

## Right at Home (continued)

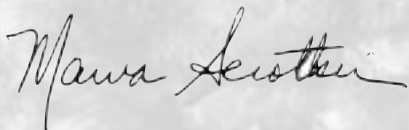
ing 5,000 beds, have closed.

- Occupancy rates are climbing in certain areas in the state, which means that nursing-home residents and their families are experiencing greater difficulty in accessing nursing homes (TBH has a 100% occupancy).

In response, the Mass. Extended Care Federation reports that the seriousness of this underfunding has prompted the filing of a lawsuit against the state. We support this action, and we need to let the Governor and the State House know how strongly we feel.

For the sake of all those affected, Medicaid rates need to be increased. I therefore encourage you to join me in taking action. Contact Governor Swift and your legislators and ask them to support equitable rates of payment for nursing facilities as proposed by the Mass. Extended Care Federation. We need to be heard, and the time to act is now!

Thanks for your concern.



**Marva Serotkin**  
Chief Executive Officer

**Note:** Marva Serotkin is an officer on the board of the Mass. Extended Care Federation. She welcomes your questions if you would like to call her (ext. 256) or email her (serotkinm@cs.com).

## WORDS ON WHEELS

### Reflections on Jacqueline Kennedy Exhibit

I almost felt as though I was looking through somebody's closet without them knowing about it when I saw the JFK Museum show. It's a step backwards in time, showing these things that are familiar, yet of another era. I was really rattled when they showed an airmail stamp of 20 cents. It seems as though you can't get anything nowadays for 20 cents!

Another thing that I was so amazed by is her stature. She was about my height, had bigger feet, and carried herself so regally. I guess that comes from her breeding. I know that she was originally from a French (Auchincloss) family, which shows how easily she could converse in French. Also amazing was the way the mannequins were made her size and wore her hats easily in their chiseled hair, even the pillboxes!

The way the museum planned the exhibit was really nice in that the curators could be instantly available. I know that because I lost my friend Kathy for a while, and one of the curators showed up like a genie and said, "Are you looking for someone?" And I said, "Yes, I've been looking for a friend, also in a wheelchair." And he said, "I think I know who, since I've been tracking you for a while." That kind of made me feel weird, because I've become so used to people looking over my head and not seeing me at all.

Anyway, the show was like rummaging in someone else's closet (or boudoir) without having to hang up the stuff because it was already on some elaborate dummies! The show was so good, that some of the materials were painstakingly described, thus underscoring the types and times that they represented.

**COLLEEN POWERS – BOSTON HOME RESIDENT**

## WE ARE THE CHAMPIONS A SALUTE TO SITKA SONMEZER

While "Bridges" is the name of an important TBH outreach program in the external community, the game of bridge is an important recreational activity inside our facility. On Thursdays from 5:30-7 p.m. in our Activity Room, groups of four, eight, or twelve residents listen intently as Bridge Master Sitki Sonmezer gives lessons in this fascinating pastime.

Born in Istanbul, Turkey, Sitki graduated from Bosphorus University with a Masters in Business Management. He came to the USA last year, joined the MIT Bridge Club, and soon after began to volunteer at The Boston Home.

The residents find him pleasant, charming, and, in the words of Dan Dalpe, one of our dedicated players, "very, very patient." All qualities that make him an excellent teacher.

We're proud to add "Master Sitka" to our list of champions!

# A Distinctive Chair Wheeled into City Hall

One of the ways our residents express their creativity is by participating in artistic endeavors, such as those sponsored by the Dorchester Community Center for the Arts. The latest project, "Not Your Ordinary Chair," involved several residents who helped design a unique wheelchair (bottom left), featured at a City Hall ceremony attended by Mayor Tom Menino. According to Joan MacQuarrie, one of the resident designers, the wheelchair (now located in our reception area) is our mode



of transportation, and we wanted to celebrate participation in the Boston Marathon.

Seated (L to R): Residents Joan MacQuarrie, Colleen Powers, and Claudia Badgett. Standing: Recreation Therapist Jean Goldman, volunteers Liz Atkins and Alan MacQuarrie, and Mayor Menino.

## Congratulations for 100% Immunization!

Protecting the well-being of our community at The Boston Home is always a top priority, and this winter 100% of eligible employees were immunized against the flu, and no cases of the flu have been reported. For achieving this impressive result, Cindy Walsh, R.N., will be honored by the MassPro. Congratulations to Cindy, Kathy Pavidis, R.N., Staff Development Coordinator, and all our employees!

