

The Friendship Shelter, Inc.

A Friendly Voice

Volume 2
Summer 2008

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Executive Director: Kathleen Arndt


Summer Food Program Provides Fuel For Hot Summer Days

This Summer, The Friendship Shelter is proud to be a site for the Michigan Department of Education's Summer Food Program. The program is funded by the USDA. With this program, we are able to provide school aged children with nutritious meals each weekday, at no cost.

A special thanks to Sandy Matelski, Gaylord Community Schools' Food Service Director and Dawn at the Gaylord Intermediate School Cafeteria for all of their time and effort in getting this program up and running for the first time in Ot-

sego County.

With the benefit of this program, the children at the shelter are afforded a nutritious breakfast and lunch. Our main goal in implementing this program at the shelter is to assure the children are eating an adequate, healthy breakfast. As we all know, this is the most important meal of the day and provides our youth with the needed energy to be active and healthy during the Summer. The children are also given a nutritious lunch to enjoy during a break from the demands of being a kid during Summer!



Program provides nutrition for Summer

Once the children are fed, we incorporate other activities for the children into meal times. These activities will be geared toward learning and socializing. We hope it will give the kids a chance to eat, drink and be merry! We are grateful for the opportunity to provide adequate nutrition and fun-filled Summer days for the children at The Friendship Shelter.

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Safety First!

The Friendship Shelter is subject to quarterly inspections by the Salvation Army. These inspections are done to ensure the shelter is within the required safety standards. Executive Director Kathleen Arndt touts safety as priority #1 for the fa-

cility. Emergency Preparedness Drills are conducted on a monthly basis by Friendship Shelter staff.

During the inspections, the facility is checked for fire safety, emergency exit routes, safe storage of combustibles, electri-

cal hazards and any other hazards that could be potentially dangerous. The most recent inspection was conducted in April by Ken Kelly of the Salvation Army. All recommended changes have been made and the shelter has been deemed a safe place for everyone!

Dinner & Dancing Anyone?

The Friendship Shelter was recently host to a dinner/dance benefit at the Michaywe Clubhouse. The event was held on August 23rd and was a great success. Nearly 40 people attended the event and the shelter netted nearly \$3,000 in proceeds. The proceeds will be used toward the ever increasing cost of utilities and transportation at the shelter.

There were several contests and drawings held



A little jazz, a little Benny Goodman, a little Swing!

throughout the evening. Board Member Ron Chavey was the lucky winner of both the Lil Texan grill and the 50/50 raffle. Ron graciously donated all of his winnings back to the shelter. There was a dance competition that took place and the talented team of Mary and Willard Flynn took home first prize!

Thank you to all that attended. We hope you enjoyed the delectable dishes provided by

Michaywe, the outstanding Big Band Selections and the enjoyable time of fellowship with other members of your community.

All who attended reported having a great time and we expect to see a much larger turnout next year. This year was the first dinner/dance benefit that our organization was host to. Shelter Director Kathleen Arndt plans on making the benefit an annual event. So, be ready to put on your dancing shoes in the name of fun, relaxation and helping a good cause!

Friendship Shelter Draws National Attention

Executive Director Kathleen Arndt was recently invited to the National Alliance To End Homelessness 3rd Annual conference in Washington, D.C. Kathleen was asked to be a speaker, on a panel to report on the challenges of rural homelessness, innovative programming, Michigan's 10 year plan to end homelessness and the chronic homeless initiative that she has spearheaded in Otsego County.

"...community leaders are taking serious the challenge of ending homelessness in Otsego County."

Kathleen, in conjunction with The Friendship Shelter board of directors, is constantly working toward ensuring that the chronic homelessness initiative is going to be a

success. Look for the shelter to be breaking ground on our new property very soon.

There is a hubbub of activity taking place at The Friendship Shelter these days. Our Director and other community leaders are taking serious the challenge of ending homelessness in Otsego County. With Kathleen at the helm, we are well on our way.

New Officers Elected

A new slate of officers was selected by the Board of Directors at The Friendship Shelter recently. We have a wonderful, innovative new group of volunteers and are pleased with the initiative they've taken since being elected.

The election process resulted in the selection of an entirely new Executive Committee. A new President, Vice President, Treasurer and Sec-

retary were appointed during last month's meeting.

3 new members of the Board of Directors also began terms on the board as 2 members moved on. A special thanks to those former members, for all of their devoted service.



The Friendship Shelter's Board is Helping To Build Futures!

