

From the President



Dear Friend:

As you can see from our page one story, we are in the process of purchasing our sixth home. Although Howell is in Monmouth County, it is within easy distance of our current homes and will enable us to reduce the

waiting list of those looking for group residences by providing a home for four women currently living in the Woodbridge and New Lisbon state development centers.

While the state will provide operating support, AMIB is responsible for purchasing the home at a cost of about \$375,000. The house will also need considerable renovations before it can be made suitable and accessible for our residents. In this regard, I hope we can count on our you, our friends and family members, to help us out with your generous gifts. Please respond as generously as you can to our year-end appeal, which you should receive shortly in the mail.

Also in this newsletter, you will note that we have approved the establishment of the Bixel Respite Fund in memory of David Bixel, who gave so much of himself to AMIB. It was one of Dave's fondest wishes that we provide help to families trying to bring up children with visual and other impairments. As many of us know, this can be a challenging and sometimes overwhelming task. I am glad to report that guidelines are now in place for selecting families next year to receive these respite services.

Thank you, all of you, for your support of our homes, our residents and our staff.

Kenneth J. Carson, Jr.

From the Director



Greetings:

I hope this finds you doing well. This is an exciting time for AMIB, as we look to partner with the new state administration in developing additional services for those on the waiting list. In

an effort to do our part in reducing names on that list, AMIB has taken the initiative by purchasing a sixth group home (see article on page 1), which will provide 24/7 services to four women.

I hope you will be able to help us out

in any way you can with the mortgage costs and renovation costs that will be needed to make the home as accessible and barrier free as possible for these four residents.

On another positive note, AMIB has begun providing respite services to families in need through the recently created David Bixel Respite Fund honoring the memory of David and in recognition of all he did for AMIB through the years.

We look forward to the opportunities ahead, and will keep you posted on our progress.

I would like to extend a thank you to all the board members, staff and supporters of our cause.

Aaron Soto

The Legacy Society

We wish to acknowledge and thank the following who have become members of The Legacy Society through a bequest or planned gift:

Janet Andruss *	Robert Wood Johnson 1962 Charitable Trust
David R. Bixel *	Kellogg Endowment Fund
Elaine O. Behr *	Mary Katherine Lightner *
Kenneth J. Carson, Jr.	Muriel Martucci
Mary J. Carson	David Mathey *
Phil Cochran *	Daniel J. McCarthy
Albert R. Costa *	Patricia McKinley
Viola Ellison	William McKinley, III
Peter & Mildred Galanti *	Margaret J. McLean
Richard F. Harries & Carol J. Harries	Vera Monaghan
Austin & Clara Helle	Ann Pambello
Betty Wold Johnson	Edna Thorsen *
The Keith Wold Johnson Charitable Trust	Polly Wilson *
	* deceased



Thank you to the following donors for their generous gifts in Memory of David R. Bixel

Donald R. Blair
Kevin Cunniff
James M. Fischer
Irwin Gordon
Mr. & Mrs. Austin Helle
Mr. & Mrs. Alf H. Johnsen
Eric Johnsen
Muriel Martucci
Margaret J. McLean

A Bequest to the AMIB Endowment Fund

A tax-deductible bequest in your will is an excellent way to become a member of The Legacy Society and make a significant gift that may not be possible during a lifetime. If you have an up-to-date will and want to include a provision to provide permanent assurance of the future of AMIB residents, ask your attorney to add an amendment, known as a codicil. Suggested wording for a will or codicil could be:

"I give and bequeath to the AMIB Endowment Fund, 909 Cedar Bridge Avenue, Brick, New Jersey 08723-4259, the sum of \$_____ (or _____ percent of my estate) and/or the following property _____."

Some other opportunities to make a planned gift to AMIB's Endowment Fund and become a member of The Legacy Society include: creating a charitable remainder trust; giving a paid-up insurance policy; and arranging for a gift of appreciated long-term capital gain securities or real estate.

Three Members Join AMIB Board

At its meeting in May, the AMIB board appointed three new members. They are: Colleen Healey, Lillian Johnsen and Muriel Martucci.

Colleen Healey comes from a long line of AMIB board members. She is the granddaughter of Ken Carson, Sr.; daughter of AMIB's president, Ken Carson Jr.; sister of board member Ken P. Carson; and niece of Mary Carol, resident of AMIB's Bayville home.

