



Spring 2023 Marks the End of the COVID-19 Public Health Emergency

Based upon analysis of recent COVID-19 trends, the US Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) has set the expiration date for the COVID-19 Public Health Emergency to May 11, 2023. As of this date, the State of Michigan will begin to transition away from an emergency response position toward improving the standard of care for individuals who contract COVID-19. Data show the following national trends as measured since the peak of the Omicron surge at the end of January 2022:

- Daily COVID-19 reported cases are down 92%
- COVID-19 deaths have declined by over 80%
- New COVID-19 hospitalizations are down nearly 80%

While this is wonderful news for the general population, it is especially welcome news at Community Opportunity Center (COC). This means our COC residents will continue moving toward full participation in their pre-pandemic activities. It is expected that there will be additional communications and guidance published by US Dept. of HHS and Michigan Department of Health and Human Services regarding the use of COVID-19 screening stations and personal protection equipment. Once guidelines are clearly published they will be shared with residents, employees and friends and family members of COC. For now, spring is here, it's time to get outside, soak up the good weather and have some fun, with less regard and worry concerning the spread or contraction of illness.

Happy Spring,
 Holly Heath, Executive Director

Source: (2023 February 9). Fact Sheet: COVID-19 Public Health Emergency Transition Road Map [Press Release]. [hhs.gov/about/news/2023/02/09/fact-sheet-covid-19-public-health-emergency-transition-roadmap.html](https://www.hhs.gov/about/news/2023/02/09/fact-sheet-covid-19-public-health-emergency-transition-roadmap.html)


Donations: Our website has been updated to record and process your tax-free donations via debit and credit card for your convenience. If you wish to show your support to COC, please visit our website, www.cocliving.com, and follow the donation prompts. Or use this link: <https://securepayment.link/communityopportunitycenter/>




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


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Health and Wellness



Plymouth House continues to beat the temptation to be sedentary with a weekly cardio drumming class that is lively and full of laughter.

As summer turned to winter, we maintained our fitness classes. Friendship House has continued with the specialized seated Pilates and yoga classes every week, with all four residents joining in the stretching and toning.

Garden City has a vibrant and jovial weekly walking club, and we take full advantage of those long hallways when the weather turns wet and cold. We've really logged some miles!

The weekly floor yoga class held at COC's office is well attended and has seen remarkable progress for all its very social participants. These classes build confidence and friendships, in addition to flexibility and strength; a winning combination all around.

Visits with Scooter

Research has shown that the presence of a beloved pet or therapy animal can help a person control anxiety, improve mood and self-esteem, decrease depression and raise energy levels. Dogs are the most popular animal used in pet therapy, although other animals have been successfully used therapeutically. Therapy dogs generally offer unconditional love to those who may need comforting or a just bit of cheering up. Therapy dogs are not service dogs but rather dogs who work with their owners as a team to provide affection, comfort and joy to folks who love animals but don't have one of their own.



Three of the COC homes have become familiar with "Scooter", a cute little dog whose owner and trainer has a son in one of the apartments supported by COC. Scooter is a "people" friendly dog and therefore is the perfect therapy dog for settings like ours. He has been officially trained and certified for almost two years.

Friendship House was the first home Scooter visited, and the visit went so well that he has been invited back several times. He also was invited to Curtis House and Bassett House where he spread some of his energy, doggie kisses and brought about smiles like you wouldn't believe! Of course, they would love to have him back on a regular basis.

Scooter also visits a local assisted living program on a weekly basis and an elementary school twice a month. His owner knew that he would be a great therapy dog because whenever he and his owner go for walks, Scooter greets every person he meets with excitement and a wagging tail. Everyone in their neighborhood knows Scooter and looks forward to giving him a little love, a treat or just a pat on the head.



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
Referral Bonus
and Paid Training

Direct Care
Workers

Competitive Pay

Great Benefits:
401k, Medical,
Dental, Vision

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, referral bonus and paid training. Contact Andrea Bey – 734-838-0542



Thelisa, Mark, and Randy visit a horse farm.



COC staff enjoy the COC annual picnic.

