

# ROSIE'S PLACE NEWS



## SPRING 2013

From Friendly Visitor to “Soul Sister”

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Striking Mother's Day Necklace from WCC



## Q&A

**CHERYL HARRIS**  
A FRIEND FOR ALL SEASONS

**Friends for All Seasons** is a monthly giving club that offers an easy way to support Rosie's Place year-round through automatic charges to a credit card or checking account. Cheryl Clayton Harris—a Rosie's Place volunteer and work study student until her graduation from Boston University in 2005—stays connected as a Friend for All Seasons, even as her U.S. State Department Foreign Service job takes her to Iraq and other international locales.

### What motivated you to first give to Rosie's Place?

I first spent time in the Development Office and then taught English as a Second Language, and the people I was lucky enough to meet left a big impression on me. The core mission and values of Rosie's Place—providing a second chance, empowering women through education and advocacy, creating sustainable neighborhoods and communities—motivated me to give originally. Even though I was no longer living in Boston after graduation, I really believed in the work being done and wanted to continue to stay involved in some way.

### What are the benefits to you as a Friends for All Seasons member?

I feel that I have a good understanding of what my monthly contribution supports at Rosie's Place; it is a great chance to make a difference in someone's life. People my age are not thinking about making that large one-time yearly donation. But with Friends for All Seasons, it is easier for me to donate as much as I am comfortable with each month, which does add up. Also, I like knowing that there is consistency in my giving.

### What about our work keeps you connected?

When I was a volunteer, I saw that each person was treated with huge respect and that the focus is on taking real, meaningful steps to improve the lives of women for the long-term, whether it is through healthy meals, assistance with job searches and resume writing, or affordable housing. For me, it is knowing that these things can make a real impact in someone's life and make the difference as to whether a woman (and her kids) can not only survive, but succeed. And Rosie's Place does a great job keeping me updated through the newsletter and website.

To learn more or to become a Friend for All Seasons, contact Katie Amoro at 617.318.0211 or visit [rosiesplace.org/FAS](http://rosiesplace.org/FAS).



## From Friendly Visitor to “Soul Sister”

Nancy is a warm, soft-spoken woman who has settled nicely into her assisted living facility. Magdalana says knowing Nancy is “my blessing.” Magdalana is a vivacious woman and caring therapist who Nancy says is “awesome.” These two individuals, of similar age and nationality but travelers on very different paths, have found each other. Rosie's Place Friendly Visitor Program made it happen.

The program connects volunteers with poor women at home or in long-term care facilities who are socially isolated and would benefit from companionship. Ideally, friendships form, bringing a measure of comfort and enjoyment to both women.

About one year ago, Magdalana, who had intermittently volunteered at Rosie's Place, called looking for a new opportunity. Evelyn Gonzalez, Outreach Program Manager, suggested she become a Friendly Visitor, saying “I think I have the perfect person for you.” Magdalana describes herself as “loud and out there” and credits Evelyn for “having the compassion and wisdom to pair two people intentionally.” According to both women, they clicked as soon as they saw each other. “On my first visit, I am checking in at the front desk when I see and hear this delightful woman sailing down the hall,” says Magdalana. “We immediately sensed who each of us were and connected like long lost friends.”

*“It's one of the kindest ways that another human being can offer support and restoration of dignity for others.”*

Magdalana, a Friendly Visitor

They've spent an hour or more together on just about every Monday afternoon since, and speak by telephone if a meeting can't be arranged. They often spend their time in lively conversation in Nancy's tidy and bright one bedroom apartment and will venture out to the terrace in pleasant weather. They exhibit an affectionate ease with each other, often punctuating the other's comments with smiles and deep laughter. When Nancy is asked to speak about her “compassionate friend,” as Magdalana describes herself, Magdalana asks jokingly “Want me to leave?”

Nancy finds her friend “very caring.” She adds, “If I feel down, she can bring me out of it. She helps me a lot.” Magdalana says there is a kind of tenderness about Nancy, something the other residents gravitate toward. “There can be a lot of negativity with housemates you don't choose,” she says, “but Nancy embraces her day, even in pain. She will fill 24 hours with joy.” Nancy replies with a modest “Isn't that nice!”

Magdalana is an enthusiastic fan of the Friendly Visitor Program. “It's one of the kindest ways that another human being can offer support and restoration of dignity for others,” she opines. “We all have wisdom to share and Nancy's wisdom bounces off me. She is my soul sister.”

