



# UPDATE

# HEART OF THE HOUSE

## RENOVATION CAMPAIGN

**This spring you can help make kitchen improvements that will enhance accessibility and efficiency, enabling Gift of Life Howie's House to better accommodate its growing occupancy.**

In the nearly 15 years since opening, the kitchen at the House has been both the cornerstone of the mission and the heart of the House.

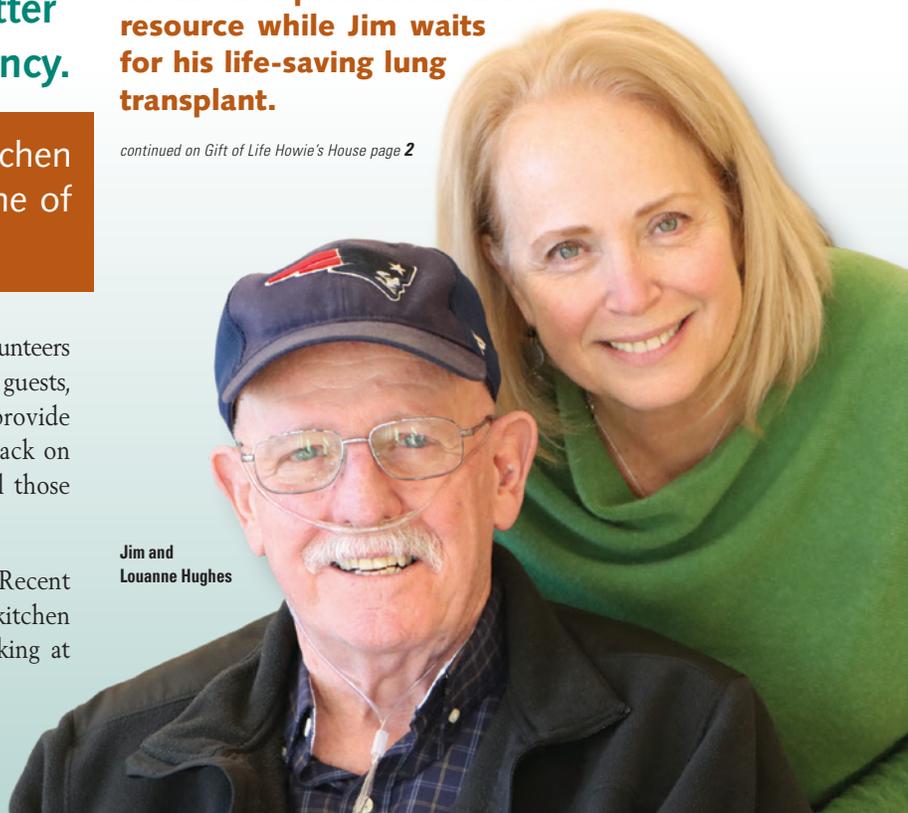
It has been the center of over 400,000 meals prepared by volunteers and a space for caregivers to cook for their loved ones. Staff, guests, and volunteers come together here to share stories and provide support. Whether baking delicious treats or grabbing a snack on the go, the kitchen has served as a hub of comfort for all those who walk through the doors.

After 15 years of use, this beloved space is showing its age. Recent increased occupancy means that more families rely on the kitchen daily. It also means Home Cook Hero volunteers are cooking at higher volumes than ever before.

To address this, the House will be undergoing a kitchen renovation this year – but it cannot be done without your help. \$150,000 needs to be raised to ensure that the kitchen remains a functional and efficient space for years to come.

**For couples like Jim and Louanne Hughes, the kitchen provides an invaluable resource while Jim waits for his life-saving lung transplant.**

*continued on Gift of Life Howie's House page 2*



**Jim and Louanne Hughes**

When Jim was diagnosed with Idiopathic Pulmonary Fibrosis (IPF) in 2023, it came as a shock to him and his family. He was immediately placed on oxygen and told he would need a lung transplant to survive.

Jim and his wife, Louanne, traveled to Philadelphia after local transplant centers in the Boston area turned him down due to his complex medical condition. He was listed for a lung transplant in November of last year and has been staying at the House ever since.

The couple says the House instantly felt like home. "It's like moving back to the neighborhood you grew up in – the people here are so warm and friendly. It's really a huge benefit for the psyche and for your own rehabilitation," Jim explains.

