

# CHARLES HOUSE ASSOCIATION

HELPING PEOPLE AGE THE WAY THEY HAVE LIVED

## NEWSLETTER

AUTUMN 2007

### Families Find Community Support at Charles House

As our population continues to age, more and more of our elders are requiring increasing amounts of care. According to the June 18 issue of Newsweek magazine devoted to Caregiving and Alzheimer's, 87% of the more than 5 million Americans with Alzheimer's are cared for by relatives at home.

Resources to help elders and their caregivers are limited – especially those focused on keeping our aging spouses, parents, grandparents, and friends involved and integrated into the community. Charles House strives to support family caregivers, as well as provide an engaging place in the community for elders to come together in a safe and stimulating environment.

More families are turning to Charles House Association for support as they take on the tasks of caring for loved ones. The benefits of elders being able to live at home and thrive in neighborhoods and communities are enormous. The costs are great, as well. Families face enormous stress adjusting to an aging family member moving into the household. Caregivers must learn new skills for dealing with illness and loss. Plus, the costs associated with in-home care providers or day services like Charles House are not covered by Medicare or health insurance.

The community's support of Charles House is so important for families to have a place where elders are stimulated, interactive, and can improve functioning. Moreover, the wisdom, joy, and experience of our "seasoned citizens" add grounding, history and richness as we weave together the diversity of ages and stages of life that form the tapestry of our community.

"Charles House *IS* our community," according to Dorothy Watson, whose mother, Ruth DeVries, is an active Charles



Participant Ruth DeVries and her daughter Dorothy Watson share one of Ruth's paintings.

H o u s e participant. Ruth moved to North Carolina from Michigan a year ago, and now lives with Dorothy and her husband (plus nine rescue dogs!) in the woods of Chatham County. Ruth is an outgoing and

sociable woman who especially enjoys the friendships she has developed at Charles House. Although she left many friends behind, Ruth says she has met so many interesting and diverse people at Charles House - and they have become real friends, not just acquaintances. A talented artist, Ruth has been painting and enjoys the range of interests and talents people bring to Charles House. "We share our delights," she explains.

Ruth would be lonely without her Charles House connection. Although she is with loving family, their home in the woods is isolated and Ruth benefits from being a part of this vibrant community.

Billie Owensby and her daughter, Anne Hastings, are delighted with Charles House. Billie was living in an assisted living residence in Georgia near another daughter, when Anne

and her family decided they would like to have her mother move in with them in Chapel Hill. Anne, like Dorothy Watson, heard about Charles House from friends. A UNC professor in the Department of Sociology, with



Anne Hastings and her mother Billie Owensby enjoy an afternoon moment together on their porch

three children, Anne knew she would need daytime care for her mother to even make the move possible. Now, after two months of making household adjustments and Billie becoming accustomed to her daily routine at Charles House, Anne is glad to have found such a warm and friendly place for her mother to spend time. She feels that Charles House has provided Billie with the stimulation she was not receiving in assisted living and that she is engaging with her peers. "Without Charles House, it simply would not have been possible for us to have my mother come live with us," Anne states.

Billie enjoys the participants and staff at Charles House, and especially appreciates that she is greeted at the door when she arrives. She also comments that the food is delicious and nutritious!

## FROM THE PRESIDENT:

Dear Friends of Charles House;

It is with mixed emotions that I write what is my final *letter from the President*. After nearly six years of service to the mission of Charles House and the last two years as the President of the Board of Directors it is time for me to rotate off the board roster. Throughout my tenure I was often asked why or what is it that prompted me to volunteer my time to this effort. Personally, I have seen firsthand how dementia slowly debilitated my paternal grandmother and the overwhelming strain that it placed on the family as caregivers due to the lack of an adequate adult day center to care for her. Secondly, I like to say that not-for-profits are just in my blood. Since my mother has served at the helm of two not-for-profit agencies over the last 25 years; I have always been intrigued by the management of charitable organizations and their impact on our communities. And lastly, I volunteer my time for Charles House for the same reason that so many of you do; because all it takes is just a few steps in the door to realize the magic of the *Charles House Method* and the special staff members that create a safe, energized, community that has a dramatic impact on the lives of the participants and caregivers alike.

So, I thank each of you for your continued financial support, volunteerism, and the countless other ways in which you help to further the Charles House mission. A special thanks must go out to Paul Klever and all of the staff, as they make the job as Board President an easy one; to Brad Fox (former President of the Board), who helped reshape Charles House during a difficult time and provided the foundation that we now use to plan the future growth and expansion; and finally to the current Board of Directors who endured my tenure and who always completed what was asked of them and more.

I take comfort and pride in knowing that I leave Charles

House a little better off than it was when I was first introduced to this very worthwhile cause. I am confident that the staff and Board will continue to ensure that Charles House remains laser-focused on its mission, and continues to use the organization's assets wisely, as it plans for the future of Charles House and the rapidly increasing aging population.