*Rosie's Place is always seeking Friendly Visitors to spend time with women during weekday hours. Please contact Jessica at [jgarretson@rosiesplace.org](mailto:jgarretson@rosiesplace.org) or 617.318.0226.*

## NANCY'S STORY

Nancy came to Rosie's Place seven years ago, when she suddenly found herself without a permanent home. She is unable to live on her own because of years of unexplained fainting spells and vertigo and had been residing with her caretaker and her family. But when the caretaker started to lose her sight, Nancy no longer had a place to live.

She stayed in our Overnight Program and we worked with her to find a permanent housing solution; ultimately an apartment became available at the

Rosie's Place residence at 18 Mt. Vernon Street. About 18 months ago she transitioned to the Susan Bailis Assisted Living Community, nestled in elegant brownstones near Symphony Hall.

Nancy loves her new home, which she says is a “wonderful facility.” It provides her with three meals a day, more activities than she can take part in, and a link to health services in Boston. “I'm grateful to Rosie's Place for doing all that they did to take care of the arrangements for my move,” she says. “The staff still keeps in

touch with me and I appreciate visits from (Rosie's Place outreach worker) Guissela.”

Nancy says she feels right at home at Susan Bailis, as she worked for 20 years in a nursing home before her blackouts caused her to lose her job. She gets around safely with a Rollator, which she calls “my buggy,” and enjoys mindful pursuits such as quilting and embroidery. And of course she eagerly anticipates weekly visits from her Friendly Visitor – and dear friend – Magdalana.



OUR EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR ON  
FRIENDSHIP AT ROSIE’S PLACE

Dear Friends:

When Kip opened Rosie’s Place many years ago, she knew something so smart: our guests would crave friendship as much as food. They’d seek us out for the warmth of our smiles, as much as the warmth of our building. Kip had it exactly right...the offer of food and friendship has drawn women from all over Boston to our doors. Friendship has become an integral part of the services we offer, as we recognize that feeding a woman’s heart and soul is as important as feeding her belly.

At Rosie’s Place, friendships form in many ways—between guests, between volunteers and guests, between staff and guests. We keep in mind that these friendships must always respect the boundaries and professionalism of our staff and volunteers, aware that such relationships are in the context of a sanctuary for poor and homeless women. In other words, it is harder than it looks!

We offer our friendship one-to-one when a volunteer visits a homebound guest to offer a little socializing and a break from the monotony of a nursing home routine. Our volunteer visitors spend time playing board games, watching videos, talking about current events, listening to reminiscences—just as all friends do. The same companionable activities take place in our Sitting Room, and in the groups we offer at residences for mentally ill women who used Rosie’s Place services before they found a permanent place to live.

Friendship is imbedded in our trips to art galleries, forged in the miles travelled to suburban museums in our bumpy red van. It’s part of the spirit that comes from a dozen women in our Overnight program, collectively rooting for (and against) the contestants on *American Idol*. And it grows in the smiles, the hello’s, the chit-chat about the weather and the Red Sox, or the offering of a Kleenex or a cough drop, or straightening someone’s collar.

I remember talking to a psychiatrist who regularly visited one of the large shelters in town about his frustration that some of the shelter’s former residents would return to hang out. What he saw as a problem was in truth a solution. For so many years, friendships were the only way these women managed to survive. At Rosie’s Place, through providing services to poor women regardless of their housing status, we have found that we can create the friendship and support necessary for health and dignity. We are glad to be here for our guests, whenever and for however long they need us.

The road to justice is as bumpy as the trips in our red van...and with fiscal cliffs and budget freezes looming, it’s likely to be even more tricky. At Rosie’s Place, we know that the journey to justice is best spent in the company of friends, so we create chances every day for friendships to be forged and strengthened.

Your friendship and support has helped us grow and change, to meet our guests at the place they need us most, and to build a niche in Boston that allows friendships to flourish. From our heart to yours – thank you.

Sue Marsh



ROSIE’S PLACE NEWS is published three times a year to inform our friends about activities and events taking place throughout the Rosie’s Place community. OUR MISSION is to provide a safe and nurturing environment for poor and homeless women to maintain their dignity, seek opportunity, and find security in their lives.

