The Blessing of the GOL House through the Highs and Lows of Cancer

By Cindy M. Petersen

This is the story of how our family came to know, love and depend on the Gift of Life Transplant House (GOL).

In 2009 my sister, Gelene Rohr was diagnosed with Non-Hodgkin’s Lymphoma. With a husband and 3 teenagers she decided to receive chemo treatments near her home in Long Prairie, MN. In December, her oncologist thought her PET Scan appeared to look abnormal and was referred to Mayo Clinic.

At the end of December we received our first “high” from Mayo Hematology when after looking at her Pet scan determined what appeared to be abnormal was actually, brown fatty tissue and she was free of cancer. She returned home to pick up her life again with the understanding that she would return for a follow up appointment in August. By that time, she knew the cancer had returned.

After extensive testing her doctors felt she would be a good candidate for an autologous stem cell transplant. We moved into the GOL House. My husband Pat and I were the main caregivers as we had more flexibility in our schedules than others in our family. Pat took the first week taking Gelene to the multiple appointments that are needed prior a transplant. After I returned from a work conference I took over the majority of the caregiving as I could do much of my work from the GOL House. Computer access in our room was one of the many benefits as well as having the computer room available when a larger screen and printing was needed. Turns out it’s also a great place to meet with other GOL residents.

Gelene received her first successful transplant on December 8 and after a few complications and a 10 day stay in the hospital we were able to return home in early January 2011. She was on the way to recovery and back to her active life. At her one year anniversary of her transplant we once again learned her cancer had returned.

This brought several more rounds of chemotherapy. Later her doctors decided a second transplant was possible, but this time it would be allogeneic with the hope of having a sibling as a match. My brother, Duane from Nome, Alaska was the match so plans were made to begin the transplant process once again.

In June 2013 Gelene and I moved back to the GOL House. It felt like home. We had familiar surroundings, most of the same staff and even a couple still in the House when we were there in 2011. It was reassuring to have that familiarity. We eased into the routine smoothly. Patients tend to get to know one another as they mingle in the dining room and the caregivers that prepare the meals tend to get to know one another as they spend time in the kitchen. The eating areas are very much the heart of the GOL House.

Continued on page 2
News from Building, Safety and Grounds Facilities

By Ron Kreinbring

Spring has arrived at Gift of Life Transplant House and all are thankful for warmed temperatures. Our flowers are a sure sign that summer can’t be far behind. With spring’s arrival, our Staff has been focusing on the grounds keeping things tidy. There was some plant replacement and major mulch freshening to do. Also, the City is reconstructing First Street Southwest which is directly behind the 705 House and that poses some inconvenience for guests and the shuttle service. The street will ultimately be an improvement for us so patience will be needed while this work happens. Other exterior work includes concrete walk replacement and some additional directional signage.

Our exterior patio replacement at the 705 House is set to begin very soon due to the generous donation by Trails3Transplant. It will consist of some new pavers, benches, and landscaping and it will be a pleasant place for guests to relax and enjoy the Minnesota summer.

At the 705 House we have some plans for improvements. Some of the furniture has already been replaced but we have several floors still needing some new furniture. We also have a generous donation coming of some solid surface countertops to replace the old counters and we are considering new cabinetry as well. This is dependent yet on funding. As may be recalled, we had invested in some energy savings efforts at 705 House consisting of mechanical ventilation changes and adding additional insulation. This is being rewarded by a $4600 rebate from our gas company as well as reduced fuel bills. The winter was unusually cold so utility bills were certainly a concern in our overall budget.

Our Facility Director, Ladd and his Staff have been working diligently to keep our Houses in a welcoming and safe condition for guests to enjoy. They are a dedicated team working with our guests in mind.

It worked out well that my brother, Duane was able to stay with us at the GOL House for about a week while he went to his pre-donation appointments and ultimately donated his stem cells. It was a wonderful opportunity for Gelene and Duane to spend time together when she was feeling good and I was working. They shared many hours in one or more of the family rooms watching Twins games.