 **Like Us on Facebook!**

Staff News

Staff Appreciation Events

October 2022 – Side Dish Showdown

COC hosted our fall luncheon, where staff competed in a Side Dish Showdown for a chance to win \$100 for the best dish. The food was out of this world with a variety of options and flavors. We had eleven staff participate and provided the following dishes:

- Broccoli & Rice Casserole
- Corn Bread Casserole
- Cowboy Beans
- Baked Beans
- Asian Ramen Salad
- Mac and Cheese
- Seafood Pasta Salad
- Seafood Salad
- Cheesy Potatoes
- Lasagna
- Not Yo Mama's Brussel Sprouts



- 1st Place** \$100 prize went to Nancy Merehouyias for her Cowboy Beans
- 2nd Place** \$60 prize went to Ashley Morris for her Asian Ramen Salad
- 3rd place** \$40 prize went to Natisha Martin for her Seafood Pasta Salad



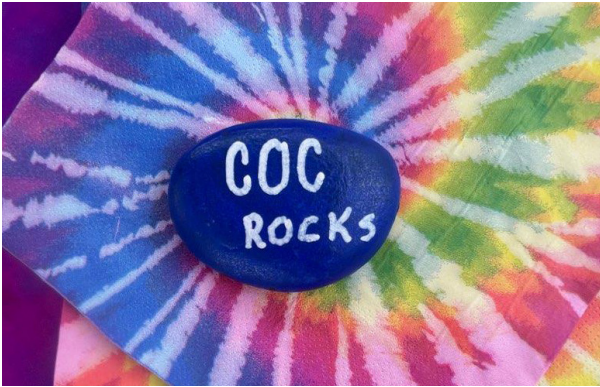
Judy attends Staff Appreciation Lunch

December 2022 – Deck Your Doors

Instead of the house décor contest for the holidays, we opted for a “Deck your Doors” event where residents and staff could decorate their interior doors in a festive way to spread cheer and have some fun! We had great participation with lots of creative ideas... we look forward to continuing this and possibly extending this into other holidays throughout the year.



Please visit our website:
www.cocliving.com



Welcome New Hires

July-December 2022

Victoria Adekola

Candis Armstead

Georgia Armstead-Byers

Renee Ballinger

Kyra Blevins

Michelle Cromer

Nkesichi Eferebo

Paula Gibboney

Kathy Green

Daelon Hill

Kellie Johnson

Obinna Nwosu

Katherine Schmaltz

Shay-Vone Taylor

Welcome Georgia Armstead-Byers, New Administrator for SIP Location in Livonia



Georgia Armstead-Byers assumed the role of Home Administrator for the SIP program in July of 2022. This site includes three two-person apartments at Canterbury Apartments in Livonia. Georgia came to COC with 21 years' experience as a Home Manager, working with people with intellectual and developmental disabilities. She left her previous company due to the closing of the home she was managing. During her first year with COC, she has shown persistence in learning and transitioning to COC policies and procedures. We have appreciated her willingness to join COC and assist us through the labor shortage, which has made things challenging within the caregiving space. Georgia lives with her husband, Keith, in Detroit. She has a daughter Alicia and two sons, George and Cardell. She enjoys spending time with her three grandchildren, managing her event and party planning business, Great Creations, shopping, and spending time at home relaxing. Please welcome Georgia as part of the COC family.



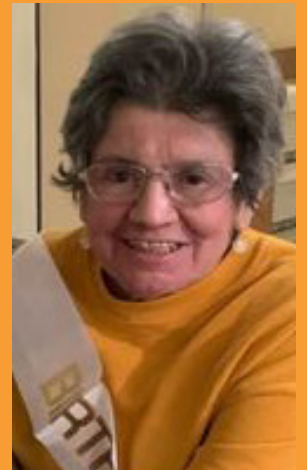
Resident News



Chris frees the butterflies

On the Move

On August 1, 2022, Rosemary moved from her own apartment with minimal staffing into a single apartment at Garden City Opportunity Manor (GCOM). Rosemary started with COC at GCOM in 1985 and has lived in various independent settings within COC for the past 37 years. The GCOM setting offers needed additional staffing, transportation, and assistance to Rosemary. She enjoys her independence and the camaraderie of her COC family that live at GCOM.



