

St. Louis Spirit



Winter 2021

Staff and residents enjoyed the beauty of the season on the night of the Christmas Parade (pg. 2).

In this Issue

Community Brings Christmas Joy

Santa arrives at SLC



P2

Coach Beilein hosts virtual event



P4

Dream Tour planned



P5

KofC offers Match



P7

The birth of Christ is the reason for the Christmas season, and in spite of the many challenges we've faced in 2020 as a result of this year's pandemic, St. Louis Center has also received many blessings.

The residents are grateful for the Christmas season and the tremendous outpouring of love and support from the community throughout Washtenaw County and beyond. Along with the many people who made year-end contributions to assist with this year's pandemic related budget deficit, many groups and organizations have made special efforts to help the residents feel special and know that they have not been forgotten. To all of you, our residents say "Thank You!"



Keavan enjoyed decorating the Christmas tree.

They received everything imaginable, from toys to pajamas, athletic shoes, sweatshirts, gift cards and personalized items on their wish lists. It is overwhelming



Bob was overjoyed with his gifts Christmas morning.

to witness how much generosity comes from our benefactors every year. Because of you and your support, the residents of St. Louis Center learn every year that there are many people in the world who love them and cherish their lives as children of God.

To get into the Christmas spirit, the residents participated in a Christmas parade around the campus of St. Louis Center on Thursday, December 17th, with Santa and Mrs. Claus making an appearance. Read more about the parade on pg. 2.

16195 W. Old US Hwy. 12,
Chelsea MI 48118
phone 734-475-8430
www.stlouiscenter.org

From Fr. Enzo

Pandemic! The pandemic is not over, but life continues at St. Louis Center.

Some changes happened this fall. The hybrid school format which was implemented at the beginning of September suddenly changed at Thanksgiving and became only virtual because of an increase in COVID-19 cases. Many of the adults were still able to go to work.

Two adult residents returned to their county of origin.

We were able to have virtual celebrations: the 60th anniversary and the Fall Auction.

Due to the cancellation of many fundraising events, the need to hire additional staff to provide nurturing care for the residents, hazard pay for staff, and a reduction in earned revenue, the Center found itself in deep financial need to meet day-to-day operations. We asked the community for help and you responded. The generous outpouring of financial support has been outstanding and marvelous. One benefactor solicited his friends and raised \$300,000, another matched donations totaling \$100,000. The Manresa Caravan of Alhambra ran their own drive to raise money for the match. The Community Advisory Council (CAC) of the Center raised from its membership \$52,800. The goal was met!

The KofC State Council has pledged a matching fund of \$100,000 to help us continue to meet higher than usual needs in 2021. The matching drive began January 1st and runs until March 31, 2021.

The construction of the new buildings and the remodeling of part of the old one have been completed. As soon as licensing approvals are received, the residents will move into their new homes/cottages. Also we are finalizing all the documentation needed for the renting and leasing of the single home and the duplex.

All of you have cared and showed love, interest and concern for the Center and its residents. We give thanks to God because all of you have become His caring hands for the people entrusted to our care. We know that God doesn't forget those who "are precious in His sight" (St. Louis Guanella.)

Thank you again and may God bless all of you during this year of grace 2021!

Fr. Enzo Ashlari



Around the Village

Trick or Treat Parade

Nothing has been the same during this year of the pandemic, and Halloween night was no exception for the children living in St. Louis Guanella Village. The staff of SLC made the best of the situation by putting together a "candy motorcade," where participants could drop their candy into a box in front of each of the four children's homes, and provide the kids with their promised Halloween treats. In the meantime, the visitors were treated to scary decorations at each of the homes, with the children all dressed in costumes and waving from their front porches. The children were grateful for everyone who took the time to stop by their homes to donate treats.



Deja Gray decorated the house for Halloween.

Christmas Parade

To get into the Christmas spirit, the residents participated in a Christmas parade through St. Louis Guanella Village on Thursday, December 17th. Fr. Dave Stawasz led the way in a golf cart disguised as a stack of gifts. The adult residents followed with signs and cheers of "Merry Christmas." The children sat on



their porches anxiously waiting for the grand finale: the appearance of Santa and Mrs. Claus. At the end of the parade route, Fr. Dave presented the keys to St. Louis Center to Santa just to be sure there is nothing to prevent him from getting in on Christmas Eve to deliver gifts.



