



# NEWBRIDGE

Counseling

Youth

Seniors

Housing

Addictions

## Critical Financial Times Loom Over Vital Programs

A NewBridge Services nurse practitioner makes home visits to senior shut-ins in Morris and Passaic counties, assessing medical problems before they become more serious.

NewBridge staffers go into area schools to teach children life skills of resiliency, communications and self-esteem and steer them clear of developing detrimental habits. They help high school dropouts earn diplomas and launch careers, and delve into the emotional well being of toddlers through play therapy programs that work.

NewBridge also helps hard-working families secure affordable housing of their own through its many initiatives.

Since its founding 46 years ago, NewBridge has reached far beyond mental health services. Ever-changing, NewBridge continuously expands its offerings to reach more of the community.

“People may not realize that the innovative programs that NewBridge offers to children, adults and senior citizens are only possible with donations from local corporations and individuals. They value what we do and see the difference we are able to make in the lives of those we help,” NewBridge Executive Director Robert L. Parker said.

NewBridge’s specialized programs are creative, practical and cost-effective but severely underfunded. The agency stretches its dollars to keep them going. As Parker puts it, “a little bit goes a long way, but you reach a point where you hit the wall.”

Without additional support from individuals and corporations, the programs and services that more than 15,000 local residents count on each year will have limited availability. We hope you will consider giving to NewBridge.

Dear Friends,



This is one of the hardest letters I’ve ever had to write in my career. Please stay with me and I encourage your feedback.

NewBridge, like so many others, have stretched our dollars to the maximum. Our community supported and focused programs - for children, youth and the elderly - have lost revenue this year.

Contrary to popular belief, these targeted programs do not receive state funding. They were developed in direct response to community needs and funded by grants, corporations, families, and individuals. Now, I fear, as we reach the tipping point, our services may have to be reduced and I must ask more fervently for your help.

It’s the generosity of individuals, families, corporations and foundations that has propelled NewBridge’s responsiveness to the community’s specialized needs for 46 years. We’ve helped turned many lives around, are very much part of the community and take pride in ‘answering the call’ quickly and effectively, everyday. We have not failed—not yet.

I hope as you explore this expanded newsletter you will be motivated to respond positively to my request for support. We have even introduced a new monthly contribution option, so your support could be spread over 12 months! It’s all inside.

Reaching beyond its limits to help is what makes NewBridge special to the people who support us and count on us everyday. Please help us continue to help to those who need it most.

Robert L. Parker, Executive Director  
parker@newbridge.org



### Verizon Supports NewBridge 70001 Jobs Plus Program

Rick Ricca, director of community affairs, Verizon, (right) presents a \$6,000 check to NewBridge in support of its 70001 Jobs Plus program. 70001 Jobs Plus is a youth employment and education program for young adults ages 16 to 21 who have dropped out of school. The free program includes GED preparation and testing, pre-employment training, life skills mentoring, educational services, counseling and job search assistance.

Pictured: Nina McCormack, director of development & marketing, NewBridge, Robert L. Parker, executive director, NewBridge and Rick Ricca, director of community affairs, Verizon.

## Serious Success from Play Therapy

Casual observers of play therapy may see it as, well, play. But clinicians such as NewBridge's Emil Vernerec, MA, LAC, know first-hand its power in helping children break through adversity.

Take his experience with an 8-year-old boy burdened with emotional challenges far beyond his years.

Each week when they meet, Vernerec and the boy play a military game the boy dreamed up using stray

pieces of Legos®, Army figures and yellow plastic wheels.

The game has become more complicated as they add new rules each week, and that provides a platform for teaching him social skills, Vernerec says.

The boy has learned about fair play, following rules and keeping his cool by taking deep breaths.

He understands not to tease his playmates and that losing a game doesn't make him a loser. And, maybe



most importantly, he has learned to focus on having fun.

Play therapy helps children work through their issues and connect with others. As Kathleen Kolaritsch, NewBridge Services' child and family supervisor explains, it is "a safe place to help kids navigate what's happening in the real world."

### Counseling



### Novartis Dedicates a Day of Service to NewBridge

Twenty volunteers from **Novartis Pharmaceuticals Corporation** rolled up their sleeves and armed themselves with paint brushes and rollers as they transformed an ordinary play therapy room into an inviting, child friendly haven at NewBridge.

The volunteer effort was part of Novartis' 13th annual Community Partnership Day of service and volunteerism. It came at the perfect time as demand for NewBridge's play therapy and counseling services are growing, and additional space is needed.

