



A PUBLICATION FOR THE FRIENDS  
AND SUPPORTERS OF THE  
BOSTON LIVING CENTER

# WE ARE THE LIFE

# Boston Living Center's 2008 Marathon Team is Running for Life

Each year on the third Monday in April, 25,000 runners gather in Hopkinton to run the Boston Marathon®, the world's oldest annual marathon. This year, 17 of those runners are doing it for the Boston Living Center. Their challenge is twofold, running 26.2 miles while each raising a minimum of \$3,000, but their reward is tenfold; making a lasting impact on the lives of BLC members.

*"The Boston Living Center for me represents overcoming the negative and emphasizing Life with a capital L. I am in awe of the people I have met at the center who have come together to face their diagnosis with strength rather than weakness, with hope rather than discouragement, and with love rather than fear. I'm can only aspire to have such courage in confronting my life stressors (such as Heartbreak Hill!)."*  
—Michael O'Connor,  
"Running for Life"  
Marathon Team Member



Tony Bertoldi and Kevin O'Neil

This year's 17 member Marathon team includes two BLC members who are running to show their appreciation. For Jamie Simpson, this will be his second time running the Marathon for the Center, "The BLC has kept me going for 10 years. The least I can do is return the favor." As an official charity of the Boston Marathon®, the BLC will have a team in 2008, 2009 and 2010.



Holly Perreault

*"Honestly, running isn't fun for me. It is painful, grueling, and emotionally taxing. That's where the Boston Living Center comes in. The BLC is humanity at its finest, struggling to offer warmth, safety, and comfort to those in need. The Boston Living Center is singing and laughing while lunch and dinner are being served."*— Holly Perreault, "Running for Life" Team Member

While the runners' motivations vary, their connection to the mission of the BLC has become more personal as they have been getting to know a BLC member through the Member Match program. Runners and members have been enjoying sharing time together and finding inspiration in one another.

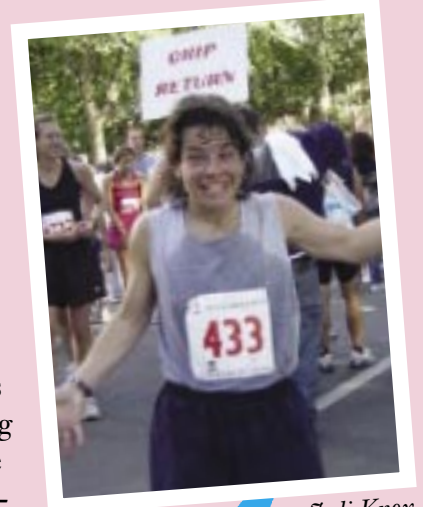
*"Running on the Boston Living Center team has allowed me to turn a personal fitness goal into something much greater, impacting the lives of thousands of people that benefit from the Center."* Randy Fasnacht, "Running for Life" Marathon Team Member.



Randy Fasnacht and Justin Lopes

*"It is wonderful to sit down with Randy and share with him what it is like to live with the virus on a daily basis, not only as a BLC staff person, but as a member."* Randy's BLC Buddy, Justin Lopes, BLC Staff and Member

On April 21 the months of training will pay off for the runners, but for their BLC buddies, and the other members at the BLC, their hard work will pay off for years to come. Please help us cheer on the Running for Life team on Marathon day and join us at the Boston Living Center on Stanhope Street for the **Marathon After-Party** to celebrate and congratulate our runners.



Jodi Knox

Thank you to the MBTA for displaying our Marathon Team ads on the Orange, Blue and Red Lines during the month of March



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The Boston Living Center's Marathon Team is Running for Life

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to donate to the team

# Tales from the Road

## Jamie Simpson, BLC Member and Marathoner Shares Excerpts from his Running Journal

**December 30, 2007**

Almost the new year. Woke at 6:40 a.m. to the dawn light, dressed, grabbed my camera, and began running, arriving at the top of Broadway & Main in Somerville in time to catch the sunrise. Maybe I am a morning person. The peaceful, unmatched morning light can turn even a power plant & tanker into a work of art.



**January 20, 2008**

Today I ran the last six miles of the marathon route. Memories of four years ago (memories filled with lots more runners & spectators) carried me along the hills of Commonwealth Avenue. As I crested the highest point, I saw my goal. Now I remember why it's called "Heart-break Hill," though it actually spurred me on rather than broke my heart.

**January 24, 2008**

My longest run to date, nearly 8 miles. (Next weekend's goal: 10.) To mix things up a bit, I ran to the Bunker Hill Monument, then up the 250 stairs for one of the area's best views. (My calves are still grouchy.) One photo captured the shadow of the monument stretching out over the townhouses of Charlestown.