Gelene spent many days in the hospital. She was treated for shingles, she endured two different rounds of chemo with the hope of reducing her cancer so she would be able to have the transplant. Through it all she was positive and hopeful even with all of the setbacks. As a caregiver it was hard for me to see my little sister going through all of the pain. It was always nice for me to come back to the GOL house and be able to share my thoughts and feelings with people that would understand. The support you give and receive is truly one of the many benefits of GOL House.

August 5th 2013 we learned Gelene’s cancer was terminal and there were no further options. She was placed in hospice until she could return home to Long Prairie. I returned to the GOL House and shared the sad news with the staff and friends we had met. Each of these individuals shared in the disappointment and sadness our family was feeling. It was a true blessing when two patients came to the hospital the following day to pray for and with my sister. She went home later that week and passed away on the 18th. Even at her funeral visitation we had friends we met at GOL House attend, understanding all we had been through and giving us much needed support.

The GOL house is a place I will always hold dear to my heart. Our family experienced joy and sadness during our journey, but the people we met and a strong faith have helped us move forward.

Nancy (sister), Gelene, Pat (brother in law)
President’s Letter

By Mark R. Litzow, M.D., Board of Directors

“Nobody goes there anymore. It’s too crowded.”
~ Yogi Berra

It has been an active year so far at the Gift of Life Transplant House as we celebrate our 30-year anniversary. We remain busy at the house with high occupancy rates as we serve patients and families before and after transplant. In 2013 we did have the privilege of serving over 4000 guests and caregivers. However, we don’t want anybody to not come to the house because it’s too crowded as Yogi Berra suggested in his nonsensical quote above.

It is my privilege to continue to serve as the President of the Board of Directors for Gift of Life Transplant House. I have been involved in the treatment of patients with hematologic malignancies who have required blood and marrow transplants for nearly 30 years. I am always humbled and awed when patients and families tell me how much the Gift of Life Transplant House was supportive and beneficial to them as they went through the challenging experience of their transplant.

We are pleased that the transplant house remains on sound fiscal standing this year but continue to do all we can to try to pay down our $3.5 million mortgage that remains after the construction of the 724 house.

We hope that we will see you sometime this year as we celebrate our 30th anniversary. Coming up at the end of June is the annual transplant picnic on June 28th followed by our golf tournament and white party fundraiser on June 30th.

We hope you are having a great summer and wish you health and happiness.

Executive Director’s Letter

By Ginger Holmes

Summer is finally here. I think the only thing that has gotten our staff through the coldest winter ever is the warmth of all our guests and caregivers.

We started off 2014 with Gift of Life Transplant House 30th Anniversary Kickoff on January 4th. Mayor Ardell Brede proclaimed 2014 “Year of the Gift of Life Transplant House”. Randy Staver, President of the Rochester City Council presented the proclamation to President Mark Litzow and Ed Pompeian, our founder. With cake and coffee, our guest and caregivers had a great time.

After having a huge snow storm in February, we rescheduled our Iron Chef Challenge for March 6th and had a wonderful turnout. Johnny Mangouras of Jonny Mangos Cabernet Catering and Joe Forrer, a member of our Board of Directors, put together a fun event with six local chefs’ (It was just like Iron Chef Challenge on the Food Network). We were able to raise $6,000.00 Thank you so much to everyone who participated.

On April 30th, Gift of Life Transplant House 30th Anniversary Committee hosted a dinner at both the 705 and 724 House. Guests and caregivers appreciated the dinner and raved about the food. They are always thankful when a group brings a dinner to the house. The committee is already talking about hosting another one in the fall.

We just finished the 2nd Annual Trails4Transplant Ride. This year the rider started in Mandan North Dakota and finished at the Little Bighorn Battlefield, in Custer National Park Montana. 444 miles. The team will be coming to Gift of Life Transplant House in August.

Looking ahead, August 17th will be our 30th Anniversary Community Ice Cream Social Celebration. (See Roger Erickson’s article). And then before we know it, fall is here.