Novartis' 13th annual Community Partnership Day is a global initiative that reaffirms the company's commitment to social responsibility and offers opportunities for associates to give something back to the communities where they live and work.

Rob Guirlando from the **United Way of Morris County** was also on hand to show the agency's continued support for NewBridge with which they have a longstanding partnership.

## Family Foundations Help NewBridge Help Neighbors

When Bonnie and Steve Holmes learned that a crucial NewBridge program might be at risk, their family foundation gave \$10,000 to ensure seniors in Morris and Passaic counties would continue receiving the help they need to stay in their homes.

The **Holmes Family Foundation** donated to NewBridge because its services "have such an impact on people's lives," Bonnie Holmes said. The money will help folks like 85-year-old Hilda Kouyoumjian remain independent (see related story on page 5).

"Organizations we feel strongly about, we want to support in a big way," said Holmes, who became a NewBridge board member in May 2008.

Family foundations provide a great way for residents to help neighbors in

need by funding locally provided services that have a track record of turning lives around, said Robert L.

Parker, executive director, NewBridge. "Family gifts are personal, compassionate and responsible."

The **F.M. Kirby Foundation**, which donates millions of dollars each year to a range of charities, annually recognizes NewBridge's commitment to helping people overcome hardships and improve their lives. The family foundation recently gave NewBridge a \$12,500 grant to help the agency carry out its mission.

Families don't need to have a foundation to support NewBridge. The family of a 70001 Jobs Plus graduate gives generously to NewBridge regularly because the program helped their daughter earn her New Jersey high

school equivalency diploma and set her on the path to college.

If your family has a foundation or is interested in making a family gift, please contact Nina McCormack, director of development and marketing, at (973) 839-2521, ext. 2246.



Bonnie and Steve Holmes of the Holmes Family Foundation shown with Robert L. Parker (center), executive director, NewBridge.

# Prescription Drugs: A National Issue with Local Impact

The nation's prescription drug abuse problem is being felt in North Jersey, where NewBridge Services is seeing more clients - from young adults to seniors - seeking treatment.

Joanne Goer, MA, LPC, LCADC, CODS, director of integrated clinical and addiction services at NewBridge,



hopes a growing awareness of medications' dangers among doctors, patients and their families will help stem the epi-

demic. Abuse of prescription painkillers ranks second among prevalent illegal drug problems in the U.S., exceeded only by marijuana use, according to the 2007 National Survey on Drug Use and Health.

"The question is, is this new awareness going to change behavior?" Goer said. She can point to examples in

which it has.

A recovering heroin addict who had to undergo surgery turned to Goer for guidance because she realized the

## Addictions

painkillers she would be taking would challenge her heroin recovery. Goer explained to her that when she stopped taking opium-based painkillers her urges to use heroin, which had lessened considerably over time, would likely return.

"She knew this was not going to be easy, but that she could do it," Goer said.

Goer urged her to get someone she trusted to monitor how much medicine she took and to inform her doctor about her addiction. As a result, the woman and her doctor signed an agreement that spelled out how long she would take painkillers.

Patients aren't always that strong and loved ones need to intervene. "Family members sometimes feel help-

less when they're not helpless," Goer said.

Goer also worked with the mother of a man who was on four addictive medications prescribed by a local doctor.

The mother lost sleep worrying her son would overdose and die. Finally, she put her foot down, confronting the doctor and vowing to stop paying her son's doctor's bills. The woman's son eventually did go into a long-term treatment center and NewBridge will be here when he returns to the community.

"Consequences have a way of knocking reality into the picture," Goer said. "It's pretty hard not to see the costs and impacts of what it's doing to your life."

For more information on how NewBridge can help, call (888) 746-9333 or visit [newbridge.org](http://newbridge.org)

## Lessons to Prevent Addiction Start Young

A rise in medication abuse involving both prescription drugs and over-the-

### Youth

counter medicines has more schools calling on NewBridge to teach children resiliency skills as early as kindergarten.

Mary Vineis, DRCC, coordinator of prevention services at NewBridge, said she is seeing a higher demand for the Beginning Alcohol and Addictions Basic Education Studies (BABES) program which was started in 1979 and used nationwide. NewBridge already teaches BABES in Morris County schools and is expanding to Passaic County this school year.

BABES is a story-based program that uses puppets to gently introduce

the topics of alcohol, medicines and drug prevention to young children. It also teaches children lessons about decision-making, self-image, feelings, peer pressure and reaching out for help.

"It's important for children to have the information long before they get into a situation," Vineis said. The average age a child takes his first drink is 11-1/2, she noted. BABES "opens up a dialogue with kids and parents."

