



**ANGELS
UNAWARE, INC.**

Residential Care for the Developmentally Disabled.

Newsletter

1995 Angel Ornaments On Sale!!

Our 1995 ornament is now on sale. A sweet angel holding a candle, the ornament was designed by Jim Hawver, President of Hawver Aluminum Foundry, Inc., who will also manufacture and donate the ornaments to Angels Unaware for our annual fund-raising event.

Board members, parents and friends of Angels Unaware are selling the ornaments for \$5 each. If you or your organization would like to help us sell ornaments or would like to purchase ornaments, please call Ross or Dixie at **961-1159**.

Angels Make The Holidays Special

Our angel ornaments are versatile. Hang them on a Christmas tree or wreath. Buy three or four and make a wind chime. Or use them as gift package decorations. Our angel ornament adds the perfect touch of cheer when tied around the neck of a wine

bottle. Place them in floral arrangements. Or simply tie an angel ornament with a long velvet ribbon and wear it as a holiday necklace. Purchase several, and let us know what other innovative ways you use them to brighten your holidays.

Easy To Order By Mail

Our mail-order ornaments cost \$6 each (\$5 for the ornament, plus \$1 for shipping/handling).

To order ornaments by mail, send your check (payable to *Angels Unaware*) to **Angels Unaware, P.O. Box 270040, Tampa, FL 33688-0040**. To order any of the older ornaments (1990-94), call Dixie at **961-1159** to ensure the year you want is still available.



Help Us Break Last Year's Record

With your help, we can break last year's \$8,000 record sales! Please share the spirit of the season by purchasing Angels Unaware ornaments this year — for our residents' sake. May the holiday season bring each of you many blessings!! ♥

Resident Bronze Winner At Special Olympics World Games

*by James Epperson
Angels III Facility Director*

This past July, James (Jimmy) and I competed in Bocce against the best in the world at the Special Olympics World Games in New Haven, Conn.

Although we went to play Bocce, the distractions were many and wonderful. Press interviews were especially fun for me as I watched Jimmy answer the questions with ease and deft clarity. Not bad for someone who just a few years ago was considered nonverbal.

We marched in no less than three major parades — one at Disney World, another on national television for the Opening Ceremonies and again at the Opening of



Jimmy (left), shown here with his Facility Director, James Epperson, enjoys playing Bocce.

the Bocce Courts.

We received two Bronze Medals and were cheered on by 500 to 700 spectators

on any given day. We were the only Bocce team that was asked to autograph some Florida posters. We signed over 20 posters from the time we started counting.

Star gazing was also a good pastime as we got to see President Bill Clinton, Arnold Schwarzenegger, Eunice Kennedy-Shriver and many others.

We still represent the sport of Bocce today, demonstrating our skills for state and local organizations.

We look forward to competing next year in the Southernmost Bocce Invitational Tournament in the Florida Keys and Caribbean. ♥

"Your depth of commitment, your quality of service, the product of your devotion—these are the things that count in life."

— USAF Capt. Scott O'Grady

Bless Our Donors

Elli Shultz; Charline Stuart; The Cosmopolitan Club of Tampa, FL; Mr. & Mrs. J.R. Black; Mary H. Sherrill; Ruth Sunday School Class of First Baptist Church; Huey & Barbara Bland; James & Vickie Feutz; Tom Wirkus; Sports & Recreation; Carrie Sullivan; Angel Baltar, Sr.; Carol Smith; W.A.N.E. Tree Systems; James & Elaine Lancaster; Georgie & Mary Hunt; Mr. & Mrs. Vincent J. Lodato; Malcolm & Barbara Castor; William Hincer; Lawrence & Linda Murphy; Beatrice Albano; Patricia Blackshear; Share Tampa Bay Staff; Peace Community Church; Jean Jordan; Molly Thacker; Jack Barnes; Southprint Corporation; Terri Simons; Bits'n'Pieces Theatre; Lynn Capece; St. Joseph's Wellness Outreach; Cathy Swieso; Unisea Food, Inc.; VRI; Fox Sports Field Operations; Lenore Lake-Guidry; PTA Council; Cari Puleo; Sports Unlimited; Doreen Markley; Dr. Margaret Hammond; Michael G. Charles; CGM Services; Cindy Marks ♥

"If you cannot lift the load off another's back, do not walk away. Try to lighten it."

