

SHARING THE *gift*

A NEWSLETTER OF GIFT OF LIFE TRANSPLANT HOUSE

SPRING SUMMER 2017

gift of life



GIFT OF LIFE
TRANSPLANT HOUSE
A HOME THAT HELPS
AND HEALS

Our New Executive Director Mary Wilder



As Ginger and Nick took me on a tour, I sensed my dad walking with us.

It all started because of a freshman motivational speech assignment. As I pondered the subject of my speech, I thought about my dad who had recently been diagnosed with kidney failure. Though the diagnosis had come just before I left for

college, mom and dad had insisted I go. Letters from home came with words I had never heard before - renal, dialysis, fistula and while there was never a complaint, I understood the seriousness of what Daddy was facing.

I decided on the topic of organ donation for my speech. As I researched and prepared for my assignment, the thought slowly occurred to me that *I* could donate a kidney to my dad. I delivered my speech and that afternoon, I called dad to ask if he would consider accepting a kidney from me. Years later, my mom shared that she and Daddy had been praying that I would make that offer, but Daddy refused to ask me.

That was 40 years ago and despite a successful transplant, Daddy passed three years later from amyloidosis. I was hospitalized for one week, went home and played tennis the next day! Daddy stayed in the hospital much longer and when he and Mom finally traveled from the University of MN Hospitals to our home in Wisconsin, Mom returned to work and Dad was alone. While friends and

family came to visit, I can only imagine how lonely this time must have been for the two of them.

When I first heard of Gift of Life Transplant House, tears came to my eyes as I realized what a blessing this would have been to my parents. And as Ginger Holmes and Nick Pompeian took me on a tour, I sensed my dad walking with us. I am honored and humbled to serve as the Executive Director of Gift of Life Transplant House. In the coming weeks and months, I look forward to getting to know the amazing network of people, staff and guests who support, encourage and fulfill the vision of Ed Pompeian – to provide Mayo clinic transplant recipients and their caregivers a “home that helps and heals”.



Mary and Jim

President's Letter

By Nick Pompeian, Board of Directors

Dear Friends,

So far it has been a very active and busy year at Gift of Life Transplant House. The house remains quite busy with high occupancies as we continually serve our guests and caregivers before, during, and after their transplant journey. Outside of Gift of Life's normal operations, there have been a multitude of activities that have kept our entire organization extremely busy.

As many of you are aware, the month of April is known as Donate Life month. Not only is this something that we celebrate locally, but is also observed and celebrated across the nation to help raise awareness for organ, eye, and tissue donation.

As part of the month, there were several events that we were so fortunate to be a part of and in partnership with our community on. The annual Walk of Remembrance kicked off the month, which was led by the efforts of the Gift of Life Transplant House and LifeSource. The Timmay 5k occurred the very next day and was an incredible event courtesy of the Tim Rasmusson



Foundation. We finished the month with a pizza party extravaganza at Pasquale's Neighborhood Pizzeria that our new friend and supporter, Pasquale Presa, so graciously put on for us. All of these events helped to raise awareness, funds, and celebrated all of those touched by organ, eye and tissue donation. We cannot thank our staff, volunteers, and community partners enough for all of their time and efforts to make these events possible.

As we look ahead, there are plenty of other events to help continue in the celebration with our golf tournament in July, Gala of the Decades in August, and Iron Chef Challenge in October. It is our hope that you can join us for all of these incredible and memorable events.

As always, it is with extreme gratitude that I would like to thank all of you for what you do for Gift of Life. Whether you are a donor, caregiver, recipient, community member, volunteer or staff, you are all part of the Gift of Life family. Thank you again for all that you do, and have a wonderful summer.

Staff Update Spring/Summer 2017

Gift of Life Transplant House would like to say good bye to **Brittney Bones** and **Jennifer Karow** and hello to **Debbie Nichols** and **Laura Oberhensley**. And a new hello to **Norm Theel**.

Norm has been with Gift of Life Transplant House for 2 years through Experience Works and we have always called him a part of our Gift of Life family but Norm is now really a part of our family. Norm will continue to be a tour guide, helping in housekeeping and continuing to pitch in wherever we need him.



