Dear Siena/Francis House Friends,

One evening last month, a family of TEN (mom, dad and their eight children) showed up at our doorstep. As is always the case, all of our beds were already full for the night, as was our space where we put mats on the floor for overflow. In short, we were bursting at the seams. However, we also make every attempt to never turn away ANY family or individual that shows up requesting shelter. As such, we made room for this family by moving 70 chairs out of a conference room and putting down ten mats. Within one week, our staff had helped them move into an affordable and appropriate housing option, for which they were extremely grateful.

I share this story with you, as it speaks to the heart of our mission of providing temporary shelter and food for homeless families and individuals who, for whatever reason(s), find themselves in need of our services. In 2016, 3,846 men, women and children found their way to our front door, requesting overnight accommodations, a record number for the 40+ years that the Siena/Francis House has served the homeless. Of those 3,846 people, over 60 percent were “new homeless.” And, of the families that sought shelter here last year, 83 percent of them were new homeless. Every year, more and more people...

Shannon and Finn – Follow-Up

In a letter sent to Siena/Francis House friends and donors a few weeks ago, we told you about a young pregnant mom, Shannon, who had sought shelter at the Siena/Francis House before delivering her son, Finn, eight weeks before his due date.

As background, Shannon was the victim of a physically abusive husband. The guy’s hot temper and alcohol addiction lead to senseless arguments, ending with Shannon becoming a punching bag in his drunken rages. After many blackened eyes and bruises on her body, Shannon finally made the decision to leave that life of fear and beatings. Six months pregnant and with almost no money, Shannon left him under the cover of darkness and made her way to the Siena/Francis House.

As her pregnancy continued, our staff cared for Shannon and brought her to medical appointments. As she was nearing her seventh month, Shannon began experiencing contractions. Our staff brought Shannon to a local hospital’s ER, and she was admitted. Two days later, Shannon gave birth to Finn, eight weeks premature.

Although Shannon recovered well, Finn had a number of health problems associated with the early birth. Besides weighing just over three pounds, Finn was diagnosed with a common breathing problem in premature babies called Bronchopulmonary Dysplasia (BPD). Finn needed sustained nursing care and medication, forcing him to remain in the hospital for two months, while Shannon returned to the Siena/Francis House.

During the time that Finn was hospitalized, a very distraught Shannon went to be...
encounter a personal or familial calamity that tips them over the economic edge, causing them to fall into homelessness, very often for the very first time in their lives. I am just grateful that our community entrusts the Siena/Francis House to exist, in order to serve these families and individuals who come to us in their time of need.

The number of homeless families and individuals seeking shelter, food and clothing can, at times, be overwhelming for our staff. Each and every night, the Siena/Francis House provides overnight stays to well over 500 people, with a one-night record of 559! We provide this service in our facilities that have a total of 392 beds, very often operating at over 140 percent of capacity. Anyone who doesn’t get a bed sleeps on a mat on the floor, or in a chair. And, based on the 2017 year-to-date date numbers, it appears that we will once again break the record of unique men, women and children requesting overnight shelter this year.

In closing, please know that I am continually grateful to you for providing our organization the ability to offer our services to all who show up at our door, requesting assistance. Regardless of how grossly overcrowded our shelters may continue to be – the Siena/Francis House will do our best to never turn away any person or family who comes to us in need. Please know that your support makes a real and meaningful difference to the thousands of homeless families and individuals we serve each year.

With gratitude,

Mike Saklar
Executive Director

with him daily. Our staff drove her to the hospital in the early morning each day, and picked her up at night. As Shannon prepared for Finn’s homecoming, we did too. Our staff stockpiled donations of baby items, including a bassinette, blankets, diapers, wipes and infant clothes. We also helped arrange for continued follow-up medical care for both Finn and Shannon.

It was with great relief to Shannon when Finn was finally discharged from the hospital to the Siena/Francis House. Finn responded well to the care and love that he received from Shannon and our staff, with the assistance of local medical personnel. With their need for shelter, food, clothing and safety met, a case manager from our Rehousing and Reintegration Services Program was able to connect Shannon to a partnering agency that helped Shannon get an apartment and find affordable child care for Finn. Shannon was also able to find a job at a local restaurant.

When their apartment was ready, we provided additional clothing for both Shannon and her now-thriving baby boy, a case of diapers, stroller and car seat for Finn. We also sifted through our donations and found them dishware, utensils, cleaning supplies, and some pantry staples to use in their new space.

Shannon, with Finn in tow, stopped in at the shelter recently to say thank you again for the help she received at Siena/Francis House Homeless Shelter. Of course, we extend her thanks to all the caring and compassionate donors to the shelter, whose generosity made it possible for us to care for this little family.

Gifts to Siena/Francis House are used to provide food, shelter, clothing, and care of the people who turn to us during their hour of need, and are greatly appreciated. All of our services are provided at no cost to our guests. All gifts to Siena/Francis House are tax deductible to the full extent of the law. Our audited financial statements are freely available by writing to Siena/ Francis House, P.O. Box 217 DTS – Omaha, Nebraska – 68101. Our donor information is kept in strict confidence; our donor lists are never rented, shared, or exchanged with other organizations. The stories in our letters are real. Identifying details have been changed and file photos may be used to protect the privacy and therapeutic interest of our guests. For more information about Siena/Francis House or to include us in your estate planning, please contact Siena/Francis House Development Director, Tim Sully at (402) 341-1821.

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**Shannon and Finn cont’d...**

**Annual Walk/Run**

This year’s annual Walk/Run will be held at 9 a.m. on Saturday, September 9 at Stinson Park in Aksarben Village. Please join us for one of the two events: a 5K Run and 5K Walk. For the 5K Run, awards will be given to the overall male and female winners, Master’s Division (over age 40), and for the top three finishers in 12 age-group categories. The registration form is located on page 8 in this newsletter. An online Walk/ Run registration and credit card payment option will be available beginning Monday, June 12 and ending at 7:59 a.m. on Thursday, September 7.

