



Reaching People. Changing Lives.

# bay cove news

Winter 2007

## adult day health: a home away from home

My name is Ola Wornum. I'm 72 blessed years old. I was born and raised in Dublin, Georgia. I came to Boston in 1953, with one child. It was better living here than it was there, at the time. My husband had already come up here and got a job and a place for us to stay, so we came to join him. I've been here ever since.

I have a very large, supporting family. I'm the mother of nine children, all living, except my first, who I lost at three months old. I have 27 grandchildren and soon-to-be ten great-grandchildren. Believe it or not, they're all in Massachusetts.

In 1965, I banged my leg on a little kid's red wagon. The wound kept healing and then not healing. In 1989, it really started bothering me, so I went to see about it. It was squamous cell cancer. It healed on top, but all the time, it was not healing inside. And it was right on the bone. So in 1990 I wound up having to have my leg amputated.

I was determined that I was not going to let this throw me. I was always a person that wanted to do things on my own — a very independent person. So I did everything that I was told to do. Soon I got a prosthetic. But I was home a lot.

I had two bad marriages, so I really raised my children by myself. I was a licensed home daycare provider. I had got used to a very busy life. To watch soap operas and game shows — it just wasn't enough for me. I needed something more. I was not satisfied at all.



Ola Wornum

One day, I told a woman at the doctor's office that I got so bored at home. She said, "Why don't you go to Kit Clark? It's a senior center where people go who have illness." That was in October of 1994. I've been coming three days a week ever since.

It's a place to be when you can't really function for yourself. It's a place for socializing, for keeping you from being depressed.

When you get on the van in the morning you're right away laughing and talking with the other people — family things, cooking, stuff like that. We get here, have breakfast, then exercise. That helps you physically to start your day off.

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### welcome kit clark!



Bay Cove welcomes Kit Clark Senior Services to our family of services. For a list of programs and services see page 6.

## management's message



Bay Cove President and CEO Stan Connors (left) and Executive Director Bill Sprague

One of the major goals of our long-range plan is to “grow and expand our services.” Another is to “ensure that all of our programs and services provide high-quality, effective and compassionate care.” Our ability to meet these goals has been enhanced dramatically with the recent addition of Kit Clark Senior Services to the Bay Cove family of programs and services. Kit Clark has long been recognized as a premier senior service provider throughout the city of Boston and currently reaches out to more than 2,200 seniors each day through programs offered at senior centers as well as in individual homes.

Over the past two decades, Bay Cove and Kit Clark have worked together often to meet the special needs of elders who live with mental illness, developmental disabilities and/or addiction disorders. Both of our organizations are founded on the belief that all people have value and deserve to be treated with respect and dignity as they live full, rich lives within their communities.

**Kit Clark has long been recognized as a premier senior service provider throughout the city of Boston and currently reaches out to more than 2,200 seniors each day**

In this edition of the Bay Cove News, we will introduce you to some of the executive staff of Kit Clark and illustrate just how critical the services that we provide through these programs are to Boston's elders.

We are very excited about the opportunities that this merger provides. The combined strengths of Kit Clark and Bay Cove allow us to better serve both aging individuals with disabilities and our elderly neighbors who now need the care of others to maintain a dignified and quality life.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Stan Connors".

Stan Connors  
*President and CEO*

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Bill Sprague".

Bill Sprague  
*Executive Director*

# multicultural drop-in program happy to be here

an interview with maximiano and his wife maria

**Maximiano:** I was born on the island of San Nicolau, Cape Verde, in 1937. I went to school until the fourth grade; then I worked on a farm. I left for Brazil on July 22, 1962, when I was 24. Immigration was open, and other people were going, so I decided to go, too.

In Brazil, I worked at the Firestone tire factory for eighteen years. After that, I had a little grocery store, very small.

We met in Brazil and got married in July, 1968. We have four children, two boys and two girls.

