



Shepherd's Crossing

FEBRUARY, 2011—IN THIS ISSUE:

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Note from the Executive Director



Executive Director
Beverly Olson

There is no question that these are challenging times, but we have a great team of volunteers who are deeply committed to caring for those in need. One of our recent days of assistance included clients requesting help in many different ways: two for prescriptions; eight for an electric bill; one for a water bill; one for a gas bill; four for rent; two for clothing vouchers; and two applications for a Fairy Godmother's grant. This all happened in three and one-half hours, but imagine the 20 homes that can breathe a little easier because of the donations from churches, individuals, businesses and volunteers. Thanks to all of you who show that you care.

We are continually grateful to First United Methodist Church for the use of the Alan Lee Center for the days that we are open to the public and for our office work days. Blessings!

-Beverly Olson, Executive Director

Words We Love to Hear

We occasionally get notes of appreciation from our clients. We share these with our volunteers, who truly enjoy reading what someone says after they have received help at Shepherd's Crossing. We thought perhaps our newsletter readers would also like to see what a couple of them had to say. Most of the wording has been left as written by these wonderful clients!

To the Volunteer at Shepherd's Crossing,

Once again, on behalf of me and my son (name omitted) and all the people who forget to say it, Thank you all very, very much for your time, effort and generosity, and what lifesavers you are for those in need, here in Riley County! Overheard a man just the other day talking about how you helped him with rent and you should've seen the joy and relief on his face! Thank you for the clothing vouchers. I need something decent to wear to church. Miniskirts and short shorts don't cut it. Have a nice holiday season and thanks again!

Sincerely,
(Name omitted)

Some of our readers may hear comments about Shepherd's Crossing as you move about in the community. We'd like to have you tell us what you hear—criticism as well as praise. Drop us a line or send us an email at shepherd@interkan.net.

To Staff,

I just wanted you all to know how much we are grateful for your help when we needed it the most. You all was there for us. So now we can give to a church so you all can help some one else like you did for us. I want to thank the people at Shepherd's Crossing for helping the (name omitted) family out. Now things came through from the VA—they went back to 1985. We get back pay, plus more a month from them. Just one word of thanks.

God bless you all.
(Name omitted)



LIHEAP

Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program—On January 19, Shepherd's Crossing opened its doors to households who could qualify for grants from the State of Kansas utility assistance program popularly called LIHEAP. These grants are one-time payments of utility bills for low-income households. Beverly Olson and Warren Holmes, along with

several counselors and representatives of other participating organizations, made our services available to register qualified clients online. This greatly benefited our clients and also served as a great help to the Department of Social and Rehabilitation Services which administers the program. Another good example of collaboration!

Staff Notes

Debbie VanderWeide left her temporary, part-time position with us in December to take a full-time position with a child care center. She started in November 2009 supported by funds from a Sunflower Foundation grant. The grant was to help us deal with the client overload brought on by the economic downturn. Debbie did a great job and will be missed by all of us at Shepherd's Crossing. Warren Holmes, director of client services, has expanded his hours to include some of Debbie's duties.

Kourtney Krehbiel, senior at K-State in Family Studies and Human Services, joined Shepherd's Crossing staff in January as an intern. She wants to gain practical experience in a social service agency in preparation for a career in that field. She hopes to learn counseling skills, database management, marketing, public presentations and financial management. Welcome, Kourtney! Your donation of time and effort will make Shepherd's Crossing more effective in carrying out its mission.

Support in Numbers

End-of-year numbers show that we assisted 1,256 households during 2010. That's 135 or 12% more than in 2009. These numbers include duplicate visits by persons from the same family. When reduced to unduplicated households, the number is 629.

Total assistance in 2010: \$164,933. That's an average of \$131.32 per assistance. The total compares to \$152,380 in 2009 or approximately 8% more.

16 volunteers, working as counselors, greeters and office helpers, donated more than 2,000 hours during 2010. There is no way one could put an accurate monetary value on these services, but if one assumed a pay rate of \$10 per hour, the contribution would exceed \$20,000.


Help Find our Supporters!

Best Friends Bible Class—During December, Shepherd's Crossing received a contribution of more than \$100 with a note stating that it was from the Best Friends Bible Class. Beverly Olson has tried to find out more about this group and would like to say thanks to the members of the class.

TPM—We also received a gift from TPM. This women's organization is well-known in Manhattan, but we need to have the name of someone to thank!