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**We’d love to hear from you! Please contact us with your comments at 617.318.0210.**

Guests Offered an Expanded Slate of Groups

Over the years, Ana Mann-Cervera and other Rosie’s Place Advocates have served as a lifeline to guests seeking help with housing, shelter, job search, safety from domestic violence and other issues. Within those conversations, Advocates also heard guests voice interest in programs beyond the immediate assistance we provide. In particular, guests were interested in support groups and skill building classes. With the hire in July of Ana Mann-Cervera as the first Groups Coordinator, Rosie’s Place now offers a wide range of groups that meet our guests “where they are.”

“Having a dedicated staff member to organize and facilitate groups is allowing us the opportunity to offer a wider range of programming for our guests,” says Erin Miller, Rosie’s Place Advocacy Manager. “We’re listening to what they’re telling us they’d like us to do and we now have the capacity to make a lot of their suggestions happen.”

Programming falls into two broad categories: curriculum-based groups that teach skills along with the offer of support, and traditional support groups where peers share experiences and provide emotional encouragement to each other.

This fall guests have taken part in a 12-week Nurturing Program for parents, led by Ana with training and curriculum assistance from community partner the Institute for Health and Recovery. According to Ana, this group—as well as most at Rosie’s Place—is customized to our guests. “It’s not just about parenting skills,” she says, “but about what led you to be who you are now and how that impacts the parent you are. If women have histories of substance abuse and mental health issues, we take the time to examine over the course of the group how they factor into their parenting.” Guests can join another session this spring.

With a large and growing population of Haitian women seeking our services, Advocates saw that “they often had similar questions and many did not know their own rights,” Ana says. A survey we conducted with these guests provided the foundation for a new eight-week support group, facilitated by a representative from AFAB, a social service agency serving Haitian people in the area. Priority topics covered at the well-attended sessions include “the truth about public benefits,”

immigration, education, health issues, and housing. “We’re seeing 11, sometimes 14 women attending each week,” Ana notes. “They are happy to have their own group for support in their community.”

*“We’re always trying to understand what we can do to help our guests move on a little bit further down the road.”*

Groups Coordinator Ana Mann-Cervera

We have also been able to start the Latina Support Group and, for the first time ever, a guest of Rosie’s Place is leading the group, along with Ana.

Women who attend a longstanding Anger Management Group over ten weeks are learning to develop control over their anger, thoughts and actions and to become more aware of the warning signs and common triggers that lead to incidents. A Domestic Violence Support Group started in January, in partnership with the Elizabeth Stone House, is an open and ongoing group that provides a forum for women to discuss how they have coped with and survived abuse. The group offers tools and information as it works toward developing a supportive peer network.

Ana also organized a multi-week Diabetes Support Group in the fall, co-facilitated by a nurse from Women of Means (an organization that also provides free health care to our guests), which presented healthy ways for our guests to manage this illness. And every Friday, an Advocate leads a short, informal discussion group in the Sitting Room, where topics can range from Social Security benefits to housing and health issues.

Even after nine months of rapid growth, Ana wants to do more. “I think these new programs and groups are just the tip of the iceberg, as there is so much need,” she reflects. “We’re always trying to understand what we can do to help our guests move on a little bit further down the road.”



“In 2009, we reached out to farmers and asked them to donate some produce to us (so we could cook healthier meals)...We decided to use all the fresh vegetables in the kitchen and what we have left, we give to the grocery program. So we have about 10 different farms that we’re working with...We’ve received about \$25,000 worth of fresh produce for our dining room and the food pantry. And the donations are seasonal, so that means everything from strawberries in the summer to squash in the fall to asparagus in the spring.”

**Ruthie McDonough**, Rosie’s Place Dining Room Manager, excerpted from “Healthier food helps the healing at Rosie’s Place,” by Glenn Yoder, *Boston Globe*, January 8, 2013

“You should volunteer here. Today. Tomorrow would be fine too... My husband and I volunteered at Rosie’s Place as part of this year’s National Day of Service and we are so happy that we did. It was an incredibly rewarding experience, and only those with hearts of stone will walk away untouched by the incredible commitment to service and dedication provided by the employees and regular volunteers of Rosie’s Place...We helped serve dinner and cleaned up afterward. It was the best four hours we’ve spent in a very long time.”

