

inner strength

The Newsletter of Cardinal Hayes Home for Children

Fall 2020



HEROES WORK HERE!



CCOVID-19 has been challenging to everyone. Cardinal Hayes Home is no exception. The usual daily routine for residents was attending day programs; they are now confined to their cottages. Challenge #1: devising new and different ways to make the days interesting; Challenge #2: meeting the strict new requirements to keep the residents and staff safe and well. The third challenge was, how do we express gratitude to staff for the extraordinary efforts put forth as they met these challenges? You see, it wasn't just administration wanting to acknowledge these efforts – it was the direct care professionals and essential workers themselves who wanted to show appreciation for each other!

That's how the idea for a parade came to be. With approval from directors and enthusiastic response from

staff, the plans took off. In mid-May, the parade began its preplanned route, local Millbrook fire engines, an EMS vehicle and an ambulance leading, with sirens and flashing lights. Following that were 42 cars decorated by staff from all departments and administration, with horns blowing, drivers and passengers waving. The parade wended its way through the campus, cheered along the way by spectators (visitors, other staff, residents) and headed to another CHH site, spreading its enthusiasm through the Village of Millbrook streets. A local radio station played a block of "hero" music during this time and did three shout-outs to CHH staff.

That's Cardinal Hayes Home!... spirits undimmed by a pandemic... facing ordinary and extraordinary situations with teamwork and gusto!

WE'D LIKE YOU TO MEET – Mary Sontheimer



In January of this year, Cardinal Hayes Home welcomed its new Executive Director, Mary Sontheimer. In the months since then, Mary not only had to adapt to her new position but also has had to meet the challenges that COVID-19 presented. An opportunity to talk to Mary quickly assures you that she has met and is meeting these challenges very well. With a pleasant, calm and reassuring demeanor, Mary leaves no doubt she is more than capable of handling the many facets of being Executive Director and of steering the agency through these difficult times.

With a strong background in the field of services for children (Mary was at Astor Services for Children & Families for many years, most recently served as Assistant Executive Director of Education and Early Childhood Programs), Mary is enthusiastic and compassionate as she speaks of the residents in our programs.

When asked how she is able to manage the stress that COVID has created, she responds, “The team of people I am surrounded by. They are so committed to keeping everyone healthy. By the grace of God, we are able to weather this storm.” As for the future direction of Cardinal Hayes Home after the virus is under control, Mary indicates they will be treading carefully in the transition to new policies mandated by Medicaid funding. Opportunities to expand or improve services are always explored, according to Mary.

What does Mary find most rewarding about being Executive Director of CHH? “Being part of a place that is so focused on compassionate care for those being served. I am in awe of the care that is delivered. Just being part of this system of care, compassion and commitment of staff – I feel privileged to be in this position. I am learning so much about human dignity.”

A FEW THOUGHTS FROM FRED APERS

(retired Executive Director 47 years at CHH)

I am so pleased that the positive spirit of Cardinal Hayes Home and School maintains the standards of our ongoing mission. Service above self is a special calling and witnessed every day. On the walls of our various facilities is a reminder of our special mission:

Stronger together than alone
connected by shared...
purpose
values
goals

Our staff remains committed to our mission providing appropriate assistance and a positive spirit throughout these challenging times. It is an extraordinary experience as we go forward.

To our donors, thank you for your caring support, may God Bless you and your loved ones in these challenging times.



A Fond Farewell

– *Sister Anne Turbini, fmm*

The Franciscan Missionaries of Mary have been an active presence at Cardinal Hayes Home since its very beginning in 1941. Over the years, the sisters have held various positions at CHH, and their steady support and enduring joyfulness have given an important dimension to the mission of the agency.

