

GRACE House Gazette

November 8, 2012

Volume I, Issue 2

Dear GRACE House Friends,

Thank you everyone who attended the Open House "Meet & Greet" at GRACE House on October 23. What a great feeling to be welcomed back home with open arms! This event gave me the opportunity to get to know volunteers who have been involved with GRACE House since its inception in 2006, and it allowed me to meet church, community and business leaders from the greater Grand Rapids area. The "Raging Grannies" dropped in for an impromptu performance, singing several songs including "The Ballad of GRACE House." What a treat!

Many of those who attended the Open House were surprised to see that GRACE House's new shelter offers an inviting, homey environment. I think many folks were surprised to see our cozy sleeping quarters that offer our guests a sense of dignity, privacy, and belonging.

With the holiday season quickly approaching, GRACE House continues to experience a major shortage of volunteers! Gather your friends and coworkers or start a new family tradition by filling one of our three daily volunteer shifts. You can and will make a HUGE difference in the lives of GRACE House's guests by volunteering today.

And please make plans to join us at the TimberLake Lodge on Saturday, December 1, 2012 for GRACE House's "Home is Where the Heart Is" Dinner Dance.

Best Wishes for a Safe and Happy Thanksgiving,

Sherry Shadley

Executive Director

"Home is Where the Heart Is" Dinner Dance:

Tickets are now available for GRACE House's 7th Annual "Home is Where the Heart Is" Dinner Dance, which will be held at TimberLake Lodge, Grand Rapids, on Saturday, December 1, from 5:00 to 11:00 p.m. The event includes a delicious meal, a dance featuring music from Jimi "Primetime" Smith & the Groove Merchants, silent and live auctions, a raffle, and door prizes.

Tickets for the dinner dance can be purchased at Reed Drug and GRACE House. This year, we are offering an early bird ticket discount of \$50 per person through November 22. After Thanksgiving, tickets are \$55 per person through November 27. Tickets for the dance only are \$20 and can be purchased at the door. Call GRACE House at (218) 326-2790 for more information. We hope to see you there!

A Volunteer S.O.S.!

More than 50% of GRACE House's workforce is supplied by community volunteers from the greater Grand Rapids area. We continue to experience difficulty in filling 90 volunteer shifts each month, especially since many of GRACE House's most dependable volunteers are "snow birds" who've already headed south. **That's why we're issuing a Volunteer S.O.S.!**

We need volunteers for the following daily shifts: 6:00 a.m. to 8:00 a.m., 4:45 p.m. to 9:00 p.m., and 9:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. During the week, please call Ami or Tara between 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. at (218) 326-2790 to sign up for one or more of these shifts. You can also stop at GRACE House between 8 a.m. and 8 p.m. to take a look at the volunteer calendar to see what shifts still need to be filled.

GRACE House will hold volunteer orientation and training sessions on November 12 and December 10 from 5:30 to 7:00 p.m. No previous experience is required.

NOTE: GRACE House currently seeks the volunteer services of an experienced website developer to help dismantle (and possibly rebuild) our outdated website. If interested, please call 218-326-2790.



Volunteer Spotlight:

This month Volunteer Spotlight shines brightly on Gwen Smith, one of GRACE House's most dedicated overnight shift volunteers.

Gwen has been a steadfast volunteer since the inception of GRACE House in 2006. She is a substitute teacher who lives and works in Deer River. An avid duck hunter, Gwen was recently featured in the Grand People section of the Grand Rapids Herald Review.

Filling volunteer overnight shifts are always challenging for GRACE House. But, having loyal volunteers like Gwen help lighten the load considerably. We're humbled to know that volunteering at GRACE House is an important pastime to Gwen. We thank Gwen for all of her years of service, and we look forward to many more!

Getting to Know Our Staff

GRACE House staff members are some of the most competent and compassionate employees in the community. They work diligently to keep our guests motivated in their searches to find employment and suitable housing.

They partner with the staff of transitional housing programs and local social service agencies to pool limited resources and ensure the welfare and safety of GRACE House's guests, both past and present.

