Planting Seeds
of Hope...
Mercy Haven’s mission is to acknowledge the dignity and potential of people who are homeless, living with mental illness or living in poverty by providing housing, advocacy, education and life skills development.
From an effort to house a few vulnerable Long Islanders, Mercy Haven has grown to offer housing, enrichment, and hope to hundreds. Still, there is ongoing need for clean and dignified housing for those unable to support themselves. We are all enriched by our efforts to respond to this need with compassion.
It is amazing to think that Mercy Haven was born from one desperate gesture by a town to close a welfare hotel and the passionate response of community members to protect a special group of people. 2010 marked the 25th Anniversary of not only our agency but also the first gathering of the layers and layers of people who have been dedicated to our mission. In addition, we are also celebrating the gifts that our residents have made to us in choosing to live here at Mercy Haven. I know many people join me in rejoicing that stability in housing has allowed so much personal growth in them.

Whenever I am asked “Did things turn out as you had planned them?” I think of a Creole proverb that says “God can give to humans, but it is up to us to justly distribute what God has given us.” For sure this has been the blessing of my life – to be part of a community of passionate and compassionate individuals who have made life more just, available, kind and reliable for our friends and neighbors.

I hope this report will give you glimpses into the journey of our years. There’s still a lot more to do as we all struggle with the challenges of these times. I am certain, because you have shown me, that a better, more compassionate world is not only possible but contagious! Thank you so very much for all you have meant and given to us.

Sincerely,

S. Patricia Griffith
Executive Director

“The future is not something we enter. The future is something we create.” ~ Leonard I. Sweet

Mercy Haven’s Board of Directors are a dedicated group of professionals from a wide variety of professions and walks-of-life who are committed to the mission of the agency.

Board Secretary Patrick T. Collins.

Board Retreat Day.
On Behalf of Mercy Haven’s Board of Directors, I am pleased to present the 2010 Annual Report.

This past year we celebrated our 25th Anniversary. It has been a wonderful journey! Since its beginning, Mercy Haven has evolved from just an idea into a multi-service agency that meets the needs of this Long Island community. Just think of what would happen if we didn’t have an agency like ours!

I joined Mercy Haven because I strongly believe this agency makes a difference. I wanted to make a contribution to an organization that is really focused on the most in need in our communities. For me, serving on the Board has been a very rewarding experience. I know the Board members are vital in helping with the growth of the agency. I am very grateful to all who have contributed in different ways to the work of Mercy Haven: my extraordinary colleagues on the Board of Directors, the staff, volunteers, donors, and other supporters. The personal satisfaction of knowing that your efforts make a difference in the lives of all affiliated with Mercy Haven is a gift. It is important to be a part of something larger than just myself and my family and I like that my work as a volunteer will impact future generations.

I hope you enjoy this snapshot of what we have accomplished together. We are ready to welcome more people to volunteer and to help in the continued success of Mercy Haven.

Thanks for caring!

Sincerely,

Dorothy Overton
Board Chair

“The future belongs to those who believe in the beauty of their dreams” ~ Eleanor Roosevelt

“I was recently given the honor and opportunity to serve on the board of Mercy Haven. It's an honor because some very good people thought that I could contribute something to this fine institution. It's also an opportunity to keep my life fulfilled. After my first board meeting, I knew I was on a winning team.”

~ Board Member Russ Moran

Board Member Patrick J. Hickey.

Board Member Denise Green-Jackson.
“Reflections from the Heart of Mercy”

Excerpted from “Heart of Mercy: Celebrating 25 Years of Memories”

By Sister Patricia Griffith, D.Min., LMSW

Seeds of Hope

On the occasion of Mercy Haven’s 25th Anniversary, Executive Director and Founder Patricia Griffith captured the “joys and struggles” of the agency’s first quarter-century in a personal memoir, “Heart of Mercy”. The book is available from Mercy Haven’s main office.

How long can a seed lie dormant? Must we remain unaware of children with special needs, or an aging parent, or a person living with mental illness until a face, life, awakens us? Is it then the learning begins?