All proceeds from the Walk/Run will benefit the Siena/Francis House, Nebraska’s largest homeless shelter, serving homeless men, women and children. Thank you, in advance, for considering participating in our 23rd Annual Walk/Run!
The Siena/Francis House Homeless Shelter has an amazing opportunity to be part of a city-wide philanthropic effort called **Omaha Gives!**, to be held on Wednesday, May 24, 2017. During the 24 hours of that day, the Omaha Community Foundation is sponsoring their 5th Annual Omaha Gives!, a one-day, online fundraising event, in which the Siena/Francis House is taking part! The goal is to inspire the community to come together for 24 hours to contribute as many charitable dollars as possible to support the work of local nonprofit organizations. Omaha Gives! is based on other successful giving days hosted by community foundations across the country.

**What is Omaha Gives!?** Omaha Gives! is a 24-hour, online giving event – to be held from midnight to midnight on Wednesday, May 24 – and is organized by the Omaha Community Foundation, to grow philanthropy in the Omaha area. The minimum donation is $10, and there is no maximum. All event-related donations must be made online – via a credit card or debit card – at [omahagives.org](http://omahagives.org) during that 24-hour period. Prize monies will be distributed to non-profits that have the most donors during three 8-hour timeframes throughout the day. Additionally, please know that some generous local donors have pledged challenge grant monies to match every donation contributed to the Siena/Francis House through Omaha Gives – DOLLAR-FOR-DOLLAR – essentially doubling your donation to our shelter that day!!

In this event in 2016, 860 unique donors gave to our organization during that 24-hour online charitable challenge, and the Siena/Francis House finished the day with the 2nd highest number of unique donors, out of 789 participating organizations. With all matching donations and prize monies factored in, the Siena/Francis House also finished the 2016 Omaha Gives! with the 3rd highest donation amount - $234,750! This was the single largest fundraising day in the 41-year history of our homeless shelter. Will you please help us repeat this success in 2017?

**How can you help Siena/Francis House during Omaha Gives!?**

- **Schedule a gift!** For your convenience, you can schedule gifts between May 1 and May 23. We encourage you to donate early if you cannot participate on Wednesday, May 24.
- **Save the date.** May 24, 2017 will be a great day of generosity in Omaha. Get excited and ready to share your enthusiasm for Siena/Francis House throughout the day.
- **Donate to us anytime during the 24 hours on Wednesday, May 24!**
- **Spread the word!** Tell your friends that you will be giving to the Siena/Francis House during Omaha Gives! on Wednesday, May 24 and that you need their help.
- **Create your own fundraising page for Siena/Francis House at omahagives.org!** Be an ambassador by setting your own fundraising goal and asking friends to donate.
- **Post about Omaha Gives! on your social media pages.** Let your friends and followers know how they can give and how their donations can help us win matching prize funds.
- **Cheer us on!** On Wednesday, May 24, watch the leaderboard on OmahaGives.org and update our progress on social media.

If you have any questions or want to learn more about Omaha Gives!, please go to omahagives.org, or feel free to contact our development staff, Tim Sully at tsully@sienafrancis.org or Dawn Olijnek at dawn@sienafrancis.org. Tim and Dawn can also be reached by phone by calling 402-341-1821.

Thank you for considering this terrific opportunity to support the Siena/Francis House Homeless Shelter!

Do you have friends who may be interested in knowing more about the Siena/Francis House? We would be happy to send them the twice-yearly Siena/Francis House newsletter. Please feel free to contact Kristi Miskimins (kmiskimins@sienafrancis.org), Dawn Olijnek (dawn@sienafrancis.org) or Tim Sully at (tsully@sienafrancis.org) – or by phone at 402-341-1821 – for more information. Please also contact Kristi, Dawn or Tim if you wish to only receive Siena/Francis House information toward the end of the calendar year, or to be removed from our database.
DONORS WORK IN MYSTERIOUS WAYS!

In the 42 years since Siena/Francis House Homeless Shelter was founded, we’ve been blessed by amazing in-kind and financial support from compassionate donors who share our mission of providing our simple services of shelter, food and clothing to homeless families and individuals from right here in our local community. Frankly, our mission could and would not exist without this tremendous support.

Over these years, we’ve also been privileged to witness many unique gifts and givers. Our staff have often marveled at the coincidences that are perfectly timed to the needs of our shelter. On these two pages, we’ve compiled some mysterious stories and unique ways donors have given. To share your Siena/Francis House giving story, please email Dawn Olijnek at dawn@sienafrancis.org. Your tale could be featured in a future newsletter or on our Facebook page, and might inspire others to give!

IN-KIND GIFTS

Blanket Blessings
One cold winter’s day, a homeless gentleman entered the men’s shelter and requested two blankets, one for himself, and one to take to his friend at the homeless camp, who refused to come inside. Siena/Francis House staff member, Sister Stephanie Matcha, overheard the discussion between the men’s shelter manager and the homeless gentleman, as there were only 47 blankets left on the shelf, and over 150 men were expected in the shelter that night. Sister stepped in and gave the homeless man the blankets. “If we’re short of anything, we need to give away what we have,” she told the shelter manager. “It’s God’s job to get the blankets. It’s only 2:30 in the afternoon, so God has six hours to work.” Before she even finished her sentence, the phone rang—a local church had just completed a blanket drive and wondered if the shelter could use 250 blankets!

Egg-cellent Surprise
Many years ago, when the Siena/Francis House was located at 19th and Cuming, meals for the homeless were prepared based on whatever we had on hand, much like we do today. However, that many years ago, our facility did not have the food partners, pantry space or freezer storage it does now to draw from in times when donations were low. On one particular afternoon, the many who prepared the food were frantic. There was nothing to serve for the evening meal. “I don’t know how we will feed these people,” the kitchen leader declared. The staff and volunteers on site decided to pray, because that’s all they could do. They asked for provisions to give to the people for dinner that night. As the day wore on, the man in charge of cooking was still fretting. Late in the afternoon, he heard a knock on the back door. When he opened it, no one was there, but a crate of eggs sat on the door step. Shortly after, someone walked in with a bag of rolls. Dinner was saved!

Mattress Merriment
Conventional wisdom states that an average mattress should be replaced every 8 years. But when you run a shelter that sleeps hundreds of men, women and children each night, mattresses are well-used. A few years ago, a shelter manager had raised this concern to management. The mattresses that were in the shelter were old, uncomfortable and had rips and holes making them susceptible to pests. The manager was concerned about the comfort of the guests. The next day, the manager was working on the donation dock when a call came in from a local nursing home – “Could Siena/Francis House use any mattresses for the shelter? We’re replacing out the ones we have, although they’re still in pretty good shape.” Our manager confirmed, yes, of course!

