



Hearth

HOME FOR GOOD

ending elder homelessness

Celebrating Our Staff

The final event of Hearth's 20th Anniversary year was the 2011 Annual Meeting, *Celebrating Our Staff*. At the meeting the Hearth community honored the hard work and dedication of Hearth's staff, with special recognition of those who have worked at Hearth for five years or longer.

In addition, Hearth founder Anna Bissonnette presented the inaugural Urban Medical Group Outstanding Service Award to Program Nurse Sue Jones, who was nominated by her co-workers for her fifteen years of compassionate service.

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Staff who have been at Hearth five or more years were recognized at the Annual Meeting.

Turning *Hearth at Olmsted Green* into a Home

Construction of Hearth's newest residence is nearly complete. By the end of April, the first fifteen residents will have moved into their new homes, fully furnished through the generosity of the Adopt-A-Room Program participants.

Because elders moving into Hearth housing usually come from the shelters or streets, they have few – if any – personal belongings. The Adopt-A-Room program allows members of the community to help provide a welcoming home to our new elderly residents. Adopters help cover the costs of furnishings and also organize and decorate the apartments.

Cristina Nelson, Hearth's Adopt-A-Room Program Volunteer and



member of the Ignatian Volunteer Corps. (see page 2 article "Volunteer Awards") has been working with Hearth staff to reach out to the community. As a result of her enthusiasm and persistence, 40 of the 59 apart-

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Message from Mark



First and foremost, I want to thank all of Hearth's donors for their generosity. Seeing so many names on the following

pages of this newsletter is truly inspirational to all of our incredible staff who are working hard to house and care for our resilient clients and residents. Thanks to you, we are seeing exciting progress every day!

I know you have heard so much about *Hearth at Olmsted*

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2012 Outstanding Volunteer Awards

Each spring Hearth celebrates all the volunteers who bring so much to the organization and – with great difficulty – chooses a few volunteers who really stand out among the many wonderful groups and individuals who give their time and talents to our elders.

This year we are celebrating our partnership with Temple Beth Avodah of Newton, MA, whose members have been volunteering with Hearth in various ways for many years at our Ruggles Affordable Assisted Living Community and more recently as part of the Winter Walk to End Elder Homelessness. In addition, members of their knitting group have made countless hats and scarves for Hearth Outreach clients and are currently making afghans for the new residents of *Hearth at Olmsted Green*.

We are also very grateful for our partnership with the New England branch of the Ignatian Volunteer Corps. Through their program, Hearth has gained some amazingly talented and dedicated volunteers. Ann Bersani is a tremendous asset to our Finance Department and has taken on the role of Rep Payee for some of our residents, helping them manage their finances. Cristina Nelson has been an invaluable member of the Institutional Advancement team, heading up the Adopt-A-Room program for *Hearth at Olmsted Green*. Thanks to her hard work and enthusiasm, over half of the apartments have been adopted so far.

We are also pleased to recognize Board of Visitor member Harold Forbes, a volunteer assisting the Outreach Program by managing the

Outreach Food Pantry. Harold oversees the inventory of the pantry and distributes food to Outreach clients, freeing the Case Managers to focus on the housing search process for their clients.

Your Invited Volunteer Appreciation & Resident Art Show

**When: Tuesday,
April 24, 6:30 p.m.**

**Where:
Ruggles Assisted Living
25 Ruggles Street
Roxbury, MA 02119**

Turning *Hearth at Olmsted Green* into a Home

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ments have been adopted by families, schools, religious organizations, and corporations. Hearth's Board of Directors and staff are each adopting two units

"It's great to see people embracing the project," says Cris. "Joe Masterson, whose company Com-Ton Contracting has worked with Hearth for years, pledged to adopt an apartment and quickly exceeded his goal of \$3,000 just by asking his friends and business contacts."

"The student groups are really excited," continues Cris. "The senior class at Newton Country Day School is adopting one apartment. They did the math and realized that to reach \$3000, each girl needs to raise \$60, which is a pretty manageable amount."

Starting in April, adopters will come to *Hearth at Olmsted Green* to



put the apartments together. Volunteers from the Dexter School, Boston Urban Outreach, and Boston University will help move all the furniture into the building.



There are still 19 apartments available for adoption. For more information, contact Cris Nelson at cnelson@hearth-home.org or 617-450-0338 or visit www.hearth-home.org.

