

# the Clarion

Issue 2, 2008



Savanna Soto with  
son Masiah

## A continuum of care

**Life is often a bumpy and tortuous road fraught with obstacles. But Catholic Charities is there at every turn, providing services that help people of all ages.**

While there are many fine organizations that address various aspects of the human condition, there's perhaps no other agency quite like Catholic Charities, which provides the widest variety of services to people at every stage of life.

Within its continuum of care, Catholic Charities provides aid and comfort to people of all ages, and of every faith, ethnicity, and nationality.

A very big part of what Catholic Charities does involves finding loving adoptive homes for children. But the organization also offers many services that help individuals and families get through tough times: emotionally, spiritually, and financially. Catholic Charities provides education and childcare, and assists newcomers to this country to hasten their assimilation into our culture. The agency helps older adults find self-fulfillment through volunteer and employment opportunities, and even offers them a nice place to live in retirement.

We checked in with some good folks who are benefiting from Catholic Charities' services. They represent a broad spectrum of ages and agency programs.

### A solid start

Children's Cottage, Catholic Charities' fully licensed childcare center in Fort Wayne, provides

continued on page 4



Catholic  
Charities

Fort Wayne-South Bend Diocese

## Coming full circle

When I rediscovered the picture of my mom holding me in my baptismal gown and bonnet, I couldn't help but think of the way life changes during what later seems like the blink of an eye. My mom looks so young holding me, her second child, but she was actually just a few years beyond college. But somehow she made the transition into motherhood with grace.

I thought I'd become much wiser because I'd made the transition not only to motherhood, but also from being the mother of toddlers, to school children, to teenagers, and then to young adults. But the reality captured in another photo temporarily wiped away whatever wisdom I thought I had gained. It's an image of my mother and me after the stroke that had in less than 10 minutes pushed her from the role of independent woman to one in which my sister and I became responsible for our lifelong caretaker. And, of course, my mom did so with grace.

It was only then that I really "got" the fact that life isn't some sort of trajectory, but is a cycle that always keeps circling back to where it seemingly began. And, of course, the cycle of our lives isn't a pristine one, but a muddy thing with all kinds of overlapping roles going on at the same time.

It makes me glad that our agency actually deals with the entire cycle of life. We're the place people can come for ECHO services when a baby is on the way. And while we're helping a young mother-to-be, the father, grandparents, and unborn infant are also empowered in the process. We're also the place to go when you come to this country from Burma and need to find a way to become self-sustainable. But when we're finding the mother or father a job, we're also empowering the children, who will be better fed and will have their working parents as role models. We're also the place to come to when your retired dad needs a job or volunteer work so he can continue to be needed and useful. But



when we help him, we're also helping his grandkids and children, who still love to see their loved one giving as well as receiving.

The work at our agency is messy, and I like it that way because that's the way life is—quick and slow and always overlapping. Just when I think I've gotten accustomed to the fact that my sister and I are now the caretakers, my mom comforts me over the phone at the end of a frustrating day. And after speaking with her caregivers at her nursing home, it's clear that they've found in her a good listener with often sound advice.

*Debbie Schmidt*

## Lenten volunteers help sort it out

Finding exactly the right soft goods—clothing and bedding—to fit the needs of each newly arrived refugee family will now be much quicker and easier, thanks to the efforts of volunteers from St. Vincent de Paul Parish in Fort Wayne.

As their Lenten service project, the volunteers spent two Saturdays in February at Catholic Charities in Fort Wayne, organizing three storage rooms filled with soft goods donated to help refugees start their new lives. Overseeing the project was Jan Moore, a key volunteer in the Refugee Resettlement Department. Leading the contingent from St. Vincent were Mary Kay and Don Ehlerding.

"It was a tremendous effort and a very positive experience because it was a group effort, we were helping someone,

and there was a beginning and an end to the project," says Moore, who's also a St. Vincent parishioner. "We got a lot done, and we had a lot of fun doing it."

The soft goods included clothing and hundreds of bedding items—sheets, pillowcases, blankets, comforters, and more. Although some of the items were new and still in wrappers, most of the articles had to be measured, categorized, wrapped, labeled, and organized on shelves so that they can be easily accessed when needed.

Mary Kay Ehlerding says the project was just part of a Catholic's life of service. "We plan service projects every year for Advent and Lent. For Advent last year, for instance, we collected items for the Woodburn Christian Children's Home. But for our Lenten

project, we like to do something that's more hands-on.

