



News From Crossroads House

Our goal is to provide care and support with love and dignity to individuals and their families as they journey through the dying process. We deliver the very best in comfort care to Genesee, Wyoming and surrounding counties.

Resident Spotlight:

Mark Tress

On the right, you will see a photograph of my father Mark, my brother Nate (right), and me (Jeff, left) at the Buffalo Bison's Father's Day baseball game on June 17th, 2018. Oftentimes I'll be out with family or friends and debate whether I'll ask a stranger to take a picture of the group I'm with. I suggest almost always going ahead and asking a stranger to do so because you never know the impact that photograph will have later or what road life will take you down afterwards.

About two and a half weeks after this picture was taken, my dad was diagnosed with Stage 4 gall bladder cancer and we were told he had one or three years to live. For twenty years, my dad had had several health issues, including depression, anxiety, sleep problems, back issues and surgeries, and diabetes. Dad had also been in multiple car accidents; however, Dad had never had a brush with death.

Summer and fall came and went, as Nate and I tried to spend more time with Dad. When I asked Dad at some point whether he'd like to go to Toronto or Buffalo, or just about anywhere, he responded, "I just want you guys to come over and watch the games with me." That was who he was—a simple man who knew what he liked to do and didn't want a lot of fuss made about it.

This past January, we found out that we wouldn't even get the year the doctors spoke of back in July. Our oncologist, a fantastic one by the way, Dr. Connolly of Lipson Cancer Institute in Batavia, told my dad and I that the cancer had spread, and he only had two to three months to live. I put my forehead on my dad's shoulder and cried for a bit while he patted my arm quickly. It was a heavy moment.



For a couple months before this devastating news, I had Crossroads House in the back of my mind. As a Batavia High School teacher, I had volunteered for one day at the House as part of BHS's Make a Difference Day, an annual event when high school seniors help agencies in the community. **A week after being told he had two months to live, (should I say that?) my brother and I moved my dad into Crossroads.** Quickly Crossroads House became a home for my dad, my brother, myself, and even my four-year-old daughter, Juniper. Juniper, of course, doesn't know Crossroads' true mission. We just called it "Granddad's new apartment." After a week or so, my dad settled in. People coming to your room to ask you what you want to eat all the time is a benefit, for sure. I suppose you could say the next couple months were a mix of "the normal" and the "totally not normal." Normal— we watched TV with Dad. Dad read the paper. We took Dad out to dinner. Not normal—Dad would never drive a car again. (story continued on page 3)

Summer/Fall 2019

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EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE



Jeff and Darla Allen

**“We make a living by
what we get; we make
a life by what we give.”**

-Winston Churchill

Even though Crossroads House has been serving the community for over 20 years, many people are still surprised when they learn just how we staff, fund and operate our comfort care home. First, we are funded solely on the generosity of the community we serve. We don't charge for our services, we don't accept insurance reimbursement and we don't take any government funding. Second, we rely mainly on volunteers to operate our home. Outside of a small administrative staff, several staff caregivers (nurses) and aides, the home is staffed by your neighbors, friends and family.

When the concept is presented to those with any kind of business background, it is rightfully met with skepticism. In terms of economics, it is a terrible business model. But comfort care homes operate on a higher calling and with a greater purpose. Comfort care homes are founded and run on the principle that death should be simply the final act of living and that life should be lived with grace, dignity and compassion until we take our last breath.

Crossroads House is fortunate to exist in a community that understands and supports comfort care. Each year, by the grace of God, we find that our expenses have been met and we can continue to provide the very best in end of life comfort care. The one resource that is dwindling, however, is people. As time marches on, volunteers get older and retire, or lives get understandably busy. We need folks just like you to consider joining our family of resident care volunteers. The need has never been greater, and the process has never been easier. You don't need any medical background or caregiving experience. We will train you. All we need is your compassion and commitment. If you could give 4 hours a week in exchange for the opportunity to impact someone's life, why don't you give us a try.

Simply go online to www.crossroadshouse.com and click on the [Volunteer Application button](#). Fill out the form and submit it. For non-computer users, stop by the house for a paper application or call 585-343-3892 and we will gladly drop one in the mail. Today is the day to begin the journey of making a difference.

