

# THE COMPASSION CHRONICLES

THE TURN-A-FROWN AROUND (TAF) FOUNDATION, INC.

VOLUME 2: ISSUE 4

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**Quarter Auction at the Almond Tree Manor, Alpha, NJ**

## *End Loneliness, Starting at 25¢!*

By Joseph Meany

Director of the Mental Health Initiative

**October 1, 2014, Alpha, NJ** – Angel Ed, Director of the Nursing Home Initiative, pulled off a fun and successful Quarter Auction to raise awareness and funds for TAF and its important mission of ending loneliness. Angel Ed kicked off the event telling his inspirational and motivational personal story of what led him to the amazing work he does in ending loneliness in nursing homes.

There was a great turnout, including members of the CSPNJ's Middlesex County Wellness Respite Services Team, TAF's Management Committee, and various church groups affiliated with the Nursing Home Initiative.

I know this writer can speak for everyone in

attendance when I say it was a very fun auction, filled with great prizes and a lot of laughter. The big ticket item was the Kindle Fire, along with a 50/50 raffle, hosted by the Almond Tree.

At the end of the night everyone left smiling. I believe it was a combination of an excellent event organized by Angel Ed and the personal satisfaction knowing their contribution will allow TAF to make a positive impact in the lives of so many individuals in nursing homes, hospitals, and mental health facilities who are looking for, and in need of, happiness, friendship, and compassion. ●

***This Quarter Auction was an excellent example of how different branches of TAF support each other in efforts to end loneliness, one friendship at a time.***

***If you would like to suggest a fundraising idea, please email [tafafoundation@gmail.com](mailto:tafafoundation@gmail.com)!***

## The First Forever Friend



**Drew Horn, W.C., Founder**

By Caitlyn Yerves  
Director of Public Relations

As TAFAs build and expand its empire of compassion, there is one question that is in the hearts of all the troops for this mission to end loneliness – what happened to Drew?

While the answer to this question is a little more complicated than a simple article can illustrate, it is important that TAFAs supporters know what is going on. In the beginning of 2014, Drew decided to go on sabbatical – thus, taking a leave from any operational roles and responsibilities in the Management Committee or Executive Board. After over twelve year of dedicating his every waking moment to the mission, Drew simply needed to take some time off to find himself and work on some of his deeper rooted mental and emotional issues.

It is essential to note that while Drew is very remorseful for his disappearance, this is not a new thing for him. Throughout his whole life, he has experienced many games of hide and seek – times when he wants to hide from the world, and other times where he seeks to share the truth of loneliness and compassion. The truth is, he is always seeking – but there are times he just doesn't want people to see him. This is not to be taken personally, and it is fair to ask that TAFAs supporters

have compassion for Drew in his times of suffering.

When the pain of his inner demons dominates the love in his heart, he chooses to drop off the face of the Earth. This is his decision, and the TAFAs Management Committee has been doing its best to respect his wishes. Ideally, Drew will be back to the heart of the mission – helping to bring Compassion Comedy to the institutions of isolation in his unique and blessed fashion. However, while this will take time, it is not guaranteed. It is with great hope that TAFAs sails forward into the horizon of Drew's vision.

In the meantime, TAFAs supporters are encouraged to fuel the fire behind the mission to end loneliness. There is no greater tribute to pay to Drew than to become an active Forever Friend and TAFAs volunteer. There is always a demand for visitors, a need for helping hands behind the scenes, and more recently, an absolute necessity to keep the spirit of Drew alive in TAFAs. This includes entertainment – inspirational, compassion filled entertainment for the forgotten friends that have forgotten how to love themselves. Every person has a place in this mission, and when all the pieces come together we will solve the puzzle and end loneliness. ●

## Happy Holidays!



With our next newsletter scheduled to be released after the New Year, TAFAs would like to thank each and every supporter who has brought us this far. We are so thankful for the volunteers and friends we have and we're looking forward to another great year!

We wish you a safe and joyous holiday season with your family and Forever Friends! ●

By Joan Venezia  
FAM Smile Station Founder

Colleen Meyer, President of TAFE, approached me in the spring of this year about starting a Smile Station at Francis Asbury Manor (FAM), an assisted living facility in our home town of Ocean Grove. Colleen would soon be hosting a charity event with a number of our fellow Ocean Grove friends attending and all could be possible Forever Friends. I contacted FAM and quickly started the Smile Station paperwork with Meg Cox, the volunteer coordinator at FAM. She was open to the idea immediately. FAM would do the required background checks and Meg would train the volunteers and match the Forever Friend volunteers with the FAM residents.

Soon after giving my pitch for Forever friends at the Arbonne fundraising event for TAFE, I had 8 volunteers filling out the required applications for TAFE and FAM. By mid-summer, six volunteers were meeting their FAM resident. Meg did a great job of matching our TAFE volunteers with the FAM residents. For example, Diane, our Ocean Grove Forever Friend born in Wales, asked for an international resident. Meg connected Diane with FAM resident Evelyn who came to the US from London in 1945 as a war bride. They both share their international backgrounds now with great pleasure. Annie had learned Arax, a previous coworker, was a resident at FAM's memory unit. Meg connected Annie with Arax and her brother Gary who also was a resident of FAM. The 3 of them share conversations and memories on their visits. I share meals and entertaining events at FAM with Flo weekly and we both enjoy our time together. Initially I thought Flo might like to go out for meals as a change of pace, but FAM meets her limited dietary needs while I enjoy a lovely full course meal in the FAM dining room. We recently listened to a concert by Baritone James Michael at FAM, who not only had a great voice but a personal approach of sharing stories as he introduced each song.

