



# VillaVoice

Providing Love,  
Care and Hope for  
Individuals with  
Disabilities and their  
Families since 1961

Villa Esperanza Services Quarterly Newsletter • Volume 2 • Summer 2007

## RYAN ROSE: *A Life Not Defined by Autism*

by Robert Efford—Director of Employment & Transition Services

I rushed to catch up to Ryan as he slipped into the store like he's done for over three years, past the cashiers and down an aisle to a door marked "Employees Only." I hesitated. "Ryan, am I allowed..." He grinned and motioned for me to follow him into the staff room, where Ryan was met by a chorus of greetings. Ryan stuck his hand out to a new employee and smiled warmly, "Hi, I'm Ryan, a manager."

Those words still ring in my ears, "I'm Ryan, a manager." The confidence in his voice; his body language. If the moment had words, it would say: "I belong here. This is mine."

Ryan Rose is economically and socially plugged into his community. He's even someone's boss. How great is that.

After three years of steadily increasing responsibilities at PetSmart in Westlake Village, the regional director promoted Ryan to manager. Ryan applied and was appointed to Tri-Counties Regional Center Board of Directors. He even moved into his own apartment.

Watching Ryan interact with surprising ease and confidence with his colleagues made me ponder, how did a young man

with autism get this far? What struck me is that Ryan is not *defined* by his disability. Ryan will readily acknowledge that autism has posed a constant, unrelenting struggle in his life, from childhood through his transition to adulthood. But Ryan has never said it will limit him. He's always been hopeful and determined, thanks to strong support from his family in concert with Tri-Counties Regional Center staff, Department of Rehabilitation, and Villa Esperanza Services.

Ryan's story is a testimony of hope we can all embrace. So what's next for Ryan Rose? Someone special to share the journey.



Ryan Rose

# Message from the CEO

## 2007-2008

### BOARD OF DIRECTORS

AnnMarie Flaherty, Chairman

Karen Brown

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R-lene Mijares de Lang

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Harlan P. Tripp

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Dottie Cebula Nelson, MSW, MSG

### ENDOWMENT FUND

Rita Milostan, Chairman

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Caring Hearts

Debra Hart

Villa Esperanza Guild

Vrajesh Lal

Tournament of Hope

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Nancy B. Pierson

Christopher Vicino

Robert Wedemeyer



What is excellence? This is the question Villa has been asking and it has many answers—quality, caring programs that meet the needs of the individuals we serve, good community relationships, achieving goals we have set, an organization based on high ethical standards, stepping forward for individually tailored services, training for excellence—excellence is Villa Esperanza Services.

We have welcomed our new fiscal year with much joy and excitement. As we begin the second year of our three year strategic plan, we have reviewed our goals and accessed that 96% have been implemented—excellence is Villa. This 2nd year, the Year of Investment, is all about planning and creating a strong infrastructure that will carry Villa into the decades ahead. The management team is working on upgrading staff salaries and benefits, increasing amounts and types of trainings to assist staff to be the best they can be for our clients. The Weingart Foundation has awarded Villa with a 3-year grant totalling \$830,000 to assist with strengthening organizational and leadership capacity. We also received a grant from the Ahmanson Foundation for \$300,000 to assist with the purchase of a property we have been renting for program offices.

Villa's Board of Directors held their annual retreat in June. Prior to this meeting they were surveyed on-line by Board Source, a national organization. Our Board was ranked in the top 5% of boards nationwide—excellence is Villa!

July was Staff Appreciation Month in which we held several events to celebrate our terrific staff and thank them. As we move forward and continue in excellence, we always want to be sure to say thank you to those that are a part of the team.

Thank you to all of you for your support of Villa and the very special children, adults and seniors we serve.

