Center Club Offers
A Home for the Holidays

For 53 years, Center Club has been a resource and gathering place for individuals with mental illness. The need for support doesn’t stop at the holidays, and neither does Center Club’s ability to provide it.

In fact, the winter holidays—whether one celebrates Thanksgiving, Christmas, Hanukkah or Kwanzaa—tend to be the busiest time of the year at Center Club, a place generally bustling with activity anyway. “From the end of November to the end of December is by far our favorite month,” says Club Director Mary Gregorio. “We essentially become a function hall.”

It begins at Thanksgiving, when the Club hosts its annual Turkey Day dinner for a usual gathering of “70-75 members, plus volunteers,” says Mary.

A meal that big (usually consisting of eight whole turkeys and all the fixings) requires a lot of hands to come together, but the head chef for the holiday functions is Dominic, a Club member since 1991 who has culinary school training. “It’s a lot of fun, but a lot of work,” he says. “I take as much help as we can fit in the kitchen.”

Despite the size of the meal, things usually go smoothly. Still, Mary says, there’s been the occasional minor disaster. “One year, we discovered a problem with the gas lines into the building, and it wasn’t fixed in time for us to cook the turkeys. That year, we had to get take-out from Boston Market.”

At Christmas, festivities include a Nativity pageant and an optional grab bag gift exchange (the Club also furnishes members with giftcards). Each Hanukkah, generous supporters host a special celebration at the Club (see Supporter Spotlight, p. 3). And in January, Casa Primavera (Center Club’s sister clubhouse for Latino men and women) hosts an annual celebration of Three Kings Day. All are well attended, Mary says, whether members have family in their lives or not.

“I remember one of our members who had numerous options at the holidays,” she says, “and they wanted to come here. There’s always a feeling here of a warm, extended family.”
Fall Fundraisers Combine to Generate $135,000 for Bay Cove Programs

The generosity of Bay Cove’s loyal supporters was on full display this autumn, as The 2012 Elsie Frank Walk for Kit Clark Senior Services and The 17th annual George C. Cutler Memorial Golf Tournament presented by Liberty Mutual were hugely successful and enjoyable events for all.

Nearly 200 walkers braved a somewhat grey day on September 29 to assemble at Pope John Paul II Park in Dorchester and walk to support the programs for elders provided by Kit Clark Senior Services.

Honoring the centennial of renowned senior advocate Elsie Frank’s birth, this year’s walk was the most successful one to date for Bay Cove, generating more than $43,000 in contributions. We thank all the walkers and volunteers; The Frank Family; our presenting sponsor, Senior Whole Health; and fellow sponsors and supporters The Boston Globe, Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center, Carney Hospital, Tufts Medical Center, Commonwealth Care Alliance, UnitedHealthcare, Walgreens, Hebrew Senior Life, Fantini’s Bakery, Dorchester House, Mt. Washington Bank and Boston Senior Home Care.

And, on October 9, more than 100 golfers gathered at the Myopia Hunt Club in South Hamilton to play in The 17th Annual George C. Cutler Memorial Golf Tournament presented by Liberty Mutual. These generous donors—in collaboration with the more than 20 sponsors of the event, including Liberty Mutual and Gold sponsors Riemer + Braunstein LLP—contributed a total of $91,000 to support Center House’s programs for individuals with mental illness.

Our hearty congratulations go out to the winning foursome of Douglas Novitch, Ray Clarke, Samuel Bluso and Billy McArdle. As the winners of this year’s tournament, they have been invited to play in the Liberty Mutual Insurance Invitational National Finals at Pinehurst, site of the 2014 U.S. Open.

Next year’s Cutler Tournament has already been scheduled for Tuesday, Oct. 15, 2013.
**Supporter Spotlight:** Burton Herman

Each December, Center Club celebrates the Jewish holiday of Hanukkah with a special traditional meal and festive get-together. One of the key figures behind the event is Burton Herman, whose involvement with Bay Cove dates back many years to the days when his late wife, Frances, served as a trustee for the agency.

Frances passed away in 2004, but Burton hasn’t missed a Hanukkah at Center Club, continuing to host a delicious dinner for Club members.

