

# THE GREEN HOUSE® Project

## Quarterly



### *Celebration, Innovation and Sharing: The First Annual Green House® Meeting*

The First Annual Green House® Meeting and Celebration took place in St. Louis on August 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup>. Over 90 attendees from Green House® projects spent time sharing their successes and challenges in a highly engaging two days. Dr. Bill Thomas opened the event with his vision of how The Green House homes are creating places for

lives worth living. Karen Schoeneman from the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) communicated her belief that The Green House model embodies person-directed care and congratulated the pioneers who are pursuing this transformational model. A wide range of sessions provided opportunities for learning and sharing, including topics such as coaching leadership, tapping our creativity, and creating opportunities for activities that support the natural rhythms and interests of elders.

Highlights included the premiere of “Where Love Matters”, the new Green House® film, featuring the elders and staff from The Green House homes at Tabitha Health Care Services, St. John’s Lutheran Ministries, The Village of Redford, and Resthaven Care Community.

Shahbazim Cindy Joy from Resthaven, Linda Johnson of The Village of Redford and Angie Peterson of Tabitha explored the challenges and joys of being in this new and revolutionary role. They shared stories of everyday successes and inspiration that are creating the history and legacy of the Shahbaz.

In the closing plenary, Bob McKinnon, of the communication firm Yellow Brick Road, challenged Green House® adopters to “Tell Your Story”. This first meeting of Green House® projects was a powerful celebration of a story that is successfully unfolding and demonstrating daily in communities across the nation that it can be different! □

### **THE GREEN HOUSE® Project Shares Success Stories at Eden Alternative Conference**

In early June, Green House® Project team members Anna Ortigara and Ruta Kadonoff, as well as Green House® Guide Lisa Maxwell and Shahbaz Angela Evans from The Village of Redford in Redford, MI, joined over 300 fellow change agents in long-term care at the 4<sup>th</sup> International Eden Conference, *Many Stories ... One Journey* in Columbus, OH.

Presenting at a session titled, “The Green House: Non-fiction tales of culture transformation,” Anna and Ruta provided participants with an overview of the core elements of The Green House model, while Lisa and Angela shared their personal journeys and experiences while creating two Green House® homes that have now been operating for over a year and a half. Session attendees were particularly pleased to have the opportunity to engage in dialogue with Angela, who provided her perspective on the positive impact of The Green House model of care on not only the elders, but also on her and her colleagues. Angie shared that their household has truly come to feel like a second family to all who live and work there and told magical stories of elders who have discovered their voices in the knowing relationships of their home. □

For more information, visit: [www.thegreenhouseproject.org](http://www.thegreenhouseproject.org) or call Marilyn Ellis at (703) 647-2313  
The Green House® Project is a partnership between:

## Green House® Project Testifies at Senate Special Committee on Aging Hearing



On Wednesday, July 23, Senator Robert P. Casey, Jr., (D-PA) chaired a U.S. Senate Special Committee on Aging hearing on reforms necessary for creating a system of health care and long-term care for elders that is person-centered. The hearing examined person-centered care within two settings - residential long term care, and outpatient care. Currently, the \$122 billion nursing home industry includes 16,000 nursing homes, and significant concerns persist about maltreatment and neglect of our elders in about 20% of these homes. In addition, many question whether the quality of life for residents receives adequate attention in facilities that resemble hospitals more than they do homes. A recent AARP survey found that only 1% of Americans over 50 with a disability wanted to move to a nursing home.

Consensus is growing that Medicare spending is not correlated with quality of care outcomes. To ensure person-centered outpatient care, services and reimbursements must be geared toward care that is coordinated, comprehensive across the health care spectrum, and delivered within a family and community context.

The hearing examined two models that promote person-centered care, highlighting The Green House model as one with great potential to address these challenges. Testimony was delivered by Robert Jenkins, Director of The Green House® Project at NCB Capital Impact; William Thomas, MD, founder of The Green House Model; Zoe Holland, daughter of a former Green House® resident at Tabitha Health Care Ser-

vices, Lincoln, NE; and Edna Hess, Shahbaz, Lebanon Valley Brethren Home, Palmyra, PA.

The testimony included policy recommendations and first-hand accounts from a family member and direct care worker regarding the dramatically positive change thanks to person-centered care within Green House® homes. These outcomes benefit elders and their family members, medical professionals and direct care workers who provide services, as well as society in general.

