



## Membership Drive is Underway

### Bert Benson Receives Annual NHCA Award



Bert Benson, Director of Social Services for the Rose Blumkin Jewish Home, recently received the award in social

work from the Nebraska Health Care Association.

One statewide, annual award recipient is selected in each of six categories including; activities, administration, dietary, environmental services, nursing

and social services. Bert received the award at this year's NHCA convention in Lincoln, Nebraska.

Bert was nominated by the RBJH for this award and the input of her peers was utilized in describing Bert's commitment to our Residents and to long-term healthcare. Below is a sample of what her peers had to say for her nomination:

*In her twenty-three years here, Bert has impacted the life of every family she has worked with. When building*

*a social history for each Resident, Bert is committed to developing an understanding of each person that goes beyond "filling in the blanks". She discovers what has been important to each person in their lifetime and how we can continue to inspire and motivate them here at the Blumkin Home.*

Thank you Bert for your commitment to the care of our Residents and to the continuation of top-notch care here at the Blumkin Home!

*The League Offering Volunteers for the Elderly (L.O.V.E.) is currently conducting its annual membership drive. This active group plays a vital role in providing Blumkin Home Residents, through donations, with many items they need, as well as providing volunteer support at functions and events.*

The assistance of L.O.V.E. volunteers is greatly appreciated by the staff and Residents of the Blumkin Home. Volunteers provide their time, their smiles and their positive energy for events throughout the year such as National Nursing Home Week and an amazing Grandparents Day celebration for families. In addition, weekly events include sing-alongs, manicures, pokeno games and tea time.

Funds raised from last year's membership drive, along with other L.O.V.E. fundraising efforts, provided \$20,000 to the Blumkin Home for the purchase of a bladder scanner and an adjustable Torah table for the future chapel, among other things. These items, provided by L.O.V.E., help maintain the highest standards of care and service by giving staff access to equipment that is utilized for the direct benefit of the Residents of the RBJH.

With the 'New Beginning' construction well underway, your donation will be put to excellent use



L.O.V.E. members (from left) Eileen Remer, Ilse Kabn, Judy Yoo and Gloria Goodman pause for a photo while planning a fundraising event.

in purchasing the many items needed for the future of the Blumkin Home. L.O.V.E. will also continue to support the many programs that enhance the lives of our Residents including; entertainment, discussion groups, holiday parties, cultural event outings, arts and crafts and more.

Thank you in advance for your support of L.O.V.E. To join in membership, please complete the slip on page 8 and return with your check to:

**LOVE**  
Attn: Wendy Manvitz  
1724 N 127th St  
Omaha, NE 68154

### L.O.V.E. Membership

**New    Renewal**

- |                          |                          |       |                        |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|-------|------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | \$18  | Individual - Chai      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | \$36  | Couple – Double Chai   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | \$75  | Individual Benefactor  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | \$150 | Couple Benefactor      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | \$300 | Individual Life Member |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | \$500 | Couple Life Member     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | -     | Other Donation         |

Return with  
your check to:

**LOVE Attn: Wendy Manvitz**  
1724 N 127th St  
Omaha, NE 68154

Last Name \_\_\_\_\_

First Name \_\_\_\_\_

Spouse \_\_\_\_\_

Street Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone Number \_\_\_\_\_

Your donation is tax deductible.

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## VISIONS Enjoyed the "Good Old Summertime"!

*Members of VISIONS made the most of the beautiful summer weather and enjoyed several events in June, July and August in addition to their regularly scheduled meetings and entertainment. Trips to Rosenblatt Stadium, Lauritzen Gardens and Brownville, Nebraska were highlights of the summer!*

First up to bat was an outing to Rosenblatt Stadium where members of VISIONS joined the group '39 Forever' for a joint function. The crowd gathered at the Stadium Club for dinner and drinks before the game and enjoyed the action from an excellent vantage point! The Omaha



*The group celebrated a great year at the VISIONS summer picnic at Chalco Hills Recreation Area.*

Royals took on the Iowa Cubs and took the win with a score of 4 to 3!