I remember the first lunch with our very first residents in our Community Residence program, more than 20 years ago. With our hearts so filled with joy, Kathy and I joined staff in welcoming the first three or four new members of Mercy Haven. As we enjoyed the time, clearly an adjustment for all, Kathy kept telling us she heard someone at the door. Upon checking the front door this seemed to be untrue. The next time she said it, and I denied it, one of the residents asked her if she heard voices too! Disarming seeds of laughter filled the room.

That might have been the beginning of what I believe is the one quality that over the years is the greatest gift our staff extends to its residents. It is hospitality of heart. Amidst all the services, all the education and instruction braided into the support and encouragement each brings, this is the gift that has made the difference. It is a way of being available that is filled with a desire to connect, to befriend, to understand, to accept and to see another. Because of this gift, we watch our residents and one another unfold in ways that would not have happened had we not met.

Have you ever asked yourself “How did I end up here?” Do you ever wonder why it is that things that matter to you often are not of the same concern to others? Where did those seeds get sown?

Twenty-five years – what a miracle! As I think of those years, I am really filled with great gratitude for all the moments when I have witnessed the closed mind, closed life, or fearful heart unfolding by what Mercy Haven has done. I think of the power of hope held by our staff believing that one of our participants, fellow staff members, or neighbors has more gifts than maybe, as yet, have been realized. Like the tree, this hope-filled person knows that the right time and the right atmosphere will beckon new life in both the giver and the receiver.

From seeds sown by each and all of us, shoots have sprouted and buds have blossomed. Many of us would simply say we just took one step at a time and did what had to be done. Thanks for stepping with us these past 25 years. As we step into the future, imagine what more we still can do!
We soon realized that we were the logical ones to start such an agency. In retrospect, this seems like madness rather than a dream. We had no experience and no money but we were rich in conviction and resolve. Our future was beginning to look brighter until the Baybright’s small fire became the occasion for the residents to be permanently relocated. This might have been the death blow to our dreams, but it turned out to be the resurrection of our resolve. We began developing grant proposals and plans for incorporation as a nonprofit agency while community opposition mounted and the fight for the Baybright became more political than ever…

Hope turned to ecstasy and ecstasy turned to anger, frustration and tragedy as the maneuverings of local politicians became enmeshed with our plans. The emotional roller coaster reached an all-time low when we realized that we had been kept busy, and what we thought were efforts of cooperation, were really efforts to block our purchase of the Baybright…. This was enough to discourage most people, but our commitment to the deinstitutionalized was irrevocable and the leadership of Sister Pat Griffith and Sister Kathy Nolan was unwavering….

It is exciting retracing the “roots” of Mercy Haven for it helps me see more clearly who we are. It also helps me to recognize how life was mirrored in these events… tragedy, comedy, fear, anger, hatred, love and joy all played out in time. Most of all however, I have an abiding respect and appreciation for the countless individuals who saw their neighbor in the weak and helpless and who made themselves a part of this dream. Their support has helped to define and sustain Mercy Haven and they promise a future which is even more exciting.
Thanks to 2010 renovations, Pleasant Gardens remains one of the most elegant sites in the Mercy Haven Community. The stately home offers 26 adult residents round-the-clock staff care and – as we recently learned from the Bayport Historian – a connection to important Long Island history.

According to the Bayport Heritage Association, the land was purchased by one of the earliest area settlers, William Brown, in 1787. Several families lived in the house over the years, including the Smith Family, which occupied it for 56 years and opened the first hotel – with the first lit advertising sign – in Bayport in 1883. By 1916 the property housed a hotel and restaurant called L’Azur, mentioned in a memoir published in 1921 for the excellence of the food – and the steep price for a family dinner of fifty dollars (when dinner with a string orchestra in New York City could be had for one dollar!).

During the Depression the house fell into disrepair, but it was purchased by Gustav and Maria Blocker in 1938 and restored and enlarged. Mr. Blocker opened “The Colonial Inn” on the site; by 1953 the Blockers converted the restaurant into a convalescent home and changed the name to Pleasant Gardens.

