



Hildegard House

dignity has a home



We Remember

INSIDE

A Word From Our Executive Director

Meet a Compassionate Companion

Cocktails for Compassion

Welcome Laura Dixon

Issue III
Fall 2024

At Hildegard House, we often say that we are caring for our neighbors. Not only are we heeding the Golden Rule, but our residents are individuals from this community. A recent resident lived just two doors down from one of our Compassionate Companions. Several other Compassionate Companions recognized Victoria from her trips along Bardstown Road.

Victoria was familiar with Hildegard House when she arrived in May. She has visited a friend of hers who lived here. Victoria frequently expressed her gratitude for her big room at the front of the Motherhouse, overlooking Adams Street and our courtyard garden. She loved flowers. Watching the world pass by outside was how she spent much of her time.

Because of things she had encountered in an unsafe living arrangement, Victoria made it clear she didn't want anyone to know she was living at Hildegard House. In the two months Victoria lived here, she never had a visitor. Victoria was widowed, with no children. She often talked fondly of her family, but always the distant past. She loved to reminisce about picking vegetables in the family garden and pets she had while growing up.

Typically, when a resident is in their final days, we'll call their next of kin to inform them that their loved one's condition has changed and to encourage one last visit. Victoria had no one. We were her family.

Compassionate Companions took turns sitting bedside vigil with Victoria. A Compassionate Companion was with Victoria when she exhaled her last breath. Because Victoria had no one who was her "person," there was no one to write her obituary. At Hildegard House we believe every person's life is sacred, and everyone deserves a death with dignity. We also believe that everyone deserves to be remembered. Obituaries are written to remember those we have loved, and we certainly loved Victoria.

Victoria A. Wood (Leslie), born on December 28, 1953, died peacefully on July 22, 2024, at Hildegard House surrounded by her chosen family, the Compassionate Companions and Staff of Hildegard House. Victoria attended Angela Merici High School, graduating in 1971. She worked in secretarial and accounting jobs. She enjoyed the vibrancy of The Highlands – the places and especially the people. She frequently visited the library at Mid-City Mall. Victoria adored animals and was delighted with Dudley and Dash, pet therapy dogs who spent time with her at Hildegard House. Victoria loved talking about her childhood growing up in Louisville's South End.

She is preceded in death by a husband. Left to cherish her memory are the Staff and Compassionate Companions of Hildegard House. Victoria's lasting legacy was bequeathing her body to the University of Louisville School of Medicine.

Photo credit: Matt Johnson, The Voice Tribune





A Word from our Executive Director

Dear Friends of Hildegard House,

HOME.

This word has meaning for all of us. I am often reminded that it means something particularly special for someone at the end of life. And last week was one of those times.

One of our residents, Mike, tested positive for COVID. To prevent further spread at Hildegard House, he was sent to Baptist Palliative Care, where Dr. Chuck Anderson cared for him. (Dr. Anderson is the Medical Director for Hildegard House, as well as the attending physician for our residents. He is also the Director of Baptist Palliative Care Unit).

Dr. Anderson relayed to me that each day as he checked in, Mike asked, "How many more days? When can I go home?"

HOME.

Hildegard House is his home. The place he feels cared about and safe. And where he wants to spend his last days.

That is what Hildegard House provides - a home and compassionate care. That is what we provide to Mike that he missed! And he wanted to come back home. Because he had no home or loved ones to care for him at the end of his life.

Thank you for helping us provide a home and compassionate care to so many like Mike. We rely on your donations, support and prayers.

Mike is back at home.

Blessings,

Karen

Karen Cassidy
Executive Director



dignity has a home

Meet a Compassionate Companion
Mike Meffert

Mike Meffert is someone who likes to stay very busy. After he retired from a career in sales at Fruit of the Loom in 2017, he began volunteering for several organizations in Louisville. He heard about Hildegard House from a friend. "At first, I was a little squeamish," he recalls. "I really wasn't sure if I could do it."

He attended compassionate companion orientation in 2018, and seven years later Mike has over 1,000 volunteer hours under his belt. It turns out, he can do everything that's called for and more!



Mike loves talking to the residents he serves at Hildegard House. "We have things in common. A lot of them are close to my age. I really enjoy sitting and talking - that's easy. There are things I am always trying to get better at - like changing bed linens without disrupting the resident. That's a real skill!"

In addition to serving his five hour shift each Friday, Mike maintains the lawns at both houses - and greener, happier grass you have never seen. "I would probably pay you to do that," he jokes, "I enjoy it!"

The bottom line for Mike is that at Hildegard House, he has found a place he belongs. "I'm part of a family," he says. And over the years, he has grown a lot less squeamish.

"When I started I hadn't been around death at all," Mike remembers. "But when it does happen, you realize the body is just a shell. You can put your hand on the body. The spirit is not there. Dying is just like being born. It shouldn't come as a surprise to us anymore."

Hildegard House is a better, more compassionate place because of Mike. He is a blessing to so many!

