



**Joseph's
Coat**

Joseph's Coat

SEPTEMBER 2012

Meet One of Our Shoppers

Shopping Hours:

Monday and
Wednesday 9:00 -
12:00 and 1:00-
4:30

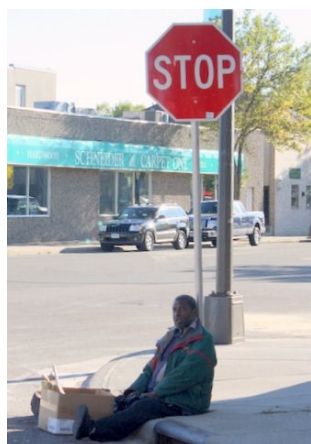
Donation Hours:

Tuesday and
Thursday 9:00 -
2:00

**FINANCIAL
SUPPORT IS FULLY
TAX DEDUCTIBLE.**

Leeland is a communicator. He talks. And talks. And talks. He doesn't much care if another human being is paying attention or not. I started listening to Lee because he makes me laugh, but the funny thing is that I learned from him. He's very aware that his constant chatter irritates people and leads others to conclude he's crazy. Sixty-three years of life have taught him that he can't do much about what others think of him. He can only try to be a good man.

The problem is that as far back as Leeland can remember, people have been telling him who he is and what he's like. His daddy would refer to Lee and say, "That boy ain't right in the head." As a little boy, he'd listen at the top of the stairs when his parents



thought he was asleep and hear them talking about what a problem he was. Kids in the neighborhood picked on him mercilessly. His dad had hunting dogs, and Lee spent many hours picking up dog poo in his yard. The neighborhood kids would come by and call him names and laugh at him. He can still hear them saying, "Hey, look at the dog man. He gots to clean up dog sh_t all the time." Lee was in a bad situation because his daddy didn't take kindly to disobedience. He was no stranger to *whoopins* with a belt, which didn't hurt much 'cause he was used to it. It's when his daddy beat him with a thick switch from the plum tree in their yard that he really hurt—those knots in the

wood made him bleed and left welts. The worst by far, though, was when he was beaten with an extension cord. He'd crawl under his bed to get away and his daddy would reach under, grab him by the feet, pull him out and start hitting him some more. His daddy didn't stop 'til he ran out of breath "like he was gonna have a heart attack."

He didn't really fit in at school either. He was placed in a program called Class C where they sent older kids back to lower grades to learn. It was humiliating. He was teased all of the time.

Running away from home several times and getting caught riding in a stolen car landed Lee in reform school.

Cont'd on back

A Few Notes...

- ◆ PLEASE keep in mind when packing your donations that the majority of our volunteers are unable to lift heavy bags and boxes
- ◆ We cannot accept: TV sets, hangers (plastic or wire), sharp knives, medical equipment, inoperable small appliances, telephones or electronics
- ◆ Let us know if you're interested in volunteering. We could use your help on Monday mornings, and Tuesday, Wednesday, or Thursday afternoons
- ◆ We need women's feminine products (tampons and sanitary pads), men's razors and any travel size personal care products

Shopper (cont'd)

There they had to make their beds exactly as instructed or face punishment. Lee tried really hard to make his bed the right way, but he couldn't remember how. Even when he wrote it down and promised himself that he would do it right the next time, he couldn't make it happen. He was labeled a rebel with an attitude who was unwilling to follow the rules. He was placed in *room confinement* and only allowed to come out to use the bathroom. He was ridiculed by the other kids as he walked down the hall to the lavatory. It never occurred to those in charge that Lee simply could not retain the information. As he grew up he started hanging around with people on the streets on the north side of Milwaukee. The ghetto. The people there accepted him. He drank. He hustled. He spent time in prison.

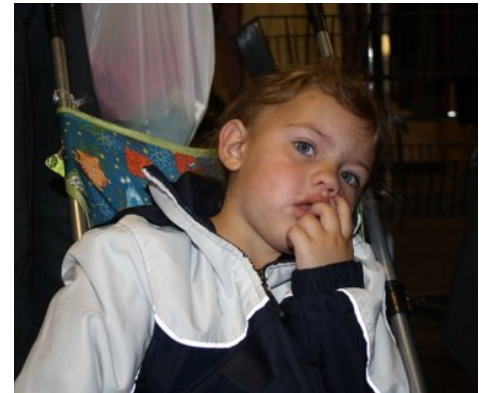
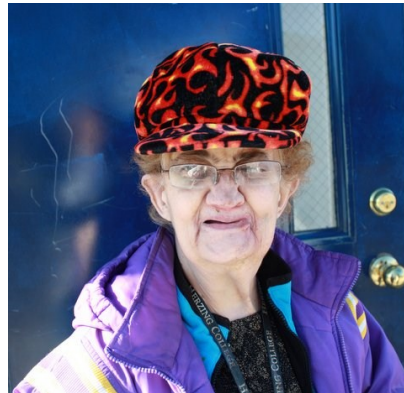
He lives in one room now. He does not have a refrigerator or a sink or a stove but is happy to have a microwave. He shares a bathroom with 20 other renters. He is a self-proclaimed "hogger" (hoarder) and is often seen going through trash to find treasures.

He walks around the neighborhood with a box or sack filled with his dis-



coveries. Many people don't like Lee because he's different. He doesn't act the way we're *supposed* to act. His behavior makes some angry and scares others. But, I learned that by overlooking annoying behavior you may meet someone like Lee who is kind hearted, hard working, and funny; someone who just wants to be accepted, not criticized, for who he is.

Photographs compliments of Lou Schatz



...more faces of our shoppers at Joseph's Coat

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