



NOTES *from* HOME

The Boston Home | Fall 2005

Right at Home

The Path Less Traveled

In the movie *Whale Rider*, a young girl from New Zealand believes in her destiny so passionately that she takes on significant risk. Like this girl, the mission (destiny) of The Boston Home has led us to take the challenging “path less traveled” as we strive to help our residents lead purposeful lives. We embrace challenges on this journey as we advocate for younger adults with disabilities...those “faces out of place” in the healthcare continuum. Thanks to our dedicated Board of Trustees, staff, and volunteers, we have



succeeded in finding creative and sometimes inspirational solutions along the way.

Over a decade ago, our Trustees and staff charted a course that would steer us toward a standard for long-term care for adults with progressive neurological diseases, primarily multiple sclerosis. Today, our travels extend beyond our own campus in reaching this under-served population.

Recently, it was gratifying when The Boston Home received an “Outstanding Service Award” from the National Multiple Sclerosis Society (NMSS), recognizing our record of exemplary care and leadership. But it will still be an ambitious undertaking to establish national standards for care of adults with advanced MS. Today I’m pleased to say that we are closer to setting such standards now that The Boston Home’s Norma Harrington has been awarded a fellowship for this purpose.

On the local level, Norma and some of our residents recently participated in MS Day at the State House. We are encouraged that the

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National Recognition for an Outstanding Service Track Record

The Boston Home has received a distinguished honor—an “Outstanding Service Award” from the National Multiple Sclerosis Society (NMSS). Joyce Nelson, who was recently named President and CEO of NMSS, presented the award to Marva Serotkin, President and CEO of The Boston Home, in recognition of our exemplary care and leadership in enriching the lives of individuals with progressive MS.

Joining us at this recognition ceremony from the Central New England Chapter of NMSS were Arlyn White, President and CEO, and Linda Guidod, VP of Chapter Programs. We were also pleased to welcome recently elected State Representative Linda Dorcena Forry and City Councilor Maureen Feeney, who joined other friends of The Boston Home in touring our facility and speaking to residents and staff.



Marva Serotkin accepts award from NMSS CEO Joyce Nelson (far left.) Joining them is Cindy Walsh, TBH Director of Clinical Services (second from right), and Holly Burnes, Chairperson of our Board of Trustees (far right).

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Norma Harrington, Director of Outreach and Admissions.

Norma Harrington Chosen to Help Set Standards for Care

During her tenure at The Boston Home, Norma Harrington, a licensed social worker and an RN with specialization in MS, has distinguished herself as our Director of Outreach and Admissions as well as Care Manager for our Bridges program. Now, we salute her for reaching another milestone: She has been awarded a John Dystel Fellowship in Nursing by the National Multiple Sclerosis Society. In the six-month sabbatical afforded by the fellowship, Norma will codify nursing standards for the long-term care of adults with advanced MS.

While The Boston Home is already recognized as a standard setter and model for this kind of care, Harrington will pinpoint “exactly how we establish these guidelines and how they can be taught.”

Mentored by Cindy Walsh, our Director of Clinical Services, Harrington will distill knowledge and proven practices from the

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Legislature is considering a special commission to assess the need for long-term care for people with MS. And we thank the Legislature for voting this year for needed funds for quality care for all nursing homes in the Commonwealth.

Nationally, Hal Daub, President of the American Health Care Association, a strong voice for nursing homes in Washington, D.C., recently visited The Boston Home and met several of our residents. He recorded his conversations in his weekly newsletter.

Last month in Norway, I presented at the International Association of Homes and Services for the Ageing along with representatives from the NMSS and other nations. To help our efforts here at home, it is useful to learn about the strategies of different countries, and all governments need to step up their support for long-term care.

Our community of residents and staff are learning new skills through technology and education. Funded by the Department of Public Health and implemented by our assistive technology team, digital photography is a new offering in our resident tech program.

Many of our employees are pursuing career advancement through in-house and degree programs. We are proud of the achievements of our staff. Together, we are building bridges that lead to ongoing quality improvement.

In addition to reading the related articles in this newsletter, we invite you to visit www.thebostonhome.org to learn more about our technology program (see *Provider* reprint) and MS Day.

Marva Serotkin

Marva Serotkin, President & CEO



Hal Daub, President of the American Health Care Association (center), recently visited TBH. To his right: Marva Serotkin, President & CEO, and Mark Williamson, Director of Human Services. To his left: Norma Harrington, Director of Outreach and Admissions (left); and Ned Morse, President of MECF.

WORDS ON WHEELS

Dare I

Dare I to be larger than infinity
greater than magnificent
and stronger than omnipotent
a maker of time itself
with a destiny of spiritual health
the physical not far behind
a world is born from out of my mind
as great or as small as I should see
thought into reality

with all the thought in the faith I have to give
I will make the place in which I live

—Resident Al Gaines



Al's aunt, Rebecca Hill, introduces him to the audience before his poetry reading at recent "At Home with the Arts" event.

