

# St. Louis Spirit



## Spring 2020

Though daily life has slowed to a stand still, spring marches on at St. Louis Center.

### Easter Greetings from Fr. Enzo

“He has Risen” and so shall we.

I found this line in an email I received a few days ago.

I want to share it with all of you for it summarizes well my Easter greetings at this time.

We have celebrated Easter in a totally and different way. The social distance dictated by COVID-19 has brought many changes in our social and family lives.

But the hope brought by the Risen Lord is still the same. He has called us to rise and still encourages us in our daily activities and services we offer to the SLC residents. This is also true for all of you at home.

The Lord has risen and has given us the same opportunity as well. We will rise too for we hope in Him and in His actions to benefit all of us.

May the hope we celebrated at Easter guide, support and sustain everyone.

## Staying Home, Staying Safe

As cases of COVID-19 began spiking in the state, Governor Gretchen Whitmer issued an executive order on March 16th barring non-essential visitors from entering health care and direct care facilities.

The direct care and support staff have done a superb job of reporting to work and caring for the residents, and the administrative staff has provided great leadership. Non-essential staff working in an administrative support role are now working remotely from their homes.

When staff report to work, they are required to have their temperatures checked, and anyone with potential symptoms

from this virus or not feeling well are asked to stay home and self-quarantine.

Construction projects for St. Louis Guanella Village and Martin Hall remodeling have been suspended, and all school and work programs have

been cancelled. Housekeeping is keeping high traffic areas disinfected, and hand sanitizer and hand washing is a requirement throughout the day for personal safety.

The Michigan Governor and State Senate extended the “Stay Home” order through April 30th, and it will be several weeks before things are back to normal. In the meantime, SLC will do everything it can to keep the residents safe.



Personal care during Covid-19.

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## From Fr. Enzo



Health, grace and peace to all.

It is very difficult to write to you during these challenging times. A worldwide pandemic has spread, stirring fear and anxieties. We have been called to face this unknown reality, which, like a hidden enemy is attacking us. Constantly, rooted in our faith, we pray to God to spare everyone from it.

COVID-19 has brought changes at St. Louis Center as well.

The school programs have been closed since March 16, 2020, and all off-site work programs have halted. Some residents moved back with their families for the time being. The others are served here at SLC. We are keeping the groups separated, and each group/house is running its activities independently from the others.

Many staff members are working overtime to provide the supervision and care the residents need. A small handful of staff is able to work from home. All the others, who are essential workers, report to SLC to serve the residents.

We were planning for fund raising events to support SLC benevolent care, but due to the present crisis the Pasta Dinner, organized by the Italian American Club of Lansing for April 25, 2020, was cancelled, the Annual Guardian Angel Dinner Dance, scheduled for April 26, 2020 at the Italian American Club of Livonia, has been postponed to September 20, 2020. The SLC 60th anniversary and dedication celebration, scheduled for June 17, 2020, has been postponed to a date yet to be determined. The Golf and Glory Outing has also been postponed; the new date is September 14, 2020. The construction of the new houses and the remodeling of part of the main building have been put on hold until the COVID-19 crisis is over.

In 2010 the SLC administration and members of the Community Advisory Council formed a Legacy Committee to envision the future of the Center. One of the projects was to remodel Fr. Guanella Hall for Assisted Living. It was the right decision for the aging population we are serving now. There, people with intellectual and/or developmental disabilities can age with dignity and respect. It was a great vision and we knew that sooner or later would become a reality. Julian Early, who spent more than 40 years at SLC, was the first one benefitting from it. He was embraced by God on March 14, 2020 and now he is resting next to his mother.

I want to thank all of you for contributing to the \$555,555.55 matching fund. The total amount raised was \$577,219.38. A big THANK YOU goes to the donor as well. This money will allow us to continue in the vision crafted in 2010 by the SLC Legacy Committee.

Please, keep praying that the pandemic will be over soon and everyone can resume a regular way of life. Please be safe.

*Fr. Enzo Anselmi*

## Around the Village

### Night to Shine



On February 7th, several SLC residents attended the Tim Tebow Foundation **Night to Shine** event held at 2|42 Community Church in Ann Arbor. They thoroughly enjoyed being kings and queens for the night.

### Basketball with Friends



Knights of Columbus from Chelsea challenged the SLC residents to a friendly game of basketball on Saturday, February 8th. Everyone enjoyed a bit of fun and fitness.

