

Heartline

A Publication of Kevin Guest House... "The little house with a big heart" | Winter 2011



*Veronica Weaver, Darren Weber
with their Mom, Marge Weber.*

My Story—Marge Weber

When I was invited to tell "my story", I felt truly honored to explain how Kevin Guest House has impacted and changed my life. We never really know of some of the most valuable "spots" in our communities until we need them. Kevin Guest House is such a place for me.

Having lived in the Buffalo area most of my life, I was reluctant to move to North Carolina in 1998. My son chose to stay here because this was home for him. I would come to visit on many occasions and was able to stay with friends. In 2008 my son was very viciously attacked and had to be on life support for six weeks. He has had four head surgeries, kidney failure, blood infections and the list goes on. When I did go to visit him I was able to stay with friends who have since then passed away or moved away. I was left with hotel stays and car rentals. Seeing my son in the condition he was in was

extremely difficult and had it not been for the grace of God, I don't think I would have been able to continue much longer. I cried when I arrived, I cried when I saw him and I cried when I left Buffalo.

The emotional ride was starting to affect me. The pain of seeing him in his state, the fear of losing him but grateful we still have him, the concerns of long term affects for him and the worry of not being able to come back as often because of the increasing expense. Everything was overwhelming. It was becoming more and more expensive with car rental expenses, food and hotel costs.

At one point of this horrible portion of my life journey, someone told me about Kevin Guest House, a hospital hospitality house in the City of Buffalo which would certainly be able to help accommodate me with food and lodging. Well, I gave it a try and I could not believe my eyes when I came in. The House is extremely inviting when looking from the outside and takes me back in time when life seemed more comfortable and easy. The inside is exactly what one would see in Victorian times with the living room in bright flowered patterns and the kitchen in very warm updated colors with that Victorian flavor. The bedrooms are very comfortable and each one has its own personality (I do have my favorite rooms!). The Dream Room is beautiful and Room #11 with its shades of green, tan and brown are so inviting and soothing. The world and all my problems were shut out and I didn't want to leave.

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Kevin Guest House provides caring, affordable and safe accommodations to individuals seeking care at area medical facilities, and to their loved ones at a time of need.

Heartline is a publication of:
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Buffalo, NY 14203
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www.kevinguesthouse.org

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Happy New Year One and All!

I hope each and every one of you enjoyed the holiday season, a special time with family and friends.

As we enter a new year we are challenged with uncertainties on many fronts. All of us are concerned about issues such as national safety, the crisis in the mid-east, health care coverage, state budget cut-backs and job loss, and city and towns downsizing, but we are fortunate that on the Buffalo Niagara Medical Campus, revolutionary advancements in medical research, treatment and cures are being discovered. It is truly a mixed bag of uncertainties no matter where your heart and thoughts lie.

However, through thick or thin, highs and lows, good times and bad times, Kevin Guest House remains firmly rooted in its mission to provide care and compassion to all those who enter our home. And for this ability we are happy to say thank you for your on-going support. Whether you send us a financial contribution or provide in-kind support through the donation of food, linens, pantry items, cleaning supplies and gifts for our guests during the seasonal holidays, thank you. Your participation helps to make Kevin Guest House the home that it is for hundreds of families each and every year.

Included in this issue is a year in review where you'll get to see all of the good work being completed by our staff and volunteers; not only in the care of our guests but in the love and care in taking care of our beautiful Victorian home and our wonderful gardens.

I do hope that when you find yourself in Buffalo for an afternoon, please come by and visit, we love to hear how you and your family are doing and it always gives us the opportunity to share with you our hopes and goals for the future.

From the bottom of my heart, thank you. I wish you and your family health, happiness and compassion in 2011.

