



Fall 2009



Clarity

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Welcome!

It is my pleasure to welcome you to the first of edition of *Clarity* – Welcome Homes Residential Services new quarterly newsletter. October not only marks the beginning of our new fiscal year, but it also brings about many exciting opportunities for Welcome Homes Residential Services. This newsletter is just a sample of things to come this year.

At a statewide Lion's convention this summer, Welcome Homes Residential Services announced a new affiliation with six residential communities of Porter Hills Retirement Communities & Services – adding more than 250 new residents to our program. And this is only the beginning! We look forward to expanding this relationship with Porter Hills and others to reach even more residents who could benefit from vision services.

Continued on back...

Dexter Foundation Donates!

The Louis M. Dexter Foundation of Grand Rapids presents Welcome Homes Residential Services with Donation

On August 4, 2009 the Dexter Foundation Board of Directors approved a donation of \$1,125 to Welcome Homes Residential Services, bringing their total support to nearly \$6,000 since 2007. The Board and staff at WHRS thank the Dexter Foundation for their continued support.



Pictured: Janice Jacobson, Dexter Foundation Trustee, Brian Shepard, WHRS Director

"We believe that there is such a need for the services that you offer," said Janice Jacobson, Dexter Foundation Trustee. "We are happy to provide support to Welcome Homes in their mission."

To Learn More:

Call us at 888-939-9292 or email

info@welcomehomesmichigan.org



Your donations will help us accomplish...

\$30 - a white cane for someone who is blind or visually impaired allowing them to travel safely

\$50 - a handheld magnifier that would allow a person with low vision to read the newspaper

\$100 - one hour of Group Support for visually impaired individuals and their families

\$150 - one hour of Orientation/Mobility Training or Vision Rehabilitation Therapy to help individuals perform daily tasks and navigate safely in their own living environment

\$225 - one hour of training for 50 caregivers in Assisted Living or Nursing Care communities

Send your tax deductible donation to:
Welcome Homes Residential Services
500 Cherry Street SE
Grand Rapids, MI 49503

WHRS is a 501c3 organization

A Great Partnership

Welcome Homes Residential Services (WHRS) and the Michigan Commission for the Blind (MCB) are excited to announce a new partnership to better serve the more than 255,000 Michigan residents who are blind or visually impaired.

The partnership between WHRS and MCB is a state-wide initiative focused on providing the highest level of service to individuals living with vision loss. Both organizations bring a different expertise and area of focus to the table, making this a valuable partnership to those with vision impairments.

MCB serves individuals who are legally blind – 20/200 vision or less – and live in an independent setting by providing opportunities to achieve employment and/or to function independently in society.

WHRS provides services to individuals with all levels of visual impairments living in a variety of settings – including individual homes, assisted living and retirement communities. WHRS teaches life skills, provides aides

and appliances and offers trainings to individuals and staff at residential settings.

“By partnering together, the Michigan Commission for the Blind and Welcome Homes Residential Services can now serve all of Michigan’s residents struggling with vision loss,” said Brian Shepard, Director at Welcome Homes. “The Commission can assist legally blind independent individuals with life skills and employment training, while Welcome Homes can assist people with all levels of vision loss in a variety of living environments.”

“This partnership between Welcome Homes Residential Services and the Michigan Commission for the Blind is so important to those individuals that otherwise may not receive services, whether due to the individuals living arrangements or financial restraints,” said Sherry Gordon, Assistant West Region Manager at the Michigan Commission for the Blind. “Whatever the case, the Commission appreciates this partnership and looks forward to it continuing well into the future.”



“I don’t need your services today- but I am so grateful to know that when I do, you will be here to help me.”

-Resident



Lions Support

Annual Golf Outing Raises \$2,300 for WHRS

On June 13 the Laingsburg and Ovid Lions Clubs hosted their annual golf outing at Pine Hills Golf Course. The event raised \$2,300 which benefited WHRS. "This year's event was a record breaking year for us both in participants and the money raised," said Past District Governor John Carroll and co-chair of the event. Thank you Laingsburg and Ovid Lions Clubs!



