March Celebrity Chef. Chef Cesta prepared a delicious meal including lobster bisque, grilled chicken over spring greens with honey and poppy dressing, fresh fruit, date nut bread and white chocolate cake.

Chef Cesta preparing a decadent lunch for our residents.



☞... Thank you Executive Chef Drew V. D'Angelo, Sodexo at Le Moyne College for serving as our June Celebrity Chef. Our residents dined on chicken piccata, green beans, rice pilaf, fresh fruit and mini cheesecakes for dessert.

Executive Chef D'Angelo putting the finishing touches on our resident lunch.



☞... Thank you to Inn of the Seasons Executive Chef R. Bradford Wiese and his wife, Carole Marino-Wiese for serving as our April Celebrity Chef. Our residents and their families enjoyed your delicious homemade soups, tasty tea sandwiches and assorted homemade cupcakes for dessert.



(from left to right) Carole Marino-Wiese, Owner, Blake Daly, volunteer, Jean Moth, volunteer, Executive Chef R. Bradford Wiese and Meghan Crossett, volunteer

The mission of Francis House

Francis House provides a home and extended family to persons with terminal illnesses so they can die with dignity surrounded by the unconditional love of God. We will use our lived experience as a resource for others.

The core values of Francis House are:

Compassion, Unconditional Acceptance, Respect and Dignity.

Blake Daly (continued from page 1)



Blake enjoying a sunny day with resident, Robert M.

inspiration to me and I hope to live a life of service like all of you do!

Now for the residents, who have blessed me a thousand times over in a thousand different ways. I have been invited into numerous lives and have been encouraged to step outside of my comfort zone to share myself as well. With such a keen awareness of what matters in life, our residents have been absolute models of love, trust and friendship. They have motivated me to become a better person and to always make sure that I tell my family and friends how much I appreciate and love them. Their strength and humility to allow me to serve them this year has stretched my understanding of love and their memory has found a new life within me. For this I cannot thank our residents enough.

This home has truly been a place of growth and maturity for myself and has opened my eyes a little wider. Francis House is an incredibly special place. I arrived in September expecting to learn how to deal with the reality of death and loss. I have ended up learning how to live everyday like it is my last. I have learned that a group of committed individuals can truly make a lasting and substantial difference and that this commitment to loving and serving others has a natural way of returning back to yourself. Thank you all from the bottom of my heart for the amazing year and may your countless gifts to me throughout my year be returned to you throughout your amazing lives!

Take care of each other!
Your Canadian Friend,

Blake Daly

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.

SAVE THE DATE



Wednesday, October 12, 2016, 5:30pm-8:30pm
New York State Fairgrounds, Horticulture Building

Be a part of our 25th Anniversary celebration and join us as a sponsor, advertiser, prize donor or purchase a ticket to attend our signature event.

For more information please go to our website

www.francishouseny.org

or you may contact Adrienne Kelley,
Development and Special Events at **(315) 475-5422**
or email **akelley@francishouseny.org**



Join us for a Celebration of Local Artisans and Francis House

September 16, 2016, 5pm-8pm / \$25/person

Benjamin's on Franklin / 314 S. Franklin Street, Armory Square, NY

Support Francis House by purchasing one of a kind pottery. Each year, the Independent Potters' Association (IPA) hosts "Cups for a Cause" to benefit a local charity. We are grateful they have selected Francis House this year. Your admission includes fine food, beverages and live music. Guests can purchase handcrafted drinking vessels made by local potters. **For more information** please contact Adrienne Kelley, development and special events at **(315) 475-5422**

or email **akelley@francishouseny.org**

An Easy Way to Give Support

You can schedule monthly or quarterly gifts through ACH (automated clearing house) debits.

ACH allows you to make your donation electronically. It is more efficient, cost-effective program for both you and Francis House.

For more information, please contact Beth Lynn Hoey, Director of Development at **(315) 475-5422** or email **blhoey@francishouseny.org** or visit our website at **www.francishouseny.org**

WISH LIST

MISCELLANEOUS

8 ½ X 11 white copy paper
Grocery store gift cards
Postage stamps

FOOD

Applesauce snack cups
Bisquick
Broth: chicken, beef, vegetable
Brownie mix
Cake mix: white, yellow, chocolate
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
Pancake syrup
Peaches or Pears (small cans)
Peanut butter (16 oz. jar - creamy)
Pie fillings: cherry, apple, blueberry
Pineapple (canned) crushed & chunks
Pudding snack cups
Quick bread & muffin mix
Soda (liters and cans)
Soup: cream of mushroom, tomato, vegetable
Sugar: granulated, brown
Tomatoes: diced, crushed
Tuna (cans): solid white & light

PAPER GOODS

Coffee stirrers
Flexible straws
Freezer & storage bags (all sizes)
Parchment paper
Plastic or paper cups (5oz.)
Plastic wrap
Snack & sandwich bags
Tissues & napkins

HOUSEHOLD

Batteries: AA, AAA, C, D, 9-volt
Bleach
Dishwasher detergent gel pacs
Disinfecting wipes
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)

SUPPLIES

Alcohol pads
Baby wipes



108 Michaels Avenue
Syracuse, New York 13208-1718

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SYRACUSE, NY

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. 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 April 15, 2016 through July 6, 2016

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|------------------|----------------------|------------------|------------------------------|
| Robert Argy | Randall Harmon | James McCabe | Mary Sammon |
| Jackson Bennett | Lyle Hobart | Josephine McCall | Michael Slater |
| Barbara Birdseye | Louis Izzo | Kathleen McGrath | Priscilla Steinbach |
| Arlington Brown | Nancy Jacuk | Joseph G. Murphy | Eleanore Tomczak |
| Beverly Burton | Sharon Januszka | Eileen Norris | Blanche "Jane" Van De Bogart |
| Robert Bustin | Norma Kessler | Bernard Northrup | Chester Zerrillo, Jr. |
| David Colegrove | Manuel "Manny" Leone | Virginia Reau | |
| Nancy Erhard | Salvatore Marotta | David Roche | |
| Thomas Foster | William Mayers, Sr. | Sallie Rutkowski | |