### Special Olympics



SLC residents participated in the Annual **Cherry Bowl** on Thursday, March 5th. This is a special basketball game between the Chelsea and Saline Special Olympics teams played in honor of Chelsea graduate and Special Olympian Curt Cherry who lost his battle to cancer a few years ago.

## Social Services Specialist Joins Staff



Meet St. Louis Center's newest addition to the Social Services Department, **Johanna Stephens**. Johanna grew up in Ann Arbor. She attended Pioneer High School, Washtenaw Community College and Eastern Michigan University where she earned a Bachelor's Degree in Social Work in 2000. She has a 17 year old son named Tyler who attends Skyline High School in Ann Arbor. She and Tyler moved to Chelsea four years ago after purchasing a home right around the corner from SLC on Hayes Rd. She's close enough to be able to walk to work when the weather turns nice. Johanna has had a varied career, working for the Ann Arbor Public Schools as a secretary, then a pre-school teacher, a real

estate broker, and an ophthalmology assistant at St. Joseph Mercy Hospital. Johanna is excited about being able to apply her education in Social Work at SLC. "I'm learning a lot, and I've had the opportunity to do many different things so far while visiting the residents in their homes and working with Stephanie and Sheryl. I'm getting the full spectrum for what we do, and I'm really impressed." Welcome to SLC, Johanna!



*Senator Lana Theis (center) during her visit.*

## St. Louis Center Remains Active with Political Advocacy Efforts

During the first quarter of 2020, St. Louis Center staff continued to work with local elected officials on behalf of the residents we care for. On Thursday, January 30th, Fr. Enzo, Deana Fisher and Joe Yekulis met with **County Commissioner Jason Maciejewski (D-1st District)**, to discuss efforts on building a better relationship with Washtenaw County Community Mental Health.

On Friday, March 13th, the same group met with **State Sen. Lana Theis (R-22)**, who listened to concerns expressed about funding for Home and Community Based Services and how to stream government funds for intended services directly to people with I/DD.

We were contacted personally by **Congressman Tim Walberg (R-7)** on Thursday, March 26, 2020 concerning the availability of loans and grants through the Small Business Administration from the CARES Act just passed by Congress.

## St. Louis Center Presents at Conference

St. Louis Center was prominently featured at the recent **Accept the Challenge Men's Conference** in Ann Arbor on February 22nd at the



event presented by the Diocese of Lansing. Fr. Franklin Michael and many other area priests concelebrated Mass with Most Rev. Bishop Earl Boyea. PR Assistant Kelly Flaherty handled the information table. Special thanks to **CAC Chairman Andy Shmina**, who provided SLC with a corporate sponsorship. This provided an opportunity to show a new SLC video to the 1,200 men who were in attendance. According to Andy, "It was powerful, and very good exposure for SLC. They played the video, and then we had a booth for people to stop by and ask questions. It was great for everyone's awareness."

## Dinner with Friends



The **Pasta Dinner with the Priests** was held on February 20th.

# Together ... in a Time of Crisis

## A Note from the Development Director

At this time of immense uncertainty and worry, we want you to know that *you* are in our thoughts and prayers. We hope that you and your family are safe and healthy, and managing as well as possible. You have been steadfast partners with us for many years. Please know that we keep you close in spirit at this time. If you have questions or would simply like to check



in, we would love to hear from you. Email me at [cferris@stlouiscenter.org](mailto:cferris@stlouiscenter.org) with your phone number and I'll give you a call.

Wishing you peace and wellbeing,

Christina Ferris  
Development Director

## Financial Challenges

Here at SLC, we are taking all measures possible to protect the health and safety of the residents and staff. But the crisis has created financial challenges, as well.

- 1. Reimbursement Reductions** – Some publicly funded residents are sheltering with their families resulting in income reductions of \$920 per day.
- 2. Hazard and Overtime Pay** – Staffing costs remain high as residents require around the clock care, and overtime and hazard pay for their caregivers.
- 3. Cleaning supplies and personal protection equipment** – These have added costs of \$5,000 a month.
- 4. Increased Food Expenditures** – In-kind food donations are suspended, increasing our food budget by 25%.
- 5. Loss of Fundraising Income** – We raise one third of our operating budget through donations. However, fundraisers are being cancelled or rescheduled, resulting in additional losses.



