

Interfaith News

Interfaith Social Services, Inc.

Proudly Serving the South Shore since 1947

Spring 2007

Mother & Daughter Self-Esteem Group

ISS is offering a special eight-week program to help mothers and their daughters on a journey towards improving confidence, self-respect, and sense of worth.

As many girls grow older, they begin to lose self confidence. When self-esteem and self-concept deteriorate, it paves the way for difficulties in school, at home, and within all future relationships. It also makes them more susceptible to eating disorders.

“Anything which improves self-confidence can have a positive impact when faced with the choices and challenges of life,” says Claire Hagan, RN, LMHC, counseling coordinator. “Having a valued sense of self helps counteract negative messages that impair positive growth.”

The main goal of the mother-

daughter self-esteem group is to help women increase their sense of self-worth and begin to empower their daughters, which will help both feel strong and centered and build a base for independence and self-confidence.

Each session will begin with an overview of that evening’s topic. Mothers and daughters will then separate into three groups: middle school girls, high school girls, and mothers. The discussion in each group will be tailored to meet age-specific needs and concerns. All participants will then gather for refreshments and conversation.

The cost for the eight sessions is \$120 per person. A sliding scale fee is available for those with limited financial means. Contact New Directions Counseling at 617-773-6203 ext. 12, for more information.

Women’s Prayer Breakfast: *Using our gifts to serve God and others*



The Women’s Prayer Breakfast Committee is presenting its Ninth Annual Women’s Prayer Breakfast on Saturday, March 31 at 8:30 a.m. at St. Ann’s School Hall, One Saint Ann’s Road, Wollaston. The Rev. Ann G. Suzedell, pastor of Quincy Point Congregational Church, will discuss “Using our gifts to serve God and others.”

Rev. Suzedell, a Quincy native, has had an extensive ministerial career in the United Church of Christ. In addition to serving pastorates and interim ministries in Massachusetts, Connecticut, and Pennsylvania, she has also been an Associate Conference Minister in both Western Massachusetts and Western Michigan.

Rev. Suzedell taught Christian Theology at Moravian Theological Seminary in Bethlehem, PA, and has worked with the national Office for Church Life and Leadership.

All women in the community are invited to attend the breakfast—a morning of prayer, music, and fellowship.

Call 617-773-6203 by March 16 to reserve tickets, which are available for \$12 each. The proceeds benefit ISS.

Turkey Dippers Raise \$4,000 for ISS



“Dippers” huddle together for warmth after their dip into the North River.

Sixteen-year-old Katherine Maloy of Marshfield did it again! Her 3rd Annual Turkey Dip on Thanksgiving morning was a huge success, raising more than \$4,000, well above the \$3,100 she raised in 2005. All proceeds benefit the Pantry Shelf at ISS.

Despite the freezing water, rain, and wind, close to 100 supporters participated in the annual dip in the North River at Mary’s Boat Livery in Marshfield. More than 50 braved their way down the frozen boat ramp into the frigid water.

The event garnered great press coverage. Attorney Tom Williams, co-chair of Feed the Hungry and a longtime supporter of ISS, was pictured in a *Boston Sunday Globe* news item the week before the event, running out of the icy water in last year’s dip. Both FOX and WHDH had live news coverage, and WATD radio interviewed Katherine and other hardy “dippers”.

ISS is grateful to Katherine’s continued support. She is an inspiration.



Tom Williams, Katherine Maloy, and her mother, Kristin Williams, celebrate another successful Turkey Dip.

Feed the Hungry raises \$51,000

Interfaith's 9th Annual Feed the Hungry event at Lombardo's last November was hugely successful. Due to the outpouring of generosity of sponsors, donors, and attendees and the hard work by the committee, the evening netted \$51,000, which will go a long way in supporting ISS's social service programs.

The evening featured a live auction led by Kathy Kingston of the Kingston Auction Company. Her enthusiasm captured the attention of the entire ballroom.

