

Happenings at Harbor Homes, Inc.

SUMMER 2006

DID YOU KNOW?

A \$115 donation can house individuals in our Emergency Shelter for six nights.

Harbor Homes was founded by a group of concerned citizens in reaction to the release of persons with mental illness from the State Hospital with few support systems in place.

Providing permanent supportive housing reduces public sector costs by more than \$16,000 per year.

In 1995 Harbor Homes opened the first Safe Haven in New Hampshire for the homeless living on the street and unconnected to services. Our Safe Haven now serves as a model for safe havens across the nation.



Harbor Homes Cruises Into a 25th Anniversary Celebration



*Come join the celebration!
Saturday, September 9,
Harbor Homes Inc. will hold
an Anniversary
Dinner and Silent Auction
Fundraiser
"Cruisin' Into the Harbor"
at the
Sheraton Nashua Hotel*

This event will celebrate the achievements of an amazing organization, which began when a small group of citizens recognized a critical need to provide supportive housing for those experiencing mental illness.

From humble beginnings, the organization has grown to service over 1100 individuals annually. Beginning with a single 9-bed residence, HHI now operates 23 programs, 17

of which are residential. Harbor Homes' mission has also expanded since its initial days of operation to include homeless and low-income individuals and families. HHI's Emergency Shelter serves over 150 individuals and families annually. Over 250 clients and their families reside in permanent housing programs which include apartments and condominiums with varying levels of support and supervision. HHI residents include persons living with persistent mental illness; HIV/AIDS; and/or substance abuse. HHI also provides low-income and Section 8 assistance for 80 families in the community. As needs in the community have developed, Harbor Homes has developed solutions. The newest initiative is a transitional housing program to address the needs of honorably discharged, homeless veterans. *Veterans F.I.R.S.T.*,

established in 2003, opened in early 2004. This program offers veterans up to 24 months to regain the skills, support services, and self-confidence necessary to live independently.

Although the services and programs have expanded over the course of 25 years, the core belief that individuality, dignity, self-respect and a safe place to live are key to a person's ability to contribute to society has never changed.

*Tickets to the celebration are \$75 per person; proceeds will enable Harbor Homes to continue meeting the needs of the most vulnerable members of our community. Individuals and corporations can purchase a table or a single ticket. For more information phone 882-3616 ext. 1102
Keynote Speaker:
Dr. Kay Redfield Jamison
See page 2 for details*





Peter Kelleher,
LICSW
Executive Director

Harbor Homes is the largest provider of permanent supportive housing services in New Hampshire

In 2005 HHI provided housing for nearly 650 clients

Supportive housing is the least expensive option to service homeless individuals, and provides the most long-term benefits

In 2005 volunteers provided over 1500 hours at the Gathering Place

A major employment resource for individuals living with mental illness in our region

A letter from Peter Kelleher

Twenty-five years ago, it was a hot, stifling summer day when I ventured north to Nashua for an interview that would alter my life and ultimately those of so many others. Arriving somewhat ruffled from the heat, with tie askew – was not exactly the picture of a polished Executive Director. Appearances aside, the Board must have recognized the enthusiasm in my voice or perhaps the light in my eyes, for I was truly awestruck by their determination, drive and passion.

Across the country mental health statutes had recently changed, leaving individuals experiencing mental illness few options for housing or job opportunities. A group of people in Nashua – mothers, fathers, concerned family members and civic leaders had been meeting to find a solution that would provide safe housing, compassionate care, and op-

portunities for their loved ones. As the interview progressed, it became clear that this group was “hell-bent” on success as the only option and I was thrilled when they selected me to help spearhead the exciting new journey.

For 25 years, this “can-do” Board, right from the start, thought big. When they proposed an ambitious five-year plan, my first thought was – no way, it will never happen that quickly. Imagine the sense of sheer accomplishment when just three years later...plan completed! And the pace has never slowed down since. Our Board members, through the years, have never stepped back from problems; instead seeing them as challenging opportunities to find new solutions.

While Board members, past and present, have helped create what Harbor Homes is today, so too have our staff. For the

past 25 years, we have been blessed with dedicated men and women who work every day to making the lives of our clients both fulfilling and productive. Our direct-service staff and managers recognized the need to build long-term relationships and gain the trust of those we serve. Continuity among the support and administrative staff was equally important and our staff retention is among the highest for mental health agencies in the state. Without the commitment and support of our public and private funding partners, including community organizations, government agencies, corporations and individuals, we would not have been able to grow into the agency we are today.

I invite you to join with us on September 9th as we celebrate 25 years of serving our community.

25th Anniversary Keynote Speaker Dr. Kay Redfield Jamison

Best selling author and mental health advocate Dr. Kaye Redfield Jamison will speak to guests at the 25th anniversary celebration on September 9th. Dr. Jamison is an international authority and researcher on mood disorders and recipient of the prestigious MacArthur Fellowship. She addresses the clinical and personal realities of depression and bipolar disorder in a manner that encourages dialogue, empathy and hope.

A professor of psychiatry at Johns Hopkins University, Dr. Jamison startled her colleagues in 1995 when she published *An Unquiet Mind*, a bestselling account

of her own struggle with manic-depressiveness. In 1999 she published another ground-breaking book, *Night Falls Fast; Understanding Suicide*, the first major work to deal with suicide in 25 years and the first to fully confront suicide’s terrible pull on the young. Her latest book is *Exuberance: The Passion for Life*, an exploration of exuberance and how it fuels our most important creative and scientific achievements.

