



Holiday Formal A Great Time!

Despite a snow storm and FLAME not being able to make it, we still had almost 400 people show up tonight for the Holiday Formal!

People dug out and drove from all over both counties. Many agencies were represented including New Horizons, Dutchess ARC, Greystone, Abilities First, Anderson, The Taconic DDRO, as well as individuals who live at home in the community. Of 60 groups who RSVP'd only one did not make it!! Thank you everyone who came out to join the fun tonight! It is always wonderful to see everyone together!

I hope to coordinate for FLAME to come next year!
Thank you everyone! ~Jenn Wells



A Message From the Executive Director...

2013 A Year End Report – Accomplishments, Challenges and Goals

It is hard to believe that 2013 is gone. For me, the year has flown by; we have been very busy as an NHR family keeping the ship steady and finding our new way forward. I want to thank everyone who kept his or her oar in the water to keep our mission, philosophy and supports of everyone around us as the number one priority.

In this state of the agency article, I hope to summarize some of our achievements, to set some of our agendas for 2014 and to again thank everyone for their role.

First of all, we maintained certification in some very important areas. We achieved re-certification of our CQL Accreditation. We also remained OPWDD certified in every work location, at every house and with every program! This is because of the diligent work, accurate data collection, and terrific support services in every program. A special thanks to all our DSP staff, House Coordinators and Administrators for your conscientious efforts. NHR is rated as a Five Star agency with OPWDD, the highest available rating!

Secondly, we opened a new home for five individuals in Poughkeepsie. This was a challenge from so many different angles, that it is hard to fathom we opened

only a couple of months behind schedule; but we did it! It seemed like the purchase of the home, the renovation project and all the decorating and staffing concerns would never come together. However, with the help of many people, such as Andrea Pollack, Bev Kaufman, Dan Lynch, Mary MacNamara, Lou Antonelli, Nancy Howell, Barb Mika, Mark Holmes, Joe Devito, Anthony Palazzo, Angelo Barcia, Lauren Hann, Kieran Blavelt, Kacey Mitchell and all the Pleasant Ridge DSP staff, the house opened in March.

We are embarking on a new training initiative with a software product called Relias. I want to thank Tom McCluskey and IT for collaborating and for beginning training. We hope to start rolling out on-line course material in the next few weeks. Our goal is to increase accessibility to mandatory and special trainings, to reduce travel, reduce scheduling conflicts, reduce costs and allow staff to learn at their own pace at their regular worksite.

The NHR Board of Directors has gone paperless in 2013. For the first time all board reports and attachments are scanned and emailed, reducing paper use, postage, and staff collation time. This is an estimated savings of \$2,000 annually.



The NHR Newsletter is a quarterly publication produced by the agency to keep our friends informed about NHR's current activities.

William Beattie, *Executive Director*

Please address comments about the newsletter to Beth Cookinham at:

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NHR will finish 2013 with a nearly balanced budget despite record Workmen's Compensation insurance premiums and house vacancies that were unprecedented. Thank you to everyone who watches expenses, tries to reduce costs, and is a good steward of our available resources.

The OMIG audit has been very successful with NHR able to provide all required documentation to date. OMIG auditors have gathered here twice and will be back in February to hopefully complete reviews. I want to thank Sandi Swan for her coordination efforts and all the "data elves" that helped her pull documents to make this audit as seamless as possible.

NHR has hired its first truly shared employee. We have partnered with Crystal Run Village to increase each of our respective IT Department's skills and possibilities. This shared partnership has increased our ability to assist each other, allowing for the sharing of hard resources. This has increased overall strategic planning within our respective departments.

NHR has continued partnering relationships with many other agencies. We have worked to develop shared trainings, conferences, CQL principles and recreational events. This allows us to foster trust, opportunities and relationships between agencies for future possible alliances. Collectively, we monitor the effects of OPWDD's reorganization with the Department of Health, Rate Rationalization, and Managed Care.

We have completed the first phase of re-structuring Administration by using opportunities of staff vacancies to reorganize, reassign, and utilize resources differently. We have seen this most dramatically in Finance, Human Resources, and Senior Administration. We were able to organize and backfill responsibilities at a savings.

We have had successful Golf, Fashion and Leadership Breakfast fundraising events. There were challenges, and despite lower attendance, there were increased sponsorships. I want to thank Beth Cookinham for all her efforts along with all her countless helpers that volunteered to do a little extra to ensure fantastic events.

NHR continues to show the greater community that we care. A few examples are the two successful blood drives, Thanksgiving support to a family in need, the American Heart Walk Team, Christmas support to three families, the United Way Campaign, the Autism

Society of Hudson Valley representative Sally Heilman, and spreading the CQL tenants to 12 agencies. I want to specifically thank people like Gerry DePorres, Lauren Hann, Beth Cookinham, Dan Lynch, Sarah Civile, Tom McCluskey, Sandi Swan, Veronie Anderson and all their helpers for caring so much. We truly care about our community.