*Sincerely,
Wayne*

Please note: KGH expansion plans are moving along, so please consider sending in a gift to support this important project - our growth- to better serve you, your family, friends and neighbors. Or if you are not ready to make a gift to the expansion project at this time but wish to make a general contribution to help cover the cost of a child, family, or transplant recipient's stay, please use the enclosed envelope to send it our way. Thank you!

www.kevinquesthouse.org

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our WISHLIST

Kitchen Pantry Items

- Coffee – regular
- Powder Coffee Creamer
- Equal packets
- Splenda packets
- Sugar
- Salt
- Spices
- Olive Oil
- Crackers
- Canned Soups
- Peanut Butter
- Jam and Jelly
- Non-Stick Cooking Spray (Mazola Pure)

Cleaning Supplies

- Liquid Hand Soap
- Liquid Dishwasher Detergent
- Clorox Anywhere Spray

- Tilex Daily Shower Spray
- Air Wick Solid Room Freshener
- Pledge Furniture Polish
- Window Cleaner
- Swiffer Wet and Dry Sheets
- Toilet Bowl Cleaner
- All Purpose Spray Cleaner
- Spic and Span Liquid Floor Cleaner
- Kitchen Sponges
- Dish Detergent
- Handiwipes

Laundry Supplies

- Liquid Detergent
- Liquid Clorox II
- Liquid Fabric Softener
- Bleach
- Dryer Sheets

Linens (please, new in package only)

- Mattress Pads – Twin and Queen
- Zipper Pillow Covers – Standard (hypo-allergenic)
- Sheet Sets – Twin and Queen (neutrals-beige, cream, tan, and ecru)
- Fleece Blankets – Twin and Queen
- Towel Sets – white, beige, and tan (able to withstand bleaching)
- Kitchen Towel Sets
- Dish Cloths

Food Storage & Preparation

- Quick Release Foil
- Plastic Wrap
- Parchment Paper
- Freezer Storage Bags – Quart and Gallon size

Gift Certificates

- Wegmans, Tops

continued from pg. 1

I have met some of the most interesting and nicest people during my many visits at Kevin Guest House. There have been many exchanges of stories, tears, phone numbers, prayers and all of them are blessings in one form or another. For me it is always a blessing to help others and I believe that many people feel the same way and therefore, the guests have blessed me by helping in whatever way I needed help.

The Healing Garden in back is a haven of peace in a very hectic, busy world of fearful questions and sometimes unwanted answers. It has even been possible to have my daughter and two grandsons stay here in the "big room", all of us together. It made a difficult time actually fun.

Now I will share the best part of the story - the staff. Back in the beginning, when things were most difficult, I could not have asked for a more understanding, caring group of people. When I met them I did not think that people like this existed. They were so kind, so comforting and so loving and fun. They have seen my tears, frustrations, fears and all the other emotions that go with these kinds of situations. They lived through the trial of the assailant with me and gave words of comfort and hope. They have become my family and my friends here in Buffalo and I do not know how to give back for all that they have been and how they have helped. They are a blessing.

I have lived the "best of times and the worst of times" here at Kevin Guest House--the worst being outside the house, the best inside the house. As far as the status of my son, things have improved for him and he is now living in a nursing home and is able to walk and speak. He is still having some difficulty but I am grateful for his progress and now life seems to be on a brighter path.

I know I would not have made it through as well as I did had Kevin Guest House not been introduced to me. It is one of those "spots" we don't know is available until we need it. Thank you Wayne, Cathy, Barbara, Jeff and Francis for all you have done and for all you are.

And, thank you to the Garvey family for turning their loss into an addition for the lives of so many.



FRIDAY MARCH 25 2011
~ IN THE HISTORIC ~
ELLICOTT SQUARE BUILDING

FEATURING: MUSIC BY "CHICAGO" JACK CIVILETTO, JJ MOSCATO, MIKE PHELPS, APRIL MAZZONE, LYNNE FREDERICKS AND MORE!

1ST BLUES & BREWS TO BENEFIT KEVIN GUEST HOUSE

6PM-10PM
\$35 PRE-SALE \$40@DOOR

The evening will include Flying Bison Beer, wine with Kevin LoVullo from WBEN's "Spiel the Wine" talk show and soda; an assortment of southern-style foods and live blues music.

To be included on the planning committee, serve as a sponsor or attend the event, please contact Cathy Allen at 882-1818 or via email at cathy@kevinguesthouse.org.

Keep track of event updates on our Facebook page.

Visit Kevin Guest House on Facebook!



(left to right) Debbie Sperazza and Kevin Durawa pull the lucky winning ticket...it belonged to Carla Connolly!



