



# BULLETIN

A PUBLICATION OF BLUE WATER DEVELOPMENTAL HOUSING, INC.

FALL/WINTER 2017

## Happy Reunion

### Resident Reunites with Mother at BWDH Picnic

It was a mother and child reunion.

Blue Water Developmental Housing, Inc. resident Meredith MacRury, 54, was reunited with her mother during a picnic in the Marysville Park in September.

Meredith's mother, Corliss MacRury, is 91 and had not been able to visit Meredith for the past two years due to illness. However, she was able to attend the picnic and a family reunion was held.

Meredith's brother and sister, Doug and Bridget, who regularly visit her at Thornhill Home, were also in attendance for the reunion.

"Meredith has resided here since 1994 when Thornhill Home opened and her mom has always been involved in her life," said Kathy Davis, supervisor at Thornhill Home. "Her mom was feeling good enough to come to the picnic and to see those two together, well, it was just so beautiful."

Meredith has some communication skills, but they are limited.

"She didn't have to say anything when she saw her mother, she knew," said Davis. "You could just see it on her face. She knew."

"That's the thing...we also have individuals in our care who are completely nonverbal, but they know when their special people come around. They are very interactive with their family members. It is very good for their well-being to have family and close friends around. They are able to express their recognition."



Mother Corliss, brother Doug, Meredith, and sister Bridget

**"That's the thing... we have individuals in our care who are completely nonverbal, but they know when their special people come around. They are very interactive with their family members.**

**"It is very good for their well-being to have family and close friends around. They are able to express their recognition."**

*Executive  
Director's  
Report:*

## Inclusiveness Relies On Vigilance



Kathy Swantek

*inclusive: adjective. The definition of inclusive is something that does not leave any part or group out.*

In 1976, when I began my career working with individuals who were challenged, society thought it best to tuck those individuals away inside of institutions where very little emotional, mental or physical stimulation was provided.

The prevailing thought was that these individuals were “less than” the rest of us “normal” people and therefore, they didn’t need to be seen or heard from, much less included, as a part of a family or anyone’s everyday lives.

My how far we have come.

But we must not rest on our laurels. We must be vigilant in our efforts to ensure that the individuals for whom we advocate continue to receive the care they need in a dignified manner while also remaining active and visible in the communities where they reside.

We owe it to them to make sure they continue to feel included.

During my first year working at Blue Water Developmental Housing, Inc., we were able to purchase and open our first group home. This became a place for the individuals we cared for that provided oh-so-much-more than any cinder block-walled facility could provide.

Over the years, the homes and the ways they are populated with residents has changed. Various new programs that offer individuals the opportunity to reside in a “home of their own” – something never, ever imagined in the 1970s – and other innovative housing arrangements have become a part of our everyday lives.

The people we serve reside in regular homes in regular neighborhoods throughout our communities.

They are welcome. They are included.

This year has been full of political unrest. At times, it is difficult to tell if the dog is chasing his tail or the tail is chasing the dog. Regardless, those of us who work in health and human services continue to dig in and break waves for the individuals we serve. We are their voice. We are their bulldozer, helping to break barriers when needed.

We help make sure they are welcomed wherever they go. And regardless of the politics that we see swirling around us locally, regionally, statewide or nationally, we are vigilant in our efforts to ensure inclusiveness.

We must be. Some very important, yet vulnerable, individuals are counting on us. And I am so very proud to be a cog in the wheel that keeps the reality of inclusiveness moving forward.



## Residents, Staff Enjoy Outings

Individuals that are cared for by Blue Water Developmental Housing, Inc. and BWDH staff have recently enjoyed a number of outings.

The annual BWDH picnic was held in September at the Marysville Park.

Residents and staff at the Semi-Independent Home also recently enjoyed a night of ice cream and karaoke.

Over the summer months residents from multiple homes also participated in the annual BWDH summer camp. This year, camp was held at Camp Fowler and a total of 17 individuals participated. Individuals enjoyed hayrides, boating, jewelry making and arts and crafts.

# Celebrate!

## Annual Employee Luncheon Recognizes Excellence

The Blue Water Developmental Housing, Inc. annual luncheon provides staff with an opportunity to get together, enjoy a meal, recognize colleagues and be entertained.

This year's annual luncheon was held at Alexander's Banquet Hall in Marysville. Entertainment was provided by comedian Jason Douglas.

Two employees were recognized for their outstanding efforts at work.

Megan Herr received the Community Based Employee of the Year Award and Deborah Biernot received the Residential Employee of the Year Award.



# Red or White?

## Sanborn Gratiot Memorial Home Wine Tasting Fundraiser Date Set

The ninth annual wine tasting for the benefit of the Sanborn Gratiot Memorial Home in Port Huron will be held from 5:30 to 8 p.m. Thursday, January 18 at the ????

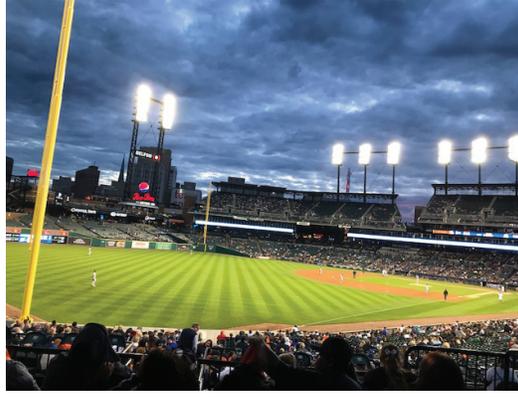
Last year's event raised \$8,190 to support the home, which is managed by Blue Water Developmental Housing, Inc.

"The funds raised are used to both subsidize the cost of care for low-income residents and also to support capital needs at the home," said Kathy Baker, community services division director at BWDH.

Substantial capital improvements have been made to the home since 2009. All of the renovations have been completed using grant monies and private donations.

Tickets to the event are **\$XX** per person and can be purchased by contacting the BWDH offices at (810) 388-1200 or by visiting the BWDH website at [www.bwdh.org](http://www.bwdh.org).





# At the Old Ball Game

BWDH Residents Attend Detroit Tigers Game at Comerica Park

Casey wasn't at bat, but the Detroit Tigers took the field and BWDH residents from Maple Street Group Home were in the stands watching the game at Comerica Park.

"It was a great day," said Kari Kral, program supervisor at Maple Street Group Home. "Our residents loved the game and everyone thoroughly enjoyed themselves."



## Editor

Kathy Swantek  
Executive Director  
Blue Water Developmental Housing, Inc.

## Writer & Designer

Patti Samar  
The Write Company  
[www.TheWriteCompany.net](http://www.TheWriteCompany.net)

Bulletin is published quarterly by:  
Blue Water Developmental Housing, Inc.  
Coventry Court  
1600 Gratiot Blvd., Suite 1  
Marysville, MI 48040

Phone: 810.388.1200  
Email: [customerservice@bwdh.org](mailto:customerservice@bwdh.org)

[WWW.BWDH.ORG](http://WWW.BWDH.ORG)

Blue Water Developmental Housing, Inc.  
Coventry Court  
1600 Gratiot Blvd., Suite 1  
Marysville, MI 48040