CHAD T. LEFTERIS  
Outgoing President,  
Board of Directors

Effective next month, a new slate of Directors will assume Officer roles at Charles House. Please join me in welcoming Robb English, a former Charles House staff member (now Aquatics Director with the Town of Chapel Hill Parks and Recreation Department) as the new President, Nina Hackney (UNC Hospitals nursing director retired) as Vice President, DuVal Byrd (CFO for Carillon Assisted Living) as Treasurer, and Mel Hurston (Sr. Vice President of Operations, UNC Hospitals) as Secretary.

In closing, I would also like to say thank you as Charles House Board says good-bye to another friend and dedicated board member this month; Hunter Wagstaff (UNC Healthcare System's Director of Accounting) is concluding 6 years of service to the board. Hunter's tireless efforts as Treasurer have made a tremendous impact on the accounting, budgeting, and record keeping for the organization.

Thank you for allowing me the pleasure to serve as President, for your continued support, and for your belief in the legacy of Charles & Dorcas Jones. Charles House is a very special place and I am honored to have been associated with such a fine organization.

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### CHARLES HOUSE ASSOCIATION 2008 Board of Directors

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Aquatics Division Supervisor  
Chapel Hill Parks and Recreation

Nina Hackney, Vice President  
Retired Clinical Nursing Director  
UNC Hospitals

Melvin S. Hurston, Secretary  
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## Charles House Association's Vision for the Future: Local Neighborhood Embraces Idea for an Eldercare Home

Throughout the summer, Charles House Association has been in discussion with the Heritage Hills neighborhood exploring the possibility of creating an ElderCare Home in the neighborhood.

Heritage Hills is an established neighborhood of nearly 200 homes—many ranch style and split level homes built in the 1960s and 1970s—located just south of Chapel Hill and Carrboro near the Chatham County line. Several families in Heritage Hills have been associated with Charles House either as volunteers or enrolled participant families. These families have been learning about Charles House Association's vision for the future and initiated broader discussion in the community and with the neighborhood association.

After an initial discussion, the board of the neighborhood association formed an Eldercare Home Exploration Committee which solicited questions and concerns from the neighborhood. A community wide question & answer meeting was held in August. The neighborhood raised questions about how an ElderCare Home would fit into the neighborhood, zoning restrictions, operations and other support services.

The neighbors asked themselves what it means for a neighborhood to be supportive of older residents and families who are caring for aging parents or loved ones. As discussions continued, the neighborhood embraced the positive opportunities that a Charles House ElderCare Home presents. Providing an option in the neighborhood for seniors who need care in a residential setting could prevent some from having to leave the neighborhood. Middle aged families, who may be dealing with

care issues for a parent in another location, could consider having their parent move into the neighborhood. Neighborhood children could visit with seniors at the ElderCare Home and interact with them while walking outdoors, and learn that those in the later years of life are still part of the fabric of neighborhood life.

An ElderCare Home operated in an existing single level home serving five or six permanent residents would be a home with the vibrant, caring atmosphere of Charles House. Residents could participate in the life of the larger neighborhood, attending picnics and other gatherings, while receiving the individual care they need to live as independently as possible.

Many Heritage Hills residents who have been involved with the discussions see the potential of the collaboration with Charles House Association becoming a model for a neighborhood response to the growing need for new approaches for aging support services.

With the enthusiastic welcome from Heritage Hills, Charles House Association is a step closer to the dream of small ElderCare Homes. Just as Charles House was being created from an idea twenty years ago with the community's financial support and collaborations, Charles House Association's commitment to serving seniors and their families continues to depend upon the generosity and support of the community. Please contact us if you are interested in learning more about Charles House Association's concept for ElderCare Homes.

Paul S. Klever, Executive Director



## PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

### Student volunteers and interns add to program while learning

As more university programs address the issues of aging, students are increasingly finding opportunities to learn about the aging process, concerns of an aging population and to learn about careers focused on

aging services.

Several UNC departments arrange internships, site visits and volunteer learning opportunities for students at Charles House. This semester, two psychology classes have students conducting ten week volunteer assignments. These students bring vitality during their hours at Charles House while they learn about the unique program.

This past summer, the UNC Occupational Therapy Department placed an OT intern at Charles House. The department will frequently have students interested in aging request field work assignments at Charles House, as well.

Occasionally, medical students and social work students will make site visits to Charles House as part of their course work on aging issues and surveys of aging ser-

vices.

Charles House and the Aging Transitions Office (Orange County Department on Aging) at the Seymour Senior Center will be collaborating on providing a broad experience for one of the new Johnson Interns. The Johnson Interns Program in Chapel Hill, which provides recent college graduates with a year of service and leadership experience, has placed eight interns this fall at various agencies.

Charles House has benefited from many dedicated volunteers throughout its history. These collaborations build upon the connections Charles House has established with the community and the university. Participants enjoy the life and caring that these young people bring to their days at Charles House.



Volunteer Coordinator Maureen Adams introduces UNC psychology student Patrick to participants during his orientation to Charles House.

