



Newsbreak @ VIFCC

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Editor
Barb Campbell

Valley Interfaith Food & Clothing Center

What's New at Valley

Inside this issue:

Back-to-School Program	2
VIFCC's On-going Needs	2
Mark Your Calendar	2
Back-to-School Needs	2
Going Beyond the Call of Duty	3
This years <i>Fun-Raising</i> Successes	3
Men's Breakfast & Silent Auction	3

During the past 5 years, the Center has focused on improving its infrastructure to better serve our clients. In the process, we've dramatically enhanced our facility, including the establishment of a "state of the art" Choice Pantry, implemented a Volunteer Handbook and a Volunteer Training Program, introduced computerization throughout our operation and better security and safety procedures and facilitated on-site services of several outside agencies. We've also increased our capabilities in the areas of fund raising, publicity and interface with outside organizations.

We have now begun the process of formulating a

strategic plan for the next 5 years. The primary focus of this plan will be on our clients. Our objectives are to further improve the emergency relief we offer clients, and to enhance our capabilities in helping clients on the road to long term recovery. The latter will require bringing critically needed services of outside agencies within the Center's proximity, in order to make them easily accessible.

The first step in this process is to enhance our understanding of "customer needs" in the areas of short term emergency assistance and long term recovery. Initially, we will ask 500 clients to answer a short questionnaire which will address their current cir-

cumstances as well as the assistance they most critically need for the long term rehabilitation of their lives. This data will then be utilized to gain a deeper understanding via a "focus group" composed of 10 to 12 of regular clients. We expect this segment to be completed by October 2007. Thereafter, we will have the data to formulate a strategy to improve our on-going services and to recruit the agencies deemed most critical by the clients.

This process will require the broad based participation of our volunteers and staff. We welcome any additional assistance in this endeavor. Call me if you wish to contribute your time and talent.

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Trivia Questions

1. How much food can we purchase with \$1
2. What year did Valley Interfaith start giving out food?
3. How many volunteers does it take to keep the Center running smoothly each month?
4. How many outside partnering agencies do we have work from our Center?



A Plea for HELP



During the first 5 months of 2007, we witnessed a 14% increase in clients served. That translates into 700 additional clients or 140 more per month! This is a very troubling statistic in light of cutbacks in both governmental and private funding of social

services.

The Center's basic challenge is accommodating a substantially larger client base within the context of flat donations from individuals, sponsoring congregations, and local businesses.

This where you can help in a HUGE way. **Please** use the enclosed envelope to **send a donation** to help us help your less fortunate neighbors. We now also accept credit card donations on our www.vifcc.org website. Thank you!

The Back-to-School Program

This year, we are doing things a little different with the "Back-to-School" Program!

For the first time ever, we are condensing it to only *one week!*

July 30-August 4, 10:00-2:00

Due to limited space, we are also going to have it in a different location. *Lockland Church of Christ (located across the street)* has been gracious enough to open up one of their neighboring little white houses for



this program!

We will be dispensing shoes, backpacks and school supplies and personal hygiene products from the little white house. Clothing will still be handed out at the center.

With this change comes the need for many hands!!

We are hoping to serve 600 kids this year. That equals out to about 100 kids a day! Please call Marne Kappes to reserve your spot! 761-4521

VIFCC's On-Going Needs

Valley Interfaith is able to help our neighbors in need because of your generosity. We greatly depend on your donations. Remember that all your donations are tax deductible! We are always in need of the following items:

- \$\$\$ - Monetary donations, remember that for each dollar you donate, we are able to pur-

chase \$15 worth of groceries!

This is because we are a member of The FreeStore/Foodbank.

- Spaghetti Sauce w/ meat
- Personal Hygiene Products, i.e. shampoo, conditioner, toothpaste, toothbrushes, soap (bar & liquid)
- Peanut butter
- Jelly

- Canned Fruit
- Cans of soup or beef stew

Please feel free to contact us at (513) 821-3233 if you are interested in a wonderful opportunity to help your neighbors. Feel good about knowing that you are helping your community be a better place. We accept donations M-F from 10-2.

