



CENTERED

Meet Henry Belisle



Erin Blazek, Henry Belisle
and Julie Johnson

When I was ushered into Henry Belisle's room, he was sitting near the window looking out at the hills and trees surrounding Mount St. Rita and finishing a telephone conversation. He acknowledged my presence then gently and politely ended the call. "That was my wife, Claire," he said. "We've been married for 66 years this May. You know," he continued with a little grin, "there are only two things you have to remember in order to have a marriage lasts that long, just two words – yes, dear!"

Henry was still affected by what he described as "a stroke and a fall" and was receiving rehabilitative care at Mount St. Rita. He was looking forward to recovery and returning home to be with Claire, and he felt that everyone at The Mount was helping him to do so.

"The Mount is like night and day compared to other places – more caring, better service, a lot of help, and really good food ... everything we hoped for and expected."

Henry began talking about his stay at Mount St. Rita and how different it was from other places he had been beforehand.

In his words, "It is like night and day compared to other places – more caring, better service, a lot of help, and really good food. My son checked out a lot of places before I came here and it's been everything we hoped for and expected."

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We are blessed at Mount St. Rita Health Centre to be surrounded by wonderful people from so many different walks of life.

Our staff members, patients, families, friends, volunteers and supporters all bring to our community experiences and perspectives that make our lives richer for knowing them. In this and future issues of our newsletter, we will profile some of the individuals that make "The Mount" a special place.

Mount St. Rita Health Centre

15 Sumner Brown Road
Cumberland, Rhode Island
02864-1297
Tel: 401-333-6352

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Administrator

www.mountstrita.org
mail@mountstrita.org

Design by: kerryn@cox.net

Mount St. Rita Health Centre is committed to providing health care in the tradition of Mercy. Our mission is to witness to the healing ministry of Jesus. Our concern is to incorporate Gospel values into all aspects of life.

WELCOMES NEW ADMINISTRATOR



Mount St. Rita Health Centre welcomed Deborah Beards, our new administrator, in late 2008.

Deborah originally hails from the suburbs of New York City. Yet her career in aging services has taken her to many parts of the country.

After graduating from Queens College of the City University of New York, Deborah volunteered with the JFK-initiated poverty program, VISTA (Volunteers in Service to America). VISTA assigned her to organize programs for seniors in a rural area of Iowa.

The move from urban New York to rural Iowa was quite a change in culture for Deborah, but it introduced her to the issues of aging. Upon completing her work in Iowa, Deborah headed south to Texas to begin studying gerontology. Deborah attended the Center for Studies in Aging of the University of North Texas in Denton, Texas, where she majored in aging studies and minored in public administration and long term care. Subsequently, two graduate school internships took her to New York City and Bethesda, Maryland respectively.

After finishing her master's program, her first position was in Worcester, Massachusetts. Little did Deborah realize that years later her profession would bring her back to the same region.

From Worcester Deborah moved to Atlanta, where for 21 years she was the chief executive officer of the Atlanta Jewish Home. Lured back to the northeast by a recruiter, Deborah spent 5 years as head of the Central New Jersey Jewish Home before joining us at Mount St. Rita in Rhode Island.

“Mount St. Rita can build on a long tradition of excellence and caring, while providing a new era of care for lay and religious men and women.”

During her career, Deborah has had the opportunity to oversee the construction of a nursing home, an apartment building for seniors and an assisted living facility. And, she has also been

responsible for the development of two community-based hospices.

Deborah is excited to have joined the staff, residents, family members, friends of Mount St. Rita and the Sisters of Mercy in shaping the future of “The Mount.” Deborah has stated her confidence that “Mount St. Rita can build on a long tradition of excellence and caring, while providing a new era of care for lay and religious men and women.”

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Despite his current ailments, anyone meeting Henry would sense an underlying energy and strength, a positive attitude and a ready wit. He displayed a certain spark that hinted at a life that you wanted to hear more about, and he shared some of it with me.

Henry has lived in Cumberland for over forty years. He and Claire had three sons, one who lived in Wisconsin before moving to Florida, one living in North Carolina, and one who passed 10 years ago. Henry was a skilled tool maker – not a surprise because he has the solid arms and hands that one would associate with that profession. But those same hands are expressive in an understated way and belong to a life-long musician. Henry played piano and accordion for nearly four decades with the Starlighters, an orchestra that regularly played at the Providence Biltmore and for private parties throughout the region. While playing the piano is difficult now since he has lost some strength and flexibility in his hands and fingers, Henry plans to simply spend more time with an organ or electronic keyboard.

While talking about his musical background, Henry expressed an interest in ballroom and line dancing, but suggested his physical therapy at The Mount was more like ballet – always on the toes.

Henry modestly told me that he was also a composer. Two of his songs, “Behind Every Rainbow” and “A Little Christmas City” played on radio station WNRI.

I had so many more questions to ask, but Henry had another visitor – good for him but a little disappointing for me. I plan to seek out and share the stories of others who are part of the Mount St. Rita community.

By David Wahl

P.S. I am pleased to report that, not long after our interview, Henry returned to his Cumberland home.

