

home address

a publication of resident home association

Founding Partner of **Partners For Community Living**



Thank you just isn't enough

by *Pete Roll, Executive Director*

As I sit at my desk and survey the white wonderland that is January in Ohio, I find myself reflecting back on our year-end activities and events from 2009 and I am touched by the memories of so many acts of kindness by our friends. A simple thank you to all seems so inadequate, yet to let this opportunity go by without publicly acknowledging our gratitude would be unacceptable. So to all of you who donated your time, your treasures, kind words and prayers for our mission and our residents' needs, please know that we are beyond grateful for your generosity.

It's always difficult to list all of the individuals, organizations and businesses who touch our lives, as we're often fearful we will neglect mentioning each one. Those I speak about now are but examples of just how blessed we are by our families, friends, volunteers, and

donors. There were long-time friends and supporters Mike and Donna Schwartz who approached us with a fundraising idea for a beer tasting event.

Combining their business expertise as the owners of Belmont Party Supply with their long-term strong support of our mission, prospects were bright for a successful event.

The first annual Miami Valley Beer Fest got underway on October 24 at the Montgomery County Fairgrounds Roundhouse. Thanks to the work of the Planning Committee our event raised \$6000 for RHA! Planning committee members included Mike, Donna, Casey McAdams, Pam Skelly, Brenda Whitney, along with me. The second annual Beer Fest is scheduled for October 9, 2010.

We also say thank you to McGohan Brabender, Inc. for helping us honor our

RHA and CICL employees for their time volunteering and their donations and pledges. TransAmerica Investment Management was also part of the holiday spirit by hosting our Open House at their corporate offices.

There were those anonymous neighbors of our Hemphill Home who came unannounced to the door bearing gifts for residents and staff. For the second year, employees from Dermatologists of Southwest Ohio purchased, wrapped and delivered gifts for some of our neediest residents.

It is such caring that gives us reason to look with hope to our future, even as we remain ever mindful of those who paved the way for where we are today. In the cold of January in Ohio and in the midst of hard times for so many, it is because of each one of you that we are indeed among the most blessed!

Resident Spotlight

She may be an energetic and young looking 62 but Barbara Kost doesn't show any signs of wanting to slow down. "I do have some problems sometimes with my legs hurting and I have to rest and be careful then, but I don't ever think about retiring," she emphasizes.

Barbara has lived at our East Third Street Women's Home since 2004, where she has her own bedroom surrounded by things she loves, like her angel collection, and her own television where she enjoys watching game shows. She does admit the stairs to her bedroom are sometimes a problem when her legs hurt. That's one of the reasons her face lights up in a smile when she talks about the move that will be coming this year for her and her housemates, when they leave their current home and move to a more accessible home. "I'm happy we're moving and can't wait. Stairs are a problem and sometimes this neighborhood is a problem. It's not always safe."



Barbara proudly shows off some of her current crochet projects.

Barbara works in janitorial services with MONCO Enterprises four days a week, one of her concessions to growing a little older. She works at MONCO's Kuntz Road Adult Services Center and the offices of the Ohio Lottery. That leaves her Wednesdays off, where she enjoys socializing and arts and crafts as part of the Day Hab program. "We do arts and crafts and have lunch and then Wednesday evening we do arts at home, too."

She loves art and creating art, but what she loves most is crocheting. When she has enough yarn she crochets items to donate to homeless shelters, nursing homes, as well as baby blankets for hospitals. "That's one of my favorites, making pink blankets for baby girls and blue blankets for baby boys, but I can't make as many as I want because I run out of pink and blue yarn. I really would like pink and blue yarn."

Barbara enjoys being a part of the Third Street family. "We're best friends and you know why that is," she says, "it's because we're family!" She likes going out to eat and singing in her church choir. She has gone on vacation with housemates and other residents to Las Vegas (where she loved seeing Elvis, her favorite singer), Florida and Gatlinburg. "You know where I'd really like to go?" she asks, not waiting for an answer, "I'd really like to go to Washington, D.C. Yes sir, I'd really like to go there and say hello to the President."

