

# The Beacon

*"Building a just and compassionate community one person at a time"*

Spring Issue/May 2013

A Semi-Annual Publication of Bethesda House Schenectady, Inc.



## Help Hope Haven

*"We make a Living by what we get,  
But we make a life by  
what we give."*

—Winston Churchill

Pictured below is John, a former Lighthouse resident with  
Anne McGhee, Bethesda House Program Director.



### Welcome to the spring edition of Bethesda House's semi-annual newsletter!



There are few challenges greater than providing individuals with the resources they need to achieve self-sufficiency and independence. Our Case Management staff has successfully housed over 200 homeless individuals and stabilized housing for an additional 120 persons. In our residential program, we have provided safe and secure housing to 30 chronically homeless men and women. Bethesda House's day program has provided services to over 3,900 unduplicated individuals, served 24,000 meals, and provided 1,000 households food from our food pantry.

As we end our current program year, staff and volunteers reflect on the thousands of people we have helped by providing a wide variety of services. I am proud of the commitment and dedication each staff and volunteer has for our mission and vision. The energy and passion put forth really make a difference in the lives of the homeless and impoverished citizens in our community.

We hear, in the news, that the economy is on the upswing and this may be true however, many suffered for so long that it will take years to recover. Unfortunately, because of the economic fall and slow recovery, we are seeing new faces affected by the stagnation. Our staff assumes responsibility to assist increasing numbers of devastated people and renews their allegiance to overcome social injustices and bring positive changes in the lives of so many. We are always looking for ways to improve our services, level of communication, and interactions with other area providers. We celebrate the success of our journey so far, but at the same time look for ways to improve even more for next year. Thanks to each and every staff, volunteer, and contributor who supports our work and vision. So someday in the future we will have succeeded in ending homelessness in our community. I am honored to to serve as Bethesda House's Executive Director.

*Kimarie A. Sheppard*

# Journey

## from Desolation to Life

### Homelessness from the perspective of a Case Manager

The cold rain gained speed as it fell to earth on the wings of hurricane strength winds. The icy water felt like bullets as it pelted Jane's exposed skin while she huddled under her makeshift shelter in the woods. Her body shook as she pulled all of her belongings around her in an effort to be warm. She promised herself that she would not be a statistic, she would not be a homeless person found without a breath. Off in the distance she heard the sound of gun shots or was it thunder, eventually she became delirious and allowed her mind to protect her from the night, as it always did.

I met Jane when she was forty-five. She stumbled into my office in torn and dirty clothing draped on a skeleton of a body. Her weathered skin was dry and red; the deep lines on her face etched the tragic story of her life. Jane was born into an abusive home and believed her existence was normal. She sat shaking; I interrupted our conversation and put her in the warm shower room available to our homeless guests. She then put on dry, clean clothing from our clothing room and ate a warm plate of food from our daily meal. I saw the pain of her existence in her beautiful eyes. Jane had been physically and sexually abused. She could not remember a time when she wasn't mistreated and molested. Her parents traded her to support their substance addictions. She felt worthless. Having no strength to defend herself, she took on the persona of an angry person and became an abuser to her younger siblings and classmates.

By the time Jane was thirty; she had dropped out of high school, became a significant player in a gang, was a drug addict, and spent time in jail. In prison Jane tallied her life; the tears she wept from the pain of injustice consumed her emotions. She vowed never to see her family again, to live a different life. When Jane was eligible for parole, she was given a bus ticket to go back to the community from where she came. With a sense of pride in her back pocket, she attempted to find a home she could afford, a job in which she was skilled, and relationships that were not destructive. But, the prejudices of societal norms would make it near impossible to begin a new life carrying the baggage of her past. Without resources, Jane became a prostitute living in hotel rooms, on stranger's couches, in abandon buildings, or in the woods. Despite all attempts, Jane became a statistic.

In winter's darkness, a severely frost bitten unconscious body of a woman was found with no name or identification - it was Jane, who at 45 now sits before me.

I am trained to be objective and rational, but I was torn with emotion for this woman who sat before me with so much gratitude for the comfort and respect I had already given. I was reminded of great literary works that recounted social injustices, the many centuries we have allowed social and financial status to dictate how we proceed in life and treat others. How much longer will this go on? Jane wanted to shake the shackles that bound her to poverty and low self-worth. Something told Jane she was in the right place to take the first steps to a new life.

Today, Jane is fifty-six. She is committed to making the rest of her life one that reflects hope, love, and strength. Jane received her GED, attended college and graduated with a two-year degree last year. Throughout her growth and recovery, she volunteered and served others who were less fortunate than she. Jane will forever be in my heart and I hope to one day have her courage and strength.