Can anyone help us locate these groups?
Call 785.776.1470 • Email shepherd@interkan.net

NOW AVAILABLE:

Make donations directly from our website or  facebook page! shepherdcrossing.info
facebook.com/shepherdcrossing

Shepherd's Crossing's mission is to provide compassionate and caring assistance to those in need of a listening ear and financial support.

OPEN: Tuesday 10 a.m.-2 p.m. & Thursday 2-5:30 p.m.

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GIVING THANKS



Farewell to Sirloin Stockade—

The corporate headquarters for Sirloin Stockade ended its 19-month relationship with Shepherd's Crossing in November 2010. Their generosity in donating 10

percent of each receipt deposited in our basket on the Third Tuesday of each month brought a total of \$6,812.35 to support our assistance programs. This has helped dozens of Riley County families with their rent and utility bills. Our staff, volunteers and Board of Directors are deeply appreciative of Sirloin Stockade for this meaningful relationship. Hats off to Frank Connizzo for his faithful attention to this program. It was his initiative which led to the Third Tuesday program and it was Frank who was present on most of the 19 Tuesdays, encouraging diners to put their receipt in the basket. Sirloin Stockade employees were forever attentive to our presence and helped us in so many different ways. Thanks a million!

Mark your Calendar—Famous Dave's in Manhattan agreed to donate a percentage of each patron's bill to Shepherd's Crossing on Sunday, February 13. This is a one-time arrangement. Shepherd's Crossing's supporters must present a special flyer to the staff at the restaurant in order to obtain the donation. The flyer can be obtained from the Shepherd's Crossing website or Facebook page. This, again, resulted from a call by Frank Connizzo!



Frank Connizzo



BRRRRR!!! IT'S COLD OUTSIDE

The north wind doth blow and we shall have snow!—School children love to see a heavy snowfall—after all, it means no school today! The staff and volunteers at Shepherd's Crossing may or may not think that snow is beautiful, but they know that snow and cold weather can mean difficult times for many of their clients. Recall the several days' power outage in December 2007? That was more than a nuisance for all those without heat and light.

Shift your thinking, if you will, to the hundreds of low-income families who face the prospect of having their electricity and gas shut off for non-payment of bills at any time. Imagine the trauma associated with doing without heat, light and hot water for a protracted period of time because you can't pay your bill. Yes, Kansas has a policy called the cold weather rule which has been adopted by the utility companies, and offers some safeguards.

Shepherd's Crossing has helped literally hundreds of households avoid shut-off or get service restored. We work directly with Westar and Kansas Gas Service, often putting the client on a payment plan. We are able to do this because of the generosity of our donors and our partnership with the City of Manhattan.

COLD WEATHER RULE:

- A utility can't disconnect you when the temperature is forecasted to drop below 35 degrees or be in the mid to low 30's in the next 24 hours. To keep from getting disconnected when it is 35 degrees or above, or to get reconnected regardless of temperature, you must make pay arrangements with your utility.
- A utility may start final notification and disconnection process if there is a 48-hour forecast of temperatures above 35 degrees.
- On the day before disconnection, a utility must attempt to contact you by phone. If that fails, they must go to the home and notify you or leave a message on the door. Some utilities have a third-party notification plan.
- If the 48-hour forecast changes before the period ends and there is a forecast of below 35 degrees, the utility cannot disconnect until there is another Cold Weather Rule 48-hour forecast of temperatures above 35 degrees.

Faithful Giving Congregations

Our October listing of congregations which gave in four or more months through August 2010 brought forth one major oversight and one proper inquiry. The oversight was called to our attention by volunteer Marilyn Davenport. She quite properly noted that we had not included the St. Paul's Encore Shop. Thanks, Marilyn! The Encore Shop not only makes monthly cash donations to Shepherd's Crossing; it also provides us with clothing vouchers which we issue to clients.

The inquiry came from Christ the Redeemer Church, asking about its 2010 gifts. This congregation has given monthly for several years and should have been included. The reason it was not listed was the way we recorded gifts during the first eight months—some of the gifts were lumped together, causing them to be omitted from the list of those giving in four or more months. Not a suitable excuse, but this is the reason. Thanks to Mark Linville and Pastor Nate Wilson for their careful reading of the newsletter and for letting us know about our error.

Sharing with the Shepherd

Our annual letter went out early in December, giving our faithful donors an opportunity to make year-end gifts to our 2011 Sharing with the Shepherd campaign. The response has been heartwarming. This is our major fund raising effort and we rely on our December — February donations to help support our operation the rest of the year. Thanks so very much to those of you who mailed in a contribution. Anyone still wishing to give to this fund may use the enclosed envelope to mail in your gift.

NEWS

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