After purchasing the house from the Blockers’ son Julius in 1998, Mercy Haven residents have treasured the expansive garden-like property and the quaint hamlet of Bayport. This year, Mercy Haven received a $20,740 from the Department of Health (Quality Initiative Payment Program) for enhancements to our adult home. These enhancements included installation of a new bathroom, carpeting for the stairs and second floor, new wooden chairs, and flooring in the kitchen, hallway, mudroom and dining room.
Mercy Haven’s newest endeavor, the Mercy Enrichment Program, offers individuals and groups a chance to step away from daily routines to reflect, plan and support one another. Located in Brentwood, the site expresses in space and plaster the agency’s core goal to bring a community together to experience and practice compassion.

Among those to benefit from the house and its two peaceful acres in 2010 were participants in Mercy Haven’s “Residential Empowerment and Achievement Program” (REAP), who enjoyed art classes, poetry, book clubs, and employment training in Brentwood. A wonderful Christmas party for residents and their children took place at the end of the year and even included a visit from Santa Claus! The setting also provided an inspiring backdrop to Mercy Haven board retreats and staff meetings.

The Mercy Enrichment Program is open to individuals and groups who share Mercy Haven’s vision of an inclusive and respectful community. The house can accommodate up to 14 people overnight and includes a media-rich education center, which can accommodate up to 40 people. All donations benefit the residents of Mercy Haven.

“We see the brightness of a new page where everything yet can happen.” ~ Rainer Maria Rilke, Book of Hours

Christmas 2010 The Mercy Enrichment Program
Throughout the year Mercy Haven enjoyed the opportunity to train and educate interns and volunteers in our residential programs. Our staff provided each intern with a more thorough understanding of mental health issues. Interns and volunteers learned about individual counseling, community relations and mental illness. They were able to create service plans, develop relationships with the residents and provide support to them on a daily basis. Together, the interns and the staff at Mercy Haven have created a beneficial relationship that has fostered new and creative ideas that support our participants.

In 2010 Mercy Haven was fortunate to have volunteers provide beautification to our Community Residence in West Babylon. The volunteers painted the entire inside of the home. We also had volunteers from the LIVE (Long Island Volunteer Enterprise) project who created a wonderful and peaceful garden at our Bay Shore Community Residence. Warm thanks to everyone who helped make a difference!

**Mercy Haven Golf Outing Supporters**

On June 3rd, 2010 both old and new friends attended Mercy Haven’s Annual Golf Outing and Spa Day at Island Hills Golf Club of Sayville. Our spa guests were whisked away in limousines donated by Richard D’Andrea for an afternoon of relaxation at Cactus Salon & Day Spa of Commack.

Golf Chairperson, Paul Conefry commented, “A real highlight of the afternoon was on Hole #5, where legendary New York Mets shortstop and Long Island Ducks co-owner Bud Harrelson graciously hosted the Beat Buddy Contest.” The contest gave the golfers an opportunity to meet Harrelson and the chance to take a swing against him. Contest participants were entered to win a sky box at a Long Island Ducks game – a $1,000 value!

The guest speaker during dinner was 17-year-old Meghan Murphy, Mercy Haven volunteer and Girl Scout Gold Award recipient. During her time with the agency, Meghan worked hand-in-hand with the participants to compile a healthy, cost-effective and easy recipe book.
Staff growth and development are key components to Mercy Haven’s ability to provide quality services to our participants. We believe that by supporting staff members in professional growth we improve job performance as well as increase levels of personal satisfaction. At Mercy Haven, we require each staff member to participate in specific essential training programs on a yearly basis. Mandatory in-services, which have 100% employee participation, include trainings on HIPPA, OSHA, Mercy Haven’s Compliance Program and sexual harassment in the work-place.

In addition to the mandatory trainings, in 2010, staff received education in a variety of areas both internally and externally. Training topics included:

- Substance Abuse and Co-Occurring Disorders
- How to Become a More Effective Manager
- Diabetes and Wellness
- The Nuances of Delegating
- Ouch! That Stereotype Hurts
- Confidentiality and the Law
- Entitlements
- Diabetes
- Wellness Workshop

These regular training opportunities motivate employees to excel in any position they may hold, while allowing the Mercy Haven community to benefit to the utmost from each employee’s skills, abilities, and dedication. We are delighted to report that a majority of employees not only meet the requirement of this training curriculum regularly, but exceed it!

