



The ROGERSON RECORD

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From The Desk Of President James F. Seagle, Jr.



In this column, I often refer to my mom. She is the elder with whom I am most intimately connected and whose life I know the most about. She is 90, lives pretty much independently albeit with help from many friends and her family. She has suffered two fairly major strokes, both of which she recovered from after extensive rehabilitation. She has the usual aches and pains but has serious pain in one knee and one hip that only responds to nerve blocking injections. And, she just got back from Paris.

For her 90th birthday, my siblings and I gave her the Paris trip. With the exception

of one trip to Mexico as a child and one trip to Nova Scotia, her travel has been constrained to the lower 48 states. With many mouths to feed on a firefighter's salary, trips to Europe were never on the schedule even if my Dad were so inclined, which he was not. Alone, in retirement, her pennies have got to be pinched. But now a girlhood dream has come true. Together with my youngest sister, she has spent the past ten days gallivanting around Paris, France.

For those of you who have not been there, I will tell you my view. Paris is the most beautiful city that I can imagine. And, imagining Mom's expression at that first viewing makes me smile. Some might question the importance or the advisability of sending someone so old and so frail to gay Paris. To them, I can only quote my Mom. She told me once, "When people look at me, they see

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A Closer Look A Slice of Rogerson Life



Photo by: Lisa Natalichio

From left to right: Keynote speaker Dr. Walter Leutz, Board Member John Cupples, Treasurer Shelley Kaplan, and Clerk Anne Marie Boursiquot King take a break from breakfast to pose for a picture.

Rogerson Communities hosted its 149th Annual Meeting on May 14, and shared the work we do with Board Members, Overseers, and other Rogerson supporters. The event featured a farewell to retiring board members and a keynote address from Dr. Walter Leutz.

While the breakfast and the farewell were tasty and meaningful (respectively), it was Leutz who was able to shed light on the work that we do and provide direction for the future.

Leutz teaches about long-term care and aging at the Heller School for Social Policy and Management at Brandeis University. His address focused on what it means to be healthy and how people who don't fit in the predetermined mold for "successful aging" can still age healthfully.

"If you look at the media, you will think that everyone who is aging is part of a couple and on vacation," Leutz joked. As Rogerson employees, we know all too well that just isn't the case.

So what about the people who don't fit into the mold—the people who are aging with chronic illness, dementia, or another debilitating condition? Can they age

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Employee Profile

Mimi Petrino

Listen to Rogerson House Receptionist **Mimi Petrino's** typical day at the office, and you might just think that her official title was "Professional Problem Solver" or maybe "Professional Chaos Calmer." But in fact those tasks are just a part of what Mimi does for Rogerson House.

"We are very busy here," Mimi said, adding "Professional Understater" to the list. "I interact with families, greet vendors, direct phone calls, and try to provide an upbeat environment for people who are going through a hard time in their lives."

Mimi came to Rogerson House twelve years ago, when an old co-worker who joined the Rogerson House team recommended her for the position. "I love the people here," Mimi explained. "I love that I get to interact with everyone from the vendors to the family members, and I take pride in the fact that everyone who comes through the door says that Rogerson House is such a happy place."

A Belmont native and resident, Mimi's most valuable lessons came



Photo by: Lisa Natalichio

from her own varied life. The mother of three, Mimi worked as everything from Cub Scout leader to Hospitality Manager for her children's schools. When her husband was diagnosed with terminal cancer 16 years ago, she began to plan for her future by taking a computer class. "My husband's passing helps me to understand the sadness that many of the families here feel," Mimi explained. Shortly after, Mimi joined the workforce. Once she found Rogerson House, she knew she had found the perfect fit.

In her free time, Mimi enjoys knitting, dancing and doing crafts. She is also an avid traveler and has been around the world—literally. Her travels have taken her to Egypt, Ireland, London, Scotland, and beyond. But no location is more exciting for her than that of her children's homes. Living in Manhattan, Salem, and on the Cape—Mimi's three children and grandchild are living proof of her life's work.

