



Hildegard House

dignity has a home



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A GOOD HAIRCUT CAN MAKE YOU YOU *Smile!*

One of the first things Joe told Compassionate Companion Suzanne Dugan is, "I want a haircut." Joe arrived in late summer, when our usual volunteer hair stylist was away. But a haircut was on his mind.

Joe was a widower and lived alone before coming to Hildegard House. His only brother lived several states away. Without the resources for 24-hour care, Joe could not access hospice services when his illness became terminal. When he needed us, there was an opening at Hildegard House.

Joe quickly charmed everyone here with his sweet temperament and stories. He talked about his days in the seminary, his travel to Italy and Hawaii, and growing up in Louisville. Occasionally, he would ask for a haircut.

Suzanne serves every other Friday morning with her daughter, Kelly Booker. They are the smiling mother and daughter team from 7 - 10 AM. Together they make breakfasts, provide medicines, and tidy up rooms. Kelly says that when they started serving together about 18 months ago they agreed that they would work half their shifts together and half their shifts with another Compassionate Companion, so they would get to know the rest of the volunteers.

"That was our agreement," she says, "because there are so many wonderful people here from all kinds of backgrounds. We want to know them and learn from them." Suzanne also serves every other Saturday morning with another Compassionate Companion.



Over the few days Joe lived at Hildegard House, he and Suzanne developed a friendship. As they talked, they learned that Joe – like Suzanne’s father – had attended St. Meinrad during his high school years. He asked her to pray the rosary with him. "Sometimes you get attached," Suzanne says, "and he was special."

When she came back on Saturday morning, Joe asked for a haircut. "I've given my husband haircuts for 50 years", she said, "so I felt up to the job." As she cut his hair, Suzanne and Joe chatted comfortably. Then they took a picture together - both beaming. "Joe was so pleased," Suzanne said, "and that made me happy."

Joe died at six o'clock that evening.

Suzanne believes he was waiting for his hair cut. And she *knows* that Joe, like every resident at Hildegard House, spent his final days receiving loving care and experiencing deep connection with the people who cared for him. Everyone deserves to die with care and dignity. And a haircut if they want one.



A Word from our Executive Director

Dear Friends,

One woman touched me by her life. Her shining example as a wife, mother, and grandmother. And she continues to touch me and so many, even with her death. Let me explain.

One beautiful April day, Councilman Andrew Owen and his wife, Nancy, came to visit Hildegard House. I could tell that Andrew especially was moved. He shared with me that his mother, Phyllis, was in the last stages of pancreatic cancer. I have known the Owen family for many years. I was sad to hear of this.

You probably know Tom Owen, the historian and politician. Phyllis was his wife. And the lighthouse of the Owen family.

Andrew and Nancy shared their visit with Phyllis. She too was moved. She wanted to make a small contribution in her will. She also said that in lieu of flowers, she wanted donations to go to Hildegard House. This is what her obituary said (in part): "Phyllis "Oma" Owen, died at home on May 28 th , 2023, surrounded by her family.... Because Phyllis was fortunate enough to be accompanied to her death at home by a chorus of family and friends, she asks that in lieu of flowers, donations be made in her memory to Hildegard House, a home supporting the terminally ill who might otherwise die alone."

The donations poured in. And Phyllis, the chorus is still singing! We are blest by the gift of your life. Thanks to all of you who support Hildegard House. It touches me. And it touches the volunteers and the residents who live and die here.

Blessings,

Karen Cassidy
Karen Cassidy
Executive Director



P.S. Elated to welcome
Jane Walsh, Assistant Director!



THE CALL TO COMPASSIONATE COMPANIONSHIP by Donnie Ruark

"If you told me (in 2016) that I would be doing this," says Donnie Ruark, "I would have said you don't know what you're talking about." And yet, since 2018, Donnie has been a loyal Compassionate Companion at Hildegard House, becoming famous for cooking residents absolutely anything they want to eat - up to and including a kimchi omelet.

that sometimes you are the last person that someone will ever talk to - that's really something."

Today, Donnie can't imagine not being a Compassionate Companion at Hildegard House. "I will be doing this until I am physically too feeble. It's so satisfying to be here."