“When we cast our bread upon the waters, we can presume that someone downstream whose face we will never know will benefit from our action, as we who are downstream from another will profit from that grantor’s gift.”
~ Maya Angelou
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Timeline of Events – 1985 - 2010

1985

Mercy Haven is established in Bay Shore to prevent the 116 residents of the Baybright Hotel from losing their homes.

December 1991

Thanks to a NYS Homeless Housing Assistance Program grant, Mercy Haven launches HEART: “Healed, Encouraged, and Renewed Through Housing.”

November 1997

The Mercy Advocacy Program opens, serving as a law office for the poor and assisting Mercy Haven residents in civil legal issues. The “MAP” program has since expanded to include training and consultation to staff of mental health agencies throughout Long Island, New York State and beyond.

December 2001

Mercy Haven launches “Resident Empowerment and Achievement Program.” It continues today, serving as a resident education, job-training and employment program.

February 1998

Mercy Haven purchases “Pleasant Gardens Adult Home,” a large and stately residence in Bayport offering a warm, home-like atmosphere and 24-hour staff to 26 people who need assistance with daily living activities. (See page 8 for a history of this landmark building!)

May 2007

Impact continues to expand beyond Mercy Haven’s walls with the launch of Mercy Unto Thousands/Breakthrough Program, offering homeless individuals an intense outreach and education program. Nearly 100 persons have graduated from the program through 2010.

October 2008

Legal victory: the Mercy Haven Advocacy Program (MAP) wins a food stamp class action lawsuit, Graves v. Doar, expanding benefits to more than 115,000 New York State residents living in group homes, public housing or subsidized housing.

November 1996

Mercy Haven creates REAP. “Resident Empowerment and Achievement Program.” It continues today, serving as a resident education, job-training and employment program.

May 2010

Mercy Haven marks its 25th anniversary, now serving the elderly and limited-income families as well as persons with special needs, and looking to the future with our Enrichment Program and updated strategic plan.

2010

Thanks to a NYS Homeless Housing Assistance Program grant, Mercy Haven opens a supported housing-apartment program, housing eight additional individuals in scattered sites not owned by Mercy Haven.

November 1997

Mercy Haven is awarded 75 housing assistance vouchers which have been renewed annually to enable persons with disabilities to rent affordable housing of their choice, thanks to the U.S. Government’s HUD “Mainstream Program.”

March 1999

Legal victory: the Mercy Haven Advocacy Program (MAP) wins a food stamp class action lawsuit, Graves v. Doar, expanding benefits to more than 115,000 New York State residents living in group homes, public housing or subsidized housing.

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Mercy Haven thanks our INDIVIDUAL SUPPORTERS

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2010 FINANCIAL REPORT

The following information is derived from the Mercy Haven Consolidated Audited Financial Statement for the fiscal year ended December 31, 2010, as audited by Cullen & Danowski, LLP, CPA.

Income Sources
Government Contracts and Grants $ 3,015,520
Resident Services 2,467,646
Contribution and Fundraising Income 218,161
Grant Income 574,164
Investment Income 81,418
Other Income 50,700
Total Income Sources $ 6,407,609

Program Expenses
Program Services $ 5,922,389
Supporting Services 646,644
Fundraising and Development 135,877
Total Program Expenses $ 6,704,910

Change in Net Assets (297,301)
Beginning Net Assets 2,938,060
Ending Net Assets 2,640,759
Total Liabilities 6,287,439
Total Liabilities & Net Assets $ 8,928,198

For more complete financial details, please visit our website www.mercyhaven.org.
In its fourth year, Mercy Haven’s community outreach program Mercy Unto Thousands continued to make a huge impact. At the core of this program is Breakthrough, a 12-week, 24 session intense outreach and education program offered to homeless and formerly homeless individuals. The goal of Breakthrough is to assist participants in understanding the factors that have contributed to their homelessness and give them the tools and confidence to achieve personal goals.

