



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

FALL | 2022

LEE AND KEEGAN: A Match Made in Perseverance

This story begins our series of Stories That Inspire: Perseverance. Perseverance is persistence in doing something despite difficulty or delay in achieving success. Lee and Keegan both show us how to have strength and that achieving success takes hard work and perseverance.

Lee Booth moved to St. Louis Center when he was eight years old. After he completed school at the age of 26, he began attending the work programs offered by the county.

Lee really wanted to have a job and earn a paycheck, just like some of his housemates. After trying a few places, Lee finally found a job that he loved: washing dishes at the local Big Boy restaurant. Unfortunately for them both, the Covid-19 pandemic shuttered the doors to Big Boy and thus to Lee's job.

After things started to re-open, Karin Brandt, St. Louis Center Social Services Specialist, started to help Lee

look for other opportunities. Lee's mother, Christine Okler, was hopeful.



Lee and Keegan: Each achieving dreams through hard work and perseverance.

She had worked in the employment industry and kept her eyes peeled for opportunities for her son.

Keegan Rodgers had a lifelong dream of owning his own bakery that stemmed from baking cookies with his grandmother. In 2010 he graduated with honors from the Culinary Baking and Pastry Arts

Program at Schoolcraft College.

Many accolades later, he purchased a bakery in Chelsea! His lifelong dream had become a reality.

Keegan's business was growing and thriving. Then came 2020. Keegan knew he needed to keep baking to not only provide for himself but also his loyal employees. The bakery never closed throughout the pandemic. His perseverant staff helped keep the business afloat.

Keegan also knew that he wanted to give opportunities

to persons with disabilities. Thanks to Dick Dice, a member of the Chelsea Rotary Club and Saturday Morning Challengers volunteer, Keegan was introduced to Lee. Now Lee works side-by-side with Keegan assisting with dishes and clean-up around the bakery.



A BLUE RIBBON FOR LISA



Sue Jacobs (left) and **Kacie Szpara** (right) were pleased to present **Lisa** (center) a blue ribbon for her painting.

Every year Lisa spends hours and hours creating arts, crafts, and jewelry to enter the Chelsea Community Fair. This year, circumstances did not work in Lisa's favor. She missed the deadline to enter her items into the fair.

Lisa went to Sheryl Mohr, Social Services Supervisor at St. Louis Center, her eyes filled with tears, barely able to explain what happened. Sheryl made some phone calls to the Fair office and pleaded with the officials to take a look at Lisa's work. They reluctantly agreed, bending the rules based on the situation.

Sheryl got in the car and drove over to the fairgrounds. The fair officials took one look at Lisa's painting and knew right away that she was a blue ribbon winner. Lisa's artwork got a special place on the wall in the fair office.

On the last day of the fair, Lisa stopped at the office to meet the Fair officials and be awarded her blue ribbon. What a proud moment for this St. Louis Center artist!



FROM FR. ENZO



During the 50th anniversary celebration, a decision was made to bring the Center to a new level of services.

Thus, a legacy committee was formed and money started to be raised in order to build the St. Louis Guanella

Village and to renovate the existing buildings.

The Village has started to take shape with new cottages built and homes for people from the community, thus creating an integrated village where people with intellectual and developmental disabilities and people without live next to each other enriching everyone.

Following this trend very soon we will remodel St. Joseph Hall, reducing the number of people living in this home and giving them the opportunity to have a personal, single room to foster the sense of belonging and to have something that is for self. Work will start at Christmas time and will be completed in a few months.

Another project will be underway soon as well: the main kitchen, designed at the end of the 50's, needs a major renovation in order to address all the food preparation needs.

New residents have been enrolled into the SLC residential programs.

We are shaping the day program with the hiring of a day program coordinator; thus, we are able to serve those residents who need services as well people from the community whose guardians are looking for meaningful activities for their loved ones during the day.

All the fund-raising committees are working very hard (I thank all the members for this) to raise the amount of money needed for the daily operation of the Center (\$19,178.00 a day, which is \$10,137.00 of earned revenue and \$9,041.00 in donations). I want to thank all of you for being the caring hand of God for those 'who are precious in His sight' and for giving us the encouragement to be a lighthouse of hope for many people.

