



# Interfaith Issues

Interfaith Social Services, Inc.

Proudly Serving the South Shore since 1947

Spring 2006

Lace up those sneakers and head over to Bethany Congregational Church to support ISS's 32nd Annual Walk, which will begin at 12:30 p.m. on Sunday, April 23, 18 Spear Street, Quincy.

Last year, walkers raised almost \$20,000, which helps fund the agency's programs and services. ISS hopes to raise \$30,000 this year. Walkers raising \$50 or more in pledges will receive a t-shirt; the top fund-raisers in each age category will be awarded medals.

Walkers can choose either a family-fun 1-mile route or the 10K route to Hough's Neck and back. A

## **SOUTH SHORE WALK** Helping our Neighbors in Need

Beantown Trolley will circulate throughout the routes, offering rides to walkers who need a lift.

The Bad Hats, back by popular demand, will provide live music during the post-walk celebration. Massage therapists from Integrated Massage Therapies will offer complimentary neck and shoulder massage. There will also be clowns, face painting, balloons, refreshments, awards, and raffle prizes.

For information about sponsorship, call ISS at 617-773-6203. Registration forms are available online at: [InterfaithSocialServices.org](http://InterfaithSocialServices.org)

## Faith in Action volunteer receives as he gives



Barbara Goodman and volunteer Bob Petitti

When Bob Petitti moved to Braintree three years ago, he volunteered for the Faith in Action program.

Faith in Action pairs volunteers with clients who are recovering from a mental illness, suffering from loneliness or depression, or living with a physical disability.

"I had previously volunteered for a similar program through Catholic Charities," says Petitti, who was paired with "Stan" an elderly man with physical limitations.

Petitti visited Stan regularly, taking him to doctor's appointments, shopping, out to eat, and even to the voting booth. When Stan was in the hospital and nursing home, Petitti visited him there, and checked in on Stan's wife, who also has a visitor through the program. And when Stan died in January, Petitti was there at the funeral to offer comfort and

*continued on page 2*

## Feed the Hungry event raises \$56,000 for ISS programs

The 8<sup>th</sup> Annual Feed the Hungry event at Lombardo's in December was a great success, netting \$56,000 through ticket sales, donations, spon-

sorships, silent auction, and a raffle. New this year was a live auction, featuring Quincy's own Dan Flynn as auctioneer. Flynn, one part auctioneer and

one part stand up comic, delighted the crowd with his quick wit and humor. The proceeds from the event support the vital programs at ISS.

"We are most grateful to event co-chairs Tom Williams and Paula Lombardo Colia and their committee members who worked so hard to sell tickets and gather auction and raffle items," says Laura Stracco, executive director. "We also extend our sincerest appreciation to Tiffanie Williams & Company for making all the arrangements. Tiffanie and her staff attended to every detail, from the event's planning stage through its completion."

The ballroom décor, provided by Party by Design, enhanced the ambiance for the rock and soul band, Five After Five. Once again, Lombardo's prepared tasty hors d'oeuvres and a delicious dinner for the 600 attendees.

"The money raised at Feed the Hungry goes a long way in supporting programs at ISS," says Stracco.

## Second Annual Turkey Dip raises \$3100



First in, first out applies when the water is this cold!

Fifteen-year-old Katharine Moloy did it again, even bigger and better than last year. She organized the *Second Annual Turkey Dip* and raised \$3,100 for Interfaith Social Services, almost four times the \$800 she raised in 2004!

Despite cold, freezing rain, and a boat ramp covered in ice, these hardy "turkeys" dipped into the North River on Thanksgiving morning—and they had fun doing it.

"Despite the awful weather conditions, we had a great turn-out, and I think everyone really enjoyed themselves," says Moloy. "I want to thank everyone who contributed something to the event. The dip is a great way to start off Thanksgiving Day, and I look forward to continuing the event for years to come. I hope to see everyone again next year!"



## Addictions counselor joins New Directions



Anne Donovan, a licensed drug and alcohol counselor, recently joined the staff at New Directions Counseling.

In addition to more than 20 years experience counseling clients with drug and/or alcohol abuse problems, she brings an incredible passion and commitment to her work.

"I like to help people heal the pain of the past and become whole," she says. "It's very gratifying."

Describing a recent call from a

former client, who told her he's been "clean" for more than three years, Donovan commented, "I choke up, even today, because I know how precious it is."