Due to Jim's condition and a recent diabetes diagnosis, the kitchen at the House has been crucial for Louanne to prepare healthy meals tailored to his needs.

"I can create a diet for him in the kitchen that meets his needs, and that's truly priceless," says Louanne. A talented cook, Louanne depends on the kitchen, cubbies, and her personal fridge space to prepare nearly every meal for both of them.

As Jim's mobility is limited, the convenience of the kitchen has made all the difference on his journey.

"I can't get around, and I can't go to a restaurant. If we were in a hotel room without access to the facilities here, our lifestyle would be completely different," Jim explains.

An updated kitchen will make it easier for Louanne and Jim to navigate the space, allowing them to spend less time cooking and more time focusing on what matters most: Jim's care.

"[The kitchen] makes it so I don't even have to worry about that component, it gives me more time to do other things that I have to do as a caregiver," Louanne says.

Jim and Louanne also value the knowledge and services they've received at the House, which have been vital as they navigate this challenging journey. The couple, who recently celebrated their 41st anniversary, remain hopeful and eager to return home to spend time with their three children and five grandchildren.

Louanne Hughes



Jim and Solange Healy with their children and grandchildren

Like the Hughes family, past guests Jim Healy and his wife Solange also benefitted from the House kitchen during their stay for his life-saving lung transplant.

Before arriving at the House, Jim's journey was filled with many challenges.

Jim's negative reaction to medication following a knee replacement in 2019 led to him developing pulmonary fibrosis. His worsening condition brought him to Philadelphia to be evaluated for a lung transplant. During that process, the tests revealed he had colorectal cancer, requiring treatment and a period of remission. Jim received treatment for his cancer and was listed for a lung transplant in 2024, 5 years after his initial diagnosis.

In August of last year, Jim received the call he waited so long for. Unfortunately, his surgery came with severe complications, leaving him hospitalized for nearly 80 days, 65 of which he spent completely immobile.

In October, Jim and Solange left the hospital and came to stay at the House.

"It was wonderful... the House was the perfect transition from the hospital. There were so many people who had lung transplants that I could trade stories with and learn from," he shares.

"The fact that my wife didn't have to worry about planning meals and running to the supermarket every day was incredibly helpful for her spirits and her time, and therefore my recovery," explains Jim. He continues, "She was so busy managing everything. It was so nice to come back from the hospital and be able to relax and then go down for dinner."

Having access to the kitchen and meals prepared by volunteers made a huge difference during their stay.

Jim has traveled and lived all over the world – with home bases in Brazil, Mexico, the US – and says that post-transplant he is looking forward to slowing down and spending time with his wife, three children, and five grandchildren.

# HEART OF THE HOUSE RENOVATION CAMPAIGN

Home Cook Hero volunteers work tirelessly in the kitchen to provide meals each night for families like Jim's. With increased occupancy, more guests are using the kitchen daily, and volunteers are often cooking for over 60 people a night. A kitchen update will make their job easier and more efficient, allowing for more comforting meals and a more enjoyable cooking experience.

**THIS SPRING you can help make kitchen improvements that will enhance accessibility and efficiency, enabling the House to better accommodate its growing occupancy.**

Please consider making a tax-deductible contribution today to help reach our goal of \$150,000 to complete this important renovation project. Gifts of all sizes are needed and appreciated. For your convenience, you can use the enclosed envelope or donate online at [GiftofLifeHowiesHouse.org](https://www.GiftofLifeHowiesHouse.org).

**SCAN HERE to make your gift today.**



Jim and Solange Healy

The fundraising campaign is being held to help update both the kitchen and the coffee bar, including the addition of new:

- Countertops
- Cabinets/Storage
- Updated lighting
- Backsplash
- Fresh paint

House guests like the Healy and Hughes families, as well as the hundreds of Home Cook Hero volunteers each year, will rely on these improvements for years to come.

Your support will make a lasting impact, providing families with comfort and relief during the most challenging times of their lives.

## Introducing the Gift of Life YOUNG FRIENDS PROGRAM!

**Gift of Life is thrilled to announce the launch of the new Young Friends Program!**

The Young Friends Program is a philanthropic group of dynamic, career-driven individuals who are passionate about supporting the mission of Gift of Life. Members will have the opportunity to raise awareness about organ and tissue donation and raise funds for Gift of Life Howie's House through a variety of charitable, social, and educational activities.

