

TLC NEWS

Theresa Living Center

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Caroline Family Service

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VOLUME XXXI

Fall 2008

Co-Directors' Corner

*From the Directors; Rita Jirik, SSND,
and Judy Bakula, SSND*

An Attitude of Gratitude

Within the last month we have been reminded to give thanks for the many ways in which people gift us throughout the year. In spite of the challenges the present economy presents to all of us, we have been gifted financially, materially, and with time and talent of our many volunteers. An "attitude of gratitude" reminds us to be responsible stewards of these gifts. As our fiscal year comes to an end this December, we are finding ways to tweak our budget in ways that will enable us to continue to serve our participants in the best way we can. As we nurture this attitude of gratitude, we will be continually reminded to express this gratitude not only during a Thanksgiving Season but throughout the entire year. Thank you donors, volunteers, staff, foundations, corporations, those in other agencies who share their expertise with us, and our participants who continue to grow in their journey to a better life.

Thank You

*Theresa Living Center and
Caroline Family Services
support women striving to
claim their personal worth and
dignity.*

*TLC and CFS are founded on the
belief that the right
environment can make the
difference.*

*TLC and CFS offers support,
direction and encouragement.*

Our Needs

- Paper supplies- toilet paper, paper towels, and napkins
 - Baby wipes
 - Body bath and lotions
 - Diapers-sizes all sizes
- Women's hats, gloves and scarves for winter
- Pots and pans (new or used in good condition)
 - Dish sets
 - Silverware sets
 - Crock pots
 - Kitchen utensils
 - Toaster
 - Irons/Boards
- CASH FOR OUR MATCHING GRANT

You think it is never going to happen to you. This is what many people believe when it comes to being in a relationship that involves domestic abuse. In fact domestic abuse is like chemical abuse in that it knows no economic or educational boundaries. We all probably know someone (without really knowing) or have been ourselves in an abusive relationship. Teachers, board members, food servers, judges, police officers, beauticians, doctors, writers, ministers, nurses, sales people, musicians, sisters and brothers (you get the idea) all have been people who have been domestically abused and have also been people in the abuser role. Many of the participants served by CFS come from shelters that are for persons who have been domestically abused.

People can become homeless because they have left their home to escape an abusive relationship. Often there are children involved who of course also need and deserve housing with their parent. One such woman recently came to CFS; this is part of her story. I met Sa-

CFS Client Focus Polly McGlaulin, Case Manager

sha (name changed) in September as she came for an initial interview. She recently shared with me during a home visit how she became pregnant. She has three older wonderful children. Sasha became pregnant with her significant other who apparently believed she might leave him because of his controlling nature and abusive behavior. He thought that she might stay if she became pregnant again, for the fourth time. Well, Sasha did leave; in fact she fled from another state to Minnesota where she recently delivered a very beautiful baby boy.

Sasha is a strong woman and in the short time I have known her, I have learned that she is very honest, open, caring, and a great mom with excellent parenting skills. She is a very hard worker with a

strong work ethic, cares very much about her children's welfare and schooling, as well as teaching her children to be strong and respectful people. Her house smells wonderful when I visit at the end of the workday with the smells of garlic, pasta, and greens. She has in the

past lived a life where money was not an issue. Now she and her family live a life where she has to stretch every quarter for herself and her children to live independently and out of the fear and control of the abusive relationship.

Sasha's newborn son is healthy and "talkative", making noises and watching his three older siblings look and talk to him. There is so much love in this family that I am in awe of it. Sasha has some struggles and challenges ahead for sure, but she has a realistic attitude and knows hard work well. Please respectfully consider Sasha and all families in your prayers. We at Caroline Family Services wish you a warm and happy winter season filled with the love of family.



Linh at the Fall Party

TLC Monday Night Meetings Libby Rausch, Case Manager

Every Monday to your doctor about. In October the women had Muriel talk

how to dress and treat different wounds. We also had Doug from East Metro Opportunities Industrialization Center talk to the women about the different programs they offer and how they are felony friendly.

In November we had Mike from Home Line talk to the women about their rights when they move into an apartment. We also had Rebecca talk with the women about screening for cancer. Thank you to all the wonderful speakers and to those who babysat while we had our meetings.