"This project gave us all a better sense of what's being done to assist refugees," Mary Kay continues. "The project also made us more aware of the difficult journey refugees must endure and how most of them arrive here with little more than the clothes they're wearing."

Kristina Galvin, a member of St. Vincent de Paul Parish, has transformed more than 100 pastel-colored baby washcloths into angel dolls for the children of refugees. The dolls can also be frozen and used as teethers.

## Upcoming events

### Citizenship classes (Fort Wayne)

The next session begins May 13 and ends July 1. A graduation ceremony will take place after the last class. Classes meet every Tuesday from 4 to 6 p.m. at Catholic Charities, 315 East Washington Boulevard. To register, contact Luz Ostrognai at (260) 422-5625, ext. 225.

### Adoption Information Meetings (Fort Wayne)

Meetings are held at Catholic Charities from 10 to 11 a.m. on the first Thursday of each month, with the exception of July, when the meeting will be on the second Thursday. Dates include May 1, June 5, July 10, August 7, and September 4. The meetings are free, and no registration is required. Space is limited, and no childcare is available; therefore, please don't bring children with you.

### Pack A Backpack (Auburn)

RSVP of DeKalb, Noble, Steuben, and LaGrange Counties will begin its Pack A Backpack program distribution in August. Visit [www.ccfwsb.org](http://www.ccfwsb.org) at the end of July to learn the exact distribution dates, or contact Patti Sheppard at (260) 925-0917 or (800) 875-4917 (toll-free).

## RSVP continues to make a real difference

In addition to all their other good work, members of the Retired Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP) were very busy again over the last year providing warmth and comfort during the winter and ensuring that students had supplies to start the school year right.

Busy Hands, an industrious group within RSVP of St. Joseph County, distributed nearly 10,000 handmade items through 39 agencies during the 10th Annual Warm Up Michiana in October. Items included quilts, hats, mittens, scarves, slippers, lap robes, shawls, neonatal items, stuffed animals and dolls, and numerous other niceties for hospital patients and people with disabilities.

During 2007, the 135-plus members of Busy Hands served 41,563 volunteer hours and made and distributed close to 15,000 items to 70 organizations to benefit 7,738 families.

RSVP of DeKalb, Noble, Steuben, and LaGrange Counties distributed more than 1,500 donated coats during its Share the Warmth program, which was facilitated through the organization's Community Center of Caring Food Pantry in Auburn. The program was a collaborative effort joining RSVP, WANE-TV, WBTU-FM U.S. 93.3,

Peerless Cleaners, and the Italian Grille in Auburn.

In addition to coats, the pantry distributed approximately 2,500 hats, mittens, and scarves, many of which were made by RSVP members.

The nearly 500-member RSVP of DeKalb, Noble, Steuben, and LaGrange Counties also provided 1,500 new backpacks filled with school supplies to students in DeKalb and Noble counties during the fall of 2007. The Pack A Backpack program helps kids who are also eligible for free or reduced-cost meals at school. The supplies provided in each backpack were grade-appropriate for the particular student.

Membership in the RSVP of Elkhart has nearly doubled during the seven months since Sarah Hendrix became project coordinator. The chapter now has more than 270 members volunteering at 35 sites. The Elkhart RSVP will host its Senior Expo at Greencroft in Goshen on Thursday, October 16.

On January 10, Brief Services received 229 calls for financial assistance in the first four hours of the day, and on January 31, 70 calls for assistance were received in the first 45 minutes of the day.

### Did you know?

Catholic Charities is seeking local nonprofit organizations in DeKalb, Wells, Adams, Marshall, and Steuben counties to serve as training sites for adults 55 and older. If interested, please contact Terry Noller at (260) 422-5625, ext. 285

continued from cover

a wide range of services for children ages 6 weeks to 12 years. Children's Cottage employs a child-focused curriculum, and other activities are designed to help develop motor skills and social skills and stimulate creativity.



Elnora Holman with daughters Rob'Briunia (right) and Rob'Briasia.

Who better to evaluate a childcare center than a childcare professional? Elnora Holman works in childcare at Transitions, an arm of the Fort Wayne Women's Bureau that assists women struggling with drug addiction. Elnora's daughters Rob'Briunia, 4, and Rob'Briasia, 3, have been Children's Cottage students for nearly two years.

"I have nothing but positive things to say about Children's Cottage,"

Elnora says. "It's been a great experience for my daughters and for me. The care and education my daughters receive are excellent. Rob'Briunia and Rob'Briasia are learning a lot. They're learning their letters, and they're learning to get along with others. Rob'Briunia has homework now, and she's very excited about that. Rob'Briasia wants to have homework, too, so she makes up her own."

