

Over 30 years of
Service
1974 - 2005

GROUP SCOOP REVIEW

Edition 3

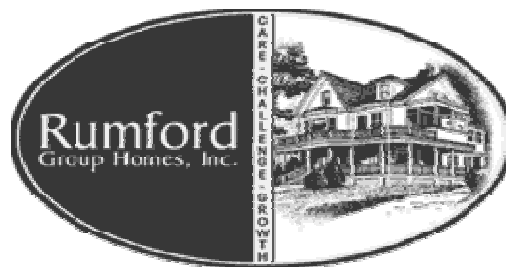
Rumford Group Homes, Inc.

March 2005



COUNCIL ON ACCREDITATION MISSION STATEMENT

**THE COUNCIL ON ACCREDITATION PROMOTES
BEST-PRACTICE STANDARDS;
CHAMPIONS QUALITY SERVICES FOR
CHILDREN, YOUTH, AND FAMILIES; AND
ADVOCATES FOR THE VALUE OF ACCREDITATION.**



Rumford Group Homes, Inc. Mission Statement

It is the mission of Rumford Group Homes, Inc. to develop and administer programs to enhance the safety, quality of life for children, youth, and families through a quality, comprehensive continuum of care in the fields of social services, education, corrections, mental health, and housing.

Kids Korner

HOME

Leeds Bridge Home is a really nice place. The House is located on 12 Kids Place. The staff are really kind and wise. They don't really like to listen to people complain. We have chores to do, but that's really cool. Some kids like it here, some kids don't but try to make the most of it. Because if you don't people might take that as an insult. We sing; we laugh; we all have a blast. We walk; we talk; we have to wear socks! That's a lot of things we do at Leeds and I wish I didn't have to leave.

From a past client 7/04



Four Generous Young Men donate Christmas Dinner

Steve Prosper knows what it's like to not have much reason to celebrate the holidays. The 17-year-old Mountain Valley High School student has more or less been on his own since he was 15, and even spent time living on the streets and taking refuge in shelters.

But things are looking up for Prosper these days. As part of the Rumford Group Homes, Inc. Semi-Independent Living Program, Prosper lives with other young men with similar backgrounds in an apartment where he is learning to pay bills, go grocery shopping and hold a job.

Prosper and his roommate are learning something else valuable too – the spirit of giving. Prosper, Steve Erskine, Brandon Virgin, and Jason Jonitis decided to take some of the money they had saved this year by doing odd jobs, such as raking leaves and shoveling snow, or from their regular jobs, and buy a full Christmas dinner with all the trimmings for the Beacon House on Congress Street

“The community has given us a lot,” said Erskine, also 17 and an MVHS student. “We’ve been through homeless situations. We wanted to give something back.” Erskine and Prosper, along with Rumford Group Homes, Inc. Supervisor, Silver Varnum, delivered the turkey, vegetables, rolls and pie to the Beacon House Monday afternoon.

The Beacon House is a club that functions basically as a drop-in social center for adults with any kind of impairment, physical, emotional or mental. Along with a pool table, couches, computer, games, and television, the center also has a full kitchen where club members make meals together on Thursday evenings.

This Thursday evening, the meal will be courtesy of the generous young men from the Group Home. Not only did the young men provide the ingredients for the meal, they will be on hand Thursday to help the club members prepare the food.

“For me, I did it because I’ve been through some of the same things these people have been through, with not celebrating the holidays,” said prosper.

Beacon House director Jeanne Bedard told the young men that before the Beacon House was open on holidays, some of their club members really didn't have anywhere to celebrate the holidays or anyone to celebrate with.

Both Prosper and Erskine noted that in a lot of ways, their families have become the people they now celebrate the holidays with.

“I wanted to help bring that same kind of feeling, that family feeling with friends,” said Erskine.

Varnum is proud of what Prosper and Erskine, Virgin and Jonitis chose to do for the people at the Beacon House. “I think that one of the things we’ve tried to teach them is what goes around comes around,” he said. “It’s pretty rewarding to see these boys growing into young men.

After a tour of the Beacon House facility, the young men started talking about doing some volunteer work at the center, socializing and playing cards or pool with the members.

“We’re thinking about seeing if we can schedule some time to spend down here, said Erskine. With school and work schedules, not to mention shopping, cooking and cleaning their own apartment, time is a precious commodity. But, as these young men are already learning, giving blesses both the giver and the receiver, and is one of the most important parts of being a part of a community.

I watched a caterpillar move lazily back and forth across the window ledge of my room. He seemed completely unsure about which way to go. Sometimes I feel just like that caterpillar. I don't always know which way to go, and even if I do know the right way to go sometimes I'm short handed in the will department. When I have to make big decisions I choke. It's like I am going to the arcade, but I don't have enough quarters to play.

