



# Friends of Elizabeth Seton Residence

Volume 2, Issue 2

Fall 2004

## In This Issue

---

■ From the  
President's Desk  
Page 2

■ Residents Get Into  
the Holiday Spirit  
Page 4

■ Online Giving  
Debuts on ESR  
Web Site  
Page 5

## GENEREROUS DONATION A FAMILY AFFAIR

By RACHEL COPPOLA

**T**he generous \$50,000 donation to the ESR endowment fund this fall is more

than a story of dollars and cents. It is a story of the bond between two sisters and their upbringing in a family devoted to the Catholic Church.

The gift comes from the estate of Mary Regan in the name of her sister, Sister Joseph Gerard (Monica Regan), who was a member of the Sisters of Charity for 66 years and a resident of Elizabeth Seton Residence.

Although Dorothy Reynolds is more than a decade younger than her sisters Mary and Monica, she remembers them fondly. She recalls her mother's surprise when it was Monica and not Mary who decided to enter religious life. Unlike Mary, who spent a good deal of time in church, Monica was more interested in being outside and playing baseball with the boys in the neighborhood. "I guess you could say she was the unlikely candidate," Reynolds said.

She remembers, at age 7, watching Monica board a steamship in Boston bound for the Sisters of Charity in Halifax, Nova Scotia. Monica entered religious life at age 24 as Sister Joseph Gerard and was missioned in the Boston area and Canada, often on faraway assignments in Northern Canada where life was difficult. Reynolds has no doubt that her sister was able to do good work in this part of the world. "She had a tremendous sense of humor, and she kept people's spirits up," she said.

Both sisters learned about dedication and good works from their family, which was part of St. Peter's parish in Lowell. The Regans had 14 children and gave two of those children, Father Joseph Gerard and Sister Joseph Gerard, to religious life. The Regans were active and devout members of the church, and Reynolds remembers that her house was always full of clergy and parishioners, who were welcome to stop by at any time. "It was a family life that revolved around St. Peter's Church," she said.



Monica and Mary Regan share a May birthday cake.

continued on page 3

# MESSAGE FROM THE FRIENDS' PRESIDENT

Dear Friends,

“Come away by yourselves to a quiet place and rest awhile.” Mark 6:31

And that's exactly what I did! In early September, when the rest of the world headed back to work, or back to school, I climbed aboard a plane and headed west, far west, to a Benedictine monastery high in the foothills of the Santa Ynez Mountains in Santa Barbara, California. \*

It was there that I steadied the rhythm of my life. Up at five in the morning, praying the Divine Office with the monks many times during the day, reading, being, observing the Great Silence, and going to bed at nine o'clock to sleep a deep, restful sleep. It was a time of incredible spiritual growth and renewal. I left refreshed and with a much greater sense of how—when you are quiet, still, not moving an inch—God speaks to you. When I returned, I decided that I would try to have a little more balance, more rhythm, in my life.

And in some respects, building an endowment takes rhythm; you have to pace yourself. Frenetic activity works for a while, but a well-planned, balanced approach to meeting fund-raising goals works best. This year I plan to meet with two or three of you every week. It will be good to provide you with an update on our fund-raising progress, as well as review with you some planned-giving strategies that can provide tax deductions for you and your families. But the best part will be meeting with you and your families individually.

This past summer, I had the privilege of meeting and working with the family of the late Mary Regan in deciding how a \$50,000 bequest to the endowment fund would be made. The bequest was made in honor of Mary Regan's sister, Sister Joseph Gerard, a member of the Sisters of Charity for many years.

It was wonderful to be regaled with stories about a family with 14 kids who grew up during the Depression in a loving, devout home. I really enjoyed looking at all of the pictures of the Regan family and reading about their father, a Lowell policeman who was much loved and admired in the community.

But this is what philanthropy is all about: building relationships with our donors, sharing memories, and helping to complete gifts that

have great meaning for donor families and Elizabeth Seton Residence.

The Friends of Elizabeth Seton Residence is very grateful to the Regan family for making this generous gift to the endowment fund. And we hope you will consider making a similar bequest or planned gift. For more information, please contact me at 617-621-1596 or [ngilbert@gilberthci.com](mailto:ngilbert@gilberthci.com).

Faithfully yours,  
Nicholas H. Gilbert, J.D.  
President

\* As a candidate for a master of divinity degree at Trinity Seminary and a lay preacher in the Episcopal Church, I often spend time away in prayer and meditation.

