



JANUARY/FEBRUARY 2010

NUMBER 1

So let us summon a new spirit of patriotism; of service and responsibility where each of us resolves to pitch in and work harder and look after not only ourselves, but each other.

~ President Barack Obama ~

FROM THE EDITOR

Over the last year, I have strived to make the newsletter more than a list of dates, statistics, and telephone numbers. While this information is important, it cannot convey the true spirit of Share. As Reverend Michael Catlett, Senior Pastor of McLean Baptist Church, eloquently stated in his Keynote Address at Share’s 40th Anniversary celebration:

SHARE cannot be described with words or with numbers, no matter how lovely the vocabulary or impressive the figures. Statistics can paint a picture, but it’s a paint-by-numbers canvas devoid of depth and feeling. Words can tell a story, but for the story to come alive it must become more than words. Knowing how many cans of food the scouts delivered is far different from watching the scouts collect and deliver that food to SHARE. Being aware of the number of clients SHARE sees each month isn’t the same as helping a single mother find clothes for her children. Knowing SHARE delivered furniture to a house is far different from seeing an empty home transformed by a sofa, chairs and tables. Learning SHARE sometimes helps clients with utilities isn’t the same as seeing the light reflected in the eyes of a man who lived far too long in darkness. It is important to know statistics; it is critical to make sure more funds and food are coming in than going out. Behind every number there’s a face; behind every word there’s a story. SHARE is about people.

As Editor, it is my hope that these stories convey to you, the sense of hope that Share brings to its beneficiaries and the overwhelming support it enjoys from the community.

In a technological “leap,” the newsletter is now available in PDF format on our web site, www.shareofmclean.org.

WINTER VOLUNTEER APPRECIATION DINNER

Our winter Volunteer Appreciation dinner will be held on **Thursday, February 4, 2010 at 6:00 pm** in the Fellowship Hall of McLean Baptist Church. We’re planning to provide food (to give our hard-working volunteers a "night off" from cooking!), but please stay tuned for a last-minute appeal if we need to round out the menu. In case of inclement weather, where Fairfax County curtails evening activities, the snow date is the following week, Thursday, February 11, 2010.

NEXT MEETING

The monthly business meeting will be held on **Thursday, March 4, 2010 at 7:30 pm** at Immanuel Presbyterian Church, 1125 Savile Lane, McLean, Virginia 22101. MaryBeth Emmons will host the meeting.

WITH THANKS AND GRATITUDE

More than statistics, descriptions, or photos, this moving letter conveys the true sense of Share's Holiday Shop:

Dear SHARE,

Today is New Year's Eve and with great thanks and gratitude to you, Fairfax County Coordinated Services and the Department of Social Services, we are in a warm home, with a full refrigerator and perhaps most important of all, memories of this year's Christmas that will forever be cherished.

When I first called SHARE this year, I believed it to be for temporary help and felt certain that we would shortly be back in a place where we could return the kindness of strangers and repay the generosity we had been shown. That was in September. Next thing I knew, Christmas was around the corner and I found myself thanking God that a volunteer had suggested I sign up for the Holiday program, just in case. As well as I know my child, that he would have been happy with a painted cardboard box, and that that there are many Christmases to come, as a mother, it was not the time I would have chosen to try to explain that what, or how much you get from Santa has nothing to do with how good you are. If you will look at the picture of the desk below, perhaps you will be able to see how great a gift you gave to us all.

One of the gifts someone generously donated was a bucket of wood pieces to build a small castle. On Christmas Eve, before wrapping it, I showed it to my husband. He had been quiet throughout the week, I know because he had no gifts to put under the tree. He took the little bucket of blocks and disappeared downstairs. On Christmas morning, the desk in the picture was under the tree. That little castle you see on the top inspired him to build Wyatt his first "grown up" desk, one fit for a king. He worked all night, and the smile on both their faces Christmas morning was the most beautiful picture I've seen. For my part, seeing my husband's feet in brand new socks (the gift I was able to choose for him) meant the world.

The one time I came to the food bank, someone made the comment that putting away groceries was a chore. I used to believe that, until we had no food to put away. Just before Christmas, I was standing in line at Giant, ready to use the gift cards we'd been given. I'm sure I didn't stand out, didn't look any different than any other harried mother picking up milk on the way home and certainly no one knew how I was paying for it but me. There was a woman ahead of me in line and after she scanned her groceries, she reached up and took one of the coupons to donate to the local food banks and scanned that too. I know she will never know I was behind her, and what her gesture meant to me that night but please share, with all of your volunteers, supporters and every one of the

generous and compassionate souls that gave of themselves, to us, strangers, that this was the greatest Christmas of all. For all that others may think we are poor in, we are rich in the knowledge of what immeasurable immense good there is in the world and for that, we will always, always be grateful.

You asked for feedback to improve the Holiday Shop - I did not return a wish list, my only wish was for Christmas for my child. I did not ask for gift cards, and was touched to find one in an envelope with my name on it. I used the gift card to Old Navy to buy warm cozies, new clothes and a winter hat for my son. Any item on the gift table is a treasure. I was scheduled to shop at 3, I waited less than 5 minutes. My only suggestion for next year's Shop would be to truly impress on everyone that makes it possible how much it means to those of us who had the fortune to know the kindness of strangers.

All of my thanks,

Kimberley Sisco



MCLEAN WINTERFEST BENEFITED SHARE

On December 6, 2009, Share participated in the McLean Winterfest parade through downtown McLean. McLean Winterfest solicited donations of toys and financial contributions for Share. According to a November 18, 2009 article in the *McLean Connection*, “As Share celebrated its 40th anniversary, McLean WinterFest organizers reached out to the community for donations to this home-based charity...The steering committee of the community’s holiday parade [used] its outreach to local businesses and residents to help Share volunteers fill its pantry and store in preparation for the holidays.” In addition to gearing the McLean Winterfest around Share, McLean Winterfest solicited in-kind donations and presented Share with a generous check.

