



### • RAISING THE QUALITY OF LIFE FOR SURVIVORS OF BRAIN INJURY •

## Making Music - Having Fun

Music. Listening to it. Creating it. Even performing it has become a very popular activity at all Supportive Living residential communities. Music is the theme of this winter's newsletter, and using a few photos and updates we hope to show just how important and beneficial music can be, especially for people living with chronic brain injury.



## Music Therapy

Music therapy is the evidence-based use of music interventions to accomplish individualized goals with a therapeutic relationship by a credentialed professional. Music therapy can be designed to help individuals living with brain injury to: encourage wellness, manage stress, express feelings, enhance memory, improve communication, and promote physical rehabilitation. These benefits are all part of the **Total Health** initiative at Supportive Living. But just as important as these benefits is the friendly, social and FUN environment it creates.



*Scott Galvin, Woburn Mayor*

## The Mayor and the Music

This past December Woburn Mayor Scott Galvin visited Warren House to hear the residents perform "their" song. The song was something they wrote about their lives with brain injury, and was performed with the assistance of Nicole Berke from The Real School of Music. The mayor's visit to Warren House was to learn about Supportive Living's wellness programs – like music – and how these programs could benefit residents of Woburn.



## Board of Directors

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The Board of Directors of Supportive Living, Inc. is made up of concerned citizens from the community who are committed to the mission of SLI. They include family members of survivors, business leaders, physicians and professionals in the field of brain injury.

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## Winter Update

Music at Supportive Living residential communities is becoming an ongoing activity enjoyed by residents, staff, neighbors, friends and families. This newsletter highlights the role and benefits that music can have in the life of someone living with chronic brain injury. Music is the most recent of our health and wellness programs that we are now offering to survivors of brain injury living in our local communities. These programs have been created by Supportive Living and are being provided as part of our Total Health initiative.

**Total Health** is a comprehensive, holistic approach to meet the unique needs of people living with chronic brain injury. Total Health regards the brain and body as integrated and inseparable, and offers complementing physical, cognitive and social fitness programs to help improve life for survivors of brain injury. Total Health community programs have been piloted at Supportive Living, and refined to meet the special needs of our population. This year we will offer the following Total Health programs and classes to the brain-injured community:

- Physical Fitness
- Music Appreciation and Therapy
- Cooking and Nutrition
- Game Clubs
- Horticulture Therapy and Gardening
- Expressive and Creative Arts
- Social and Support Groups
- Special events, and more

Supportive Living will be offering many of these programs at each of our four residential communities located in Lexington, North Reading, Rockport and Woburn.

Total Health is the latest offering from Supportive Living designed to help improve life for survivors of brain injury. Total Health confirms our commitment to leverage whatever resources are available to serve the needs of these deserving individuals.

- Peter J. Noonan, Executive Director

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## With Sympathy

Over the past few months Supportive Living has lost two of our long-time residents. In December, on Christmas Day, Peter Chochrek of McLaughlin House passed away. Then in February we lost Sheila Fitzgerald of Warren House. Both of these wonderful people have been residents at SLI since the early days. They were truly family. Peter's smile and Sheila's wit made every day a little more special for those they touched. Our condolences to the family and friends of these two special individuals. We miss you both.



*Peter Chochrek*



*Sheila Fitzgerald*



## More on Music

Few things are more therapeutic than beating on a bongo or drum. If you have never tried it, then come join us. At least four times a year we are treated to a concert from Ten Tumbao, an Afro-Latino-Caribbean band. This energetic group visits each of our residential programs and performs a drum circle, with participants involved. In the drum circles, everyone has a percussion instrument of some type, and is given a role to play as part of the band. For those with any physical limitation we have someone to help out. Ten Tumbao concerts are open to our friends in the brain injury community. Check out our website under Total Health for the next event.



## Music is Everywhere

When we took time to look at all the different music related activities we have at Supportive Living it was surprising. At **McLaughlin House** there is a monthly Karaoke program. At **Douglas House** regular piano concerts are given by Mark West, a local musician. **Warren House** has been hosting the music enrichment program offered through the Real School of Music. Each of these houses are also fortunate to have **Sounds of Grace**, a group of singers who volunteer time every month to provide an opportunity for a group concert. At **Old Farm Rockport** a few residents take music therapy classes regularly, and over the holidays had a surprise fiddle concert. It just happens that living next to Old Farm Rockport are two young ladies, sisters, who are also well known fiddlers and wanted to share their music. We also have a young harpist scheduled to perform at several of our houses.



Neurologic Music therapy (NMT) is now a certified therapy and has been demonstrated at SLI's **Brain Injury Wellness Center** in Lexington. Last year professionals from **MedRhythms** showed how music can be used as the intervention to help stimulate different motor functions. We watched first hand as music was used to increase the walking speed of a person disabled by a traumatic brain injury.

Another source of music, which we did not expect, was from one of the stroke participants in physical fitness. One afternoon while working on the treadmill this gentleman began singing one of his favorite tunes. He was loud, clear, and had a nice voice. What amazed us was how well he could sing when we all knew how hard it was for him to speak.

## Making Music Available

Starting this June Supportive Living, through our Total Health Wellness programs, will be offering music classes at Warren House in Woburn to anyone living with chronic brain injury in the area. Those survivors, along with anyone they wish to bring, are welcome to join the group. As of this writing we are also developing a 10-week music program to be offered at Old Farm Rockport. More information on these programs is available on our website under Total Health.

# Music on the Brain



Our brain loves anticipation. The pleasure that we derive from music is chiefly related to the intermingling of anticipation and surprise – you start listening to a tune, find a repeating pattern in it and then start anticipating the pattern. This anticipation is thrilling and so is the moment when anticipation and reality meet. However, too much predictability can start to get boring, so musicians throw in little elements of surprise – when the brain is anticipating something but gets something else, perhaps even better than what it was anticipating. These little surprises are pleasant for the brain too.

CureJoy Editorial, "Why Does Your Brain Love It When You Dance?"2.14.17.

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## Yes, it's time to think golf!

Please join us on **June 26th** for the

25th Annual Supportive Living, Inc.

### *Douglas Stephens Memorial* Golf Tournament

Andover Country Club

60 Canterbury Street | Andover, MA 01810

**Registration is available online or  
by calling 781-937-3199.**

781-937-3199 | [www.supportivelivinginc.org](http://www.supportivelivinginc.org)

Supportive Living, Inc. is a non-profit organization formed to create long-term housing options for people who have sustained a brain injury.

Return Service Requested

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