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August 2017

HOLTON HOME • BRADLEY HOUSE

N•E•W•S•L•E•T•T•E•R

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65 Harris Avenue, Brattleboro, Vermont 05301 • (802) 254-5524 • email: info@BradleyHouseVT.org • www.thebradleyhousevt.com

Ethel Brosnahan has been a member of the Holton Home family since September of 2011, and just celebrated her 90th birthday. Ethel shared memories with friends and staff about being elected as the first woman side judge in the town of Newfane, VT. “I was just thrilled to do it!” she said as her face lit up.



During this time two men were always elected as side judges and made decisions about situations concerning women.

“They did not understand what life was like as a woman at that time, and I lost a lot of sleep feeling sorry for these women.” Women needed a voice, and Ethel fought to give them one.

Ethel was also one of the first judges to perform Civil Unions between men and women couples.

“I met so many wonderful people who came from all over the country to be together.

It was very heartwarming that people could finally do this. I was so happy to hear from them even years later to find out how well they were doing.” Ethel was a large part of two very significant movements in history, and is proud of her accomplishments during these times. We are privileged to know a woman such as Ethel, who has made such a positive difference in our community.

Emma Sheldon
Site Director



Curious Minds Want to Know . . .

Friends of Holton Home and Bradley House are interested in knowing how the Bradley House Revival project is being funded. It's a big project, bigger than anything ever done at Holton Home because we're doing a great deal all at once. In addition to adding space for private bathrooms and new residents, we're addressing all wiring, plumbing, heating and fire safety issues in the beautiful, historic old mansion.

If you've been following local building projects lately, you know that construction costs a very pretty penny these days. Bradley House is no exception. We will be a 35 bedroom, 40 bathroom home, with offices, common areas, a commercial kitchen, and a dining room large enough for all residents to gather together. What will it cost? With loving renovation of historic areas, new space, and proper fire safety and handicapped access, \$5.3 million.

Where is it coming from? We've raised many dollars over the years for Holton Home projects, but never so much at once. We knew we'd need to apply for federal and state funding that is geared toward low income housing for elders, keeping beautiful old buildings in use, and implementing energy efficiency measures. Curious about the "low income housing" part? All our residents are retired. Very few have an income on par with the median household wage in Windham County. They may have assets they've put away for their later years, but their income is low. That opens the door for certain grants and loans. The support we have received has been overwhelming. We have been approved for every single grant and loan we applied for. A total of \$1,163,750 in grants has been awarded from:

- Vermont Housing and Conservation Board
- Vermont Community Development Program
- The Town of Brattleboro
- Efficiency Vermont.
- USDA Rural Development

Bradley House had no long term debt and can afford to take some on. We are borrowing \$3,500,000 in low-interest loans from:

- The Vermont Housing Finance Agency
- The National Housing Trust in partnership with Commons Energy
- USDA Rural Development

Some friends have expressed concerns as to whether current conditions in our nation's capital may impact promised funding. We have been assured that all funds have been "obligated," meaning they are already in the accounts of the agency or organization that has promised them, and cannot be taken back. Those of you who are math whizzes will have noticed there's a gap of \$636,250. We are responsible for contributing that amount through a combination of three sources: a capital campaign, retained earnings, and not spending all of the budgeted \$368,459 in construction contingency funds.

We have very good news on for the capital campaign. Our great friends at the Thompson Trust have made a challenge grant of \$50,000! Show your support for quality care for our elder neighbors in a safe, accessible and beautiful home.

Watch your mail for your chance to have your gift doubled by the Thompson Trust!

Cindy Jerome
Executive Director



Chuckle Corner

A woman arrives at the Pearly Gates, and meets Saint Peter. She says, "I was supposed to look up my husband when I got here." Saint Peter asks, "What's his name?" She replies, "Smith." Saint Peter says, "I've got hundreds of thousands of Smiths here. Could you narrow it down a little?" She adds, "His first name is John." Saint Peter answers, "I got thousands of John Smiths here. Could you narrow it down some more?" She offers, "He's got red hair."

A little exasperated, Saint Peter says, "I have hundreds of red haired John Smiths here. You've got to give me something else." She thinks for a moment, then says, "Well, with his dying breathe he told me to always remain faithful to his memory, or else he'd roll over in his grave!" Saint Peter says, "Oh, you mean Pinwheel Smith!"



Around the Halls of Holton Home



What is summertime without a s'more!? One recent beautiful afternoon we all sat around a little grill in the shade, roasted marshmallows and made a whole mess of s'mores! One of our newest residents, Marie, a master-marshmallow roaster, roasted the marshmallows, and Emma prepared the graham crackers and chocolate so everyone who wanted one could enjoy the summer treat. We all sat and talked amongst our fruit trees as summer breezes rolled through. It seems like summer flies by so quickly, despite the long day light hours! There are so many wonderful summer traditions that sometimes it's important to make to take a moment to do the things you love and that make you happy. Even if it is just to sit, relax and just be with and enjoy the people around you.

Ellenka Wasung-Lott
Activities Director



Congratulations
to
Lisa Holabird, RN
Bradley House's
Nurse Extraordinaire
For earning the credential
of
Certified Dementia Practitioner