

Morningside Retirement and Health Services

Tuttle Center 100 La Salle Street, #MC, New York, NY 10027 (212) 666-4000
Health Center 549 West 123rd Street, #ME, New York, NY 10027 (212) 666-2050
Website: www.mrhsny.org

Board of Directors

Kathy Ch'iu Hinton, *President*
Carole Morning, *Vice-President*
Lori Woliner, *Secretary*
Kay Murray, *Treasurer*
Luis Argueta
Amy Berg
Michael Davidson
Anne Ellis
Ann McIver
Melinda Moore
Audrey Platnick
Neil Rothfeld
Carla Slomin
Alene Smith

Major Supporters

Government	New York City Department for the Aging New York State Office for the Aging Scott Stringer, Manhattan Borough President Robert Jackson, City Council Member Daniel O'Donnell, State Assembly Member Bill Perkins, State Senator
Foundation	UJA-Federation of New York New York Community Trust
Corporate	Morningside Heights Housing Corporation Metzger-Price Fund, Inc. Tiffany & Co. Time Warner
Individual	Residents and friends of Morningside Gardens
Academic	Columbia Community Services Barnard College Jewish Theological Seminary Columbia University Office of Government Relations and Community Affairs
Other	Riverside Church Elders Share the Arts YES! Solutions

Staff

Ronald Bruno, LMSW
Joanna Stolove, LCSW
Ronald Lennon, LMSW
Alan Stricoff, CPA
Michael Nguyen, Christine Collins
Shira Pasternak, Stephanie Spector
Marie Phillips, RN, BSN, MPH

Karen Morris, Jennifer Paul
Dr. Alison Grolnick
Dr. Jessica Petilla
Margaret Bianchi

Executive Director
Assistant Director
Social Work Supervisor
Comptroller
Social Work Interns
Occupational Therapy Interns
Geriatric Nurse/Coordinator of Health
Care Services
Home Health Aides
Consulting Psychiatrist
Consulting Geriatricians
Office Manager

The 194 people who volunteered services to MRHS in 2009 are listed towards the back of this report.

Background and History of the MRHS Program

Morningside Retirement and Health Services (MRHS) was founded in 1966 on two principles: self help for older adults and neighbors helping neighbors. The founders were a group of residents in Morningside Gardens, a middle-income cooperative housing complex in Morningside Heights. The apartment complex was constructed with government assistance and opened for occupancy in 1957 to house approximately 2,000 individuals. A group of forward-thinking older residents organized MRHS nine years later to serve those elderly residents who needed assistance in order to continue to live comfortably and safely in their homes.

For the first 20 years of the program, MRHS was staffed and run solely by older residents, working as volunteers. But by its twentieth year of service, the MRHS Board of Directors recognized that many of the original volunteers had “aged in place,” and themselves needed assistance. Morningside Gardens had become a “NORC” — Naturally Occurring Retirement Community — with more than half of the apartments occupied by residents over the age of 60. In order to address the multitude of problems elderly residents were facing, professional support was needed to guide and supplement the work of volunteers. Several MRHS volunteers formed a committee to raise funds for this purpose, and in 1986 the first professional social worker was hired.

Since that time, the program – still governed primarily by Morningside Gardens residents – has assisted and enriched the lives of hundreds of older residents. Working side-by-side with the professional staff, 194 volunteers offered their time and expertise to MRHS in 2009.

All of these changes and additions have not altered MRHS’s fundamental commitment to its mission: 1) to help frail and at-risk elderly residents of Morningside Gardens remain in their own homes; and 2) to provide programs which promote health and provide opportunities for education, socialization and recreation for older adults.

MRHS was one of fourteen programs designated by New York State in 1995 as a NORC. As a consequence of this status, MRHS qualifies for state funding to provide social and health care services. In 1999, New York City created its own funding stream for existing and new NORC programs. MRHS was one of the sites chosen to receive city support and was selected again, in 2006, after a Request for Proposals (RFF) was issued by the city.

Through these special grants and with foundation support MRHS, since 1995, has maintained an on-site Health Center for older adult residents of Morningside Gardens. The Health Center offers residents on-site nursing, personal care, psychiatric services, health education and health care screenings, and a Doctors Home Visiting Program for homebound residents. MRHS has been able to enhance the medical care provided to residents thanks to an arrangement with St. Luke’s Hospital for the placement of a medical office on the premises of Morningside Gardens, which opened in November, 2000.

As older adults at Morningside Gardens continue to age, MRHS continues to experience increases in the use of its services. Total social work case contacts numbered 4,134. There were 1,818 contacts by MRHS nurse Marie Phillips, RN, MPH, an increase of 6% from one year ago.

The total number of professional contacts by our staff in 2009 was 6,532.

Mission of MRHS

The Mission of MRHS is twofold:

- 1) to help frail and at-risk elderly residents of Morningside Gardens remain in their own homes comfortably, safely, and with as much independence as possible for as long as they can; and
- 2) to provide programs which promote health and provide opportunities for education, socialization and recreation for all older residents of Morningside Gardens, with particular attention to the special needs of the infirm, homebound, and isolated.