We continue to Thrive!

It certainly was not a “normal” holiday season for any of us. We have all struggled. But, even in this difficult time, SLC has thrived.

When asked how the supervisors and staff were coping, this is what Rick Visel, Program Director, had to say:

“The staff have pulled together and supported each other during this time of crisis. For the past two months I have not heard of any conflicts. This also extends to housekeeping. The units have been clean and the housekeeping staff have done a great job even while working understaffed. The whole team has stepped up and supported one another.



Stanley enjoyed the New Year's celebration.

The direct care workers, with the extra efforts to help salvage Halloween and Thanksgiving, were wonderful. They also

embraced Christmas, holding a decorating contest for exterior of the building and organizing a parade. Staff did secret Santa for each other as well as for the residents who were at SLC on Christmas day.

“The new supervisors are all learning new responsibilities and navigating the challenges of leading a shift. They have embraced these new challenges and are doing their best to better support their staff.

I worked with one of the residents recently and he talked about how much more engaged the staff are while working with him. They really seem to care and that they are all doing more activities with them to help make the days more fun.

The new activity coordinator connected with the staff and residents. Each week more and more residents are participating in the arts and craft projects. The groups at St. Joe Hall took a long time to buy in. But soon they were all coloring Christmas pictures, listening to music and filling in the blanks to a letter to Santa. Then they broke out in a dance



*Laura Rayer
Activities Coordinator*

and formed a train with each of the residents leading the dance team around the unit. This would not have happened a few months ago. There is a new level of confidence in the staff and a new level of interaction now then there was before COVID. All of us are turning out to support one another to survive.”

Congratulations to all of you for the outstanding work you have done. We will come out of this pandemic stronger than ever!

Residents and Staff Vaccinated

Saturday, January 9th was a day of celebration at St. Louis Center, as many of the residents and staff were able to start receiving the first of two COVID-19



Deana Fisher, SLC COO, getting a vaccine.

vaccinations from the CVS technicians who were contracted by the State of Michigan. You could almost feel a collective sigh of relief in the building as everyone happily rolled up their sleeves, sensing that there is now light at the end of this dark COVID-19 tunnel. CVS employees Laial Dakroub and Ivana Elhelleh worked quickly and efficiently while distributing the Moderna vaccinations in the gym, following initial screening by COO Deana Fisher. Those who received the vaccinations will need a second dose in 28 days.



Matthias was excited to do his part and get the vaccine.

Virtual Events Support St. Louis Center

60th Anniversary (Oct 22) St. Louis Center celebrated its 60th Anniversary Virtual Event on Facebook and YouTube. The event began with Mass celebrated in the SLC chapel. Former University of Michigan Basketball Coach John Beilein served as celebrity host, and was filmed touring the SLC campus. Participants were able to listen in on a Zoom call with former UM players Tim Hardaway, Jr. of the Dallas Mavericks, and former team captain Zack Novak while they reminisced about their 2012 visit.



Coach Beilein did drills in the gym with some residents.

Coach Beilein autographed a number of items for donors, including photographs, Michigan ball caps, and basketballs, and offered for auction a dinner for six with he and his wife, Kathleen.

A bit of serendipity also led to a generous corporate donation. Jim Broner, Vice Chairman of Corporate and Investment Banking at Wells Fargo, and also an alum and huge University of Michigan fan, heard a radio interview with Coach Beilein promoting the event. He had always been inspired by Coach and knew that his clients would be as well. So, Coach Beilein graciously agreed to donate his time and in early December held a call on Zoom for Broner's clients, which turned out to be as he had hoped, a great hit. In return, Wells Fargo made a generous contribution to the Center.



Items autographed by Coach Beilein are still available for a donation. Email slcdev@stlouiscenter.org if you would like to receive one of these autographed collectibles.



Fr. Enzo Addari steps into the room to open the virtual Fall Auction with a blessing.