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Staff Spotlight

Maintaining the financial integrity of the Resident Home Association – that’s a daunting thought and even more daunting task, but when RHA found accountant Rhonda Rich, they found just the person who could handle the task. Rhonda has been our accountant for 21 years. She makes sure that agency billings are completed on a timely basis. She oversees all agency financial systems, from resident accounts to agency accounts. She is also responsible for external and internal audit compliance. She balances those responsibilities with her other responsibility for all agency technology, hardware and software.

Rhonda has seen many changes since she started at RHA, both for the agency and for herself. “When I first became the RHA accountant my husband David worked for NCR. Our oldest son Eric, who is now in college, was 16 months old and our middle son Kyle, who has two jobs, was three months old. Youngest son Ryne, now a sophomore at Troy High School where he plays football and wrestles, wasn’t born yet. Just one month after starting at RHA I put my previous banking experience to work and volunteered at my very first Fish Fry. My sons have grown up volunteering for RHA.



The Fish Fry has turned into a mandatory event for them. Eric even comes home from Ohio Northern University to volunteer.” David is sure to be found behind his camera, capturing all of the activity.

Her favorite part of the job is interacting with clients. She really enjoys Wednesdays when Day Hab (senior day) activities are underway. She enjoys the annual Residents’ Holiday Party and getting the chance to talk with everyone. The

Party is held at her family’s church, Happy Corner Church. “I have this favorite memory of Tommy Harmuth coming out of the bathroom at the office one day with a roll of toilet paper he called ‘big white john john’ stuck under his sweatshirt. He wasn’t happy with me when I threatened to tell Pete about it if he didn’t give it back. All the time this was happening right outside Pete’s office and while Tommy kept telling me sssh.”

Rhonda has respect for the support staff who are RHA. “We would not be RHA without them,” she says. “As a parent of a child with developmental disabilities, I can only hope that one day our son will be taken care of by such caring and dedicated staff.”

That respect goes both ways. “Rhonda is extremely efficient and hard working,” praises Pete Roll. “Not only is she a very

skilled accountant but she has been very valuable in areas of information technology.” Her commitment goes beyond her work. She and David are generous donors to RHA. David, who is a CPA, makes an annual gift to RHA, which is then matched by his employer, Cardinal Health.

Besides her family, which also includes her 88 year old father Duane who lives with them, Rhonda loves football, make that the Denver Broncos, and she loves the Colorado Rocky Mountains. She enjoys reading and scrapbooking and helping David with photography. She also has a reputation for cooking up some great dishes she shares at RHA activities.

Most people don’t know that Rhonda has had worldwide adventures. “When I was two and a half my parents moved to Australia. For the next 12 years I lived in Sydney, Melbourne and Perth in Australia, as well as Singapore and Brazil. I used to speak Portuguese fluently. By the time I was in the tenth grade, I had attended ten different schools. I have 241,243 nautical air miles logged. Unfortunately, I got them all before frequent flyer miles were ‘invented.’ Wouldn’t you just know?”

Maybe we don’t know so much about that, but the one thing we do know is that RHA, our staff and especially our residents are very fortunate to have Rhonda behind her accountant’s desk, counting money at our Fish Fry, and laughing and sharing as an invaluable member of our family.

Resident Spotlight

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Editor’s Note: Barbara would welcome the donation of any yarn so that she can continue her service of crocheting for others. We know she would also enjoy having a “crochet friend” who would like to spend some time crocheting with her.

With the move to a new home later in the year Barbara and her housemates are hoping that there might be some new furniture to greet them when they move in. Tax-deductible donations in any amount would be welcome to assist with new furniture. Donations can be made on our secure website at www.partnersohio.com by going to our Donate Now button or donations designated for RHA furniture may be sent to Partners For Community Living at 1651 Needmore Road, Dayton, 45414.

Beer Fest Brings \$6000 to RHA Thank you participants and supporters

Allied Wine	The Filling Station	Quanexus
Belmont Party Supply	Harrigan’s Tavern	Schuerholz Printing
Bonbright Distributing	Heidelberg Distributing	Skillless Villains
Boston’s Bistro and Pub	MONCO Catering	South Park Tavern
Cavalier Distributing	Pizza Factory	Thai 9
Chappy’s Tap Room	Premium Beverage	The Trolley Stop
Dayton DRAFT Club	P.S. Creative	
Fifth Street Wine & Deli	The Pub	



Mike Schwartz (l) shares good times with Aaron Spoore from Cavalier Distributing during our Miami Valley Beer Fest. Aaron was involved from start to finish, from setup to clean up. He’s already on board to assist with our 2010 Beer Fest.