— Frank Tyger

Remembrances

Donations Made In Memory Of:

♥ **Josephine Leet** by Huey & Barbara Bland; Burlington Senior Citizens Organization; Harold & Elizabeth Emenau; Levi & Maudy James; Peter & Jacqueline Carter; Mabel Weagle; Basil & Marjorie Freeman; Wayne & Linda Durling; Vera L. Doggett; June Mole
♥ **Gene Jordan** by Jean Jordan ♥

"We have committed the Golden Rule to memory; let us now commit it to life."

— Edwin Markham

Special Olympics Heroes Receive Recognition

Angels Unaware is proud to announce that Board Member Jerry Gibbs has been named *Hillsborough County's Special Olympics Steering Committee Member of the Year* and Angels III and V Facility Director James Epperson has been named *Hillsborough County's Special Olympics Volunteer of the Year*. Congratulations to each of you on receiving public recognition of the time, effort and dedication you have given so generously to Special Olympics. ♥

Speaking Out Column

Earning Respect ... We All Still Have So Far To Go

Guest Columnist: James Epperson
Facility Director of Angels III and V

We have come so far, but have so far to go. By we, I am referring to the population that Angels Unaware serves and the people who know them. Not just the people who work with them, but their friends, family and all the people in the community who interact with them.

I watch with satisfaction as some of my residents shop for groceries. I marvel not just at the residents but at the check-out person who doesn't alter her behavior when they go through her line. I marvel and think that we have come a long way.

Then along comes an experience that sets me back. Angels III recently went on a vacation. The vacation didn't go along as planned; however, most of the mishaps I can look back on and have a good laugh. Unfortunately, one series of events, I cannot.

We had booked our rooms about a month in advance. When making the reservations I follow a script which closes with, "... we will be arriving on [...] and will be paying by company check in the amount of [...]." All went well, until I took a some residents with me to prepay our stay.

When we arrived, we were told that the hotel could not accept the check. The hotel personnel were courteous but intractable. We had stayed previously with other hotels within the chain and had no trouble. I called the chain's office and was told to pay at a local hotel (in Tampa) and get a voucher. This was done, and the voucher was in my hand, but before I had gone back to my office, the hotel had

called and informed us that they would not be able to honor the voucher if it was paid by check.

To resolve the problem, the check was made out to me, and I would, in turn, pay the local hotel for the rooms on a personal credit card and then take the voucher to the Orlando hotel. This worked with the local hotel, but the Orlando hotel told the local hotel they still would not honor the voucher.

The conclusion I was left with was that we were not welcome. It was too late to get rooms for 14 at another hotel in Orlando. And disappointing the residents was not an option. They certainly had done nothing inappropriate. We paid the Orlando hotel cash for the rooms.

Once we arrived, it became more apparent that we were not welcome. No one was rude or overtly unkind. We were simply avoided and ignored. The best example of this was in the mornings. I am an early riser. At 6 a.m. the first morning, I went down for breakfast alone and received excellent service. The next morning, I took two residents with me, and we were ignored — no *Good morning*; no *The coffee is over there*; nothing.

Experience tells me that the best response is exposure. Expose them to us, and let them get to know the reality of our residents. It works. I've seen it work. It worked with the check-out lady at the grocery store, and it can work with hotel managers. We need to be out there. We need to show them who we are.

Respect must be earned. We have to earn it, and people like those in that hotel will have to earn it as well. ♥

Sharing Their Concern

Special thanks to these businesses, organizations and individuals for their continued support:

- ☑ **GTE Federal Credit Union**, for waiving service fees for our residents' personal accounts.
- ☑ **Oak Grove United Methodist Church**, for opening its classrooms to Angels Unaware for staff training sessions and Board meetings.

☑ **Ruth Epsky, Tampa Tribune** Neighbors Columnist, for always publicizing our events and fund-raisers.

☑ **The Beta Sigma Phi - Chapter Preceptor Zeta Gamma Sorority**, for ordering \$1,200 worth of angels ornaments so far this year.

☑ **The Cosmopolitan Club**, for selecting Angels Unaware as its fund-raising beneficiary for the coming year.