Dottie Cebula Nelson  
CEO

What is Excellence?  
Providing Love, Care and Hope...  
Villa Esperanza Services

## Volunteers

July 1 marks the first day of our new fiscal year. We thank our out-going Board Chairman, Jim McDermott for his leadership and congratulate new Board Chairman, AnnMarie Flaherty. We welcome four new board members—Thomas Coston, Business Consultant; Lauren Frankel with Capital Group Companies; John T. Kelly with Whittier Trust Company; Harlan P. Tripp, retired business owner, representing the Pasadena Civitan Club.

San Marino Girl Scout Troop # 444 held a carnival for our students here at Villa. The afternoon included lawn bowling, magic tricks, face painting, and more. Thank you to the troop for planning, coordinating and implementing a fun day! The troop also donated materials for the classrooms.



Christopher, Room 5, enjoying stamp designs with Girl Scout and Villa Volunteer, Marion Riley Campbell.



(l to r) Finance Team Larry Sallows, Jamie Robe, Antonio Del Rosario, Julia Tsang and Vicky Castillo



(l to r) LaRonda Saxton and Claudia Cortez, part of the Dimensions Team

## Excellence is—Villa's Employees

Villa's Board of Directors designated July as Staff Appreciation Month. We celebrated the excellent staff and said thank you with a variety of events - breakfast prepared and served by the management team, dinner in the West Region, an ice cream social and dinner hosted by the Board and catered by Mijares Mexican Restaurant. Thank you to all the Villa employees for giving graciously of themselves and providing quality services.

Congratulations and thank you to the following individuals for their dedicated service to Villa:

### COMPLETED 3 YEARS OF SERVICE

Clyde Acabal  
Jeannette Arellano  
Krystle Bagby  
Andy Garcia  
Cheyenne Gonzalez  
Genny Guadalquivir  
Stella McMahon  
Karin Moore  
Norman Pangracs  
Anita Paredes  
Sherna Reid  
Margaret Riley  
Katherine Rojas  
Mary Rusin  
Margarita Santacruz  
Ed Volk

### COMPLETED 5 YEARS OF SERVICE

Jenny Barnett  
Shenee Brunston  
Cheryl Franco  
Segundino Gotladera  
Nicola Keller  
Judith Mwazo  
Genoveva Perez  
Velkis Rosas  
Maria Sangalang

### COMPLETED 10 YEARS OF SERVICE

Vicky Castillo  
Lourdes Chico  
Joyce Duran  
Damion Lee

### COMPLETED 10 YEARS OF SERVICE (continued)

Jimmy Manibo  
Donna McGregor  
Dottie Nelson  
Andrew Rosecrans  
Kelly White

### COMPLETED 15 YEARS OF SERVICE

Gioia Pastre

### ABOVE AND BEYOND AWARDS

Danny Alvarez  
Aida Enriquez  
Rosa Galifi  
Priscilla Garcia  
Segundino Gotladera  
Kelly Gregory  
Valerie Guardado  
Robert Hernandez  
Lourdes Mendez  
Fabian Ojeda  
Maria Ramirez  
Jamie Robe  
Frances Sands  
Annabelle Santos  
Gloria Tryon  
Judith Valmonte

### RIISING STARS AWARDS

Renee Rivera  
LaRonda Saxton  
Marvin Untalan

### LEADERSHIP AWARD

Michelle Cox



**EMPLOYEE OF THE YEAR AWARD**  
Cynthia Davis

### MOVIN' ON UP

*We are very happy to announce many well deserved staff promotions. These positive changes strengthen Villa as we continue along the path of becoming a Center of Excellence. Please join us in congratulating all of these great Villa team members!*