They are led through this process by Mercy Haven co-foundress S. Kathy Nolan and a group of volunteer mentors. The mentors attend approximately 8 sessions and support participants with identifying realistic and achievable goals. In addition, a group of volunteers prepares a delicious, home-cooked meal for the participants so that they may be nourished in body as well as spirit when they come together.

By the end of 2010, Breakthrough had graduated nearly 100 participants since its inception. These graduates have moved on to meet many of the goals they set for themselves. These goals include moving into stable housing (including Mercy Haven’s housing), finding employment, and enrolling in college.

The Breakthrough program culminates in an Evening of Insight and Sharing hosted by participants to which the local community is invited. There are educational presentations on topics pertaining to poverty and homelessness and several participants share their stories. This evening is among the most moving events that Mercy Haven hosts.
In 1997, it was clear to us that a new level of advocacy was needed for the very persons that had been included within our network of care. And so we formally started our Mercy Advocacy Program (MAP) which included the hiring of a full-time attorney and limited staff. The intent of this program was to have an attorney on staff available for direct assistance and representation of persons around entitlements and also to train staff and participants. We also wanted, through the legal staff’s work, to bring any action against the institutions that would loosen the bonds that hold persons living in poverty captive. It was also clear to us that we needed to do this as Congress increasingly tied the hands of public advocates in Law Services, claiming that having received federal funding, these advocates could not represent any class action initiative.

Hence, for the past fourteen years, we have had to raise on average $100,000-150,000 annually to sustain this unique Legal Advocacy presence in serving the mission of this agency. We have worked very hard to develop the sophistication among staff and participants that enables them to see that entitlements are not automatic and have everything to do with economic survival.

Mercy Haven is committed to maximizing an individual’s or family’s access to subsistence income (preventing homelessness), health care, and food. Without such entitlements being fully in place, the person or family is considered to be undergoing a “civil legal emergency.” When this happens, the individual or family, staff and our legal advocacy program are called on to organize and define a plan to rectify such emergency deprivation. Because we have the resources of this program, Mercy Haven has also risked accepting and providing shelter for persons without income with the confidence that we can make government work in favor of the poor. Since October 1997, MAP has advocated to maximize receipt of entitlements on 2,052 cases, with 235 now open, for people living with mental illness.

Our methods of legal intervention are three-fold: 1) direct legal representation to clients; 2) consultation to Mercy Haven staff to support their advocacy role; and 3) legal seminars to both staff and the homeless served by our Breakthrough Program. MAP also presented 20 intensive trainings for 40 agencies throughout Long Island and the boroughs of NYC and a seminar to the statewide agencies of the Association of Community Living, which serve thousands of impoverished individuals and families. Four other non-profit agencies, in New Jersey, Pennsylvania, New York and Maryland, have been assisted in using our program as a prototype to create their own programs.

MAP’s effort continues towards reforming food stamp allocation, questioning claims of disability overpayments, expanding access to health care, and disputing wrongful and illegal evictions. One of the main highlights of 2010 continues to relate to litigation of our class-action suit Graves v. Doar, to promote systemic reform in NYS Food Stamp Program, with our co-counsel Peter Vollmer and supported by Gene Doyle, LMSW. Following our landmark victory in which New York State was enabled to claim an additional $150 million in food stamp benefits from the federal government annually, impacting approximately 115,000 food stamp households across the state, we submitted our papers to the Appellate Division of NYS Supreme Court to defend our second victory by which over $50 million in retroactive food stamps owing from 2005-2008 to our certified class of 20,000 persons residing in group homes should be paid. The State’s appeal should be decided in the summer of 2011. We are looking forward to a similar decision for up to 344,000 Food Stamp recipients across NY State who have lost up to $20 per month in Food Stamps as of April 2011.

Advocacy volunteer with participant.
Focus on Families

Maureen, a resident in one of our first three community residences, shared with us that her great hope was to be reunited with her child. At the time, around 1990, the idea of supportive family housing was new to us—and to the State. It complicated grant applications, but eased the hearts of residents who found a safe home together with us and their loved ones.

