



FROM THE DIRECTOR

Hello,

My name is Kathy Okiec and I have recently been named the House/ Resident Care Director at Charlotte House Comfort Care. Right off the bat, let me say, I absolutely love what I do. Maybe because it's not a big corporation with a ton of bosses that pull you in a million different directions every day. We have a Board of Directors that work closely with me to ensure things are carried out correctly and help in any way they can. There is also a group of volunteers who give their time simply because they want to, not for want of compensation or accolades, and a few staff members who pick up the overnights. Charlotte House is a home, just like you and I live in, kitchen, bedrooms, etc., but a home with a different purpose. Individuals come here when they have been diagnosed with having less than three months left to live. It's a heavy pill to swallow, not only for the residents, but for their family as well. That's where we come in, all of us together, working as a team, making your loved one our loved one. No competition, everyone working as one, to make sure that your family member is cared for, every need met in the best way possible. I'm proud of our team. I'm very proud to be part of this family, and hope to be for a very long time. If you would like to be part of a very fulfilling journey and would like to become a part of the Charlotte House family, call me: 585-689-1935. I have no doubt you will be blessed in more ways than one.

Kathy Okiec



2025 Events Calendar:

Maple Weekend/Arcade & Attica Train Ride: 3/22/25 & 3/23/25

Vendor/Craft Show – Held at Hope Lutheran Church: 4/26/25

Dinner/Dance: 5/3/25

Duck Derby – in conjunction with Arcade Arts & Antiques Festival

Meat Raffle: October 2025

LET'S HAVE A CONVERSATION

When my step-father had a stroke, there were many remaining issues despite his ability to live on his own. At this point, I wish I would have had the courage to ask the important questions." What are your wishes when you are unable to stay alone?" "Would you be willing to move in with me?" "If not, where would you prefer to live when this happens?"

There are options for end-of-life care. An individual may stay in the hospital (depending on the situation), go to a nursing home, in home care with the assistance of Hospice (6 months or less life expectancy with a terminal diagnosis) or Visiting Nurses Association and enter a Comfort Care Home (three month or less life expectancy with a terminal diagnosis).

Other important things to consider as well: a Health Care Proxy, Power of Attorney, a will, potentially a Do Not Resuscitate (DNR) form, Medical Orders for Life-Sustaining Treatment (MOLST) form and lastly, funeral, memorial service, burial, cremation and any other final wishes.

I now know that all of these questions need to be answered well in advance of a life-changing event. I sincerely wish that I would have had this "conversation" because my loved one could have been a resident of Charlotte House longer and would have been given better care, companionship, love and dignity. I hope that by sharing this, some of you will have the answers to these questions well in advance of the need for them. We, as family members and friends, need this information in order to fulfill our loved one's wishes. If we have all of this information ahead of time, our loved one can be cared for in the manner of their choice and in a timely fashion.

Comfort Care Homes operate under the direction of Hospice and/or Visiting Nurses Association (VNA). There is never a cost for the care given in comfort homes. Nurses and volunteers work around the clock following the care plan provided to them. We, at Charlotte House, strive to give our residents along with their families, the love, respect and dignity that they so deserve. We all work together as a team and family. We consider it an honor to be able to assist our residents along with their families and friends.

Lynn Streicher

Volunteering Can:

- Build relationships with like-minded people
- Combat loneliness
- Help practice social skills
- Be a great way to make friends
- Allow you to impact others
- Promote & support causes you care about
- Allow you to contribute to your community

- Help you learn new skills
- Develop leadership and communication skills
- Improve mental health
- Improve physical health
- Change other people's lives
- Expose you to other cultures
- Build empathy and compassion
- Build community
- Allow opportunities which are a great way to try new things

- Make your life meaningful
- Teach you things a book never could
- Offer networking opportunities
- Lead to career development
- Increase your self-confidence
- Help with time management
- Be fun!
- Teach civic responsibility to children
- Be anyone!



If you are interested in volunteering at Charlotte House, please reach out to a volunteer, call 585-535-4065 or send an email through our website at: www.charlottehousecomfortcare.org

Charlotte House, Inc. is a 501©3 non-profit organization. Your donation is tax deductible as allowed by law.



KATHLEEN M. SCHWAB

7/5/1963 - 5/31-2024



We at Charlotte House would like to dedicate this newsletter to Kathy Schwab. Kathy became a board member in 2019. Kathy enjoyed volunteering behind the scenes. She was a firm believer in TEAMWORK. As, President, Kathy jumped in with both feet. She put her heart and soul into Charlotte House. She took her position very seriously and had a lot of plans for improvement. Kathy was the president of Charlotte House for eight months and left a void that can never be filled. We will be forever grateful for her dedicated years of giving to Charlotte House.



