

# Letters from Home

for the friends of Gianna Homes

FALL/WINTER 2015

Serving our community since 1999

## HAPPY HOLIDAYS FROM THE GIANNA FAMILY



Carolers from Minnetonka High School and Armstrong High School fill the air with Christmas cheer!



**Mission Statement**  
Providing memory care with a loving kindness that respects the dignity of each resident.  
Welcome Home!

Another cycle of seasons has come and gone and here we are reflecting on 2015. It has been a year of growth and joy as we celebrated sixteen years of service. The snow melts into spring, the leaves turn brilliant shades of red and gold, and then a new white blanket of crystals cover the earth. We're all "tucked in" here at Gianna Homes and ready for another winter!

Time brings not only the change of season, but new life and growth for ourselves. Nearly two years ago, we opened our doors to Gladys' Place, and since then we have served 11 residents. We have had the honor of knowing these residents and their friends and families - and in some cases, pets!

As our ability to serve multiplies, our staff becomes more numerous, too. In the last year, we welcomed Amy Hyers, RN, and Emily Maxwell, RN, as our nurses and held four new staff orientations for Certified Nursing Assistants. As our offices became fuller, Anne Marie, along with our



Santa visited with all the residents in 2014 and filled the home with Christmas spirit.



Dick, who got his start as a gift wrapper at Dayton's as a high school student, helped us make sure our presents looked perfect last year.



Time for trimming the tree!



Christmas means family at Gianna Homes.

bookkeeper Cindy and CFO Cheryl, moved to an office one stop down Highway 7 at the Commons so we could all have enough elbow room. What a joy to see our Gianna family growing!

We hope that as you and your family get "tucked in" for the winter, you too are experiencing the glowing warmth of growth and change.

With great fondness,  
The Gianna Homes Staff

Anne Marie, Amy, Emily, Denise, Claire, Alice, EJ, Rose, Michelle, Paula, Atsede, Georgia, Nasha, Lydia, Cindy, Wendy, Etsella, Assew, Teresia, Miriam, Caren, Emily, Sonnie, Rontin, Helen, Christine, Ruth, Greg, Susie, Shanea, Efrata, Mulu, Cheryl, Abraham and Patricia

**Gianna Homes' Board of Directors**

**Officers:**

- Anne Marie Hansen
- Patricia Henjum
- Terrence Kopp
- David Orlady

**Advisory Board Members:**

- Jayna Locke
- Paul R. Mooty



How very blessed we are to have so many people join us at the Gala!

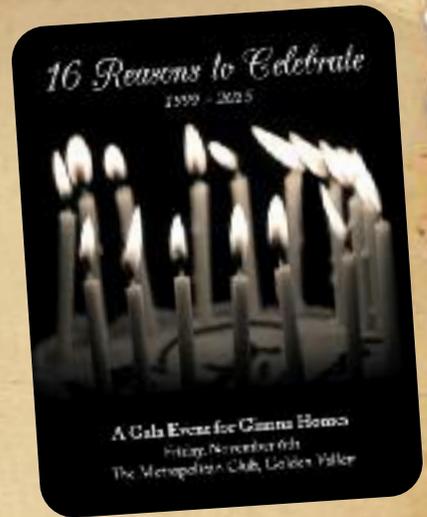
**Dear Friends of Gianna,**

We want to thank you for your gracious support of our gala "Sixteen Reasons to Celebrate" on November 6, 2015. Your generosity has contributed greatly to our efforts to raise money for the new "Steve and Mary Mattson Fund," which provides our residents who otherwise could not afford to pay with a loving home and an excellent level of care.

Know of our prayers and best wishes for each of you.

With grateful hearts,  
The Board of Directors of Gianna Homes

*Anne Marie Hansen Patricia Henjum Terrence Kopp David Orlady Jayna Locke Paul R. Mooty*



# 16 Reasons to Celebrate

## A GALA IN HONOR OF OUR 16TH BIRTHDAY!



The Gianna Homes gala has been a tradition since our home's beginning in 1999. This year, we celebrated 16 years of service in our community. The Metropolitan Club was lined with candles representing each year of our growth and memories of birthdays celebrated with residents were displayed throughout the evening. This year's "Gianna family reunion" of sorts was one of our biggest and most successful events to date!

