Dear Friends,

What a year this has been for Hearth, starting with the loss of a beloved CEO in the spring and culminating with the hiring of a new leader whose arrival has us all very excited. And in between we were so ably led by our wonderful senior staff.

We are very pleased to welcome Mark Hinderlie as our new CEO. Mark brings extensive not-for profit experience and some interesting new perspectives to the team. He had to hit the ground running, because we have been busy developing several new projects. We are so appreciative of the strong leadership provided by our COO and Acting CEO, Ellen Nolan-Gard, and our entire dedicated staff who have worked so hard to keep our programs strong and to prepare us for the future.

This summer, the Mayor’s office and the City’s Department of Neighborhood Development asked us to help save 15 units of housing for very low income elders which had been taken out of service. With extraordinary efforts of our senior staff and with unprecedented support from the City and Commonwealth, we expect to see tenants settled into the former McCrohon House in Jamaica Plain before the end of the year.

Of course what makes us most proud is the service we provide daily to more than 120 elderly residents and the hundreds of seniors assisted by our outreach team. We were recognized for this work by the National Alliance to End Homelessness which awarded Hearth its 2006 Leadership Award. We hope that you will enjoy getting to know some of the people we serve in the pages of this report.

All of us at Hearth are extremely grateful for the continued faith and commitment demonstrated by the generosity of our friends and supporters. Together we really do bring elders home for good.

In gratitude,

Mary S. Parker
Board Chair
A Day in the Life....

Recent collage graduate Kate Waters is an Outreach Case Manager at Hearth. Although her simple answer to the question “What do you do?” is “I work with homeless elders to find them housing,” that answer barely scratches the surface of the complex work she and the other Outreach Team members do on a daily basis.

9:15 am  Kate’s phone rings, but she’s busy gathering files for her weekly visit to the Pine Street Inn shelter and doesn’t answer.

The next several hours are spent with elderly homeless men and women at the Pine Street Inn shelter, each one needing help with different tasks. Juan needs help filling out the application for food stamps. Bill needs help obtaining healthcare, and Steven needs help applying for a photo ID and a copy of his birth certificate. Each one of these services Kate performs brings these men one step closer to leaving the shelter system and into their own apartments.

1:00 pm  Kate grabs lunch on her way back to Hearth. Before heading out to her next meeting, she calls the Massachusetts Coalition for the Homeless to schedule an appointment for Susan to obtain furniture for her new apartment.

1:30 pm  Kate accompanies Linda to a housing interview. They wait an hour before being called, Kate attempting to keep her client calm. It will be two weeks before Linda finds out if the management company will offer her a unit.

4:00 pm  Kate returns to the office to find Peter waiting for her. Peter recently moved into an apartment but doesn’t have any money for food. She fills a plastic bag with items from Hearth’s small food pantry which he gratefully takes home.

Kate spends the rest of her afternoon meeting with her supervisor, discussing her difficult cases and addressing her clients’ needs.

Home for Good

Client Stories of Success

Warren’s Story: The Anna Bissonnette House continues to be a home for good for a good many people including Warren. It all happened very quickly to Warren. After 25 years as a practicing attorney in Texas, Warren was devastated by the deaths of several friends and relatives. Then, following the loss of his health insurance, Warren’s wife was diagnosed with lung cancer. She ultimately died and Warren was left alone, broke, and severely depressed.

Warren remained unemployed for two years before burying himself in an enormous workload as an accountant. The stress complicated his diabetes and he slipped into a coma for eight days. His depression worsened when he gave up his independence and moved to Boston to live with his daughter and son-in-law.

Things improved for Warren when Hearth learned of his situation and the Outreach Team found him an apartment at ABH. Now, Joan Doherty, the on-site nurse, helps him manage his diabetes, and Melissa Russo, the on-site social worker, helps him manage the rest of his life. At Hearth, Warren has found a safe home where he can receive needed care and remain independent. It was a long, hard journey, but Warren is now home for good.

Catherine and Rose: Ruggles Assisted Living Community is a home for good for Rose and Catherine. These two ladies were prominent African-American women in Roxbury. They were helping others before they found themselves in need of help. Rose went from living on her son’s couch to thriving at Ruggles, even taking on a clerical job with a state-based organization for elders.
The Ruth Cowin House has become Peter’s home for good. Peter was a neurosurgeon in Germany, but he was unable to pass the medical equivalency exams in the United States, of his deteriorating mental health. His marriage failed, and he was hit by a car in 2003. After two hip replacements and four knee surgeries, Peter still needs crutches to get around. Peter’s Story:

Meanwhile, Catherine was hit by a series of health problems. No longer able to direct a city-based community band, Catherine moved into a housing project where her congestive heart condition was exacerbated by the need to constantly walk up and down four flights of stairs. Switching to Ruggles has revitalized her.

Without Ruggles, Rose and Catherine would most likely have been placed in nursing homes with far less suitable services and autonomy—and at much higher cost. At Ruggles, these fine women are healthy, happy, and home for good.

Peter’s Story: The Ruth Cowin House has become Peter’s home for good. Peter was a neurosurgeon in Germany, but he was unable to pass the medical equivalency exams in the United States, because of his deteriorating mental health. His marriage failed, and he was hit by a car in 2003. After two hip replacements and four knee surgeries, Peter still needs crutches to get around.

Hearth’s Outreach Team began assisting Peter in 2004, and just this past April, he finally found a home for good.

Regina’s Story: Upham’s Corner ElderHouse is home for 63-year-old Regina. After too many years staying at the Pine Street Inn, Regina was introduced to Hearth’s Outreach staff three years ago. Regina has both physical and mental health disabilities, including paralysis in her left arm. She feels embarrassed about her arm and says that’s why she isn’t more social. Although she struggles with social avoidance issues, Regina reports that she is very happy at Upham’s Corner. She can now sleep late, enjoy her own private space, and feel safe in her home for good.

2006 Leadership Award

Hearth’s commitment, innovation and effectiveness were recognized this year with an especially prestigious award. The National Alliance to End Homelessness is the largest homeless prevention advocacy group in the country, and each year it chooses to acknowledge one outstanding nonprofit organization in the country for making the most significant contributions toward ending homelessness. This year, the Alliance’s Leadership Award was presented to Hearth at a special ceremony at the Kennedy Center in Washington, DC. The award is a credit to the distinguished work of our staff, volunteers and friends.

The award was presented in April. In July, May Shields, Director of Health Services, and Debbi Cutler, Director of Behavioral Health, were invited to Washington to speak at the Alliance’s Annual Conference on Capitol Hill. Attendees enjoyed May and Debbie’s discussion of Hearth’s service-enriched housing model and their own experiences caring for and working with the homeless elderly population.

On-site nurses play an important role in Hearth’s service-enriched housing.
**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 elders and staff, with the desire to see both achieve their highest degree of potential.

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