



OPENING DOORS

HEARTH

*Parkvale Bank presents the Art of Wine & Food
Golf Outing United Way Contributor Choice #3384
Combined Federal Campaign #45153*

Annual Report Edition - Fall 2008

THROUGH THE EYES OF A CHILD

Two homeless shelters. Drugs. Alcoholism. Physical abuse. Her brother's near drowning. Two fathers in prison. Her mother's debilitating health issues. A man's attempted suicide.

These are all things that Roberta has seen in her life. Did I mention she is only 15 years old!? In her short life, Roberta has dealt with more than most of us will ever see in our entire lives.

Roberta, what do you remember about your early childhood? How was it? It was good. We always had clothes. We had a nice, little place in the South Hills. We had pets.

You have told me that the last time you saw your dad was when you were 6 years old, which was when he went to prison for drugs. What was your relationship with him like? I can't remember if I liked him. I remember how mean he was, and that's why I never really missed him. My mother was the person who turned him in. She didn't want me and my brother around drugs. She was honest with us and didn't try to make excuses for him. I was angry with him at first, but later I thought, "Do what you want. My mom is all I need." Drugs are bad, and he needed to be in prison.

Even though your mom was working full-time, you lost your home and had to move to Mt. Washington. How did things go there? Not good. My mother was seeing someone, who turned out to be mentally unstable. He threatened to kill us one day and then slit his own wrists. I'm not sure where he is now. At the end of 2006, my mom's health got bad, and she lost her job. She developed neuropathy from diabetes. She had low blood pressure, and her knees would lock. She couldn't do the job of an LPN anymore. We had to go to a shelter.



What was your relationship with your mother like at that point? Around the time I was 11 years old, we didn't get along well. We would fight about stupid things. My life was turned upside down. I blamed her and was mean to her. Now I think I just wanted to rebel.

Where did your family go from there? When my mother got her income tax return, we got an apartment in Lawrenceville, but we eventually got evicted from there and went to another shelter. We moved from there to HEARTH in February 2008.

How do you feel about living at Benedictine Place? I like it. Everyone is friendly. The donations help a lot. We got school supplies, a computer, and some Christmas decorations. We lost everything twice- so this stuff is really helpful. Benedictine Place is also safe. It's kind of tucked away and not on a busy street. There's a nice, little "backyard" where the playground is. Also, it's good to have people around who have had similar experiences that you've had. We can be friends and give each other support.

How is your relationship with your mother now? We're getting along better. I still rebel, but I'm a bit more polite about it! It helps that we have set up some ground rules. I do certain things around the house, and my mom does certain things. I know what I'm responsible for, so there's nothing I can argue about! When we do get mad, though, we both have our own room to go to to calm down.

What is your life like now, as far as school, friends, and activities? I try to do good in school. I like learning. I have friends, but I don't socialize a lot. I think I'm a little more down-to-earth and realistic than other kids my age. I'm not into make-up and hair. And other kids I know still fight with their parents! As far as activities, I've done basketball, cheerleading, and volleyball. I'd like to do fencing. I'm also involved in dragonboating. We practice once a week on the Allegheny River near Millvale. In June, my team placed first in a big race. Things are going good.

PROGRAM PARTICIPANT NEWS

Ramona graduated from La Roche College with a Bachelor of Science degree in Facilities Management, secured a full-time job, and moved into permanent housing. She also won the Irene O. Bartko Award through the Bartko Foundation.

Krysta and **Cyndy** got all A's last semester.

Ginger was accepted into the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers apprenticeship program. She also received a Terri F. Gould Scholarship from Action Housing, Inc. and made the Dean's List.

Arnita secured full-time employment.

Jessica completed a Certified Nurse Assistant (C.N.A.) program and started working full-time.



Parkvale Bank

PRESENTS

The Art of Wine and Food to benefit HEARTH

Thursday, September 25, 2008
6 to 9 PM
at The National Aviary

Honorary Chairs:

Mr. and Mrs. Robert J. McCarthy, Jr.

*Enjoy a variety of wines, great food from exceptional restaurants, a silent auction,
and musical entertainment while exploring the habitat of exotic birds.*

Regular Tickets: \$60

VIP Tickets: \$85

VIP includes admission at 5:30 PM and valet parking

For tickets, call 412-939-2302 or visit www.hearth-bp.org.

Sponsors include:

Parkvale Bank - Clearview Federal Credit Union
TBROOKS Financial Services - Citizens Bank - DRS Architects, Inc.
PGT Trucking, Inc. - Software Specialists - Alpern Rosenthal
Pietragallo, Bosick, and Gordon - Iannucci Law Group, LLC - Buck Consultants
TriState Capital Bank - Dunbar, Bender, and Zapf
North Hills Monthly Magazine - 3WS and FM Newstalk 104.7

MARTINIS AND MORE

Benet Woods Housing Corporation held its second Martinis and More event on Wednesday, April 16 at The LeMont Restaurant. Besides looking out the windows at the beautiful view of the city, guests enjoyed sampling over 10 different martinis, mingling around the gorgeously-displayed food stations, and shopping for gift items at the 'Tini Boutique.