Some staff members have been with us for years, while others are just beginning their careers at GRACE House.

Each staff member possesses special talents, experience, and expertise. The next time you call or stop by GRACE House, give our staff a pat on the back and thank them for a job well done.

Program Director: Ami Bolster

Administrative Asst.: Tara Venema

Onsite Supervisors: Kathe Johnson, Jim Azure, Heidi Madsen, Tiffany Beckman, April Christiansen, and Mike Glen.

GRACE House's Top 5 Critical Needs:

(New or Gently Used Items)

1. Food scale
2. Teflon pots and frying pans
3. Dust Buster/Hand-held vacuum
4. Christmas decorations and lights
5. Sturdy TV stand

November 15th is "Give to the Max Day"

As you know, GRACE House is making a difference everyday by providing safe, temporary shelter for people in Itasca County who are experiencing homelessness. **November 15th is "Give to the Max Day"**, which gives GRACE House supporters the opportunity to donate online through www.GiveMN.org.

The fourth annual "Give to the Max Day" enables Minnesotans to come together and show their support for the nonprofit organizations and schools that work to strengthen our communities. Now more than ever, your generous support helps GRACE House provide shelter for the growing number of individuals and families in Itasca County who are without a warm, safe home.

Please join us on November 15th and help GRACE House increase its odds of winning a \$1,000 Golden Ticket prize by making a donation on "Give to the Max Day." Visit www.GiveMN.org and search for GRACE House of Itasca County.

Thank you for supporting our shelter!

SATURDAY COOKING CLUB UPDATE:

The inaugural meeting of the Saturday Cooking Club was filled with camaraderie, laughter, and good old fashioned home cooking. Nine trusty volunteers and a few relative newcomers joined forces to whip up tasty casseroles, soups, and entrees. GRACE House now has a designated freezer that is brimming with delicious and nutritious meals. The club will meet again on **November 17 and December 15**. If you're interested in joining the group, call Misty at (218) 999-5444.

Homeless Awareness Hoedown:

GRACE House will join forces with Kootasca Community Action, Arrowhead Economic Opportunity Agency, Salvation Army, and many others to serve a BBQ lunch at the Itasca Resource Center (IRC) building on Tuesday, November 13, from 11:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.

The BBQ serves as fundraiser for the "One Night without a Home Fund, which is used by local transitional housing agencies to cover expenses incurred by people in our community who are experiencing homelessness. A \$5.00 minimum donation is suggested.

National Hunger & Homelessness Awareness Week:

November 10 -18 is National Hunger and Homeless Awareness Week. During this week, a number of schools, nonprofit organizations, and churches throughout Itasca County will hold a series of events designed to bring greater awareness to the problems of hunger and homelessness in our local communities.

GRACE House and other members of the Housing Issues Advisory Committee (HIAC) have sponsored a "**One Night without a Home**" rally on **Thursday, November 15**. We invite you to come to GRACE House at 3:30 p.m. to hear Grand Rapids Mayor Dale Adams read a National Hunger & Homelessness Awareness Week proclamation.

The "One Night without a Home" homeless awareness walk kicks off at GRACE House at 3:45p.m. At 5:00 p.m., GRACE House will host a soup line fundraiser at the shelter. For a suggested \$5.00 donation, "One Night without a Home" participants and supporters will feast on a wide array of homemade soups and breads. Proceeds from the soup line will the "One Night without a Home" Emergency Fund.

Limited financial resources and ongoing postage rate increases necessitate the need for GRACE House to disseminate newsletters electronically. GRACE House currently has email addresses for approximately 70% of its existing volunteers and supporters. This is the last hard copy issue of *GRACE House Gazette* that will be mailed to everyone our in our database. If you do not have access to a computer or the Internet, please call GRACE House at (218) 326-2790 to request hard copies of these materials. You may also complete the following form and mail it to: GRACE House, 501 SW 1st Ave, Grand Rapids, MN 55744.

Name: _____

City _____ State _____ MN _____