

View *from the* Porch



FALL 2023



*From
my View...*

by
Christine McDonald, Exec. Director

A Time for Celebrations!

In this issue, we are celebrating two momentous events at Friends Home:

- Our 125th Anniversary, and
- The beginning of the public phase of the ELEVATE! Capital Campaign for a new elevator.

You'll see lots of photos of our celebration activities throughout the issue. But here, I want to update you on our major construction project – the new elevator and wheelchair-ready rooms for the Friends Home building. We call the project

ELEVATE! Friends Home
A Campaign for Accessibility.

In the last issue, I wrote about some of our challenges with only one small elevator we now have. Here is the recap:



THE CHALLENGE - Currently, the Friends Home building has a single small elevator, which severely limits accessibility, particularly for residents and necessary staff and medical personnel and equipment.

THE SOLUTION - Build a separate elevator tower and install a more spacious elevator in the main building:

THE IMPACT - FHK will be FULLY accessible to residents, staff, families, and friends.

This new elevator will cost \$850,000. To avoid dipping into reserves (interest on our reserves helps with operations to keep our prices low and also helps fund our Resident Assistance Program), the Friends Home Board authorized a capital campaign and created a capital campaign committee. Since that last issue, we have contacted many groups (mostly Quaker meetings in the area) and individuals to get a sense of what we can expect in contributions to the project.

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Highlights of the Wine & Cheese Reception on October 18:

Senator Carolyn Comitta presents a citation from the Pennsylvania legislature which she and Senator John Kane, co-sponsored in recognition of Friends Home's 125th Anniversary.

The event also featured a ribbon cutting to launch the **ELEVATE! Friends Home** project. Pictured left to right are Executive Director Christine McDonald, Board member Bob Norris, Debby Brumbaugh, Clerk of the Board, Board member Teal Rickerman and Cheryl Kuhn, Director of the Southern Chester County Chamber of Commerce.

From my View *Cont. from pg. 1.*

We have also contacted many local foundations that have supported Friends Home projects in the past and asked for their support. As we said to them, "In these days of disposable and throw-away mentalities, it is comforting to find partners who understand the need and thus the challenges of a long-term commitment to 'place.'"

The good news is that over 75 individuals, businesses, and regional Friends Meetings contributed \$190,000 toward the project. In addition, we are optimistic that we will receive an additional \$550,000 in the form of foundation grants.

That leaves only \$110,000 left to raise, and we are counting on your support to help us finish this campaign.

Please consider making a gift to this transformative project.

This issue includes additional information about the new elevator – why it was needed, our decision to proceed, and the impacts it will have on our community.

If you regularly contribute to Friends Home by responding to our appeal letters during the year or making a memorial gift, please know we are grateful. This is a different request as it will provide the necessary infrastructure improvements to make it possible for generations in the future to access all that Friends Home has to offer.

Please help as you are able, and if you have already been approached or have heard the presentations we have been giving, I encourage you to serve as an ambassador for Friends Home, and tell your friends and neighbors about the project. Together, we can make Friends Home fully accessible for our current residents and for the folks we welcome to the Friends Home family in the future.

Christine

Performing Arts Associate, Brenten Megee (left) and Senior Advancement Officer Wright Horne give a shout out to some of the businesses who sponsored the 125th activities. A complete list of sponsors is on page 8.



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Hilary Boucher Ext. 212
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Dennis Jones Ext. 215
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1898

Friends Home

125 Years in Kennett

2023



Linda McClendon (rt) listens to Allen Gliniewicz's beautiful rendition of "Deep River."



Peter Moore



Dorothy Mehl recites Shakespeare.

First – hats off and a giant thank-you to all who helped make our 125th Anniversary week so memorable – families, staff, sponsors. The celebration started with a big banner across State Street and a giant sign on the front lawn announcing to the world, "A thriving community where Friends become Family" and "Friends Home – 125 Years in Kennett". We hope that anyone who came down State Street got the message that Friends Home is a community resource that has been serving the area for a long time.

We also published a commemorative booklet with historical photos and bios of several residents with comments from their families. We started the week on Monday, October 16, with a Kick-Off party for families and residents. Performing Arts Associate Brenten Megee and the Friends Home staff organized a resident choir and a series of skits to entertain all assembled.