Getting to Know Mimi

Favorite Music 50's oldies

Favorite Color Yellow

Place of Residence Belmont

At Rogerson Since November, 1997

Hobby of Interest Dancing

From the Desk (Continued)

a wrinkled and gray old lady; what they don't see is the 16-year-old girl looking back at them."

Front Page (Continued)

successfully? Leutz thinks so.

"If you ask elders how they define health, they will tell you that being healthy means, 'getting up and doing,'" Leutz explained. "This means that elders need something to do, a way to get there, and the ability to do the thing they want to do," Leutz added.

Leutz referenced our adult day health programs and congratulated Rogerson on the fact that not only do these programs provide a place for people to go, our vans provide a way for elders to stay engaged even after they have lost the ability to drive or use public transportation safely.

"It is not just the healthy and wealthy who are aging well," Leutz concluded. "Health is all about doing well with the hand that you have been dealt"—an important lesson for anyone whose life doesn't resemble vacation advertisements.

Summer Stories



A 3-month series of Rogerson employees in the summer sun.

Q: How did you spend your Memorial Day weekend?

A: It was a big weekend. On Friday night we had a cookout. Then, on Saturday we decided to rip out the kitchen wall to make the kitchen a little more spacious. On Sunday the project extended to ripping up the floor and tearing down the wallpaper, and on Monday we took a break from the renovations and had my mother and mother-in-law over for a relaxing day of swimming and dominos.
-Carleton House Property Manager Maggie Gonzalez-Colon

Dignity, Longevity, Vitality Rogerson's Mission in Action

Staying mentally sharp is a priority – not only for our residents and participants, but also for employees. While heredity has been linked to illnesses that decrease cognitive function, there are steps that we can take, both for those we serve and also for ourselves, that can sustain, maintain, and even heal our minds.

One of the most proven means of staying mentally sharp has nothing to do with your mind, and everything to do with your body. Exercise is one of the surest ways to keep your mind intact. Fitness FIRST Coordinator **Bonnie Opyoke** explained, “Much like our arteries, the brain gets blockages that exercise helps push through.” She also added, “When you take care of your body, and keep yourself happy and healthy, your mind is able to function at its peak ability.”

Managing stress has also been linked to peak cognitive function. It makes sense—when your mind is bogged down with worries, there is no way it will be able to operate the best that it can. Rogerson Egleston ADHP Manager **Paula Tishel** explained, “Managing stress is so important to mental functioning. Getting a good night's sleep, prioritizing, and learning to say no are some of the best tips that I have for making sure the mind can focus on what is truly important.”

The relationship between mind and body is undeniable. So, if you want your mind to function the best that it can, think about what you are putting into your body. Rogerson House Director of Food Services **Adam Perry** recommends a diet rich in antioxidants to help sustain and improve cognitive function. “There have been studies that link fast food to



Photo by: Anne Morton Smith

Gardening is not only a good source of exercise, but it is also stress relieving (see back panel) making it a great way to stay mentally fit. Pictured above: Rogerson Roslindale ADHP participants Terry Resse and John Hynes show off centerpieces they planted for the Egleston Square Main Street Annual Meeting.

Alzheimer's,” Perry explained. “While it is hard to prove anything for sure, eating lots of nuts, berries and other foods rich in antioxidants helps the mind sustain and repair ability.”

And finally, after all that work exercising, managing stress, and eating right, let your mind have some fun. Rogerson Roslindale ADHP Activities Coordinator (and fun expert) **Kellee Lee** makes sure that day program participants are challenged – in a good way. “We play Jeopardy, complete crosswords, solve riddles, and play trivia games,” she explained. “It is productive, because the mind has to work for the answers. And when the mind works, it makes new connections.”

For a fun riddle to mull over (before your workout, while eating your berries and planning how to get a good night's sleep) chew on this:

I can be covert, secret, or published for the world to see. I guide boards and staff, and programs are based on me. I am also the basis of this article. What am I?

