



ABILITY BEYOND DISABILITY

presents

The Rainbow



Gala

A Prism of Possibilities

April 26, 2008

The Amber Room Colonnade

Supporting people and their communities

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The Rainbow Gala

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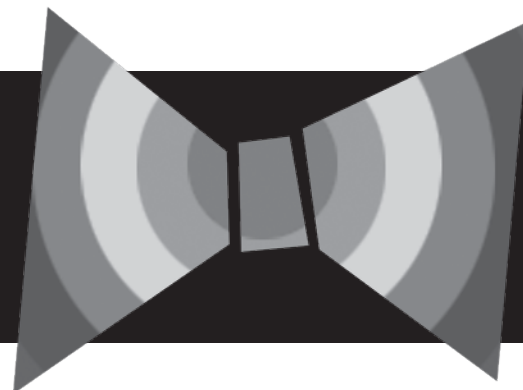
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The Rainbow Gala

A Prism of Possibilities



PROGRAM

April 26, 2008

- 7:00 **Cocktail Reception**
Silent Auction
- 7:45 **Silent Auction Closing**
- 8:00 **Guests are Seated**
- 8:15 **Welcome**
Mark R. Zimmerman, Gala Co-Chair, Board of Directors, Board of Trustees
- Opening Remarks**
L. Kevin Cox, Chairman, Board of Directors
- Live Auction**
Champion Auctioneer June DeLair
- Presentation of Robert S. Young Humanitarian Award**
by Thomas H. Fanning, President/CEO
Gail Hamaty Matthews, Chairman, Board of Trustees
Roy Young, Board of Directors
Mark R. Zimmerman, Gala Co-Chair, Board of Directors, Board of Trustees
to Anthony Rizzo Sr.
- Video Presentation**
The Geoffrey Schachter Story
- Lend-a-Hand...Fund-a-Home Live Auction**
Champion Auctioneer June DeLair
- 9:30 **Prayer of Thanksgiving**
Rabbi Solomon Acrish
- Dinner**
- Dancing until midnight**



The Rainbow Gala

April 26, 2008

Dear supporters, believers, and friends,

It is wonderful to be together again in support of Ability Beyond Disability. We are honored to host this evening's festivities as the chairpersons for the 2008 Rainbow Gala and humbled by what so many have done to make this a truly special affair.

Tonight is the culmination of so much commitment, energy, and dedication contributed by so many. The Boards of Trustees and Directors and the Leadership Team of this great organization continue to chart a positive and progressive course. Almost 100 volunteers lined up the auction items, recruited business and community support, designed and mailed invitations, and transformed this room, under the expert guidance of the Development and Community Relations Office. Even more amazing and remarkable are the accomplishments of the Ability Beyond Disability staff, day in and day out. The writer Louis Nizer wrote "A man who works with his hands is a laborer; a man who works with his hands and his head is a craftsman; but a man who works with his hands, his head, and his heart is an artist." Ability Beyond Disability is an organization filled with artists. We thank all of them from the bottoms of our hearts.

It all takes a deep sense of purpose, an unyielding optimism, and a belief that we can and must take responsibility for improving our communities. These are traits found in abundance in our honoree this year, Tony Rizzo. Few people you know have experienced so much, accomplished so much, and given so much as Tony and our lives are already richer by sharing this evening with him.

As we celebrate Tony's and Ability Beyond Disability's accomplishments, we too have a chance to accomplish something truly extraordinary while we are here. The organization has mapped out an ambitious plan to develop the capabilities and services that will enable our consumers to further their potential and to enrich our area for the next 10 years. From groundbreaking service models to address the complications of aging among our consumers to meeting the growing demand for enhanced services for individuals with autism, there is still much to do. Despite the obvious need for such services, it's a courageous step as the chronic underfunding from public sources grows more acute.

It all begins here tonight. Over the next few hours, we can have a more profound impact on our communities than at any other moment during the course of the year, perhaps in our lives. Inspired by Tony's example, let's get it done and then let's celebrate the future we have enabled, a future that represents a prism of possibilities.

Thanks for your generosity.

