

THE QUARRY HILL Quarterly

FALL 2014/WINTER 2015

A Hard Act to Follow

FROM MARY SARGENT, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

It is hard to believe that it has been six months since our founding executive director Bob McKeown left us to begin life as a Florida retiree. We got to see him several times this past summer, when he came to finish up a project or two and assist with matters related to the transition. Now, though, the training wheels are off, and we're officially on our own, striving each day to meet the high standards he set for our community.

With Bob's retirement came changes for several members of our staff. Initially, I, who had been serving as administrator of the assisted living and nursing care components of our community, assumed the role of interim executive director. Then, in mid-May, I was named as Bob's permanent replacement and assumed responsibility for Quarry Hill as a whole. Meanwhile, other staff members have taken on additional duties to ensure continued quality of care for all residents.

We are grateful, in particular, to Nancy Marcille, RN, assistant administrator, and Denise Pease, sales and marketing director, for their willingness to assume expanded duties. We are fortunate to have these and so many other skilled and

dedicated professionals on our team.

As I look to the future, I am filled with gratitude: for the welcome I've received as I attempt to step into Bob's shoes, but even more for the privilege of working alongside the best and most caring professionals in elder care today.

We are honored to continue to offer the tradition of care on which seniors and their families have come to rely. But as Bob taught us, a great community never rests on its laurels. So stay tuned. We have some exciting irons in the fire.



Mary Sargent

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If you're worried about living safely in your home as you grow older, or if you're concerned about the well-being of an elderly relative, you're in good company. Census figures show the number of Americans age 85 and older—those most likely to seek care—has more than doubled since 1980. But Quarry Hill health services coordinator Nina Cunningham, RN, says that for those considering a move to an assisted living community, it's best to stop worrying and start planning.

"Ideally, you should begin anticipating your or your loved one's needs, and developing a plan to meet those needs, months or even years in advance," says Cunningham. A longer timeline, she explains, gives you more leeway to...

Research your options

Assisted living communities come in all shapes and sizes. Too many people wait until a crisis arises and wind up having to settle on a community under duress. Instead, try to envision what kinds of support might be needed down the road, so you'll have time to collect information from, and visit, a variety of settings.

Initiate a family discussion

When's the best time to start talking with an aging relative about his or her changing needs? Sooner rather than later, Cunningham and others advise. Many people shrink from discussing the implications of advancing age. So ease into it. Be gentle, but honest and direct about your concerns (as in, "Mom, you've fallen three times in the last month, and we're worried"). You may want to ask a family physician or other trusted advisor to help break the ice. Whatever your approach, make sure all parties have ample opportunity to air their feelings and concerns.

Take stock of resources

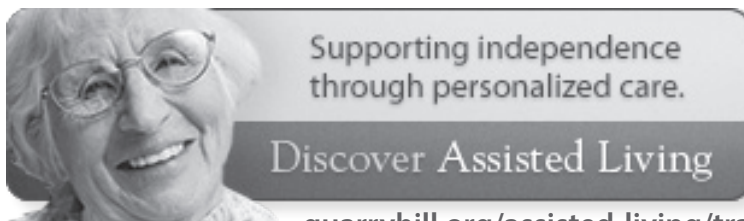
Elder care is expensive, to be sure. The more time you have to evaluate your family's resources and investigate possible alternative sources of payment such as Medicaid (known as MaineCare in Maine) and long-term care insurance, the better prepared you'll be.

Get on the list

Cunningham encourages prospective assisted living residents to get on a community's waiting list as soon as possible. At Quarry Hill, joining the waiting list costs nothing and carries no obligation. Yet it pays twice: first, by upping the odds of "getting in" when you're ready; and second, by guaranteeing you the widest range of apartments from which to choose. Both are especially important if you expect to rely on Medicaid to foot the bill, as competition for these subsidized beds can mean a longer wait.

Dip a toe in the water

Moving from one's home to an assisted-living community can be overwhelming. But with time on your side, you can make it easier to swallow. Ask the care coordinator at the community you've chosen to arrange a brief trial stay—just a weekend, perhaps. See if you can drop by from time to time for a meal or an activity. Check with the marketing department about joining the mailing list to receive newsletters and announcements. Wading gradually into community living goes a long way toward easing anxiety.



quarryhill.org/assisted-living/traditional-care

Dial "921"

Pen Bay Healthcare (PBH), of which Quarry Hill is a member, has established a single phone exchange that applies to all PBH member organizations. Until recently, six different exchanges (230, 390, 593, 594, 596, and 701) had been in use across the PBH system; effective now, the new exchange for all member organizations is 921.