Fall Auction (Nov 14) Without the ability to host a live event, St. Louis Center pivoted once again to a virtual fundraiser. The 33rd Annual Fall Auction was held Saturday, November 7, 2020 live on Facebook and YouTube. This event, usually conducted during a formal dinner at St. Joseph Mercy Hospital – Chelsea, wound up being an online auction instead. There were 16 lots up for bid featuring items ranging from artwork to trips to fine dining. The event featured auctioneer Joseph Merkel from Merkel's Auction Specialists, Inc. of Chelsea. Joe was assisted by members of the Auction Committee and SLC staff. The total amount raised from the auction this year was over \$36,000.

“We are grateful to the many people who participated in this online event to help support the needs of our residents,” said Fr. Enzo Addari, CEO. “While we were disappointed that we couldn't bring everyone together for a formal dinner, the work we did was still important in God's eyes, and we thank the wonderful auction committee and everyone else who was involved in making this event the best it could be this year.”



Volunteers Eileen Augustine and Tina Merkel-Chavez, SLC Development Director Christina Ferris and Database Coordinator Kristine Collins stayed connected to attendees on Facebook and Youtube by answering questions and replying to comments.

To read more about these events and see more photos, visit our website: www.stlouiscenter.org

Upcoming Events

Committee Planning for 27th Golf & Glory Event

Can June be that far off? In just a few short months, the warmth of spring and summer will return, and so will one of our favorite events of the year--the Golf & Glory Outing at UM Golf Course in Ann Arbor. The dates for this outing are set, with the usual Paesano's Sunday Night Dinner taking place on Sunday, June 20th, and the golf outing scheduled to take place the following morning, June 21, 2021. Provided the COVID-19 pandemic has subsided by then, hopefully we can return to the regular format.

That also means a return to the previous entry fee of \$275 per golfer, and the ability to play on one of the finest courses in Michigan. UM Golf Course was designed by Alister MacKenzie, the same designer who was famous for building Augusta National Golf Course in Georgia, home of the Master's Tournament. Every year, this outing is a sell-out. Registration will be available soon on the SLC website.



Sportscaster George Blaha (2nd from left) serves as celebrity co-chair.

New England Fall Color Tour

Plans are in place for a New England Fall Color Tour, October 16-23, 2021.

This fall, with the pandemic hopefully winding down, SLC will once again hold a popular **Dream Tour**. **This year, in a trip designed with health and safety as a top priority for all guests, the tour will take place in the US.**

The week-long trip will cover Maine, Vermont and New Hampshire.

Travelers will enjoy visits to charming coastal towns, shopping in quaint villages, opportunities to experience mouth watering New England lobster, tours of Acadia National Park, and other national landmarks. The highlight will be the stunning fall vistas that can only be experienced in New England when the leaves turn



from green to beautiful shades of red, yellow and orange. The roundtrip cost including a flight from Detroit, lodging, tours and most meals is \$3,565 per person. The land only cost is \$3,205 for those making independent travel arrangements to meet in Portland, Maine. All deposits are fully refundable up to 90 days before departure.

Information is available at stlouiscenter.org. Or you may request a brochure and details for registration by contacting Cathy Bilinski at cbilinski@wittetravel.com or 734-674-9458. You can also view/register on-line at bookings.wittetravel.com. Use the booking code 101621BILI. We are excited about plans for another successful fundraising tour hosted by Fr. Enzo!

As a note to our guests waiting for the Rhine River and Castles Dream Tour III, it continues to be delayed until the Covid-19 pandemic travel restrictions have been cleared in Europe. We are still planning on offering this Tour and will share information as it becomes available. In the interim, please consider joining us on this US based New England adventure.

Needs Lists

Needs have no season and so SLC Amazon Charity lists are still available for those who like to help. Scan the QR code (right) to visit our Amazon Charity lists page. On Amazon, you can purchase items listed there from one of the categories and have them shipped directly to the Center. Please be sure to include your contact information so that we can send you a tax receipt.



Village Housewarming



Readers are Leaders



Cold Weather Closets



Tool Boxes



Receive Newsletter by Email

To keep you informed about the latest news and events and help us control costs, **please share your email address with us today.** We will not share your information with anyone else. This will make it possible to communicate important information quickly and reduce costly mailings.

Email us at slcdev@stlouiscenter.org it is a small step that can have a big impact.

Community Support

We Say a Big THANK YOU!

Generous year-end contributions helped us meet the fundraising goal!