MONETARY DONATIONS

Meal Multiplier
Nearly 1,000 of you participated in the “Dining In for Siena/Francis House” event during Lent. Instead of dining out at your favorite restaurant in March and April, you ate at home and sent the money you would have spent out to the Siena/ Francis House Meal Program. Your generosity yielded enough support to serve 530 homeless men, women and children three meals a day for 55 days – 87,450 meals!
MYSTERIOUS WAYS!

Meaningful Memorials
More than half of the pages of our twice-yearly newsletter are filled with tributes to our donors’ loved ones, friends, and family members. Some honor a living person or group, while others are given in someone’s memory. When Kathleen Brennan’s husband passed away last year, designating the Siena/Francis House to receive his memorials was an easy decision for her. “Siena/Francis House has always been one of our favorite charities because of its 4-star Charity Navigator rating,” she said. “When you wish to honor the memory of a loved one, you want to continue his legacy of helping others. We believe that when we reach out to those in need through the hands of Siena/Francis House and feed the poor, we are feeding Jesus.”

Purposeful Planning
“My name is Stephanie, and I’ve been a donor to the Siena/Francis House Homeless Shelter since 2001. I recently retired from a career in higher education, although long ago had made the decision to include the Siena/Francis House as a beneficiary in my will. The reason I decided to include the shelter in my estate plans is the same reason I’ve supported them for so many years – I share their mission of providing the most basic services to the poorest of the poor from my very own community. I also appreciate the fact that such a high percentage of my donation goes to services (and not to overhead and administration). I’m glad that I’ll be able to support this great organization even after I’m gone.”

Sharing Security
An individual recently donated his first Social Security check, to the penny, to the Siena/Francis House. This generous gesture helped provide food, shelter and clothing to many homeless men, women and children.

Donation Dance
Christopher and Chrissy C. were sweethearts, and graduates of Creighton University. As they were planning their wedding, they realized they wanted some portion of their big day to support their favorite non-profit organization, the Siena/Francis House. Together, Christopher and Chrissy creatively came up with the idea of having the proceeds from the “Dollar Dance” at their reception to go to our homeless shelter. Prior to the start of the dance, they shared this intention with their wedding guests. When all was said and done, the Dollar Dance made $585 . . . an amazing amount!

Young Love
Some of our favorite letters come from Siena/Francis House’s youngest supporters, like Collin, who donated two $5 bills in honor of his 5th birthday on Giving TWOsday in 2015. Or Eva, who sent in 100 percent of her babysitting money in January - $225! Or the Trautman family, who operated a refreshment stand at the 2016 Nebraska State High School Track & Field Meet and donated their proceeds to the shelter. The creativity and generosity of these young people is inspiring.

Do you want to impact the Siena/Francis House Homeless Shelter in mysterious ways? Siena/Francis House couldn’t help the thousands of homeless that come to us each year without the donations provided by our community. You can help us in a big way by hosting a drive! First, decide what you want to collect . . . A list of our most needed items is updated every Wednesday on our website, www.sienafrancis.org, and our Facebook page. Maybe your Scout group wants to build a teepee out of TP (toilet paper) for a community project. Maybe you want to have a canned food drive in your neighborhood. Maybe it’s a coat drive, or a sock collection. You can also call Beth at 402-677-3085 for help brainstorming. Whatever your idea is, we want to know about it! Visit http://bit.ly/2omJ2xP to register your drive.

When you register your drive, we’ll send you a tool kit to make your drive a success, including customizable fliers, fact sheets, press release templates and logos you can use in your marketing. Thank you so much for your support!
Meet Steven Abraham!

Known to many by the nickname, “Big Steve,” Steve Abraham is one of our newest staff members at the Siena/Francis House, working in our Rehousing & Reintegration Program (known in-house as Day Services). A lifelong resident of Omaha, Steve took a somewhat circuitous route to be hired as the Siena/Francis House’s Day House Manager and Homeless Outreach Specialist in early February of last year.

Steve is in charge of our Day Shelter for the Homeless, overseeing 18 homeless men who participate in our in-house employment training program and staff this daytime shelter. Located adjacent to our overnight shelters, the Day Shelter is a “drop in” center for persons who are homeless. It operates from 7 a.m. until 7 p.m. every day of the year. In our Day Shelter, persons who are homeless can access resources and services such as bag storage, telephones, restrooms and showers. A respite from inclement weather, the Day Shelter is also a place for homeless persons to begin the oftentimes lengthy process of achieving affordable and appropriate housing outside of the shelter.

Steve has a unique perspective on the services that he and the Siena/Francis House provides; he and his family were homeless – off and on – when he was young. Steve’s mom, Ruth, worked full time, though still struggled to provide the necessities of life for Steve and his three younger brothers. As such, Ruth moved the family into the now defunct Logan Fontenelle housing “projects.” However, being able to afford the rent there was sometimes impossible. Ruth was occasionally forced to seek temporary lodging at local shelters, while she saved enough money to return to an apartment. But even while Ruth struggled to make ends meet, she set an example of selflessness to her children by periodically volunteering at various non-profit organizations, including the Douglas County Housing Authority (as the first resident commissioner) and the Siena/Francis House Homeless Shelter.

Perhaps not surprisingly, this difficult upbringing had a significant negative impact on Steve. School work became less important to him than running with the cool crowd…which turned out to be the wrong crowd. His older brother was in an Omaha gang and, by the time he turned ten, Steve was also being recruited to join. One of his first “jobs” in the gang was to run numbers for a local bookie.

Just as Steve was becoming involved in gang life, his mom, Ruth, took notice. Not wanting Steve to get mixed up with this dead end kind of life, Ruth encouraged him to concentrate on his schooling. She also started to bring Steve with her when she volunteered at our homeless shelter. As a teenager, it was not uncommon for Steve to find himself prepping the dining room for dinner at the Siena/Francis House, while his mom was cooking the shelter’s meal. His mom’s interventions had a powerful effect on Steve, as he navigated his late teens and early twenties.

Steve opened a couple of businesses between 2003 and 2005 – an auto detailing shop and a recording studio. And even though he hadn’t gone on to college after high school, his mom kept encouraging him to continue his education…and to keep resisting gang life.

