

Winter/Spring 2018

A newsletter for St. Ann's Home residents and families



Upcoming EVENTS

Saturday, March 17th
7:00pm

St. Patrick's Day Party
Bishop Kearney Auditorium



Saturday, May 12th
Mother's Day Brunch

Look for future
communication with
seating times



Saturday, June 16th
Father's Day Celebration

More information to come



**Please check the monthly
Recreation Therapy calendars
for more information**

Robotic Cat Delights Dementia Patients at St. Ann's Community



By Gino Fanelli

Rochester Business Journal, December 29, 2017

What brands come to mind when you think of medical technology? Bayer? Pfizer? Siemens Healthineers?

Certainly you could go down the list and still never come up with Hasbro. The toy producer known for G.I. Joe and Transformers doesn't scream medical ingenuity, and its newest line of robotic tabby cats, complete with flowing fur and lifelike meows and purrs triggered by nearby voices, doesn't quite trigger clinical thoughts.

However, at St. Ann's Community, these robotic animals are showing true promise with the vulnerable

clientele that call the community home. Eighty-five percent of the residents at St. Ann's have been diagnosed with some form of dementia, and for those patients, a dose of companionship has been shown to be invaluable in improving quality of life.

Therapy animals, of course, are nothing new. St. Ann's in the past has played host to flesh-and-blood cats and dogs to keep their residents company. The move to robotic animals, however, is a new innovation that has been picking up speed. St. Ann's is the first in the Rochester area to begin using robotics, and the results have already spoken for themselves.

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DEMENTIA WORKSHOP

St. Ann's Community is excited to invite you to an interactive workshop designed for families and friends of residents living with Dementia. We will discuss changes your loved one may be experiencing and strategies of partnering in their care.

Please RSVP to Mollie Jones
at 697-6513.

TUESDAY, MARCH 13th

2:00-4:00pm

St. Ann's Home

Life and Learning Center
1500 Portland Ave.

THURSDAY MARCH 22nd

6:00-8:00pm

Cherry Ridge

Community Room
900 Cherry Ridge Blvd.

*A minimum of five participants is required for class to take place.
The workshop will be approximately 2 hours long. Please attend 1 session only.*



Luck was in the house as we hosted Casino Day for our residents! Thanks to Upstate Vegas Events for bringing a touch of Vegas to St. Ann's Home.

Six St. Ann's residents joined celebrities, international and local artists and college students in donating works of art for display at Rochester Contemporary Art Center's 6x6x2017 Gallery!



Residents took a **"Dude Cruise"** on the Harbor Town Belle. They also enjoyed live music from St. Ann's resident John D. and our Marketing Manager, Tom.



Residents from all floors get together on Friday afternoons to rehearse with the St. Ann's Singers or the St. Ann's Bell Choir.

This year they serenaded us with songs from 1917 at our Centenarian Salute. They also dazzled us with popular tunes at their "Singing in the Springtime" concert, made us laugh with their "Summer Camp Songs," performed at the Bishop's Advent Mass, and rang in 2018 with their "Sing in the New Year" holiday concert.

In honor of Patriot's Day, St. Ann's Home residents **visited Rochester Fire Department Engine 12** and brought the firefighters cookies they had decorated. The residents received a tour of the station and were able to test out some equipment!



Robotic Cat Delights Dementia Patients at St. Ann's Community *continued from page 1*

"There's a focus here on Alzheimer's and dementia, because often you'll find patients in an agitated state, and so some level of this is the calmness. That was the thought process behind it," said Michael Larche, Chief Technology Officer for St. Ann's. "And early results have been positive, not just from a patient's perspective, which is obviously very important, but also on the staff."

***"She just lit up, and her world that seemed to be confusing to her at the moment all of a sudden came into focus."* – St. Ann's CEO Michael E. McRae**

Recent studies have shown promise in the use of robotic animals with memory compromised patients. A study by Wendy Moyle of Australia's Griffith University, released in August, looked to study the impact of introducing "Paro," a robotic seal, to 415 dementia patients. Over the course of 10 weeks, residents were monitored interacting with Paro, which responds to touch, temperature and vocal cues, and a non-robotic, plush version of Paro. While Paro was not found to be able to replace routine care, it did show potential to curb agitation in the short-term more effectively than the plush toy, which also showed some potential.

