

# Spotlight

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## Mission Statement

*Helping Hands for the Disabled's Mission Statement is to give people with developmental disabilities the opportunity to achieve their potential, build their self esteem and enhance their community involvement. To accomplish this, we commit our energy and resources to advocate for and support a continuum of creative living options.*

## PROFILE: NEW RESIDENT AT TRAIL HOUSE!

*"Jeffrey" by Catherine Carter, based on interview with his parents, Lisa and Brian*

Jeffrey moved into Trail House on April 23, 2007.

Jeffrey has autism. He's almost 24.

Jeffrey has worked for 4 and a half years in a pediatrician's office, 5 days a week for about 4 hours a day. He pulls "charts," which is what they call a patient's medical records. He also refiles them, makes new charts and does computer work.

"They keep telling us that if they ever find a misfiled chart they know Jeffrey didn't file it," says Jeffrey's mom, Lisa.

Jeffrey loves to bowl, sometimes more than 3 times a month, and he's pretty good, too.

"His average is 120, but his high score is 185," his dad Brian says proudly. "He has his own approach. It doesn't take him very long to pick up his ball and get it rolling down the lane!"



(please continue reading about Jeffrey on page 2)

People are like stained-glass windows. They sparkle and shine when the sun is out, but when the darkness sets in, their true beauty is revealed only if there is a light from within. Elizabeth Kubler-Ross

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1)  
**PROFILE: NEW RESIDENT AT TRAIL HOUSE!**

*"Jeffrey" by Catherine Carter, based on interview with his parents, Lisa and Brian*

'Oldies' is what Jeffrey calls the music he likes, because they are the songs he listened to when he was younger. For instance, he loves Tom Lehrer and knows a lot about him, as well as the birthdays of hundreds of people: celebrities, friends and acquaintances. And if you tell him your birth date, he can tell you instantly the day of the week you were born, and the day your birthday will fall on in any year in the future. He also likes some musicals. And of course, being a young adult, he spends a lot of time on the phone and emailing!



Tom Lehrer

Jeffrey moved into Trail House April 23rd. "That's a date I'll never forget," says Lisa. "I can't say enough good things. The people are wonderful and he loves them, he considers them family and Trail his home. He gets to go grocery shopping and help make meals. The staff has been great at arranging transportation to the 'events' Jeffrey likes to create: like a bowling date with a friend."

Brian jumps in, "It's clear he's respected there. It's perfect for him. They keep his life smooth and predictable, which is what he needs."



"I feel very comfortable and welcomed whenever I go there," says Lisa, "And any concerns are dealt with immediately. The staff are efficient, competent AND caring - WOW!"

When asked about how he feels about his new home, Jeffrey said "I like that I've lived here since April 23rd. For 40 weeks, I was at [another location], and I moved here, I like it here. The staff are nice people." Jeffrey concluded by saying "Things are under control."

*Welcome to Trail House Jeffrey! We are thrilled to have you as our new resident.*

**Side Note:**

Shortly after Jeffrey moved into Trail House, the staff worked to re-decorate the living room. If you haven't yet seen this beautiful home, please call the office (425.644.4344) and arrange a time to stop by. We are proud of our homes, and we know you will be too!



"How much gold can you hold in an elephant's ear? When it's noon on the moon, then what time is it here? If you could count for a year, would you get to infinity. Or somewhere in that vicinity?" Words by Tom Lehrer, from "That's Mathematics" (1993)

## Employee Profile: Kiyomi Tamura

By Catherine Carter

Kiyomi grew up in a small city by the ocean south of Yokohama in Japan. She got an associate degree in English at a junior college, but her parents were a bit old-fashioned and didn't think a girl needs a college education, so she went to work.



Kiyomi worked at the base exchange on a US Navy base and met the man she would marry there. When he got out of the Navy he went back to go to the University of North Dakota and he proposed to Kiyomi in a letter 3 months after he went home. She said yes! Four months later, in 1971, she came to the US and lived in Grand Forks, North Dakota, a town of 2000 people, until he graduated in 1980. Her daughter was born there, so Kiyomi started a home day care business.

Kiyomi soon became friends with a Filipino woman who was also a Navy wife, who had a job at what was then called the North Dakota State School for the Mentally Retarded. In 1977, Kiyomi got a job there, too. She worked with older people, developing and implementing their Individual Program Plan.

"I'm a people-person," says Kiyomi. "It comes from my heart. I just be myself and connect with people."

