



INSIDE THIS ISSUE

APPLY NOW FOR 2012 NEAHMA AWARD	3
NEAHMA MEMBERS WIN NATIONAL AWARDS	4
TIPS ON CUTTING LANDSCAPE COSTS	6
STRONG OPPOSITION TO PROPOSED HUD BUDGET	7
LESS SMOKE, LESS LIABILITY	8
ASSOCIATE MEMBER DIRECTORY	9
CHARITY CORNER	10

COVER STORY

NEAHMA ACCEPTS THREE NATIONAL AWARDS



Accepting one of NEAHMA's three awards are Doreen Donovan, Scott F. Ployer, Julie Kelliher, Sarah Kaufmann, Nancy Hogan, Maria Oymaian, Michelle Mitchell, Julie Wall, Sue Kelly, Peter Lewis and Melissa Fish-Crane.

At the National Affordable Housing Management Association's (NAHMA's) annual winter meeting March 11-13, 2012, NEAHMA was presented with three awards for excellence. The awards were among 15 presented to AHMAs from around the country in various categories. NEAHMA won in the categories of Membership Recruitment, Innovation (co-winning with the Western Pennsylvania AHMA) and Most Applications Submitted for the Communities of Quality® (COQ) Awards program (for a medium-sized AHMA).

In addition, NEAHMA members also received two out of the three awards given to individual NAHMA corporate members for their participation in the NAHMA National Recognition Program COQ Registry (based on data maintained by NAHMA staff). These are Peabody Properties, headquartered in Braintree, Mass., and The Community Builders, headquartered in Boston. (See related article on page 4).

NEAHMA was thrilled to have a good showing of its members at the winter meeting in Washington, D.C. to help accept these awards.

"It is always exciting to be honored by your peers," said Julie Kelliher, executive director of NEAHMA, "but of course the real honor goes to our members, and

continued on page 12

WE HAVE MOVED!

NEAHMA has moved although just down the hall. Please note our new offices are in Suite 201 instead of 210. Make the change in your email and smartphone contacts lists and on that good old Rolodex if you still use one. The full address is 400 Washington St., Suite 201, Braintree, MA 02184. And stop by any time!

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OFFICE MANAGER

Sarah Kaufmann

OFFICE ASSISTANT

Michelle Mitchell

NEAHMA NEWS EDITOR

Catherine A. Smith

Community-Based Communications, LLC

cbc.smith@comcast.net

NEAHMA NEWS DESIGN

Evelyn Powers

DesignPowers, Inc.

evelyn@designpowers.com

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT



I want to welcome you back to the second issue of *NEAHMA News*. We have something exciting happening in June of which you should all be aware.

As we all know, the upcoming joint meeting of the *National Apartment Association* (NAA) and the *National Affordable Housing Management Association* (NAHMA) is coming to Boston the last week in June. We are all very excited about the continued collaboration of these two nationally recognized housing organizations to join forces once per year and get our combined membership the most up-to-date industry information needed to operate quality housing properties across the country. For more information on this meeting, please visit www.nahma.org/meetings/MeetingInfo.html.

At the fall 2011 NAHMA meeting held in Washington, D.C., a challenge was put forth by Wayne Fox, chair of the NAHMA Educational Foundation, to all AHMAs across the country. That challenge was for each AHMA to raise at least \$15,000 in 2012 for the NAHMA scholarship program, which recognizes and rewards our residents who have made a commitment to move forward with their post-secondary education. As president of NEAHMA, I brought this challenge back and shared it with our board and members. It was well-received but is a huge undertaking.

At the spring meeting in March 2012, a group of NEAHMA board members and New England NAHMA representatives met and decided that the perfect way to answer this challenge was to **sponsor a Boston Harbor Dinner Cruise** the evening before the NAHMA meeting. It is a great way to showcase our great city and, at the same time, raise the necessary money for this very worthwhile endeavor.

