

mother teresa house

For the Care of the Terminally Ill

August 2009

Our Guest: Helen Pixley's Presence a Gift

Helen Pixley had a heart for beauty and a passion for gardening. Inside her room at Mother Teresa House was a bright profusion of potted daffodils, tulips, and hyacinth. While the cold of a Michigan January settled outside, the fragrance of spring blooms wafted into the kitchen for all to enjoy – both caregivers and visitors alike.

Though Mrs. Pixley did not have the strength to leave her bed, her spirit and presence extended beyond her small room and touched all who cared for her. Like a member of our family, she impacted and enriched the “life” and rhythm of the house and brought with her that certain *something*, that goodness, which can only come through the presence of a person, of someone who can love and receive the love of others.

Her spirit and presence touched all who cared for her.



The picture in Helen Pixley's room donated by Don Pixley to Mother Teresa House (see also pg. 4)

Her caring friends and family - husband, son, and daughter - were often at her side as she suffered the final stages of cancer without complaint. They surrounded her with things that were dear to her. Images of familiar places, which had been photographed by her husband of 55 years, hung where she could find comfort in them until she “gently, [and] mercifully” passed away.

One of those photographs remains in the room where Helen Pixley lived at Mother Teresa House. The scene is of a tranquil winter road. Shaded and overarched by trees, the snowy tracks lead quietly into the distance. This picture was taken of the road leading to Mrs. Pixley's home and brought her comfort during her time at Mother Teresa House. Now, it gives comfort to others as it speaks of another road...the road we all travel, as brothers and sisters, toward our one true home in heaven.

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Local Business Helps Carry Mission

Simplified Accounting & Tax Service, Inc. has been a vital supporter of Mother Teresa House since we began in 1997. Judith Stegman, Simplified's owner at that time, played an integral role in starting Mother

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Dear Friends of Mother Teresa House,

Home and family. One of the principles at Mother Teresa House is a deep respect for the preeminence of the family. As endeared as each guest becomes to us, it is the family member whose picture is on the cabinet, not ours. The pleasure of making the birthday cake may not be ours, it is the family's if they so desire.

When a person does not have family, Mother Teresa House is a ready family-like circle around him or her. For those still blessed with family, we profoundly respect their bond and unique way of being together.

Sundays at Mother Teresa House especially are family days. The volunteer caregivers are here early, as they are every day, and help each person throughout the morning. But on Sundays, family members arrive for the afternoon, and we leave the care of their member to them while we rest or go home to our own families. One big family had the tradition to gather at Grandmother's every Sunday after church. When she came to our House, they just moved the weekly affair, grandkids and all, to her new address at Mother Teresa House—bringing plenty of food and company for any other guests and visitors.

Much of the support that comes to Mother Teresa House arises out of loving families, be it the nurture of childhood that instilled in us concern for others, or be it the example or agreement of spouse and family that supports our giving. For those of you who have been able to help the people at Mother Teresa House, thank you! May the Lord bless you and yours.

Warmly,

Karen Bussey
President



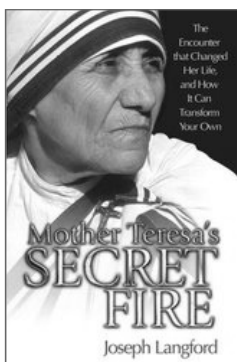
TIPS FOR FAMILY CAREGIVERS

Giving care to a family member in need is a great act of love and kindness. It can be very rewarding but also very difficult because it involves many stressors which can pile up.

Here are some helpful ways to prevent caregiver burnout:

- ◆ Learn as much as you can about your member's illness and about how to be a caregiver as you can. You'll feel better about your efforts.
- ◆ Know your limits and communicate them to doctors, family members, and others involved in care.
- ◆ Accept your feelings. Caregiving can trigger a host of difficult emotions.
- ◆ Confide in others. Don't keep those emotions bottled up. Caregiver support groups are invaluable, but trusted friends and family members can help too. You may also benefit from counseling.

Source: Helpguide.org



A Reflection on Mother Teresa's Secret Fire: The Encounter That Changed Her Life and How It Can Transform Your Own, by Mandy Scott

Admired across religious, economic, and national boundaries for her love and self-sacrifice, Mother Teresa has become a household name and a symbol for charity.

