

HomeFront

the Women's Home

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Summer 2013



The beautiful gardens and community room at JCGP provide a calm, inviting atmosphere for residents.

It Truly Does take a village



It's a typical Tuesday at Jane Cizik Garden Place (JCGP), and Ann Lister is rounding up residents for their weekly trip to Fiesta, Kroger and Walmart. For the grateful passengers, this weekly excursion is just another example of the many programs and services provided by the JCGP staff and their partners.

As Senior Case Manager at JCGP, Ann Lister is the "go-to" person for any

- what I love to do - and helping women and their families begin a new way of life. It just can't be sufficiently put into words how grateful I am to be a part of this organization...to be involved in helping to transform lives."

It really does take a village, and the dedicated staff at JCGP could not provide it all without the help of a growing list of individual volunteers and organizations.

“the physical layout at JCGP also lends itself to a feeling of growth, spirituality and community...”

and all resources for tenants. Owned by The Women's Home, JCGP is no ordinary apartment community, and Ann's job is as ever-changing and multi-dimensional as the women she serves. Dedicated is an understatement for this soft-spoken, yet determined woman. A graduate of the Chandler School of Theology at Emory University with a work history in Pastoral Care, Ann loves her job with a passion, and it shows.

“Our residents have weathered some rough storms,” Ann explains. “Their needs range from a simple trip to the store or doctor's office to information on social security, access to job training and help with relapse prevention. No day is the same. It can be a demanding job, but it is so rewarding. I'm using my gifts

These valued collaborators help us to support the WholeLifeSM model at JCGP that has made The Women's Home transitional treatment program in Montrose so successful. The model - which addresses six areas of wellness: spiritual, physical, vocational, financial, social and emotional - is a more voluntary approach at JCGP. The programs and services are provided, but residents are not required to participate. What we have found, however, is that most of our residents are not only willing to take advantage of the help offered, but they often provide us with ideas for new programs and services to further prepare them on their journey toward a healthy and more independent life.

“In addition to our in-house and

volunteer offerings, the physical layout at JCGP also lends itself to a feeling of growth, spirituality and community,” says Ann, “the grounds, the design of the gardens and the apartments surrounding them... everyone is connected, and that connection helps to garner a sense of accountability and cultivate an environment of empathy and mutual respect - all of which are very important to transition and recovery.”

The winning combination of our beautiful facilities and our dedicated staff and volunteers have made the first two years at JCGP more successful and life-changing for our residents than we ever could have dreamed. Together, they have all helped to turn a great facility into a warm, safe and supportive home.



Ann Lister, Senior Case Manager at JCGP

Just Some of Our Valued Volunteers and Collaborators

Houston Area Community Services (HACS): provides residents with medical and dental care based on a sliding scale fee.

Spring Branch Community Health Center: provides residents with medical and dental care based on a sliding scale fee.

Prevent Blindness: Assists residents with eye examinations and glasses.

Santa Maria Hostel: referral for residents interested in outpatient group therapy.

Overeater's Anonymous: holds official Spring Branch OA meetings at JCGP.

Salon on Kirby: periodically provides complimentary hair care to JCGP women (i.e. women seeking employment, etc.)

Terrace United Methodist Church: provides crafts, games and refreshments for residents once a month and also pick up for NA meetings and Sunday morning worship service.

Volunteers of America: referral housing collaborative for women in transition.

Memorial Assistance Ministries: provides computer training, rental assistance, prescriptions, tax preparation and many other services.

SEARCH Homeless Services: provides case management services, including rental assistance for some of our chronically homeless residents.

The Mission of Yahweh: referral collaborative for our chronically homeless units.

Grace Community Church: provides a weekly Bible study for residents. Big thanks to facilitator and church member, Kelly Conley.

Bridgestone Bible Church: provides monthly fellowship and sharing, usually in the form of a “morning tea”. Big thanks to the Women's Group Leader, Naomi Reed.

Gulf Coast Community Service Association: assists tenants with rent, various classes and food pantry needs.