While Paro costs \$5,000, Hasbro's robotic cats retail for just under \$100. That means a recent \$1,000 donation to St. Ann's goes quite a long way for a program showing real promise to change the quality of life for dementia patients, as Recreation Therapist Jamie Barbara explained.

"I would go to the resident with the robotic animal already turned on, and the response that I got was the residents thought the cat

was real, and this was an actual cat I was bringing to spend time with them," Barbara said. "A lot of times, residents would put out their arms to hold it, touch the cat and make interested noises, when throughout the day they don't do that. They don't spark interactions with other residents and staff, but with an animal—everyone wants to touch an animal when they see one."

Part of Barbara's job includes studying the behavioral impact of the animals on the patients, and the results thus far, she said, have been stunning.

"Residents who said no, they don't like animals, will interact with it and carry the cat around all the time," Barbara said. "It aids with sleeping as well. We use that as intervention for one resident who wanders around all night, but as soon as she gets the cat, she'll go to her room, sit down, pet the cat and fall asleep."

The comfort provided by the cats, as Barbara has seen, is not limited to dementia patients either.

"I did bring this over to TCC (Transitional Care Center) when one resident was saying she missed her cat so much, and she did not have dementia," Barbara said. "And she just lit up, and thought it was almost hilarious how realistic this cat was. Her

family loved it, too, because her mood was so positive, when before it was negative: 'I don't want to be here, I want to go home,' then she was laughing and smiling with this robotic cat, even though she knew it wasn't real."

St. Ann's has ordered three more cats so far to join the one gray and white one used in the unit—one orange to be named Charlie, in honor of St. Ann's recently retired 16-year-old tabby.

The robot lies in a bed just like any other cat when not in use, and yet is always up for a cuddle and a good pet. That type of stability and dependability can play a massive role in improving the quality of life for memory compromised patients.

"I went up on one of the floors, unbeknownst to me, as the staff was pulling out the cat and giving it to a resident that was a little agitated, or preoccupied I guess, and her eyes as big as diamonds," said St. Ann's CEO Michael E. McRae. "She just lit up, and her world that seemed to be confusing to her at the moment all of a sudden came into focus, came into check, came into reality. She was able to sit there and the attention she was able to give that cat transformed her in front of my eyes."

The residents of St. Ann's are no different than other doting pet owners who like to stroke their fingers through their feline's silken fur. They are a testament to the all-too-human behavior—when the mind runs astray, we seek shelter in creature comforts.





ST. ANN'S
COMMUNITY

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*Caring for the most
important people on earth*

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Rochester, New York 14621

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“Honoring Grief” Sand Mandala

“Honoring Grief” began Nov. 5 with the construction of a Tibetan Buddhist sand mandala in the lobby of St. Ann’s Home. A mandala is a spiritual symbol that brings harmony and peace to the world. As an object of meditation a mandala serves as a spiritual tool for developing compassion. The mandala was created over five days by Venerable Tenzin Yignyen, a Buddhist monk and visiting professor of Tibetan Buddhism at Hobart & William Smith Colleges in Geneva, NY. While creating the mandala at St. Ann’s he offered spiritual meditations and answered questions from spectators.

Council Meetings

Family Council meets in the Board Room

Each month we welcome families and friends of St. Ann’s Home residents to discuss issues and information that affect their loved ones’ home here at St. Ann’s.

Thursday March 8 at 3:00pm

Tuesday April 10 at 6:00pm

Thursday May 10 at 3:00pm

Tuesday June 12 at 6:00pm

(No meetings in July/August)

Resident Council meets in the Board Room

Each month residents of St. Ann’s Home join together for a town hall meeting to discuss current issues, events, and information that affect them.

Thursday March 15 at 2:00pm

Thursday April 19 at 2:00pm

Thursday May 17 at 2:00pm

Thursday June 21 at 2:00pm

Thursday July 19 at 2:00pm

Thursday August 16 at 2:00pm

Questions? Call Triciajean Jones at (585) 697-6687.