



Lazarus House
Love Letter

Luke 16:19-31

WORKING TOGETHER TO OFFER HOPE AND A FUTURE

Spring 2007

Volume X

Issue 1



Message from the Executive Director

What a blessing this last month has been! We received word that the ongoing rental subsidy program we have through the Illinois Housing Development Authority can be offered in Geneva as well as St. Charles. That means we can help our Geneva neighbors in need stay in their housing. As grateful as we are to have a place for our neighbors to come, we are even more grateful if we are able to help them stay in their own home.

I've also been very blessed by our Women and Children's Day Center. We have a great bunch of caring, courageous women who care for and support one another daily. One of our moms this week was having a difficult time advocating for the services her special needs child requires. Of course we will help her with this, but it was gratifying to see how the other women listened and supported her as she described her struggle to have her child's needs met.

Another of our women needed some specialized care, and when she was able to access the care she needed at a facility in Rockford on short notice, we had to put her in a cab so she could get there on time, as no staff was available to drive her. How grateful I am that we have some grant money to cover transportation costs.

Recently, a new guest came to us. She is 19 and has a 2-year-old child. The other women gathered around and made her feel very comfortable. When I told the women that the new person was coming, one of the ladies responded "don't worry, we'll pour love on her", and they did. A true family of God!

How grateful I am for the new Women and Children's Day Center that provides such a warm, loving environment for our women and their children. Even though they don't sleep there, it's a real home that feels "homey". Our one bump in the road is that it's REALLY tight quarters

when everyone is "home". We knew going in that the space was small, but the location was so ideal we really felt this was our best option. And it has been a wonderful gift.

Our plan is to put a modest 12x17 addition on the north side of the Women and Children's Day Center, one room downstairs and one room upstairs. We hope to start this addition in February and have it completed in time for our 10th anniversary in June.

Yes, I did say "10th anniversary"! Can you believe it's been 10 years? Me neither, but it's true. God has been so very good to us, as has been this very caring community.

As we look to the next 10 years, our hope is that the numbers in our emergency shelter begin to go down as our rental assistance program increases. As funding permits, we hope to eventually extend our ongoing rental assistance program to our entire

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Upcoming Events



- **SPAGHETTI SUPPER FUNDRAISER**
FRIDAY, MARCH 9
5:00—7:30 P.M.
GENEVA UNITED METHODIST CHURCH. 211 HAMILTON IN GENEVA. THE MEN'S GROUP WILL HOLD THIS SUPPER TO BENEFIT LAZARUS HOUSE AND A HURRICANE RELIEF EFFORT. CALL (630) 232-7120 FOR MORE INFORMATION
- **"DECADE OF DREAMS"**
LAZARUS HOUSE ANNUAL DINNER/AUCTION
SATURDAY, APRIL 21
PHEASANT RUN RESORT & SPA

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See Auction invitation insert inside this issue

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service area (the Tri Cities and western rural Kane). We would love to be able to keep most people in their homes, and will work diligently to identify grants and other resources to accomplish this purpose.

One of our challenges is that we ARE more "mature". When churches or businesses start out, everyone understands that they are start-up operations and want to help. But as operations become established, it is assumed that their parishioners or customers can support them. Not so for us! The services we provide are without cost, and the more people we serve, the more it costs us to provide those services. So, as we "mature" and provide more help and care to our guests and the community at large, more resources are required to cover the costs associated with those services. Grants often will cover the cost of a specific need, but will not as often cover general operating and staff costs. So, we have some grant money for rental

assistance, but very little of it can be used to pay the staff we need to administer the program. We may write a grant for a new refrigerator, but we don't get funding to pay for the person who is serving meals to our neighbors in need.

That's where you come in. **For our 10th anniversary year, I would like to ask every household who is able, to contribute \$10.** Maybe you can only afford to send \$10 once, and if so, I thank you for that \$10. But maybe you can afford to send \$10 each month, or \$10 each week, or maybe even \$10 a day. I don't know what you can afford, but if you have a roof over your head, and food in your refrigerator, and car keys in your pocket, then you are wealthier than the 58 men, women and children who are staying with us tonight. Lazarus House is a 501(c)(3) not for profit charity registered with the state of Illinois, so all gifts are tax deductible.

