

News From Crossroads House



Fall
2020

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.

Living...

Usually, it's after a few back and forth phone calls, faxed paperwork, a visit here, a visit there, that someone comes to live at Crossroads House. As we welcome family members, they hold back tears as they walk through the door. Eye contact is tricky at first. Admission day is a day of change. Our new resident puts on a brave face and engages in friendly chit chat. Everyone smiles. Clothes are unpacked. Coffee is brewed. After a while, the family leaves.

This is home, now.

It's a time of meeting new people. You will be grateful for name tags, and pain management. Whatever you want to eat, got it. Whenever you want to eat, can do. Music, TV, sitting outside on the deck any time of the night or day, your wish is our command.

Some families are more private than others. They could prefer quiet time together, or friendly conversation with our volunteers. Everyone needs time to figure out this new way of life visiting Crossroads, or "Grandpa's new apartment" as little Juniper referred to us. Sometimes there is unfinished business; words that need to be spoken and relationships that need to heal. The sand in the hourglass is flowing quicker and it can be overwhelming. With amazing grace, our staff and volunteers will love you through it. When you think about some of the options near the end of life, it can depress you. Maybe that's why we avoid talking about it, planning for it, and living like there may not be a tomorrow.



Fran Bourdon with her daughter Denise Spadaccia

...at Crossroads House

There is a desire for some to make sense of their lives or to find meaning after a life review, and to receive validation that they have mattered. Sons and daughters bring boxes of photographs and hang some on the mantel. It feels more like home. Your afghan, your pajamas, your dog coming over later for a nap and a scratch behind the ears. The House smells like brownies. Maybe you would like to attend the assembly at your grandson's school, go to a car show, have a family dinner, or read the paper and have your coffee outside every morning. You are living your best life.

(story continued on page 3)

Executive Director's Message

Fall 2020

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The cover of this newsletter features, in bold letters, **LIVING AT CROSSROADS HOUSE**. Although the phrase may, at first, appear contrary to the mission of our home, quite the opposite is true.

The goal of comfort care at Crossroads House is to help each resident live their best life until their last breath. That can look very different for each individual and their loved ones depending on the progression of their illness when they arrive. No matter the case, comfort is the first order of business. Then, depending on the desires of the individual and their physical capabilities, we get to know our new family member and their loved ones.

Barbara Karnes RN, Hospice nurse and End of Life Educator says, "Dying is not a medical event, it is a social and communal event." In other words, it is an integral part of the living process and therefore provides both the terminally ill person and those close to them, an opportunity to go through the final act of living in a purposeful and meaningful way together.

Our compassionate volunteer and staff caregivers work with our residents and their loved ones to ensure that moments of impact and opportunities to build or cement legacies are not lost. This edition of our newsletter highlights a few examples of **LIVING AT CROSSROADS HOUSE**.

If you, or someone you know, would like to take part in someone's final act of living, consider becoming a part of our family of caregivers. The commitment is small, but the returns are immeasurable!

"What more good can we do?"

Jeff Allen, Executive Director



..the final few minutes

Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has.

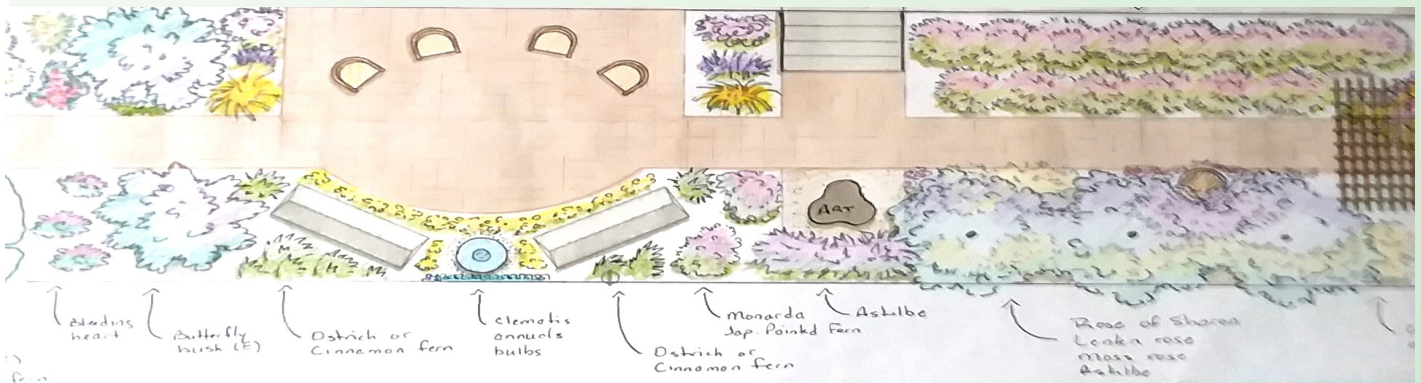
-Margaret Mead

(continued from cover story)

...and creating a legacy.

