



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

SPRING | 2024

## KITCHEN RENOVATION BEGINS

*The planning and funding of the kitchen renovation project has been in the works since 2022.*

The number of residents, as well as their need for specialized meals and food preparation, have grown beyond the capacity of the facility's 61-year old kitchen and a complete renovation is required.

The Center maintains a full nursing staff and social work department to provide for residents' health and welfare. Currently, 40% of the Center's residents are aged 40 and over. Because those with intellectual and developmental disabilities (I/DD) experience the effects of aging



This will be the Center's kitchen throughout the renovations.

far earlier than the neurotypical population; the residents at the Center represent a highly vulnerable population with many physical challenges. Currently, 73% of the Center's residents require some form of nutrition intervention to support

their health.

A new kitchen will provide adequate space for food preparation and the ability to meet the current health department codes.

The "Kitchen-to-Go" trailer was delivered to the Center April 24th. The kitchen staff has been working hard moving everything out while still preparing meals.

The project includes demolition, excavation for installation of grease management systems, the addition of ventilation and electrical system upgrades. New equipment to facilitate specialized meal preparation will also be installed.



## DIVERSITY SERIES



**Nikki Lewis** (left) demonstrates haircare techniques useful for residents like **Lanard** (right).

In conjunction with two grants awarded by Chelsea Community Foundation and Chelsea Hospital, St. Louis Center will be hosting a series of free community cultural events. These events will be running throughout the year, with many more details to come.

The first event was on **March 6th**. Nikki Lewis gave a presentation on

natural hair. She discussed different hair textures and how to properly care for them. She also offered hands-on demonstrations with several of the residents as hair models. Twenty staff members took advantage of this educational opportunity.

## A NIGHT TO REMEMBER

Nearly 400 people gathered at Andiamo's Showroom on 14 Mile Rd. in Warren MI on **April 18th**, to honor Fr. Enzo's retirement.

The crowd included people spanning the decades of Fr. Enzo's career.

At the forefront stood the Italian American Community, a testament to the enduring bond forged decades ago when Fr. Enzo first set foot on American soil.

Aaron Caruso, an accomplished singer and performer, planned a musical tribute that was thoughtful and beautiful. Performers included Aaron, Eva and Michael Evola, Angela Theis, Sonia Lee, and a brass quintet directed by Brandley Arnold. The surprise performance of the night was Lia Lucci, a very talented 11-year-old, who sang the Star Spangled Banner and Ave Maria.



**Fr. Enzo** spoke of the progress made at the Center, and urged everyone to continue their support.

## FROM FR. SATHEESH



Spring is the season of new hope and promise as reinforced through the beauty of the Easter season. This renewal of life in nature reinvigorates

the spirit of life at St. Louis Center where life has been cheerful and entertaining even during winter with activities and action. As we move forward in Spring and towards Summer, changes at St. Louis Center become even more exciting. The kitchen renovation has been underway since May 1st. The planning for, as well as possible

execution of, the Skill-Building program is on the horizon as we continuously seek ways to empower our residents with independence.

We were able to take advantage of the mild winter by bringing the residents to the gym every day for shared activities. They were also able to take part in off-campus activities such as bowling and Special Olympics regularly. They didn't miss out on the blockbuster movies either. The fun and energy could be felt when they prepared for the movie experience. Listening to the highlights retold as residents shared the event made it more memorable. All these experiences - and many more - become possible through the continuous support of our donors.

On a consistent basis, our residents offer prayers for all our benefactors during our liturgical celebrations; so please, send us your special prayer intentions.

All the activities that I have mentioned, as well as the many other experiences that our residents enjoy, are possible because of your support. We are truly grateful for the consistent benevolence and generosity demonstrated by each and every one of you. Jesus says in the Gospel of John, "I have come so that they may have life, and have it in abundance." You make the reality of our vision - to provide the fullness of life for our residents - possible.

*Fr. Satheesh*

## DOING THE RIGHT THING

St. Louis Center has a thriving Aktion Club with 26 members. Every year, they do a Christmas card fundraiser to support different local charities.

