



ST. LOUIS CENTER

ST. LOUIS SPIRIT

St. Louis Center serves individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities in an intentional, faith-based community.

WINTER | 2022

NURTURING INDEPENDENCE

St. Louis Center continues to move forward in developing Independent Living Skills among the residents. This year we established Mike's House, an independent living home for women, and moved in five people. These ladies were excited to be able to have more independence, and, of course, the most exciting thing was being able to plan and cook their own meals. The Kitchen Supervisor, Robert Walker, first sat down with the group to help them plan a menu that was healthy and nutritionally sound. Although many of the big items were purchased through SLC kitchen vendors, each resident has a monthly SNAP card with which they are able to buy things that are enjoyable to them—the special coffee creamer or dessert that makes them happy. Together they prepare a grocery list and go



Sarah sets the table while her roommates prepare dinner.

shopping with their Direct Care Worker. The next step is cooking the meals! The ladies work together, under the supervision of their DCW, to prepare meals that they eat together as a

family. It takes a lot of cooperation but this team of women have been friends for years, and they have really made it work.



MEDICAL INDEPENDENCE



Blood pressure is the force that moves blood through the body and is the measure of the force that circulating blood puts on the walls of the arteries. Without blood pressure, blood will not circulate and we cannot survive.

When a person has hypertension, or high blood pressure, the workload of the heart and blood vessels is increased which makes them work harder and less efficiently. Over time this damages the tissues of the arteries, causing LDL (bad) cholesterol to build up plaque in the damaged tissue. This build-up narrows the arteries and causes even higher blood pressure, more damage and more plaque build-up. Left untreated it can lead to heart arrhythmia, stroke and heart attack; avoiding them is why it is important to monitor/measure blood pressure. Nearly 45% of all adults in the US today have hypertension.



CONTINUED ON PG 2

FROM FR. ENZO

WE CONTINUE TO MOVE FORWARD!



After closing the program for minors, SLC serves adults exclusively.

Some of the higher functioning ladies were moved to an independent program where they are able, under staff supervision, to care for themselves and their needs.

We are planning additional programs similar to this one because we have a very long

waiting list and there are many people who would like to be served at the Center. Unfortunately, due to lack of staff, we keep postponing the opening of new houses.

Some of the residents, who are aging, have increased in their needs for care as well. We implemented the Montessori training to address these needs and to serve the residents accordingly.

The development and public relations departments have been merged to form the Development and Communication Department. This solution will help to streamline the work.

The pandemic is not over. Because of this, we were forced to cancel many fundraising activities, thus we are using our creativity and knowledge to raise the money needed to meet the \$2.8 million goal set for benevolent care for the current fiscal year. I have to say that many benefactors have increased their support. We are very grateful to them because it is through their generosity that the Center remains a lighthouse of HOPE for many people and society as a whole with its services and for proclaiming the great dignity of all human persons.

When we planned for the integrated St. Louis Guanella Village, we envisioned having families living next to people with intellectual and developmental disabilities. After a lot of work, several meetings with people familiar with the rental process, and other organizations which offer similar services, SLC welcomed families into the single home and one duplex. The vision has become a reality!



Looking forward; new projects, which were put on hold due to the pandemic and the changes occurring at the Center, will be resumed and we will continue in modernizing the physical structure of the original building.

The Good Lord has called to Him our beloved Dawn, who is now with her mother, Judy, and her aunt, Karen. During the latest part of her life with us, we engaged hospice and nursing services to take care of her needs.

Best wishes for a blessed 2022 year!

MEDICAL INDEPENDENCE

CONTINUED FROM PG 1

As we have increased the independence of the ladies in Mike's House around meals, we are also working with them on increasing their ability to attend to their own healthcare needs. Consequently, we purchased a "talking" blood pressure machine, Nurse Deb trained the ladies how to take their blood pressure, and explained what is considered "normal". They all were very excited to learn how to do this and they check it regularly.

They will be taught the Heimlich Maneuver as well as some basic CPR. Mike's House is becoming more independent every day!



SLC COMMUNITY ADVISORY COUNCIL

- Andrew A. Shmina, Chair
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- Joseph Munie, Treasurer
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- Don Walker
- George Walrath
- Vickie Walrath
- Walter K. Winkle, Jr.
- (MI State Deputy, KofC)

FAMILY TIES



Kenny takes the WAVE bus to work at McDonald's five days a week.

WHAT DO YOU DO IF YOU BECOME LEGAL GUARDIAN OF YOUR SIBLING WHO HAS SPECIAL NEEDS?