Fairhaven UMC Food Pantry; East Spring Branch (Holy Cross Lutheran Church) Food Pantry; St. Jerome's Catholic Church Food Pantry; Faith Center Food Pantry (Houston's First Baptist Church): residents in need are transported to these food pantries at least once a month.

If you are interested in bringing more growth opportunities to our residents at JCGP, please call or email Shelley Bridges, Manager of Community Involvement and Development at The Women's Home (713-328-1950; sbridges@thewomenshome.org). Particular areas of need are educational classes for: Spanish, job networking, resume building, financial and computer skills, and opportunities for creativity, such as arts, crafts, music, cooking, sewing, etc.

Message from the Executive Director

PAULA PAUST, MSW



HOME. It's such a simple word, but one that has so many different meanings to so many different people. I count myself lucky. My memories of home are filled with warmth and love. If I think back, I can almost smell the fresh-baked chocolate chip cookies – my mother's favorite, or picture my family gathered around the table for Sunday dinner. There was so much laughter...such a sense of connection. And most importantly, I felt safe. I always felt safe.

Because of the work that we do at The Women's Home, we know that nearly 10,000 individuals are without a home. They have no family gathering place, no refuge from the storm or safe place to land. Research also shows that single mothers with children (many of whom are employed) are the fastest growing homeless population. Take into account that these numbers do not reflect the many families that are at risk of homelessness...those that are one paycheck away from losing their home, and you understand the sheer magnitude of this issue we work so hard every day to bring attention to and improve upon.

For more than fifty years, The

Women's Home has been committed to helping single women move from homelessness to independence. We found, early on, that many of these women struggled with substance abuse and mental illness issues, so we developed a treatment program to help them heal and a transitional housing program to help them move towards independence. The program, called WholeLifeSM, has received national recognition and our success rate exceeds national averages.

Years ago, we found that the success of the women in our transitional housing was put in jeopardy when they did not have access to safe and affordable housing after graduating from our program. We also realized that if this was an issue for those in our care, then it must also be a challenge for thousands of other women in our community. The cold, hard truth? Our city needed over 30,000 safe and affordable rental units, so The Women's Home stepped up. With the help of our many supporters, we carefully planned, constructed and opened Jane Cizik Garden Place – our apartment community in Spring Branch that offers a supportive, sober and af-

fordable living environment.

Homelessness is not a static problem. As certain needs are addressed and improved, new issues often come to light. I am proud to say that The Women's Home has always been at the forefront of addressing those needs and finding the most effective and proactive ways to reach our ultimate goal: to end homelessness for those most vulnerable due to substance abuse, mental illness, past abuse and lack of job skills and/or education.

Through our own observations and as a result of the latest independent research findings, The Women's Home is stepping up yet again. At Jane Cizik Garden Place, we are now opening our doors to women and their families, and our strategic plan approved in April of 2012 calls for The Home to build more housing. All of these efforts help us to provide women and their families with a safe community in which they can create their own warm and loving memories of HOME.

Thank You! Muchas Gracias! Merci!

Generosity and community support...The Women's Home wouldn't exist without it.

We are so grateful and continually humbled by the many different sources that provide our organization with the donations, grants and volunteer time that help us to change lives. Below are just a few of our many charitable supporters.

Harris County
Community Services
Department



Emergency solutions grant



Child Care Council of Greater Houston, Inc.



Emergency solutions grant



Texas Department of Housing and Community Services

Grant for essential services and homeless prevention activities



U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development

Two grants under the Continuum of Care program



There's a Rooster in the Hen House

And we couldn't be more pleased to have him on board! Mike Shirl, originally hired as the Director of Operations at The Women's Home (TWH) has, in just over a year, provided us with invaluable dedication and insight. In this brand new position - created to manage and project priorities for our recent addition of properties (Jane Cizik Garden Place) - Mike has vigilantly maintained the integrity of The Women's Home as many changes and challenges have come his way.

