

October 7, 2013

GRACE HOUSE

GAZETTE

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Dear Friends,

The spirit of teamwork was alive and well when students from ICC's Engineering & Professional Development (EPD) Department joined forces with employees of The Home Depot, Grace House volunteers and current guests to install our new playground on September 27. Less than ideal weather didn't seem to slow down efforts to build a recreational safe haven for the children and families who stay at our shelter. Although Rome wasn't built in a day—our playground surely was!

It was inspiring to see students working side-by-side with Home Depot's knowledgeable staff, sometimes in the pouring rain, to carry out instructions for properly pouring concrete footings, assembling platform sections, installing fencing and aligning brick courtyard pavers. It was a true learning experience for the students, many of whom labored well-beyond the four hours they originally volunteered to work. I believe memories of this remarkable day, like the playground itself, will last with the students for many years to come.

The results of this community-supported endeavor is a beautiful, welcoming playground outfitted with fixed and interchangeable swings, monkey bars, miniature rock and netted climbing walls, picnic tables (adult and child-size) along with a teeter totter, slide and sandbox. A three-sided picket fence delineates the playground's borders, adding an extra layer of security from nearby street traffic.

I'd like to personally thank the staff of the Grand Rapids Home Depot store for their commitment to and participation in this project. I'm particularly grateful to Lori Huber and Leslie Adkisson, Home Depot's management staff, for endorsing Grace House's grant request, and for supplying the necessary staff, tools, and in-store product donations to bring this ICC student-designed project to fruition. Special thanks go out to Home Depot employees Bruce, Richard, Joe, and Jim for the leadership they provided to the students during this service learning project.

I'd also like to recognize Al Zachman, a member of Grace House's Building Committee, for supervising and directing students as they worked on individual construction projects. Thanks also to Grace House volunteers: Dave Roerick, Alice & Dave Billings, Madelen & Denny Schuemann, Jess Mohn, Nikki Calvin and Ann Hoover for their help throughout the day.

Through the generosity of The Home Depot Foundation, local service organizations, individual donors and area churches, our playground transformed from a \$2,500 collegiate project into a nearly \$10,000 outdoor paradise. The inviting playground gives children the opportunity to play and have fun while bringing a sense of normalcy and stability during their stay at our family-friendly shelter.

Best Wishes,
Sherry Shadley

Executive Director

Volunteer Spotlight—Betty Brandt

This month's Volunteer Spotlight is focused on Betty Brandt, whose history with Grace House spans more than six years. A loyal morning shift volunteer, Betty has contributed 100's of hours of service during her tenure with Grace House. She also regularly donates essential clothing items, hygiene supplies and other staples to meet the ancillary needs of Grace House's guests.

Betty is a retired teacher from ISD# 318. She taught Home Economics at Grand Rapids High School and later worked in the school's library when this curriculum was phased out. An active member of Zion Lutheran Church and Women's Group, Betty currently serves on the national ELCA's Church-Wide Board of Directors.

Her volunteer work extends well beyond the walls of Zion Lutheran and Grace House. Betty volunteers part-time with the Bigfork Ambulance Service Association and was involved with Girl Scouts of America for many years. She also currently produces "Hobbies, Inc." show segments for ICTV.

Thanks, Betty, for your dedication and many years of service to Grace House. We truly appreciate all you have done and continue to do on behalf of our guests and our shelter!

Please mark your calendars for these important Grace House events:

October 14 @ 5:30 p.m.: Volunteer Orientation Training

October 18 @ 1:00 p.m.: Grace House Afternoon Volunteer Support Meeting

October 22 @ 6:00 p.m.: Grace House Evening Volunteer Support Meeting. Northland Counseling Center's staff will present information on the use of Spice and other synthetic drugs in our community.

November 14: "Give to the Max Day", a designated day of on-line philanthropy.

November 20: Natl. Hunger & Homeless Awareness Month Walk & Soup Line. The event begins at Grace House at 3:30 p.m. with Mayor Dale Adam's Hunger & Homeless Awareness Month Proclamation; walk to Old Central School begins at 4:00 p.m.; soup line at the shelter runs from 5:00 to 7:00 p.m. If you're interested in making and donating soup for this event, please call Tara at 326-2790.

Congratulations to beloved Grace House volunteer, Peg Christensen, on recently becoming an ordained minister at Clara Lutheran Church in Deer River. Your Grace House family is so proud of you, Pastor Peg!

Top 5 Critical Needs

1. Zippered mattress covers (twin)
2. Ground coffee
3. Fresh or frozen meat*
4. Mattress pads (twin)
5. Adult flannel/fleece pajama pants (L, XL, XXL)

***Special Note:** Due to a change in inventory and health code procedures, Grace House no longer receives free chickens from a local supplier. As a result, our supply of frozen chicken has dwindled down to less than 10 packages over the past six months! **With deer hunting season just around the corner, please consider donating a portion of your processed venison to our shelter.** If you're not a hunter, but you raise cattle, pigs or chickens, Grace House will eagerly accept donations of beef, pork, chicken and eggs. These donations will greatly stretch our meager food budget, and make meal preparation that much easier for our volunteers and staff. Meat donations are tax-deductible too!