We are delighted to highlight the contributions of our friend, Nancy Marsden, who joined our Board of Directors in 2008 and has been a generous supporter ever since. Nancy was tasked, at first, with finding items for the Live/Silent Auction to our Musical Feast for the Eyes and Ears, as a member of the Fundraising/Development Committee. Per her usual style, she gave it her all and achieved new levels of partnerships with area businesses while securing wonderful items. She was successful in this duty for six years!

Nancy’s commitment reveals her character: “If I am going to do something, I’m all in!” she remarks, “and if I can’t be, I will quit.” We are grateful for this tenacious and loyal spirit, as Nancy’s philanthropic heart is drawn to many varied causes. She has served on the Auxiliary Board of Francis House and is active with DoVes, against domestic violence. With a passion for health and wellness, she is concerned about the environment and animals and proudly supports Heifer International. Nancy is also actively involved in the Brockway Farms Garden Club, having been a member for the past fifteen years and serving as past president. Nancy’s strength is networking and making “connections of the heart.” She enjoys bringing people together for enrichment, education and enjoyment.

She has brought many to AURORA’s mission, as well. Nancy considers herself a “cheerleader” for AURORA and explains why: “The mission statement is very ambitious but it didn’t take me long to realize how competent and responsible people are [in the organization]... the bottom line is, I met the clients and they proved that AURORA helps all the people they say they do and they get results.”

(continued on page 2)
Nancy clearly articulates our mission when she said, “AURORA stops the potential marginalization of the whole family.”

We are so grateful to Nancy for all that she has done to support AURORA and those we serve. She embodies the “can do spirit” and positive, results-oriented energy, coupled with compassion, that drives us to do our best each day. Thank you, Nancy, for being you!

For more information about Women of AURORA, visit our website at auroraofcny.org, or call 315-422-7263.

**Spotlight On: Summer Fun and Learning**

Thanks to a grant from the Jim and Juli Boeheim Foundation, three families were able to send their children to Camp Mark Seven programs this summer. Camp Mark Seven (CM7) offers an array of recreational, educational, leadership and spiritual programs for deaf, hard of hearing, and hearing individuals of all ages. The goals of CM7 include enhancing the lives of Deaf and hard of hearing children and youth, along with hearing kids of Deaf adults (KODA). They offer family programs as well, all with the intent to increase communication through sign language and improve connection for people, both hearing and Deaf.

We are grateful for the partnership and support of the Jim and Juli Boeheim Foundation for making this opportunity possible.

Kudos to Wegmans for offering an American Sign Language class for their employees this past summer. Instructor Monica Wilmot offered an eight-week introductory course that was enriched and attended by many co-workers and one employee who is Deaf. The offering included learning about Deaf culture so that not just communication but understanding and connection could be fostered.

Area employers interested in offering an American Sign Language Class for employees can contact Director of Interpreting Services, Maggie Russell at AURORA at 315-422-7263.
Spotlight on: Partnership
Lions Club and AURORA: A Perfect Match

AURORA of CNY’s relationship with the Lions Club literally goes back over one hundred years as both organizations were founded in 1917 with similar missions to champion the needs of people in our community who needed assistance. In 1925, during an international convention of Lions Clubs that was held in Cedar Point, Iowa, Helen Keller charged Lions with becoming “knights of the blind in the crusade against darkness.” And the tradition and service to individuals with vision/hearing loss was begun.

Interestingly, it was a Lion, George Bonhem, in 1930, who created what we now know as the “white cane” by painting an ordinary cane white with a wide red band after he witnessed a man who was blind struggling to cross the street.

In our region, there are 25 Lions Clubs that have made a huge impact, with the Syracuse HOST Lions Club being one of the longest running as they celebrate 95 years in November. We are grateful for their ongoing support, the latest in the form of a generous $2,000 donation.

Recently, we met with Lion Ed Cooney who is the current, newly instated King Lion or president of the group, and Lion Doug Russell who has been a Lion for over 40 years and is the past president of the club, as well as the Membership Chair, and has held many district and statewide positions with the organization. In fact, Mr. Russell has affected Lions International by converting the LIONS acronym from its original Liberty, Intelligence, Our Nation’s Safety to Loving Individuals Offering Needed Services.

The number one priority for the Syracuse HOST Lions Club and all Lions Clubs is membership. New members are urgently needed to carry out the service projects that directly impact our community. To join this largest civic organization in the world is rewarding, fun and full of possibilities. Lifelong friendships, worldwide travel and the “good-for-the-heart” feeling that comes from knowing that you are making a valuable contribution are all a part of the Lions experience.

There is a great motto that says… “Where there is a need, there is a Lion!” Wouldn’t YOU like to be one?

For more information contact: Lion Douglas Russell, PDG at 315-952-2136
Spotlight On: Ms. Donna Reese

A resolution was passed this summer by the Syracuse Common Council to recognize our colleague, Donna Reese for the lifetime of achievement and contributions to the community. We are so proud to know Donna and to have her on our team as AURORA’s Outreach Specialist and Coordinator of the CNY Support Group for People with Vision Loss.

Both personally and professionally, Donna’s commitment to civil rights has impacted and influenced individuals and our community. She has been past president of the local chapter of the NAACP, an active member of the National Action Network.