Colleen and her husband, Mark, have a two-year-old daughter, Ella, and currently live in Middletown, NJ.

"AMIB is very personal to me," she said. "I grew up with Mary Carol around and always felt passionate about what AMIB does, and how we help people. As a little girl I would listen to my grandmother, grandfather and father discuss AMIB and its future, so I consider being on a board a real honor, and I look forward to actively participating in its growth."

Lillian Johnsen is the second of four girls born to Austin and Clara

Helle. Her sister Andrea, born when Lillian was in sixth grade, has been a resident of the Bayville home since 1982 when she was 22.

A trained nurse, Lillian currently works with the Visiting Nurses Association of St. Clare's Hospital, which provides home care in Sussex County. She says that the training she had with Andrea taught her more than she learned at college and that her four children also benefited from knowing Andrea. She and her husband Alf have four children, now all married.

Lillian says that she is happy to be a part of the AMIB board, and is impressed by the love, care and cooperative spirit she encounters when she visits her sister.

A member of The Legacy Society, **Muriel Martucci** has been a long-time and dedicated friend of AMIB, well



Healey



Johnsen



Martucci

before her son, Paul, moved into AMIB's fourth home in North Dover, which opened in July 2002. The home is named after her husband, Vinnie, who passed away on March 3, 2000. For 15 years Muriel served as secretary on AMIB's board of trustees. She and Vinnie organized fundraising events for AMIB and were among the group of friends and parents who were instrumental in opening AMIB's first group home in Barnegat — an old barn that was rented and converted into a family-type home for residents. This led to the opening of the first permanent group home in Toms River in 1980.

Residents of Long-Term-Care Home in Lanoka Harbor Greet Friends and Family at Luncheon/Reception



Above: Janet Wilson Alternative, executive vice president of AMIB (right), takes time at the luncheon/reception at the long-term care group home in Lanoka Harbor in May to get together with her sister, Mary Blair Wilson. Mary Blair is one of the eight residents of the facility.

Below: During the special luncheon/reception in May, Rita Jacobs, a resident of AMIB's first long-term care group home in Lanoka Harbor, proudly traces the words on the plaque outside her room with her fingers and tells visitors that it was "given by the Wallerstein Foundation for Geriatric Improvement." During the reception, the board also announced that another bedroom in the home had been "given in memory of David R. Bixel, President of the AMIB Endowment Fund."





Boards Announce Establishment of Bixel Respite Fund

AMIB board members get together at a meeting in May at the long-term-care group home at Emerald Court in Lanoka Harbor, Lacey Township. They are, from left: Austin Helle, Janet Wilson Alternative, Kenneth J. Carson, Jr., Muriel Martucci, Lillian Johnsen, Mary Carson and Daniel J. McCarthy. At the reception following the meeting, the AMIB and the Endowment Fund boards announced the establishment of the Bixel Respite Fund and presented David Bixel's wife, Patricia, with the following scroll:

The Bixel Respite Fund was established in 2006 to honor the memory of David R. Bixel who donated countless hours and dedication to the Association for the Multiple Impaired Blind, Inc. and to the growth of the AMIB Endowment Fund, Inc. over which he presided for many years.

David stressed the importance of providing services to families of individuals with disabilities. He strongly believed that the focus should be on giving families a break from the daily challenges they face as caregivers to those who require constant love, devotion and attention.

In recognition of his compassion for the disabled and their families and to fulfill his desire to provide them with respite from time to time, the AMIB Endowment Fund Board of Trustees has established an annual grant program in his name to provide respite services to families in need.

The annual grant will be consumer driven and will be available for families to avail themselves of respite services/programs. Grant monies may be used to:

- Purchase direct-care services provided by the AMIB organization to include in-home and/or community-based support,
- Purchase qualifying respite support rendered by other service providers or to offset the cost of family-chosen respite services,
- Purchase a combination of the two afore-mentioned services.

The Bixel Respite Fund will yield a family grant by May of each year. The grant will be awarded to New Jersey families who care for individuals with a visual and multiple impairment. Funding for services will be based on the level of need to be determined through an application process overseen by designated AMIB personnel.