Suffice to say, this idea has been well-received, and we are proud to announce that on the evening of June 26th from 6:30 pm to 9:30 pm, NEAHMA has reserved the *Elite II*, a luxury touring yacht for this event. **Company sponsorships are available, and tickets are going to go fast.** There is limited seating on the yacht. Tickets are \$125.00 each, so get your tickets now. Contact Julie in the NEAHMA office for more information at (781) 380-4344 or by e-mail at Julie.Kelliher@neahma.org

I would like to extend a heartfelt thank you the committee members for all their hard work putting this memorable event together. They are Melissa Fish-Crane (Peabody Properties, Inc.), Nancy Hogan (First Realty Management), Debbie Piltch (Piltch Associates) and our NEAHMA Executive Director Julie Kelliher. They have all done an outstanding job!

Thank you in advance for this support and see you on board!

Scott Ployer, NAHP-e, is Director of Facilities Management for the Community Builders, Inc.

NEAHMA News is published four times a year by the New England Affordable Housing Management Association (NEAHMA).

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INVITATION TO APPLY FOR 2012 NEAHMA AWARDS



NEAHMA's Annual Industry Awards Reception will be held on Wednesday, October 24, 2012, at The Four Points by Sheraton in Norwood, Mass. in conjunction with NEAHMA's Annual Conference & Trade Show.

This year, we are announcing the application and nomination criteria for NEAHMA Awards in three categories:

1. NAHP, NAHP-e, NAHMT and NAHMS of the Year
2. Property Manager and Maintenance Tech of the Year
3. Communities of Quality® Awards

Please note that applications and nominations for the NEAHMA awards should be submitted electronically only (via email) to NEAHMA. Our nominating committee will review, and the winners will be presented at the Awards Reception on October 24, 2012.

To nominate someone for any of the following awards, please respond by email and let us know which award you are nominating the person for and why you think the person should be the award winner, including specific accomplishments supporting your recommendation. *This section should be a minimum of 100 words up to a maximum of 1500 words.*

NAHP, NAHP-e, NAHMT and NAHMS of the Year Awards are given annually. This competition will recognize outstanding National Association of Housing Professionals (NAHP) awards, including NAHP-Executive and outstanding NAHP-Professional, and outstanding National Affordable Housing Maintenance Technician (NAHMT) and outstanding National Affordable Housing Maintenance Specialist (NAHMS) for their contributions to the affordable housing industry.

The Awards Criteria –You may nominate any one, from your staff or a coworker who currently has any of these designations. You may also nominate someone for more than one category. If you are unsure whether the person you would like to nominate has one of these designations, you can confirm by checking the NAHMA Credential Directory at www.nahma.org.

NEAHMA's Property Manager and Maintenance Tech of the Year Awards are two new awards this year that will be given annually to a NEAHMA-member property manager and maintenance tech in recognition of his or her contributions to the affordable housing industry and to their residents' lives.

WELCOME NEW NEAHMA MEMBERS

REGULAR MEMBERS

KCEE Property Management, East Greenwich, RI

ASSOCIATE MEMBERS

Greener Horizon, Middleboro, MA
Hynes Landscaping, Weymouth, MA
National Credit Systems, Atlanta, GA
RM Cochran Company, Woburn, MA
Strategic Energy Group, Portland, ME
Waltham Services, Waltham, MA

The Awards Criteria –You may nominate someone for one or both of these awards. This person should demonstrate the skills needed to operate a well-run property and the ability to work well with industry partners and the residents living at their property.

Nomination deadline to NEAHMA for the above awards is September 28, 2012.

Communities of Quality® Awards honor the achievements of affordable housing providers who make an unprecedented contribution to developing outstanding properties for families of modest means. .

The awards competition includes five categories:

- Exemplary Family Development
- Exemplary Development for the Elderly
- Exemplary Development for Residents with Special Needs
- Exemplary Development for Single Room Occupancy Housing
- Outstanding Turnaround of a Troubled Property

To enter the 2012 NEAHMA regional Communities of Quality® Awards competition, your property must be a Nationally Recognized COQ property.

The property must have scored a minimum of 325 points on its National Recognition application.

