



Finding Family at Family House

Sixteen years ago, John suffered a stroke that left him with right arm weakness and the inability to speak. He was diagnosed with aphasia, a communication disorder resulting in the loss of words but not the intellect. Soon thereafter, John came to Family House with a singular goal in mind: to read Dr. Seuss books to his six-year-old grandson.

For Ann, John's wife, this was an overwhelming diagnosis, but she was determined to find the best treatment for John. Ann enrolled John in therapy classes at the Veteran Administration (VA) hospital near their home in Florida, and as she was researching programs that could help John, she found an intensive, month-long program at the Pittsburgh VA Health System. After an extensive screening process, John was approved for the program. Ann was thrilled with the prospect that this program could help John lessen the impact of the aphasia.

Before John arrived at the Pittsburgh VA, he was tasked with determining his motivation to speak. Without a clearly defined goal, the program would not be successful. John decided that his goal was to read bedtime stories to his grandson. With Dr. Seuss books in the suitcase, John and Ann flew to Pittsburgh and arrived at Shadyside Family House.

"I was surprised to be told by the VA that we would not be staying in a hotel but would be housed at Family House," said Ann. "I didn't know what to expect. But from the minute we walked in the door, we felt at home."



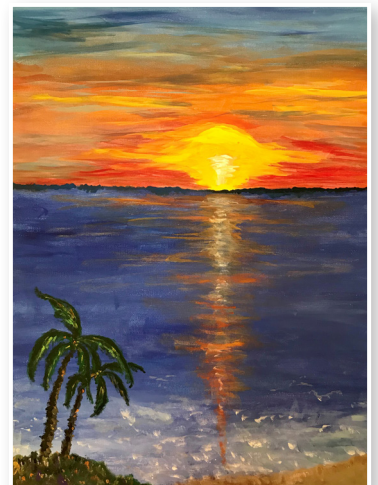
... from the minute we walked in the door, we felt at home.

John and others in the program were able to work on improving their speech by being at Family House and interacting with each other on a daily basis. Family House staff, volunteers, and other guests understood what each was going through, so the usual embarrassment that frequently accompanies aphasia was not present—John could truly be comfortable and relax, just like at his own home.



John's goal was to be able to read story books to his grandson.

After his stroke, John taught himself to paint with his non-dominant hand. The result: beautiful paintings like the one below not only decorate his home, but three of them also now reside at Shadyside Family House.



When not in class or therapy, John and Ann explored Pittsburgh and spent time getting to know the other Family House families. "We met lots of nice people. We would sit around after dinner and just talk. It didn't dismiss our own issues, but it took our minds off of them," Ann explained. She became especially close with the wife of another Veteran in the same aphasia treatment program. Together they would cook big meals for everyone in the house. They did this, Ann said, because "it feels like family."

The two women have stayed in touch. For them, "Family House is where you can get on with living life." Ann said. "Family House is where I feel comfortable and at home. Family House is like home." ●



DEAR FAMILY HOUSE FRIENDS:

If you're reading this newsletter, you already know how Family House differs from other hospitality lodging options. In addition to room rates at least 25% lower than hotels and free transportation to Pittsburgh's world-class hospitals, we continue to provide a safe, welcoming, and supportive environment that helps alleviate the stress experienced by so many of our guests who find themselves in a challenging time in their lives.

What you—and many of our friends—may not know is that Family House also provides a number of other amenities that we don't typically highlight. These "extras" further enhance our guests' experiences and include complimentary meals, clothing for those who arrive unexpectedly due to a trauma or emergency, pantries stocked with essentials as well as extra toiletries, mini refrigerators for those who need their medication to be refrigerated, regular visits from therapy dogs, and an array of complimentary tickets to many of Pittsburgh's cultural and sporting events.

The Family House "difference" is, in fact, a constant—an experience that Family House guests have counted on for the past 36 years. And thanks to the generosity of our volunteers and donors, we will continue to provide these extras so that Family House remains a "home away from home" for those who need one.

Best wishes,

Jennifer N. March, Executive Director

Thanks to everyone who supported the **36th Annual Family House Polo Match** in September at Hartwood Acres where #1 Cochran Potomac Polo Club squared off against Howard Hanna Real Estate Services Foxlease Polo Club!

The event raised \$225,000 for the Family House mission.

SAVE
THE
DATES!