JUDY HAMOD SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM ESTABLISHED:

WILL PROMOTE HEALTH CARE EDUCATION OF MOUNT ST. RITA STAFF



Deb Beards, Administrator, George Hamod and Candy Yates, Director of Nursing

Judy Hamod was a 20-year, highly valued member of the Mount St. Rita staff. Judy served as a unit charge nurse, supervisor, and assistant director of nursing. She was known as being an advocate for all residents, a highly competent registered nurse, and an exceedingly compassionate woman. Judy was passionate about her work, her family and her God.

Judy Hamod spent the last weeks of her life as a resident of Mount St. Rita. As her life came to a close much too soon, she reaped the rewards of her work training staff to be compassionate and caring. Her husband, George Hamod, in appreciation for the care she received while a resident, has committed funds that will serve as the initial corpus of a scholarship fund that will memorialize his wife, recognize Judy's commitment to educational advancement, and honor the staff who compassionately cared for Judy and who continue to meet the needs of the patients and residents at Mount St. Rita.

The Judy Hamod Scholarship program is being initiated to encourage staff to consider furthering their education in nursing and other areas of health care. Preference will be given to nursing students in recognition of Judy's longstanding dedication to the profession. Educational advancement will benefit both the Mount and the individual with new and enhanced skills.

George Hamod's contribution of \$20,000 to Mount St. Rita will be placed in a secure investment as determined by the Finance Committee of the Board of Trustees. The interest from the corpus will be used to provide scholarship funds to staff on an annual or bi-annual basis depending on the interest earned.

Individuals or groups wishing to add to the corpus of the scholarship fund may contact Dave Wahl in the Mount St. Rita Development Office at 401-333-6352, ext. 48.

Mount St. Rita Receives Gifts

FOR NEEDED EQUIPMENT

Dale and Joan McKenzie of Ridgefield, CT, in memory of family member Lillian M. Flynn, gave a contribution to Mount St. Rita for the purchase of much needed diagnostic equipment for each floor of the Health Centre.

This equipment allows for testing of blood pressure, temperature and pulse in a single portable unit. Through the generosity of the McKenzie's, staff is able to care for patients and residents in a more effective and efficient manner.

- WISH LIST -

*Wish I may,
wish I might,
have the wish
I wish tonight...*

We often are asked how family members and friends can help Mount St. Rita. In addition to contributing to help support resident care, we have a lengthy wish list. If you are able to help us with the purchase of any of these items, please contact David Wahl in the Development Office at (401) 333-6352, Ext. 48. Pricing on some items is approximate.

Items:	Cost:
• Individual air conditioning units	\$200 <i>each</i>
• Patient electric lifts	\$3,500 <i>each</i>
• Replacement food processor	\$2,900
• Beds that go low to the floor	\$1,200 <i>each</i>
• New Dishes	\$5,000
• Convection Oven	\$4,000
• Dessert Carts for dining room service	\$1,350
• Dining Room Chairs	\$24,000
• Bus for outside trips	\$45,000

*Mount St. Rita
Health Centre*

**ANNUAL DINNER &
2008 COMMUNITY
SERVICE AWARD
HONOREES**

At the Mount St. Rita 39th Annual Dinner at Kirkbrae Country Club in Lincoln, RI., the Community Service Awards were presented to Corinne Calise Russo and Sister Mary Norma McCabe.

Corinne Calise Russo contributed more than thirty years experience to elder services and was the founding Director of the Salvatore Mancini Resource and Activity Center, a nationally recognized senior center. As the Director of the Department of Elderly Affairs she took the lead in expanding the state's focus on the delivery of community-based services to maintain elders and support their care partners within the community. Ms. Russo also served as an adjunct instructor at Rhode Island College, Community College of Rhode Island and Dean College in Franklin, MA.

Sister Mary Norma McCabe devoted her life to service as a Sister of Mercy nearly sixty years ago. Prior to working at Mount St. Rita, she served as a teacher and as a nurse at Grandview Nursing Home. Here at "The Mount", Sister Norma provided many years of extraordinary service to the institution and its residents as Plant Manager, retiring from that position in early 2008. Still called to serve, and with much still to give, Sister Mary Norma McCabe works part-time on the Mount's nursing support staff.

Sisters of Mercy

MINISTRY OF PRAYER CARDS

LOVE AND MERCY



ELAINE MARCHAND, RSM

401-453-4433

EMRSM@AOL.COM



We are pleased to announce the arrival of beautiful new cards that may be used to send messages of comfort indicating that loved ones or special intentions have been included in the Ministry of Prayer of the Sisters of Mercy.

There are four different cards, all developed from original artwork and text by Sister Elaine Marchand, RSM. Each card carries a different message – sympathy, the gift of life, peace, or trust in God.



One of the cards is sent to a recipient indicating that the Sisters of Mercy have been asked, through their Ministry of Prayer, to include a given intention in their daily

prayers and at a monthly Liturgy of the Eucharist for one full year. The request is made by the sender to the Sisters of Mercy through an enrollment form included in the card that is mailed in advance to Mount St. Rita Health Centre.



The cards are on display and available in the reception area of Mount St. Rita. An intention/donation return card is included for the use of the donor.

Coming Soon!

INFORMATION ON THE

40th Annual Mount St. Rita Dinner - Fall 2009

THERE WILL BE SOME CHANGES WE THINK YOU WILL ENJOY.