**Maria:** I was born on San Nicolau in 1936. I went to school until the fourth grade. I stayed in my parents' house until I was almost 25. I had two children while I was single. I left them with my parents when I went to Brazil. I didn't need to leave Cape Verde, but I had the desire to see more of the world.

In Brazil, I went to work for a French family, doing laundry and taking care of their son. When they went back to France, I worked for an Italian family. Then I met Maximiano and got married and stayed home to care of our children. One of them now lives here in the U.S.

Our daughter was always telling us to move to the United States. Maximiano sold the store, and we came. Our daughter wanted us to live with her, but we felt we were strong enough to work and live on our own, not be dependent on her and her husband. So we went to live in Providence. We found jobs and lived there for five years.

**Max:** I worked for a cleaning company in Providence. Then the factories started to close, and it was hard to find a job.

**Maria:** We came to Boston because we couldn't find any more work in Providence, and we heard that the chances were better here. But we could not find a job.

**Max:** We made a lot of applications, but nobody called us.

**Maria:** No one said it was because of our age, but we know that was the reason.

**Max:** When we first came to Boston, we lived with a cousin. Our cousin brought us to Kit Clark. They found us an apartment in a government project, where we've lived for two years. We can stay in Boston because of the help we get from this place.

**Maria:** We come to the senior center many days a week. Whenever we get a letter we cannot read, we bring it here. The doctor here speaks our language. We come here to entertain ourselves with the other people from our country. I crochet and talk to my friends. We play cards, dominoes, bingo. Maximiano likes to play *ouri*, a game from Cape Verde.

The place [Kit Clark] helps us a lot. We come here, and we don't feel lonely. We don't feel depressed, because we find people here who understand us.

We get up early and get ready to come here.



Maria, Maximiano and Terese Barros

**Max:** We always use the transportation the center provides to bring us back and forth.

**Maria:** And if we have to go to the doctor, they provide the transportation.

**Max:** I come here every Monday for a Cape Verdean men's group. There is an American who explains lots of things to us, and the outreach worker translates. Every week we talk about different topics. It's very interesting.

**Maria:** I am a citizen, so I applied for our three children in Brazil to come here, and they are waiting for the papers to go through.

It is hard to be separated from our children. Every time we call one of them, they have different issues and problems. And all those things go in your mind and you get worried and don't know how to help.

We want to stay in Boston. We've been living in the government project for two years. We like that. And we intend to stay. □

kit clark director

# sandy albright

I'm from Indiana. When I was nine, I read a book about Jane Addams and Hull House [an early settlement house in Chicago], and I knew that's what I wanted to do.

I came to Boston in 1969. I was clinical director of a kids' agency in Dorchester until the early 1980s. Kit Clark, who was a neighborhood activist, was president of my board. Then I was director of a Blue Cross HMO health center for six years. A lot of my work there was with seniors. I thought, "Hmmm, this is a very interesting group of people."

Being a health-center director was a great experience, but I wasn't as close to the community as I wanted to be. I decided to come back to the city, back to more social work.

When I was hired as director of Kit Clark in 1989, the agency was pretty small, but the foundation was very strong. It was like an old-fashioned settlement house. It had a senior center, a mental-health clinic, and it was doing nutrition and transportation.

We went from serving 100,000 meals a year to a million. Our transportation department grew; mental health grew. We had some wonderful programs in the 1990s, especially in substance abuse, but we could not sustain them once all the government funding cuts started.

It's been very hard with recent state funding cuts. Some really terrific programs crumbled. That's depressing. We used to have many more staff who were doing direct service and more folks who could supervise and teach. To be that lean takes away from the quality of what we do. That was part of our wanting to go to Bay Cove. We have a lot of synergies, and being able to make those synergies work for the seniors — in mental health, substance abuse, assisted living — is really exciting.

I believe in the multiservice model, where the seniors don't have to go to 20 different places to get help. Access is one of our biggest goals, to make sure people are not locked out or don't give up.