First, the Aktion Club members created several beautiful designs. The club members voted on their two favorite designs, and then had the cards printed. Then, the club got to packaging them, listening to Christmas carols while they worked. Once all the cards were packaged, the club began to sell the cards at local churches after Sunday Masses.



**Jacqui, Sarah, Lisa, and Cathy** work to assemble the card packages.

The cards completely sold out! The Aktion Club raised \$1,790 from the 2023 Christmas card fundraiser. So far, two donations have been made from the funds raised. Aktion Club members visited Faith in Action in Chelsea and donated \$500 to help provide food, clothing, and other supplies to people in need in the Chelsea area. Another \$500 donation was made to the Cascades Humane Society in Jackson.

The club members described the feeling of making these donations as "heartwarming" and "the right thing to do". The Aktion Club can't wait to get started on their next project and continue to impact their community.

## SLC COMMUNITY ADVISORY COUNCIL

**Joseph Munie, Chair**  
**Donna Hrozencik, MD, Secretary**  
**Glenn Johnson, Treasurer**

Nancy Graebner  
William Lamb, JD  
George Mallison  
Kathi Neuman  
Norm Neuman  
Juanita Pampuch  
Jerry Ruggirello  
Andrew A. Shmina  
Rosalie Tocco-Bradley  
Don Walker  
George Walrath  
Vickie Walrath  
Christopher Kolomjec,  
(MI State Deputy, KofC)

Scan the code with the camera app on your smartphone or tablet to read more about the Center.





## CENTER STAFF APPROACH PEOPLE WITH A SENSE OF RESPECT, LOOKING UPON EACH ONE WITH COMPASSION AND TENDERNESS.

- WITH FAITH, LOVE, AND COMPETENCE 53



### Family | Community

St. Louis Center staff learn to 'tune into' others in any situation through empathy and sharing. They become involved in the lives of the residents, often reaching where a person and their dignity is endangered. They share moments of darkness and fear, pursuing together the road that leads to a worthy life.

Visit the website to view current staff openings.

### Volunteers are Family too

Volunteers play an integral role in the life of the Center. Explore the opportunities at: [stlouiscenter.org/have-fun-here/volunteer/](http://stlouiscenter.org/have-fun-here/volunteer/) or scan the code with the camera app on your smartphone or tablet.



### Volunteer Spotlight

**Lauren Wisniewski** volunteers each Tuesday and Wednesday evening to assist Laura Rayer, Activities Coordinator, with bingo and bowling. She also helped at the recent Glow Party and Open Spot Theatre performance. The residents look forward to activities with her.



### Jean Strzempek



**Jean** said, "I look forward to coming in to work every morning and being greeted by the residents who are excited to tell you about their evening or what they have going on that day."

Jean graduated in 2011 from EMU with a Bachelor's degree in Social Work. Prior to coming to St. Louis Center, she worked at Ann Arbor Center for Independent Living for 4 years. The role as Supervisor for the Nursing Facility Transition team gave her a lot of experience working with Community Mental Health and foster/group homes for adults. Jean also has a strong background working with the homeless population in Washtenaw County as a transition coordinator for Veterans who are experiencing homelessness working directly with the vets to overcome barriers to safe, stable and affordable housing.

Now employed at the Center as the Social Services Supervisor Jean feels like she is where she belongs, the staff and the residents are the reason she feels this way.

## MONTESSORI TRAINING

On March 20, 2024, St. Louis Center welcomed Vince Antonucci and Bryan Stevenson from the Center for Applied Research in Dementia (CARD). They provided us with a 6 hour training on helping individuals with IDD and dementia remain independent for as long as possible. We learned a great deal about utilizing the Montessori method with the residents we serve to enable them to remain independent and able to make choices about their daily lives.

They ended their visit by performing a rock concert for the staff and residents in the St. Louis Center gym.