Our next 10 years will be filled with many blessings and many challenges. I remember in our early years, we didn't have money for medication or transporta-

tion, and often when someone came to us with a prescription or a need to get somewhere urgently, a staff person or volunteer had to provide the resources. How grateful I am now that we do have more resources, but how quickly they evaporate in view of the pressing needs.

A popular song back in the depression years was "Brother, Can You Spare a Dime?" I would like to ask every household if they can spare \$10, whether it's a one-time gift or an ongoing gift. Each one is appreciated and put to excellent use. It's an investment in the future of our community and our neighbors, and it's storing up your treasures in heaven. For more information on this concept, consult the Basic Instructions Before Leaving Earth (better known as the Bible), Matthew 6:19-21. "For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also." Thank you for having a heart for your neighbors in need and investing in their future and yours.

Serving Him with you,

LAZARUS HOUSE 10TH ANNIVERSARY PLEDGE CARD

Yes! I would like to invest in our community and the future by donating the following to Lazarus House:
(please check one)

\$10 _____ \$10 monthly (\$120 per year) _____
\$10 weekly (\$520 per year) _____ \$10 daily (\$3,650 per year) _____

All gifts of any size are welcome and put to excellent use. Here are a few examples of how your gift can be applied:

- \$39 – One day of food, shelter, showers, hygiene items, case management, referral to support services, and assistance with specific guest needs, such as GED registration
- \$48 – One day of daycare for a small child
- \$60 – One month of bus passes for a guest to reach appointment
- \$30 and up - Prescriptions or one episode of counseling or general medical care

Name _____ Phone _____

Address _____ E-Mail _____

Celebrating a 'Decade of Dreams'

Lazarus House prepares for annual dinner/auction

*Lazarus House
Annual
Dinner/Auction
"Decade of
Dreams"*

Saturday, April 21

*Pheasant Run
Resort & Spa*

Because of you, our extended family, Lazarus House has been able to offer hope and a future to its neighbors in need...for 10 years!

We would be honored if you would join us at our annual dinner/ auction as we celebrate a "Decade of Dreams."

Like any family, over the years we have grown and made changes. Together, we have faced challenges and celebrated victories. We are so thankful for

the gifts that God has blessed us with, especially you. Please see the en-



closed invitation and plan to be a part of our celebration on Saturday, April 21, 2007

at Pheasant Run Resort & Spa.

Here's how you can help:

We are still in need of items for our Live and Silent Auctions. Local businesses and area residents have begun donating items for the silent and live auctions, but more items are needed. If you would like more information about

attending our event or donating an item, please call Cindy Duff at 587-2144.

Grant brings transportation blessing

For the past three years, Lazarus House has been attending meetings of the Kane County Paratransit Committee. The purpose of these meetings was to organize an effort to get funding into Kane County to subsidize taxi service for seniors, disabled and low income persons. It has been a long, and at times discouraging process, but it all came together recently and Kane County was awarded a \$2.6 million dollar grant. What a blessing! We hope to have this program in place by this summer.

What does this mean?

Persons who qualify can pay a modest fee to get door to door transportation to work, medical appointments, shopping trips, etc. Bus service in our community is very limited both in terms of the geographic area the routes cover and in terms of the times the buses run. **Did you know that there is no bus service after 6:00 p.m. and none on Sundays?** So, if you work a second or third shift job, you

either have your own car or you walk or ride a bike. One of our guests was recently hit by a car while riding his bicycle home from his second shift job at a local restaurant. He was seriously injured and the person who hit

him was devastated. He has not yet been able to return to work. Many of our guests have passed over good job opportunities because they did not have transportation available. What a difference this program will make for so many in our community who are no longer able to drive or don't have access to a vehicle. For more information about this program, call Holly Smith at the Kane County Dept. of Transportation: 630-584-1170.





A VOLUNTEER'S JOURNEY INTO SERVING

My name is Lori Beaulieu and I have been serving at the Lazarus House for about five years now. My service started out as an interest in occasionally serving where there was a real need for people who are struggling.