**Laura Abbasi**, excerpted from *Yelp* Review, January 22, 2013



QUOTABLE

“Hardship and homelessness can occur at anytime for many reasons to women, and it crosses all socio-economic groups. Rosie’s Place provides hope along with a soft landing place for local women to turn their lives around for their future. We feel proud knowing that by supporting this local charity our community bans together, and public awareness of Rosie’s Place increases while our contributors receive a terrific haircut! We are in the business of making people look and feel good and in the end, the team feels proud to have donated their time and talent! We’re already planning next year’s event! We love Rosie’s Place!”

**Gina Mancinone**, General Manager, Salon Mario Russo on their *Renew You* Cut-A-Thon Benefit with Kiss 108, February 3, 2013



# COMMUNITY *of* FRIENDS



Attendees peruse items available for bidding at a recent auction held by the **Boston College William F. Connell School of Nursing** to benefit Rosie's Place. Since 1986 the School of Nursing has generously donated nearly \$30,000 to support our work through this annual event.



Through their **Charity in Bloom** program, Winston Flowers will donate 20% of the proceeds from the above special arrangement (and a second arrangement)—sold only during the month of April—to Rosie's Place. This beautiful arrangement welcomes spring with a soft medley of roses in pinks, lavender and cream tones, accented with ivy. Prices range from \$65 to \$225. You can purchase the Rosie's Place **Charity in Bloom** arrangement at any Winston Flowers location or at [www.winstonflowers.com/Collection/Charity-In-Bloom](http://www.winstonflowers.com/Collection/Charity-In-Bloom).



**Trenni Kusnierek** of Comcast SportsNet, right, spoke about the importance of supporting the good work of Rosie's Place as celebrity guest host for the **Friends of Rosie's Place Winter Evening Out** in February. Joining close to 60 attendees who enjoyed food and networking at Back Bay hotspot Lolita are Rosie's Place volunteer **Rachel Walt**, left, and Major Gifts Officer **Ben Weisman**, center.

## Rosie's Place

ACCEPTS NO  
GOVERNMENT FUNDS  
AND RELIES INSTEAD  
ON COMMITTED  
SUPPORTERS LIKE  
*you!*



On February 3, stylists at Salon Mario Russo and on-air personalities from Kiss 108 came together to raise more than \$5,000 for Rosie's Place at the **4th Annual Renew You cut-a-thon**. Customer **Lorraine Saad** (seated), one of 80 lucky women who received a \$60 cut and blowout at the event, is with, from left, Salon Mario Russo stylist **Jonathan De Mar** and associate producer **James Raggi** and co-host **Lisa Donovan** of the Kiss 108 *Matty in the Morning* Show.

**Please support** Rosie's Place  
by donating online at [www.rosiesplace.org/giving](http://www.rosiesplace.org/giving).  
**We thank you!**



# DID You KNOW?



**Plans for a permanent commemorative installation** honoring Kip Tiernan are moving forward, with four artists chosen from a field of 51 to present their visions to the public at Boston Public Library on April 8. Artists' submissions will then be available on our website until the announcement of a final design. Please visit [www.rosiesplace.org/kiptiernanmemorial](http://www.rosiesplace.org/kiptiernanmemorial) for more information.



**The Rosie's Place Public Policy program** has registered 296 voters since June, both at Rosie's Place and the Woods Mullen shelter. Among those aiding in this effort are seven graduates of our public policy training for guests—who reached out to their peers—and an organizer from RoxVote.



**Advocacy Manager Erin Miller** recently presented at a National Network to End Domestic Violence conference that drew staff from domestic violence (DV) transitional housing programs from across the country. Her presentation, *Creating Support for Survivors with Mental Health Challenges*, offered concrete strategies to help providers feel more confident in delivering services to DV victims with mental health issues. A recognized authority on domestic violence, she also co-teaches a class at the University of Colorado Denver, Graduate School of Public Affairs, Domestic Violence Program, and presents trainings to local organizations.



**Homeless women seeking shelter** in big city shelters often have to be present at around 1:00pm in order to participate in a lottery for a bed for that night. This makes it almost impossible for them to schedule interviews or appointments after noon. At the Rosie's Place overnight shelter, our lottery is at 8:30am each day and women are able to stay for up to 21 days, which allows them time to work with our Advocates on finding a permanent solution to their homelessness.