Values of MRHS

The board, staff, and volunteers of MRHS are committed to offering services that enable older residents of Morningside Gardens to remain in their own homes by:

- Promoting a caring community and enriching community life;
- Preserving the dignity and human rights of older people;
- Promoting and supporting independence by actively involving individuals in managing their own care;
- Preventing isolation by keeping older residents connected to the larger Morningside Gardens community; and
- Reflecting integrity, professionalism, responsibility, warmth and respect, and a commitment to diversity.

Hartford Foundation

MRHS was one of five agencies chosen, city-wide, by the Columbia University School of Social Work to participate in the Hartford Foundation's national initiative to recruit social work students into the field of aging. MRHS is serving as a training site for social work interns in the Hartford Foundation program.

Program Attendance

MRHS program attendance more than doubled in the 2000's — from 4,129 in 2000 to 8,962 in 2009.

Year	Attendance	% Change
2000	4,129	---
2001	3,840	-7%
2002	4,915	+28%
2003	5,268	+7%
2004	5,304	+1%
2005	6,109	+15%
2006	7,054	+15%
2007	8,229	+17%
2008	8,836	+7%
2009	8,962	+3%

EEILAT Program

The EEILAT (Encouraging and Extending Independent Living with Adaptive Technology) program developed blueprints and a model design for the renovation of the MRHS health office, utilizing the technical input of two volunteer architects and the MHHC Engineering Project Coordinator. An advisory committee was formed and met on November 27 for the first time.

Indicators Project

MRHS implemented the benchmarking tool from the United Hospital Fund Indicators Project. This falls prevention tool is used with residents who have been determined to be at-risk for falls. It involves the quarterly monitoring of blood pressure, medication usage, and other health care indicators linked by research to falls.

Social Services

NORC Case Management, Counseling, and Direct Services

MRHS offers a comprehensive array of professional social services as well as group activities, and serves a community of more than 600 older people. In 2009, the people served ranged in age from 60 to 99, and included those seeking assistance in finding suitable home care as well as those who were without family or other social contacts. MRHS social workers respond to a range of needs, supporting those providing care for a dependent relative, those unable to shop and cook for themselves, and others afflicted with dementia, isolation, illness, depression, and loss. Total social work case contacts numbered 4,134.

At MRHS, social services begin with a request for assistance from the individual, a neighbor or friend, family member, physician or hospital social worker, housing staff, or any other concerned person. The first step is an assessment, which is done usually at the resident's home. Follow-up NORC services include:

- planning for care at home, including coordination of discharge planning from hospitals and rehabilitation facilities
- collaborating with family members and friends regarding care for the individual
- providing daily money management, including bill paying, check balancing, and mail sorting
- counseling about benefits, such as Medicaid, Medicare, Medicare Part D
- supportive counseling services
- advocacy on behalf of MRHS clients
- managing health insurance problems and planning for long-term care

- information, referral, and coordination of community services, such as Meals on Wheels and home health care
- consulting with medical and legal experts on an individual's behalf
- providing friendly visitors

The MRHS social work staff consisted of three social workers and two graduate social work interns from the Columbia University School of Social Work, the latter selected as fellows in the Hartford Foundation's initiative to train geriatric social workers.

Group Work

In 2009 MRHS started up a new program called *Breakfast for Your Brain*, a six-session evidence-based workshop that promotes brain wellness. Breakfast for Your Brain has been shown to prevent cognitive decline through a series of mental exercises. Activities used in the group include puzzles, problem-solving games, nutrition, exercise, music, and learning about brain function. Six older adults "graduated" from the program in December.

MRHS continued to offer its program for older adults who are experiencing memory problems, called *The Memory Tree*. The program is presented by staff from the Early Alzheimer's Foundation, working alongside MRHS staff. The Memory Tree program works from the principle that memory loss affects everyone in a family and includes caregiver support as part of the program. Total attendance in 2009 for the Memory Tree program was 2,307.

The Arthritis Foundation and MRHS offered a program for those living with challenges of arthritis. Participants in the Self-Help Program received tips and techniques, and easy-to-understand course materials. MRHS also continued to offer its support group for residents who have low-vision problems.

Health Services

MRHS operates a Health Center offering nursing services, home care assistance, psychiatric consultations, and a Doctors Home Visiting program. Under a subcontract with the Visiting Nurse Service of New York (VNS), MRHS has a Geriatric Nurse to provide and coordinate health care for older residents of Morningside Gardens.

With a team of health and social service professionals, MRHS utilizes interdisciplinary collaboration to target and streamline services to meet individual resident needs. The MRHS Nurse has been Marie Phillips, RN, MPH, for the past eleven years. Ms. Phillips brings more than twenty-five years of clinical and managerial experience to the job. There were 1,820 contacts made by Ms. Phillips in 2009.

Nursing Services

Nursing services include physical assessments, home evaluations, and consultations with families, neighbors, social workers, and hospitals to coordinate care. In addition, the nurse works closely with a resident's personal physician to develop a plan of care and to help residents follow up on doctors' orders and monitor medications. The nurse also supervises two part-time Certified Home Health Aides, employed through Partners in Care.

Home Care Assistance

MRHS'S Home Health Aides provide short-term help with personal care (bathing, meal preparation, light housekeeping), as well as with laundry and shopping, for older residents unable to manage such tasks on their own. Jennifer Paul has been providing home care at MRHS for twelve years, and Karen Morris has been at MRHS for eleven years.

