



■ **Looking for Helping Hands**

Life continued to move forward at Community Opportunity Center (COC) during the first half of 2021. While the Pandemic is still with us, we continue to manage it with our COVID policies and protocols. We were all grateful to get a little breathing room from lower COVID case numbers. Our residents have been able to get out more often and resume some of their normal activities, with the proper COVID precautions in place.



Despite some modest improvements in pandemic metrics, we are experiencing collateral damage evidenced by our severely reduced work force; we normally operate with **120** direct care employees, but currently have **99**. During the first six months of the 2021 calendar year, we hired/rehired only 11 direct care staff, five of which left within a few months, and during that same time 16 resigned from the company. We do have our job postings on all the mainstream internet job boards, however, there has been little applicant traffic. We are working to spread the word on social media regarding job opportunities at COC and looking to make presentations to different community groups about this issue.

The staff who have remained with COC through all the recent adversity within the last two years, are our most dedicated employees. We are very grateful for the steadfast commitment they make to our residents, day in and day out. If you have the opportunity to engage with our staff, please thank them for their service.

Continues on page 2 "New Initiatives".

■ **Our Mission**

We promise to help the people we serve lead fulfilled lives by providing quality, individualized support.

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Happy Holidays
from Community Opportunity Center

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New Initiatives

Our partnership with Living and Learning Enrichment Center (LLEC) continues. Over the summer, our Residents had the opportunity to attend music therapy, dance, and drama classes. COC and LLEC will continue to create enrichment/leisure opportunities throughout the year. If interested in your loved one attending classes, please contact the home administrator for your loved one.

We now have rapid COVID-19 test capability in-house. Prior to this we had specific weekly testing days set up with Dr. Khanafer, pharmacist and owner of KRX pharmacy in Westland. We have trained Ferarri Griffin, Felisha Wilkerson, Kim Stack, Lisa Lindner, Chris Compton, Glen Hearn, Andrea Bey, and Holly Heath in administering rapid antigen tests for COVID-19. This allows COC to respond, quickly and efficiently to testing needs when exposures arise.

Despite continued challenges presented during these difficult times, I remain thankful for the blessings given to COC. Our residents are a joy to be with and can be counted on to add fun and levity to even the toughest of days. Our staff remain committed to providing quality care in our homes, and the family and friends of COC continue to make generous contributions of time and money to help COC carry out its mission to enhance the lives of the men and women we serve.

Holly Heath,
Executive Director



Development Update

COC appreciates the generous contributions we receive from our friends and supporters. Your generosity enables COC to provide quality 24/7 care and housing to our residents.

We would like to give special thanks to Plymouth Community United Way for their continued generous support. Along with raising funds for COC through their annual golf outing which took place on October 14, they recently donated \$22,000 in grant funding to help us provide COVID-19 testing of residents and staff, to purchase laptop computers for telemedicine visits, and to purchase a wheelchair accessible minivan.

COC also wants to thank The Wilcox Foundation for a very generous gift of \$25,695 to replace the roof at Plymouth Opportunity House. We are deeply grateful for this donation and their past contributions to COC.

Welcome New and Returning Employees

Program Trainer New Hires

Jan – June 2021

Muibat Ajiboye
Jordan Dincio
Laura Lyons

Program Trainer Rehires

Jan – June 2021

Ulysses Edmonson III
Lunda Johnson
Barbara Kosciolek

COC is Hiring and We Need Your Help Recruiting Talent!

Community Opportunity Center

Join Our Team!

Full Time, Part Time
and Casual Shifts
Available

Sign On Bonus
and Paid Training

Direct Care
Workers

Great Benefits:
401k, Medical,
Dental

Competitive Pay

Candidates Must Have:

- Valid Driver's License
- Pass a Pre-Employment Drug Screen
- High School Diploma or GED
- Authorization to Work Within the US

We are looking for compassionate individuals committed to providing day to day support to people with developmental disabilities in a community residential setting.