☑ **Southprint Corporation**, for underwriting production costs for this issue of our newsletter.

Angels Unaware Continues To Grow

Angels Unaware is blessed as we continue to grow and make a difference in the lives of our developmentally disabled residents.

A New Group Home Is Added

As we went to press, plans were under way to close on the purchase of a house that will become Angels VI, a group home for non-ambulatory residents. After closing, extensive renovations will need to be made to better serve our non-ambulatory residents and their wheelchairs, walkers, lifts and other special equipment.

When the home is ready, some Angels II residents will move over to Angels VI, alleviating the crowded conditions at Angels II. Plus two young women (Angela and Andrea) are patiently waiting to join the Angels Unaware family as new Angels VI residents.

The home is near Angels II, making it easier for Elizabeth Alexander, Facility Director at Angels II, to also become the Facility Director for Angels VI.

Two New Vans Are Delivered

Angels Unaware now has two brand-new vans — thanks to two DOT grants and the funds raised from last year's angel ornament sales. Both vans have been modified to meet the special needs of our residents.

The non-wheelchair van was completed and delivered in October. However, the wheelchair-accessible van required more extensive modifications and was not ready for delivery until late November.

With both vans now in action, group outings are much easier and certainly a lot more fun for our residents and for their caregivers. ♥

Residents' Scholarship Fund Needs Donations

Angels Unaware's scholarship fund helps our residents when their personal savings accounts are low, so they won't miss out on activities or go without needed medical care or personal items.

Since the State of Florida does not cover many of their health care needs and medications, residents often pick up the full tab. Frequently, prescriptions alone can deplete their account — money they have saved from SSI and "far below minimum wage" earnings from their employment at sheltered workshops.

If you would like to contribute to the scholarship fund, mail a check (payable to *Angels Unaware Scholarship Fund*) to:

**Angels Unaware
P.O. Box 270040
Tampa, FL 33688-0040**

To learn more about how you can help this important fund, please call **961-1159**. ♥

For The Perfect Holiday Gift, Share Angels Unaware With Family And Friends

Capture the true meaning of Christmas this year by giving gift memberships in Angels Unaware. And if you haven't renewed your membership, please do it today. Angels Unaware counts on your continued support. Mail your check (payable to *Angels Unaware, Inc.*) to:

**Angels Unaware, Inc.
P.O. Box 270040
Tampa, FL 33688-0040**

Designate on the check whether it is for a membership or a donation (and the type of donation). Angels Unaware is a 501(C)(3) non-profit charitable organization; donations are tax-deductible.

For more information, please call Ross O'Banion, Executive Director of Angels Unaware, at **961-1159**. ♥

Annual Memberships

- Individual General Membership \$10
- Family General Membership \$25
- Corporate Membership \$100
- Bronze Angel \$250
- Silver Angel \$500
- Golden Angel \$1,000
- Platinum Angel \$5,000

Donations

- Donation in Loving Memory of: _____
- Donation in Honor of: _____

Please send a notification letter about this donation to:

Name: _____

Address: _____

City/State/Zip: _____

- A General Donation (to be used for the residents as needed).
- A Donation for the Residents' Scholarship Fund.

Enclosed is my check (payable to: *Angels Unaware, Inc.*) for \$ _____

Donor's Name: _____

Address: _____

City/State/Zip: _____ Phone: _____

On The Home Front Angels I

Sandra Bulmer, Facility Director

Earlier this fall, Chad was invited to have lunch with the Tampa Bay Buccaneers and returned saying he had a great time!

The residents are all focused on Christmas and can't wait to begin decorating and seeing gifts appear under the tree. One of our big holiday outings will be to the *Christmas on the Farm* program sponsored by the Children's Horsemen's Academy at Camp Keystone. It's an event that promises to be filled with hot cocoa and hot cider and lots of fun and caroling. We wish everyone a very Merry Christmas!!

Angels II

Elizabeth Alexander, Facility Director

Ever since the residents first learned I was pregnant, they have been eagerly anticipating the arrival of my baby. When Amy was born, residents and staff members celebrated and volunteered to help care for her.

