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# Golden Times Newsletter

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Spring 2012

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By: Tom Boudrow, Chair of the Board

Here we are again, with winter finally behind us we can now look forward to the nice weather coming. I hope I have not spoken too soon as it has been an unusual winter. We had snow in October leading me to think this was going to be one crazy winter. Then we hardly had any snow until March. Well let's hope it's all done with.

Things have been moving along at the home. I look forward to seeing our residents' fishing days on the river. I am sure our golf committee lead by Steve Sacco will get started soon on our annual golf tournament. Supporters of the home have had lots of fun at this event while raising money to support the home.

The home recently is undergoing installation of Verizon FIOS internet and TV service. FIOS will give us the power to install many more videophones throughout NEHD and even in the rooms of residents who want them to call their friends and families. The Board is very excited about this and looking forward to the availability of videophones all over the home. Even at nursing stations.

We will be working with Massachusetts Rehabilitation Commission (MRC) to set up a Job Fair for deaf individuals in April. Our hope is to create some additional positions as our resident numbers increase. We are working with MRC to possibly establish a training unit so when these positions become available we will have people trained and ready.

I have also talked with some Thompson House residents; we discussed a "wish list" of things they would like to see happen at the Thompson House. I will work with the staff and the Board to try to get some of these wishes in place and improve communications so we can continue to make things even better. I realize this is something we can do by bonding together and making things better for every one. I look forward to a great spring with best wishes to all.

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## In Loving Memory of Our Dear Friends...

Joan Albert, MA  
Geraldine Russo, M  
Brian Barkyoub, VT  
Bessie Diot, CT  
Karen R. Dronzank, CT  
Becky Drury, MA  
Kate Emery, ME  
Eunice Fox, MA/NEHD

Doris Haley, MA/NEHD  
John Hanna, MA  
Robert Hanna, MA  
John Horrigan, MA/NEHD  
Edward Mallard, MA/NEHD  
Nelson Maxim, ME  
Mildred Nistico, MA  
Shirley Ovitt, MA

Betty Jellison Perry  
Rose Polizzotti, MA/NEHD  
Robert P. Rudnicki, CT/FL  
Michael Sabia, CT  
Thelma Saco, ME  
Robert Samia, MA  
Roland Sherman, RI  
B. Arlene Thompson, MA/NC

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## **Thomas Boudrow Receives Advocacy Award from North Shore Elder Services**

Thomas Boudrow, Chairman of the Board of Trustees, for New England Homes for the Deaf, Inc. in Danvers, received the Advocacy Award from North Shore Elder Services at an awards dinner held at The Hawthorne Hotel in Salem on Thursday, November 17, 2011.

As stated in his nomination for this award, "Tom brings his tireless advocacy to the community of Deaf and Deafblind seniors. Tom focuses on breaking down the communications barriers faced by Deaf and Deafblind elders by ensuring that NEHD hires qualified American Sign Language and tactile sign interpreters; requires all hearing employees to learn ASL; and makes every effort to hire and train deaf staff."

The grateful residents and staff members at New England Homes for the Deaf, Inc. wish to thank Tom for his efforts and to congratulate him on this well deserved award.

## **New England Homes for the Deaf, Inc. Deficiency Free DPH Survey 2011**

Sept. 14, 2011 - As issued by the Massachusetts Department of Health and Human Services Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services:

"The New England Home for the Deaf was found to be in substantial compliance with the SNF/NF Medicare/Medicaid Conditions of Participation found and 42 CFR 483 Subpart B".

Please congratulate NEHD Executive Director, Emmanuel Ikomi and his staff on such an outstanding review of NEHD operations by the State of Massachusetts.

## **Transition Period Begins from Toll Free Numbers to Local Numbers**

November 21, 2011 to November 21, 2012 is the transition period for removal of toll free numbers (800, 866, 877) for internet-based telecommunications relay service numbering.

