



Joseph's Coat Newsletter

FEBRUARY 2008

“It is easy to lose sight of the common good and the call to care for our neighbors as ourselves. A culture of the common good is one in which people look out for each other and concern for one another is reflected in the corporations, communities, entertainment and government we produce. A culture of the common good provides for the health, welfare and advancement of all people, regardless of race, gender, religion or economic class.

- Danielle Baas Molliver

Dear Friends,

Each of you, dear readers, has been a living example of what “looking out for” and what “having concern for” one another really means. All during December, you came with new things for our guests: winter jackets, hats, scarves, and mittens for everyone, new clothes, toys, games and books for our children, blankets, bed linen, and gift items. For our staff and volunteers you brought cookies, special coffee, candy, poinsettias, cards, and other surprises. You came with hugs, offers to help us with our work, and warm wishes for happy holidays. You are wonderful!! **THANK YOU!**

Many of you helped insure our future this holiday by making a generous financial donation. You gave from your hearts and we are so very grateful. Some of those who shop here offered what they had, a dollar, five dollars. Some offered to vacuum or to shovel the sidewalk or pick up trash around the building. Others told me that they just didn't know how they would make it without Joseph's Coat. Over and over I heard that we were such a blessing in their lives. **THANK YOU!**



Marlene and Sandy help shoppers at the table

I have always known that our volunteers are fabulous! They come week after week, most for many years, to visit with their friends and sort donated clothing and household items and/or to assist our guests as they shop for themselves and their families. They are gentle, kind and patient. Joseph's Coat is powered by these strong and beautiful women and men. I rejoice and give thanks and praise each day that I can work with them in this very special place. It is these wonderful friends that truly are the face of Joseph's Coat. **THANK YOU!**

Our wonderful friend and long time volunteer, Lucy Becker, died December 23, 2007.



We will always miss her. May she rest in peace.



“Continue to be who and how you are...to astonish a mean world with your acts of kindness. We are touched by your thoughtfulness, lifted up by your kindness and renewed by your goodness.” ~ Maya Angelou



Volunteers Alice, Mary Ellen and Diane take a break during a busy shopping day



Burm and Tina shop while they wait for their mom



Pat, Joan and Pam work at sorting donated clothing

WE ARE PLEASED TO ANNOUNCE...

For some time, we have had the goal to be of better service to the working poor. Many of these individuals work weekday hours, just as we do, and cannot access the services we provide. And so...

Beginning Saturday, March 8, 2008 we will open our doors the 2nd Saturday of each month from 9:00 AM to 1:00 PM for both shopping in the store and for accepting donations in our new space. These hours are designed to assist people who work Monday-Friday and who are unable to come during our regular business hours.

Last May, we hired Mary Anderson to be an associate in the store and to coordinate and staff the shopping area on Saturdays. A short time ago, Vicky Seidenkranz was hired to manage the hygiene program and she will oversee the donation area on Saturdays. We feel very fortunate to have these two wonderful women working their magic at Joseph's Coat.

A few thoughts Mary has had about working here:

"I have held a number of jobs in my life, but I have never felt as immediately accepted as I did my very first day here. The kindness and generosity of spirit of everyone was a new experience for me, and one I continue to treasure. Many of the volunteers helped me learn how things were done and made me feel welcome. Now that I know the names of the 90+volunteers, I also know how much I have come to care about all these wonderful people. The stories of our shoppers, their difficulties, struggles, ways of coping, have brought me out of my comfort zone and enabled me to see each person as unique, fallible and valuable. The day Danny told me how much it had meant to him when I had helped both he and his girlfriend find clothes when they were homeless and had lost all their belongings, was the day I felt I was really doing the work of Joseph's Coat. And, when I was thinking about a situation that had occurred at the store, I suddenly realized that that shopper was just trying to provide what she could for those family members she cared about. There are so many who come to shop but also to share themselves with us and I am moved to be part of this community. Recently, I was in downtown Minneapolis waiting for the light rail train and a young African man smiled at me and said hi. I smiled back. He then said, "You are from Joseph's Coat". That said volumes! I don't know if our shoppers and volunteers realize it, but I think about them when I am not at work. I carry many of them with me, hoping that their troubles will lessen, that their situations improve and I appreciate their resiliency, strength and courage."



Tanisha, Ronda, Corean and Veronica on her birthday



Vicky and Harley come together each week



Joan and Linda are happy to see each other



Mia, Bonnie and Mary visit at the front desk

JOSEPH'S COAT IS RECYCLING AT ITS VERY BEST!

~ Diane Hildin, a donor

"I get far more out of Joseph's Coat than I give."