I tried different areas and one day decided I was going to call the Lazarus House and keep calling until I was assigned a position to volunteer where there was a need at the shelter. I don't believe in coincidence, and when I called, I was told that a dedicated volunteer had just stepped down because of a medical condition and they needed someone to come in on Tuesdays to drop off donations from a local store. I started the next week, and after dropping off the donations, I took a moment to watch all that was going on at the shelter. My eyes were opened to see a staff member, Carol, who had many things going on at once. I saw people sitting and watching TV near the dining area, some people playing games and others who sat silently by themselves. I asked if I could stick around for a while and help. Carol said "yes," and I enjoyed serving and helping. I asked if I could come back around the next week and

help again...and of course, Carol said YES!!!

Shortly after, I joined a meal team with my church and began cooking on a monthly basis for the Lazarus House. Before I knew it, months had passed and not only did I enjoy serving on a weekly basis, but I was cooking meals and began to coordinate menus and meals for our church team to



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bring in to the Lazarus House. What started out as an interest in serving became a true gift that God was giving me to heal myself in what I like to call "life's ups and downs."

I've told Darlene this on many occasions, that some of the time, I come at this serving from a truly selfish reason. It feels good to be here, and I can't put my finger on what exactly is being healed, but there is a healing

that has taken place; a gradual healing that I recognize when I come to serve here. I do believe that God put the Lazarus House in my life as a place for me to serve and I am grateful for the opportunity.

When the Women & Children's Day Center opened, I was excited for the opportunity to start a new adventure in serving. I eagerly awaited the opening and did not know what to expect. That first night it opened was a new beginning. There was no counter to serve behind like the one at the Emergency Shelter – everything was open and together, and I had become, in a way, a member of the house. In this home, I did not feel like a server, but a part of the family of women and children for whom the house stood. I have gotten close to many of the women & children and can honestly say I enjoy immensely the time spent serving. For some, it might take more than one or two times of volunteering — it was gradual for me, but I now know how grateful I am to God for letting me have this experience.

In God's love,
Lori Beaulieu

Volunteers
needed:



Can you be one
of our 'angels'?

With our new Women and Children's Day Center now open, we find that we have a real need for the following volunteers:

Women to help for 2 or 3 hours Monday through Friday between 9 a.m. and 4:30 pm.

Most of our women work or go to school, and our children are in school or day care, so our weekdays are pretty low key. But we do want to have the women's house available for our ladies who may not be able to work at present or who work unusual hours. That's where our dedicated volunteers come in. We always have staff nearby, but it is immensely helpful to have a volunteer to be a caring presence in the house on weekdays to make sure the milk is cold, the coffee is hot, and the smiles are genuine. If you have a couple of hours you can donate on weekdays, whether it's once a week or once a month, please call our volunteer coordinator, Kim Bazant at 630-587-2144.

Another area that's opened up now that we have the Women and Children's Day Center is the space in our main dining room. When all of our emergency shelter guests were crowded together in our dining room, there wasn't much space or opportunity for our volunteers just to sit and visit with guests. Now that the women and children are across the street, there is ample room in our main dining room for volunteers to hang out and visit with our male guests. So whether you'd like to come and play checkers or watch a ball game with our guys, **having some caring men come on a regular basis in the evening would be a great gift.** Again, you can donate an hour or two a week or each month; whatever fits your schedule. Call Kim to set up a time.

Straight from the heart:

A parent's letter to Lazarus House



We received this letter at Christmas 2006, from the parent of an Emergency Shelter guest. What a gift these words are to us at Lazarus House. They are a stark reminder of the far reaching causes and effects of homelessness, of the hope and future that is possible, and a testament to the work that God does in this house every day.

Even before you lay eyes on your child for the first time, you dream for him. With his first cry, your heart is transplanted into him, and you pledge your life to him: to his health, his potential, his possibilities. Somewhere along the line, the daunting task of raising him becomes more routine, and you begin to believe in your ability to successfully navigate the road from midnight feedings to skinned knees to puppy love to high school graduation and finally launching him into the world to find his way.

