A NEWSLETTER OF GIFT OF LIFE TRANSPLANT HOUSE

SHARING THE gift

FALL/WINTER 2023

gift of life

GIFT OF LIFE
TRANSPLANT HOUSE
A HOME THAT HELPS



Hope Restored

By Mary Wilder

The word “hope” is one we hear again and again at Gift of Life Transplant House. There are many definitions of the word, but the best, I think, is a “confident expectation”. When a guest and caregiver come to stay at Gift of Life, they have a confident expectation that they will find safe, supportive and affordable accommodations. Transplant patients coming to Mayo Clinic have a confident expectation that the staff will do everything possible for the patient and the caregiver.

When Mike T. suffered a massive heart attack while preparing for a Men’s Retreat in a remote and small town in North Dakota, the family began a journey of hope. Just as the EMTs arrived 20 minutes later, Mike’s heart failed completely and he passed away. For 6 long minutes, EMTs worked to restore a heartbeat. He was taken by ambulance to the next largest town. He called his wife Roberta during the ride, repeatedly telling her he loved her. He wanted to make sure that she knew how much she was loved. And then she heard some rustling and the line went still. She later learned that Mike had coded again and EMTs were working to restore his life. He was airlifted to Bismarck and Roberta was able to join him. On the 3rd day, the cardiologist came to Roberta and said, “There is no hope. There is nothing more we can do.”

Mike and Roberta met when they were teenagers at a private boarding school. It wasn't until Roberta heard him sing that she decided she wanted to know more about this boy who up until this point had been annoying her. After high school, Roberta went to college and Mike became a professional musician. They were married in 1985. Mike spent a lot of time on the road as a musician and was away from home quite a bit. Just 5 years after they were married and 9 years after they had met, in 1990, Roberta was in a car accident that left her as an incomplete paraplegic. Her spinal cord was not severed; instead it was compressed, causing her paralysis. She spent 3 months in the hospital and then began the long process of rehab. Over the years she had some nerve regeneration which allows her to be able to stand on her own with something to lean against. Mike describes her as "tough as nails". She worked extremely hard during her rehab and as she described attempting to perform feats not recommended by her physical therapist, we learn a little bit about Roberta's determination and courage.

When Roberta heard there was nothing more that could be done, the doctor asked her what she would do to save Mike's life and her answer was instantaneous – "anything". Her same determination and courage came through in her words and the doctor put in orders for Mayo Clinic, reminding Roberta that he could still be rejected for a myriad of reasons. At the moment, Roberta says she was given hope!



MIKE WITH HIS SIGNED GUITAR

Mike was air flighted to Mayo where Dr. Spencer told Roberta and Mike that his heart had extensive damage and they had two options for him – an LVAD (Left Ventricle Assist Device) or a heart transplant. Roberta presented Mike the options and they chose a heart transplant. 13 days later, Mike received his new heart, staying at the hospital and rehab until July 7th, when he and Roberta were able to return to Gift of Life Transplant House together.

Roberta had chosen Gift of Life primarily because of its affordability. She was a bit apprehensive about experiencing recovery with Mike in a communal setting, but her fears were quickly put to ease once she had an opportunity to meet other guests and caregivers. She describes her stay as an "amazing experience".

Mike is a pastor, writer, speaker and a State Hwy. Patrol Chaplain. He and Roberta will soon return home to North Dakota, but they will transition from their hobby farm to an apartment, where Mike can continue his recovery.

Both Roberta and Mike love to cook and during their time at Gift of Life, they treated guests and caregivers to meals and baking!

Hope Restored changes our lives, allowing us to change our focus from inward to outward and Mike and Roberta have been inspirations and ambassadors of hope!

Letter from Leadership



Lori Ewoldt

I am honored, excited, and humbled to take on the role of Vice President of Gift of Life Transplant House! I am also thankful to be part of an organization filled with diversely talented people who are committed to the mission of hope and healing.

My childhood was spent dreaming of being a nurse while working on the family farm outside of Clutier, Iowa. That dream was fulfilled after I graduated from Luther College and started working at Mayo Clinic. My first significant exposure to Gift of Life was in 2012, when I accepted a position in the Transplant Center. I toured the house and quickly realized the importance of our patients having a caring and affordable home away from home while going through the complex journey of transplant care. When my best friend from high school needed a stem cell transplant I encouraged she and her husband to stay at the house. It is through their experience that I felt what I can only describe as the magic of Gift of Life Transplant House. It is hard to explain, but you know it when you feel it – the camaraderie, caring spirit of the staff, and lifelong friendships that develop among the guests and caregivers. In my opinion, that magic is the "secret sauce" of the ongoing success of Gift of Life Transplant House.