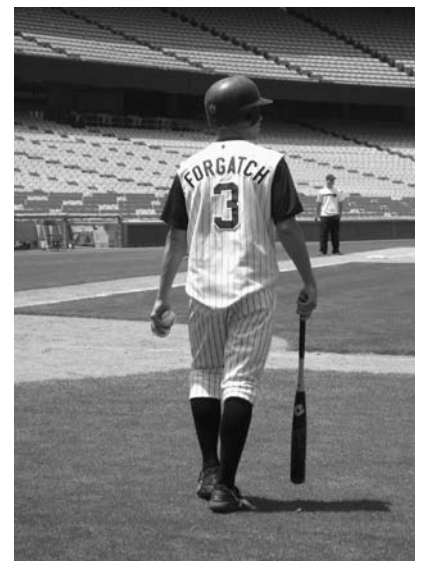
Deserie Areola, School Administrative Assistant  
Michelle Cox, Director of Development  
Michelle De Los Santos, Project Director  
Ricardo Johnson, Assistant Director of Residential Services  
Damion Lee, Director of Residential Services  
Ed Volk, Vice President of Training for Excellence

## FIELD OF DREAMS

Greg Forgatch and friends hit a home run for Villa at the Triple Header held at Dodger Stadium on Sunday, June 3rd. The event, like no other, was a true field of dreams for Villa raising over \$30,000. The entire stadium, including announcer, Dodger Vision, Dodger dogs, drinks, peanuts and popcorn were available to the 200 person crowd. Individuals were personally invited to play in one of three games—little league, high school or the 'old men's' game. In lieu of an entry fee individuals were asked to make a donation to Villa. Onlookers had a great day and no game would be complete without the 7th Inning Stretch! Thanks Greg for taking Villa 'Out to the Ball Park'!



Villa CEO Dottie Nelson and Vice President of Development Gioia Pastre with Triple Header Host Greg Forgatch



Warming up for the game, Matt Forgatch

*Thank you to all the family members who assisted in the homes so that residential staff could attend the Staff Appreciation Dinner. We appreciate your help!*



# Around Villa

## WORKING HARD FOR THE MONEY

We are pleased to announce the following individuals have accepted positions in the community, congratulations to each of them!

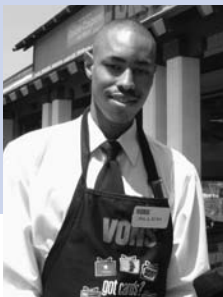
Vicky Alvarez, began work at Vons in Santa Paula this past May. Rodger Allen Barnes joined the Von's team in Pasadena. Mindy Good is celebrating 3 months at Albertson's in Westlake Village; Edwin Jennings began with Vons a year ago and is now working for Starbucks in that same store. Carson Wilk joined Lovebirds Cafe in Pasadena.



Edwin Jennings



Carson Wilk



Rodger Allen Barnes



Students, parents and staff dancing the night away.



Katie, room 1, with her mother Bibi Philippou enjoying the evening.

## UNDER THE SEA

In June Villa's Middle and High School classrooms held their first evening dance, themed 'Under the Sea'. The event was a huge success with the majority of students attending. They enjoyed fun games like the limbo and the hula and they danced to great tunes provided by a professional DJ. Carol Eblen, Dustin and Danielle's mom, chaired the event, while Denise and Mark Sparks, Tyler's parents, and Carolyn Navarro, Vanessa's mom, provided decorations and helped with set up.

"What a great thing to see our teenagers having the time of their lives! Singing songs, taking over the floor while dancing with each other, bouncing beach balls with such laughter, now that's success," said Eblen, Event Chair. A huge thank you to all the staff who served on the dance committee and who attended the evening 'Under the Sea'.

## SCHOOL NEWS

Villa's School held their Annual Awards Program in June celebrating the end of a wonderful school year. Each class performed for the audience; there were dance routines and sing alongs for all to enjoy. All students were presented with awards for their accomplishments. Eugene "Ryan" Nadres received his Certificate of Completion from Villa. Congratulations to Ryan and all the students!



Room 5, performing for families and friends at the Annual Awards Program.

Thanks to the generosity of Toyota Motor Sales USA, Inc, Villa will continue to provide music therapy sessions to students with special needs. Toyota awarded our School with a \$5,000 grant. Thank you Toyota!

