

MEMORIES WITH MY MOM

Belinda Jewett, daughter of former resident Jane Puttkamer spoke at our Memorial Mass in December. The following is an excerpt from her talk. We are grateful for Belinda for sharing her story.

My mother's first encounter with the FH was in 2007, when she came to see Francis House for my step-dad whose health was failing. She had hoped he would make it there, but he never did. However, it was a warm, loving and peaceful place that my mom would never forget.

Five years later my mom was diagnosed with lung cancer. She chose to live out her life naturally at home. She was very strong and managed to live independently for a couple more years, but she was getting weaker and we were both getting scared of what could happen.

On April 7, 2014 my mom entered Francis House. It was not an easy thing to do to see her leave her home, but it was so comforting to know she was in a safe, loving environment. I was able to continue working my job and I would cut my days short to visit her every day. She had found great comfort in the friendships and bonds that she had made. She would tell me about the visitors she had and the prayers she received and sometimes gave back. Some volunteers came to decorate for the holidays, some to clean; some made and shared cookies on Thursdays. That was always a favorite! The volunteers in the kitchen learned my mother's favorite meals and snacks and that would just make her day.



“Not a day goes by that I don't think of the precious memories that we shared at Francis House,” says Belinda Jewett about her time with her mother Jane who was a resident at Francis House.

Her room was cozy and warm. She had a lovely view into the flower garden, and she could watch the birds and squirrels outside in the trees just like at home. She watched some of her favorite shows, like the Rifleman and movies from home. At Christmas time I brought in her table top revolving Christmas tree. She got lots of attention and visitors to see her tree and her picture of Elvis on the wall.

We all became great friends, instant family with Dennis who lived across the hall and his family. In fact I still meet with Dennis' daughter and her husband at least 3 or 4 times a year.

What does Francis House mean to me? A warm loving safe place for my mother during her last 10 months. I think she lasted as long as she did because of the love and compassion she was shown. When my mom passed, caregivers Sally and Annie helped me change her clothes and get her cleaned up to be taken away.

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News From Our House

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EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE



The Oxford Dictionary defines transition as, "The process or period of changing from one state or condition to another." We have all experienced changes, passages, or even transformations throughout the years. Perhaps we have moved from one home to another, upsizing or downsizing as our needs changed. After education we apply our learning to our chosen field or vocation, transitioning from full-time student to full-time employee. Maybe we have made the transition from child to parent to grandparent. We plan for and welcome these transitions, these wished for changes in our lives.

Other changes happen without our ability to make a choice. We have just transitioned from one year into the next. The clock keeps ticking, the calendar changes with each sunrise and sunset. There is no choice. We cannot hold the past static. Nor can we take it into the future. We must move ahead and face the new days to come acknowledging that we are not in control.

In "The Other Side of Chaos" Margaret Silf says that transition is "the bridge that leads from the no longer to the not yet. Nobody knows what that bridge is going to look like." While we welcome the New Year and those positive changes in our lives, there are other transitions which we would certainly choose to avoid if we could. The death of a loved one forever changes us. We may never be the same when a relationship is badly fractured or severed altogether. Perhaps this New Year sees a job opportunity slip away and prospects limited. Our transition bridge is shaky and without sure footholds. We do not know what is at the other side of the bridge. We only know we are on the path that is before us. Going forward is our only way. We cannot change the past or refuse to take those next hesitant steps. We can look back, however, and see the blessings in what we have accomplished or overcome. That look back can give us the perspective that no matter how dark our world or great the obstacles, we are never truly alone. God was there, giving us the strength to move ahead, one step, one day at a time.

Changes in life are a fact. Our response to those changes may take great faith, courage, loving support from others, and a belief that we are able to cross our transition bridge, no matter what it looks like. As the lyric from the beautiful song in The Lion King says, "It's the circle of life, and it moves us all, through despair and hope, through faith and love."

May the coming year for you be filled with transitions that are grace-filled and abundantly blessed.