We're not huge and bureaucratic, so that if there's an issue, there aren't too many layers. There is a team of six or seven of us. That's something I really appreciate.

For me, the fun and the challenge is trying to respond to what the seniors need. And if we get complacent in any way, our consumer advisory board pushes us. I like that kind of input, where it isn't just a corporate look down to see what should happen with seniors.



Sandy Albright

Assistant Director Anita Nasra is really the one responsible for how multicultural we are. She's always holding my feet to the fire. I'm more the visionary, and Anita is the nuts and bolts. One day she said, "I know what's wrong with this place! We need to go out into the community — there are many Vietnamese people living here now." So we hired one part-time person, and in about six weeks we had 100 Vietnamese seniors coming in here. Now we have about 500! Then the same thing happened with the Cape Verdeans.

We have an all-Vietnamese adult day health program and an all-Haitian senior center. Here, in Madden Senior Center, everybody is together. We keep balancing that. Are we going down the wrong path by separating? Are we going down the wrong path by having everybody together? The seniors tell us they want a little bit of both. They want a place that is just their world, where they are with their families and friends, but they also want to be part of the larger group, to learn things and not feel isolated from the greater world.

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kit clark assistant director

# anita nasra

I've been working at Kit Clark for 26 years. I used to pass by on my way to work. I'd see the people through the windows, and it looked interesting and exciting. One day, I applied for a job.



Anita Nasra

I started out as Meals on Wheels coordinator. I've been in-home services director, social worker for the Madden Senior Center, and I started Volunteer Insured Time-banking Association (VITA), a demonstration project through the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation. I became assistant director in 1989.

Most of the people come to the senior center every day of the six days that we're open. This is really their family, is what it amounts to. For one reason or another, people have had many losses in their lives, and they find friends here, things to do, reasons to get up in the morning.

All the seniors share things, like the Tet celebration, which is the Vietnamese new year. Vietnamese seniors are very

proud to dress in their native dress, share their food. Cape Verdeans have Cape Verdean independence day, which is right around the Fourth of July. We have a Black history month celebration in February, and we sometimes have Irish celebrations. People generally feel they get more, because they're celebrating more things. It seems to work quite nicely.

Director Sandy Albright and I complement each other. She does the budget wonderfully and is great at representing the agency in the outside world. I'm good at putting together a program, so I write proposals, but I also like to supervise. I like variety — I think we both like variety. The staff are just wonderful. You don't work here very long unless you love what you are doing. The commitment is unbelievable. People are very, very committed to the clients. It's a great place to work.

I don't want to be very far from the actual services provided. If I worked for the government, that would be too far away. We actually see the people we are providing services for, get to know them a little bit, and then have a good idea of what we're doing and if we're doing it well and what we could do better. That's helpful. □

## for more information

For more information regarding Kit Clark's services and programs, please contact:

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## kit clark programs

- Information and Assessment
- Community Supports
- Volunteer Programs and Services
- Day Programs
- Homemaker Services
- Senior Centers
- Assistance for Seniors with Limited English Proficiency
- Adult Day Health Centers
- Home Repair
- Memory Loss Day Centers
- Services for Seniors Caring for People with Developmental Disabilities
- Health Services
- Transportation
- Senior Health Center
- Homeless/Housing Services
- Mental Health Services
- Service Coordination in Senior Housing
- Addictions Outreach and Counseling
- Congregate Housing
- Health and Fitness
- Transitional Housing
- Food Services
- Day Shelter
- Meal Sites
- Meals on Wheels
- Catering Services

# kit clark senior services

Kit Clark provides services at more than 30 sites in Boston. We own the buildings at two of these sites, both in Dorchester. The Madden Senior Center houses our health center, mental health clinic, multicultural drop-in program, and one of our four adult day health programs. The Codman Senior Center houses a variety of programs, as well as our kitchen and transportation services.