The evening began with cocktail service and activities, including a gift card wall and a silent auction of gorgeous jewelry and fabulous coach bags. Guests were delighted by the sounds of the Land of Lakes Choirboys as they enjoyed butler-passed hors d'oeuvres.

As the night continued, host Kare11 News anchor Cory Hepola shared his personal connection with Alzheimer's and dementia that affected his grandmother. Our president and founder, Anne Marie, gave witness to the work Gianna Homes has done over these past 16 years and premiered a new video about our care and services.

After dinner, guests bid on a variety of delightful desserts and "birthday" cakes in a live auction, including a layered cake made by our own Anne Marie! The live auction was led by Frank Sullivan and his crew. Featured items included a catered dinner for six with beer pairings, an experience at The American Club in Kohler, Wisconsin, and a 5-day trip to St. Lucia.

The highlight of the evening was honoring long-time friends of Gianna Homes, Steve and Mary Mattson, by naming our Resident Care Fund for them. The Resident Care Fund, a tradition the Mattsons helped create, financially assists residents who no longer have resources to pay for their care and stay in their homes with staff they know and trust. The now-called Steve and Mary Mattson Fund maintains the high level of services people have come to know from Gianna. This emotional part of the evening was capped with Steve's presence with us and his personal testimony for Gianna's mission and care.

The event concluded with the upbeat sounds of the Sevilles. Guests danced the night away as they reveled in the joy that Gianna Homes brings to so many.



Mary & Steve Mattson after sharing his story with Gianna



Host Cory Hepola



Board member Terry Kopp shared information on new stem cell research



Competitive bidding during the auction



The mouth-watering cakes displayed before the dessert auction



Coach bags for sale at the silent auction



Cakes for sale during the live auction.



Banners lined the floor representing each of our 16 years of history



Guests enjoyed the catering of D'amico



The Land of Lakes Choirboys sang several selections throughout the evening

# BLESSINGS: DARLENE'S STORY OF FAITH

*Written by Jill, her daughter*

Darlene Joan Fretter was born in 1932 in Minneapolis, Minnesota. Although her parents were very poor, they shared their wealthy hearts with their two daughters and much of their extended family — eight people living together in a tiny house on Hiawatha Avenue.

"It never felt crowded" Darlene would say, as she shared stories of her childhood with her daughters and grandchildren. "It was fun!"

As a child, she lived as witness to selfless service wholly integrated into her home, sharing, giving and receiving among family. In a time of great need and much suffering, she was never anything less than grateful for what she had. She carried this generosity of loving kindness forward into her adult years, selflessly sharing with all. Her devotion to God and sharing love and light served as inspiration and security for her entire family.

Interestingly, Darlene's parents had never spoken of God or Jesus or The Holy Bible, but yet they never discouraged Darlene, who at age eight felt a call to the church and would walk two blocks every Sunday morning to attend worship services by herself.

By the time she was 14, Darlene was walking four blocks to catch a streetcar that would take her to yet another church where she sang in the choir and attended confirmation classes. She would tell you today, if she could, that the Holy Spirit was moving her.

During her school years, Darlene was continually recognized by her peers, teachers and school administrators as a leader in her community receiving honors and awards. In 1950 when most young women were marrying and settling down to the business of raising a family, Darlene felt the nudge of Spirit leading her in a different direction.

"I've always felt God working in my life and showing me the way." She would explain. And so she chose to enroll in the University of Minnesota to pursue a college degree, the first in the family to do so. Courageously deviating from the cultural norms for women of her era, Darlene



*Enjoying the outdoors with family.*



*Darlene loves to go for walks outside.*

mastered the rigor of a university education while working part-time at Sears. She graduated in 1954 with a degree in teaching.

"A teacher is a second mother, there to help the students both emotionally and socially. When a child feels secure and happy with himself, he's going to get along in the world just fine," she explained in a 1975 interview about teaching.