Since the release of *An Unquiet Mind*, Dr. Jamison has become a trusted spokesperson for millions who suffer from mental illness and their loved ones. She will

provide personal and professional reflections on mental illness in her speech. Her rigorous yet compassionate approach is an offshoot of her own journey from suffering to sharing. She offers a powerful message of hope to those that need it most, and is a perfect speaker to highlight the wonderful work Harbor Homes continues to do to diminish the stigma of mental illness.

Copies of her books will be available for purchase during the cocktail hour, and can be autographed later in the evening.



25th Anniversary Silent Auction Offers Something For Everyone

Looking for another reason to attend the gala 25th anniversary celebration on September 9?

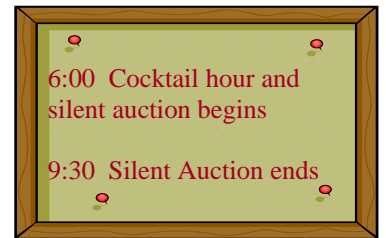
A silent auction fundraiser will offer a bounty of goodies ranging from inexpensive: oil changes, manicures, and books, to more elaborate items including jewelry, quilts, gym memberships, autographed sports paraphernalia, original photography and artwork. A few higher-end items include Walt Disney Hopper passes, golf out-

ings, hotel stays, and restaurant gift certificates and even a complete king-size bed.

Silent auctions allow bidders the opportunity to determine what they are willing to pay and continue outbidding others until a specified time. A minimum is often pre-set, but the winning price is unknown until the close of bidding. Keeping tabs on bids throughout the evening and trying to guess the price objects

will go for can provide a bit of drama for celebrants.

Credit cards, checks and cash will be accepted throughout the course of the evening. Winners will get a great deal plus the satisfaction of knowing that all money raised goes to an excellent cause. For a preview list of prize offerings go to www.harborhomes.org and check under 25th anniversary.



Buckingham Place Groundbreaking A Rousing Success

Several hundred supporters gathered on a sunny, warm April morning to celebrate the groundbreaking at Buckingham Place, the new Harbor Homes apartment building for honorably discharged homeless veterans. Master of Ceremonies Dr. Griffin Dalainis kept the schedule of events moving smoothly, introducing a wide range of dignitaries including Mayor Bernard Streeter, Governor John Lynch, Senator John Sununu, Congressman Jeb Bradley, and Phil Mangano, Executive Director of the US Interagency Council on Homelessness.

Residents of Harbor Homes existing veterans housing program, *Veterans F.I.R.S.T.*, assisted with parking and led the pledge of allegiance. Area veteran groups participated by leading the benediction, and serving as the Color Guard.

While the common theme of the morning was the importance of this project and the necessity of government and private agencies working together, Mangano summed it up best, "Isn't this the way it should be?" he asked, citing the presence of local, state and national officials. "Every level of government coming together to help out our

veterans. On this issue there is no Democrat or Republican - we're all Americans trying to end this national disgrace."

The 20-unit apartment building will be one of the first in the nation to accommodate under one roof-homeless male and female veterans and their families. The new facility will allow Harbor Homes to continue providing the skills and resources enabling homeless veterans to become self-sufficient and productive members of the community.



**Building Update
07/06**

Gathering Place To Become "Connections"

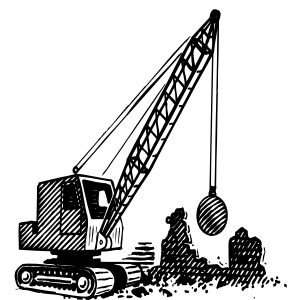
In an effort to better serve members, a committee of Harbor Homes' board members, staff, volunteers, and clients has begun meeting to discuss ways of improving the Gathering Place.

What started as a social club is now morphing into a resource center to better meet needs of members. While a place to socialize and get a free meal is

important, it has become clear that members are looking for the opportunity to improve their lives with educational programs, vocational skills, substance abuse counseling, life skills, as well as a place to socialize and recreate. The club will begin interviewing members to find out what types of programs will make the biggest impact in their lives. The committee will work

to implement changes in the club including the new name, "Connections," new hours and more defined programming beginning later this fall. Community volunteers will be vital in teaching skills and providing guidance to members.

To find out about volunteering at "Connections", contact Karen Blow at 882-3616.



45 High Street
Nashua, NH 03060

Phone: 603-882-3616
Fax: 603-595-7414
www.harborhomes.org



NON-PROFIT
ORGANIZATION
PERMIT NO. 155

Our Mission: *To create and provide quality residential and supportive services for persons (and their families) challenged by mental illness and/or homelessness.*

Community Responds with Generosity

With recent temperatures rising well above normal the need for air-conditioning units for clients became abundantly clear. A letter to the editor was all it took to rally the support of the community. Within days, units began being dropped off and pledges of nearly 3 dozen units phoned in. Others vowed to purchase units, and Sears Pheasant Lane Mall store offered several new units as well.

Grateful clients can literally breathe a little easier thanks to our generous community.

HHI relies on the community to support programs and provide funding to stretch tight budgets. S.C.O.A.P. is one specific area where donations can make a difference. Donations would enable more clients to participate.



Enjoying the view

S.C.O.A.P. (Social Club Outreach Activities Program) participants and staff enjoy a recent trip to Mount Washington. This summer marks the 20th year that Harbor Homes has provided this program for the homeless and/or persons dealing with disabilities in the greater Nashua area.

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