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Brecksville "Angels"!



# BRECKSVILLE *Magazine*

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**Beautiful Yards  
Have Curb Appeal**

# Brecksville "Angels" Hosted Event in Tropical Paradise

by Nancy Thaler

Margaret Mead once said, "Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed people can change the world." Inspired by the personal tragedy of a close friend, one Brecksville couple's actions are bringing meaning to that often-repeated quote.

Bill and Nancy Florio, who have been fundraising for St. Augustine Health

Campus, a facility offering assisted living, rehabilitation, long-term care and end-of-life care for those in need in Northeast Ohio, were first made aware of the facility several years ago when their friend, Linda Lucarelli of Brecksville, suffered a heart attack. As a result, Lucarelli was in a persistent vegetative state (PVS) for two years. St. Augustine's was one of the few facilities in the area equipped



*Bill Florio posed in the tropical-themed garden he landscaped himself, which served as the setting for a fundraiser for St. Augustine's Health Campus he held with his wife, Nancy. Photo by N. Thaler*

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to care for PVS patients.

The Florios were impressed by the quality of care Lucarelli received, and after her passing, they committed themselves to giving back to the facility that had helped their friend so much.

Bill, a former police officer who now has an investigation firm in Brecksville and who had served on the board of the Cleveland Rape Crisis Center, serves on St. Augustine's board of directors. Nancy is part of a committee called Angels on the Avenue.

The Florios initial fund-raising efforts helped to create a garden on the campus, located in the inner city, housed in the former location of St. John's Hospital in Cleveland's Detroit-Shoreway neighborhood. The garden is one of the few places patients may relax and enjoy the beauty of nature.

"It's an older building," Nancy explained, noting that much of it needs renovation. This need has inspired the current project for her Angels on the Avenue committee, the renovation of bathing facilities for patients.

"We're calling it a bathroom/spa renovation," Nancy said, saying they hope to raise enough funds to complete updates, including the installation of a whirlpool tub for wheelchair-bound patients.

The Florios held a fundraiser in early August to help make that vision a reality. In their backyard sanctuary of palm trees, hibiscus, and other tropical plants, they

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hosted a steak dinner for approximately 60 guests. One hundred percent of the ticket proceeds, along with funds from a silent auction and 50-50 raffle, will benefit the bathroom renovations, which Nancy estimates will cost \$40,000.

The beauty of their backyard, which Nancy called "Bill's pride and joy" is a testament to what one person can do with enough enthusiasm. The garden features a waterfall, which seems to emerge directly from the forest behind it. Bill explained, "Every one of those rocks were carried up here by hand."

Just as the landscaping of the Florio's yard took place rock by rock, so, too, will the work to improve St. Augustine's continue, bit by bit. Nancy expressed her joy that despite the difficult economic times, everyone she has asked has continued to help make her work for St. Augustine's possible. She cited a fall wine tour as an upcoming fund-raiser and noted that the facility's annual fund-raiser, Top O' the Towers, is held in March.

For additional information about the St. Augustine Health Campus, visit [staugustine-manor.org](http://staugustine-manor.org). For additional information about Angels on the Avenue, call 440-838-1974.

# THE EYE DOCTORS

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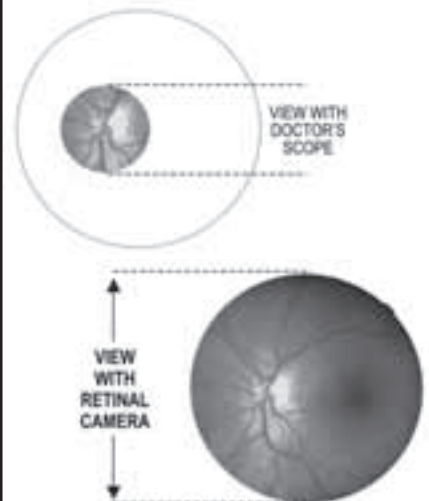
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