



A Family When You Need It Most

WINTER 2021

NEWS

FROM OUR HOUSE

1991 30th Anniversary 2021

PRAISE AND THANKSGIVING

THANK YOU FOR BEING PART OF OUR FAMILY

As we celebrate our 30th anniversary in 2021, we'd like to share the following letter with you that was printed in our very first Francis House newsletter. We have heard these words from residents through the years. This is a letter of love written to you for it is your love and support that has made moments like this happen.



Earl (standing) with fellow resident Joe in 1991

Dear Friends,

I would like to express my feelings of my new home, Francis House, which I call "Love House." It is filled with love from every nook and corner from the staff and volunteers. Love is coming from the heart of each one of these people. I belong! Francis House is home! Enough could not be said as to how much of a real home it is.

While in residence at Francis House, I met the Lord, and received my First Communion and Confirmation in the living room. Fifty people came to celebrate the event with me; they were staff members, volunteers, relatives and friends.

Each and every day, something more has been added to my life during these past weeks at Francis House. The atmosphere creates a real home for me. The only real home which will be better is when my Lord calls me home. Looking forward to this, I have no fears of being alone. Someone will always be with me to hold my hand and walk the last mile with me with love and care.

This is my home and I love it as such.

I truly love and am loved in Francis House and am really happy here. Thank you for all you have done to make this possible for me and for all those who will come after me.

Love,

Earl

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News From Our House

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For more information, comments or address changes contact:

Francis House

108 Michaels Ave

Syracuse, NY 13208

315-475-5422

info@francishouseny.org

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE



When I walked through the door of Francis House, I could feel the love surrounding me. In that moment I understood what it was to be a member of the Francis House family. This is a home and family first, people working together and being there for one another. As I met and observed the wonderful caregivers and administrative staff, I knew this was an extraordinary and special place.

During my first few weeks at Francis House, I met a resident who told me that Francis House is where she wanted to be. Her mother and brother had both been previous residents in our home. To spend her final days at

Francis House was her dying wish. When I talked with her family members, they were so thankful and relieved that their mother was at Francis House.

The global pandemic we are all experiencing has shed light on what is important to our Francis House family. We have found that life isn't what happens to us. Rather it is what we create when faced with seemingly overwhelming challenges. We have discovered we are stronger than we might have imagined, creative with our approaches to keeping our home safe and most of all grateful for our family.

Gratitude during these times is so important. It helps us to acknowledge and appreciate our abundance. Being grateful is what starts the receiving process. We look over our many blessings and we welcome new blessings yet to come.

As we embark on a new year, new leadership, and a celebration of 30 years of providing a home and extended family for those at the end of life, we recall how our founder, Sr. Kathleen Osbelt, made what was thought to be impossible a reality. She followed the teachings of St. Francis to **"Start by doing what's necessary; then do what's possible; and suddenly you are doing the impossible."**

This January 28th, we call to mind the over 3,300 residents we have cared for during the past 30 years and those who are yet to come to Francis House. We have hope and promise for the future. This is the year to celebrate our connections, our joys, and to take our moments of quiet, go within and renew what is important to each of us.

We ask God to continue to bless and guide Francis House, our staff, volunteers, and benefactors. We are looking forward with joyful expectation to reuniting our entire Francis House Family as we begin our 30th year of service to our dying brothers and sisters.

I wish you many blessings in 2021,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Mary Anne Hankins". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Mary Anne Hankins, *Executive Director*

FRANCIS HOUSE MISSION STATEMENT

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.

Core Values of Francis House

Compassion, Unconditional Acceptance, Respect and Dignity.

HOME

*There's
no place
like home*

We would like to thank you for your support as we navigated this year's virtual *"There's No Place Like Home"* event. Although we were not able to gather and celebrate together with 2,400 of our closest friends and family, we were together in spirit. We are grateful for your dedication and commitment to this event and even more so to our residents.

Your gifts combined with the support of others enabled us to raise over \$290,000 for our ministry.

Thank you to all our sponsors, advertisers, prize donors and all those who supported the event. You helped make it a huge success!



Event Co-Chairs Pete and Tara DiLaura watch the virtual event from the administrative offices at Francis House.