On Wednesday, we had a Wine and Cheese reception for members of the Chamber of Commerce and the Rotary Club, Kennett Square officials, Friends Services for the Aging staff, Friends Home donors, media, Friends Home Board, residents, and staff. The event allowed us to tell the Friends Home story and present our exciting new project: the Elevate! Friends Home elevator campaign, which included a ceremonial ribbon-cutting to launch the project. In addition, our State Senators, John Kane and Carolyn Comitta, arranged to have a citation prepared from the Commonwealth, recognizing our 125-year history. Senator Comitta shared her own personal history with Friends Home. Her father was a resident for about 5 years some years ago, and as she said, he remarked that they were the best 5 years of his life.

We ended the week-long festivities by treating the staff and residents to a dance party catered by Savanna's Tender Love & Fries.



Donna Iacone-Davis & daughter



Marion Cunningham and family



George Reilly



Karen Zilke



Lois Goepel & family



Eileen Jennings & family



Donna Leo & sons

Celebrating a thriving community where Friends become Family!

The Sound of Music!

As part of the FHK 125th anniversary celebration, a crowd of family and friends gathered in the Friends Home activity room on October 16th for a concert presented by the residents. Performances included choral singing, vocal and piano solos, and poetry readings. The concert concluded with a poignant, heartwarming choral rendition of the Frank Sinatra classic, "My Way."



Brenten Megee

The person behind this memorable afternoon is Performing Arts Associate Brenten Megee, who has spent the past 4-1/2 years building the performing arts program into a vital focus of the Friends Home experience. Brenten is a classically trained vocalist and choir director who performs with various regional choral and performing arts organizations. Brenten also possesses a worldwide network of musical colleagues and the technical expertise to bring a world-class musical experience to the residents of Friends Home.

Shortly after Brenten arrived at Friends Home, the world shut down because of the pandemic. Everyone was wearing masks, and people were encouraged to refrain from singing. "Getting a performing arts program up and running was incredibly challenging," explained Brenten. "I couldn't sing, so I played piano in the hallways and went from room to room with my iPad to speak with the residents about the kind of music they liked and what they wanted to listen to. Friends Home uses the Montessori approach in working with older adults, so a performing arts program was a perfect fit, being creative, expressive and customizable.

With the use of Zoom and Smart TVs, we began a lecture series involving various musical styles from around the world, featuring various performers, including their favorites, like Frank Sinatra." I also realized we could do much more if we boosted our technological capabilities. We secured a grant for additional Smart TVs and an excellent sound system. In addition, two former residents gifted us with a grand piano and an organ."

As vaccines became available and pandemic restrictions began to ease, Friends Home collaborated with the Kennett Flash for a series of lecture performances with regional

musicians like jazz trumpeter Matt Cappy and Americana folk artist Scott Birney. During this time, Brenten was nurturing a choral program, encouraging residents with musical backgrounds to perform, and offering piano lessons to anyone interested. Outdoor concerts have become a regular occurrence throughout the warmer months.

When planning began for the 125th Anniversary, it seemed like the perfect opportunity to showcase the program with a concert. "We spent 2-1/2 months preparing for the concert. A major goal was to encourage as many residents as possible to participate. It took a little persuading for some, who were inexperienced with choral singing. But, the residents really worked together and encouraged each other. It was a real confidence-building experience for a lot of them." Photographer Dylan Francis created an 8-minute video compilation of the concert, which, along with a video of the entire concert, are posted on the

Friends Home YouTube channel, <https://www.youtube.com/@friendshomeinkennett4395/videos>

Next up, the residents are busy preparing for a Christmas Concert on December 19 at 3 p.m. Brenten envisions these are just the first of a regular series of concerts that will be presented throughout the year. In addition, he has guest lecturers and performers scheduled from Spain and Australia. Plans are also being made to attend local musical and performing arts venues.

Brenten said that the residents' enthusiasm motivates him to continue expanding the program.

"Leaving your home to move to a retirement facility can be a challenging adjustment. Providing enriching, meaningful activities and seeing people happy and enjoying being part of the community is very rewarding."



Frank Sinatra's iconic "My Way" was the perfect, poignant final number.



(Above) Brenten congratulates Shirley after her piano solo.



All Around Friends Home



Residents were delighted with a visit from the Education Department at Longwood Gardens. We were treated to a hands-on activity creating arrangements from beautiful fall leaves.