The Friendship Shelter Board of Directors is responsible for drafting agency policy and overseeing major decisions at the shelter. Executive Director Kathleen Arndt and the shelter staff would like to thank our group of devoted volunteers.

"Children are delicate and fragile beings. What they may become is not of their own doing. It is ours."

**—FR. FLORENTINO S. CONCEPCION (FATHER BOYET),
FOUNDER OF ST. MARTIN DE PORRES**

The Friendship Shelter would like to thank the Otsego County Community Foundation and the Youth Advisory Council for a grant award in the amount of \$2,691.

The shelter was awarded the funds for their new youth mentoring project, FORM. The acronym stands for Future Otsego



Y.A.C. Member Aurora Arndt presents the grant award check to grant writer Ron Holt.

Resident Mentoring. The intention of this program is to increase fundamental educational skills in the children who are residents of the shelter, thus increasing their scholastic ability, self confidence and chance of future success.

The monies will be used to purchase computers, desks and educational software. Local Girl Scout Troop 2111 has graciously agreed to volunteer to mentor these children and aid in the tutoring process once the program begins.

With all of the aforementioned organizations in our community working together, we are excited for the opportunity to make a difference in the lives of the children who reside at The Friendship Shelter.

Strong Families, Safe Children

The Friendship Shelter has been the recipient of a grant award in the amount of \$4,365 for the Strong Families, Safe Children program. This has been an ongoing program at the shelter.

This year's grant was written by Case Manager Meghan Grebe and is renewable for a 3 year period.

This program is specifically geared toward providing services to families who have an open case with Child Protective Services or have

had an open case within the last 18 months. This is true for approximately 80% of the families who enter the shelter for services.

The purpose of this program is to educate these families so that they may be able to overcome the troubles of their past and not repeat the mistakes that resulted in their involvement with Child Protective Services. Meghan works directly with these families to give them the tools needed for success. The monies are spent on parenting vid-

eos and educational material for the families. Also, some of the funds are used to provide case management services to the families once they have transitioned back into the community. Meghan has been working with these families for a year and a half and has seen many successes thus far. We look forward to seeing many more in the future!

Taking Skanpoint Statewide

The Friendship Shelter has been invited to give a presentation regarding the Skanpoint program that the agency was awarded monies to pilot.

The Skanpoint program is a part of the MSHMIS system. The Michigan Statewide Homeless Management Information System is a data collection system engineered to meet a requirement of the department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD).

Through use of the Skanpoint feature, service providers such as the shelter are able to generate identification cards for those they serve. The IDs can be used as a form of identification to overcome the barrier of lack of identification that many homeless individuals face.

The IDs contain a barcode that can be scanned by any service provider. Providers can then access the clients' MSHMIS information and ensure there is no duplication

of services. This feature also saves valuable data entry time for the provider, as the information is all entered simply by scanning the barcode. The Friendship Shelter is hopeful to see the use of this program expand to other agencies in the community very soon. We are excited for the networking opportunities that lie ahead!

Volunteers Needed

The Friendship Shelter is seeking volunteers for the months to come. Case Manager Dawn Allmacher conducts morning meetings with shelter residents Monday through Friday between 8:30 am and 9:30 am. These meetings cover a wide variety of topics; employment preparedness, budgeting, and life skills.

Dawn has elected to add a new component to the curriculum of these structured



Teach, Learn, Give Back!

meetings. She would like to include a "How To" segment, possibly one day per week in the months to come. That's where you come in!

We are seeking volunteers to come in and demonstrate their knowl-

edge of ANY particular subject. Whether it be cooking, sewing, arts and crafts, gardening, child care, carpentry, first aid/CPR, etc. Dawn has piloted some of these demonstrations in the past and they have been a hit with our residents. It's a fun way to aid our clients in learning a new skill.

If you are a professional or have a hobby or skill and would be interested in sharing your knowledge, PLEASE contact Dawn at 989-732-5960. So little of your time could mean so much.