On November 21, 2012 toll free numbers will be permanently removed from all relay operator services. That includes video phones, teletypes and smart phones.

If you want to have a toll free number, that number will be handled by a private company of your choice which will charge you a monthly fee.

## My Perspective on New England Homes for the Deaf Nursing

By: Melvin C. Wheeler

Though I was on the board of New England Homes for the Deaf (NEHD) for 11 years and made frequent trips to the Homes for social activities, I was still considered an "outsider". It wasn't until my sister, Eunice Fox came to reside there that I found how tremendously great the nursing care was, and I respect the nurses and aides there very highly.

To begin with, Eunice was in ill health starting in July 2010 and was placed at Renaissance Gardens, an assisted-living facility situated at Brooksby Village in Peabody, where she had resided for several years. It was a very clean and nice facility, but unfortunately she had communication breakdowns with the staff. She felt alone there and did not understand the medications, food plans, etc. After some weeks she got her wish to be transferred to NEHD.

I met Laurie Grenier, the head nurse of the assisted-living facility on first floor at NEHD as she welcomed Eunice on her first day. I found her to be a professional person with compassion and a nice personality. She signed American Sign Language (ASL) well. She remarkably had ready answers to any questions that we had regarding medication, etc. Later, I met Alice when she came to Eunice's room with medication and teased that Eunice might be sick of her as she would come to associate her with swallowing pills. She signed ASL and admitted that she was not keen on receiving them back. Nevertheless she was like "a ray of sunlight" coming around whenever we were with her. She was at Eunice's side constantly until her end-like many of the others, and they were all wonderful.

Eunice was comfortable going to the community room for snacks and chatted there with other residents every day. I asked her if she was happy, and she admitted that she missed her home at Brooksby Village and understood that she had no choice but to stay at NEHD where she had the best care possible. The staff on the first floor-besides Laurie and Alice, Janice, June, Sandra, Stephanie, Alisha, Stacy, Paul (and others I may have overlooked, please forgive me) were **GREAT**, gave her comfort, arranged shopping trips and medical appointments.

When Eunice was near her end, she was transferred to the nursing-care facility on the second floor. I could not say very much about the nurses there, as she was there only for 5 days. But I was impressed with them keeping me and my family posted with frequent updates. Kristen was very pleasant and signed ASL well. So was Beverly. A nurse (I think her name was Megan) explained what the morphine was doing for Eunice. With the hospice care, Eunice was comfortable until her end on November 23, 2011.

My family and I have without any doubt no regrets about Eunice's stay and treatment at NEHD. As I said before, I respect the nurses and staff very highly for their work and am happy that the residents there have them for their services.



## Halloween at New England Homes for the Deaf

Halloween preparation was an enjoyable event for almost everyone at NEHD. The residents created their own costumes during activities time with Activities Director Jessica Dupont and her devoted staff.

On Halloween, the residents and staff paraded their outfits in the Community Hall ending the fun gathering with a treat.

Photos by NEHD Activities Department



## Friends of the Home

By Ruth Collari, President



Friends of the Home (FOH) had their annual Christmas Luncheon at the Spinelli's Restaurant in Lynnfield, MA on December 9, 2011. Many thanks to the above committee for their devotion to New England Homes for the Deaf. Left to right: David and Barbara Burnes, Lorraine Mendez, FOH President Ruth Collari, Santa, Joan and Joel Joseph and Ed Thompson.

Friends of the Home still continues to give every resident a birthday and Christmas money gift, an event which brings happiness and excitement to each resident. The \$5.00 FOH membership dues help to defray the cost of the residents' special days. FOH newsletter has a lot of photos which makes it easier for the elderly to understand and know who everyone is. Anyone who is interested in helping support the costs of the residents' special days, can join FOH for \$5.00 a year, anyone is welcome. Send your dues to Barbara Burnes, 5 Park Drive, Ext., Woburn, MA 01801-2812.

FOH has their bingo event on the third Saturday of every month at the New England Homes for the Deaf. Bingo starts at 6:30 PM, all are welcome.