# PILLARS OF SUPPORT

*In Acknowledgement and Appreciation of Our Donors*

Received April through September 2007



Phyllis S. Adams  
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**Ellen Ironside's 81st Birthday**  
The Ironside Family

**Ivy Nogle's Birthday**  
Catherine S. Beemer

### **Charles House Association Mission:**

*Enriching the lives of seniors  
Supporting families caring for  
aging family members*

*Representing the  
community's commitment  
to its elders*

## **Donations to Scholarship Fund**

The Charles House Board of Directors remains committed to making Charles House services available to families of need. Approximately 20% to 25% of the families enrolled in Charles House receive some financial assistance to make their enrollment possible.

Contributions from donors, foundation grants and the local human services agency funding make it possible for Charles House to maintain a commitment to socio-economic diversity.

This summer, a grant from the Home Health Foundation of Chapel Hill Endowment Fund of Triangle Community Foundation helped significantly in funding the Scholarship Fund this year.

In addition, Wachovia Corporation made a grant recently to Charles House Association for the Scholarship Fund.

## Donor Profile:

### *Robert and Pearl Seymour*

Recently, Paul Klever, Executive Director of Charles House Association, visited with long time friends of Charles House Robert and Pearl Seymour in their home. The Seymours have been volunteers, advocates and supporters of Charles House Association and through their financial support over the years, the Seymours are counted among the *Sustaining Donors of Charles House*. Here is a summary of their conversation:



**CHARLES HOUSE: Your association with Charles House began in 1984 as one of the *Original 100* who responded positively to an inquiry for support from the family of Charles Jones regarding the creation of a day center. What prompted your involvement?**

SEYMOURS: As a pastor in this community I was aware of the need for more services to support our seniors and we were personal friends of Charlie Jones and his family. We wanted to help. We also thought the formation of Charles House was well timed as our community was facing a rapid increase of the senior population. When we see the success of Charles House we can see that such a facility is needed in every community.

**CHARLES HOUSE: You have been advocates for social services and senior services for many years. How did you get involved in so many important issues?**

SEYMOURS: We moved to Chapel Hill in 1959 and I became the first pastor of the newly formed Olin T. Binkley Baptist Church, which knew this community was going to grow rapidly and face many changes. For instance, when we arrived, UNC had a student body of around 6000 students. In 1962 I became the first president of the Interfaith Council where one of our early pursuits was to work with seniors in nursing homes. This activity lead to Friends of Nursing Home Patients and a broader awareness of the needs of our senior citizens. This awareness lead directly to the formation of the Orange County Department on Aging. Then after I retired in 1988, I was asked to serve on the Orange County Aging Advisory Board where we have helped advocate for the county's support of senior services, including the new senior center in Chapel Hill.

**CHARLES HOUSE: Indeed, your advocacy and community leadership was recently recognized when the beautiful new senior center was named The Robert and Pearl Seymour Senior Center in your honor. Were you surprised?**

SEYMOURS: We were floored and overwhelmed by the honor. It really is a wonderful senior center.

**CHARLES HOUSE: Pearl, you have been volunteering at Charles House for many years helping with our music program, playing piano for our sing-alongs. What is it like being a volunteer at Charles House?**

SEYMOURS: I so enjoy the contact with the participants at Charles House. For many years I played the piano with church groups visiting nursing homes. My mother played the piano for silent movies. My sessions at Charles House give me an opportunity to play many old songs for people who so enjoy them—and I get to play from music books that belonged to my mother.

**CHARLES HOUSE: You both are such good friends of Charles House and lent your support which was so important in the early years of getting Charles House established. Yet you continue to support Charles House financially, why?**

SEYMOURS: Charles House Association plays an important role in providing access to quality care. A recent New York Times article was entitled "Less Care—More Profit" and told of the tension between care and profit in the for profit business of long term care. As a nonprofit, Charles House can put care first. By securing funds from those who are sensitive to human needs, nonprofit organizations like Charles House can serve the community focused on their mission, not on profit.

**CHARLES HOUSE: You continue to serve on the Advisory Board for Charles House Association. What do you see for the future.**

SEYMOURS: Charles House Association will need to grow in the future as our senior population continues to grow. The plans for expanding services are exciting. We want to support that growth and Charles House Association's continuing role in our community.

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## CHARLES M. and DORCAS M. JONES ENDOWMENT

Five years ago, Charles House Association established the Dorcas M. Jones Fund to be an endowment with the objective of generating income to be used exclusively for fee assistance to low-income families. The fund was named in honor of Dorcas Jones, the first Charles House caregiver whose husband, Charles was the first participant (and namesake for Charles House). Recently, the Board of Directors renamed the fund the Charles M. and Dorcas M. Jones Endowment to honor this couple and to reflect the mission of Charles House in supporting both participants and caregivers. The board also reconfirmed the organizational commitment to the fund's restriction as an endowment. While the endowment fund currently has a modest balance, it is hoped that those who wish to honor the memory of the Jones family or the ongoing commitment of Charles House to serve low income families will help make this endowment grow through designated gifts to the endowment fund.

CHARLES HOUSE ASSOCIATION

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