



# “Key”munications

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Key Program, Inc. is a not-for-profit agency serving children and families in Massachusetts and Rhode Island through residential and community-based intervention services. Key’s mission is to assist youth and their families with developing positive life skills and life experiences so that they may pursue productive and rewarding lives. **To learn more, please visit us at [www.key.org](http://www.key.org)**

PUBLISHED FOR EMPLOYEES AND FRIENDS OF KEY PROGRAM, INC.

## Are You Ready For Some Football?

Submitted by: **Juan Martinez**, Assistant Program Supervisor, Enhanced Family Support Services Program, Rhode Island Region

On Friday July 28, 2017, 22 clients from Key’s Rhode Island, Northeast, Central and Southeast Regions had the opportunity to attend the New England Patriots’ “Open Practice” at Gillette Stadium. All members of the Patriots’ roster (including some of the best-known players like Tom Brady, Rob Gronkowski and Julian Edelman; along with Head Coach Bill Belichick, assistant coaches and training staff) were on hand. Clients watched them running plays, conducting drills, practicing punts and field goal kicks – all in preparation for the challenge of defending their Super Bowl LI championship title for the upcoming season.

On this very hot day, Key staff and clients were appreciative of watching from the end zone that was in the shade of a large tent most of the day. During the



Joe Thuney with a Key client

practice, the clients got an up-close-and-personal view of 2 of the team’s 5 Super Bowl championship rings. 2017 Patriots’ Hall of Fame inductee Raymond Clayborn also visited Key’s group, signing autographs and taking pictures with clients – one of the reasons they deemed the end zone the “VIP Section!”

Following practice, many of the players and coaches came to Key’s section to pose for pictures and sign autographs on hats, posters, footballs and jerseys. The clients (and many of the staff!) were in awe of the athletes and were thankful for the chance to watch the practice and meet some of the Patriots.

Several clients from the boys’ STARR Program in the Central Region also had the chance to attend the practice session.

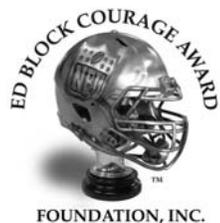
Program Supervisor **JP Ahern** writes that the clients were decked out in



LaAdrian Waddle signing a shirt

Patriots gear due to the generosity of Residential Caseworkers **Jayson Kenneway** and **Christian Lopez** who excitedly supervised the trip. The boys enjoyed watching the practice and meeting a number of current Patriots’ players. The highlight of the trip was undoubtedly the clients getting signatures from the one-and-only Bill Belichick! It was a great day for which the clients extremely grateful...who wouldn’t be after spending the day with the future 6-TIME Super Bowl Champs? GO PATS!

Key would like to extend a special “thanks” to Patriots’ Director of Community Relations, Donna Spigarolo, and the entire Patriots organization for their kindness and generosity towards Key’s clients and staff.



Activities such as attendance at this practice are made possible by Key’s designation as the official “Ed Block Courage House” for the New England Patriots. The vision of the Ed Block Courage Award Foundation, Inc. is to “break the cycle of abuse and neglect and to lay the foundation for generations of safe and nurturing families.” Through its partnership with the National Football League (NFL), the Foundation cultivates awareness through designated Courage Houses. All 32 teams in the NFL have now selected youth-serving organizations as their designated Courage Houses. Key is deeply honored to have been chosen by the Patriots.

## A Message From the President



William Lyttle

Although it's been some time (admittedly a *long* time) since I completed my formal education, this time of year still makes me feel like I should run out and purchase supplies for the new school year. It seems that whether you were a student who absolutely loved, simply tolerated or really disliked school; something about late summer/early fall will always feel like back-to-school season.

This is also a great time to think about where you are in your educational journey. All of Key's employees have earned high school diplomas or equivalencies, many have completed their Bachelor's degrees and a growing number have obtained Master's degrees as well. Whatever your educational status, I hope you do not consider your education to be "complete."

There are many reasons to continue your education. Statistics show that, on average, individuals with Bachelor's degrees will earn nearly double in income than people with high school diplomas over their lifetimes and those with Master's degrees will earn an additional 30%. Other advantages include a wider range of job and career advancement opportunities, greater job stability and satisfaction, networking prospects and a wealth of knowledge in numerous subject areas. Studies also show that people with some level of post high school education are more likely to be engaged in their communities, support the arts and humanities and report a greater degree of "happiness" with their lives. In addition, learning new things provides significant cognitive (memory, focus, problem solving) and social/emotional benefits.