St. Luke's Community Care

Through the efforts of MRHS, St. Luke's – Roosevelt Hospital Center located a primary care office on-site at Morningside Gardens in 2000. The office provides older adult residents of Morningside Gardens access to on-site medical care, which is particularly valuable to those frail elderly residents who have difficulty traveling distances. Services are also available to the younger residents of the Gardens, as well as to the nearby Grant Houses residents. The office, situated on Amsterdam Avenue, has been a boost to the entire community. The attending physician, Dr. Michael Correa, also provides health education programs at MRHS.

"Your patience and expertise have been wonderfully helpful..."

--- note to MRHS nurse, Marie Phillips

Doctors Home Visiting Program

MRHS operates a Doctors Home Visiting Program through the Division of Geriatric Medicine of St. Luke's - Roosevelt Hospital Center. MRHS doctors make home visits to evaluate, diagnose and treat elderly residents of the Gardens who are homebound or who, for other reasons, such as cognitive impairment that limits decision-making, have little or no access to health care. To residents and their families, this is like a return to the days when doctors routinely made house calls.

Psychiatric Consultation

Older adults are subject to a range of mental and emotional impairments, from Alzheimer's disease to depression. MRHS's consulting psychiatrist provides evaluations, prescribes and monitors medications, and consults with family members and the MRHS staff. Thanks to a grant, MRHS is able to provide this service at no cost to the patient.

Health Promotion Programs

Health Education Workshops

Low Vision Services. In May MRHS sponsored a discussion with Michael Fink, LCSW, from the Jewish Guild for the Blind. Mr. Fink presented information on Low Vision services in the community, including the InTouch Networks. Then in September Robin Gilman-Capon from The Commission for the Blind and Visually Handicapped (CBVH) presented information on the various services provided by CBVH. CBVH is an office within the NY State.

Hospice Care. Questions such as: What is Hospice? When is it necessary? How to make the decision? were addressed by Elizabeth Santiago, LCSW, Continuum Hospice Care. Hospice is available for everyone, no matter what the person's age or stage. This discussion helped answer questions and increase knowledge.

What is Long Term Care? Presented by Vivian Gallo, Long Term Care Planning Specialist, and answering questions such as: Where is Long Term Care provided? Who Should Consider It? What are Medicare's and Medicaid's Roles? What Questions Do Need To Be Considered in planning?

Decision-Making Day. Led by attorney, Frank G. Colella, and sponsored by the NY State Bar Association, this workshop provided information on advance directives, including the New York Health Care Proxy and the living will, as well as information on wills and the new power of attorney form.

Take Charge of Your Health.: Led by MRHS nurse Marie Phillips, the group meets once a month to discuss various health-related topics of interest to participants.

Flu Vaccinations

MRHS held three sessions of seasonal flu shots this year, with the MRHS nurse coordinating distribution with St. Luke's Hospital on October 19, October 26, and November 24. Over 200 individuals were immunized by the teams of providers. According to the Health Indicators project, coordinated by the United Hospital Fund, a great majority of MRHS clients receive a flu shot (83%) and a majority (65%) also have received a pneumonia shot.

Hypertension Screening

On alternate Wednesdays, MRHS provides blood pressure testing and monitoring for older residents of Morningside Gardens. This program is staffed by volunteers who are older adults themselves. The volunteers received training from the city's Department for the Aging, which monitors the program. During 2009, MRHS volunteers provided a total of 276 blood pressure screenings.

Based on the United Hospital Fund's Indicators Project, more than double the percentage of MRHS clients report their health status as "Excellent" or "Very good," with 40% at MRHS compared to 18% NORC-wide.

Occupational Therapy Program

MRHS hosted two Occupational Therapy (OT) interns from Columbia University. The OT interns coordinated a series of programs to help Morningside residents cope with everyday challenges to living independently. Programs included a presentation called "Get Some Leverage," about joint protection methods; and another called "One Step at a Time" on balance and fall prevention. The OT interns also conducted individual in-home sessions with clients who requested them.

Exercise and Stress Management

Exercise programs have grown rapidly at MRHS in recent years, both in number of offerings and in attendance. The importance of exercise in preserving a high quality of life in older adults has been amply demonstrated in the healthcare literature.

Not only does exercise improve balance, strengthen muscles, preserve bones and lessen the likelihood of falls and accidents – exercise programs have been demonstrated to reduce the incidence of emotional illness, particularly depression, in the older adult population. The exercise programs also have a social benefit, producing a sense of comradery among participants.

Yoga

Self-led by participants in the class utilizing instructional videos, basic yoga poses and stretches, breathing and relaxation techniques are learned. In 2009, total attendance in this class was 471.

Stress Reduction Through Exercise

Led by Gardens resident and professional instructor Marjorie Nissen, this class includes warm up with stretch and exercise, and cool down with Yogic breathing and Chi Gong. In 2009, total attendance was 111.

DanceFit

Taught by certified personal trainer and Gardens resident Suzy Frazer, this class includes gentle stretching, weight bearing work, balance, coordination, correct posture and alignment, and a fun dance combination. Total attendance increased to 250.

Stretch and Tone

Led by trained volunteer and longtime Morningside Gardens resident, Lucienne Yoshinaga, this popular group provides an opportunity for those unable to do vigorous exercise to use their muscles and stay limber. Ms. Yoshinaga received her training from the Health Promotion Unit of the New York City Department for the Aging. In 2009, attendance was 952, an increase of 13% from the prior year, which makes this our most popular exercise class!