Warmest regards,



NEED SIGNATURE

Donna & Mark Zimmerman



Previous Award Recipients

This award is given in memory of Robert S. Young, a former volunteer leader and President of Ability Beyond Disability, formerly known as Datahr Rehabilitation Institute.

Mr. Young contributed beyond measure to find the "Ability Beyond Disability" in those we serve.

These are the former award recipients:

Nathan Ancell

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Tonight's Honoree – Anthony M. Rizzo Sr.

When Tony arrived in America at the age of 12, he relied on the kindness of strangers to help put a roof over his head, get him on his feet and become independent in a place thousands of miles away from his family and the only home he ever knew.

Born in Italy just one month after the death of his father, Tony began his life fighting an uphill battle to survive. He was sent to America to live with relatives he had never met before, unable to speak a word of English, but determined to live the "American Dream".

This new home and new family meant everything to Tony. They provided him with the love and support needed to begin pursuing his dreams. Hard working, determined and with a strong family network in place, Tony made his way to the top. Four years after he graduated from Henry Abbott Tech, at the age of 22, he and his wife Joan founded A.M. Rizzo Electrical Contractors Inc. Over 40 years later, The Rizzo Companies are entirely family owned and now handle Construction Management, General Construction and Electrical Contracts throughout both Connecticut and New York. Tony's dreams have come true.



Not only is Anthony Rizzo Sr. a dedicated family man and successful businessman, but he is also a philanthropist, helping others to lead independent lives in any way he can; which is why he chose to get involved with Ability Beyond Disability over a decade ago.

Ability Beyond Disability provides the same family network and support to individuals with disabilities that Tony credits his own success to. He has been instrumental in helping people with disabilities to be successful and lead lives full of opportunities in their communities...in helping them to achieve their own dreams.

Tony's community commitments go far beyond his support of Ability Beyond Disability though, he has served as Chairman of the Board of Directors for Nutmeg Federal Savings and Loan Association, NewMil Bank now Webster Bank, has served on the Board of Directors of the Greater Danbury Chamber of Commerce and The Board of Directors of Housatonic Development Corporation, Chairman of Danbury Commissions of the Housing Authority is a member of the Board of Directors of Regional Hospice and is involved with many other local organizations.

Over the years, Tony has received many awards for his exemplary service in the community, including the Cecil J. Previdi Entrepreneurial Business Award, the 1996 Connecticut Family Business Leadership Award from the University of Connecticut, The Greater Danbury Area "Good Scout" award, the Catholic Family Services, Mary Dolce Humanitarian Award and the Old Timers Award from the Amerigo Vespucci Sons of Italy for his achievement as Americans of Italian Heritage. Tony was also inducted into the Junior Achievement of Western Connecticut Free Enterprise Hall of Fame. 🎉



From the President

Welcome to our Rainbow Gala!

We are thrilled that you are with us to honor Mr. Tony Rizzo with the Robert S. Young Humanitarian Award and to support the efforts of Ability Beyond Disability in this, our 55th year of commitment to the inclusion of people with disabilities in our communities.

Tony Rizzo is a self made man, a man of great energy, great vision and great compassion. Born in Italy, Tony is truly an American success story who has achieved tremendously in the business world. His success is rooted in tireless work and the fact that he is a person whose handshake is a greater bond than any legal contract. Tony has also embraced another uniquely American trait; the willingness to share his good fortune with those in need. His personal commitment, leadership and generosity to others make Tony Rizzo a true humanitarian in every sense of the word.



We are also grateful to you for being here to support the mission of Ability Beyond Disability. The needs and challenges facing people with disabilities continue to increase and, in response, we have established a goal of increasing our services to over 2,000 people with our Vision 2013. It is our mission to enable people with disabilities with opportunities that lead to successful and fulfilling lives. In spite of financial challenges, we will succeed because of the compassion and involvement of people like you. You are making a difference with your generosity and support. We are truly thankful!

Have a wonderful evening!

Thomas Fanning,
President/CEO
Ability Beyond Disability



From the Chairman of the Board of Trustees

Dear Friends,

Welcome and thank you for joining us for this most special night. I am both touched and awed by the outpouring of support for Ability Beyond Disability.