## The View from here

By Butch Fogg, Director, Property/Facility Operations

**It has been a very long, gray winter season and we are ready for the colors for spring.**

Bethesda House is fortunate to be the recipient of three separate foundation grants that benefit the Lighthouse Residential Program.

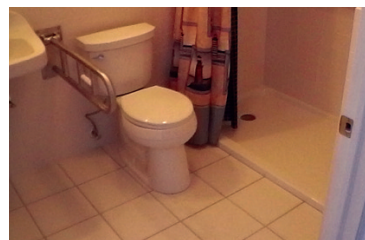
The COINS Foundation provided funds that allowed us to replace the boiler heating system in the main building and provided funds for the new furnace at the duplex along with siding and new doors. The William Gundry Broughton Charitable Private Foundations, Inc. provided funds that resulted in new, handicapped accessible, bathrooms in both sides of the duplex. We are very excited to be able to have this option for our residents. We are fortunate that the Home Depot Foundation provided funds that allowed us to replace the kitchen flooring in the duplex and the main building as well as the rugs in the dining room and back entranceway in the main building.

**We were able to obtain contractors, volunteers, and staff who diligently worked on the projects. The Lighthouse is a beautiful facility that is kept clean and charming as a result of the dedication of the wonderful staff!**

At our State St. site we have been just as busy; with the help of The Carlilian Foundation we were able to install a new walk-in freezer for our Client Choice Food Pantry and Soup Kitchen. Our maintenance department freshened up offices, boardrooms, hallways and apartments with a new coat of paint. Our building has a lot of traffic and heavy use; it keeps us busy making sure the building is clean and well maintained.

We look forward to warmer weather to get our gardens and flowers in at our main and Lighthouse locations. We are fortunate to have an Eagle Scout project starting at the Lighthouse which will include a larger garden and picnic tables. We are very excited about this project and working with the Boy Scouts of America.

We are grateful for our staff, volunteers, and contributors. Without everyone's commitment and dedication we would not be able to provide the services that we do.





# Payne's Prism

By Danny Payne, Director, Residential Services

Being part of the residential team has been a rewarding experience. Our permanent supportive housing has twenty-three beds for chronically homeless individuals, and we have three emergency shelter beds for veterans. I am honored to know each of our tenants and am committed to helping them make progress toward the goals on their service plans. This year we have provided services to 13 veterans and 30 residents. We have had 8 of our 30 residents discharge from the program and move into community housing. When a resident moves to community housing, they leave with an income, medical insurance, and a financial management plan; most are in our Case Management Representative Payee Program.

Our residential program is part of Schenectady's 10-year plan to end homelessness in the community. Bethesda House is an integral part of this plan, using the Housing First model. We have had the good fortune to have several Union College interns working with us to help provide those in need with life skills. Visiting Nurses also play an important role in the lives of our residents and work closely with two specific tenants. Working

together as a team with other area providers is testimony to the impact collaboration has on meeting the needs of our community and the ultimate goal of ending homelessness.

Pictured to the right, is Bethesda House resident Louie. Pictured below, left to right, are residents, Linda and Nima.



## Bethesda House Spring Appeal

It's time for Bethesda House's Spring Appeal! Each year we compile a list of gifts for friends and supporters in the community who wish to donate. Bethesda House gratefully acknowledges the generous gifts we receive that help us support the needs of so many. The items on our Wish List reflect our day-to-day needs. Donations accepted 9:30am - 4:30pm. Please call 518-374-7873 for details.

### Day to Day

#### Food

Non-perishable items

#### Kitchen

Spices, Coffee, Iced/Hot Tea, Lemonade

#### Clothing

Gently used items for men/women

#### Practical shoes

### Summer Clothing/Dresses

#### New underwear and socks

#### Hygiene Products

Regular and hotel size shampoo, deodorant, toothpaste, soap, razors and toothbrushes

#### Linens

Sheets, towels, wash cloths

#### Seasonal Garden Plants,

Home Depot/Lowes Gift Cards

## Adopt Our Food Pantry

A \$50 donation gives us \$200 in food products from the Regional Food Bank.

A \$100 donation gives us \$500 in food products from the Regional Food Bank.