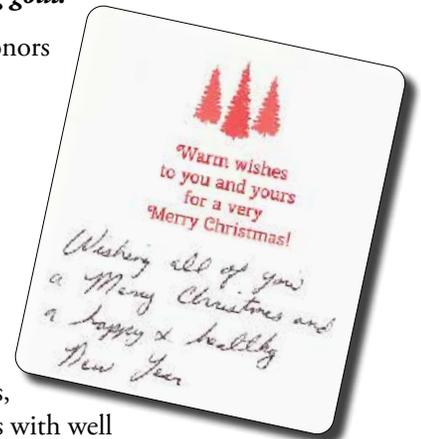
The past year is one that we can all be glad is behind us. There were many challenges, from small inconveniences to devastating losses, and none of us was immune. Here at St. Louis Center, we too, experienced many challenges. Residents have been unable to go to school or work. As a result, we

have had a huge increase in staffing costs, including overtime, hazard and quarantine pay, as we must provide care around the clock.

Fortunately, there is good news to share. Because of your generosity, we were able to meet the SLC year-end fundraising goals which were so critical to helping cover these caregiving

expenses. Several generous donors stepped up to offer matching gifts and you enthusiastically responded. From individuals, couples, churches, Knights of Columbus councils to organizations and businesses, we received hundreds of generous donations. We greatly appreciate the kindness shown in your notes, comments, pictures and cards with well wishes and holiday greetings.

You also responded to Wish Lists, sending items like clothing, toys and personal items for the residents. And many of you dropped off wrapped gifts to make sure the residents would still enjoy a Christmas undimmed by the pandemic. We cannot say THANK YOU enough!



Moments of Fun in 2020



A birthday celebration - in spite of COVID.

We wanted to send you a snapshot of the moments in the lives of the residents that your donations have helped to make possible over the past year.



Lots and lots of arts and crafts to help residents stay engaged.



Adaptive Movement - a favorite of many residents.



A socially distanced graduation celebration.



Residents enjoying a Christmas parade.



Ken decorating holiday cookies.

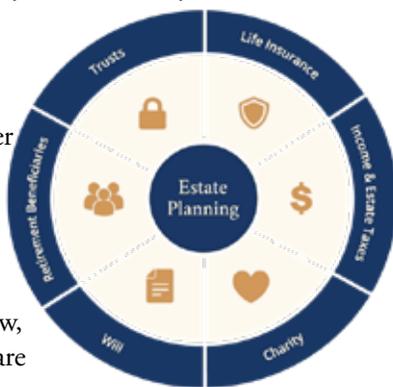


Don't miss out on any fun. Scan the QR code to subscribe to our YouTube channel.

Gifts that Live Forever Ensure the things you value live on

Have you ever thought of making a gift that will allow your values to live on? Would you like to benefit a cause you care about for a long time to come? It is more simple than you might have imagined. Making a bequest can be easily done in a variety of ways. You can:

- Make the Center a **beneficiary of an IRA, 401K or life insurance policy**. You only have to update your beneficiary form; there is no need to change your will.
- Include St. Louis Center in your **estate plans**. Your attorney can help you add a gift to the Center in your plans.
- Other tools like **Charitable Gift Annuities and Charitable Remainder Trusts** can provide you income and tax benefits now, and help an organization you care about later.
- You can also make a gift of **Real Estate** or other tangible property.



However you decide to leave a gift, you always remain in full control of how it is used. Whether you would like your gift to go to resident care, the Legacy building program, to endowment or to the area of greatest need is up to you.

The most important thing is that you will make a lasting impact and help ensure that the children and adults at St. Louis Center will always have a place to call home.

If you have already made plans for a future gift to St. Louis Center, or if you would like to discuss a gift, we would love to talk with you. Please contact Christina Ferris, Development Director, at cferris@stlouiscenter.org or 810.423.3437 to schedule a time to talk.

Please seek the specific advice of your tax advisor, attorney, and/or financial planner to discuss your individual situation.



Knights Step Up with \$100,000 Matching Challenge

Although we were able to reach the SLC fundraising goals at the end of 2020, the New Year presents ongoing challenges. Staffing levels, along with overtime, hazard and quarantine pay remain high. Plus, after the rush of year-end contributions, giving for most organizations tends to drop off in January and February.