PROGRAMS AND AMENITIES OFFERED AT SLC

- Independence College
- Music Therapy
- Kiwanis Aktion Club
- Daytime Enrichment
- Cooking Club
- Gardening
- Tiny Libraries (coming soon)
- Guided Activities
- Special Olympics
- Private Bedrooms
- Private Bathrooms
- Family Integration

Linda Recca has had to make tough choices regarding her brother, Kenny. After the passing of their mother 11 years ago, Linda took over as the decision-maker for her brother. Although Kenny had been living in assisted care, it was still a big change for the family. With mixed emotions, Linda came to St. Louis Center in her search for finding a home for Kenny that would suit his needs and the needs of their close-knit family.

In May of 2021, Kenny became a resident of SLC, and Linda could not be more pleased with how things have turned out. Kenny quickly adjusted to his new home and Linda feels at ease having him somewhere he is so happy. There are meaningful activities available and they have assisted Kenny in getting his first job - Custodian at the local McDonald's restaurant.

Not only has the Center become a home for Kenny, but it has also become a place that Linda feels welcomed. Quickly, Linda became part of the SLC Family Association. The Family Association is comprised of loved ones of the Center's residents. As a part of the Association, Linda has begun to volunteer in many aspects of the Center.

The Fall Dinner Auction was her first major task. She enjoyed being a part of a major fundraiser that will help the Center where her brother lives. Linda was able to attain many donations for the silent auction and was a vital part of the planning and execution of the event. Sorting donations is also a volunteer opportunity that Linda has helped with. In the spring, Linda will be joining the planning of the annual Golf and Glory event.



Moving a family member out of your home or to a new facility is a brave move. Together, through their sibling bond and friendship, Linda and Kenny remain resilient throughout every situation. Linda feels

that she made the right move for Ken, and he is so happy and pleased to be at the Center.

Linda says, "My favorite thing is I feel confident that he is well taken care of. It is a good feeling that he has another family there and I feel comfortable leaving him, no matter how hard it is."

To learn more about SLC programs, visit stlouiscenter.org/live-here/ or scan the code at left.



CARE WORKERS MAKE THE DECISION TO WORK WITH PERSONS IN DIFFICULTY, DISTRESS OR IN NEED OF SUPPORT ON THE PATH OF LIFE.

- WITH FAITH, LOVE AND COMPETENCE 45



What qualities make a good care staff?

According to Tom Arbanas, SLC HR Director, the qualities he looks for when hiring people for direct care are derived from principles in the spirituality of St. Guanella:

- Faith in the dignity and potential of others
- Realistic optimism
- Simplicity and sensitivity
- Creativity
- Empathy and sharing
- Patience
- Equilibrium and self-control
- Commitment and dedication
- Humility and listening
- Sense of co-responsibility

If you or someone you know embodies these qualities, encourage them to apply for a position at SLC.

Do you want to apply?

To submit your application visit stlouiscenter.org/work-here/ or scan the code at right.



Brad is able to help meet the needs of the residents no matter the challenge.

PROFILES OF GUANELLIAN STAFF

Direct Care: The toughest job you'll ever love.

At St. Louis Center all staff members are trained according to the methods and vision of St. Louis Guanella. "With Faith, Love and Competence" and "The Basic Document for the Guanellian Mission" are the guideposts for nurturing the staff.

Brad Crosier has worked in the field of Direct Care for over 26 years.

He has worked at three other residential campuses during his career. In his experience he noted that "SLC fosters an atmosphere where the residents thrive due to the preventative methods used to help guide them, encouraging them to be more independent and achieve their own personal goals."

Brad says it is a rewarding career. "The best part of my job is the fact that every day I get to see familiar faces but like all of us, they're constantly changing so you never know what

you're going to walk into every day. That makes it kind of exciting, every day is a new day. It's like a new challenge."

But as with any other job, it does have difficulties. Of all the things that could happen on the job Brad said, "The most difficult thing for me is not always getting as much accomplished as I would like to in a day's time. I need to make sure that the ladies and gentlemen that I serve have everything they need and that they can be as active as possible and sometimes, due to the constraints of time, we are not always able to do as much."

To anyone considering this type of work he says, "You can expect to be challenged. If you're doing your job to the best of your ability, you'll sense a real intrinsic good feeling about what you're able to accomplish and how you're able to help the residents live their best lives."



SLC staff accompany the residents on off-campus outings.