Properties that competed in the previous COQ Awards program but did not win are invited to reapply for the 2012 awards program; previous award winners are not eligible to re-compete.

continued on page 12

NEAHMA MEMBERS WIN



Kris Cook, executive director of NAHMA (left), and Scott Reithel, president of NAHMA (right), present a COQ award to Melissa Fish-Crane of Peabody Properties.



Representatives of The Community Builders share a moment after winning three COQ Awards.



ABOVE: Trolley Square is well integrated into the neighborhood.

BELOW: The exterior of Trolley Square.



This year's national Communities of Quality® (COQ) Awards, sponsored by HD Supply and judged by NAHMA, saw NEAHMA-member properties winning in four out of five possible categories. In addition, two of these members were honored with an Industry Award given to the NAHMA members with outstanding participation in the NAHMA National Recognition Program COQ Registry (based on data maintained by NAHMA staff).

"This is a tremendous accomplishment," said NEAHMA President Scott Ployer, who said that one of his three key objectives during his term was to increase the number of COQs among the membership. Ployer is also director of facilities management for The Community Builders (TCB), which won three of the four COQ awards after submitting seven for consideration.

NEAHMA itself put a lot of effort into having properties submit applications—and more than 90 were submitted to this national awards program from this one AHMA. "We think that's probably some kind of record," said Julie Kelliher, NEAHMA's executive director. There are currently 20 AHMAs around the country.

Ployer "led the charge on his company's applying for National COQ Recognition [which is the first step in applying for the COQ awards] because TCB is moving towards a best-in-class protocol for our company in the 21st century," he said. For its first major push in 2011, 49 property managers submitted COQ applications. This led TCB to be designated a National COQ Corporate Partner.

"We are doing it again this year," Ployer said. "We believe in NAHMA, its mission and objectives and the value the organization brings to the industry."

COQ AND INDUSTRY AWARDS

TCB's winning entries included

- **Exemplary Development for the Elderly**
Back of the Hill Apartments, Boston, MA
Owner: Back of the Hill Community Development Corporation
Management Company: The Community Builders
- **Outstanding Turnaround of a Troubled Property**
Leyden Woods Apartments, Greenfield, MA
Owner: TCB Leyden Woods LP
Management Company: The Community Builders
- **Exemplary Development for Single-Room Occupancy Housing**
Aurora Apartments, Worcester, MA
Owner and Management Company: The Community Builders

The other big NEAHMA-member winner was WinnResidential. "We find our property managers are very excited to go after COQ National Recognition, and they're thrilled when they get it," said Maria Oymaian, director of compliance. "When one gets a COQ Award, everybody in the company knows about it and there's a great deal of pride attached to it. To be considered part of this elite group is thrilling."

WinnResidential's winning property is

- **Exemplary Family Development**
Trolley Square Apartments, Cambridge, MA
Owner and Management Company: WinnResidential

Peabody Properties, in addition to WinnResidential and TCB, were honored with the Industry Award for outstanding participation in the COQ program.

Peabody Properties, Inc. is a 40-year, family-owned full-service property management firm headquartered in Braintree, Mass. with a portfolio of 14,000 units of housing primarily in New England with other locations in Ga., N.C., S.C. and Fla.

The company submitted applications on behalf of 42 of its properties, all of which earned the COQ designation. The COQ designation recognizes Peabody Properties' long-time commitment to creating safe, attractive and well-maintained affordable housing and the assistance it provides to its residents through specialized supportive services and programs.

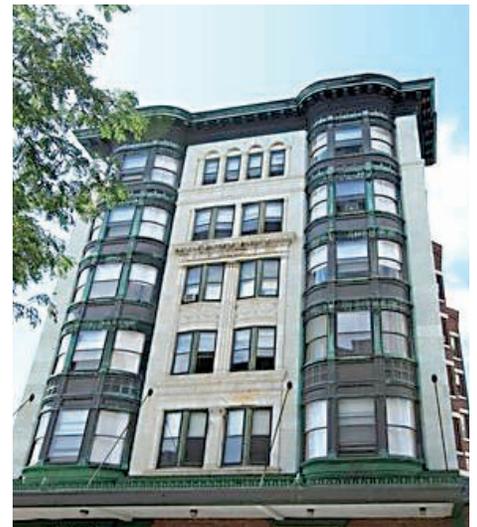
Company Vice President Melissa Fish-Crane said, "We are delighted to be recognized on the national level by NAHMA and would encourage other housing professionals to apply for this prestigious designation. Having such a credential distinguishes Peabody Properties and validates that we hold ourselves and our housing communities to the very highest of industry standards."