Fr. Enzo Ahlborn



DAY OF SERVICE

National Day of Service (NDS) is a day for acts of kindness and service to people in need in the spirit of 9-11. The American Heritage Girls (AHG) scouting organization commemorates its birthday around the same time and uses it as an opportunity to give to others. This year Patti Garibay, AHG Executive Director, announced the theme "Shine" and serving persons impacted by disabilities for NDS. This mobilized troops all over the country to find ways to serve in their local communities.



AHG Troop 1871 decided to do their act of kindness for St. Louis Center. Amy Parrish, Troop Coordinator and a former staff member at the Center, helped guide the Troop to make care packages for staff members.

The girls had a great time shopping for "Shine" themed yellow items: bags of chips, packages of cookies, packs of gum, yellow post-it notes, and notes of encouragement, like "You are my sunshine," and "You are the bee's knees."

At the first Troop meeting, the 32 scouts were on hand and all smiles as they helped pack the 100 care packages.

Mrs. Parrish dropped off the gifts at the Center in time for staff members to receive them as they arrived for the day.

According to Angela Eldersveld, Troop Vice-Coordinator, the Center is one of their favorite places to support. When the national theme for this year was announced, they all knew right away that they were going to focus their efforts on the Center. THANK YOU Troop 1871!!!



SLC COMMUNITY ADVISORY COUNCIL

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Christopher Kolomjec,

(MI State Deputy, KofC)

MICHAEL JOSEPH ROBINSON

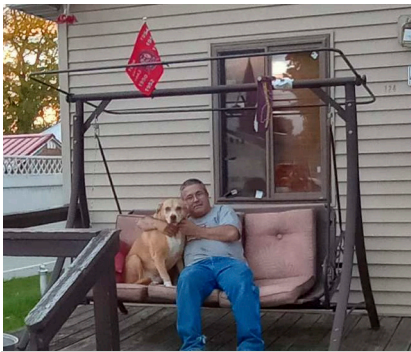
A LETTER RECOUNTING A ST. LOUIS CENTER SUCCESS STORY

The impact St. Louis Center has on the residents is life-long. Read this letter from a family member of a former resident.

To the staff at St. Louis Center and St. Joseph Hall,

Thank you, thank you, thank you. Because of you, Michael Joseph Robinson is a very independent, kind, social home owner.

Michael lived at St. Louis Center and in St. Joseph Hall for several years, in that time you made sure he learned social skills, to use public transportation, go to public school, and how to deal with not so kind people.



Michael today at home with his dog.

Michael purchased a home and he is a happy, healthy individual who lives with his dog and two cats! His neighbors love him. Michael can usually be found helping a neighbor or volunteering at the food pantry.

There aren't enough words to express our

gratitude. Keep up the wonderful work you do. You make a difference in so many lives, not just the individuals who live with you at the Center, but their loved ones, parents, siblings and extended family.

We remember how difficult the first day we brought Michael to stay at the Center was, but, the memory of Fr. Fortunato standing by Michael, encouraging and supporting him and at the same time supporting us, will forever be a treasured memory.

-Maria Robinson & Robinson Family

If you would like to visit St. Louis Center to see if it is a fit for your family, contact Summer Reed at sreed@stlouiscenter.org or 734-475-8430.



Michael (center) with his brothers during a visit at St. Joe Hall in the 1980s.



FAMILY ASSOCIATION

FAMILY MEMBERS OFFER A BIT OF GRATITUDE TO STAFF

The St. Louis Center Staff have a tough yet rewarding job. Between managing residents' busy schedules and needs, each day is a new adventure. The family and loved ones of the residents wanted to find a special way to thank



Steven Hunt and Tatiana and Andreas Pocsatko prepare lunch during the staff appreciation luncheon.

the staff for the loving care that they give. The St. Louis Center Family Association made a plan and threw a gathering to thank the staff for all that they do.

On Thursday September 29th, 2022, the Family Association arrived at St.

Louis Center to start their day of thanks. With St. Louis Center staff working a variety of hours, one mealtime would never be enough. From 7:00am through 9:00am breakfast was served, including pancakes, bacon, doughnuts, and so much more. Staff from the 1st and 3rd shift crew wandered into the gym to receive their gifts of gratitude.