As a new member of Team Transplant, I was also challenged by Dr. Tom Schwab (Transplant Nephrologist and longtime friend of GOL) to figure out how to start a blood draw service at Gift of Life. I was excited at how such a service could benefit GOL guests, but I was also a bit overwhelmed at the numerous logistical and regulatory challenges. Persistence, multi-disciplinary teamwork and a great partnership between Mayo Clinic and Gift of Life Transplant House turned a great idea into a reality for our guests. To this day it remains a favorite project from my nearly 40 years at Mayo. The traits that made this project successful are ones that I will continue to use in my new leadership role. We must continue to nurture the magic at Gift of Life, while also keeping a strategic eye on the ever-evolving health care landscape. I have every confidence that we will succeed, and I want you to know that I am up for the challenge.



SEPTEMBER TRIBUTES

The names to follow have shared the legacy of hope and renewed life. Tributes not only honor donors, recipients, and loved ones, but assists in continuing to provide "a home that helps and heals" to more than 4,100 guests and caregivers each year.

The recipient is listed in *italic* and benefactor is listed in **bold**. We are thankful for everyone who took part in this special tribute opportunity.

MEMORIALS

Alfred, Kathy E.
Kelly Mauss

Allen, Carol
Jan Lewis

Anderson, Linda
Larry L. Anderson

Anderson, Virginia W.
Carl F. Anderson, MD

Annis, Rod and Gayle
Steve (Gomer) Smith

Audette, Richard A.
Beverly J. Audette

Axelsen, Pat
Don Truman

Bakeberg, Robbie
Gail Bakeberg

Bannon, Becky
Kevin Bannon, 10/10/50 to 9/6/17

Barry, Cindy and Doug
Robert F. Rowland

Barwise, Amelia
Aaron Leppin

Batten, Bruce and Chris
Julia Batten

Baumler, Floyd
Joyce Baumler

Beadle, Ginny
Roger Beadle

Belniak, Daniel
Barbara Henderson

Below, Krista
Eugene "Gene" Falkenstein

Belter, Wesley
Judy Belter

Beuthin, Janet
Kenneth Beuthin

Biegert, Lisa
Barry Anderson

Biegert, Lisa
Craig Biegert

Bien, Marilyn, Paul and Jessica
Richard Joyce

Bills, Gloria Dick
James Bills

Binek, Sharon K.
My husband, Paul S. Binek

Blake, Amanda
Rick Aamot

Blessum, Kathy
Jerry Blessum

Boccafola, Robert
Alfred Boccafola

Brandt, Mark and Peggy
Richard Aamot

Brewer, Megan and Derek
Uncle Rick Aamot

Broderick, Pamela
My late husband, Dennis Broderick

Burnaby, Dawn
Tiffaney Forrest

Bush, Carol
Kenneth Bush

Campell, Jeffrey
Kevin Campbell

Carlson, Pam
Bob Carlson, Stem cell transplant

Castro, Lauren and Amy
Geoffrey Dawes

Cornelius, Leo
Mary Ellen Lacy Cornelius

Courtney, Wayne
Ed Pompeian

Crnobrna, Ron
Sister Margeen and Sister Jane

Dellanave, Gabriele and Cynthia Wright-Dellanave
Ed Pompeian - a prince of a man

Demaree, Barbara
Sr. Margeen

Dickey, Loretta M.
Effie Kimp

Donato, Mary Margaret
Louis J. Donato

Dorner, Ronald J.
Vicky A. Dorner

Droessler, Tom
Andy Droessler

Ducharme, Sandra Schultz
Gelene Rohr

Ebert, Richard R.
Janet E. Olson-Ebert

Enge, Miriam A.
Allen D. Enge

Engelhardt, Susan and Jeff
Daryl D. and Rita J. Engelhardt

Erickson, Roger A.
Henry C. Anderson, recipient

Erickson, Roger A. and Sandy Hart
Faye Sawyer Garbina

Family and Friends of Steve Cichos
Steven Cichos

Fidelity Charitable
Linda Vilmo



Fisher, Bonnie L.
Charles L. Fisher

Fischer, Tim
Dick Wayne

Flury, Nancy
Jay K. Flury

Fuchsteiner, Christopher
Geoff Dawes

Geiger, Barb
Stephen Geiger, Stem Cell Transplant 2016

Gibbs, Sheila and John
Rick Aamot

Hagemann-Mead, Bill and Jan
Lois Hagemann

Hanson, Tanya
Gary Melin

Henderson, James
Barbara L. Henderson

Hickman, James
Katie Hickman and Joy Hickman

Hickman, Michael and Sharon