## Adopt an Apartment

Visit [bethesdahouseschenectady.org](http://bethesdahouseschenectady.org) for details

## Gifts That Keep On Giving:

Deferred gifts to Bethesda House can have a lasting effect on our future strength and sustainability. Please give serious consideration to:

- A bequest to Bethesda House
- A donation of a life insurance policy
- A gift of appreciated asset (stock, property)

## Bethesda House of Schenectady, Inc

### Friends of Bethesda House/Profile Update/Gift

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Organization \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Daytime Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Fax \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

Enclosed is my contribution of \$ \_\_\_\_\_

(Please make checks payable to Bethesda House)

Are you a G.E. Employee/Retiree? ☐ Yes ☐ No

(Bethesda House is a G.G. Match Recipient)

Would you like to learn more about volunteer opportunities at Bethesda House? ☐ Yes ☐ No

Enclosed is my gift of \$ \_\_\_\_\_

You can also make donations at  
[www.bethesdahouseschenectady.org](http://www.bethesdahouseschenectady.org)

# Bethesda House Donors

November 2012 - April 2013

## Patron up to \$499

Abbitt, Viola I  
American Legion Post 1005  
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Chequer, John, Taft, Elizabeth  
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Coppola, Sharran  
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Dodson, Carlene  
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of Scotia - Bottles/Cans  
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Hunt, Daryl  
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Karowe, Marjorie  
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Kerr, Donald  
Kinney, Alan  
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Lacoss, James & Carolyn  
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Leblanc, Eileen  
Lemmerman, Eugene  
Levasalmi, Lisa  
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Linehan, Charles  
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Longo, David J  
Longmire, Shelly  
Lyons, Alyce  
MacLaury, Kay  
MacNeal, Linda  
Magagnos, Roseanne  
Malin, Julianne  
Maneri, Charles  
Marr, Jonathan & Sterne, Rachel  
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Marty's True Value Hardware  
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Mausert, Richard  
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McClary, William & Shirley  
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McGhee, David & Alice  
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Murphy, Greg & Rebecca  
Mutryn, Alice  
Myers, James  
Nadler, Faye  
Nardini, David  
Nelson, Paul  
Network For Good  
Newberry, Arthur & Nancy  
Nolte, Ann  
O'Connell, Kathleen  
O'Connor, Dennis & Wendy  
O'Connor, Kevin J  
Ognibene, Richard & Elaine  
Orsini, Anastasia, Brodie, Scott  
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Our Redeemer Lutheran Church  
Paupst, Catherine  
Payne, Danny  
Payne, Danny Sr  
Perillo-Lasky, Joanne  
Peroutky, Alberta  
Perrone-Almeida, Lisa  
Peterson, Nancy J  
Petro, Joan  
Philbrick, Richard  
Pidgeon, Richard  
Pierce, Gerry  
Pitts, Lynn  
Porter, Don & Lois Shepherd  
Pratt, David & Kendra  
Price Chopper Employees  
Rakus, Barbara & Mark  
Ray, Karl  
Reformed Church Women  
of Helderberg  
Rhatigan, Laetitia  
Richter, Priscilla P  
Rickson, Tyler  
Rickson, Whitney  
RN Club  
Rodriguez, Patricia  
Rosenberg, Marsha  
Rosenthal, Kimmo  
Rotterdam Lodge No 2157  
Rowe, Jacob  
Rubarsky, Anna & Mary  
Ryan, Jane  
Sankar, Richard  
Saburro, John & Constance  
Sapone, John & Karen  
Sargent, Steven  
Sarnacki, Eleanor  
Sarsmit, Ann  
Schenectady Friends Meeting  
Schenectady Ole Timers  
Baseball Club  
Schnell, Kim  
Schultz, William  
Schumacher, David & Nancy  
Sciocchetti, Michael & Linda  
Senior Sewers of Schenectady  
Shank, Thomas & Anna  
Shaw, George & Paula  
Sheppard, Kim

Shuff, William  
Siegel, Martin & Raphael  
Singer, Roger  
Sisters Of St. Dominic  
Smith, Karen  
Smangler, David B  
Smith, Janice  
Snyder, Patricia  
Snyder, Susan  
Soldani, Barbara J  
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Ladies Philoptochos  
Society Inc.  
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Stanford United Methodist  
Church  
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Stecher, Thomas & Helen  
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Storch, Larry G  
Stroble, Terry  
Stryjski, Olga  
Susich, Jane & Erwin  
Sutton, Owen D  
Taft, Shirley G  
Taylor, Regina  
Teresco, M J  
The Evangelical Lutheran  
Church Of The Messiah  
The First Unitarian Society  
of Schenectady  
The Troy Savings Bank  
Charitable Foundation Inc  
Thomas, Crystal  
Thompson, Dorothy  
Tobiessen, Joanne  
Tolge, Bruno P  
Traxler, Robert  
Truist  
Trustco Bank  
Tryon, Clifford & Charlynn  
Underhill, Frances  
Union Presbyterian Church  
Women's Association  
VanPatten, Richard & Rosemarie  
Vile, June R  
Vivier, Barbara  
Von Wellsheim, Ellen  
Voss, Sandra  
Vullo, William  
Wachsmuth, Tina  
Waddell, Douglas & Donna  
Waldbiling, Norma  
Walden, Nancy  
Walker, Simone  
Walther, Anita  
Warner, Kurt & Sara  
Warner, Mary Ann  
Wilkinson, John  
Williams, Susan M  
Wilson, William & Lois  
Winch, Allan  
Wingle, Ray  
Wolfram, Katherine  
Women's Group NA Mtg.  
Wood, Andrew & Anne  
Yang, Walter & Alison  
Zebrowski, Janice  
Zimmerman, Ronald F  
Zion Evangelical Lutheran  
Church