Sister Anne Turbini, fmm, was for many years one of the sisters residing and working at Cardinal Hayes. Sister Anne came to CHH in 1992. Prior to coming to Cardinal Hayes Home, Sr. Anne served in various locations. Over the years, she was active as an educator and spent approximately 25 years in Australia – as a teacher, as principal at a school and as a religious education consultant. During her time here at Hayes, Sr. Anne was a familiar face, often stopping in to see the children. With a gentle touch of her hand and a smile, Sr. Anne softly spoke to each youngster. But it wasn't just the residents, she would warmly greet each staff member in a sincere and kind way. Many times there would be a camera around her neck so she could get that good candid shot!

A gifted and creative person, Sister Anne was an active member of the agency's Mission Committee. The annual Mission Awareness Month would find her busy creating posters and helping plan special times to bring staff together. When preparing unusual and moving prayer services for the

children and occasionally for staff, Sr. Anne always made sure each detail was perfect – the small altar in the chapel tastefully adorned with flowers, candles or other items appropriate for the season. The children's prayer services gathered in residents from the campus cottages and from the community homes. There was always a way for the youngsters to take part, and they eagerly participated. The Bible stories were simple and beautiful, the music lively.

A prayer service for staff at Christmas would include readings, reflections and traditional and non-traditional music. All this was done with Sr. Anne's special touch.



After living and working for 28 years at Cardinal Hayes Home, Sr. Anne retired and went to be with her community of sisters in Rhode Island. A few days before her departure, the outdoor send-off had to be moved inside due to rain, but that did not lessen the enthusiasm of staff who stopped by to express their love and appreciation to Sr. Anne. She was overwhelmed and greatly pleased when given a scrapbook filled with many pictures and letters from staff, former staff and members of the Board of Directors. It was easy to imagine that she would spend hours going through the album, reading the letters and enjoying the photos.

Fondly speaking of her years here, Sr. Anne says, *"To be in this place is a blessing."*

We will miss you, Sr. Anne...

"May the Lord bless you and keep you. May the Lord let His face shine upon you and be gracious to you. May the Lord look upon you kindly and give you peace."

[Numbers 6:24-26]

WE ARE ALL IN THIS TOGETHER

We always look forward to putting together a newsletter for our donors. The length of time that has elapsed since we shared news with you has been longer than usual due to the COVID-19 crisis. In this issue, we have tried to convey some of the struggles we have encountered and challenges we are meeting, but, at the same time, to assure you that the remarkable spirit of Cardinal Hayes Home and Hayes Day School has not diminished. Our workers have demonstrated their ability to adapt programs and routines so those in our Home and School are safe and well cared for. At the same time, we are aware that you, our donors, are also facing many challenges. Please be assured that you are all in our prayers. To those of you who choose to send donations during this time, we thank you! Any gifts now received are used to offset the extra expenses that the pandemic has created for our agency and for our school – for example, additional sanitation supplies and procedures, compensation for workers who put in extra hours to ensure adequate coverage in our cottages/units and maintaining overall high quality of care.

New Deck & Ramp Enhance Watch Building

We are pleased to report that a new deck and handicap ramp were completed on the building housing our WATCH program. Enhancing the front of the wood frame structure, this addition provides more efficient entrance and exit, especially when transporting those in wheelchairs. More importantly, the deck and ramp will ensure quicker and safer evacuation in the event of an emergency. A very big thank you to those who joined us in financing this project. The fundraising campaign is still open for those who have not yet had the opportunity and wish to contribute.

WATCH (Work Activities Training at Cardinal Hayes) is a vital part of Cardinal Hayes Home. When it began in 1996, there were eight participants. Today there are twenty-three developmentally

disabled young adults benefiting from this program that challenges them and brings a new dimension to their lives. Vans owned by CHH are used each weekday morning to transport participants from our main campus and five community homes to the day program and then back at the end of the day. A visit to the workshop is an uplifting experience...

The upbeat, cheerful atmosphere is immediately apparent as one enters the large room where different work sessions are taking place. All the young adults are intent on what they are doing, many working one-on-one with a staff member. A variety of craft projects are taking place with lots of encouragement from staff. One day an observer summed up her visit, "I could feel the smile coming to my face and a warm glow inside when I watched those taking part in the program – they were so happy and so pleased with their accomplishments."