“The Rainbow Gala” indeed showcases “a prism of possibilities”. The very name personifies the potential that we as a community can bring to our neighbors, our friends and those in our families who may have a disability. It also brings attention to the infinite possibilities people with disabilities could enjoy – if they were provided the opportunity. And that is why we are here tonight.

At tonight’s gala you will hear about our vision for the future. You will hear about the many more people who will have the need to become connected with our community. You will hear about the challenges and the many opportunities we see to serve our community and people with disabilities. And – most important –you will hear how your support can and will make a difference, both tonight and throughout the year.

So, please enjoy the evening. To our many sponsors, underwriters and contributors – I say thank you from the bottom of my heart. We would not be able to host such an event without you. To our committee members – it does take a village to stage a gala – doesn’t it? To our many volunteers – you are magnificent and we are very grateful. To the consumers – whos strength and courage inspire us all – thank you for showing us all the true meaning of happiness. And to all of you who came tonight. I am so glad you are here. Enjoy the evening. And be sure to raise your hands and join in the fun. And join our community of support for people with disabilities.

With the deepest gratitude,



NEED SIGNATURE

Gail Hamaty Matthews, Esq.
Chairman Board of Trustees



Special Guest – Jayna Altman

Born severely premature, Jayna spent the first three months of her life in the intensive care unit where she underwent 14 pneumothorax due to pulmonary distress, open heart surgery at 6 weeks old, and 2 complete blood exchanges, among many other medical complications. As a result of her survival, she was dubbed the Arizona Miracle Baby and written up in several medical journals regarding her odds. Medications given to sustain her life, left Jayna with a severe to profound hearing loss. Doctors predicted as a result of such complications that Jayna would never learn to speak, or obtain beyond a third grade education. Despite such dismal predictions, Jayna learned to speak beautifully as a result of intensive auditory verbal therapy for 12 years. She went on to graduate with distinction and honors from the University of California, San Diego. She has completed classes towards a doctorate in Audiology at CID/Washington University School of Medicine.



Today and in the past, Jayna serves as a role model and advocate for all types of disabilities, specifically hearing loss. She has worked with several organizations, which has allowed her the opportunity to travel more than 20,000 miles speaking on behalf of disability related causes. Additionally, she has assisted in raising more than \$1 million dollars towards various charitable and educational organizations working towards greater awareness on such issues.

Below are some of roles she has served over the years:

National Poster child/Alumni Spokesperson for John Tracy Clinic

State Board Trustee for Hearing Loss Association of America

State Conference Speaker with Heather Whitestone - McCallum (Miss America 1995)

Conference Panel Speaker for Alexander Graham Bell Association

Conference Panel Speaker for CChat

Serve in the following organizations: Special Olympics, Best Buddies, John Tracy Clinic, Alexander Graham Bell Association, March of Dimes, Lymphoma and Leukemia Society, etc.



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Special Thanks

Special Thanks to the following for their generous in-kind support
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A Special Thank You to our Committee Members & Volunteers

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Tonight's Menu and Arrangements

The Amber Room Colonnade

Garde Manger

A fabulous display of fresh fruit, crisp vegetable crudités with assorted dips and antipasto platters, hot spreads and cold canapés, domestic and international cheeses and a full assortment of hot hors d'oeuvres.

First Course

Baby Field Greens with Grilled Portabella Mushroom with Lemon Vinaigrette Dressing.

Entree

Filet Mignon with Rainbow Peppercorn Sauce with Roasted Red Bliss Potatoes and Charred Asparagus.
(Vegetarian entrée of Roasted Red Pepper Ravioli available upon request)

Dessert

Assortment of Fruit Sorbets.

Entertainment

Nik & the Nice Guys

Photography

A Thousand Words,
Cynthia O'Connor and Marc Isolda

Decorations

Ginny Young

Sign Language Interpreter

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Invitations & Program Book

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Special thanks to the gracious staff at The Amber Room Colonnade for helping to make this evening so spectacular.



“Lend-a-Hand, Fund-a-Home”

Brings New Meaning to the Word “Family”

“Providing a home and a sense of family for someone really makes a difference,” says Anthony Rizzo, Sr., this year’s recipient of the Robert S. Young Humanitarian Award. It was the family Tony met for the first time when he was 12 years old and the home they opened to him that he credits for making his dreams come true.

