



Welcome!



As this year comes to a close, we are in awe of what we have been able to accomplish, albeit not without a few bumps along the way. As a community, we have faced many challenges, knowing that “there is no growth without change, no change without fear of loss.” We humbly embrace all who come to our doors who feel lost and alone, striving to be the hands and feet of Christ, because we know He has the answers. We are committed to being a listening ear, a place of peace and encouragement, providing life transformation and empowering people to use their God-given abilities to care for themselves and their families.

Since our most humble beginnings, we have cultivated relationships and programs to respond to the ever-growing needs in our community. You, our donors and volunteers, bear witness to the growing needs as well and have chosen to walk alongside us in unity. United in humility, gentleness, and patience and with a true heart for what’s at the core of Mercy.
(cont. on page 4)

8th Annual Night of Hope Gala Surpassed all Expectations!

Mercy’s 8th annual Gala, Night of Hope, was a much-needed fundraiser to cover 2021 programs and Mercy supporters helped to surpass all goals this year!

This year’s Sinatra-themed event included a Silent Auction online that began Monday Oct. 4th, through the event, and a Thursday night Dinner and Gala at Sullivan Hall in Fleming Island. The VIP Reception began at 5 p.m. with a Champagne Bellini Bar and hors d’oeuvres from Yianni’s, then the gala was held from 6-9 PM with a plated dinner by Davoli’s Catering. With a costume contest, the attire exceeded all expectations and created a new level of fun for future events! **(cont. on pg 2....)**



Our 2nd Annual Volunteer Appreciation BBQ Jamboree is still BONAFIDE!
(cont. on pg 7)



8th Annual Night of HOPE Gala

(continued from page 1)

...Emcees, Rep. Travis & Jessica Cummings were in rare form and along with the Live Auction, they challenged local leaders to step up and help Mercy exceed its goals. The Honorary Chair, Jim Horne, shared his thoughts on the uniqueness of Mercy in Clay County. With a lineup of amazing testimonials and Sponsored Auction packages and trips, Mercy supporters showed up in full force and helped to raise over \$125,000 for Mercy's ever-expanding programs.

Event Chair, Andrea Fogarty, noted, "We are in awe of the amazing sponsors, participants and volunteers who show up in full support each year! It was such a beautiful night of fellowship and ambiance for such a worthy cause. Thanks to all those in the community who have a heart to support Mercy, making a difference in so many lives!"

Let us know if you have interest in joining our NOH committee for 2022!



Congratulation to Frances Walters on her recent retirement!

Frances joined the Mercy Support Services family in October 2015 through the staffing organization **Experience Works** and later became a permanent employee of the Mercy team in April of 2017. She was such a dedicated team member from the very beginning and was determined to grow and learn everything she possibly could! Frances started out as an assistant which consisted of administrative tasks and eventually helping with calls in our Resource and Referral Call Center. She developed a deep compassion for the vision and mission of Mercy. That compassion, combined with her huge heart and caring spirit, became a tremendous blessing to us. She was so very eager to learn all that she could so she would be most effective in serving the families in Clay County who are in need. She continued learning many new skills, including computer technology and quality call handling, which soon positioned her to be our **Lead Call Center Care Agent**.



Over the next several years she was the call center “go-to person”, overseeing the day-to-day call center activities, training new call center team members and volunteers, ensuring resources were accurate and up to date; yet, ALWAYS made the incoming phone calls her top priority each day.

Frances also cared deeply for her fellow team members! Always checking in with each of us, making sure we ate lunch (in a timely manner OR else), helping in any way we may need it, and bringing us lots of laughter and joy as only Frances could with her one-of-a-kind sense of humor!

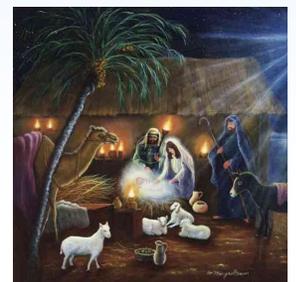
Frances was driven by her compassion for people. Her loyalty and love for Mercy and her community were unmatched. While we are so very happy for Frances and her MUCH deserved retirement, we will always miss her presence and infectious joy around the office.

All the best to you Frances!!!! With love from your Mercy family!

Did You Know?

HOW DECEMBER RECEIVED IT’S NAME:

In the Julian and Gregorian Calendars, December is the twelfth month of the year. The last four months of our year receive their names from Latin numerical terms. Prior to the introduction of January and February into our calendar system, the old Roman calendar employed a calendar of only ten months. Latin numbers were given to these months: *septem*, (meaning seven) became September; *octem*, (eight) became October; *novem* (nine) became November; *decem* (ten) became December. When January and February were added to the ten-month calendar to become our twelve-month calendar, these latter four months retained their Latin names, despite their new positions as months nine, ten, eleven, and twelve.



Welcome to our Call Center - Mary Joy Fiore!!



