



# Benjamin Rose today!

HELPING PEOPLE AGE SUCCESSFULLY Vol. 2, No. 2

## Strategic Plan Guides Benjamin Rose toward the Future

After months of meetings, focus groups, and other input from stakeholders, partners, and community members, Benjamin Rose has formulated a strategic plan outlining a series of attainable goals by the year 2006. The plan reinforces and guides the organization's commitment to sharpen direct-services performance, modeling what can be done in the real world with finite resources, and broadens Benjamin Rose's leadership role in research and advocacy.

"This plan will help us establish, or in some cases deepen our investment in, our niche," Benjamin Rose President/CEO Richard Browdie said. "We can be an exemplar of how to do things differently, and then show others how to do it."

*The plan reinforces and guides the organization's commitment to sharpen direct-services performance*

The Strategic Planning Committee, chaired by Board Member Jennifer Langston, kicked off the process in October 2002 with a launch event involving nearly 80 people. They included board members, representatives from the various areas of Benjamin Rose, senior management, and representatives from community organizations, local health-care organizations, universities, colleges, and funders. Max Stark of Max Stark & Associates served as consultant/facilitator throughout the eight-month process.

The plan focuses on Benjamin Rose's strengths while acknowledging current weaknesses and establishes benchmarks to be reached by 2004 that will lead to the achievement of key results by 2006. These key results include providing more effective direct services, broadening the organization's impact on larger systems, improving internal operations, and enhancing the financial strength of Benjamin Rose.

Development of the campus, Benjamin Rose Place, is high on the list of priorities. The Kethley House debt will be restructured, saving the organization money, and feasibility studies will determine the most efficient, mission-driven use of facilities and the possibility of centralizing operations on the campus.

## From the desk of Richard Browdie

An enduring contradiction in life is that one of the few things that remains constant is the need to adapt to change. For that reason, it is important for



Richard Browdie

agencies like Benjamin Rose to periodically examine its policies and practices to assure we are going in a direction that will enable us to have the greatest impact consistent with the values we hold as being most important and the resources we are likely to be able to command. They call this process strategic planning.

We have recently finished eight months of work that has culminated in our strategic plan for the period from 2003 through 2006. More than 80 representatives of community agencies gave of their time and insight, and numerous hours of research and discussion on the part of members of the

Board of Directors and staff of Benjamin Rose went into the planning process. It is particularly challenging for an organization like ours, with its long and diverse history of service provision and research activities, to choose what things it will emphasize, since we are interested



*(continued inside)*

*(continued inside)*

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**Apartments Open in Margaret Wagner House**

Named in honor of Benjamin Rose's first executive director, Margaret Wagner House opened on Euclid Heights Boulevard in January 1961 as a "rest home." Mrs. Wagner scrupulously oversaw construction of the facility at a cost of \$2.2 million.

The same commitment that at the time led the *Plain Dealer* to tout Margaret Wagner House as "a model for the nation" can be seen in the facility's recent "facelift." The fourth and fifth floors of the building have been refurbished into 18 one-bedroom and six studio apartments for low-income renters age 62 and older.

The Margaret Wagner Apartments were dedicated on May 14, 2003.

"These apartments are an example of Benjamin Rose's commitment to provide high quality supportive housing for the elderly at an affordable cost," said Lynne Kearns, vice president of housing and campus development.

For additional information on the Margaret Wagner Apartments, call 216.373.1749.



Cleveland Heights Mayor Edward J. Kelley and Benjamin Rose President/CEO Richard Browdie (back row) look on as Board members Catherine LoPresti and Patricia Frutig prepare to cut the ribbon and officially dedicate the Margaret Wagner Apartments.



Board Chair Catherine LoPresti addresses guests at the dedication.

(Below) Eighteen one-bedroom and six studio apartments offer comfortable, affordable living space.



**Benjamin Rose** Summer 2003  
**today!**  
HELPING PEOPLE AGE SUCCESSFULLY Vol. 2, No. 2

**SUMMER 2003 Volume 2, No. 2**

*Benjamin Rose today!* is published by the Institutional Advancement division of Benjamin Rose.

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**Strategic Plan Guides** *(continued from front)*

The strategic plan also calls for Benjamin Rose to be a leader in research and advocacy on aging-related issues. With the fulfillment of this goal, the organization will be at the forefront of a regional consortium of service providers for older adults to develop and test best-practice models.

*Throughout the strategic planning process, all those involved looked to the mission and values of Benjamin Rose to guide decisions in developing goals.*

**Our Mission**

To advance the health, independence, and dignity of older adults by raising the standards for quality of care.

**Our Values**

- Compassionate care
- Programmatic innovation informed by research
- Advocacy that makes a difference
- Respect for the dignity of those we serve and those who serve them
- Integrity and fairness
- Dedication to excellence
- Respect for cultural and ethnic diversity
- Responsible stewardship of our resources, while also maintaining a commitment to serve those with limited resources
- Collaboration and partnership

*A summary of the Strategic Plan was mailed to our constituents in July. If you didn't receive your copy, please call 216.373.1607.*

**Browdie** *(continued from front)*

in virtually everything that might help to improve the lives of older people in the Greater Cleveland area and beyond.

But, in these days of increasingly constrained resources, making those kinds of choices is even more important.