## Food/Nutrition

Our kitchen staff cooks about 2,500 meals a day, providing lunches for 26 nutrition sites and 600 Meals on Wheels. Meals on Wheels is the only service many homebound elders are willing to have. The drivers get to know the people; they report if something seems wrong or no one answers the door. It's incredible who is able to live in their own homes because of this program. These are the frailest, most isolated seniors we work with.

## Transportation

Transportation is usually the greatest need elders express. We have 25 vehicles for delivering food and 20 for transporting people to our adult day health programs and medical appointments.

## Adult Day Health Programs

Our four adult day health programs provide a six-hour-a-day group experience for people who have conditions that require nursing treatment or monitoring, including mental illness, mental retardation, and chronic or acute medical problems.

Two of these programs are specialized. We have a state-of-the-art adult day health program for people with memory loss. By giving caregivers a six-hour break, we help make it possible for people with Alzheimer's Disease to live at home with their families. We also run an adult day health program in the Vietnamese language.

## Homemakers and Home Health Aides

Homemakers help with cleaning, shopping, laundry, meal preparation, and long-term personal care. Home health aides do acute personal care for people who have just come out of the hospital. It is not easy to break even on these services, but they are a vital part of what we do.

## Mental Health

There's a great stigma about mental illness, especially among elders, so having our mental health services at the Madden Senior Center works very nicely. No one has to know that you are coming to see the psychiatrist or a therapist because you're also participating in the senior center activities or seeing the primary care doctor.



Madden Senior Center participants

Many of the seniors came to this country when they were elderly. Their families are split up. They haven't had years to adjust to this culture. There's a lot of depression and anxiety. The combination of therapy plus seeing their friends in the senior center every day is wonderful. I think it really helps people.

We have mental health services in English, Vietnamese, and Cape Verdean Creole and Haitian Creole.

## Programs for Homeless Elders

The Cardinal Medeiros Center in the South End is our day shelter for older homeless elders. By getting to know people and building trust, we've never had to have security or a police presence. More than 100 people come to the center every day.

We have 5 congregate housing programs for formerly homeless elders. Even though these elders are now housed, they still need to connect to a social group, so many of them keep coming to the Medeiros Center. We also have a transitional housing program.



A Kit Clark handicapped-accessible van

### Multicultural Drop-in Program

We have a Vietnamese social group and a Cape Verdean social group at the Madden Senior Center. We also have a center in Mattapan for Haitian seniors. Immigrant groups develop social and political empowerment at these centers.

We are very fortunate to have outreach workers for Cape Verdean, Vietnamese, and Haitian seniors. We serve about 1000 seniors from these populations, most of whom have limited English and a great need for connection to services such as health insurance, food stamps, and fuel assistance. Because most of them can't speak English and have no reading and writing skills, we do the applications. We go with them to public service offices. It's very time consuming but very useful. Once people are signed up for a program, we keep them on it.

### Health Care

Three times a week, physicians from Bowdoin Street Health Center conduct primary care sessions at the Madden Senior Center. One doctor is Cape Verdean, the other is American born but speaks fluent Haitian Creole and Cape Verdean Creole and is learning Vietnamese.

To maintain good health, seniors need both social services and medical care. After each clinic session, the doctor, the health-center coordinator (who acts as a social worker), and, usually, an

outreach worker (since most of patients don't speak English) meet to develop a comprehensive plan for the patients.

Many seniors, especially those who don't speak English, don't get health care because they lack transportation, need an escort, and have housing, financial, or medical insurance needs. We provide all these things.

### Volunteers

Through VITA (Volunteer Insured Time-banking Association), healthy seniors earn credits for helping less able seniors. They then can use these credits to get help when they need it (but we don't deny anyone help just because they didn't earn credits). We also have volunteers in most of our programs.

### Housing

In Kit Clark's housing programs, we provide the social services, and a management company takes care of the building. For example, at Foley Apartments, a 45-unit affordable assisted living facility in Mattapan, we provide social services, nursing, and personal care homemaking, and Maloney Properties manages the building.