This year we have said hello to so many new friends at Gift of Life Transplant House and welcomed back all of our old friends, and of course had to say goodbye to some old friends also. I wish you all a grand and wonderful summer, full of warmth and happiness.
Gift of Life Transplant House 30th Anniversary Celebration Continues on Throughout the Year

Buy Roger A. Erickson, Chairperson of 30th Anniversary Committee

Our committee continues to plan for our yearlong celebration. It’s hard to believe the year is half over. The 30th anniversary celebrations will continue to focus on internal (house guests) and external (community/benefactor) events.

The most recent celebration took place on April 29, 2014 when the 30th anniversary committee hosted a house dinner for guests at the 705 and 724(houses). Guests enjoyed a full meal by Catering by Design. Our 30th anniversary committee members and volunteers served the house guests. With this event, guests enjoyed a night off from kitchen duty and shared their story with committee members and Volunteers. We give a special thanks to Steve Tarara, Volunteer Manager for his support.

The next planned event will be the Community Ice Cream Social on the front lawn of 705, on August 17, 2014 from 1-3 PM. If you are in the area, stop by for some ice cream, cookies, lemonade and coffee. Conversation and stories are sure to abound. Musical entertainment will be provided by the Turkey River All-Stars.

Planning is continuing for the Friday November 7, 2014 Benefactor Recognition (by invite) Dinner at the Historic Mayo Foundation House. A December Tea will finalize the yearlong celebration. Thirty years has come and gone, but our GOL mission to serve Mayo Clinic transplant patients through “a home that helps and heals” will remain for years. Gift of Life Transplant House continues to focus on our mission and the entire Gift of Life Transplant House family.

Every day Gift of Life Transplant House staff, board of directors and volunteers step forward to serve our guests by doing what is best for them and changing lives forever. For Gift of Life Transplant House supporters, we thank you for partnering with us and our mission.

A Special thank you to our Presenting Sponsors, Ed and Jayne Pompeian and the Norman L. Gillette Jr. Donor Advised Fund, and Supporting Sponsor Weis Builders. Your generosity has allowed Gift of Life Transplant House to celebrate 30 years like none before!

30 for 30 Campaign

2014 marks the 30th Anniversary of Gift of Life Transplant House. Ed Pompein founded the Gift of Life Transplant House in 1984. We started with an 8 bedroom house (624 W. Center Street) and have grown to an 87 bed campus (705 House, 724 House and Founders House). The Gift of Life Transplant House campus provides housing for guests and caregivers that come to Mayo Clinic for their transplant journey. Our guests and families are regional, nation and international. They have been touched by our staff and the hospitality we offer in Rochester MN. We are not part of Mayo Clinic but work very closely with Mayo Clinic Rochester.

One of the opportunities our guests, caregivers, family, friends and benefactors can do to help Gift of Life Transplant House celebrate our 30th Anniversary is to be part of our 30 for 30 Campaign. It is $30.00 per month for 30 months. The campaign will be used to help retire our mortgage debt. For example, just think if 3,000 or ½ of our family/friends signed up for the $30 for 30 months, Gift of Life could pay $2.7 million against the mortgage. Our current mortgage remains around $4 million dollars. This is one of the first suggestions on “30 Ways to celebrate the 30th Anniversary of Gift of Life Transplant House”.

If you have further questions, Ginger Holmes, Executive Director would be happy to visit with you. Her phone number is 507-535-1014 Consider asking your family/friends to join in this endeavor. Let’s keep Gift of Life Transplant House mission going forward.

For your past support and future consideration, Gift of Life Transplant House thanks you.
30th Anniversary Kickoff Event

Chef’s Challenge
Staff Highlight

I am often asked by our new guest “Who is the kind, soft spoken woman that we see helping all the time?” I tell them that it is Bonnie. Bonnie Hanson is our “go to” person when we need help with tours, paperwork, filing and anything else. Bonnie came to us through Experience Works, which is a training program made possible by Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP). The program helps workers 55 and older get new training, support services, and job development assistance they need to find good jobs.

Bonnie grew up in Lanesboro Minnesota and has stayed in Southern Minnesota all of her life. She previously worked as an insurance specialist. Bonnie loves sewing, walking, music and ballroom dancing. Bonnie told me “I like working here in this beautiful house. Everyone is friendly, plus I have met a lot of nice and interesting people”.