## How You Can Help



### \*\*\* It is Easy to Give \*\*\*

- 1. Mail** the completed form below to: Development Dept., St. Louis Center, 16195 W Old US Hwy 12, Chelsea, MI 48118
- 2. Donate online** at [www.stlouiscenter.org/giving/give-now/](http://www.stlouiscenter.org/giving/give-now/)
- 3. Email** Christina at [cferris@stlouiscenter.org](mailto:cferris@stlouiscenter.org) with your phone number and she will call you to so that you can make your donation over the phone.

Return this completed form with your donation

## YES! I want to help St. Louis Center

### Contact Information

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City/State/Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Cell     Home     Work

E-Mail: \_\_\_\_\_

### Donation Amount

\$30     \$60     \$100     Other amount \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Payment Type:  Credit Card     Cash     Check (*Payable to St. Louis Center*)

Name on Card: \_\_\_\_\_

Card Number : \_\_\_\_\_

Exp. Date: \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_ 3-Digit Security Code: \_\_\_\_\_

## Development News



The development department welcomes **Wendy Zielen**, our new development communications coordinator who started at SLC on March 9th. She will be responsible for the website, social media and staying in touch with our donors. Wendy holds a BA from the University

of Michigan and has an extensive background in marketing, administration, and management with a specialty in small to mid-sized businesses and nonprofit organizations. Wendy enjoys utilizing her industry expertise to promote worthy youth advocacy, underserved communities, environmental sustainability, and historical preservation causes. She chairs a statewide youth soccer league and is a board member for a program that gives voice to young victims of trafficking and other abuses. Wendy's passion for philanthropy was inspired by watching her youngest daughter, Julia, and many others, struggle with Krabbe disease.

### Receive Newsletter by Email

To keep you informed about the latest news and events and help us control costs, **please share your email address with us today.** We will not share your information with anyone else. This will make it possible to communicate important information quickly and reduce costly mailings. Just email us at [wzielen@stlouiscenter.org](mailto:wzielen@stlouiscenter.org). It is a small step that can have a big impact.

Each year the **Michigan Pharmacy Foundation Board of Trustees**

selects a charity to support. This year one of the board members nominated St. Louis Center and it won the vote. A staff member, Jamie James, Communications



Manager, has a brother who is a resident and that really resonated with the Board. Members donated personal care supplies, socks, t-shirts, headphones and more for the residents. The items were presented to Fr. Enzo at the **Pharmacists Annual Conference** held on **February 22nd** at the Renaissance Center in Detroit.

## Village Updates

### Weighted Blankets Give Comfort

*The community has been extremely responsive to the needs of the residents during the "Stay at Home" order in Michigan.*

With the onset of the Coronavirus quarantine, the lives of the children we care for have been turned upside down.

For many of them, particularly those with autism, the lack of a routine produces a great amount of anxiety, and many of them are unable to verbalize their fears. They are having difficulty sleeping, and are acting out with behaviors related to this anxiety. Research in the areas of anxiety and trauma has shown that the use of weighted blankets can help promote a sense of calm and promote sleep.

Deep Touch Pressure (DTP) stimulation is what gives the weighted blanket most of its benefits. When the blanket is being used, it provides the body with the sensory input needed to regulate stimulation overload. It has a calming effect on the body's senses, addressing sleep problems.

Fifteen new weighted blankets arrived after just a few days.



### Construction On Hold

*According to Andy Shmina, construction manager of the St. Louis Guanella Village Phase II Building Project,*

"We were looking good until the State shut everything down because of the Covid-19 virus. The houses are close to being done, and in various stages of completion. The Administration Building is the furthest along, followed by the family home and the duplex. The group homes are the furthest away with the most work to do. We were scheduled to wrap everything up by June 1st, but now we're out of commission. Martin Hall was scheduled for completion by May 1st, but everything has been pushed back 3-4 weeks. The heating and cooling job is almost done, and hopefully there'll be air conditioning in the main building this summer."

# Upcoming Events

## 33rd Annual Memorial Golf Outing July 18, 2020 In Remembrance of Jerry D'Adamo

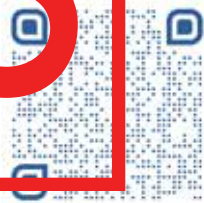


According to Fr. Enzo Addari, "The first time I met Jerry D'Adamo was when I joined the Italian American Club of Livonia in 1991. Immediately Jerry became an friend. For us at SLC he was a family member, for he had supported the Center's mission and had helped to grow it. After retiring he discovered SLC, and it was love at first sight! Even so, it was at the Center talks that I saw his persistence in fundraising. Jerry would say, 'You have no idea how I feel about SLC. I see the residents and I see myself. To know his commitment to SLC and to other charitable organizations, as well as the help he gave to countless people, Jerry was awarded the St. Louis Guanella Humanitarian award in 2011. We were proud to give Jerry this award for the many hours he spent soliciting funds to help the residents. He was a hero to SLC, and now we have the privilege of honoring his memory more time at the Annual Memorial Golf Outing."