Katie Hickman

Hoech, Gary F.
Peter Christian Hoech

Hofbauer, Dale and Darlene
Randall Dale Hofbauer

Hoffert, Ken
Ardyce Hoffert

Hoffner, Karen
Suzanne Traaseth

Holter, Scott and Lindsey
Rick Aamot

Horntvedt, Lester and Dianna
Ed Pompeian

Houdek, Karen
Jim Arsineau, donor

Huber, Eldon
Rhona Huber

Interstate Power Systems
Richard E. Aamot

Isobe, Amy
John Isobe

Jacklitch, Pat
John King

Jeatran, Amy
John Mulligan

Johnson, Bryan
Kathy Allen

Johnson, Dwayne and Nancy
Joshua Wold, Heart Donor 6/13

Johnson Patricia
Aunt Adeline Hink

Johnson, Rebecca
Rick Aamot

Johnson, Wanda
Arthur L. Johnson

Kees, Lowell
Eric Kees

Kehrli, Karen
Wayne Kehrli

Kiffmeyer, Elaine
Wendelin Kiffmeyer

Kile, Beverly
John Lutzka

King, Dawn
Rodger Stordahl

Klahr, Inga
Garrett Klahr

Koperski, Rich and Judy
Son, Steven Siegle

Kurhajetz, Jo Anne
Judy Cooper

Ladin, Karl and Lynn
Joyce Baumler

LaFlair, James
Mona and Jason LaFlair

Langbecker, Sara
Karen Langbecker

Larson, Michael
Robert Yao-Jou Young

Latham, Linda
Bill Latham

Latterell, Dale
Steve Isaacson

Lee, Rick and Jean
Edward Pompeian

Leopold, Tharan
Lou Ann Leopold

Lewis, Justin
Sue Roise
Lynn VanMaaren
Dick Rabb
Ed Pompeian
Ed Ordal

Liebl, Dianne
W. Michael Liebl

Lien, Scott
Christine Ann Lien

Link, Pam
Bob Manly

Loven, Marlys
My husband, Sheldon Loven

Lund, Kim and Eric
Steve Shank

Lundeen, Christopher
Rick Aamot

SEPTEMBER TRIBUTES

MEMORIALS CONTINUED

Maier, Michael
Frank Maier

Marcinkus, Michael and Roberta
Carole Marcinkus

Martini, Joe and Tina
Scott and Shawn, my 2 donors

Mayer, Darlene
John H. Mayer

McCormick, Lynne
Michael McCormick

Meehan, Dan
Ron Wapotish

Meiners, Kimberly
Geoffrey Dawes

Mell, Susan and John
John Walsh

Messelt, Em
Ronald Messelt

Milbocker, Nancy
Jerome (Jerry) Coger

Milner, Sue
My dad, Louie Schacherer
Heart Recipient Aug 1995

Moeller, Machelle
Janice Bren

Morrison, Julie
Arlen Hilkemann

Moxon, Richard and Jean
Greg Moxon

Muller, Brad
Ruth Muller

Murphy, Michael and Emily
Curt Evans

Natus, Lynne
Troy Natus
Heart Transplant 2-3-2004

Naumann, Dennis
Dianne L. Naumann

Nagurski, Beverly
My husband

Nelson, L. Brian
Marcia A. Nelson

Norris, Michael H.
Carolyn Ann Norris

North, Kelly
Sharon Fox Moore

Oelhafen, Thomas
Eugene W. Falkenstein

Olson, Gary and Katherine Carlson
Lisa Thronsedt

Osborne, Duane
LeAnne Osborne

Overbeck, Theresa L.
Duane L. Overbeck

Parta, Janet
Mike Parta

Paynter, Katherine
Burton Paynter "The King",
Roberta Darbyshire, & Carissa Vice

Pedersen, Bertel
My wife, Dianne Pedersen

Plantenberg, Marlene
Mike (Melvin) Plantenberg

Plantenberg, Patricia
Mike (Melvin) Plantenberg

Polsfut, Shanon and Elaine
Nancy Moen

Pompeian, Adrienne
Ed Pompeian

Pompeian, Jayne
Ed Pompeian

Pompeian, Rochelle, Nick, Nadia, Lydia
Ed Pompeian

Potter, Chuck and Bonnie
Denise Kinlaw

Primrose, Beth
Dean Primrose

Rabb, Sarah
Jan Lewis
Dick Rabb

Rahoin, Shady
Gail Craycroft

Rau, Betty
Thomas Rau

Reda, Ali
Beth Young

Reda, Shereen
Robert Young

Rislove, Susan M.
David J. Rislove

Roes, Dave and Jodi
"Aunt Shy" Pearson

Ruzek, Cheryl
Rick Aamot

Schacherer, Shirley
Louie Schacherer

Schaffer, JoAnn
Richard R. Schaffer

Schmidt, Dean and Marly
Ed Pompeian

Schroeder, Kathe
Wesley A. Schroeder
Heart and Kidney Transplant

Sheggeby, Paul and Pat
Collette Lehti

Shelton, Sheldon
Jeff Shelton

Short, John
Axel Forrest Short

Shoutz, Shawn and Lesa
Barbara Swenson

Skosey, Linda
George A. Skosey

Slavitsky, Frank
Diane Kay Foster

Smith, Ken and Pam
Marion Smith

Smith, Wendell and Mary
Margaret Smith Askew

Sobolewski, Jane
Ron Cline

Sykora, Mary
Astrid A.
Glenna Reichel
Helen Pompeian
Ron Sykora
Sr. Jane
Sr. Margeen