NewBridge also offers a program for 7th and 8th graders in which a health class is divided into groups and each group researches a specific drug - from tobacco and alcohol, to cocaine, club drugs and inhalants. Vineis provides information packets so students

have the facts. The classroom experience, research and the student-lead presentations are powerful tools in the prevention process.

Vineis has found that some students don't think alcohol and tobacco are drugs because they are sold legally. Students often tell her they think kids use drugs out of curiosity. Providing them with information, she said, "takes away the mystique."

For more information on school-based programs, call Vineis at (973) 839-2521, ext. 2228.



# A Simply Stress-free Holiday Season

Just when nature slows for the approaching winter, November unleashes the frenzy of the holidays. Intended to be a period of reflection and celebration, the season can quickly become a source of stress, something to survive rather than savor. For lives that already are so jam-packed, the holiday hoopla adds an extra layer of obligations.

"For most people, it creates anxiety and frustration," said Michelle Borden, LCSW, associate executive director, NewBridge. One of the best ways to make the season less stressful and more fulfilling is to simplify your approach, Borden says. Focus on connecting with your family, your community and your spirituality, and skip

those things that steal time and energy from those goals.

Borden suggests writing down all you expect to accomplish during the holidays, and then paring that list as much as possible. Setting realistic expectations can spare you feelings of inadequacy and prevent holiday burnout.

**Enjoy the simple pleasures.** Be childlike, indulging your senses in the glowing lights, the aroma of baking cookies, the stillness of a frosty morning.

**Decide now that you won't attend every holiday party to which you are invited.** Choose gatherings that have the most meaning to you and graciously decline the others.

**Don't buy into the retailers' mantra of 'shop till you drop.'** Overspending can be a major stressor,

causing financial hangovers in January. First, set a budget. Then ask yourself: do the family members and friends on your gift list really need more stuff? If not, consider alternatives.

**Make gifts or organize a gift exchange.** Have family members (or colleagues or friends) put their names in a hat and then each person draws a name and buys a gift only for that person.

**Or pool the money you would have spent on gifts and give to a charity,** such as NewBridge, that improves the lives of those in your community. NewBridge serves residents of Morris and Passaic counties and relies on financial support from the public to help neighbors most in need.

After all, at its best, the holiday season is about reaching out to others, and making a difference in someone's life.

## NewBridge Makes Giving Simple Monthly reminders or credit card billing available

NewBridge helps stabilize communities, neighborhoods and families. Partner with NewBridge to support its work for one year and see how your money can turn a life around.

### Think of it:

- Giving just **\$25 a month**, your \$300 annual contribution can ensure that another 3rd grade class will learn about bullying and how to stop it.
- Donating **\$84 a month** - an annual pledge of \$1,000 - will provide seniors with a care-giving companion for a year.
- Pledging **\$208 a month** will, over a year, cover the \$2,500 cost of giving a young adult an opportunity to achieve a NJ state-issued diploma and get help with job placement through its NewBridge 70001 Jobs Plus program.

NewBridge makes giving simple... You make it possible.

Donate through the enclosed envelope (a monthly credit card or billing option is available), go online to [www.newbridge.org](http://www.newbridge.org), or call Nina McCormack, director of development and marketing, at (973) 839-2521, ext. 2246, and talk to her about ways to give.

**Your gift will bring balance to the lives of others.**



On September 30th, more than 100 people attended the Enrich Garden Party. They enjoyed garden tours, and various types of artwork and celebrated the hard work of the NewBridge clients who participated in creating the garden.



# For Love of Home, Hilda's Quest to Stay Put

An interview by Margaret McHugh, Staff Writer



*"NewBridge offers me the luxury of being able to live by myself," she says.*

*Hilda turned down her four children's offers to move in with them.*

*"I'm too independent."*

## Seniors

Hilda Kouyoumjian smiles, recalling the times she and her husband would sit in their his-and-hers recliners, only a small table between them, and play a Middle Eastern card game for hours on end.

At 85, Hilda counts those memories among her happiest in the Pequannock, NJ, bi-level she has called home for 44 years. It is there that Hilda, widowed nine years ago, intends to live out her life.

Hilda laughs at how reluctant she had been in 1965 to move from Jackson Heights, Queens, to the suburbs of North Jersey. Six years earlier, the family uprooted itself from across the world, emigrating from Khartoum, Sudan.

But once she saw the area, "I fell in love with it," says Hilda, sitting in her slate blue recliner. Painted scenes of Egypt, where Hilda's Lebanese parents sent her to boarding school, hang on the living room walls around her.