Our Senior Home Improvement program arranges repairs to ensure that senior homeowners can continue to live at home, be it by building a wheelchair ramp, putting in grab bars, or dealing with a broken hot water heater. We communicate with the contractor, on behalf of the homeowner, to make sure things are done right.

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# Kit Clark Senior services

## did you know...

- ★ Cooks **2,500** meals a day in its commissary kitchen for **26** congregate nutrition sites, **600** Meals on Wheels recipients, and other non-profits.
- ★ Provides **70,000** rides a year on its handicapped-accessible vans.
- ★ Helps **550** homebound seniors a week with its staff of **55** home-makers and home health aides.
- ★ Offers critical respite support to over **50** caregivers a week with its specialized Alzheimer's daycare center.
- ★ Provides nursing treatment and monitoring for **120** adult day health participants in **3** programs on a daily basis.
- ★ Counsels **500** people a year at the only homeless day shelter for older adults in Boston, the Medeiros Center.
- ★ Coordinates services for **175** formerly homeless adults at its **5** congregate and **2** transitional housing sites as well as in independent housing.
- ★ Provides mental health counseling in **4** languages at its licensed geriatric mental health clinic.

"home away from home" continued from page 1

After lunch, there's a lot of different groups. On Tuesdays, I have a women's group; Wednesdays, I have a group with a therapist for my depression. There are groups for creative writing, spirituality, music and movement. We do arts and crafts. People play cards, dominoes, bingo. A lot of people do puzzle books or read. Or just sit around and joke and talk — that means so much.

Three years ago, I got custody of two of my grandchildren. I couldn't sit back and not do it, wondering what would happen to them, where would they go. They're doing OK. It's hard, though.

I have high blood pressure, and I'm a diabetic. I try to look out for myself and my health, rather than let myself get stressed over housework and things. I just can't afford to get myself worked up over that, so I don't. The group therapy here helps me with those issues, very much so.

Here you find all nationalities, all kinds of people. We have the Cape Verdeans, the Haitians, the Vietnamese. I talk, or try to talk, with them all. We are all people, and I feel people should try to get along. Here, it's very good. People do try to get along and mix themselves in with everybody. I've learned so many different dishes since I've been coming here, different foods that I really love, just by mingling with different people and learning their way of cooking and eating. It's really been educational for me.

I couldn't wait to get up today because I know I'm going to come here. This is what I call my time. It's home away from home. We call each other family. We're our sisters and brothers. We call each other when they're sick and find out why they're not here. It's just a connected thing that we have. I recommend it to anyone that's sitting home doing nothing but watching the game shows and soap operas. Come on out here with us, and have yourself a good time. □

"sandy albright" continued from page 4

One of our finest accomplishments is our state-of-the-art Alzheimer's day program. The families feel respected, and the staff is superb. It came together in a way that I think was very important for the minority community. Also, I'm very proud of our affordable assisted living that opened three years ago in Mattapan. There need to be more of these programs.

States, including this one, need to look at the whole policy of long-term care, not separated out by age or infirmity. Let's look at it as a total picture, and see what long-term care really should be. □

"kit clark" continued from page 6



Kit Clark's congregate nutrition site at Madden Senior Center

### Mental Retardation

We help elder parents who are caring for adult children with mental retardation plan for the future, and connect them with services. This is one of the areas in which we can work well with Bay Cove. □

## vision, mission, principles

### Vision

Full, rich lives for people with the greatest challenges.

### 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.

### Principles

The organization is guided by a core set of principles, which include:

- ▷ All human beings have value, and deserve to be treated with respect and dignity.
- ▷ Our services must be outcome-focused, measurable and effective.
- ▷ Treatment plans must be developed in partnership with those being served.
- ▷ The strength of our services depends on a well-trained, highly motivated workforce.
- ▷ Successful partnerships must be maintained with those we serve, as well as the community at large.
- ▷ All of our programs and services will be managed in a fiscally responsible manner.

## bay cove news

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