

# Buffalo Bills tight end visits St. Ann's Home



Lauren McFalls/Photo intern

Buffalo Bills tight end Pete Metzelaars visited residents of St. Ann's Home/The Heritage, 1500 Portland Ave., Rochester, on Oct. 17. At left, Metzelaars (left) signs an autograph for Jerry Buscetto. Metzelaars (top photo) dwards an admiring fan. After visiting with residents in the lobby, the Bills tight end joined them for dinner. Metzelaars was in town for the 'Everybody's Walkin and Rollin' event, which raised funds for disabled children and adults served by the Al Sigi Center and the Easter Seal Society.

## Senior finds gratification in providing others a respite

By Rob Cullivan  
Staff writer

PENFIELD — When Charles J. Roth lost his wife to Alzheimer's disease in August, 1991, he feared he might take to the bottle to deal with becoming a widower.

"It was kind of tough," recalled the 74-year-old Roth. "I wasn't a drinker but I would've because I was so bored."

Instead, Roth, who serves as an usher at St. Joseph's Church, 43 Gebhardt Road, became a volunteer for Respite Cares!, a not-for-profit agency and a division of Heritage Christian Home, Inc., 349 W. Commercial St., East Rochester.

Respite Cares! recruits volunteers who are matched with families caring for a disabled child or an adult with Alzheimer's disease or a brain injury. Roth was honored for his work with the agency on Friday morning, Oct. 15, when he received a Senior Role Model Award from OASIS — Older Adult Service & Information — during a

ceremony at Midtown Plaza marking the OASIS' fifth anniversary.

The award also recognized that Roth performs a wide range of jobs for the Alzheimer's Association/Rochester Chapter, including tracking down phone numbers; helping with bulk mailings; and staffing exhibit booths at area health fairs.

"Charles is one of those rare volunteers that will take on practically any task," said Judy Lawrence, executive director of the Alzheimer's Association. "He's a wonderful resource."

And Respite Cares! said this about Roth in a statement at the ceremony: "We don't know what what we would have done without Charles Roth on board."

Respite Cares! volunteers spend anywhere from two hours or more with a client each week to give the client's family a break, Roth explained. He knows the value of such volunteerism because a Respite Cares! volunteer provided him with regular time off from the around-the-clock caring his spouse needed when she was

still alive.

"I realized what a golden time that is," Roth said of his breaks. "You couldn't buy that."

About six months after his wife passed away, Respite Cares! contacted Roth and asked him whether he knew of anyone willing to work with a client with multiple sclerosis. The client happened to like music, fishing and painting — three of Roth's favorite activities.

"I didn't fall out of bed yesterday," said Roth, who soon realized that the agency was really looking for him to volunteer, and not some other person he thought was qualified.

Today, Roth works with eight families on a regular basis. Among his clients are people with Parkinson's disease, Huntington's chorea; and the effects of stroke.

"We help anybody," he said. "It isn't hard work. It's pleasant."

Roth added that receiving an award from OASIS felt nice, but that the recognition he truly craves comes from working with his clients.

"You just get the thanks from their eyes," he noted.

EDITORS' NOTE — For information on volunteering for Respite Cares!, call Barbara J. Genier at 716/381-6550. The Alzheimer's Association, Rochester Chapter, also needs help. Call 716/442-3820.

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### Halloween dance slated for Oct. 28

ROCHESTER — Tickets are available for the fourth annual Senior Citizen Halloween Dinner Dance scheduled for Thursday, Oct. 28, at Logan's Party House, 1420 Scottsville Road.

Monroe County residents ages 60 and over are welcome to attend the event. A sit-down dinner at 6:30 p.m. will be followed by big-band music from the group "Nice 'N Easy" from 7:30 to 10 p.m. The evening's festivities will also include a costume contest and surprise drawings.

Cost is \$13. To order tickets, call the Monroe County Office for the Aging, 716/274-7824, by Oct. 27.

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