

Board of Directors

Guy St. Germain, *President*
Neil Ahola, *Vice President*
Brian Geshel, *Treasurer*
Deb Young, *Past President*
Beverly Auel
Magdalena Belej
Natasha Berg
Cindy Griffin
Virginia Hemmer
Sigurds Janners, MD
Julie Johnson
Leah Kinnunen
Mark Miron
Ray Weglarz
Don Van Uum

Staff

Michael Lutz, *Executive Director*
Mary Rowe, CPA, *House Coordinator*
Pam Aho, RN, *Patient Care Coordinator*

Presorted Standard
Non-Profit Org.
US Postage Paid
Permit #10
Houghton, MI 49931

Address Service Requested

Wish List

We are always grateful to the individuals, businesses and churches who supply us with needed items from the wish list. Please contact House Coordinator Mary at (906) 482-4438 to donate items or if you have questions.

Paper/Household/Cleaning Products

- Kleenex
- Paper towel
- Disinfecting wipes
- Stamps
- 33-gallon drawstring trash bags (black)
- 13-gallon kitchen drawstring trash bags
- 3x3 Post-it notes
- Napkins
- Coffee filters
- Coffee
- Zippered pillow covers – standard size
- Libman mops
- Dawn dishwashing soap
- Dishwasher soap
- Rinse aid for dishwasher
- Hand soaps
- Vinegar
- The Works liquid toilet bowl cleaner
- Disposable exam gloves
- Unscented laundry detergent
- Unscented dryer sheets
- Bleach
- Unscented baby wipes
- Batteries – AA, AAA, 9volt
- Copy paper
- White wash cloths, hand towels, & bath towels

Appliances & Furnishings

- 32" flat screen TV
- Electric recliner/lift chair
- Upright vacuum



NEWS FROM OMEGA HOUSE

A Community Leader & Resource in End of Life Care Issues

Winter/Spring 2020

Portage Health Foundation sees incredible community response to Giving Tuesday



Bernadette, Michael & Kevin

On Thursday, December 19, Portage Health Foundation (PHF) visited 15 non-profit organizations from throughout the four-county community to deliver nearly \$400,000 in checks. Omega House would like to thank the 172 donors and Portage Health Foundation for their contributions. Omega House was presented with a check for \$62,324 from Portage Health Foundation Executive Director, Kevin Store and PHF chairperson Bernadette Yeoman-Ouellette.

Giving Tuesday is held annually on the Tuesday after Thanksgiving. It kicks off the holiday giving season and inspires people to collaborate in improving their local communities and to give back in impactful ways to the charities and causes they support. Portage Health Foundation matched all donations up to \$150,000.

Respite Care: A “win-win” for caregivers and their loved ones



Dacee & Dorothy

Caring for a loved one at home can be rewarding, but at times it can also be very challenging, demanding and a stressful responsibility. No one is equipped to do it without some help. At Omega House, we understand the difficulties that can arise when caring for a loved one at home. We also understand that there are times that you won't be available for your loved one due to vacations, business trips or just the need for a personal break.

Respite care provides family caregivers and their loved ones with a break from the daily care routine.

Caregivers are afforded some down time and can rest easy, while loved ones benefit from the care and support provided in a safe, nurturing environment. At Omega House, we give you the time you need to “recharge your batteries” so you can continue to provide the best care to your loved one in the future. It's important to remember that you can't do it all. If you are interested in respite care services at Omega House, call us at (906) 482-4438. Respite stays can be for a few days or a few weeks.

Healing From Grief

Sometimes we may feel like we are swimming in an ocean of grief threatening to swallow us. With grief support and education many have learned to ride the waves of grief and intense feelings of loss, and not be overwhelmed and alone.

We gather at Omega House on the Third Thursday of each month for our Community Group Grief Support sessions from 5:00-6:00 pm. These sessions are free and pre-registration is not required but appreciated. We very gently and carefully come together to witness and share each other's grief. We gather close to listen to and support each other. Sometimes with tears, sometimes in deep silence, and sometimes in words, stories and feelings of loss are shared. This can help deepen our connection to ourselves and each other in subtle and profound ways.

