SHARING THE gift

SPRING/SUMMER 2022

gift of life

GIFT OF LIFE
TRANSPLANT HOUSE

A HOME THAT HELPS
AND HEALS



The Quilts of Gift of Life

Quilts are a part of the very fabric of Gift of Life Transplant House. From the quilts displayed as artwork on the walls, to the quilts guests find on their beds, to the Memorial Quilt monument built in honor of one of our guests, quilts are remembered fondly.

Each quilt tells a story and in fact, speaks different words to different ears.

We recently received a large donation of quilts from the Bethel Lutheran Church Friendly Quilters and I enjoyed spending time with them, learning about quilting and what quilting means to them.

Quilting is an involved process. First a pattern is chosen, but if you are working with the Bethel Friendly Quilters, you creatively design your own patterns. Next fabric is carefully ironed to be used in each quilt, followed by meticulously cutting the same size squares to be used. A bottom piece is chosen to which the fabric will be sewn and in the middle is placed batting or material to make the quilt warm and heavy. The quilts are laid out on a large table and the piecing together of the fabric begins.



Bethel Lutheran Church Friendly Quilters Group
Front Row: *Trish Bendtsen, Barbara DeFrang, Carmelita Johnson, Ruth Friedli, Joan Miller, Martha Schwartz.* ***2nd Row:*** *Karen Edin, Joan Fleming, Jean Rysavy, VerlaJean Anderson, Gloria Harper, Jan Scheid, Eileen Anderson, Sue Mitchell.* ***3rd Row:*** *Janet Olson, Alice Beighley, Sue Kjome, Chris Higgins, Jeanette Johannsen, Jenifer Jensen, Susan Lommen, Jean Mortenson, Laurice Kneeskern, Sandy Anderson, Rozana Roeder, Cindy Corey*

Some stitching is done on sewing machines and some is done by hand.

Why is quilting important to these women? For some, gathering for these tasks is a social outlet and time to visit and reminisce. For others, it means keeping hands and minds busy and for others, the group has become just like a family.

But for our guests, the quilts are a symbol – a tangible reminder of Gift of Life Transplant House. Just like the many scraps of fabric used in a quilt, each coming from a different dress, skirt, apron or curtain, our guests each bring an array of life stories, colorful and interesting in their texture and pattern. Just like the way in which the fabric is arranged to make a pattern, so our guests reflect on the way in which their life is arranged. Just as the threads of the quilt tie together the bottom, the batting and the beautiful fabrics, so their lives are tied together with friendships forged in the midst of challenge, tears and joy. Each quilt takes countless hours of work and when we hold the quilt or wrap up in its warmth, we can't help but appreciate the craftmanship that created each one. As we listen to the stories of our guests and learn to know them, we can't help but appreciate the courage, resilience and creativity of each one.

Quilts are an autobiography in cloth and thread, made with love and gratitude. They embody the desire to comfort and protect, to embrace and secure. The quilts at Gift of Life remind us all that we are not alone, but rather wrapped in the love and embrace of our community, family and friends!



Quilt made by Jan Lewis. Inspiring the quilt memorial behind the 724 House.



The preparation and sewing of a quilt at the Bethel Friendly Quilters Group.



Quilt hanging in the 705 House in honor of the 20th Anniversary.

Letter from Leadership



ADRIENNE POMPEIAN
BOARD PRESIDENT

Dear guests, staff, donors, and friends,

We couldn't be more excited at Gift of Life as we look ahead to warmer temperatures and officially kick off spring with celebrations and activities for Donate Life Month in April. National Donor Day, Blue & Green Day, and the 8th Annual Timmay 5K are just a few of the activities we have participated in this month to promote and raise awareness of organ, tissue, and eye donation, which is a topic near and dear to many of us.

Many of you reading this have received a second chance at life because someone checked "yes" to being a deceased donor or came forward to being a living organ donor. We know how impactful being an organ donor is as one deceased donor can save the lives of 8 people, restore sight to 2 people, and heal more than 75 people through tissue donation. In addition we have a large need as over 110,000 people are on the transplant waiting list today. The more people we can educate on the impact and importance of being an organ donor, the more lives that can be saved. I encourage each of you to continue to actively work to raise awareness of the importance of organ donation not just during Donate Life Month, but year round. For those of you who are transplant recipients or living donors, I encourage you to share your story. You don't know who you could touch and ultimately help come forward to be an organ donor.