Senator Casey plans to introduce the Promoting Alternatives to Nursing Homes Act to help promote the spread of person-centered long-term care options. □



## Grand Rapids Elders are Truly Blessed

On May 7, 2008, Porter Hills Retirement Communities & Services blessed the ground of their very first Green House® homes. Porter Hills currently serves more than 1,000 senior citizens at all income levels through its residential settings and in-home services in the greater Grand Rapids area, and looks forward to adding two, 10-person homes in the spring of next year. Many members of the Porter Hills family attended the dedication ceremony, including residents, staff, and board members.

Located on their Cook Valley Estates campus in Michigan, Porter Hills' two homes will be the first nationally to apply for LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) certification, as they strongly believe that environmental, economic, health, and community benefits will further enhance the lives of those working and living within their homes. □

## *Providence Breaks Ground on New Seward Green House® Project!*

*Green House® model will be the first of its kind in Alaska*

Seward, AK - On Monday, May 19, representatives from the City of Seward and Providence Health & Services Alaska joined to break ground and bless a new Seward skilled nursing Green House® project. The new facility, scheduled to open in 2009 will replace the aging Wesley Care Center.

The Green House® project will feature four individual homes with ten persons per home, with a total capacity of 40 elders. "The Green House model provides better outcomes for elders through structuring living in a home as opposed to institutional setting. The Seward project will be the first Green House® project in Alaska. We are proud to bring the first Green House® project to Alaska, and we look forward to improving the lives of residents through this new facility," said Providence Seward Medical and Care Center Administrator Kathleen Kloster. □



## *THE GREEN HOUSE® Project Goes to CMS*

On June 27, Robert Jenkins of The Green House® Project, Angie Evans, Shahbaz, Presbyterian Villages of Michigan, Bill Groll, Shahbaz, St. John's Lutheran Ministries, and Joyce Ebmeier, Vice President for Strategic Planning (and former Guide at Tabitha) went to tell the story of The Green House journey to many leaders and staff at the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS). Working with program and leadership staff, The Green House Project has developed a strong relationship based on mutual respect and providing creative solutions to address CMS' long-standing goal to improve the quality of life in nursing homes.

Two issues key to The Green House model's success are under CMS' jurisdiction - Medicaid reimbursement and federal nursing home rules. Both significantly impact our ultimate goals of making Green House® homes an accessible care option embedded in real neighborhoods in every community in the United States. With a strong foundation laid over the last two-years, we were encouraged to request a meeting with the highest levels of CMS' leadership to build support for collaboration to identify and remove barriers.

Having Shahbazim as well as leadership staff speak to the "small miracles" that happen every day in The Green House homes is a powerful way to capture CMS' interest and support. This support translated into a vibrant discussion, culminating in CMS' asking us how we could work together. Our request was to form a working group to explore reimbursement policy and regulatory obstacles to community-integrated Green House® homes. □

### *In The News*

The Green House Project received major media coverage this summer in *The Baltimore Sun* and a front page story on *The Wall Street Journal*. To view these articles and much more, visit our website: [www.thegreenhouseproject.org](http://www.thegreenhouseproject.org) (Click on *In the News*)

## *Telling Your Story, Getting It Heard* An Interview with Tanika White, Writer for *The Baltimore Sun*

Tanika White, reporter for *The Baltimore Sun*, recently wrote an excellent article on THE GREEN HOUSE® homes at Lebanon Valley Brethren Home in Palmyra, PA, and the Stadium Place project being developed by Govans Ecumenical Development Corporation (GEDCO) in Baltimore. Her story captured well the principles and spirit of The Green House model. Ms. White agreed to answer questions and share strategies to help Green House® homes tell their story to local papers and news outlets.

### What makes you want to write a story?

*I look for things that are new, different, fascinating, extraordinary, not something that has been reported by other news outlets or is well-known already. Because I write for The Baltimore Sun, I look for things that are new or first in Maryland, or particularly impact or affect the people of Baltimore. Local news outlets want stories that are relevant to their readership and communities.*