Taylor, Don
Beverly Taylor

Tilton, William F.
Dorothy A. Tilton

Tjerstad, Mary
David Tjerstad

Tostenson, Jennifer and Daniel
Steve Cichos

Tranberg, Judith
David Tranberg

Trela, John and Katherine
Richard Joyce

Truman, Laura
Don Truman

Van Maaren, Robert
Jan Lewis and Lynn Van Maaren

Verhulst, Larry
Elizabeth Luckman

Watson, Judd and Jeanne
Steve Siegle

Weathers, Mary
Tom Weathers

Weisenburger, Marc
Carolyn Weisenburger

Weixel, Jim and Barbara
Jean Wulf

Wenzel, Dorothy
Robert V. Wenzel

Wilder, Mary
James Jacobson

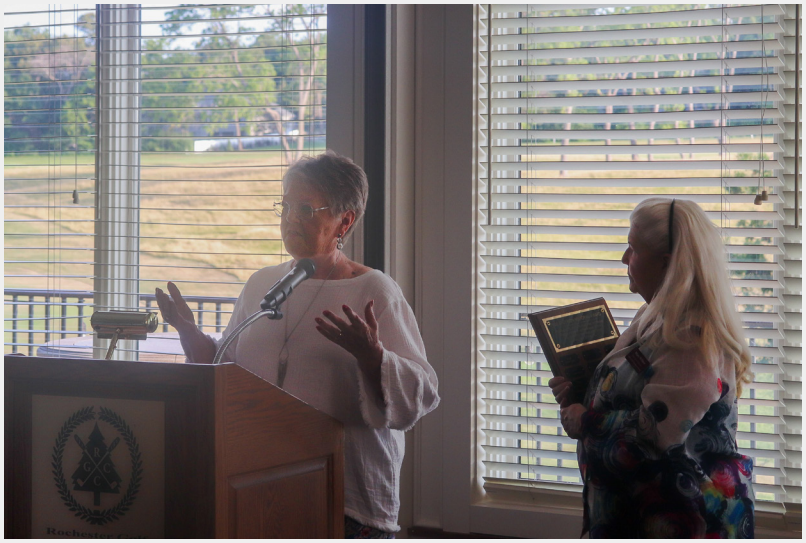
Willis, Rita M.
Harry G. Willis, Jr.

Wilson, Martin and Gretchen
Ed Pompeian

Wood, Pat Dockter Hulm
Her daughter, Jessica Hulm

Young, Elisabeth
Robert Yao-Jou Young, Gift of Life Transplant House Resident - 2000

Ziegelman, Todd and Melody
Steven Cichos



Rod Anderson Memorial Award 2023

The Rod Anderson Memorial Award commemorates board member, Rod Anderson, who passed away in 2017 and is presented to an individual who embodies those qualities of selflessness, humility and kindness that Rod embodied every day of his life.

The 2023 recipient of the Rod Anderson Memorial Award is Diane “Sam” Konakowitz, presented at our 39th Annual Golf Tournament in July. You may have had the joy of meeting Sam as she gave an orientation tour.

As a tour guide, Sam has the responsibility to review all the policies and procedures of the house as well as do everything she can to make you feel at ease and at home! And Sam does this beautifully! Her charming smile, infectious laugh and compassionate, kind eyes match her generosity of spirit and instantly put guests, caregivers, volunteers and staff alike at ease! Sam has been a volunteer at Gift of Life since 2014, logging over 1,000 hours during those years.

We are honored that Sam has chosen to volunteer at Gift of Life Transplant House!