She was highly respected by her professional peers and the community and highly requested as the teacher of choice by the parents of incoming first graders. But she has always been humble, graciously giving credit for every accomplishment to God.

Darlene dedicated her life to ceaselessly giving of herself in order to help others. Always reaching out to family, friends, neighbors, or mere acquaintances with cheerful words of encouragement, inspiration and support. If ever you were feeling down, Darlene was there with an open heart, a listening ear and an earnest prayer.

In 1981, while working through her own grief and loss after divorce, Darlene knew that reaching out to help those with similar experiences would bring healing to herself and others. And so, for many years she facilitated *Rainbows for God's Children*, a program designed to help children overcome the grief of losing a parent either through death or divorce as well as *Beginning Experiences*, a program designed to help adults resolve the pain and grief of divorce or the death of a loved one. Her list of volunteer endeavors was indeed endless. She tirelessly volunteered for the American Red Cross, the Summit Center, Faith In Action, Vine, the Democratic party, and her church.

But her greatest joy has always been her family, and with smiles, and hugs, Darlene embraced and celebrated each grandchild, demonstrating unconditional love while connecting deeply with each blessed child. Her home was a playground of games, art projects, activity centers and homemade treats. Her unwavering faith and open heart continues to inspire all those who know her.



*Darlene is an expert hymn singer. Here she is working with Music Therapy student, Anne.*



*Darlene taught first grade for nearly 35 years.*



*Darlene's graduation from the University of Minnesota's teaching program*

# WALK TO END ALZHEIMER'S

By Mary Catherine Schmidt, Administrative Assistant

September 26, 2015 dawned a sunny autumnal morning, perfect for a 3-mile stroll through the city.

Our walking team consisted of children and spouses of current and past Gianna residents, young volunteers, and new and old staff, a variety of members of the Gianna family who don't usually get to spend time together. For me, it was fun to connect personally with people with whom I most often speak over the phone or through email. With the help of many other family and friends of Gianna who donated to our cause, we raised over \$7,500 for the Alzheimer's Association and were recognized as the Top Longterm Care Facility Team. Three of our team members reached Grand Champion Club status, meaning they raised over \$1,000 on their own. We also had two friends walk in Brainerd, Minnesota in honor of Gianna Homes, part of Team Gianna in spirit.

We were a small part of the nearly 6,200 walkers in the Twin Cities Walk, the largest of all Walks to End Alzheimer's in the country this year. The Twin Cities Walk has raised over \$1.1 million, within dollars of their \$1.2 million goal.

Almost every person in the crowd of thousands was carrying a colored flower which explained their connection to the disease. The purple flower represents



TEAM GIANNA!

someone who has suffered the loss of a loved one to Alzheimer's, including myself. My maternal grandparents moved in with my family in high school during my grandfather's final stages of Alzheimer's; within a few months of his passing, my grandmother, who has also since left us, developed dementia.

People who carry a blue flower themselves have Alzheimer's or some other form of dementia. Those with yellow flowers are caregivers, either professional or familial, who serve people with Alzheimer's: that's the entire Gianna community. Last but not least, the orange flower represents an individual who supports the cause through volunteering or research, someone who is dedicated to the vision of a world without Alzheimer's.

I think everyone at the Twin Cities Walk really fits into that last category, and here at Gianna we families, volunteers, and staff are proud to be doing our own part... because "The end of Alzheimer's starts with US."

## WE NEED YOUR HELP TO FIND A CURE FOR FTD

Frontotemporal dementia is the most common cause of young onset dementia in people under the age of 60. This neurodegenerative disease strikes earlier in life and diagnosis is difficult and often takes years.

FTD impacts personality and behavior first, and then moves progressively to all remaining brain functions. The average lifespan of a person diagnosed with FTD is 6-8 years, many of which require 24/7 care providing all basic living needs. FTD is difficult to diagnose, strikes at an earlier age and presents significant behavioral challenges to manage.

Currently there are no effective treatments for FTD.