Enjoying authentic Spars Sausage.



Prost!



OKTOBERFEST A GREAT SUCCESS!

The 5th Annual Kevin Guest House Oktoberfest held last September was a smashing success! The event, coordinated by Al Ryer, Kevin Durawa and John Connolly, raised more than \$9,000 for KGH and its mission.

Guests were treated to authentic German beer and wine, delicious German food including famous Spars Sausage, and live entertainment by The Frankfurters, "The Best of the Worst"!

Thank you very much to our 2010 Oktoberfest Corporate Sponsors. They include: *Event Sponsors*--Flying Bison Brewing, On the Rox Liquors, Mike & Rene Wolasz from Brand-On Services, G & R Tent, and One Foot One Hand Massage; *Platinum Sponsor*--RealtyUSA; *Gold Sponsors*--LanTrax, Morrison Family Limited Partnership, Tri Delta Resources, Al and Barb Ryer, and Tops Friendly Markets; *Silver Sponsors*--John and Carla Connolly, Amherst Police Club, Block and Longo, Cole's, Comtel, Home Pro of WNY, Home Space, The Keenan Law Firm, ReMax North, Nancy Saia, Esq., and S & T Enterprises. Also, thank you to the *Oktoberfest in-kind donors* who were Anita Gullo, Ed Jakubowski, Dorothy Ryer, Harold Ryer and Marjorie Zelman.

Mark your calendar to join us for the 6th Annual Oktoberfest on Friday, September 23, 2011.

give to the LIFE OF KEVIN GUEST HOUSE FUND

Over the past several months, we have seen families in more challenging financial situations than ever before. Many of our guests have been affected by the loss of a job, a home, and medical insurance on top of facing a medical crisis. We strive even harder to provide service for these individuals to ease their struggle, fearfulness and worry.

We are asking that you make a commitment, a commitment to Kevin Guest House, and join us in helping people care for their family without concern for their safety and comfort, today and tomorrow.

SPECIAL GIVING OPPORTUNITIES

We are inviting you to dedicate a month, a week or a day at Kevin Guest House to honor an important person or event, in memory of a loved one, or to show your community spirit. Each level of sponsorship is a visible and meaningful show of support to the more than 1,200 people we serve each and every year.

GIFT OPTIONS

You may make your gift in one payment or choose a pledge option. Please remember, all gifts are tax-deductible as allowed by law. If you have any questions or require additional information, please contact Wayne M. Zimmerman, Executive Director, at (716) 882-1818 or email wmzimmerman@kevinguesthouse.org

SELECTING AN OPPORTUNITY

Four giving levels are available for you to demonstrate your commitment to Kevin Guest House, and each has a unique recognition program to represent your heartfelt gift.

PLATINUM:

MONTH SPONSOR \$2,500.00+

Listing on Hall of Angels plaque
Outdoor sign at Kevin Guest House
Recognition certificate for office/home
Recognition in Heartline
Website banner recognition
4 tickets - Affaire of the Heart 2011

GOLD:

WEEK SPONSOR \$1,000.00+

Listing on Hall of Angels plaque.
Outdoor sign at Kevin Guest House.
Recognition certificate for office/home.
Recognition in Heartline.
2 tickets - Affaire of the Heart 2011.

SILVER:

DAY SPONSOR \$500.00+

Outdoor sign at Kevin Guest House
Recognition certificate for office/home
Recognition in Heartline.

BRONZE: PATRON \$150.00+

Recognition certificate for office/home.
Recognition in Heartline.

help support Kevin Guest House's mission by making a donation at:

www.kevinguesthouse.org

Host a Fund Raising Event for Kevin Guest House!

Through the years, Kevin Guest House has been the fortunate beneficiary of funds raised by different organizations and companies that help support our mission to provide safe, compassionate and affordable accommodations to patients and their loved ones who travel from their homes for medical treatment in Buffalo.

In the past, groups have held dress down days, golf tournaments, auctions, etc. to raise money for KGH. We welcome any ideas for third party fund raising events and can assist with publicity, KGH informational brochures, receipts, etc.