## ADDRESSING STRATEGIC PLAN GOAL I — ADVOCATING FOR STUDENTS AND CLIENTS

Villa encourages those individuals who can advocate for themselves to do so and become active in decision making processes. Recently Villa's Employment Services held its first official **Client Advisory Council** meeting on June 20th. Each month, the council will meet to discuss concerns and issues of their peers based on the 2008 work schedule provided. Minutes will be taken and outcomes will be documented. A democratic vote was held with each member contributing their nomination for the 5 clients who will make up this council. The following members won the election by majority vote:

Jim Hubinger                 Jackie Stone  
Matthew Lindberg         Carson Wilk  
Debbie Page

Congratulations to all the elected council members, we are very excited by the participation of our workforce!

In addition, Villa's Board of Directors Program Committee is creating an advocacy plan in support of those who cannot speak for themselves. Many of Villa's Management Team Members are also involved in a variety of Community Committees or Councils in support of this goal. Part of Villa's Center of Excellence is to be at the table when discussions and changes are taking place. Below is a partial listing of organizations and committees Villa is a part of:

American Association of Intellectual Disabilities  
City of Los Angeles Department of Aging, member of the 10 year master plan  
CRA (California Rehabilitation Association)  
Coalition of Adult Day Programs  
Coalition for Affordable Housing  
Down syndrome Association  
Foothill Autism Alliance  
Frank D. Lanterman Regional Center—Service provider advisory council and  
A New Day Workgroup  
Pasadena Senior Commission  
San Gabriel Valley Autism Society  
Tri-Counties Committee on Employment  
Ventura County Supported Employment Partnership (VCSEP)

## CLIENT SEMINARS AND TRAININGS

Frank D. Lanterman Regional Center is offering a **Women's Health & Self-Advocacy** support group, which many of our clients are attending. The intent is to teach women with developmental disabilities ways to improve their health such as seeing their doctor yearly and to advocate for their well-being. The group meets the first Thursday of every month here at Villa Esperanza Services. If you are interested in attending please contact Mary Flynn, Peer Advocate at Lanterman Regional Center (213) 383-1300, ext. 759.



Simone, Room 1

## WISH LIST

**Villa is in need of a variety of items. We ask that donations are new or gently used. Thank you.**

### Exercise Equipment—

**Treadmills, Stationary Bikes**

**Deep Freezer**

**Store Gift Cards**

**Patio Furniture**

**Dining Room Tables**

**Couches**

**Pyrex Dishes**

**Vacuums**

**Cash donations are also greatly appreciated.**

**If you are interested in donating to Villa please contact the Development Department at (626) 449-2919, ext. 28.**

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## VILLA CAN HELP

**When caring for a loved one with Alzheimer's disease or any type of dementia, safety becomes a concern. One wants to be certain that their loved one is cared for with love and respect when they no longer can remain home alone. Adult Day Services are a critical component of the long-term care strategy. Villa offers an Adult Day Program tailored for individuals with Alzheimer's or dementia. For more information or to tour the program, please contact Kelly White, COO, at (626) 449-2919, ext. 12.**

# Around Villa *(Continued)*



## **TOURNAMENT OF HOPE IS 20!**

**Join us for Villa's 20TH ANNIVERSARY Tournament of Hope presented by Wells Fargo. The event will take place on Monday, October 1, 2007 at Glendora Country Club and will honor Joe DeFur, Executive Vice President, Regional Managing Director, Wells Fargo. We are setting our sights high and hope to raise \$200,000. For more information, contact us at (626) 449-2919, ext. 62.**

## **AND THE WINNER IS...**

**Villa Esperanza Guild presented Helene Nielson with the Silver Bowl Award at the annual Guild Board Installation Luncheon held at Bob and Judi Moore's home. Congratulations Helene.**

**Betty Weaver, Guild Member and long time Villa supporter, was presented an award by the Los Angeles County Commission on Aging at their 42nd Annual Older Americans Recognition Day. Congratulations and thank you Betty!**

## **VILLA'S RESIDENTS—ON THE ROAD AGAIN**

Individuals in Villa's 9 group homes in Pasadena and Thousand Oaks have been busy attending a variety of events. Thanks to Jason Kerns, son of Board Member Christianne Kerns with Hahn and Hahn, several of our residents enjoyed watching a Clippers Basketball game in style. They cheered from the luxury of the Wells Fargo Corporate Suite at the Staples Center. Though the Clippers lost, our clients had a great time!