The fifth award winner, for **Exemplary Development for Residents with Special Needs**, was Mullen Manor of Sicklerville, NJ, which is owned by MSAA and managed by PRD Management, Inc. Both are members of the New Jersey AHMA.



ABOVE:
Kids love working in the gardens at Leyden Woods.

BELOW: The exterior of the Aurora Apts.



The exterior of Back of the Hill Apts.

INCREASE SUSTAINABILITY, CUT LANDSCAPE COSTS

By Bill Butts

Opportunities abound for properties to respond to challenging economic conditions they face today. By proactively deploying smart landscape services managers can reduce landscape costs while still improving the sustainable elements of a property. Applying some simple measures and best practices can provide numerous benefits.

Certainly, the economy presents a real need to be more efficient in the operation of a property, yet still be friendly to Mother Earth. The impact of a smart landscape and maintenance plan can be significant, with annual savings in the 15 percent to 20 percent range. When making decisions about how to achieve the goals of a property, an obvious starting point is to assess the existing design, systems and plantings before developing a plan to improve and enhance a property.

For example, properties constructed 20 or more years ago have common age-related elements that typically need to be addressed. First, look at the irrigation system, which can usually involve a technology upgrade. Second, enhance the existing landscape with sustainable, drought-resistant plants. Finally, consider what elements of the original landscape design still meet today's standards.

Smart controllers or sensors to detect when plants actually need water didn't exist when properties were built in the 1970s or 1980s. By investing in these kinds of improvements to an irrigation system, a property can generate the kind of savings that reasonably would be expected to pay off within 24 months and, in some cases, even shorter return-on-investment periods.

Sustainable landscaping is good for the environment and can have a great impact on the bottom line as well. Replacing existing plants with those that are



native or adaptive to an area, or that are drought tolerant, will help address a need for all to use water resources more wisely. A property might even be able to utilize a recycled water source, such as rain barrels. Pervious walkways, replacing lawns with rain gardens or relatively maintenance-free, native ornamental grasses, prevent stormwater runoff, which is another earth-friendly thing to do, while also reducing puddling after a rainstorm.

Over time, the needs of a property may change, so it is necessary to examine the original landscape design and determine what improvements can be made. A smart approach considers selective removal and replanting of marginally performing or high-maintenance shrubs and trees. The region of the country in which a property is located serves as a good guide for what to plant.

Landscape services partners should be more than just contractors. They must drive value and serve as maintenance strategists. For property owners and managers, it is critical in today's

budget-sensitive environment to count on a team of landscape experts who understand the business side of property management, because landscaping should always be value-added rather than a drain on resources. The landscape services team needs to build a relationship with a property that's based on listening, caring and acting in the property's best interest.

Knowing what can be done with the landscape, when it should be done and why a recommendation makes sense from a financial and landscape best practice is the measure of true value of a landscape services firm to a property owner or manager. A landscape services partner must ensure the landscape reflects the quality and value the owner desires, since it is one of the first things people see.

Bill Butts is a regional sales leader with ValleyCrest Landscape Maintenance and can be reached at (617) 484-3360 or bbutts@valleycrest.com. ValleyCrest has offices in Belmont, Billerica, Boston and Foxboro and is the area's premier integrated landscape services company. For more information, visit www.valleycrest.com.

Grave Concerns About HUD Budget

The lead articles in the most recent issue of *NAHMA News* (March/April 2012) contain excellent summaries of the status of the Obama Administration's proposed FY 2013 budget and issues a call to the industry to advocate on behalf of stronger funding. Here is an excerpt from that overview.

