

A Word from the Executive Director

Many of you have heard me talk of Hildegard House as a place of miracles and blessings. And lots of surprises. One Sunday evening, I received a phone call from an older woman with a German accent. She said, "Karen, this is Hildegard. I have something for you." You can imagine what went through my mind and heart! I thought it was my soul-mate, Hildegard of Bingen.

The call was from Dr. Hildegard Stoddard, 92 year-old-German immigrant, a retired JCC professor. She told me she had something at her house, a Madonna and Child statue, that she wanted me to look at and see if we would care for her at Hildegard House. I visited Hilda (as she likes to be called) at her home to see "her Mary." Mary was in her bedroom on a mirrored vanity, like an altar. She told me that she wanted to find a safe place for her before she died. This Madonna had been a wedding gift to her parents, and had survived World War I and II. Hilda had brought her to the United States in a feather bed. She looked so hopeful with her request – how could Hildegard House not have a Madonna from another Hildegard from Germany?

Hilda brought the Madonna over by car with her driver, Jimmy (a former student). We put her on an altar that we had been given from the Carmelites when their monastery closed. It was the perfect place for her. Hilda was overjoyed. She put her hand up to the statue and said, "Mary, I'm going to miss you!" Then she turned to me, reached into her bra and handed me a check saying, "I can't leave Mary without any money." It was a generous donation to Hildegard House.

Hilda has been back to visit Mary and we are glad to have Hilda as a friend of Hildegard House!

Karen Cassidy
Karen Cassidy
Executive Director



Hildegard House Staff

We have a dedicated staff that works hard and works well together. How fortunate we are to have each other! I'd like to thank them for their passion and the care they give our residents!

Jana McNally, Volunteer Coordinator

Rachelle Seger, Volunteer Assistant

Wade Lemke, Executive Assistant

Judy Noble, House Manager.



In gratitude for all those that support our mission to care for those at the end-of-life.

—Karen



Too Soon to Say Good-bye *Continued from page 1.*

enrolled in hospice and sent to Hildegard House. The first three days he laid in bed in a fetal position, so depressed and despondent. The next day, Tom Trimble, a Compassionate Companion, walked into Allan's room and said, "Come on! Let's get out of that bed and get in the shower!" After Allan spent 45 minutes in the warm shower (it was hard to get him out!), he asked for Tom and Allison Ewart to cut his hair and shave him. He looked and felt like a new man, but was still very weak. But he began eating. As I walked through the hall at the end of that first week, I could hear a voice from his room telling the Compassionate Companions, "Don't bring me that wheat toast! I want white! Lots of butter!" At the end of the first week he had gained ten pounds!

The second week he had gained 22 pounds. Allan eventually went back to Jewish



*Compassionate Companion
Tom Trimble and Allan*

Hospital to get tuned back up and was discharged back home. Today he weighs 150 pounds and is back welding with his friends. He lives in a cute house, has a new sofa and a remote. He says Hildegard House brought him back to life and gave him a second chance.

I frequently think of one of our first residents, Jim, a Vietnam vet. He said, "Hildegard House is the best Bed and Breakfast in town!" Nourishing food, quilts and soft pillows. Ring a bell and someone is right there. Friendly faces and caring souls surrounding you.

Sometimes it is just too soon to say good-bye!

PS. I read this story to Allan and he loved it.

— Art Buchwald (2006) *Too Soon to Say*

WE'RE GROWING!

We want to be able to serve more individuals that need our services.

Will you help us?

We just closed on a little shotgun house across the alley. It needs some renovation and remodeling to add some bedrooms. We want to be able to serve 3-4 more people. We always seem to have a waiting list and it breaks our hearts!

A big thanks to our initial Major Donors on this journey! Thanks for getting us started!

Mr. John Rogers – a long time friend of Hildegard House. Bringer of bagels and pizza on holidays!

Carl and Carlene Herde – also long time friends, Carl is currently on our Board and serves as the Finance Chair and Treasurer

The Gheens Foundation – In 2015, they took a risk on a brand new nonprofit with a generous grant, and and still believe in our mission.

Can you help us as we grow?

We are planning to open the new house and accept residents there – hopefully in January 2023.



ARE YOU BEING Called?

by Jana McNally, Volunteer Coordinator

There's a common theme that we hear around Hildegard House when someone first becomes a volunteer. They say things like "I felt called" or "I kept seeing the volunteering notice and it kept reaching out to me" or "It was like someone was tapping me on the shoulder trying to get my attention". Hildegard House Executive Director, Karen Cassidy, says this kind of "shoulder tapping" is Hildegard's way of telling us that we are being invited to provide compassionate service. Sometimes Hildegard can be rather insistent! If you have received the call, you know it can be hard to resist.



Resident Myrtle Marie (104 years old) and Compassionate Companions Suzanne Dugan and Kelly Booker

In December of 2021, Kelly Booker saw an ad in *The Record* (Newspaper of the Archdiocese of Louisville) and another in her church bulletin announcing a training session for Compassionate Companions in January. Kelly had seen an ad for Hildegard House volunteers before, but she said the second time she saw it she couldn't ignore it. She attended in January. Kelly completed the weekend training. She told her mother, Suzanne Dugan, about her new volunteer service and Kelly said her Mom told her to "wait right there!" while she went to get something. When she returned, Suzanne had the clipping she had cut out of *The Record* about that same training session. Suzanne had been out of town in January so she couldn't make the January training date but had cut it out and saved it because she had the same reaction to it as her daughter. And it was also the second time she

had seen the ad. Suzanne signed up for the next training session and became a Compassionate Companion in March. Do great minds think alike or was Hildegard at work?