Savanna Soto is also sold on Children's Cottage, but then she's a bit biased. Savanna began working at Children's Cottage when she was expecting her son Masiah, now 18 months old. Savanna serves as a teaching assistant with 1- and 2-year-olds who are walking, while Masiah is cared for in "The Lambs," a room for infants.

"I really like working with kids, and Children's Cottage has been a wonderful place to work," Savanna says. "Masiah started attending Children's Cottage when he was just 6 weeks old. It was hard to put him in someone else's care at first, but here at Children's Cottage, I feel like he's as safe as if he were with me. All the teachers and other members of staff genuinely care about the children—and Masiah really enjoys being here. I get a chance to check in on him during my breaks, but otherwise, it's as if I'm not working here, but I'm confident he's in good hands."

### Making the grade

ECHO (Education Creates Hope and Opportunity) is a program that enables pregnant and parenting teens to complete high school as they meet the new challenges presented by parenthood. Many participants then go on to college.

Marcia O'Flynn found herself in need of emotional support and guidance when she learned she was expecting her son Morgan about a year-and-a-half ago. "When I found out I was pregnant, I didn't think I was going to make it," Marcia says. "I didn't think there was anyone who understood what I was going through."

Marcia turned to ECHO for help. As it turned out, Kela Guy, then an ECHO case manager, and Marcia were both members of the Greater Progressive Baptist Church in Fort Wayne. Laura Brandenburg is now Marcia's case manager, but the high level of conscientious assistance has remained the same.

"I really appreciate their help," Marcia says. "Without ECHO to help me, things would have been a lot harder. I don't know where I would be now. Kela and Laura have made sure that I stay in school and get good grades, and they've helped build my confidence and self-esteem."

Marcia is now close to earning a GED at the East Wayne Center in Fort Wayne. "I'm doing real well now—passing my tests and progressing," she reports.

### Peace of mind

Catholic Charities' Immigration Services guides newcomers through a maze of governmental red tape and facilitates citizenship classes, the establishment of legal residency, and the process of naturalization. For some immigrants, however, the obstacles are greater.

Patricia R., 28, came to the United States from Lima, Peru, on a tourist visa in 2002. Patricia met and married a U.S. citizen, and the couple had a son. The marriage, however, faced many challenges, and Patricia's husband refused to sponsor her for citizenship. The marriage finally unraveled to the point at which Patricia sought help from the Center for Nonviolence, which referred Patricia to Catholic Charities.



Marcia O'Flynn with son Morgan.

With assistance from Catholic Charities case manager Luz Ostrognai, Patricia now has all the credentials she needs to live and work in this country. Patricia works at First Steps in Fort Wayne and is going back to school to pursue a career in health care.



Patricia R.

"Luz helped me with everything, and she gave me hope," Patricia says. "My life has improved 100 percent, and doors have opened for me. Without Luz's help, I'd probably be back in Peru—or maybe dead. Now I have the peace of mind that I can work, I can go to school, and I can provide for my son."

### Helping them stand alone

When refugees arrive in the Fort Wayne area, Catholic Charities is there to help them assimilate and become self-sufficient. Services include assistance with housing, education, health care, and employment.

People from Burma represent the majority of refugees currently arriving, and most of them share a similar story. After enduring life in refugee camps outside Burma for several years, they were given the opportunity to come to this country.

Nwe Tun and wife Baby Myint with son Myint Hmo.



Nwe Tun, 28, lived in a camp in Thailand for eight years. His wife, Baby Myint, 22, was actually born in a refugee camp, as was their 1-year-old son Myint Hmo. The family arrived in Fort Wayne in October 2007.

Nwe taught mathematics in the refugee camp, but now he's concentrating on his own education as a full-time college student. His goal is to eventually find a position in which he can use his English-language skills and education to help other Burmese refugees.

"We've very pleased to be here, and we appreciate very much everything Catholic Charities has done for us," Nwe says. "But at the same time, the Burmese people coming here have to learn to stand on their own feet. Catholic Charities helps them do that, but people shouldn't wait for Catholic Charities to provide everything. We have to learn to do things for ourselves, so that resources are available for others when they arrive."

### A rebirth

Senior AIDES is a program that connects people 55 and over with subsidized jobs with nonprofit organizations, governmental agencies, and businesses. The jobs provide income and additional training. The goal is for participants to progress to nonsubsidized positions with other organizations and companies.