She believes that people use drugs or alcohol because of underlying pain and emotional issues. "I take a holistic approach, healing the entire person. We work to put the broken pieces together, putting them on a journey of recovery."

"We are very lucky to have Anne," says Claire Hagan, RN, LMHC. "Her experience working with clients in recovery will be invaluable, and will complement the other specialties we offer."

## Behind the scenes, Farrell is vital to ISS



Many have seen Beverly Farrell's friendly smile at ISS since 1995, when she was hired as the agency's bookkeeper.

Since then, Farrell has assumed the role of office/business manager extraordinaire, and oversees the registration desk at many of the agency's fund-raising events. She negotiates with vendors, assuring that the agency receives the best available price for products and services. Farrell is quite savvy with technology, often coming to the rescue of staff members

having computer, printer, telephone, or copier difficulties. Farrell also handles all insurance billing for New Directions Counseling.

When asked about Farrell, agency director Laura Stracco commented, "I am most impressed by Bev's attention to detail, organization, efficiency, and timeliness. It is an absolute pleasure to work with her."

"I have been with the agency now for 11 years and watched the needs of our clients grow. I am proud that even though we are a small agency, we can help so many," said Farrell of her tenure with ISS.

## Faith in Action Volunteer receives as he gives

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support for the family.

Petitti, like other Faith in Action volunteers, gains much more than he gives by participating in the program. "They [Stan and his wife] have been a blessing for me. They have touched my life, and strengthened my faith. By visiting them, I have a much greater sense of faith."

"Consistent acts of kindness and concern, like Bob Petitti's, are the very things that keep the Faith in Action program so successful," says Barbara Goodman, director. "Our volunteers make such a significant difference in

the lives of their friends, and the rewards are twofold: the clients' lives are enriched, and the volunteers' lives are as well."

Faith in Action is always welcoming new volunteers, who will receive training and support, and the opportunity to use their unique talents and gifts. All volunteers are insured, and all participants are carefully screened to help ensure a good match.

Please call Barbara Goodman at ISS for information about becoming a volunteer or to refer someone who may need help.



**Interfaith  
Social Services**

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ISSQuincy1@verizon.net  
www.InterfaithSocialServices.org

### Mission Statement

Interfaith Social Services, Inc. (ISS) is a private, non-profit agency serving people of all faiths on the South Shore. ISS seeks to serve the communities by strengthening family life and offering assistance to anyone in need. ISS works to ensure that individuals and families have access to food, clothing and counseling.

### OFFICERS

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## Please put ISS on your shopping list

Donations to the Pantry Shelf at the end of last year were tremendous. Groups from businesses, the community, schools, and houses of worship went above and beyond in their generosity during the holiday season.

"I'm always bowled over by the response," says Bettyanne Lang, manager of material assistance. "People are very generous."

The need for food donations is the same year round, yet donations during the rest of the year are not as high as during the holidays.



"It would be a great help if supporters would remember us throughout the year as well," says Lang. "If everyone pitched in a little, it would make a big difference for those we serve."

Groups in the community may call Lang to find out how they can organize food drives to benefit Pantry Shelf clients.

Bring nonperishable items to the Pantry, Mon.-Fri., 8 a.m. to 3:30 p.m., and Saturday, 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. As always, monetary gifts and grocery store gifts certificates are appreciated.

## Shopping List

- ✓ peanut butter & jelly
- ✓ spaghetti & sauce
- ✓ macaroni & cheese
- ✓ soup
- ✓ canned tuna & meat
- ✓ rice
- ✓ baked beans
- ✓ canned veggies
- ✓ canned fruit
- ✓ coffee & tea
- ✓ bath soap
- ✓ shampoo & toiletries
- ✓ feminine hygiene products
- ✓ diapers
- ✓ powdered milk

## Homesafe program helps clients stay warm in the winter

As New Englanders were enjoying the region's exceptional fall foliage displays, ISS clients began calling the Homesafe program for emergency oil deliveries. The same cold night air responsible for the glorious colors is disastrous for low-income clients, whose fuel assistance grants do not arrive until after November 1.

"During this time, we provide modest help, a 50-gallon delivery to tide them over until they receive their seasonal grant," says Jan Stewart, manager of financial assistance.

Just as the malls were becoming crowded with holiday shoppers in search of the perfect gift, demand at ISS for fuel assistance was in full swing.