Note: This is one of many poems written by Al Gaines and shared with fellow residents.

We Are the Champions

A Salute to Steve Bergen and the Chapin School

When it comes to describing Steve Bergen and his longtime relationship with The Boston Home, the words "technology" and "kids" immediately come to mind. Back in the days before The Boston Home earned its present-day reputation as a leader in technology, Steve set up our first computer lab, and he helped connect residents with the outside world. At the time, Steve worked at Noble & Greenough School in Dedham, and he created an email buddy system for students and residents. He also organized the "Boston Wheelers," students who would push Boston Home residents in the Boston Marathon, raising much-needed funds for our future technology endeavors.



Students from The Chapin School participate with residents in the Dorchester Day parade.

Today, Steve teaches at The Chapin School in New York City, and he has introduced a new generation of students to our Home. For the last few years, Bergen has made it possible for students and residents to participate in the annual Dorchester Day parade. Students march with the residents and then return to our campus. The day culminates with Steve's sixth grade Chapin girls presenting authentic-looking Photoshop creations for their Boston Home partners. Chapin's sixth grade curriculum includes a unit on MS, and students work an entire month creating these graphics.

Over the years, Bergen has become a legendary volunteer in the annals of The Boston Home. Like the Boston Red Sox, whom Bergen has always adored, he is a true champion.



Steve Bergen and his class from The Chapin School.

Technology Enables Creativity as Digital Photography “WOWs” Residents

It started with a survey in which many of our residents indicated an interest in photography. It then took the form of a Vision Plan from our Technology Committee. And it materialized with the help of our student partners from the Citizen Schools as part of a “WOW” (the school’s term for a truly big moment).

This spring, WOW took on special meaning for our residents as it presented them with a new opportunity for creative expression. With the help of eighth graders from the Citizen Schools and a grant from the Massachusetts Department of Public Health to support resident empowerment programs, wheelchairs were adapted with a device called a “Bogen Arm” that supports a digital camera.

The photography project, organized by Director of Physical Therapy Thomas Plante and Director of Activities Kerry Donohue, educated students in innovative technology and digital photography. Don Fredette, our assistive technology specialist, and Faith Saftler, seating specialist, adapted the cameras for use on each wheelchair. Each student was paired with a resident, and together they rigged the chairs, shot

photos, and used the computers to edit a slideshow. Each resident had a remote control mechanism that met his or her unique needs.

Resident Ellie Kasilowicz enthused, “I can get the picture I want just by adjusting my chair. The only thing I need is assistance with the zoom. It’s neat!”

“This project is another great way to involve the community with our residents. It is very gratifying to empower our residents by giving them a creative outlet,” says Kerry Donohue, Director of Activities.

Recently, the students presented their WOW, or the culmination of their apprenticeships, at The Boston Home. The presentation consisted of a screening of a PowerPoint show for all the residents, staff, family, and friends. The photographs were also on display at our At Home with the Arts exhibition in June.

Residents can now opt to take photographs with volunteer assistance as a regular activity.

“This apprenticeship was a remarkable experience for the students. They quickly formed relationships with their resident partners and felt welcome and wanted,” says Nathan Darvish,

Dean of Engagement for Citizen Schools Eighth Grade Academy Apprenticeship Program.

Citizen Schools, founded in Dorchester by Ned Rimer and Eric Schwarz, is a leading national nonprofit provider of out-of-school learning programs for students in the middle grades, mobilizing thousands of volunteers in hands-on apprenticeships.



Resident Colleen Powers in a wheelchair adapted with a special device that supports a digital camera.

Climbing the Career Ladder

Scholarships

Two nursing professionals from The Boston Home have received Massachusetts Extended Care Federation (MECF) Scholarships: Judy Bellevue of Stoughton and M. Olava Cardoso of Dorchester. Bellevue, an LPN Charge Nurse who has been with The Boston Home for 13 years, is pursuing her RN at Curry College in Milton. Cardoso, a Senior Certified Nurse Aide

with 11 years at TBH, recently received her LPN degree from Roxbury Community College, and she is now pursuing her RN degree.

In addition, Lisa Layne of Dorchester, previously an LPN at our Home, received her RN from Quincy College. And Dieula Marcelin of Mattapan, a Senior Certified Nurse Aide at TBH for five years, earned her GED from Boston Public Schools Adult Evening High School.

Finally, we congratulate staff members who have won the Kristen Veal Coffman and Family Scholarship: Mompremier Alce, Judy Bellevue, Olava Cardoso, Yvette Myers, Bernadette Pierre, Daphney Remy, Kamla Singh, and Lorraine Scarlett.