What about some of our honorees this year? Our Employees of the Month were; Jen Rodriquez, Lynn Snyder, Anne-Marie Carrube, Angie Miller, Maureen Burchfield, Linda Cafaro, Dottie DeNunzio, Lauren Lyle, Kathleen McCarhty, Jenifer Jefferson, Steve Bradley and Erika Bradley. Also, we honored several Teams of the Quarter including Tyrell Road, Deer Run and Pleasant Ridge. Our 2013 Goldman Award winner was Gerry DePorres, our National Leadership Consortium graduate was Donna Newkirk, our Leadership Dutchess Graduate was Mary MacNamara and our 40 Under 40 honoree was Jennifer Wells.

NHR Goals for 2014 include but are not limited to: increased attendance at all fundraising events, increased development of possible grants, securing new sponsorships, on-line training, reducing Workmen's Compensation costs, continued restructuring of agency resources, maintaining CQL Accreditation, increasing IT safeguards and deployment of software in several key areas (Finance, HR, Training, PC), balancing the 2014 budget again this year and opening a second home for people aging out of residential programs.

The items listed above are only a few of the many highlights for 2013 and of those to come in 2014. They represent the fabric of what we do every day. They represent who we are as employees, workers, technicians, and professionals, but most importantly all of these accomplishments and goals represent the type of people that want to support people the very best we can in every way we can. Congratulations to every single person involved in any aspect of delivery of services to the people we support here at NHR. It is impossible to thank everyone here by name but you are all part of the NHR family, and I want to thank each and every one of you for a great year!



AROUND THE AGENCY NEWS



Residents of Deer Run enjoyed dinner and a show in NYC in December! They went out to eat—and then went to Radio City Music Hall for a fantastic performance and to see the Tree at Rockefeller Center! They even found a furry friend!

Thank You!

I wish to extend a heartfelt THANK YOU to the countless NHR employees, individuals we serve, board members and friends of the Agency who helped us to support a family of 10 at Thanksgiving and then three families in need at Christmas! Wish lists prepared by children that include “warm socks”, coats, hats, toilet paper and a Christmas tree are heartbreaking, and it meant so much that we were able to fulfill them! I’ll never forget the look in the children’s eyes as several of us carried a Christmas tree up their stairs.

Thank you for giving freely, for caring, for helping and for making a difference!

~Beth Cookinham



New Horizons Foundation Annual Appeal 2014

The New Horizons Foundation Annual Appeal 2014 is currently underway. If you would like to contribute, please complete this form and return it with your tax-deductible donation payable to the New Horizons Foundation. We at NHR greatly appreciate your commitment to improving the quality of life for people with developmental disabilities.

Name

Address

Phone & Email

"Hope is a state of mind, not of the world. Hope, in this deep and powerful sense, is not the same as joy that things are going well, or willingness to invest in enterprises that are obviously heading for success, but rather an ability to work for something because it is good."

-Vaclav Havel

Please make checks payable to: *The New Horizons Foundation*, and mail to:

123 West Road, Pleasant Valley, NY 12569

Donations to the Foundation are fully tax deductible.

AROUND THE AGENCY NEWS

“Israel, Here We Come!”

In the pursuit of most endeavors, from education programs to employment opportunities, parents of special needs children often face road blocks. We get discouraged, frustrated, and exhausted. However, I recently experienced quite the opposite when my son Michael, who has autism, participated in a once in a lifetime, (and essentially free) ten day trip to Israel for young Jewish adults with special needs.

Taglit/Birthright is a program for all Jews around the world, ages 18-26, to learn about their homeland and experience Israeli culture. My daughter, Rachel, participated a few years ago, too. Michael's then service coordinator (Jenn Wells) told me about a Birthright program geared for those with special needs. But how could I send Michael? He's on a special diet, takes medications, and on occasion, has a "meltdown." I eventually realized that I, or my fear, was the only road block. "Didn't I believe that my son deserves every opportunity for an enriched life?" Since Michael was approaching 26, I contacted Yachad (meaning together) - National Jewish Council for Disabilities (NJCD), an agency which coordinates special needs programs, including Taglit/Birthright. I received an email *and* call within days! The coordinator provided information about the program and the well-trained staff, and strongly encouraged me to apply. I mentioned this opportunity to several NHR staff and my son's doctor. They were all genuinely excited and supportive!! No one discouraged me; everyone assured me that Michael would "do great!"

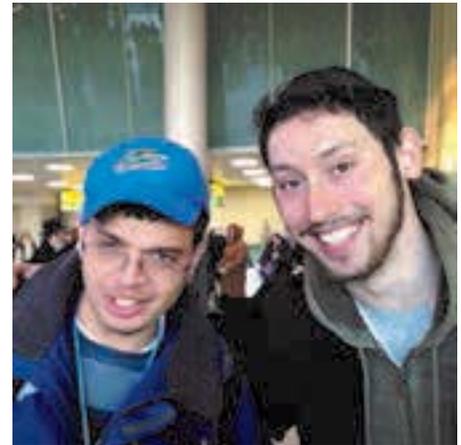
Although apprehensive, I applied, provided all the necessary documentation (medical, behavioral strategies, etc.) and was interviewed. Hoping he'd be considered for the May 2014 program, I was stunned when Michael was accepted for the December 2013 trip! This all happened within a few weeks time; no begging - no convincing! My son *was wanted*, his participation *was embraced*!