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Drs. Michael
and Colleen O'Leary
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Betty and Jimmer Szatkowski
Salli and James Tuozzolo
Upstate Radiation Oncology

ST. PATRICK'S DAY RAFFLE WEDNESDAY, MARCH 17

Tickets are on sale for our annual St. Patrick's Day Giveaway. Only 600 tickets are sold at \$100 each. (note: raffle tickets are non-deductible.) Your ticket enters you for a chance at winning \$10,000, \$5,000 or \$2,500. Winners will be drawn at Francis House on Wednesday, March 17th.

It is a fun way to support the ministry of Francis House. You can purchase a ticket individually, or have your family members or co-workers purchase a ticket together.

To purchase a ticket, send your payment with your name, address and phone number and the name as it should appear on the ticket. If more than one person is buying the ticket, please include all names and addresses. You can use the envelope enclosed in this newsletter. We will complete the ticket for you and return your portion of the ticket.



WALKWAY OF BLESSINGS

We will be installing additions to our Walkway of Blessings this summer. If you would like to dedicate a brick in memory of or in honor of someone who has been a blessing in your life, your reservation form must be received by April 1, 2021. For your donation of \$100, a brick is installed. To purchase a brick, call (315) 475-5422 or email info@franchishouseny.org with the subject: "A Blessing Brick" and we will email you a form to complete with your payment.

1991

30th Anniversary

PRAISE AND THANKSGIVING

2021

In 1989, leadership of the Sisters of St. Francis met with community leaders with the idea to create a home and a family where people with terminal illnesses could die with dignity and experience unconditional love. A small group of dedicated individuals sought support for Project Home@ and the Sisters of St. Francis donated a home at 108 Michaels Avenue.



January 28, 1991, Francis House opened its doors to the first two residents with a family of caregivers that included three Sisters of St. Francis and 56 volunteers.



Fall 1992 Newsletter: Francis House Auxiliary Growing Strong

Since its inception in the Spring of 1992, the Francis House Auxiliary has grown to a membership of 120 according to Auxiliary Board President Joanne Speech. With its constitution and by-laws in place, its purposes clear and a working board of very experienced people, the Auxiliary is off and running... To acknowledge and celebrate the wonderful volunteers of Francis House, the Auxiliary hosted a party at The Top of the Hill. October 22nd is the date of the First Annual Silver Tea at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Lawrence Ruston of W. Lake Road in Skaneateles."



Msgr. Rev. J. Robert Yeazel presides over the blessing of our new gazebo in 1994, donated by Elaine and Joseph Scuderi and Donna and Claude Incaudo.



Sister Kathleen opening Christmas presents with residents Jim C. and Cloe M. in 1994.



Letter from the Family of Resident Andre L. in 1998

*We learned so much from our father. We learned...
...that even in great suffering, life still holds small joys.
...that the world is filled with kind strangers who we will never be able to thank.
...that long goodbyes give you time to say all that needs to be said.
...that angels do exist; they come in the form of caregivers, volunteers, staff and sisters and they can be found at Francis House.
You filled his life with joy, laughter and happiness.
You have been our angels of mercy in our time of need. With much gratitude, we thank you all.*



Original Francis House
logo created by Sister Rose Raymond Wagner



Volunteer Meg Bogosian with resident Jan C. in 1997.
Meg is still an active volunteer on our event committee.



Excerpt from A letter from resident Catherine S., 1992:

Dear Friends,

I don't know exactly how to express myself, but I have to tell you about Francis House—my home. The staff is awfully good to everybody and especially to me!...One important thing for me is that I feel so safe and secure here. I am no longer afraid like I was when I was alone. The volunteers are so good to me. Why, they even bring me videos to watch and audio cassettes to listen to...I have good days and bad days, but every day I have people around me who love me and care for me, and I am so grateful. Thank you to everyone who has helped to make Francis House a home.

Love, Katie



Sister Kathleen with Al Antonini on moving day into our newly built residence in 1998. Al volunteered his time to help oversee the building of our residences 108 and 114.



In 1998, a 7,800 square-foot building renovation and expansion project began to increase resident bedrooms to eight and improve the quality of care and safety of the residents. Friends and family of Francis House celebrated the Open House of the J. Stanley Coyne Residence at Francis House. Residents moved into the new building on March 1, 1999.



Walkway of Blessings was created in 1999 in the yard surrounding the gazebo with etched bricks dedicated in memory and in honor of loved ones.



Please follow Francis House on <https://www.facebook.com/francishouseny> as we will be celebrating our 30th anniversary with posts, stories and photos from over the years.