This outing is scheduled for Sunday, July 18th this year at Pierce Lake Golf Course in Chelsea, MI. If you would like more information about sponsorships or registration, please visit our website:

[www.stlouiscenter.org/fundraising/events/memorial-golf-outing/](http://www.stlouiscenter.org/fundraising/events/memorial-golf-outing/)

To learn more about the Memorial Golf Outing, scan here →



## Planning for Dream Tour III

With great sensitivity to the COVID-19 struggles we are facing today, making positive plans for the future is good for our mental health and spiritual needs. So let's hold onto the hope that there is light at the end of the tunnel!

As a matter of fact, you'll find light and tulips, castles, cruising, cathedrals, shopping, Swiss Alps and lots of food at the end of the Glacier Express tunnel! Our late April/early May 2021 Dream Tour III will help our hope for recovering, our mental status and spiritual solace. The complete package begins with a flight and overnight in Amsterdam during "tulip time". Stroll through Keukenhof Gardens, admire a working windmill, and maybe see the art of Van Gogh or the Anne Frank Museum. Then board the AmaMora river cruise boat to journey down the Rhine river for seven days. Relax and enjoy the panoramas, castles, cathedrals, and quaint towns as AmaMora takes you through Germany to Cologne, Rudesheim, Ludwigshafen, Heidelberg, and Speyer. Then enjoy the splendor of Strasbourg and Breisach, France. Finally, spend a night in Basel, Switzerland before disembarkation. You may choose to fly home or continue on with Fr. Enzo through the Swiss Alps on the Glacier Express from Zermatt to St. Moritz and down to the birthplace of St. Louis Guanella in Fraciscio, Italy. Experience seven more nights of true Italian hospitality and beauty while staying in Campodolcino, Lake Como and Milan before flying home.

Dream Tour II raised over \$35,000 for St. Louis Center and was sold out. Look for more information in the next SLC newsletter. Register online at [bookings.wittetravel.com](http://bookings.wittetravel.com) with booking code **042721ENZO** to secure your cabin with a deposit. Please note that the refundable deposit date has been extended to 9/15/20.

Contact **Cathy Bilinski** at [cbilinski@wittetravel.com](mailto:cbilinski@wittetravel.com) or **734-674-9458** for more information or to receive a brochure. Register soon to join fellow SLC supporters! Look for more information in the next Spirit News!

**THE ITALIAN AMERICAN CLUB OF LIVONIA'S**  
—2020 Guardian Angel—  
**Dinner-Dance**

**Sunday, September 20, 2020**  
at **The ITALIAN AMERICAN BANQUET & CONFERENCE CENTER of Livonia**

**Admission \$80 per person**

For tickets or questions, please call IACL representative **Sandy Pulice** at **(734)930-6597** or **Joe Yekulis** at SLC **(734)475-8430**.

More details can be found at: [stlouiscenter.org](http://stlouiscenter.org)

39200 Five Mile Rd., Livonia MI 48154

## Remembering our Friends

**Emma G. Neibauer** of Grass Lake, MI, was a longtime friend and supporter of St. Louis Center, who passed away on December 30, 2019, at the age of 80. She became a member of the Community Advisory Council in the 1980s during the Bill Grant era. Emma participated in many SLC fundraisers throughout the years. She also traveled on the first St. Louis Center Dream Cruise in 2015. Emma leaves behind four children, eight grandchildren and two great-grandchildren.



**Ann Merkel** of Chelsea, MI, was one of St. Louis Center's many angels through the years, and now belongs to God. She passed peacefully at home on February 21, 2020 at the age of 91. Ann was known for her involvement in the Fall Dinner Auction after taking over as Chair during the 1990s, and she was also a member of the Community Advisory Council for many years. She and her late husband, Martin, were great benefactors of SLC during their lives together. Ann is survived by her children Angie Egan (Bob), son David, and grandchildren Eva and Max Egan.



**Walter W. Niemann, DDS** rose to be with our Heavenly Father on February 23, 2020 at the age of 95, and he will be missed by many. He was a 1951 graduate of the University of Michigan's School of Dentistry and he practiced in Ann Arbor.



