

Greater Lynn Mental Health is on the move Private, non-profit organization to relocate to Lynnfield on Sept. 11

By David Liscio, Staff columnist

Thursday, September 1, 2005

Greater Lynn Mental Health and Retardation Association, founded in Lynn in 1958 as a child care center and since mushroomed into a multi-service center with nearly 100 programs in 21 cities and towns, is relocating its headquarters to Lynnfield.

The private, non-profit organization will move on Sept. 11 from its present location at 37 Friend Street to an office building at 471 Broadway in Lynnfield, formerly occupied by a sports medicine practice.

All administrative functions will be run from the new facility effective September 12, according to James Cowdell, the chief operating officer.

Cowdell said the decision to relocate was prompted by the organization's steady expansion over the past several years.

"We've outgrown ourselves and Lynn," he said. "We still have 37 programs in Lynn but we also have a total of 96 spread over two counties, from Tewksbury to Merrimac to Lowell."

Fifty employees will be affected by the move, mostly clerical and administrative staff, as well as training and human resources personnel. "The programs we have in Lynn will stay in Lynn," Cowdell said. "it's the executive team that is relocating."

GLMHRA purchased the property for \$2.1 million, according to Cowdell. The organization, headed by executive director Robert Stearns, will occupy the entire building.

Cowdell said the organization started out in 1958 as a child guidance center and opened its first residential property in 1975, a Lynn home for eight individuals with disabilities. In 1989, GLMHRA moved from its headquarters on Baltimore Street to the offices on Friend Street.

"It was formed to support individuals with disabilities and that is what it still does," said Cowdell, noting that GLMHRA services more than 2000 clients daily. "We have residential services for individuals with developmental needs who lives in group homes.

We offer clinical services and day programs for people with disabilities. We also service the elderly and the homeless.”

In Lowell, GLMHRA runs a day program for the homeless that provides food and job training, according to Cowdell.

For more information about the relocation, call GLMHRA at (781) 593-1088 or visit the organization’s Web site at www.glmh.org.

The organization’s board of directors is as follows: President James Purdy, Vice President Paul Sahovey, Treasurer Nancy Rizzo, Clerk/Secretary Phil Clifford, and Directors Shelley Baer, Michael Connelly, Daniel Hughes, Gordon Massey, Debra O’Blenes, Gailanne Reeh and Carla Saccone.