Walking Club

MRHS kicked off its chapter of the Big Apple Senior Strollers in 2008 with the support of volunteer group leaders. Total attendance at walking events in 2009 was 57.

Qigong

This is a Chinese Healing Art using gentle movements and working with energy. The exercise enhances the immune system and the meditative aspect calms the nervous system. Led by Gardens resident and professional instructor, Marjorie Nissen, this class can be done sitting or standing. In 2009, total attendance was 146.

“Thank you for all you do for my parents and the elderly in the Gardens.”

--- note from the daughter of MRHS client

Tai Chi

Taught by Gardens resident and professional instructor, Xiao Chuan Ping, this class includes a combination of body and balance exercises, mind concentration and meditation. Total attendance was 85, an increase of 81% from one year ago.

Education, Instruction, and Communication

New programs in 2009 included The Circle of Hands and a city touring group called Where To Now? MRHS participated in NYC's Summer Youth Employment Program, hosting a high school student as a volunteer throughout the summer. A choral program was formed and led during the summer by a volunteer musician / conductor.

Circle of Hands

MRHS introduced a new program in September called Circle of Hands. Led by Morningside Gardens resident, Mary Davidson, the group is for those who like to crochet, knit, embroider, needlepoint, quilt or appliqué, and enjoy sharing their skills, designs and techniques with others. The group meets on Monday evenings and has been well received. Finished items are donated to social service organizations in the community. Total attendance for the group was 78.

Chinese Language Class

Morningside Gardens resident, Shuli Wu, a native speaker with experience in teaching languages, provided Mandarin (Pu-tong-hua) instruction in 2009, using the Pin-yin system. Total attendance for the class was 187.

Book Club

Led by volunteer, Gabriella Mora, a retired university instructor in literature, this group reads and meets to talk about contemporary novels. Total attendance for the group in 2009 was 99.

Great Decisions

This series of programs provides participants with an opportunity to discuss critically important foreign affairs issues. MRHS volunteers coordinate the series, with Morningsiders, Ken and Peggy Thomas, facilitating the discussion. Resource persons are enlisted from within the Gardens community to provide their expertise.

Participants are provided with a briefing manual. The manual outlines eight timely thematic topics of global concern. The materials are written by experts and include discussion tips for leaders. Total attendance for all sessions in 2009 was 133.

Later Life Transitions

Led by Gardens resident Frances Geer, this group meets monthly to discuss issues of aging and includes refreshments and socialization. In 2009, total attendance for the group was 91.

Spanish Class

Led by Morningside Gardens resident and filmmaker, Luis Argueta, MRHS offers Spanish language instruction and practice. Mr. Argueta, who is a native Spanish speaker from Guatemala, utilizes handouts from Spanish-language periodicals and articles to assist his students. In 2009, total attendance was 229, an increase of 20% from one year earlier.

Book Discussion

Through literature and film, this group explores historical family, political, and social structures. Led by author, historian, and Gardens resident Bea Gottlieb, the group studied Annette Gordon-Reed's *The Hemmingses of Monticello* in 2009. Total attendance was 123.

Writing Workshops

In conjunction with Elders Share the Arts (ESTA), MRHS offered two writing workshop series in 2009. Taught by Susan Willerman, *Writing From Life Experience* utilizes each participant's experiences to encourage and inspire their written work.

At the end of the spring workshop series, MRHS hosted a public reading on May 27, with participants reading from their latest work. Two participants of past MRHS writing workshops have had their work published. In 2009, total attendance for the class was 155.

"Our family is very fortunate to have an organization such as yours located within the community... The capabilities of your organization are impressive."

--- note from the son of a Gardens resident

Bridge Club

For both long-time players and newcomers, this new group met on a weekly basis. Total attendance for the group was 132.

Where to Now — Exploring New York City

Led by Morningside Gardens resident, Mary Davidson, this new group visits places throughout New York City. All are welcomed to travel together to view exhibits with other participants or on one's own.

Destinations have included the Bard Graduate Center Gallery to view the exhibit, *Dutch New York Between East and West: The World of Margrieta van Varick. Life in colonial New York.* Also visited was The Frick Collection in Henry Frick's mansion plus the exhibit, *Watteau to Degas: French Drawings from the Frits Lugt Collection.*

Speakers and Forums

MRHS presents a broad range of educational and informational programs. These programs provide a forum for speakers to present on topics of interest to residents. In 2009, programs included presentations by Morningside Gardens residents, as well as others.

In honor of Abraham Lincoln's 200th birthday on February 12, MRHS screened the half-hour documentary film, *Fellow Citizen, A. Lincoln*, by residents Cecile Starr and Aram Boyajian. In August, residents Mary and Alan Borthwick displayed pictures of their trip on a coastal ship from Greece to Split, Croatia.

In these economically challenged times, MRHS scheduled a number of finance-related workshops in 2009. In February, Richard Deam, CFP, gave a presentation called *Wealth Management Issues*, providing an overview of such issues as insurance, investments, gifting to children and descendants, and wills and trusts. In October, the workshop offered was called *Keys to the Execution of Your Estate Plan* with William Wu, CFP, Kramer Financial Group. This included information on preparing, key documents to have, questions, and other things to consider. The presentation was. Then in November, MRHS presented *What You Need to Know About Long Term Care Planning*, led by Vivian Gallo, Long Term Care Planning Specialist. Topics covered included: What is Long Term Care? What Questions Do You Need To Consider in Your LTC Planning?