Mary Joy has volunteered for Mercy Support Services alongside her husband, Tony since 2017. She recently transitioned on staff as our Call Center Care Agent. Mary Joy assesses all of our phone calls from our local community in need of spiritual or financial assistance; all while maintaining our core values of self sufficiency. As an Orange Park native, Mary Joy has worked with local churches in the Jacksonville and Orange Park community to help our leadership pursue the Kingdom of God. She is an advocate for youth ministry and has served faithfully as a Youth leader at the Celebration Northside center. Mary Joy enjoys spending her free time paddle boarding and exploring many of our beautiful State Parks and crystal clear springs.



A Testimony of Overcoming!



Hello everyone!

I just wanted to give you an update from the last time we met at the Donor's Breakfast in February. At that time, I had 30 days left to complete my nursing program. I am pleased to announce that I am now officially a registered nurse, and ALSO, I secured that job that I prayed for! Currently I am in one of Mercy's transitional homes with my next goal to purchase my own home. I would like to let everyone know how much the Mercy Self-Sufficiency Program has meant to me and my daughter's life. I just want to thank you

ALL for the love and support you have given to us throughout our journey. We will always be grateful!

KT
Mercy Self-Sufficiency Client



Upcoming Events

Donor Breakfast– February 24, 2022
Orange Park United Methodist Church

5th Annual Jack Myers Champions for Mercy Golf Tournament– May 6, 2022
Eagle Landing Golf Club

A Word From Patrick (continued from page 1)

With these growing needs, we are committed more than ever to seeing Mercy Village built for the expansion of our programs in the coming years. We ask you to keep this expansion in your prayers, as well as our Program staff, who are confronted daily with the extreme needs of those in crisis and limited by the available resources in our community. Together we are making a difference! We know that God makes all things work together for the good of those who love Him and are chosen to be a part of His plan. We are all a part of His plan.

May God Bless you,

Becoming a Heritage Partner

Through the years, as Mercy has grown, our loyal donors have grown along with us. Although there are a few who have already included Mercy Support Services in their will, until now, we did not have a formal program to recognize these faithful supporters and their amazing acts of generosity.

HERITAGE Partners are those of you who designate a legacy or bequeath - a sum of money, items of possession or property in your will to Mercy Support Services and its growth. Your gift does not have to be cash only. You can also designate shares, bonds, jewelry and valuables, insurance policies and real estate.

Leaving a bequest to Mercy is a significant way to share your heart for Mercy by paying it forward. It is a DESIRE to bless people beyond a lifetime with an expression of deep conviction and an overflowing sense of gratitude that our lives and families are a gift from the hand of God.

This simple act of worship establishes a legacy of charitable giving throughout your family and community for generations to come.

There are many different ways to set up a legacy, based on your personal situation. If you are interested in learning more about how you can make a lasting impact through designating a gift in your will (Estate giving, stocks, cash, appreciated securities/ stock, real estate, artwork, partnership interests, personal property, life insurance, or a retirement plan) please contact R. Patrick Hayle at

RPHayle@mercysupportservices.org
(904) 297-4061



A huge THANK YOU to Andrea Fogarty!

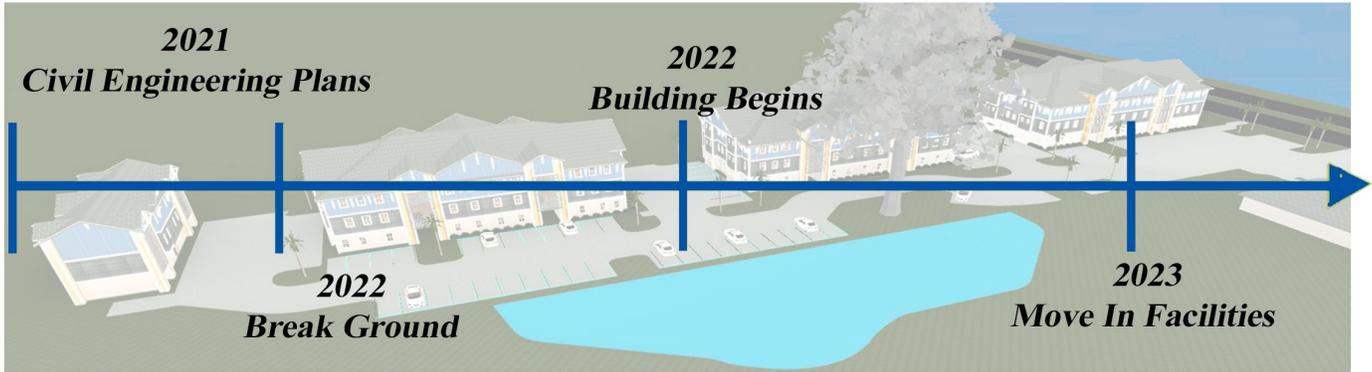


We could not proclaim the accomplishments of this year's Night of Hope without recognizing our committee Chair for 2021, Andrea Fogarty. She and her husband John have been loyal supporters of Mercy since 2017, and her volunteer commitments have grown through the years, as a Night of Hope committee member, a Golf committee member and this year, Chair of the Night of Hope event. Her talents for organization and creativity have raised the Auctions for both events to a new level, and we have been blessed to learn from her skills.