Jeff Allen, Executive Director

(continued from cover page)

Soon Dad's tumor blocked the end of his stomach and he couldn't eat solid food ever again. It wasn't easy, and it was downright depressing. However, we knew Crossroads was the right place for Dad. One of the amazing aspects of the House is how people of varying personalities work together to provide the best care. Dad had a special bond with "Overnight Tom" Mika, Trudy Miller, Elaine Dorris, and Jim Gardner. In fact, Jim, who is a minister in addition to being a volunteer caregiver, graciously presided over Dad's funeral service at Gilmartin Funeral Home in Batavia, instead of someone who had never known him.

Sometime last January, I ordered the DVD of The Beatles' "Let It Be" film. We used to rent it in the 80's when I wasn't even ten years old. We watched it at Crossroads House not long after, when Dad was still feeling relatively well. Fast forward to a day in March. I called the House and was told that Kendra Moak, a volunteer who does music ministry, spent several hours overnight sitting with my dad. She had made a few Beatles and Beach Boys CDs for him. Needless to say, the selflessness involved in sitting with a dying stranger in the middle of the night is truly amazing, and hard to come by. At Dad's memorial service she brought a CD with "Let It Be" on it. The funeral staff played it and we all sang along. The three-word title became a message, and in fact a theme for the end of my dad's life, and a theme for the work of Crossroads House: death does not have to be terrible. People matter. Say what you need to say to the living while they're alive. Treat people with dignity. Treasure the time you have left. Do not worry. Do not fear death. Let. It. Be.

My dad passed away at Crossroads. I am a donor, and now a volunteer caregiver. I hope you will consider volunteering and/or making a small donation to ensure Crossroads House continues its amazing and life-changing work. Life is tricky. Some of our problems are caused by ourselves and some are thrown into our laps and we just have to deal with them as best we can. My dad was no different. However, I can honestly say that my dad's last two months were the best two months he could've possibly had, considering the situation. *Thank you so much to everyone at Crossroads House.*

-Jeff Tress

-Remembering our Residents-

We would like to extend our deepest sympathy to the families of the residents we had the honor to care for since our last newsletter.

[Steven Fowler](#) [Clarence Keicher](#)

[Frances Bourdon](#) [Pauline Canty](#) [Elsa Donnelly](#)

[Thomas Hayes](#) [Sharon Gebel](#) [John LaFarnara](#) [Emma Hokenson](#)

[Marjorie Reiss](#) [Nellie Coughlin](#) [MaryLou Wolfley](#) [Jeanette Fryer](#)

Volunteer Spotlight:

Daisy Brew

Daisy started out in caregiving by helping a neighbor who had cancer. She was only supposed to live three weeks, but she lived three years. Her sister-in-law asked Daisy to stay with her during the day. Her first day on the job, she took her neighbor to Max Pies to buy all new furniture. She wanted to live out her time on a new davenport and chairs.

After she passed, the county nurse, who Daisy had met earlier asked her if she would take care of another neighbor. And then another. And then another. After caring for the nurse's father, Daisy saw an ad in the paper for an LPN class at Boces in Batavia and signed up. (She had always wanted to be a nurse, but her mother thought secretarial school was a better fit.) Daisy got her license in 1992, and began working at the Village Green in LeRoy, then another nursing home, a doctor's office, and spent twelve years as a school nurse.

Daisy's husband Herb was always supportive of her. Together they foster-parented *fifteen* children and raised three of their own on their farm in Bergen. Herb was diagnosed with colon cancer in 1997, yet he was able to remain active throughout his treatment-still doing yardwork, cutting wood, and hunting deer. In 2014, he suffered a heart attack which took his memory. Their children, Herbert Jr., Sandra and Barry helped care for him, but eventually Daisy retired. Herb always wanted to die at home. Caring for him: lifting, bathing, catheter and colostomy care, became too difficult for the family. He was admitted to Crossroads House on Sandra's birthday, April 5th, 2017. The homey atmosphere at Crossroads put Herb at ease. He had his country music on all the time, even while he slept at night. The family had Easter dinner in his room. Herb died the following Friday, April 21st.

