

Shelter

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New director at Community Fortress

Brandy Kreider started as Community Fortress' director in June.

She appeared with Twining at the July Fremont City Council meeting and outlined some of the shelter's desires to add transitional housing and extend its hours to better serve the city's homeless community.

Kreider said Thursday that she met recently with Downtown Fremont, Inc. Executive Director Kristie Bilger.

Bilger relayed concerns from some downtown business owners about the loitering issue.

A couple of guests from outside the area had been responsible for some of the issues downtown, Kreider said.

Malcolm said Sanchez also visited the shelter in July and invited Twining to speak to city council members.

The Community Fortress board president said shelter officials have had conversations with some of their guests about how their actions in public reflect on the shelter as a whole.

She said there are limits on what the shelter can do during the 12 hours their guests are on the street, at Birchard Public Library, or anywhere else in downtown Fremont.

"We don't have any control over them after they leave," Malcolm said, adding that some of the shelter's guests are dealing with untreated mental health issues.

Sanchez said he talked to four or five Fortress guests during his visit about their needs and what the city could do to assist them.

He spoke with Fortress officials about a desire to provide better services at the shelter and build partnerships with community agencies.

The mayor said he recommended to Kreider that the shelter form a community advisory board with people who have backgrounds in serving the homeless.

He said he recognizes the shelter's staff are primarily volunteers and doing the best they can to serve their guests.

Malcolm said the shelter is trying to "promote the good" in what it offers the community, with Kreider appearing at city council meetings, the downtown farmers market and other public venues to let community members know more about Community Fortress and how they can help.

A lack of available and affordable rental units in Fremont is a major obstacle for many of Community



Community Fortress has shown a slight increase in its occupancy numbers this summer, as the Fremont homeless shelter hopes to expand its hours and services for its guests.

DANIEL CARSON/THE NEWS-MESSENGER

Fortress' guests.

"We've found housing is a difficult thing for our guests to find," Kreider said.

Affordable housing struggles

Malcolm said she'd like to see more rental housing in Fremont that is based on tenants' income.

At Community Fortress, several of the shelter's guests are living on as little as \$800 a month, Malcolm said.

"We've got some people that are working and saving money for an apartment, but can't find anything," she said.

Kreider said when an affordable apartment becomes available in Fremont, often Fortress guests will all know about it and sometimes hold an impassioned debate over who will get the unit.

Twining told council members she lost her previous apartment at a bad time and didn't have enough money saved to put down a deposit and cover monthly rent for a new place.

Ragan Claypool, adult and youth development director at Great Lakes Community Action Partnership (GLCAP), told the News-Messenger in February GLCAP spent nearly \$472,000 in rental assistance for homeless prevention activities and for those who were homeless in 2020.

Claypool said there's been a 30-to-35% increase in Sandusky County rental assistance requests since the start of the pandemic.

Sanchez said Thursday city officials know there's a significant need for housing in Fremont across all income levels and for seniors on fixed incomes.

Pete DiSalvo, founder and president of the Columbus-based DiSalvo Development Advisors, told city officials in February his firm had surveyed 25 apartment properties with 1,188 units in the Fremont area as part of a city-commissioned housing study.

The city has a 99.4% occupancy rate for rental units, he said.

"You have a very old housing stock. Just about everything was built in the 1970s for the apartment community," DiSalvo said.

Sanchez said the city needed to make it easier for local developers to build housing units.

He said the city needed to work with the Sandusky County Land Bank to help rehab more homes and make them livable, which would in turn free up more apartment rental units.

Some homeless individuals don't want to stay in a shelter

Malcolm said the shelter's guest numbers are slightly higher than the start of the year.

Community Fortress is averaging about 10-12 guests per night, up from an average of 8 at the beginning of 2021.

The number of women staying at the shelter has increased dramatically this year.

Some days, there are more women at Community Fortress than men, compared to a little more than 10% in January.

There are guests that have been at the shelter for as long as five months as they try to find affordable housing.

Not every homeless person in Fremont is a guest at Community Fortress, Malcolm stressed.

Malcolm said she and Kreider have stopped by the tent city at the former Kroger site and dropped off food.

One of the homeless residents living there has a dog and doesn't want to stay at Community Fortress.

None of the other people expressed a desire to come to the shelter.

"There's homeless all over our city. We can't make them stay with us," Malcolm said.

Kreider said the shelter is looking for some new beds, as well as plumbers and general contractors that would be willing to donate their work for interior renovations.

The shelter always needs volunteers and donated food items for brown bag lunches, she said.

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Obituaries

TODAY'S OBITUARIES AND DEATH NOTICES

Name	Age	Town, State	Death Date	Arrangements
Durdel, Nancy M. (Lanning)	72	Clyde	29-Jul	Auxter Funeral Homes
Kretz, Dorothy "Kay"	82	Oak Harbor	29-Jul	Robinson-Walker Funeral Home & Crematory, Oak Harbor
*Molyet, Bryan Andrew	-	-	26-Jul	-

* Additional information in display obituaries

Obituaries appear in print and online at www.thenews-messenger.com/obituaries

Bryan Andrew Molyet

Bryan Andrew Molyet passed away peacefully at home on July 26, 2021, of complications from congestive heart failure and pulmonary fibrosis. He was born in Fremont, Ohio, on July 13, 1952, to Donald and Rita (Ochs) Molyet.