Many of our residents attended Villa's Blue & White event held in May at the home of Paulette and Mark Geragos. They enjoyed an afternoon of great food, entertainment and art.

Thanks to Mayor Bill Bogaard and the City of Pasadena the 4th of July was a blast! Most of our residential clients attended the Americafest event at the Rosebowl, while the Dominion and Murphy houses attended a barbeque hosted by family members Beth and Thomas Montanio.

The Wynn and Chester Houses residents spent a week at the Pilgrim Pine Summer Camp. They participated in arts and crafts and enjoyed singing with friends around the campfire. Residents in the Norgaard house attended the Star Wars Movie 30th Anniversary Celebration at the Los Angeles Convention Center. The 36th Annual Pasadena Police Officers Association held their Annual Variety Show at Pasadena City College which many of our residents also attended.



Brothers Patrick and Tim Murphy celebrating at the Clippers Game



Earl Brown enjoying his luxury seating at the game.



(l to r, back row) Wes Scheer, Michael Conkey, James Knowles, James Wilson and Bill Gilchrist  
(l to r, front row) Clyde Acabal, Tim Murphy and Clano 'Roy' Solomon enjoying brunch at Villa's Blue & White event.





Cynthia Kurtz, Pasadena City Manager, with husband Jim McDermott, past Board Chairman, at Blue & White.



Marybeth Rehman-Dittu, presenting sponsor, with guests enjoying the entertainment.

## ANYTHING BUT BLUE!

The first ever *Blue and White* benefit was anything but BLUE! Held at the home of Paulette and Mark Geragos on May 20, 2007 the event raised more than \$62,000 to help support Villa. The beautiful garden was adorned with over 60 art pieces created by Villa's children and adults. In addition to its fund-raising success, 200 guests joined Villa in honoring Lee and John Taylor of Pasadena as our 10th annual Guardian Angel Award recipients. Thank you to our Mistress of Ceremonies, co-anchor of the evening NBC Channel 4 News, Colleen Williams and all those that made the day a success. The key contributors to the success of the benefit were event committee members, Karen Brown, Yun Byrd, R-lene Mijares de Lang, Marybeth Rehman-Dittu, Sally Irving, Alison Korman, Melissa Ryan, Denise Sparks and Jan Starnes as well as the sponsorships of BILA, Marybeth & Ashfaqur Rehman-Dittu, Rob Kricena of Wells Fargo Private Client Services, Rich Byrd of City National Bank and many more.

## SOME ENCHANTED EVENING!

The Shakespeare League of Pasadena raised \$17,000 for Villa from their gala and Broadway performance of *South Pacific*. Funds will support the Angel Frames art therapy program for Dimensions Adult Day Program and the Hjelte-Phillips Speech and Language Center. Ladies, thank you for making the lives of our children, adults and seniors truly ENCHANTED!

## 'FORE' A GOOD CAUSE

The Sterling Hills Women's Golf Association in Camarillo recently presented Villa with a check for \$3,000, which represents the proceeds from the association's second invitational tournament held on May 23 at Sterling Hills Golf Course.

Villa Board Member and client, Damon Sickman and Job Coach, David Pisciotto, attended the tournament and shared how Villa has impacted their lives in very positive ways. Thank you Stephanie Donkels, President, and the entire Sterling Hill's Women's Golf Association.



Villa Board Member, Damon Sickman and Villa Staff, Rolland Klimek, with the Sterling Hills Women's Golf Association.