Volunteer Spotlight:

PATTY JACOBSON AND CYNTHIA KIZER — CONTINUING FAMILY TRADITIONS

Patty and Cynthia remember the tiny kitchen in their small, country home where they first learned to cook. “I guess you can say we were trained for the Francis House kitchen our whole lives,” laughs Cynthia. Growing up in Amboy, in the Town of Camillus, their family lived in a house built on land from their family farm. Cynthia adds, “There wasn’t a lot of room, so we learned quickly how to work together.”

Days were filled with cooking and canning. Meals were made with love. “If someone was having a tough time, you brought them a casserole. And if someone needed a smile, you made them cookies,” says Patty. “The kitchen is our favorite room.” Family was at the center of everything growing up. Patty shares, “We were always together – Cynthia, our sister Nancy, me and our two cousins who lived down the road. Back then, people never called us by our individual names, we were just “one of the Craig girls.”

As young adults, Patty and Cynthia moved out of state. After graduating from Rochester Institute of Technology, Patty moved to Missouri for an internship. She met her husband Ron and they lived there for 14 years. Cynthia moved to Texas after nursing school and met her husband Randall, known to everyone as Smokey. However, they both missed family and home and returned to the Syracuse area, finally settling in Baldwinsville.

They became active in their church, St. Augustine’s, and learned about Francis House. But it was caring for their father that convinced Patty she wanted to volunteer. When their mother died in 2002, the sisters took over full-time caregiving responsibilities for their father. “I treasure those 18 months with my Dad,” explains Patty, “to be able to make him happy and comfortable; to be able to have conversations and recall memories; the everyday, little moments were the best experiences of my life.”

Patty began volunteering as a house volunteer as soon as she retired in 2009. She also helped by making meals at home and helping to coordinate meals for Francis House. “I worked the 4 pm to 7 pm shift and realized that most residents didn’t want a big meal at the end of



Patty and Cynthia enjoy bringing their family traditions to Francis House, including making homemade soup and cooking everything with love.

day, mostly soups or sandwiches. So I started making soup at home and to make it easier I froze the soup in individual molds.” The famous “soupsicle” is now a staple of the Francis House kitchen.

Cynthia joined our Francis House family in 2014 after her retirement. “For a year before I retired, Patty reminded me that I had a volunteer job waiting for me,” laughs Cynthia. The sisters treasure their time at Francis House. Says Cynthia, “I particularly like visiting with residents. One small question about a picture or a keepsake can turn into a wonderful conversation. I love listening to our residents’ stories. They have lived fascinating lives.” Patty adds, “It is an honor to be a part of their lives. And the residents stay with you.” Both agree that they receive so much more than they give. One of the biggest gifts of Francis House is what Patty and Cynthia call their “attitude adjustment.” Cynthia explains, “you always leave better than you arrive. You realize the difference a kind word or a small gesture can make in someone’s life.” Patty continues, “and you understand that everyone has struggles, many people face harder challenges than you and you need to be grateful for the blessings in your life.”

We are blessed by the gifts of Patty and Cynthia. Thank you for being part of our Francis House family.

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.

Francis House finds support in the Syracuse medical community

During the pandemic, we continued to review all infection control operating protocols with Hospice and in particular with Dr. Judith Setla and Dr. Julie King. Their knowledge, support and guidance has been a blessing throughout the COVID-19 pandemic. We were very fortunate to develop a new relationship within our community with Dr. Thomas, Dr. Endy and Paul Suits from Upstate Medical Center. Their insights, research knowledge and expertise on COVID-19 and the vaccine were invaluable to all at Francis House.

We were also blessed by St. Joseph's health system, who ensured that we had appropriate equipment. There was a time when PPE supplies were dwindling for all in the community and despite this, St. Joseph's ensured that we had enough to be able to care for each other.

The pandemic brought some unwelcome changes, but it was refreshing and so hopeful to make these new friends who have infused us with confidence and validated that we are on the correct path through the pandemic. Their kindness and generosity brought light into a dark time.

As Dr. Elizabeth Kubler Ross wrote:

“People are like stained glass windows. They sparkle and shine when the sun is out, but when the darkness sets in, their true beauty is revealed only if there is a light from within.”

IDENTIFYING YOUR CORE VALUES

Research has shown that people with a sense of meaning and purpose in life are happier than those without that sense. Those individuals seem to live longer, cope better with the losses and difficulties of life, and have a greater sense of life satisfaction.