The Obama Administration's FY 2013 budget presents a mixed bag of increases, decreases and inadequate funding for affordable rental housing programs critical to NAHMA members and their constituents, as well as budget policy and priority changes that could inject a level of uncertainty into daily and long-term operations, according to NAHMA's analysis.

For FY 2013, the Obama Administration is proposing a HUD budget of \$44.8 billion, an increase of \$1.4 billion over FY 2012 appropriations and a decrease of \$3.2 billion below the FY 2012 Presidential budget request.

However, the Administration's funding priorities in FY 2013 are very different from the FY 2012 budget request. For the first time, the Obama Administration did not request full funding for all Project-based Section 8 contract renewals for their 12-month terms. In fact, the budget recommendation for the Project-based Section 8 account is \$640 million below the FY 2012 appropriation level.

NAHMA and its industry colleagues strongly oppose HUD's proposed Project-based Section 8 budget and HUD's various plans to cut funding via various cost-savings plans. While the overall FY 2013 budget contains a number of good multifamily housing proposals that NAHMA supports on their individual merits, NAHMA cannot support a budget that fails to fully fund Project-based Section 8 contract renewals.

In addition, NAHMA is extremely concerned by the Administration's decision to include "savings" policies in the FY 2013 budget that could destabilize the operation, finances, and long-term preservation of the Project-based Section 8 portfolio.

MAJORITY OF PROGRAMS FLAT-FUNDED

The majority of HUD's other accounts would receive flat-funding under the budget request at FY 2012

appropriations levels. In terms of multifamily housing, the Obama Administration is proposing flat-funding the tenant-based Section 8 contract renewals, HOME and CDBG funding.

Nevertheless, the budget does request increased funding for Sections 202 and 811 PRACs, LEP translations and assistance, and the Choice Neighborhoods initiative when compared to the FY 2012 appropriations. The budget also contains a proposal to reduce the frequency of Management and Occupancy Reviews (MORs) as part of its cost-saving efforts.

NAHMA and its industry colleagues strongly oppose HUD's proposed Project-based Section 8 budget and HUD's various plans to cut funding via various cost-savings plans.

HUD's budget also includes two mandatory spending proposals that account for the increase in the FY 2013 request over the FY 2012 appropriations level. For the third year in a row, the Obama Administration is requesting \$1 billion for the Housing Trust Fund, since Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac cannot fund the program for the near future. The Administration is also proposing to increase the FHA Mutual Mortgage Insurance Capital Reserve Account by \$2.6 billion.

NAHMA has prepared an in-depth examination of the individual affordable rental housing components in the Administration's FY 2013 budget (see *NAHMA Analysis* at www.nahma.org/member/analysis.html). Not surprisingly, the future of Project-based Section 8 contract renewals leads NAHMA's concerns.

LESS SMOKE, LESS LIABILITY

By Frank A. Flynn, Esq.

As an attorney who is in court at least two or three days per week, the issue of secondhand smoke has been arising on a more frequent basis. Tenants consistently are raising the issue of their units being overwhelmed with secondhand smoke from neighbors. This issue could become your problem. As this brief article will show you, implementing a nonsmoking policy for your development can help avoid liability, improve the health of your tenants and save money. We will also explore some of the myths behind banning smoking.

Unless you have been living under a rock for the last 50 years you obviously know that smoking is bad for you. Just in case you are still not convinced, here are a few statistics from the Centers for Disease Control.

- It is estimated that there are 443,000 smoking-related deaths per year in the United States.
- That means that about one in every five deaths in this country is due to smoking.
- On average, a smoker dies 13 to 14 years earlier than a non-smoker.

The bad news doesn't end there, either. It is further estimated that secondhand smoke causes about 49,000 deaths in the U.S. on an annual basis. It is in that statistic that your potential problem lies.

It is highly doubtful that tenants who are smokers will sue you for their own injuries. However, there are a growing number of lawsuits out there in which either individuals or classes of people have successfully sued their landlords for secondhand smoke entering their units and causing a nuisance.