After the morning rush, everything was cleaned up and the fire was lit in the grill for a lunch cookout. From 1:30pm through 3:00pm, hungry 1st and 2nd shift employees enjoyed burgers, hot dogs, sides, and many wonderful treats. Each staff member also received a small gift bag filled

with special treats and gifts.

Staff members left the event with a smile and gratefulness to the family association for their kindness.



CHARITY OF PERSON IS KNOWING HOW TO ATTEND WILLINGLY AND WITH LOVE TO THE NEEDS OF OTHERS.

- WITH FAITH, LOVE AND COMPETENCE 78



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
- Making a difference in people's lives
- 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.



PROFILES OF GUANELLIAN STAFF



Cathy, Direct Care Workers Waylen Dottery and Alexis Hale, and Shane had a great time walking in the Chelsea Fair Parade August 27th.

Mark Bourdua

Mark joined St. Louis Center as staff accountant. After graduating from Eastern Michigan University with a Masters in the Science of Accounting (MSA), Mark worked for an Ann Arbor based non-profit called Chime. During the pandemic CHIME sent all staff to work remotely and they continue that model. Mark however desired to work face-to-face with his peers. When he saw the opening for an accountant at St. Louis Center, he



applied right away. He enjoys working in the non-profit sector and the Center's mission really appealed to him. So far he really enjoys being able to help make sure that the Center is managing its funds well. When he is away from work, Mark enjoys playing disc golf and mastering the art of Bob Ross painting.



Willard Johnson Scholarship Award

For the past seven years, St. Louis Center benefactor Willard Johnson has funded a college scholarship for the children or grandchildren of Center staff.

The scholarship awardee this year is Brandon Davey, son of Social Services Assistant Stephanie Lyerla.

A reception was held on

August 10th at St. Louis Center, giving Mr. Johnson the opportunity to meet the awardee and his family. Brandon, who is planning to use the scholarship to get a degree in nursing, attended with his mother. During the reception Will talked about his experience as the CEO of Chelsea Hospital. This topic is very pertinent to Brandon and his future career.

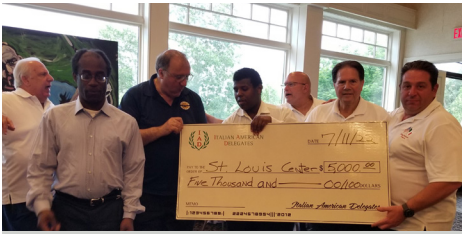
Will presented Brandon with a certificate as well as a copy of his book. Will likes to keep informed about the success of the students that he has helped through this scholarship campaign. Cake and light refreshments were served.



Fr. Enzo Addari, SdC; Brandon Davey, Stephanie Lyerla, and Willard Johnson at the award reception.



SUMMER FUNDRAISING HIGHLIGHTS



Antoine, Fr. Enzo and Lanard accept a generous gift from IAD representatives.

ITALIAN AMERICAN DELEGATES GOLF

The outing sponsored by the Italian American Delegates was held this year on July 11th. Fr. Enzo and residents Antoine and Lanard were on hand for the dinner and program. Over \$216,000 has been donated to St. Louis Center from this event since 1992.

MEMORIAL GOLF OUTING



Angie Merkel and family had a great time at the outing.

Pierce Lake Golf Course in Chelsea welcomed 27 teams on the morning of July 16, 2022. In honor of those who have passed, since 1987, the Memorial Golf Outing has allowed us to remember these individuals and

their generosity. Ann Merkel of Chelsea was this year's memorialized angel. Ann was known for her involvement in the Fall Dinner Auction after taking over as Chair during the 1990s, and she was also a member of the Community Advisory Council for many years. She and the Merkel family have sponsored this outing for more than 20 years. Ann and her late husband, Martin, were great benefactors of the Center throughout their lives together. With all teams having a blast while supporting a cause that is near and dear to them, winning is still fun!



The Outing founders and their families are proud to assist St. Louis Center.

DAD AND LAD

On August 3rd, 2022, a fleet of golfers teed off at Twin Lakes Golf Course in Rochester Hills, MI, the site of the Annual Dad and Lad Golf Outing to benefit the St. Louis Center for a quarter-century. Golfers enjoyed a delicious Italian family style dinner and bidding on many fun and practical silent auction items. Sarah, one of St.