"I live in Morningside Gardens and so does my 87 year old mother, and the retirement and health center (MRHS) is a godsend.... They provide people who can't go far from their homes with a sense of community."

--- comment posted on NY Times website

Annual Meeting

MRHS held its Annual Meeting on March 30. After Board President Kathy Hinton welcomed the attendees the chair of the Nominating Committee was introduced for the presentation of new board members to the community. Committee reports were then presented by the chairs of the various MRHS committees. Finally, the Executive Director's report was given, which outlined some highlights from 2008.

Among our accomplishments, MRHS upgraded its volunteer program in 2008. The Executive Director reported that the results of the United Hospital Fund's (UHF's) Indicators Project were analyzed in 2008 and upgrades, based on the results, were implemented. The results of the survey demonstrated that MRHS has been performing at a superior level in its delivery of NORC services to residents of Morningside Gardens.

Newsletter

MRHS publishes and posts online a monthly *Newsletter* that includes a schedule of MRHS events and activities. The *Newsletter*, along with flyers that MRHS posts each week in the six Gardens buildings, is an important facet of the MRHS outreach plan to residents.

The *Newsletter* regularly contains information about cluster care services that are available to older adults, such as laundry and shopping, in addition to information about the range of NORC services. The *Newsletter* provides information on MRHS and other community services, cultural events, government entitlements, and various health and safety issues. More than 1,000 copies of the *Newsletter* are distributed each month.

Social and Recreational Programs

Fall Program Forum

This year we held the MRHS Fall Program Forum in the evening to enable everyone in Morningside Gardens to attend. The event was an opportunity for residents to meet instructors and learn more about MRHS programs. The evening also provided an opportunity to enjoy some light refreshments and the company of neighbors to kick off a new year of activities. To facilitate registration a list of all programs, along with a registration form, was put under each resident's door.

Tuesday Lunch

This is MRHS's "oldest" group, dating back 43 years. Every Tuesday at noon, a group of residents gather for a brown bag lunch. Coordination of the Tuesday luncheon and birthday program is performed by a team of volunteers, which plans, organizes, and leads the weekly events. The team provides coffee, tea, and dessert; group members provide the company and conversation. In 2009, 274 guests came to the Tuesday lunch.

Birthday Parties

MRHS began celebrating member birthdays in November, 1993, on the third Tuesday of each month. A volunteer sends a birthday card, which includes an invitation to the party, to each person whose birthday falls in that month. Another volunteer calls each birthday person a day or two before the party as a reminder. MRHS supplies a birthday cake and everyone sings. In 2009, 187 guests came to the parties.

"You all keep Morningside Gardens mindful of its heart. Thank you."

--- note from Morningside Gardens resident

Music Therapy — the MRHS Sing-Along Chorus

The MRHS Music Therapy program began in 1992 and continues to draw a variety of older people to the center. The therapist brings guitar and customized songbooks, emphasizing favorite music from the 1920's and 30's and folk songs from the 1940's and 50's. Rhythm instruments are offered to those who are shy about singing aloud but enjoy the music and the company. Studies have demonstrated that music can reduce stress levels in people of all ages, but particularly in the elderly population singing together is a calming experience.

Often, the music stirs poignant memories and lively exchanges, creating new friendships among the participants. The Music Therapy program also builds self-esteem among participants when they discover their own talents and creativity. In 2009, total attendance at this program was 427.

Supper Club

This is a group that was founded and led by volunteers, as a way to bring socialization and stimulation to residents' dining experience. MRHS staff re-started the Supper Club in 2006, providing organization and coordination of activities. Every other month, participants choose one of the many ethnic restaurants in the neighborhood as the provider of the evening meal.

Dinner is delivered to the Tuttle Center at MRHS, which is prepared with tables and chairs, tablecloths, and tableware. The Supper Club provides an opportunity to meet neighbors and to try a new dish. It has been particularly successful with residents who were accustomed to dining out occasionally, but have become unable to do so because of disability or frailty. In 2009, total attendance at this program was 76.

Saturday Afternoon Videos

Many older adults at Morningside Gardens find it difficult to use the city's public transportation system. Weekend video shows were initiated in the 1980's to provide entertainment for Gardens residents who could not get out to the movies. Every Saturday afternoon, a dedicated group of volunteers shows a video in the MRHS Tuttle Center on our high-definition screen, equipped with Blu-Ray technology and closed captioning for the hearing-impaired.

The committee of volunteers schedules the movies, and shares the task of setting up the Center as a theater for the afternoon and running the video. In 2009, the committee sponsored a retrospective series of the films of Paul Newman. Total attendance for 2009 was 513.

Winter Celebration

MRHS held its annual holiday party, the Winter Celebration, on December 10. More than 140 residents stopped by to join in the good cheer, neighborliness and refreshments. MRHS makes a special effort to create an intergenerational atmosphere at the party, with children from the community in attendance. Music and singing was provided by Vocal Ease, a troupe of professional entertainers who volunteer their time to perform at nonprofit functions.

