

BALLOU LIFE

A NEWSLETTER FOR THE FAMILIES AND FRIENDS OF BALLOU HOME FOR THE AGED



BallouLife COMMUNITIES™

A 501 (C) 3 Non-Profit Organization

Ballou Home for the Aged

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MISSION STATEMENT

To provide exceptional person-centered care for our residents and their families, while promoting quality of life, and embracing the dignity of each individual in a safe, nurturing, and respectful community.



MARY DUPRE, DIRECTOR OF NURSING, RETIRES AFTER 42 YEARS Leaves Remarkable Legacy of Compassion and Professionalism

Mary Dupre, Director of Nursing, retired October 4th after 42 years at Ballou Home. She loved to tell the story about the horse that brought her to Ballou. It seems that she was driving by Ballou, thinking that she had to get a part-time job to supplement her full-time nursing job so that she could support the horse that she had just bought. Her mother, who was in the car at the time, said how about there, pointing to Ballou as they drove by. Days later, Mary spoke with Ballou's Director and the rest is history.



Mary Dupre, RN

"Actually, I learned a lot from that horse," said Mary. "Horses have their own personalities and you have to really tune-in to them to learn how to best work with them."

This philosophy kept Mary in good stead with her staff, during her tenure as Director of Nursing. "I told everyone to be respectful of each other and that everyone's voice was important. I really listened to everyone, zoning in on what they were saying or feeling," said Mary. In this way, Mary built a "team," where everyone was working towards the same goal of providing the best of personal care to residents.

DENNIS AYOTTE, RN, NEW DIRECTOR OF NURSING Following the Family Tradition



Dennis Ayotte, RN, began his duties as Director of Nursing, October 4th, upon Mary Dupre's retirement. Dennis has 37 years of clinical experience working as a Registered Nurse. Most of that time was at Landmark Hospital, where he served in various capacities: Charge Nurse of the Intensive Care Unit, and in the Orthopedic, and Cardiac Departments. He also worked for Visiting Nurses for 25 years while at Landmark as well as being a Pacemaker Data Analyst for several physicians. Before becoming a nurse, Dennis was interested in the trades. He had "built" things for the better part of his life, from furniture to house additions, and was attending Vocational School when he decided to become a nurse; his father was a nurse, and at one time was Director of Nursing at the Woonsocket Health Center. You might say that Dennis was following the family tradition. Building things is still a strong part of Dennis' life, and he continues to put his carpentry skills to work in his spare time.



Executive Director's Letter

EVERY VOICE COUNTS!

Dear Friends,

Mary Dupre, our beloved and highly respected Director of Nursing, retired as of October 4th. The lead article in this newsletter describes Mary's strengths, perfectly. She listens! She listened to her nursing staff, and to residents, alike. But, more than that, she got beyond the words that were spoken to the emotion behind the words. Listening, and listening in depth to what is being said, is a rare commodity in today's world where decisions are sometimes made quickly without having grasped the full meaning of what is being said. Mary said, "Every voice is important," and through this process, she developed a true team of nursing professionals.

Mary was with Ballou Home for 42 years, which alone is remarkable. She first came here as a nurse, and slowly took on more duties as time passed. One of the early administrators saw a great talent in Mary to bring people together and asked her if she would assume the Director of Nursing position. Through the years, Mary maintained a nursing department of the highest quality and compassion.

Thank you, Mary, for your devoted years of service and for the spirit and depth of understanding that you brought to Ballou Home, its residents, staff, and families; and, for the many lives that were made better because of your presence.

Sincerely,

Barry B. Zeltzer, PhD

Lucille Ducharme

The "Johnny Appleseed" of visual assistive technology

Talk about a positive outlook on life, and you could be talking about Lucille Ducharme. Most days, you can find her at the desk in her room behind the Telesensory machine. Lucille is "legally" blind and Telesensory makes it possible for her to read and write.



Lucille Ducharme with her Telesensory machine.

Born blind and deaf, Lucille didn't talk until age 13 when she got her first hearing aids. She now could hear what people were saying to her and could respond. She was determined to overcome her hearing and visual impairments. She learned Braille, and sign language and excelled at school. Later, she earned a college degree and worked at City Hall for 15 years.