With over 30 years of non-profit experience, including Manager of Chaplaincy Services at Memorial Northwest Hospital (now Memorial Hermann) and Executive Director positions at Houston Habitat for Humanity, Serve Houston Youth Corps (AmeriCorps), and Wesley Community Center, Mike's breadth of knowledge is impressive, appreciated, and tapped into on a daily basis. When he first joined the TWH team, Mike did an initial evaluation and analysis of all properties in the Montrose area. His findings were presented to the new Facilities Committee and confirmed what the Board suspected - that the

older properties were in need of some "refreshment". The committee adopted Mike's conditioning/planning document and it now serves as our internal guide to prioritizing capital improvements and repairs.

Not surprisingly, as Mike's many areas of expertise came to light, his role at The Women's Home evolved to include additional responsibilities. We know a good thing when we find it...and Mike's definitely a good thing! In June of 2012, Executive Director, Paula Paust, asked Mike to oversee The Women's Home compliance responsibilities - which focus on ensuring all targets and regulations in our state licenses and federal and state grants are met. It's an important job that helps to secure renewals of current grants and the receipt of new grants in the future. To make sure state licensing requirements were being satisfied, Mike worked with Paula Paust to perform an internal audit of records. As a result of their findings, Mike updated the "Standards of Care" and "Operational Policies" and initiated a new training process with the Clinical team. All of these

efforts culminated in not only improvements to our record keeping, but also helped to enhance the execution of our Whole LifeSM program, and consequently, further improved the already high quality of care to our clients.

But Wait...There's More!

If Mike had learned anything at this point, it's that dedicated women recognize the talents of others and sure know how to delegate. Mike's list of responsibilities was growing, but he was handling it all with great ease and passion. So, why not add to it! With a Bachelor's degree in Psychology and Religion, graduate work in Theology, and almost a decade of experience in Pastoral Counseling and as an LPC (Licensed Professional Counselor), Mike seemed the perfect fit to take on the job of Director of Program Services. And so he did. As recently as several weeks ago, Mike began looking at

the core program structure and is working to provide recommendations on any improvements that can make this already stellar program even better. Everything we do here - all the hard work...it's always about the clients, and anything we can do to increase their chance of success is worth the effort. So, we thank our new "rooster" for his first and fabulous year of service to The Women's Home and we congratulate him on his new (and amended) title of Director of Program Services and Operations. The "hens" are proud to call you one of our own and we look forward to many more years of serving the needs of this community together.



Joanne King Herring Entertains and Invigorates Attendees at TWH's Spring Advisory Board Luncheon

On Friday, March 22nd, the spring Advisory Board luncheon was held at River Oaks Country Club. Joanne King Herring - longtime supporter of The Women's Home was guest speaker. Joanne's witty stories and her warm and endearing memories of The Home's early days captivated the crowd. Familiar faces from the Board and new, prospective members thoroughly enjoyed the historical look back along with important information on how our dedicated mission continues to grow and evolve. Many thanks to our fabulous hostess, Adele Pieper, for helping to make this event a great success.



Rebecca McDonald
and Jan Carson



Joanne King Herring



Diane Riley and
Trini Mendenhall Sosa



Janice Hall
and Scott Ensell



Adele Pieper and
Pilar de la Garza



Current LPGA Pros, Brittany Lincicome (left) and Brittany Lang (right) with Long Drive Champion, Jamie Sadlowski



2013 Golf Tournament Volunteers



INVITATIONAL MEN'S & WOMEN'S GOLF TOURNAMENT

The Women's Home 2013 Invitational Golf Tournament Brings in Record Numbers

Thanks to all involved, The Women's Home's sixth annual golf tournament was our most successful to date, raising over \$230,000! The tournament was held at the historic Champions Golf Club where 188 golfers enjoyed a great round of golf on a perfect April day. Boy, have we been lucky with the weather this year! Pre-tournament activities included a golf clinic taught by World Golf Hall of Fame member, Nancy Lopez, followed by the jaw-dropping 400+ yard drives of Long Drive Champion, Jamie Sadlowski. Current LPGA Pros Brittany Lang and Brittany Lincicome also provided valuable tips to golfers on the course. Our heartfelt gratitude goes out to the many volunteers, sponsors and players, and of course to our lovely and gracious tournament chair, Jan Carson. The success of this tournament, and what that success allows us to accomplish for our clients, would not be possible without you!