Clarifying your personal core values can point you in the direction of creating a deeper and more meaningful existence and can serve as a guide on how you choose to focus your energy and time.

Your core values in life are not needs, desires, or preferences. They are the basic direction you want to follow, and they generally support your welfare or the welfare of others. As you experience different events and stages in your life, your values evolve and change.

At Francis House our Core Values are Compassion, Acceptance, Respect, and Dignity. All of our behaviors and actions emanate from those values, serve as the foundation of our ministry, and dictate how we interact in all situations with our residents, family members, caregivers, volunteers and benefactors.

Values Based Decision Making is a current topic we offer as a presentation and discussion through our Mission Outreach and Education program. If you would like information on future gatherings, email us at info@francishouseny.org.

A NOTE FROM NANCY LIGHT

The late afternoon sky on December 29, 2020 reflected my feelings as I contemplated my impending retirement. There were low, gray clouds creating wisps of snowflakes. Behind those clouds though, there were bursts of sunshine, revealing a bright, blue sky. A sky of mixed signals, my heart filled with mixed emotions. I am sad at leaving my official role in this wonderful ministry; however I have been and continue to be beyond grateful for all of you. Those of you who I know personally and those known only through our correspondence, have been a mainstay to Francis House and to me. It has been my great privilege to serve thousands of residents and their families. That privilege was afforded me because of the complete trust placed in us by our residents and because of you and your faithfulness to our shared mission.

Please accept my deep and sincere thanks for all that I have received from my years at Francis House. My life has been changed in ways I never would have imagined. The ministry envisioned by Sister Kathleen and brought to fruition through God's grace holds a deep and abiding place in my life. Your love and support for our mission clearly demonstrate what Francis House means to you. I ask God to bless you for your goodness. You will remain in my daily prayers of thanksgiving. Until we meet again.

In peace and gratitude,

Nancy

THANK YOU...

~ Thank you G & C Foods and Palmer Foods for their generous Christmas gift.

~Thank you to the members of the Brockway Farms Garden Club for your generous donation and appreciation for our dedication to taking such fine care of our residents.

~Thank you to the Doran Family for their generous donation to purchase a new washing machine.



~Thank you to the employees of Hematology-Oncology Associates of CNY for donating pantry and household supplies.

~Thank you to the Jesuit Novices for decorating our homes for the holiday season.

~Thank you to the 2nd Annual John Schaap Memorial Golf Tournament for their donation.

~ Thank you Peter Guinta & Sons Produce for donating a beautiful tree for our Gazebo and all the gorgeous wreaths for our homes and Gazebo.



Caregiver Annie Wilcox tries out one of two new compact air purifier systems donated by Intellipure. Thank you!

~ Thank you to the Valley Desperados for donating cash, gifts cards and pantry items from their annual fundraiser in memory of Tim O'Herin and Al Wrightsman. Special thank you to Guilfoil's Irish Pub for hosting their gathering.

~Thank you to the youth group at Oran Community Church for donating proceeds they collected from loose change from the congregation and their bottle and can drive fundraiser.

~Thank you to the staff at Grant Middle School for conducting a gift wrapping fundraiser in support of our residents.

~Thank you Gingerbread Preschool and Daycare for hosting a paper towel drive.

~Thank you Francis House Youth Auxiliary member Luke for having a paper towel drive.



We are grateful to the ongoing, generous support of Teri and Ed Perry. They have touched many lives in our Francis House family.

The Caring Fund

YOUR LEGACY OF LOVE

Through The Caring Fund

We have received tremendous support from our benefactors who have named Francis House in their wills and other planned gifts.

By naming Francis House's Endowment *The Caring Fund* in your will or planned giving vehicles, you will be impacting the lives of our residents and family members for many years to come.

We are humbled and filled with gratitude from the recent gifts received by:

Estate of Eileen B. Kennedy

Estate of Marlene A. Molella

Estate of Ann L. Slocum

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.franchishouseny.org or contact Beth Lynn Hoey, CFRE, director of development at 315-475-5422.

Become a Member of Our Monthly Giving Club

We thank the members of our Monthly Giving Club for your commitment to our residents. This group, now numbering over 100 donors, impacts our ministry in a significant way.

We invite you to become a monthly giver. You can make your gift with monthly checks in envelopes we provide. You can also schedule monthly or quarterly gifts to be made electronically from your bank account. For more information, please contact Beth Lynn Hoey, director of development at 315-475-5422 or blhoey@franchishouseny.org.