Completing a degree program, however, is just one way to reap the benefits of furthering your education. Taking a class, attending a workshop, learning a skill or getting involved in a new hobby are all great ways to exercise your mind and enrich your life. Vocational high schools often offer adult classes that include subjects like cooking, photography, computer applications or personal finance. Sites like [www.openculture.com](http://www.openculture.com) and [www.edx.com](http://www.edx.com) offer **free** college-level courses in all academic fields. Community centers are also great resources for workshops in topics such as painting, dog training, dance or gardening - and you can find an instructional video about virtually anything on YouTube!

Key also provides support for work-related education through its *Educational Reimbursement Policy*, participation in the Massachusetts Tuition Remission Program, attendance at approved outside seminars and the availability of numerous on-line presentations through Relias Learning (eAcademy). See your region's Administrative Supervisor for information about any of these opportunities.

However you choose to do so, I encourage you to become a lifelong learner. Albert Einstein once said, "The more I learn, the more I realize how much I don't know." There is always room to learn something new and much to be gained from that knowledge that will benefit you, Key's kids and families and your community as a whole.

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## Painting With A Purpose

Submitted by: **Kara Webster**, Administrative Supervisor, Northeast Region

Thirty-four Key employees, friends and families came out to "paint with a purpose" on July 11, 2017. The event raised funds for the Northeast Region's clients' therapeutic activities. The painting instructor walked the group through step-by-step instructions in painting a peacock. It was interesting (to say the least) how people interpreted her instructions and created their own UNIQUE masterpieces! The evening was not only fun, but it helped to fund a similar event for our residential clients. Margaritas restaurant in Salem, NH hosted a "Noche Mexicana Night," donating 20% of dining sales to Key. We appreciate all who came out to support our fund raiser.



## Congratulations!

Key would like to congratulate two employees for their outstanding achievements!

Rhode Island Bridge Program Residential Caseworker **Yolanda Harley** (see January 2017 newsletter's Alumni Spotlight) works part-time for Key and full-time for the Rhode Island Department of Corrections as a Probation and Parole Officer II. Yolanda was recognized by the state for her exceptional efforts to improve the success of probationers'/parolees' re-entry into the community by relocating her office to the district she serves, instituting weekly home visits and monthly "meet and greets" for newly released probationers and local law enforcement/probation personnel to become acquainted with one another and other community-based initiatives.



**Christopher Andrade**, Program Supervisor of the Southeast Region's Family Support Program, successfully completed a Certificate in Non-Profit Human Service Management

at Suffolk University. The program is offered at both Suffolk (Boston) and Clark (Worcester) Universities through a collaboration of the Massachusetts Providers' Council, member agencies like Key Program and the universities. It is designed for supervisory-level staff to further advance their knowledge in the human services industry and involves one day of classes every week for a year – not easy to accomplish in addition to working full-time. Nicely done, Chris!

## Northeast Region's Internship Program

Submitted by: **Kara Webster**, Administrative Supervisor, Northeast Region

Key began its formal internship program in 2007. Since that time, the Northeast Region has worked with over 125 Bachelor's and Master's level students who are pursuing their educational goals for working in the human service field. Thirty-one of these interns were offered positions at Key and 16 interns received the *William G. Lyttle Human Service Professional Award*. To be eligible for this \$2,500 award, recipients must have completed an internship placement at Key, graduated from their degree programs, accepted full-time positions with Key and successfully completed their initial 90-day new hire orientation periods. Awards are presented in-person by Key President **Bill Lyttle**, for whom the award is named.

The 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the internship program was marked by presenting the 50<sup>th</sup> *William G. Lyttle Human Service Professional Award* to our very own Clinician, **Helen Martinez**! Helen completed her Master's in Mental Health from Cambridge College and is now a valuable member of the NE Outreach and Tracking team. Helen stands out as a resource to all NE programs, whether working with a client in crisis or assisting in language translation for our clients and their families. Helen's smile and laugh are contagious with co-workers and families. We are fortunate that she is sharing her many talents with our agency! Congratulations, Helen, for being Key's 50<sup>th</sup> Award recipient!