SPECIAL THANKS

TOURNAMENT FOUNDER

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K2Controls, Inc.
Parkcrest Builders, LTD
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Long Drive Champion, Jamie Sadlowski



Champions Golf Club Founder, Jack Burke enjoys a laugh with Jeff Rawson and friends



Winning Team (Cypress Creek course): Arthur Baird, Jr., Presenter-Carol Mann, Philamena Baird, Krista Moser and Arthur Baird



Kay and René Joyce with Tournament Chair, Jan Carson



Winning Team (Jack Rabbit course): Jason Schoppe, Craig Farris, Presenter-Carol Mann, Matt Jack and Linda Rhodes

Primary Services
J'Anne Rawson
Jeff Rawson
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Top Threading Services, Inc.
Barbara and Sonny Vaughn
Linda and Steve Webster
The Willis Group
Wortham Insurance & Risk Management
Zorich Family Foundation



Jorge Olvera and Oscar Martinez



Crawfish Boil Chairs - Stephen Clarke, Will Schorp, Michelle Yeglin and Jessica Sanders



Benjamin Floyd and Benjamin Floyd II (Lil Ben)

Third Annual Crawfish Boil *a Tail-Raising Success*

The Women's Home Young Professionals have done it again! For the third year in a row, the group's annual Crawfish Boil grew significantly, with recorded attendance jumping 50 percent - from 300 last year to over 450 happy, mudbug-loving attendees in 2013. Held on an absolutely gorgeous spring Saturday in early April, a steady crowd poured into the West Alabama Ice House to enjoy over 1,500 pounds of delicious crawfish, corn on the cob and potatoes. Event chairs Stephen Clarke, Jessica Sanders, Will Schorp and Michelle Yeglin spearheaded planning and execution efforts, and with the support of their equally dedicated host committee, event revenue increased by almost 45 percent to over \$28,000 (more than \$1,000 over their projected goal). All proceeds go to The Women's Home and each dollar helps us to continue providing the programs and services that allow our clients to reach their unique potential for success.

Many thanks to all of the gracious event sponsors, and special thanks to our "King Craw Daddy" sponsor, Bristow Group, Inc., and our "Bayou Queen" sponsors, Briggs & Veselka Co. / Brenda and Jim White, Covenant Crossfit, and Deb Parks and Mark Bouzek.



Steve Burke, Marcella Burke and Kristen Kruse



Chelsea Boerstler with sister-in-law, Ashley Boerstler



THE LAURA SAMPSON SOCIETY *Planned Giving Provides Help for Years to Come*

The Laura Sampson Society was established in honor of our founder, Mrs. W.E. Sampson, and recognizes individuals who further the lives of others by making a gift to The Women's Home through their living trust or will. Becoming a member of The Laura Sampson Society ensures the vitality of The Women's Home beyond your years...the most enduring commitment you can make to building whole lives for our residents - today and in the future.

For more information on planned giving or to inform us of a planned gift, contact Marcia Tapp, Director of Resource Development at 713-328-1975 or mtapp@thewomenshome.org.



KAREN GEORGE
Member: TWH Board of Directors
The Laura Sampson Society
Chair: Resource Development Committee

"I have observed firsthand the amazing impact this organization has had on so many lives. It is gratifying to see how together our efforts make such a big difference to the women and families served. I believe that service is part of our legacy, and I want The Women's Home to have the resources to continue its good work. This is why I have decided to make a bequest to The Women's Home in my will."



YOUR CLOTHES DESERVE A COMEBACK *The Runway is Waiting...*

The reNew and reDux Style Show is making its annual "comeback" in August of this year (date to be announced) and we are currently collecting fabulous "gently used" or brand spanking new designer duds! Each graciously donated item will either be featured on the runway, in our makeshift (and extremely popular) fashion show boutique, or added as new stock in The Women's Home Cottage Shop! If you love fashionable clothes as much as we do, it's time to clean out that closet...make room for the new and let your donated clothing reNew its original vigor. Whether you're a shop owner with extra stock or an individual with clothing to spare, we are grateful for each and every piece.