But, I'm doing better with Nicole's help. I'm trying to change my choices, not just myself. I want to choose what is right and let the possibilities manifest themselves. I guess it's an opportunity we all have. Every decision can create a life-changing moment, and I'm tired of going down the wrong road.

S.D.

6/7/04

Winner of Black Mountain Season Pass

To Whom It May Concern:

My name is Tedy and I am fifteen years old. I currently live at Rumford Group Homes. I think that this season pass opportunity would be awesome. I would be able to go to the mountain more often and not worry about where the money is coming from.

This would be a positive thing in my life right now because I am not able to be with my family at this time. My foster parents would be very proud of me for putting effort into this essay to get this Black Mountain ski pass.

This would also give me the chance to practice my snow boarding skills because I am a beginner. I would be able to ski and board with my friends and make friends with the staff at Black Mountain. I would also be willing to help out at the Mountain whenever needed. I also would be able to come to the Mountain when it is convenient for my schedule.

Some ways that I could help in the community is like I said I would be willing to help out, I am a great helper. I am average at shoveling. I would be willing to learn more about how the mountain is maintained on a daily basis. I would also be nice to everyone at the mountain at all times. Being able to snowboard would get me outdoors in the fresh air, which would help me deal with stress. This would put me in a more positive space in my living environment. Being able to deal with stress would keep me healthy and fit. Learning more about snowboarding would help me be more patience and test my limits.

Thank You Very Much,
Tedy



Dear TFSC Staff:

I want to tell you all that you made my 10-day stay here. You were very helpful in so many ways. I didn't get the chance to say goodbye to all of you, and I feel like you helped me so much, whether it was calming me down, or making me laugh. You deserved to hear a goodbye and thank you! Coming here made me realize a lot of faults and gifts that I have in my life! I'm more aware now (because of you) and I'm working everyday for me, and making my life better and better.

Thanks for all the help.

“B”

The Emperor's Valentines

Once upon a time there lived an emperor in a cool palace of pure gold. He lived in the country of China in the city of Beijing. He could even see the Great Wall from his palace window.

The great ruler awoke one wintry morning to the sound of a crowing rooster. It was Valentine's Day according to the calendar. He said to himself, "I must give away candy and gifts to my friends and family and make some valentine cards."

So the emperor found some paper, paints, and brushes, pens, stickers, crayons, colored pencils and began writing. Some cards were made of silk... a fine silvery thread spun by the silk workers living on the palace mulberry bushes. Other cards were shiny gold, the emperor painted beautiful Chinese dragons on them. Still other cards were made of silver with pictures of colorful fireworks drawn on them. The Emperor worked carefully, making sure his writing and pictures were neat.

Finally, his cards were completed. It was time to sign his name and put the date – February 14. He carefully put each card in an envelope, addressed, and sealed them.

Now it was time to mail the cards. He decided to call a Yak Express rider. The rider came and took the Emperor's mail. Off rode the rider and yak toward the sandy desert. They traveled past a caravan of camels and at one point had to fight some poisonous snakes.

Soon they came to the cold, cloudy mountain forest region. This was the home of the giant pandas. There were other animals to look for as well – panthers and cheetahs. Fortunately these animals did not cross the Express rider's path.

Before sundown the Yak Express Rider reached his destination. The Emperor's valentines were safely delivered to each of his family members and friends. The Yak Express rider was delighted to find there was even a card for him!

(The boys at Roy House have been studying a unit on China. This short story is a result of brainstorming and cooperative story telling. Mary Fenstermacher)

SAVE THESE DATES!!

CPR/FIRST AID TRAINING

- 3/24/05 Dixfield Library
 - 4/17/05 Leeds Bridge Home
 - 5/19/05 Dixfield Library
 - 6/16/05 Leeds Bridge Home
 - 7/21/05 Dixfield Library
 - 8/18/05 Leeds Bridge Home
 - 10/20/05 Dixfield Library
 - 11/17/05 Leeds Bridge Home
- ◆ ◆ ◆
- 4/08/05 Agency Training Day – Madison
 - 6/03/05 Articles due for Group Scoop Review
 - 6/23-24/04 Two day Agency Training – Location TBA
 - 7/01/05 Distribution of Group Scoop Review
 - 7/15/05 Kids Picnic – Mt. Blue Park
 - 8/19/05 Staff Picnic – Kinoowatha Park, Wilton
 - 9/23/05 Agency Training Day – Madison
 - 9/30/05 Articles due for Group Scoop Review
 - 11/07/05 Distribution of Group Scoop Review
 - 12/02/05 Holiday Party – Location TBA