★ Car Donation™
Wizard

Did you know you can donate your car to benefit Francis House? Visit www.cardonationwizard.com and choose Francis House as your charity or call 877-957-2277 for more information.

amazonsmile
You Shop. Amazon Gives.

Choose Francis House as your charity of choice on Amazon Smile and a percentage of your qualified purchase is donated to Francis House.

WISH LIST

MISCELLANEOUS

- AA, AAA, C, D Batteries
- 8 ½ x 11 white & colored copy paper
- Grocery store gift cards
- Home improvement gift cards (Lowe's, Home Depot)
- Postage stamps

FOOD

- Applesauce snack cups with sugar
- Bisquick
- Broth (canned): beef, chicken, vegetable
- Brownie mix: fudge, dark
- Chocolate chips (semi-sweet)
- Coffee: decaf, regular
- Cookie mix
- Cooking oils: canola, olive
- Cooking spray
- Crackers: Ritz, club, oyster, saltine
- Cremora creamer
- Flour
- Frostings: chocolate, cream cheese, vanilla
- Fruit snack cups: cherry mixed fruit, peaches
- Gravy: beef, chicken
- Jello snack cups: strawberry & orange
- Juice: apple, cranberry juice cocktail
- Mayonnaise (30oz)
- Nuts shelled: almonds, walnuts
- Pancake syrup & mix
- Peanut butter (16oz. jar-creamy)
- Pie fillings: apple, blueberry, cherry
- Pudding snack cups
- Quick bread & muffin mix
- Soda: colas, ginger ale, orange, root beer
- Soup: chicken noodle, mushroom, tomato
- Sugar: granulated, light brown, confectioners
- Tomato: crushed, diced
- Tuna: (canned) solid white, light

PAPER GOODS

- Flexible straws
- Freezer & storage bags (all sizes)
- Paper towels
- Parchment paper
- Snack bags

HOUSEHOLD

- Dishwasher detergent gel pacs
- Disinfecting wipes
- Hand sanitizer
- Liquid hand soap
- Swiffer sweeper cloths (dry & wet)
- Trash bags (4, 8, 13 & 30 gallon)

SUPPLIES

- Alcohol pads
- Aromatherapy diffusers
- Baby wipes (unscented)
- Body Wash
- Chapstick/Lip balm
- Essential Oils
- Masks
- Mouthwash
- Unscented lotion



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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.

You can request a copy of our most recently filed financial report from the Charities Bureau Registry on the New York Attorney General's website www.charitiesnys.com or by contacting (212) 416-8401.

WE PRAY FOR OUR RESIDENTS WHO HAVE DIED FROM SEPTEMBER 22, 2020 – DECEMBER 14, 2020

Martha Bobik	Richard "Dick" Hammond	Ann Nesci-Murty
Nicolae Babuts	Linda Hobbs	John Orioli
Charles "Chuck" Baker	Gloria Hollander	Helen "Jeanette" Powell
Scott Baldwin	Carmella "Marie" Houser	Isma Pusey
Rosemary Baratta	Herman Klaisle	Bertrand "Bert" Roy
Emily Carver	Roberta Knapp	Thomas "Tom" Salanger
Nancy Colonna	Mary Ann Kotlik	Ann Marie Shavalier
Leo Corbin	Helga Labatte	Lisa Sitar
Jo Anne Crawford	Dorothy LaMontagne	Rose Sladick
Ruth Culkin	Vincent Lupo	Jack Spina
Pauline "Paula" Dennis	Joseph Macro	Elizabeth "Liz" Vertigan
Howard Downing, Sr.	Leonard Mastrocola	Jeanne Viggiano
Freida Fedele	Anna McAvoy	Richard "Dick" Yale
Donald Gardner	Jeannette McMullen	Heather Yates
	William "Bill" Moon	

We Also Remember...

Our Francis House family is saddened by our long-time volunteers that have died since our last newsletter. We hold family and loved ones in our prayers as we celebrate the loving impact the following people have had on our ministry.

Frank Anastasi
Volunteer for 16 years

Sally Ann Grillo
Volunteer for 14 years

Martha Lollis
Volunteer for 17 years

Genevieve Pieniazek
Volunteer for 3 years

Helen Sherwood
Volunteer for 7 years