Basset guys at lunch



Anne baking pumpkin pies for Thanksgiving



LOH friends help each other through a Corn Maze



Dan at Pumpkin Patch

In Loving Memory

Barbara Ingle

Barb started her journey with COC when she temporarily moved into Plymouth Opportunity House (POH) in January 2003 from Lutheran Social Services. That April, she transferred to Livonia Opportunity House (LOH).



Barb quickly fit in at LOH making many new friends and adapting to a new and busy routine. She enjoyed participating in social activities, including bowling, bingo, going out to dinner, dances, birthday celebrations and the big, annual Christmas party. Barb absolutely loved attending COC's summer camp each year. She loved all the camp activities, especially horseback riding. Barb talked about "summer camp" all year long and consistently asked staff the date of the next summer camp. Despite needing to use a walker for mobility, Barb moved very quickly with her walker and was often first in line for all the events. Barb would always greet everyone by name with a big smile. If she did not remember your name she would point and say, "I know you". When Barb began to have some physical limitations requiring additional assistance, she move to Milburn Home in January 2015. Milburn turned out to be a perfect place for Barb. The smaller setting and exceptional staff allowed her to be involved in the day-to-day routine without requiring her to walk so much. Barb aged gracefully at Milburn. She enjoyed quieter activities such as coloring, painting, crafts, singing Christmas carols throughout the year, watching staff prepare meals, assisting with folding laundry, going out for dinner, movies and ice cream with her three housemates. In June 2022, while in Hospice, COC staff and friends celebrated Barb's 70th birthday with a lovely party. Barb loved all the attention. Barb passed away in her home surrounded by Milburn's loving and caring staff on July 15, 2022. Barb's grand smile and sparkling eyes are dearly missed by those that knew her.

Mary Brennan

Mary was one of COC's icons. In July 1985, at the age of 21, Mary's family assisted her with moving into Plymouth Opportunity House (POH) thus establishing her independence as an adult.



Mary thrived at POH and during her time there, she sharpened her daily living skills making her a candidate to live more independently at COC's Garden City Opportunity Manor (GCOM), where she moved in 1994. At GCOM she shared an apartment with different COC female residents. Mary excelled in her independence and thoroughly enjoyed attending work programs at STEP, maintaining her personal care, preparing her own meals, keeping her apartment clean, attending social events, going on dates, and attending dances with her longtime boyfriend, Brian. Mary always dressed impeccably with matching jewelry. Her mother was a great advocate, teacher, and best friend to Mary through most of her adult life. Mary admired her mom and often talked about memories of her. Mary had a unique way of making those that cared for her feel truly appreciated and special. She was soft spoken, pleasant, gentle, and graceful with her words and body language, often giving heartfelt hugs to those she knew. She wanted everyone to feel loved. In 2017, Mary started to show signs of memory loss and began to struggle with her daily routine. In 2018, Mary moved to Livonia Opportunity House (LOH) where she could receive additional support from staff with the activities of daily living. Mary soon adjusted to a new routine and appeared to be happy with her new, purple bedroom. This move proved to be a blessing for Mary as her memory declined quickly. The additional staffing at LOH enabled Mary to handle her memory loss challenges in a safe and healthy setting. On September 28, 2022, at the age of 58, Mary peacefully passed away with LOH's caring staff at her bedside. Mary's gentleness and "ear to ear" grin will be remembered by the COC family for years to come.

We Appreciate Our Volunteers!

How to Get Involved!

Volunteers have always played a significant role in supporting the COC community. Interested persons and/or organizations 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. 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. Or contact Glen Hearn at 734-838-0540.

Volunteer Projects July - December 2022



A BIG shout out of THANKS goes out to the RUN DTP (Downtown Plymouth) group lead by Theresa Gutierrez. For the past five years Theresa and other DTP members, Linda, Ryan, Ann, Johanna & Mike, have been meeting the residents at POH and walking with them every Tuesday, rain or shine, from April through October. They walk at total of 1.5 miles to the PARC in downtown Plymouth, where everyone has the opportunity to walk additional laps around the PARC track. Some of the residents walk as many as five laps! The residents look forward to this weekly walk but more importantly they really enjoy hanging out with their DTP friends. If you want to see a bunch of smiling faces, hear a lot of laughter and excitement, and witness true camaraderie, you will find it walking in downtown Plymouth every Tuesday evening.