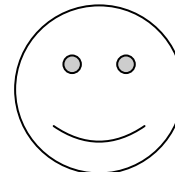


Teen Center

Kim Sequoia, Program Director for Healthy Communities has established a Youth Resource Team for the River Valley Communities. This Youth Resource Team (YRT) is comprised of SAD #21, 43, Healthy Communities, Big Brothers/Sisters, AWAP, Community Concepts, REACH, Tri-County, Rumford /Mexico Parks and Rec, Homeless Youth Outreach, and other dedicated community members. The goal of YRT is to organize dance events, have art displays, drumming circles, and eventually establish a drop in center, which will be located at 32 Parker Street in Mexico. HYO has participated in the YRT meeting in the months of November and December of '04, helping the YRT with such things as brainstorming ideas, logos, rules, mottos, and mission statement for the teen center. In December, Outreach participated in the cleaning up and painting of what is soon to be the Mexico Teen Center. Youth Resource Team meetings have been changed from Tuesdays to Mondays. Representation from other members at RGH would be a key asset to this team since 'our boys' interact daily in the Dixfield, Mexico, and Rumford communities. Anyone interested in attending the Youth Resource Team can contact Kim Sequoia directly @ 364-7408. Below is a list of coming events sponsored by Healthy Communities:

Regional Meeting for area youth to discuss needs to establish a center in the Tri-County Area @ the teen center on April 13th - provided by Maine Youth Active Network.
Community Forum Meeting is held each third Thursday @ Healthy Communities Office, River Road, Rumford at 4:00 pm

**By Dan Sansoucy
Homeless Youth Outreach**



Turner Family Support Center -

The mission of the Turner Family Support Center is to provide crisis stabilization to help reduce psychiatric hospitalizations. Families residing in Androscoggin, Franklin, and Oxford Counties are given priority for services. Turner Family Support Center works with families outside the Tri-County area based on bed availability. Turner Family Support Center offers responsive community-based services that respect the dignity of individuals and families. It is the goal of Turner Family Support Center to enhance the families' natural support system to assist them in dealing with crises in the least intrusive manner.

TURNER FAMILY SUPPORT CENTER

**WRITTEN BY DIANE L. BELANGER
TFSC PROGRAM DIRECTOR**

Al Monier wanted Rumford Group Homes, Inc to have a program that would help divert children in crisis from hospitalization and instead provide crisis stabilization in a nurturing, home-like environment. A program like this didn't exist anywhere in the state – providing crisis stabilization services in a home-like environment for high needs kids with psychiatric issues had not been done, but he and Rumford Group Homes made it a reality. After some searching, he found a location in Turner: a previously owned family residence, set back from the road, located among trees and greenery. Renovations were made to convert the garage into office spaces, a bedroom for the foster parents and ensure that the program was handicapped accessible.

I was fortunate to come on board in August of 1998 as the TFSC Case Manager, assisting with the start-up of the program, helping complete the licensing of the program and assisting in supervising the new staff and our new foster parents. Our mental health license was issued in November 1998. TFSC staff began doing work in the community with children and families in their homes, helping to resolve crisis, preserve the family, and maintain the child in their home and prevent placement in a more restrictive setting. Meanwhile, we found foster parents, finished their licensing process and completed the residential childcare license from the Department of Human Services. On April 22, 1999, with four beds and ready to serve both boys and girls from ages 5 to 17, TFSC first opened its doors.

Since that time TFSC has made several changes to the program. We moved from a foster home model with support staff to a fully staffed program of crisis stabilization youth workers that no longer has foster parents. However, the model and the mission of the program has remained the same: diverting hospitalization for children in crisis by providing stabilization services in a home-like, nurturing environment. We provide 24 hour a day eyes on supervision to children experiencing psychiatric crisis who are often depressed, suicidal, aggressive, and victims of past trauma. The program provides children with a seven to ten day stay at TFSC and utilizes a strengths-based, solution-focused, brief treatment approach to working with children in crisis and addressing the issues that precipitated their crisis. In addition to addressing these issues with children we also work with their families as often as possible prior to their discharge to assist in successfully transitioning children home so that they can remain in their home.

Turner Family Support Center also continues to provide In-Home Crisis Resolution services to children and families in their homes for up to 30 days after their discharge from the residential crisis program. We also provide In-Home services to children and families who have not been in the residential crisis program but are in need of services to prevent out-of-home placement. During the 30 days our In-Home staff work with families to help maintain placement stability and avoid further instances of crisis and children needing out-of-home placement. Their work involves many aspects, including direct behavioral work with children; work with the entire family on communication and issues with structure, while helping to build on the families' strengths and utilizing their natural support system. The In-Home workers also assist families with making linkages to their community resources and other service providers to assist in meeting their on going needs and address psychiatric and/or family issues.

