



Joseph's Coat

June 2008

"The Earth is God's; its abundance is for all. The work of sharing what every human being needs to live ~ food, water, shelter, education, health care, ~ is our call and our responsibility as human beings and as Christians. In a way, all of us immigrated to this land of promise and depended on the hospitality of others."

.....Joan Mitchell, CSJ

Dear Friends,

Jayne Hollen called a couple of months ago. She told me she was a senior at Mahtomedi High School. She said that for her "senior project" she wanted to do something to benefit Joseph's Coat!! I had never met Jayne. She sounded very nice, had thought through what she would do and really wanted to make a difference. After some thought and discussion, it was decided that new carpeting in our large storage room would be a good project. Ever since we have been on W. 7th Street there has been a hodge podge of previously used floor coverings in that room. It's like a patch work quilt! We sought a bid from Schneider's Carpet across the street. They have carpeted other rooms for us, always offering us a discount (thank you, Schneider's). The bid was \$2000.00. Jayne thought she could raise enough money to accomplish that!



Since that day she has dedicated her time, energy and considerable expertise to obtaining these funds with projects in her school and neighborhood. In addition, she has chosen to work at the store each week; she has unpacked bags of donated items and put them in their proper places and has assisted our clients at the table helping them find what they need.

Little did I know with that first phone call that I was speaking with such a super motivated, dedicated, smart, talented young woman, who ultimately would obtain not only the gift of new carpeting for us, but would give us the wonderful gift of her friendship as well.

THANK YOU, JAYNE!



Helen, Carole, Val and Marcelle



Barb, Kathy and Kerm



Linda and Sue

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 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 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, DEAR FRIENDS**

The photos in this newsletter were taken at our spring volunteer luncheon and style show!

**So many times I have said:
"The Lord is in this place just as surely as I am."**

One day, a lovely woman I know, called and told me that her washer had broken and that it had been pronounced "beyond repair". She wondered if I knew where she could get another one – for free! I had no idea but told her I'd think about it and asked her to give me a little time to work on it and call me back in about a week. She was a little distressed about her plight. I asked if she had money for the laundromat, she did not. She said her neighbor would let her use her washer for a few times but she had no soap powder or softener. I offered those two items, as we sometimes include them in our hygiene packages. She came to get them. A week went by. She called again. I had no news. I honestly hadn't had a moment to think about it. I told her the note was right on my desk and wrote down her phone number. I didn't want to just forget about it, but I couldn't imagine how it would turn out in the end. We just don't do washers at Joseph's Coat!!

Two days went by. The phone rang. It was Mary at the Little Sisters of the Poor. She told me that they had a stacking washer and dryer, pretty new, that they had to get rid of and did I have anyone in mind that might be able to use it? I was speechless!! Unbelievable!!

I called my friend. She was ecstatic! She made an arrangement for a family member to pick it up that same day. She called later to tell me it was all hooked up and ready to go and thanked me for getting it. "I didn't do it!" I told her. "Honest, I didn't do it!"

Sometimes the things that go on over here just take your breath away.
The Lord watches over and blesses this little place and every person in it.

Speaking of blessings...One shopping day, a woman picked up her bag and moved toward the door. She had gotten some clothing, a booster seat for her car and a small plastic wagon. She gave me a hug and said, "I feel so happy! God bless all of you for helping all of us. Thank you!"
YOU MAKE IT HAPPEN! THANK YOU!



Sue, Herb, Joan and Connie



Friends enjoy lunch and visit



Alice, Beth, Marlene and Sandy



Gene, Judy and Cindy



George, John & Emmett



Board members
Herb & Wayne with Liz



Jim, Margaret and Julie



Arch and John

This week we assisted 875 adults and 228 children who came to us for help.



Corrine, style show moderator



Lois and Marilee get ready to walk the runway



Gayle, John and Char enjoy the antics of friends



Linda models the latest fashions

She says she will never forget...