## BUT YOU CAN HELP CHANGE THAT REALITY

A former Gianna Homes family member is helping raise funds for a clinical trial conducted by The HealthPartners Center for Memory and Aging to develop the first known treatment for FTD. Visit the website for more information and to make a tax-deductible donation: <https://3086.thankyou4caring.org/hopeforFTD>

## CHRISTMAS TIME IS HERE!

As you do your holiday shopping, please keep Gianna Homes and Gladys' Place in mind! Search for "Gianna Homes" under the wish lists on Amazon.com or follow the links here!

[amazon.com](https://www.amazon.com)



Gianna Homes



Gladys' Home



# THAT'S A WRAP: BEHIND THE SCENES AT GIANNA HOMES

This summer, Gianna Homes partnered with Studio2400 to create video pieces to document our care and services. Residents had the opportunity to experience getting all dolled up and interact in their day-to-day life at Gianna Homes. The residents were filmed interacting with caregivers, participating in Mneme therapy sessions, and visiting the Minnesota Zoomobile. From our big events to a simple hand-hold or smile, videographers Scott and Shannon captured these moments that are usually so ineffable.

*Lights, Camera, Action!*



Staff, family members, and board members also spoke on camera about their experiences working at Gianna Homes. We are so happy to share these moments with you.

**Watch the videos online on  
the Gianna Homes YouTube channel –  
search for “Gianna Homes” to find us!**

## “FLY ON:” A BUTTERFLY RELEASE CELEBRATION

Gianna Homes has long claimed the symbol of the butterfly and its transformative power as one that speaks of our holistic approach to care. The butterfly reminds us that as we age, our creative spark and imagination continue to deepen.

On July 10, residents from Gianna Homes and Gladys' Place gathered together in our garden space to release 120 butterflies into the world. These beautiful creatures came to us from the Michigan Native Butterfly Farm and arrived in a box no bigger than 10” square after emerging from their cocoons not one week before. They lived in a cage made from a repurposed carnival game that had a window screen, fan, branch, and a custom clear Plexiglass top.

Prior to the ceremony, residents held orange slices to attract individual butterflies to their hands. With wide eyes, they got to behold the delicate loveliness of these creatures.



*Butterflies making their first flights in the Gianna Homes gardens.*

The butterflies on this day helped us to remember all the amazing men and women who have called Gianna Homes and Gladys' Place their home who have gone before us and to celebrate with them. We also wanted to reach out to all those who will look for our help in the years to come. We sent up our gratitude for our 16 years together and our hopes for the future.

The ceremony concluded with the singing of Humming House's “Fly On” by music therapist Claire Klein. As the lyrics so poignantly say, “The seasons were kind in spite of the storms, there's age in your eyes but the fire is warm. Out to the sea, this river it flowed like an old mountain stream, our story it grows as we fly on.” We look forward to all the ways that our story continues to grow.



*CEO Anne Marie spoke about our beginnings and our hopes for the future before the butterflies were released.*



*Residents and staff got to hold butterflies in their hands by luring them over with orange slices. Yum!*



## “Blue-Butterfly Day”

*by Robert Frost*

*Read by our resident Dick at the release ceremony*

It is blue-butterfly day here in spring,  
And with these sky-flakes down in flurry on flurry  
There is more unmixed color on the wing  
Than flowers will show for days unless they hurry.

But these are flowers that fly and all but sing:  
And now from having ridden out desire  
They lie closed over in the wind and cling  
Where wheels have freshly sliced the April mire.

# CATHERINE'S AWARD WINNING APPLE PIE

I recall Mom saying that when she lived at home (on a farm by Spring Hill, Minnesota) with her family she would bake the pie. She could put a pie together in no time! That was what they would make for dessert. Her pies always looked so nice and tasted so good! Lemon meringue, fresh rhubarb, apple & pumpkin are just a few that I remember her making through the years when we were kids growing up. Lisa, Catherine's daughter

Here is Catherine's AWARD-WINNING apple pie recipe!