Friendship Shelter Grant Overview: Summer 2008

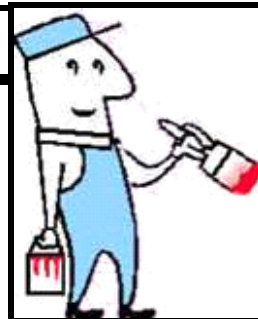
Grant Name	Awarded By:	Grant Purpose
Future Otsego Resident Mentoring (FORM)	Otsego County Community Foundation/ Youth Advisory Committee	To educate the shelter youth and raise their chance of future success.
Strong Families Safe Children	The Department of Human Services	To educate parents and children on healthy behavior.
Chronic Homeless Initiative	Michigan State Housing Development Authority	Permanent Supportive Housing for Otsego County's chronically homeless.
Instant Access To Housing Initiative	Michigan State Housing Development Authority	To assist clients in overcoming barriers to housing and reduce shelter stays.
Handicap Accessibility	Otsego County Community Foundation	The shelter office is in the process of becoming handicap accessible.
Skanspoint	Michigan State Housing Development Authority	Data collection, identification generation for homeless shelter clients.

Shelter Receives A Makeover

The Friendship Shelter has been bustling with activity recently. The handicap ramp that was made possible by a grant from the Otsego County Community Foundation has been completed. The shelter is now completely handicap accessible. As an added touch to the new curbside appeal and welcoming atmosphere, the shelter's front office was also the recipient of a dearly needed new roof.

Shelter Director Kathleen Arndt has her sights set on a better place to live for our residents during their transitional period at the shelter. In accordance with this vision, she has scheduled "The Big Event." This is a renovation project to update the resident's rooms at the shelter. This project will take place at The Friendship Shelter October 11th and 12th, between 10 am and 4 pm. Volun-

teers are needed! All volunteers over age 18 are welcome. For further information, contact the shelter at 732-5960. We look forward to seeing you there!



THANK YOU TO ALL OF THOSE WHO HAVE DONATED TO THE SHELTER THIS YEAR! AS SUMMER COMES TO AN END...THE HOLIDAY SEASON WILL BE UPON US BEFORE WE KNOW IT! PLEASE TAKE THE TIME TO REVIEW THE BRIEF SUMMARY OF THE MICHIGAN TAX CREDIT BELOW. WITHOUT YOUR GENEROUS DONATIONS, WHAT WE DO WOULDN'T BE POSSIBLE!

Local Giving Earns Special Michigan Tax Credits

During the holiday season, hunting for discounts and sales is a time honored tradition. Unfortunately, one of the best bargains in town is often overlooked or misunderstood by the generous and giving people who make Otsego County their home. For many, taking advantage of this "sale" means helping others in our community at a 50% savings to you!

Here's how it works: Michigan law allows contributions to three categories of charitable giving to receive a tax credit when you file your Michigan income tax return each year. They are:

- ◆ Donations designated to any of the Otsego County Community Foundation's endowment funds;
- ◆ Contributions to a qualifying homeless shelter, food bank, food kitchen or other entity whose primary purpose is to provide overnight accommodation, food or meals to needy persons;
- ◆ Gifts to qualifying Michigan public institutions (such as public libraries, public broadcasting stations, colleges, universities and others).

For every two dollars you contribute towards any of these special charitable categories, you will receive a one dollar credit applied directly towards your Michigan income tax return obligation when you file next year. Michigan law does place a limit on the tax credits you can earn; but it is very generous. For individual tax returns, the maximum tax credit is \$100 and is reached when you have contributed \$200 within one of these categories. Joint returns are allowed to deduct a maximum \$200 credit, so long as they have contributed \$400 to one of these local organizations.

The most misunderstood aspect of these claims is that you can claim more than one of them when you file your return. An individual contributing a total of \$600 can receive a maximum \$300 tax credit while joint returns may receive a maximum \$600 credit if they contribute \$1200 to qualifying organizations.

EVERY DOLLAR YOU GIVE IS UTILIZED TO HELP THOSE IN NEED BY ALL OF OTSEGO COUNTY'S GREAT CHARITABLE ORGANIZATIONS! THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT OTSEGO COUNTY!

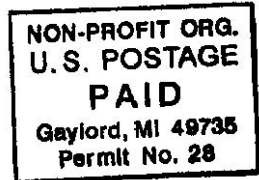
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The Friendship Shelter is a "people first" 501(c)3 non-profit agency which provides shelter and comprehensive social services to those in need as they transition to self-sufficiency with dignity and respect.



The Friendship Shelter is a federally recognized 501c(3) organization. As such, all donations are fully tax deductible.

I am enclosing a donation of: Check Other: _____

- I am interested in volunteering my time at The Friendship Shelter
- Please remove me from your mailing list

Name: _____ Date: _____ Mailing Address:

Please complete, tear off and mail to the address listed above. Thank you for your continued support.