### What does not make a good story?

*The story works better if it relates to the bigger picture. If your story is an example of bigger trends that makes it more interesting. The Green House story is interesting for several reasons. It is reinventing nursing homes, something that most people are familiar with. If you were building a brand new traditional nursing home, even if you were putting great resources into building it and it was going to be a great traditional nursing home, there would be no real story there. The Green House model is interesting because it is a new way of caring for elders. Also, the aging demographic of the Baby Boomers makes retirement issues a priority. And if it is the first one in your community, it has that added strength. Finally, the story will have different thresholds depending on the audience of the publication or media outlet. A large metropolitan paper has a different audience than a local weekly paper. A trade publication may be interested in the same trend, but would write a story from a different perspective, again addressing their audience.*

### How can a provider best get the attention of local media?

*Develop a relationship with local reporters. Press releases have their place but reporters receive them all day long. If they are linked to a 1:1 relationship it will command more attention. You want to become an industry resource that is knowledgeable and credible: an expert in the field the reporter will think of when they need information. Consider meeting with them and giving them six to eight ideas for stories related to trends, movements in the industry, specific stories that you think are important. The stories can't all be about your organization. If something is going to happen in the next few months, ask if you can send an update when the time gets near. Send background information and the key points regarding a recent report or a local perspective related to a national news story. All of this information makes it easier for the reporter to pitch a story to their editor. Be patient, the reporter can not write every story that comes across their e-mail, but as you build trust and serve as a resource they will come to you as a valued source. □*



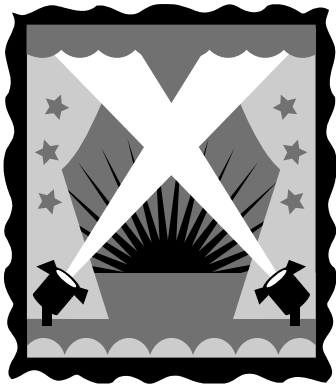
### *Thoughts from Dr. Bill*

Human warmth is a peculiar thing that is felt much more easily than it can be known. Some organizations, like some people, radiate warmth. They are rich in optimism and trust, and they exude the spirit of generosity. Cold organizations, on the other hand, parade a distressingly familiar pattern of pessimism, cynicism, and stinginess. The ability to create and maintain human warmth is an essential attribute for any organization that aspires to create a sanctuary for elderhood.

Warm organizations are adept at fostering well-being; cold organizations are not. Just as importantly, warm organizations are flexible and adapt readily to new and changing circumstances. Most of us can report bitter personal experiences with the rigid inflexibility that defines cold organizations.

An ancient and highly effective method of increasing the warmth of an organization involves “doing good deeds without the expectation of return.” This spirit of generosity is contagious! Genuine altruism practiced as an everyday habit rarely fails to touch the human heart. The practice of altruism is the surest method of generating human warmth. Some organizations, though, have shown themselves to be much better at this than their peers. One of the best things about Green House® homes is that they are designed and organized, from foundation to rooftop, to promote the active practice of mutual compassion. Green House® homes are, more than anything else, about cherishing and being cherished. □

*“Thoughts from Dr. Bill” is the inaugural column from Dr. William Thomas, founder of The Green House model, and will appear periodically.*



## Spotlight On...Sarah Hoffman, Green House® Shahbaz

“Quirky Princess” is no stranger to THE GREEN HOUSE® Forum family. Née Sarah Hoffman, this sparkling Shahbaz consistently shares experiences with peers and provides support for

adopters using our online, web-based Green House® discussion tool. Log in just once to [www.ncbcapitalimpact.org/thegreenhouseforum](http://www.ncbcapitalimpact.org/thegreenhouseforum) and you will be greeted with comments from [smiies\\_78@yahoo.com](mailto:smiies_78@yahoo.com) and others who are networking across the smiles - err, miles. New to The Green House® family? No worries! Keep reading to learn more about Sarah’s Shahbaz role at Lebanon Valley Brethren Home (LVBH) in Palmyra, PA.

### What is your favorite part about working in your Green House® home?

By far, my favorite part is having the freedom to empower and allow the Elders to dictate the course and rhythm of their own day. It has been absolutely thrilling to see our Elders’ true personalities come out in ways we never could have experienced in our other nursing home.

**Wow! It’s hard to believe you’ve been working in this role since LVBH opened its first two homes last November! Now that you’ve had the opportunity to work both day and evening shifts, what’s your favorite time of day to be in the home?**

At this point, my favorite time of day is right after supper. It is so endearing to see the Elders around the table interacting after the meal is done. Just watching them socialize...or seeing one of our higher-functioning Elders encouraging and helping a lower-functioning Elder finish their meal, or watching how they work together to clear the table and clean the placemats....it just feels like home. I also enjoy this time of day because it’s when quite a few family members come in to visit, and everyone just seems so comfortable and at home. Family...never seems to mind if another Elder wants to sit and visit with them as well. It means the world to me seeing so many “hallmark” moments being created every day.