The staff and guests love having Bonnie as part of Gift of Life Transplant House.

When you come to the house you will always be greeted by Bonnie with a big smile.

Spotlights  Goodbye and Welcome

Time With Her Husband - We want to say goodbye to Ruth Johnson, our Afternoon Desk Receptionist at the 705 House. Ruth joined our staff in September of 2013. Ruth enjoyed her time with Gift of Life Transplant House. In March left us so that she could spend more time with her husband Rick. They were working opposite shifts. We wish Ruth well in her new endeavors.

Joining His Children and Grandchildren - Mike Stirts who has been our Resident Night Manager at the 724 House since 2011 is moving on. He is moving to the state of Washington to be closer to his children and grandchildren. Mike did a great job for us as the night manager; he became a good friend to many here and was willing to help in any way he could. We all wish Mike good luck on his new life in the great Northwest. Just some friendly advice from us, “keep an eye out for Bigfoot”. We thank Mike for his devotion to the Gift of Life Transplant House.

Our New Artistic Desk Receptionist - We say a giant hello to Brittany Bones. Brittany joined our staff in April as our new part-time Desk Receptionist. Brittany is married to Aaron and they live in Stewartville with their “almost” 6 year old son Trenton and their 8 month old chocolate lab, Bella. When Brittany is not working, running after Trenton and Bella, she is designing jewelry for Origami Owl or staying busy with her photography business. Stop by and say hello to Brittany the next time you are at Gift of Life.

A Friend Comes to Join Gift of Life Transplant House - Let us all welcome Dennis Lamers as our new Resident Night Manager at our 724 House. Dennis is very familiar with Gift of Life Transplant House, as he was a transplant patient himself and stayed with us. Dennis comes from the great state of Wisconsin and he brings with him many assets that will help us at Gift of Life. We are sure Dennis will fit in to the roll of Night Manager very quickly and go above and beyond what is expected of his position.

A Little Change in Pace - We would like to welcome Kelly Varner. Kelly will be working part-time in Housekeeping at both the 705 House and the 724 House. Kelly grew up in Zumbrota Minnesota but now lives in Rochester. She previously worked at Hiawatha Homes while going to school to get her degree in Law Enforcement. Kelly loves going to movies and being with friends. She spends a lot of time with her dog Raulee. Raulee is a one year old German Shepard.
Gift Of Life Transplant House – Planned Giving

How Can I Financially Support the Gift of Life Transplant House? This is a question that is asked by many individuals who support the mission of the Gift of Life Transplant House. There are many types of giving, but your situation is unique. In addition to gifts of cash, you can leave stock, real estate, an insurance policy, personal property, an IRA or the assets in a pension plan to the Gift of Life Transplant House. If you would like to support the Gift of Life Transplant House, there are several options available to you. First, you can give today by making an outright gift. Second, you can give later through a deferred gift. Finally, you can make a gift at death. Below are examples of those three options.

I. Give Today If you would like to support the Gift of Life Transplant House immediately, there are several ways you can do so. Below are a few examples of how you can help today.

1. Cash Gift. Cash gifts are the most common way of contributing to the Gift of Life Transplant House. They are an excellent means of support because gifts of cash and checks can be put to immediate use.

2. Appreciated Securities. A gift of appreciated stock that you have held for more than one year can make an especially good charitable gift. You can deduct the fair market value of the stock and you will not be taxed on the gains.

3. Life Insurance Policies. A paid-up policy no longer serving its original purpose may be used as a contribution to the Gift of Life Transplant House. Even new policies or policies not yet fully paid for can yield tax benefits to the donor.

II. Give Later (Deferred Gift) When outright gifts are not practical, you might consider one of the following options to help support the Gift of Life Transplant House. Giving strategies such as the ones listed below offer numerous tax advantages. Your attorney or accountant will know how to design a giving strategy that best meets your needs. We have included these strategies for your information only.

1. The Charitable Remainder Trust. If you have a highly appreciated asset that you would like to exchange for a guaranteed stream of income, but are concerned about having to pay capital gains taxes, consider creating a Charitable Remainder Trust. During your lifetime, you will obtain an income tax deduction, you will be able to defer capital gains tax and you will obtain a guaranteed stream of income. Upon your death, the Gift of Life Transplant House will be entitled to the remainder.

