

News From Crossroads House



Fall/ Winter
2021

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.

"What Makes a Well-Lived Life?"

By Tom Staebell, Resident Care Volunteer and End-of-Life Doula

When I was first asked to write about this topic for the Crossroads House newsletter, I thought, who am I to write about such a topic? In my sixty-six years of living, has my life been *well-lived*? My life has had its ups and downs, like so many others: illness, death, new relationships, figuring out who I am.

As an [End-of-Life Doula](#), I recently had the opportunity to care for our resident, **Joanne De La Cruz**, and learn about a life well-lived. She was witty, humorous, reflective, lovable, and said what she meant. While getting to know Joanne through her life review, it was evident that she would only share so much. I quickly learned not to push her in order to continue to keep and build her trust. When I talked to her about it, she expressed that it was only important to live in the "now." What sense does it make thinking about the past, and what good does it do thinking about the future? Joanne believed that the present moment is all you ever have.

Make the "now" the primary focus of your life.

Joanne was with us for three and a half months. We often don't have that much time to get to know our residents, so this was a blessing. Joanne couldn't believe the love and kindness she got from our staff. She shared with me how she used to live her life hiding under her bed with her "dust bunnies," avoiding life and people. Then she had a spiritual awakening a year or two ago, which she held very close to her heart. Joanne began to realize the goodness in people. She came out from hiding and began to feel the love of her neighbors, friends, and family. Joanne's faith community grew larger while she was a resident. I asked, what made her realize her belief in the higher power of God?



...surround yourself with people who love you...

(story continued on page 3)

Executive Director's Message

Fall/ Winter 2021

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Check out our website at:
www.crossroadshouse.com

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Moments...

In our newsletters, you will see and read about moments captured at Crossroads House. The Dictionary defines a moment as a brief portion or point of time, an instant. We will experience approximately 2 **billion** moments in our adult life.

When a resident enters Crossroads House, the remaining moments are reduced to a time frame that we, as humans, can only guess. That is why we make it our mission to capture, create, cherish, preserve, share, and pass on special moments. Moments come in many forms. They can be a reunion with someone special. They can be a resolution of relationships or the cementing of new ones. They can be a group photo or a selfie with a surprise visitor. They can be a trip to see the fall leaves and breathe the crisp autumn air. They can be the smell of fresh pastries at a local bakery or a sundae loaded with all the toppings. They can be captured in the celebration of Christmas in June or Thanksgiving in April. They can be captured as the old tractor you and your siblings grew up on is fired up *one more time*.

A life and a legacy are a compilation of those moments and can be a source of joy and comfort for loved ones to cherish forever. "Moment Making" requires no special skills or training, simply an awareness of what has the potential to be a lasting moment, great or small.

Like a fine wine, a gourmet cheese, or a wise investment, the value of a moment often increases with time. Be aware, be prepared, and be ready to invest in moments that will go from instant to *timeless*.

*Sometimes you will never know the value of a moment
until it becomes a memory.*

-Dr. Seuss

Above: Our resident Dennis dances a jig with Tom at the
Genesee County Park... one of his favorite places to be.



(continued from cover story)

She'd had an experience one day: a bright light, a powerful sense of warmth surrounding her, and an incredible feeling of love. During Covid, she began watching Sunday church services live-streamed from the [Zion Lutheran Church](#) in Clarence Center. When she came to Crossroads House, I asked her if she would like to meet the pastor from the church. With her permission, I contacted Pastor Julius Carroll, and he agreed to come meet Joanne. After several visits from Pastor Carroll, on her 92nd birthday, the Zion Lutheran Church admitted her to their congregation. *She had found her spiritual home.*

Joanne had a photograph in her room of a beautiful meadow that was taken behind her property. She would talk about the fox, deer, and turkeys she would watch from her porch. She loved the country, where she could garden and enjoy the outdoors. After living in Buffalo, Hawaii, New York City, Florida, and Akron, she felt most at home and happy in a small trailer park in Pembroke, New York. When she passed, she knew she was lovable, and *definitely* loved by her family, friends, and her Crossroads House family.

So, what does this all mean about a well-lived life? As Joanne has taught me: **live in the "now," surround yourself with people who love you, believe in a higher power (find your spiritual community), and have a place that you call home.**

We thank you Joanne, for touching our lives.



*Joanne enjoys a road trip
in our van to
[Buttercrumbs Bakery](#) and
[Sprinkles Creamery](#)
in Corfu, NY*

We would like to extend our most heartfelt sympathies to the families of the residents we had the honor to care for since our last newsletter:

[Joanne De La Cruz](#)

[Bernard Fix](#)

[Jeremy Tjhung](#)

[Barbara Rager](#)



Thank you for sharing your loved ones with us.



