



Dominican Center Newsletter

2470 W. LOCUST STREET, MILWAUKEE, WI 53206 414-444-9930

MARCH 1ST, 2006 THROUGH MAY 31ST, 2006

FROM THE DIRECTOR

ANN HALLORAN, OP

We are coming to the close of another year, and all of us are wondering where the time has gone. I guess that is a good thing. Reviewing the year and its record of accomplishments assures us it has been a good thing. The following listings will give you an idea of some of our activities.

- Monthly over 500 people come to the Center for one or the other of the services we offer.
- Since June of 2005, we have brokered 8 homes within our targeted area. We have seven families credit ready and on the waiting list for a home.
- Partnership with the Milwaukee Health Department continues to grow and develop. Through our contract with them, our lead abatement organizer, **Shonia Zollicoffer** has encouraged all neighborhood families to have their children lead tested. She has reached families by going door to door, visiting schools, churches and day care units to get out the message of the enormity of the lead poisoning problem. Of the thirteen applications for new lead free windows, seven have been completed. Shonia has also helped seven families submit NIP applications, with two of them approved. In addition the Health Department is working with us in conjunction with WE Energies so that residents can benefit from the WE Energy weatherization program. Their program involves assistance with furnaces, hot water heaters, insulation and lead free windows.
- The First Saturday resource meetings are continuing to attract many new members. More and more we realize how our mission: "To create a safe, beautiful neighborhood where people are well educated and well employed", is a rallying point for the community. In addition to the Center's meetings, a satellite group of neighborhood homeowners meets weekly in an effort to strengthen community in the neighborhood and to make

certain that residents have a strong voice in neighborhood development. On July 1, they will sponsor a fair with the theme, *Families United in '06*. They are planning on an attendance of over 300. The Dominican Center is a sponsor for that event.

- Under the direction of **Tess Gallun**, a UWM Documentary Film Class has produced a great piece of work. Their ten minute documentary has caught well the spirit and mission of the Center. The focus of the documentary is the renovation of the home that the Center purchased on 2975 North 21st Street. The home will be sold to one of our constituents. This filmmaking marks the fourth collaboration we have had with UWM students and faculty. The partnership began with a chance visit of **Professor Jacques DuPlessis** to the Center's Resale shop. He liked what he saw and heard about the Center, so he invited us to be the recipient of the community service aspect of his classes. It's been a win win situation ever since.

- Our students continue to accomplish much. **Doris Gant** and **Jackie Williams** have received their GED. Jackie was hired at St. Ann's Intergenerational Care Center almost immediately after her graduation in December. Recently, she was chosen May employee of the month. **Stephanie Sow** was chosen to represent Hephatha Church at a recent city wide Lutheran synod meeting. **Rochelle Jones** was also hired at St. Ann's.



Tyler Holst, seen in the red shirt above, restored the delapidated porch at 2975 North 21st Street for his final Eagle Scout Project. The porch was completed along with his troupe and father Jim Holst, seen above brandishing a sawzall with others from the Boy Scouts.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT CONTINUED...

The Center sponsors a meal at Guest House, a place for homeless men, on the first Sunday of each month prepared and organized by **Jackie & Archie Williams**. The following help serve the guests and visit with them: **Dorothy Simond, Doris Gant, Sister Sue Felice, Sister Ann** and a number of other volunteers. It is always a special event. **Lydia Johnson** was honored to have her essay chosen to be printed in MATC's "Readers Writers" Program. Congratulations, Lydia.

• From July 10th - 14th, we are looking forward to welcoming nineteen teams from Catholic Heart Workcamp. The teams will be assisting homeowners in the neighborhood with a host of activities: gardening, painting, building, cleaning out, cleaning up, and whatever else needs to be done. Also this summer **Sister Sue** will again be working in partnership with Hephatha Church work ministry program. They will beautify the neighborhood by planting flowers in the gardens of those who request them. In addition they will do a weekly clean up of the neighborhood.

All in all it promises to be a busy and productive summer. Please feel free to drop by anytime.

AN INTERVIEW WITH GEORGNIANA BOND

In an interview with Dominican Center Student **Georgniana Bond**, staff member **Carl Quindel** discovered the inspirational story of a woman's quest for knowledge. Her journey finally brought her to the Dominican Center roughly a year ago after speaking with a friend about her desire to return to school and learn how to read. Her friend mentioned the Dominican Center as a place that offered this type of opportunity. On Monday after last year's Memorial day, Georgniana walked into the Dominican Center and met with **Sister Ann Halloran**. Georgniana found the Center to be "a spiritual place", and she "thanks God for it".