Some things never crossed our stream of consciousness, at least not in the same thought with our son: mental illness,

addiction, homelessness. These are the calamities that befall other people's children. They enter homes where love and family stability "must" be lacking. When we became "other people," our arrogance and ignorance left my husband and me ill prepared to cope with the foreign situations that arose as we struggled to love our son and do our best for him.

We are eternally grateful for the help Lazarus House and its staff gave us, teaching us that sometimes the most we could do was nothing. We were able to leave our son to you, trusting you to supply his physical needs with a mixture of compassion, responsibility and love. Thank you for all you did to help him take necessary steps along his path. It has been a difficult and treacherous path, but one that we continue to trust will lead to peace and glory with God's help. Thank you for helping us to parent our beloved child against all odds.

IHDA's Rent Subsidy Program: Another year, another milestone



Lazarus House is about to begin year two of the Illinois Housing Development Authority's rent subsidy program. The purpose of this subsidy is to assist low income households (income limits are clearly defined for eligibility – example: \$30,150 annual income for a household of two persons) in the St. Charles area in obtaining or remaining in housing in their community. It is with gratitude that we have been able to expand the service area to include Geneva as well.

How the program works

Participants complete a comprehensive application process and commit to being financially responsible to pay monthly rent equal to 25% of their rent or 25% of their gross

income, whichever is higher. The household must demonstrate that their income source is stable in order for them to be considered. If their rent amount exceeds standards established by IHDA for the area (example: \$706 for a one bedroom apartment), the participant must pay the difference in addition to the 25%. Also, the household must provide documentation that their utilities are being paid on time monthly.

Households that choose to participate meet monthly with the program administrator to work on financial goals and monthly budgeting strategies. To this meeting they bring proof of their income and expenses for the prior month. Successes and challenges in meeting goals are reviewed, and goals and a budget are established for the next month.

Witnessing God's great miracles

Household by household, we are seeing

people develop budgeting skills they did not previously possess. We are witnessing people taking great pride in the ability to be financially responsible for their own monthly bills, without relying on relatives or friends to meet their obligations. People are learning to plan and prioritize how their funds will best be used. For many, it is the first time in their lives that they are in charge of their resources. Another witnessing of God's great miracles at Lazarus House!

How you can help a neighbor in need

We are very thankful to the Illinois Housing Development Authority for presenting this opportunity in our community and hope that all Geneva/St Charles households in need can learn of this program. To that end, if you know of someone who is struggling financially, suggest that they call Lazarus House to inquire if this program may be of benefit to them. We are here to serve our community, and are blessed by each opportunity to do so.

Look inside for your
dinner/auction
invitation!



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Lazarus House
214 Walnut Street
St. Charles, IL 60174



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WORKING TOGETHER TO OFFER HOPE AND A FUTURE

Sponsors sought

If you would like to help Lazarus House in a unique way and get a little recognition in return, please consider underwriting the cost of our quarterly newsletter. As a special recognition for this support, we are happy to thank you or your business in the mailing. Please call the office, 630-587-2144, if you would you like to help.

Lazarus House

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A close encounter of the Lazarus House kind



This letter was sent to us from a friend at St. Mark's Episcopal. It was submitted to him from a member of the congregation who had a positive interaction with a former Lazarus House guest. We are happy to share this story with you.

On a wonderfully positive note, I'll share this short story. While shopping at a well known store after Sunday's 10:30 church service, I recognized one of the residents we served at Lazarus House (he will remain anonymous in this story). He is a store employee; in fact his badge indicated that he is a "Team Leader." As I spotted him, I realized that it had been several months since I had seen him at Lazarus House. He finally saw me and also recognized me, and then told me he had been out of the "house" for eight months and is doing great. I'll tell you that he looked sharp! We both agreed that Lazarus House is a great place for our community and I indicated that it was a blessing to see people rotate out of the House. He added, "And to not have to go back."

To see one of the residents that we used to serve was indeed a blessing. God works in very special ways, and to have our paths cross OUTSIDE of Lazarus House was incredible.