If you're of a certain age and a fan of Fort Wayne-area sports, you may well remember Roman Robles. A gifted athlete, Roman was a standout for North Side High School and one of the first Hispanic athletes in Indiana to make a real name for himself. After high school, Roman continued his education and athletic endeavors at Taft College in California.

Roman went on to a long, successful career in business that required international travel and work in diverse cultures. He later worked for some high-profile nonprofit organizations and the government. However, Roman eventually found himself in a situation shared by many mature adults, who despite their vast knowledge and experience, have a hard time finding new employment opportunities.

## Did you know?

February 12 represented just the second time in 13 years that home study specialist Jean Small had to cancel home visits due to road conditions.



Roman Robles

Not long after Roman joined Senior AIDES, he was made a job developer by Terry Noller, project director. Roman now locates opportunities for other program participants.

"Regardless of their level of experience and abilities, many older adults have a difficult time finding new jobs," Roman says. "To be successful in today's world, older adults often need to learn new skill sets. Senior AIDES opens doors for people. It's a rebirth of sorts for many people—the program changes and enhances their lives through additional training.

"I know Senior AIDES has changed my life—I have a renewed sense of purpose," Roman adds. "It's so rewarding when you can see firsthand how your work results in tangible benefits for others."

**An asset to everyone**

The Retired Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP) gets people 55 and older back in the game, keeping them vital and productive. Through their volunteer work, participants enjoy social interaction, gain a sense of fulfillment, and make their communities better places to live. Some RSVP members donate as many as 2,000 hours in a single year. Yes, that's the equivalent of a 40-hour workweek.

RSVP volunteer Grace Ley



Grace Ley retired in 1982 after a 36-year career in business with International Harvester in Fort Wayne. When her husband, Francis, passed away in 1992, Grace was left with many hours to fill.

A little more than 10 years ago, Grace joined RSVP of DeKalb, Noble, Steuben, and LaGrange Counties, and she's become one of the organization's busiest helpers. "I just like helping out," says Grace, who turned 80 in December. "We do just about anything that needs to be done, and there's always a lot of work to be done. RSVP members do a lot for the community. It's amazing to have all these people get together and do things that benefit so many other people."

Grace helps out at the food pantry in Auburn, works with sewing groups making comfort items for people of all ages, and participates in quilt shows and raffles and drives that generate school supplies and winter clothing.

"There's a wonderful camaraderie among members as they work together—it's kind of like having another family," Grace adds. "And volunteering fills the days with something productive. There's something about giving your time to others that makes you feel better."

**Villa celebrates**

Villa of the Woods in Fort Wayne is a state-licensed residential facility for older adults. Although the Villa is staffed around the clock, the emphasis is on independent living. And, the living is easy: housekeeping, linen service, meals, and social activities are all provided. The Villa is also conveniently located near a city bus line, a public library, and a shopping center.

One of the newest residents at the Villa is Josie Dull Manter, who had quite a bit of help celebrating her 100th birthday on February 23. A combination of residents, staff members, Josie's sons—even members of a Girl Scout troop—were on hand for cakes,

Refugees enter the United States in debt to the International Organization of Migration for their plane fare and must begin payments within four to six months of arrival?

**Did you know?**

Approximately 56,000 driver's licenses face revocation because they contained information that didn't match the Social Security database, and that many of these mismatches were actually due to typographical errors or name changes due to marriage.

candles, ice cream, and best wishes during two parties and an open house to commemorate Josie's longevity.

"They're killing me with kindness here," says Josie, who had been living alone for many years before she moved into the Villa. "During the first one or two months here I was a nervous wreck as I tried to learn everyone's name and how things work. The food is good, but different from what I had been eating, so I had to adjust to that. But now that I've settle in, I like it here at the Villa. Everyone is very nice."

There you have it. Although this is just a small sampling of the many people of all ages and walks that Catholic Charities serves through its many programs, it's also very illustrative of how Catholic Charities—with your continued support—has such a positive impact on our entire community.

## A different time

Still sharp as a tack, Villa of the Woods resident Josie Dull Manter has an excellent recollection of events throughout her 100 years. One of the most exciting chapters in Josie's long life came when she was just a little girl.

Josie was born in Rockford, Ohio, in 1908. Times were tough as her parents eked out a living on the family farm. When Josie's mother died in 1915, Josie's father sent her and her siblings to live in an orphanage. Josie was subsequently kidnapped from the orphanage by a Canadian woman, who took Josie north of the border and forced her to work on a farm.