In peace and gratitude,

Nancy Light, Executive Director

As we finished, Annie, being the sweetheart that she was, said oh no wait a minute! She grabbed my mom’s lipstick and gave her lips a little color for her ride away. My mom was surely smiling over that! I now refer to the staff and volunteers at the Francis House as Earth Angels. After my mom passed, I sent a letter to Francis House that read:

What you do is SO special not only for the person who is there to say goodbye to this world but to the family and loved ones left behind. You brought much love and joy to a bittersweet ending. Your compassion and caring made my mother’s stay at Francis House a heartwarming experience. I will be forever grateful for all the precious moments that we shared at Francis House.

We laughed and cried, we made friends, we lost some friends, but the memories leave an everlasting imprint on our lives. Not a day goes by that I don’t think of the precious moments that we shared at Francis House. How lucky I am to have those memories to treasure.

*Thank you for caring and for all the special moments that were shared. Thank you for calling me when my mom needed me, thank you for the times that you recognized my mom needed something. Thank you for all the special treatment, the special meals and kind gestures. Please continue knowing that what you do **IS VERY SPECIAL**.*

THANK YOU FOR ANOTHER SUCCESSFUL “THERE’S NO PLACE LIKE HOME”!



Over 2,400 of Francis House family and friends gathered at the New York State Horticulture

Building on the beautiful evening of October 10th to celebrate *There’s No Place Like Home*. Over \$290,000 was raised in net proceeds for Francis House.

Guests enjoyed the delicious food provided by Carnegie Catering and live music from Cathy and John Cadley and Jason Jeffers throughout the evening. There was much laughter and cheering as guests won playing the popular key game. Over 450 prizes were won that night! Guests were able to bid on 140 silent auction items from their phones or available GiveSmart iPads.

Our dedicated volunteers spent three days preparing the Horticulture Building for a night of celebration. Guests were reminded of the true meaning of the evening as they viewed our resident banners featuring the names of over 2,900 residents in our Francis House family.



Nancy Light, executive director (left) enjoys a beautiful evening with event chair, Nancy Daino (right) and event co-chairs Phil and Suzanne Congel (center).

Major Sponsors

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CHRISTMAS LUNCHEON



Current and past Board Members of The Auxiliary of Francis House gathered for their annual Christmas Luncheon on December 6th. Thank you to Christine Connors for hosting the event at the Century Club of Syracuse.



(left to right) Auxiliary to Francis House Board Members, Lisa DiMiceli, Kathy Martin and Lynda Convertino enjoy the holiday luncheon.

SPREADING THE MESSAGE OF FRANCIS HOUSE THROUGH ART

We are grateful to local artist Tina Barry who creates handmade, stained-glass jewelry for Francis House. It raises needed funds for Francis House. It also raises awareness of the service Francis House provides for our community. Our staff members, volunteers and donors share that when they are complimented on their jewelry and have the opportunity to explain that it supports the work of Francis House. The same is true for the beautiful notecards created by local artist Michelle Masters. The beautiful topiary cards include Francis House's mission on the back.

“We are grateful to our community members for a very successful Christmas season,” shares Francie Smith, coordinator of the sales for the Auxiliary. “It is inspiring to volunteer at a sale because time and time again people will approach us with their story of how Francis House touched their life. We are all connected by a very special place.” Auxiliary volunteers sold items at various venues including Destiny USA and Holiday Shoppes by Syracuse Junior League.

Upcoming venues include: St. Patrick's Day sale at Holy Cross Church in DeWitt the weekend of March 9-10 and a Mother's Day sale at Immaculate Conception Church in Fayetteville on May 4-5. Our Auxiliary Spring Luncheon at the DoubleTree in East Syracuse on May 16 will also feature all of our jewelry and notecards.

For more information, contact Francie Smith at 315-439-3909.



Volunteer Luz Maria Maciel sells pins, jewelry and notecards at Loretto. Loretto is one of the many venues that offers the Auxiliary space to sell items to benefit Francis House.