In 2006, Steve’s mom began experiencing complication from severe diabetes, eventually requiring her to stay at an assisted living facility. Steve stayed by her side constantly, as her health declined. By early summer of 2007, Ruth had a “heart-to-heart” conversation with Steve. “I want you to do what you love to do…which is to help people.” That was the central message from the conversation that Steve remembers.

“I really didn’t know what that meant for me, job-wise, though,” Steve recalls, and so he asked her. “She told me she thought I’d make a good counselor or work in social services in some capacity. She knew I really liked going along with her during her volunteer activities, mostly because I liked helping people in need. My mom affirmed that in me.”

Ruth passed away in July of 2007. Her death had a profound effect on Steve. “After she died I dropped the gang thing completely,” Steve states. He also got a job as a security guard/mentor at a local grade school. He later worked for the Omaha Nighthawks football team, and eventually took a position with a local non-profit organization that helps people with physical and mental disabilities. He also volunteered as a basketball coach in a local youth sports organization.

And, with the memory of his mom’s encouragement to continue his education always in the back of his mind, Steve finally decided to give college a try. In 2013, Steve enrolled at Metro Community College, taking a variety of human services and related classes. In 2016, Steve graduated from MCC with an associate’s degree in chemical dependency counseling and human services. After graduation, Steve immediately continued his schooling at Bellevue University. Steve will graduate this coming August with a bachelor’s degree in Behavioral Science. After he completes that degree, Steve would like to one day earn his alcohol and drug counseling license, known as a LADC.

An average day for Steve in our Day Shelter starts in his office, meeting with homeless individuals, and sometimes with couples or teenagers. Steve listens to their stories, and often refers them to case managers in our Rehousing and Reintegration Program, as appropriate. He also helps the homeless by providing them with simple life necessities like clothing, toothbrushes, and other items helpful for activities of daily living.

As the main supervisor of 18 men in our employment training program, Steve makes sure that his “staff” show up to work, and that they know what they need to be doing by going over the Day Shelter’s manual with them. He also teaches them conflict

Cont’d on pg 7
resolution skills, which are very helpful in our overly-crowded Day Shelter.

Steve monitors who comes into and out of the Day Shelter, and is the main contact for prospective employers looking for temporary help, as well as for other non-profit organizations that provide services to our guests. Steve also oversees on-site student interns who need to complete practicum hours as part of their educational degree.

Steve is also quite busy out in the larger community. He sits on the Project Homeless Connect Omaha’s Board of Directors, Operation Youth Success (a program associated with Douglas County Youth Corrections), and was recently appointed Resident Commissioner on the Omaha Housing Authority’s Board of Commissioners, a five year commitment.

When asked what he is grateful for, Steve replied: “I’m grateful for my family, and especially to my mom for getting me on the right path in life. I’m grateful for my ten years of sobriety, and for my peace of mind, because I used to have such a criminal thinking mindset. It’s a rewarding thing to do the kind of work I do, here at the shelter. I’m happier than I’ve ever been in my entire life. And, I’m grateful to the Siena/Francis House because they’ve allowed me the opportunity to work with the population I serve. I know the kinds of issues the homeless are facing because I’ve been in their shoes. I can truly relate to them, which allows me to be a voice for them…and for anybody who becomes homeless.”

“One of the things I try to leave with each of the homeless persons I interact with is a sense that things can get better, and that I’ll do everything I can to help them. I often share with them a saying that my mom used to share with me, ‘May God be a guiding light in your heart and in your life.’”

Steve’s mom would, no doubt, be proud of her son, “Big Steve” Abraham.

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**VOLUNTEER CORNER**

**SURVEY SAYS!**

Why a volunteer survey?

We want our volunteer program to be meaningful for volunteers, getting your direct feedback helps us shape our programming. This Spring we offered a volunteer survey in partnership with the University of Nebraska at Omaha VPA program, to gain insight on volunteers feelings, insights and barriers to volunteer service at Siena/Francis House.

Four areas of the survey that stood out to us include:

- **Training:** Volunteers overall are satisfied with their training, but would like to see more training opportunities offered.
- **Paid Staff:** Our volunteers enjoyed working with paid staff, but would like to build stronger relationships with staff.
- **Voice:** Siena/Francis House volunteers want to share more with us and help us improve by using their own voices!
- **Volunteer Position:** Volunteers feel their roles at the shelter are meaningful and they have pride in their work.

**WHAT WILL WE DO WITH THE RESULTS OF THE SURVEY?**

- Provide more training opportunities.
- Hold volunteer forums so volunteers can share their voices.
- Conduct another survey in 2018 to gather results on how we are doing.

**WOULD YOU LIKE TO BECOME A SIENA/FRANCIS HOUSE VOLUNTEER?**

You can get started by calling Stephanie, 402-341-1821, or emailing her, stephanie@sienafrancis.org.

**WE THANK YOU FOR YOUR SERVICE AND COMMITMENT TO THE SIENA/FRANCIS HOUSE AND IT’S GUESTS!!**

“I love our volunteers because they demonstrate selflessness and service to others.”

*Marilyn McLaurine, Miracles Counselor*
Siena/Francis House
Walk/Run - 2017

Saturday, September 9, 2017
Stinson Park/Aksarben - 67th & Center Streets

All proceeds from the Walk/Run benefit the Siena/Francis House Homeless Shelter, Nebraska’s largest shelter serving homeless men, women & kids – 1702 Nicholas Street – Omaha, Nebraska

SCHEDULE OF EVENTS
8:15-8:45 AM..Packet Pick-Up & Same-Day Registrations
9 AM..........5K (3.1 Mile) Run
9:05 AM........5K (3.1 Mile) Walk
Refreshments served before and after events

Awards/Awards Ceremony for 5K Run only.

REGISTRATION & PACKET PICK-UP: Register by completing & signing the form below – one name per form – and mail to: Siena/Francis House - P.O. Box 217- DTS - Omaha, NE - 68101. Checks should be made payable to: Siena/Francis House. Or you may also register and pay online at www.sienafrancis.org beginning Monday, June 12 and ending at 7:59 a.m. on Thursday, September 7. Walk/Run registrants may also pick up their event t-shirts and race number tags at Peak Performance – 519 North 78th Street (just north of 78th & Cass Streets) – from 4-8 pm on Thursday, September 7 and from 4-6 pm on Friday, September 8. Walk/Run registration will also be available during these times. Walk/Run registration and t-shirt/race number tag pickup may also occur from 8:15-8:45 a.m. on the day of the race, Saturday, September 9 at the race site at Stinson Park in Aksarben Village, although we cannot guarantee a t-shirt to participants who register for the Walk/Run on the day of the event.