Kathy shared this at our last volunteer training session.

This is a Volunteer's Appreciation Kit.
The contents will be helpful during your day.

Lifesaver – as a reminder you are a *Lifesaver* to many.

Toothpick – to help you *pick* out the good qualities in others.

Gum – as a reminder to *“stick”* with it for all the people who depend on you.

Puzzle piece – a reminder that You are an important member of a *TEAM*.

Penny – to remind you that every *“one”* counts.

Candle – a reminder that you are the *light* that brightens someone's day.

Mounds – for the *“Mounds”* of praise and Thanks you deserve.

Tootsie Roll – to remind you of the essential *“role”* you play with the *TEAM*.

Payday – since you are not doing it for the *Pay*.

Thank you to each one of you, for everything you do to make Charlotte House the beauty in this neighborhood that we are.

VOLUNTEERS ARE NOT PAID BECAUSE THEY ARE WORTHLESS, THEY ARE NOT PAID BECAUSE THEY ARE PRICELESS!!!

Those who touch our lives, stay in our hearts forever!

“What we once enjoyed and deeply loved we can never lose, for all that we love deeply becomes part of us.”

Helen Keller

IN REMEMBRANCE OF THOSE WHO GRACED OUR HOUSE IN 2024:

Gertrude “Suzie” Buresch

Lois Brockway

Wilma Carlson

Bonnie Ciamaga

Tami Clapp

Carol Gingerich



Patricia Hume

Jeff Jurgens

Betsy Marsh

Sharon Robida

Paul Sansone

John Yansick

Thank You GENEROUS DONORS!



We were honored to receive four quilts that were made by:
Amy Ploetz, Marcia Beresford and Melissa Maston.



Harry Beckous, Board President on the left with Marissa Sanders, right who donates her tips once a year from working at the VF in Arcade during the Thanksgiving holiday.



Our Christmas Cookie Donor, June Beck on the left along with Paula Catlin, volunteer and Paula's faithful friend, Cassini.



Kathy Okiec, on left accepting a donation from Emily Parmerter, Lux Salon Owner on the right.



Volunteers Donna Kirsch (left) and Judy Kerwin (right) accepting a donation from Michelle Schmidt from ERA Real Estate.

2024 Fundraiser Highlights



Love & Luminaries – 2/10/24



Duck Derby – 9/21/24



"SUSIE"

Our mother, Gertrude Mary "Susie" Buresch passed away peacefully at Charlotte House in North Java on January 10, 2025 at age 93. Before we get to the wonderful care our mom received there in her final days, here is a little history so that we remember her as a real person, with a real life.

Mom was born at home in east Buffalo, NY on July 10, 1931, at the height of the Great Depression. While she was named after her grandmother, Mary Gertrude (only reversed), mom absolutely HATED the name Gertrude. As a child her nickname was "Sassy Susie", and it stuck; "Susie" was the name she preferred rather than Gertrude, and honestly it was the name everyone knew her by. She had a brother, William ("Bill") who she loved dearly. Mom was better at schoolwork than Bill, and often helped him with his schoolwork. It is a testament to mom's tutelage that after his service in the Navy, Bill went on to a successful career in the construction business. Mom attended Kensington High School in Buffalo, and then went on to graduate from St. Mary's Business school with a certificate in bookkeeping in 1949. Immediately entering the business world, she was employed by both International Milling Company (on Buffalo's waterfront where the present General Mills facility is located), as well as the American Red Cross, then located on Delaware Avenue. In 1950 she met our dad, Edward, at a "street dance". They married in 1951, and raised three sons. Our dad eventually went on to work on his own distributorship for Garry Automotive Chemicals, with which our mom assisted with the bookwork. We are fortunate and grateful to have had a wonderful upbringing by our parents, who taught us the values we rely upon

today, among them honesty, resourcefulness, helping others, the importance of education and family, and a sense of humor. When our dad suffered a major health issue, our mom cared for both him and her mother, Louise, 24-hours a day, in addition to raising teenage boys. This is often a cliché, but if anyone deserves Sainthood, it is our mom. Mom was exceedingly proud of her grandchildren and looked forward to spending time with them.

After she passed away, one of my brothers was going through mom's belongings at his house and came across a sealed envelope addressed to her three sons, written several years ago, to be opened after her death. Inside was a short letter to us. It was 100% our mother; among other personal messages, she made clear how very proud she was of her sons, of her grandchildren and great-grandchildren. The letter was written in her distinctive, neat handwriting and her message so thoughtful and heartfelt--like every note she wrote in every greeting card. We will treasure that letter always.