Flea Market

On November 13, 14, and 15, MRHS held its Annual Fall Flea Market. More than 60 volunteers gathered, organized, and priced hundreds of items, staffed tables, and worked as cashiers. People from the surrounding community, as well as Gardens residents, enjoyed the bargains and the home-baked cookies and cakes. The 2009 Flea Market was one of the most successful ever, raising funds to support MRHS.

Bus Trips

In 2009, MRHS organized trips throughout the area. Total attendance on MRHS bus trips was 168. Among the highlights were two trips during this summer season. MRHS subsidizes all bus trips in order to keep them affordable. As usual, we scheduled trips in the great outdoors during the summer, especially concentrating on locales near the water. In July, we spent a day on the ocean in the town of Cape May, New Jersey, one of three towns listed on the National Historic Register. In August, we spent a beautiful August day sailing the Hudson River on the Rip Van Winkle and then strolled around downtown Kingston. Other trips included a visit in June to the charming town of New Hope, PA and its many restaurants, antique shops and art galleries. In October, MRHS sponsored a trip to the North Fork of Long Island to visit the Jamesport Winery and the Catapano Dairy Farm. These trips provide a great opportunity for those older adults who are no longer able to travel as readily as they once did.

MRHS In the News!

An article about MRHS and NORC programs appeared on the NY Times website on September 25, on the blog called "The New Old Age." The reporter, Paula Span, had visited Morningside Gardens and spent time talking with us. The piece presents a very positive picture of MRHS and NORC programs in general. "Living here has helped us stay active, mentally and physically," 83-year-old resident Moira Whittington states in the article. "A couple of years ago I got the flu and Marie" – the nurse – "came to see me every day. Called the doctor, got the prescription, brought the medication. Made sure I was drinking properly. If not for her, I would have had to go to the hospital. She keeps an eye on us."

Special MRHS Events

Intergenerational Programming

On February 12, MRHS celebrated Valentine's Day early with the Morningside Gardens Children's Learning Center (CLC). CLC's Director and a teacher accompanied nine children to the MRHS Tuttle Center. Together with older residents, the group decorated and ate sugar cookies with colorful frosting and sprinkles. At the end of their time together, the children put on a Valentine's Day-themed show for Garden residents. In March, MRHS coordinated a sing-along with children from CLC, as a prelude to an intergenerational bus trip to a working farm.

On a rainy April afternoon, MRHS hosted a special intergenerational program. Ms. Stephanie Morano's bilingual first and second grade class from nearby PS 161 joined older adults at MRHS for an afternoon of singing *en espanol*. Everyone practiced conjugating the verb "ser", the Spanish word for "to be", with a song and games. Ms. Morano's class continued to come to MRHS regularly on Friday afternoons throughout May and June to carry on the intergenerational bonding.



Black History Month

On February 26, MRHS presented a special program for our annual observance of Black History Month, organizing a trip to the Studio Museum of Harlem. The trip included a guided tour of the museum, followed by a soul food lunch at Sylvia's Queen of Soul Food Restaurant. As usual, it was an inspirational outing for all.

Health Care Reform

As the debate about health care reform raged, in December MRHS hosted a special presentation by AARP Associate State Director, Michael Olender, called *Health Care Reform and You*. Mr. Olender provided an update as reform continued to be debated in the United States Senate. He discussed various reform proposals and how the legislation would affect Medicare.

Film Screening

On October 8, MRHS screened the film, "Grandmother to Grandmother, New York to Tanzania" with the Director, John Ankeley in attendance. Filmed on location, the film introduces two projects --- in the Bronx and in Tanzania --- that support grandmothers who have been struggling to raise children and rescue them from the streets. It was an inspirational evening.

AIDS And HIV Awareness

Sponsored by Assembly Member Danny O'Donnell, MRHS hosted this discussion, providing an opportunity to understand the issues connected to HIV and AIDS for those over the age of fifty. Issues such as housing, lack of access to healthcare, racism, sexism, homophobia, sex, substance abuse, religious and cultural obstacles, and immigration were discussed. In particular, how the older adult population is impacted by the domestic HIV/AIDS epidemic was explored.

Musical Program

On Sunday, March 8, Juan Franco, a professional tenor, sang a selection of tenor arias and songs. There were also instrumental selections by musicians from Juilliard and the Manhattan School of Music. The concert was sponsored jointly by Emmanuel Presbyterian Church Chorus and MRHS.

End of Life Issues

David Leven, Executive Director of Compassion & Choices of New York, spoke about important health care issues and how to communicate effectively with doctors about them. Mr. Leven focused on what can be done to get pain well controlled and how to have one's health care choices respected. Mr. Leven, a graduate of the University of Rochester and Syracuse University College of Law, played a leadership role in securing passage of legislation in New York to improve pain and palliative care and health care decision making.

Ready New York

The New York City Office of Emergency Management (OEM) came to MRHS in June for a Ready New York presentation. Ready New York is the City's educational campaign to encourage New York City residents to prepare for emergencies. Ready New York takes an all-hazards approach to preparing based on three guiding principles: knowing the hazards in New York City, making a household disaster plan, and stocking emergency supplies.

Bequests

In 2009, MRHS received bequests from the following individuals: *Rose Komatsu* and *Margarita Espinosa*. We wish to thank those who have remembered MRHS in their wills.