According to Georgniana, her story began long before a year ago and not even in Milwaukee. "I grew up on a plantation in Mississippi and never had an opportunity to go to school," she explains. "The Civil Rights marches helped out a bit so that my younger brothers and sisters could take advantage of busing and good schools. I remember them being able to ride the yellow bus to get to the better schools. Before the buses, we all walked to a school, which was a part of the plantation." The plantation

school never compared to the education provided at the surrounding schools. When Georgniana ended up in Milwaukee about 40 years ago, she realized how important riding that yellow bus would have been. "When

I got here, I couldn't even spell my own name," she sadly remembers.

Her goals now are to earn her high school diploma at the age of 69. She also has begun writing memoirs of her experience in Mississippi and hopes to turn these into a book. In her first written piece she reflects on her time on the plantation, "The white children went to school all year long. They were the ones who rode the yellow buses, while we were in the field working... none of us was able to go to school until the crops were gathered." When those at the Center urged her to start writing her memories down on paper, she thought it might be too painful, but "it did [her] good to talk about her upbringing and how [she] really had no schooling growing up." What she did have, was common sense and a lot of respect for her mother and father, who helped her through rough times with prayer and faith "that one day [they] were going to overcome".

When asked about her typical day at the Center, she elaborated, "Some days, I only do math, other days I read, and when **Dorothy [Daniel]** is here we read the Bible and talk about it...I love the Dominican Center. I now know how to come in and get busy working by myself." Since she started coming to the Center, Georgniana learned to read and when she thinks about all she has accomplished, she seems astonished at where she is today, noting that "by God's grace, I have come a long way."



A happy Georgniana Bond is studying hard as usual at the Dominican Center for Women, Inc.

VOICES FROM THE CENTER

ROSA PARKS, 1913 - 2005

by Doris Gant

"I reached my limit of being in bondage, so I refused to give up my seat on the bus. There were plenty of other seats for people to have when the bus driver pulled over. Fear did not appear in me. My God gave me a seat. I held my head up, not knowing what was going to happen. My God never left me. Through my steadfastness, people of all colors were able to remain steadfast for the rights of freedom."

We shall overcome, we shall overcome. Let freedom ring! Let freedom ring!

I thank Rosa Parks for putting her life in danger, for allowing us to have equal rights.

God be with you always. Rest in Peace.

A PRAYER

by Marilyn Washington

Our Father...who art in heaven...we come with humble prayer... not to beg for miracles, just strength to not despair.

You are refreshment and true strength. We ask that you refresh and strengthen us as we come to you in unity.

Help us to accomplish our dreams and goals of being home owners in good standing according to your creeds.

Secure our faith, trust, and wisdom in this violent world, so that we can build a caring, loving, and peaceful community that arms us with hope and courage.

We ask in the name of your son Jesus Christ...Amen



Felicia Davis, Stephanie Sow, Sister Sue Felice, OSF, & Doris Gant enjoying each others company at the Dominican Center.

ONE DREAM

by Denise Scott

If I could have one dream come true, it would be that I find a good job so I could buy Omar and myself a house and a car. I would also get my GED so that my children can be so proud of me. I thank God for Sister Sue and Sister Ann for what they are teaching. I thank God for giving me an opportunity to go to school.



Rochelle Jones and Sherry Jackson mingle at the Dominican Center Fundraiser.

UNCONDITIONAL LOVE

by Doris Gant

Lord, I thank you for your unconditional love. You do not let me stay in my sorrow, but I thank you for every last one. Without me keeping you first, I would have been messed up. Lord, I am glad to know that the blind and the just see you. Lord, I am blind. I try to be just. Lord, keep watching, working and walking with me. Lord, I can feel the fire. Lord I am trying my best to stay focused. I also encourage myself to be understanding and compassionate. I have a desire to help or least to try to help.

Lord, you gave me new life. Keep me smiling and always with a good word or thought in my mind and in my heart.

DOMINICAN CENTER FOR WOMEN, INC.
2470 WEST LOCUST STREET
MILWAUKEE, WI 53206-1134



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Our mission is to help create a beautiful and safe neighborhood consisting primarily of homeowners who are well educated and well employed.

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Dominican Center Rehab Specialist Wes Landry explains to Eagle Scout Tyler Holst the intricacies of porch restoration.



Doris Gant and Pastor Mary Martha Kannas have a chat at the Dominican Center Fundraiser.



Dominican Center Development Director Sister Mary Catherine takes a moment to smile for the camera

If you are interested in ordering *Dare to Dream* Dream Cards™, we have several options. For order inquiries, please contact Carl Quindel at

414-444-9930

