

Reflections

The Newsletter of



Supporting People with Developmental Disabilities

❄️ Winter 2010

Follow the Yellow Brick Road to the 17th Annual Emerald Ball

The 17th Annual Emerald Ball will take place on March 13, 2010 at the Martinsville Inn at 7pm. It is our annual night celebrating the achievements of the past year and bringing together our loyal friends and supporters. It is a great night out on the town along with the added benefit of supporting the many services in recreational, residential, educational and employment programs we provide. This year we have helped over 60 students/adults with special needs find or retain jobs through our Supported Employment Program. We also plan to expand our residential opportunities with two new homes to be built in Somerset County.

The evening will begin with a cocktail hour (cash bar) featuring a wide assortment of hot and cold hors d'oeuvres.

“The 17th Annual EMERALD BALL will take place on March 13, 2010 at the Martinsville Inn.”

Dinner will follow with an entrée choice of prime rib, salmon, chicken or vegetarian, topped off with a gourmet dessert, coffee and tea. Throughout the evening our Silent Auction will feature, as always, some wonderful offerings

of gift baskets, tickets to sporting and theatrical events and gift certificates donated by generous businesses and friends. There will be a 50/50 raffle and for the first time we are introducing “Wine Cellar Roulette”. Bottles of wine, all in matching gift bags will be available for a \$20 donation and guests will take the chance of purchasing a bottle that can range in value from \$10 to over \$100. Dancing will be to the live music of First Class.

The Emerald Ball is our major fundraiser and the continued support of the community is vital to its success. We consider ourselves fortunate to be blessed with so many people who are committed to lending a helping hand. Please consider joining us for a fun evening, supporting a worthy cause. Tickets are \$125 a piece, \$60 of which is tax deductible. *Please call Michelle Marvel at 908-221-9356 for tickets or if you would like to donate an item for the Silent Auction, please call Jane O'Connor at 908-766-4890.*



Emerald Ball guests enjoy dancing to the music of First Class.

MANY THANKS to
Millington Savings Bank,
“the Community Minded”
bank for once again sponsoring
us at the Sapphire level.
and to our newest sponsor,
Aurora Kitchens & Interiors
for their Topaz sponsorship.



From the Executive Director

Happy New Year
to the Bethel Ridge Community!

**“You must be the
change you want to see
in the world”.**

— Mahatma Gandhi
*Indian political and spiritual leader
(1869–1948)*

These are the words that I use often to inspire and guide me through my work at Bethel Ridge and life, in general. These words also embody everyone who contributes to the mission of Bethel Ridge, and their contributions are reflective of the spirit that leads to change for people with disabilities.

Whether it is the local teenager who donates his or her time each May to help run our Charter Day booth, the donor who finds \$75 in their budget, despite this difficult economy, to help us improve our programs, or the community volunteer on the Board of Directors who helps our organization run more effectively—all of these people are change agents. They promote, act, guide, and support us and the world around them.

2010 is poised to be an exciting year for Bethel Ridge. Thanks to our amazingly supportive community, and people like you, we are growing and becoming more efficient in achieving our mission to ensure each individual becomes a contributing member of his or her community.

Thanks to our partnership with the Borough of Peapack-Gladstone, we will be moving forward to expand our residential programs. This program will be less than a half a mile from local shopping and public transportation. It will be a great opportunity for

the residents to be as independent as possible while participating in their local community.

We are also expanding our use of technology so our staff can spend less time on administrative tasks and more time in the field growing our programs. By using web-based computer applications like EVMS or TherapServices, we can now document services anywhere there is an internet connection, faster and more efficiently. A big plus is that our supervisory staff now have access from alternative locations. Use of technology is automating routine tasks and increasing communication. This makes more time for the individuals we provide services to and makes our services even better.

Finally, be part of this exciting year and be the change you want to see in the world... by joining us for a fantastic night out at our annual Emerald Ball/Silent Auction. *For more details, please see article on front page.*

—Karen L. Ennis, M.A.

Educationally Speaking

“Reflections on Rewards” by The Learning Center’s Lead Teacher, Deborah Paduano

When I started teaching at the Bethel Ridge Educational Center four years ago, I had no idea the impact that these classes would have... on me.

Throughout the year, Bethel Ridge offers classes that are eight week sessions. The classes include Reading for Life, The Bubbling Gourmet, Arts and Crafts, Computer classes and Driver’s Education. The classes are intimate in number and are held on weeknights.

I have seen the students (many of whom are regulars), develop their abilities and welcome new friends into the classes. There is an unspoken rule that everyone belongs and everyone has something to contribute to the class. It is important to note, that this is the approach of all the students that I have had over the years. I have witnessed some amazing people really appreciate each other, just because it is the right thing to do. There are no prerequisites. What a refreshing approach to life—and people! The families involved

in this program have also expressed support and appreciation, which means a great deal to me. Over the years, I have heard from parents that as a result of the classes, their child is reading more, or better... their child is helping in the kitchen... or... even a simple “Thank You” because the classes offer a great opportunity for their child to engage in social interactions with peers. Positive risk taking is strongly encouraged in my classes!

I have been humbled by teaching these classes over the years. In a world where everything is prioritized and the mantra of “there is never enough time in a day” is common knowledge, my experience teaching such an amazing group of people has reminded me that the important things are appreciation, sincerity, friendship, decency, trying your

best and the power of an infectious smile and laugh.

To sum it up in a word... rewarding. The opportunity to be a part of this program and the mission of Bethel Ridge is truly rewarding. I am very lucky to have made so many new friends and for the opportunity to have such a rewarding part time job!



Pictured above are Learning Center participants, Maria Lamia, Patrice Keiling with Deborah Paduano.

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*"Building Stepping Stones
to Lifelong Success"*

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OUR MISSION

To provide comprehensive community-based support for persons with developmental disabilities.

ABOUT BETHEL RIDGE

Bethel Ridge is a not-for-profit, non-denominational agency that provides residential, vocational, educational, recreational and family support services to people with special needs. Incorporated in 1991, Bethel Ridge remains steadfast in its mission to provide exceptional community based supports that maximize the potential for independent living.

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Mark Your Calendars!

Emerald Ball

Saturday, March 13, 2010

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Recreation Express

"The Time of Their Lives" by Katie Jo Prendella

Last Fall, my sister, Lee, and I went to a Halloween Dance hosted by Bethel Ridge. We both went in costume, Lee as Joseph, from Joseph and the Amazing Technicolored Dreamcoat musical and I dressed as Minnie Mouse. Lee chose her costume because she loves Joseph and sings one of his songs at her private voice lessons. I was also acting as the photographer for the event, so I thought it would be more enjoyable if I were to dress up, too.

By documenting the evening with my camera, I could see that it was enjoyed by all who attended. It gave Lee and me the opportunity to enjoy each other's company. I also got to meet some of Lee's friends who she knows through the events sponsored by Bethel Ridge. Everyone was very nice and having a fantastic time. The dance floor was busy all night, which we thought was the best part of the event. Everyone was having

so much fun "dancing the night away". Many of the songs played by the DJ were great sing-alongs, such as "(I've Had) The Time of My Life". This song ended the event and all the guests and helpers were singing and swaying across the dance floor. It was a very fun evening and we would love to go back.

For more information on Bethel Ridge Recreation events, please go to www.bethelridgenj.org

UPCOMING EVENTS... *"Don't miss out on the fun."*

Emerald Ball
Saturday, March 13th, 7pm
RSVP no later than 2/26

Spring Fling
Friday, April 23rd

Charter Day
May 15th
*We'll have our sand art, sun catchers,
and other fun activities!*