Recipients are pursuing degrees such as LPN, Associate RN, BSN, and Social Work. We are grateful to the family of our resident, Kristen Coffman; they have contributed to the scholarship to honor Kris’ teaching experience.

Welcoming Mary Spagnuolo

Welcome to Mary Spagnuolo, a resident of Roslindale and a native of Mexico, who joins The Boston Home as a social worker!



Spagnuolo, who has a degree in Psychology from the University of California, provides counseling and support services to our residents. Previously, she worked as a social worker at DSS and Lemuel Shattuck Hospital; she was also employed at Avery Manor Nursing Home.

“When I interviewed here, I immediately fell in love with the place,” she says. “I saw that the residents were active in the life of the facility, and I wanted to be part of their lives.”



Judy Bellevue, an L.P.N. Charge Nurse, works with resident Linda Clarke.

The Boston Home in the Spotlight at MS Lobby Day at State House



TBH resident Mike Caristinos participates in MS Day at the State House.

Among the 200 participants at the fourth annual MS Lobby Day at the State House were Outreach & Admissions Director Norma Harrington, residents, and volunteers. Participants heard speakers such as First Lady Ann Romney, who was diagnosed with MS six years ago. They also interacted with their legislators regarding public policy.

In a related news report on NECN, The Boston Home was singled out for its specialized long-term care for adults with progressive MS, and Harrington spoke about the challenges of this underserved population—and the unique response of our Home.

Thanks for Your Support!

We are very grateful to all our supporters. Your continued generosity benefits our residents directly through our many programs. In the fall, our first annual appeal letter will highlight the benefits of our Rehabilitation Program, and it will focus on the need for upgrading and adding vital rehabilitation equipment.

To show your support now, please visit www.thebostonhome.org and click on the Donation Form on the home page.

Calling on Volunteers!

We also rely on community volunteers, with all levels of interest. To learn more, please contact Sally Gorman in Volunteer Services: 617-326-4299 or by email at sgorman@thebostonhome.org.

Norma Harrington (Continued from page 1)

clinical staff at TBH and other expert consultants. She will also travel around the country to interview other specialists and further refine these standards for nursing care.

The standards will then be made available to staff, clinicians, and administrators of other long-term care facilities so that skilled care for adults with advanced MS will become more widely available. This will begin to address the needs of hundreds who are on our waiting list or living in other care settings.

“Residents with MS at The Boston Home tend to be younger, more mentally alert, and more physically disabled than typical residents in geriatric facilities,” says Walsh. “But they live here longer, and their needs are different.”

Harrington sheds light on these divergent needs: “Just the room temperature can be an issue. Geriatric facilities need to keep room temperatures high, but heat can be debilitating for someone with MS.”

She adds, “Nurses caring for adults with advanced MS deal with issues of ‘executive function’—problem solving, critical thinking, and organizing tasks. This requires a different

“Residents with MS at The Boston Home tend to be younger, more mentally alert, and more physically disabled than typical residents in geriatric facilities,” says Walsh.

approach than does dealing with dementia, a more common geriatric issue.”

“This scholarship is a great honor for both The Boston Home and Norma,” says Walsh.

Faces Out of Place. Norma Harrington and other senior staff of The Boston Home will lead a workshop sponsored by NMSS and The Boston Home on September 20, 2005 at The Johnson & Wales Inn in Seekonk, Mass. Presented for clinicians, social workers, administrators, and therapists from nursing homes in Massachusetts and Rhode Island, it will address the need for appropriate placement and care for adults with advanced MS. For more information, contact Martha Maynard at 508-759-0402.

“We are very excited to be moving toward greater standardization in our industry—and assuming a leadership role in the process.”

Harrington will be pursuing a Master’s in Nursing from Boston College while doing her Fellowship work.

The John Dystel Fellowship Fund was created by Oscar and Marion Dystel in memory of their son. A practicing attorney when he was diagnosed with MS, John was eventually placed in a geriatric facility. In response to the lack of skilled MS nurses and facilities suited to the specialized needs of their son, the Dystels decided to support the work of physicians who specialize in MS and the education and development of certified MS nurse specialists. Harrington will expand the scope of the fellowship to the standardization of care for adults with advanced MS in long-term care facilities.

AT HOME *with the* ARTS: ACT III!

Our beautiful summer garden was an appropriate backdrop for guests, staff, and residents of TBH to congregate as they nibbled on strawberry shortcake and sipped old-fashioned lemonade during our Second Annual “At Home with the Arts” exhibition. Twenty-five talented artists displayed their works, which included photography, painting, stained glass, and multimedia presentations. Selected artwork was sold during the event, with a portion of the proceeds benefiting The Boston Home’s Arts, Entertainment & Outings—a daily program of lectures, performances, and visits to cultural and community events to enrich resident life.