YoQi with Jan is a Movement, Breath, and Awareness class that integrates elements of yoga, QiGong, and meditation to increase energy and emotional balance, reduce the effects of stress, enhance connections with ourselves, to each other and with the earth. Perfect for all levels and all bodies.



Constellation Energy holds an annual Executive Golf Outing. Funds raised benefit many charities throughout the Kennett Square Community. We are thrilled to be a part of this generous donation and their commitment to our community. Thank you Constellation!

Halloween Fun!



Welcome Hilary!

Introducing our new Community Life and Montessori Enrichment Director at Friends Home in Kennett, **Hilary Boucher**, a Therapeutic Recreation Professional with a focus in Senior Living.

Hilary shared with us some of her background:

I have over 20 years of experience in the recreation field and have made it a priority to promote whole body wellness by offering a variety of meaningful and purposeful programs that help improve or maintain social, emotional, physical, spiritual and cognitive health. With experience in the Montessori Approach for

people with dementia, we strive to treat all with respect and dignity and provide choice and independence throughout their life.

I reside in Glen Mills, PA and have had the pleasure of raising 3 wonderful children. When not working, you'll find me out in nature- walking my dog, or reading a good book. I have an extreme "sweet tooth," as my childhood was spent in Hershey, PA (the sweetest place on earth) So, you will most often find me nibbling on chocolate.

Please join us in welcoming Hilary and be sure to say hi and introduce yourself when visiting!

CHALLENGE

Currently the Friends Home building has a single small elevator which severely limits accessibility:

- Only accommodates a few residents at a time with walkers
- Only accommodates one wheelchair at a time
- These restrictions result in backups during mealtime and activities on the main floor and lower level.
- Does not accommodate a gurney in its horizontal position
- Complicates the process of moving residents possessions in and out.

SOLUTION

Build a separate elevator tower and larger elevator onto the main building which will:

- Accommodate multiple wheelchairs
- Accommodate a gurney and necessary staff and/or medical personnel.
- Be placed at the end of a hallway for easier resident access between floors
- The current elevator will continue to be utilized as a secondary option
- New elevator will give access to the attic as a sizable storage area

IMPACT

All of FHK will be FULLY accessible to residents, families, friends:

- Opens up two stories to wheelchair use and provides access to all programs
- Provides gurney accessibility
- Speeds up resident flow between floors
- Increases the number of rooms designated as wheelchair accessible
- Limits stairway risks. Stairs are not a viable option for many residents.
- It will ease the process of moving residents possessions in and out.



Project Budget

Elevator Tower Construction	\$575,950
Elevator Mechanism and Installation	<u>\$118,680</u>
Subtotal	\$694,630
Contingency - 20% +	\$155,370
Total Cost	<u>\$850,000</u>
Raised to date	\$190,000
Pending Grants	<u>\$550,000</u>
	\$740,000

LEFT TO RAISE

\$110,000



*Please give as
you are able.*



Together

we can do this!

*Your gift will make
a difference!*

Friends Home in Kennett is a 501(c)(3) organization.

Tax ID# 23-0604260

Multi-year pledge opportunities are available.

Gifts in memory of a loved one are welcomed. Family contributions are encouraged.

For further information, please contact:
Wright Horne, Senior Advancement Officer
whorne@fhkennett.org - 609-774-3049



147 West State Street (610) 444-2577
Kennett Square, PA 19348 www.fhkennett.org

Independent Living
Personal Care
Skilled Nursing Care

Capital Campaign Pledge Form
Elevate Friends Home! A Campaign for Accessibility

Donor Information

Name(s) _____

Address _____

City, State, Zip _____

Preferred phone _____ Email _____

Pledge Information

I (we) wish to support the **Elevate Friends Home!** capital campaign project to build a new elevator.

(The gift can be paid over a multi-year period.)

Total Amount of Gift _____

Initial Payment _____

Balance _____

Pledge balance payable ☐ one time ☐ or over two years

Pledge to be fulfilled by December 31, 2025

Please bill me ☐ annually ☐ semi-annually or as follows _____

Can your gift be matched by a company, family, or foundation)? _____

What name would you like used in acknowledgements? _____

Would you like your gift to be in Honor or Memory of? _____

Do you wish to have your gift remain anonymous? ☐

Are you a connected to a Monthly Meeting, and if so, which one? _____

Date _____

Signature(s) _____

Please make checks payable to Friends Home in Kennett

Or use our secure website, www.fhkennett.org This QR code takes you there!



Where friends become family



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