Next up was a trip to Lauritzen Gardens, Omaha's botanical center. Members of VISIONS gathered for a narrated tram tour of the gardens including the rose garden and the Sanpu Gate; a new Japanese gate that will serve as the entrance point to a new Japanese garden currently under construction. Members also got a look at the two largest locomotives ever built by Union Pacific at Kenefick

Park. The weather was perfect and a good time was had by all at this popular destination.

The Brownville Concert series is an offering of musical performers ranging from jazz ensembles to violinist and pianist performances. The building was officially dedicated as a concert hall on April 28, 1990. It was noted at the time, the significance



*Maurice and Rosalie Meiches shared a laugh on the tram ride at Lauritzen Gardens.*

of music in the life of this early, bustling frontier city. The importance of that music is still honored today in the form of the annual concert series.

Members of VISIONS always look forward to these outings and the lovely drive South of Omaha to Brownville, Nebraska. This particular concert featured Michael and Beckie Menzie showcasing the "Great American Songbook". The duo presented unique takes on the works of both classic and contemporary songwriters including Irving Berlin, Johnny Mercer and George Gershwin. Brownville is also the backdrop for a popular annual fall flea market every September.

As a finale to the perfect summer, VISIONS enjoyed their annual

## Blumkin Home Receptionists - Tying it all together!



*From left: Dana, Dee Dee, Sharon and Kerry tie it all together here at the Home!*

*They come from different backgrounds, but they all provide terrific service and a smile at the main desk of the Rose Blumkin Jewish Home. Dee Dee Sortino, Sharon Houchin, Dana Brannon and Kerry Zimmerman are the receptionists we depend on to answer all of the phone calls and much, much more!*

Dee Dee has been with the Blumkin Home full-time for over six years. A friend initially interested her in the job and it's been a great match ever since then. "All my life I've been a people pleaser," she says. "I'm very committed to the Residents and their needs." She describes her interest in meeting the needs of these Residents in any way she can assist. Often, this entails making sure that each department is provided the information they require for quality care, in an efficient and effective manner.

There's more to the job, after all, than just answering the phones (sometimes six to ten calls at a time)! "My responsibilities have increased with time," Dee Dee says. "It's my job to make sure that each department is distributed the information that pertains to them and their needs." She

prints and forwards the necessary letters and documents on every status change of a Resident in the Home. "I think of myself as the bow tier," she describes.

"Everyone else here puts the package together and I'm the one that finishes up the loose ends and completes the project."

Sharon agrees. As an evening and weekend receptionist for the Home, she answers calls and completes projects at the request of various departments. She often spends time between calls putting together the YES Club (Young Energetic Seniors) and VISIONS newsletters for the activity department. She creates the fliers for many events and other times she's folding newsletters or assembling admission packets; whatever is most needed at the time. She works another full-time job during the daytime and then comes to the Blumkin Home for part-time work that has become very meaningful to her.

Sharon describes how she began work at the Blumkin Home about a year ago and never expected to cherish a part-time job as much as she now does. "I found out that I just fell in love with it. It was a perfect fit for me. I've been fascinated with everything I have learned here," she says. "I miss when I'm not here and look forward to coming every day. It's a big part of my life." It's also become a part of her life that is not just 'work'. She's begun volunteering with L.O.V.E. (the League

Offering Volunteers for the Elderly), so she's spending time with Residents even when she's not being paid. Her volunteer time is usually spent assisting at events and transporting Residents to and from various activities.

There's another way that Sharon, Dee Dee, Dana and Kerry are all helping to 'tie it all together'. Public relations isn't the first thing most people think of when they describe the work of a receptionist, but it's a big part of the job here. First contact with everyone entering the Blumkin Home is at the main reception desk. Dee Dee describes how, with every answer of the phone and every smile she greets a visitor with, it's important to be compassionate no matter what your own mood or what kind of day you're having. Often, she can't meet people's specific needs herself, but she demonstrates a genuine interest in treating every Resident, caller, visitor or family member with respect and getting them to the nurse, social worker or administrator that can help them with their specific situation. Sharon agrees by saying, "We're the impression that follows you throughout the rest of the Home. We're the first face you see."