**Brian** enjoyed playing classic rock tunes while the residents danced.

### Montessori Moments

*The 3 main pillars of a Montessori approach are Respect, Dignity & Equality for all.*

The following are 12 principles to consider when interacting with residents and co-workers:

1. **The activity should have a sense of purpose and interest.**
2. **Invite the person to participate**
3. **Offer choice whenever possible**
4. **Demonstrate more. Talk less.**
5. **Physical skills. Focus on what the person can do.**
6. **Match your speed to theirs. Slow down!**
7. **Use visual hints, cues or templates.**
8. **Give the person something to hold.**
9. **Go from simple to more complex.**
10. **Break a task down into steps.**
11. **To end, ask: 'Did you enjoy doing this?' and 'Would you like to do this again?'**
12. **There is no right and wrong, think engagement.**

*Think about ways you can incorporate Montessori Moments into your daily life.*



## KEEPING BUSY ALL WINTER

### WIND CHIMES

Thanks to the generous support of a grant from the Michigan Arts & Culture Council and administered by Creative Washtenaw, Eli Zemper offers weekly clay workshops.

Recently, they made ceramic wind chimes and crafted their own personal biographies. The wind chimes are on display at Chelsea District Library in the reading garden throughout the month of May.

### A FEAST WITH FRIENDS

The annual Pasta with Priest event at St. Louis Center has become a cherished tradition for the community. This heartwarming gathering brings together friends, families, and priests for a delightful evening filled with camaraderie and delicious food. The aroma of freshly cooked pasta filled the air

**February 8th.** Through their participation, attendees not only indulge in a delightful evening but also contribute to a worthy cause, embodying the spirit of compassion and community support.

### RESIDENTS SHINE

Nineteen residents enthusiastically prepared for an unforgettable evening on **Friday, February 9th**, marking the 10th Anniversary of the Tim Tebow Foundation's Night to Shine global event. The Center residents attended the event at 2|42



← **Kyle** has found great joy working with clay.

Community Church in Ann Arbor each arriving as a royal guest. They walked the red carpet, feasted on a catered meal, and enjoyed dancing until it was time to head home.

### HOLIDAY FUN

To help fill the lives of the residents with fun, the staff helps the residents enjoy holidays to the full. Laura Rayer, Activities Coordinator, made sure the residents enjoyed Mardi Gras



→ **Nancy** loved the Mardi Gras activities, especially the mask.

Festivities. Day Program staff planned a selfie filled Valentine's Day celebration, and between the Family Association and Laura, St. Patrick's Day did not go unnoticed.

### POETRY SLAM

Day Program Coordinator Haylie Moran challenged Tifani Barnett, Direct Care Worker, to plan a fun event for all of the residents participating in the day program. In conjunction with World Poetry Day, Tifani planned an event for the staff and residents to hear and recite poetry. Through Jennie Maynard, sister of one of the residents, the Chelsea

Bakery donated baked goods. On



↑ **Mark** strummed his guitar, and **Alex** (sitting) listened attentively as **Brad**, Direct Care Worker, recited a poem.

**March 21st**, everyone gathered in the gym, enjoyed coffee and pastries, and best of all listened to many different types of poetry.



← **Jackie** walked the red carpet into the event.

## PLAYMAKERS UNLEASHED

*During the first Open Spot Theatre session this year, we were able to use what we've learned from past sessions to put on a full play.*

This session was 8 weeks of extra practice, one-on-one work, and learning. It was a smaller group of 12 residents, providing more extensive skill-building and individualized attention to help residents learn their parts in the play. These two changes took this Spring's program to the next level.



**Jacqui and Lanard** starred in the latest theater collaborative.

Over 60 people attended the Open Spot performance on **April 22nd**. One local teacher commented, "I loved the play and the fact that the residents get an onstage experience. For a moment, they are a star, with their peers looking on. Theatre is an art and I am so excited that they all get to participate."



This project is funded in part by Michigan Humanities, an affiliate of the National

Endowment for the Humanities, and the Michigan Arts and Culture Council.



**Miranda** (left) helped direct, **Kyle, Lee, Jerome, and Cathy** who formed the dance crew.



# GET READY TO GOLF

## *Golf and Glory* A PREMIERE GOLFING EVENT



Tee up for St. Louis Center's Golf & Glory Outing! Join us **Monday, June 24th** at University of Michigan Golf Course in Ann Arbor. You'll enjoy a day of golf on one of the country's best university courses, designed in the late 1920s by Alister MacKenzie, one of golf's all-time great architects.