SAVE THE DATE

Auxiliary Annual LUNCHEON MEETING & FASHION SHOW

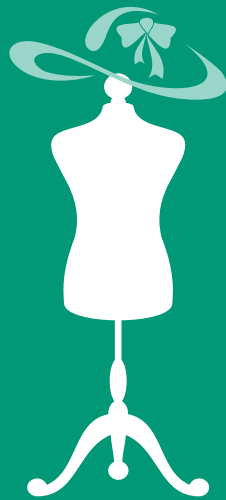
Thursday, May 16, 2019

Doors Open at 10:45am, Luncheon at 11:30am

DoubleTree by Hilton Hotel

Located on Carrier Circle

Fashions provided by Jane Morgan's Little House. Invitations will be mailed in April.



Volunteer Spotlight:

OUR MARVELOUS MAINTENANCE MEN



Francis House Maintenance Men: (Left to Right) Bob Cooper, Paul Keenan, Dick King, Paul Simandle and Mike Delaney take a break from working around the house.

Our wonderful maintenance volunteers have more in common than a hammer and nails.

Paul Simandle, Mike Delaney, Paul Keenan, Richard King and Bob Cooper all have a shared commitment to ensure Francis House is a house filled with love. They attend to every detail to make sure our homes are comfortable and beautiful for our residents and loved ones.

All five agree that it was also a perfect time in their lives to be a part of the Francis House family. Being retired they were looking to stay busy while doing something worthwhile and meaningful. They feel it is an honor to be able to volunteer here. Mike Delaney shares, “Francis House is a wonderful residence with calm and peaceful feelings you get the moment you arrive and stay with you for a long time after you leave.”

Our maintenance men fill a valuable need. The group created a schedule among themselves to ensure that at least one of them are onsite every day. They share the workload; painting, repairing walls, plumbing, taking care of the trash cans and even changing lightbulbs when needed.

“It is a lot of work to keep up these houses,” says Sister Colette Walter, Francis House household coordinator. “These great guys are willing to do any task, large or small and I am so grateful for them.”

Thank you Paul, Mike, Paul, Richard and Bob! Your attention to every detail makes our home shine and your love for our residents and families makes our family stronger.

*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.



Members of G & C Foods staff (from left to right) Rich Chapman, President; Nicki Watts, HR Generalist; Kelly Saukas, Marketing Manager and Sara Johnson, Director of Organizational Development (not pictured) visited Francis House in December and presented Beth Lynn Hoey, Director of Development, a check for \$20,000 for Francis House.

FROM SCARED TO SACRED

Have The Conversation

Thinking and talking about end of life is a scary proposition to many. However, the thought process is truly not on death, but living. How do you want to live now? How do you want to live in the final months, weeks, days of your life? It is important to take the time to talk about these things with your loved ones now.

One starts the conversation by talking about your personal values, what is most important to you. And if there comes a time when you are not able to speak for yourself, who will?

The importance of end-of-life decisions and lack of experience in making them can create such overwhelming circumstances that people sometimes shy away from conversations for fear of saying the wrong thing. Advances in modern medicine are simultaneously giving rise to the urge to fight death at all cost while patients still lack clear information about options. “In our healthcare systems, the sickest, weakest, most vulnerable citizens undergo treatment that frequently does not improve their health. The cost of care is now rising so rapidly that, if nothing changes, the system itself may not survive. Five percent (5%) of the population now accounts for fifty percent (50%) of our healthcare costs.”¹

Yes, we will all die, but do we want to have a say in how we live?

Francis House’s Education Committee continues to work to educate and assist with issues related to life transitions and end-of-life planning. We are available to speak to your company, parish or organization. Our presentation may also help you in assisting a family member decide what matters most. For more information, contact Sister Kathleen Osbelt, director of mission outreach, at kosbelt@francishouseny.org or 315-475-5422.

¹ Having Your Own Say, Getting the Right Care When it Matters Most. Edited by Bernard Hammes, PhD. CHT Press, 2012.