**Gosh - your house does sound too good to be true! Does that mean the Dragon never comes to rear his ugly head?!**

Ha, actually, I inadvertently tried creating a dragon by

labeling shelves with different supplies the Elders could use, as I thought it would help make things a little more organized and “user-friendly.” I was “busted” when asked the infamous question, “Would you do that in your own house?” Some days my quirk for organization can be both a blessing and a curse!

### So you bring with you a very organized background?

Yes, before working in The Green House homes I worked in the Therapeutic Recreation department (Activities) in our dementia unit and was also a PRN (as needed) nursing assistant.

### Has anything else about you, other than your responsibilities, changed since working in the homes?

I have learned to slow down and let the Elders set the pace, whether it’s taking that extra 10 minutes to help them decide what they want to wear that day or taking time to encourage convivium at meals - even if Elders are still nibbling an hour after serving the meal. I’ve realized it’s OK to let a few dishes sit in the sink to take time to play a game of Uno with an Elder. They can be washed just as easily once all the Elders are in bed. It’s nice to be able to slow down and smell the roses...this generation is absolutely precious in reminding me of that every day.

**We’re always glad to slow down every day and check out your latest blogs on the forum!**

I am so very grateful for the online forum. I find it invaluable having the ability to connect and brainstorm with Shahbazim and support staff from Green House® communities across the nation. It definitely helps knowing you’re not the only one out there in the midst of this revolutionary journey.

**Yes! Thanks again for being part of our journey, as we can’t wait to celebrate more success stories from Lebanon Valley!**

If you are affiliated with a Green House® project and are not currently experiencing the benefits of blogging, please send your name, e-mail address, position, and organization’s name to Marilyn Ellis at [mellis@ncbcapitalimpact.org](mailto:mellis@ncbcapitalimpact.org) so you can introduce yourself to Sarah and begin taking advantage of this networking opportunity! □





## THE GREEN HOUSE® Project Team Welcomes Bill Keane!

WILLIAM KEANE, MS, MBA, LNHA, is the newest member of The Green House® Project Team. In his role as Project Guide, Bill provides project management support and technical assistance to Green House® adopters.

Prior to his move to Virginia, Bill was based in Chicago, where he was a consultant in aging and dementia; Bill served as the Chief Operating Officer for Harbor Senior Concepts of Illinois, and was Director of Special Programs for Mather LifeWays Institute on Aging. Here, he developed programs and staff education projects in dementia care, customer service excellence and leadership within the Mather residential, community and research programs.

Bill received a B.A. from Villanova University, an M.S. from Syracuse University and an MBA in Health Administration from Temple University. He worked for more than twenty years in secondary education, mental health and hospital administration. From 1994 to 2000, he was Vice President for The Whitman Group / ZA Consulting, where he coordinated all gerontological strategic planning, senior housing, and marketing services. Bill was the caregiver for his mother and aunt, who lived many years with Alzheimer's disease. He has provided public testimony, has published numerous articles and has been recognized as a significant leader in the movement for dementia-capable care and a new culture of aging in America. □

### Calendar of Events

#### The Green House® Project Orientation Workshops New 2009 Workshop Dates!

Register on-line! [www.thegreenhouseproject.org](http://www.thegreenhouseproject.org)  
(Click on *Information and Workshops*)

<u>2008 Workshops</u>	<u>Registration Deadline</u>	<u>Location</u>
November 5-6	October 24	Lincoln, NE
December 10-11	November 26	Billings, MT
December 16-17	December 2	Palmyra, PA
<u>2009 Workshops</u>	<u>Registration Deadline</u>	<u>Location</u>
January 13-14	January 2	Lincoln, NE
February 3-4	January 23	Palmyra, PA
February 11-12	January 30	Billings, MT
March 10-11	February 27	Redford, MI
April 8-9	March 27	Lincoln, NE
May 6-7	April 24	Billings, MT
May 19-20	May 8	Palmyra, PA
June 16-17	June 5	Redford, MI

For more information, contact Joanne Won at (703)-647-2311 or [jwon@ncbcapitalimpact.org](mailto:jwon@ncbcapitalimpact.org).