Because of her personal experience, Daisy felt a deep connection to the mission of providing comfort care for the dying and decided to become a Crossroads House volunteer this summer. "They need the help. They do a wonderful job. This is where the greatest need is," she says. "The care is much better than anywhere else."

—Thank you, Daisy, for being a part of the Crossroads House family!



Daisy has joined our caregiving team.

There are many ways to make a difference!

Whatever you do at your house, we need to do at
Crossroads House:

- Cleaning
- Answering the door and taking phone messages
- Laundry drop off/ pick up (one hour per week)
- Yard work/ raking

Let us know how much time you have and we can find a way for you to be a part of our awesome team!



Kathy with Joanne and Lu.

CAN YOU MAKE A GRILLED CHEESE SANDWICH?

In my travels and conversations with inquisitive minds of prospective Volunteer Caregivers, I seem to sound like a broken record. And you probably are wondering where the grilled cheese sandwich comes in with all of this. Please allow me to indulge you in my typical communications about caregiving at Crossroads House.

Abbreviations for dialog below are: **IM**= inquisitive mind, **KP**=Kathy Panepento

IM: "I don't think I can be a caregiver at Crossroads House. I'd get too emotional."

KP: *"Do you have the willingness to serve, a compassionate heart and know how to make a grilled cheese sandwich?"*

IM: "Yes, I believe so."

KP: *"Then you would make an excellent caregiver!"*

IM: "But I don't have any medical or caregiving experience."

KP: *"Most of our caregivers have no medical experience. We train you for free to provide the extraordinary COMFORT CARE that every human being deserves at the last few months of their lives. Just picture yourself providing care for a parent or grandparent in your own home, providing unconditional love and support! Well, that's what caregivers do at Crossroads House...we walk that intimate journey together and comfort our dying residents as if they were our own parent."*

IM: "What can I offer the residents and their loved ones?"

KP: *"Your Presence, (the most important thing that shows you really care!) your unconditional love, willingness to serve, hospitality and socialization. You can offer comfort measures such as a hand massage or the repositioning of a pillow. You can swab their dry mouth, assist the nurse or aide or your fellow volunteer with personal care etc.*

You could be an emotional support to residents and their loved ones.

You could offer spiritual support, learn their life story, find out what is important to them, what legacy they want to be remembered for. You will never be alone-you'd be working alongside another experienced volunteer, aide or nurse. And there is ALWAYS a nurse on call 24 hours a day. It takes 60 volunteers to fill just one week on the schedule. Best news yet....a volunteer obligation is only 4 hours a week or every other week!

People come to Crossroads House not to die, but to LIVE until they take their final breath. Our HOME is FULL OF LIFE, for our residents, their loved ones and all of our caregivers. Being a part of the Crossroads House family is so fulfilling, a special gift and blessing. Please consider caregiving.....your life will never be the same, in such a magnificent way. And I bet you CAN make a grilled cheese sandwich!"

Kathy Panepento RN

Crossroads House Founder, Director of Resident Care and End of Life Doula Services





"The Sound of Music"

Introducing Tom Ruhland



Playing an instrument has always been an important part of my life. I recently discovered the Mountain Dulcimer and it has become my new best friend. I was amazed at the extent of the dulcimer culture that is prevalent in the United States. Dulcimer clubs and festivals abound across the country providing new and experienced players an opportunity to mingle and improve their talents.

It was in a dulcimer publication, *Dulcimer News*, that I encountered an ad for the Music for Healing and Transition Program (MHTP.org). This organization trains and certifies musicians in the art and science of providing therapeutic music for body, mind and spirit. Apparently, music can decrease pain, lower blood pressure, reduce anxiety, stabilize the heart rate and more.

I enjoyed playing the dulcimer but was looking for a way to engage others in my music. Becoming a Certified Music Practitioner (CMP) by completing the training at MHTP.org seemed like a good way to do it. Therapeutic musicians focus on meeting a patient's needs with therapeutic music in-the-moment. We use the intrinsic healing elements of live music and intentionality to create an environment conducive to healing.

