

Advent House Report for PEM June 1, 2020

Residents:

We have welcomed six Residents this year. It feels so strange to be June and to be saying that. Our last Resident died March 12 just before the COVID quarantine. Peace for them and an unknown blessing in disguise for the Advent House. March 13th I attended a meeting at Visiting Nurse Service with the directors of the other comfort care homes and learned that if indeed we accepted a Resident and they or a family member became ill with Covid it was our responsibility to manage the situation. When pressed, their director stated the agency would not be in any position to provide proper PPP equipment and/or additional staff to cover for the lack of volunteers. Also, the Resident could not be transferred to any other facility under the auspices of hospice. Unfortunately, a Resident at one of the other homes did become ill, as well as several family members, with Covid and after multiple frantic attempts for assist from the agency the director finally called an ambulance and the health department. The whole staff and other Resident and family then had to be quarantined leaving many unanswered concerns for everyone's well being and safety. We are still unsure what the level of support will be from the agencies so obviously that is a major consideration for reopening. I continue to meet every other week with the other home directors via Zoom. We are working together to formulate a proposal to present to the agencies as to how we can proceed to reopen safely with their assured support in case of need for change of status. As of this writing, the agency staff is very limited in what they can provide with one home having been informed that they may not necessarily have their night aide on a scheduled basis. I continue to read and reread daily the CDC and governor updates and they continue to be conflicting and confusing. I want to assure you that I am doing everything in my power to do whatever needs to be done to get our sweet Home reopened. I cannot remember a time in all of these years when I have come so close to feeling so helpless and frustrated. We have a daunting task set before us but I do firmly believe that by the grace of God if it is meant to be, we will figure this out. A time frame is unrealistic at this point. One home is opening with all paid staff; another not planning to open until possibly December; another will not reopen and the Home is going to be used for a different purpose and on it goes. Keep this beloved ministry in your prayers.

Staff: As you can see from Laurie and Vicki's lengthy reports that we have all been very busy. We are blessed indeed to have such a dedicated staff willingly stepping out of their job descriptions to do whatever is needed whenever and wherever they are needed. A special thank you to Kevin Cooman and Jeanne Kramers for their timely response in obtaining the grant for non-profits. We have been able to cover payroll for all staff through this pay period. I will be notifying the weekend nurses that the grant has been depleted and that unfortunately we will no longer be able to cover their weekend salary.

Finance Committee: Heartfelt gratitude to this committee of dedicated professionals that have so wisely shepherded our finances. With the grant monies we have been able to meet expenses including paying this incredibly dedicated staff. We met with Ray Wager to discuss several issues one of which is the annual budget. His recommendation at this time is that the budget remain the same with the stipulation that the Finance Committee will meet when feasible to review and make revisions as necessary. Insurance is another topic of concern and Ray is conferring with our reps. We received a very generous donation from the will of one of our former Residents. Always a wonderfully unexpected blessing.

Fundraising: See Vicki Deady's report. Vicki has done an amazing job of reorganizing and dismantling our non-gala making numerous calls and thank you notes and shuffling and reshuffling. She has been in touch with Victor Hills and the golf tournament will look different but seems to be a good possibility that we will be able to plan on having that. We will plan on sending out in the fall our annual appeal as usual and hopefully that will have a good response.