Today, Mercy Haven owns 22 houses and rents 37 apartments enabling us to provide supported housing for 192 people. These housing opportunities are made available through our program: “Healed, Encouraged, and Renewed Through Housing,” or HEARTH, launched in 1991. Inspired by Maureen’s desire to reunite with her children, a main focus of HEARTH is providing opportunities for families to remain together. By making housing available for families and ensuring that all our homes are in residential neighborhoods, we help provide the comfort and dignity that communities can bring one another.

Kieran F.:

“The day I came to Mercy Haven, four years ago, I will never forget. I moved into one of the most beautiful apartments I’ve ever seen. It’s in Hollbrook. Two bedrooms, one roommate, a lovely neighborhood. I was used to looking out a window to see cars without engines, bikes without wheels as my yard. Here I see children being taken to the bus by their moms and dads. In the evening, families walk together, couples walk hand-in-hand, children get ice cream. It’s such a beautiful place, a family environment, anyone would be happy to live here.”

Erik S.:

“We’ve been so happy. We are so grateful to Mercy Haven for the way we are treated. We have such a beautiful apartment. We were given an opportunity for a new life. Before that, Mary Ann and I were in separate apartments. I used to get depressed when I had to leave her. Mercy Haven has given us each other. It’s given us a new lease on life.”
Just in time for Mother’s Day 2010, HEARTH made a dream a reality for one homeless family in Patchogue. It was a touching scene as Melissa T. and her four children, ages 2 – 12, walked into their newly built home on Saturday morning, May 14. The family had spent the previous two months living in a single room at a Suffolk County shelter. “When I look at my future now, I see this home as where my children will grow up,” said Melissa, with visible relief and joy. “After many sleepless nights, I now feel like I can get a good night’s rest knowing my family has a place to live.”

The home now provides permanent housing for two families living on a fixed income and coming from emergency housing. The gracious house benefits neighbors as well, replacing an eyesore that had stood on the property. Mercy Haven purchased the property with a grant from the New York State Homeless Housing Assistance Corporation and worked with Village of Patchogue Mayor Paul Pontieri to get the job done.

This home is well-situated within walking distance to the Village shops, a new YMCA, public transportation, and the Patchogue Theater. It will provide the children of the families the opportunity to learn, play, and grow in a stable, culturally rich environment with superb public schools. This was the first ever demolition and newly constructed home undertaken by Mercy Haven.

Compassion is even built into the design of the house. Architect Michael Lagnese of Fusion Architecture, who designed the two-family duplex, explained: “I designed the wrap-around porch to look like arms hugging the home and the two families that will live within it.”

“Learn from yesterday, live for today, hope for tomorrow. The important thing is not to stop questioning.” ~ Albert Einstein
Approximately 80 Mercy Haven residents participated in REAP during 2010. Mercy Haven established the “Residential Empowerment and Achievement Program” (REAP) in 1995 to assist residents in achieving their goals through the enhancement of their daily living skills. Each month, residents receive an activity calendar offering painting, crafts, journal writing, poetry reading, movie nights, holiday parties, and more. REAP also offers participants the chance for paid employment to help Mercy Haven complete mailings of quarterly newsletters, event invitations, and other items. REAP activities take place at various Mercy Haven locations including our main office.

“Though no one can go back and make a brand new start, anyone can start from now and make a brand new ending.” ~ Anonymous

REAP artwork
As Mercy Haven has grown, so too has the scope of Residential Services. When we began we offered residents a safe and reliable roof, which was a step forward for many. Today, residents and staff benefit from a wide range of services and opportunities below those rooftops.

Real Jobs for Our Residents
Mercy Haven values the ability to provide support and skill-building opportunities to our participants. We are especially pleased to be able to offer employment opportunities, in which participants can be paid for their work while learning valuable employment skills. The first participant we employed began working as an Office Assistant in 1990. Today, employment opportunities may include bulk mailings, van driving, and housing assistance. We had a total of 47 participants who were employed by Mercy Haven in 2010, up from 33 in 2009.

Compliance Audits
Staff, under the guidance of our Compliance Officer, conduct quarterly audits to address the guidelines established under the Compliance Program. In 2010, compliance audits focused on the documentation produced to support the services provided by Mercy Haven in comparison to the services actually billed. The audits determined that there was a 98% rate of accuracy with the desired outcome.