# More TBH Employees Climb Career Ladder

A lucky 13 employees of TBH recently completed a college-credit course on "Interpersonal Communications" as part of our state-funded, career ladder program. This is the third in a continuing series of these popular courses, which offer opportunities for our certified nursing assistants to advance in their careers.



Marva Serotkin and the instructor, Dr. Dorothy Brissenden (second and third from right), join staff holding their certificates. From left: Rosette Hilaire, Julie Helebert, Lauren Maloney, Kamla Singh, Olivia Bute, Maria Gomes, Glennie Perch, Jean Goldman, Anne Best, and Tahera Paul.

## Making a Media Splash

The Boston Home continues to be featured in the news. Recent placements include major feature stories in the *Patriot Ledger* and *On Call*, as well as bylined articles in *Nursing Spectrum* and *HealthCare Review*. For copies, call 617-825-3905.

- MARVA SEROTKIN**, EXT. 256  
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER
- JAMES J. MAHONEY**, MD, 617-825-3905  
MEDICAL DIRECTOR
- ROBERT BARRY**, EXT. 253  
FACILITIES MANAGEMENT
- KEVIN BUCKLEY**, EXT. 263  
BUSINESS OFFICE
- PAT COUGHLIN**, EXT. 227  
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## HAPPENINGS AT HOME

### Boston Marathon

A great tradition continues this April 15 as a team of Boston Home resident "wheelers" and "pushers" from Nobles & Greenough take part in the Boston Marathon. For more information, call Jeff Meech at ext. 277.

### MS Walk

Another annual tradition for TBH is the MS Walk, which takes place on April 21. At noon, our team starts at the Hatch Shell, and the route follows the Charles River. To join us, call Mary Ann Fennessey at ext. 296.

## TRANSITIONS

*We mourn the loss of  
Diane Lemay.*

*Welcome to our newest  
residents, Jeannette  
Jennings and Kathi  
Dembrowski.*

The "Original" Boston Home of 1881



# The Boston Home

2049 Dorchester Avenue  
Boston, MA 02124-4799

#### TELEPHONE

617-825-3905

#### FAX

617-825-1951

#### WEB SITE

[www.thebostonhome.org](http://www.thebostonhome.org)

Member of **AURUM**,  
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# Notes from Home

## RIGHT AT HOME

### MEDICAID RATES: CALLING FOR A RAISE!

State Medicaid rates have been set to increase an average of just 1.5% during the first six months of 2002—despite the pressure to increase health care salaries and despite significant increases in insurance. At The Boston Home, the increase is 0%.

A recently released report of the state-sponsored Health Care

Task Force acknowledges that the financial conditions in the nursing home sector are serious. Since the state is the major payer for nursing home care, the fiscal crisis is a grave concern for long-term providers, residents, and family members.

The facts are as follows:

- Medicaid pays for the care of more than 70% of nursing home residents in the state.
- At The Boston Home, Medicaid pays for 97% of our residents.
- On average, Medicaid now pays \$20.00 less per day than it costs to care for a nursing home resident. The difference is much greater at TBH.
- In the past three years in Massachusetts, 76 nursing homes, represent-

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—MARVA SEROTKIN

## SENIOR AIDES RECEIVE TRAINING, RESIDENTS REAP BENEFITS

Three special programs at TBH are enriching the lives of our residents—and a number of our senior aides are receiving special training that enables them to serve as nurse aide specialists.

### Mentor Program

Because we believe in teamwork, we instituted a Mentor Program in which five senior aides at TBH were trained to help new or inexperienced staff to improve in their jobs. A representative from Worksource, a staff-development organization, trained Mary Grow, Pat Mayers, Luc Saint Fleur, Irsiline Scantlebury, and Ena Wint to interview and mentor entry-level CNAs ("mentees").

### Technology Assistant Program

Most of our residents have minds that work well but bodies that



Adaptive technology helps to keep our residences in touch.

need help. That's the philosophy behind our Technology Assistant Program in which senior aides gain valuable knowledge in wheelchair maintenance, fine motor exercises, and computers. TBH, Easter Seals, and Quincy College provided training for

Valerie Caldas, Maria Olava Cardoso, Maureen Hedderman, Tahera Paul, and Glennie Perch.

### Resident Life Assistant Program

Wellness and spirituality, including mind-body relaxation, is taking on greater meaning at TBH, and our Resident Life Assistant Program is playing a greater role. TBH staff, along with volunteer pastoral care associates Rev. Dr. Jeffrey Johnson and Sr. Bridget Haase, provided the training for Maria Gomes and Cynthia Fraser.

"As our staff improve their skills, we improve resident care," says Cindy Walsh, R.N., Director of Clinical Services. For related story, see "Career Ladders" on page 3.