He was a 1970 graduate of Fremont Ross High School and received a B.S. in Mechanical Engineering from The Ohio State University. While at OSU, he was elected to the Freshman Senate, was involved in student government in Baker Hall, and also participated in intramural sports. An enthusiastic lifelong learner, he later earned his MBA from Rollins College, his pilot's license, real-estate license, and stock-broker certification. He was a member of Mensa and enjoyed studying history.

Having moved to Florida in 1981 for employment with Florida Gas, at the time of his death, Bryan was a Professional Engineer and owner of Molyet Engineering, Orange City, FL.

Bryan was an extremely kind-hearted and fun-loving man who loved laughing, entertaining, delicious food, and good drinks, especially red wine. He always had a joke ready for any situation and could light up the room with his smile, laugh, and personality. He loved watching old-time TV shows and movies, and especially loved movie popcorn with extra butter.

Bryan married Eileen Ann Shirer on August 30, 1980. As Bryan's favorite hobby was traveling, they traveled extensively throughout the United States and the world.

He was a proud Ohio State alumnus and a die-hard fan of Buckeye football. He never missed watching or attending an Ohio State game. They traveled to many bowl games, including National Championships. They looked forward to going back to Ohio each fall to attend at least one football game at "The 'Shoe" after a family and friends' breakfast at The Blackwell.

Bryan is survived by his beloved wife, Eileen; his brother, Mike Molyet, sister-in-law Diane Molyet, mother-in-law Frances Shirer, sisters-in-laws and their spouses: Gayle and Chuck Campbell, Donna and Stan Cochrac, Nancy and Doug Nemec, Lori and Keith Kahle; nephews, nieces and their spouses: Adam and Megan Molyet, Allison and Alex Walls, Andrew and Tara Molyet, Jason and Ann-Marie Molyet, Todd Thozeski, Amy Zatelli, Hannah and Greg Cooper, Micah and Jennifer Nemec, Abbey Nemec, Sam and Jennifer Kahle, Jordan Kahle, Matt and Celia Kahle, Jason and Leslie Kahle, Josh and Brianna Kahle, Emily and Drew Hottmann; and numerous cousins, great-nieces, and great-nephews.

In addition to his parents, Bryan was predeceased by his brother Jeff Molyet, sister-in-law Elaine Molyet, niece Sarah Molyet, and nephew Jason Campbell.

Extending genuine hospitality to his family and friends was more than important to Bryan, it was his life. He always made everyone feel welcome, and was humbly generous. Bryan has always been surrounded by rescue dogs, providing them immeasurable love and care. He leaves behind Thelma, Louise, Falcon, Meadow, and Holly/Gomer.

The family would like to thank Alavon Direct Cremation Services, Orange City, for their assistance. A Celebration of Life will be held at a later date this fall. Memorial contributions may be made to Pet Rescue by Judy at www.petrescuebyjudy.com.

He was loved by many and will forever be missed.



DeWine

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But DeWine, through a spokesman, said there was no reason to fire either staff member.

"Neither the FBI nor the Department of Justice has contacted anybody in the governor's office. They have not subpoenaed anybody in the governor's office. They have not interviewed anybody in the governor's office. They have not named anybody in the governor's office as a person of interest in this investigation," spokesman Dan Tierney said. "This is an investigation that is, rightly, about (former Ohio House Speaker) Larry Householder."

Last week, FirstEnergy admitted that it bribed Householder and ex-PUCO Chairman Randazzo in exchange for a \$1 billion bailout for two nuclear plants then-owned by FirstEnergy Solutions and other legislative and regulatory help. The company must pay a \$230 million fine.

Both Householder and Randazzo have said they did nothing wrong. Randazzo has not been charged.

What FirstEnergy is saying

FirstEnergy's deferred prosecution agreement detailed how the utility company paid Randazzo's company \$4.3 million in January 2019, shortly before DeWine appointed him to oversee utilities.

Randazzo told Dawson about the payment on Oct. 30, the day after FirstEnergy fired three executives, a DeWine spokesman said. But Dawson didn't tell DeWine about the payment until Nov. 16 when the FBI searched the utility regulator's home. Randazzo resigned four days later.

Dawson, who previously served as DeWine's chief of staff, also disregarded concerns about Randazzo's close ties to FirstEnergy during his nomination process.

Randazzo isn't the only person in DeWine's orbit with close ties to FirstEnergy. McCarthy, a former FirstEnergy lobbyist, led a FirstEnergy-funded dark money group before joining the administration. McCarthy worked with lawmakers to pass the nuclear bailout in House Bill 6, legislation that DeWine signed the day it hit his desk.

"I have confidence in the people who work for me," DeWine told reporters Thursday morning while brushing off Democrats' concerns.

What Democrats are saying

Democrats are criticizing DeWine, but they also played a role in helping Householder return to power. Crossman and Weinstein were among the 26 Democrats who backed Householder for speaker in early 2019; the majority of Republicans wanted Rep. Ryan Smith instead.

"I was lied to about what his real motives were and what was behind his effort to become speaker and how it really, truly centered in many ways around a singular piece of legislation," Weinstein said.

Both Democrats voted against House Bill 6 and have since worked to remove Householder from the Ohio House of Representatives, a vote that happened in June.

Jessie Balmert is a reporter for the USA TODAY Network Ohio Bureau, which serves the Akron Beacon Journal, Cincinnati Enquirer, Columbus Dispatch and 18 other organizations.