



IT'S A BLESSING!

Blessings are "showered" on new school building

The blessing was simple, but touching. A small gathering of school and agency staff and several students huddled under umbrellas in a soft rain at the entrance of the new building. "Oh Lord, be with us" (to the tune of "Kumbaya") was sung to begin the blessing. In the loose stones at the doorway, a shallow indentation had been prepared where several shards and a stone from Assisi would be placed by the students present. Sister Anne explained that Assisi was where St. Francis had lived and "he loved children." The pieces of old pottery and the stone were symbolically giving back to the earth what the earth has given to us.



Bless our school

With the words, "Bless this water, bless our school, bless those who attend the school and those who work at the school and

bless all here today," water was sprinkled at the entrance. A glance in the doorway revealed two construction workers who, hearing the guitar and singing, had come to watch.

and proud participation of the students.

One class takes pleasure in planting seeds and watching them grow. They wanted to plant something, and a clay flowerpot filled with soil was ready to accept the zinnia seeds that one of the students sprinkled on top. With the singing of "He's Got the Whole World in His Hands," the brief ceremony was over, but the afterglow remained as we remembered the smiles

and proud participation of the students.

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RESPIRE

The breather that helps families stay together

Cardinal Hayes Respite Program has been in existence for 23 years. The services have proved invaluable for local families caring at home for a son or daughter who is disabled. At the present time, 32 families are using the respite services.

Workers trained by Cardinal Hayes Home provide day or evening breaks, giving parents the opportunity to shop, go to appointments or just "take a break" from the 24-hour, 7 days a week responsi-

bility of caring for a member of their family who has disabilities. The program serves all ages and income levels.

Having a child who is developmentally disabled is a great burden on a family. Some couples have grown closer in spite of the hardship. It is very apparent that all these children are deeply loved by their parents, but some people find they cannot cope with the situation. Those involved with the adminis-

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WATCH - Work Activities Training at Cardinal Hayes

Program participants enjoy friendship with local students

This spring, a wonderful reciprocal relationship was established between the young adults in WATCH and students in a Pre-K class at St. Joseph School. What began as a celebration of Catholic Schools Week at St. Joseph's resulted in regularly scheduled contact between the two groups.

Initially, the St. Joseph School students made cookies and hand decorated packages and cards and delivered them to their new friends at the WATCH program at Cardinal Hayes Home. The 3-year-olds sang two songs before giving packages to Felicia and Tanya. It was hard to tell who enjoyed this exchange more – the little 3-year-olds or the two young women in WATCH.

For Valentine's Day, the WATCH participants made Valentine teddy bear pencils and handed them out to the children from St. Joseph's. WATCH worked hard on a special papier-mâché Easter egg project that was delivered during Easter week to the children in the St. Joseph Pre-K class.



Felicia proudly gives teddy bear pencil

The periodic visiting back and forth is a source of delight to all – the children, the young adults and the staff from St. Joseph's and from Cardinal Hayes Home.

RESPIRE

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tration of respite services sometimes encounter a father who just never learns to cope. In other cases, couples have split up because it is just too much to deal with. Respite is even more crucial for single moms as they try single-handedly to manage the home.

Nearly 100% of the families using respite services would like more hours, but funding is limited. One mother remarked, "If only those who determine funding would just watch me try to make



He's ready to dance!

supper, they might begin to realize how important Cardinal Hayes Respite Program is."

Under the respite umbrella, there is a program that is scheduled during school breaks. Started 7 years ago, GAP (Group Activities Program) takes place at Cardinal Hayes School and provides a wonderful "fill-in" for students in the community who need special care during the times when schools are not in session.

The students attending GAP have wide-ranging disabilities, and it is a pleasure to visit the program,
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WHAT'S COOKIN'?

CHH kitchen staff tackles challenges with good humor and enthusiasm

They prepare meals for 60 young people whose diets and needs are varied, many meals have to be pureed or ground, individual menus are altered to appeal to “picky” eaters... but those who work in the kitchen at Cardinal Hayes Home will tell you that they love their jobs. A visit to the kitchen may find John, one of our cooks, “making our own baby food” – pureeing fresh fruit. And he proudly says that it’s better than what you buy because there are no additives. The day for one or two staff begins at 4 a.m. when they fix breakfast and begin preparing for lunch.