Gift of Life is seeking motivated individuals between the ages of 21-35 who are eager to get more involved in the Gift of Life community while expanding their personal and professional networks.

If this sounds like an exciting opportunity for you, scan the QR here or contact Abby Wells at [awells@giftoflifehowieshouse.org](mailto:awells@giftoflifehowieshouse.org) to learn more!





# MAJOR MILESTONE ALERT!

John Schmid and his Home Cook Hero volunteer group, Friends of Bear, have become familiar and beloved faces at Gift of Life Howie's House. Group leader John, affectionately known as "Bear", has been volunteering to cook in the House kitchen since 2018. Over time, he involved his family and friends, and together they have grown into a prolific Home Cook Hero All-Star group.

**IN DECEMBER, JOHN AND THE FRIENDS OF BEAR CELEBRATED AN INCREDIBLE MILESTONE: THEIR 100TH VISIT TO COOK IN THE HOUSE KITCHEN!** This achievement is a testament to the generosity, dedication, and passion that John and his group have shown in serving transplant families.

## A HEARTFELT THANK YOU from Gift of Life Howie's House!

Gift of Life Howie's House extends its deepest gratitude to all the amazing supporters of the **GIVING TUESDAY** campaign! Thanks to their generosity, the House is thrilled to announce that it exceeded its Giving Tuesday goal of \$80,000, RAISING AN INCREDIBLE \$104,795 IN TOTAL!

This remarkable achievement would not have been possible without the dedication and support of the community. Whether through donations or hosting fundraisers, every effort has made a profound difference. The funds raised will directly support transplant patients and their families, helping them stay at the House during the holidays and throughout the year.

A special thank you goes to the Foxwynd Foundation, funded by their donor-advised fund, for their matching gift partnership. Their support helped double the impact, making this record-breaking success possible.

Contributions from the community are truly changing lives and Gift of Life Howie's House is deeply thankful for the kindness and commitment shown. The House is grateful to have such a supportive community as part of its extended family.



## CAREGIVER LIFELINE PROGRAM Spotlight

by Talia Giordano, LCSW  
Director,  
Family Services and Caregiver Lifeline

### Maintaining Healthy Relationships as a Transplant Caregiver

When caring for a loved one undergoing a transplant, it's essential to preserve your prior relationship. Taking on the role of a caregiver does not erase your original role as a spouse, parent, child or friend. Maintaining balance is key to avoiding the loss of your own identity.

Here are key strategies:

- 1. Set Boundaries:** Clearly define what you can and cannot do as a transplant caregiver. Communicate your limits and seek help with tasks that cause stress, such as managing complex medical needs or providing emotional support during recovery. Setting boundaries can help prevent resentment and burnout.
- 2. Create a Transplant Care Plan:** Use a journal to organize caregiving tasks and appointments related to the transplant. Record medication schedules, doctor visits, and transplant care needs, especially post-transplant. This will help you identify when assistance is needed, schedule personal time, and manage responsibilities more effectively.
- 3. Take Personal Time:** Prioritize activities that bring you joy to maintain your well-being. Regular self-care is crucial for sustaining the stamina and emotional resilience required for transplant caregiving.
- 4. Nurture Relationships:** Set aside time away from caregiving to strengthen your bond, such as a date night with your spouse, quality time with your child, or meaningful conversations with a parent. Engage in activities that reinforce your original connection and maintain a sense of closeness.

**5. Ask for Help:** Don't hesitate to seek support from family, friends, or professionals such as transplant social workers or counselors. Take advantage of respite care from loved ones or in-home nursing aides to ease the demands of transplant caregiving and ensure you receive the emotional support you need.

By preserving the core of your relationship and establishing clear boundaries, transplant caregiving can become a fulfilling experience rather than an overwhelming one.

### Challenges for Transplant Caregivers in Different Relationships

#### As a Spouse:

- Caregiving for a transplant patient can blur roles and create stress. To maintain intimacy and partnership, schedule "couple time" and ensure caregiving doesn't dominate your interactions. Seek professional support for emotional guidance when needed, particularly if medical tasks or recovery begin to strain the relationship.

#### As a Parent:

- Balancing caregiving for a child undergoing a transplant can be overwhelming. Encourage children to participate in age-appropriate activities to maintain a sense of normalcy. Involve them in decisions about their care to empower and reassure them throughout the process.