**Sunday, February 10**

I went running around the hills of Somerville. (All the hills that used to live in Boston moved to Somerville long ago – must be the lower rents.) After a week of snow, rain, hail, locusts, – a typical New England winter week – Sunday morning's weather was spectacular. As were many of the vistas, and the houses I ran past. Unfortunately, I didn't bring my camera, for which



Jamie Simpson

I spent the better part of the run kicking myself. (On the plus side, kicking one's self is good exercise – great for the quads. ;- ) Following the run, I went to church (First Church in Boston), where the youth organized a bake sale and Religious Education Director Ruth Owen (along with the choir, ministerial staff, and - the whole congregation) put together a very entertaining show about my training. Not only was it great fun (and yummy), but the youth donated the proceeds to the BLC.

**Sunday, February 24, 2008:**

A run of about 12-13 miles, back & forth over the dreaded hills of Newton, with one of my BLC marathon teammates. Afterward, stretching and protein shakes further along the route, then bowling with my older brother's family, followed by BLC's Dinnerfest Kickoff party at STIX restaurant. Yummy skewers, and more donations for the center. The adventure continues...

**Thursday, March 6, 2008:**

Last Sunday I ran from the Eliot Hotel, at the corner of Commonwealth & Mass. Ave, to Route 16 in Newton, and back. I thought the round trip was about 12 miles; turns it was 17. Why, I wondered afterward while getting something to eat, did it seem like everyone was looking at me funny? Was I being paranoid, as usual? I discovered the answer as I washed up after eating: the sodium in the sweat from my running had crystallized on my face, making it look like I had fallen face-first into a snowbank. Who says exercise isn't glamorous?...



Marc Davino, Cathy Morales, Julie Barnes

## Message from the Executive Director

Spring brings new hope, new promise, new colors. At the BLC we are celebrating spring with exciting news. First, our "Running for Life" team is training for the Boston Marathon® while raising funds for the BLC. As the first AIDS service organization chosen as an official charity of the Boston Marathon®, we are proud of our team and hope you'll cheer them on as they run 26.2 miles and raise over \$50,000 for our members. They truly are...Running for Life. We are equally happy that Sara Andrews joined us as the new Chair of the Board. Sara has big shoes to fill as Alfredo Hernandez passes the torch. We are pleased to work with

Sara, as her commitment to the BLC, especially to the quality of services we offer, is outstanding. The BLC also welcomes Julie Barnes as our new Director of Member Services. Julie has extensive experience with diverse populations from homeless teens to farm workers, and many years in the HIV field, including housing advocacy at AIDS Action Committee (AAC) and grant writing at Cambridge

Cares about AIDS. With her passion for collaboration, Julie is excited to continue building a community where members are empowered to become leaders. And the last news comes from our Development Office, where Marc Davino joined us as the director. Marc came to us from The Iacocca Foundation, where he served as Assistant Director of Development and Communications. Prior to that, he was Director of Events at AAC. Marc is happy to have lunch with you, take you on a tour of the BLC, or chat about plans going forward. On behalf of the members of the Boston Living Center, thank you for being part of our community and we wish you a happy spring.

Warm regards,

Cathy Morales  
Executive Director

## Boston Living Center Welcomes New Board Chair, Sara Andrews



Sara Andrews is the Senior Vice President of Development at Partners HealthCare. She has been on the BLC Board since 2002, providing fundraising expertise to the development committee, chairing the strategic planning committee, and strengthening ties between the BLC and Partners HealthCare. She remarks, "I am honored to take the reins of the Board Chairmanship from Alfredo Hernandez and look forward to working with BLC members, staff, donors and community stakeholders as we continue to strengthen the Center's programs for all who count on our support."

*A heartfelt thank you to outgoing Board Chair, Alfredo Hernandez, for years of valuable service and leadership to the BLC.*

## 2006 – 2007 Donors

The Boston Living Center is able to provide vital programs and services to those living with HIV/AIDS because of the generosity of many individuals, companies, foundations and organizations. Those whose gift was \$100 or more made between July 1, 2006 - June 30, 2007 are listed. If there is an error in this listing, please let us know so we may correct our records. Contact Marc Davino, Director of Development (617) 236-1012 ext. 233 or mdavino@livingcenter.org

### 2006 – 2007 Donors: Corporations

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## Debbie and Ron Fellman, Longtime Supporters

“The Boston Living Center is near and dear to our hearts,” says Debbie Fellman, referring to her entire family. Having lost a brother – Peter Daniel Clark – to AIDS in 1992, Debbie Fellman has been supporting the BLC since our doors opened. After he was diagnosed with HIV in 1987, Peter decided he would make a difference in his community and – after a trip to California – was instrumental in establishing our first Thanksgiving event for BLC members.