“The support group I attended just before Christmas sent a powerful message to me. I came away from that group with a different outlook on life

itself. The woman that talked about her cancer and not knowing how much time she has left really hit me hard. Her tears were felt deep in my heart. The courage for her to come there and speak was amazing to me. It sent a message to me that life is truly a gift. I have so much to be thankful for. I saw much pain in that room yet there was courage all around me. That courage lifted me with new energy for life”. GM Grief Client, January 2020

“From the moment I entered the Omega House, I felt welcomed, like I was coming home. I met Cynthia and we immediately connected. I met many different people at the Omega House. I felt comfortable-in a safe space of belonging. This



A Message From The Executive Director — Don't Wait —



Michael Lutz
Executive Director

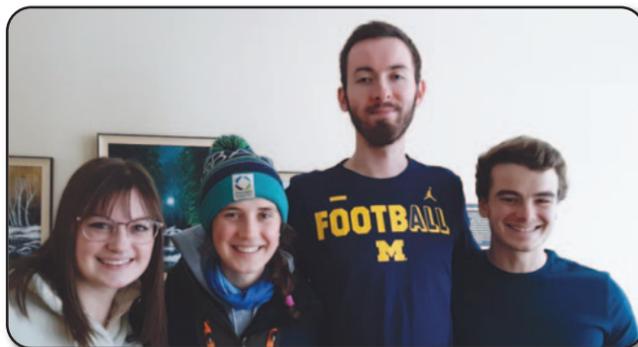
As the director of Omega House, I have the opportunity to meet with many local families who have a loved one in need of end of life care. What surprises me is how many families haven't planned for an end of life situation. Statistics show that only one third of U.S. adults have an advance directive on file. Advance directives make your wishes known if you become incapacitated and unable to make your own decisions regarding your care.

I understand, when you're fit and healthy, the last thing on your mind is planning for your end of life care. However, just as prospective new

parents plan for the birth of their baby, preparing for the end of life is just as important. Planning for death when you are healthy means there is a lot less to think about if you become seriously ill. What kind of medical care do you want to receive? Who do you want to make important medical and financial decisions for you if you can't make them on your own? These are just a couple of the many decisions that will need to be made. Although your wishes may end up changing over time, it is important to start these conversations now, and revisit them often, as your situation changes.

Many people are interested in planning ahead; however, they have no idea how to get started. At Omega House, we can help you get those conversations going and get you started on an end of life plan now. Our Advance Care Planning Program ensures that you, or the person you are caring for, family, friends and/or caregiver know what your end of life care desires are. This will give everyone some peace of mind.

Volunteer Corner



Lindsay, Becca, Rick & Patrick

This edition of the volunteer corner focuses on the role and importance of our student volunteers. Student volunteering has been shown to benefit society by increasing engagement toward community service and the potential for volunteering later in life. Michigan Tech University has been instrumental in providing us with a group of volunteers from the Community Ambassadors (Pavlis Honors Society) and also the Pre-Health programs. These students have proven to be responsible, dedicated, motivated, and caring individuals who have received high praise from our residents and staff alike. Working

with residents in end of life care benefits the student by increasing self-awareness, offering real life training, and providing a different perspective on medicine not available in college classes. They also have the opportunity to practice and improve their communication skills with residents who are going through the final phase of their life journey, as well as with family members/caregivers,

and the clinical staff. Overall, the hospice environment offers invaluable life lessons that will benefit them in their future careers and in their personal lives as well. The students would agree that they get back much more in return for their volunteer service here than they ever imagined. Here is what some of the students have said:

"I'm a 3rd year, pre-pharmacy/chemistry student and I originally started volunteering at Omega House to gain more patient and general healthcare experience. I've since learned that Omega House is so much more than this

opportunity for experience. It's really an opportunity for community enrichment and development. I have been impressed by the vast wealth of knowledge that many of these lifetime UP residents have collected, their passion for their area and their willingness to share this passion and accept Michigan Tech students into their community."

"Volunteering at Omega House is a good way to give back to the community and learn more about coping with terminal illness. The Omega House feels like a welcoming home and I have been able to make meaningful connections with the people I have met here."