Positions Available In:

Livonia | Plymouth | Redford | Garden City

www.cocliving.com

Contact Andrea Bey, HR Assistant: Abey@cochomes.net (734) 838-0542

We are experiencing extreme staffing shortages and need your help recruiting talent. Please help spread the word. Currently offering: Sign on bonus, overtime bonus & referral bonus. Contact Andrea Bey – 734-838-0542

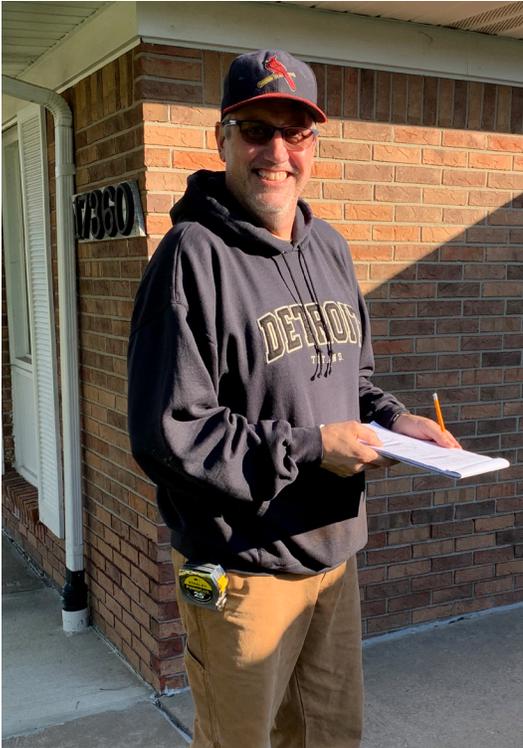
COC Attends Job Fair

Andrea Bey, COC's HR Assistant and Recruiter, attended this event at Schoolcraft College in October. We are working to develop contacts at Schoolcraft College to work with the Allied Health Department to offer employment to Schoolcraft students pursuing degrees in health-related fields. Due to the labor shortage, applicant traffic was light, but the opportunity to connect with Schoolcraft personnel was a plus.



 Like Us on Facebook!

■ COC's Got Talent



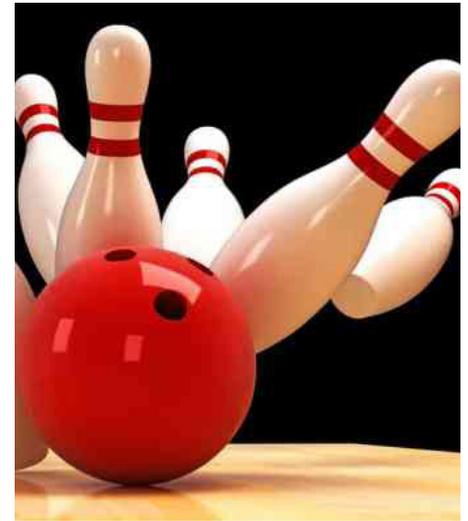
Any homeowner knows that the upkeep and maintenance of a home is never ending. There is always something to fix, replace, remodel or landscape. This is especially true at COC, where we own seven homes: Plymouth House, Garden City Opportunity Manor, Balmoral, Curtis, Milburn, Redford House, and Livonia House. In addition to this there are two homes rented by COC residents, Friendship and Bassett, which need minor repairs and upkeep. The employee managing the maintenance details for these homes, along with the maintenance schedule for our

fleet of 16 vehicles is **Patrick Malone**. He has an Associate's degree in construction from Henry Ford Community College. His work experience includes 25 years in construction and 15 years owning his own countertop and cabinet company.

Because of Patrick's background in construction, his versatility goes far beyond general maintenance and there are many jobs that COC can complete in-house with Patrick's help, rather than contract out. Patrick has replaced counter tops in the laundry rooms at Livonia, built two secure storage rooms in the basements of Plymouth and Curtis, and enclosed a room at Redford to accommodate employees working a sleep shift. When vehicles need repair, he collaborates with home administrators and office staff to get cars dropped off, or towed if needed, to repair shops. When washers, dryers, dishwashers, microwaves, stoves, or refrigerators need repair, he finds the needed part and fixes them. When they need to be replaced, he shops for the best quality and price he can find, with COC best interest in mind.

Keeping all COC homes maintained and vehicles running is a team effort, but Patrick leads the way. So, when you see a freshly painted room or new outdoor trim, a new appliance, improved lighting, new ceiling fans or doors, know that it is Patrick working behind the scenes to make things happen. We appreciate all that Patrick does to keep things looking nice and running well at each of our home locations.