SEPTEMBER TRIBUTES

TRIBUTES

Abels, Roger and Irene
Roger Abels

Acree Jr., Nathan E.
Austin G. Acree

Anderson, Rev. Rodney and Julane
Julane, 10 year liver transplant anniversary

Anderson, Winifred E.
Becky Neal

Apland, Jo Ann
Doug Apland

Aspen, Jeanine
Kay Emmons

Balcueva, Mary Jane
Ernie Balcueva

Bandas, Sharon
Sharon Bandas, received kidney transplant 3-17-19

Bell, Derek
Chris Lien

Bernstein, Rhona
Herbert Bernstein

Benters, Kathleen
Adam McCloud

Bloms, Kim
Betty Faber

Boyenga, Phillip and Janet
All Donors

Brady, Dennis and Theresa
Arnie Johnson, Recipient
Andy Cowell, Donor

Buettner, Heide H.
David Kess

Churchwell, Susan
Eli Churchwell, Kidney Transplant 11-16-2000

Coco, Eugenio
My Organ Donor

Cosio, Mary Jo
Kathy Schwab and Dr. Fernando Cosio, Organ and Tissue Donors

Cosio, Mary Jo
Dr. Brooks Edwards

Couture, Karen
My Liver Donor (unknown), 3-1-2011

Davidson, Cheryl
Byron Davidson

Desroiser, Robert and Tracy
Bob Desroiser

Edwards, Garth and Shelly
Garth Edwards

Erickson, Roger
Lori Lange, Donor

Esser, Connie
Connie Doughan

Evans, Mark
To All That Have Given Life

Feltman, Allan and Teresa
Steven Thurk, Recipient
Cindy Froehling, Donor

Fuerstneau, Sonia
Al Cooper, Recipient
Jeremias Cooper, Donor
July 2020

Giager, Linda
Linda Giager, donor for her husband Michael

Gilligan, Gene and Lorri
Pam Gould Jacobs

Glenn, Jay and Diana
Val Koehn and Val's honored friendship

Gordon, Marjorie and Jerold M.
Alison Grossman and Family

Gould, Bruce
Dale Gould

Guiton, C Richard
John Bruce Guiton

Hadacek, Mark
My living liver donor, Sharla Ann Hadacek

Hart, Sandra
Robert (Pete) Patterson, 22+ Year Heart Transplant

Hartman, Michael and Lisa
Doug Hartman

Hestetune, Dan and Beth
Rick Wahlberg

Hoffmann, Glenda
Kidney donor, Erin Roiger

Husman, Dale and Bonnie
Jeanine Aspen

Isobe, Amy
Marge Richardson

Johansen, Keith D.
Chris Stoner

Johannsen, Richard
Mr Richard Johannsen and Dr. Lynn Brooks

Johnson, Lorri Mumme
Anita Stoker

King, Dawn
John C. King

Klaege, William
Dalie Rocotello, Kidney donor

Knoblock, Martha
Kendon Knoblock

Knudson, Rebecca
Noah Knudson

Kulkay, Glen
My unknown donor

Lawler, Steve and Jill
Gift of Life House

Lee, Rick and Jean
Aaron Pompeian

Lewis, Justin
Will Oler and Robbye Langenfeld,
Dan and Pat Cruser,
Carol Brott,
John Livengood and Christina Livengood-English,
Greg and Regina Taylor,
Carol and Okie Allen,
Brooke Angell and Sheri Monroe

Loven, Marlys
My husband's brother and donor, Doug Loven



Mans, Dennis R. and Alice
All living transplant recipients

McCulloh, Tracey and Murl
Jill Selby

McKay, Thomas and Rose
Vicki Aegerter

McLellan, Diane
My loving husband, Dennis McLellan, who is a double lung & kidney recipient. Mayo & Gift of Life Transplant House were definitely a "beacon of hope on a dark night." Mayo Clinic was the only medical facility in the country that would consider doing a transplant. This was our last hope & thank God for Mayo & Gift of Life Transplant House.

Meek, Pat
Jim Klunder
Roxanne Meek
Pat Meek

Montgomery, Tony and Stacy
Lily Montgomery

Mrugala, Rick and Barb
Rick Mrugala

Muellner, Harry and Joanie
Paula Muellner

Myers, Mary
Darlene Perkins

Nauss, Mark
Lesa Nauss, Caregiver

Oschwald, Jennifer
Ann Oschwald

Patrick, Dr. Herbert and Paula
Adam (AJ) Patrick

Pompeian, Adrienne
Aaron Pompeian

Pompeian, Jayne
Aaron Pompeian
Ed's Mother, Helen

Pompeian, Rochelle, Nick, Nadia,Lydia
Aaron Pompeian

Preimesberger, Jean
Tim Preimesberger

Qualley, Jerry
Dawn Qualley

Quam, Jim
Jeany Kohut

Ridgeway, Lowell and Pam
Kristen Oesterreich

Roehrick, Shelly
Gary Roehrick

Rowbal, Robert and Stacy
Alan Rowbal, my brother, who gave me a kidney

Schwab Charitable
Barb Schommer

Schmidt, Ramona
Tina Wangen

Schueler, Stephanie
Leon Schueler

Schultz, Sara and Dane Van Horn
Ron and Chris Schultz

Skalecki, Mike and Dawn
Ardus Schwartz

Smith, Jay and Joyce
Joyce Smith

Smith, Michael and Barbara
Steve Thurk's birthday, kidney transplant recipient May, 2021