"We have helped a number of single parents, like Michelle, with three young children at home, or disabled individuals such as Patricia, who is housebound due to a stroke," says Stewart.

"With an income of \$600 per month, these families simply cannot afford an oil fill, nor can they lower the thermostat during the day the way working parents can. But they often make heroic attempts to conserve heat, and are immensely grateful for the crucial emergency help we provide."

ISS has been working with Citizens Energy program (Joe 4 Oil), taking advantage of their discounted oil stock while it lasts, in order to stretch ISS funds further.

ISS continues helping with overdue utility payments, though at a slower pace due to the winter moratorium—when utility companies are prohibited from shutting off service. "The demand will increase this spring, when utility companies send out termination notices," says Stewart. "Recent increases in gas and electric rates will impact low-income families as never before. We are expecting a surge of requests and lengthy negotiations with the utilities."

## Programs help prevent/end homelessness

Fresh Start works with individuals or families who have recently been in shelters and are making the transition to more permanent housing. It is a unique and welcome resource, since such a move entails numerous expenses—household goods and first and last month's rent, to name a few. Funding for such expenses is very scarce.

"Recently we provided grants to four men who each needed help transitioning into a rooming house. This move is a milestone event, accomplished through hard work after much upheaval and deprivation," say Jan Stewart, manager of financial assistance. "It is a privilege to be part of this process and to experience the joy and renewed energy engendered by a fresh start!"

Homesafe works tirelessly to help prevent eviction, and may mean the difference between security and becoming homeless. "We help individuals who have experienced a loss of income due to unforeseen and life-altering events, such as an automobile accident, an unprovoked assault, or serious illness," says Stewart. "Their plight is often compounded by the need for essential healthcare purchases not covered by insurance."

Homesafe and Fresh Start are funded by donations from churches and individuals and grants from foundations. Last year the programs helped more than 210 clients remain in their homes, settle into new housing, or supplement their heating and lighting needs.

## The Career Closet opens doors

Interviews by their very nature are nerve-racking enough. Compound that with issues of low-self esteem and not enough money to buy appropriate interview attire, and you could have a recipe for failure.

For the past seven years, The Career Closet has been providing interview attire for low-income women entering or reentering the job market.

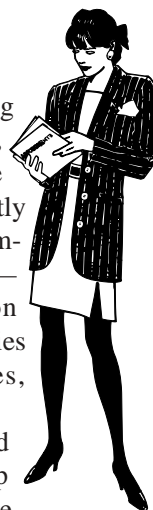
"We all feel better when dressed well, and that helps us project a better image. A nice outfit may make the difference in who gets hired and who doesn't," says Bettyanne Lang, manager of material assistance. "And the women are so grateful, not only for the clothing, but because they know oth-

ers care about them."

There's an ongoing need for good quality, up-to-date clothing. The Career Closet is currently accepting spring and summer interview attire—clean, pressed, and on hangers—and accessories such as belts, scarves, shoes and jewelry.

Volunteers to sort and hang clothing, and help women select outfits are also needed.

Call Lang at 617-773-6203 for more information about ways to support the Career Closet.



## The Bureau Drawer: A win-win for all

Everyone wins at the Bureau Drawer Thrift Shop, where every day is a sale day. Customers save money when buying new or nearly new items, and the revenue supports ISS's programs.

"The Bureau Drawer has been very busy," says Cindy Lee, shop manager. "Customers purchased many fine sweaters, coats, and other warm, winter clothing at bargain prices.

"During the holidays we had hundreds of great home decorating items in our boutique. The shop was so festive and everything sold quickly."

Lee, an incredible asset to ISS, is very creative, offering periodic special promotions, such as sales and raffles.

There are still some new, all occasion Hallmark greeting cards selling for only 50 cents. Party supplies, such as hats, plates, and toys for grab bags for

birthdays, anniversaries, and seasonal events are available at low cost.

The Bureau Drawer sells a wide variety of items, including clothes and accessories for the entire family, books, toys, games, jewelry, bric-a-brac, dishes, antiques, small appliances, personal care products, and much more.

"We appreciate your generous tax deductible donations," says Lee. "Please keep us in mind when you do your spring cleaning. We are now looking for spring and summer clothes in good, clean condition. We do not accept yard- or rummage-sale leftovers. New merchandise arrives daily, so stop by and visit often!"

The Bureau Drawer is open Wed. through Fri., 9:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m., and Sat., 11:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. Donations are accepted every day.