Our Secretary, Serenity

the women come to the living room and listen to a speaker about a variety of subjects. This September the women had Voting 101 and Self Advocacy. They discussed the importance of voting and the different candidates. In self advocacy

they talked about getting the most from your doctor visit by planning what to talk with them on First Aid. She discussed



Kelly's Birthday

Fall and winter proves to be a busy time of the year for staff and residents at Theresa Living Center. With the sudden brisk air and promise of snow filled subzero temps almost here, the need for housing has many homeless people desperate. Daily, we talk to multiple people over telephone on the endless pursuit for a safe and decent place to call home. So, as you might expect, TLC has been welcoming a new wave of women. This

TLC Happenings
Jamie Salaski, Case Manager

the road. Residents at TLC enjoyed many other celebrations this autumn, including 3 birthdays (Kelly, Linh and Pat) and a goodbye party for Shanteeze and Serenity as they reached their two year anniversary. We enjoy getting together and

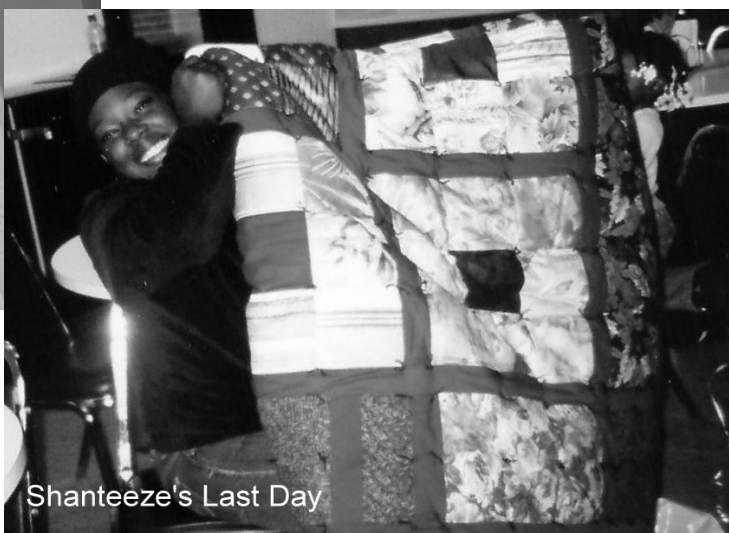
Minnesota Coalition of the Homeless Conference. This 2 day event was full of trainings, networking, good food and social relaxation. Some of the topics covered by the conference included: Traumatic Brain Injury, Motivational Interviewing, Harm Reduction, Gangs, Prostitution, Narcissism, and Financial Literacy.

This election day, many TLC residents exercised the right and privilege of casting their votes at our local polls. Changes on the political horizons have added to the energy level as many clients participated in, and anticipated the outcomes of the election. Residents at TLC continue to look forward to changes, and strive forward for jobs, stable income, and possible apartments in a somewhat



Judy and Jamie, the mermaid

eating cake or other treats after Monday night meetings. Often we even have presents to give and enjoy seeing



Shanteeze's Last Day

brings excitement and energy to the house as we learn to live and adjust to each other, each new face brings new personality and perspective. October was a time for fun and relaxation at the in house meeting. Residents gathered for a harvest party. We enjoyed a full and tasty dinner together, played Bingo, and some even dressed in costume! Bellies were full and satisfied by the end of the evening. Residents also requested more games of Bingo down

the special woman open her gifts due to our generous donations from so many of you.

Thank you for making this fun tradition possible! October proved to be a refreshing time for staff, as well. Three staff from TLC/CFS traveled to Alexandria MN for the

unstable financial and housing crisis. It is encouraging to see their perseverance and dedication to overcome such difficulties daily.

Dear Friends,
Each of you has been a great supporter of our programs and the women and children who we serve through them. Many of you have asked us to let you know what we need. We've chosen to do that via our quarterly newsletter. Each time we make a request, we have many people who respond in whatever way they can. Thank you!
The baby supplies, children's clothes, toys, women's clothes and household items are given to the participants and

used in our programs for general use. When the women move into a place of their own they let us know what they need for their apartment and if we have it on hand we give it to them. I can tell you that you (by your donations) have provided household and cleaning supplies to women in the past and in 2008 your gifts helped 41 families get started in their own places. Since all of our women are homeless when they come into our programs and have very few belongings, you can imagine what a re-

lief and joy it is when we tell them we can give them some of the things they will need in their apartment. You may think the list has gotten bigger than ever. Since we are getting to the end of the year, our cupboards are getting bare. Although we appreciate new things it isn't necessary that everything be new. Items or clothes that are in good useable shape will be appreciated and used. Thank you for your interest, care, concern and generosity toward our women.