FIVE “BE’S” FOR GETTING THROUGH A NEW YEAR WITH GRIEF PULLING YOU DOWN

Grief is caused by a profoundly felt loss of that which is valuable to you: a loved person, house, dream, job, pet, relationship, health.

BE with those you love.

Grief already makes us feel isolated, alone, singular. Loved ones can lift us up when we are at our lowest.

BE realistic about expectations, your own and that of others.

Grief consumes energy so you can’t do everything you used to do. Everyone grieves differently so don’t take as “the law” any prescriptions like “you should be over this” or “grief takes one year.”

BE ready to do something different.

Sometimes we need to let go by bringing something new into our lives; a new sport, a companion (2 or 4 legged), a hobby, travel, writing, new traditions or rituals.

BE open to doing something for others.

Responding to someone else’s need helps us to turn our focus on another, suspending our grief for a bit. Giving our time or an act of kindness for another also heightens our endorphins which can bring our grief into balance.

BE a care giver for yourself.

Living well with grief requires that we care for ourselves as we would for someone we love. Gracious living has to begin in our own home in order for you to heal.

Suggested Books:

[Grief One Day at a Time: 365 Meditations to help You Heal After Loss](#)
by Alan D. Wolfelt, Ph.D.

[It’s Ok That You’re Not Ok: Meeting Grief and Loss in a Culture That Doesn’t Understand](#)
by Megan Devine and Mark Nepo

THANK YOU...

Thank you to our benefactors who choose to support us anonymously. You humbly touch our residents' lives and you are included in our daily prayers.

Thank you to the Welch Allyn Singers for gracing our residents with your beautiful sound.



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

Thank you Valley Desperados and all your friends and family for donating so many pantry items from our wish list, gift cards valued over \$300 and over \$1,200 in donations.



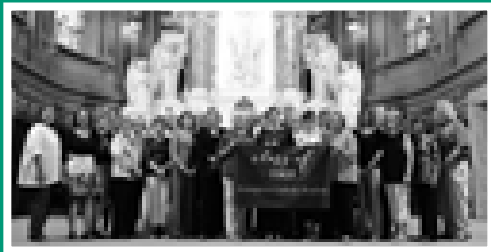
Thank you Salt City New Horizons Orchestra for performing a classical Christmas ensemble for our residents and visitors.



Thank you BOCES students for their handmade ornaments and donation of pizza sale proceeds.



Thank you Assumption Academy Class of 1968 for your class gift to Francis House of over \$2,900 in honor of your classmate, Sister Kathleen Osbelt.



Thank you Georgia State Alumni for your generous donation of food and pantry items.



Thank you Catherine Murray of Lakeshore Road Elementary School for the generous "Wear Jeans on Friday" donations in memory of her dad, Robert Murray, former Francis House resident.

Thank you Jesuit Novices for working at Francis House this year! You made a big difference in the lives of our residents and their families by working in the kitchen, serving meals, spending time with each of them and decorating our homes for the holiday season. We look forward to having you return next year.

Thank you Lockheed Martin employees for your donation of 15 turkeys and all the fixings for our residents and their families to enjoy on Thanksgiving.



Thank you to our benefactors who have given Francis House a charitable distribution through their Individual Retirement Account (IRA).

Thank you to Saint Agatha Foundation for their grant to assist with the cost of care for residents with breast cancer.

ST. PATRICK'S DAY RAFFLE: FRIDAY, MARCH 15

Tickets are on sale for our annual St. Patrick's Day Giveaway.

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. Only 600 tickets are sold at \$100 each. (note: raffle tickets are non-deductible.) Your ticket enters you for a chance to win \$10,000, \$5,000 and \$2,500. Winners will be drawn at Francis House on Friday, March 15th.

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 June 15, 2019.

For your donation of \$100, a brick is installed. To purchase a brick, call 315-475-5422 or email info@francishouseny.org with the subject: "A Blessing Brick" and we will email you a form to complete with your payment.

You can also download a blessing brick form from the Francis House website, www.francishouseny.org. The form can be accessed from the "Ways to Help" page under "Many Ways to Give."