Volunteers are the heart of Hildegard House

Compassionate Companions provide the day-to-day care for our residents just as a family member would at home - making lunch, doing laundry, or reading. We ask for an ongoing commitment of at least one five-hour shift a week.

Call Jana McNally, Volunteer Coordinator, at 502-581-8267 or email jana@hildegardhouse.org for more information. The next volunteer training is November 10th from 6 - 8 PM and November 11th from 9-4 PM. **Come join a compassionate community!**

WE HIT IT FOR HILDEGARD!

The seventh annual Hit it for Hildegard on September 29th, was held at Heritage Hill Golf Course. Morning and afternoon golfers supported Hildegard House and enjoyed a beautiful day of golf. We are grateful to Stock Yards Bank and Trust, Laura Rice, broker at Lenihan Southby's Realty and Mark Clore Construction for leading our Sponsor Board this year!



Hildegard Fest

Friends and admirers of St. Hildegard celebrated her feast day at the first annual Hildegard Fest on September 17th. The Butchertown Business Alliance sponsored the gathering, which was hosted by our good friends at Apocalypse Brew Works. Leah Deines, owner and master brewer, donated a portion of beer sales and invited a variety of vendors who donated some of their proceeds to Hildegard House. Guinevere Milewski baked Hildegard's special recipe, Cookies of Joy, and shared all proceeds with Hildegard House.



Karen Cassidy and Michael Logston



Bob Young and Erik Segura Martinez of JBS were serving up pork chop sandwiches, potato salad, and baked beans with donations going to Hildegard House.



Pictured far left: We were delighted by the custom made "beer coaster" created for us by Sarah Baker, Hadley Pottery. Friends who donated \$20 to Hildegard House received this beautiful gift. Finally, special thanks to Michael Logston who organized an amazing lineup of musical acts all day long including Blue Murphy, Taylor Katherine, Don't Call Me Lady, the Elderblooms, and John and Kim D'Amato.

Our Board

Carl Herde, *Chair, Retired, Kentucky Hospital Association*

Barbara Gordon, *Vice-Chair, UofL Trager Institute*

Marilyn Cleeff, *Treasurer, CPA, Consultant*

Mary Beth Hatch, MD, *Secretary, Humana*

Betty Adkins, *Retired, Metro Government*

Julie Boatright, *Humana*

Barret Collins, *Community Volunteer*

Sean Higgins, *CEO, Mint Julep Tours*

Donald Kavanaugh, *Barry Wooley Designs*

Al Klein, *Retired, Humana*

Derek Reed, *Retired, Chief Regional District Judge*

Rev. Tara Reck, *Pastor, Anchorage Presbyterian Church*

Donna Trabue, *Volunteers of America, Mid-States*

George Webb, MD, *Retired, Hosparus*

Our Staff

Karen Cassidy, *Executive Director*

Jane Walsh, *Assistant Director*

Jana McNally, *Volunteer Coordinator*

Cindy Cooper, *On-call Volunteer Manager*

Judy Noble, *House Manager*

LaDonna Carnahan, *House Manager*

www.hildegardhouse.org

502-581-8267



Moments at Hildegard House

John was the first resident at Hildegard on Story, Hildegard House's second home. He came to us after a full life that included time served in the Michigan National Guard. In September, Compassionate Companion Gerald Hope, who is an Army Veteran and also represents the Hosparus Veterans Program, presented John with a certificate of service and a lap blanket. Hildegard House nurse Hope Walker, who is an Army Veteran, attended the simple ceremony in John's room.



HILDEGARD HOUSE

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We provide a home and compassionate care for individuals at the end of life who have no home or loved ones to care for them so that they may die with dignity.



Hildegard House has Two Homes

In 2016, Hildegard House opened in the former Ursuline convent on Adams Street in Butchertown. Since then, close to 200 people have been cared for by Compassionate Companions in that home, which we now call the Motherhouse. In September, the first residents moved into Hildegard House's second home, Hildegard on Story. We have three more rooms, and have doubled our capacity to care for individuals who have no home or loved ones to care for them so they may die with dignity.

Ways to Give:

- Our secure website www.hildegardhouse.org
- Mail using the enclosed envelope, PO Box 5613 Louisville, KY 40255
- A monthly gift
- A gift in memory or honor of someone
- Buy a Brick (See website)
- Legacy gift through your will



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