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**PEOPLES HEALTH CHAMPION RICHARD “BUZZY” GAIENNIE
HONORED AT SAINTS GAME**

Metairie, La. - The Peoples Health Champions program honored Richard “Buzzy” Gaiennie, its sixth champion of 2009, on Monday, November 2 during the New Orleans Saints game against the Atlanta Falcons. A Peoples Health Champion is someone who has done something extraordinary after the age of 65 and who proves that excellence is achieved through experience.

On June 3, 2008, at the age of 70, Gaiennie broke ground on the future home of Bridge House, the internationally heralded drug and alcohol rehabilitation program he has guided since 1984.

When they move in next month, Bridge House staff and residents will enter a \$10 million, state-of-the-art facility with significantly enhanced capacity to serve the program's mission of rebuilding lives.

A recovering alcoholic now 35 years sober, Gaiennie experienced first-hand the seductive and destructive power of addiction. He witnessed as it claimed the lives of friends and even his parents. Determined to resist that same downward spiral, he fought and prevailed against his own addiction.

Life experience taught Gaiennie an invaluable lesson -- how to take control of your own life. He felt compelled to share this lesson and help others escape their pain and start new, productive lives. Twenty-five years ago, he was the sole employee of Bridge House. He has since grown the organization to 65 employees, increased the annual budget from \$120,000 to more than \$6.5 million, expanded the program to other cities and countries, and saved thousands of lives along the way.



Unlike other national recovery programs that rely on federal funds, 85 percent of Bridge House funding is self-generated through such enterprising outlets as thrift shops and refurbishing donated cars for re-sale. These programs do more than generate funds; they help transition many Bridge House residents back into the work force.

The new home of Bridge House is built on a foundation of personal growth and accountability. It reflects the lifetime of experience that he transformed into hope for others. Gaiennie is a living testament to our ability to learn from life and affect positive change with that knowledge.

Buzzy Gaiennie... Peoples Health Champion.

About Peoples Health Champions

In collaboration with the New Orleans Saints, the Peoples Health Champions Program honors individuals who shatter the misconception that ability diminishes after the age of 65 and, who instead, prove that excellence is achieved through experience. Nominees must be at least 65 years of age and reside in southeast Louisiana or the Mississippi Gulf Coast. More information about the program, including details on how to nominate someone as a Peoples Health Champion, can be found on the Peoples Health Web site at www.peopleshealth.com.

Nominations can be submitted online, or call (877) 712-7320 for a nomination form.

About Peoples Health

Established in 1994, Peoples Health administers Medicare benefits for 42,000 southeast Louisiana residents enrolled in the Choices 65, Choices Plus, Secure Health, HealthCare Select, and Peoples Health Group Medicare health plans. More than 450 employees work at Peoples Health corporate offices in Metairie, Louisiana and a regional office in Baton Rouge. Peoples



Health is accredited by URAC, a Washington, DC-based healthcare accrediting organization.

More information about Peoples Health can be obtained by visiting www.peopleshealth.com.

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