House Maintenance: As Vicki mentioned we are working on the Five Year Capital Improvement Project. We will present our findings and recommendations to the Finance Committee. In lieu of the unexpected expenses incurred due to the Covid quarantine we will be adjusting our timeline. That being said we have accomplished many of our annual cleaning projects during this time. The deck and all the railings are in the process of being refinished; the driveway has been repaired resealed and restriped; the landscaping project has been started; the carpets throughout the entire house have been cleaned; the windows washed inside and out; the furnace checked; the basement and garage being cleaned with excess supplies being donated to the appropriate places; the lower living room, guest bedroom and conference room have been painted (the first time since we opened this house). Please consider using Sam Gange of Quick-Dry Carpet Care, 585-202-3965 for any carpet cleaning needs and Jeff Johnson of APlus window cleaning for any window cleaning or power washing needs at 585-381-3244. Both of these gentlemen donated their time and services to Advent House and we are most thankful. I have investigated multiple different options for sanitizing products for the House. New touchless trash cans, touchless hand soap dispensers, UV wand, touchless thermometer, masks gloves and other sanitizing products purchased. We still need to complete sorting excess supplies and get through endless quantities of saved paperwork since the opening of the House. Much of this will need to be actually looked at and shredded. Multiple boxes of little use and taking much space. Speaking of all of this, our very dear longtime volunteers David and Carolyn Hebert have found it necessary to step down from their volunteering at the House. They gave so very generously of their time and talent and did so without fuss or fanfare. The kitchen floor always looked like a mirror, the refrigerator and oven spotless and the pantry always labelled and well organized. The garage was always orderly and swept, the trash cans emptied and garbage out weekly; mouse traps set and the victims removed discreetly, never was there a lightbulb out that wasn't noticed and replaced; new flags appeared and used ones to the VFW; we never ran out of garbage bags or napkins; molasses cookies delivered regularly; plants watered and groomed; driveway and front walk swept; sidewalk salt magically appearing in the garage for the winter; annual maintenance on the generator, fire extinguishers, smoke detectors and furnace scheduled and taken care of and so very much more. We will miss them dearly especially the cheerful greetings and smiles and "did we wake you?!!" So, for now I am trying to keep up with all of this, but these are hard shoes to fill.

Sweet Charity: Our last day of business before the quarantine was March 14, 2020. Up until that point we had been doing very well with business as usual. Since closing, I have been dividing my days between Advent House and Sweet Charity. As with any business of our nature, there is always plenty to do. Monitoring and organizing inventory has been the priority; assessing what we know will sell at our shop and what we should pass on. We had advertised donation days May 20th through May 23rd and again May 27th through May 30th. We had a very good response and received some lovely items. The generosity of this community is so incredible. Reopening has come with some challenges but none that we cannot comply with. There are exact guidelines including liability policies, NYS forms to complete and sign, CDC sanitizing procedures and endless documentation but we are on it! We have created new policies and procedures for the volunteers and staff. There will be signage posted stating that masks are required, social distancing in place and hand sanitizer at front door as well as at receiving door. We have invested in new soap dispensers, UV wands, disinfectant cleansing products; new paper towel dispensers and tueling and investigating the possibility of the need for a different cash register system. We will be monitoring the number of people in the shop and hoping that we will be given permission to go to fifty percent capacity. At the current ruling, we can only have ten people total in the store at any one time but fifty percent would bring us up to twenty which would help with being able to have a bit more staff in place. The plan as of this writing is to continue to accept donations Wednesday through Saturdays 10 AM til 2PM with a tentative reopening date of June 17th. Special thanks to Nancy Loughran and Meg and Bruce Sarnoff; again very dedicated staff always willing to go above and beyond. Meg has made purple masks for all the volunteers!

Volunteers: Please see Laurie Eisele's report. We miss our volunteers. Laurie and I have been keeping in touch regularly with them and love when they write back. An initial early survey indicates that many are willing to return once they are reassured that it is safe to do so. But I have only heard from about twenty-five people so really too soon to judge. As you know, our Volunteer base is essential to run this Home. We cannot do without them. That is one of the primary concerns of all of the other homes – how do we keep

our volunteers safe. We have started looking at revised policies for accepting Residents, family and visitor restrictions and possibly limited use of the House as means of protecting our people. Most Houses are planning to run with only one resident indefinitely. Some are staying in “pause” mode longer than others and many are contemplating hiring more paid staff. We will be writing new policies and procedures as we receive necessary guidance. All of the standard safety requirements will be in place including masks, hand sanitizer, assessing health status (any fever, any travel, any exposure to Covid etc) for everyone who enters the building. This is unknown territory for all of us and daunting to say the least. Again, keep us in your prayers that we will know how and when to proceed and have the strength to endure.

On a final note, Happy Birthday to Kevin!! Hope your wonderfulness is properly celebrated!! Also, special thanks to Pat May for her encouraging notes and unwavering support. It means more than you can imagine.

Peace,

Glenda Hastings, Director