■ COC Celebrity Bowling Challenge



We are excited to announce the **Inaugural COC Celebrity Bowling Challenge** which will take place at Oak Lanes in Westland on Friday, February 4, 2022! Participating teams will have the opportunity to bowl with local sports and media celebrities to raise funds for COC.

Drew Stanton, former star quarterback of the Michigan State Spartans, and 12-year NFL quarterback for the Detroit Lions, Arizona



Cardinals, and the Cleveland Browns, will be our Honorary Chair for the event! More information on how to participate or to become a sponsor of the Celebrity Bowling Challenge will be coming soon!

Staff Appreciation Events

2021 Events

January/February 2021 - Employee of the Year:

Glen Hearn was the recipient for the 2020 Employee of the Year Award. We hosted a COVID-friendly awards ceremony where we connected virtually with staff, residents, and office staff. Lunch was brought in for those who participated in the ceremony. Glen's name was the first name added to 'Employee of the Year' plaque located in the foyer of the office, and a gift card for Carl's Golfland was given to Glen to show our appreciation.

March 2021 - Mugs in March: Our staff received COC mugs filled with a variety of goodies. The mugs contained soup, crackers, tea, and honey sticks for a tasty treat for our staff to enjoy.



June 2021 - Mac 'N' Cheese Cook Off and Staff Luncheon:

Ten staff members submitted their best batch of Mac 'n' Cheese. Our panel of judges sampled and voted on their favorites. The lunch for the staff also included salad and a dessert. Lunch was packaged up for each of the homes as well and was available for staff to stop by and pick up. In addition to the lunch, a variety of prizes were raffled off for staff to enjoy.

The winners of the Mac 'N' Cheese Challenge

1st Place - Brandy Drayton, made a delicious Lobster Mac 'N' Cheese

2nd Place - Verlinda Senior, made a creamy and tasty Mac Daddy Mac 'N' Cheese

3rd Place - Latonia Johnson, made a yummy, cheesy Mac-Detroit Mac 'N' Cheese



Congratulations and thank you to all who participated in the challenge.



Nominations for 2021 Employee of the Year

In the fall of each year COC employees will be given the opportunity to nominate up to three coworkers they think should be the "Employee of the Year." The nominations should be based on their firsthand experiences from working with and/or observing their work ethic, character, their disposition, and their passion for the work they do with the people we serve. Individual comments paired with the requirement of an annual evaluation score of 3.5 or greater help the Selection Committee in determining who should receive the award. Every year, the winner will have his/her name placed on the award plaque that hangs in the COC Office, and his/her picture will be placed adjacent to the plaque for one year. The 2021 Employee of the Year will be featured in the next edition of "SPOTLIGHT".

Families of our residents are also encouraged to submit letters of recognition for the staff whom they feel go above and beyond for the residents they serve. These letters or notes can be mailed to or dropped off at the COC main office attention "Employee of the Year Committee." We will then be sure to share all sentiments with the staff member and administrator.

■ Crafts at COC

In May of this year, we were finally able to restart our in-office craft classes. Normally our crafts class would hold 10–12 participants, however, to keep a safe distance we only had six participants in each class, keeping safe distancing between residents from different homes. In both the May and June classes, the crafters made sun visors, painted pictures using a plastic fork, made wild faces on canvas using different craft materials, and chocolate covered pretzels. As of June, we resumed the monthly craft classes and everyone cannot wait to dig into our full craft closet for more fun projects. We hope to resume full capacity in future classes soon.



■ Welcome New Friend



Richard Drew

Richard, who prefers Ricky, moved into our Redford Opportunity House (ROH) on June 11, 2021. Ricky's application for placement was submitted in October 2001, however his family did not actively start seeking placement until 2021. It was a stroke of luck that COC had a suitable opening when he started seeking placement. Ricky fits in very well with the other five gentlemen living at ROH. Ricky gets along well with his housemates and staff and has smoothly transitioned to his new home. Ricky has been working at STEP Dearborn vocational program for 40 years and continues to attend five days a week with one of his housemates. He enjoys working and making money so he can save up for a vacation. Ricky enjoys bowling and will be joining the bowling league with his housemates. Ricky is helpful to the staff at ROH by helping vacuum the house, making his bed, keeping his room neat and putting his clean clothes away. He enjoys coloring and watching his favorite team the Detroit Tigers on TV. Ricky is very close to his brother Scott. Scott advocates on Ricky's behalf and continues to support Ricky in his new home along with supporting ROH staff with Ricky's care. Welcome Ricky to the ROH family, we are delighted to have you.