A SEASON OF GIVING THANKS

In November, staff in the Day Program began the project of planning gifts for the entire St. Louis Center staff. The residents collected and returned



Thomas decorated cookies with Dominique's help.

bottles and cans to save up the money to purchase supplies. The next step was making the salt dough ornaments and baking cookies. After the Christmas cards were signed, the residents accompanied by staff members visited all of the homes and offices on the SLC campus delivering the gifts to staff members December 7th.

On December 12th SLC residents performed the skits and songs they had been practicing for weeks. The

Day Program choir entertained the crowd between the skits prepared by each House. Many of the parents did not attend because of the pandemic, but they were able to see the performance live via Zoom. At the end of the performance, everyone enjoyed cookies and punch.

The greater Chelsea community goes all out to help SLC all year round, but they go over and above at Christmas time. Area parishes buy pajamas for each of the residents, provide craft and art supplies, some give hats and mittens and the list could go on. Ugly Dog Distillery in downtown Chelsea even hosted a second Annual "Claus for a Cause" event December 17th



Lisa greeted family members who watched via Zoom.



Residents enjoyed caroling in a nearby Chelsea neighborhood.

that included a visit from Santa, a hot chocolate bar, a visit from the Chelsea Fire Department, and Chelsea Police.

SLC residents spent many hours practicing Christmas carols, so they decided to put all that practice to more good use by spreading some holiday cheer around one of the Chelsea neighborhoods. On December 20th after dinner, residents visited at least a half dozen homes much to the surprise and delight of the homeowners. At a couple of houses the residents were served cookies.

Please visit our website to read more about these events.



GENEROSITY KEEPS THE CENTER MOVING

Thanks to a \$6,000 grant from the Ann Arbor Area Community Foundation (AAACF), the residents are able to continue their participation in the Chelsea community Meals on Wheels program. This grant helps to cover transportation costs and staff that ensures residents can get the food and get it delivered safely. Residents of SLC who are involved in the program understand the responsibility they carry – and are dedicated. Their days become more about giving back versus focusing on their own needs, needs that are so often met by the kindness of others.

Through this generous grant, the AAACF shows its commitment to the entire community. This grant is a direct benefit to SLC residents and an indirect benefit to the greater Chelsea community. We are deeply appreciative to AAACF for helping to keep the wheels on the van spinning.



Albert, Jerome and Linda volunteer for the Meals on Wheels program.



THANK YOU!

With your help, we met the \$100,000 match.

May you have a very Blessed New Year!



Loving Service to the most Vulnerable

For over 60 years St. Louis Center has remained focused on St. Louis Guanella's vision to provide loving service to the most vulnerable people in our community, without regard to their economic status. With this as our mission, SLC always focuses first on resident care.

What is Benevolent Care?

Benevolent Care is financial support from charitable contributions necessary to cover the services that are not met by earned revenue. Given the limits of earned income, and the reality that very few families can afford the total cost of care, SLC strives to offer Benevolent Care to cover the difference.

More than half of the total costs must be fund-raised to provide a proper level of care. The difficulties the pandemic caused over the last several months have made the need to provide benevolent care even more poignant.

Depending on the level of care, the cost of services to a person living at SLC may be as much as \$8,000 a month. A social security supplement (SSI/A) covers only room and board, which is about 20% of the total. Some residents do have support from their local Community Mental Health organization and a Medicaid waiver program. Many residents do not qualify for this governmental benefit.

According to the 2020 audit, SLC administrative and overhead expenses were only 21%, in line with well-managed nonprofit best practices. You can be confident that your donation to the Center is going to good use.

St. Louis Center is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization, Federal Tax ID: 38-6038121

To learn more about #SLCBenevolentCare, <https://stlouiscenter.org/benevolentcare-match/>



ensures that clean water will always be available for the entire campus:

- Chelsea Community Foundation
- Helen McCalla Trust
- Knights of Columbus Michigan State Council

GRANT SUPPORT

In order to provide the level of support for the residents and to grow and maintain the facilities, St. Louis Center receives a number of grants each year. In the last half of 2021, we have received support from:

- Anonymous Foundations
- Catholic Foundation of Michigan
- James A. and Faith Knight Foundation

Three grants combined to cover the cost of replacing one of the Center's two primary wells. Almost sixty years old, one well was failing and needed replacement. Critical to the continued operation of SLC, this well supplied potable water to the Center's main building, assisted living facility, and one residence. We give heartfelt thanks to the following three organizations, whose generosity



Mail this coupon to: Development Dept., St. Louis Center, 16195 W. Old U.S. Hwy 12, Chelsea, MI 48118 or **Donate Online** at: <http://bit.ly/slcSpiritDonate> or by scanning the code at right

Payment Information

Gift Amount: \$30 \$60 \$100 Other amount \$ _____

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: _____

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Dawn (center) with Karen (left) and 'Mama Judi'.