## NEVER FAIL PIE CRUST

3 cups flour	1 tsp. salt
5 Tbsp. water	1 Tbsp. vinegar
1 egg slightly beaten	1 ¼ cup shortening, pref. Crisco

Cut shortening into flour and salt. Combine egg, water and vinegar. Pour liquid into flour mixture all at once. Blend until moist. Keeps for two weeks in refrigerator.



Catherine preps her pie for her family – always an anticipated tradition!



## APPLE PIE

4 cups peeled sliced apples*	2 Tbsp. flour
1 ¼ cups sugar	¾ tsp. vanilla
1 tsp. cinnamon	dab of butter

Mix 1 Tbsp. flour into ¼ cup sugar. Spread this mixture into a 9-in. unbaked pie shell. Put sliced apples over sugar mixture. Add the rest of the sugar and flour over the apples. Add vanilla and butter over the apples. Sprinkle on the cinnamon. Cover with rolled out pie crust, seal edges. Bake at 350° for 20 minutes, then 40 minutes at 325° or until a golden brown.

*\*Delicious with Haralson apples.*

SAVE THE DATE SAVE THE DATE SAVE THE DATE SAVE THE DATE SAVE THE DATE

## Family and Resident Events

- **Thursday, Nov 26, 2:30pm** – Thanksgiving pie social
- **Friday, Dec 11, 2:00pm (GP only)** – Christmas party with visit from Santa and Armstrong High School Carolers
- **Saturday, Dec 12, 10:00am (GH-SC only)** – Christmas party with visit from Santa and Minnetonka High School Carolers
- **Friday, Dec 25, 2:30pm** – Cocoa and presents under the tree
- **Thursday, Dec 31, 2:30pm** – Countdown to New Year's Party
- **Saturday, Jan 2, 10:30am (GH-SC only)** – Piano music with Jim Shaw
- **Saturday, Jan 23** – Art project with COMPAS community artist, Anne Krocak
- **Saturday, Feb 13 (GP only)** – Piano music with Jim Shaw
- **Sunday, Feb 14, 2:30pm** – Valentine's Day card making
- **Tuesdays (GH-SC) and Wednesdays (GP)** – Massages with Wendy
- **Second Thursdays** – Communion service with Pastor Margie
- **First and Fourth Thursdays (GH-SC only)** – Communion service with Deacon Francis
- **Last Saturdays (GP only)** – Communion service with Stephen's ministers of St. Joseph's parish of New Hope

## Volunteers

**Volunteer trainings and staff orientations** offered regularly. Contact the office (952-988-0953) for more details.

## Lewy Body Dementia Support Group

- **Support group meetings** every second Monday of the month. Light lunch served.



# OWL ABOUT THAT!

## A VISIT FROM THE MINNESOTA ZOOMOBILE

On a beautiful sunny day in June, residents from both Gianna Homes and Gladys' Place were visited by very special guests from the Minnesota Zoo. An owl, snake, armadillo, millipede, and other animals traveled from Apple Valley to our very own backyard for a day of education and enjoyment. Neighborhood children and families joined us as well - their interest and excitement brought an even greater energy to the day!

Not only did the residents hear about different animals, but they had a multi-sensory experience of touching, smelling, and seeing up close.

One of the education specialists from the zoo, Galen, was a familiar face to many, he can be seen volunteering and leading activities once a month at Gianna!



*Residents from Gianna and Gladys' Place gathered together along with neighborhood families*



*Our feathery friend shows off his wingspan*



*Staff and residents react as Zoo naturalist (and Gianna volunteer) Galen shows off a snake*



*Counting the bands of the armadillo armor.*



*Neighborhood kids, residents, and staff meet an armadillo.*

### Dear Friend,

With *Letters from Home*, we hope to share with you, our friends and family, a little bit of what life is like here at Gianna Homes.

Each stage of life brings its own changes. At Gianna Homes we create a place where our residents can feel at home and where they will find care, companionship and dignity

-Anne Marie Hansen, Founder & President

**YOU can bring the Minnesota Zoomobile back to Gianna Homes with a donation of \$325!**