



fall '94
newsletter

Committee to End Elder Homelessness, Inc., 30 Wallingford Road, Boston, MA 02135

National Awards Given to Bishop Street, Bissonnette

The Committee to End Elder Homelessness (CEEH) has recently received three national awards recognizing its work with Boston-area elders.

The Fannie Mae Foundation awarded its Maxwell Award of Excellence grant to 4 Bishop Street, an innovative boarding house for nine formerly homeless women and the first major project of the Committee. The \$25,000 award, one of six given to nonprofit organizations across the country, was accepted by members of the CEEH board of directors on May 12th at a ceremony in Washington, D.C.

In addition, the Robert Wood Johnson Community Health Leadership Program honored Anna Bissonnette for her role as director of the Elders Living at

Home Program which provides health and housing services to homeless elders, and for her vision and continuing leadership as a founder and board president of the Committee. The Leadership Award also cited her work as a nurse, manager, and educator. This award brings a three-year grant to further Anna's "program dreams" and was presented in Washington, D.C. on May 26th.

During the summer, CEEH board members Ruth Cowin and Elsie Frank accepted an award from the Association of Occupational Therapists of America. The AOTA award recognizes CEEH's continued efforts to promote the health and well-being of all citizens.



(l. to r.) James Johnson, Chairman, Fannie Mae Foundation, Rep. Joe Moakley, Anna Bissonnette, CEEH Board President, Ellen Feingold, Vice President, Rep. Barney Frank, and Board Members Elsie Frank and Odessa Smith.

From a House to a Home

Happenings at 4 Bishop Street

Two years have past since the opening of 4 Bishop Street. Friends, supporters, volunteers, and staff continue to contribute in many ways to ensure that the home remains a warm, supporting environment for the nine women who live there.

In the winter of 1993, Dolores "Do" LeBeau became the first live-in resident manager of the home. A manager, helping hand, sympathetic ear, chauffeur and community builder, Do has worn many hats. Recently, she decided to return to her home near Chicago. Do will be missed by all. Interviews are currently being held to find a replacement.

As coordinator of health care services, Sue Jones, R.N., is responsible for helping to monitor and manage residents' health care needs. She evaluates potential residents for the Medicaid Group Adult Foster Care Program. She also reviews and supervises personal care services on a weekly basis.

The 4 Bishop Street kitchen is the domain of Pauline Durant from the Senior Aid Program. Five afternoons a week, Pauline prepares dinner for the residents, in addition to visiting with them.

Contributions have also made a major difference for residents. A generous anonymous individual donation and numerous smaller donations have supplemented a \$18,273 grant from Charlesbank Homes. These funds will permit construction of a much-needed elevator at Bishop Street. In addition, a player piano has been donated by Marilyn Pajk, a nurse educator at the BUMC Home Medical Center. Once the Committee locates someone to repair the automatic player in the piano, the house will be filled with music for all to enjoy.



Residence at 4 Bishop Street, Jamaica Plain



Donna Townsend, Executive Director

Townsend Named Executive Director

On April 1, 1994, the Board of Directors of the Committee to End Elder Homelessness, Inc. appointed Donna Townsend Executive Director of the organization. She had been serving as a consultant to the Committee since January, 1991.

Prior to her affiliation with the Committee, Donna worked since 1986 developing a variety of transitional and permanent housing projects. She had also previously served with the Traveler's Aid Society of Boston, Inc. and directed Capital District Travelers Aid Society, Inc. in Albany, New York.

Donna received her Bachelor of Arts degree from Northeastern University and her Masters in social work from the Boston University School of Social Work. She lives with her husband and two children in Holliston, MA.

Fall Newsletter

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Diane Watson, Commissioner, Boston Affairs of the Elderly, and member of the Golf Committee, helps anchor the welcoming banner for the golf event.

Golf Addicts Pitch in "FORE... the LADIES"

More than 100 intrepid golfers, a host of dedicated volunteers, and some hearty spectators convened on May 27th at the William J. Devine Golf Course at Franklin Park in Dorchester for the Committee's first annual benefit golf tournament, "FORE...the Ladies."

Boston Mayor Thomas M. Menino served as Honorary Chairperson for the tournament. Its success was in large part due to the collaborative efforts of many city agencies including the City of Boston Commission on Affairs of the Elderly, Parks and Recreation Department, the Department of Health and Hospitals, and the Boston University Medical Center as well as many individual financial contributors, hole and cart sponsors, donors of golf and raffle prizes, business and individual foursomes, and program book advertisers.

The event netted a gratifying \$13,500 to support the ongoing work of the Committee to combat elder homelessness in Boston.

Two New Projects Underway

270 Huntington Avenue

The Justice Resource Institute and the Renwood Companies are developing a 75-unit supported housing program in a 90-unit apartment/condominium building at 270 Huntington Avenue in Boston. The Committee has agreed to provide supportive services in 12 refurbished studio apartments for elderly tenants at the project. This development is based on the concept that housing and social services must be joined on-site to provide a safe, resource-rich environment.

When this project is ready for occupancy next winter, the Committee will seek friends and supporters to "adopt rooms" to provide furnishings, linens and curtains, household goods, and all that is needed to make an empty studio a home.

Concord Street

An application has recently been submitted to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Develop-

ment for Section 202 support of another housing project. An abandoned warehouse on East Concord St. in Boston will be rehabilitated into 40 units of attractive, affordable housing for formerly homeless men and women.

The Committee is seeking financial support and volunteer help to bring these projects to reality. Call Donna Townsend at 617/638-6134 if you or your organization can contribute.



Anna Bissonnette, President, CEEH Board of Directors, and Boston Mayor Thomas Menino.

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Reaching Out is Necessary to End Elder Homelessness

The Committee's Outreach, Planning and Research program is seeking out and identifying elders in shelters and other facilities in Boston, and assessing their ability to make the transition from shelter to permanent housing. This information is then compiled into a database which is used for status and follow-up purposes.

Michael St. Peter joined the Committee as its outreach worker the spring of 1993. By visiting shelters, he is able to identify and assess the needs of homeless elders. He provides case management and planning, helps them access their benefits, and ultimately helps them move into permanent housing.

Michael brings a wealth of experience to the Committee. He was previously a shelter counselor at the Pine Street Inn and Fort Point Shelter and with the Boston University Armory. To date, he has compiled a client list of more than 200 homeless elders.

Want to Get Involved?

Opportunities for volunteers with the Committee are endless and available for one-time projects or ongoing commitments; from administrative support to painting and repairs, fundraising and PR to cooking a meal. Whatever your time availability and talents, your help is needed and welcomed.

Contact Donna Townsend at 617/638-6139 to explore how you can become a part of this adventure.



***Committee to End
Elder Homelessness, Inc.***

30 Wallingford Road - Boston, Massachusetts 02135