After glaucoma caused Donna to take an early retirement from Hutchings Psychiatric Center, she received services from AURORA and upon their completion quickly joined our staff. Since then she has never looked back and now dedicates her energy and time to accessibility and fair treatment for citizens with sensory loss and other disabilities.

Donna has turned every potential tragedy in her life into a means to help others and she is very deserving of the great honor she received. Thank you and congratulations, Donna!

Spotlight On: Support Groups

The newly named “Blind Support Group of the Greater Cayuga County Area” was recently featured in an Auburn Citizen newspaper article to get the word out and attract new members.

Susan Gray of Auburn and Nancy Anderson of Marcellus co-lead the group that is both informative and provides an opportunity to share and socialize with others living with vision loss. The group meets the last Friday of the month at Cayuga Community College, located at 197 Franklin St. in Auburn from 10:00am to 11:30am. If you would like to be put on the support group list, or would like more information, you can contact Susan Gray at (315) 730-6845.
Spotlight on: Giving
Generosity Spans the Globe

We wish to thank Dr. Dayaprasad G. Kulkarni and the Aarogya seva Global Health Volunteer Alliance for their generous support of our efforts to provide training, apprenticeship and mentoring to prepare Mr. Jay Regmi to realize his goal of becoming a Deaf Sign Language Interpreter. Mr. Regmi has recently relocated here from Nepal and is fluent in Nepalese Sign Language. As he swiftly adjusts to life in America, he states that he is ready to “give back for all the help” he has received thus far.

Dr. Dayaprasad is the Founder and Director of Aarogya seva and is also an Assistant Professor in the Department of Biomedical and Chemical Engineering at Syracuse University. We met him through a presentation at the Syracuse Rotary Club, where he learned about AURORA’s work with foreign born Deaf

(left to right) Debra Chaiken, Laura Smith, Leanna Cleveland and Virginia Bough (Rural Health Network)
Dawnings— News for the AURORA of CNY Community

members of our community.

The objective of the Aarogya seva Alliance is to build a global network of medical and non-medical volunteers; provide meaningful volunteering opportunities in the health space; create models within the healthcare ecosystem that will demonstrate and showcase the effects of an organized network. You can learn more about these impactful efforts at http://www.aarogya.seva.in/

Spotlight On: Innovation

We are pleased and honored to announce that AURORA has been awarded with a CNY Care Collaborative 2019 Innovation fund grant in the amount of $500,000 to establish Integrated Vision/Hearing and Healthcare Services in partnership with Liberty Resources, Inc.

The Innovation Fund was established by Central New York Care Collaborative in 2017 to help coordinate services and improve care for Medicaid and uninsured patients by funding creative approaches that address physical, social, and mental health needs while also fostering cross-sector partnerships throughout six counties in the region: Cayuga, Lewis, Madison, Oneida, Onondaga, and Oswego.

Innovation Fund awardees were selected from nearly 40 applications submitted from local organizations.

AURORA’s project will focus on coordinating primary care, vision/hearing care and mental health services for patients with vision/hearing loss. The project will also offer education and links to community resources for the same patients to help manage chronic disease. “This will be a whole new way to deliver care in our community for a population that is traditionally underserved,” says Debra Chaiken, President of AURORA of CNY. “We’re very excited because we would not be able to offer these types of services without the Innovation Fund.”

Improving access to healthcare and community services for people with vision and hearing loss is a core part of our mission. We are excited to develop and present this new model in collaboration with Liberty Resources to make life easier, especially for those with diabetes and other chronic care needs.
Join Our Mission— Without the generous support of our donors, we would not have been able to serve this community over 100 years. Donors like you provide much needed funds for programs such as our support groups, social work services, and skills training.

We appreciate donations in any amount and thank you for your assistance.

Please complete & mail this form to:

AURORA of CNY, 518 James St., Suite 100, Syracuse, NY 13203-2282

AURORA of Central New York 2019 Donation Form

Name ________________________________

Address ________________________________

City _______________ State _____________ Zip ________________

Phone _______________ Email _______________________

I would like to make a contribution to AURORA of Central New York at the following level:

☐ $25  ☐ $50  ☐ $100  ☐ $250  ☐ $500*  ☐ Other $ __________

☐ Please send me information about AURORA’s Planned Giving Program

I am paying by:  ☐ Check (please make checks payable to AURORA of CNY, Inc.)

☐ MasterCard  ☐ Visa  ☐ American Express

My account # ________________________________ Expiration Date __________

V-Code (three digit code on back of card) ______________

Name on account (if different from above) ________________________________

Billing address (if different from above) ________________________________

I am aware and allow AURORA of Central New York to charge my card for the above purposes.

Signature: ________________________________ Date: __________

*Gifts may be acknowledged in our newsletter; if you wish to remain anonymous please check here ☐

In return for your gift you receive no material goods or tangible services for supporting AURORA of Central New York. Your donation to AURORA is tax deductible.
Remembering Our Friend

We are greatly saddened by the passing of our dear friend, Bob Haege. Bob had been one of the longest standing active board and honorary board members, having joined the Lighthouse Board in 1970 and offering his steadfast support to our organization for nearly 50 years. He held the positions of Board President and Chair of our Finance Committee and was an active member of the Fund/Development Committee.

What we will remember most are Bob’s gentle presence and wise counsel, both of which he shared so generously and selflessly to serve so many.