Meg and FAM's volunteer tracking system has made it easy for me to do my monthly task of reporting the amount of hours spent by the FAM Smile Station. FAM has a touch screen in the lobby that all volunteers sign in and out on for each visit. Meg produces a TAFE report monthly that allows me to produce my report in minutes. Now that the FAM Smile Station has been running so smoothly, I have been concentrating on slowly expanding the number of Forever Friends. I have been doing this - on a one-to-one basis but soon will open it to a broader audience. ●

### Poetry Corner

By Chelsea Durocher  
MSU Smile Station Coordinator

She flounders (to struggle helplessly)  
And I hurt  
So I stay a little while  
When I tell her I'm not leaving  
I can see her smile...Widening  
Each minute I stay  
I feel her loneliness  
Melting away  
This is why I don't stray  
And I stay by her side  
Buying her lotto tix  
So the pain can subside  
Optimistic she dreams  
Of the limits unseen  
If this lotto dream could come true  
So silly time seems  
But I know what my time means  
The glue to her dreams, it's true  
I come every week  
And I can see her less weak  
Stronger because of me  
I feel like a hero  
A beautiful soul who once felt zero  
Finally feels again  
Because she has a friend  
That friend is me  
And I post this so you can see  
That you can be a hero too  
If you try

## *A Robotic Future of Friendship*

By Allen Teplitzky

Director of Organizational Development

TAFa is a dynamic organization that hopes to end loneliness where it can on a realistic scale with its current volunteer base. So far our efforts are centered in New Jersey, but we are slowly making forever friends in states outside of our own. Our volunteers come from different countries and we know loneliness is not just something in the United States. Loneliness is a global issue.

Japanese inventor Hiroshi Ishiguro is busy at finding a way to end loneliness with technology. This excites me the most on the front of loneliness science and I recognize his efforts as remarkable! They have invented robots to end loneliness, which might be an affordable way one day to make sure everyone has a friend. With every friend the quality of life can be increased and the length can be elongated of those who are extremely lonely.

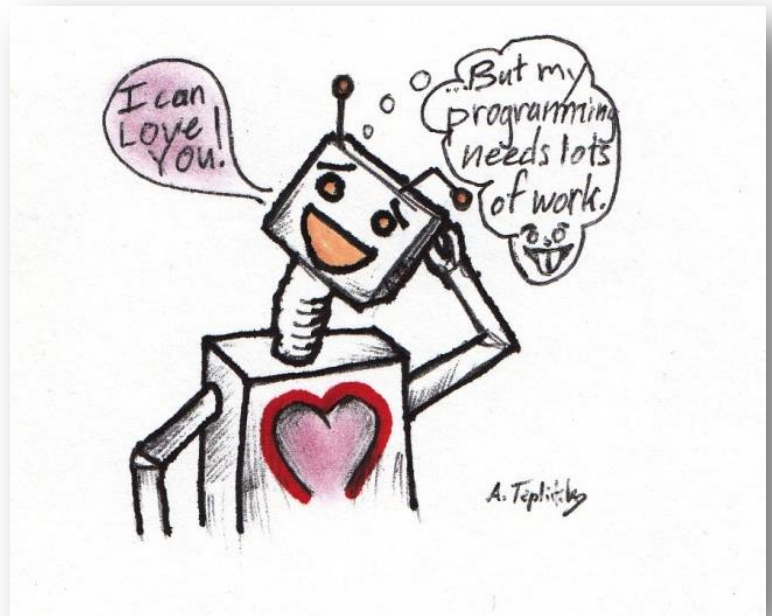
The level of interactions of these machines are a start, but nowhere near the level of love, caring, or ability a real person gives. I consider someone may develop something similar to the artificial intelligence from the movie, Her by Spike Jones, which could just be a voice from a computer. There are already voices with entire languages programmed, but having an interaction with a program and creating an authentic relationship is tougher for even experts to create. People have a variety of responses, behaviors, intelligences, personalities, and special characteristics that make them unique. You as a Forever Friend cannot be easily replaced. •

Contact us at [tafafoundation@gmail.com](mailto:tafafoundation@gmail.com)  
or call (862)682-9830.

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## *The Smile Station Express*

The Smile Station Express  
travels from town to town,  
setting up Smile Stations  
to turn your frown around.

Who will love the loveless?  
Who will be a friend?  
Who will seek and find the lost?  
Who will bring loneliness to an end?

Will it be the worship house?  
Love is what they teach.  
Or the local bar and grill?  
With beers within your reach.

Elk clubs, moose, and lions,  
any animal will do.  
Kids from grammar school to college,  
it could even be your friends and you.

So climb on the Smile Station Express  
as we gather each Forever Friend.  
Start a Smile Station right now,  
is the message that we send.

Just think about the lonely  
and how they will come alive.  
Just think about the forgotten  
whose soul you will revive.

So will you become a Forever Friend?  
Don't make us wait or guess.  
Please bring your unconditional love  
and join the Smile Station Express.