I am Hearth – Barbara

Despite the sometimes very painful arthritis in her knee, Barbara Jackson is always busy. Barbara, who has lived at Hearth's Uphams



Corner Elder-House since 2005, attends a day program three times a week and also participates in most of the activities offered

at Uphams Corner. "Tuesday night is bingo. I love that, even if I don't win," she said, sitting in her cozy studio apartment.

Her front door is decorated with various art projects, and her paintings hang on the walls. Thursday is her favorite day at Uphams Corner; she has a one-on-one art lesson for an hour in the morning, followed by the Uphams Corner Knitting Group and then a group art class in the afternoon.

Each time she finishes an art project, she writes a reflective poem about it with help from the art teacher. Each school year there is a new



"teacher," an Expressive Therapies graduate student from Lesley University, and Barbara has worked with several of them.

Her projects are often based on childhood memories. One work she is particularly proud of is the painting of a girl in a cowgirl outfit. "I wanted to be a cowgirl," she said.

For another project she painted a rubber duck, and wrote the poem "My Rubber Ducky Fantasy," recollecting family outings around Boston when she was a child.

Now Barbara has her own children and grandchildren. "My grandbabies – one looks like the sweetest little 5-year-old boy. I pray they stay little," she says with a smile and gestures as if she's cradling a small child. "I just want them to stay little, but they gotta grow up."

My Rubber Ducky Fantasy

I like the sun,
It keeps me nice and warm when it rains.

I like the clouds,
Because they bring rain.

What I like best about the rain is the clouds.

When I was a little girl I imagined being a rubbery ducky.

When I was a little girl we had family day and we used to go to the pond where they had benches surrounding a puddle of water.

Me and my brother and sisters used to jump around in the water.

We'd spend hours and hours in the water,
While my mother and father sat on the benches.



Paintings by Hearth resident Barbara Jackson

You Can Donate to Hearth Online

**Use PayPal or
Network for Good
to make a gift to Hearth.**

Visit www.hearth-home.org/donate

3rd Annual Winter Walk to End Elder Homelessness

Members of Temple Beth Avodah in Newton and First Parish Church, St. Peter's Church, and St. Julia's Church in Weston, participated in the 3rd Annual Winter Walk to End Elder Homelessness on Sunday, December 4th in Weston, Massachusetts. The 68 walkers raised over \$7,500 in support of Hearth's Outreach Program that helps find homeless elders safe, permanent, and affordable housing.

Annual Meeting

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Anna Bissonnette and Sue Jones

The following is an excerpt from Sue's remarks upon receiving the award:

“We often talk around here about Hearth's model of service.... And we know that it is the Cadillac of comprehensive service... and that this network of support also acts as a springboard for our tenants, as they become able to launch out towards their newfound hopes and dreams.

But what makes that all happen ... are the wonderfully talented Hearth staff, who cheerfully and tirelessly over-deliver on a daily basis....

So, this Outstanding Service Award is really the property of all my wonderful coworkers, and I feel so honored to be able to work along side them, for they are such an exceptional and inspiring group of colleagues.”



Message from Mark

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Green over the years, but our persistence has paid off, and we are all FINALLY looking forward to new residents moving into our beautiful building at the end of April. Our Adopt-A-Room program is up and running, and the creativity has been incredibly exciting and inspiring. Board of Visitor Param Roychoudhury organized a fundraising Zumbathon, and a young man, Thomas McMahon asked people to make donations in lieu of gifts for his Bar Mitzvah.

We look forward to celebrating with you in June at a ribbon cutting ceremony – please keep your eyes on our web site for the date!

I am actually writing this while in DC for the Aging in America conference. Along with many other

partners, Hearth founder Ellen Feingold and I have made great progress with our National Leadership Initiative and getting elder homelessness on the national radar. Recently I was on WGBH's *The Callie Crossley Show* as part of a panel talking about the implications of economic insecurity for elders in Massachusetts.

Did you know that in Massachusetts, the gap between needed income and the actual median income for fully retired senior renters age 65 and older is \$10,248? This is the largest gap faced by elders in the U.S.

Service-enriched affordable housing is an important solution. I hope we can count on your continued support and partnership in our work to end elder homelessness. Thank you!