Dinners are started in each house early in the day, and staff working in the home does the finishing touches. More and more of the cooking is being done in the individual houses on the Millbrook campus as it’s more like real family life. It may be a lot of work, but having the sounds and smells of cooking make it like any home. (In Cardinal Hayes five community homes, located in different towns in the county, all cooking is done on the premises.)

But don’t ever think that cooking is all the kitchen staff does! Nancy loves to help feed the kids, and Anthony (formerly a direct care worker) is a natural fit to cook in the houses. An early morning visit to one of the homes on campus finds Nancy, smiling and chatting away with the kids and staff as she prepares cheese omelets, a favorite breakfast food. The direct care workers, who have been on duty all night, are nevertheless upbeat and energetic. Some are helping the residents eat their

breakfast, others are completing reports. As Nancy dishes up breakfast, she talks and jokes with the children who respond with smiles. Nancy obviously knows each resident’s likes and dislikes – “You need more ketchup already?” The atmosphere is definitely home-like, giving the youngsters who live in the home a happy start to the day.



Nancy cooks and helps with breakfast

There is a 4-week cycle of menus – one set of menus for fall/winter and another for spring/summer. The produce supplier can deliver 6 days a week, so fresh fruits and vegetables are ordered as needed, ensuring freshness.

Lunch is also taken to Cardinal Hayes School every weekday in insulated food carriers.

Every day in the winter homemade soup is part of the menu. In the warm weather, salads take the place of soup. Lunch might be ravioli, pizza, hamburgers, spaghetti and meatballs or sandwiches. Here again, a lot of meals have to be pureed or ground.

Then there are occasions like Fun Day for residents and their families, the staff picnic, the Christmas party. That’s when the kitchen crew is called upon to plan and cook an entirely different type of meal. All this is cheerfully tackled, and the needs of the residents are also met on these days.

In spite of the challenges, in spite of the fact that “it gets harder all the time” as new residents bring new and more difficult dietary needs, the kitchen staff carries it off with a smile. Hats off to this dedicated, hard-working group of workers!

HE MEETS CHALLENGES WITH GUSTO!

...enjoying independence
in spite of disabilities

David is an amazing 18-year-old who has lived at Cardinal Hayes Home since 2004. Although he has made incredible strides in the years he has been here, David still has limitations. But he accepts every challenge that comes his way. Several years ago, David displayed an interest in karate and eventually achieved his orange belt. If you could meet David, the first thing you would notice is the beautiful smile that frequently lights up his face.



David's beautiful smile

David's outgoing personality makes him a natural to be involved in the Self-Advocacy Association of New York. He recently was able to take part in a statewide conference – a weekend of seminars and social events with peers from throughout the region. A dance on Friday evening featured the nationally acclaimed band

“Flame” which is composed of a troupe of exceptionally talented young men and women who are developmentally disabled. Their performance had the ballroom rocking and inspired David to wish for a rock band of his own.

Spending the night in a hotel room and attending events rich in peer interaction gave David a sense of independence that transcended the day-to-day experience of residential life. On the final day of the conference, David looked up from his wheelchair and said to the Cardinal Hayes worker who had accompanied him, “I feel just like a king in this place!”

IT'S IMPORTANT!

If you don't have a will,
your state has one for you!

We all know it's important to have a valid will in place, but many of us delay beginning the process. However, once this is done, you will feel greatly relieved. Remember, you have the right to decide how your estate will be distributed in the event of your death.

If you currently have no will or need to update an existing will, we can help you. Our free leaflet, “Will your Will make a difference?” explains in easy terms what steps you need to take – tips on retaining an attorney, deciding where you want your estate to go, and how to remember a charity in your will.

If you would like a copy of this pamphlet, just fill in the request form and mail it back to us, or send an e-mail to jilltowner@cardinalhayeshome.org or call us at 845-677-6363, ext. 133. There will be no follow-up phone calls to your home.

If you want to designate Cardinal Hayes Home as a beneficiary, our legal name is *Cardinal Hayes Home for Children at Millbrook, New York*. Please let us know if you ever decide to do this so we can say, “thank you.” Unless otherwise requested, bequests are placed in our Endowment Fund, thus helping to support programs for young people with disabilities, both now and in the future.

**PLEASE SEND ME THE FREE PAMPHLET,
“Will your Will make a difference?”**

Name

Address

City/State/Zip

HELPING HANDS AT HAYES

Mission celebration offers opportunities to share and to give

During a six-week period in the spring, we celebrate our mission with open house scheduled at our homes in the community and at our houses on the Millbrook campus.