Family House Gala

▶ Saturday,
March 7, 2020
Duquesne Club

37th Annual Family
House Polo Match

▶ Saturday,
September 12, 2020
Hartwood Acres



**Ryan Shazier, named
first Family House
Person of Inspiration Awardee**

Ryan's optimism, courage, commitment, resiliency, and overall generous spirit throughout his 22-month recovery from a spinal contusion continues to inspire those in our community, across the country, and around the world. These characteristics that Ryan embodies and the example he sets each day are representative of countless individuals who come to Pittsburgh seeking medical care and who themselves or their caregivers have stayed at Family House. ●

Celebrating Our Volunteers

Volunteer Award Reception held at the HIP Flashlight Factory

Karen Florian, 2019 Arleen Lhormer Awardee

Since 2009, Karen Florian and a dedicated group of Certified Registered Nurse Anesthetists (CRNA) have been volunteering at Family House and have prepared meals at least three times a year. One of these meals includes the annual “Souper Bowl,” where the nurses bring a Super Bowl celebration to our guests with various types of soup. In addition to preparing meals Karen also recruited volunteers to help with this year’s Polo Match at Hartwood Acres. For her dedication and ongoing support, Karen was named the *Arleen Lhormer Award* recipient for 2019.



Arleen Lhormer recipient Karen Florian (center) with her fellow volunteers, (l to r) Leanna Madich, CRNA, Sharon Weaver, CRNA, Ashley Pannaman, nursing student, Emma Lowery, nursing student, Derick Florian, and Leo Bake, Family House Volunteer Manager.

The *Arleen Lhormer Award* was created as a tribute to the late Arleen Lhormer, one of Family House’s original volunteers who passed away in 1996. Volunteers nominated for this annual award best represent Arleen’s love of life, family, and Family House. Awardees demonstrate exceptional service to the mission of Family House.

Thank you to all of the House Volunteers who work tirelessly to ensure Family House remains an affordable and comfortable “home away from home” for our guests.

2019 Service Award Honorees

1-Year Volunteers

Sarah Betron
Alex Hickman
Avery Rife

5-Year Volunteers

Josh Alberts
Anne Christianson
Jennifer Fedor
Antonia Redigan
Mike Redigan

10-Year Volunteers

Pat Byrnes
Mary Anne Kormos
Chris Witman

15-Year Volunteer

Margaret Vincent

Thank you to the volunteers who participated in the Community Service Events on October 27 for “Remember. Repair. Together.”

Fifty volunteers cooked meals in the houses and created welcome bags for Family House guests. Nothing says home like a home-cooked meal. You don’t have to be a chef to cook a meal at Family House. To learn more, contact Leo Bake at lbake@familyhouse.org or (412) 647-4917. ●



HOLIDAY WISH LIST

HELP US COLLECT GIFTS FOR FAMILIES SPENDING THE HOLIDAYS WITH US!

Full-sized toiletry items

Winter wear (hats, scarves, gloves)

Lap blankets

Slippers and slipper socks

Candy

Puzzles and Puzzle Books

Travel-sized Board Games

Hardback Books

Family Friendly Movies

Travel mugs

Gift cards (CVS, Giant Eagle, Subway, Panera, Aldi, American Express)

Pittsburgh Memorabilia

Picture Frames or Photo Albums

Hot Chocolate Mix/Packets

Hand Sanitizer

Facial Tissues

Stationary

DELIVER TO:

Family House
Administrative Office
5001 Baum Blvd., Suite 545
Pittsburgh, PA 15213

For further questions, contact 412-647-0389



FAMILY HOUSE

5001 Baum Blvd. | Suite 545
Pittsburgh, PA 15213

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TO GIVE

- > Online at: www.familyhouse.org
- > By phone: 412-647-5893
- > Designate Family House through your workplace:
United Way: #859


TO VOLUNTEER

- > Email us at: volunteer@familyhouse.org
- > By phone: 412-647-4917

TO BOOK YOUR STAY

- > Visit us online: www.familyhouse.org
- > By phone: 412-647-7777

TO CONNECT

-  @FamilyHousePittsburgh
-  @FamilyHousePGH



Thank you for supporting Family House!
YOUR HOME AWAY FROM HOME

FALL 2019 NEWSLETTER

A Year at a Glance



20,000+
guests provided
a "home away
from home"



130
guest rooms,
3 houses, **35,000**
nights of service

1,260
families qualified for
13,000 discounted
room nights




10,500
complimentary
rides to and from
local area hospitals



14,000
service hours donated
by volunteers



460
complimentary
meals provided

 Visit www.familyhouse.org to learn more about how you can support our families.

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their time at Family House

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