Please note that only our three-digit exchange has changed. The last four digits remain the same.

Our 230 number will no longer be in service as of May 1, 2015.



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Cunningham Named Health Services Coordinator

Former assisted living nurse manager Nina Cunningham, RN, has taken on the pivotal role of health services coordinator (HSC) at Quarry Hill.

From her new office on the independent living side of the Anderson Inn, Nina works to promote residents' overall well-being, advising them on matters pertaining to health and wellness and assisting them in accessing the resources and expertise available at Quarry Hill as well as through Pen Bay Healthcare and MaineHealth.

Executive director Mary Sargent said Nina brings extraordinary dedication and depth of experience to the HSC table. Throughout her career at Quarry Hill, Sargent commented, the nurse leader has proven herself a "fierce advocate" for the residents and families she serves.

"Nina subscribes wholeheartedly to Quarry Hill's philosophy of preserving seniors' dignity and independence," said Sargent. "She knows the entire Pen Bay Healthcare family inside out, so she's uniquely qualified to help people access the care and supportive services they need. And she does it all with her natural warmth and genuine belief in each individual's self-worth."

Clearly at home in an office decorated with framed photos of the elderly and abused dogs she

makes a hobby of adopting, Nina said she's never been happier.

"I am so fortunate to have been offered this opportunity," she remarked. "I enjoy my interactions with residents and their families and get the greatest satisfaction from helping them get the care they need and deserve."

Cunningham began her nursing career 34 years ago as a certified nursing assistant (CNA) at the former Camden Health Care Center (CHCC). She became an RN, and in 2002, with the opening of Quarry Hill, was named manager of the community's highly regarded dementia-care center. She took on the broader position of assisted living manager in July 2010.



from the Recipe Box

Autumn Pasta

Submitted by the Marketing Office

Ingredients:

3-4 cloves garlic, minced

1/4 C slivered onions

3-4 C chopped kale

1 crisp apple, peeled, cored, and cut into bite-sized chunks

3/4 T olive oil

1/3 C vegetable broth

Salt, to taste

2 t dried rosemary (or more of fresh)

8 oz. spaghetti

Directions:

Combine all ingredients except spaghetti in a skillet, bring to simmer and cook for about 8 minutes. Meanwhile, cook spaghetti per package directions. Drain. Toss with cooked kale-apple mixture. Top each serving with grated Parmesan cheese, if desired. Serves 2-3 as a main course.



Shelter Pets Help Elders Reclaim Their Past

"I had a white cat once. Called him Snowball."

In any other group gathered to watch a kitten pounce on a toy mouse, the comment, offered by a gray-haired woman in flannel skirt and buttoned cardigan, might have seemed unremarkable. But these folks—10 women and one gentleman—are residents of Quarry Hill's Courtyard, an assisted living community dedicated to caring for those with Alzheimer's and other forms of memory loss. Caregivers here, in partnership with the Pat-a-Pet program run by P.A.W.S. Animal Adoption Center in Rockport, are discovering the extraordinary power of companion animals to engage residents and help them reconnect with long-forgotten memories.

Marty Martens, honorary member of P.A.W.S.'s Board of Trustees and a shareholder in Quarry Hill's cottage community, launched the Pat-a-Pet initiative some 28 years ago.

"My daughter-in-law heard about a similar program run by Angel Memorial Animal Hospital in Massachusetts, and suggested that I start one here," she says. Marty began taking her West Highland terrier to visit her mother and other patients at the Camden Health Care Center (CHCC), a nursing home that once stood on land now occupied by Quarry Hill. Before long, additional volunteers, escorting selected dogs and cats from the shelter, joined the cause.

For shelter animals, the benefits of Pat-a-Pet are compelling, Marty explains. "It helps pets adjust to different people and different environments. It also helps us learn more about the animals so that ultimately we can find the best possible homes for them."

But the gains are perhaps even more striking for the program's human participants: typically residents of nursing homes and other senior centers who might otherwise have no day-to-day contact with animals.