In Loving Memory



Terry Jergens

It was with much sadness when we lost our long time COC family member, Terry Jergens, on May 31, 2021. Terry was loved and enjoyed by all who knew her, she had friends everywhere. Terry, also known as TJ, moved into our Plymouth Opportunity House (POH) in August 1980, where she immediately started to enjoy her

independence. Terry was “the most verbal nonverbal person you would ever meet”. Despite her lack of traditional speech, she was very bright and found creative ways and strategies to clearly communicate her needs, desires, and emotions. Terry was loved by all her housemates and staff.

Terry loved to do just about everything. She enjoyed attending all the “Just Fun Club” monthly activities, dressing up for Halloween and Christmas parties, bowling, going to the casino, getting her nails done, attending church services and amusement parks. In June 1992 Terry moved to our Livonia Opportunity House (LOH) which enabled her to be physically closer to her sister, Diane. Terry quickly adapted to LOH and enjoyed her new housemates, staff, and her easy accessibility to Diane.

However, in July 2001, Terry was offered the opportunity to move back to POH and she jumped on it. Terry took advantage of living in the heart of Plymouth and frequently would walk downtown with her housemates to many of the social gatherings that take place and to the local party store to buy snacks. Terry loved doing



chores, she would empty the dishwasher, set and clear the table, take out the recycling and garbage, assist with laundry, and making beds.

Terry’s passion for water activities was unmatched by anyone. She always had her swimsuit on hand. If there was a lake, swimming pool or hot tub within walking distance, that is where you would find Terry. Terry very much enjoyed camping, traveling, flying, and cruises and went on several trips with her housemates and family.

Throughout her 40+ years with COC she had tremendous support from her loving and caring siblings. Her sister Diane always included TJ for family holidays, parties, activities, and vacations. Terry enjoyed her time spent at her “home away from home” in her sister’s home as much as she did at her COC home. No greater advocate could Terry have had than Diane. Terry was in the care of POH staff and hospice when she passed away in her POH home at age 68 from cancer. Those who knew Terry well are confident that she is enjoying a cup of coffee or glass of wine with her dear brother-in-law, Larry, while relaxing in a hot tub in heaven. Terry is missed by all.

Support the Mission of COC

Legacy Giving Program

As the people supported by Community Opportunity Center (COC) age, the Corporation is in a position of self-funding extra staffing and services needed as well as modifications to homes and vehicles. Mental Health funding does not adequately support persons living in smaller home settings and the Corporation's commitment to providing quality staff is demonstrated by enhanced wages and benefits that are not fully funded by the mental health system.



For these reasons and more, we need to strengthen COC's resources to continue helping people achieve their greatest potential while living in a caring and safe environment. You can help by considering COC in your estate planning. Means of offering support include:

- Make a donation in memory of a loved one, in honor of a special occasion, a matching gift through your employer or a direct contribution.
- Identify Community Opportunity Center as a beneficiary of a portion of your Retirement Plan, Life Insurance Policy or financial accounts such as a bank or brokerage account or a CD.
- Those over 70½ who must take the required minimum distribution (RMD) from their IRA annually can donate directly from their investment source. In this way it's treated as a reduction in income and the standard deduction on your tax return can still be taken.

Donations are tax deductible. With your gift, you can help us do what we do today, even better tomorrow.

Please visit our website:
www.cocliving.com

Please Participate in These Donation Programs

Community Opportunity Center, NPHC (COC) is currently enrolled in three different donation programs. Donating through these programs will never cost you more money. Each year we receive contributions as a result of families and friends of COC who shop at Kroger using their rewards card, Amazon using smile.amazon and iGive.com. In 2020 COC received a combined amount of \$784. Thank you to those who participated.