There were many happy winners, including Jim Lucido and Pauline Ngunjiri, who were the winning bidders of an African Safari! Ngunjiri also won a \$500 shopping spree at the Derby Street Shoppes in Hingham during the "Heads or Tails" interactive game of chance, which had audience members trying to match their own heads and "tails" with the coin toss.

Paula Lombardo-Colia, event co-chair, and Laura Stracco, executive director, shared letters of gratitude from Interfaith's clients, which highlighted services the agency provides and the positive impact on clients' lives.

After Stracco read a letter from a



Jim Lucido and Pauline Ngunjiri

New Directions Counseling client, Kingston began the "Fund the Future" portion of the auction. She invited guests to bid at different levels to help renovate Interfaith's basement to provide additional counseling and food storage space. (*Editor's note: see Executive Director column on page 5 for more details about the renovation.*)

"I was overwhelmed with gratitude as I stood at the front of the ballroom with Kathy and watched a sea of bid cards appear before us," says Stracco. "To see people bidding out of the goodness of their hearts and out of concern for others was inspiring. I felt that people really understood the importance of counseling for our clients.

Letters from our clients

Thank you so much for your help during this very difficult time in my life and my children's life. We could not have survived this past year without the help of your food pantry and now your help at Christmas. Hopefully next year will be better for us, God willing, and we will be able to give back. Merry Christmas and Happy New Year.

Thank you so much for your kindness and generosity. I am a single mom who only wants the best for her 8-year-old daughter. Because of your kindness I can be that mother. Thanks for making our Christmas special. May God bless you for you are deserving of only the best.

Dear Guardian Angel

That is what I call you, for if it was not for you and your generosity my two children would not have a gift under their Christmas tree. I have been out of work due to an injury. I cannot tell you how much your kindness means to me and my family. We are very blessed to have someone as kind as you to care for our needs. We are forever thankful to you for all your caring.



Interfaith Social Services

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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.

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Homesafe helps avoid homelessness

ISS's Homesafe program continues helping clients at risk for homelessness, often in partnership with other agencies. Single parents are especially vulnerable when a family crisis occurs.

"Jeannette" is ill with cancer and resulting depression, and has endured repeated hospitalizations in the past two years. Although she is fortunate to reside in subsidized housing, lost work

time due to her illness has put her at risk for eviction, which would create an extreme hardship for her and her 15-year-old son. With help from ISS and several other sources, Jeannette has been able to remain in her own apartment during this critical time.

When "Lynne," a nurse, relocated here from Florida, it took four months for her professional licenses to become

valid in this state. Despite working at Macy's during the holidays and resuming her nursing career in December, she fell behind in her rent. Homesafe provided assistance at the end of December, so that her landlord would not proceed with eviction in early January.

"Despite record-breaking warm weather in December, many clients had exhausted their annual federal fuel assistance grants by early January," says Jan Stewart, manager of financial assistance. "The subsequent onset of severe cold brought increased requests for emergency fuel deliveries. Special offers from Citizens Energy (Joe4Oil) eased the intense demand until mid-February. The final six to eight weeks of the winter heating season are the hardest; the cold continues and funding everywhere runs low."

ISS works with clients to make sure that they have used all fuel assistance and other special offers. Stewart meets with clients to help plan a strategy for keeping warm throughout the winter and encourages conservation measures. Depending on a client's circumstances and fund availability, ISS is able to arrange a 50-100 gallon oil delivery.

"We are grateful for the generosity of donors, who make this help possible," says Stewart.

John Hancock Birthday Plunge

This winter found the Quincy Beaches and Coastal Commission (QBCC) in high gear, organizing its first *John Hancock Birthday Plunge* to raise money for ISS. The event, which commemorates the 270th birthday of Quincy's own John Hancock, was rescheduled to Sat. March 3 at 10 a.m. because the beach was frozen. Preregistration was over \$2,200 at press time.