Hilda loses track of her story for a second, but picks it right back up. "Sorry, my mind went for a little trip," she laughs. She is so vivacious, it's hard to believe she needs the oxy-

gen tank that sits at her side.

Once Hilda and Gary chose their lot, "we would come out to see it being built piece by piece," she says. In no time, they were involved in the community. From 1973 until the early 1980s, they owned a local eatery, Kays Towaco Luncheonette, where the regulars called her husband, "Pop."

During the interview, Hilda, the consummate hostess, pauses to ask questions of her guests and offer slices of chocolate fudge cake. "Chocolate. Dark chocolate. That's my middle name," she says, grinning.

When Gary developed Alzheimer's disease, Hilda became his caretaker. She would have it no other way; thoughts of him still give her goose bumps. But it was hard. Gary sometimes wandered from the house.

Once, when a policeman brought him home, "he didn't know who I was, but he knew my face," she says, her voice catching. "He smiled when he saw me."

At the time, she also was caring for her mother in their home. She felt overwhelmed. In 1998, she turned to NewBridge Services to get help for her husband. It was the first of many times she has tapped NewBridge's

Senior Assistance for Independent Living program (SAIL), which links seniors in Morris and Passaic counties with services that can help them remain in their homes.

Over 11 years, NewBridge has put Hilda in touch with an attorney specializing in elder care, connected her with a provider of free home repairs, and arranged for home-delivered food from Meals on Wheels, transportation from Dial-a-Ride and assistance from health aides through a Morris County program.

After she suffered a heart attack, her NewBridge case manager sat in on the rehab center's discharge conference to ensure she got in-home care.

"I was so worried. I didn't know what to do with myself. I didn't want to leave my house," she says. She has been hospitalized three other times; after each, NewBridge made sure she received the services she needed.

These days, an aide comes for three, two-hour sessions each week to help Hilda bathe and dress. And a volunteer from the Morris County Senior Cents Money Management program stops by to help her pay her bills.

"NewBridge offers me the luxury of being able to live by myself," she says. Hilda turned down her four children's offers to move in with them. "I'm too independent."

Gina Osterhoudt, Hilda's NewBridge case manager, keeps regular tabs on her. During our visit, Gina popped out of her seat to pick up Hilda's oxygen tube, which had slipped to the floor.

"I can get it. It happens a hundred times a day," Hilda says, patting Gina's arm. Before leaving, Gina gave Hilda a hug and reminded her to call if she needed anything. But Hilda knew Gina would be checking on her long before then.

# Housing Partnerships Bring Balance to the Community



As an agency of action, NewBridge joined forces with partners to create 25 affordable housing units in North Jersey, and has another 37 in the pipeline. It's more proof that investing in NewBridge yields big dividends. NewBridge's housing programs not only help families, they stabilize neighborhoods and entire communities.

## Housing

NewBridge wants to say thank you to:

- The County of Morris
- Declarations, Inc.
- Harding Township
- Homeless Solutions
- JP Morgan Chase Bank
- Mental Health Association of Passaic County
- Monarch Housing Associates
- Morris Habitat for Humanity
- Mount Olive Township
- NewBridge Fund, Inc.
- New Jersey Community Capital
- New Jersey Department of Community Affairs
- New Jersey Department of Mental Health Services

- New Jersey Housing and Mortgage Finance Agency
- Pequannock Township
- Pequannock Township Senior Citizens Corporation
- PNC Foundation
- The Rose House
- READS - Real Estate Advisory Development Services
- TD Bank
- United Way of Morris County
- U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD)

- Our partners who invest services and/or provide financial support for NewBridge affordable housing projects.
- Those who entrust us to develop and implement their mission.
- Municipalities that believe in the power of alliance to accomplish a single vision.

You have our utmost appreciation:

- Capital One Bank
- City of Clifton
- Corporation for Supportive Housing

**Donate Now!**  
**Now NewBridge is depending on you.**  
**Last year 15,000 people depended on NewBridge –**



**The NewBridge Services 14th Annual Golf Outing netted over \$27,000 for vital community programs and services. Thank you to the many sponsors and supporters. Visit [www.newbridge.org](http://www.newbridge.org) for photos from this year's outing!**

Boiling Springs Savings Bank supported the NewBridge Golf Outing as one of this year's cart sponsors. Pictured from Boiling Springs: J. Christopher Ely, Kenneth Grimbals, vice president of its board of directors, Angelo Vigna and Robert E. Stillwell, president.



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(973) 839-2520