“ And in some respects, building an endowment takes rhythm; you have to pace yourself. Frenetic activity works for a while, but a well-planned, balanced approach to meeting fund-raising goals works best. ”

# A TALE OF TWO SISTERS GIVING BACK

continued from page 1

At ESR, Sister Joseph Gerard entered into an extended family much like the one she experienced as a child in Lowell. Niece Mary Reynolds believes that ESR was a saving grace for her Aunt Monica. Although she had dementia, Sister Joseph Gerard was able to move around freely and received superior care from the staff at ESR.

“We just felt like they really tried to accommodate her,” Mary Reynolds said. “The thing we always felt comfortable about was that she was happy till the end.”

Reynolds said that even during her illness her aunt “always looked outward.” Each night, she would take out her address book and make two phone calls. “She always called two different friends that she hadn’t talked to in a while—people from all across the country.”



**A 1937 Regan Family Photograph:** Taken before Monica went to Mount Saint Vincent, Halifax. Back: Paul, Thomas, Mary, Rev. Joseph, Dolores, Francis, Edward. Front: Monica, John, William H., Mary E., Dorothy, Eleanor.

Nicholas Gilbert, Friends of ESR president, said that the donation in honor of Sister Joseph Gerard will continue this family’s legacy of reaching out to others.

The \$50,000 will be placed in the Friends of Elizabeth Seton Residence endowment fund to be used for future operations and to enhance the mission of ESR.

## GIFTS OF LIFE INSURANCE

By NICHOLAS H. GILBERT, J.D.

A gift of life insurance can provide a significant year-end charitable tax deduction. You can purchase a new policy or donate a policy that you currently own but no longer need.

To receive a deduction, designate the Friends of Elizabeth Seton Residence as both the owner and beneficiary of the life-insurance policy. Check with your insurance agent for details.

**Example:** Let’s say you own a \$100,000 life-insurance policy with a current cash value of \$34,582. By transferring the policy to the Friends of Elizabeth Seton Residence as the new owner and beneficiary, you would be able to receive a current charitable deduction in the amount of \$34,582. If you decide to continue paying premiums after you make the gift, these additional premium payments will be tax deductible each year.

# HOLIDAY HAPPENINGS

The social calendar for ESR residents is booked solid for the next few months, thanks to Susan Inglis, ESR's social worker and admissions coordinator.

The holiday festivities kicked off on Oct. 27, with a mask-making event, and kept on rolling with a Halloween party on Oct. 30. The party was a true family affair, with children and grandchildren of residents and staff members showing off their costumes. Attendees included a Terry Francona and a Johnny Damon, a cheerleader, a dragon, and a Tinkerbell.

Yvette Vezina and Sister Catherine Rorke enjoyed seeing all the kids. "Any holiday with children is the best holiday," Rorke said.

November will be just as busy at ESR. Inglis will ask family members to participate in a Door Decor Project by helping residents deck ESR's halls—and doors specifically—in preparation for a Holiday Stroll on Dec. 6. At this event, everyone will be invited to view the festive doors, sing Christmas carols, and collect toys for underprivileged children.

Since Inglis came to ESR 11 years ago, she has brainstormed new activities that are fun for the whole family. "My goal is to try to come up with some intergenerational projects at ESR to get the kids involved with the older folks," she said.

Residents are enjoying all the activities and many are looking forward to Christmas this year. Sister Mary V. Casey said, "I like Christmas because the family comes together and it's the birth of Christ renewed. It's so joyous."

Sister Gabriel Marie added, "I like Christmas because I believe in Santa Claus!"

—RACHEL COPPOLA





## SHOW YOUR TECH SUPPORT: DONATE ONLINE!

ESR is proud to announce that making a gift to the endowment fund is as easy as point and click.

Anyone with internet access can now donate online using a major credit card by going to the ESR web site ([www.elizabethseton.org](http://www.elizabethseton.org)) and clicking on the "Support the Friends of ESR" link in the lower left-hand corner. In a matter of minutes you can give a one-time gift in memory of a loved one or sign up to donate on a continual basis.

This service is provided by Groundspring.org, which supports more than 100 non-profit organizations across the country, including Big Brothers Big Sisters International, Communities for a Better Environment,

and Global AIDS Action. Groundspring has a secure web site and does not release donor information to third parties.

All gifts will help grow the ESR endowment fund, which will be used to purchase necessary capital equipment and pay for important renovations.

ESR Administrator Phyllis Tedesco said, "Each tax-deductible charitable donation will allow us to continue to provide the level of care our friends have come to count on, and to expand our services as we strive to meet the spiritual, physical, and emotional needs of each of our residents."

—RACHEL COPPOLA

## Come Celebrate With Us!

Next spring ESR will celebrate its 25th anniversary with wonderful festivities.

Look for more details in your  
spring 2005 newsletter.