One last note... FOH will celebrate its 45 Anniversary in 2013, more details later.

## News from South Shore Deaf Senior Citizens

By Ruth Collari and Theresa (Butter) Buttiglieri



(L to R) Ruth Collari, Thelma Doucette, Butter Buttiglieri, Catherine Hanna and Mary Reynolds.

February 14, 2012 the South Shore Deaf Senior Citizens (SSDSC) celebrated their first anniversary at their new location, the Kennedy Center, 440 East Squantum Street in Quincy, MA. SSDSC moved after ten years at the Knights of Columbus Hall in Wollaston MA. A lot of thanks go to Judith Good who found this new location where we can feel comfortable and cozy in a much brighter hall on the first floor and no more climbing stairs as in the past.

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Our center is open every Monday from 8:30 AM to 4:00 PM. We have planned eight fun bingo holidays with a free lunch provided by our center for this year, look for our flyers. Also we hope to take about four to five field trips and have more workshops/activities. Butter has been our center coordinator for 16 years.

For our first anniversary fun bingo, we enjoyed munching on Kentucky Fried chicken with an anniversary cake. There are lots of fun times and laughs at our Center, everyone is welcome to come and join the fun.

### Central Mass Deaf Senior Citizens Center

By Jane A. Botti

Central Mass Deaf Senior Citizens Center (CMDSCC) had a very active 2011 season. They took two trips for the day to the JFK museum in Boston and Foxwoods. In their center they had a Blueberry Ice Cream day, Apple festival, Halloween Social, Thanksgiving dinner cooked by the members and a Chinese raffle at their Holiday social.

CMDSCC will host the 2012 New England Deaf Senior Citizens (NEDSC) Fourth Biennial Conference on April 13, 14, and 15. The center had a fund raising event last October, 80 people came to support this event which was unbelievable and a great success. Russell Biando and Claire Constantin are chairing this conference.

### Bay State Deaf Senior Citizens

328 North Main Street East Longmeadow, MA 10128

By Jane A. Botti

The Baystate Deaf Senior Citizens (BDSC) has their regular bingo socials on the third Wednesday of every month. The first Wednesday is their meeting time and the second Wednesday is their Super Bingo special. Other special events like workshops/field trips will be emailed.

The 2012-2013 officers re-elected for another term are: (Photo on right; left to right) President: Sharon Carpenter, Vice President: Carol Murray, Secretary: Kenneth LaRosa and Treasurer: Hazen Peaslee.

On Saturday, June 9, 2012 this center will celebrate its 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary with a luncheon including guest speaker, Eddy Laird. Eddy Laird was Executive Director of the New England Homes for the Deaf in the 1980's. For more information regarding this wonderful 25<sup>th</sup> celebration, contact Carol Murray, [napoli301@hotmail.com](mailto:napoli301@hotmail.com) VP 860-272-4014.



## **Verizon's Center for Customers with Disabilities**

Contributed by Tom Boudrow, Verizon Outreach Manager

Were you aware that Verizon Communications, Inc. has a videophone customer service line devoted entirely to serving customers who are Deaf and Hard of Hearing? This allows you to call and speak directly on your videophone with a Deaf customer service representative using ASL. The Verizon Center for Customers with Disabilities (VCCD) was first opened in 1992 in Marlboro, Massachusetts and has since grown, resulting in Verizon adding more representatives as well as a second office in California.

"The Verizon Center for Customers with Disabilities provides our customers with equal access by offering the ability to talk to representatives who understand the challenges we face in our everyday lives when it comes to using the phone, TV and internet," said Tom Boudrow, a deaf outreach manager at the center. Whether the customers call through traditional phone means, a TTY, or even a Videophone, VCCD is ready to take their call. When the center first opened in 1992, the focus was only on telephone services. Today it has expanded to include telephone, internet, and television through its award winning FIOS network. FIOS internet is wonderful for powering videophones and delivering crystal clear pictures.