## Citizen up to \$999

Armstrong, Rosemarie  
CARES, Inc.  
Christoffel, Robert  
Eastern Parkway United  
Methodist Church  
GE Woman's Club  
Heatcraft  
Huber, William, Clarke, Penny  
Jones, Christopher & Pat  
Lynnwood Reformed Church  
MacNeal, Ellen  
Reschovsky, John & Sandra  
Roecker, David & Lauren  
The Community Foundation  
The Evangelical Lutheran Church  
Of The Good Shepherd  
The Whitney Club, Inc.  
The Woodzell Family Gift Fund  
United Way "Direct Deposit"

## Advocate up to \$3,999

Christ Community Reformed  
Church  
Dell, Alex & Christina  
First Reformed Church of  
Schenectady  
Golub Foundation, Inc.  
Khan, Genghis & Nahla  
Lewis, Bradley & Catherine  
Lynnwood Reformed Church  
Malone & Tate Builders Inc.  
Our Lady Queen of Peace  
Roeser, Randall & Patricia  
Sweeney, James

## Founder up to \$9,999

Little, Mark  
SEFCU Foundation  
Stewart's Foundation

## Visionary up to \$50,000

GE Employee Match  
Walmart

Bethesda House is grateful to these individuals and organizations who donated from \$1 to \$50,000. Your generosity allows us to continue our mission this spring and summer with helping others by providing for basic needs in an environment that encourages and supports positive life changes.

We thank you and look forward to another successful year.

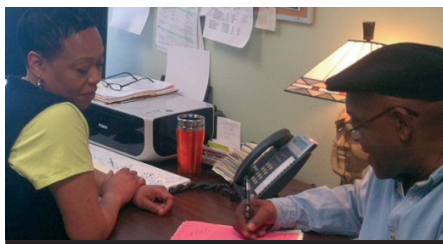
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# Case Management

Working together to make a difference

Pictured are Crystal Thomas, Case Manager, and Ronya Bynum, Senior Housing/Outreach Case Manager.



Don't let the size fool you when considering the Case Management Department; big things really do come in small packages. Ronya Bynum, Senior Housing/Outreach Case Manager and Crystal Thomas, Case Manager form a cohesive unit with an extensive skill set that has made significant progress in addressing the needs of Schenectady County's homeless and working poor population.

The primary duties of the Senior Housing/Outreach Case Manager include homelessness prevention, assisting individuals to remain housed, and assisting the homeless to find permanent housing. There are many components to securing housing and preventing homelessness that goes well beyond just finding a place for someone to live. Many of those whom we serve have gone from self-sufficiency and having respectable jobs and homes of their own to being victimized by an unstable economy with no foreseeable end in sight. Ronya has established relationships with area landlords to ensure that more individuals have access to safe and secure housing. In early 2013, Bethesda House hosted a luncheon with area landlords and discussed the difficulties that landlords encounter when renting to our population and how we can better work together to ensure greater success for those served.

The Senior Housing/Outreach Case Manager is also responsible for fostering relationships with other community agencies. Beginning in January 2013, each Monday morning you can always find Ronya at the Department of Social Services (DSS) meeting with individuals that are not stably housed, completing assessments and intakes to begin the process of obtaining permanent housing for the homeless. Ronya has housed an additional sixty (60) individuals as a result of this addition to her work week. In addition, since the beginning of our current fiscal year, which began July 1, 2012, we have been able to successfully serve sixty-six (66) individuals by referring them to other area providers. By having interagency agreements in place, many more are helped through the collaborative efforts of organizations such as DSS, Social Security, Legal Aid, the Aids Council, Empire Justice, and SCAP just to name a few.

From July 1, 2012 to present, Case Management has seen 314 individuals that were chronically homeless or in imminent danger of losing their housing. Of those 314 individuals, 225 were stably housed.