This year, each unit or house is taking great pride in making their mission boards individual, using the theme, *Helping Hands at Hayes*. During each Mission celebration, visitors enjoy refreshments or light lunches prepared by staff at the site. Cardinal Hayes workers really enjoy

having the opportunity to tour other houses or units and get together with employees who work at other locations.



Because the “Stuff the Van” food drive for needy families in the area was so successful in the fall, another drive was planned in conjunction with the Mission celebration. “Fill the Easter Basket – Let’s Get Hopping!” gave staff the chance to again donate toward a local food pantry.



RESPIRE

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meet the participants and see how they enjoy and benefit from the days they spend in GAP.

During a spring school break, there were nine youngsters gathered in one of Cardinal Hayes School’s large classrooms. All were busy doing something and all seemed happy. It was a special delight to meet Amtoj, a 17-year-old who is totally blind and has autism. “Ams” (as he is commonly known) has the remarkable ability to memorize once-heard facts such as a phone number, license plate number, or day of the week on which a date fell.

Ams seems immediately pleased to meet a new acquaintance and might quickly ask, “How many miles on your car?” That question will be followed with other questions such as – what year is your car? – what is your phone number? Answers are stored in his mind and weeks later, he will immediately recall them. And Ams can tell you the ages of all of the others at GAP. He likes CDs, especially Michael Jackson, and will eagerly demonstrate his dancing skills. Ams’ mom loves to share stories about her son and will tell you that she never needs to write down a phone number – she simply tells Ams.

With his engaging smile, this cheerful young man could lift anyone’s spirits. In spite of his disabilities, Ams enjoys life, enjoys people, enjoys music.

BECAUSE YOU ASKED

From the desk of Fred Apers, Executive Director...

Getting a note or letter from a donor really makes my day, and I am always glad to respond to an inquiry. Certain questions seem to periodically pop up, so I decided answering them in a newsletter would be a good idea since you may have wanted to ask the same question.

Since you are sponsored by the Franciscan Missionaries of Mary are admissions to Cardinal Hayes Home limited to those who are Catholic or Christian?

Absolutely not! We have youngsters of many different religious and ethnic backgrounds. All are welcome at Hayes!

Does the current economy curtail the services you are able to provide?

No. We are reducing expenses wherever we can, but not in areas that directly affect the care of our residents. As many families are doing, we are scrutinizing day-to-day expenditures. The care of our young people is and always will be a top priority for us. The donations we receive help us more than ever.

I appreciate that you limit your mailings. Why did you arrive at this decision?

It is my belief that mailing to donors more than 6 or 7 times a year is excessive. Obviously, there are expenses involved – printing, postage, etc. I am committed to keeping our costs to mail appeals as low as possible.

Many organizations send address labels, note pads and religious articles. Why do you not send any “freebies?”

Again, it’s a cost factor. All these “free” items cost money to produce and often add to the weight of a mail piece, thus increasing postage. We enjoy sharing positive real life stories about our mission. The feedback I receive indicates

that the stories and pictures are appreciated and enjoyed – perhaps more than any premium.

How come your pictures are never of a sad nature – seems the kids are always happy.

Naturally there are times when our youngsters are not smiling, but they are for the most part happy kids. I would rather share these happy faces than to snap a picture when a child is feeling sad. The youngsters seem to know how to get the most out of life – a smile opens many doors for them.

GOOD JOB!

It’s all about teamwork...

Cardinal Hayes Home is required by the state to meet certain licensure requirements. From time to time official visitors spend time at the agency. At the conclusion of a recent program review, the following observations were noted... *lots of teamwork; great spirit of caring; many smiles on the faces of those who live here; care, maintenance and upkeep of homes and grounds “top notch;” many special touches; bedrooms highly personalized.* Perhaps the nicest comment was, *We all agree that if any of us had the need, we would be very comfortable placing our own child here.*

Cardinal Hayes’ high quality program would not be possible without our dedicated sisters and staff. A theme recently featured on our mission boards proclaimed: *A successful team beats with one heart!...* this sums up our success very well.

Cardinal Hayes Home for Children
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Sponsored by the Franciscan Missionaries of Mary
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Visit our website:
www.cardinalhayeshome.org