If you have the strength and desire to create a "legacy project" we have the folks to help you with that. On Wednesday mornings at 10:00, we sat with Fran Bourdon. She told stories as we wrote: how she caught the eye of her sister's dinner guest and ended up marrying him, raised their children on a 50 acre parcel of land, and instilled the value of a good education to two generations. "Here's my birthday money and a book from Granny." She loved being out of doors, even in the winter. Her husband, Gene, was a gardener in his spare time. He was especially proud of his roses.

When the Bourdon family surprised us with a generous donation, we decided to use a portion of it to create a more interactive green space for our residents and families. In the spring, we will be breaking ground on a garden project in honor of Fran's love for the natural world. Our existing Memory Garden will have a wheelchair-accessible walkway installed, roses planted, and a water feature built so our residents can be wheeled out and put their feet in the grass, or have a garden party under the stars at night by the future firepit. The Bourdon family's support of comfort care will enhance the lives of the future residents and families we serve for generations to come. (Leslie Moma, a Master Gardener with the Cornell Cooperative Extension has created a phenomenal blueprint for us, and we can't wait to put shovel to soil. Note: a partial sneak peek is below!)



When the Ficarella family brought Connie to us, she saw familiar faces working at Crossroads House. Having cared for over 530 residents in 22 years, our caregivers occasionally find themselves sharing this special time with their friends and neighbors. The House frequently carried the aroma of homemade sauce bubbling on the stove, and we could see that *cooking and Connie* were at the heart of this family. Butch, Connie's husband, would sit in the recliner next to Connie's bed and read the paper while they watched TV together in the evenings. Sort of, just like at home. Families can come and go as they please, stay as long as they want, and sleep over if they would like to. We do the caregiving so they can be a family again. By the time this newsletter reaches you, Connie's legacy project will be completed. The Crossroads House staff and volunteers have been working with the Ficarella family to create "Comfort Foods," a cookbook filled with recipes from all of us. Their funding of this cookbook will help to fill the gap left by fundraisers that were cancelled this year. Connie's legacy of food and family will live on. (See page 9 for more information on obtaining your copy of this keepsake cookbook!)

Our goal at Crossroads House is to answer the question, "What more good can we do?" We embrace families at this most intimate and heartbreaking time and love them according to their specific needs and desires. It is important to honor every life that walks through our green door and we do our best to meet families where they're at. We do not receive any money from the government or insurance companies, but are supported by the donations, large and small, of a community that sees the value in helping their friends and neighbors live out their last days with peace, love, and dignity. We rely on an army of volunteers to extend their hands in care to people who will forever impact their lives. The mission of Crossroads House is that we will do everything we can to bring the best departure from this world, to those we serve. Thank you for helping to sustain us with your donations, by attending our fundraisers, volunteering your time, and for keeping us in your prayers. It enables us to ask that question,

"What more good can we do?"



Saying Good-Bye to One of Our Own

John A. Arent 1944-2020

He was a Civil War enthusiast, rollercoaster lover, and had a collection of pirate memorabilia. He was a Eucharistic Minister at Resurrection Parish, coached girls' softball for 38 years (thanks in part to daughters Jill and Amy) and when he could no longer drive, he was content to be a passenger. When Covid hit, he was diagnosed with ALS. At the time, everyone was restricted from going here and there so he didn't feel so bad that he had to stay put at the LeRoy Village Green. This is where he would spend his last days: visiting with those he knew from his time working at the "old" St. Jerome's, and United Memorial in Batavia. John Arent was trained as a Social Worker, and what he became over his lifetime was a social...worker. He loved people and could make conversation with anybody about anything. He served his country, and he served, with his whole heart, the elderly of our community. The things that were important to him were checking on the patients under his care before checking his work emails, and when needed, finding someone a nursing home that was close to their family to guarantee frequent visits. When he left the working world, he did not stop working. His life as a giver extended to volunteering at the Genesee Country Village and Museum and, eventually, for 7 years at Crossroads House. When he and his wife, Ann, were talking about volunteering at Crossroads, he said, "I could do that." Ann said, "I could not do that." Before John Arent left this world, he knew what was coming, he walked with a cane, and his hands were curled under. Yet he (known to his 7-year-old granddaughter Addy as "Baba") had such peace in his heart that he was making monkey faces with her on Facetime the day before he died. Perhaps the loving sentiment he wrote in cards to his wife was true: "Grow old with me, the best is yet to be.."

Rest in peace, John. You will be missed.



Thank you for sharing your
loved ones with us.