1 Sign up for a Kroger Plus shopper's card and enroll in the Kroger Community Rewards Program to ensure COC receives your donation. To confirm your contribution, Community Opportunity Center will be printed at the bottom of your receipt. Register at: krogercommunityrewards.com



2 Every time you shop Amazon, **amazon smile** log into smile.amazon.com You shop. Amazon gives. for COC to receive donations from Amazon. Confirm you have selected Community Opportunity Center as your non-profit organization. Amazon will donate 0.05% of your total bill to COC on a quarterly basis. Sign up at: smile.amazon.com/ch/38-3143428

3 Shopping online through iGive.com connects you to over 700 brand name stores including eBay, Staples, JC Penney, Barnes & Noble, Office Depot, QVC, Expedia, Home Depot, Best Buy, Gap and Nordstrom. A portion of each purchase will be donated to COC. In fact, shopping through iGive.com will often save you money through exclusive coupon codes and deals offered just for our members. Sign up at www.igive.com/welcome



If you need help signing up with any of the above, please contact Glen Hearn in COC office at 734-838-0540.

Thank You to Our Generous Donors

Donations Made to COC January 1, 2021 – June 30, 2021

Honorary Donations

In Honor of Jim and Pat Mies

Mr. Gerald Mies

In Honor of Debbie Diegel

Mr. & Mrs. Robert Phillips

Memorial Donations

In Memory of Jeffrey Campbell

Ms. Lisa Birkby
Ms. Charlotte Blair
Mr. & Mrs. Tom Davison
Mr. Robert Deacon
Ms. Eileen Hartke
Mr. & Mrs. Andrew Martin
Ms. Barbara Ritsema
Mr. & Mrs. Terry Schleicher

In Memory of Noelle Campbell

Mr. & Mrs. Timothy Deacon
Ms. Marjorie Deacon
Mr. & Mrs. Robert Eland
Ms. Eileen Hartke
Mr. & Mrs. Patrick Marody
Mr. & Mrs. Andrew Martin
Mr. & Mrs. Walter Smith

In Memory of Jean Crawford

Ed's Plumbing & Sewer
Mr. & Mrs. Andre Letourneau

In Memory of Dorothy Grunst

Mr. Keith Kirkpatrick

In Memory of Lori Henry

Mr. & Mrs. James Bearden
Mr. & Mrs. Thomas Henry
Ms. Bonnie Jarlock

In Memory of Terry Jergens

Mr. & Mrs. Lawrence Boulton
Mr. & Mrs. Carl Cantrell
Mr. & Mrs. Kevin Deacon
Mr. & Mrs. John DeGeorge
Mr. & Mrs. Charles Hagmann
Ms. Holly Heath
Ms. Bonnie Jarlock

Mr. & Mrs. John King
Mr. James Lankton
Mr. & Mrs. Abe Lindner
Mr. & Mrs. Robert Moore
Mrs. Mae Yong Ogletree
Friends of Unity Church

In Memory of Russell Kanyo

Mr. & Mrs. Michael Birkett
Mr. & Mrs. John DeGeorge
Mrs. Diane Janes
Mr. Frank Watson

In Memory of Philomene Kekkoua

Ms. Renee Sayegh

In Memory of Robert, Jane, and Julie Krebaum

Mr. & Mrs. Ralph Green
Mr. & Mrs. Ralph Green
Mr. Jesse Krebaum
Ms. Nancy Krebaum
Mr. & Mrs. Larry Mount
Mr. & Mrs. Lyle Nustad
Ms. Jeanne Peters
Ms. Alexandra Wener

In Memory of Gregory Neschich

Ms. Patricia Ryan

In Memory of Mr. Richard

Mr. George Bedro

General Donations

Mrs. Shirley Abar
Mr. Michael Averill
Ms. Mary Babcock
Mr. Brian Binder
Mr. Edward Binder
Mr. & Mrs. Robert Blamer
Mr. & Mrs. Edward Fowler
Ms. Michele Halloran
Mr. Perry Hausman
Ms. Holly Heath
Mr. Edward Hibner
Mr. & Mrs. Piorkowski-King
Ms. Barb Krasiecko
Mr. John Lawrence
Ms. Patricia Marshall
Mr. & Mrs. Matthew Munn
Mr. & Mrs. Brian Pearson

Why Donate...

COC is committed to providing the best possible living situation for the men and women we support. A critical factor that contributes to achieving this goal is contributions of all kinds. Your generous monetary donations help maintain COC's high standards.