The newest member of the Blumkin Home reception team is Kerry Zimmerman. She began work in October and everyone's glad to have her onboard. Welcome Kerry! If you haven't had time to meet our amazing reception staff members, next time you visit or volunteer take the time to say hello and discover how their smiles and their hard work help package and tie together the quality of service and care at the Blumkin Home!

## Congratulations to the Schragger Award winners!

It takes dedication and a lot of hard work to be singled out as an employee at the Rose Blumkin Jewish Home. With a whole staff that is committed to quality care and excellent service to our Residents, you have to go the extra mile to receive honors. As a CNA (Certified Nursing Assistant), Laurie Pearson has earned that honor as this year's recipient of the Jack and Sonia Schragger Employee of the Year Award!



*Laurie Pearson, CNA, (center; pictured with her parents) accepted her award as the Schragger Employee of the Year in July.*

Laurie was recognized in a celebration at the Blumkin Home in July, along with the quarterly award

winners who share her 'can-do' attitude and commitment to our Residents. These quarterly winners were Gary Larsen, Transportation Driver, and Cathy Carroll-Moriarty, Activity Director (Cathy has since moved to social services).

All of these staff members personify the exceptional caring and commitment that the Rose Blumkin Jewish Home's reputation is built on. Thank you all for your dedication and sense of teamwork!

## Welcome our new Activity Directors!

The Rose Blumkin Jewish Home is proud to welcome two new Activity Directors to our staff. Maggie Zipperlen and Sarah Russell complete our hardworking and energetic activities staff under the direction of Maggie Conti. Their responsibilities include



*Sarah Russell*

involvement in Resident care planning as well as assisting Residents in a multitude of activities and planned programs here at the Home.

Zipperlen and her family moved to Omaha from Sydney, Nebraska in June of 2003. Prior to their move, she spent nineteen years working as the Area Director for the Regional Office of Human Development in Sydney, assisting adults with developmental disabilities. There, she also developed programs for adult day services.

Russell's professional and educational background is in occupational therapy. Prior to joining the Blumkin Home, she worked in case management at a local

women and children's shelter. She's also worked as an Activity Assistant previously. She received her doctoral degree from Creighton University in December of 2003.



*Maggie Zipperlen (standing at left) helping set up for a game of pokeno at the Blumkin Home.*



*The entire group enjoyed a terrific view of the game from the indoor Stadium Club seating.*



*VISIONS members (from left) Sheldon Masnek, Harry Alloy, Doris Alloy, Tootie Simon, Esther Wax and Jim Wax enjoyed the evening out together.*

summer picnic. This event was also a joint function with '39 Forever' and was held inside at the Chalco Hills Recreation area. With the heat and humidity that Omaha experienced in late August, this choice of location was appreciated by everyone! Entertainment for the picnic was provided by Derek Ventura and everyone contributed to the potluck meal.



*LaReine Abrams, Ethel Grossman and Bob Gerelick (seated) stop for a photo during the summer picnic festivities.*

**VISIONS is a group for active retirees to whom age is just a number! For more information on VISIONS and other outreach groups sponsored by Jewish Senior Services, please contact Maggie Conti, Director of Activities and Outreach Programs at 334-6521 or Jim Wax, Executive Chairman at 393-4442.**

## Volunteers Needed to "Answer the call"!



Volunteers are at the heart of our care at the RBJH! We are in need of volunteer receptionists to help cover occasionally at the front desk. If you are able to give of your time, please contact Lois Wine, Director of Volunteer Services at 330-4272. You can help so much in continuing the standards of service and care that our Residents deserve. Thank you!