I have been through the classroom training to become a CMP and am in the final stages of the certification process. This involves a 45-hour Independent Practicum, which involves playing for patients in Skilled Nursing Facilities, Hospitals and Hospice Facilities. I currently play for residents at the Crossroads House and for patients at several other facilities in the local area. I'm about a third of the way through the practicum and I have been amazed at the people I have met, and the difference music has made in their healing as I play for them. As I move to retire over the next few years, I look forward to providing therapeutic music to those I encounter now and in the future. For more information go to: www.tomruhland.com.

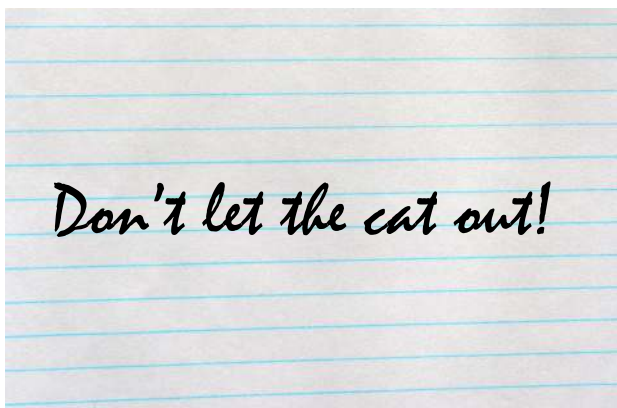
"So long as you can sweeten another's pain, life is not in vain." -Helen Keller



Jackie with her cat, Molly.



Lee and her daughter, Elaine.



We welcome our furry, four-footed residents!



*Fran enjoying oysters for dinner.
"This is my going-away party house!"*

"Life isn't measured by the breaths we take, but by the moments that take our breath away."-Anon.

Our “Wish List”

- Forever postage stamps
- Volunteers and materials for several projects in the House-please call for more information
- Mailing labels (Avery 8163)
- Label Maker-M tape 3/8
- Gift Cards: Aldi's, BJ's, Save-A-Lot, Walmart, Tops, and local restaurants for residents' families
- Coffee: decaf and regular
- Cans of ginger ale, 7-Up & juices
- Mixes for: brownies, muffins and cookies, and vegetable oil
- Applesauce & pudding cups
- Butter
- Swiffer Dry Cloths, disinfectant wipes
- Murphy's Oil Soap
- Windex
- HE laundry soap
- Boudreaux's Butt Paste (Walmart)
- Anti-Monkey Butt Paste (Walmart)
- Large bags of candy for candy machines: Mike & Ike's, M&M's
- White copier paper
- Half and Half
- 13-gallon trash bags

HELP WANTED: “Coffee Sponsors”

We go through a lot of coffee! Would a group of you from your workplace or church group consider being a “Coffee Sponsor?” Our staff, volunteers, residents and their families would be eternally grateful!

Please call the House and leave a message for Diane Sia at 343-3892 or email:

dianesia@crossroadshouse.com

A BIG THANK YOU!

..to everyone who shopped at, and donated to our huge garage sale!

..to our volunteers who give so much of their time to care for our residents, wash dishes, clean the House, cook meals, help out at fundraisers, hang flyers, run errands, tend to the garden, do yardwork, and all the many jobs big and small that help make possible our mission of providing the very best in comfort care!

..to all the businesses and community groups who sponsor fundraiser events, donate hours to help with our projects, and support us with their generosity.

I'll support comfort care too!

Thank you from the bottom of our hearts!

We could not do it without your help.



Volunteers Val and Jackie preparing for the garage sale.

Upcoming Events

(Please check our website or Facebook page for more information.)

12th Annual Car Cruise & Fall Festival: Sunday, September 15, 2019, 11am-4pm. This is sponsored by the Pembroke-Corfu-Darien Kiwanis, and will be at the Pembroke Town Park Route 77 (south of Pembroke High School). Come and check out our basket raffle and have a delicious burger or hot dog while you are there! All proceeds from the food stand and basket raffle come directly to Crossroads House.