Snyder, Lynne E.
Husband, Bruce Snyder

Stenstrom, Stephen
Marge Stenstrom

Stephens, Paula
Dave and Tess Holzer

Stoll, Charles and Karen
Karen Stoll

Stripling, Craig and Carol
Jeff Stripling
Jason Korns
Katie Olson

Swanson, Mary
David Swanson

Taylor, Greg and Regina
Gregory L. Taylor

Thames, Col. John and Sandra
Dr. Julie Heimbach

Vilmo, Gregory
To all whose lives and paths I've crossed at Gift of Life, I am forever grateful

Walthall, Tony and Joey
Tina Thoennes

Weeks, John E.
Lois E. Weeks

Wells, Roger and Carole
Emily Buck
Sandy Toomey
Both of these 'angels' served as my donors through the Kidney Paired Donor Program.

Wilder, Mary
Norma Fristad

Williams, Ken and Elaine
My sister and live donor, Lisa Williams

Wilson, Martin and Gretchen
Jayne Pompeian and Family

Worrell, Debra
Debra and Dean Worrell

Wyffels, Mary
My living donor, Wendy Oftedahl-Moya

SEPTEMBER TRIBUTES

CONTRIBUTIONS

Altenburg Construction Inc.
Anderson, Leslie
Anonymous
Austin-Foote, Elke A.
Bachman, Dr. John and Joan
Bahr, Arlene
Bakeberg, Robbie
Beecher, Terry and Donna
Bisek, Jerome and Bernice
Blonigen, R.N. and Arlene
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Davis, Christine
Downey, Helen and Ernie
Eddy, Doug
Evans, Steven
Fidelity Charitable
Fraser, M. Cathy
Gertz, Dr. Morie
Graf, Karen
Groenewold, Jerry and Sherry
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Krump, Mark and Mary
Kukla, Dr. Aleksandra
Labernik, Edward
Larson, Jeff and Sandy
Larson, Jeffrey and Deborah
LaValley, Richard
LeDuc, Gary
LeDuc, Jacob
Lee, Jong-Han
Lee, Mary
Leier, James
Lininger, Gene and Grace
Lloyd, Ann
Lutgens, Joe and Sharon
Mattke, Ross and Peg
Mehrkens, Susan
Metz, Leo
Moran, Frank and Deb
Moore, Chris and LaVonne
Morse, Raymond
Moua, Long
Murphy, Scott and Nancy
Murtaugh, Michael
New, Dan and Mary
Olson, Corey and Annette
Olson Tree Services
Olson, Joan
In thankfulness for staying at GOL in 2018 for a stem cell transplant
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Pazdernik, Gregory
Peak, Frank
Pepin, Wayne
Peters, Sara
Peterson, Kevin
Phillips, Frank S.
Purdy, Gail Rasmussen
Quirk, Michael
Randby, Pat
Robbins, Bruce
Roise, John
Schaber, Tamara and Joseph
Schmidgall, Donald
Schmillen, Frank L.
Schmitt, James and Susan
Sibson, Joyce
Sleeter, Walter
Smith, Steve
Spitzmiller, Betty L.
Sterioff, Dr. Sylvester and Yvonne
Sweeney, Brenda and Daniel
Tatge, Charles and Sandra
Teeser, Pat
Thoe, Larry
Thompson, John
Tiernan, Carolyn
Torkelson, Tom
Ubben, Kathryn
Vance, Steve
Wagler, Regina and Lonnie
Waite, Mark and Debbie
Wells, Herbert and Denise
Wietzke, Raija
Wilhelmi, Rose
Wernecke, Wayne and Sharon
So many thanks for what GOL had meant to us.
Zabel, Glen

Musings

How Do I Say Thank You?

"Scar of love. We all have scars. Fall off your bike, cut with a knife, fall off a dock. Keisha just received a scar of love. It started with the word donor on a person's driver's license. This scar of love is not often intended, but most often a gift from personal misfortune. Keisha and I hope to talk to, maybe even meet the family of the person who allowed Keisha to receive this scar of love. Because of this family's gift, when Keisha recovers, she will be able to play with the grandkids in the lake, continue to do genealogy, yes and even return to work."

Written by Brian S., husband to Keisha
Keisha received a heart transplant May 2023





Reaching Out to Your Donor Family

The hope that Brian expresses in his writing *Scar of Love* is a hope shared by many recipients yet it is ultimately a deeply personal decision. Even after the decision is made, where to begin can be daunting. Finding the right words - knowing what to say or how much to share - it all can seem overwhelming.