The first part of *Mother Teresa's Secret Fire* went into what caused her to go to Calcutta. When reading about the extreme charity that Mother Teresa showed, it can

be hard to take it to heart because it seems so much bigger than what we believe we can do.

Continued on Page 4

Support at Spring Benefit Event Surpasses Expectations

April 23, 2009. Friends of Mother Teresa House, old and new, packed the Spring 2009 Dinner and Fundraiser held at the Kellogg Hotel & Conference Center at Michigan State University.



Highlights of the evening included the musical talent of award winning singer Noelle Garcia, moving testimonies by K. C. Pullman-Harrison and Annie Mokris, and the new "Faces of Mother Teresa House" video (for more on this video, see page 4).



In this photo: (l-r) Maureen Van Glabbeek, Karen Bussey, and Karla Reilly



Maureen Van Glabbeek, Executive Director of the John L. Mulvaney Foundation announced a \$25,000 challenge grant in tribute to Ellen Mulvaney. Our heartfelt thank you to those whose gifts and pledges have met and surpassed this grant!

This year's event was chaired by board member Joe Harrison, and sponsored by Palmer, Bush & Jensen Family Funeral Homes and Simplified Accounting & Tax Services.

“Where does love begin?
It begins at HOME” Mother Teresa

Want to Pledge? Consider enrolling in monthly automatic debit. Simply fill out the green ACH Authorization form which is located in the center of this newsletter and mail it to Mother Teresa House in the donation envelope provided.

Local Business Helps Carry Mission (Continued from page 1)

Teresa House and began providing accounting services at no charge to the fledgling organization.

Through the ongoing generosity of Ryan Lowe and Nikali Luke, owners of Simplified since 2005, Simplified has donated monthly accounting and

bookkeeping services, payroll processing, and tax preparation for over a decade. Funds normally routed to these services are instead spent on the heart of our mission here at Mother Teresa House: providing compassionate care for the terminally ill.

Kind words from families

Thank you so much for all your care, friendship, kindness you have shown to [our father] during his respite at Mother Teresa House...May God continue to bless your ministry as you bless those who pass through your doors.

My heartfelt appreciation for the loving care you shared with my Mother during her final days.

"It takes special people to do what you do. God Bless you all!"



IN LOVING MEMORY

Linda was such an able, compassionate caregiver and uplifting companion to so many sick people who she watched over at Mother Teresa House over several years of loving service, May the Lord give her His light and peace.

From Message to Family of Linda Slueter, who died October 24, 2008

Wish List

- \$36,500 365 days of care
- \$1,000 1 guest's stay at Mother Teresa House
- \$100 1 day of care for one guest
- \$85 1 week of groceries
- \$3,500 Energy efficient central air conditioning
- \$2,800 Refinish exterior of main porch entrance
- \$2,000 Commercial large capacity washer and dryer
- \$1,000 New kitchen table with 6 washable chairs
- \$550 Battery operated sump pump
- \$555 1 year of internet access for our offices
- \$75 15" heavy paper cutter
- \$276 12 month supply of chapel sanctuary candles
- \$58 Memorial plaques, enough for one year
- \$23 Chapel sanctuary candles for one month

"Faces of Mother Teresa House"

a video featuring photos of past and present volunteers and guests that was shown at the Spring 2009 Dinner & Fundraiser is now available to view online at www.motherserterahouse.org.



We have received a generous donation of photographic art by Don Pixley (see cover story) which is on display throughout Mother Teresa House.

These scenes of Michigan wildlife and landscape are for sale 100% of proceeds benefit Mother Teresa House.



A Reflection on Mother Teresa's Secret Fire (Continued from page 2)

Mother Teresa's Secret Fire: the Encounter that Changed Her Life and How it Can Transform Your Own, by Joseph Langford, published by Our Sunday Visitor Publishing Division, 2008.

A Tidbit from the Publisher: "Written by the co-founder of her priest's community, Father Joseph Langford, and published at the personal request of Mother Teresa to share her message with the world."
www.osv.com

It's that mindset that makes Joseph Langford's next message so powerful. He points out that Mother Teresa was not extraordinary because of her ability to serve, but because she listened to the call



Guest contributor Mandy Scott is donating this summer to full-time service at Mother Teresa House in our live-in position. Mandy is attending the Franciscan University of Steubenville.

of God and followed His will even though she was terrified and uncertain of herself. Each one of us has a calling; our own personal Calcutta. No person's Calcutta is more important than another's because it is what God has called them personally to do. We all have just as much ability to serve as Mother Teresa; it's just a matter of finding out where God wants us to be. If Mother Teresa had ignored what God wanted her to do she would not be the symbol that she is today. This unique message is why I would recommend *Mother Teresa's Secret Fire* to everyone.