Tom Staebell, Tom Mika, and Mike Vickner (a few years ago but they haven't changed a bit).

He's the caregiver that's not known to every volunteer since his shift begins at 11:00pm. He is however, known for making the *best* breakfasts, and when asked his secret, he modestly shrugs. Tom Mika, aka "Overnight Tom" has been at Crossroads House for 12 years. He has that uncanny ability to bond with our residents during the quiet hours of the evening, when visitors have gone home and most of Batavia is tucked in for the night....

"Coming to Crossroads House is a sensitive time in a person's life; they do not know what to expect or how long they will be with us. Some residents adjust to our home-like environment immediately while others may require a few days.

There is an indescribable bond between the resident and the caregiver. This can occur in as little as the first few minutes of meeting. We assess where they are in their journey, read their charts, review meds, discuss religious beliefs, and listen to suggestions from previous caregivers. Family members add to the discussion. We take all this information, which helps us provide a very individual case management plan. Residents often define themselves according to the occupation they had and share unique life stories relating to their employment. They take us back to the past and relive how things were: the history of Genesee County, the different businesses back then-some that still exist today.

I am blessed to have Kathy Panepento for a mentor. She has the unique ability to bring out the best in people and I admire her for her dedication to Crossroads House throughout the years. I appreciate all the knowledge she has given me during my tenure, which has helped me become a better caregiver.

Oftentimes it is the little things that turn out to be significant: fresh water, a snack, a visit from a pet or just being there to listen to the resident, that can make him or her feel more comfortable with the situation. We do whatever is necessary to make their whole journey as peaceful and pain-free as possible."

-Tom Mika



Don't look for big things, just do small things with great love. - Mother Teresa

News from the Legacy Living Center...



A Crossroads House



As we move forward with our vision to help our residents *live their best life until their last breath*, we've come to understand that this is something we should *all* aspire to, starting right now. In our day-to-day lives we have those moments of clarity when someone we've known or someone we've loved is taken from us all too soon, and the realization that we'd better "start living" before it's too late is something we think about more often. So, we write the "bucket list" and for a time may start doing those things that are most important to us. Then, life goes on and we don't give it a second thought until we find our list tucked away inside a drawer when we are looking for a roll of Scotch Tape. [The Legacy Living Center](#) is an extension of our mission at Crossroads House. Our vision for the Center is to conduct life-enhancing programs that are open to the community and promote the concept of legacy living. What is "legacy living?" It is *living with the end in mind*. Instead of having just a focus on what you will leave behind, it is having a mindset that we create our legacies every single day by living our best life *now*, by impacting those around us in a positive, loving way, and in a nutshell, doing the best with what we've got. In light of this, we held our first Grief & Loss Peer Support Group where hurting souls found support and encouragement from others who shared their pain. (Stay connected to our Facebook page and website for information on our next meeting in 2022). Exciting things are ahead at the **LLC**. Future programs will be focusing on a variety of important topics because *everyone* should live their best life until they take their last breath!



At **Crossroads House** this fall, we broke ground on our wheelchair-friendly concrete pathway! This will enable our residents access to our garden so they can get dirt under their fingernails and put their green thumbs to work! We will have a rose garden, herb garden, a family gathering area (left) and eventually a water feature! We can't wait till our residents can kick off their shoes and put their feet in the cool grass.



Is there such a thing as making up for lost time? Better to make the most of the time you have now. Don't lose another moment to "should haves." Appreciate now what's in front of you and what's coming in the days, weeks, and years ahead.

...Ask Emily...



Recently the question has arisen:

Does working with the dying desensitize you to death?

There is no doubt that being exposed to death and dying on a regular basis impacts your life in many ways, but I must admit that I had never thought about it from this angle before. It certainly makes sense given our general understanding of how desensitization works, and I suppose in a way, yes, it does.

Does it toughen you to the emotions of the individuals who are preparing for the end of life? Do you become cold to the grief and loss that their families endure? *Absolutely and resoundingly no!* Human empathy is like an instrument that lives in the center of your chest, and the more finely tuned it becomes, the more beautifully and freely it sings out when played upon. Exposure to these intense experiences does not anesthetize you to them; it provides you with the virtuosity needed to give them the space, the time, and the mindfulness they deserve. It is trauma that hardens the heart, and trauma comes when processing becomes too much to bear. Crossroads House is a safe space with an exceptional support network that lifts up *every single person* who enters through the door and invites them to probe the depths of fear, grief, and vulnerability out loud and in person. How far down that rabbit hole each of us goes is a personal choice, but we cannot help but come back out kinder than we were when we started.