Exhibition entrees were reviewed by our jury panel: Julie Connelly, Vice President of Community Relations at Citizens Bank; artist Elizabeth Colburn-Moraites, TBH trustee and advocate for the disabled; Ellie Kasilowicz,

artist and resident; and Pat Burson, painter.

A special reception the evening before the event was hosted by The Boston Home’s Board of Trustees Kevin Smith and Karen Quigley, neighbors Jean Knox and Christina Keefe, residents David Hatch and Ellie Kasilowicz, and resident family members Mary Catherine Calisto and Rebecca Hill.

This year’s event built on last year’s success, raising more money and involving more artists and corporate sponsors. Most importantly, more artists with MS were able to participate. The art show was made possible by grants from Biogen-Idec and Citizen’s Bank and many volunteers who contributed time, expertise, and donations.

Al Gaines, a resident, held the rapt attention of the audience during his poetry reading in the pavilion. Guests also enjoyed guitar music played by Tom Rhode.

Leslie MacWeeney, Director of Dorchester Community Center for the Visual Arts (Dot Art), displayed a fascinating piece featuring three life-size papier maché people.

One of the highlights of the afternoon occurred when we proposed to purchase “Immortal Goddess,” a watercolor by Dawn Evans Scaltreto. After Dawn toured the area and chatted with residents, she was so inspired and moved that she donated her piece to the residents. Staff and residents had selected the masterful painting because it features a scene of a white Koi swimming in a pond with other Koi—reminiscent of the single white goldfish swimming in our pond.

Florence Rawls, who organizes our special



Artist Dawn Evan Scaltreto and Holly Burnes, Chairperson of the Board of Trustees, pose in front of “Immortal Goddess,” a watercolor that Dawn generously donated to The Boston Home.



Volunteers helped to make Arts Day a success. Left to right: Judy Raup, Margaret Lamb, and Pat O’Neill.



Artist Elizabeth Colburn-Moraites (bottom right), TBH trustee and advocate for the disabled, joins Kerry Donohue, Activities Director at TBH, and Kathleen Cote and Chris Davis (standing).

National Recognition (Continued from page 1)

The National Multiple Sclerosis Society was founded in 1946. Through education, support, advocacy, and research, the Central New England Chapter of NMSS serves 13,000 individuals and families who are affected by MS.

This year, TBH staff, volunteers, and residents have addressed state legislators, health-care organizations, and healthcare facilities about insufficient community resources, residential facilities, and funding in our field.



Resident Ellie Kasilowicz, panelist on Selection Committee, studies paintings.



Grand Prize Winner Rose Montgomery poses with “Koi Pond,” a stained glass mosaic.

ALL IN THE FAMILY

Phone Directory

NURSING	
Director of Nursing Helen Hall: 617.326.4332	Medical Director James J. Mahoney, MD: 617.825.3905
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Evenings Dorothy Abel: 617.326.4291	Admissions & Outreach Norma Harrington: 617.326.4300
Weekends Johanna Longo: 617.326.4334	Business Office Kevin Buckley: 617.326.4263
Staff Development Kathy Pavidis: 617.326.4272	Community Development Florence Rawls: 617.326.4310
MDS Coordinator Rosemary Kenney: 617.326.4280	Dietary Mary Jo Joachim: 617.326.4349
Quality Improvement/MMQ Pat Coughlin: 617.326.4327	Maintenance/Housekeeping/ Laundry Larry Cosom: 617.326.4357
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Director of Human Resources Mark Williamson: 617.326.4359	Wellness & Spirituality Lucille Haratsis: 617.326.4328 Sr. Bridget Haase: 617.326.4298
Chief Financial Officer Paul Carroll: 617.326.4294	

First Family Forum. In June, our first Family Forum, sponsored by our Ethics Committee, focused on difficult end-of-life issues faced by residents and families. This forum, organized by Lucille Haratsis, SW, and Norma Harrington, SW, RN, was facilitated by Cindy Bagley, Ethics Committee Chair and Trustee of The Boston Home; Dr. James Mahoney; and Dr. Mary Lou Asher. Stay tuned for notices of future forums.

Water, Water Everywhere. Many of our residents love to bask in the summer sun, and that means we need to guard against the danger of dehydration. So we are trying to ensure that residents receive two liters of liquids a day. Please join in this preventive measure by reminding residents to drink fluids. Also, please let the primary care nurse know when you take a resident off campus.



Jonathan Katz, a popular actor, comedian, and Emmy-winning TV writer with MS, recently entertained residents, families, staff, and friends at our Home. Pictured here with resident Al Gaines, Katz delivered a "standup routine while sitting down."

NOTES *from* HOME

The Boston Home | Fall 2005

The standard for care of adults with MS and related neurological diseases

CELEBRATING



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