How Are We Doing?
All participants in our residential programs complete a Satisfaction Survey. The survey is designed to assess their satisfaction in a variety of areas including services, living environment, and Agency Staff. The 2010 survey findings included:

- 91% satisfaction with the participant’s understanding of program rights;
- 96% satisfaction with the kinds of services provided by Mercy Haven; and
- 92% satisfaction with the courteous and professional manner in which services are provided by staff.

Overall quality of services was reported at a level of 97%.

Thank you -- we’ll keep striving to earn those straight A’s!

Community Residence Report: Moving On
Since 1990, Mercy Haven has offered housing for up to 34 residents in three Community Residences. A key component of the work done in a Community Residence is to help participants learn the skills needed to move on to a less supervised level of care. Skills to be achieved include:

- knowledge of community resources
- medication management
- money management
- daily living skills

Of the participants discharged from our Community Residences program in 2010, 69% moved on to a less supervised level of care. The majority of the other 31% moved on to a supervised environment such as Mercy Haven’s Pleasant Gardens Adult Home, in order to address ongoing medical issues.

Mercy Haven’s Community Residence in Westbury.
Looking Forward | STRATEGIC PLAN

2010 marked the completion of Mercy Haven’s three year strategic plan. Through oversight from our Board Committees and the dedication of both Board and staff, we successfully completed 85% of the strategic initiatives we committed to accomplish. Major achievements include:

- Increased awareness of the organization’s mission and vision.
- Improved financial oversight through the expansion of internal controls, budgetary information, cash flow analysis and improved forecasting.
- Updated information management infrastructure and systems.
- Expansion of our programs and services including the development of five new sites, which led to an increase of 40% in our Supported Housing (HEARTH) Program and the expansion of services through the development of Mercy Haven’s Enrichment Program.
- The implementation of Mercy Haven’s Compliance Program in accordance with state and federal guidelines.
- Improved outcomes through the development of agency wide performance indicators for employment, financial performance, fundraising, grant development, and occupancy.

In order to continue the momentum and expand on past accomplishments, Mercy Haven senior staff and Board of Directors began meeting in late 2010 to establish additional strategies with corresponding goals and objectives to create a road map for our future. Due to the ongoing commitment of our Board members and staff, we were able to create a Strategic Plan that sets clear direction for the work needed to carry out Mercy Haven’s vision and fulfill our mission through 2012.

Governance
Throughout the year we will continue to govern the effectiveness of our Board and Committee meetings by soliciting feedback from all members of the Board of Directors. In 2010, 90% of our Directors were satisfied with the information, responsibilities, purpose, and accomplishments of their respective committees while 89% were in agreement with the information, management, and documentation provided during our quarterly Board meetings.

The direction that results from these meetings has always been a key success factor in our ability to make positive changes in policy and will continue to help us monitor and evaluate progress into the future.

Since 1990 Mercy Haven administrators have acknowledged the need for objective evaluation of the agency. Through feasibility studies, audits, and strategic planning we continue to perfect an agency of deep values and accountability.

Mercy Haven’s Board and Staff at our 2010 retreat.
Amidst the year of deep joy we also found ourselves with hearts that were deeply saddened by the unexpected death of two of our Board Members, Len Saltzman and John G. Bendick. Both of these gentlemen held our agency and the needs of our friends close to their hearts and made it their work to make sure the quality of our care mattered most in our deliberations. They were committed to making public the needs of the homeless and persons living with mental illness. Both knew whatever they did mattered for the long haul. Both frequently asked me why we couldn’t find 'big donors' like other causes did. Both were deeply saddened that corporations and the public still didn’t understand the detrimental effect of stigma not only on the person who experienced homelessness or living with mental illness, but the effect it has on a non-profit like ours not getting the publicity and support that ‘acceptable’ causes find.

It takes a lot of courage to be part of our mission and to stand for and with our friends. If there’s one thing that is clear after this wonderful 25th year it is the effect that every single person who has been part of our life, for however long, has had.

~ Sister Pat