So how then does it desensitize a person? It does so by systematically breaking down the barriers we have built up as a society to protect us in our day to day lives from the fear of death. Over time, you find yourself more and more capable of using the “D” word in casual conversation. The uneasiness dissipates and you begin to accept death as the intrinsic conclusion of life. You grow comfortable with the physical process of leaving this world and like birth, it becomes a very natural occurrence, that none-the-less maintains its sanctity and its mystery. Death is a momentous and emotional event, but not one that has to overwhelm you with dread. It is possible to consider it both plainly and compassionately, and because you don’t hide it away in the corner of your mind until the day it eventually demands your attention, *you take the time to live right now. You take the time to love right now.*

“I would say that it does desensitize you in that you’re not afraid of it anymore. I find it calm and peaceful. I’m not afraid of death. There’s some sadness, but you enjoy the good stuff. You spend time with the residents and build a relationship. You definitely have a connection.” -Norma Jensen

“It doesn’t desensitize so much as it gives me a different perspective. My outlook is different, but I’m still very sensitive. I started volunteering at Crossroads House after my father passed. He was in a lot of pain, and I had already come to see that death doesn’t have to be something to be afraid of. That has stayed with me, but I still feel a lot of sympathy for our residents and their families.” -Pauli Miano

“I think it makes you more sensitive. It makes you want to have more conversations about what’s really happening-the reality of the situation, and you communicate that to others. If you love someone, tell them you love them. If you want to see them, go and see them. If you miss them, send them a card. You don’t want to have *any* regrets.” -Dawn Greene



For information on becoming a volunteer at **Crossroads House**, you may start the [online application](#) process by visiting our website, or by contacting Emily, our Coordinator of Volunteer Services, at emilycrawford@crossroadshouse.com.



Stay
Connected!

www.crossroadshouse.com

In case you haven't been to our website lately, we have a new look! You can find information on:

[Referrals](#)

[Upcoming Events](#)

[Our History](#)

[Virtual Tour](#)

[Meet Our Staff](#)

[WBTA Radio Broadcasts](#)

[Newsletters](#)

[Make a Donation](#)

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[Caregiving Videos](#)

You can also get details about our fundraisers by checking:

Our [Facebook](#) page ***[The Batavian](#) ***[The Daily News](#)

The [WBTA calendar](#) lists our monthly radio segments with Chris Kalen.

Listen in for stories about *how* and *why* we do what we do!

If you miss a broadcast, they can be found under the *Community tab* on our website.



Check out our website to hear recordings from our monthly radio segments on [WBTA Radio](#) including these three ladies who are, or have been educators in our area!



[Helen Hulburt](#)

[CLICK TO HEAR HELEN](#)



[Jackie Swinarski](#)

[CLICK TO HEAR JACKIE](#)



[Sue Chiddy](#)

[CLICK TO HEAR SUE](#)

Our "Wish List"



- Paper Towels
- Forever postage stamps
- Clear packaging tape
- White copier paper 8 1/2 x 11
- Pastel copier paper: pink, green, blue, yellow
- 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
- Cans of ginger ale, Coke, Diet Coke, 7-Up, Pepsi, Diet Pepsi, and juices (small)
- Mixes for: brownies, muffins, and cookies
- Pudding cups
- Butter
- Coffee: regular and decaf
- Half and Half creamer
- Swiffer Dry Cloths
- Murphy's Oil Soap
- Dishwasher detergent
- Boudreaux's Butt Paste (Walmart)
- Anti-Monkey Butt Paste (Walmart)
- 13-gallon trash bags

Thank you for adding us to your shopping list!

Are you doing your shopping online these days? 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 *thank you*, and **HAPPY SHOPPING!!**



MEGA Wish List "HO! HO! HO!"

(Our registry is on Amazon!)

- Battery operated weed whacker
- Battery operated leaf blower
- Battery operated hedge trimmer
- Indoor flagpole, base, and gold eagle pole topper



Our Amazon Wish List <https://a.co/8wspX5p>



To everyone who buys and sells our chocolate suckers, attends our fundraisers, and donates to our basket raffles.

To those who tell their family, friends, and neighbors about Crossroads House and suggest memorials to honor their loved ones who have passed.

To our staff and volunteers who give their precious gift of time which enables us to continue our mission.

To those who say "I believe in what you do" by setting aside a donation when they have a little extra.

To the organizations who partner with us by allocating funds for special projects, donating their time on community work days, and holding fundraisers on our behalf.

To our Board of Directors who support us with their time and donations as needs arise.

For cans of coffee, rolls of paper towels, and other Wish List items that mysteriously appear at our side door.

To our Facebook followers who share our posts and "like" our page.

To our future residents who will entrust us with their care and their families who share them with us.

We have been so blessed by the response to our "Comfort Foods" cookbook!