With the help from the NHR and Yachad staff, I went into action mode to prepare my son for success (social stories, previewing, etc). We talked about Israel, the long flight, itinerary, food, customs, group and staff. One NHR staff, Gina Heiser, even took Mike to NYC to meet some of the Yachad staff before the trip! Mike's new motto became: "Israel, here I come!"

Any nerves we both shared quickly dissipated when we met the group at JFK airport. I will always remember the eagerness on the faces of the 24 young adults who were embarking on a trip of a lifetime, having *the same opportunity* offered to their "typical" peers! I felt tremendous pride when Michael, as he marched off with the group, gleefully stated: "Israel, Here We Come!"... Two days later, I heard the excitement in his voice when Michael called: "Hi mommy, are you having a great time in Israel?!!!" (yes, the typical pronoun mix up). The follow up emails from staff reassured the families that they were all incredibly happy! I soon learned Michael participated in all activities from planting flowers, dancing in the streets of Tel Aviv, visiting Yad Vashem (Holocaust memorial), and the Kotel (the sacred Western Wall). He even led the group in music!

Then the beautiful pictures; mere words can not describe my emotions. *His Smile*. And when I saw my son praying at the Wall while he held someone's hand, *the sweetness*. Tears simply flowed.

With a sparkle in his eyes and a proud walk, I greeted a young man at JFK airport. Michael possessed a certain maturity and sense of accomplishment I had never noticed before. This Birthright trip was truly an amazing life experience for him and all the young adults who participated. I will be forever grateful to Yachad - NJCD for making this happen, and to the NHR staff for their unyielding support.



Michael Brenner with friend
Ron Hirschhorn

Today (Thank-You)
Stephanie Brenner

AROUND THE AGENCY NEWS

2013 Goldman Award!

Congratulations to Gerry DePorres for being selected as this year's Goldman Award Recipient! His nomination is below.

I would like to nominate Geraldo DePorres for this year's Goldman Award recipient. Gerry was hired at New Horizons in April 1997 as a QMRP. He was no stranger to our field, as he was previously employed with Abilities First (then called Rehab Programs) for many years. Just after a year of being hired, Gerry was quickly promoted as a Senior Psychologist.

New Horizons was extremely lucky to gain Gerry on "our team". He is one of the most caring and true people that I have ever met. He will always take the time, no matter how busy he may be, to listen to a concern and genuinely want to help. Gerry will always touch base with you at a later time "to check in" and see if there is anything else he can do for you.

He puts a lot of effort into helping other people, regardless of the time of day or what day it is. He has personally taken individuals that we support to funerals for loved ones, no matter the distance and he assists with delivering Eucharist within this church, in which he is very involved.

Gerry currently sits on many boards of directors, including Family Services, Mental Health America of Dutchess County & Eagle Case Management. He was on the board of Dutchess Outreach for many years and is now a Director Emeritus. The one thing all of these affiliations have in common is that they attract caring members of the community through the work they do in helping others. Gerry also spends his time working as a CPR, First Aid, Defensive Driving & a SKIP instructor. He has been a loaned executive to the United Way Campaign and every year he leads the New Horizons Heart Walk Team and encourages community participating from the individuals we serve. Whether its pins & red ribbons in February or Anenomes in April, you know Gerry will lightly be knocking on your door requesting your participation. Even if you don't think you have any extra money, you'll find it to give to him to help support the causes he is so passionate about.

Spotlight On....



*Gerry
DePorres*



When I sit and look back at the list of Gerry's personal and professional affiliations, I have to wonder when he finds the time to sleep, not to mention to take any time to himself. He is dedicated, selfless and a man of his word. The list of positive adjectives describing Gerry is a long one, that many can attest to. His Personnel File is filled with letters of thank you & recognition from dozens of organizations, families of those we serve and his co-workers. I think the fact that he speaks four languages is a talent that, combined with his education and degrees, is an inspiration for others to admire. Gerry has a greeting that encourages you to engage in a conversation with him. It is warm and honestly genuine. He has done nothing short of dedicating his life to being a support for others. I know how fortunate I am to have him not only as a co-worker, but a friend and a confidant. He has been the recipient of many awards, including the prestigious Marist President's Award. However now its time to honor him for all that he does for us. Please consider him for this year's Goldman Award. Thank you!

Sincerely,
Beth Cookinham



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Mission Statement:

The mission of New Horizons Resources, Inc. is to enable people with developmental disabilities to achieve fulfilling lives within their local communities by establishing a home, belonging, self-determination and respect.

Printed on  recycled paper



News from the Foundation Office Beth Cookinham, Foundation Director

New Horizons Foundation 31st Annual Invitational Golf Tournament

Monday, May 12, 2014
Dutchess Golf Club
2628 South Road
Poughkeepsie, NY 12601