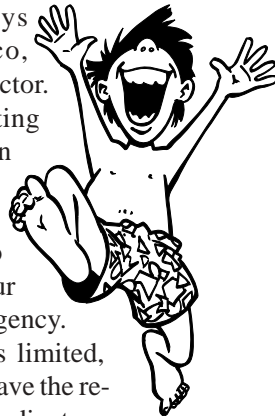
"Plungers" were invited to wear a bathing suit, Speedo, or costume, and plunge into the ocean (*brrr...*) at the Mound Street Beach at Quincy Point. In addition to raffle drawings, plungers would be treated to the chorus line of the "Dunking Toe-nuts."

"Chickie Abdallah of the QBCC came to us with this idea to raise money

for ISS," says Laura Stracco, executive director.

"It is so exciting that groups in the community are reaching out to us to help support our work at the agency.

Our staffing is limited, and we don't have the resources to coordinate as many events as some other agencies. Having groups come forward to help us not only raises money, it also raises awareness of our programs with people we might not otherwise reach. We can't thank the QBCC enough."



Please help fill our grocery carts!

As this newsletter was going to print, New England was experiencing severe, record-breaking cold weather. That means that the families ISS serves are once again facing the dilemma of how to spread limited financial resources between heat and groceries.

The Pantry Shelf needs donations to help alleviate some of the burden. Last year, in both March and April, the Pantry served 144 more individuals than the previous year. That's a tremendous increase at a time when the agency is trying to help clients with heat and utility payments, espe-



cially since donations to the food pantry tend to be much lower than during the holiday season.

"We depend on donations from groups and individuals," says Bettyanne Lang, director of material assistance. "Please call me if you want to find out how you can organize food drives within your workplace, place of worship or other group."

Please bring nonperishable items to the Pantry, Mon.-Fri., 8 a.m. to 3:30 p.m., or call 617-773-6203. As always, monetary gifts and grocery store gift 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

In Memoriam



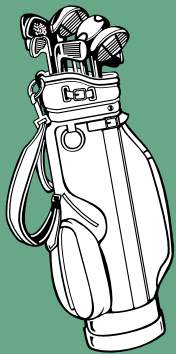
ISS is saddened at the loss of long-time volunteer Alpha Story. Alpha was introduced to Interfaith four years ago when her friend Barbara Johnson asked her to help out as a weekly volunteer on the front desk. Alpha helped Pantry Shelf clients sign-up for food, assisted others in sign-in, and often helped with mailings. When Alpha found out that bread was brought to the agency on

Saturdays, she volunteered to help with sorting. She also helped in the Pantry Shelf during the week during very busy times of the year.

A year later, she covered for a friend who was not able to volunteer for her shift at ISS's Bureau Drawer Thrift Shoppe. She enjoyed herself so much that she continued as a regular volunteer at the Bureau Drawer as well.

Alpha volunteered at ISS two to three times a week, until she passed away in February. The photo here shows her participating in ISS's South Shore Walk in 2006.

"I always enjoyed talking with her," said Laura Stracco, executive director. She had such a great outlook on life and really enjoyed people. Alpha is missed very much by her friends at Interfaith."



Save the Date 6th Annual Golf Tournament

Mon., June 25, 2007
1:30 pm tee-off
Pembroke Country Club

Call Laura Stracco, 617-773-6203
or visit www.InterfaithSocialServices.org

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From the Executive Director



Laura E. Stracco

We had a very busy fall at the agency, as demand for all of our programs increased dramatically over last year.

We were fortunate to have many volunteers at Interfaith's annual Thanksgiving food drive and are extremely grateful to all who donated food to help us stock our very depleted pantry shelves. Lynne Houghton, a Quincy Rotarian and long-time friend of the agency, brought many volunteers from Quincy High School's Interact Club, which is sponsored by the Quincy Rotary.

In the weeks before Thanksgiving, the Pantry Shelf provided 226 Thanksgiving meals to needy clients, a 41 percent increase over last year.

Thanks to the generosity of an anonymous donor, the agency now has commer-

cial-grade freezers and refrigerators, so we were able to give our clients fresh produce and holiday pies to enjoy with their Thanksgiving meals this year.