Answer: A Mission

News & Events

Congratulations!

Congratulations to Communications and Marketing Associate **Lisa Natalicchio** (who also writes *The Rogerson Record*) on her recent graduation from Emerson College with a Master's of Fine Arts in Creative Writing.



Photo by: Eric Antoniou

A Big Thank You ...

A big thank you to all of our nursing professionals who work so hard to advocate for the health of our residents and participants. Rogerson could not provide the excellent level of care that is our standard without your dedication.

The Rogerson Review

Books and movies that show elders and those with disabilities living meaningful and engaged lives are all around!

The Book	<u>Water for Elephants</u>
Author	Sara Gruen
The Plot	A 90-year-old man reflects on his time in the circus and examines two unlikely friendships that literally saved his life.
The Reviewer	Rogerson Roslindale ADHP Manager Kathy Poissant
The Verdict	<i>Water for Elephants</i> is a delightful book that I found to be fun, exciting and so nostalgic you could almost hear the barbershop quartet playing in the background. This book is a great read with a few surprises along the way.

To read the book for yourself, check it out from Rogerson's lending library, located in the Communications and Marketing Associate's office at One Florence St., Boston, MA 02131.

HR Focus

Leyre Gillis

Human Resources Manager



Last month we discussed what ‘qualifying events’ were, and how they impact your ability to make changes to your insurance benefits outside of open enrollment. There is one benefit,

however, in which you can enroll at any time during the year: **your 403(b) retirement savings plan.**

All employees who work 1,000 hours at Rogerson Communities are eligible to participate in our retirement savings plan, which is administered by Principal Financial Group. The idea of a retirement savings plan is just what it sounds like – save money towards your retirement. And at Rogerson, we couldn’t make it easier to save. Once you

decide how much money to put aside each pay period, we will set it up so that amount is automatically deducted from each pay check (pre-tax!).

Think it all sounds too good to be true? Well brace yourself, because you haven’t even heard about the free money part yet. After your first year of employment, if you are contributing some portion of your paycheck towards your 403(b), Rogerson Communities will

match whatever you are contributing, up to 4% of your salary. For instance, if you have been employed for one year, and are contributing 2% of your salary, Rogerson will match your 2% contribution.

For more details on enrolling in this plan, please visit or call the Human Resources office. Even if your retirement seems far off in the future, it is never too early to start thinking about how you’ll fund that period in your life.

Healthy Rogerson

April showers bring May flowers, but what do Mayflowers bring? Pilgrims! This cute childhood ditty leaves out one important piece of the equation, though. Turns out that it takes more than April showers to get flowers to bloom ... and maybe that’s a good thing.

Gardening is a great form of exercise, helps manage stress, and is a wonderful (and eco-friendly) way to supplement your grocery list. Gardening also connects us to nature, which has therapeutic value in and of itself.

You don’t need to be a gardening pro, or even have a green thumb, to get started. Just follow

these steps and be on the road to the garden of your dreams. First, invest in good soil. Your nursery or home improvement store should be able to guide you in the right direction. Next plan what and where you are going to plant. Low-maintenance perennials are a great way to start.

Since plants do well in controlled environments,

consider planting in either a planter (great for the apartment dweller) or raised beds. Also try to group plants with similar needs next to each other.

And finally, recruit help! No one said you need to do all the work alone. Get family members, neighbors, and friends on board. You will find that not only will your yard bloom, your relationships will as well.

New Hires & Promotions

Priscilla Bencosme
Certified Nursing Assistant
Rogerson House

MaryBeth Boyce
Resident Service Coordinator
Farnsworth House

Barbara Flynn
Wellness Director
Rogerson House

Maule Laventure
Per Diem Program Assistant
Rogerson Roslindale ADHP

The ROGERSON RECORD

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Story ideas? News items? Comments?
Email news@rogerson.org or call 617-469-5847.

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