*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:*

Conrad Gifford Sr.

Barbara Hutton

William Benson Jr.

Gretchen Defabaugh



“How Three Hours with Lori Changed My Spiritual Life”

Our volunteers are represented by many faiths and spiritual disciplines and are available to meet the needs of our diverse resident population.

By Debbie Foley

Do you ever look back at a little, unexpected moment in your life and suddenly realize what a difference it made in who you are today? That’s the way I look back at my time with Lori when she was a resident at Crossroads House. This is how I remember it. I had finished my End-of-Life Doula training and sat vigil a few times at Crossroads House when a message was sent out asking for volunteers to read to a resident from three to four each day. Lori was a devout Catholic and with failing eyesight, it was becoming difficult for her to read her daily devotions. Being a Catholic myself, I immediately felt drawn to this and signed up to read and pray with her on Monday afternoons.

When I walked into the side room at Crossroads House the following Monday to meet Lori, I was extremely nervous, as I usually am when meeting someone for the first time. That never gets easier for me, however, after five minutes with Lori, all of my nerves were gone. We were two Catholics praying together and sharing our faith. When we finished praying the Chaplet of Divine Mercy, I read from her devotional book for that day. I don’t remember the specific reading, but it talked about how important humility is and how pride gets in the way. When I had finished reading the meditation, Lori commented: “If you’re arguing and start to defend yourself or make excuses, that’s pride getting in the way and humility is gone. Humility cannot exist with pride. I see it all the time with couples.” That one statement stuck with me, kept coming back, and gradually changed the way I interact with people in my life.

I only had the privilege of spending two more Mondays with Lori before she was called home but I pray that I will see her on the other side to thank her for having such an impact on me. Many say they volunteer at Crossroads House to make a difference in the lives of the residents and their families. That is why I volunteered, but my experience has been that the residents have given me more than I could possibly give them. Lori is a great example of how one person’s life can have an impact on others until their very last breath.

[Click book to order](#)



Debbie recently published her first book, “Emma’s Song.” It is written from the perspective of a high school student, a young woman of faith, in the aftermath of her brother’s death due to suicide. This book was part of Debbie’s healing journey through grief. Twenty-five years ago, her son Shawn took his own life at the age of eighteen. “Emma’s Song” is not Deb’s story, but the feelings, guilt, and emotions she felt are expressed through Emma. This book is available on [Amazon](#), also available on [Kindle](#). A copy is also at the Richmond Memorial Library in Batavia, in the local authors section.

During the early time of the pandemic, we had a temporary pause on resident care, but lots of good things were going on behind the scenes. A small group of volunteers gave Crossroads House a much-needed freshening up with leftover paint, donated supplies, and lots of elbow grease. They pounded, they sawed, they made a lot of dust, but what a difference! We are updated, but we still have that “old-world” charm. (Fortunately, in a big Victorian house such as this, there is plenty of space to distance oneself.) Our team of assessment nurses were also very busy. They remained in contact with those on our referral list and were able to provide information, education, and supplies as needed. It’s always a comfort to have a friendly, caring voice on the other end of the phone when you don’t know what to do. Thank you to our nurses, and to anyone who has opened their heart to serve others in their time of need! We are all in this together.

Our Assessment Nurses, At Your Service!



Kathy



Bev



Nicole



Joan (with Max)



The Beauty of Brokenness

“While searching the basement, we came across this wonderful transom. It was tired and worn with broken panes and deteriorating lead and frame. Although time had taken its toll, it was absolutely beautiful. That can also be said of every precious person we care for. Though broken by disease, they are beautiful. It is our mission to highlight their beauty in spite of their broken bodies. The transom hangs proudly in the center of our home as a continual reminder of the beauty in brokenness.”

-Jeff Allen, Executive Director





Some First Floor Updates at Crossroads House: Spring 2020



Front Resident Room dressed in red, white, and blue to welcome a Veteran.



Dining Room Fireplace



Side Resident Room

*"Crossroads House was like being at our own homes. We felt so at home there.
Kathy we are so glad you founded Crossroads."*

*"I cannot thank you enough for the tender love & care you put into taking care of my grandpa and my family every time we visited. You are all amazing!
You made all of this easier."*



Beneath many coats and colors of paint.....was a vintage treasure!



Our Wish List



- Hand Sanitizer, Clorox Wipes
- Paper Towels
- Air freshener spray
- 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
- Lotions for men and women
- Cans of ginger ale, 7-Up & juices (small)
- Mixes for: brownies, muffins and cookies, and vegetable oil
- Applesauce & pudding cups
- Butter
- Swiffer Dry Cloths
- Murphy's Oil Soap
- Windex
- HE laundry soap
- Boudreaux's Butt Paste (Walmart)
- Anti-Monkey Butt Paste (Walmart)
- White copier paper
- Half and Half
- 13-gallon trash bags, paper plates

Thank you for adding us to your shopping list!