The students and volunteers from the community, benefit Omega House by sharing their time and special talents supporting our residents, staff, and families/caregivers. As a local non-profit organization, our volunteers help reduce the costs of operating our facility. If you would like to make a difference in people's lives and give back to your community call Peggy, our Volunteer Coordinator, at 906-482-4438, or visit our website www.omega-house.org to apply on-line.

made the darkest of days light again and given me tools to access when I am having hard times.

I cannot thank Cynthia and Mike at the Omega House enough.

—MR Grief Client, January 2020

Although we may be grieving, we have a choice to not grieve alone. We have each other and we are in the time of great healing. In that healing we must come to terms with what unites us which is the other side of love, our grief.

Contact Omega House at 906-482-4438 for more information on our group or individual grief support programs.

Healing From Grief – Continued on the bottom of page 2

was so important to my healing. I can honestly say that Cynthia saved my life, and my life will never be the same since now knowing her. I had all these emotions of sadness, anger, depression all mixed together to make a pretty nasty life of pain. What I did not realize was it was grief I was going through. I was experiencing some extreme grief. Grief from a lifetime of losses and now facing my own, with a terminal cancer diagnosis, I was grieving so deeply, I could not stop crying, and the pain was deep. Cynthia holds a space for me to go through it all because she has a gift to listen with no judgement, and guide me through this journey, together. Cynthia has

Make a Difference Today — Donate Now!

Every dollar counts and as a nonprofit organization for 14 years, Omega House has provided competent and compassionate care for over 600 terminally-ill patients and support for their families. To make a tax-deductible donation to Omega House, please complete and submit the form below to Omega House, 2211 Maureen Lane, Houghton, MI 49931.

Donations can also be made on-line at www.omega-house.org

\$500 \$250 \$100 \$50 Other \$ _____

I would like to join the Sustainer Program. Please charge \$_____ to my credit card on the following schedule:

Monthly Quarterly Annually

I understand Omega House will charge the above amount on the schedule I've chosen indefinitely. I may end my participation in the Sustainer Program at any time by contacting Omega House via phone or mail.

Please make my donation

in Honor of: _____

in Memory of: _____

Please notify _____ of this gift at address _____

DONATION INFORMATION

Enclosed is my check made payable to Omega House
 Please charge my VISA MasterCard

Cardholder's Name _____

Account # _____

Expiration Date _____

Signature _____

Email: _____

Thank you for your "Gift of Home"

Omega House, Inc. is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization. Contributions are tax deductible under the limits of the law.

2020WINLTR

Thrivent Choice Charitable Grant Program



THRIVENT
FINANCIAL®

Did you know as a Thrivent Financial member you can support Omega House through

the Thrivent Choice charitable grant program? In 2013, Omega House was approved by the Western Upper Peninsula Chapter of Thrivent to participate in Thrivent's Choice Dollars program, which gives eligible members an opportunity each year to recommend where Thrivent will distribute some of its charitable outreach funds. Since that time, Thrivent members have contributed over \$20,000 to help fund our end of life care mission.

Members can take advantage of this charitable grant program by selecting Omega House as the organization they want to support. Simply go to thrivent.com/thriventchoice and scroll down to the "Promote Thrivent Choice in Your Community" section. Your charitable donation will help strengthen Omega House for the future.

Amazon Purchases can Support Omega House



Choose Omega House as your charity of choice on Amazon Smile and a percentage of your qualified purchase is donated to Omega House.

UpComing Events

3rd Thursday Grief Support Workshops

5:00pm – 6:00pm at Omega House

Support group is open to anyone who wants to come and process grief together. No Cost. Contact Cynthia at (906) 370-6686 for more information. Next workshops March 19th, April 16th & May 21st

Finlandia Student Nurses Association – Annual Pancake Breakfast for Omega

Saturday April 18, 2020

8:00am – 1:00pm - Gloria Dei Lutheran Church – Hancock

Community Coalition on Grief & Bereavement Annual Grief Presentation: Understanding Grief: Building Resilience in Children & Families

Wednesday May 6, 2020

6:30pm – 8:30pm – Hancock High School Auditorium. No cost, open to the community.

18th Annual Joe Evans Golf Classic Saturday June 6th, 2020

Portage Lake Golf Course – 3-person scramble, \$225/team