Diane's Story

My name is Diane and I've been given the opportunity by TLC to make changes in my life. Before being accepted into TLC's program I've lived with others, family and friends for many years due to my lack of sufficient funds to keep myself independently stable. It's been years since I've taken responsibility for myself and for my behaviors leading down a path of self destruction. I've encountered great losses; financially, mentally, physically and environmentally. And now it is with TLC's program I'm striving to regain my self-respect, personal worth and dignity. TLC provides an environment of structural beliefs and principals to guide me along the way while on this peaceful journey. Currently, I attend the SEEDS Academy to refresh basic skills such as math, language, writing and computers which will allow me to soon register for college courses. I also volunteer at Ames Elementary school in the FRED program and after school program to help children

TLC Client Focus ***Diane, TLC Resident***



succeed. The staff here at TLC offers me great support, direction and encouragement on budgeting and all sorts of great Monday night speakers that discuss a variety of topics. These groups are very valuable to me along with the others who have a listening ear. Oh!! The greatest is donation night. It's

shopping without a price tag!! Every Tuesday I'm dancing all the way to the finish line. Health, hygiene, laundry and beauty products ALL FREE!! TLC makes sure you have what you need.

I plan on soaking up all the resources available to me here. Cause in the future I'm sure I will be able to spread what I've learned to someone else in need. I've lost a lot, but I am sure to gain plenty!!! I'm taking baby steps; soon the mountain won't look so high. My life is on track now and I'm going to ride this horse until the lumps and bumps hurt no more!!! Im here until they put me off this wagon train, but not until I graduate that is. Thank you TLC for all your support, encouragement and guidance. I'm most grateful for your loving hearts that provide the environment that makes all the difference!

Sincerely,
Diane

CFS Client Focus ***Megan Mitchell, Case Manager***

It has been an exhilarating couple of months. Daily conversations have been filled with talks of the crisis that has hit our economy and of course the excitement of our historic election. Whatever a persons political view – it is certainly an exciting time in our country's history. In many contexts "Change" has been the theme that we have all been hearing so much about. And as we look back over the last few months, we here at CFS have been going through a lot of change ourselves!

We are nearly full with 23 participants. It is very unusual in that ten of those participants are new to the program since our last newsletter! We want to give a warm welcome to all the new families; we are excited to have you. Along with that, we had many graduate the program successfully in the last few months. Many were able to find great housing opportunities, which can be difficult. A big congratulations to all those that have recently graduated – we look forward to continuing to hear that things are going well.

Our current women and their families have of course stayed busy! We have nine women who are currently working, two that are attending school or training, three that are working and going to school, five that are actively looking for work, and three that are working towards completing their GED. We also have welcomed three new babies to the families of CFS! We also recognize that it has been a particularly difficult last few months for our women. The price of food increasing, the cost of bus fare increasing, and the housing market have affected the women and CFS as a program. It becomes difficult to focus on work/school when there is very little or no money for food, or diapers, or toilet paper. These women especially deserve recognition for all they have been doing.

As we look towards the upcoming months we will continue to see a lot of change within the program. We have three women that will graduate successfully before the end of the year. All of these women have worked very hard and we are happy to report they all are moving into great housing opportunities. One is going to another transitional housing program, and two are moving into their own subsidized permanent apartments! In addition, we will have another two women graduate in the very beginning of 2009.

As we look toward the holiday season and beyond we will be continuing to embrace the idea of continuing change here at CFS. We wish everyone a happy and safe holiday.

Enjoy the rest of 2008!

Donors

We thank the following donors who have contributed to Theresa Living Center and Caroline Family Services either financially or materially since our last quarterly TLC/CFS Newsletter. We are grateful for your interest and for your contribution. If we have omitted anyone, we apologize and ask you to let us know either by phone or by mail.

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Happy Holidays From All
Of Us At CFS & TLC!!

THERESA LIVING
CENTER



Home
for women
on their
way to a
better life

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St. Paul, MN 55106

651-774-5594

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Volunteers Who Have Helped Us Since Our Last Newsletter:

Thanks to all of these loyal volunteers. Your efforts contributed 433.83 hours to our Programs in this last quarter. We are grateful to each of you.

We would welcome anyone who would want to offer their time as a volunteer. We have openings for overnight and childcare on Monday nights. If you are someone you know are interested; please call Jamie at 651-774-5594.

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