When I finally returned to work, all 10 residents bombarded me with questions: *How's Amy? When will we be able to see her?* Latonya was especially excited about the opportunity to help care for Amy. My daughter is especially blessed to grow up with an extended family of Angels watching over her. Together we'll share her special moments ... her first step, her first tooth.

And more excitement is on the horizon — the opening of Angels VI. Angels II has been bursting at the seams for some time, so it will be nice to move some residents over to Angels VI when it is ready. Finally, there will be more elbow room for wheelchairs, lifts and the other special equipment our non-ambulatory residents need.

Angels III

James Epperson, Facility Director

Just how many things can go wrong on a vacation? Just ask Angels III. Our trip to Orlando this summer was an unforgettable experience. Getting there was half the trouble; surviving once we got there was the other half.

On the way there, the van broke down. (*When*

does that new van get here?) We were rescued by a passing tow truck. With the hotel refusing us early check-in and our being unable to go the park, the folks shopped while I "flew at low altitudes" back to Tampa for repair funds, only to arrive back in Orlando 28 minutes too late to rescue our luggage from a locked repair garage.

The rest of the trip was a flurry of tantrums, stolen wallets, messy pants, disappearing hotel keys, attacked potato chip stands and burglarized cars. In spite of it all, we enjoyed a lot of great moments — enough of those close, fun times that will make us want to try it again next year ... although at another hotel and in another van.

Angels IV

Sandra Bulmer, Facility Director

We're proud of Jason, who is making slow but steady progress in a new workshop environment. It is often the quiet victories like his that make the difference for all of us at Angels Unaware.

The Annual Thanksgiving Dinner prepared by Angels Unaware staff and parents was a great opportunity to visit with residents and caregivers from Angels I, II, III and V. The food was home-cooked, plentiful and delicious!! Thanks to

everyone who helped to make the evening special.

All six residents are now eagerly awaiting Christmas. We'll spend a few evenings touring the city, looking at holiday lights and singing carols before we welcome in the new year.

Angels V

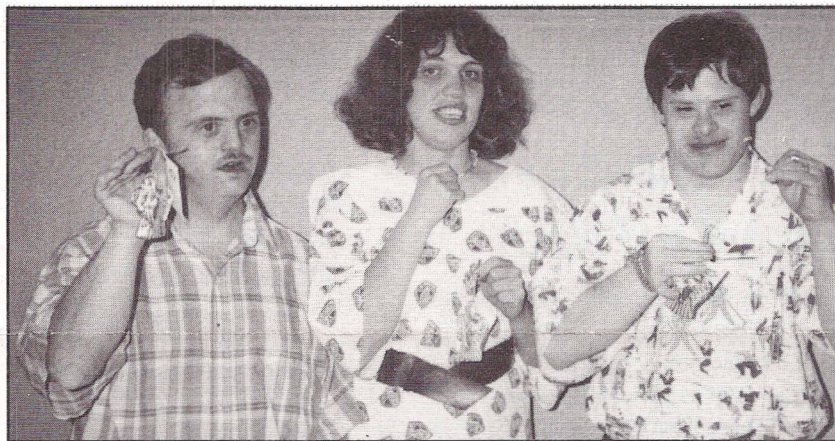
James Epperson, Facility Director

The women at Angels V are on a roll — literally. They're learning to bowl, some with adaptive balls while others lug around the traditional ones. Some prefer not to use a ball. Our adventures at the bowling alley have brought some exciting moments, from balls that cleared the bowling circle to the first strike ever.

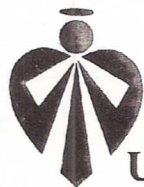
John, the local pro at Florida Lanes, has helped us a lot. From his office, he had watched the ladies' valiant efforts and couldn't help coming out to lend a hand. Some of the ladies have taken a liking to the game as players; others would rather just sit in the gallery and agonize over the near misses. (I think Becky has learned to moan sarcastically.)

The emotional highlight came when Lisa completed three whole frames and knocked 12 pins down without bumpers. ♥

**ANGELS UNAWARE
WISHES YOU AND YOUR LOVED ONES
A SAFE AND HAPPY HOLIDAY!!**



(L-R) Angels Unaware residents Jeff, Michelle and Juan show off the 1995 ornaments.



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Tampa, FL 33688-0040



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