Pictured from left to right: Outreach Caseworker **Maria Rinaldi**, Clinician **Helen Martinez**, President **Bill Lyttle**, Outreach Caseworker **Shanice Madera** and Assistant Program Supervisor **Julian Lind**.

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“Tell me and I forget, teach me and I may remember, involve me and I learn.”

– Benjamin Franklin

# Rhode Island's Bridge Program Aims to Renew, Relax and Rejuvenate

Submitted by: **Allison Forte**, Program Supervisor, The Bridge Program, Rhode Island Region

Rhode Island Region's *Bridge to Independence Program* is excited to have been approved for an "Urban Garden Oasis" through the Rodman Ride for Kids.

Unfortunately, our program does not have a reflection room or a quiet place for the girls to refocus and spend time self-soothing. When one of our girls becomes upset, frustrated, over stimulated or just needs a few minutes to herself; she often chooses to take some space outside. But "outside" at the program is an old/ugly carport area, tar, dirt, a dumpster and parked cars; all surrounded by the loud noises and distractions that inner city living brings. The goal of the "Oasis" was to create an outdoor space filled with flowers, garden spaces, inspirational images, soothing lighting and comfortable seating so that the clients are able to truly relax, refocus, unwind and enjoy. This place will also encourage the girls to spend more time outdoors reconnecting with nature. It is a wonderful place to read, journal, play cards, eat lunch and just simply breathe in the fresh air.

The first step of the project was to repurpose old, recycled materials to use as planter bases for a variety of colorful flowers. Everyone worked together to create a planter pyramid out of old cinder blocks. Each person was asked to come up with a word that either inspires them or describes what they most enjoy about the work that they do. The words were then hand painted onto the cinderblocks for a functional and creative piece of artwork.

The staff team also looks forward to having a space to refresh, stay energized and practice a few moments of self-care during their shifts. The project was completed by staff and clients working together to promote a sense of accomplishment and unity.

Part of the project is a small vegetable garden with tomatoes, cucumbers and a variety of fresh herbs such as cilantro and parsley. We are proud to report that our tomatoes and herbs were planted and we have seen great success - the tomatoes have been used for fresh salsa which was delicious! The girls learned basic skills by observing how weather affects plants, how seeds sprout and plants develop, how gardeners cope with problems; how soil, water and sunshine interact and how butterflies and other insects play a role in the plants' life cycles. Observing this process of growth and change enables them to practice patience rather than expecting immediate gratification. These fundamental concepts promote hands-on learning, environmental responsibility and self-confidence through active learning, exploration and fun.

Some of the girls are not yet at a point in their treatment where they are able to obtain gainful employment within the community, so this space allows them to be assigned specific daily or weekly tasks to complete to earn additional stipend or allowance money. We truly believe this project is something from which the Bridge Program benefits immediately and ongoing. Not only will this space be a peaceful "retreat" for the our girls; it will also serve the important functions of having them take pride in their living space, increase responsibility by helping to care for the space and working as a team to help create and maintain this area.



## A Bit of Disney Magic

Submitted by: **Kara Webster**, Administrative Supervisor, Northeast Region

The Old Methuen Girls' Program clients were presented with a surprise gift prepared by Assistant Program Supervisor **Jerrid Kenney** last spring. Jerrid decorated an old trunk with Disney character cutouts and purchased a "like new" VCR. Over approximately a month's span, Jerrid was able to accumulate over 40 Disney VHS movies from local thrift shops. On Easter morning, the clients were surprised to find the Disney Trunk and, once it was opened, the girls couldn't get the VCR hooked up fast enough. The clients have continued to watch the movies on a regular basis and have been treated to additional VHS movies from staff members' attics and garages.



## Key Holds 12th Annual Family Fun Day at Canobie Lake Park

Submitted by: *Sue Spitale*, Regional Director, Northeast Region

The Northeast Region's 12th annual Family Fun Day at Canobie Lake Park (located in Salem, NH) was held on July 21, 2017. What a great day! This year, 615 kids, family members and friends attended the event, making for a LOT of smiling faces. Hundreds of Key Program kids and their families, accompanied by staff members from across the agency, were able to attend free of charge hosted by Key and The Rodman Ride for Kids. The remaining tickets were given out to sister provider agencies, local families, staff friends and families. These tickets were offered at a suggested donation of \$30 per ticket.