Mark your Calendar

The Wine Tasting was such a success in February, that we have decided to try it again! If you weren't able to make it in February, this is an *fun-raiser* you won't want to miss! It is a great time to meet other VIFCC volunteers, staff & board members and the other wonderful people that make Valley Interfaith such a success.

By request, we are putting a new twist to it...this will be a Wine & Martini tasting! It will be held on **Friday, July 27th** at Juliana & Carl Swabeks house, 141 Springfield Pike (right next to Valley Temple) in Wyoming from **7pm-???**.

With weather permitting, we will be sipping wine and martini's at the pool-side or step back in time at their

original 'Speak Easy" room from the Prohibition Days! Seating is limited, so be sure to reserve your spot today! 513-821-3212 Cost: \$20/person. Credit Cards accepted.



Back-to-School Needs

With the Back-to-School program right around the corner, the following list is our current needs to make this program successful:

- Markers– washable, 8-10 count
- Folders
- Rulers
- Glue sticks
- 1” binders
- Shampoo
- Toothpaste
- Bar soap
- Deodorant
- **No crayons please!!!**

Please drop these items off before July 20th.

Going Beyond the Call of Duty

Charles (Chuck) Ward, our Vice President and Trustee of St. Bartholomew Church, has dramatically improved the Center's operation during his 5 year tenure as a volunteer. Initially, he spent a brief stint in the Pantry. Then, during a meeting with our late Executive Director, John Campbell, he uttered the magic words “ If you ever need any help with systems or computerization, I'm willing to help” and he was off and running. As a retired Systems Manager from

Gibson Greeting Cards, Chuck brought a wealth of talent and experience. He undertook the evaluation of all our work processes, and initiated simplification and streamlining in the Pantry, Clothing, Reception and Interviewing operations. He also designed a training manual for the



VINE (our automated client history system). Once he fully understood our business processes, he initiated the full computerization of the Center. Despite significant initial resistance, he patiently and persistently converted the skeptics by keeping it simple, user friendly and effective. Today, all our operations are automated via the use of 9 PC's . Chuck pulled off a “silent miracle” which will benefit the Center for years to come. Truly a magnificent effort.

This Years Fun-Raising Successes!!!

This is the first year VIFCC has held *fun* raising events to raise money. Considering this has never been done before, it has been quite successful.

We had our first annual Wine Tasting in February and in spite of the bad weather, we raised \$755.

In May, we held a fashion show and had some of our volunteers model some of the designer label clothing donations we receive. We also had a wonderful keynote speaker at this event and raised \$580.

Last month, we held our 4th Annual

Clothing Sale and we broke all records! We raised almost \$1400, thanks to the hard work of Mary Corley and numerous other volunteers that made all these events such a success.

We hope to see you at our next event!

Men's Breakfast & Silent Auction

On Saturday, October 27th, we will be holding our first Men's Breakfast and Silent Auction. We are thrilled to have Brad Cousino as our keynote speaker. Brad is a former NFL player for the Chicago Bears, New York Giants, Pittsburg Steelers, and our very own Cincinnati Bengals!

Brad will share how a man who had it all, money, fame and prestige could not find the contentment he had



searched his entire life to achieve.

He will be sharing his struggles and his accomplishments and how he based his whole identity on his career as a NFL player rather than as a creation of God.

You will get the behind the scenes view of Brad's life & career. Time and location info will follow...

Answers to Trivia Questions

1. With recent cuts from the FreeStore/FoodBank, we are now only able to purchase \$15 worth of groceries with every \$5 donation.
2. VIFCC gave out it's first bag of food in 1963.
3. It takes about 140 volunteers/mo to keep the Center running smoothly.
4. We have 3 outside agencies that work from our Center on a weekly basis.

VIFCC provides emergency assistance in the areas of food, clothing, personal care and financial aid. Our on-going clientele consists largely of the elderly, the single parent, the physically and mentally challenged, and the minimum wage earner. We also provide assistance to others on a limited time basis. Clients, whose needs exceed our capabilities are referred to other agencies for further assistance.

Check out our new website!!!

www.vifcc.org

420 W. Wyoming Avenue
Lockland, Ohio 45215
513-821-3233
fax 513-821-3236
e-mail vifcc@zoomtown.com

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