~ John Cafferty, volunteer

A few lines about Vicky, by Liz

I first met Vicky in 2002. She and a friend came into the store in the middle of a busy shopping day. She had had a dream about Joseph's Coat. She told me her story and asked if she could volunteer here. She had been fighting an illness and thought it would be helpful and healing if she could come here and work a little bit. For years following that initial meeting, she, her husband Tom and their young children came at closing time on Wednesdays. Tom ran the vacuum and the rest of us worked at cleaning up the store. Long story short, she has been here ever since. About a year ago, we hired her to manage our hygiene program. 900 of our shoppers have a punch card that allows them to receive a gallon size plastic bag with shampoo (16 oz), lotion, deodorant, toothpaste and bar soap once a month. Vicky has enlisted the help of her mom and various friends/neighbors to help fill the bags. She has established relationships with Second Harvest and World Vision where she has been able to get hygiene and other items at minimal cost. In addition to the hygiene program, she has agreed to be a presence in the donation area on the Saturdays we are open. She loves being here and often comes in when she thinks we will need extra help. She is like a guardian angel to Joseph's Coat.

Thank you Mary and Vicky, for the great job you do.

Following are some more wonderful people who do a fabulous job for Joseph's Coat!

OUR BOARD OF DIRECTORS:

**Wayne Beierman
Renee Hoffman
Katherine Wojtan**

**Arch Mrkvicka
Roxanne Meshar**

**Bob Brezinski
Herb Mischke
Rita Quigley**

THANK YOU FOR SHARING YOUR WONDERFUL WISDOM AND INSIGHT WITH US.

Words of wisdom from: The Little Black Book, based on the writings of Bishop Ken Untener:

Lent is a time of prayer...

There's nothing tricky about prayer. It's simply tuning in to God's presence – and God is always present.

Not simply alongside us, but within us at the deepest part of who we are.

We never have to get God's attention. We have God's total attention. Always. Everywhere.

We never have to make an appointment with God.

We're "first on the list". Our appointment is always "right now".

When we call God, we never get voice mail. It's direct.

To draw near to God, we don't have to travel anywhere. God does all the traveling.

We don't have to figure out the right words to get started. God is already speaking to us.

All we have to do is turn off the "mute" button.

The reason we pray is to become more who we are. We're made in the image and likeness of God. When we pray, we become more and more like God. Try it. Use words if you wish.

But you can also just sit quietly with God. It's a fine way to spend a few minutes.

**Wishing you
blessings
and peace
during Lent
and a
beautiful
Easter
season!**



Scott, Emmett and Anthony work the men's department on a donation day



George and Mary Jane visit toward the end of the day



Dilma likes her new toy doggie

MANY THANKS...

To the church communities, foundations, businesses and individuals who support us financially. We could never manage without your generous help.

To our faithful donors who continue to gift us with clean seasonal clothing, household items and hygiene products. We are very grateful for your generosity.

To our wonderful volunteers, my dearest friends, extraordinary people. You are the heart of this ministry. Our doors would never open without you.

To my husband Larry, for his constant help, support and encouragement.

For these and for all our blessings, we are truly grateful.



Ryan chose a toy truck when it was his turn at the toy box

Joseph's Coat uses over 90% of donated resources for program needs.

Audit available upon request.

WINTER NEEDS LIST FOR JOSEPH'S COAT

Clean seasonal clothing for men, women and children

T-shirts, socks and underwear, new or gently used

Outerwear appropriate for the season

Shoes (esp. men's tennis shoes) and boots (in winter)

Adult backpacks, duffle bags and sleeping bags

Books for adults (mostly novels and mysteries)

Children's toys, games and books

Candles

Hygiene products (bar soap, shampoo, shaving soap, lotion, **toothpaste**, **toothbrushes**, **deodorant**, **disposable razors**, foot powder, etc.)

Household items (pots and pans, glassware, dishes, small electric items, sheets, blankets, towels, bedspreads, rugs for the bathroom and kitchen, etc.)

We still need:

Men's winter jackets, hats, scarves, gloves, & mittens.

Backpacks & duffle bags.

Pants, shirts, sweatshirts & sweatpants for men.

We always need:

Bed linen & blankets in every size.

**FINANCIAL SUPPORT IS APPRECIATED AND MAY BE DESIGNATED TOWARD PURCHASING ITEMS TO MEET THE NEEDS OF THE PEOPLE WE ARE SERVING.
THANK YOU FOR YOUR DONATION**

DONATION HOURS: TUESDAY AND THURSDAY, 9:00 A.M. - 2:00 P.M. OR BY APPOINTMENT. SATURDAY, 9:00 A.M. - 1:00 P.M. PLEASE CALL AHEAD FOR LARGE DONATIONS. THANK YOU.

MAILING ADDRESS:

Joseph's Coat
P.O. Box 2202
St. Paul, MN 55102

CLOSING DATES FOR HOLIDAY TIMES:

Holy Week: Mon. March 17th thru Fri. March 21st
Memorial Day: Mon. May 26th thru Fri. May 30th

STREET ADDRESS:

1107 West 7th Street - **On West 7th Street, 1 block West of Randolph, 1 mile East of 35E**

PHONE #: 651-291-2472

WEB: josephscoatmn.org

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