*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.

*We would especially like to
recognize gifts received from*

Estate of Sandra C. Barnes
Estate of Debra A. Greenfield
Estate of Joanne C. Moore
Estate of Gerard T. Roome

For more information on The Caring Fund, go to www.francishouseny.org or contact Beth Lynn Hoey, Director of Development at 315-475-5422.

GIVING MADE EASY

ACH GIVING

If you make a donation on the Francis House website, www.franchishouse.org, you will see an option to check if you would like to make your donation reoccurring monthly or quarterly.

Or you can set-up your reoccurring gift directly with our office. ACH (Automated Clearing House) debits are a more efficient, cost-effective program for both you and Francis House.

For more information, please contact Beth Lynn Hoey, Director of Development 315-475-5422 or email blhoey@franchishouse.org.



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.



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

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.

WISH LIST

Miscellaneous

- 8 ½ x 11 white & colored copy paper
- Grocery store gift cards
- Home improvement gift cards
- Postage stamps

Food

- Applesauce snack cups
- Bisquick
- Broth: beef, chicken vegetable
- Brownie mix: fudge, dark
- Cake mix: yellow, chocolate
- Canned fruit (small): fruit cocktail, peaches
- Chocolate chips (semi-sweet)
- Coffee: decaf, regular
- Cookie mix
- Cooking oils: olive, canola
- Cooking spray
- Crackers: Ritz, club, oyster, saltine
- Cremora creamer
- Flour
- Frostings: chocolate, vanilla, cream cheese
- Fruit snack cups: cherry, mixed fruit
- Gravy: chicken, beef
- Jello snack cups: strawberry & orange
- Juice: cranberry juice cocktail, apple
- Mayonnaise (30oz)
- Molasses syrup
- Pancake syrup
- Peanut butter (16oz. jar-creamy)
- Pie fillings: cherry, blueberry, apple

- Pudding snack cups
- Quick bread & muffin mix
- Soda: colas, root beer, ginger ale
- Soup: chicken noodle, tomato, mushroom
- Sugar: granulated, brown, confectioners
- Tomato: diced, crushed
- Tuna: (canned) solid white

Paper Goods

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

Household

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

Supplies

- Alcohol pads
- Baby wipes (unscented)
- Bar soap (unscented)
- Body wash
- Chapstick/Lip balm
- Mouthwash
- Unscented lotion



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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 AUGUST 2, 2018 - DECEMBER 13, 2018

Robert "Bob" Abert
Nadine Anagnost
Martin Beckwith
Ann Marie Bick
Edward Bossong
Carl Brown
Catherine "Cathy" Cardell
Philip "Phil" Catalino
Mark Cerosaletti
Virginia "Ginny" Cerretani
Alice Chico
Jean Ciccarelli
Joan Coholan
Julie Connolly
Frances Dibble
Gary Diriwachter
Mary Dooley

John Field
Mark Fogerty
Charla Gallinger
James Harmon
Jessie Harris
Shirley Hart
Norma Jenner
Albina "Ellen" Jordan
Charles LaRonde
Nicholas LaRose
Susan Lewis
Violet Leyland
Tim Maitland
Diane Malay
Mary Mangino
Louis "Lou" Marble
John McCann

Mark "Steve" Miller
Joan Monaghan
Tim Nagle
Carol Nicholson
Diane Ondreicka
Stephen O'Shaughnessy
Michael Pirro
Ada Pistello
Kathryn Potter
Frank Proia
Patricia "Pat" Proulx
Helen Raineri
Teresa "Tessie" Raponi
Henry Rivers
Margaret Rowe
Donna Ryan
John Schaap

Bernard "Bernie" Schmidt
Anthiny Scicchitano
Glenn Sherwood
Marie Spuches
Floyd Stanton
Margaret Straub
Mary Ann Valenti
William Volpe
Christina Vaughn
James "Jim" Walsh
William "Bill" Waters
Marilyn Wiggers
Christine Yackel
Audrey Young