In 1980 Kiyomi and her husband and daughter moved to Whidbey Island, and her son was born there in 1982. Later they moved to Poulsbo and Kiyomi worked for what was then known as Kitsap Peninsula House Association - an organization similar to Helping Hands but larger. She worked with residents in homes like ours and worked as



the ITS Manager.

After starting to work part-time for Helping Hands in 1992 she became a full-timer in 1994, working first as a caregiver, then a shift supervisor and now as Program Director for Trail and Visions. She got divorced in 1992. In addition to working for Helping Hands she works part-time for Easter Seals as a job coach.



"I guess I was born to care for people, to help people. You know when we lived on Whidbey Island I worked at a resort there as a cocktail waitress and a bartender, but I never was so happy, it wasn't for me" says Kiyomi. "I like it that you can make a difference in a person's life."

Kiyomi lives in Silverdale with her partner John, who also works with people with disabilities, for Kitsap Applied Technology. He develops jobs and also works as a job coach. Her daughter is married and has twin 13 year old girls and a 12 year old stepson and lives in Poulsbo, and her son is married and also lives in Silverdale. Kiyomi and John love to go geo-caching - a new sport using GPS (Global Positioning System) units. Geo-cachers hide stuff (!), post the location using GPS coordinates on the internet, and then other geo-cachers go find the stuff! Kiyomi explains, "I've been to places with beautiful scenery, ancient trees - and of course it's good exercise! But really, my biggest hobby is being a Clay Aiken fan!!!!!"



## **Employee Profile: Sherry Elwood**

*By Julie Hegira*

Who believes that the direct caregivers, not her, should be profiled because they are the ones who do all the hard work? Who is the person that has “done” the STP (that’s a bike ride from Seattle to Portland usually taking two days) in ONE day? Who loves working with residents and loves being a mentor to younger people? It’s Sherry Elwood, the Consulting Nurse for Champion House, Trail House and Halcyon.



When we met on a recent Thursday we were both a little nervous. I am not a writer and Sherry has been skillfully avoiding being interviewed for many years. But thanks to Eva, we were put together. Well, we just started talking about our dogs and the conversation just took off!

Sherry has been with Helping Hands for the Disabled since 1987! She said she just “fell into it and has loved her job ever since”! She first started at Halcyon House then added Trail House and finally about 5 years ago she acquired Champion House!

Her background includes education at Highline Community College, Clover Park and the University of Washington. Sherry’s resume is an impressive list of positions including working with people who are quadriplegic, assisting in the surgical unit, providing individual care, and working in the cardiac unit and an IMR facility.

When I asked Sherry what is something about you that most people don’t know. She replied that she is an athlete. She’s been an aerobic instructor and an endurance bicyclist. She has ridden around Mount Rainier in one day, going over 3 passes! She biked from Yellowstone to Steamboat, Wyoming! She also loves skiing, both snow and water.



Sherry’s family includes a husband, two sons and two grandsons. No girls, yikes! She adores her grandsons who call her “Bana.” She takes both jet skiing! Her extended family includes two Corgis and a rescue mutt! Having 4 dogs of my own including two rescues, we “bonded” immediately!

The conclusion of this profile is that Sherry loves working at Helping Hands, adores her family and pups and is pretty happy all around. But she wouldn’t let me stop there. Sherry had to end with her firm belief that the Spotlight should profile more of the hands-on caregivers! I’m sure she’ll e-mail me with her nominations!

Helping Hands is very lucky to have Sherry Elwood!

“Within each of us lies the power of our consent to health and sickness, to riches and poverty, to freedom and to slavery. It is we who control these, and not another. Richard Bach (Illusions)

## TECHNICAL DIFFICULTIES

Thank you to each of you who have contacted us about the fact that our website does not contain information about the 2007 Auction! We are working hard to fix the problems that have prevented us from updating our website, and hopefully by the time you open your mailbox and read this edition of The Spotlight, the website will be updated!

Please go to [www.hhftd.org](http://www.hhftd.org) to see the most current information about our Auction and the items that will be available! Read about the incredible "Smile for Life" program that has already provided many thousands of dollars to Helping Hands for the Disabled! We'll be changing the pictures more often, and we'll post information about upcoming events on our site.

**THANK YOU** to Troy Meyers with Epsilon9.com. Epsilon9 is our new web host, and this service is being donated to Helping Hands for the Disabled! We are very grateful to Troy for his generous donation and assistance in getting our website back online and functioning properly.



## SMILE FOR LIFE!

Go to [www.hhftd.org](http://www.hhftd.org) to learn more about "Smile for Life."