MRHS in the Community

MRHS works closely with a number of service providers in the community. St. Luke's - Roosevelt Hospital Center provides the physicians who make house calls and coordinate health care with MRHS for frail elders at Morningside Gardens. In 2009, MRHS reached an agreement with St. Luke's Hospital for mental health support services in the form of weekly visits from psychiatrists to Morningside Gardens elders. This service is reserved for homebound residents. St. Luke's - Roosevelt has hosted health fairs at MRHS, and has provided health care screenings and health promotion events. Staff from the hospital held three sessions of distributing seasonal flu shots in the fall of 2009.

MRHS has a longstanding relationship with the Visiting Nurse Service of New York. The MRHS nurse and two home health aides are subcontracted through the VNS Congregate Care program. MRHS reached an agreement with Isabella Community and Home Care in 2009 to coordinate the provision of case management and meals-on-wheels services to residents of Morningside Gardens. The goal is to avoid duplication of services.

MRHS also works with cultural organizations such as Elders Share the Arts. As a site for interns from the Columbia University's School of Social Work and for Occupational Therapy interns from the College of Physicians and Surgeons, MRHS works alongside leading practitioners in the field.

As a member of the West Side Inter-Agency Council for the Aging, the Council of Senior Centers and Services, the New York Council of Nonprofits, the Non-Profit Coordinating Committee, the Human Services Council, MRHS meets regularly with representatives of other community agencies.

Volunteer Recognition

MRHS recruited seven new volunteers in 2009, including two volunteer architects recruited from volunteermatch.com. MRHS also provided increased responsibilities for ongoing volunteers.

On April 29, MRHS hosted its Sixteenth Annual Volunteer Recognition Ceremony, held at Columbia University's Pulitzer World Room to honor the 188 volunteers who contributed to the program in 2008. Volunteers are honored for helping their neighbors in a number of ways that enable frail elderly residents to continue living safely at home.

Special recognition was given to the team of volunteers that coordinates the MRHS Video program, which shows a movie every Saturday afternoon on the flat screen at the MRHS Tuttle Center. These volunteers, mostly seniors, select the films to be screened, order the DVD's from Netflix, and take turns showing the movies on Saturday afternoons. Also honored at the event were the twenty-four new volunteers who came on board in 2008 and helped expand MRHS volunteer services in the areas of telephone reassurance, friendly visiting, reading for residents with vision impairment, website design, and coordinating a Walking Club.

More than 75 volunteers attended the event and were addressed by Beatrice Gottlieb, PhD. Dr. Gottlieb, an original tenant of the cooperative in the 1950's, spoke on *Answering Questions About Morningside Gardens Past*, the subject of a Dr. Gottlieb book. The audience was enthralled to hear the history of the neighborhood where they live and work. Volunteers were treated to refreshments and to music provided by a jazz group from the nearby Manhattan School of Music. The event was made possible in conjunction with the Columbia University Office of Public Affairs.

Volunteer Recognition

The following profile of MRHS volunteers, written by Assistant Director Joanna Stolove, appeared in the Winter 2009 edition of the New York City Department for the Aging's newsletter, *Healthy Aging in the Big Apple*:

Morningside Gardens Retirement & Health Services (MRHS) kicked off its chapter of the Big Apple Senior Strollers in August of 2008 with the support of two dedicated volunteers, Leslie Kiss and Shuli Wu. MRHS established two walking groups, one to address the needs of those with limited mobility and the other to meet the needs of the more avid walkers.

The residents with limited mobility enjoyed walks around the grounds of Morningside Gardens. The avid walkers were excited to explore new places. This group discovered Riverbank State Park, which was a first visit for many long-time Morningside residents. Several have since registered for classes offered by the park. Others were surprised to discover the improvements made in Morningside Park, including a walking track.

A highlight of our walks was one planned by the Morningside Gardens Community Relations Committee. The Committee wanted to share the new restaurants on 12th Avenue between 131st and 135th Streets through a "Restaurant Walk." Our club was involved in planning a route for the entire community. The "Restaurant Walk" was a tremendous success and introduced us all to several new restaurants. Not only are Morningside residents getting fit, they are meeting neighbors and rediscovering their community.

Senior Stroll 2008 was a distance from our Morningside Heights location. Through the generosity of the Jackie Robinson Senior Center, Leslie Kiss was able to represent MRHS at the event.

We're excited to add the Big Apple Senior Strollers to our DFTA Health Promotion programs. These programs are possible through the dedication of the MRHS volunteers. The weekly STAY WELL class led by Lucienne Yoshinaga with the assistance of Cynthia Harris continues to be one of our most popular classes. Every other Wednesday morning the MRHS office is bustling with Keep on Track volunteers and residents waiting to be screened. Many thanks to Keep On Track volunteers: Marie Ledoux, Mary Lowry, Ana Santos and Winifred Shearer.

(Copies of the MRHS Financial Report are available at the MRHS Office, 100 LaSalle Street, #MC, New York, NY.)