A few ideas for fund raising events include: dunk tank, car wash, basket auctions, concession stand proceeds, can drive, talent show, ice cream social, yard sales, and lemonade stands to name just a few.

If you are interested in conducting a fund raiser for KGH, please contact Cathy Allen at 716-882-1818 or at cathy@kevinguesthouse.org.

Thank you!



Checkers Athletic Club's "Mueller Mile" a Great Success!

John Noe (far left), President of Mueller Services, and Tom Donnelly (far right), President of Checkers AC, present a check for \$2,500 to Wayne M. Zimmerman, KGH Executive Director, and Steve McGlone, KGH Board President.

The donation represented proceeds from the annual Checkers AC "Mueller" Mile held last August. Thank you!

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Kevin Guest House
782 Ellicott Street
Buffalo, NY 14203
t: (716) 882-1818
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www.kevinguesthouse.org



2010 Was a Busy Year at Kevin Guest House

Maintaining our beautiful Victorian main house, our four apartments and our campus and gardens is always a challenge and lots of hard work. Much of the work at KGH is accomplished by our wonderful volunteers who donate countless hours and resources to make KGH shine. Here are a few highlights from 2010:

- Replacement of the roof on one of our apartments which was funded by a grant from the East Hill Foundation—*Shown in left photo above.*
- Replacement of the ceiling in room #11 in the main house.
- Staining of the Healing Garden gazebo, deck and gates was completed and funded by the Wegmans Leadership Team program.
- One of the side halls in the main house was remodeled to include ceramic tile flooring to match our new kitchen and a large pantry was installed for brooms, mops, and other household supplies.
- The civil engineering work for our expansion was completed by a team from Clough Harbour LLC. Thank you Frank DelSignore and Shannon Wegman.
- KGH hosted several volunteer groups to assist with gardening under the guidance of our volunteer gardeners from the Claudia Garvey Memorial Guild (CGMG), Diane Smith and Barb Moscati—*Shown in center photo.* The groups included volunteers from the following companies and organizations: Canisius High School, Cheektowaga YES, Chiampou Travis Besaw Kershner, and Wegmans Leadership Team.

• The KGH Dinner Program, Chaired by Joanne Janicki and Nora O'Neill, both CGMG members, hosted over 100 dinners for our guests. Volunteer "chefs" included the Buffalo Sunrise Rotary Club, Nora and Tim O'Neill and Friends, Paulette, Nadine and Mark, The Sangria Girls, Joanne Janicki, the Roswell Park Cancer Institute Rehad Department, Wegmans, Malcom Pirnie, Orchard Park High School Cancer Awareness Club, Canisius High School, Buffalo Seminary, and Mount Mercy Academy.

• Several area Girl Scout Troops also volunteered during the year and some made decorations for the house and small gifts for our guests.

• A big welcome to Ruth Kesser, a new CGMG volunteer, who volunteers each Wednesday at Kevin Guest House with general household tasks...Thank you Ruth

• KGH began a unique partnership with the UB Bulls Football team and coaching staff. Watch for more great things to come from this collaboration

• Patrick Kane, Jr., a forward with the Chicago Blackhawks hockey team, stopped by KGH for a visit with the Stanley Cup which Chicago won in 2010. Patrick has been a supporter of KGH for several years and participates in our annual golf outing—*Shown in above right photo.*

• *Kevin Guest House served as a "home away from home" for more than 1,000 people last year. Of that number, 557 were new guests to KGH. We welcomed guests from all over the United States, Canada, England, Jordan, Puerto Rico and more!*



The Silver Sneakers group at Gold's Gym in Lancaster recently held a fund raising drive for Kevin Guest House. The group sold Kevin Guest House paper houses for \$1 each and took up a collection of items from our Wish List. The group and their leader, Olivia Ebsary, all pictured here, donated many different items and a check for \$270! Thank you one and all.



Vicki Defoe, a member of the Laureate Alpha Sigma WNY Chapter, shows off one of the many blankets the group donated to Kevin Guest House just before Christmas. The group makes an annual holiday donation to KGH and last year such items as linens, towels, throws and gift cards were presented to the house.

Thank you Vicki and fellow chapter members!