We tease her about her event-planning binders, and yet they are a constant resource for all the facts as well as future suggestions. This year's Night of Hope event exceeded all goals, raising over **\$125,000 for Mercy programs!**

THANK YOU to Andrea for your time and involvement with Mercy! It has made a huge impact in so many lives!

The Difference YOU Can Make



The Village will be a 65-unit complex comprised of supportive housing for our Self-Sufficiency Programs, including dorms that will house our unaccompanied high school youth and an activity center.

Capital Campaign Plans for 2022!

It is again my pleasure to give the Mercy community an update on the progress on Mercy Village.

In September, with 100% attendance, Mercy Staff and Board met to revisit the mission and vision for Mercy Village. With the Pandemic adding additional burdens, there was concern that we had developed “mission drift” as a result. And even though we were able to keep almost 200 families in their homes and lent enormous help in other ways to those affected by the pandemic, we recognized the need to get back to our original mission – to help our clients get to a level of self-sufficiency. Our focus will be returning to how best Mercy Village can improve our 10-year record of success in helping those who seek a better life.

We discovered a stumbling block recently. The issuing of permits to begin site work are awaiting the payment of the impact fees to the Clay County Utility Authority – approximately \$250,000. We are praying that God will put this in the heart of someone. The estimated cost to begin is \$950,000.

The Capital Campaign Committee structure has been established. John Thrasher and Jim Horne have graciously agreed to be our co-chairs for this committee. Under their direction, will be three leaders: a community leader – Connie Thomas, a business leader, and a ministry leader to assist with this campaign. All printed materials have been finalized to present to prospects and we hope to have a kick-off event and groundbreaking ceremony as soon as funds are available.

Monetary funds to date include several 5-figure donations, a 6-figure commitment, and notice that a donor has made a 7-figure bequest in their will. Please continue to pray with us that God will touch the hearts of other individuals, businesses, and foundations to make our vision a reality.



Dr. Robert Cowie
Chair, Board of Directors
Mercy Support Services

- 1 @ 2,400,000
- 1 @ 1,200,000
- 2 @ 600,000
- 3 @ 300,000
- 3 @ 180,000
- 10 @ 120,000
- 12 @ 90,000
- 15 @ 60,000
- 20 @ 30,000
- 30 @ 18,000
- 40 @ 12,000
- 50 @ 6,000
- many gifts





Volunteer Appreciation Event (Continued from page 1)

Mercy Support Services Volunteers are second to none! On Friday, November 5, we hosted our 2nd Annual Volunteer Appreciation Event. And despite a very rainy day, we celebrated our wonderful volunteers with a BBQ feast, gifts, music and games. The Father’s Heart Ministry supplied the delicious food and the music was provided by High Point Community Church. To find out more information on volunteering with Mercy Support Services call (904) 297-4052 or email Brandi Tubbs at btubbs@mercysupportservices.org



In Memory of Kathy Garske



How do I write a paragraph or two about the best volunteer ever that I had the pleasure to volunteer with? I would need to write a book about Kathy Garske.

Kathy Garske was not just an extraordinary volunteer I had the pleasure of volunteering with, Kathy was my friend. We began our volunteer work together at Mercy Support Services in 2012. Kathy took on any volunteer work that came her way. Just to mention a few; she helped with the 501c3 process for Mercy Support Services, answered telephone calls in the Call Center, participated in the weekly Prayer Group with Heather Clarke and Juliette Van Heerden, and wrote grants with me, Janey Fox, at her side. We were quite the team for many years at Mercy Support Services.

Mercy Support Services and I miss her profound presence, knowledge, kindness, spirituality, and sense of humor.

Kathy is smiling down from Heaven marveling at the tremendous achievements Mercy Support Services has accomplished and is cheering us on as we move forward.

Until we meet again.

Janey Fox



MERCY PARTNERS IN OUTREACH

On Saturday, October 23rd, Mercy was honored to host another outreach with **Saved2Serve**, **Seeds of Love** and **Clay County Rescue Mission**. It was an amazing day that blessed many of our local Clay County families with a fun “Fall Festival” event filled with candy, face painting, toys, games, and a hot lunch; as well as provided perishable and nonperishable groceries, haircuts, health insurance, and more! Approximately 300 people were served! So many testimonies have been shared from not only participants, but also the vendors and providers. Hearts were touched that day and families left knowing they are loved and cared for. This is what unity in community is all about! We are truly blessed here in Clay County with the most loving and selfless people! To the numerous vendors, organizations, ministries, and volunteers who came together for the community, WE THANK YOU!!!! It couldn't have happened without you. We look forward to serving alongside you for the next one!



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