Louis Center's long-time residents, entertained diners by playing well-loved songs on her recorder, and Jacqui helped select the winners of silent auction items.

From the small beginning in 1997, with this year's donations the Center has received over \$1,200,000 from this event in the last 25 years!

FALL HARVEST DINNER



Lisa and Jacqui assisted during the Live Auction portion of the event.

On Sunday, September 25, 2022, a group of devoted people from the Italian American Club of Livonia organized an event for the benefit of St. Louis Center. Guests were able to enjoy a delicious dinner, music and dancing with Pino Marelli, and speed painting with David Santia. A live auction was held to collect proceeds toward a new generator for the Center. Before the dinner, Fr. Enzo celebrated Mass in the lower level of the Banquet Center. Fr. Enzo presented Alice Rotondo with the St. Louis Guanella Humanitarian Award for her charitable works.



AKTION CLUB CONVENTION

Friday, September 16th, St. Louis Center Aktion Club members attended the Michigan District Aktion Club Convention in Vestaburg, MI.

Aktion Club is a Kiwanis-sponsored service club for adults with disabilities, providing leadership opportunities and a chance to give back to the community. The club is led by Advisor Carlie Hartwick with the help of Chelsea Kiwanis Board Member Gordon Schleicher.

Carlie and Gordon, along with St. Louis Center staff Haylie Moran and Hannah Amaro, took 12 members of the club to the convention. Along with several other Michigan-based clubs, they participated in line dancing, western-themed yard games, a dunk tank, crafts, a campfire, and a dance party at the end of the night.

Throughout the fun, members also learned about strong leadership and the importance of serving others. Clubs shared their experiences, what service projects they have enjoyed, and what they hope to accomplish in the next year.



Antoine and Stanley enjoyed the games and fellowship at the convention.



HELP US BUILD A LIGHTHOUSE OF HOPE

BECOME A MONTHLY SUSTAINER

**\$5/
month**



\$5/month provides residents like Lisa fuel to get to work for a week.



\$15/month provides residents like Stanley one day of quality nursing care.

**\$15/
month**

**\$25/
month**



\$25/month Provides residents like Linda, Sarah, Lee and Cathy with one week of laundry supplies.



BASEBALL BRINGS SMILES



Every year the Knights of Columbus invite 25 residents and staff to a Lugnuts game for Vocation Night, providing tickets, transportation from Chelsea, and vouchers for a concession stand meal.

On Friday, August 5th, the Dean Transportation bus arrived at the Center to get the group to Lansing well before the game began. They were dropped off right in front of the stadium and the staff guided the excited residents into the ballpark. As the group made their way to their seats, they were greeted by the familiar faces of the KofC members.

It was a perfect evening for a ball game! The sun was shining, the hotdogs were delicious, and the Lugnuts played a great game. When it was time to leave, the Knights made sure that each resident took a rosary home.



Payment Information

☐ **Recurring Donation** Make a monthly gift and automatically become a **SUSTAINER!**

Monthly Gift: ☐ \$5 ☐ \$15 ☐ \$25 ☐ Other \$ _____

☐ **One-Time Gift:** ☐ \$200 ☐ \$500 ☐ \$1000 ☐ Other \$ _____

☐ **\$304** - Help cover #benevolentcare costs for one day for a resident.

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

Name on Card: _____

Card Number : _____

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

Contact Information

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E-Mail: _____

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.

Note: We value your privacy as much as you do. We will never share or sell your information with any third party.



CHELSEA FAIR PARADE



This year on Saturday, August 27th, St. Louis Center joined in the parade fun. Staff members made the arrangements for a permit, a hay wagon and a theme for the float. The residents helped to paint some of the decorations and of course to pass out the candy. So, with great excitement in their hearts and picnic lunches in their hands, the residents headed to downtown Chelsea and the parade staging area. As they waited for everyone to get ready and the parade to begin, they each ate their

lunch and got their throwing arms ready for the mile-long event. Staff members who accompanied the residents were decked out in lifeguard shirts and visors to personify the theme, "Be a life saver for St. Louis Center." The hay wagon was decorated with waves and featured a giant lifeguard chair and lifesaving ring. Staff and residents riding on the float threw wrapped lifesavers candies while those who walked gave out cards with the candies attached. There were cheers, clapping and people looking for handshakes from their favorite Center residents.