In most of these cases courts have found that the plaintiff's right to peaceful enjoyment of their apartment was breached. For instance, in Massachusetts the courts have been quite consistent on this issue. The often-cited case of 50-58 Gainsborough St. Realty Trust v. Haile presented a nonsmoker above a smoky bar who withheld her rent, claiming that the tobacco smoke seeping into her apartment from the bar directly below deprived her of the quiet enjoyment of that apartment.

When the landlord sued the tenant for failure to pay rent, the judge determined that the smoke from the bar below made the apartment "unfit for smokers and nonsmokers alike." The



It is further estimated that secondhand smoke causes about 49,000 deaths in the U.S. on an annual basis.

It is in that statistic that your potential problem lies.

judge further found that "the evidence does demonstrate to the Court the tenants' right to quiet enjoyment was interfered with because of the second-hand smoke that was emanating from the nightclub below." The judge awarded the tenant \$4,350.

The simple fact is that a quick search of Google will provide a tenant with a plethora of websites that offer advice and case law on how to successfully sue your landlord over secondhand smoke.

You may not realize that implementing a non-smoking policy can also save a great deal of money for your development. First, there is the obvious savings in legal fees and also potentially the savings of having to pay out to a tenant or class of them on a lawsuit. But also consider the fact that cigarette smoking is the leading cause of fires in multi-unit properties in the U.S. Also, if your building(s) have shared heat and/or air conditioning, the improved air quality reduces the load on heating and air conditioning equipment, thus reducing operating costs.

So why the hesitation? Many managers are under the (false) impression that they are somehow violating rights of their tenants by implementing a non-smoking policy. Others have possibly asked but have just received bad legal advice. The fact is that there is no constitutional right to smoke. My personal favorite case that speaks about this issue was a 1990 case decided by the New York Supreme Court (Fagan vs. Axelrod). The court in that case stated, "There is no more a fundamental right to smoke cigarettes than there is to shoot up heroin or snort cocaine or run a red light." There are a host of other cases in which a non-smoking policy either adopted by a city or apartment have been upheld.

In conclusion, I'll be glad to answer your questions about how to avoid liability, improve the quality of your residents' health and save money by properly and legally implementing a non-smoking policy for your development.

Frank Flynn, Esq. is the managing partner of Downing & Flynn, a Boston law firm specializing in landlord/tenant law. He has successfully defended numerous civil cases regarding cigarette smoke and one class action lawsuit against landlords. He can be reached at (617) 720-3535 or by email at frank@downingandflynn.com

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Suite 301
Waltham, MA 02452
www.rentgrow.com

Rethinking Power Management
Energy Management Consulting
P.O. Box 181034
Boston, MA 02118

RM Cochran Company, LLC
Contractors
10 Draper Street # 33
Woburn, MA 01801

R.V. Leonard
Educational Furniture
1362 Washington Street
Weymouth, MA 02189
www.rvleonard.com

Screening Reports, Inc.
Credit, Criminal Background Checks, Collections
729 N. Route 83, Suite 321
Bensenville, IL 60106
www.screeningreports.com

Service Master by Gilmore
Disaster Restoration Services
350 Union Avenue
Framingham, MA 01702
www.svmgilmore.com

Sherwin Williams
Painting Supplies
73 First Street
Cambridge, MA 02141

Signet Electronic Solutions
Integrated Security/Communication Systems
106 Longwater Drive
Norwell, MA 02061

Simplex Janitorial
Janitorial Supplies
6 Commercial Street
Sharon, MA 02067

Strategic Information Resources
Tenant Screening Services
155 Brookdale Drive
Springfield, MA 01104
www.backgrounddecision.com

United Restoration
Disaster Restoration
70 Industrial Park
Middlefield, CT 06455
www.unitedcr.com

Valley Crest Landscape
Landscape Maintenance & Snow Removal
1010 Pleasant Street
Belmont, MA 02478
www.valleycrest.com

Watch All
Pest Control
408 Washington Street
Weymouth, MA 02188

Yardi Systems, Inc.
Property Management Software
154 Technology Parkway,
Suite 100
Norcross, GA 30092
www.yardi.com

If you are interested in becoming an Associate Member, please contact Sarah Kaufmann at Sarah.Kaufmann@neahma.org

Charity CORNER



Crossroads Rhode Island's main office is on Broad Street in Providence.