Pictured L-R: WHRS Director Brian Shepard, Lion Larry Martin, PDG John Carroll (Event Co-chairs), Ovid Lions President Michael Wieber



Lions Member Raises Funds During Bridge Walk

For many, Labor Day weekend represents a short work week, a long weekend with family and friends, even the end of summer. This year Labor Day weekend represented an opportunity to raise funds for Welcome Homes Residential Services. Lions State Chairman Richard Maxwell was among the 50,000 people who participated in the 52nd Annual Bridge Walk. Lion Richard used this opportunity to raise \$1,235 through pledges and donations to benefit Welcome Homes Residential Services. Thank you Lion Richard and everyone who helped to support him in his efforts.

Affiliation Spotlight

New Partnership with Porter Hills Retirement Communities & Services

By Carol Helsel, Vice President of Human Resources

Porter Hills Retirement Communities & Services is pleased to announce our exciting new partnership with Welcome Homes Residential Services! Welcome Homes is now providing its services to six of our residential communities and we anticipate that the number will grow.

We recognize the tremendous value Welcome Homes provides to older adults struggling with vision loss, and we see them as an important partner. Porter Hills currently serves approximately 1,000 people throughout our eleven residential communities and

nearly 3,000 people through our home care services. Through this partnership with Welcome Homes, our residents, clients and staff can receive the necessary vision-related assistance they need – wherever they call home.

Welcome Homes' staff goes into our communities to work with residents and employees to help prevent serious injuries caused by falls and other vision-related accidents. Research has found that 18 percent of falls and other mobility issues are caused by vision-related problems. With the help of Welcome Homes we can help

keep people safe and assist in preventing these serious injuries.

All of us at Porter Hills see how critically important Welcome Homes' services are, and we thank the Lions Clubs of Michigan and all of Welcome Homes supporters for believing in its mission. Without you, we would not have this opportunity to provide quality vision services to the thousands of older adults we serve. We will continue to look at ways we can partner with Welcome Homes, and we anticipate more exciting news on this soon – so stay tuned!



Welcome... *Continued from front*

In addition to providing services to residents of our affiliated homes, we have also added a new component of in-home care, allowing us to provide services to individuals at home. As we continue to grow, we are reaching out to orientation and mobility specialists throughout the state in an effort to add new service areas and reach more individuals living with vision impairment.

And we haven't stopped there. We have been spreading the word to a variety of groups throughout the community including the Michigan Optometric Association and the Michigan Assisted Living Association this past spring. As part of our new plan for the 2010 fiscal year, Welcome Homes Residential Services will be offering continuing education units (CEU's) for homes seeking these credit hours for certification or recertification of their staff.

There's a lot happening this year at Welcome Homes Residential Services! Keep reading our newsletters to learn more about all the exciting new things happening as we expand our services to reach more individuals who can benefit from vision services.

Brian Shepard, Director

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This newsletter supported in part by
Porter Hills Retirement Communities & Services and Gerontology Network



500 Cherry Street SE
Grand Rapids, MI 49503

Annual Blind Dinner Date! Guest speaker: Tom Sullivan



The Grand Rapids Lions Club is pleased to announce Tom Sullivan as the keynote speaker for the 5th Annual Blind Dinner Date to be held on March 11, 2010.

Refusing to be fenced in by his blindness, Sullivan and his father created "Sullivan's Rules" so that he could play baseball with the neighborhood boys without the benefit of seeing the ball. Sullivan is an accomplished actor, singer, entertainer, author and producer.

This Annual event highlights local programs that helps individuals live with vision loss. All proceeds benefit: Cherry Street Health Services, Association for the Blind and Visually Impaired, Ken-O-Sha and Welcome Homes Residential Services. The event will take place at the Grand Rapids Hilton-Airport location.

Tickets are \$75 and are available through Welcome Homes Residential Services.

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