For information on making a donation or scheduling a pick-up, contact Cottage Shop Manager, Wendy Cook at wcook@thewomenshome.org or 713-328-1957.

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Upcoming Events

**reNew and reDux Style Show:
Kick-Off Party**
Thursday, June 13
Kendra Scott Jewelry

reNew and reDux Style Show
August 2013
The Wortham Center - Grand Foyer

The Women's Home Annual Gala
Friday, November 15
The Corinthian



Use your mobile device to join our email list. Check the box next to your interests and choose the emails you wish to receive.

"Stray Cat Needs a Safe Place for the Summer"

Sarah is a recovering alcoholic. The first time she drank – at age 14 – she blacked out. It was her calling card, blacking out...something she did just about every day from age 19 until she entered detox at age 33.

ALCOHOL - and the abuse of it - was nothing foreign to Sarah. The oldest of three girls, she endured a childhood most of us could never imagine. Her early years were marred by the trauma of life with a hardcore alcoholic - her mother, and after years of moving around (in an attempt to escape Child Protective Services), Sarah and her sisters were finally pulled from the home, separated and put into foster care. She was 11. For five years, Sarah bounced between (and consistently ran away from) foster homes and high security girls' homes. At 16, she ran one last time and little to no effort was put into tracking her down. She was officially homeless. Between the streets and "random places to stay", she endured the life of a lost soul for the next 17 years.

In 2011, Sarah was living in Grand Junction, Colorado and had fallen in with a rough crowd...a very rough crowd dominated by bikers with a fondness for methamphetamines. Danger and uncertainty surrounded her, and she knew with every fiber of her being, that if she didn't get out - and soon - she was dead. So she found an Internet connection and put out an SOS message on Facebook. The message read: "Stray cat needs a safe place for the summer."

Two friends responded. One told her to come to Houston and another paid for the plane ticket to get her there. Although she didn't know it at the time, that simple and oh-so-telling message was picked up by the universe, and it brought her to the city that held the key to a new life. Sarah's move to Houston, however,

was not an instant fix. For the next year, she was on the street. Fear, alcohol and hopelessness dominated her every waking hour. And following a violent rape last April, Sarah was sent to a hospital that eventually placed her in Women's Way Out detox facility. One fateful step led to another and after 10 days in detox, she was moving into one of the new, beautiful apartments reserved for the "chronically homeless" at Jane Cizik Garden Place (JCGP) - The Women's Home's apartment community in Spring Branch. Sarah's life had turned an important corner, and the future was starting to look a whole lot brighter.

"Before I came here, I was in a bad place...I was basically trying to end it all," Sarah said, "not in the traditional sense, mind you, if there is such a thing. I wasn't taking pills or looking for a gun, but I would jump in front of cars hoping they would hit me, or I would sleep under a big truck's tire thinking they wouldn't notice me in the morning and would run me over. I didn't feel like I had anything to give the world. I felt like trash."

But Sarah was meant to live, and as others began to believe in her, she slowly began to believe in herself.

"JCGP - my new home, the people, the programs and services available, all of it - has given me a sense of self-worth for the first time in my life," said Sarah. "Just in the last couple of months, I've been able to say that I deserve a safe, nice place to live, a good job, a worthwhile life. The Women's Home and JCGP - it's

better than anything I could have imagined. I've been offered chances before, but never anything like this."

And she has certainly taken full advantage of these new opportunities. Today Sarah is clear-headed and sober. She is beautiful and well-spoken. She is a dependable, full-time employee with goals and dreams and intentions to repair that which she has broken - including herself and her relationship with her two children.

"I'm most proud that people are starting to trust me again, and to be chosen as a success story for this newsletter. It's amazing to me that someone feels like I'm successful. I've never felt that before - it's unbelievable," said Sarah. "I have a new lease on life. This experience has literally given me my life back, and now I feel that I can use my experiences to help others."



"I feel like I can make roots here in Houston. I don't have to flee anymore. I have options. I can be a functional person."