In the years since, Debbie and husband Ron have participated in many of the faith-based events at the BLC and feel strongly that donating is more of a partnership. “We believe in what you do, in the population you serve,”



adds Debbie. Through the Peter Daniel Clark Fund, and Temple Beth Avodah, the Fellman family started the Seder of Hope & Healing. What

began as an event for 35 has grown over the last 15 years to more than 400 people learning to cope with loss.

Debbie closed with “Our job isn’t done... we will continue to support the Boston Living Center.” More information about the Peter Daniel Clark fund can be found at [www.peterdanielclark.org](http://www.peterdanielclark.org).

## Jerry Thorne, A Loyal BLC Friend and Volunteer

Jerry Thorne first became involved with the Boston Living Center in the late eighties, when, as part of a men’s social club, he helped renovate a room in BLC’s first home at the YWCA. Many of Jerry’s friends were instrumental in pioneering the vision for the Center



*Jerry Thorne and David Hough, Dinnerfest 2008*

during its early years, and he was a member of the first ever Dinnerfest Committee. At that time he hosted and attended elaborate house parties to raise funds for the Center. After a few years, Dinnerfest expanded to include restaurants and Jerry has been hosting a dinner party at the same

restaurant for over ten years! After many years on the Dinnerfest Committee, Jerry continued supporting the BLC in various ways. Twelve years ago, he was diagnosed with AIDS, and has never been sick. Feeling fortunate for his health and extensive support from family and friends, Jerry wanted to help those who are not as fortunate, so after retiring he began volunteering in BLC’s Meals Program. You can find Jerry serving juice or behind-the-scenes, doing dishes. **“I always leave here feeling great, there is no better feeling.”** And speaking of Dinnerfest, thanks to all our supporters and donors who made this year’s Dinnerfest a huge success!

## Susan Bullock, Director of Community Relations at Pioneer Investments

Pioneer Investments’ association with BLC began in November 1994 and we are proud to have been able to increase our support to the BLC over the years. We have also sent volunteer groups to serve meals. In 2001, when we launched our “Pioneer Helping Others” corporate social responsibility program, our giving to the BLC has been a cornerstone of our efforts.



Pioneer Investments has a firm commitment to ensuring that people living with HIV/AIDS have access to necessary care and services. We have 650

associates in our Boston office with valuable strengths and resources, and I believe every business should lend their expertise to formulate a targeted response to today’s challenges, such as the HIV/AIDS epidemic.

We support the BLC because we are impressed with the dimensions of their model. It is especially meaningful to us that it is being replicated in South Africa, as we are also helping patients at an AIDS hospital in Zimbabwe, in addition to helping those close to home.



Through Pioneer Investments’ thriving matching gift program, our associates give to the BLC and we match those donations dollar for dollar. It is an honor to augment this support and to set an example, as a company.

## 2006 – 2007 Donors: Individuals

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William Kelly  
Robert Marceau

### Platinum Level 1 -- \$5,000 - 9,999

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# Redefining L.I.F.E

Jeffrey's life goals are to begin a new career in the human services field, own a home again, and find a fulfilling relationship. He is active at the Center as a member of the Consumer Advisory Board, a peer leader and is learning new computer skills in the computer lab. It is hard to imagine a man so distinguished and outgoing describing himself as tentative and afraid. But, that is how Jeff remembers feeling when he first entered the BLC for lunch.

At one point, Jeff was in a state of denial, "I didn't want to *bear* anything or *know* anything about HIV. I cut off from the world." A turning point came when he realized he had to come to terms with his HIV diagnosis if he was to keep sane. Then he saw a flyer for the BLC.

BLC staff member Betsy Simmons noticed that Jeff was new and approached him, showing genuine concern for his state of being. After feeling more welcome at the Center, he decided to join the L.I.F.E (Learning Immune Functioning Enhancement) program, an interactive support group that teaches participants healthy attitudes and behaviors that boost the immune system.

The L.I.F.E Program, designed by the Shanti Institute in San Francisco, is beneficial to both newly diagnosed people as well as long term survivors and addresses the physical, emotional and spiritual aspect of each person. Jeff and many other come to the program feeling isolation, loneliness and loss. In its place, they find camaraderie, connection, and a sense of belonging, meaning and purpose.

After eight weeks of learning and sharing, Jeff says that he and his 12 group mates became a family. "Basically" says Jeff, "The L.I.F.E Pro-

gram showed me **how valuable my life is.** Now I am not afraid to talk to the doctor, I am eager to learn and connect with people because I feel part of them. I no longer feel estranged, like an outsider." Jeff, along with 2 other graduates of L.I.F.E has been trained to co-facilitate the next session.

For Betsy, Program Coordinator, L.I.F.E is about learning how to calm anxieties and take charge of our life and health, "We are all in this together. We are here to listen, lift each other up, and build strength, balance, perspective and goals. The program is an anchor in the storm of life." For Jeff and many others, the program is a life transformation.



Betsy and Jeff



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