Lunch will be provided at the turn,

with dinner and program following the round.

Join your friends and colleagues for a day of golf all while helping provide the residents who call St. Louis Center home with loving care in a community for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities.

**For more information or to volunteer for this event please contact Kelly at [kellyf@stlouiscenter.org](mailto:kellyf@stlouiscenter.org) or call 734-475-8430.**

**When:** Monday, June 24th

**Time:** 8:00am registration, 10:00 am shotgun start

**Where:** University of Michigan Golf Course, Ann Arbor MI

### *Registration and Sponsorships*

can be purchased online, scan here →



## 2ND ANNUAL SEAN BRIAN ASHLINE GOLF OUTING

Join the Sean Brian Ashline Foundation for their 2nd annual golf outing to remember Sean. This outing is a 4 person scramble. There will be contests, you could win a 50" TV, a car for a hole in one, and prizes will be awarded to 1st and 2nd place teams.

**To learn more visit: [stlouiscenter.org](http://stlouiscenter.org)**

**When:** Monday, July 29th

**Time:** 10:00am

**Where:** Lakelands Golf & Country Club, Brighton, MI 48116

Scan code to learn more →



## 2024 DAD & LAD GOLF OUTING



The Dad & Lad Golf Outing was created in 1997 to encourage father and son camaraderie. Dedicated and long-time St. Louis Center supporters Mike Chirco and Joe Maniaci are credited with organizing the event

with the help of their friend, Sam Cottone.

**Please visit [stlouiscenter.org](http://stlouiscenter.org) for more information.**

**When:** Wednesday, August 7th

**Time:** 9:30am registration, 10:00 am shotgun start

**Where:** Twin Lakes Golf & Swim Club, Oakland, MI

Scan code to learn more →



## 2024 MEMORIAL GOLF HONORS GEORGE MERKEL



If you go to one golf outing this year, make it this one!

The scramble format and inviting course layout at Pierce Lake Golf Course in Chelsea, MI make this an event to enjoy. St. Louis Center is blessed to have so many supporters. Since 1987, the Memorial Golf Outing has been held to honor special benefactors who have passed. This year the Outing will be honoring George Merkel for his many contributions to the Center.

There is still time to join the planning committee or become a volunteer.

**Please contact Kelly at 734-475-8430 or [kellyf@stlouiscenter.org](mailto:kellyf@stlouiscenter.org).**



**George Merkel** was a strong supporter of the Center for many years.

**When:** Saturday, August 17th

**Time:** \$100/golfer

**Where:** Pierce Lake Golf Course, Chelsea MI

Sponsorships are also available. Scan code to learn more →



## FIND MORE EVENTS

Not a golfer? No problem!! There are plenty more opportunities to support St. Louis Center.

Paesano Dinner, Randazzo Men's Social, Fall Harvest Fest, and the Fall Dinner Auction just to name a few.

Visit the website to find out more: [stlouiscenter.org/have-fun-here/events/](http://stlouiscenter.org/have-fun-here/events/)



# YOU CAN BUILD A LIGHTHOUSE OF HOPE

St. Louis Center continues to face many unanticipated costs after the pandemic, including a big increase in staffing cost –not to mention ongoing maintenance and structural needs—all leading to an ongoing shortfall.



## BECOME A MONTHLY SUSTAINER

The Center's mission is to make sure that residents are always provided with a secure and loving home, and your help can take this mission even further. Our monthly sustainer program is your opportunity to extend the impact of your gift to be felt for years to come.

You can support St. Louis Center with a recurring gift of any amount. Spread out your giving into monthly payments and ensure that the residents at the Center have the continued support and care they need each day!

In gratitude for your efforts in building a LIGHTHOUSE OF HOPE please accept one of these gifts when you become a monthly sustainer.

To give or see more options, visit: [stlouiscenr.org/give-here/sustainers/](http://stlouiscenr.org/give-here/sustainers/)



## YOUR IMPACT OUR APPRECIATION

**TICKETS  
ON SALE  
NOW!**

### WIN AN ALASKAN CRUISE & LAND TOUR



Drawing to be held at the  
**GOLF & GLORY OUTING**  
on  
**JUNE 24, 2024**  
(need not be present to win)

7-Day Inside Passage Cruise Plus 3-Day Land Tour for 2 People\*

*cruise over to the website for more details* [stlouiscenr.org](http://stlouiscenr.org)

\*Winner can take a cash option.