Attendees enjoyed all-day admission to the park and all of its attractions, as well as a catered all-you-can-eat barbeque lunch, and goodie bags with snacks and water. During lunch, everyone was entertained by our kids taking turns at the mic, showing off their talents with DJ Dave's Karaoke Extravaganza, as well as playing competitive lawn and table games for prizes.

After the lunchtime festivities, kids and families had access to every corner of the historic park. Kids were able to choose from a variety of rides and attractions. Some of our kids favorite rides from years past are The Yankee Cannon Ball, Untamed, Extreme Frisbee and the Boston Tea Party. The kids and their families also enjoyed live shows and were even take a refreshing detour to the Castaway Island splash ground.

This annual event could not happen without the generosity of the Rodman Ride for Kids and our community partners including The Methuen Sons of Italy Lodge 902, Granite State Church, Foster Kids of the Merrimack Valley, Lucia's Bodega and countless other local businesses. We also rely on our employees, family and friends supporting our fundraisers throughout the year. On the day of our event we had a legion of enthusiastic Key volunteers, as well as are Kohl's Cares Associates from the North Andover store.

It is such a privilege to be part of such a special day. Seeing kids and families have the opportunity to put aside life's stressors for the day and enjoy being together is a reward in itself. Thank you to everyone who played a part in making this event possible.



Pictured from left to right: President **Bill Lyttle**, Central Region Assistant Regional Director **Kara Ludy-Speight** and Regional Director **Mike Brennan**, retired Northeast Regional Director **Joel Tragash**, present Regional Director **Sue Spitale**, Chief Operating Office **Wes Cotter**

## You've Been Noticed!

Submitted by: *Sharon Gray*, Administrative Supervisor, Southeast Region

The Southeast Region is pleased to announce its new employee recognition program, "You've Been Noticed." The goal of the program is to recognize and provide encouragement to our staff for work that is "exemplary" or just downright "appreciated." Any supervisor can simply write a note on a "You've Been Noticed" index-sized card and present it and a small gift card to outstanding employees will be given during staff meetings.

Of course we appreciate all of our employees every day, but this program has been a great way for supervisors to make sure those who are doing exceptional jobs are recognized for their efforts. I would also like to thank all of the Southeast Region's staff for everything they do each and every day. Though simply stated, I mean it when I say that I consider myself incredibly fortunate to work with such a talented and caring group of people!



## 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Key Program Night at the Worcester Bravehearts



Submitted by: **Stephanie Cormier Gregoire**, Administrative Supervisor, Central Region

On June 12, the Central Region hosted its second “Night at the Worcester Bravehearts.” Now in their third year, the Bravehearts strive to bring great baseball and memorable family experiences at affordable prices to Hanover Insurance Park, located in Worcester. The Bravehearts are the reigning champions of the Futures Collegiate Baseball League (FCBL) and compete against 9 other teams from around New England; giving fans a full Minor League-style experience. Half of the players either grew up in Central Massachusetts or are currently playing baseball at a college or university in New England.

Clients, staff, friends and families enjoyed a game under the lights at Fitton Field on the campus of the College of the Holy Cross. All who attended received a replica Bravehearts hat and the chance to participate in and win the 50/50 raffle. Staff and clients could be heard throughout the park as they sold raffle tickets. They loved every minute and were happy to be able to use their loud voices for a good cause! One lucky client even got the chance to meet a player, who graciously autographed her commemorative hat. The smile on her face was priceless.

Everyone enjoyed the game, all while participating in the Region’s first Rodman Ride for Kids fundraising event of the season. Thanks to Bravehearts’ Group Experience Coordinator Chris Lola and the entire Worcester Bravehearts organization for bringing our community together and for continuing to support Key Program and the Ride for Kids. A special thank you goes out to the Northeast Region for participating in the event. It was great hosting your staff and clients! Thanks also goes to Central Region Assistant Regional Director **Kara Ludy-Speight**, Administrative Assistant **Rafael Cruz** and Program Director **Liz Farrar** for volunteering your time at this year’s event. Lastly, but certainly not least, a big thank you to all of the staff and clients that attended the game and helped to raise money for this event!