Like Tony, people with disabilities depend on the comfort and support of a family and a home to help them achieve their goals. This is the philosophy behind “Lend-a-Hand, Fund-a-Home,” a fundraising initiative to provide the people we serve with a caring family and a place to call home at one of Ability Beyond Disability residences in Connecticut and New York.

“We believe in the phrase coined by Benjamin Franklin in the late 18th century: ‘a house is not a home unless it contains family, food and fire for the mind as well as the body,’” Fanning notes. “By providing living arrangements in which our consumers feel comfortable and good about themselves and staff that are like family, we’re making it easier for them to find jobs, make new friends and acclimate to their communities. They leave their homes each morning with a smile and their positive attitudes send messages of hope and promise throughout the community.”

Within the past year many people have joined our family, moved into our homes and found ways to become part of our community. In the years to come we anticipate that the number of people we serve will grow substantially. It is in the home that these individuals first learn the skills needed to obtain employment, participate in volunteer activities and become actively involved in their communities. The home is also the place where they return to, to replenish and re-invigorate and dream of a life made possible because there are people who believe in them.

Tonight – we are looking to you to help the people we serve to have a place they are proud to call home, a sense of family and a safe environment from which they can emerge to pursue their dreams. And dreams really do come true.



Our History

Fifty-five years of making a positive difference in the lives of people with disabilities. Thousands of dreams realized. And the promise that more advances are to follow.

A small group of parents generated the hope and promise. Now their energy, dedication and vision are taking the Ability Beyond Disability dream into the new century – and more communities.

It started in 1953 in a small section of Connecticut. The catalysts were just a handful of parents with little more in the way of resources than love of their children and some scattered hours of free time. But they had a vision too: that their children and others with similar disabilities could one day lead independent lives in a community of their choice. They also believed there is strength and comfort in numbers, plus synergetic benefits when concerned parents pool their expertise, share dreams and build...They were right.

Their vision led to the creation of Datahr Rehabilitation Institute, now known as Ability Beyond Disability. And in the years between 1953 and 2008, the organization has become a leading resource for changing lives, by providing the best home, health, employment and rehabilitation services available to individuals in Connecticut and Hudson Valley, NY whose independent living skills are impaired by disability, illness or injury. Each of those years is marked by stories once deemed “the impossible dream.”

FOR EXAMPLE:

“Our son spent more than 30 years in an institution doing little more than roaming the halls. Then we took him to Ability Beyond Disability; he now lives independently with a roommate, has a good job and requires no more than one hour per week of support.”

“We employ more than 30 Ability Beyond Disability consumers in our headquarters building. They show up every day with great attitudes and they get their work done. There are no bad hair days; only smiles and good rapport with our other employees.”

“I once was hesitant about having people with a developmental disability or serious brain injury living next door. But not any more. They’re good neighbors.”

“Who would have thought I’d ever be in a play. But thanks to Ability Beyond Disability my friends and I performed before an audience at the Northern Westchester Center for the Arts.”

“I’m a person with a developmental disability who is normal because I’m living a normal life. I have a job and I moved to White Plains because that’s where the action is.”



Operating out of Connecticut and Westchester with headquarters in Bethel and Mount Kisco, Ability Beyond Disability now serves approximately 1000 people each year at some 400 diversified sites. Its services include numerous residential alternatives, employment training, career counseling, job placement, cognitive and life skills instruction, clinical and therapeutic support, and volunteer and recreational activities. And although space limitations preclude a longer list of the agency's accomplishments over the years, the following are especially worth noting:

- Offering every person we serve choices in how they live, work and participate in their communities.
- The introduction of the first Traumatic Brain Injury Program in Connecticut.
- Being the first agency in Connecticut – and subsequently New York (at the invitation of the State) – to serve people with traumatic brain injuries through a residential program.
- Completely eliminating isolating sheltered workshops and placing all job-seeking consumers into positions at local workplaces.
- Receiving the highest rating possible by the Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities (CARF) for its services for people with disabilities that promote independence, dignity, and self-respect. And not just once; each time we were rated.
- Receiving national accolades for our innovative hiring process and our best practice models for offering extensive and unique opportunities for employees who choose to work in the human services field.
- Receiving national recognition for our services focused around community integration.
- Providing cost-effective community-based solutions to rehabilitation, medical, and healthcare and human service needs.
- Establishing state-of-the-art benchmarking data to continually improve quality services.
- Identifying service needs and pro-actively seeking the best solutions to meet those needs.
- Presenting nationally on innovative use of technology to deliver services most effectively and efficiently.
- Building a diverse and inclusive culture for the people we serve and the people who serve them.
- Creating a culture of employee generosity and philanthropy.
- Fostering extensive volunteerism throughout many communities.

