

Sheltervoice

Quarterly Newsletter of The Women's Shelter
Volume XXII, Number Three, Fall 2008

Souper Time

Written by Prentiss Hallman, Shelter Staff

This is a special Invitation to join us for the Annual Thanksgiving Souper benefiting The Women's Shelter. Have fun; fellowship with friends old and new; enjoy good food; and create a Thanksgiving tradition!

When: November 20th 2008, from 5:30 until 7:30 p.m. **Donation:** \$2
Where: Eastminster Presbyterian Church, 3200 Trenholm Rd, Columbia, SC 29204

It is hard to believe it's time to begin preparing for the 29th annual Souper. You won't find me complaining – this is my favorite time of year. The mornings offer a little chill in the air and the afternoons provide significant relief from the humid summer days. The shelter has a renewed energy as the fall season sets in. The women have more gusto because the blazing sun no longer accompanies their waits at the bus stop and the nights provide a more satisfying sleep. Of course the cooler evenings are certainly more pleasant for cooking and gathering together to enjoy dinner.

With the change in weather comes a change in donations. We begin receiving sweaters instead of shorts, homemade brownies rather than ice cream, and canned soups for our regular Tuesday dinners of soup and sandwiches. The change in season also means a change in schedules.

The children are back in school, church dinners are back on a regular schedule and college students are gearing up for special projects and volunteer opportunities. All of these changes mean we see more of you, more often, as you provide needed donations for shelter operations.

Above all, the fall season means we begin preparing for the Souper. This means confirming with Eastminster Presbyterian Church that they will once again graciously donate the use of Thompson Hall. We also begin meeting with Chic-fil-A, as they offer their time, energy, and delicious soup for yet another well organized fundraiser. Additionally, we, as a staff, begin writing press

releases, contacting the media, planning with the board, requesting volunteer support and attempting to create another successful Souper.

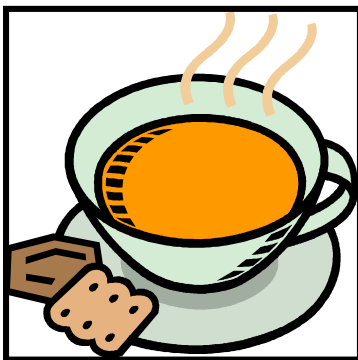
Although I have only been present for three Souper events, each year I enjoy it more and more. I know more volunteers; I recognize more participants and I truly enjoy promoting the event to new people. It is my wish that each year new people will become a part of our community and a part of the magical event that is the Souper.

The Souper is always held the Thursday before Thanksgiving. This is also National Hunger and Homelessness Awareness Week. This simple dinner of soup and crackers is not just to remind us how fortunate we are to have food on our table and a safe place to sleep.

This event is a celebration of what The Women's Shelter provides.

Over the past 30 years thousands of women have chosen to make significant changes in their lives with The Women's Shelter program. They give up the security and familiarity of some old coping mechanisms (avoidance, denial, drugs, alcohol, criminal behavior) for the opportunity for a new, healthier life. However, the faith, determination, and hard work that it takes to attempt this transformation is immense.

The Souper resembles dinnertime at The Women's Shelter, but on a much larger scale. Each year thousands of women come to dinner together for the day.



Fall Is Here (continued)

Witnessing the joy and relief on a woman's face when she announces that she finally found a job, is a new grandmother, or is moving into the Transitional Program is incredible. The celebration and congratulations that flows from her house sisters is truly a wonderful feeling.

On the flip side, we also have dinner conversations about current challenges. Sometimes the women have bad news from home, maybe one of the women lost her job, or a house sister did not come home. These conversations may not be easy but they certainly provide strength, hope, and support for a better tomorrow.

The Souper is an opportunity for the local community to take time out from the hustle and fuss of a busy life to support a valuable community program. The monetary donations gathered at the Souper supports almost 10% of our annual budget. However, just as important is the opportunity to catch up with one another; to celebrate and reconnect with those we may not have seen since the last Souper.

This annual event offers an atmosphere of hope, faith, celebration and family. It is a demonstration of how individual members of a greater community can come together and truly make a difference. I hope you will join us this year for the 29th Annual Thanksgiving Souper. You, too, will experience the energy that is The Women's Shelter.

Transitional Happenings

Written By Christy Slocum, Shelter Staff

If you have passed by The Women's Shelter lately, you probably saw some beautiful, colorful flowers. You may have noticed shiny new mailboxes and a freshly painted red front porch. These are just a few of the most obvious works produced by the spectacular Home Depot event this summer. At the end of July, approximately 70 volunteers converged on The Women's Shelter in a massive effort to renovate and rehab several transitional housing units. With much excitement and energy, paint flew on walls, window blinds were hung, and ceiling fans were installed. There is new laminate flooring, new doors, and motion detector lights providing safe entry. Volunteers from the Lake Carolina Jeep Rogers YMCA coordinated with The Home Depot providing additional manpower as well as hygiene bags for the women and books for the resource library. Many of you responded too, supplying snacks, drinks, and ice to keep the energy moving on that hot day. We owe a huge THANK YOU to all of these wonderful people for volunteering and also to Chic-fil-A, Bojangles, Starbucks and Publix for providing meals. We deeply appreciate your help.