Good-bye to a grand lady

"I don't think she ever had an unkind word for anyone," is one of Pete Roll's lasting memories of Doris Bartlett. "She was just



a real lady with a warm smile and gentle disposition," he recalls. While we remember 2009 for so many good things, we will also remember it as a time of sorrow in losing such a valued and devoted friend.

Doris served as a long-term RHA board member, where she is remembered for her thoughtfulness and strong support in making significant board decisions, even when there were areas of disagreement. She had a wonderful sense of humor, even in difficult times. She was particularly interested in helping RHA educate the community about our residents and our agency.

She and her son Logan attended most of our functions and activities over the years, with Logan, who had a developmental disability, serving as our photographer at many of them. His mother was always a lady and he was always a gentleman, always dressed in a suit when he attended our activities. She and Logan often extended their hospitality to the men of our Greenhill and Third Street homes, hosting them for dinner and socialization in their home.

Logan's death three years ago did not diminish her love and support for RHA. She remained a good friend and still enjoyed being a part of RHA activities. Shortly after her death we were notified that she left us a generous planned gift in her estate.

Doris was a person you could count on for help anytime, as we did so many times while she was on our board and in all those years when she remained so devoted to us. The people she thought of as family are counting on her still as we celebrate the legacy of caring and generosity she leaves behind.

Editor's Note: With her planned gift to RHA, Doris becomes the newest member of our John W. Pratt Society, our legacy society honoring those who make planned gifts in their estates to RHA, Choices In Community Living and Partners For Community Living. For more information on making a planned gift or other gift to our Endowment, please visit our website at www.partnersohio.com or send us an email at partners@choicesincl.com.

You couldn't help but smile

If you ever met Tommy Harmuth, even for a short time, you couldn't help but smile. Even as we face the reality of his recent death at 62 years old, we can't help but smile when we say his name or see his picture. Tommy was just pure joy, always with a bit of mischief about him, a wanderer at heart and very crafty in his own way.

"I remember when he was about three years old," recalls his sister Pat Pietrzak, "he climbed out of his crib, discovered how to open the latch on one of the windows and made his way out of the house, ready for an outside adventure."

Tommy lived at our Greenhill home since 1991. He had lived in his own home before that, until his father finally made the decision to allow him to leave home and go to RHA. It might have seemed like an easy decision. His father was Marty Harmuth and there would be few people in and around the Miami Valley who didn't know Marty as the strong, determined, very vocal advocate for people with developmental disabilities. He served on the county board for many of its most turbulent years when so many changes unfolded for families and for organizations. Marty Harmuth was never a shrinking violet. Anyone who met him knew that.

According to his daughter, they might then have been a little surprised at just how difficult it was for him to make the decision to have Tommy leave home. "Dad finally made that decision," Pat remembers. "He didn't talk about it much but we knew he was having a hard time. But once he made the decision, that was that. There would be no turning back. He called us together for a family meeting and announced that Tommy would be going to live at RHA, no questions asked. Besides, he noted, it wasn't permanent. If it didn't work out, he could always come back home." She credits her father's relationship with Ken Ritchey of the county board in helping make the decision.

"Dad really liked Ken and respected his opinion. He mentored and guided Dad and we think he helped him make the decision to go to RHA and we're so grateful for that."

There would be no going back to Dad. At Greenhill Tommy blossomed, soared like an eagle who had just discovered its freedom and independence. He was happy. He would

go back home on weekends or holidays, eat and then get up and be ready to go back home to his Greenhill family. "You could just see the weight of the world lift from Dad's shoulders," says Pat. "Tommy was happy and that was what mattered!"

She credits the staff at Greenhill and support staff at RHA for giving Tommy the chance for his second home, his second family. "When he went to Greenhill he weighed more than 270 pounds and was having a lot of health problems. Food was just too easy to get at home. He went to Greenhill and they put him on a controlled diet and the result was just amazing. He was a little more than 140 pounds the last part of his life."