Are you doing your holiday shopping online this year? Go to smile.amazon.com, and if you choose **Crossroads House** as your charity, we will receive a donation from Amazon based on the amount you purchase. It won't cost you anything more, so **HAPPY SHOPPING!!**



How wonderful that golf is pretty much Covid-proof! With a few minor adjustments, Colleen Kemp and her staff from Alex's Place (pictured above) organized the 13th Annual Golf Tournament to support Crossroads House and to fund a culinary scholarship in memory of Chef Russell Bugbee. The Hesperus Lodge of Bergen also held the 20th Annual Van Hulburt Golf Tournament and a good time was had by all! Like many organizations, Crossroads House had a number of annual fundraisers cancelled this year, and our wonderful community came together to support our mission of caring for the dying of our area. We even had a few unexpected surprise fundraisers:

The Corona Convoy organized by Bruce Scofield

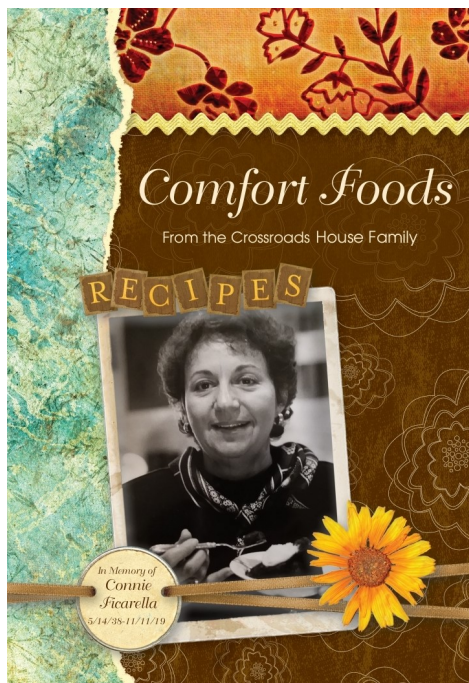
The Purple Pony Drive-Thru Parade in LeRoy

Le-Ti Campground Hot Dog Roast and corn hole board raffle

Batavia Rotary grants enabled us to be ready for growing grass and falling snow by providing a lawn mower and a snowblower!

We are so very grateful to all the businesses and individuals who reached deep into their pockets and brought donations to our doorstep: delivery tip money, dress down day funds, cans of coffee, rolls of paper towels, and the checks from people who "just figured Crossroads House could use it."

Thank you! We *truly* could not do it without you!



[Click on book to order](#)



"Comfort Foods" Cookbook!

There are many ways to order your copy of our cookbook!

To have it mailed to you:

*Use the form on the back cover and send to Crossroads House with your payment.

*Order online at www.crossroadshouse.com or use the QR code below.

Please allow 10 to 15 business days for shipping of your order.

For local pick up:

*Call Crossroads House ahead of time to schedule payment & pick up of your order (585) 343-3892 so that a frequently-ringing doorbell does not disturb our resident. Thank you!

*Order at www.ficarellaspizzabatavia.com where you can purchase it alone or have it added to your food order, for pick up or delivery!

100% of the proceeds from the sale of this keepsake cookbook comes to
Crossroads House.



Scan with your smart phone or tablet to
order your cookbook!

Crossroads House News and Events

Due to on-going changes and restrictions on gathering in public, there are several ways you can stay informed of what's going on, and details about our fundraisers:

[Our Facebook page](#) **** www.crossroadshouse.com *** [The Batavian](#) *** [The Daily News](#)

Also, check the [WBTA calendar](#) for our monthly radio broadcast with Chris Kalen.

Listen in as the **Crossroads House Family** shares stories from the heart.



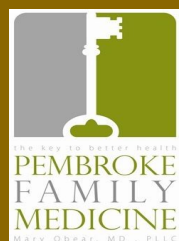
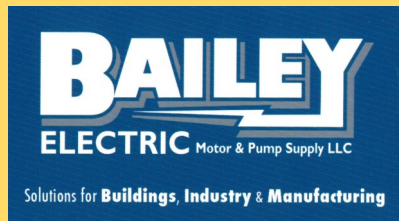
We always welcome Compassionate Hearts willing to serve, and we have a wide variety of opportunities: caregiving, house maintenance, fundraising, gardening, or answering the phone and doorbell.

For more information about joining the Crossroads House team by volunteering, please contact Emily at

emilycrawford@crossroadshouse.com

Thank you Major Contributors to our 2020 Annual Business Campaign!

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Thank you to our 2020 Newsletter Sponsors!



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