Event (Please Check One):

____ 5K (3.1 Mile) Run
____ 5K (3.1 Mile) Walk

T-Shirt Size (Please Check One):
____ S   ____ M   ____ L
____ XL   ____ XXL   ____ XXXL

NOTE: No awards will be given for the 5K Walk.

WAIVER: I know that running in races is a potentially hazardous activity. I should not enter and run in races unless I am medically able and properly trained. I agree to abide by any decision of a race official relative to my ability to safely complete the run. I assume all risks associated with running in races, including but not limited to falls or contact with other road traffic on the course. All such risks being known and appreciated by me, having read this waiver and knowing these facts, and in consideration of your acceptance of my application, I, for me and anyone entitled to act on my behalf, waive and release the Siena/Francis House and all sponsors, their representatives and successors from all claims or liabilities of any kind arising out of my participation in this activity even though that liability may arise out of negligence or carelessness on the part of the persons named in this waiver.

DATE __________________ SIGNATURE _____________________________________ (Parents must sign for registrants under 19)

AWARDS
5K RUN – Top Overall Male & Female & 1st, 2nd, & 3rd in each of the following age categories:
14 & Under; 15-19; 20-24; 25-29; 30-34; 35-39; 40-44; 45-49; 50-54; 55-59; 60 & over; Master’s Division (over 40) – Male & Female

NOTE: No awards will be given for the 5K Walk.
REMEMBERING THE LIVES OF HOMELESS IMPORTANT FOR FAMILIES AND FRIENDS

On Wednesday, December 21, 2016, the Siena/Francis House conducted our annual memorial service at our shelter for the 78 homeless individuals from our Omaha community who died during 2016. This annual memorial service is part of a national program to put a human face on homelessness and the harsh conditions and life that many homeless people face. In our service and throughout the year, Siena/Francis House staff honor and remember the homeless who have died – often anonymously and alone – in a street or alley.

Our service was attended by shelter guests and employees, as well as family members and workers from other social service agencies. At the ceremony, each deceased homeless person was represented by a volunteer wearing a sign with the person’s name on it, holding a lighted candle. Attendees offered prayers, readings and songs during the 30-minute service. For many people who are homeless, this is the only ceremony held in their memory.

Sister Stephanie Macha – a case manager at the Siena/Francis House – stresses how important the opportunity is to remember and grieve for those who suffer from poverty, addictions, mental illness, sickness and other sorrows in this life. She notes that each individual belongs to someone. “They were mothers, fathers, brothers, sons, daughters, uncles and cousins,” she said. “The deceased were friends of our shelter guests, and the case managers and social service workers that helped them.”

In addition to this annual remembrance in December, the Siena/Francis House honors the passing of guests, as we learn of them throughout the year, with an announcement at our Day House, along with a moment of silence and a memorial prayer.

The Siena/Francis House Memorial Service is one of several services held around the community and the country on winter solstice each year. If you would like to learn more about the memorial service, or are interested in participating or attending in the future, please contact Sister Stephanie Macha at 402-341-1821 or ssmatcha@sienafrancis.org.

Please consider sending a gift to the Siena/Francis House Homeless Shelter today. Your gift will immediately help provide food, shelter and clothing to homeless individuals and families from our very own local community, in their hour of need. Thank you, and God bless you.

SIENA/FRANCIS HOUSE GRATEFULLY SERVES MILITARY VETERANS

Each November, Siena/Francis House honors homeless veterans of our armed forces with a flag ceremony and barbeque, provided by the Knights of Columbus from Mary Our Queen Catholic Church. But our shelter’s appreciation of veterans doesn’t end there!

Over the course of this past decade, the number of homeless veterans in the United States has decreased dramatically, since the federal government created programs focused on this problem. Siena/Francis House statistics demonstrate this decline, as well. In 2012, 368 veterans stayed at the Siena/Francis House. Five years later, in 2016, the number of veterans seeking shelter at Siena/ Francis House was 204. That is a 45 percent decrease in five years!

While the decline is remarkable, our work is not complete. Siena/Francis House continues to seek out homeless Veterans and connect them with resources to overcome barriers to permanent housing.

To this end, Siena/Francis House hosts a monthly movie night for all veterans on our campus, whether they are guests of our emergency shelter, participants in our drug and alcohol program, or members of our staff. These events allow veterans to develop a support network with others who have served, and to enjoy an evening recognizing them for their service. We make sure other non-profits that serve veterans are invited to these events, as well, and many of them often do. Bringing together a variety of these community partnering agencies – providing services such as employment, housing, medical care and legal aid – ensures that homeless veterans will receive the highest quality of services and care possible.

Siena/Francis House also recently completed a grant proposal to the Department of Veterans Affairs. If funded, this will help provide substance-abuse disorder and mental health treatment to up to 14 veterans at a time through our Miracles Addiction Treatment Program. Siena/Francis House has been a recipient of this funding since 2008, but all agencies were required to reapply in 2017. Award notices will be mailed this summer.

In a letter of support for our application, Nebraska Western Iowa VA Health Care System Director B. Don Burman wrote, “We have had a positive working relationship . . . Siena/ Francis House is successfully serving the Veterans and is an integral part of the collaborative efforts to end Veteran homelessness.”

Siena/Francis House will continue to recognize Veterans for their service, and to help them obtain appropriate affordable housing, as long as is necessary, and until veterans’ homelessness is ended completely.
February 1, 2017

Mike Saklar
Siena/Francis House
1702 Nicholas Street
Omaha, NE 68102

Dear Mike Saklar:

On behalf of Charity Navigator, I wish to congratulate Siena/Francis House on attaining the coveted 4-star rating for demonstrating strong financial health and commitment to accountability and transparency.

The nonprofit sector is advancing and expanding. As our organizations evolve, so do the desires and interests of our supporters. Astute donors are yearning for greater accountability, transparency, and for concrete results from us. With more than 1.5 million American charities, Charity Navigator aims to accentuate the work of efficient and transparent organizations. The intent of our work is to provide donors with essential information to give them greater confidence in both the charitable decisions that they make and the nonprofit sector.