Following Donate Life Month, we look ahead to our activities this summer. We will be hosting the 38th Annual Golf Tournament on July 11 and resuming the Annual Transplant Patient and Donor Family Picnic on July 31. I am sure many of you are especially looking forward to the picnic as this has been canceled the past two years due to the pandemic. Lastly, August 6 will be our Second Annual Gift of Life Car Show. There are plenty of great opportunities to support Gift of Life and have fun while doing so! I hope to see many of you at these events!

Gift of Life Transplant House truly is blessed. Amidst the ongoing pandemic, we continue to safely and successfully provide our guests with a clean, affordable, and supportive home-like environment. This is a result of our incredible staff and volunteers for whom I can't thank enough for all that they do to keep everyone safe and healthy each and every day. I also thank each of you—our guests, donors, and friends for your continued belief in and support of our mission. We couldn't do it without you!

As my father would say, Gift of Life is where transplant patients belong—he was right. Gift of Life is a unique and special place where tears, laughter, and stories are shared and lifelong friendships are born. You don't get that at a hotel and you can't explain this until you step inside the house and are greeted with an environment of hope.

I wish you a blessed spring and summer, and that you continue to find joy in every day. Each day truly is a gift of life.

With warm regards,

Adrienne Pompeian

GIFT OF LIFE TRANSPLANT HOUSE Wish List

- ◊ $30 towards a guest room stay (*1 night*)
- ◊ Keurig K-Cup Pods
- ◊ Individual Wrapped Chocolate Candy
- ◊ Individually Wrapped Snacks *(crackers, cookies, trail mix)*
- ◊ Gift Cards to Wal-Mart, Target, or Hy-Vee
- ◊ Forever Postage Stamps
- ◊ Gallon Ziploc Bags
- ◊ Napkins
- ◊ Paper Towels
- ◊ Facial Tissues
- ◊ Toilet Paper
- ◊ Scrubbing Bubbles
- ◊ Soft Scrub
- ◊ Toilet Bowl Cleaner
- ◊ New Commercial Vacuum Cleaners
- ◊ Aluminum Foil
- ◊ Clorox Clean-up

Find our Amazon Wish List and links to items on our Website: www.gift-of-life.org/make-a-donation

Gift of Life In 1995



Stephanie and Clint at Gift of Life Transplant House in 2022.

To get a perspective on what Gift of Life Transplant House was like in 1995, we spoke to Stephanie Redden-Higgins. Stephanie would know – she has been coming to Gift of Life since 1995!

Stephanie was born with a Class III heart blockage and first came to Mayo Clinic when she was just 3 years old. With the assistance of Mayo Clinic, she did well until she was 22 and then needed a pacemaker.

In 1995 she was placed on the transplant list and returned to Gift of Life and Mayo Clinic every 6 weeks. Eventually, she was stabilized, doing so well that she was moved to the inactive list and then taken off the transplant list. During this time, Stephanie was working, climbing stairs and leading a normal life as much as possible.

She was once again hospitalized in 2021 with what was thought to be gall bladder problems. Her local doctor did not think it had anything to do with her heart, but when the surgeon came to visit with her, he told her he would not do the surgery. Her heart was choking off the blood supply to her gall bladder. After a week of antibiotics, she felt better, but a visit with her Mayo doctors ended in an immediate request that she get to Mayo Clinic NOW!

She was admitted in June 2021. On June 28th, she was told she would receive a new heart the next day. Being the remarkable woman that she is, Stephanie paid her bills, called her husband Clint and the rest of the family, and went to sleep.

She did receive her heart but was in the hospital for 11 days dealing with high rejection. Eventually she was released to Gift of Life Transplant House for continued recovery. Stephanie says she feels so healthy. She has so much energy, can run, her lips and hand are no longer blue and her ears are actually warm. Her husband, Clint, says he was concerned about being her caregiver at first – he isn't much of a cook, but Stephanie was able to help him more than he had anticipated.

So how has Gift of Life Transplant House changed since those early days? The house had just been acquired in 1994, so there were only guest rooms at that time. Stephanie actually helped the first Executive Director, Sr. Margeen, set up her office. Her husband, Clint, hauled items between the original Gift of Life Transplant House and the "705" house and worked in the yard. Visitors could visit in the guest's room with them and perhaps most memorable, Sr. Margeen and Sr. Jane completely changed her concept of what Franciscan nuns were like!

But what hasn't changed is the camaraderie and support among the guests and caregivers. Once here, guests and caregivers know they are not alone – this is a journey being experienced by so many others. Since 1984, Gift of Life has continued to be a 'home away from home" and will be for generations to come!