A Crossroads' case advocate meeting with clients.



Former Crossroads Family Center residents.



Participants in the 2010 Wilderness Heals Pledge Hike.

WELCOME, CROSSROADS RHODE ISLAND!

Please welcome Crossroads Rhode Island as a new Team NEAHMA Charity. Crossroads Rhode Island, founded in 1894 as Travelers Aid, is now the leading homeless service organization in Rhode Island. They provide 24-hour assistance seven days a week to homeless Rhode Islanders ranging from infants to octogenarians ... from adults with only a sixth-grade education to those with Ph.Ds.

Their roots date back to 1894, when Travelers Aid of Rhode Island was founded to reach out to young women from the countryside who arrived at the Providence bus station in search of work. Some would become lost and others homeless. Many were hungry, lonely and afraid. In 2004, the organization entered a new era, changing the name to Crossroads Rhode Island and moving into the nine-story, former Providence YMCA building at 160 Broad Street.

Today, with the help of compassionate donors, they are the largest homeless services organization in Rhode Island. Crossroads has become much more than a place for the homeless to sleep. Their programs can help people find solutions to both immediate and long-term needs that will allow individuals and families to, once again, become independent. Most often these neighbors, who come from all across the state, need just a little help to move forward.

Crossroads is a private, nonprofit organization that relies on the generosity of their donors and supporters to provide their continuum of care.

At the present time, they are in need of the following items, all of which must be new and wrapped.

- Non-perishable food items
- Travel size personal care items
- Flip flops
- Men's and women's socks.

NEAHMA encourages its members to collect and send these kinds of items to Crossroads Rhode Island. In addition, any financial contribution is welcome. A \$15 donation will buy a pair of socks for three homeless people, a donation of \$34 will buy a pair of sturdy shoes, \$62 will buy showers and a night's rest for a family of four, and so on. To donate online go to www.crossroadsri.org. To schedule a donation of the above-listed or other items, contact Jade Alves at 401-277-4325 or jalves@crossroadsri.org.

Click LIKE for Hunger to Help Crossroads RI

Starting in June, NEAHMA will launch Click Like for Hunger on Facebook. Each new LIKE on NEAHMA's Facebook page will equal a canned good that will be donated to Crossroads Rhode Island. The canned goods will be used for their emergency food shelter and family shelter.

NEAHMA IS ENGAGED IN SEVERAL ACTIVITIES TO BENEFIT ELIZABETH STONE HOUSE.

- **Join the 2012 Wilderness Heals Pledge Hike.** Over three days, **July 20-22, 2012**, a dedicated group of women, including volunteer members of NEAHMA, will hike through New Hampshire's White Mountains in the *Wilderness Heals* annual pledge hike to benefit the individuals and families served by the Elizabeth Stone House in Roxbury. The Elizabeth Stone House

provides a safe space and supportive services to survivors of homelessness, abuse, mental illness and other forms of trauma. This year marks the 17th annual Wilderness Heals fundraising event.

The 2012 fundraising goal is \$150,000. More than \$1.5 million has been raised since Wilderness Heals' inception in 1996.

Wilderness Heals hikers must raise a minimum of \$1,500, and the registration fee is \$50. As our largest fundraiser, the hike raises much-needed flexible funding that helps us meet the various needs of the individuals and families we serve.

The Wilderness Heals pledge hike is one of New England's most challenging all-female fundraising hikes!

Women are encouraged to bring young female hikers between the ages of 12 and 17.

Women can choose from several trail options in the White Mountains, including a backcountry option.

Each team of six to eight women includes two experienced team leaders.

For more information about Wilderness Heals, visit wildernessheals.elizabethstone.org or contact Erica Whyte, Wilderness Heals coordinator, at ewhyte@elizabethstone.org.