**TICKETS  
\$25  
OR 5 FOR \$100**

### Make a Gift Today

☐ **One-Time Gift:** ☐ \$50 ☐ \$100 ☐ \$250 ☐ Other \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
☐ **\$304** - Help cover #benevolentcare costs for one day for a resident.

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

**Monthly Gift:** ☐ \$5 ☐ \$15 ☐ \$25 ☐ Other \$ \_\_\_\_\_

### Payment Information

Payment Type: Credit Card Cash Check

Name on Card: \_\_\_\_\_

Card Number : \_\_\_\_\_

Exp. Date: \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_ 3-Digit Security Code: \_\_\_\_\_

Spring Newsletter 2024

### Contact Information

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City/State/Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

E-Mail: \_\_\_\_\_

**Mail** this form to: Development Dept., St. Louis Center, 16195 W. Old U.S. Hwy 12, Chelsea, MI 48118 or

**Donate Online** by scanning the code below or at:  
[stlouiscenr.org/about/news/newsletter/st-louis-spirit/#donate](http://stlouiscenr.org/about/news/newsletter/st-louis-spirit/#donate)

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





# CARING FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

## DISABILITY AND THE HUMAN CONDITION

***On Thursday, April 11th, Pope Francis received participants in the Plenary Assembly of the Pontifical Academy of Social Sciences. The assembly focused on the theme "Disability and the Human Condition: Changing the Social Determinants of Disability and Building a New Culture of Inclusion."***

The Church's care and concern for those with one or more disabilities concretely reflects the many encounters of Jesus with such persons, as described in the Gospels. In these accounts, we can find a number of timely points for our reflection.

1. Jesus enters into direct contact with those with disabilities, since, like every form of infirmity, disabilities must not be ignored or denied. Yet Jesus not only relates to disabled persons; he also changes the meaning of their experience. In fact, he showed a new approach to the condition of persons with disabilities, both in society and before God. In Jesus' eyes, every human condition, including those marked by grave limitations, is an invitation to a unique relationship with God that enables people to flourish.

**"Every human being has the right to live with dignity and to develop integrally... a dignity based not on circumstances but on the intrinsic worth of their being."**

2. The throwaway culture, in effect, has no borders. There are those who presume to be able to establish, on the basis of utilitarian and functional criteria, when a life has value and is worth being lived. Such a mentality can lead to grave violations of the rights of the most vulnerable, to serious injustices and situations of inequality, resulting for the most part from the mindset of profit, efficiency and success.

3. In today's throwaway culture, ... [there is a] tendency to make individuals view their life as a burden both for themselves and for their loved ones. The spread of this

mentality turns the throwaway culture into a culture of death. In the end, "persons are no longer seen as a paramount value to be cared for and respected, especially when they are poor and disabled, 'not yet useful' – like the unborn, or 'no longer needed' – like the elderly" (cf. Fratelli Tutti, 18).



Lisa and Crystal Fenly, Direct Care Worker, shared a smile on Valentine's Day.

4. Combating the throwaway culture calls for promoting the culture of inclusion – the two things go together – by forging and consolidating the bonds of belonging within society. The primary agents of such solidarity are those who,

out of a sense of responsibility for the good of each individual, work for greater social justice and for the removal of the barriers that prevent many people from exercising their basic rights and freedoms.

5. What is needed, then, is the development of a culture of integral inclusion. The bonds of belonging become even stronger when persons with disabilities are not simply passive receivers, but take an active part in the life of society as agents of change. Subsidiarity and participation are the two pillars of effective inclusion. In this regard, we can appreciate the importance of associations and movements of disabled persons that work to promote their participation in society.