• WAYS TO GIVE •



Your support means that transplant patients and their caregivers are not alone! They find hope, support and a haven at Gift of Life Transplant House.

• ***Memorial Pavers*** •
Memorialize or honor your loved one with a memorial Paver.

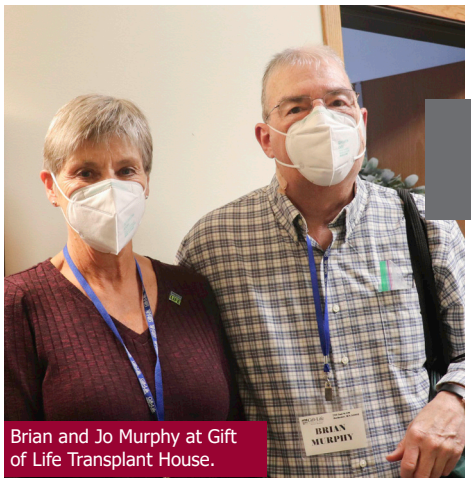
• ***AmazonSmile*** •
Select Gift of Life as your AmazonSmile charity. Amazon will donate .5% of your eligible purchases

• ***Gifts from Your Retirement Account***•
Make a qualified charitable distribution (QCD) from an IRA or other retirement account if you are over the age of 70 ½.

We have listed just a few of the variety of ways you can support Gift of Lift Transplant House. To discuss other options, please feel free to call Mary Wilder, Executive Director, at 507-951-0061 or email at mwilder@gift-of-life.org.

WWW.GIFT-OF-LIFE.ORG/MAKE-A-DONATION

"I Know Your Secret"



Brian and Jo Murphy at Gift of Life Transplant House.

"It is a relief to stay here, knowing we can stay as long as we need to."

In 1990, Brian Murphy first made his way to Mayo Clinic and learned his diagnosis was IgA, an autoimmune kidney disease that can lead to end-stage kidney failure. Brian received his 1st kidney transplant in 1994 donated from his wife, Joselyn (Jo). We acquired the "Judd" house in 1994, so guests and caregivers were still finding a place to stay at the original Gift of Life Transplant House on Center St. But they were unable to find a room there, so instead, they stayed at Brentwood Motor Inn for a month. Ed Pompeian, our founder, and others had purchased the Brentwood back in 1980 and Ed made sure that transplant patients could find a room at reduced rates! One of the investors in the hotel was a friend of Brian's dad and coincidently Brian's dad grew up just two doors down from the current "Judd" house.

In 2007 after 12 ½ years, Brian went into acute rejection and received his 2nd transplant from a friend. Sadly, the kidney was rejected. Another transplant was done in 2009. This transplant was a "paired donation". In a paired donation, a kidney donor and the intended but unmatched recipient agree to participate in a chain of coordinated transplants involving other incompatible donor-recipient pairs. The donor's organ goes to another patient and the original intended recipient receives a kidney from another new but matching donor. In Brian's case, there were 4 people involved.

Staying at Gift of Life Transplant House at the same time was a daughter and her mom. This young woman had donated her kidney and her mom had received a kidney from the paired donation program. As Brian and Jo got to know them, a thought began to form. One day, Jo approached the young woman and said, "I know your secret." This young woman's donated kidney had been given to Brian and their family friend's donated kidney had been given to her mother!

Brian and Jo have many memories of Gift of Life Transplant House – watching Sr. Jane, our 2nd Executive Director, don a construction hat and check on construction at the "724" house – remembering Helen Pompeian, Ed's mother and 1st kidney donor, as the "house mother" who loved to laugh – and climbing the stairs at the Founder's House (it had to be demolished in 2015).

Brian admits he was hesitant to stay at first. There were no TV's in the rooms and a lot of strange people around. But he quickly got over that and appreciates how comfortable and affordable the house is. "*It is a relief to stay here, knowing we can stay as long as we need to.*"

DONATE LIFE MONTH RECAP

April was Donate Life Month and the theme was BEE A Donor! The month was busy with activities including National Living Donor Day, the Virtual Donate Life Flag Raising, and a thank you to Health Care Workers! Sunny the Honey Bee and her beekeeper even came to visit at the house! *('Sunny' is actually our Board member, Cathy Dudley. Cathy works with LifeSource as well.)* We had intended to culminate the month with our "Walk of Remembrance", lighting 2nd St. SW with blue and green luminarias, but it rained two weeks in a row and we had to cancel it. Encourage your friends, family and neighbors to "BEE A Donor"!