The Case Manager in charge of the Representative Payee Program plays a vital role in ensuring the success of those that have become newly housed and those that have been able to maintain housing. It is not uncommon for those we serve to be taken advantage of and run the risk of losing their minimal income to drugs/alcohol and other addictions because of their inability to manage the one time monthly SSI/SSD check. Crystal meets with the individual to develop a budget that takes into account all financial obligations (rent, utility, medical, phone, etc.) as well as allowing for personal needs money in order to purchase necessary items. The budget is reviewed often and changes are made as needed.

The Case Manager also must foster relationships with community agencies in order to best serve the individual. While Crystal is very new to the Case Management Department, she has already established relationships with area landlords, Social Security, utility companies, area hospitals, and medical practices in order to help those she serves to remain stably housed and to become fiscally responsible.

.....  
**From July 1, 2012 to present, the Rep Payee Program has assisted 71 individuals maintain secure housing and become financially stable.**  
.....

In addition to assisting individuals with housing and financial responsibilities the Case Managers also see those in crisis and provide immediate assistance. Assistance can be as simple as providing a bag of food to get them through until food stamps come in, to the more complicated and time consuming task of trying to keep a family that speaks no English from being deported. Whatever the crisis big or small, Ronya and Crystal leave no stone unturned in their efforts to stabilize the crisis and move them to a place where a plan can be put in place to address the issues that created the crisis.

From July 1, 2012 to present, Case Management has seen 93 individuals in crisis and was able to stabilize all by addressing immediate needs and establishing plans that provide long-term solutions.

When you consider the number of individuals seen by Ronya and Crystal and the rates of success that they enjoy, it becomes very clear that size really doesn't matter.

**Bethesda House  
of Schenectady, Inc.**  
834 State Street  
Schenectady, NY 12307

Non-Profit Org.  
U.S. POSTAGE PAID  
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Albany, NY

## **Bethesda House**

is an Interfaith ministry  
to the homeless, disabled  
and economically  
disadvantaged citizens  
of Schenectady County,  
building a just hospitable  
and inclusive community  
one person at a time by  
affirming the dignity and  
addressing the needs of  
each guest entering  
this House of Mercy.

**Save the Date: October 24, 2013**

## **BETHESDA HOUSE'S ANNUAL FUNDRAISER**



### **Bethesda House Board of Directors**

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- Louise O'Leary
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- Allee Rosenfield
- Susan Salamah
- Richard Werner

### **Bethesda House Management Team**

**Kimarie Sheppard**  
**Executive Director**

**Danny Payne**  
**Director,**  
**Residential Services**

**Anne McGhee**  
**Program Director**

**Harold "Butch" Fogg**  
**Director,**  
**Property/Facility Operations**

## **Bethesda House Donors**

### **In Kind Donations**

BJ's  
Cappiello Dairy  
Chipolte  
Congregation Agudat Achim  
Congregation Gates of Heaven  
Eastern Parkway Methodist Church  
Grace Lutheran  
Immanuel Lutheran  
Our Lady of Fatima  
Our Redeemer Lutheran  
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St. Madeleine Sophie  
St. Marys of Galway  
Subway  
The Ladies Philoptochos Society of  
St. George Greek Orthodox Church  
Union College

Every donor is important to us. Our goal is to list each person or organization as the donor wishes. If your name does not appear as you would like it, please call Bethesda House (518) 374-7873 so we may correct our records. Thank you for your continued support.

## **Fundraising: A Non-Profit Necessity**

Bethesda House's funding is 80% contracted revenue, 8.64% fee for service, and 11.36% private grants and donations. At different times of the year newsletters are mailed and more frequently our campaign letters. Our Board of Directors is working to increase our number of fundraising events which has proven to be beneficial.

On April 28th, Union College students, had their Empty Bowls Event to increase awareness of those who live in poverty and are often without food. Bethesda House, the Concerned for the Hungry and the City Mission receive support from this community event. The Union College community has been a generous benefactor of Bethesda House for many years; we are fortunate to have this help to support our mission and vision to serve the homeless and impoverished members of our community.

On May 10th we had our first annual Bowling for Bethesda House. We had twelve teams and had fun making strikes against homelessness.

On Saturday, June 1 Bethesda House staff, Board members and friends will be taking part in the Freihofer's Community Walk. There is no cost to participate and all the funds raised benefit Bethesda House directly. To register you can contact Hope French at (518) 374-7873 or [h french@bethesdahouseschenectady.org](mailto:h french@bethesdahouseschenectady.org) or go to ([http://www.freihoferstrun.com/cw\\_indiv\\_form.htm](http://www.freihoferstrun.com/cw_indiv_form.htm)) A group photo will be taken prior to the walk! Hope to see you there!