Debbie is our new Full-time Desk Receptionist. Debbie has been married for 45 years to her husband Larry. They have one daughter and one granddaughter. Debbie loves being with her granddaughter, travelling, reading, cross-stitch and sewing. Debbie says "I love the people I meet and Gift of Life is an amazing place to work." Please stop buy and say hello to Debbie.

Laura applied to be a volunteer at Gift of Life Transplant House but in visiting with her we ended up hiring Laura as our Part-Time Desk Receptionist. Laura had a kidney transplant 2 ½ years ago and wanted to become involved.

The Journey

By Ginger Holmes



“A journey of a thousand miles starts with a single step”

My journey with Gift of Life Transplant House started on Friday, September 10, 2010. That is the day I took my first step into Gift of Life Transplant House, as a new volunteer. Immediately I started to develop my passion for the “gift of life.” Not just Gift of Life Transplant House but the true gift of life. I will be retiring in June, 2017. The rest is history.

Most importantly is “What have I learned on my amazing journey?” My space is limited so I promise I won’t rattle on and on.

- How to be the leader of an incredible organization dedicated to making a difference and what to do when “the buck stops here.” To be part of financial decisions for the health of Gift of Life Transplant House, all our guest, caregivers, volunteers and staff. Ex; Do we tear down the iconic Founders House for the health of guests and caregivers when we unexpectedly find the health hazard of black mold. What are the repercussions?

- How to be part of the fabric of Gift of Life Transplant House. The unimaginable highs; “I just got the call, I am getting my transplant!”, and the devastating lows; the loss of family, friends and loved ones taken away, and they are asking, “How do we begin our next journey?”

These are some of the many experiences encountered, but what are the biggest lessons learned on this my journey?

- Compassion – “shows kindness, caring, and a willingness to help others”. Listen. How do we live that: by listening, no matter what time of day or night. Always having a Kleenex tissue ready, not only for the one shedding the tears but also for myself as I put myself in their shoes to walk their mile. Just be there. Just be available.
- Passion – “any powerful or compelling emotion or feeling”. As many of you know, I get very emotional and passionate about the true meaning of the Gift of Life Transplant House. That is where more Kleenex comes into play. How can I not be passionate about Gift of Life Transplant House?

There is so much more I have learned but that is for another time. So my journey continues. I could not have walked this journey without each one of you and for that I say thank you. I hope to see all of you in my travels. Be well and travel safely on your journeys.

GOL Health and Wellness Program Update

by Roger Erickson

Musical Moments of Hope and Healing for Transplant Patients and Families by Tami Briggs, therapeutic harpist, kicked off April’s month long celebration of organ and tissue donor awareness. Tami presented her concert on April 8, 2017 at the Zarrow home. She shared powerful stories, readings and beautiful live harp music for our guests while helping us understand how music can be a tool for self-care. The concert and dessert reception were sponsored by the Health and Wellness(H&W) committee. Those in attendance felt the comfort brought by Tami’s strings during the performance and upon return to their days’ activities.

Our committee is in the midst of making initial contact to a list of potential leaders for our Inter-Faith service. We hope to offer our guests an Inter-Faith service on campus since this was a priority of a guest survey. If you know

of any clergy or lay leaders who might be interested in assisting us, please let Manger of Finance/Administration, Rita Hawkins know.

The H &W committee is developing an “artist in residence” program as Phase II of our Wellness program. We are preparing to invite “artists” to the GOL campus to share their talents with our guests. Music, poetry/prose or painting are desired options for guests. Our Mennonite singers remain a favorite dedicated group for our guests.

As we look to enhance our guests experience while staying with us, we recognize the need for additional equipment. Items desired include microphone/PA system, grand piano or electronic keyboard to name a few. We will adapt for now but look forward to these items for program enhancement.

April Donate Life Month

By Catly Dudley, LifeSource

April Donate Life Month is always a highlight of our year here at the Gift of Life Transplant House.

It is a time to raise awareness in the community urging people to register to become donors and have those precious conversations with families

This “Call to Action” all month sparks activities that surround support, sentiment and sharings of the ever-growing need of those awaiting the precious Gift of Life.

