MATTHEW HOUSE

Loving Care

"Peace of mind has a home address."
43 Metcalf Drive, Auburn, NY 13021
315-252-2052 info@matthewhouse.org www.matthewhouse.org

A Community That Cares

Friends of Matthew House,

As you read through this newsletter, please know that you are a member of an incredibly generous and gracious community that has supported Matthew House over the past sixteen years. Your gifts make all the difference in allowing us to fulfill our mission of providing a home for people with terminal illness to die with dignity and in comfort. All contributions, whether big or small, are valued and we can't thank you enough for your generosity. There are so many creative and compassionate individuals within our community who organize fundraisers and other special events to benefit Matthew House. This newsletter only highlights a few, though we are delighted to recognize each of you.

Matthew House Mission

Our mission is to provide a home for people with terminal illness to die with dignity and in comfort.

Hello,

My name is Bella Field and I'm a senior at Jordan Elbridge High School. As part of my Civics class, I am required to perform some type of community service. For my project, I decided to ask for monetary/gift card donations in order to buy supplies for Matthew House. I also purchased a variety of items to assemble "busy bags" for both adults and children. These bags are filled with many things to do, such as word search books, puzzles, crayons, etc. I did this because I know what it's like to sit with ill family members and have something to do to take your mind off why you're sitting and waiting. These bags are given to family members while they are spending time with their loved one at Matthew House, or they are provided to children as a way to keep them busy during a wake or funeral service, it was important to me to contribute something. I also purchased several items off of your "wish list." Monetary donations and gift cards were supplied by my friends and family members, along with Wegmans and Walmart of Auburn.

Matthew House has a special connection to me because in October of 2016 my grandmother was scheduled to move into your home. Unfortunately, she passed away the morning she was to move in. None the less, my family was grateful that there was a place for her to go and I wanted to somehow give back.

Thank you for your time and I am looking forward to dropping these items off to you.

Isabella Field
JEHS, Class of 2019

Isabella Field delivering her donations

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For more information, comments or address changes contact:

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Design & Printing:
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From the Executive Director

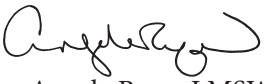
Reflections of the Past Year

As spring approaches, thoughts of sunny weather, budding leaves and blooming flowers come to mind, warming my heart in anticipation. Maybe it's just spring fever, but when I reflect upon my first year as the Executive Director at Matthew House, I am also drawn to the analogy of how our diverse volunteers are like a glorious rainbow spectrum of every age and level of ability. With our youngest volunteer just 9 years old and our oldest volunteers being over 80 years of age; people offer a variety of talents such as plowing the driveway, organizing fundraising events, or providing carpentry skills at no charge. I have been in a constant state of awe and gratitude since I started in my position at Matthew House. It is amazing to witness all the creative ways in which people have been inspired to contribute gifts of talent, time, skills, and of course funding.

Certain days feel quite magical at Matthew House, with unexpected blessings happening in all sorts of ways. Here is just a glimpse of the types of generosity I have seen in the past few weeks alone: Jacob and Josh Janish worked tirelessly for six hours in the blustery cold to replace our front door as an in-kind gift; an artist and close friend of a resident who passed away in December, donated a beautiful print of Hoopes Park's Gazebo to adorn the walls of Matthew House and Isabella, a local high school senior, donated some items from our wish list and created "busy bags" filled with activities to keep people engaged while going through difficult times.

Each day I get to witness firsthand the dedication of an incredible team of staff and volunteers. Each one of them brings his or her unique gifts and talents to Matthew House, helping us to better serve the terminally ill in a beautiful, clean, warm and home-like atmosphere that is a bright gem in our community. Matthew House is a vibrant rainbow, created by a generous community, volunteers of all ages, individuals and foundations along with churches and businesses. I feel so very grateful that the universe has allowed me to be an integral part of its existence.

Thank you!



Angela Ryan, LMSW
Executive Director

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TOPS
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"There is no exercise better for the heart than reaching down and lifting people up."

John Holmes

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"No one has ever become poor by giving."

Anne Frank

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"The best way to find yourself is to lose yourself in the service of others."

Mahatma Ghandi

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"Only by giving are you able to receive more than you already have."

Jim Rohn

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"Not all of us can do great things. But we can do small things with great love."

Mother Teresa

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"No act of kindness, no matter how small, is ever wasted."

Aesop

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"Do not count the days; make the days count."

Muhammed Ali

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When you get, give."
Maya Angelou

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"Try to be a rainbow in someone's cloud."

Maya Angelou

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In this issue, we list all those who contributed to our financial support during 2018. Please accept our apology for any misspellings or omissions as we try to give each donor well-deserved credit. To all of you go our deepest thanks for being a part of the loving care at Matthew House.

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A Rainbow of Friends

My Mom was diagnosed with liver disease fourteen years ago and was hospitalized multiple times; each hospitalization longer than the one before. In August 2018, she made the decision to start her end-of-life journey. With the help of Hospice, all of her options were reviewed and a personalized end-of-life plan was put into place. As a family, we decided to pursue Matthew House as a possible plan of care. She was initially placed into a nursing home from the hospital while awaiting a bed opening at Matthew House. Each day Mom's health seemed to get worse and we began to worry that she wouldn't make it to Matthew House. On September 10, 2018, we received the phone call we were anxiously awaiting from Executive Director Angela Ryan. She wanted to set up an intake interview with Mom and the family to pursue possible placement.

Mom was welcomed into Matthew House on September 13th and after a few days of being there, she seemed to bounce back in overall physical status. The constant, attentive care and medication management made a huge impact on her overall well-being, so much so that she was worried Angela was going to have to send her home.

All of her needs were tended to including her desire to have her hair done. Her hair was washed and styled with a curling iron until a volunteer hair dresser could come in to cut and style it. Another volunteer gave her a "mini manicure spa treatment" that included pink nail polish to match her new nightgown. This elevated my Mom's spirits and put a smile on her face. When her appetite improved, she began asking for all of her favorite foods including egg and olive sandwiches, ice cream and cookies. Manager of Resident Services Shelly MacBain brought in fresh eggs from her own chickens to make her sandwiches, cook for breakfast and use in the homemade cookies you could smell when walking in the front door. Staff and volunteers would take time to make Mom special cookies that were low in sugar. To Mom, a cookie made everything better.

Mom often told me many times how lucky she was to be at Matthew House. She loved her private room and the special 24/7 care given by the staff and volunteers. As her health began to deteriorate further, it was comforting to our family to know she was being cared for as we wished. She was comfortable, kept clean and treated with respect. Her end-of-life journey came to an end on October 22, 2018, "Her Way!"

Special thanks to everyone at Matthew House for making Mom's forty-day journey to her end of life comfortable for her and our family. Please continue doing what you're doing and give the same excellent care and compassion to others in need during their end-of-life journey.

Linda Kramer
Daughter of Shirley Bobbett

Thankful ❤ Grateful ❤ Blessed