One day last March, a volunteer came in to say that someone wanted to see me. It was a lovely woman, about 30 years old. She wondered if I would remember her as it had been about 4 years since our last meeting. She told me she used to shop here but now no longer lives in the St. Paul area. Here is her story: in 2002 she and her husband of 15 years had three children, ages 6, 7 and 12. Everything seemed to be fine until one day, he just left... no explanation, nothing! He had taken all the money they had so she had no way to pay the rent, or buy food or clothes for her family. She began to work more jobs taking two additional to the one she already had. She tried to get food stamps and medical insurance but she made \$2.00 too much and was rejected. Someone told her about Joseph's Coat and she came to shop. She remembers that one of our volunteers gave her a couch and she was so happy! They could all fit on the couch together.

After a while, she grew desperate and despondent. She got in a little bit of trouble trying to hold everything together. She tried to commit suicide. Her one friend came over and found her on the floor and called 911. She told her that no way were her kids going to come home from school to find her dead! She was taken to the ER where they pumped her stomach and released her. Two days later, she came to realize that things had gone much better for her in South Dakota. They all piled into the car and she started driving. She got a job in a daycare and worked there for about a year. Everyday she prayed for strength and wisdom. She discerned that she should go to school. Somehow that came to pass. Today she is able to see the light at the end of the tunnel. She would graduate in May (2008); she works full time and has her own construction clean-up business.

She explained that she was in St. Paul that day to take one of her children to a medical specialist. She stopped here first because she wanted to say "thank you"! She said it was this place that got her through the tough times; we were there for her, cared about her and helped her to be strong. She came regularly to get clothes for her kids and things for the house. She vividly remembers one Christmas when one of her boys loved some toy so much, but no way could she afford it! On their next visit, she found it in our toy box!! Everyone in the family was so happy!

Through her tears she told me that just before she had left for South Dakota the first time, I had held her in my arms and told her that I would pray every day that she would be strong and that she would be a good mom and that all would be well. I am happy to report ...All is well!

YOU MAKE IT HAPPEN! THANK YOU!

Last May, Bob Gardner, a youth minister from Cedar Rapids, IA called and said he would be bringing some young people to the Twin Cities to do some service work. He wanted to know if we could use any help. They came, they worked and they were fabulous! We are grateful for their assistance. We so enjoyed having them.



If you buy Blue Sky books and don't use the bus passes, we can surely use them.

Stop by or mail them to P.O. Box 2202, St. Paul, MN 55102. Many thanks!

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.

In the summer months we especially need: socks and underwear for men, women and children (new or gently used), adult backpacks, men's tennis shoes, bar soap, disposable razors, toothbrushes, toothpaste, deodorant, shampoo, and foot powder. Thank you.

SPRING AND SUMMER NEEDS LIST FOR JOSEPH'S COAT

Clean seasonal clothing for men, women and children
T-shirts, socks and underwear, new or gently used

Baby clothes

Backpacks, sleeping bags, and tents

Books for adults (novels, mysteries)

Children's games, toys and books

Candles

Personal care products (soap, toothpaste, toothbrushes, shampoo, razors, deodorant etc.)

Household items (pots and pans, glassware, dishes, small electric items, sheets, blankets, towels, etc.)

Brown paper bags

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

SHOPPING HOURS: MONDAY AND WEDNESDAY 9:00 - 4:30 & 2nd SATURDAY OF EACH MONTH FROM 9:00 – 1:00

DONATION HOURS: TUESDAY AND THURSDAY 9:00 - 2:00 & 2nd SATURDAY OF EACH MONTH FROM 9:00 – 1:00 OR BY APPOINTMENT.

PLEASE CALL AHEAD FOR LARGE DONATIONS.

MAILING ADDRESS:

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

CLOSING DATES FOR HOLIDAY TIMES:

**June 30th - July 4th in celebration of the 4th of July
September 1st - 5th in celebration of Labor Day**

STREET ADDRESS: 1107 West 7th Street

PHONE #: 651-291-2472

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

If you do not wish to receive our newsletter, please put your mailing address label in the enclosed self-addressed envelope and mail it back to us. Thank you.