## Drivers, Start Your Engines!

On July 16, 2017, four clients from the Northeast Region were treated to a surprise recreational trip to see the LOUDEST event in New England...the NASCAR race at the New Hampshire



Martin Truex, Jr.

Motor Speedway in Loudon! As Assistant Program Supervisor **Jerrid Kenney** pulled into the Speedway’s parking lot, the clients noticed fan vehicles parked as far as they could see.

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## Western Region Hosts 18th Annual Golf Tournament

Submitted by: **Matt Beaulieu**, Senior Program Supervisor, Outreach & Tracking, Western Region

The Western Region’s 18th annual Key/Rodman Ride for Kids Golf Tournament went off



without a hitch on Sunday, August 6, at the Tekoa Country Club in Westfield, MA. With beautiful weather and the course in pristine condition, 60 golfers teed off at 1:00 p.m. to raise money to support Key Program and the Rodman Ride for Kids. The tournament raised approximately \$4,000 this year. That amount was just under the total raised by last year’s tournament, but with 12 fewer golfers we were very pleased with the results! After the round of golf, players were treated to a buffet style dinner and a raffle drawing. Many of the raffle prizes were donated by local businesses and the vendors that work with the Western Region throughout the year. This golf tournament is held in August every year and we are looking forward to increasing both the number of golfers and the amount of money raised in the years to come.

## Kaleidoscope Clients Get Involved

Submitted by: **Sharon Gray**, Administrative Supervisor, Southeast Region

This past spring, the boys from the Kaleidoscope Group Home joined over 350 Wareham residents by participating in the “Don’t Trash Wareham Earth Day Cleanup.” Team Key aided in the cleanup’s efforts to increase youth involvement in the community.



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## Rhode Island Region

Submitted by: **Kristen Wild**, Program Supervisor, Enhanced Family Support Program

The Enhanced Family Support Services Program (ESSP) in the Rhode Island region has had a super busy summer engaging clients in positive summer recreations. Some of the fun summer recreations we have held include kickball tournaments, mini golfing and basketball games at the park. Recently, we took sixteen of our clients to join other Key clients and families at the Northeast Region's Family Fun Day at Canobie Lake Park in Salem, NH (see article in this edition). The children had an amazing experience bonding with their caseworkers and peers and most importantly having fun on all the rides! They were all very appreciative of the experience and it was the first time at an amusement park for most of the children. EFSS Caseworkers were grateful to be part of that experience with them.



Some fun recreations to conclude our summer fun will include the Mystic Aquarium, the Audubon Society Wildlife Refuge, the Southwick Zoo and a back to school cookout at Goddard Park. Our program strives each and every day to make a positive impact upon our client's lives by providing them with positive/therapeutic experiences to build rapport with their caseworkers, keep kids busy and engaged during the summer time and assist our clients with socialization with other kids their age.

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## Straight Ahead Ministries Visits Oakes D Program

Submitted by: "E," Oakes D Girls' Program resident, Central Region

On June 25, 2017, the Oakes D Girls' Program enjoyed a very pleasant visit from people from "Straight Ahead Ministries." After thanking them for coming, we played fun games and got to know one another a little better. After that we sang songs and listened to one of the visitors play the guitar he had brought along.

Next we got to the real reason for their visit: to talk about how we can do good things in our lives after we are released from detention. We got to talk about real-life situations and heard examples of people who had been "in the system" and had still gone far in life. We really appreciated how understanding they were and how they didn't look at us any differently than they might look at their own friends. Many of us enjoyed a period of Bible study and really appreciated the cake and ice cream that they surprised us with at the end of the visit. Overall, we felt that the event was special and something we hope the program will continue doing for other clients who come to the program.