During an ultimately unsuccessful escape attempt, Josie briefly lived with another family. During an outing with that family, Josie met a sailor who was leaving on a train to fight in World War I. The sailor begged the people to lift Josie up to the railcar window so he could give her a kiss. He said Josie reminded him of his own little sister, to whom he hadn't gotten a chance to say goodbye.

Josie ended up back with her original captors, but she eventually managed to send a letter to her father. With the help of the FBI and the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, Josie was reunited with her father in 1917.

When Josie was 16, she left home and moved to Fort Wayne, where she met her first husband on a blind date. After nine months of courtship, the couple wed in 1925. They were married for 35 years and had two sons. Josie eventually remarried after her first husband passed away.

Long retired after a career in food service, Josie likes to relax with a good book. She also enjoys gardening and making latch-hook rugs.

Asked about the most significant changes in the way we live over her lifetime, Josie says, "Everything—we were still riding in horse-drawn buggies when I was young."

Josie credits no specific lifestyle choices for her longevity, simply saying, "I guess the Good Lord upstairs must be looking out for me."

Birthday girl Josie Dull Manter



(Above) Josie with a great-grandson.

(Right) Josie sits on her mom's knee in a family photo circa 1909.



## Pantries fill a growing need

The Community of Caring Food Pantry in Auburn and the Emergency Food Pantry in South Bend strived to fill a growing need among families and individuals going through tough times this past winter.

The Community of Caring Food Pantry, operated by the Retired Seniors Volunteer Program (RSVP) of DeKalb, Noble, Steuben, and LaGrange Counties, provided for approximately 320 families—or about 1,000 people—in DeKalb County each month this winter.

RSVP Program Director Patti Sheppard says the number of new families and individuals seeking assistance continued to increase over the winter. “The state of our economy has created an ever-growing need for assistance. Most people never expect to be in a situation in which they need to come to a community pantry just to feed their families. That’s one reason we encourage people to contribute to our pantry during times of plenty. You never know when you, a relative, a friend, or a neighbor might need assistance.”

In addition to the hard work of RSVP members and generous donations from individuals, the Community of Caring Food Pantry receives considerable, consistent support from the DeKalb County Community Foundation, the United Way of DeKalb County, and Wal-Mart. Moreover, 12 area businesses and organizations stepped forward with special donations to the pantry during the Christmas holidays.

The Emergency Food Pantry was moved into larger quarters, a former conference room, at the South Bend offices of Catholic Charities this winter. The pantry provided sustenance to 500 to 600 families—or about 2,000 individuals—each month during the winter months. The Emergency Food Pantry is the only pantry in the South Bend area that offers evening hours, 5 to 7 on Wednesdays.

“Our pantry is for residents of St. Joseph County, but we have people from outside the county come in for assistance. We won’t turn anyone away, but we then refer them to food pantries operating in their areas,” says administrative assistant Sara Walters, who’s also serving as coordinator of Brief Services and the pantry.

“The need is always great, and we’re always accepting donations,” Walters adds. “We accept cash that we can use to buy items at the Food Bank of Northern Indiana, and we accept donations of actual food and nonfood items, such as essential household supplies. If anyone is looking for an organization to share their good fortune with, Catholic Charities is one that wisely uses donations in a way that has a positive effect on a very wide range of people.”

The Emergency Food Pantry suffered a bit of a setback in February, when its entire supply of beef—720 pounds—was part of the largest recall in U.S. history. The pantry receives beef through the U.S. Department of Agriculture and the Food Bank of Northern Indiana just two or three times a year.

### Did you know?

The National Association of Letter Carriers annual Stamp Out Hunger campaign that helps stock food banks, pantries, and shelters is set for Saturday, May 10. The largest one-day food drive in the nation, last year’s effort generated 70.7 million pounds of food.

The following commemorative gifts were received between 1/1/08 and 3/31/08.