We all know how beautiful a smile can be!



## Father of the Century [From Sports Illustrated, By Rick Reilly]

I try to be a good father. Give my kids mulligans. Work nights to pay for their text messaging. Take them to swimsuit shoots. But compared with Dick Hoyt, I suck.

Eighty-five times he's pushed his disabled son, Rick, 26.2 miles in marathons. Eight times he's not only pushed him 26.2 miles in a wheelchair but also towed him 2.4 miles in a dinghy while swimming and pedaled him 112 miles in a seat on the handlebars--all in the same day.

Dick's also pulled him cross-country skiing, taken him on his back mountain climbing and once hauled him across the U.S. On a bike. Makes taking your son bowling look a little lame, right?

And what has Rick done for his father? Not much--except save his life.

This love story began in Winchester, Mass. 43 years ago, when Rick was strangled by the umbilical cord during birth, leaving him brain-damaged and unable to control his limbs. "He'll be a vegetable the rest of his life;" Dick says doctors told him and his wife, Judy, when Rick was nine months old. "Put him in an institution."

But the Hoyts weren't buying it. They noticed the way Rick's eyes followed them around the room. When Rick was 11 they took him to the engineering department at Tufts University and asked if there was anything to help the boy communicate. "No way," Dick says he was told. "There's nothing going on in his brain."

"Tell him a joke," Dick countered. They did. Rick laughed. Turns out a lot was going on in his brain. Rigged up with a computer that allowed him to control the cursor by touching a switch with the side of his head, Rick was finally able to communicate. First words? "Go Bruins!" And after a high school classmate was paralyzed in an accident and the school organized a charity run for him, Rick pecked out, "Dad, I want to do that."

Yeah, right. How was Dick, a self-described "porker" who never ran more than a mile at a time, going to push his son five miles? Still, he tried. "Then it was me who was handicapped," Dick says. "I was sore for two weeks." That day changed Rick's life. "Dad," he typed, "when we were running, it felt like I wasn't disabled anymore!"

And that sentence changed Dick's life. He became obsessed with giving Rick that feeling as often as he could. He got into such hard-belly shape that he and Rick were ready to try the 1979 Boston Marathon. "No way," Dick was told by a race official. The Hoyts weren't quite a single runner, and they weren't quite a wheelchair competitor. For a few years, Dick and Rick just joined the massive field and ran anyway, then they found a way to get into the race officially: In 1983 they ran another marathon so fast they made the qualifying time for Boston the following year. Then somebody said, "Hey, Dick, why not a triathlon?"

How's a guy who never learned to swim and hadn't ridden a bike since he was six going to haul his 110-pound kid through a triathlon? Still, Dick tried.

Now they've done 212 triathlons, including four grueling 15-hour Ironmans in Hawaii. It must be a buzzkill to be a 25-year-old stud getting passed by an old guy towing a grown man in a dinghy, don't you think? Hey, Dick, why not see how you'd do on your own? "No way," he says. Dick does it purely for "the awesome feeling"

he gets seeing Rick with a cantaloupe smile as they run, swim and ride together.

This year, at ages 65 and 43, Dick and Rick finished their 24th Boston Marathon, in 5,083rd place out of more than 20,000 starters. Their best time?

Two hours, 40 minutes in 1992--only 35 minutes off the world record, which, in case you don't keep track of these things, happens to be held by a guy who was not pushing another man in a wheelchair at the time.

"No question about it," Rick types. "My dad is the Father of the Century."

And Dick got something else out of all this too. Two years ago he had a mild heart attack during a race. Doctors found that one of his arteries was 95% clogged. "If you hadn't been in such great shape," One doctor told him, "you probably would've died 15 years ago." So, in a way, Dick and Rick saved each other's life.

Rick, who has his own apartment (he gets home care) and works in Boston, and Dick, retired from the military and living in Holland, Mass., always find ways to be together. They give speeches around the country and compete in some backbreaking race every weekend, including this Father's Day.

That night, Rick will buy his dad dinner, but the thing he really wants to give him is a gift he can never buy.

"The thing I'd most like," Rick types, "is that my dad sit in the chair and I push him once."



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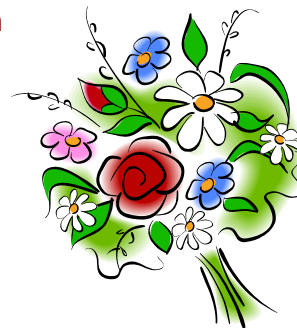
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