Jan Tagami volunteers at Garden City Opportunity Manor (GCOM). Jan has been helping the residents make different healthy meals. She also plays bingo and various card games with the folks.



Alecia Goodlow-Young helped transport Jeff McGuff down to Tennessee to hang out with his dad.



Alhambra-Manresa Caravan donated all the meat, buns, condiments, beverages, and paper products for COC’s Family and Friends picnic in October. COC families provided the desserts.

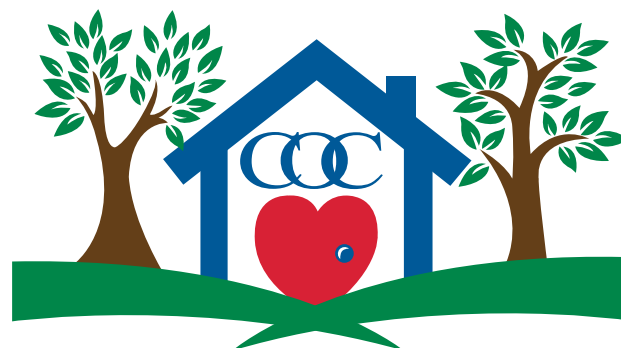
Alhambra-Manresa Caravan organized and covered the cost for 93 COC residents and their staff to enjoy The Diamond Jack Cruise on the Detroit River in September.



In November St. Timothy Presbyterian Church of Livonia hosted a Fall Harvest Dinner for our folks which included crafts, live music, singing, dancing and an appearance from Elvis. Everyone enjoyed themselves and the hospitality of the church members.



Jingle and Mingle Christmas Gathering - In December, COC hosted several National Honor Society Students from Orchard Lake St. Mary's for a small Christmas party with Friendship, Bassett, and Curtis Houses. The students mingled with COC residents while completing crafts, decorating the Christmas tree, and singing Christmas songs. All involved enjoyed meeting new people and sharing a fun holiday activity. The St. Mary's students also learned about career pathways related to assisting individuals with developmental disabilities, such as special education, occupational therapy, physical therapy, speech pathology, nursing, and social work.