With the new commercial refrigerators and freezers we are able to obtain more perishable food items from the Greater Boston Food Bank and accept more meat, dairy, and produce donations from local grocery stores.

The demand for our services continued through December. Numerous generous supporters "adopted" 359 children in 162 households, providing holiday gifts for them. We are grateful to all the donors and volunteers who made the season much brighter for so many children who otherwise would have faced very bleak holidays.

For those that have not heard the wonderful news, The Copeland Foundation has generously offered to purchase a new 2007 Ford E-series silver metallic van for Interfaith. The foundation came forward after seeing our plea for a van in our newsletter last summer. We are thrilled, as the current

van has little life left in it. We expect to take delivery during the spring. The van is essential for picking up food at the Greater Boston Food Bank and grocery stores.

We welcomed two new members to our Board of Directors at our Annual Meeting in October. Joseph Giggey, president of Gig IT Consulting and JoAnne Hennigan, both of Quincy, accepted three-year terms. Tiffanie Williams, president of Tiffanie Williams & Company of Quincy, is the new chair of Community Relations. We are blessed to have such wonderful individuals working to help Interfaith in our mission to strengthen family life and offer assistance to those in need.

Plans are underway to renovate Interfaith's basement. Demand for help for those in need has increased exponentially since we moved into the building four years ago. When we first moved here, we couldn't imagine what we would do with all of the space. Now we are bursting at the seams. We are developing specifications and soliciting bids to create extra storage space in the basement for the food

pantry and for as many as three new counseling offices. In the for-profit world, increased demand and growth is a good thing. In our world, the increased demand for food means that more people than ever are struggling to get by.

Providing additional counseling offices means that we will be better equipped to help more people heal and recover from emotional difficulties.

Before we renovate the basement, we have to build a perimeter drainage system with a sump pump to eliminate ground water seepage. We hope to begin construction in the spring.

As always, we are extremely grateful for the generosity of our supporters, who make our programs possible. Without them, we would not be able to make such a difference in so many lives.



**Silent Auction &
Raffle Items
needed for ISS's
Golf Tournament**

Call Laura, 617-773-6203

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RECENT GRANTS

ISS is grateful for the recent generous support from these foundations:

The Frederick E. Webber Charities Corporation	\$ 5,000	HomeSafe
Verizon Wireless HopeLine New England	\$ 1,000	New Directions Counseling
Grace E. Brooks Trust	\$ 5,000	Fresh Start
Harold Brooks Foundation	\$10,000	HomeSafe
Affinity Services Fund at The Boston Foundation	\$ 1,000	General Operating

SOUTH SHORE WALK

Helping our Neighbors in Need

Sunday, April 22
12:30 p.m.

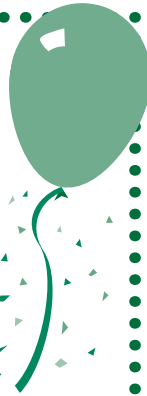
Bethany Congregational Church
18 Spear Street, Quincy

Join us
after the walk
for a celebration!

Food
Awards
Prizes
Music
Clowns
Balloon Animals
Face Painting

Call 617-773-6203

for registration forms or visit
www.InterfatihSocialServices.org



Overwhelmed by clutter in your home or office?
Paying high monthly fees for storage bins?
Closet stuffed with clothes that don't fit?

ISS can help.

"Clutter causes stress," says Gary Small, M.D., director of the UCLA Center on Aging, in the November issue of *Ladies Home Journal*. He says that chronic stress can speed aging and increase risk of heart disease and stroke, and suggests decluttering your space as an antidote.

So roll up your sleeves, dig in, and clean out those cluttered closets, attics, and basements. Then bring clean, current clothing and small household goods, books, toys and jewelry in good, usable condition to ISS's Bureau Drawer. Donations are accepted during office hours and on Saturday from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m.

The money raised from the sale of donated goods helps fund the agency's programs. Your donation is tax deductible to the extent allowed by law.

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