#### As a Son/Daughter:

- Caring for aging parents after a transplant can be emotionally taxing. Work together to meet their daily needs while preserving their independence. Utilize transplant resources for financial and emotional support, and collaborate with healthcare providers to manage post-transplant care effectively.

#### As a Friend:

- Caregiving for a friend undergoing a transplant can be challenging without familial authority. Maintain boundaries and remember to nurture the friendship beyond caregiving duties. Offer both practical and emotional support while respecting their autonomy.

To talk with a social worker about resources and support around maintaining healthy relationships as a transplant caregiver, please reach out to Talia Giordano, LCSW at [caregiverlifeline@giftoflifehowieshouse.org](mailto:caregiverlifeline@giftoflifehowieshouse.org)

The Caregiver Lifeline Program is supported in part by TD Charitable Foundation. We are thankful for their partnership and generosity.



# Strokes of KINDNESS

## ART CONTEST & FUNDRAISER

### VOTE TODAY FOR YOUR FAVORITE ARTWORK!

Check out the virtual art gallery and cast your vote in the Gift of Life Howie's House's 2nd annual Strokes of Kindness Art Contest & Fundraiser. Each gift of \$5 will count for 1 vote. The artist with the most votes at the end of the voting period (April 30, 2025) will win the contest. No limit on votes. All proceeds will benefit

the Adopt-A-Family Program to continue providing transplant families with an affordable home away from home during the transplant journey.

**SCAN HERE** to view art work submissions and to cast your vote!



## NEW PARTNERSHIP WITH FREEWILL

### Create a will online for free!

Gift of Life Howie's House is excited to announce a new partnership with FreeWill, an innovative platform that helps individuals create legally valid wills online, free of charge.

Through this partnership, FreeWill's user-friendly platform also allows individuals to include charitable gifts in their wills, ensuring their legacy will help sustain the mission of Gift of Life Howie's House. Together, we are excited to offer the community new opportunities for planning, giving, and supporting the ongoing work of Gift of Life Howie's House.



This collaboration aims to provide House supporters with an easy and meaningful way to plan their future while also making a lasting impact on the lives of others.

For more information visit [GiftofLifeHowiesHouse.org](http://GiftofLifeHowiesHouse.org), call 267-546-9800 or scan the QR code.

## Support Gift of Life Howie's House by DONATING YOUR UNWANTED VEHICLE, RV, BOAT, OR MORE!

Arrange a free pick-up, then all the paperwork will be handled for you – and you may even qualify for a tax-deduction. It's an easy way to support the mission.



**Pat and Deb McGinley** recently donated their 2000 Volkswagen Beetle to support Gift of Life Howie's House! Pat and Deb are past guests of the House who have stayed multiple times during Pat's transplant journey. Pat received a life-saving kidney transplant in April of 2022 and has utilized the House to stay close to Philadelphia for his pre and post transplant appointments.

*"Being a transplant recipient, we found out about the House and were so impressed by the hospitality, we've never met an unkind person here... I had a car that I wanted to donate, and the opportunity came up to donate it to the House and I saw it as an easy way to help where I can,"* Pat said.

Scan the QR code or visit [GiftofLifeHowiesHouse.org](http://GiftofLifeHowiesHouse.org) to begin the donation process.



# Thank You

to our generous partners in supporting transplant families

Contributions of \$250 or more received between JULY–DECEMBER 2024

### Founders' Circle (GIFTS OF \$10,000+)

New members who have made a gift of \$10,000 or more  
Anonymous  
Foxwynd Foundation, made possible through their Donor Advised Fund (DAF)  
Estate of Louise Waters Barbareta  
Phillies Charities, Inc.  
Round Room Gives, Inc dba TCC

### Current members who have made renewed gifts of \$10,000 or more

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James and Paula Duva  
Gervato Family Foundation  
The Gitlin Family Foundation  
Betsy and Robert Horen  
Jean Jones  
Howard and Liz Nathan  
Penney Girls Foundation  
Organ Recovery Systems  
The Raymond Family  
Temple University Health System  
TD Charitable Foundation  
Transplant Alliance Foundation, Inc.  
Wawa Foundation

### 2024 Family Circle (GIFTS OF \$250+)

to support the annual fund

### HONOR IN PLATINUM (\$5,000+)

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Masonic Blood and Organ Donor Club  
Cary Moritz, Esq. and Michael Moritz, MD