MEN'S SOCIAL MAKES IMPACT

Randazzo Fresh Market in Macomb Township, MI, held its 7th Annual Men's Social fundraiser for St. Louis Center on September 22, 2022.

Nino Randazzo, owner of Randazzo Fresh Market,

hosted nearly three hundred guests for a special night of camaraderie while feasting on a freshly prepared



Jack Tocco, Jr. and Sonny Randazzo

delicious dinner of selected specialty food items from the Market and other donors.

Fr. Enzo Addari, Ken Unterbrink and Norm Neuman attended the event representing the Center. They mingled with the guests thanking them for their support. All monies raised at the event go to

support the residents who are intellectually and developmentally disabled.



UPCOMING EVENTS

Resident's Annual Christmas Program

Join the residents and staff for the annual Christmas Program **Sunday December 11, 2022**. You will see the skits, songs and other holiday merriment that they have prepared.



SET YOUR EYES ON SUMMER



Kim Niethammer won the stocked Yeti cooler at the Memorial Golf Outing.



Golf and Glory
June 19, 2023

Memorial Golf
July 15, 2023

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



FUN AT THE FAIR



Brian showed a goat at the 4-H Fair.

SUMMER OFFERED THE CHANCE FOR RESIDENTS TO GET OUT AND ENJOY THE COMMUNITY

Members of the Rogers Corners Herdsman 4-H Club invited the residents to the 2022 Washtenaw County 4-H Fair at the Washtenaw Farm Council Grounds on Friday, July 29th. The first thing the residents did was watch goat showing. Many of the residents were even able to try it for themselves. Those who did, earned a special 4-H ribbon.

The 4-H Club then took the group of residents through each of the barns so that they could see the other animals that were showcased at the fair. They even watched horses run through obstacles and enjoyed a picnic lunch.



Jerome and Linda enjoyed the show.

The weather was perfect for a day at the Saline Fair August 31st. The first stop was the "Comedy Farm Magic Review" show hosted by Farmer John. Direct Care Worker Ashley joined Farmer John on the stage and was prompted to do the chicken dance and a magic trick - all while wearing a fabulous chicken hat.

The residents and staff strolled through the barns to see the displays before heading home.



UPCOMING EVENTS

Community Open House

November 10, 2022
St. Louis Center - Chelsea MI

Christmas Program

December 11, 2022
St. Louis Center - Chelsea MI

Golf & Glory Outing

June 19, 2023
University of Michigan Golf course -
Ann Arbor MI

Memorial Golf Outing

July 15, 2023
Pierce Lake Golf Course - Chelsea MI

For more information,
please visit our website:

www.stlouiscenter.org



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Sustainer.



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Residents had a
season of fun at
area fairs.

REMEMBERING OUR FRIENDS

Thomas Schumacher

was born to Stephen and Stephanie Schumacher on September 5, 1941, in Detroit, Michigan. He attended the Lenox Center for years with other disabled young adults. After his parents passed away, his care fell under the responsibility of his sister, Dorothy Thompson. He moved to the Lansing area and worked for several businesses, including Peckham Inc. Tom also lived in Ann Arbor for several years and worked for Chi-Chi's and Kroger's. Once he "retired," he attended an adult day program called The Oaks. In 2018, Tom moved to St. Louis Center where he resided for the last

four years. He enjoyed the activities, shared meals, programs, attended Mass, and delivered Meals on Wheels with the other residents.

Tom was preceded in death by his parents, Stephen and Stephanie, and his brother-in-law, John Thompson. He is survived by his sister, Dorothy, two nieces, one nephew, four grandnephews, and several cousins.

The Center has quickly filled the niche for older adults with I/DD who are in need of a 'forever home.' A forever home



provides peace of mind for people who wonder who will care for their loved ones if something happens to them. St. Louis Center is there not only for persons with I/DD, but for their families as well.

Nancy Brewer
James Cornils
Dr. Irving Feller
Marie Fischer
Leo Hollenbeck
Elaine Knickerbocker
Alice Lirette
Richard "Dick" Lutovsky
Pietro Mauti
Nancy Townsend Reynolds
Dr. Jerry Waldyke