

JULY 2009

Dear ((FRS N)),

I have been on the job for a little over a year, and feel honored each time I see the impact that Catholic Charities has – with your help – on so many people in the community every day. Thank you! I want also to extend my thanks to our consistent donors, people who have done so much with their gracious support.

I now want to write to others in the community who may be able to establish or reestablish a modest level of support. I write to share with you that, as we come to work or volunteer each day, we face the effects of the economic downturn: job and investment losses; government budget cuts; foreclosures; seniors with dwindling income, especially those on disability income; and children without homes or food.

**We can use your help!**

The need is greater: The young adults, the families, the children with needs grow greater. While we have redoubled our search for new funding, we still need any additional support that you can provide as we address the increase in needs today and prepare for more increases tomorrow...

In the past 6 months, the need for food and help for our neighbors in the community has risen dramatically, while some of our government funding has reduced:

- At times, **smaller food baskets** are used to serve more people when longer lines surprise us.
- The threats to services for the poor and seniors with diseases like Alzheimer's press staff to **reassure worried families** that we will be there in the future for them.

We must find ways! We will find ways!

Can you be a small part of the way forward? More than ever before, we need more people to get involved in this work.

One way is to volunteer; I hope you read further about our new dynamic volunteer coordinator, Georgette.

Another easy way, **if you are not already a dedicated supporter, is to consider pledging a monthly amount** to Catholic Charities. Only \$25 a month will make a big difference in our services and can provide \$100 worth of food for our baskets; \$50 a month can provide meals at our shelter for a family of four for almost two weeks. It is easy to set up and your



donation can be made directly from your checking account each month if you wish. You know we cannot do our work without community partnership. We appreciate donations in all forms – you may use the enclosed envelope for checks or credit card payments, or can donate online through our secure web site.

We will always take the chance and the opportunity to help those in need. When someone has lost all hope, we – you and Catholic Charities – are there to restore it. This is most powerfully realized when we all work together.

Please take a moment to consider how profound a change our work can make in one life - see Nicole's letter below. When you multiply that by 45,000 – the number of people we served last year – you will understand why we must find ways; why we will find ways. We know we can, with your help.

One final note, let us know if you like the newsletter format or have suggestions for changes. There is an email link on our web site home page. Thank you!

Sincerely,

Larry Lakes, Executive Director

*"Thank You. Because you took the time to help someone in need, I have a second chance to give my unborn baby the life it deserves. You gave me a chance to be the woman and the mother I want to be. I now have the opportunity to go to school, work, and spend time with my baby. We went from nothing and no hope, to a new life (with) so many open doors. Thank you for changing our lives!"*

Nicole, June 2009

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## Summer Activity - Join a Hope Works Wonders Tour

(MRG FRS N), please invest an hour this summer to feel good about the people whose lives Catholic Charities helps improve every day. No cost, no donations requested. Just an hour of inspiration and hope. Meet clients and volunteers who tell their stories. Tour schedule at [srcharities.org](http://srcharities.org)

Contact Rebecca at 528-8712 x 158, [rsvp@srcharities.org](mailto:rsvp@srcharities.org). Group tours by appointment – your place or ours!

Catholic Charities  
PO Box 4900 Santa Rosa, CA  
95402  
707-528-8712  
[www.srcharities.org](http://www.srcharities.org)

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## Can You Help by Volunteering?

We have a new volunteer services department, created to make it easier for volunteers to work with us. Georgette Parry, volunteer coordinator, is a real dynamo from Cotati. She has already provided a great deal of support to the department, located at our Airway Ct. office.

"I find volunteers are excited to help others and become a contributing member of our organization. They are interested in serving people, filling a need and feeling appreciated. Volunteers are 'gems.'"

Catholic Charities is blessed to have the help of over 1,000 volunteer hours per month, infused with enthusiasm, skill and caring. Volunteers help stretch valuable contributions, so we can serve more clients.



You can volunteer in many ways: We encourage you to call Georgette, and see how your passions and interests can help others. After an interview

to match you up with a program or area of interest, she'll schedule you for a tour of Catholic Charities. Call Georgette at 528.8712 ext. 134; see current opportunities at [www.srcharities.org/volunteer](http://www.srcharities.org/volunteer)



**WE HAVE SOME SPECIAL NEEDS THIS SUMMER!**  
FAMILY SUPPORT CENTER NEEDS 3 NEW ROOM SPONSORS AND HELP WITH SUMMER ACTIVITY FUNDS FOR THE CHILDREN & TEENS.

SEE DETAILS OF THESE (AND MORE) AT [WWW.SRCHARITIES.ORG](http://WWW.SRCHARITIES.ORG)  
LOOK FOR **SUMMER NEEDS**



# activities

## Program Activities

### A Goodbye

Over a hundred well-wishers bid adios to Sr. Teresita Poulin at Catholic Charities in May; she has since returned to the Mount Carmel Motherhouse in Dubuque Iowa where she is needed. Sister's work for Catholic Charities and the community for over 20 years was widely and highly regarded. Press Democrat columnist Chris Smith, who Teresita credited for spreading the word about her successful mobile home conversion project, paid tribute to her in an absolutely perfect article on May 24. Read it at [www.srcharities.org/media](http://www.srcharities.org/media).