#### Donations made in honor of:

- Curran Family*  
By Eugene F. Curran
- Dr. & Mrs. Manny Manalo*  
By Kelli Kugler
- Jerome “Jerry” and Kim Kleber*  
By Brian & Marsha Brueggemann
- Our Lady of Lourdes*  
By James & Carolyn Leeper
- The marriage of Mr. & Mrs. Michael Loi*  
By Mr. & Mrs. David Burke
- Michael Castleman’s 40th birthday*  
By wife Michelle Castleman

#### Donations made in memory of:

- Joseph Becker*  
By Dr. & Mrs. Michael C. McManus
- Wilhelm Bauer*  
by The Old World Ladies
- Klem Lebamoff*  
by George A. Lebamoff
- Arnold Teders*  
by Ben & Pamela Henderson
- Ed Smith*  
by Joe & Rosi Koch
- Ivan J. Strass*  
by wife Sue Strass  
John & Patty Shoemaker  
Marilyn Rittenhouse  
Arley & Jeanette Morris  
Joan Schmalzried  
Richard & Connie Motz
- Mary Alice Kleber*  
by anonymous donor

## Volunteer opportunities

### RSVP of St. Joseph County

• Serve as a mentor and role model for a young person soon to be released into the South Bend area by the Indiana Department of Corrections. The one-hour mentoring sessions are at the South Bend Juvenile Correctional Facility any weekday between 8 a.m. and 4 p.m., or Wednesday evenings from 6 to 8 p.m.

• Use your Access experience to design a database and create reports. This could be a portfolio project for a student.

• Take pictures at RSVP events.

Contact Jennifer Tindell at (574) 287-0500.

### RSVP of DeKalb, Noble, Steuben, and LaGrange Counties

• Fill orders at the Community of Caring Food Pantry in Auburn Tuesdays from 9:30 to 11:30 a.m. and Wednesdays from 1:30 to 3:30 p.m. Contact Patti Sheppard at (260) 925-0917.

### RSVP of Elkhart County

IRIS volunteers of any age are needed to read *The Goshen News* for the blind.

Contact Sarah Hendrix at (574) 293-5481.

### Emergency Food Pantry (South Bend)

Fill orders, help arrange food drives, stock shelves, and pick up food Tuesdays from 2 to 4 p.m., Wednesdays from 5 to 7 p.m., and Fridays from 9 to 11 a.m. Contact Sara Walters at (574) 234-3111.

### Children's Cottage (Fort Wayne)

Serve as a classroom assistant, read to children, lead arts and crafts projects, or help out with light cleaning or other chores weekdays from 7 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. Contact Rhonda Lewis at (260) 745-4929.

### Immigration (Fort Wayne)

An intern or paralegal student is needed to provide two to four hours of assistance between 4 and 8 p.m. Tuesdays and Wednesdays. Contact Luz Ostrognai at (260) 422-5625, ext. 225.

### Immigration (South Bend)

Design publicity materials (fliers, signs, posters, etc.) and translate applications and office forms from

English to Spanish. Contact Jo Fisher at (574) 234-3111.

### Refugee Resettlement (Fort Wayne)

Teach English as a second language and life skills, provide transportation, tutor children, pick up and deliver donated furniture, locate jobs—the opportunities to help are endless. Contact Jaquel Tabron at (260) 422-5625, ext. 277.

### Senior AIDES (Fort Wayne, South Bend, Elkhart)

Provide transportation to job sites. A clean driving record is necessary. In South Bend and Elkhart, contact Tina Williams at (574) 234-3111 or (800) 686-3112 (toll-free). In Fort Wayne, contact Terry Noller at (260) 422-5625, ext. 265.

### Villa of the Woods (Fort Wayne)

Play piano or hold card parties any weekday between 9 a.m. and 4 p.m. A volunteer electrician is also needed to do odd jobs on an as-needed basis. Contact Cheryl Smith at (260) 745-7039 or (866) 646-2400 (toll-free).

## Pot-of-Gold

Each year, Catholic Charities holds its Pot-of-Gold raffle to raise funds for South Bend-based programs. The more tickets sold, the higher the grand prize. If all 3,500 tickets are sold, the grand prize will be \$25,000 to a single winner! In addition to the grand prize winner, the holders of the next 11 tickets drawn will receive cash prizes.

Traditionally, the raffle has been held in May. This year, the raffle will be held in June so that *Clarion* readers will have an opportunity to purchase tickets in May!

The Pot-of-Gold drawing will be held from 11 a.m. to noon at Villa of the Woods, 5610 Noll Avenue, Fort Wayne, on June 5. Winners will be notified, and a list of winners will be published in *Today's Catholic* and available upon request after July 1.

## 2008 Catholic Charities Pot-of-Gold raffle

Entries must be received by Catholic Charities no later than June 4, 2008, to be considered for the drawing.

Drawing to be held on June 5, 2008.

