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helping families get back on their feet

NEW. beginnings

SPRING
2009



HOMELESS FAMILY CENTER:

a family's success story...

The Dexter family were residents at the Homeless Family Center for 6 months during 2007, and still continues to contact Case Management about their family's success. Due to their success, the Dexter family will be mentoring others who are current residents of the Center. Ms. Dexter will share her story with the current clients of the Homeless Family Center to help them remain focused. She states that she learned many skills during her stay at the Homeless Family Center, which have helped her gain and sustain a "home" for her family.



The Dexter family

While a resident, Ms. Dexter attended life skills, housing, budgeting and employment classes. She was able to obtain full time employment; save money and move into her own housing.

Ms. Dexter is currently working for another non profit in the community. She states that her job is terrific. She is enjoying her second year of sobriety and thanks the Homeless Family Center for allowing her an opportunity to address her issues and learn the skills she needed to gain financial independence.

This family is giving back to the community in many different ways. Ms. Dexter's 18 year old son is involved with the Gifford Youth Activity Center and works with the Director of the Afterschool Program; assisting the children with homework and activities. Her 17 year old daughter attends the Simon Education program and will graduate next year, she is also working part time for the Humane Society.

Creative Fundraising

Please join us in planning one of the following events in your own home to support the HFC.

Awareness Reception

Invite friends, family, co-workers and/or neighbors over for cocktails, dinner or coffee to share the mission of HFC and tell why you support HFC.

Birthday Party

In lieu of personal gifts ask for donations and items on the HFC wish list to be donated to HFC.

Special Event

Need a reason to plan a special event? HFC is the reason to plan a special event! Get friends, co-workers, organizations, classes or teams together to raise money for HFC.

Start your plan today by calling
Julia Keenan at 772.567-5537.

WELCOME NEW BOARD MEMBERS

by Tom Tierney, Esq., Board President

The Homeless Family Center is proud to welcome Denise Finizio, VP Branch Manager / Commercial Lender for Marine Bank & Trust and Dan Kross, AVP Branch Manager for 1st United Bank. Denise and Dan have both served as committee members for the HFC's Vero's Top Chef Challenge Event and Denise volunteered in the Center since 2007.

In addition to the HFC, Denise is involved with numerous non-profits including the American Cancer Society, Healthy Start Coalition, Cultural Council, Plumbago Volunteer Services and the Alzheimer's / Parkinson's Association. Perhaps this is why Denise was named one of the Top 40 individuals under 40 in Vero Beach Life Magazine.



Dan is also very involved with Youth Guidance, he is an Ambassador for the Indian River County Chamber of Commerce, a 2008 graduate of IRC Chamber's Leadership Program, a United Way Loaned Executive and panel member for the citizen's review. Dan has been a resident of Vero Beach for only three years, yet he truly has made this home.



The current Board of Directors join me in welcoming both Denise Finizio and Dan Kross to the Homeless Family Center. We appreciate the time and talent they will contribute to provide services to homeless families in our community.

Donor's Perspective

The Homeless Family Center Staff will ask donors to share with the community why they support homeless families.

"Everything I have has been graciously provided to me by God alone. Reverend Dr. Casey Baggott had alerted me to the needs of the financially challenged and the homeless families in our backyard, this wrenched at my heartstrings. My family Beth, Curran and Kritika join me, and are happy to become channels of God's blessing to all the residents of the Homeless Family Center of Vero Beach."



Dr. Joseph Thomas

A MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Julia T. Keenan



The Homeless Family Center has received over 200 calls during the past three months requesting services for homeless families. As the economic situation continues to decline, the need for services continues to increase.

The Treasure Coast Homeless Services Council announced its homeless street count statistics for 2009 on March 17th. On any given day the following numbers of individuals are homeless on the Treasure Coast: 662 in Indian River County, 788 in St. Lucie County, and 211 in Martin County. The Homeless Family Center is the only emergency shelter and long-term transitional housing facility for homeless families on the Treasure Coast.

The Homeless Family Center continues to provide educational classes for adult clients Monday – Thursday in the areas of life skills, employment, budgeting, parenting, and housing. Clients are required to attend school or work 40 hours per week and have a savings goal of 75% of all earned income. Education is the key component in providing clients with an opportunity to obtain and maintain employment and independent housing. Sixty-five percent of our homeless families move into independent housing.

The Homeless Family Center is in great need of your financial support to meet the operational costs of providing services to homeless families. Included with this newsletter is an envelope for your donation. Your commitment to the Homeless Family Center positively impacts the entire community.

As always, I invite you for a personal tour of the Homeless Family Center to see first hand the services you are providing in this community. Please call me for a tour at 772 567-5537.

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

The Homeless Family Center is very grateful to our wonderful volunteers who assist with various activities at, and for, the HFC. We welcome volunteers of all ages and interests. The following is a list and explanation of volunteer positions we look to fill:

CHILDREN'S HELPERS: For individuals who would be available from 6:45 to 8:00, on Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, or Thursday evenings. These volunteers would stay with the children at the HFC, while their parents attend life skills classes.