### ISS STAFF

Laura E. Stracco  
*Executive Director*  
Beverly Farrell  
*Office Manager/Bookkeeper*  
Claire Hagan, RN, LMHC  
*Counseling Coordinator*  
Bettyanne Lang  
*Manager of Material Assistance*  
Jan Stewart, LSW  
*Manager of Financial Assistance*  
Una Armstrong, LICSW  
*Counselor*

#### *Fee-for-Service Counselors:*

Anne M. Donovan, LADC1  
Barbara Goodman, M. Ed.  
Kathleen Liberman, LICSW  
Maureen Richardson, RN, LMHC  
Robert F. Taylor, LICSW  
Elizabeth Wagner, LMHC

Rev. Ann Rearick  
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## Message from the Executive Director



Laura E. Stracco

There have been many new additions to the ISS family since our last newsletter. Bettyanne and Matti Lang are proud grandparents to identical twins, Abigail Grace and Rebecca Paige. Una Armstrong welcomed her new baby girl, Sorche, on January 6, and I am thrilled to announce the ar-

rival of my daughter, Ashley Irene, who was born on November 25. All are doing very well!

I am most grateful to Bob Taylor, who came back to ISS as acting executive director while I was on maternity leave. He will continue to be a familiar face around the agency as a fee-for-service counselor, a hat that he has worn at the agency in the past. We will never let "Mr. T" truly retire!

We welcomed two new members, Susan Lydon and Tiffanie Williams, to our Board of Directors at our October annual meeting. Both have been very active at ISS over the years, and we are thrilled that they accepted the Board's nomination.

Plans are actively underway for the 32<sup>nd</sup> Annual South Shore Walk on Sunday, April 23. (see page 1 for details) We hope to have more walkers this year than ever before. The walk offers routes with varied distances, so that families with young children can actively participate. Post-walk activities include a buffet lunch, great music, clowns, face painting, and a raffle. It will be a day of fun for the whole family!

As always, on behalf of our clients, I thank you for your continued support. We constantly strive to reach out with kindness and compassion to those in need in our community. Thank you for making our programs possible.

## ISS Adopt a Family program cheers many

Last year, through the generosity of many supporters, ISS was able to make what might have been very bleak holidays a bit brighter

for the children in 150 area families.

"This program is possible solely because of the generosity of the individuals

and groups who open their hearts to those in need," says Bettyanne Lang, manager of material assistance. "I am continually amazed at their

level of caring and giving. Here are two letters, of many, from clients that tell in their own words, what this program means to them."

### RECENT GRANTS

ISS is grateful for the generous support from these foundations:

#### HomeSafe program

Eastern Bank Charitable Foundation	\$ 1,500
Foundation M	\$ 5,000
Frederick E. Weber Charities Corp.	\$ 5,000
Harold Brooks Foundation	\$10,000
Sovereign Bank Foundation	\$ 5,000

#### Fresh Start program

Grace Brooks Foundation	\$ 5,000
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#### The Pantry Shelf

Copeland Family Foundation	\$ 1,250
Project Bread	\$ 2,500*

\* this grant was used for a much-needed computer

#### General Purpose

Affinity Service Corporation	\$1,000
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*I just wanted to take a minute to thank you for your generosity. You have made a family with three children have a happy holiday. Without you, my children might not have gotten very much because I have Muscular Dystrophy and get very little money. It's tough. I really appreciate all that you have done. Thank you very much and God Bless.*

*To our Christmas Angels,  
Just wanted to let you know how much your kindness and generosity means to our family. Your heart must be made of gold! Without people like you in the world, where would we be. So from the bottom of our hearts, thank you! May your holiday be filled with happiness. Without your help, there wouldn't be much of a Christmas for the kids.*

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**ANGELA M. PONTE**  
Broker Associate  
"Your South Shore Specialist"




Save the Date for ISS'  
5th Annual



## Tournament

Mon., August 14, 2006  
Tee-off: 1:00 p.m.

South Shore Country Club  
Hingham, MA

Call Bettyanne at 617-773-6203  
for information

Join us after the WALK for a

# Celebration



FOOD  
AWARDS  
PRIZES  
MUSIC



CLOWNS  
FACE PAINTING

BALLOON ANIMALS

## Win an Award!

*Medals will be awarded to the walkers with  
the most pledges collected in each age category.*

*see front page for details!*

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