Dedicated duo to be honored at Springtime

By Paul Halloran

Cardinal Cushing Centers will honor two dedicated supporters at the annual Springtime gala this year, while featuring the Tommy Hilfiger Adaptive Collection in the fashion show at the event.

The honorees are Jody Nash, parent of a Cushing graduate and current adult resident, and chair of the capital campaign; and George Montilio, owner of Montilio’s Baking Company, which provides employment opportunities for Cushing students.

Springtime will be held June 7 at the Seaport Hotel in Boston. “There are so many people who do an incredible job to make this organization run day in and day out,” said Nash, whose daughter, Sophie, 22, came to Cushing as a student when she was 14. “The true heroes are the staff, teachers and people in adult services who do the work every day to make the organization as great as it is.”

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Good reasons to spring forward

With the reluctance winter finally in the near-term in our thoughts turn to spring and the opportunity to get outside and enjoy the sunshine and fresh air. At Cushing, we look forward to the arrival of spring with great anticipation, because it means our annual Springtime gala is quickly approaching.

As you will read in this edition of the Cardinal Cushing Centers Connector, this year’s Springtime will be held June 7 at the Seaport Hotel. We are very pleased to be honoring Nady and George Montilio, who have continued their time and talent to our organization. Like so many of our dedicated volunteers, the Montilio family first experienced Cushing as a junior, when daughter Sophie, attended back eight years ago. July has always served as the call to help in time and space, including claiming an enthusiastic new – and critical – capital campaign.

George recalls his father – who founded the extraordinary bakery business that George now runs in association with Cushing – as always being the one to engage youth at the school.

“From there, he was the one who would always call me to help with youth,” he said. “He was the one who would always call me to help with youth.”

The Montilio called the Springtime recognition “humble.”

“At the end of the day, what we do, it’s all about helping the students and the school, to grow,” he said.

Some of the models in the fashion show will be wearing clothing from B.U. Adaptive. That was one of the hottest trends last year, and something that is key to the company.

“People are very excited about the opportunity to express themselves through fashion. Last year’s Springtime gala attracted 150 guests and raised $43,000 to support Cushing’s adaptive line.”

Another goal, called “Pax or Whack,” helps students to learn and practice safely using adaptive bikes, while “WaterWorks” helps students to strengthen their muscles through activities in the pool. Cushing students and adults have attended a number of fitness achievements as a group, including a 5K race at Castle Island in South Boston.

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The idea was to come up with a new type of fundraising event, while capitalizing on the burgeoning popularity of paddle tennis on the South Shore.

Mission accomplished.

The inaugural Paddle for a Purpose was held on March 3 and, despite the area still feeling the effects of a powerful nor'easter, it surpassed all expectations, attracting 70 players and raising $14,000 for the Cardinal Cushing Centers Capital Campaign, according to event co-chair Jody Nash.

“We took advantage of the growing interest in paddle tennis to bring the Cushing story to a larger population,” Nash said. “We were hoping to raise $5,000-$10,000, so we were thrilled with the results.”

The tournament was scheduled for four clubs: Black Rock Country Club in Hingham, Cohasset Golf Club, Duxbury Yacht Club, and Scituate Racquet Club. The matches scheduled for Duxbury were moved to Black Rock due to a power outage in Duxbury. (Parts of Cohasset and Scituate were still in the dark.) The finals were held at Black Rock, along with dinner and a silent auction.

The finals were played at Black Rock Country Club in Hingham.

Charlie Hayes and Alex Boyd were the men’s winners, while Karyn Packard and Kathleen Thomson were the top women players.

Paddle tennis was adapted from tennis and has been played for more than a century, though its popularity in this area is much more recent. There are 11 courts combined at the four clubs in the Paddle for a Purpose event. The court is smaller than a tennis court and the net is lower. Paddle tennis is played with a solid paddle as opposed to a strung racquet, and a depressurized tennis ball is used.

“There really hasn’t been an event like this before. We had a small event last year, with about 15 women. We thought it would be fun to expand,” Nash, chair of Cushing’s capital campaign that has raised almost $9 million for the MarketPlace building on Route 53, said.

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“We were able to bring a lot of people into the Cushing fold, which is wonderful,” said co-chair Mary McGoldrick, who owns Black Rock along with her husband, George. “We were able to bring in a lot of new people to Cushing, which is wonderful.”