**Straight Ahead**  
MINISTRIES  
OFFERING KIDS A WAY OUT

Straight Ahead Ministries is a non-profit organization that works with juvenile offenders residing in detention facilities. For those youth who are interested, the agency provides opportunities for Bible study. "Straight Ahead" also operates Re-Entry Centers to help youth with their transitions from detention back to the community. Additionally, trained counselors work with youth through the Straight2Work Job Readiness Training program to help youth develop job skills and find employment. Straight Ahead currently serves juvenile offenders in 40 states, 35 countries and 7 languages. Straight Ahead has been visiting Key's Oakes D Girls' Program every Sunday for 10+ years. To learn more, visit [www.straightahead.org](http://www.straightahead.org).

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## Rock Those Recs!

Submitted by: **Stephanie Cormier Gregoire**, Administrative Supervisor

In Key's Central Region, one of the Outreach and Tracking team's main goals is to provide clients with positive community involvement through an assortment of supervised activities. Based in Worcester, the team conducted various recreations that have allowed clients to experience enjoyable activities in order to model appropriate behaviors in the community. One such activity was three clients' attendance at the March 24, 2017 Boston Celtics game. Thank you to Delta Dental Account Executive Nina Conroy for the generous donation of tickets to the game! Another three clients had the opportunity to attend two Boston Red Sox games in April. Each of these clients and their families were very thankful for these exciting opportunities.



The clients and families have continued to speak with staff about the experiences of being in the city and seeing a

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## KALEIDOSCOPE CLIENTS GET INVOLVED

(Continued from page 6)

Key collaborated with the Buzzards Bay Coalition; a nonprofit organization dedicated to the restoration, protection, and sustainable use and enjoyment of Buzzards Bay and its watershed, by focusing clean-up efforts at the largest freshwater river at Horseshoe Mill (part of the Weweantic River Reserve in Wareham). The boys collected trash while enjoying the walking trails and beautiful river views on this 34-acre property only minutes away from the program. We hope to make this an annual event; not only to keep the area clean and sustainable, but to help clients develop teamwork skills and a passion for community involvement.

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## DRIVERS, START YOUR ENGINES

(Continued from page 6)

While walking around the fan zone, they were admittedly pretty skeptical about what they were about to be a part of until they got the opportunity to sit in driver Martin Truex, Jr.'s official racecar. The clients were given special headsets so they could listen to the drivers' conversations throughout the race. Despite being warned, the boys insisted it couldn't be that loud until the 40+ racecars roared by just before the race started. All the clients gave APS Kenney a surprised look as they quickly put on their headsets. As the green flag waved to start the race, one of the clients held up his arm and said "I have goose bumps this is *sooo* awesome."



*Martin Truex, Jr.'s official racecar*

Each of the clients had selected a driver to root for before the event and continued to cheer them on for the entire 301 mile race. After a very long day, they could not wait to get back to the program so they could tell the staff all about their experience. When APS Kenney arrived at the program the following day, the clients already had the X-Box NASCAR game started up and were ready to challenge him to a race. Though he hasn't yet found success, APS Kenney continues to attempt to beat the clients (at least once!).

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## ROCK THE RECS

(Continued from page 7)

Boston sporting event in person. Some of the clients have stated that it was their "favorite recreation" with Key and that they are looking forward to the next recreation. One client spoke about how he had never been into Boston before and that just being in the city was exciting to him. Another client was able to watch his favorite team, the New York Yankees, play against the Red Sox. These experiences were positive not only because of the community involvement; but they also helped to build staff/client rapport and have been used as incentives for progress within the home, at school or in the community. Because of the fantastic recreations that Worcester's Outreach and Tracking team has been able to provide for its clients, the youths have been able to participate in events that they may not have otherwise experienced. The Outreach and Tracking team will continue to offer these and many other types of recreational opportunities in order to provide clients with the positive community experiences that are so important for their growth and development.

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## Autumn Reminders:

- ▶ Have furnaces and chimneys serviced before the cold weather arrives.
- ▶ Check tire treads to ensure they are sufficient for winter driving. Replace if necessary.
- ▶ Daylight savings ends on Sunday, November 5<sup>th</sup>. Turn clocks BACK one hour!
- ▶ Prepare winter emergency kit for your car (blanket, flashlight, battery charger, etc.).
- ▶ Replace batteries in smoke and carbon monoxide detectors.
- ▶ Stretch and warm-up before raking leaves. In the U.S., over 12,000 people sought medical treatment for raking-related injuries last year!