All over the U.S., Donate Life flags were flying to acknowledge and honor Donors for the Gifts they gave of organ, tissues, and eyes. Here in Rochester, at both the Gift of Life Transplant House and Mayo Clinic we did the same to honor those donors and their gifts.

Some of the activities during April included the 3rd annual Walk of Remembrance and the 3rd Annual Timmay 5K Run/Walk to honor Tim Rasmusson, and organ and tissue donor and beloved son of the Steve Rasmusson Family.

Annual Walk of Remembrance and Flag Raising Ceremony

By Catly Dudley, LifeSource



The Walk of Remembrance is held annually on National Blue and Green Day, which fell this year on Friday April 21st at 4:00 pm. The program is growing every year, and this year there was over 250 participants.

The day was warm and sunny with a slight breeze that was just enough to get all the Donate Life Pinwheels going in fine fashion which was the symbol of Donate Life Month this year.

The Pinwheel is symbolic of an instrument that turns obstacles into opportunities. The pinwheel’s ability to capture and pass on energy parallels one’s potential to make LIFE possible. Each Donate Life pinwheel has four sails supported by one stem, symbolizing the power one person has to be an organ, eye, tissue or living donor. For recipients, donation can turn sickness and injury into a second chance at life. For donors, their decision to register can turn a sorrowful time into a source of comfort for family as a result of renewed life for others.

The pinwheel reminds us that we all have the potential to capture and pass on life, comfort and hope to others by registering as a donor.

The Walk was led by the Veterans Color Guard and Mr. Craig Mann, beloved Bagpiper, both here in Rochester.

Carrying the Donate Life Flag is always done by families whose loved ones gave that precious Gift in years past. This year, the Steve Rasmusson Family carried the flag in honor of their son Tim, along with Shannon Hufstedler, mother of Skyler Hufstedler, a recent organ donor.

Esteemed speakers for the event were Mr. Ken Ackerman the Mayo Clinic Hospital Administrator, Pastor John Steer a donor father and head pastor from Autumn Ridge Church and Dr. Charles Rosen, Director of the William J. von Liebig Transplant Center at Mayo Clinic.

The culmination of our time together was with the celebratory Pinwheel Garden, led by Corinne Thul, a pastor at Saint Mary’s Campus, Mayo Clinic Hospital. Families placed their Blue and Green symbolic pinwheels in prominent places around the Gift of Life Gardens giving it a warm and welcoming glow with everlasting memories of loved ones, and gratitude for the Gift of Life!



3rd Annual Timmay 5K

By Staff

Saturday, April 22nd was a stunning day of warmth and sunshine, the necessary ingredients to make the 3rd Annual Timmay 5K a success. This year over 500 people

in the community participated in the event, which made the time



3rd Annual Timmay 5K (continued)

together rich with activity comradery and increased community awareness of the need for donors. This is the goal of the Tim Rasmuson Foundation to “Target Donor Awareness”, which is making a difference in our community and around the world.



Leading up to the event, Whistle Binkie’s North held 50/50 raffles every Friday and Saturday nights during the month of April. Both participants and the Timmay 5K Run/Walk benefited from the raffles.

This year at the Race, Steve Shank spoke on his precious gift he received in October 2016, of a double lung Transplant. Steve was a guest of the House during his recovery, and spoke of his gratitude for the donor, and honored his donor by walking in his first 5K, and finishing it in Grand Style! His wife Caren and family were all supporting Steve by walking with him, and helping to support and honor Tim Rasmuson and his family.

La Nostra Cultura Vita

By Lori Finaly

Ingredients for bringing a community together for a lifesaving cause: Combine great food, talented musicians of all ages, celebrities, an amazing venue, raffle prizes, and a blend of generous and kind individuals dedicated to changing lives.

This was the recipe used for “La Nostra Cultura Vita with the Gift of Life Transplant House” and the outcome was a mouthwatering, heartwarming success!

On Sunday, April 30th Pasquale’s Neighborhood Pizzeria hosted “La Nostra Cultura Vita”-which translates to “My Beautiful Life”. The fundraiser included live music from Pure Rock Studio’s Youth and Teen Groups, as well as, JT Thompson and Todd Owens from JT and the Gunslingers.