Fortunately, the Knights of Columbus State Council has stepped up to help. Inspired by the donors who provided matching gifts in December, they decided to help by offering a \$100,000 matching challenge that will run from Jan. 1 - Mar. 31, 2021.

All Gifts will be Matched until MARCH 31st

“January comes and the costs continue, so we knew we had to do something,” said Walter Winkle, Knights of Columbus State Deputy. “You had a previous matching donor contribute that amount, so we decided to offer the same. It makes us feel good to make this donation, which was raised by Knights throughout the State of Michigan. It’s a collaborative effort.”

The Knights of Columbus and the 400 councils across the State of Michigan have a wonderful tradition of supporting St. Louis Center through their Tootsie Roll Drives and other fundraising efforts each year. They also get involved personally at the Center by holding picnics and other events for residents.

*** It is Easy to Give ***

1. **Mail** the completed form below with your check or credit card info to: Development Dept., St. Louis Center, 16195 W. Old U.S. Hwy 12, Chelsea, MI 48118
2. **Online** at: <http://bit.ly/slcSpiritDonate>

Return this completed form with your donation

YES! I want to help St. Louis Center and DOUBLE MY GIFT

Donation Amount

- \$30 \$60 \$100 Other \$ _____
- \$267 – Cover Benevolent Care costs for one day for a resident!
- \$534 – Cover Benevolent Care costs for two days for a resident!
Benevolent Care is the amount we must raise above per diem reimbursements.

Payment Type: Credit Card Cash Check (Payable to St. Louis Center)

Name on Card: _____

Card Number : _____

Exp. Date: ____/____/____ 3-Digit Security Code: _____

Contact Information

Name: _____

Address: _____

City/State/Zip: _____

Phone Number: _____

Cell Home Work

E-Mail: _____

Upcoming Events

Paesano Dinner

June 20, 2021
Paesano - Ann Arbor MI

Golf & Glory Outing

June 21, 2021
University of Michigan Golf Course - Ann Arbor MI

Guardian Angel Dinner Dance

September 26, 2021
IACL Banquet Center - Livonia MI

Fall Colors Dream Tour

October 16-23, 2021
Maine - New Hampshire - Vermont

For more information,
please visit our website:

www.stlouiscenter.org

St. Louis Center Community Advisory Council

Andrew A. Shmina, Chair
Daniel Johnson, Vice-Chair
Joseph Munie, Treasurer
Larry Doll, Secretary
Nancy Graebner
Donna Hrozencik, MD

Glenn Johnson
William Lamb, JD
George Mallison
Kathi Neuman
Norm Neuman
Tom Nowatzke

Jerry Ruggirello
Don Walker
George Walrath
Vickie Walrath
Walter K. Winkle, Jr
(MI State Deputy, KofC)



16195 W. Old U.S. Hwy. 12
Chelsea, MI 48118

Non Profit Org
US Postage Paid
Permit No. 22
Chelsea MI

In Memory of Our Friends

Frank Giancroce
Diane Hingst
Joseph Impastato
Steve Jacek
Richard Laban
Gerald Lindsay
Lynn McCoy
John Mischley
James & Rosemary Nagy
Howard Neuman
Michael Rybka
Carmelina Sgroi
Frankie Sims
Joseph Taddia
Patrick Trese
Sharon Trudell
Charles Young
Grace Zangara

Carmela 'Carmelina' Sgroi was born April 24, 1921 and passed away on November 11, 2020 at the age of 99. She was the beloved wife of the late Joseph Sgroi, and the loving mother of Gerrie (Jerry) Sulak and Roy (Kathy) Sgroi. She was also the proud grandmother of six and great-grandmother of eleven.

Carmelina was born in Italy where she married her husband before moving to the United States. She and her husband owned and

operated Carini Bakery for 25 years on the west side of Detroit. Carmelina was very social and active in her community, and was a long-time member of St.



Colette Parish and The Italian American Club of Livonia. She was also a member of the IACL St. Louis Center Dinner Dance Committee, and was a very important part of making it a successful event through the years, as one of the leaders of the group. She will be deeply missed. Services for Carmelina were held on Tuesday, November 17, 2020 at St. Colette Catholic Church in Livonia.

Connect With Us