Another beautiful addition to The Women's Shelter was given by local artist Ann Lyness. Ann painted a four by five feet mural depicting a path of recovery for our resource center. The mural was hung in September by her brother-in-law, David Nass. Inspiration for the painting came from women living in transitional housing and is filled with symbols representing various stages of healing and growth. Scene after scene blend throughout as life's journey is followed along a path lined with houses, churches, animals, mountains, a rainbow, and a soaring eagle. Each symbol holds special meaning for every indivi-

-dual who sees it. We invite you to stop by to view this delightful painting.

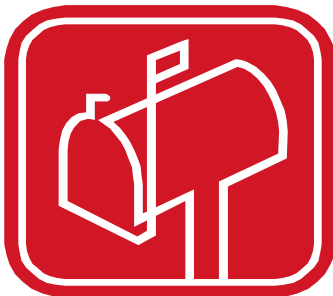
While living at The Women's Shelter and working on a personal life journey, residents are exposed to many opportunities for growth. One of these opportunities will involve several transitional women who plan to attend a Fall 2008 Retreat for Recovering Alcoholic Women on October 24, 25, and 26 in Greenville, South Carolina.

Another experience recently gave several women an opportunity to volunteer at a F.A.V.O.R Rally for a 5k Dry-Run. They helped direct and cheer the runners along the course. Ms. Ann Addison continues to volunteer her time teaching a weekly GED class on a weekly basis. Grammar rules, spelling, vocabulary, and math are current topics of conversation heard around the shelter.

Employment is an important goal for all women living in the main shelter as well as transitional housing.

As a woman continues her program from the main shelter to her new home in a transitional unit, she often hopes to find a better paying job or one that more closely fits her interests. To provide valuable assistance in this process, Social Work intern, Tamara Peterson, is developing a program to help women gain more marketable employment skills. Tamara will assist a woman with writing a resume, job interviewing skills, and appropriate dress for that important interview.

Whether developing a deeper spiritual walk, volunteering to help others, or simply sharing life experiences built up over the years, women are empowered individually and in the future.



TWENTY-NINTH ANNUAL THANKSGIVING SOUPER

Thursday, November 20, 2008, 5:30-7:30 P.M.

Eastminster Presbyterian Church

3200 Trenholm Road

\$2 adults, \$1 children

Sponsored by Chick-fil-A of Columbia

HOW TO SUPPORT THE SOUPER:

SELL TICKETS: For more information, call (803) 779-4706.

BUY A BUNCH OF TICKETS: Treat a group of your friends to dinner at the Souper.

CAN'T MAKE IT? Join us in spirit. Use the enclosed envelope to support the shelter with a Souper donation.

SPONSOR A TABLE: Sponsor a table in honor of a special woman. For a donation of \$150.00, you can let 500 of our friends know how you feel about your wife, mom, daughter, mother-in-law, friend, mentor or role model. Your honoree's name will grace a lovely table, and she will receive special mention in the Souper program. Complete the following information and return the form with your contribution in the enclosed envelope by November 13, 2008.

Name _____

Address _____

Circle one: **In honor of** or **In memory of**

(Please print names as you want them to appear on the table and program.)

Honoree's Name: _____

By (*your name or group's name*) _____

Return to: The Women's Shelter
3425 N Main St.
Columbia, SC 29203



*The Women's Shelter
3425 North Main Street
Columbia, SC 29203
Address Service Requested*

*Nonprofit Organization
U.S. Postage Paid
Permit #1018
Columbia, SC*

WISH LIST

The holiday season is approaching. During this time of hustle and bustle, The Women's Shelter appreciates all that you do to make this time of year a little less difficult and a little more "normal" for our families. You will never know how much your time and donations affect the families we work with. If you are interested in helping provide food, gifts, or decorations during this holiday season, please contact
The Women's Shelter at (803) 779-4706

HOLIDAY WISHES

- ♥ Baked Goods
- ♥ Candy
- ♥ New toys/games for children
- ♥ Stocking Stuffers
- ♥ Small gifts for the women
- ♥ Certificates for hair cuts
- ♥ Movie Passes
- ♥ Phone Cards



ONGOING NEEDS LIST

- ♥ Alcohol free Cold/Flu Remedies
- ♥ Acetaminophen,
- ♥ New Underwear/Bras
- ♥ Lotion
- ♥ Coffee
- ♥ Hot Chocolate
- ♥ Sugar
- ♥ Laundry Detergent

Happy Hol

The Women's Shelter web address: www.womenshelter.org Phone N