Near the end of her life, we sought out a special place for mom to receive quality end-of-life care that we couldn't provide on a 24-hour basis, and discovered Charlotte House almost in our backyard. As a "comfort care" resident, our mom was at Charlotte House for nearly three months, and we have nothing but high praise for the kind and patient care and attention mom received there in her final months from everyone associated with the organization. When she passed away, the outpouring of love and emotion from the staff touched us deeply and will not be forgotten.

Charlotte House is a tremendous community resource, and we are very fortunate to have this wonderful home and organization nearby. Once a person is approved for admittance to Charlotte House, this care is provided at no cost to the resident or their family. Operated essentially by community volunteers, the bulk of Charlotte House's funding comes from donations and fund-raising. I strongly encourage all who read this to support the work of Charlotte house either by contributions and/or perhaps by volunteering! Thank you.

The Buresch Family

OUTDOOR ENHANCEMENT

Dennis Wittman's family has generously donated a memorial plaque. This is a beautiful tribute to him. Dennis was our second resident. If you are in the area, please stop and see the outdoor beautifications Dennis' family have made to Charlotte House.



Memorial to Dennis Wittman.
Carol Wittman, wife - far left,
Holly Stoddard and Jennifer
Wittman, daughters

BOARD OF DIRECTORS:

Harry Beckous, President
Donna Kibler, Vice President
Doris Kirsch, Secretary
Rachel Ashcroft, Treasurer
Andrea Aldinger
Kim Bragg



Dale Doty
Sandra Janes
Dennis Kohl
Patricia Standish
Carol Wittman

COMFORT CARE HOME ELIGIBILITY

How do I know if my family member is eligible to become a resident of Charlotte House?

- Have your doctor or the hospital start a referral with the local Hospice agency in the county you live in, or you can.
- They can forward the comfort care home the paperwork to charlottehouseinc@gmail.com.
- The individual must be:
 - Approximately 200 pounds or less
 - Have a DNR/DNI in place
 - Be taking no injectable medication (including insulin)
 - Have no tubes or drains (foley catheter is ok)
 - Have a letter signed by a MD stating that they have less than three months to live with a terminal illness
 - Currently, Charlotte House requires a negative Covid test 24-48 hours prior to admittance.
 - Preferably have a Primary Physician to follow them

Our Med Team double-checks all the criteria have been met.

At times an in-person visit from a nurse will take place to meet the potential residents and their family.

Once Hospice approval is in place, steps will be taken to arrange transportation (Neither Charlotte House nor Hospice provides this).

The last step is admitting into Charlotte House.

Depending on the day of the week the process starts, it generally takes about 2-5 days from the onset to admittance.



CHARLOTTE
HOUSE
 Comfort Care Home



Non-Profit Organization
 Standard Mail
US Postage PAID
 Geneseo, NY 14454
Permit No. 29

4316 Route 98
 P.O. Box 123
 North Java, New York 14113



charlottehouseinc@gmail.com
 CharlotteHouseComfortCare.Org
 (585) 535-4065

*Charlotte House, Inc. is a 501(c)3 non-profit org.
 Your donation is tax deductible as allowed by law.*



Donations: Please consider donating to Charlotte House. We rely on donations and fundraising to make our mission a reality. Please remember that we receive no funding from Medicare, Medicaid, New York State or the federal government. All we do, we are able to do because of the generosity of people like you! *Thank You!*

A BIG

THANK YOU



To all of the wonderful can and bottle donors and to Canland, LLC (Laurie, Rick and Staff) for all the collecting and sorting that is involved in the job. The donations for 2024 were \$13,375.39.

From January 1, 2022 to February 1, 2025, the can and bottle donations have raised \$37,267.29 for Charlotte House.

We cannot thank all of you enough. We are grateful to belong to a wonderful, caring community!

Wish List



- Paper Towels
- Toilet Paper
- Liquid Laundry Detergent
- Fabric Softener Sheets (unscented)
- Shampoo Caps
- Band-aids (Assorted Sizes)
- #5160 Blank Avery Labels
- Biotene
- Baby Wipes
- Powdered Coffee Creamer
- Coffee - K Cups
- 5 & 13 Gallon Garbage Bags

- Heavy Duty Plastic Silverware
- Paper Napkins
- Disposable Nitrile Gloves (Size Medium & Large)
- Periguard Skin Protection Ointment by Derma Rite
- Lysol Cling Toilet Bowl Cleaner
- Twin Extra Long Flat White Sheets
- 1ML Disposable Syringes with caps "Brandzig" Item #CMD2573A
- 36x36 Disposable Bed Pads Medline Industries LOT #44624050001

Please go to:
<https://a.co/02Nrn4j>
 to see an updated list of needed items on Amazon