Thank You to Our Generous Donors

Donations Made to COC

July 1, 2022 – December 31, 2022

Honorary Donations

In Honor of Debbie Diegel

Mr. & Mrs. Bruce Hill

In Honor of Mary Beth Hausman

Mr. Craig Hausman

Memorial Donations

Memory of Mr. & Mrs. Ashley

James Ashley

Memory of Mr. & Mrs. Jim Baker

Mr. & Mrs. Jim Baker

Memory of Alan Bedro

Ms. Kelly Bedro

Memory of Geraldine Borio

Mr. & Mrs. Kevin Deacon

Ms. Jacqueline Marchewka

Memory of Mary Brennan

Mr. & Mrs. John King

Memory of Judy DuCharme

Mr. & Mrs. Jim Baker

Memory of Bev Erickson

Mr. George Bedro

Memory of John Flanagan

Mr. George Bedro

Memory of Linda Hoffman

Mr. & Mrs. Steven Reese

Memory of Barbara Ingle

M.L. Thompson

Memory of Julie Krebaum

Mr. & Mrs. Ralph Green

Memory of Arthur Partain

Mr. & Mrs. Gerard Hausman

Memory of Carl Sabuda

Mr. & Mrs. Steve Koch

Mr. & Mrs. Mark Sabuda

Memory of Michael Stone

Ms. Noreen Pace

Memory of Patty Stram

Ms. Ann Balasco

Memory of Jan Swallow

Mr. & Mrs. Gerard Hausman

General Donations

Alhambra Manresa Caravan 217

Amazon Smile

Mr. & Mrs. Marc Averill

Mr. Michael Averill

Mr. & Mrs. James Baker

Mr. Brian Binder

Mr. Harry Cendrowski & Family

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Ms. Holly Heath

Mr. & Mrs. Billy Heaton

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Mr. & Mrs. Michael Huziak

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Knights of Columbus #3292

Mr. & Mrs. Joseph Kotlinski

Kroger

Mrs. Elisabeth Lindner

Mr. & Mrs. Bill McIlhargey

One Eleven Group

Mr. James O'Reilly

Ms. Maureen O'Reilly

Pledgeling Foundation

Plymouth Community United Way

Mr. Richard Pytlak

Mr. Felice Rea

Mr. & Mrs. Terry Schleicher

Mr. & Mrs. Dale Stankiewicz

Mr. & Mrs. John Whitehead

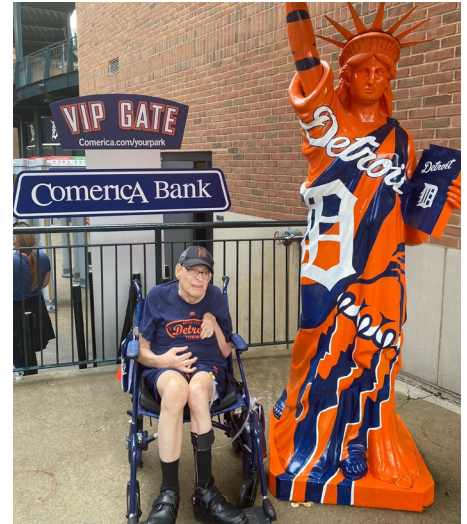
Grants

Margaret Dunning Foundation

Helen Kay Charitable Trust

Mr. & Mrs. Brian Pearson

Mr. Frank Piorkowski & Ms. Marie King



Tiger Game Fundraiser

Bassett House

Bill Brown Ford

Ms. Sara Borio

Mr. & Mrs. Larry Boulton

Curtis House

Ms. Cheryl Daniel

Ms. Julie Dombrowski

Friendship House

Garden City Opportunity Manor

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Mr. & Mrs. Gerard Hausman

Ms. Kristin Haydon

Ms. Holly Heath

Mr. & Mrs. John King

Mr. & Mrs. John Lawrence

Livonia Opportunity House

Mr. & Mrs. Thomas McLean

Ms. Ashley Morris

Plymouth Opportunity House

Mr. & Mrs. Richard Pytlak

Redford Opportunity House

Scientific Medical Services, Inc.

Services to Enhance Potential

Mr. & Mrs. David Thomas

Ms. Susan Whipstock



2022 Golf Outing



On Thursday, August 11, 2022, COC and Plymouth Community United Way (PCUW) were able to host our 23rd Annual “Tee Off For A Friend” golf outing. The weather could not have been any better. We had a clear blue sky and sunshine all day long, great golfing conditions. We cannot thank all the families, friends, and businesses enough that made this event a success. Without you it would not be possible. COC’s portion of the proceeds raised in 2022 was over \$38,000. A big thank you goes out to all the volunteers who came out to support and help make this fundraiser a success. Our 24th Annual “Tee Off For A Friend” will be held on Thursday, August 10, 2023 on the Golden Fox Golf Course at Fox Hills Golf and Banquet Center. Contact Glen Hearn at ghearn@cochomes.net or 734-838-0540 if you wish to volunteer or donate towards the event.

Golf Outing Donors

Amazon Smile
Mr. Michael Averill
Mr. & Mrs. Joseph Chamie
Ms. Bonnie Jarlock
Ms. Barbara Krasiecko
Oak Lanes Bowling Center
Mr. James O’Reilly
Mr. & Mrs. Richard Pytlak
Judge Michael Talbot
Mr. & Mrs. Lawrence Vandyne

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 a tax deductible receipt will be sent to the donor. Your donation makes a difference!

Participate in These Donation Programs

Community Opportunity Center, NPHC (COC) is currently enrolled in two 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 and iGive.com.

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



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 the COC office at 734-838-0540.

14147 Farmington Road
Livonia, Michigan 48154



SPRING 2023 SPOTLIGHT

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Vice President



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