2. The Charitable Lead Trust. A Charitable Lead Trust is the reverse of a Charitable Remainder Trust and offers many of the same benefits such as deferral of capital gains tax and a charitable deduction on your tax return. You transfer highly appreciated assets to the Charitable Lead Trust. The Trust pays the Gift of Life Transplant House a stream of income for a certain period of time. After that period of time expires, the remainder of the Trust assets is either returned to you or paid to your beneficiaries.

3. Remainder Interests (Real Estate). You can donate a remainder interest in your house or other real estate and retain lifetime use of the property. You will get a current income tax deduction for the value of the remainder interest donated. After your death, proceeds from the sale of the property that you donated come to the Gift of Life Transplant House.

III. Give at Death One of the best ways to support the Gift of Life Transplant House is to make a gift at your death. There are several giving options for you to consider.

1. Bequests. One of the simplest ways to make a contribution to the Gift of Life Transplant House is through your will or trust agreement. You can name the Gift of Life Transplant House the direct beneficiary of specific assets, a percentage of your estate, or the remainder of your estate after payment of other bequests.

2. Retirement Plans. An excellent vehicle for making a gift to the Gift of Life Transplant House is your retirement account. You can name Gift of Life, Inc. as a beneficiary of part or all of what remains in your individual retirement plan, which may include: IRA, Keogh plan, 401(k), 403(b) or other qualified pension plan. The proceeds of these plans are distributed outside of probate and are free from estate tax.

3. Life Insurance. If you have a life insurance policy, you can simply designate the Gift of Life Transplant House as the primary beneficiary of the death benefit. At your death, the proceeds pass directly to the Gift of Life Transplant House and free from estate tax.

Your financial support is important to the mission of the Gift of Life Transplant House. We invite your inquiries and would be pleased to discuss with you the planning giving option that best fits your situation.
2013 Financial Report

Assets
Current Assets 916,026
Property, Equipment, Other 9,374,046
Total Assets 10,290,072

Liabilities & Net Assets
Current Liabilities 191,509
Mortgages, Notes Payable, Other 3,625,224
Total Liabilities 3,816,733

Net Assets
Unrestricted 6,264,344
Property & Equipment 110,010
Temporarily Restricted 66,834
Permanently Restricted 32,151
Total Net Assets 6,473,339

Total Liabilities & Net Assets 10,290,072

Operations
Revenue 915,773
Expense 1,480,923
Net Income (565,150)

Fundraising
Revenue 791,294
Expense 43,264
Net Income 748,030

Combined
Revenue 1,707,067
Expense 1,524,187
Net Income 182,880

ASSETS
- Current Assets 91%
- Property, Equipment, Other 9%

LIABILITIES & NET ASSETS
- Current Liabilities 35%
- Mortgages, Notes Payable, Other 63%
- Total Net Assets 2%

OPERATIONS
- Revenue 38%
- Expense 62%

FUNDRAISING
- Revenue 5%
- Expense 95%

COMBINED REVENUE & EXPENSE
- Revenue 53%
- Expense 47%

The financial overview is an unaudited statement of financial position for 2013
Left Ventricle Assist Device (LVAD)

By Lyle Joyce, M.D., Ph.D., Professor of Surgery, Division of Cardiovascular Surgery, Mayo Clinic Hospital - Rochester

Because of the huge shortage of donor organs, the Mayo Clinic along with most other major cardiac surgery centers offers additional options to heart transplantation for patients with end stage congestive heart failure. Mechanical circulatory support therapy (MCS) can be offered to patients with advanced heart failure either as a bridge to transplant or destination therapy (in patients who are not transplant candidates). Bridge-to-transplant patients remain on device therapy until a donor heart becomes available and they undergo transplantation. Destination therapy patients receive the device and remain on device support for the rest of their lives.