Also worth citing are the people responsible for these accomplishments; the staff, board members and community partners. They have made it possible for the thousands of people we've served to have a life full of hope and promise. Their courage and tenacity in achieving their goals have sent messages of hope and promise to countless others. They are the ones to whom this Gala is dedicated. ▶▶



What it Means to Work at Ability Beyond Disability

Ability Beyond Disability has a long history of accomplishments – all centered around one key premise – we are a resource for changing lives.

Since our founding in 1953 when a small group of parents met in a living room looking for alternatives for their children to the present day when close to 1,000 people turn to us for help in accomplishing their personal dreams and goals – we have consistently done “whatever it takes” to make a positive difference in the lives of those we serve.

Our organization is founded on five guiding principles:

- 1) We will offer people with disabilities the choices and services they want.
- 2) We will continuously evolve to be successful in a changing world.
- 3) We will improve the quality of services to make it possible for those we serve to participate in the communities and activities of their choosing.
- 4) We will be the employer of choice for those seeking to work in the service sector of providing supports to people with disabilities.
- 5) We will create a stable financial foundation for current operations and for the future.

There are significant opportunities before us. Our world is changing:

- People with disabilities will increase their longevity and require support services longer in their lives.
- Every 21 seconds, someone in the US sustains a brain injury and 10-20% of Iraq War Veterans are estimated to have a brain injury.
- Higher numbers of consumers and families will want their services to be provided in their home.
- One in 150 children are diagnosed with Autism Spectrum Disorder.
- Of the millions of people with disabilities who want to work – 65% remain unemployed.

We anticipate tremendous growth for our organization as we look to meet the demands of a changing world. In the next five years we will grow our services by 100% – and be a resource for over 2,000 people. We call this Vision 2013. We are looking for people with creativity, passion, integrity, tenacity and commitment to help us achieve these goals. To work for our organization, someone must be flexible, they have to be good communicators and most of all – they need to be leaders.

The talent we seek are people who believe in what they do and seek the non-obvious solution. They have the ability to build relationships and trust among all of the stakeholders they work with. They are able to rise above the challenges and keep their eye on the goal. And they must – they must – have a burning desire, willingness and a drive to make things happen.

The leadership we seek are the people who can do all of the above, and through their actions and their words, are able to inspire and teach others.



Legacy Society

Thank you to the following members of the Legacy Society who have remembered Ability Beyond Disability in their estate plans.

Mrs. Jean M. Farnham

Mr. & Mrs. J. William Font

Mr. & Mrs. Gary Jordan

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If you are interested in remembering Ability Beyond Disability in your estate plans, please contact Mark Marsh at 203.826.3173 and one of our Legacy Ambassadors will be happy to speak with you.



In loving memory of...

The following individuals Ability Beyond Disability was fortunate enough to have served and who's strength and courageous spirit enriched our community.

Shawn Crelan
January 6, 1971 – October 1, 2007

Millie Corona
April 24, 1934 – May 6, 2007

Lee Hozebin
August 18, 1963 – April 19, 2007

Ants Leemets
November 8, 1935 – May 12, 2007

Vera Murphy
July 3, 1934 May 12, 2007

Stephanie Nelson
January 27, 1974 – February 28, 2008

William Ready
December 30, 1939 – December 2, 2007

Robert Rhodes
September 11, 1951 – April 20, 2006

Douglas Short
December 15, 1944 – December 12, 2007

Frank Sutton
February 10, 1947 – December 17, 2007

Lisa Taylor
April 5, 1963 – December 20, 2007

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ABILITY BEYOND DISABILITY

*We are pleased to honor
Robert S. Young Humanitarian Award
recipient*

Anthony Rizzo, Sr.