TFSC serves children primarily from Androscoggin, Oxford and Franklin Counties and preference is given to children from the tri-county area. However, we frequently serve children referred to us from many other areas of the State from Aroostook to York Counties.

Since becoming the Program Director in September 2002, I have had the opportunity to see RGH, Inc. continue to grow and become accredited by the Council on Accreditation. Turner Family Support Center continues to grow with the agency, meeting best practice standards and continuing to provide crisis stabilization services to children. We have a very skilled staff of 12 Crisis Stabilization Youth Workers, two In-Home Crisis Workers, two Relief Crisis Stabilization Youth Workers, a Clinical Case Manager and Program Director. TFSC completes admissions 24 hours a day and admissions in the middle of the night are not all that uncommon.

TFSC has served nearly 800 children since opening the doors, and this April celebrates its sixth anniversary providing services to children and families. We look forward to many more years to come.

Employee Spotlight

A short story about a European girl in the Maine wilderness!

I was born in Sweden, but have lived most of my life in Norway, near the Capitol, which is where I feel at home. On the surface, Maine might not be so different from my own hometown, the same trees, the hiking trails and ponds, the same beautiful snow to ski in. But in my heart, I guess I am a big city girl, “dropped off” in Farmington, Maine.

All my life, I think, I have had an interest in other people, and in the ways and wonders of other human beings, which is why I chose to go to school and take my bachelor in Social Work. I got a job, settled down, but my curiosity and my earlier traveling experiences made me want to explore a little bit more.

I came across the Ilex program, which stands for International Learning Exchange for Social Educators, then told my boss I wanted to go “over there”. And American as she is, she was very supportive, waved me goodbye and said “I will see you sometime next year.”

I did not know what to expect, but went with an open mind and an idea of that experiencing something new will make me re-evaluate how I think and work, which is always a good thing in my mind. I like to say I collect experiences, and I still have a lot of them to gather.

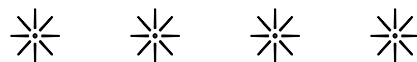
I have learned a lot taking the trip here:

I am awful at packing a suitcase; high heels look great but are not always practical; letting somebody choose accommodations for you is harder than it sounds; as much as I can beat around the bush, a lot of people here find me very

direct; humor is a universal language; criticism is not; my name is no longer Sonja, but Sonjar (getting to know the Maine dialect). And for sure, you need a car that’s running!

I am looking forward to what the next six months will bring me...

Sonja Gundersen
ILEX-fellow

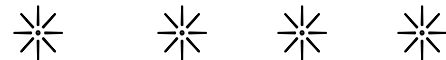


YOUR HEALTH

Medical studies suggest that where you carry extra pounds may affect your health. For example, if you are shaped like an apple (round around the middle), you may be at higher risk for chronic health problems, such as heart disease, than if you are pear-shaped (have extra padding on your hips and thighs).

Maintaining a healthy weight is important for good health. But remember that accepting your shape is also an important part of your well-being.

Talk to your doctor before you begin a weight loss or exercise program.
Cigna HealthCare



WELCOME

New Full Time Employees

Tanya Smith	THP
Samantha Sylvain	Leeds
Mary Fenstermacher	Roy
Lori Boudreault	Leeds
Dwight Murphy	THP
Sarah Decourcey	Roy
Jamie Ellwell	Roy
Shawna Roderick	Roy
Sherry Lee Ames	TFSC
Bobbie Jo Hodgkins	Greenleaf
Lisa Folk	Leeds
Katie Tucker	THP
Greg Dennison	THP
Noreen Aleck	Greenleaf
Jessica Curtis	THP

New Relief Employees

Kelly Kneeland	THP
Bobbi Nelson	THP
Tammy Giberson	Leeds

Turner Family Support Center

I I N T R U S I V E H A B D C
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ANDROSCOGGIN
CHILDREN
CURIOSITY
FAMILY
INTRUSIVE
MISSION
PSYCHIATRIC
SUPPORT

ANNIVERSARY
CLINICAL
ENHANCE
ILEX
ISSUES
PLACEMENT
RELIEF
TURNER

CAR
CRISIS
EUROPEAN
INHOME
LICENSING
PROVIDERS
STABILIZATION
WILDERNESS

Coming In The Next Issue:
Leeds Bridge Home
Employee Pets
Remember Deadline: June 3, 2005
THINK SPRING!!!!!!