Dr. Mikel Prieto and David Holmes “rock and rolled pizzas” out to patrons and hearts melted like gooey cheese as Marcus Sherels of the Minnesota Vikings and Miss Minnesota 2017, Zoey Jantsan, showed their support, while signing autographs, posing for pictures and “topping” off the day, by joining Jayne Pompeian behind the counter to make pizzas for guests.

Gift of Life Transplant House Board Members kicked off the fundraiser on Monday April 24th, by joining

forces with Pasquale’s Neighborhood Pizzeria, preparing pizzas and garlic knots, boarding a trolley and surprising guests at the Gift of Life Transplant House with a pizza party! In addition to the pizza delivery, Rochester Trolley and Tour Company provided complimentary rides to guests staying at the Gift of Life down to and back from Pasquale’s. Guests were invited to board the trolley, enjoy pizza, desserts and live music.

Henna tattoo artist, Kayley Dahle, generously donated her time AND 100% of her proceeds to Gift of Life Transplant House! Cathy Dudley from LifeSource was on hand to inform people about Donate Life and to register anyone interested in becoming a donor.

Thank you so much to our Board Members, volunteers, Laura Lee, Big Mark Clark, iHeartMedia, KAAL and Fox 47 for providing coverage to spread awareness. A huge shout out to the multiple sponsors that donated funds and prizes to make this day a success.

We are forever grateful to the phenomenal team at Pasquale’s Neighborhood Pizzeria for their passion and dedication to ensuring that “La Nostra Cultura Vita with the Gift of Life Transplant House” was a “dough raising” success. We could not have done this without you all!!





**33RD ANNUAL
GIFT OF LIFE
GOLF TOURNAMENT
MONDAY, JULY 24TH, 2017
ROCHESTER GOLF & COUNTRY CLUB**



**Golfers can
sign up online at
www.gift-of-life.org**

*We look forward
to seeing you
on the course.*

Format: FIVE-PERSON SCRAMBLE

Cost per Golfer \$150 - includes golf, cart, locker room, golfer gift and awards banquet

11:00 a.m. - 11:50 a.m. Registration • 12:15 p.m. Shotgun Tee-off • 5:30 p.m. Awards Banquet

**Proceeds from the Tournament help us provide “A Home that Helps and Heals”
for more than 4,600 patients and caregivers each year.**

WISH LIST

Washable Pillows

New Commercial Vacuum Cleaners

\$30 for a guest room night

Paper towels

Paper Napkins

Forever postage stamps



Ziploc bags, assorted sizes

Liquid hand soap – large refill bottles



Liquid dish soap

Hand Sanitizer refills

Regular & decaffeinated coffee



Wrapped candy, especially chocolates



Scrubbing Bubbles

Soft Scrub – Lemon

Toilet Bowl Cleaner

Gift Cards to Wal-mart, Target or Hy-Vee

Upcoming Events 2017:

July 16 *Annual Transplant Picnic*
Contact Steve at 507-288-7470 for details

August 26 *Gala of the Decades...The 1950's*
Signature Flight Support

July 24 *33rd Annual Gift of Life Golf Tournament*
Rochester Golf and Country Club

October 12 *4th Annual Iron Chef Challenge*
Greek Orthodox Church 5pm – 9pm

For more information on these and other events, visit www.gift-of-life.org or find us on Facebook.



Be sure to follow us on Facebook

YEAR ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2016 FINANCIAL OVERVIEW

operations	
Revenue	979,852
Expense	1,531,807
NET INCOME	(551,956)

fundraising	
Revenue	2,595,369
Expense	124,139
NET INCOME	2,471,230

combined	
Revenue	3,575,221
Expense	1,655,946
NET INCOME	1,919,274

The financial overview is an unaudited statement of financial position for 2016.

Operations

Category	Percentage
Revenue	39%
Expense	61%

Fundraising

Category	Percentage
Revenue	95%
Expense	5%

Combined Revenue and Expense

Category	Percentage
Revenue	32%
Expense	68%

House Happenings

By Ron Kreinbring

Spring has arrived at our campus in Rochester. After the typical long Minnesota winter, our staff has happily stored the snow moving equipment and are tending to the usual spring chores. The outside grounds are being spruced up, the tulips are in bloom and the trees are budded out. It is a renewal time of the year and we find our guests spending more time outside with the porches and patios being used regularly. We await all the plantings coming up in the new rain garden in the Pompeian Home parking lot.