Based on the most recent information available, we have issued a new rating for your organization. We are proud to announce Siena/Francis House has earned our sixth consecutive 4-star rating. This is our highest possible rating and indicates that your organization adheres to sector best practices and executes its mission in a financially efficient way. Attaining a 4-star rating verifies that Siena/Francis House exceeds industry standards and outperforms most charities in your area of work. Only 5% of the charities we evaluate have received at least 6 consecutive 4-star evaluations, indicating that Siena/Francis House outperforms most other charities in America. This exceptional designation from Charity Navigator sets Siena/Francis House apart from its peers and demonstrates to the public its trustworthiness.

Forbes, Business Week, and Kiplinger's Financial Magazine, among others, have profiled and celebrated our unique method of applying data-driven analysis to the charitable sector. We evaluate ten times more charities than our nearest competitor and currently attract more visitors to our website than all other charity rating groups combined, thus making us the leading charity evaluator in America. Our data shows that users of our site donated more than they planned to before viewing our findings, and in fact, it is estimated that last year Charity Navigator influenced approximately $10 billion in charitable gifts.

Your achievement and the 4-star rating will enhance your organization's fundraising and public relations efforts. Our favorable review of Siena/Francis House's financial health and commitment to accountability & transparency is now visible on our website.

We wish you continued success in your charitable endeavors.

Sincerely,

Michael Thatcher
President and CEO
Mike Saklar Inducted Into Westside Community Schools’ Hall of Fame

The Siena/Francis House’s Executive Director, Mike Saklar, was recently inducted into Omaha’s Westside Community Schools “Hall of Fame”…one of six alums inducted at Westside’s 2016 Gala on November 3, 2016 at Happy Hollow Country Club. Westside Community Schools’ write-up on Mike’s induction biography - and reprinted with permission from Westside Community Schools - relates that: “Stan ‘Mike’ Saklar truly embodies the spirit of service we foster at Westside Community Schools. Since graduating from Westside High, Mike has become a respected ambassador for tens of thousands of homeless men, women and children in our city. He has devoted the last four decades of his life to service through the City of Omaha Planning Department and as the Executive Director of the Siena/Francis House. Without the assistance of any national organization, Mike has increased the SFH operating budget from $750,000 to $3.2 million; in 2013 alone, SFH provided 420,000 meals. That same year, Mike actively helped 244 homeless families find stable, permanent housing. He has also founded or volunteered with numerous civic organizations including Charles Drew Community Health Center, Mayor’s Fair Housing Advisory Group, and the Omaha Gladiators Athletic Association. Mike received Creighton University’s Martin Luther King Jr Legacy Award in 2010, and the 2013 Horace Award from Miracles Treatment Center. He is a US Army veteran, a mentor to Asian-American student immigrants, and a father and grandfather to a new generation of Westside students.”

Above Left: Siena/Francis House Executive Director Mike Saklar sharing personal reflections and gratitude for his induction into the Westside Community Schools’ Hall of Fame on November 3, 2016. Above Right: Mike’s induction plaque.

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SIENA/FRANCIS HOUSE DONOR BILL OF RIGHTS

Philanthropy is based on voluntary action for the common good. It is a tradition of giving and sharing that is primary to the quality of life of our community. To assure that philanthropy merits the respect and trust of the general public, and that donors and prospective donors can have full confidence in our organization, the Siena/Francis House declares that all donors have these rights:

1. To be informed of the Siena/Francis House’s mission, of the way our organization intends to use donated resources, and of our capacity to use donations effectively and efficiently for their intended purposes;
2. To be informed of the identity of those serving on the Siena/Francis House’s Board of Directors, and to expect the board to exercise prudent judgement in its stewardship responsibilities;
3. To have access to the Siena/Francis House’s most recent financial statements;
4. To receive appropriate acknowledgment and recognition;
5. To expect that all relationships with individuals representing the Siena/Francis House will be professional in nature, and that information about your donations is handled with respect and confidentiality;
6. To be assured that donor information will never be shared with any other organization;
7. To be assured that those seeking donations for the Siena/Francis House are not hired solicitors, and that 100% of your donations are utilized by the Siena/Francis House;
8. To be assured your gifts will be used for the purpose of furthering our mission of providing food, shelter, clothing, outreach, and addiction recovery to those most in need in our community;
9. To have the opportunity for your name to be deleted from our mailing list;
10. To feel free to ask questions when making a donation, and to receive prompt, truthful, and forthright answers.

Adapted from the American Association of Fundraising Counsel, Association for Healthcare Philanthropy, Council for Advancement and Support of Education, Association of Fundraising Professionals

Updated: April 2017
DATE: Calendar Year 2017 (and beyond)
TO: Siena/Francis House Donors
FROM: Mike Saklar, Executive Director
SUBJECT: Important Tax Legislation Regarding Donating Directly From IRAs

In December of 2015, the United States Congress passed – and the President signed into law – legislation commonly referred to as the “Protecting Americans from Tax Hikes (PATH) Act”. A provision of this legislation MAKES PERMANENT tax-related benefits available to individuals aged 70 ½ and older who have an IRA and who make direct transfers of any or all of their Required Minimum Distribution (RMD) from the IRA to qualified charities – such as the Siena/Francis House Homeless Shelter – without the donor first having to recognize the distribution as income.

This law, which allows you to make tax-free transfers directly from your IRA or Roth IRA assets to a qualified charity, like the Siena/Francis House Homeless Shelter, can provide you with a number of planning benefits, including:

- Direct, tax-free transfers of IRA assets to the Siena/Francis House Homeless Shelter, can be counted against your required minimum distribution (RMD).
- Direct, tax-free transfers of IRA assets to the Siena/Francis House Homeless Shelter will not increase your adjusted gross income for your yearly federal income tax purposes.
- These direct, tax-free transfers make it easier to utilize IRA assets, during one’s lifetime, to make charitable gifts.

How does this work? You may make tax-free transfers from your IRA or Roth IRA if:

- You are 70 ½ years old or older.
- Your cumulative tax-free transfers to charity do not exceed $100,000 per tax year.
- Your tax-free transfers are made directly from your IRA or Roth IRA to a qualified public charity, like the Siena/Francis House and NOT to donor-advised funds, supporting organizations or private foundations.