COCKTAILS for COMPASSION
PRESENTING SPONSOR BAPTIST HEALTH®
Thursday September 26, 2024
5:30 - 8 PM

Join our honorary chairs, Dr. Chuck and Denise Anderson, on September 26th from 5:30 - 8 PM for Cocktails for Compassion, our largest community fundraising event of the year. We'll enjoy a beautiful evening at the Waterfront Botanical Gardens with drinks, heavy appetizers, music, friendship, and more. Tickets are \$100 and support the compassionate care we provide every day at Hildegard House. You can buy your tickets at www.hildegardhouse.org or scan the QR code.



Whether you can join us in person or not, we hope you will take part in the Cocktails for Compassion Raffle! Every single chance you buy supports residents at Hildegard House.

BOURBON LAND IN LOUISVILLE

The winner of this prize package will take home a signed copy of the book, a bottle of 12-year old Evan Williams bourbon, Woodford Reserve Honey Barrel bourbon, Blood Oath Pact 9 bourbon, a \$150 gift card to Ed Lee's celebrated restaurants 610 Magnolia and a \$150 gift card to Ed Lee's newest restaurant, Nami.



Chances are \$50 each, 200 chances will be sold.

BEST OF BUTCHERTOWN

For ten years, Hildegard House has made its home in the historic Butchertown neighborhood. The winner of this raffle will sample what makes Butchertown great! Gifts and gift cards from Louisville City and Racing soccer, Apocalypse Brewery, Copper and Kings, Vernon Lanes, Work the Metal, Hadely Pottery and more will have you visiting Butchertown again and again!



Chances are \$30 each, 200 chances will be sold.

EXPLODING HEART QUILT

by Cindy Williams

The winner of this beautiful quilt will take home some of the comfort of Hildegard House. The Exploding Heart Quilt measures 68 inches x 68 inches and was handmade by Compassionate Companion Cindy Williams.



Chances are \$50 each, 200 chances will be sold.

PRESENTING SPONSOR



SPONSORS OF DIGNITY



SPONSORS OF COMPASSION



VOLUNTEERS ARE THE HEART OF HILDEGARD HOUSE

Compassionate Companions provide the day-to-day care for our residents just as a family member would at home – making toast, doing laundry, or reading, but most importantly providing presence. For more information, call Sky Yeasayer, Volunteer Manager, at 502-653-1488 or email sky@hildegardhouse.org or scan the QR Code. The next Compassionate Companion training is Wednesday, October 16th from 9 AM - 4 PM.



Come Join Our Compassionate Community!

Our Board

Carl Herde, *Chair, Retired, Vice President, Kentucky Hospital Association*

Barbara Gordon, *Vice-Chair, Dir. of Community Engagement, U of L Trager Institute*

Marilyn Cleeff, *Treasurer, CPA, Consultant*

Rev. Tara Reck, *Secretary, Pastor, Anchorage Presbyterian Church*

Julie Boatright, *Chief of Staff, CenterWell*

Barret Collins, *Community Volunteer*

Larry Grossman, *Community Volunteer*

Sean Higgins, *CEO, Mint Julep Tours*

Donald Kavanaugh, *Barry Wooley Designs*

Jim Morris, *CPA, Retired, Baptist Health*

Kacy Noltemeyer, *Realtor, Rainey Allen Shaw*

Derek Reed, *Retired, Chief Regional District Judge*

Misha Rhodes, *MD, Market CMO, CenterWell*

George Webb, *MD, Retired, Hosparus Health*

Dr. Chuck Anderson, *Hildegard House Medical Director*

Our Staff

Karen Cassidy, *Executive Director*

Jane Walsh, *Assistant Director*

Laura Dixon, *Resident Care Director*

Sky Yeasayer, *Volunteer Manager*

Judy Noble, *House Manager*

www.hildegardhouse.org

502-581-8267

Welcome LAURA DIXON

We are pleased to have Laura Dixon join our team as our Resident Care Director. Laura is a Family Nurse Practitioner and earned her Masters and Doctorate in Nursing from Frontier Nursing University, as well as a Masters of Public Administration from the University of Louisville. She will be responsible for all resident referrals and admissions, assisting in coordinating resident care and competency training for all Compassionate Companions and staff.



Hildegard House

dignity has a home



HILDEGARD HOUSE

P.O. Box 5613
Louisville, KY 40255

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

NON-PROFIT ORG.
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
LOUISVILLE
PERMIT NO. 1609

We provide a home and compassionate care for individuals at the end of life who have no home or loved ones to care for them so that they may die with dignity.



Please include Hildegard House in your giving on **September 12, 2024** - our community's biggest giving day. We won't be sending lots of emails and texts that day, so please mark your calendar. We want you to know that we are participating!

Ways to Give: Hildegard House

SCAN this code to donate on our website



or MAIL using the enclosed envelope

- Join the Compassionate Care Circle by committing to a monthly gift.
- Make a gift in memory or in honor of someone special.
- Consider joining the Viriditas Legacy Society. Talk to your financial advisor about including Hildegard House in your planned giving.
- Give a Kroger Card, or paper towels.