IT IS EASY TO SIGN UP ON
WWW.REGISTERME.COM.







TRANSPLANT STORY: "This Is Our Second Home"

"My name is Alexander Fooks, I am 64 years old, married for 43 years to the woman I love. Our story began at the university. We have 2 children, a son (42) who is a software engineer in Hi-Tech company, and a daughter (33) who is a nutritionist and works as medicine researcher in Israeli office of Astra Zeneca.

We have 3 grandchildren.

We are a strong and friendly family.

We have been living in Israel for almost 30 years. We all work, we live near Tel Aviv in the city of Holon.

I have been working as a software developer at Hi-Tech company Allot for over 13 years.

Suddenly our life changed. After two years of constant pain, as well as losing 20 kilos of weight, we started checking and finally got to the wonderful and famous Israeli surgeon Dr. Ido Nachmani. According to his directions, the final diagnosis was made: cancer of the bile ducts. In practice, the situation was not easy and required an urgent decision on a liver transplant. The only way out was to get a referral for treatment at the Mayo Clinic Rochester, where such surgeries are successfully performed. Maccabi Medical Fund went to meet us and gave us a referral and provided financial support.

And here we are in the United States of America, the state of Minnesota, the city of Rochester. It was not easy to get here - the flight with transfers took more than 24 hours. It should be considered that everything was complicated by the pandemic and the flight required additional checks and permits.

The first month we lived in apartments. We were alone in a closed space and felt lonely. We had fears about moving to GIFT OF LIFE, but they did not come true. We, foreigners with a different language, a different mentality, are the only ones like that.

In GIFT OF LIFE, we found a warm, cozy home, caring attitude of the staff and the contribution of volunteers, nice, warm, caring people and kind hearted friends. We are all united by similar difficult problems. But together it is easier for us to overcome them and fight. Every day when we return from the clinic, we say we are going home. This is our second home.

Many thanks to the GIFT OF LIFE staff: Mary, Kari, Rebecca, Ashley and everyone for their kindness and cordiality."







WELCOME NEW STAFF!



JERRY JENSEN
Facilities Staff



ABBY SAND
Housekeeper



MINDY HAY
Housekeeper



REGISTRATION NOW OPEN!
GIFT-OF-LIFE.ORG/GOLF

GIFT OF LIFE RUN & WALK 5K

Hosted by TerraLoco MN

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 18

2022 EVENTS



Save the Date

ANNUAL
TRANSPLANT
PATIENT AND DONOR FAMILY
PICNIC

RAIN OR SHINE!

Please see our Transplant Center Facebook Page for cancellation notices related to severe weather or COVID-19 surges.
FACEBOOK.COM/MAYOCLINICTRANSPLANT

QUESTIONS? CONTACT US AT TRANSPLANTPICNIC@GMAIL.COM

REGISTER HERE

Date:
SUNDAY, JULY 31, 2022
Time:
11:00 - 2:00
Location:
SOLDIERS FIELD
RSVP:
FRIDAY, JULY 15

Thank you to everyone who particpated in the Timmay 5k hosted by the Tim Rasmusson Foundation!







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

2022 CORPORATE PARTNERS

Mayo Specialty Pharmacy

Altra Federal Credit Union

DBS Group — Breaking New Ground in Construction.

Home Federal

ONB Bank

WEIS builders

Valor Mechanical

Tulip Tree Studios

Reagan Outdoor Advertising

CRW architecture + design group

Even Hotels

Staybridge Suites — An IHG Hotel

Cambria

Associated Bank

Custom Retaining Walls and Landscaping, Inc.

ISG

Find us on

For more information on our events please visit our website: **www.gift-of-life.org.** Keep an eye on our Facebook page for photos, event details and other happenings at Gift of Life Transplant House!

www.facebook.com/giftoflifetransplanthouse

@GiftOfLifeTransplantHouse

GIFT OF LIFE TRANSPLANT HOUSE BOARD OF DIRECTORS AND STAFF

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Vice President - Cyle Erie
Secretary - David Liebow
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Emeritus - Jayne Pompeian

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Ladd Baldus

Operations Manager
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Tami Konakowitz

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Ashley Grant, Rebecca Stephan

Resident Night Manager
724 House: Travis Niemeier

705 House: Val Koehn

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Lead Housekeeper
Pollie Goodman

Housekeepers
Kathy Gilbertson, Connie Thedens, Abby Sand, Mindy Hay

Marketing Event Coordinator
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Data Entry Clerk
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