 **BIODEL**

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Somewhere over the rainbow

*The dreams that you dare to dream
really do come true...at a place
called Ability Beyond Disability.*

*Some of us gaze up at the rainbow,
but some actually go over...caring
people who dedicate their lives to
giving the gift of dignity
and self-reliance.*

*May the Rainbow Gala shed its
ennobling light on all of us as we
renew our vision of Possibility
and Service.*

*Congratulations to
Anthony Rizzo Sr.
as recipient of the Robert S. Young
Humanitarian Award.*



*A proud sponsor of
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and its efforts on behalf
of our community.*

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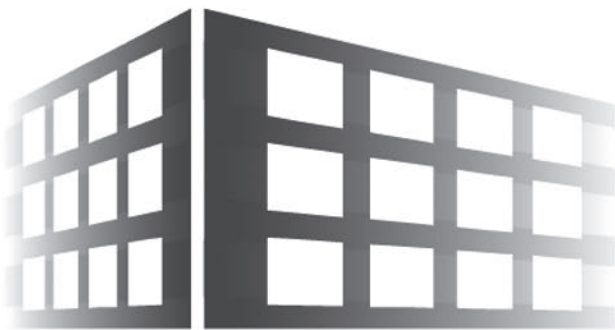
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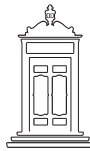
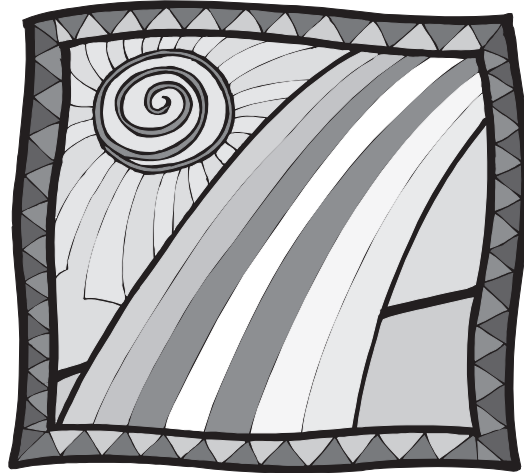


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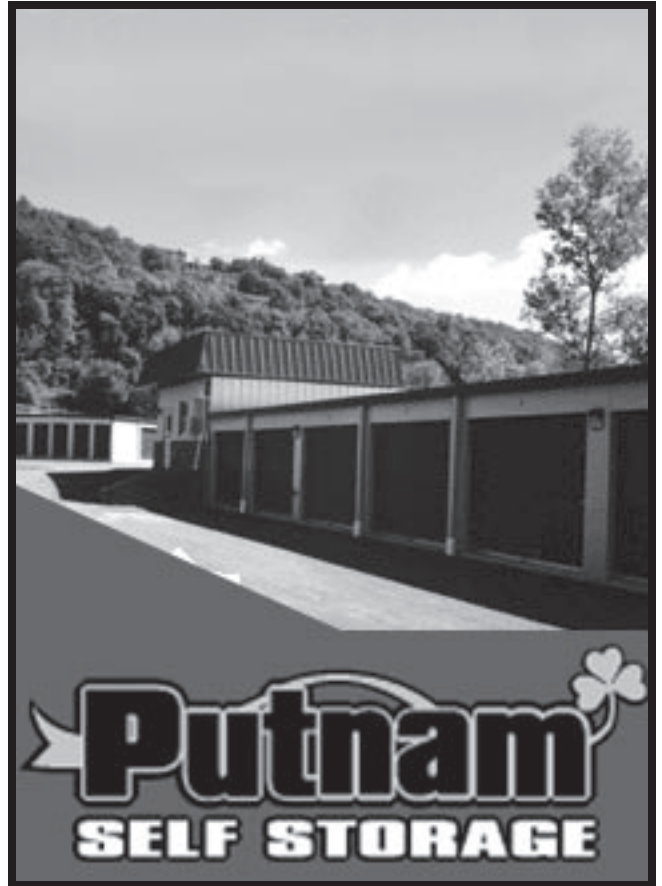


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