## spring WISH LIST

As the seasons change—from snow banks lining the streets to crocuses and daffodils popping up in gardens—our donation needs have shifted accordingly. This spring we're focused on providing our guests with the little things that make a real difference in their everyday lives. Some of the items most in demand include:

- **Spring gear to help brave Boston's ever-changing weather:** disposable rain ponchos, umbrellas and flip-flops
- **Shower and personal care necessities:** facecloths, towels, large-sized toiletries, brushes and combs
- **Supplies distributed by the Outreach Van:** lip balm, baby wipes, hand sanitizer and travel-size sunscreen
- **Most in-demand food pantry items:** canned tuna, peanut butter, dried beans and eco-friendly reusable bags

Through your generosity, we can continue to help meet our guests' needs, both big and small. All donations can be dropped off at Rosie's Place between 8:30am and 4:30pm Monday through Friday. Directions to our 889 Harrison Avenue location can be found at [www.rosiesplace.org](http://www.rosiesplace.org) or by calling 617.442.9322. Thank you for supporting us in this way!

### READ OUR NEWSLETTER ONLINE

AND DO YOUR PART TO CELEBRATE EARTH DAY ON APRIL 22ND!  
REPLY TO THIS E-MAIL AND INCLUDE YOUR NAME, MAILING ADDRESS,  
AND REQUEST TO RECEIVE THE NEWSLETTER VIA EMAIL ONLY.  
**WE, AND OUR LOCAL FORESTS, THANK YOU!**

## SPECIAL OFFER FOR MOTHER'S DAY

Rosie's Place is delighted to announce our annual limited edition Mother's Day jewelry offer. We all benefit as you honor an important woman in your life while making every day a little better for Rosie's Place guests. **For a donation of \$65 or more**, a stunning necklace handcrafted by the Women's Craft Cooperative will be sent to your mother, wife, daughter or special someone.

This striking necklace is both delicate and bold, featuring three strands of antique brass tulip bead caps. Ivory pearls inside the tulip beads look like buds peeking through. They hang from antique brass chains that can be adjusted to varied lengths with a lobster clasp. Matching tulip cap earrings will pair nicely with the necklace and are available for \$15 alone or as a set for a special price of \$75.

A simple yet elegant card will accompany the necklace, informing the honoree of your thoughtful generosity.



This beautiful and unique spring accessory is available exclusively through the WCC for a limited time, so make your purchase now! Shop online at [www.rosiesplace.org/mothersday](http://www.rosiesplace.org/mothersday), call the WCC at (617) 318-0282 or send in your contribution with the name and address of the person you are honoring to **Rosie's Place, Attn: WCC, 889 Harrison Avenue, Boston, MA.**

## FLASH SALE

As a Rosie's Place supporter you are entitled to exclusive advance notice for WCC sales. Keep an eye on your email—on **April 16th** we'll be having a 24-hour flash sale! Prices on a wide range of items will drop dramatically for one day only, so make sure to log on and get your Mother's Day, Easter, graduation or birthday shopping done for less! Put together your shopping list today at [www.rosiesplace.org/wcc](http://www.rosiesplace.org/wcc).



### SAFE AND SOUND GALA THURSDAY, MAY 2, 2013 FENWAY PARK

Please join us for a special evening of food, friends and philanthropy at our annual Safe and Sound gala. This fun and memorable event will feature local celebrity chefs and insider-only auction packages. All proceeds benefit Rosie's Place. Tickets begin at \$500. For more information, please contact Benjamin Weisman at **617.318.0232** or [bweisman@rosiesplace.org](mailto:bweisman@rosiesplace.org).

### NEW ENGLAND COFFEE COMPANY 21ST ANNUAL GOLF TOURNAMENT MONDAY, MAY 13, 2013 ANDOVER COUNTRY CLUB, ANDOVER

Spend the day at the beautiful Andover Country Club and enjoy lunch, dinner and a round of golf while raising funds for Rosie's Place. Purchase a \$10 golf ball for a chance to win up to \$1,000 in the Ball Drop raffle. For more information on the tournament and raffle, please contact New England Coffee at **800.338.3747** or visit [www.rosiesplace.org/golf](http://www.rosiesplace.org/golf).

### FUNNY WOMEN... SERIOUS BUSINESS LUNCHEON TUESDAY, OCTOBER 15, 2013 HYNES CONVENTION CENTER, BOSTON

The best lunch in Boston is back again! For sponsorship or ticket information, please contact Katie Amoro at **617.318.0211** or [kamoro@rosiesplace.org](mailto:kamoro@rosiesplace.org).

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