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Ira Dounn & Shaina Ward  
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Cheryl Eshenour  
David Feldman  
Robert and Joanne Fiorelli  
Stacey Fitch  
Dr. Gerard and Elizabeth Fulda  
Lori and Daniel Garrison  
Susan Gibbs  
Catherine Gitlin  
Betty-Jane and Alan Golboro  
Elvin and Sue Green  
Dr. and Mrs. Richard D. Hasz, Sr.  
Joseph and Megan Holden  
Rich and Felicia Hulit  
Patricia Kao  
Edward and Heather Kellogg  
William and Maureen Kelly  
Jason E. Krasno, Esq.  
Krysta Hanke Memorial Fund  
Frank Lambert  
Gabriel Llull  
Christian Locher  
Amy Matey  
Burton and Patti Mattice  
Mary McAllister  
William and Sharon McKee  
Michael McVey  
Kevin C. Parham  
The Marjorie M. and Irvin Nat Pincus Fund  
Andrea and Sean Reynolds  
Kim Robbins  
Michael and Rosemary Rose  
Velma Scantlebury, MD  
Richard Sheidy  
Bonnie and Harris Sklar  
Jay and Pat Souder  
Volunteers of the SSUMC Community Thrift Store  
J. Kate Stickle and Brad Baldus

### 2024 Family Circle

Robert and Joanne Fiorelli  
Stacey Fitch  
Dr. Gerard and Elizabeth Fulda  
Lori and Daniel Garrison  
Susan Gibbs  
Catherine Gitlin  
Betty-Jane and Alan Golboro  
Elvin and Sue Green  
Dr. and Mrs. Richard D. Hasz, Sr.  
Joseph and Megan Holden  
Rich and Felicia Hulit  
Patricia Kao  
Edward and Heather Kellogg  
William and Maureen Kelly  
Jason E. Krasno, Esq.  
Krysta Hanke Memorial Fund  
Frank Lambert  
Gabriel Llull  
Christian Locher  
Amy Matey  
Burton and Patti Mattice  
Mary McAllister  
William and Sharon McKee  
Michael McVey  
Kevin C. Parham  
The Marjorie M. and Irvin Nat Pincus Fund  
Andrea and Sean Reynolds  
Kim Robbins  
Michael and Rosemary Rose  
Velma Scantlebury, MD  
Richard Sheidy  
Bonnie and Harris Sklar  
Jay and Pat Souder  
Volunteers of the SSUMC Community Thrift Store  
J. Kate Stickle and Brad Baldus

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### COMFORT IN COPPER (\$250+)

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Cindy and Christopher Becker

Joseph and Mary Ann Belmore  
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Dr. Emily Blumberg and Mr. John Mezocho  
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Christopher Bradley  
Dr. and Mrs. Kenneth L. Brayman  
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Christine Cahill  
Cynthia Camp and Gregory Silva  
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Kevin Cassidy  
Chubb Charitable Foundation  
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Susan Paradise  
Larry and Diana Paul  
Robert Paz  
Donna Plich-Myers and Charlie Myers  
Susan Pincus  
Frank and Joyce Podietz  
M. Esther Popjoy  
Kampli and Rick Present  
Myrna Pressman  
Jim Price

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Nicole Puglisi  
John Putnam  
Dr. Elizabeth and Spencer Rand  
William Ray  
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### ITALIC = upgraded member

### BOLD = renewed member

We apologize for any errors or omissions and ask that you contact us at 267-546-9819 to report any corrections.

Processing times for check donations may vary. For faster payment processing, please consider making your gift online at [GiftofLifeHowiesHouse.org](http://GiftofLifeHowiesHouse.org).



### HEART MEMBERS

Recognizing monthly contributors who donate \$21 or more per month

### NEW Members

Robert Baur  
Susan Bell  
Mary Boston  
Amanda Frisbie  
William Griffith  
Lauren Mikolajewski  
Ann Mokris  
Victoria Munoz  
Elizabeth Murray  
Sushama Patil

To make a contribution to Gift of Life Howie's House, please visit [GiftofLifeHowiesHouse.org](http://GiftofLifeHowiesHouse.org) or use the enclosed envelope.

The official registration and financial information of Transplant House d/b/a Gift of Life Howie's House may be obtained from PA Dept. of State by calling toll free 1.800.732.0999. Registration does not imply endorsement.