The center currently handles in excess of 1500 calls per day which go directly to representatives, with no menus or recorded prompts between the customer and the customer service representative. I always tell people the definition of a disability is when the person and the environment do not match, so our job at the center is to make it match. Because of our knowledge on disability access we are able to best match our packages with the person's individual needs, depending on their disability, said Boudrow.

We have many new products that come out throughout the year. For example, most recent is our home monitoring and control service. This is a wonderful added feature for our customers who can, through their cell phone or computer, turn on their home lights, unlock their door, turn on the heat before they arrive home or even receive input from a security camera located inside or outside their home.

We welcome the opportunity to talk with customers who have any kind of disability. Call us and see how the VCCD can offer you outstanding value, meet your telecommunications and entertainment needs, and exceed your customer service expectations."

The center is open Monday to Friday from 8:30 AM to 5:00 PM (800-974-6006 voice/TTY) or Monday to Friday 9:00 AM to 5:00 PM: Videophone line (508-251-5301).

## Summer Events

### **April 13, 14, 15, 2012: New England Deaf Senior Citizens, Inc.**

Fourth Biennial Conference: "Connecting the Past with the Future."

Double Tree Hotel, 500 Computer Drive, Westborough, MA 01581

Hosted by Central Massachusetts Deaf Senior Citizens.

For more information: Russell Biando, [Russell.biando@gmail.com](mailto:Russell.biando@gmail.com)

### **June 9, 2012: Baystate Deaf Senior Citizens, Inc.**

25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary American Buffet Luncheon Celebration 1987-2012

Hartford/Windsor Marriott Airport, 28 Day Hill Road, Windsor, CT 06095

Guest Speaker: Eddy Laird Master of Ceremonies: Thomas Desrosier

For more information: Carol Napoli, [napoli301@hotmail.com](mailto:napoli301@hotmail.com) or VP: 860-272-4014

### **June 16, 2012: New England Deaf Senior Citizens, Inc. Meeting**

Silver Lake Lake Community Center, 529 Plainfield Street, Providence, RI 02909

Catered lunch by Young's then Bingo

For more information: Donna Roderiques, [blueangelanna@earthlink.net](mailto:blueangelanna@earthlink.net)

### **July 6, 7 2012: Clarke Schools for Hearing and Speech**

Clarke School for the Deaf Alumni 5-Year Reunion

Clarion Hotel and Conference Center, 1 Atwood Drive, Northampton, MA 01060

For more information: Christine (Duffy) Skwersky, [reunion\\_chair@clarkealumni.org](mailto:reunion_chair@clarkealumni.org)

### **July 20, 21, 22, 2012: Beverly School Alumni Association**

70<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Alumni Weekend - 136<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Beverly School for the Deaf, Inc.

Beverly School for the Deaf, Inc, 6 Echo Avenue, Beverly, MA 01915 (Friday)

Holiday Inn, 1 Newbury Street (Route 1), Peabody, MA 01960 (Saturday/Sunday)

For more information: Jim McNeill, [jmceillt@aol.com](mailto:jmceillt@aol.com) VP: 781-670-3429

### **August 13, 2012: 8<sup>th</sup> Annual New England Homes for the Deaf Inc. Golf Tournament**

Beverly Golf and Tennis Club, 134 McKay Street, Beverly, MA 01915

For more information: [NEHD.org/golf](http://NEHD.org/golf)

### **August 25, 2012: New England Deaf Senior Citizens, Inc.**

Third Annual Clambake/Hamburg Picnic

Colt State Park, Shelter #2, Bristol, RI

For more information: Donna Roderiques, [blueangelanna@earthlink.net](mailto:blueangelanna@earthlink.net)

### **August 22 to 27, 2013: 12<sup>th</sup> Biennial Deaf Seniors of America Conference**

For more information: [dsa2013baltimore.org](http://dsa2013baltimore.org)