In Honor and Memory

Honorary and Memorial Donations help provide for the general needs of COC and the men and women we support. Call us at 734-422-1020 and we will deliver memorial envelopes to a funeral home or to your home. Also, anyone who desires to remember COC through their memorial giving can send a donation to COC in memory of an individual. Consider an Honorary donation to honor someone special for their birthday, anniversary, or just because you care. Whether remembering or honoring someone, a recognition letter is sent to the recipient and the donor. Your donation will make a difference!

Ms. Mary Reed
Mr. & Mrs. Bill Stefaniak
Mr. Michael Talbot
Amazon Smile
Blackbaud Giving Fund
Kroger
Network for Good
Plymouth Community United Way
Thrivant Funds
United Way of Greater Milwaukee

COVID Relief Donations

Ms. Cheryl Daniel
Mr. & Mrs. Abe Lindner
Mr. & Mrs. Thomas McLean
Plymouth Community United Way

We Appreciate Our Volunteers!

How You Can Help...

Volunteers have always played a significant role in supporting the COC community. Interested persons will collaborate with the home administrators to determine the type of assistance needed and make plans to implement activities to benefit the homes and those living in them. These pages highlight the various ways volunteers help COC and our residents. If you would like to volunteer within our homes or specifically for the home where your family member resides, please contact Glen Hearn at 734-838-0540.

Volunteer Projects January to July 2021

- Pam McLean came into the office 2-3 days a week to help Bev with billing.
- John DeGeorge has been a volunteer for many years. He is always willing to help in any way he can. He has helped move furniture, rip up carpet, grill hamburgers and hot dogs for the staff appreciation cookout and helped at the golf outing.
- Woodside Bible Church cleaned out flower beds, raked leaves, planted flowers and cleaned out the gutters at Friendship House.
- We had multiple volunteers help with our craft class at the office.
- Abigail volunteered with Nancy at Plymouth House helping with cardio drumming.
- Volunteers from the court systems provided much needed maintenance assistance alongside Patrick, COC's Maintenance Associate.
- Sue Deacon volunteers her time and talent to design each "Spotlight" edition.



Over-site in Our Last Edition of SPOTLIGHT

A big shout out “THANK YOU” to the members of St. Timothy’s Presbyterian Church in Livonia and St. Kenneth Catholic Church in Plymouth. Both churches hosted separate seasonal-themed parties for our folks prior to Covid putting a halt to gatherings. In October 2019 St. Timothy held a Fall gathering and in February 2020 St. Kenneth held a Valentine gathering. In the fall of 2019 St. Kenneth began a bell choir class for our folks to attend once a week, which was a big hit until the pandemic required COC to stop community activities.

St. Timothy has reached out to us once again for another Fall gathering in November 2021, contingent on Covid restrictions and guidelines.

For many years the Plymouth Rotary Afternoon Club has sponsored a Christmas Party exclusively for the residents of COC (canceled in 2020). This party takes place the first week of December and includes dinner, dessert, dancing, and a visit from Santa Claus who presents each resident with a gift card from Target. The ladies and gentlemen thoroughly enjoy attending this event each year and talk about it for weeks in advance. Thank you, Plymouth Rotary for your years of support and generosity!

If you know of any organization that would be interested in hosting a fun gathering, please contact Joyce at our central office to discuss potential opportunities for our COC family members.



How to Get Involved!

If you know anyone who would be interested in working with extraordinary people and for an exceptional non-profit, please refer them to our website, www.cocliving.com. Click on the “Get Involved” tab.

14147 Farmington Road
Livonia, Michigan 48154



**Get COC Communications
by Email**

To reduce postal costs, please sign up to receive COC correspondence by email. Send your name and email address to:
COCinfo@cochomes.net.

COC Board Members



Mike Mies,
President



Tom McLean
Vice President



Bill Heaton
Treasurer



Larry Boulton
Secretary



Kelly Cousins



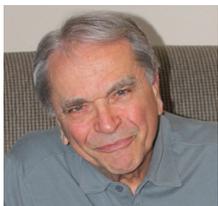
Dan Cytacki



Chris Dancy



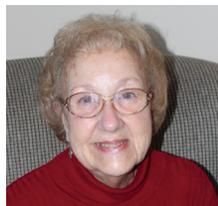
Cheryl Daniel



Ed Diegel



Scott Grosz



Marge Mitchell



Jenny Sherman



Francine Stroud