"Often the elderly have had to give up a beloved cat or dog, and they really miss that companionship," comments Marty. "One lady at CHCC was so excited

about our once-a-week visits, we'd find her waiting for us at the door each time we arrived."

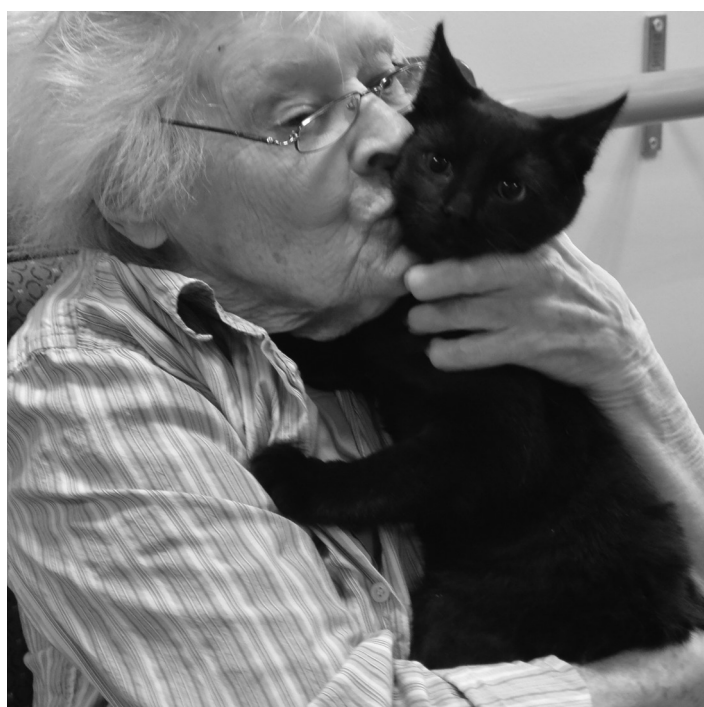
Andrea Annis, the Quarry Hill staffer who arranged the Courtyard program, concurs, saying simply, "Animals are so popular here."

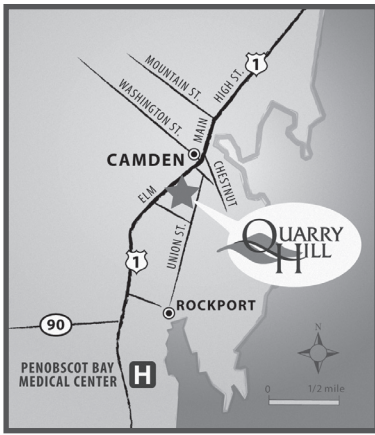
To continue its good work at Quarry Hill and elsewhere, Pat-a-Pet needs more volunteers who understand the importance of the people-pet bond. Recruits must have their own cars, be able to transport pets from P.A.W.S. to participating sites, and facilitate the visits. The time commitment can be as little as an hour or two per month.

And the rewards? Judging from recent Pat-a-Pet gatherings at the Courtyard, they include the satisfaction of seeing people who otherwise appear withdrawn blossom in ways that are significant—if at times subtle.

Take the gentleman seated beside the woman in the flannel skirt. Silent through most of the kitten's visit, he eventually lets his eyes rest on the furry bundle cavorting in the center of the room.

"Aren't you cunnin'," he whispers.





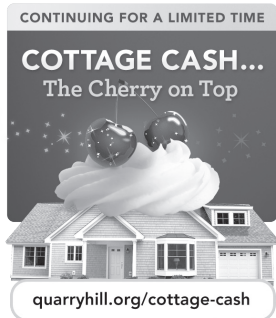
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SUPPORT GROUPS

Parkinson's Disease

For people with Parkinson's disease, their families, friends, and caregivers. The **first Tuesday** of each month from **12 noon to 1:45 pm** at the Anderson Inn, Quarry Hill. Attendees should bring a bag lunch; drinks and desserts provided.

For details, call Carol Witham at **594-1637**.

Alzheimer's Disease

Provides information and support to area residents who have loved ones coping with Alzheimer's disease or related dementias. Meets twice monthly:

- The **first Tuesday** of each month from **6 to 7 pm** at the Anderson Inn, Quarry Hill, Camden;
- The **third Tuesday** of each month from **3 to 4 pm** at Knox Center for Long Term Care, Rockland.

For details, call **Cheri Alexander, LSW**, at **921-6237**.

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