IN MEMORIAM A Family Legacy

Dawn Dietrich was a gift to all who knew her. She was the only child of a mother who taught her the true meaning of love and self-sacrifice. Dawn was born with Down Syndrome and her mother, Judi Black, was her constant advocate insuring that her needs were always met. Judi spent every bit of her energy to provide Dawn with the best care possible leading to her placement at St. Louis Center in November 2006.

Throughout her years as a resident of SLC, she taught others around her what it means to love. She loved music, her friends (who were known as her 'soul sisters'), and she especially loved her 'Mama Judi.'

Judi made it her dying wish that Dawn would be able to live the rest of her life at SLC. She died in 2016, and her sister Karen McGrath eventually became Dawn's legal guardian. Karen and her daughter Kelly Nickell took up the challenge of overseeing Dawn's care and did what they could to assist with

SLC fundraising efforts. They created and donated countless gift baskets to the annual Fall Dinner Auction.

Sadly, Karen passed away on October 28, 2021 leaving a legacy of love and devotion to Kelly.

Dawn's own health had become fragile over the past couple of years and on November 30, 2021 she too passed away. Judi's dying wish, however, had been fulfilled. Dawn remained at SLC until her death.

Dawn Dietrich
1965-2021

Karen McGrath
1943-2021

Judith Black
1940-2016

Fr. Enzo Addari, SdC was the main celebrant and homilist for her funeral Mass on December 19, 2021. The residents solemnly gathered to pay tribute to their dear friend. In his homily, Fr. Enzo reminded the residents that

Dawn had taught them how to love and have patience with one another and that she will be happily waiting to see them again in heaven. Her cousin Kelly prepared memorial cards so that Dawn's friends would have a little memento of her.



SET YOUR EYES ON SUMMER

Golf and Glory
June 20, 2022



Memorial Golf
July 16, 2022



Dad and Lad
August 3, 2022

To read about all of our upcoming events, scan the QR Code:



FIND OUT MORE

UPCOMING EVENTS

Pasta Dinner with the Priests
February 17, 2022
St. Louis Center - Chelsea MI

Golf and Glory
June 20, 2022
UofM Golf Course - Ann Arbor MI

Memorial Golf Outing
July 16, 2022
Pierce Lake Golf Course - Chelsea MI

Dad and Lad
August 3, 2022
Twin Lakes Golf and Swim Club - Oakland MI

Fall Harvest Dinner
September 25, 2022
Italian American Banquet Center - Livonia MI

Fall Dinner Auction
November 5, 2022
St. Mary Parish - Chelsea MI

For more information,
please visit our website:

www.stlouiscenter.org



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WHAT'S INSIDE



PAGE 2
Read about the latest updates from Fr. Enzo



PAGE 3
Family enriched by SLC placement



PAGE 4
Learn the qualities that make a great direct care worker.



PAGE 5
AAACF Supports SLC Meals on Wheels Program



PAGE 6
Donors Exceed Challenge Match Goal



PAGE 7
Remembering a life well-lived: Dawn Dietrich

REMEMBERING OUR FRIENDS



Liz Hollo was born in Augusta Georgia January 21, 1945. She married Richard in 1967 and they moved to Chelsea in 1978. Liz was one of those individuals who always did for others. She was a nurse for Chelsea Community

Hospital in the head/pain unit for over 25 years, and was a faithful member of St. Mary Catholic Church, where she sang in the choir and loved participating in the Lenten Fish Fry events. Liz and Richard were also devoted supporters of St. Louis Center. They volunteered for and attended many SLC fundraising events throughout the years. They also traveled on the SLC Dream Tours. They both made promises as Guanellian Cooperators in 2015. After battling a long illness, Liz passed away peacefully at home surrounded by her loving family December 29, 2021.

Ben Accardi
Joseph Darkangelo
Roy Dechert Jr.
Dawn Dietrich
Kathleen Draper
Nancy Dunn
Anthony Ficano
Hurley Fields
Kenneth Glatz
Liz Hollo
Rev. David Hudgins
Kevin Kalkovich
Karen McGrath
Celestina Mediati
Vincent Mocerì
Louis Pagnucco
Mary Ann Peterson
Marisa Petrella
Jim Pollen
Deacon Richard Shaneyfelt
Helen Steele