Burton Herman, pictured with Center Club Director Mary Gregorio, at one of the Club’s Hanukkah celebrations.

Each year, joined by friends like Lynne and Garry Smith, Burton shares the story of Hanukkah with friends and family in attendance while they break bread and celebrate together as a community.

“We light the menorah and explain about the miracle of Hanukkah,” says Burton. “There are very few Jewish members at the Club, but everyone always seems to enjoy the time spent together. For us, it’s a mitzvah—a good deed—that gives us inspiration at the holiday.”

Asked what’s kept him involved with Bay Cove, all these years after his wife’s passing, Burton says that “it’s partially a way to honor her memory, but there’s also a far simpler reason. “I feel that people need some extra enjoyment,” he says. “Life is hard enough for us all, but especially for some of the people Bay Cove serves. What can I do? If I can just help bring a little bit of joy at the holiday season, it makes me feel good. To see people enjoying themselves is such a pleasure—it’s a nice time for them, and just as nice a time for me.”

Help Make Holiday Wishes Come True

While a “full, rich life” may have a slightly different meaning to each person we serve, one common wish is that everyone wants the love and support that a family provides. Our staff works tirelessly throughout the year to ensure that each person we serve knows that he or she is part of the Bay Cove family.

As December approaches, our holiday wish is one shared by many: to be able to give gifts to the people in our family. We know from past years that gift cards are greatly appreciated, and we’re hoping to purchase one for each person we serve.

But, we need your help to make our wish come true. Please consider supporting this effort with a donation. You can do so online at [www.baycove.org/donate](http://www.baycove.org/donate), or by sending a check to Bay Cove Human Services, 66 Canal St., Boston, MA 02144. (Please note in the memo field of your check that the donation is for “holiday gift cards.”) On behalf of everyone in the Bay Cove family, we thank you!

A Grand Opening for Connors House

On Nov. 1, Bay Cove’s past, present and future intertwined, as the agency celebrated the official opening of one of its newest programs while also honoring a man associated with Bay Cove for more than three decades.

At an Open House for Developmental Disabilities Services’ new residence on Walnut Avenue in Revere—a state-of-the-art home specially-designed to house six men and women with intensive medical needs who were formerly confined to nursing homes—the house was officially named Connors House in honor of ex-Bay Cove President Stan Connors.

“This isn’t something we do often,” Bay Cove President/CEO Bill Sprague told an audience of agency employees, Revere elected officials and neighbors at the dedication. “But Stan always set the best example of how to meet the challenges of siting programs in local communities, and I can think of no one we’d be happier to name this program after than Stan.”

“This is just a great thrill for me,” Connors said. “When I retired from Bay Cove, I always thought this would be the one honor, above all, that would be truly meaningful to me. I thank Bay Cove for this, and I thank all of you here today for your efforts in helping the residents of this house live quality lives.”

(Above, l-to-r): Revere City Councilor Ira Novoselsky, former Bay Cove President Stan Connors, Revere Mayor Daniel Rizzo, Bay Cove President/CEO Bill Sprague and Larry Tummino, Deputy Commissioner of the Mass. Department of Developmental Services, cut the ribbon at the dedication of Connors House on November 1.
Bay Cove Wish List

Often, one very simple item can make a real difference in someone’s life. Would you or someone you know be able to donate new (or, in some cases, gently used) items like:

- Books for our Family Support and Parent Support Resource Rooms
- An iPad for a person with developmental disabilities
- Furniture for a formerly homeless person’s apartment
- Business apparel for a job interview
- Arts and crafts supplies for Occupational Therapy and Art Therapy programs
- Tickets to sporting events, concerts or museums for people living in our residential programs

If you’re able to help, please contact Bay Cove’s Development Department at 617-619-5930, and thank you!

A Bay Cove staffer uses an iPad to help individuals at our Bradston Street Day Habilitation program enhance their job and life skills.

MISSION Improving the quality of the lives of individuals and their families who face the challenges of developmental disabilities, aging, mental illness, and drug and alcohol addiction. We will accomplish this mission by providing effective and compassionate services and through advocacy and leadership.

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