**To read more ...**

*The full text of Pope Francis' address was published by Zenit April 11, 2024. To read the full document visit: [zenit.org/2024/04/11/5-ideas-of-the-pope-on-people-with-disabilities-building-a-culture-of-full-inclusion/?eti=14095](https://www.zenit.org/2024/04/11/5-ideas-of-the-pope-on-people-with-disabilities-building-a-culture-of-full-inclusion/?eti=14095)*

## GET YOUR ST. LOUIS CENTER MERCH

Be prepared this summer to wear your St. Louis Center merch with pride. T-shirts and hoodies are available in either white or light blue with a navy blue logo. Polo shirts and half-zip jackets are still available in navy blue with an embroidered logo. Place your orders online and you will have the option to pick-up in Chelsea.

To see the full catalog scan this code or visit:

[stlouiscenter.org/merch/](https://stlouiscenter.org/merch/)



St. Louis Center has a long history with many friends. If you have a story that you would like to share for the archives of the Center, use this link to submit your story and photos: [stlouiscenter.org/history/](https://stlouiscenter.org/history/)

## UPCOMING EVENTS

### **Paesano Dinner**

June 23, 2024

Paesano - Ann Arbor

### **Golf and Glory Outing**

June 24, 2024

University of Michigan Golf Course - Ann Arbor

### **Sean Brian Ashline Memorial Outing**

July 29, 2024

Lakelands Golf & Country Club - Brighton

### **Dad and Lad Outing**

August 7, 2024

Twin Lakes Golf & Swim Club - Oakland

### **Memorial Golf Outing**

August 17, 2024

Pierce Lake Golf Course - Chelsea

### **Kevin George Memorial Outing**

September 8, 2024

Lakeland Hills Golf Course - Jackson

### **Randazzo Men's Social**

September 19, 2024

Randazzo Fresh Market - Macomb

### **Fall Harvest Fest**

September 29, 2024

Italian American Banquet Center - Livonia

### **Fall Dinner Auction**

November 9, 2024

St. Mary - Chelsea

Learn more on our website:

[stlouiscenter.org/have-fun-here/events/](https://stlouiscenter.org/have-fun-here/events/)

VISIT: [STLOUISCENTER.ORG/ABOUT/NEWS/NEWSLETTER/ST-LOUIS-SPIRIT/](https://STLOUISCENTER.ORG/ABOUT/NEWS/NEWSLETTER/ST-LOUIS-SPIRIT/)



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Building a culture of  
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## REMEMBERING OUR FRIENDS

### **Paul Frisinger**

passed away  
Tuesday, Jan.  
23 at his home  
surrounded by  
family.

He was born in  
Ann Arbor, the  
son of George  
Paul and  
Eloise Schrier Frisinger.  
He married Kathrine  
(Staebler) in 1967 and she  
survives along with his  
sons Scott of Chelsea and  
Eric (Stacey) of Brighton;  
three grandchildren,  
Jackson, Luke and Ashley;  
and one brother Roger  
Frisinger of Albany,  
Oregon.

He was preceded in death  
by his parents, brother  
David, sister Sherry  
Lawton, and daughter-  
in-law Mary Berridge  
Frisinger.



Paul graduated  
from Chelsea  
High School and  
Michigan State  
University. He  
owned Frisinger  
Realty and was  
named Realtor  
of the Year by  
the Ann Arbor

Board of Realtors in 2003.  
He retired in 2008.

Paul worked as the  
Lima Township Zoning  
Administrator. He was  
active in his community  
serving as VP St. Paul  
UCC, St. Louis Center  
Community Advisory  
Council, Lima Township  
Planning Commission,  
Ann Arbor Board of  
Realtors, Chelsea Chamber  
of Commerce. Paul was  
President of - Chelsea  
United Way, Chelsea  
Community Fair, Chelsea

Downtown Development  
Authority, and the Chelsea  
Kiwanis Club.

Paul was a loving  
husband, father,  
grandfather and brother.  
In his spare time, he  
was a farmer and also  
enjoyed gardening and  
woodworking projects for  
his friends and family.

**Darla Bohlender**

**Gaspere Campo**

**Thomas R. Clark**

**Paul Frisinger**

**Eileen Gondek**

**Walter Hahn**

**Maria Capicchioni Harris**

**Kathy Haywood**

**Brad Herrst**

**Vickie Kern**

**Adolfo Scopone**

**David Staebler**