Nash and McGoldrick attributed the success of the Paddle for a Purpose event to a hard-working committee, which started planning last fall, and a group of generous sponsors.

“Wandered over to Cushing one day and they never let me go,” said McGoldrick, who sits on the capital campaign committee and the board of directors. “I started working in the garden with students, and I fell in love with Randy Wisocki’s (art) classroom. They’re so nice. I’m pretty hard to leave. It’s overwhelming with the dedication of the staff. It’s a very special place.”

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Nash, chair of Cushing’s capital campaign that has raised almost $9 million for the MarketPlace building on Route 53, has been affiliated with Cushing since her daughter, Sophie, started attending the school eight years ago. Her good friend, McGoldrick, is a more recent devotee, but equally enthusiastic.

“I wandered over to Cushing one day and they never let me go,” said McGoldrick, who sits on the capital campaign committee and the board of directors. “I started working in the garden with students, and I fell in love with Randy Wisocki’s (art) classroom. They’re so nice. I’m pretty hard to leave. It’s overwhelming with the dedication of the staff. It’s a very special place.”

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Going the extra mile for Cushing

By Magdalen Casey

Cushing students go for the ride of their lives

St. Coletta students go for the ride of their lives

Animals, inherently, have a lot to give—and students at St. Coletta Day School are benefiting from their gentleness, strength and caring qualities.

On a weekly basis, students visit the Page Rehabilitation Hospital for Children at Acres for therapeutic horseback riding. Led by St. Coletta staff members Jeff Kelly and Kar Lune, a group of 15 to 20 students participate regularly. They can choose between riding or grooming the horses.

“For some of them, it provides sensory opportunities and helps them to build balance and body awareness. For others, it builds confidence,” said Luke Sullivan, Director of St. Coletta Day School. “It’s also just a wonderful chance to get outdoors and interact with the animals.”

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Whether they walk, run, swim, lift, spin or dance, members of the Cush Fit Crew have trained for voluntary fitness activities with all funds going directly back to Cushing. The program was set up through CrowdRise, making it easy for supporters to contribute online.

David Yoshida, whose son Brent is a Cushing resident, has been one of the program’s biggest fundraisers. In fact, Yoshida has captained a team for the annual Rodman Ride for Kids. That team, which would ride 50 miles to raise money for Special Olympics Massachusetts and Cushing’s Special Olympics programs.

Last year, with Yoshida wanting to participate in the Rodman Ride, he had another thought:

“I'm truly honored,” said Yoshida. “It was nice because we made it a little more of a family thing. Hopefully my other children will be able to join us next year and we can make it an annual family tradition.”

Because of the rhythm of horseback riding, riders are able to raise more than $13,000 as a result of the Rodman Ride and the Rodman Ride for Kids. Brent’s Team

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Marathon Runners Conquer The Elements for Cushing

By Meaghan Casey

The rain may have dampened the course at the 122nd Boston Marathon, but it didn’t dampen the spirits of runners Brian Brownell, Julian Concannon, Brian Lawlor, Elissa Montilio, Brittany Parnell and Jake Schwan — all of whom made up the fundraising team for Cardinal Cushing Centers.

This marked the fifth year that Cushing was given official numbers from event sponsor John Hancock. Since year one, the number of Cushing bibs has doubled from three to six. This year’s team has raised more than $72,000.

Unfortunately, to do so, they had to brave 35 mph winds, pouring rain and a below-freezing wind chill. But their attitudes never wavered.

“My students bravely face obstacles every day that can be compared to training in a New England winter, so if they can get out of bed every day and hit the ground running, so could I,” said Concannon, an occupational therapist at Cushing. “Sure, the training was brutal at times and I didn’t really love all those sub-zero temps, but I did it. Not because it was fun — although there is something beautiful about an early morning run in the fresh fallen snow — but because I was doing it for someone else.”

Concannon had made a promise to himself that if he got the job at Cushing, he’d try to secure a spot on the Marathon team. He was hired in September and began training shortly after.

“I had been toying with the idea of running the Boston Marathon for a few years and it all just seemed to work out with the Cushing team,” said Concannon, a Rockland native.

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