Association for the Multiple Impaired Blind is qualified by the IRS to receive contributions which are deductible for federal income tax purposes. This charitable organization is registered with the Attorney General of the State of New Jersey. Information may be obtained by calling 973-504-6215. Registration does not imply endorsement.

Board to Present Care Giver of the Year Award

Recognizing the selfless and tireless dedication that staff members devote to their duty in caring for residents of AMIB, the board has decided to honor one member with the Care Giver of the Year Award. Starting in 2007, the award will be presented each year to a member of the staff who has demonstrated the most outstanding devotion to the challenging task of care giving. The award has been inspired by the "Beatitudes" articulated (below) by Sister Mary Byrnes, former director of St. Joseph's School for the Blind in Jersey City, where many current residents spent time before coming to an AMIB group home

Beatitudes for Care Givers

- C Blessed are they whose **Conversion/Commitment** becomes a renewal of life from the inside out.*
- A Blessed are they whose **Attentiveness** comes from the discovery of God's Mercy and the work of God's Spirit within oneself.*
- R Blessed are they who understand the need for **Rest** in spite of the unending functional and emotional happenings.*
- E Blessed are they whose **Energy** comes from maximizing opportunities for personal nourishment in all its forms.*
- G Blessed are they who are open to **God's Grace** enabling a change of heart and a change of deeds and life style.*
- I Blessed are they when **Interest** arises from others, and they can speak clearly of the circumstances present.*
- V Blessed are they who realize the ways they can **Vacation** when traveling is not possible or probable.*
- E Blessed are they who **Experience** who they are from the ways **Environmental** quality is permeated.*
- R Blessed are they who seek and connect **Resources** that provide a pause that **Refreshes**.*
- S Blessed are they whose **Spiritual** fulfillment coincides with their **Supportive** participation in the here and now as witnesses for the **Better World**.*

Ann Pambello Makes a Significant Bequest in Recognition of all AMIB Has Done for Her

Ann Pambello recently became a member of the AMIB Endowment Fund's Legacy Society, making a significant provision in her will to the AMIB Endowment Fund.

Ann's daughter, Barbara, was one of the first residents of AMIB's Bayville home.

Ann reflects on her motivation for making her bequest, and how her daughter has influenced her life.



Ann Pambello (left) and husband Michael (right) with their two children: Louis, now a priest at the Immaculate Conception Church in Montclair, NJ, and Barbara, a resident of AMIB's Bayville home.

"My daughter Barbara means the world to me, and so does the AMIB organization," said Ann Pambello. "When I sold my house and moved into the family house in Hoboken with my sister Lee, who is 90, I realized I had a few dollars, and I wanted to do something significant to pay back AMIB for all it has done for Barbara, for me, and for my family," she explained.

Daughter Barbara was born to Ann and Michael Pambello in Weekhawken, NJ, on September 7, 1957. At the time of

her birth she was given too much oxygen and was diagnosed with retrolental fibroplasia (a form of detached retina). When she was 3 months old, an ophthalmologist confirmed that the excessive oxygen had resulted in complex brain damage, causing blindness as well as autism and mental retardation.

Ann said that Barbara has a wonderful memory. She remembers dates, times, and incidents in her life as though they happened yesterday — a quality now attributed to autism.

Ann devoted countless hours to caring for and educating her daughter, exposing her to activities such as music, games, travel, and the arts. She worked hard to teach Barbara to appreciate what she had, rather than expect the world to take care of her. She fought hard to get the state of New Jersey to recognize the challenges faced by blind, developmentally challenged people and to provide them with appropriate educational opportunities and residential facilities.

Ann believes that her efforts helped to open up many avenues for the blind in New Jersey.

It was while Barbara was attending St. Joseph's School for the Blind in Jersey City that Ann and Michael met the Helles and the Martucci families. Together the families became the founding force behind the formation of AMIB. They were joined later by Polly and Al Wilson, who provided the additional expertise and financial resources necessary to launch the group homes.

In June 1981, Barbara became one of the first residents to move into the Bayville home. Today, at 49, she loves music and opera, can recall dates and sta-

Right: Barbara Pambello enjoys a day at the beach at Seaside Boardwalk.



tistics her family cannot recall, and looks forward to speaking with her mother on the telephone every day. Ann regrets that she does not drive and, at 82, is not able to make the 80-mile journey from Hoboken to Bayville to visit her daughter as often as she would like.