Transfers completed by December 31, 2017 will be free of federal income tax this year, and the gift qualifies for the donor's 2017 required minimum distribution from his or her IRA. Again, this tax legislation HAS BEEN MADE PERMANENT, so it will be in effect in 2018 and in all subsequent years.

NOTE: If you wish to take advantage of this opportunity, but hold retirement assets outside of an IRA or Roth IRA, you will need to convert your current assets to a Rollover IRA, prior to initiating a gift.

Please act now to support the Siena/Francis House Homeless Shelter – and to fulfill your own charitable goals – by taking advantage of the planning options available to you from this significant legislation. Or, if you would like us to coordinate with your fund custodian a direct transfer of funds from your IRA or Roth IRA to the Siena/Francis House, please contact our Development Director, Tim Sully, at 402-341-1821 or by e-mail at tsully@sienafrancis.org.

Thank you very much for considering taking advantage of this excellent charitable-giving opportunity!

Have you remembered the Siena/Francis House Homeless Shelter in your will? Estate gifts go a long way in caring for those most in need from our own local community.
Living Tributes & Memorials

In Memory Of...
Allen
  Amy Russell
Angels Who Walk Among Us
  Glen and Peggy Newkirk
Brian
  Lorraine Augustyn
Campbell and Buczowski Families
  Robert and Carole Buczowski
Christine’s Birthday
  David Parolek
Deceased Family Members
  Michael Steffen
Deceased family members
  Raymond and Sharon Perrigo
Gordy
  Norma Harrow
My mom and dad, in loving memory
  Liz Dundis
Oliver and Charley
  Ruby Kund
Poor Souls in Purgatory
  Jerome Loos
Rosalie
  Arden and Rosalie Llewellyn
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Lois Johnson for her birthday  
Sherry Parcel