Lucille brought a Telesensory machine with her when she came to Ballou Home, a number of years ago. "This machine has been life changing for me," says Lucille. "I can read books with it, do crossword puzzles, and even write letters." You put what you want to read on a platform, which magnifies the object to a television-like screen.

On certain days, you can see people "visiting" Lucille, amazed by her Telesensory machine. She has become the "Johnny Appleseed" of assistive technology, spreading the word about its wonders to all who listen.

Recently, Ballou has applied for a foundation grant to purchase several Telesensory machines for our visually impaired residents. Life Enrichment Director, Tina Senecal says, "These machines are very much needed. Many of our residents are at some level of visual impairment. This amazing machine could be life changing for our residents as it has been for Lucille."

GAZEBO REBUILT THIS SUMMER Octagonal shape is challenging!

Chris Hahn and Walter Tetreault, Director of Facilities and Maintenance Tech, respectively, took part of the summer to “rebuild” the outdoor gazebo, located in the back of Ballou Home. It is nestled in surrounding flower gardens, a perfect respite on a summer day. It had been “weathering” for many years, causing the wooden structure to be both unsightly and unsafe.



Chris and Walter point out the complex angles of the floor's medallion-like centerpiece.

Therefore, Chris and Walter tackled the job of rebuilding the structure. “It wasn’t an easy job to do, either!” said Chris, noting the structure’s octagonal shape. Walter chimed in, “Because of its eight sides, there were many compound angles that had to be cut.” Compound miters, as they are called, can be a carpenter’s worst nightmare. You have to have a sharp eye and keen sense of measurements to figure out where and how to cut the wood. Two sides of the wood have to be cut with different angles for each. A good saw will do the trick but only after you figure out the angles.

Both men have had much carpentry experience. Walter’s grandfather was a hobby carpenter and that is where he got the “bug,” later attending Blackstone Valley Technical School for carpentry and then doing construction. Walter’s father was an electrician. Walter replied, “I never touch electricity, though. It can bite you back!”

Chris, also, has done a lot of carpentry, building furniture and even rec room and office spaces. Together, they make a perfect team to upkeep Ballou’s facilities. The “rebuilt” gazebo is an outstanding example of their experience and teamwork.

Both men, Chris and Walter, admire their carpentry work from afar.

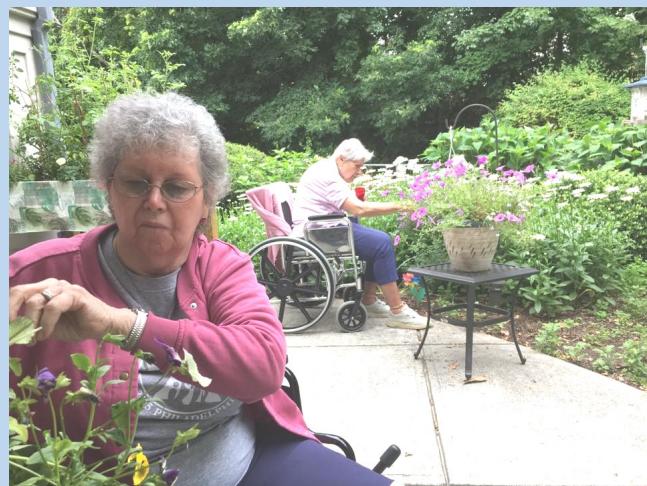


In the summertime, Ballou Home is ablaze with color in its magnificent flower gardens.

A Monarch butterfly is caught on camera pollinating flowers.



A humming-moth finds its place above petunias and daisies in full bloom.



Residents help, too. They enjoy keeping the gardens in shape, pruned and beautiful.



BALLOU LIFE

BallouLife Communities

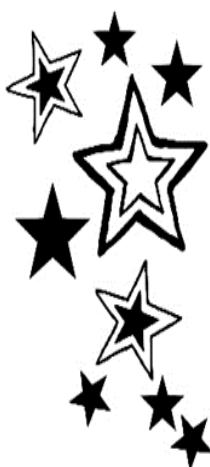
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“Living Life to the Fullest”



BallouLife
COMMUNITIES

Congratulations!

To the **STAFF** of

Ballou Home for the Aged

Great Teamwork!

Deficiency-Free Survey by the
Rhode Island Department of Health

Living Life to the Fullest!

Editorial Information

“Ballou Life” is published periodically for families, friends, residents, staff, and others interested in the work of BallouLife Communities by the Office of Development.

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