The Helles' daughter, Andrea, also lives in the Bayville home with Barbara; the Martuccis' son, Paul, is a resident of the North Dover home.

As he grew up, Ann's first child, Louis, now a priest at the Immaculate Conception Church in Montclair, also helped his sister, teaching her how to walk. In looking back over the years, Ann recognizes that all the extra time and attention the family devoted to Barbara must have been difficult for Louis.

Ann Pambello, who is a breast cancer survivor, has encountered many hardships in her life. Possibly 2002 was the lowest point. On August 31 of that year, her husband, Michael, who suffered from heart disease and dementia, passed away after two years in a nursing home. Her brother had died the previous day, and the day before that, Barbara returned from the hospital after thyroid cancer surgery.

Ann said it is her faith that carries her through. "God gave me the gift of life," she said. "What I do with this life is my gift back to Him."

Above all, she wants to be sure that that when she is no longer around, AMIB will continue to provide Barbara with the kind of excellent and loving care it has always given her.

AMIB, Inc.

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Mary Ann Miller Named a Community Star



Each year the New Jersey Association of Community Providers (NJACP) honors Community Stars — individuals who have made remarkable strides in dealing with their physical and developmental challenges. This year AMIB selected Sweetwood home resident Mary Ann Miller as AMIB’s Community Star for 2006. Joined by her friends and AMIB staff members, she received her award at the Westin Princeton Hotel at Forrestal Village on May 8.

Mary Ann has made great strides in becoming more independent and has taken on responsibilities such as household chores, grocery shopping and yard work over the past three years. She enjoys gardening and takes great pride in decorating the inside and outside of her home. Her personal touches have helped to make the Sweetwood home a warm and cozy place.

Mary Ann is an active member of the self advocacy group “Dream Weavers.” She served as treasurer of the group and continues to assist in bake sales and other projects. She also collects items and contributes to the Food Bank, the Salvation Army and other charities of her choice.

Mary Ann is a caring person who loves to help others. Congratulations on your award, Mary Ann!

Sight From Within

Fall 2006

A newsletter from the Association for the Multiple Impaired Blind, Inc.

AMIB to Expand into Monmouth County

Later this month, AMIB is scheduled to close on a spacious ranch in the town of Howell in Monmouth County. This will become our sixth residential group home and the first group home outside Ocean County.

The house includes four bedrooms, a living room, dining room, den, kitchen, two bathrooms and a sizeable backyard.

In addition AMIB will undertake a number of needed renovations including building accessible ramps at the side of the home.

Both bathrooms will be equipped with ADA-compliant fixtures and grab bars, one with a roll-in shower. Two bedrooms will be readjusted to be equal in size and to allow for wider hall space. The garage will be converted



ed into a small office and a laundry room.

The new residents of the home are expected to come from the Woodbridge and New Lisbon state developmental centers. According to AMIB Executive Director Aaron Soto, Howell is near enough to where the individuals

previously resided to be convenient for their family and friends as well as previous staff members who have worked with them to visit. It is also close enough to existing AMIB homes to encourage interaction between individuals currently served by AMIB and the new residents.

AMIB Announces Creation of Bixel Respite Fund

AMIB has decided to create the Bixel Respite Fund to honor the memory of David Bixel who died in August 2005.

David had served as president of the AMIB Endowment Fund for many years. He was also chair of the successful capital campaign to build the first long-term-care group home for blind/visually impaired and developmentally disabled seniors in the state of New Jersey.

David was particularly interested in finding ways to provide respite for families who care for the disabled and provide them with relief from the everyday challenges they face.

On May 21, the AMIB and AMIB Endowment Fund boards held a special luncheon reception at the Emerald Court long-term care group home, and invited friends, staff, board members and residents to attend.

David's wife, Patricia, attended the reception, toured the new home that her husband helped to make a reality, and met board members and residents. Board members spoke to her about the many contributions that David had made, and presented her with a scroll that described the Bixel Respite Fund and its goals. (See page 4.)

"It makes me proud and happy that AMIB has decided to honor

David in this meaningful way," she said. "As you know, AMIB had always been close to David's heart, and he felt passionately about providing respite for families of children with disabilities."



Patricia Bixel

*Gifts to the AMIB Endowment Fund
may be made in memory of
David Bixel.*