Suzanne Jones  
William and Mary Jane Harvey

Mary and Ken Kalal  
Loris Purtzer

Garrett Karlson - Eagle Scout  
Paul and Anna Sparwasser

Patty Wilderman

Michael G. Kavan, Ph.D.  
Creighton University School of Medicine

Debra J. Kelley  
Vivian Kelley

Kelly J. Kelley  
Vivian Kelley

Cheryl Kessell  
Donna Kuhn

Harry and Dorothy Klimek  
Delores Klimek

M.J. Doll and Karilyn Kober  
Christine Anderson

Paul Koch  
Carol Jean Koch

Ray and Sheryl Kolm  
Jeffrey Cieloha

Kolvet Family  
S. James and Jean Watson

Kathy Koraleski - 70th Birthday  
Caroline Parys

Steve Kotlarz  
W. Henry Looby

Peter Kottenstette  
Sarah Kottenstette

Jane Krajcek  
Mary Parizek

Paul and Midge Kudron  
Mary Parizek

Patti, Joe, Barb, Jim, Lynn, Bob and Mary Lamoureux  
Edward and Cleo Lamoureux

Sandra Laible  
Fred and Gretchen Christensen

Paul and Jeri Langeneberger  
Mary Langeneberger

Alice Lilly  
Francis and Tara Gregoski

The Linder Family for Christmas  
Valerie Sanchez

Carolyn Lugert  
Mary Parizek

Janet Mardis  
Patrick and Anne O’Keefe

Sky and Terri Masters  
Julie Masters

Jeanette Maxwell  
Jennifer Kinney

Father Mike McDonald  
Carolyn Gates

Sharon and Frank McHugh  
Susan Matheux

Sue McNamara  
Pamela McNamara

Ben and Joey Meekins  
Jeffrey Cieloha

Tom Meila  
Raymond and Bette Zdan

Alex Meredith  
Allen and Judy Meredith

Mr. and Mrs. Allen Meredith  
Allen and Judy Meredith

Mr. and Mrs. Andrew Meredith  
Allen and Judy Meredith

Fr. Joe Mikah  
Dwain Sherry Owens

Garnet Miller  
Nick Stuber

Marge Mindjik  
Deanna Hobza

Thomas J. Minikus  
Patrick and Teresa McDermott

Bernie and Wendy Monbouquet  
Jeffrey and Elizabeth Moran

Theresa Moore  
Doug and Kristi Miskimins

Tom Mortland, 10 year service anniversary  
National Indemnity Company

Heidi Moser  
Barbara Geier

Javail Muhammad - Congrats on Masters Degree  
Carl and Margaret Teplitzky

Leo Munyan  
Maureen McGill

Rev. Mark Nolte  
Steve and Marge Harman

Dave and Joanne Kolenda  
Catherine Palensky
Living Tributes & Memorials

Jeanette Novak
Debbie McCray
Phyllis L. O’Brien
Eugene and Barbara Pieper
Don and Carol O’Leary
Dorothy O’Leary
Fr. Gary Ostrander
Catherine Palensky
Alexandra Otto
Amanda De Wit
Verna Jean Owens
Judy and Beverly Ruff
Ron and Judy Parks
J. Michael and Susan Price
Jackie Paulsen
Janet Koslaphirom
The Pearce Family
Lillian McCartin
Dick and Sharon Peterson as a holiday gift
Charles and Joan Mack
Billie Pettit
Lee Pettit
Dieter and Vickie Petz
Jerald and Linda Thomsen
Becky Pick
Larry and Louise Lowe
Luke and Alice Pumilia
Karen Niemann
Mary Rader
Steven Rader
Judge Steven E. Rau and Christine L. Meuers
Sally Millett Rau
Michael Redmond
Jim and Barb Redmond
Todd and Amy Renken Family
Douglas and Beverly Renken
James and Helen Renner
David and Mollie Husman
Mark and Lindsey Rentschler
Randy and Diane Rentschler
Mr. Max M. Riley
Mike Riley
Edgar W. Rinaker
Dudley and Erin Rinaker
Mike and Vicki Riordan
Jonathan Trowbridge
Dan Rishel
Kari Randazzo
Deanne Nickerson Werner and Keith Rivard
Leo and Barbara Werner
Edmund Russell, Jr. on his 85th birthday and service to SFH
Mary Russell
Mike Saklar - for his good work
Warren and Fern Spencer
Warren and Janet Scherschligt
Richard and Mary Potts
Joel Schlessinger, M.D.
Mary LaVelle Egan
David Allen Schreiber
Charles Schreiber
Tom and Marikay Schwaller
Donna Houtteman
Father James Schwertley
Mary LaVelle Egan
Sheila Pille
Rosemary Schmitz
Abby Krumholz and Grant Scribner
Sara Adland
Jim Sealey
Gregg Grossman
Sr. Mary Senglaub, OSF
W. Henry Looby
Mark and Margot Sledge
Dee Sledge
Matt and Stacy Sledge
Dee Sledge
Barb and Tom Smith
Susan Brunke
Jeff and Brenda Smith
Dawn Smith
Pastor & Mrs. Charlie Smith
Dennis and Carrol StevFater
Anna Sparrow
Andriana Abariotes
G. Ernest and Marilyn Abariotes
Michael and Angela Beacom
Colleen Spellman - with special gratitude on our 35th anniversary
Hugh and Colleen Spellman
Bill and Barb Speiecker
Ted and Holly Ahrens
Dr. Jacqueline St. John - Friendship
Jo Ann Camgian
St. Margaret Mary’s Prayer Group
Lucretia Danielson
Mary Ruth Stegman for Christmas
Robert and Delores Heenan
Bob Stevens and Family
Eileen Stevens
Father Clifford Stevens
W. Henry Looby
Sr. Maryanne Stevens - 50 years of Mercy service
Terry and Ann Charles
Margaret Stubendick
Dave and Margaret Ann McCarthy
Richard and Carolyn Sudyka
Joseph and Judy Latoza
Diana Glenn Svehla
William Glenn and Prescott Hafner
Mr. and Mrs. Tom Svolos
Mary Ashford Anderson
Dan and Bernie Taylor
Rebecca Taylor
Lyla Thompson
Catherine Bombara
Frank Thomsen
Jerald and Linda Thomsen
Frank Trouba
James Trouba
Steve Trouba
UNO Gerontology Advisory Board
Julie Masters
UPPO Tax Department
Bryan and Joan Clark
Linda Vacanti, wedding anniversary
Charles and Linda Vacanti
Fred Vakili
Sheila Christ
Fr. Kevin Vogel, in gratitude for Christmas
Thomas and Lori Pelster
Rev. Michael Volthofer
Steve and Marge Harman
Dave and Joanne Kolenda
Catherine Palensky
Barbara Walsh-for Christmas
Bernard and Judith Verschoor
Watson Family
S. James and Jean D. Watson
Lee Thomas Weidle
Nick and Annette Weidle
Fr. Tom Weisbecker
Randy and Pamela Grosse
Doris Wenzl
Terry Wenzl
C.L. and Rachel Werner
Gary and Becky Werner
Kurt Werner
Heidi Rankin
Robert J. White
Joseph Bost
Judah and Marlowe Wiens
Marjorie Adair
Theresa Wilder - Birthday
Stephen and Margaret Lanspa
Mary Wisinski
Sharon Hoffman
Patricia and Raymond Wolf
Patrick and Michelle Wolf
Fred Woolstrum
Jorry Woolstrum
Tom and Lisa Wurts
William Glenn and Prescott Hafner
Greg and Rhonda Zebolsky
Mike and Amy Zebolsky
Matthew and Jill Zegers
Janis Zegers-Lens

Special Siena/ Francis House Tributes:

Family of Staff

Marta M. Caniglia - Daughter-in-law of Gloria Caniglia, Bookkeeper
Eugene Cook - Grandfather of Kasey Cook, Siena House Night Manager
Paul LeRoy Miller - Father-in-law of the daughter of Cindy Goodrich, Miracles Counselor
Joyce Nitz - Sister of Janis Boos, Siena House Manager
WILL YOU PLEASE HELP STOCK OUR SHELVES? WE NEED:

PERSONAL HYGIENE
- deodorant
- shampoo, conditioner
- bath soap
- disposable razors
- shaving cream
- shower gel
- hand & body lotion
- lip balms
- toothbrushes/toothpaste
- combs & brushes
- foot powder
- perfume
- men’s cologne
- adhesive bandages
- antiseptic cream
- antacids
- pain relievers
- Q-Tips

LINENS
- bath towels
- wash cloths
- sheets (for twin/single beds, only)
- blankets (for twin/single beds, only)
- pillows/pillow cases

BABY ITEMS
- disposable diapers
- bottles
- formula
- baby food
- bibs
- diaper bags
- t-shirts
- sleepers
- socks
- powder
- baby oil & lotion

CLEANING PRODUCTS
- dish soap
- laundry soap (powdered)
- liquid bleach
- liquid disinfectant
- oven cleaner
- powdered cleaners/cleansers
- brooms & dustpans
- sink & tub disinfectant cleaner
- mops, buckets, squeegees

KITCHEN
- silverware
- cooking/serving utensils
- dinner plates, bowls
- coffee cups
- sheet pans – commercial size
- hoods
- jackets
- pants
- shorts
- tops/blouses
- underwear & other undergarments
- long johns
- socks
- shoes
- boots
- mittens
- scarves
- handkerchiefs
- belts
- shower shoes/flip flops

FOOD
- canned fruits & vegetable
- frozen meat (professionally-processed)
- lunch “deli” meats (for sack lunches)
- chips/treats (for sack lunches)
- bottled water
- coffee (caffeinated, non-flavored)
- coffee creamer
- eggs
- butter/margarine
- peanut butter
- jelly
- cheese
- parmesan cheese
- milk
- pasta/egg noodles
- pasta sauce
- tomato sauce
- tomato paste
- pancake mix (larger bags or boxes preferred)
- syrup
- ketchup
- mustard
- mayonnaise
- salad dressing
- tartar sauce
- vinegar
- cooking oil
- spices (especially chili powder, oregano, granulated garlic, sweet basil, parsley, cumin powder)
- salt & pepper packets
- sugar
- fruit juice
- salsa
- instant potatoes
- rice
- flour
- soup (larger, #10 cans preferred)
- fresh produce (in season)

MISCELLANEOUS
- MAT bus ticket books
- batteries (AA, AAA, C, D, 9-volt)
- masking tape
- pens, pencils, markers, crayons
- spiral notebooks
- folders (for schoolwork)
- 3-ring binders
- copier paper
- maintenance tools
- backpacks
- duffel bags

All donations can be brought to our loading dock, located at 1111 North 17th Street. The dock is open from 8 am until 5 pm every day of the year.