Suzanne was raised in a large family of twelve children and she was smack dab in the middle. Her siblings sometimes call her the "bossy" one but she and her siblings have taken on a caregiving role in various ways with each other. Their father was the superintendent of Saint Michael's cemetery in Germantown and they moved to a house on cemetery land when Suzanne was five years old. Of her mother, Kelly says, "Mom sees death as a part of life, having grown up on the cemetery grounds, death seems natural to her."

Kelly said her own interest in becoming a Compassionate Companion came about because "it was out of my comfort zone and I knew this was a good reason to give it a try." Since becoming an active Compassionate Companion, Kelly says that what keeps her coming back is "knowing that my sole purpose when I am here is to provide whatever I can for the residents." The community of other volunteers is another good reason, "I keep serving different shifts so that I can meet everyone who volunteers! This is an amazing group of people."

Some people who are interested in volunteering think they don't have what it takes to become a Compassionate Companion. They ask if they need a medical background in order to serve. Hildegard House is a home and volunteers serve as family for the residents no medical experience is required. But Suzanne found that one part of her work history was extremely beneficial to one Hildegard House resident, Diana, living in Room One, had purchased Christmas gifts for people in her life. Diana wanted the gifts to be wrapped and given out at Christmas though she knew she wouldn't be around for it. Suzanne (who just so happened to have years of professional gift-wrapping experience at Stewart's and Shillito's) jumped in to help. Suzanne helped Diana with the gift wrapping on a Sunday evening during her weekly shift, then came



Compassionate Companions Kelly Booker and Suzanne Dugan. Quilt by Penny Sisto

back again on Wednesday afternoon when Diana was no longer able to assist with the wrapping. Suzanne finished wrapping the gifts by herself. The next day, Diana died, knowing that the gift wrapping was complete. You never know what part of your life history may mean companionship to someone who is at the end of life.

Compassionate Companions commit to serve a five hour shift every week. During the first week of May, there was a shift that was still not filled...it was Mother's Day and volunteers were busy with their own families that day. Kelly had already served her weekly shift on Friday morning and Suzanne had served her weekly shift on Saturday (Derby Day!) but after I sent out several email requests to the Compassionate Companions to see if anyone could serve this shift I got a simple text message from Kelly. It said "My Mom and I can serve on Sunday night, it will be a good way to spend Mother's Day". This kind of compassion is what Hildegard House Compassionate Companions are all about.

Hildegard House is always in need of more Compassionate Companions and volunteers who provide meals, housecleaning, gardening and more. Please contact us if you are feeling called. It's a way of being family, friend and community for someone you haven't even met. Suzanne Dugan and her daughter, Kelly Booker, got the call to become volunteers. Maybe you're being called too. ●

Hildegard House The Pathway Home



Hildegard House
dignity has a home

www.hildegardhouse

**The Pathway Home
4x8 Brick
3 Lines-20 Char/Line**

For questions, please contact Dr. Karen Cassidy at 502-797-7411
or email kcassidy@hildegardhouse.org

To Order Go Online to www.fundraisingbrick.com/hildegardhouse/
Or complete this order form and send along with payment to Hildegard House, PO Box 5613,
Louisville, KY 40255

Make Checks Payable To: Hildegard House – The Pathway Home

The beds at Hildegard House are always full and we have a waiting list. We have been blessed to be able to purchase a small shotgun house across the alley in order to serve 4 more residents. The house is in need of major renovations and some major TLC. You can leave a forever legacy by buying an engraved brick for our brick pathway. Your gift will assist those at the end of life who have no home or loved ones to care for them to have a home and compassionate care and dignity. Help build The Pathway Home! Will you support our goal of being able to open our new home by January 2023?

4x8 Brick \$1000 3 lines of text 20 characters

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Don't miss out on this wonderful opportunity, order your engraved brick today!

Mail in your order using this form and the enclosed envelope.

*Thanks to all of our
Compassionate Companions
who bring joy & dignity to our residents!*



Myrtle Marie & Jane Doehnert



*Thank You
for Supporting
Hildegard!*

*You can use this page to mail in your order.
The order form is on the reverse side and can be mailed in the enclosed envelope.*

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**HIT IT FOR
HILDEGARD!**

**6TH ANNUAL
GOLF SCRAMBLE**

Sept. 30, 2022

Registration: HHgolf.org



*Join our monthly
giving club!*

Join the Compassionate Care Circle. Any amount helps us to build our budget more confidently. To join, email Kcassidy@hildegardhouse.org or visit www.hildegardhouse.org to learn more.

Ways to *Give:*

- Monthly Giving
- Join the Compassionate Care Circle
- Stocks and IRA
- Leave a Lasting Legacy in your will
- A Gift to Help Us Grow
- See the envelope in this mailing.

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Wish List:

- Cans of Soda
- Kroger cards to buy milk and fruit
- 13 gallon kitchen bags
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