Return this form with a check or money order to: Catholic Charities, 1817 Miami Street, South Bend, Indiana 46613, or call (800) 686-3112 or (574) 234-3111 to purchase a ticket by credit card.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

License #112991

\*Prize amount will be proportionately reduced if fewer than 3,500 tickets are sold.

\$50 per ticket

Only 3,500 tickets will be sold

Grand prize up to \$25,000\*

## Wish list

All items (except furniture) are accepted at both the Fort Wayne and the South Bend locations of Catholic Charities. Donations of furniture can be accepted only in the Fort Wayne office. Pick-ups can be arranged for

furniture only. In Fort Wayne, contact Jaquel Tabron at (260) 422-5625, ext. 277. In South Bend, contact Jo Fisher at (574) 234-3111.

- Paper products (toilet paper, paper towels, facial tissues)
- Diapers and wipes, all sizes
- Adult diapers (such as Depends)
- School supplies
- School uniforms: navy, beige slacks; white shirts with collars [contact Phyllis Mizer at (260) 422-5625 for sizes.]
- 4-drawer vertical locking file cabinet
- Smoke detectors
- Fire extinguishers
- State-approved resources for lending library [contact Robin Springstead at (260) 422-5625 for details]
- Gift certificates for department stores
- TV/VCR/DVD combo sets for training
- Infant clothing
- Infant car seats
- Pack-n-plays
- Pillows
- Bed sheets and pillow-cases (all sizes)
- Blankets/comforters
- Towels/wash clothes (all sizes)
- Dish towels/cloths/sponges
- House cleaning products
- Laundry soap
- Laundry baskets
- Dish soap
- Pots and pans
- Dishes
- Silverware
- Cooking utensils
- Canned goods
- Feminine sanitary napkins
- Anti-perspirant/deodorant
- Hygiene products
- Baby wash/lotion
- Baby bottles & nipples
- Q-tips
- Educational toys/books for ages 2-10
- Gas cards
- Clocks
- Beds
- Sofas
- Dressers
- Kitchen tables and chairs
- Lamps
- Cash donations to purchase bus passes for low-income seniors to reach their jobs
- Cleaning supplies
- Yarn
- Fabric and fiber fill
- Plastic storage tubs with lids (medium and large sizes)
- Thread
- Safety pins
- Straight pins with ball-heads
- Grocery bags (paper and plastic)

## Meet Tina Williams, Senior AIDES project site coordinator

A little more than a year ago, Tina Williams found herself in the very unusual position of not having a position. For the first time in her adult life, Tina didn't have a job.

To be sure, Tina's state of unemployment wasn't due to a lack of education or expertise. Since earning a bachelor's degree in business management at Paul Quinn College in Texas in 1971, Tina had excelled in several fields, including telecommunications, insurance, and education. She'd also worked for the government and some nonprofits, too. And Tina had been an activist. In California, back in the mid-'70s, she'd worked alongside the Rev. Jesse Jackson during the early days of Operation PUSH, now the RainbowPUSH Coalition.

But despite her impressive résumé, Tina was having a hard time finding a job worthy of her abilities. She was too

young to retire; she had too much talent to waste; and just like the rest of us, she needed to make ends meet.

Then, Tina heard about Senior AIDES, a Catholic Charities-led program that finds jobs for older adults with nonprofit organizations and governmental agencies. Participants earn money while learning new skills. The ultimate goal is for Senior AIDES to progress into unsubsidized positions with other businesses and organizations.

Not long after Tina joined the program in January 2007, Senior AIDES Project Director Terry Noller recognized that she would make a great job developer, locating opportunities for other participants. "Terry said I just got in here and 'took off,'" Tina says.

In addition to finding those employment opportunities for others, Tina also

implemented a program to teach computer skills to Senior AIDES. A bit of a technophile herself, Tina had gone back to school in the mid-80s to earn an associate degree in electronic-technology engineering at Golden State College in California.

Late in 2007, when Terry needed someone to serve as Senior AIDES project site coordinator in the South Bend office of Catholic Charities, he already had the perfect person in Tina.

"Senior AIDES is something I really believe in—it's a wonderful, wonderful program," Tina says. "But I don't call my clients 'senior.' I call them 'mature.'"

"Many mature people can feel as though they've been forgotten—they feel neglected and rejected," Tina continues. "With Senior AIDES, they have an opportunity to start something different. Maybe it's something they've

## Benoit Academy assists refugee program

Before its recent announcement that it would be closing, the Benoit Academy, part of St. Henry Parish in Fort Wayne, graciously donated the use of its annex for the storage and staging of furniture donations earmarked for the homes of newly arrived refugees.