Working with young people who are developmentally disabled requires patience and can be challenging. But staff here at WATCH will quickly tell you that they love their job, love working with those attending the workshop... said one, "They get into your heart." The impressive number of years that they have worked here (e.g., 9 years, 13 years) confirms their commitment.



HAYES DAY SCHOOL



Dara Russell, Director of Education at our special school, has many years of experience in the education field and has held this position for six years. A late summer day, found Dara and Diane Diasparra, Curriculum Coordinator, busy mapping out the details for the school for special children to open in September. In case you wonder why we refer to our school and our students as “special,” it’s because Hayes Day School serves young people who are developmentally disabled – that is, have physical and mental disabilities. This necessitates having more than usual staff to meet the needs of the students – not only teachers, but also nurses, physical, occupational and speech therapists and a significant number of teacher aides and assistants. One of the Franciscan Missionaries of Mary, Sister Martha, is music therapist, bringing another dimension of learning and enjoyment to the students.

Enrollment this year stands at 52. Approximately one-half are residents of Cardinal Hayes Home and one-half are children from the surrounding communities. Thirteen different school districts provide transportation to and from school for the students who live at home. COVID-19 has had a

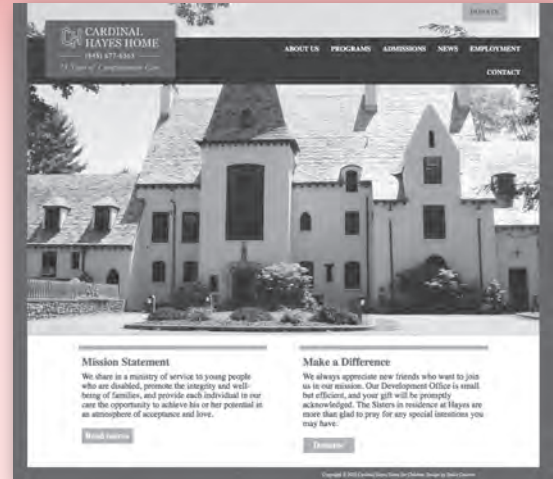
great impact on how school days are conducted – the current plan, 50% of the students are brought to the school: one group on Tuesdays and Thursdays and the other group on Wednesdays and Fridays. In that way, all students have two days of face-to-face and two days of distance learning. Teachers and staff wear masks; students are being taught how to wear a mask. Whereas sharing of educational toys and devices was formerly encouraged, it is now necessary for each student have his or her own puzzles, books, etc.

Drive-by graduation for seven Hayes Day School students took place in June. The special day began on the Cardinal Hayes Millbrook campus where stops were made for four graduates. It was a happy celebration with horns blowing and graduation certificates presented. Then the entourage went to three different locations in various parts of the county where the noisy and joyous celebration continued. All of this is posted on Hayes Day School page on Facebook. We encourage you to take a few minutes to look at these postings that will surely bring a smile to your face and brighten your day! More information about Hayes Day School can be found at website www.hayesdayschool.org.

IN STEP WITH THE TIMES

We are proud to announce that Cardinal Hayes Home and Hayes Day School have Facebook and Instagram pages. Now more than ever, people are turning to their electronic devices to keep in touch with family and friends. Being part of social media has truly helped us stay connected when visiting is limited.

We also have a website www.cardinalhayeshome.org which shares the history of the Home, the sponsors, our programs and our administration. Through our website, you are also able to make online donations via safe and secure means.



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 _____

Embracing the Inner Strength of People with Disabilities

Cardinal Hayes Home for Children
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(845) 677-6363

Sponsored by the Franciscan Missionaries of Mary
Executive Director: Mary Sontheimer

Visit our website:
www.cardinalhayeshome.org