Both houses now are transitioning from the winter heat system to the summer system and that causes much attention from staff for the switchover. On some days this creates some temperature issues as we make cooling adjustments. We also continually work on painting maintenance in all areas of the houses. It seems like when we finish one area of painting, another area is on our list of required work. One may not know it but we have a full-time staff person, Cory, who has steady painting duty for the many units and communal areas that we have.

On the exterior, we plan to repair and replace significant areas of the parking lot on the Pompeian Home. This lot is now 9 years old and gets major traffic between guests and the shuttle buses. Also at that home we have replaced all the unit entry door locks due to wear

As always, we strive to continue our vision to provide a "home that helps and heals".



In Remembrance



It is with great sadness Gift of Life Transplant House has lost one of our cherished Board of Director members. Rodney Anderson passed away on Thursday, April 20, 2017. Rod joined our Gift of Life Transplant House family, first on our Development Team in 2013 and then joined the Board of Directors in September 2014. Rod brought not only a vast amount of knowledge to the board but also great humor. You never knew if he was "pulling your leg" or not. Rod was passionate about his time together with his family. Rod, we will miss you and please keep watch over all of us.

**GIFT OF LIFE
TRANSPLANT HOUSE
MISSION STATEMENT**

The mission of Gift of Life Transplant House is to provide transplant patients and their caregivers with high quality, affordable accommodations in a supportive, home-like environment.



GIFT OF LIFE, INC.
705 Second Street, Southwest
Rochester, Minnesota 55902

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*Gift of Life
Transplant House Staff*

STAFF: Seated L to R: **Missy, Debbie, Ginger, Rita, Kari, Jenny;**
Standing L to R: **Norma, Bob, Cory, Craig, Ladd, Steve, Norm, Tami;**
Missing: **Debbie, Val, Mark**

GIFT OF LIFE TRANSPLANT HOUSE BOARD OF DIRECTORS AND STAFF

Executive Committee

President – Nick Pompeian
Vice President – Joe Forrer
Past President – Ron Kreinbring
Secretary – Roger Erickson
Treasurer – Jesse Buhl
Founder – Edward Pompeian

Board Members

Jake Cote
William French
Bob Groettum
Kathy Jensen
Paul Mensing
Sheila Nelson

Charles Pagenhart
Thomas Schwab, MD
Lori Ewoldt
George Smith (*Emeritus*)

Honorary Lifetime Board Members

Mary Davie
Sylvester Sterioff, MD

Gift of Life Transplant House Staff

Executive Director
Ginger Holmes / Mary Wilder
Manager of Finance and Administration
Rita Hawkins

Facilities Manager

Ladd Baldus

Operations Manager

Steve Tarara

*Administration Support/
Volunteer Coordinator*

Kari Wedeking

Front Desk

Tami Konakowitz, Debbie Nichols,

Laura Oberhansley

Bookkeeper

Norma Mooney

*Resident Night/
Weekend Supervisor 724 House*

Debbie Niemeier

*Resident Night/
Weekend Supervisor 705 House*

Val Koehn

Facilities

Bob Himmer, Craig Fritzke,

Cory Cody

Housekeepers

Jennifer Schneider, Missy Johnson,

Mark Stoning

Tour Guide

Norm Theel

Sharing the Gift, a newsletter about events and issues of interest to friends and supporters of Gift of Life Transplant House, is published twice annually by Gift of Life, Inc. at Rochester, Minnesota. Article topics and story contributions from guests are always welcome. Please submit them (preferably) via email to rita@gift-of-life.org; include your name and all relevant contact information. Questions may be directed to Rita Hawkins at the same email address or by phone at 507-288-7470, or by mail at 705 Second Street, SW, Rochester, MN 55902. The name, *Sharing the Gift*, and all newsletter contents are copyrighted 2010 by Gift of Life, Inc. Permission to reprint or use any aspect of this newsletter must be obtained in writing from Gift of Life prior to use.