LifeSource, located in Minneapolis, is a non-profit that is committed to saving lives through organ, tissue, and eye donation, and they offer these suggestions:

- Talk about yourself, including your name, your career, hobbies, or interests
- Share the information you feel comfortable disclosing
- Talk about your transplant experience, using simple language
- You may want to recognize your donor family and thank them
- You may want to let your donor family know how the transplant has changed your life



Once you have composed your letter, you may submit your letter, along with your name, your transplant date and the type of transplant you received, directly to LifeSource at LifeSource, Donor Family Advocate, 2225 West River Road North, Minneapolis, MN 55411 or you may submit a letter by going to the website at:

life-source.org/recipients/writing-to-donor-families

It is important to remember that the decision to respond to your letter is also a deeply personal one for your donor family. While there is no guarantee that you will hear from your donor family, your letter may bring comfort and affirmation that their gift was truly appreciated.



Susan Powers Helping Hand Fund

One of our main goals at Gift of Life Transplant House is to alleviate as many of the concerns you have, including financial concerns about your lodging. We are committed to making sure you have an affordable place to stay. We haven't increased our fees in the last 10 years, continuing to charge just $30.00 a night. Even so, for some guests, that fee can stretch their already tight budget. Thanks to the generosity of the family of Susan Powers, a two time kidney and liver transplant recipient, a fund was established in 2003 to help subsidize the lodging fees for families experiencing financial challenges. Generally, the average allocation of funds is $10,000 annually to guests requesting a subsidy.

For many of us, the onset of the pandemic in 2020 brought even more financial challenges and while the need for transplants did not drop, guests staying at Gift of Life experienced the further challenges of closures and attempting to work remotely. In the last 3 years, our average allocation of funds from the Susan Powers Helping Hand Fund rose from $10,000 annually to $34,000 annually.

No guest will ever be denied assistance if needed; however, the funds remaining in the Susan Powers Helping Hand Fund are reflecting this increase in need and our ability to continue to provide assistance to guests is being impacted.

As you ponder your donations for the upcoming months, consider making a donation directly to the Susan Powers Helping Hand Fund and ensure that the only focus our guests will have is on recovery! Go to www.gift-of-life.org/make-a-donation



Our New Staff



Kayla Dwire
PR Marketing Coordinator



Debbie Schindler
Receptionist



Kaielyn Marshall
Housekeeper



Charlene De La Cruz
Housekeeper

Gift of Life Transplant Pediatric House Becomes a Reality!





Thanks to a wonderfully generous donation from beloved friends of Gift of Life, Gift of Life Pediatric Transplant House will become a reality! Their donation has provided all the funds needed to complete the renovation and work will begin as soon as the City of Rochester approves our permits. We anticipate the work to be completed in approximately 4 months.

The house will be designed to allow the transplant child, the parents and one or two siblings, if desired, to stay. Bedrooms will feature private bathrooms and adjoining rooms. There will be room for four families with the main level bedroom and bathroom accommodating a child or parent who cannot climb stairs. The house will also feature a playroom, TV room and computer room.

We have also received donations to furnish the playroom and one of the bedrooms. If you would like to furnish a bedroom, help stock the kitchen or purchase plates and utensils, please contact Mary Wilder, Executive Director, at 507-951-0061 or email at mwilder@gift-of-life.org.

Gift of Life Pediatric TRANSPLANT HOUSE



MARY WILDER TALKING WITH BRUCE & PATSY STENGEL AND DIANA & PHIL SMITH

Coffee with Caregivers

The role of a caregiver is challenging, daunting and rewarding. It is a privilege to observe the caregivers that stay at Gift of Life and the remarkable individuals they are. We held our 1st "Coffee with Caregivers" on Tuesday, October 3rd and while the intention was to have an hour long conversation, we talked almost an hour and a half!

This program provides caregivers the opportunity to join Mary Wilder, Executive Director, for an hour of coffee and conversation every Tuesday. Alternating between the Edward and Jayne Pompeian Home and the Anne and Henry Zarrow Home every other week, Coffee with Caregivers will be a time for fellowship and friendship.

House Happenings

OPERATIONS

We will be re-keying the locks at the Anne and Henry Zarrow Home this fall. The current locks are magnetic stripe keys and often become de-magnetized. This requires guests and caregivers to either stop at the front desk or call our night supervisor to have their keys reactivated. In an effort to reduce the amount of inconvenience, we will be changing all the locks to a traditional key lock.

Our Operations Manager is Pollie Goodman. If you have questions about Gift of Life, feel free to reach out to her. Her email is pollie@gift-of-life.org.

FACILITIES

We have named 2023 "The Year of Repairs!" From repaving our parking lot at the Edward and Jayne Pompeian Home to replacing all the boilers at the same house, we have been busy fixing, repairing and replacing! Our Facilities team, under the direction of Cody Schieck, have done a wonderful job of maintaining the high standards for which Gift of Life is known.

4 new boilers are being installed at the Edward and Jayne Pompeian Home, the "705 House." Thanks to the generosity of Goodin Company and Goodin Company Foundation, this project will cost only a small percentage of the normal cost, including a $10,000 donation.