### Big Changes in Housing

Over the past year, our HUD-certified housing department has transformed into a full department of six staff who manage a robust set of housing counseling and placement, foreclosure prevention, and crisis and case management services. We have grown the foreclosure department to handle 100 active cases. Housing moved to our Airway Ct. building in April, freeing up space at Family Support Center for more families (see Brookwood news). Our foreclosure counselor is becoming certified in advanced housing counseling, default and foreclosure prevention services to better serve our clients.

Coach-2-Career (C2C) is developing into a comprehensive job counseling/employment program to dovetail with homeless programs, coaching clients from emergency shelter and transitional housing into independent lives via mentoring, tutoring, apprenticeships, and job placements. Jennielynn Holmes is an employment counselor wiz with great personnel skills. Two evenings a week she



Goodbye Sr. Teresita!

counsels clients at Sam Jones Hall, where they line up for help. A recent client landed a good job with Cal Trans, one of five who were placed in new jobs in her first month.

### Home+Art

A highly prolific painter and a past volunteer at our Homeless Service Center (HSC), Kellesimone Waits offered a series of portraits featuring members of Sonoma County's homeless community this spring at



ArtSpace404 in Santa Rosa, To Waits, "home" relates to one's identity, and the show gave due attention to a population without a voice. She donated part of her proceeds to HSC.

### Shelter Changes

Brookwood Shelter Closing: Due to City of Santa Rosa budget cuts, we are closing this shelter...but are keeping the same number of beds for residents who are temporarily homeless. Family Support Center has added three new resident rooms, and opened up a large room for emergency intake clients, women and children who need temporarily shelter until appropriate rooms are vacant. Likewise, Sam Jones Hall has opened more space to accommodate 40 new beds for singles. In total, Catholic Charities manages 305 shelter beds.

**More Activities:** [www.srcharities.org](http://www.srcharities.org)

## Good News

*Here is just a small list of good news from around Catholic Charities...let us know what you want to hear about—go to [www.srcharities.org](http://www.srcharities.org) and click on email us.*

**Ugandan Refugees:** Last month, a woman walked into Immigration's Tuesday informational meeting, looking pretty gloomy. She is an asylee from Uganda: Her husband is missing; she believes he is dead. While in process of trying to bring her nine adult children (two of which she adopted because their parents died) to the U.S., the petitions for seven of them were lost. Everyone she contacted was at a loss. Our staff was only successful with the help of U.S. Congresswoman Lynn Woolsey's office. On June 9, the woman returned with a thankful, happy disposition – all nine petitions were approved and are in process. And once she explained her housing dilemma (she lives where she works), our housing counselor set into motion several leads. We hope when everyone arrives there will be "home," and now, there is a support system to help them get started.

**Giving Back:** The Schulz Family and Snoopy's Home Ice donated 16 tickets for families at Family Support Center to attend Easter brunch and an Easter egg hunt for the kids. The same month, Fran Russell from Russell Event Photography took family portraits of residents, and then each family a beautiful 8x10 photograph. Families were touched by the photos and the remarkable contribution of time and effort by Fran, who only wanted to see them smile at the results.

**Perfect Match:** Jeri's mother had Alzheimer's, and for years she was her primary caregiver, without the benefit of a program like ours. After she died, Jeri started volunteering one day a week for Alzheimer's Respite Resource Center. Soon she was volunteering two days a week, and when an opening occurred, she was hired as staff. Recently she was promoted to site supervisor, and her cheerfulness is a great addition to the program.

**College Ahead:** In Santa Rosa, one of our young female transitional housing residents, a mother of three, was awarded one of only three \$10,000 Charles DeMeo Scholarships (two-year) to attend Santa Rosa Junior College, given through the Community Foundation Sonoma County. She attends school full time, works part-time, and is active in the community.

**Warm-fuzzies:** Over 24 colorful crocheted or knitted afghan-style blankets were donated by elder women from

a local senior apartment complex, to be used by clients of all ages moving from shelters into transitional or permanent housing. Task Force on the Homeless coordinated the donation.

**Former Client Hired:** Jesica Gutierrez, a prior DeMeo House resident (Works of Hope, Fall 2008) is our new Housing Services office coordinator, handling phones, walk-ins, in addition to assisting the foreclosure counselor, utilizing her banking employment background.

**Food News:** We received news that Community Action Partnership's Capacity Building grant application for Rural Food program was approved; we will soon purchase storage containers for food, and buy food in bulk so our dollars stretch further. Rural Food



was also granted new funds from FEMA's Emergency Food and Shelter funding for food served at the Family Support Center. This is all very good news, because **requests for supplemental food are up 157 percent** this year over the same period last year: we distributed **5,665 more food baskets** during the first half of this year than last year. The need has been met in part by an increase in food donations, thanks to generous community members. More is needed, as outlined on page 1.

**More Good News:** [www.srcharities.org](http://www.srcharities.org)

# good news