We were overwhelmed by the support of the community! Everywhere we went, police officers, volunteer firefighters, politicians, and the general public expressed their appreciation of Share’s continuing role in the community. Thank you to those who helped Share in 2009.

ECONOMIC CRISIS CONTINUES

The January 2, 2010 *The New York Times* article, “The Safety Net: Living on Nothing but Food Stamps,” (Jason DeParle/Robert M. Gebeloff) makes clear that the economic crisis is not over. The national stories and statistics in this article reflect what our Share volunteers see on a weekly/monthly basis. Below, an excerpt:

CAPE CORAL, Fla. — After an improbable rise from the Bronx projects to a job selling Gulf Coast homes, Isabel Bermudez lost it all to an epic housing bust — the six-figure income, the house with the pool and the investment property.

Now, as she papers the county with résumés and girds herself for rejection, she is supporting two daughters on an income that inspires a double take: zero dollars in monthly cash and a few hundred dollars in food stamps.

With food-stamp use at a record high and surging by the day, Ms. Bermudez belongs to an overlooked subgroup that is growing especially fast: recipients with no cash income.

About six million Americans receiving food stamps report they have no other income, according to an analysis of state data collected by The New York Times. In declarations that states verify and the federal government audits, they described themselves as unemployed and receiving no cash aid — no welfare, no unemployment insurance, and no pensions, child support or disability pay.

Their numbers were rising before the recession as tougher welfare laws made it harder for poor people to get cash aid, but they have soared by about 50 percent over the past two years. About one in 50 Americans now lives in a household with a reported income that consists of nothing but a food-stamp card.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

TRANSPORTATION:

The Transportation Committee provided 7 rides in November 2009 and 9 rides in December 2009.

FOOD & CLOTHING ROOMS:

December 2009:

Total number of families: 124

Total household members served: 435

Bags of food distributed: 419

Bags of clothing distributed: 112

In December 2009, 4 new families registered for food and clothing distribution.

November 2009:

Total number of families: 184

Total household members served: 641

Bags of food distributed: 597

Bags of clothing distributed: 159

In November 2009, **14** new families registered for food and clothing distribution. **This is more than double the number of new families who registered the previous month.**

FAMILY ASSISTANCE:

December 2009:

Total: \$7,792.43

Number of calls received: 170

Funds spent in-area: \$4,116.88

Funds spent out-of-area: \$3,550.55

Giant: \$125.00

We had 5 new clients in December 2009.

November 2009:

Total: \$10,897.62

Number of calls received: 171

Funds spent in-area: \$7,462.44

Funds spent out-of-area: \$3,310.18

Food: \$125.00

We had 7 new clients in November 2009.

FURNITURE:

December 2009:

Total Stops: 35

Pickups from donors: 18

Deliveries to households: 17

The Furniture Program provided furniture to 17 households, serving a total of 35 household members.

November 2009:

Total Stops: 51

Pickups from donors: 30

Deliveries to households: 21

The Furniture Program provided furniture to 21 households, serving a total of 45 household members.

HOPE FOR HAITI NOW

Share's role continues to be to lend a helping hand to those in our own community. The January 21, 2010 broadcast, *Hope For Haiti Now*, however, makes it difficult to ignore the recent earthquake in Haiti. An amazing show of unity and technological prowess, *Hope For Haiti Now*, featured live performances by musicians in 3 time zones and brought together renowned actors, actresses, and musicians to man the phones, tell stories of survivors, and perform to benefit the earthquake victims. Distinguishing it from previous newspaper articles, photos, newscasts, and broadcasts, *Hope For Haiti Now* conveyed the immense destruction and devastation wreaked by the earthquake while conveying stories and images of hope, courage, and yes, love: The husband who stood by for 6 days until rescuers were able to pull his wife ~ alive ~ from the rubble; the mother who used her bare hands to dig for 50 hours to rescue her 2-year old son; and trapped victims who were able to send text messages to help search & rescue teams pinpoint their location.

To contribute: Go to www.hopeforhaitinow.org. Click on the button that says, *Donate Now*.

FAMILY ASSISTANCE COORDINATORS

- Feb. 1 Ursula Guerrieri 703-821-0936
- Feb. 7 Barbara Odenkirk 703-356-7731
- Feb. 14 Harriet Beckman 703-536-3586
- Feb. 21 Nancy McMahon 703-992-8210
- Feb. 28 Jean Schiro-Zavela 703-749-7679

- Mar. 7 Clarine SchmuKler 703-356-3071
- Mar. 14 Carol Triplett 703-244-1000
- Mar. 21 Jo Ann Kelleher 703-356-9595
- Mar. 28 Mary Ashley 703-821-8396

TRANSPORTATION COORDINATORS

- Feb. 7 Jo Ann Kelleher 703-356-9595
- Feb. 14 Irv Auerbach 703-893-6953
- Feb. 21 Eva Sereghy 703-536-5075
- Feb. 28 Marianna Garrett 703-734-3328

- Mar. 7 Nancy Duffner 703-903-8925
- Mar. 14 Jo Ann Kelleher 703-356-9595
- Mar. 21 Betsy Kuzmuk 703-538-6742
- Mar. 28 Marianna Garrett 703-734-3328

NEWSLETTER DEADLINE: MARCH 16, 2010. Please e-mail newsletter items to Binaifer Davar, binaifer@aol.com. Information not received by the deadline will not be included in the newsletter.

Newsletter printed by McLean Copy.
Food & Clothing Rooms provided by McLean Baptist Church.

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