On Saturday April 9th, we invite you to our 25th Anniversary Walk for AIDS. The Sisters of Mercy opened House of Mercy in 1991 in response to the growing HIV/AIDS crisis which had reached epidemic proportions. In 2016, we celebrate the love and compassionate care shared at House of Mercy for 25 years.

Funds Raised at our Walk Will Help Our Low-income Residents Living with AIDS

Will you help us? Invite your friends, family and co-workers for the 3-mile walk through historic downtown Belmont that begins on the Sisters of Mercy campus.

Raise funds in support of your walk. We challenge individuals to raise $50 or more towards our $39,000 goal. Walk for AIDS T-shirts will be given to the first 300 walkers meeting our $50 challenge!

Afterwards, join the picnic reception on the House of Mercy grounds. Check-in begins at 9:30 am. Music will be provided.

Continued on page 2

Twenty-five Years of Mercy & Hope

In 1988, a Sister of Mercy from Guam (an organized territory of the U.S. in the northwest Pacific) stood at a Sisters of Mercy chapter meeting and asked, “What are we going to do about the AIDS crisis?”

The Sisters decided to create a home to care for persons living with AIDS. It was named House of Mercy, after the home that Catherine McAuley, foundress of the Sisters of Mercy, opened in...
Celebrate Our 25th Anniversary...
continued from page 1

by DJ Buddy Love. House of Mercy President Stan Patterson, Board Chair Maggie Baucom and Sister Jill Weber will welcome walkers at 10 am.

A walk flyer, donations form, team captain packet, fundraising tips and map can be printed from our website or call us at 704-825-4711 x3 for information.

On April 9th, turn in your donations at 9:30 am at the stone shelter on Catherine McAuley Way on the Sisters of Mercy campus in Belmont, rain or shine.

After the walk, pick up your picnic lunch at the House of Mercy residence. We’ll announce the total amount raised and prizes will be awarded for Top Individual Fundraisers and Top Team Fundraisers.

Walk for AIDS participants enjoyed dancing to tunes by DJ Buddy Love at our 2011 reception. Buddy will be back this year!

Gaston HIV Outreach Program will offer free and confidential HIV and STD testing and House of Mercy tours will be offered during the reception.

If you can’t join us, please send a tax-deductible donation in the enclosed envelope or online at www.thehouseofmercy.org.

House of Mercy thanks you!

Directions: The Walk begins and ends on the Sisters of Mercy campus in Belmont, NC. From Interstate 85, take exit 27. From Charlotte, turn left off the exit ramp onto Route 273, then turn right on Wilkinson Blvd. From Gastonia, turn right off the exit ramp onto Route 273, then turn right onto Wilkinson. Enter the campus on your left at the Sisters of Mercy sign on Catherine McAuley Way. Follow the red balloons to parking.

Thanks to our 25th Anniversary Walk for AIDS Sponsors and Friends*

In Memory of
Doug Newton

In Memory of
Doug Newton

In Memory of
Doug Newton

We appreciate our 2015 World AIDS Day / Giving Tuesday Sponsors and Friends

St. Gabriel Catholic Church

GILEAD

Bank of North Carolina • Beam Electric Company • Toal Industries, Inc. • Toby Outdoor

* Sponsors as of 3.2.16. See our website for updates.
“We rejoice in the continued invitation to seek justice, to be compassionate and to reflect mercy in the world.”

From the Constitutions of the Sisters of Mercy of the Americas

Twenty-five Years of Mercy...

continued from page 1

Dublin, Ireland in 1827. The first House of Mercy was for unemployed and poor girls in need of shelter and education. The new House of Mercy would provide a safe haven and compassionate care for persons living with AIDS.

Sisters Pauline Clifford and Rosalind Picôt met with Bishop John Donoghue to propose a partnership with the Charlotte Roman Catholic Diocese to create an AIDS ministry. Although the legal partnership was not pursued, the Charlotte Diocese contributed $100,000 and lent $100,000 for the Sisters to start the ministry.

The Sisters provided the land for the home on their Belmont campus and created a board of directors. After much planning and fundraising, the new facility opened its doors on May 18, 1991. Since then, 320 residents have made House of Mercy their home.

Before the advent of new medications around 1996, an AIDS diagnosis usually meant death within several years if not sooner. In the 1990s, many of our residents were gay men or persons who were infected through IV drug use. In the last five years, 64% of our residents have been African-American and 41% have been female. We have also had an increase in Latino residents (7%) which led the ministry to recruit Johaly Chavez, our bilingual Coordinator of Resident Recreation and Volunteers.

Highly Active AntiRetroviral Therapy (HAART) can help persons with HIV Disease live longer, healthier lives if taken early with appropriate health care. Although treatments have improved, the epidemic of new infections continue, especially in the South. As of June 30, 2015 there were 7,625 reported persons living with HIV disease (including 3,108 living with AIDS) in our 10-county service area.

Stan Patterson, House of Mercy President since 1997, says, “House of Mercy cares for some of our most vulnerable citizens. On behalf of our residents and staff, I thank our community partners for twenty-five years of generous support. We could not continue this AIDS ministry without you.”


Dickens, a white Samoyed who came to House of Mercy around Christmas 1992.

Dickens was able to sense when a resident’s death was near and, if invited, he would spend more and more time close by, often lying in the resident’s bed. Director of Nursing Shirley Stowe said, “He knew before the staff knew.”

Dickens lived at House of Mercy for over six years and died in Oct. 1999.

A yellow Lab puppy named Hope joined House of Mercy in 2000. She was full of energy and a lot of fun but also a lot to handle!

Hope, our last live-in dog, was adopted by volunteer Steve Keeble who brought her to back to the residence to visit. Hope lived a happy life with Steve until her passing in 2012.

In recent years residents have enjoyed visits with therapy dogs from Paws to People.

LaGena Lookabill Greene, model and HIV+ activist, shares a hug with a House of Mercy resident in 1996.
HOUSE OF MERCY NOTES

• Thank you to Sinead O’Doherty for her service on the House of Mercy Board as Secretary and Development Committee Chair. Congratulations on your new job in Greensboro!


• The Pound Cake Lady never wanted to leave her name or receive thanks for her home baked pound cakes for House of Mercy residents. This elderly woman (now in her nineties who recently moved to receive assisted living) took great joy in bringing pleasure to our residents. We appreciate the love she shared with us!

• Please consider a donation to House of Mercy via the reply envelope or credit card donation at www.thehouseofmercy.org Thank you!

RESIDENCE WISH LIST

These items are needed at House of Mercy and can be dropped off at 304 McAuley Circle in Belmont on the Sisters of Mercy campus (or call 704-825-4711).

• Donated meals and drinks: bottled juice, soda, Kool Aid, Crystal Light, tea bags, Gatorade
• XL garbage bags, liquid laundry & dish detergent, Clorox, Lysol, Mr. Clean
• Movie tickets to Franklin Square (Gastonia)
• Gift cards: WalMart, Golden Corral, Pizza Hut, Tony’s Ice Cream, KFC, local restaurants
• Individually wrapped snacks
• Gallon freezer Ziplock bags
• Dove soap: bar or liquid
• Dove body wash, deodorant
• Shampoo, conditioner
• Triple blade razors
• Vaseline, chapstick
• Toilet paper
• Pantry staples
• Canned foods
• Canned fruit cups
• Flushable wipes
• Kleenex
• Hand Sanitizer
• Paper towels

Join House of Mercy’s WALK FOR AIDS and picnic reception on Saturday, April 9th. Story page 1.