Patients who are bridge-to-transplant candidates tend to be younger and without serious comorbid conditions; patients who are destination therapy candidates tend to be older and often possess various comorbid conditions that preclude them from being considered for transplant. In some cases, MCS therapy can modify a comorbid condition such that a patient can become suitable for transplant, such as in the reversal of severe pulmonary hypertension. This is referred to as the bridge-to-decision strategy.

Survival for patients after continuous-flow implantation as bridge to transplant and destination therapy

The etiology of heart failure in the majority of patients is either ischemic or idiopathic dilated; however, there is an increased frequency of patients with end-stage congenital heart disease, restrictive and hypertrophic cardiomyopathy, and senile amyloidosis. These diagnoses are quite challenging when it comes to considering device therapy, and the patient-selection process is continually refined when considering device therapy in these patients.

In the case of a significantly decompensated patient with more severe end-organ dysfunction, temporary mechanical support can be utilized to ascertain whether long-term MCS therapy is appropriate. MCS therapy should not be viewed simply as an alternative to death, but rather as a bridge to life and, indeed, an improved quality of life. Early referral and appropriate timing of implant help in the attainment of these goals.

Mayo Clinic has been at the forefront of utilizing the skill sets of a multidisciplinary team to review and discuss goals of care and methods of enhancing quality of life after device implant.

Team members at Mayo Clinic in Rochester are striving to adjust the program to make the implant process as convenient as possible for not only the patient but families as well.

After device implantation, patients have normal postsurgical activity restrictions with some particular additions unique to the device. Patients are counseled to avoid static electricity, soaking and submerging in water (due to the infection risk of the percutaneous driveline), sleeping in a prone position, and driving. While there are no specific laws regarding driving, it is recommended that patients not drive after device implantation due to uncertain liability in the event of a motor vehicle accident. Despite these challenges, patients report an improved quality of life in addition to clearly demonstrable improvements in survival and exercise capacity.

One of the major determining factors as to whether a patient is offered an MCS device is the availability of a 24-hour day care giver. While it is not unusual for these patients to live alone on the device after a period of “orientation”, it often takes two to three months before the patient and medical team feel comfortable in solo living. If there is a care giver available to bridge that gap, many more patients could be provided with this life-improving technology. Without such support, the patient does not become a candidate for the therapy and will go on to die of terminal congestive heart failure. Many of these patients would have many more years of good quality life to live if there were only some way to provide that interim care giver support. The Gift of Life Transplant House has been tremendously successful in helping patients and their families in the perioperative period. We believe a modification of this design could be equally as helpful to the MCS group of patients. If we had a facility that were staffed by volunteer MCS patients, their spouses, or other device-experienced personnel, these individuals could serve as the interim care giver for whom ever needs to lodge there for that “orientation” period. Not only would this provide the patient with a second chance at life, but the interaction with individuals who have been through the process would serve as a huge morale booster as well.

With the dramatic increase in the application of MCS therapy worldwide, there will be unmet clinical needs for these patients. In order to adequately care for these patients, more rehabilitation units, dialysis units, care facilities dealing with senility, wound centers and nutrition centers (just to name a few) will need to have specialty training to effectively care for LVAD patients.

The VAD generation is a group of patients who are no longer facing death as a result of heart failure and are subsequently aggregating into a considerable subset of geriatric medicine. They have special needs and circumstances that are not necessarily understood by the general public, medical society or even family members. Awareness of these many issues is crucial to ensure that their needs are able to be met.
Upcoming Events Spring-Summer 2014

**August 17**  
**Community Ice-Cream Social**  
Gift of Life Transplant House Campus

**October 3**  
**A Taste for Life – Wine Tasting**  
Mayo Civic Center

**November 7**  
**Benefactor Recognition Dinner**  
Mayo Clinic Foundation House (invite only)

**December 14**  
**Internal Christmas Tea**  
Internal event at Gift of Life Transplant House Campus

*For more information on these events, please visit our website www.gift-of-life.org*
Sharing Fun Times
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.

Donate Life Flag Raising Ceremony

GIFT OF LIFE TRANSPLANT HOUSE BOARD OF DIRECTORS AND STAFF

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Housekeepers
Brandy Conway, Missy Johnson, Kelly Varner
Receptionists
Debra Raduenz, Brittany Bones

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.