11th Annual Musical Memories Concert: Saturday, September 21, 2019. This will be held at the City Church, 210 E Main Street in Batavia. Save the date! We have a great lineup of musicians for your entertainment. For more information, see page 10.

7th Annual Spaghetti Western Dinner: Wednesday, October 2, 2019, 430-7pm. C'mon out for a great meal! This will be at the First Presbyterian Church hall, 300 Main Street, Batavia. More details to follow, check our website and Facebook page in the upcoming weeks.

6th Annual Fall Harvest Dinner Dance: Saturday, October 12, 2019, doors open at 430pm. 515-7pm dinner by Penna's Catering and 7-11pm music by the Dark Horse Run band. This will be held at the Maximilian Kolbe Church Hall, 8656 Church Street, E. Pembroke. There will be pie auctions, raffle baskets, and lots of fun! Tickets are \$20 cash (pre-sale only) and are available at Crossroads House or by contacting Bob (585) 762-8585 or Penny (585) 356-3413.

Annual Fall Basket Raffle: Saturday, October 26, 2019, doors open at noon. Friday, October 26th Pre-sale: watch our Facebook page and look for flyers with details. This will be held at the ARC Community Center, 38 Woodrow Road, Batavia. (Behind Notre Dame HS). There is a \$5 entry fee which includes a sheet of 25 basket raffle tickets and a cup of coffee or tea. **Drawing for the baskets begins at 3pm.** Lunch & beverages will be available for purchase.

4th Annual Christmas Garage Sale: Friday & Saturday, November 29th and 30th, 9am-3pm. Beautiful new and gently used Christmas decorations, vintage glassware, collectibles, TOYS, and many gift ideas! We will be hosting this event at the First Presbyterian Church hall, 300 Main Street in Batavia.

SAVE THE DATE

Crossroads House Proudly Presents the

Musical Memories Concert

Saturday, September 21, 2019

6:30pm

(Doors open at 6:00pm)

Located at the City Church, 210 East Main Street, Batavia

Tickets are available at:

Crossroads House, Roxy's Music Store, Valle Jewelers and

The Prospector Restaurant in Attica

\$5 for General Seating , \$10 for Reserved Seating

Come on out for a wonderful evening of music with performances by:

Parkside Avenue Brass, The Hit Men, St. Joe's of Batavia Brass Ensemble, Batavia Brass Ensemble,
Hamburg Kingsmen Drum & Bugle Corps, Silver Leafs-Canada,
Mighty St. Joe's Alumni Drum & Bugle Corps

For more information please call Crossroads House at 343-3892

Mega-raffle on site-we hope to see you there!

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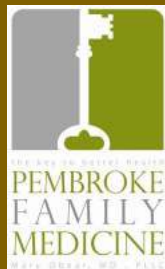
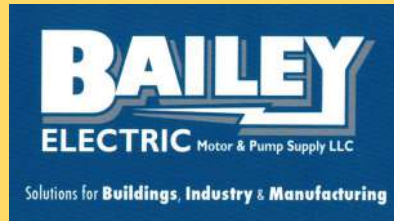
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Monthly Donation

UNITED WAY CAMPAIGN DONATION

Please consider donating to Crossroads House through a designated United Way Pledge. We are Greater Rochester United Way donor option # **2330**. For Erie county United Way, please write **Crossroads House** as designated charity.

To make a pledge through **SEFA**, please designate # **66-00251**.



Enclosed is my donation of \$ _____

Name: _____

Address: _____

City, State, Zip _____

E-mail address: _____

My Gift is in Memory of (name): _____

Or My gift is in Honor of (name): _____

Credit card information: Visa / Mastercard

Credit Card or **Paypal** account donations
may be made on our website:
www.crossroadshouse.com

Please deduct \$ _____ from my credit card.

Card #: _____

Expiration Date: _____

3 digit number on back of card: _____

Signature _____

Date _____

**Your contribution is tax deductible as
provided by law.**

Thank you for your generosity!

_____ I have provided for Crossroads House in my Will.

_____ My donation is for the Crossroads House Endowment Fund.