Dr. Niemann was a strong supporter of SLC for over 40 years, serving as a member of the original Community Advisory Council from the late 1970s through the late 80s. He provided benevolent dental care to the religious community who never saw a bill for his work. Dr. Niemann was honored with the Founder's Award at the 2019 Fall Dinner Auction, and said "I served as chair of the board, and I was around when they built the first house for the older boys (St. Joseph Hall). I did whatever I could to help them, along with raising money. I helped the Servants of Charity as a part of my Catholic faith, and I have a desire to help people, from my faith and from my heart."



**Nancy Wagner** of Cave Creek, AZ, passed into the Lord's tender arms on December 22, 2019, at the age of 73. Her husband, Bill, was a founding member of the Golf and Glory Outing in 1995. Nancy was a steady supporter of his efforts to promote the outing through his many friends in the worlds of finance and professional football. Born in Cincinnati, OH, her family eventually moved to Michigan, and Nancy graduated from Birmingham Groves High School in 1964. She went on to obtain her Bachelor's Degree from Albion College in 1968, and then a Master's Degree from Cornell University in Mathematics. She was one of the top five women at IBM until her retirement in 2000, after a 32 year career. According to Bill, "She was one of the most brilliant people I ever knew." When Nancy attended SLC events, she was always joyful for the time she spent in support of the residents of St. Louis Center. May the Lord bless her and keep her in her new heavenly home.

# Upcoming Events

## Lansing Italian American Club Fundraiser

*Canceled  
Lansing MI*

## Italian American Club Fundraiser

*Rescheduled Date - September 20, 2020  
Livonia MI*

## 60th Anniversary and Dedication

*Rescheduled Date - TBD  
St. Louis Center - Chelsea MI*

## Paesano Dinner

*Rescheduled Date - September 13, 2020  
Ann Arbor MI*

## Golf & Glory Outing

*Rescheduled Date - September 14, 2020  
UofM Golf Course - Ann Arbor MI*

## Memorial Golf Outing

*Canceled  
Pierce Lake Golf Course - Chelsea MI*

## SLC Annual Car Show

*September 27, 2020  
St. Louis Center - Chelsea MI*

For more information,  
please visit our website:

[www.stlouiscenter.org](http://www.stlouiscenter.org)

## St. Louis Center Community Advisory Council

Andrew A. Shmina, Chair  
Daniel Johnson, Vice-Chair  
Joseph Munie, Treasurer  
Larry Doll, Secretary  
Owen Ballow  
Nancy Graebner  
Donna Hrozencik, MD

Glenn Johnson  
William Lamb, JD  
George Mallison  
Kathi Neuman  
Norm Neuman  
Tom Nowatzke  
Jerry Rugerello

Kenneth Unterbrink  
Don Walker  
George Walrath  
Vickie Walrath  
William Chassé  
(MI State Deputy, KofC)



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## In Memory of Our Friends

Julian Lamont Early was a longtime resident who passed peacefully unto the Lord on the morning of March 14, 2020, at the age of 59. Julian always knew that SLC was his home, and all the residents were all members of his extended family. Julian was born in Detroit, MI, on October 7, 1960, and he had been a resident of SLC since October 26, 1974.

Julian's smile could light up a room, and everyone loved him because he was such a gentle soul. He had a great love of sports, especially the Detroit Tigers and Detroit Red Wings, and he also enjoyed bowling, dancing, bingo, watching NASCAR racing on television, and Bible study. In previous years he worked at Cottage



Inn and Macaroni Grill in Ann Arbor through Michigan Ability Partners, and his last job was working in the dining room at St. Joseph Mercy Hospital – Chelsea.

Julian's parents were Samuel Allen Early, Jr. and Marjorie Settles-Washington and they preceded him in death. He is survived by his half-brothers Walter House (Eleanor) of Reynoldsburg, OH, Stuart House (Kathleen) of Orinda, CA, and brother Allen Early III of Detroit. Burial took

place at the Chattanooga National Veterans Cemetery in Tennessee. A memorial service will take place to honor Julian at SLC at a future date.

Vera Mae Buckner Bond  
Joseph Brosnan  
Georgiana Bruen  
Archbishop Alexander Brunett  
Vincenzo Campo  
Tom Ciesicki  
Rocco Corsi  
Julian Early  
Kris Elaine Folske  
Alton Grau  
Harold James Heberts  
Ann Merkel  
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