- **Summer Toy Collection.** Team NEAHMA has been collecting summer toys for Elizabeth Stone House. Kids will be out of school soon, and summer sun will be upon us. We are looking for sunscreen, beach balls, pails with shovels, chalk, bubbles, jump ropes and more fun items for the summer. And don't forget the athletes, male and female! Footballs, soccer balls, baseball and softball helmets and gloves, etc. are also needed. Items can be brought to NEAHMA meetings and the NEAHMA office through June, **including at our Training Seminar at Gillette Stadium on May 10!** Final collection day is June 12, 2012. NEAHMA will deliver all the items to Elizabeth Stone House.

GET THOSE POSTERS IN!

Posters for NAHMA's Drug Free Kids Art Calendar contest will be regionally judged by NEAHMA on **May 18, 2012**. Once the regional winners are selected they will be sent to NAHMA where the national judging takes place and artwork gets judged and possibly chosen for the 2013 Calendar.

National winners receive a scholarship of \$2,500 and a trip to Washington, D.C. First-place winners each receive a \$1,000 check for educational expenses from the NAHMA Foundation. Seniors who win will receive cash awards made in the name of their community for use in purchasing a gift that will benefit all of the community's residents (e.g., books for the library, appliances for a community room, etc.). These winners will also appear in the 2013 calendar.

- **NEAHMA's Kids' Day**, which is a reward for the kids who participate in the poster contest, is on July 18, 2012. This year the annual event is at Canobie Lake Park in New Hampshire.

Please contact the NEAHMA office with any questions on donating to any of the TEAM NEAHMA Charities.



Participants in the 2010 Wilderness Heals Pledge Hike.



The artwork of Greg Moore of Worcester, Mass., made it into the 2012 NAHMA Calendar.

NEAHMA ACCEPTS THREE NATIONAL AWARDS

continued from page 1

DATES TO REMEMBER

**Boston Harbor
Dinner Cruise**
June 26, 2012

Kids' Day
July 18, 2012

**Elizabeth Stone
House Hike**
July 18, 2012

**IREM/NEAHMA
Summer Meeting**
July 25, 2012

**COQ Submissions
Due to NEAHMA**
August 29, 2012

**NAHP of the Year
Submissions Due
to NEAHMA**
September 28, 2012

**Conference and
Trade Show**
October 24 & 25, 2012

especially our outstanding board and committee members. Their ideas and participation are what drives us forward. We share these awards with our entire membership.”

NEAHMA received the **Recruitment Award** for its high retention rate of nearly 97 percent, its incentives to attract potential members (NEAHMA Bucks) and its successful Annual Conference & Tradeshow, which helps recruit more vendor members to the organization.

The **AHMA Innovation Award** acknowledged two of NEAHMA's advances. The first is its expansion into Vermont, Maine and New Hampshire thanks to partnerships it has made there, including with the Maine Housing Authority that resulted in NEAHMA holding an EIV training in the state attended by more than 140 people. The second innovation is the TEAM NEAHMA charity program and its relationship with the Elizabeth Stone House (see related article on page 10).

NEAHMA received an **AHMA COQ Award** for having the most member properties submit applications to the COQ awards program, with more than 90 applications submitted (see article on page 12).

For details on the three COQ awards NEAHMA received, see the winter 2011 issue of NEAHMA News at <http://www.neahma.org/wp-content/uploads/NEAHMANewsfinal2pg.pdf>

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR 2012 NEAHMA AWARDS

continued from page 3

Prepare an essay of 500 to 1,500 words outlining the outstanding aspects of the property and why it should be selected as an award winner. For “Best Turnaround Property” entrants only, include at least four “before” pictures.

All NEAHMA regional COQ winners will automatically be submitted to NAHMA for the National COQ Award competition in November 2012.

For tips on how to write an essay, you can go to www.neahma.org/programs-and-events/coq-awards/.

The COQ Application Deadline to NEAHMA is August 29, 2012.

We look forward to receiving your nominations and applications in the coming months!

Julie Kelliher is Executive Director of NEAHMA.

neahma
NEW ENGLAND
AFFORDABLE HOUSING
MANAGEMENT ASSOCIATION

New England Affordable Housing
Management Association
400 Washington St., Suite 201
Braintree, MA 02184
781-380-4344
www.neahma.org