Our Facilities Manager is Cody Schieck. If you have questions regarding the facilities of Gift of Life, feel free to reach out to him. His email is cody@gift-of-life.org.



MARY WILDER WITH TIM BESTGEN, BRANCH MANAGER AT GOODIN COMPANY



Online Reservation Requests Available Soon

Have you been wishing you could make your reservation request to stay at Gift of Life online? Well, we heard your wishes and will be creating an online reservation option for guests.

You will be able to find the option available by going to our website at www.gift-of-life.org. Click on Be Our Guest and scroll down to the form. Once you have submitted the form, you will receive confirmation that we have received your request, and our receptionists will make sure your request is on the calendar. As always, you will receive a phone call the day before or the day of your reservation, providing you with your room information. If you prefer, just call our receptionist to make your reservation at 507-288-7470. We always love to hear your voice!



MARY WILDER WITH JOSH AND LON KELLER

Honoring Generosity

Featured in our Fall/Winter 2022 Newsletter was the story of Josh Keller, heart recipient. Josh and his dad, Lon, both work for Bell Bank and as part of the Pay-It-Forward program, donated $18,200 to Gift of Life Transplant House. Lon is the Director and Senior Editor at Bell Studios and sent us a video of Josh's transplant journey.

Enjoy watching Josh's story and learning about the generosity of Bell Bank.

To watch, go to the camera option on your Smart Phone. DO NOT TAKE A PICTURE. Instead, "hover" over the QR code until you see a website come up. Click on the website and enjoy the video! We are so grateful to Josh and Lon Keller and to Bell Bank!

Billiards Room Remodel

Tucked away in the farthest corner of the Edward and Jayne Pompeian Home on the lower level is the room we affectionately refer to as the "Billiards Room". It derives its name from the billiards table that at one time made up part of the furnishings of the room. The room has always been a favorite for getting away, watching a little TV or reading a book. A pool table has since replaced the billiards table, but we continue to call the room the Billiards Room. Last fall we noticed that the room had a musty odor and our Facilities Manager, Cody, worked to identify the source of the smell. We eventually made the decision to remodel the room, tearing out the carpet and giving it a fresh coat of paint. Ever mindful of our budget, the Facilities Team did all the work themselves! One of our custodians, Steve Birdseye, donated a lovely wrap-around sectional sofa that matches the carpet. A bookcase was obtained to store all of the puzzles in the room, freeing up a desk that can now be used for writing or putting a puzzle together. Best of all, the musty odor is gone! We are so grateful for the hard work and dedication of our Facilities Team!



SAVE THE DATE

Gift of Life

NEW YEAR'S EVE BALL

A 40th Anniversary Celebration

Sunday, December 31st, 2023

8:00 PM - 1:00 AM

Hilton Rochester Mayo Clinic Area
10 East Center Street
Rochester, MN 55904

It won't be a party without you!

Welcoming Visitors Again

Gift of Life Transplant House has made the decision to once again allow visitors inside the homes. Visitors have always been welcome on our lawn and outside, but with colder weather just ahead, it becomes difficult for guests and caregivers to find a convenient way to visit with loved ones. We recognize how tremendously encouraging even a brief visit can be. Gift of Life has not been open to visitors inside since March of 2020 when the pandemic started and we will continue to monitor this closely. Guests and caregivers will be able to make a reservation in the Family Room at either the Anne and Henry Zarrow Home or the Edward and Jayne Pompeian Home. Visits may last up to 2 hours and children are welcome!



39th Annual Golf Tournament













2023 Events



GOLF TOURNAMENT WINNING TEAM



ANNUAL GOL BBQ



ANNUAL GOL BBQ

3rd Annual Gift of Life Car Show











MARY MITCHELL PUTTING UP OUR TRIBUTE RIBBONS



TRANSPLANT PICNIC



TRANSPLANT PICNIC



TIM RASMUSSON CHECK PRESENTATION

Gift of Life
TRANSPLANT HOUSE
Rochester, MN

www.facebook.com/giftoflifetransplanthouse

@GiftOfLifeTransplantHouse

www.linkedin.com/company/gift-of-life-transplant-house/

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 Transplant House is a proud member of HHN Healthcare Hospitality Network

Gift of Life TRANSPLANT HOUSE

Gift of Life Inc.
705 Second Street, Southwest
Rochester, Minnesota 55902

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Executive Director
Mary Wilder

Facilities Manager
Cody Schiek

Operations Manager
Pollie Goodman

PR Marketing Coordinator
Kayla Dwire

Administrative & Volunteer Coordinator
Tami Konakowitz

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Payge Merkel, Debbie Schindler

Resident Night Manager
724 House: Travis Niemeier

705 House: Val Koehn

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Data Base Clerk
JoAnn Volker