The annex became available after Benoit's preschool and latchkey programs were moved into the school's main building. "Catholic Charities asked us if they could use the space, and we were glad to help," says Mary Schreiber, Benoit Academy principal.

St. Henry Parish, located on Paulding Road, recently celebrated its 50th anniversary.



always wanted to do, but were afraid to approach. No matter how old you are, you can still grow, you can better yourself. And you can do that by expanding your knowledge with additional training.

"Senior AIDES did wonders for me," Tina adds. "It's provided a second chance at a career."

So Tina's growing clan—now numbering 12 grandchildren and six great-grandchildren—will have to wait a while before she's ready to devote her days to doting. "I don't have time to sit in a rocking chair yet," she says.

## Catholic Charities helps soften the blow in Nappanee

This time, when the sirens sounded—and the lights went out—Carolyn Neumeyer's family knew it was the real deal.

"We were accustomed to hearing the tornado sirens going off, but this time, when the electricity went off, too, we decided *this is it!*" Carolyn recalls. "We just made it down to the basement. We literally ran downstairs. I had never heard the wind howling like that—it was so loud. It *did* sound like there was a train coming right at us."

All things considered, the Neumeyers were among the fortunate when a twister ripped through Nappanee and the surrounding area at around 10:30 p.m. on October 28, 2007. The Neumeyers' chimney collapsed, windows were broken, and trees fell, damaging the roof, gutters, and sidewalk.

A couple of blocks away from the Neumeyers' home, however, houses were lifted off their foundations, outbuildings collapsed, and cars were overturned. Most importantly, no one was seriously injured. But the tornado damaged or destroyed an estimated 250 homes and businesses, causing millions of dollars in losses.

Although the Federal Emergency Management Administration (FEMA) has turned down two requests for financial assistance for the storm-ravaged area, the state has provided \$200,000 in relief, and the community itself has raised more than \$600,000 in donations.

And Catholic Charities of Fort Wayne-South Bend has stepped forward, as well, with money to help families weather the financial storm. The Neumeyers are among more than a dozen families benefiting from emergency disaster funding grant from Catholic Charities USA.

"We applied for and received a \$10,000 grant from the national organization to disperse to families for use toward food, medical bills, home repairs—whatever they need the most," says Lisa Young, assistant director of Catholic Charities Fort Wayne-South Bend. "Some people lost their homes, and some lost jobs or income because many places of business were damaged or destroyed."

Young and Kela Guy, Catholic Charities community service coordinator, visited the area three times to consult with the Northern Indiana Tornado Relief Organization (NITRO) and visit families affected by the tornado. NITRO helped Young and Guy identify families most in need of assistance.

The tornado couldn't have come at a worse time for the Neumeyers. Carolyn's husband, Dale, hasn't been able to work for a considerable length of time after suffering a severe knee injury at work. "Ever since Dale was injured on his job, it seems like it's been one thing after another," Carolyn says.

The Neumeyers are members of St. Dominic Parish in Bremen. Their pastor, the Rev. Polycarp Fernando, submitted the family's name for assistance from Catholic Charities. "It felt so good to know that someone out there was looking out for us and providing help when we really needed it," Carolyn says. "I wish I could fully express how grateful we are. It's just wonderful."

## Eager to learn

Certified English-as-a-second-language instructor Rosie Bertles is donating her time to teach Burmese refugees eager to learn the ways of their adopted homeland.

"I've found the Burmese to be very kind, gracious people," says Bertles, who also teaches English composition to international students at Indiana University–Purdue University Fort Wayne. "My desire is to help refugees learn English so that they too can realize the American dream."

The ESL classes are held Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays from 10 to 11:30 a.m. at Autumn Woods

Apartments, which is also home to many refugees. Management at the complex has donated an apartment for classes.

Although only promoted by word of mouth, the class has swelled from 20 to more than 40 students since its inception in March. May Mon is serving as translator, and Laura Rosswurm is assisting Bertles, but more help is needed because of the growing number of students. For more information, call Nyein Chan Oo at (260) 422-5625, ext. 230.



*Catholic Charities celebrates the spirit of Jesus and fosters personal dignity by serving the needs of our neighbors. Catholic Charities serves those in need with special emphasis on the most vulnerable populations—the poor, disabled, migrants, elderly, and children. The agency is committed to improving the quality of life for individuals, the family, and the community.*



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