(l to r) Rob Ray, a former Buffalo Sabre, Suzy Garvey, Wayne Zimmerman, and Kevyn Adams, the Development Coach with the Buffalo Sabres and our celebrity host for our annual golf outing, present a check for \$10,000 to KGH as part of its "Hockey Fights Cancer" night held last October.

Thank you Buffalo Sabres and the National Hockey League



Ann Marie Salviski, Training and Development Manager at APP Pharmaceuticals, gets assistance from Leo Trane, also from APP, to unload the many, many boxes they dropped off a few months ago at KGH. Each month the employees of APP Pharmaceuticals, located on Grand Island, select a different charitable organization to support.

The donations included blankets, an assortment of canned and dry goods, gift cards and money.

APP Pharmaceuticals is the number two generic injectable supplier in the United States. The company markets more than 120 products in over 400 dosages and formulations. APP products are used in many areas of clinical care including oncology, orthopedics, dialysis, and radiology. Thank you!

Thank you **SPONSORS**

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Denis and Tom Garvey
the Heart guests for the



Mike LaMancuso and Kirk Burzynski, both
K&H Board members, enjoying the evening.



Guests were treated to a very large basket raffle
as well as silent and live auctions.



y thanking our Affaire of their generous support.



Janie Piemonte, a former Board member and active KGH volunteer with Denis and Suzy Garvey.



Marcela and Rick Ross with Madonna and Mike Bonitatibus.



A few of our wonderful volunteers---Amy Bolt, Kris Ann Bolt, and Molly Kiessel.



Bethany Olzeak and Wayne Zimmerman strike a pose!

SNAPSHOTS OF THE HEART

The 18th annual Kevin Guest House Affaire of the Heart...and SOUL! proudly presented by M & T Bank, was a great success. Held in mid-November, the event raised more than \$45,000 for KGH. Erika Brason was the Honorary Host.

The event included gourmet food selections, cocktails, fabulous desserts donated by Tops Friendly Markets, and lots of friends and laughter. Raffle prizes included a Samsung 50" LCD HDTV, won by Mike Filing, and a "Heart and Soul" package worth about \$500 won by Jeff Karabanowski.

In addition, guests enjoyed the large silent auction, the live auction conducted by Mike Patti, and the "huge" basket raffle.

In addition to M & T Bank, corporate sponsors included Millington Lockwood Business Interiors, Roswell Park Cancer Institute, Hodgson & Russ LLP, Turner Construction, RealtyUSA, Upstate Pharmacy, Tops Friendly Markets, Argus Management Group, IKON Office Solutions, Phillips Lytle LLP, Theodore Purvis, CPA, and Unilock.

Thank You

To Our 2010 Affaire of the Heart Committee

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Erika Brason

Co-Chairs

Madonna Bonitatibus

Jeff Karabanowski

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To Our Major In-Kind Donors

Brent Zimmerman

bZyne Creative Services

Ralph Salerno

Keller Bros. & Miller Inc.

Kathleen Graim

Tops Friendly Markets

Labatts

To Our Gift Gathering Party Hosts

Erika Brason

Kris Ann Bolt

Kevin and Karen Durawa

Steve and Rosemarie McGlone

Alaw Stewart

Wayne M. Zimmerman

To Our Event Volunteers

Eileen Balduf

Amy Bolt

Gina Bonitatibus

Matt & Carol Plaugher

Molly Kiesel

Melissa Patti & Friends

Carol Fiorella

Virginia Wolniewicz

Marilyn Ross

Marge Weber

Kathy Burzynski

Sue Ohrum

Marge Davis

Pam Roach

Robin Boyd

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Sally Brown

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Please mark your calendars for March 4-6 to attend the 9th Annual Pinstriper's Kustom Kulture Northeast Nationals & Benefit Jam at the Cavalcade of Cars to be held at the Erie County Fairgrounds.

A portion of the proceeds from the pinstripping event at the car show will be donated to Kevin Guest House. Each year about 15 of the Northeast Region's most talented pinstripers attend the show and create pinstripe art on a variety of items. Just bring your item to them during the show, make a donation, and they will create a masterpiece for you.

Thank you to Paul Straus for coordinating this event on behalf of Kevin Guest House.

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