



BFAIR BUZZ

Winter 2019



***BFAIR's entry Blue Christmas (Elvis Presley)
2018 Berkshire Museum Festival of Trees:
Often Heard***

BIG CHANGES @ BFAIR

We're starting the new year on a positive note, with announcing an organizational restructuring and internal promotions. Accordingly, Rich Weisenflue, previously Executive Director, will assume the role of Chief Executive Officer, Ethel Altiery, Executive Director, Jane Patenaude-LeBeau, Chief Financial Officer and Theresa Gelinias, Senior Vice President, Day Services.

The structural changes come as a response to the organization's continued growth and poise BFAIR on a trajectory for future endeavors. "The promotions of Ethel, Jane and Theresa are a direct reflection of their significant commitment to the success of BFAIR over the past two decades, their extensive knowledge of the Human Service field, excellent management skills and professional credentials" said Weisenflue.

He continued, "Working alongside Ethel, Jane and Theresa as we prepare for the opportunities and challenges we'll undoubtedly face over the next three to five years include Senior managers, Kristen Wampler, Vice President Individual & Family Supports, Michelle Baity, Vice President Human Resources and Eric Denette, Vice President Clinical Services. Restructuring of our management team will also include a newly created position, Vice President Residential Services."



Congratulations to our team!

TABLE of CONTENTS

Changes at BFAIR	2
Neighborlies	2
Wheels for Woodcock	3
Spotlight on Homecare	4
Celebrating the Seasons	6
Date for Annual Meeting	8



**Shop at
AmazonSmile
to benefit BFAIR**

2 Sign up at smile.amazon.com

NEIGHBORLIES: WE'RE HAPPY TO BE YOUR NEIGHBOR!

As part of the *Northern Berkshire Community Coalition's Northern Berkshire Neighbors* program, BFAIR was recognized at *The Neighborlies Award Ceremony* on November 14. **Neighborlies** are given twice a year to recognize any person or group of people that has performed an act of kindness or made a positive difference in the life of another person. BFAIR was



nominated for the Neighborlie for a donation of candy to the UNO Community Center's Halloween party. It certainly was a sweet award! For more information about the Neighborlies or the nbCC's programming, visit www.nbccoalition.org

[pictured is Kayla Brown-Wood, Assistant Director of Employment Services accepting the certificate of appreciation]

WHEELS

for Woodcock

Our Annual Campaign has kicked-off and is in full swing! To date, we have raised over \$11,500... but more is needed to reach our goal.

We're literally revving our engines - or at least hope to be soon - but we need YOU to support our efforts! We'd love to purchase new van for our residence on Woodcock Road in Williamstown and we know that we can count on you to help us make that happen!

Earlier this year, we invested your donations from the previous year into our Woodcock Road property that is now the home to four men living with cognitive disabilities - it became a reality because of YOU.

While many expenses related to supporting those in BFAIR's residential program are paid for through state and federal contracts and insurance, the expenses related to purchasing a van are not.

As you know, our mission is to enrich the lives of the people that we serve by providing positive life experiences. We know that you'll agree that providing accessible transportation certainly fits that bill. We can't do it alone and we value you as a partner.

Supporting the Wheels for Woodcock 2018 Annual Campaign can be done via credit card or check donation. Visit bfair.org for easy online donation format. Alternatively, checks payable to BFAIR may be mailed or hand-delivered to their main administrative office at 771 South Church Street, North Adams. All donations made to BFAIR are tax-deductible.



“Providing a van for our residential staff to utilize increases their ability to support the people that we serve so that they may attend community events, stay connected with their families, access medical care as needed and participate in community-based recreation and leisure activities that many of us take for granted.”

– Rich Weisenflue, CEO 3

Spotlight on Home



HOME. It's true that there is no place like it. And when Theresa Smachetti suffered a major stroke in November of 2016 and was residing in a skilled nursing facility, the reality of returning to the comforts of home seemed like a distant memory – until Theresa and her son Michael were connected with the Massachusetts Rehabilitation Commission's MFP (Money Follows the Person) program. Under the MFP program, funding is provided to support a healthy and successful return to the home environment. Additionally, financially eligible families receive not only nursing staffing and homecare

support, but changes in the physical surroundings that make being at home easier.

To assist in that successful transition back to home, the MFP program provided the Smachetti's with a ramp for the front door, modifications of doorways and the first floor bathroom, a Hoyer lift, wheelchair, shower chair, iPad for therapy and communication, as well as assisting with a van reconstruction, making it fully accessible for Theresa.

All of the accommodations to the physical space, plus the nearly 154 hours per week of support services by BFAIR including a personal care attendant, adult

ecare



companion, and individual support services certainly has provided a sense of security for Michael. “If we didn’t have these services, everything would be harder,” commented Michael. And as a full-time employee at the Berkshire County House of Corrections, Michael values the program and the time that it has saved him. He continued, “The best is that Mom gets to live in the community instead of in a nursing home. There’s still a lot of work involved, but it’s still pretty great to have her home.” With the help of Bonnie, Theresa’s personal care attendant through the BFAIR homecare program,

and other supports, Theresa enjoys many of the activities that she did prior to experiencing a stroke, such as playing cards, outings, and watching television (especially Chicago PD and other law enforcement shows) from the comfort of home. While Theresa does struggle to communicate due to aphasia (the loss of ability to understand or express speech, caused by brain damage), there is never any doubt that Theresa is content at home. Her smile, laugh, and eye contact is very interactive and says it all!

Celebrating the Seasons

Time sure flies when you're having as much fun as we do at BFAIR! Since our last *Buzz*, we've gotten to celebrate several holidays. Here is a peek at the festivities!



At our **Halloween Party**, hosted at Boston Sea Foods, we had all kinds of characters enter the doors – from the witchy to the super hero type! A night of food, fun, and great music was had by all! A special thanks to Kris DeLand, habilitation specialist, for her DJing skills!



And we kicked the holidays off in style at the Berkshire Museum's Festival of Trees: Often Heard with our tree that was adorned with décor relative to *Blue Christmas* by Elvis Presley. Fully decorated with ornaments that were hand-crafted by our Community Based Day Services program, they highlighted The King and made the holidays anything but blue!





Berkshire Family & Individual Resources

771 South Church Street | North Adams, MA 01247

Presort Standard
U.S. Postage
PAID
North Adams, MA
Permit No.121

Rich Weisenflue, CEO

Board of Directors

Alex Kastrinakis, Chairperson

Kelli Kozak, Vice Chairperson

Dana Mullen, Treasurer

Patti Messina, Clerk

Kim Baker

Alex Figueroa

Peter Mirante



PROUD MEMBERS OF

*North Adams Chamber • Williamstown Chamber
1Berkshire • Greater Northampton Chamber of Commerce
Southern Berkshire Chamber • Greater Westfield Chamber of Commerce*



BFAIR's 2019 Annual Meeting!

**Friday, April 26, 2019
7:30am – 9am**

**Berkshire Hills Country Club
Pittsfield**