Coming Together: Celebrating 20 Years of Hearth

At Villa Victoria Center for the Arts in the South End on October 6, 2011, the community came together to celebrate Hearth's 20th anniversary. We would like to thank the 20th Anniversary Committee for all their hard work, and the sponsors, participating restaurants, artists and attendees who made this event so special!



Mark Hinderlie with three of Hearth's founders: Anna Bissonette, Ellen Feingold, and Sandra Albright



Jerry Sargent, President of Citizens Bank Massachusetts, and Stacey Marks Bronner, Station Manager at New England Cable News, presented Mark with a check for \$25,000 as part of the Champions in Action Award that Hearth received last fall.



Mark and Anna with Joyce and Melvin King. The Kings were members of the Coming Together Honorary Committee, and Joyce is a former Hearth board member and an active member of Hearth's Board of Visitors.



Members of the Hearth Outreach Team volunteered at the event: Kathleen Durkin, Richard Nickerson, Ann Fletcher, Carlton Johnson, and Eileen Marra.

Photo Credits: Jennifer Buchwald

2012 Spring Fling Celebration

Each year the Hearth Outreach clients are invited to a luncheon to celebrate their achievements of the past year. Hearth staff and area restaurants such as Mike's Diner and Flour Bakery donate dishes, and lunch is followed by a raffle drawing.

The Hearth Outreach Case Managers welcome donations for the

Spring Fling to help stretch their budget a little farther. Suggested items include:

Padlocks
Water bottles
Bags
Wallets
Sun glasses
Hats

Journals
Daily planners
Flip flops
Disposable cameras
Sketch pads
Colored pencils
Knitting supplies

If you would like to make a donation, please contact Jennifer Hartwell at jhartwell@hearth-home.org or 617-369-1565.

The National Leadership Initiative to End Elder Homelessness



On Thursday, October 20, 2011 people spent an informative day identifying important policy recommendations to be promoted in the year ahead. Among the attendees (left to right): Leah Staub, Council of Large Public Housing Authorities, DC; Mohini Venkatesh, National Council for Community Behavioral Healthcare, DC; David Gillcrist, Project FIND, NY; Stephanie Hartshorn, Corporation for Supportive Housing, IL; Doug Poutasse, Hearth, Board of Directors, MA; Jennifer Ho, United States Interagency Council on Homelessness, DC; Sue Stockard, Maloney Properties, MA.

Strengthening Collaboration and Developing Solutions



The fall convening was organized by (left to right) Steve Renahan, Shelter Partnership; Stephanie Hartshorn, CSH; Mark Hinderlie, Hearth; Annie Garmey, Hearth; Ellen Feingold, Hearth; Connie Tempel, CSH; Peggy Bailey, CSH.



Following the convening, Hearth and CSH gathered with Congressional staffers at the United States Capitol to discuss the issue: Ellen Feingold, Hearth; Stephanie Hartshorn, CSH; Connie Tempel, CSH; Mark Hinderlie, Hearth.

20th Anniversary Resident Cookout

In August as part of our 20th Anniversary Year, Hearth and People Making a Difference (PMD) held a celebratory cookout for the residents on the beautiful MIT campus. Hearth founder Anna Bissonnette came as a PMD volunteer and served the residents.



Residents Rosemarie and Carlton, with PMD Volunteer Vanessa.



Hearth staff and residents are grateful to People Making a Difference for making the cookout such a success. Thank you, PMD volunteers!



Anna Bissonnette and staff member Sherry Walker with Carol, a resident at the Elsie Frank House.



Anna and Mark with residents from the Anna Bissonnette House and Hearth at Burroughs Street

Hearth Online

On Facebook:

www.facebook.com/hearthinc

On Twitter:

www.twitter.com/ElderlyHomeless

Photo Credit: People Making a Difference, 2011



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www.hearth-home.org

Mission Statement

Hearth is a non-profit organization dedicated to the elimination of homelessness among the elderly. This mission is accomplished through a unique blend of prevention, placement and housing programs, all designed to help elders find and succeed in homes of their own. To this end, all housing operated by Hearth provides a creative array of supportive services that assist residents to age with dignity, regardless of their special medical, mental health, or social needs. Hearth believes these goals are best accomplished through respect for staff and elders, with the desire to see both achieve their highest degree of potential.

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