**Villa Esperanza Services touches the lives of over 1000 individuals each year helping their dreams come true in Los Angeles and Ventura Counties.**

### MAIN OFFICE

Villa Esperanza Services  
2116 East Villa Street  
Pasadena, CA 91107  
Tel 626-449-2919  
Fax 626-449-2850  
Email: [info@VillaEsperanzaServices.org](mailto:info@VillaEsperanzaServices.org)  
[www.VillaEsperanzaServices.org](http://www.VillaEsperanzaServices.org)

### ADDITIONAL PROGRAM SITES:

#### Adult Day Program

Westminster Presbyterian Church,  
Morrison Hall  
1757 North Lake Avenue  
Pasadena, CA 91104  
Tel 626-398-4435  
Fax 626-398-4707

#### Care Management Outreach Collaboration and Independent Living Skills

Under One Roof Human Services Center  
80 East Hillcrest Drive, Suite 103  
Thousand Oaks, CA 91360  
Tel 877-446-4900  
Tel 805-446-4500

#### Care Management Outreach Collaboration

10100 Balboa Boulevard  
Granada Hills, CA 91344  
Tel 800-661-3359

#### Dimensions Adult Day Program

2090 East Villa Street  
Pasadena, CA 91107  
Tel 626-449-2919

#### Employment & Transition Services

756 Lakefield Road, Suite F  
Westlake Village, CA 91361  
Tel 805-446-1939  
Fax 805-446-1959

#### Hjelte-Phillips Speech & Language Center

490 North Craig Avenue  
Pasadena, CA 91107  
Tel 626-795-8355

### RESIDENTIAL SITES

#### In Pasadena...

Allen House  
Brown House  
Chester House  
Dominion/Morehart House  
Murphy House  
Stahl House  
Villa Apartments  
Wagner House  
Wynn House

#### In Thousand Oaks..

Norgaard House

# Calendar of Events



Wesley, Room 1

## Monthly Tour of Villa

2nd Friday of Every Month • 11:30 a.m.–1:00 p.m.  
Call today to reserve a space (626) 449-2919, ext. 28

## Women's Health & Self-Advocacy Group Meetings

1st Thursday of Every Month  
Call Mary Flynn, Peer Advocate at Lanterman Regional Center  
(213) 383-1300, ext. 759

## School Parent Association Meeting

September 24, 2007 • 12:30–1:30 p.m. at Villa Esperanza Services  
Call Casey Gregg, School Director for more information (626) 449-2919, ext. 17

## 20th Annual Tournament of Hope

Monday, October 1  
Glendora Country Club, Glendora

## Fair Ladies Annual Arts & Crafts Sale

benefiting Villa Esperanza Services  
Saturday, October 6 • 10 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.  
Villa Gardens

For more information about our events please call Alex Paschal  
at (626)449-2919, ext. 62 or send an email [apaschal@VillaEsperanzaServices.org](mailto:apaschal@VillaEsperanzaServices.org)

## P.S.

*"When you ask, 'what does Villa Esperanza mean to you?' You get a variety of wonderful answers. It's a loving, caring environment; it's a place to learn how to be independent; Villa is a home to go to at night, and a place where friends gather. Villa is where anxieties about the future are put to rest and hopes are realized."*

—Colleen Williams, co-anchor of NBC Channel 4 News at *Blue & White*

*"She was a delight to have around!...she was extremely helpful. ...she worked diligently...she did a great job...truly was a joy to have around and we all miss her."*

—Audrey Langston, Amadeus Spa & Salon of one of our school participants in the Career Exploration Program who volunteered at Amadeus Spa

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ORGANIZATION  
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*Providing Love, Care and Hope for Individuals with Disabilities and their Families since 1961*

2116 East Villa Street  
Pasadena, CA 91107  
[www.VillaEsperanzaServices.org](http://www.VillaEsperanzaServices.org)