CLERICAL HELPERS: Assist several hours per week in the Administrative offices, during the day, to answer phones, make "thank-you" calls, and help with upcoming events and office chores. We also need telephone volunteers for Tuesday and Wednesday evenings from 5:30 – 8:00.

CLOTHING SORTERS: Sort clothing donations brought in to HFC.

COMPUTER TRAINER: Help residents learn to use computers, look for jobs and schools, and write resumes.

SPECIAL EVENT COMMITTEES: Help plan and work at HFC fund-raising events, including the Annual Dinner Dance in November, Vero's Top Chef Challenge Event in February, Flight Party in April, and off-site awareness events all year long.

HOLIDAY HELPERS: Assist during holidays including:

- Help cook and serve holiday meals.
- Sort and wrap gifts for holidays.
- Assist with holiday donations.
- Help decorate the residence.

LICENSED ELECTRICIANS AND PLUMBERS: Volunteers willing to donate their skills and time to work on building issues, as they arise.

MAILINGS: Fold, stuff, label, and stamp envelopes for seasonal, event, and regular mailings.

PHONES: Answer HFC phones during the hours of 5:30pm – 8:00pm.

TUTORS: Tutor children in math or reading, when needed. Tutor adults who are learning to read.

DO YOU HAVE OTHER TALENTS OR IDEAS?

Do you have teaching skills or life skills that would benefit our adult residents who are working to end their homelessness? If so, please contact Marie Lumententi, Volunteer Coordinator, at (772) 567-5537.

LET'S GO GREEN

We are currently seeking e-mail addresses to reduce newsletter and event costs. Please send an e-mail with your name and contact information including your e-mail address to mlumententi_hfc@bellsouth.net. Thank you for your assistance.



planned giving

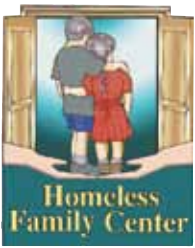
A donation through a planned gift is a great way to create a legacy of support for the HFC while providing for your own future.

Through our Endowment Fund, our supporters have the opportunity to make planned and major gifts, as well as contributions. Stock, real estate, and life insurance policies are popular ways to consider contributing to the HFC Endowment Fund. Individuals of all financial circumstances can participate in and benefit from our planned giving program.

Depending upon the assets and the gift arrangement selected, a donor can expect to obtain some or all of the following benefits:

- Reduce income tax through a deduction for the gift
- Avoid capital gain tax on the gifts of long-term appreciated property
- Retain a stream of payments for life for the donor
- Reduce federal estate tax burden

If you would like more information, please call Adam Bolinger or Julia Keenan at the HFC to discuss various options.



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- Dan Kross
- Theodore Libby
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- Richard Van Mele

OUR MISSION

To provide opportunities for homeless families to end homelessness by achieving self-sufficiency through education, living wages, and permanent housing.

changing children's lives...

As the Homeless Family Center continues to flourish, so do the children residing at HFC. With so much pressure on parents it's easy to see that the little things kids enjoy tend to take a back seat to more important issues. I am pleased to announce my role at the Homeless Family Center as the Children's Program Manager: my name is Krystal Ellig.

With the help of our wonderful crew of volunteers and staff we are able to provide nightly math and reading tutoring, homework assistance, character values education and crafts. Laura Larsen, for example, brings her own supplies and comes to HFC every other Sunday to conduct an art class for the children. Our Monday night group of volunteers is led by Ashley Ridlen while Tuesday evenings is headed by Donna Manes. Beth Moniz directs the Wednesday night group and she has been volunteering with HFC for the last five years. Thursday evenings are led by Kathleen Simpson and her husband John Simpson. Without help from the community, this program would

not be possible. Many of our materials are obtained through donations. We are so grateful to have people in the community that donate their time, money, and talent to help enrich the lives of the children living at HFC.

Since fall of 2008 when I began working with the children, the ratio of children enrolled in school and children performing at grade level have increased. Some of the children arrive here with such social challenges that they can rarely speak. Within weeks of nightly activities and positive reinforcement these children are singing "Bingo" at the top their lungs and playing "Hot Potato" with their neighbors.

Currently 50% of the children living at HFC are two years old and under. This has required me to create a specialized program which includes fine motor skill exercises and a song and dance "Mommy and Me" style activity plan. The Interactive Play area has been thoroughly baby-proofed and replenished with soft blocks,

soft books, puzzles and stimulating DVD's. We continuously have to replace these toys as normal wear and tear is common.

The future for these children is as bright as any others. Please keep the Children's Program at the Homeless Family Center in mind as we are always accepting donations of art supplies, school supplies, and educational products.

With summer break right around the corner; children will be in need of summer camp sponsors, movie tickets, and gift certificates that will enable our children to get out in the community and enjoy their summer break. If you wish to help please contact Krystal Ellig at 772-567-5537 x28 or kellig@homelessfamilycenter.org.

Thank you for your continued support and for your interest in the Children's Program. When you invest in children, you invest in the future.