Serving @ Mother Teresa House



In this photo, Gerry Stead, Trish Terrell and Mandy Scott practice changing bed linens at our March Gathering.

Volunteers meet quarterly to receive ongoing training, remember guests who have died, hear house updates, and spend time with each other in a supportive environment.

In this photo, Gerry



photo volunteers from University Christian Outreach help paint our exterior door.

Throughout the year service organizations, school groups, and other short-term volunteers help with house improvement projects and yard maintenance. In this

Our Volunteer Family...

Peggy Johnson has served as a caregiver at Mother Teresa House since December 2008.

As an early retiree from the State of Michigan,



Peggy came to Mother Teresa House looking to give service in her free time. She says that her "experiences here have taught me how to live. It's true what they say that if you learn how to die then you learn how to live." In addition to caring

for guests every Wednesday morning, Peggy also serves as a Care Coordinator one weekend per month, helping to supervise other caregivers and the guests' care. She enjoys gardening and repairing old houses and has used her skills to help with spring cleaning, painting, and yard work at Mother Teresa House.

Josh Zielinski served as a full-time caregiver at Mother Teresa House for eight weeks this summer through the Notre Dame Summer Service Learning Program. He arrived with the hope that "by the end of the summer, I will be better able to see Christ in others and serve

them more naturally in my daily life." Josh

shared his great compassion with the guests that he served this summer. He says that his eight weeks at Mother Teresa House taught him that although we cannot always take away someone's pain, we can offer

our presence to them, and sometimes that is just as helpful to someone who is dying.

Jill Cook has been a caregiver at Mother Teresa House since 2005. She serves two to



three times per month in the evening after work. After experiencing several losses in her own life, Jill says that what got her through was the support of people who had experienced similar losses. She hopes she is able to give that same comfort to the families and guests we serve at Mother Teresa House. Jill finds that her service here helps her keep things in perspective. She says she feels "surrounded by love" each time she enters Mother Teresa House.



Service Opportunities

Caregivers

Men and women are needed to provide one on one care for guests. No experience needed. Training provided. Weekday and weekend times available.

Experienced Caregivers

Experienced caregivers needed to serve as Care Coordinators one weekend per month.

Overnight Caregivers

Weekend and week nights available. Shifts are 10pm to 8am.

Live-in Caregiver

Full-time volunteer position. Room and board in a private apartment. Available August through May. Requires 40-50 hours of service each week.

Learn how to become a Mother Teresa House Volunteer

Please join us for an Orientation and House Tour September 24, 2009, 6pm-8pm

To RSVP or inquire, call 517.484.5494 between 9am-4pm Monday-Friday or email info@motherteresahouse.org

➡ DOWNLOAD A SERVICE APPLICATION ONLINE: WWW.MOTHERTERESAHOUSE.ORG/SERVICEAPPLICATION.PDF ⬅

mother teresa house

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We're on the web!

www.motherteresahouse.org

What is Mother Teresa House?

Mother Teresa House located in downtown Lansing, Michigan provides a home and care for people with terminal illness. A trained volunteer staff offers shelter, meals, personal care, as well as round the clock support with love and reverence for life.

Who is eligible to live at Mother Teresa House?

Any person with a terminal diagnosis, particularly those in the last months of their illness, and in Hospice care. Guests from any religion, social or economic status are welcomed. Priority is given to those in greatest need.

Who might consider using Mother Teresa House?

A person who does not have a caregiver in the home or whose family members may have limitations in providing care.

How is Mother Teresa House funded?

Care is offered at no charge. We receive no government or insurance funding. Mother Teresa House depends solely on the generous donations of individuals, churches, service groups, friends and businesses to cover operating expenses. Mother Teresa House is a 501(c)3 nonprofit corporation and donations are tax deductible.

How is care provided?

Mother Teresa House volunteers joyfully give this care as an expression of God's love. Mother Teresa House values each person as a child of God. In the spirit of Blessed Teresa of Calcutta we welcome people of all faiths to join us in serving.



**Mother Teresa House
Front Porch**