# Enjoying Their Temporary Home as Construction Progresses!

*Jill Gregg, Lead Therapist at the Rose Blumkin Jewish Home, reports that rehabilitation may be one of the few departments that is actually celebrating the move to a temporary location while construction progresses.*

Many staff members are currently displaced as demolition and reconstruction of the old staff office area continues, but the rehabilitation department staff is far from bothered. "We love our new, temporary space. We actually benefited. We gained probably twice as much square footage with this move," says Gregg. "We're looking to get more equipment in this area now, since we have the extra space to work with." This 'room-to-breathe' is just a sample of what is yet to come for the new and improved RBJH rehabilitation department.

Plans for the future rehab department at the Home include a great increase in space that will provide three separate and private treatment rooms. Of course, new and advanced equipment will also be added to even better provide for the specific needs of each patient and to allow the department to continue to

grow. The completed, post-renovation rehab area will occupy the site of the current kitchen and synagogue. This change in location and the improvements in the facilities will have an enormous impact on this quickly growing area of service for the Home.



*Stephanie Nigro (left), a restorative therapist, and her patient, Roie Meyers, share a smile and some laughs together as a part of Roie's therapy.*

Short-term stays, according to Gregg, make up approximately 60 - 70% of the department's current case load. "A large majority of our patients here at the Home are what we call 'skilled' or 'part A' patients, where they've had a hospital stay and they're looking for somewhere to rehab and transition

back to their own home," she says. These patients come to the Blumkin Home after surgery or other medical events, and many who return home continue to require weekly therapy on an outpatient basis. Gregg believes that many people are unaware that they can pursue outpatient therapy here, regardless of whether they've had a previous stay in the Blumkin Home or not. It's this department's mission to 'get the word out' about what they have to offer, both currently and in the future.

Gregg and the other therapists at the Home, including two occupational therapists, a full-time speech therapist and two physical therapists, aren't spending all of their time looking ahead to the new and improved space. They're busy enjoying where they're at right now; the old auditorium space at the Blumkin Home. This temporary space provides a wide, sliding glass door opening and very usable space to continue their therapy practices with both Residents and outpatient clients. Gregg describes how ready the rehab department is for growth at this time and how much they have to offer, with a talented and friendly staff as well as a state-of-the-art new facility to look forward to.

The range of services available on an outpatient basis is widespread and includes balance training, general strengthening, conditioning and re-conditioning after surgery, cognitive evaluations after an event like a

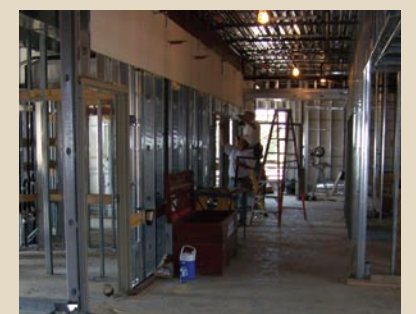
stroke and help in transitioning to life with a wheelchair or walker, among others. "We have two occupational therapists that specialize in therapy relating to ADL's (Activities of Daily Living)," says Gregg. It's these therapists' job to assist patients in regaining the strength they need to continue their life at home.

The future facilities for the RBJH rehabilitation department will include things like a kitchenette and bathroom as well as a set of stairs that can be modified for each patient's specific therapy needs. These conveniences will allow the RBJH therapists to customize their care even more.

For now Gregg isn't in a big hurry to get into the new space. She and the other therapists on staff are happily enjoying the ability to stretch and grow as a department and are continuing to provide the best in rehabilitation services to Residents and outpatient clients. For more information on therapy and rehabilitation services available at the Blumkin Home, please contact Jill Gregg at 334-6535.



*Dave Dvorkin (standing) and Holly Abramamson pose as "Resident Supervisors" over the current construction at the Home. On a sunny day, they observe the work from the RBJH small dining room window.*



*Jill Gregg (left) coaches Tina Becker in her conditioning at the Blumkin Home rehabilitation department.*