The results of our plan, like Benjamin Rose itself, are broad and ambitious. There are a few themes, however, that spring from our unique history, and that define what we stand for in very clear terms. The first is our enduring commitment to primarily serve older people with limited resources. The second is to focus our research and service activities on issues that will help to advance the cause of improving policies and practices in services for older persons. And the third is to become more visible and active as an advocate for the interests of older people locally, at the state level, and nationally.

A key element in our plan is the determination to develop our residential services including expansion of rental units at Margaret Wagner House and residential services at Benjamin Rose Place. As readers of this newsletter, a group that is both familiar with the Greater Cleveland area and the needs of older people, you are invited to share your thoughts with us as we begin our work.

Benjamin Rose has always been at the forefront of change, and so we will remain. It is never easy to lead by example, but always exciting.

**Research Analyst Brenda Peters**

“Coming to work at the Margaret Blenkner Research Institute in the Fall of 1999 was exciting for me on many levels.



My project entailed evaluation research with a rare combination of

approaches – a real

opportunity to gain valuable

experience. I was also excited to be working on topics related to aging, in an organization benefiting older adults. As one of those ‘four-going-on-forty’ kids growing up, I have always been more comfortable with people much older than myself, and having worked in a nursing home and estate planning, it was rewarding to have my head and my heart cooperating in the same job.

“One day as I was making copies of a survey instrument, I noticed an old flyer from one of Benjamin Rose’s programs on the bulletin board asking for simple items for its activities department. I think the person in the next office could see the light bulb go off over my head. Of course, things like cookie sheets, skeins of yarn, and audio tapes might be wonderful for clients, but would not be easy for program staff to obtain. And how often does an average person have these very odds and ends in perfectly good shape but not want them any more? Further, I knew that people working for Benjamin Rose in any capacity often did so out of a desire to help older people, though working at the downtown office meant they had little direct contact with the clients. Doing a little legwork to make another connection between the downtown folks and the direct care programs seemed like a natural thing to do. *(continued on back)*

*(continued from inside)*

"I called each of the direct care programs and compiled a 'wish list' for each, then found some unused file boxes and labeled one for each program. I then sent e-mails to the central office staff encouraging them to gather unneeded but useable items for me to take over to the direct care programs periodically. All sorts of little items appeared in the collection boxes, most anonymously, and I or one of my coworkers delivered them when we had meetings in the area. Items worth at least a few hundred dollars in total, including baking supplies, books on tape, craft supplies, toiletries, and blankets or quilts, have made the trip from the central office to the direct care programs. Unfortunately, the prolonged illness which has kept me out of the office for much of the past two years has interrupted these activities, but I'm encouraged to see steps being taken to make the process more official and regular."

*Kethley House residents truly appreciate these in-kind gifts, which help to enrich their quality of life. If you would like to donate items – or your time as a volunteer – contact Mary Grant at 216.373.1807.*

## A RETIREMENT CELEBRATION



**Gladys Dale, Kethley House Volunteer Extraordinaire, recently announced her retirement. Gladys has been helping Kethley House residents and staff since our opening in 1997. Pictured at her "retirement celebration" are (from left) President and CEO Richard Browdie, Gwen Williams, and Gladys. Our sincere thank you, Gladys and best wishes!**

### Four Stars for Benjamin Rose

Benjamin Rose was among 10 local nonprofit organizations to receive a 4 Star rating from Charity Navigator, according to recent report in the *Plain Dealer*. The ranking, based on tax returns, denotes an organization that "outperforms its peers and exceeds industry standards."

The complete list is available on the web at [charitynavigator.org](http://charitynavigator.org).

Did you know...  
You can designate Benjamin Rose to receive your United Way contributions?

## SENIOR COMPANION PROGRAM RECEIVES GRANT

For 22 years, through the Senior Companion program at Benjamin Rose, older adult volunteers have provided companionship and assistance to their peers who may be feeling lonely or isolated. Thanks to a \$50,000 grant from the Corporation for Community and National Service, the Benjamin Rose program will be able to expand by 12 new companions in coming months. Housed in Community/In-Home Services, the program is one of only two in Ohio to receive the grant funds.

The grant was offered as part of a homeland security initiative. In addition to simple companionship, the new elder volunteers will monitor clients and make sure they have a disaster plan in place.

For additional information on the Senior Companion Program, call 216.791.8000.

At-Your-Call is now Benjamin Rose Home Care.  
Call 216.373.1799 for information.

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## Development News

### Kethley House Residents enjoy Ice Cream Parlor

Thanks to the generosity of John and Lisa Reed, owners of Arhaus Furniture, and Jennifer Langston, Benjamin Rose board member since 1986, Kethley House residents, families, guests and staff are enjoying new furniture in the Ice Cream Parlor at Kethley House. And, yes, the ice cream comes in a variety of flavors!

Pictured are (*front row, from left*) residents Mary Rakopoulos and Elaine Hahn joining Jennifer Langston and Kethley House Administrator Mary Grant at the parlor dedication in May.



## We Can't Thank You Enough . . .

With the **Rededication of Margaret Wagner House** and the **Grand Opening of the Margaret Wagner Apartments**, it is our pleasure to give "credit where credit is due" and say thanks to the donors that made this renovation possible. THANK YOU!

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