Volunteers in 2009

Judith Anderson
Luis Argueta
Jimmy Arnold
Hisayo Asai
Anne Barstow
John Beard
Amy Berg
Ruth Bendersky
Jacques Bendersky
Jodi Benson
Stewart Benson
Vivian Bergman
Odette Bigote
Tonia Blair
Ananth Bobbili
Anne Boggan
Mary Grace
Bookhardt
Alan Borthwick
Mary Borthwick
Vera Bowens
Aram Boyajian
Cecile Starr Boyajian
Marianne Brinigar
Joseph Brodie
Laura Brown
Laurie Nan Broza
Phyllis Calese
Eileen Canty
Sharon Carr
Sharon Lockhart
Carter
Eleanor Charris
Rani Chaudhary
Anne Cleaves
Diane Cook
Joy Cooke
Michael Correa
Sarah Cunningham
Carlotta Damanda
Phyllis Darby
Mary Davidson
Mike Davidson
Roy Davidson
Ralph Della Cava
Tom Driver
Betty Dunn
Leila Elder
Anne Ellis
Michael Feder
Jeanne Felker

Tova Francus
Suzy Frazer
Susan Fridie
Frances Geer
Hardison Geer
Conchita Gonzalez
Karina Gonzalez
Tom Goodridge
Andre Gordon
Bea Gottlieb
Joyce Gottlieb
Peggy Griffin-
Jackman
Amita Gupta
John Halborg
Leonard Harper
Cynthia Harris
Peggy Haskins
Beatrice Hawkins
Paula Herz
Kathy Hinton
Marjorie Horton
Roger Hughes
Melissa Hull
Joyce Hyun
Ann Jackson
John Johnson
Phyllis Johnson
Eleanor Joynes
Beverly Judge
Anisa Kamadoli
Kamu Kamadoli
Karen Kaapcke-
LePique
Joanna Kapner
John Kapner
Corazon Kangleon
Florence Keller
Margaret Ketley
Margaret King
Leslie Kiss
Isabel Kogel
Shirley Korn
Lydia LaFleur
Mimi Lamb
Mary Lanning
Marie Ledoux
Angela Lee
Xiaobin Lee
Elinor Levin
Joan Levine

Norman Levine
Lucian Li
Ya Ling Li
Boyd Lowry
Mary Lowry
Chuck MacDonald
Joan Mansoury
Rachel Martin
Jean McCardell
Mary McDonald
Jack McGourty
Tara McIsaac
Ann Gregg McIver
Joan McKinnon
Peggy McNamara
Allen Mellen
Liz Mellen
Eppie Mercado
Anne Meyer
Erich Meyerhoff
Dana Minaya
Frank Minaya
Melinda Moore
Joan Morford
Carole Morning
Mary Murphree
Kay Murray
Audrey Muscat
Hillary Nanney
Velia Neri
Marjorie Nissen
Barbara O'Farrell
Andrew Ojeda
Rosario Palovicini
Chris Pawelski
Patricia Pell
Michele Pellar
Jessica Petilla
Edna Philiba
Alice Pifer
Audrey Platnick
Ivy Polk
Jean Prosser
Rita Marie Pullium
Donna Quiros
Lottie Raukx
Betty Reardon
Paula Rezende
Helen Rodriguez
Ari Rothfeld
Neil Rothfeld

Rachel Rothfeld
Mildred Roxborough
John Ryan
Kathy Sanson
Ana Santos
Dorothy Savage
Angela Schramm
Maggie Sears
Dan Shaw
Winifred Shearer
Merryl Sheldon
Iris Shen
Edith Shervington
Reynaldo Silva
Mytri Singh
Irene Marcuse Silver
Carla Slomin
Alene Smith
Aidan Stack
George Stack
Will Stack
Lotte Strauss
Michael Su
Maria Teusaba
Ann Tholfsen
Hilah Thomas
Ken Thomas
Peggy Thomas
Mary A. Thompson
Karl Tiedemann
Kathleen Todd
Ramsey Togo
Dace Udris
Usa Ungsunen
Kristina Vician
David Weaver
Sydney Weinberg
Eva Welch
Susan Wersan
Moiria Whittington
Ruth Williams
Audraine Wilson
Lori Woliner
Shuli Wu
Margaret Yi
Lucienne Yoshinaga
Samara Zaslofsky
Linda Zehnder
Sally Zen

Statistics for 2009

Number of Seniors Provided Casework	319
Units of Social Work Care Management	4,134
Units of Health Care Management	1,820
Psychiatric Sessions	36
Doctors' Home Visits	26
Units of Home Health Care	518
Total Professional Contacts	6,534

Program Participation

Health Promotion		Educational and Social Groups	
Memory Tree Program	2,307	Special Events/Guest Speakers	538
Stretch and Tone exercise class	952	Weekend Video program	513
Music Therapy	427	Lunch Club	274
Yoga Classes	471	Spanish Conversation	229
Hypertension monitoring	276	Trips	182
Dance Classes	321	Birthday parties	187
Health Promotion Events	290	Book Discussion	123
Low Vision Support Group	70	Writing from Life Experience	155
Stress Reduction Through Exercise	111	Great Decisions Discussion Group	133
Later Life Transitions	91	Chinese Language Instruction	187
Tai Chi	85	Bridge Club	132
Sitting Qigong	146	Book Club	99
Feldenkreis Program	33	Choral Group	60
Occupational Therapy Workshop	42	Intergenerational Programs	96
Walking Club	57	Circle of Hands	78
Arthritis Education Program	187	Supper Club	76
Breakfast for Your Brain	34	Total Program Attendance	8,962