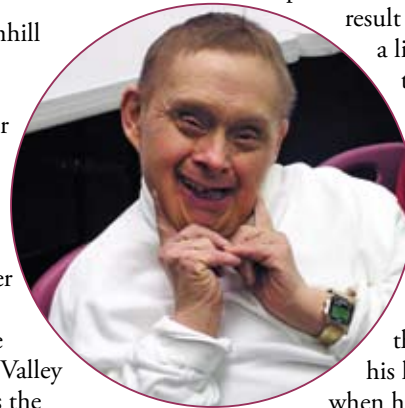
Tommy enjoyed his life at Greenhill. He loved cooking and helping in the kitchen, with his favorite things to cook Quiche and sloppy joes. He liked cleaning up and doing the laundry. The last weeks of his life were difficult, especially when he had to leave Greenhill

to go to Hospice for care. "Tommy knew he was going to die," says Pat of his last days. Although he had some speech difficulties, those who knew him could understand him. "It was really hard for us as a family," recalls Pat, "he was at Hospice and he kept saying 'me die - me die - go home. That home he wanted to go to so badly was Greenhill.'"

Greenhill staff did stay by Tommy's side during his final days. They cared for him at home as much as they could before he finally had to go to Hospice. Pat can't say enough about that care and the love with which it was given. "They just gave over the top care to my brother. A fleet of round the clock nurses couldn't have given him better care than he received at Greenhill."

There are so many wonderful memories for his sisters - of the time he took a \$100 bill from their father's wallet and took it to the workshop to buy a soft drink - of how he loved going to the gambling boat and coming back a winner - to the relief for their father in the last years of his life knowing Tommy was so happy and so loved - to the gratitude they have to those who made him a part of the RHA family.

Yes, there are so many wonderful memories for anyone who ever met Tommy Harmuth, even for a short time. Remembering him, we just can't help but smile.



Lighting our way

“Lighting the Way” was the theme when the Ohio Provider Resource Association (OPRA) honored top Ohio professionals for 2009. RHA’s Vicki Servais and Paul Cyphers were among those honored.

Vicki, who is a Program Manager, has been with RHA since 1988. She is responsible for our very successful Day Hab program.

Our Day Hab program consists of a group of 20 who attend Wednesday senior day. There are always arts and crafts activities, many of them provided by OTA students from Sinclair Community College.

Our Tuesday Day Hab group consists of four seniors who have their own community garden. They have volunteered with MetroParks as volunteers in their Posey Patrol, helping take care of the flower planters along the streets in downtown Dayton. Vicki has also coordinated art classes through Sinclair where our artists have the opportunity to learn with other seniors from the community and then have their work displayed in community exhibits.

Everything she does is based on her belief that our residents have value as they age and that retirement from daily work does not

mean the end of their vitality, purpose and need to stay active and involved in their own lives, in their homes, and in their community.

In April, 2009 Paul Cyphers won regional honors when he was awarded an Erin Ritchey Memorial Award. That regional award was followed in October when OPRA honored him as an Outstanding Direct Support Professional. Paul has served with distinction at RHA for 21 years. Paul, who serves at our Kenbrook Home, is described in glowing terms by his fellow employees – jack of all trades; strong; energetic; positive; brings excitement to every activity; gives residents high fives and encouraging words.

It’s not unusual for Paul to come to work with prizes he has purchased with his own money to use as incentives to get residents away from televisions to do something physical. He willingly and enthusiastically works in other locations whenever he is needed, earning him the title of “king of overtime.”

In addition to his service with RHA, Paul is a long-time volunteer with E.N.J.O.Y.,



Pictured in photo 1 – Vicki Servais



Pictured in photo 2 – Paul (r), with Executive Director Pete Roll and Kenbrook Home Manager Julia Mantle

a community group providing recreational opportunities for people with developmental disabilities.

In addition to the awards presented to Vicki and Paul, the staff of our Greenhill Home were 2009 nominees for OPRA’s Team Award for their overall commitment to their residents and their particular support of two residents with serious medical needs, and for the way they supported residents and each other following the death of one of the residents.



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