Last year when we collaborated with the Ficarella family on creating "Comfort Foods," we had no idea it would be so well-received! We asked our volunteers to submit their cherished recipes and, along with those contributed by the Ficarellas, we produced a collection of *over 200* of the best! Connie Ficarella was a resident at Crossroads House, and she, along with her love of cooking, was at the heart of her family. Our cookbook is dedicated in her memory and the Ficarella family not only funded the printing of it, but every dollar of the \$14 cost for this high-quality, hardbound book comes back to Crossroads House! At this time, we have more in stock, and they are available for purchase. (Please see below to order your copy.) With the cold weather upon us, there is no better time than now, to share one of Connie's recipes from page 18. *Our thanks to the Ficarella Family for their friendship and generosity!*

Pasta Fagioli.....from the kitchen of Connie Ficarella

2 (16 oz.) cans cannellini beans, drained

2 c. good quality chicken stock

2 minced garlic cloves

2 T. tomato paste

2 T. olive oil

8 oz. cooked ditalini pasta

Lightly sauté garlic in olive oil. Add drained beans, tomato paste, and chicken stock. Simmer for 30 minutes. Add cooked pasta and serve hot. Salt and pepper to taste.



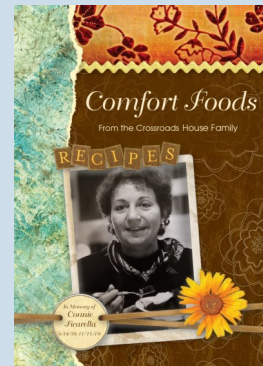
There are many ways to order your copy of our cookbook!

To have it mailed to yourself or to someone as a gift:

*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!

*Stop in at Ficarella's Restaurant or order at www.ficarellaspizzabatavia.com where you can purchase it alone or have it added to your food order, for pick up or delivery!

Thank you so much-happy cooking!



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

As the end of the year approaches, we would like to express our gratitude to the organizations in our community who faithfully partnered with us this year. They stand behind our mission of providing loving, enriching, and dignified care for those who are nearing the end of their journey in life. Their belief in the work we do is humbling and so appreciated! As you read through the names and recognize the familiar logos below, we encourage you to support their business.

A Special Thank You...

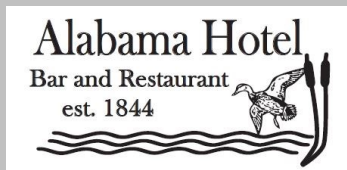
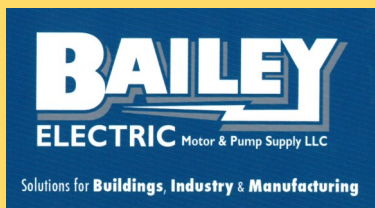
...to the Medal Level Sponsors of our 2021 Annual Business Campaign!

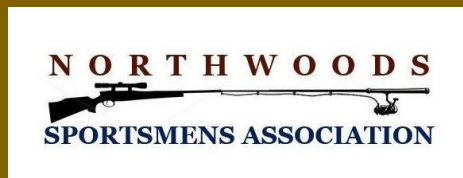
You sustain us in a major way,

And enable us to say,

“No family ever gets a bill.”

Gold Silver Bronze





Thank you to our 2021 Newsletter Sponsors!



If you would like your business to be on our mailing list for our next campaign, please contact Diane Sia at: dianesia@crossroadshouse.com. Medal Level and Newsletter sponsorship can promote your business in our newsletter, on our website, and as a supporter on our Facebook page.

"Crossroads House is a gift TO the community, made possible BY the community."

Crossroads House
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In Memory...



Each year we hold a Memorial Service in November that honors those we served through the year. This is the tribute video that was put together for the 2020 Memorial Service. The 2021 tribute video will appear in the digital version of the Spring Newsletter 2022. Click the picture to view the video and thank you for your ongoing support of our mission of comfort care.

Would you like to receive our newsletter by email instead?

Contact us at newsletter@crossroadshouse.com along with your mailing address and we'll take care of you.

Your Name: _____ Phone: _____

Address: _____

City, State, Zip: _____

E-mail address: _____

Circle one: My Gift is in Memory of or My Gift is in Honor of

Name of person: _____

Enclosed is my donation of _____

Cookbook Order Form

____ Cookbooks at \$14.00 each = _____

Shipping/ handling for 1st book = \$ 3.50

Shipping/ handling for extra books= _____

(\$1.00 for each additional book)

My cookbook total = _____

Payment: ____check or ____credit card

Please make checks payable to
Crossroads House.

_____ I have provided for Crossroads House in my Will.

_____ My donation is for the Crossroads House Endowment Fund.

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!