Sponsors were:

**Daily's
Deloitte
Fort Pitt Capital Group**

*The event featured spirits from:
Raise Your Spirits*



GOLF OUTING

HEARTH and Presenting Sponsor Fort Pitt Capital Group held the 13th Annual Tee and Green Golf Outing and Dreammaker Dinner on Monday, June 16 at Sewickley Heights Golf Club.

Sponsors were:

Fort Pitt Capital Group - Precision Endodontics - Sherrard, German & Kelly, P.C.
Ciber - Savinis, D'Amico and Kane, LLC - PGT Trucking - Metz Lewis, LLC
Northwest Savings Bank - Software Specialists - Trinity Jewelers - Daniel W. Costa,
CPA, CFP - Herbein and Company - Allegheny Valley Bank



Dickie, McCamey &
Chilcote, PC - TBROOKS
Financial Services
Stoltenberg Consulting - ACS
WDVE and FM
News Talk 104.7



NEW PRESIDENT ELECTED

HEARTH would like to welcome our newly-elected Board President Debra Flinner! Debbie lives in Mt.

Lebanon and is a Senior Vice-President at TriState Capital Bank. She is a relationship manager, developing commercial loan business.



Debbie Flinner

Debbie joined the HEARTH Board in July of 2006 at the urging of Eric Springer, a business contact and HEARTH Board Member. She liked the mission of “providing safe housing for moms and their children who would otherwise be homeless.” She adds, “The program teaches the moms to be self-reliant and self-supporting. The safety and the education component at Benedictine Place both made the program so appealing to me initially.”

Debbie got involved quickly at HEARTH, joining the wine and food event committee for 2006 and serving as Chairperson in 2007 and 2008.

She continues to volunteer because she believes HEARTH is special, saying, “The program itself is a wonderful concept. The moms can stay at Benedictine Place for two years, attending school to gain a means to support themselves and their children, which results in a self-sustaining, stronger family unit. Second, there’s no better staff anywhere! Third, I believe HEARTH’s relationship with the Benedictine Sisters is a strength. Finally, there are so many long-time supporters of the program that you just have to believe it’s a worthwhile organization.”

She is looking forward to her term as President and feels her goals should be to maintain the quality of the program and assure adequate funding but also to provide whatever support is needed to complete the Benet Woods project.

She says, “Benedictine Place is in its 14th year and is proving highly successful. We’ll of course work with the staff on anything that needs tweaked, but, for the most part, I believe the program is going well. Benet Woods is a new program, and I’m sure they would appreciate any help the HEARTH Board could give them!”

We would also like to thank Jerry Drozynski, our out-going President, for his many years of service! We look forward to continuing to work with Jerry as the Board President of Benet Woods Housing Corporation.

BENET WOODS UPDATE

Ground clearing has begun, and a groundbreaking ceremony was held on August 26. We are so excited that our dream of HEARTH at Benet Woods is becoming a reality!

HEARTH at Benet Woods, a \$2.8 million development, will be the first permanent affordable rental housing in Northern Allegheny County. Built on Rodenbaugh Road on land adjacent to Benedictine Place, it will consist of 11 two and three-bedroom units and a community room.

Regarding the community room, the American Society of Interior Designers PA West Chapter has agreed to donate their time and expertise to design and furnish it. “ASID did such a fantastic job helping HEARTH furnish and decorate the Benedictine Place apartments 13 years ago that we immediately thought of them when it came time to make plans for HEARTH at Benet Woods,” says Judy Eakin, Executive Director.

The community room will play an important role. It will include an office for a part-time staff person who will help link residents to supportive services and arrange trainings. It will also be available for the HEARTH at Benet Woods residents to host parties and social gatherings for friends and family.

When asked his feelings about this project finally getting underway, Board President of Benet Woods Housing Corporation Jerry Drozynski said, “I am cautiously optimistic! It is exciting to reach the groundbreaking, but there are still many hurdles to overcome. Our biggest concern is what we’ll find when we begin digging. Large rocks or springs will add time and cost to the project.”

Ground clearing began in August and may take 4 to 8 weeks. We hope to have the units enclosed before any bad weather and plan for completion in June or July of 2009.

Thank you to our partners, Trek Development Group, Rothschild Doyno Architects, and Guardian Construction, for your work thus far! We could never have come this far without your expertise, patience, and support.

It's easy to donate to HEARTH through your employer:

United Way Donor Designation
#3384

Combined Federal Campaign
#45153

VOLUNTEER EFFORTS AND SPECIAL GROUP DONATIONS

Thanks to the following individuals and groups for their contributions and on-going partnerships:

- The Community Presbyterian Church of Ben Avon Youth Group for providing an evening of child care on April 18 and for cleaning toys in the child care room on July 16.
- Ingomar United Methodist Church for doing a collection of paper products and personal care items.



- Gamma Sigma Sigma from Duquesne University for volunteering in our child care room twice per month in the spring semester.

- Community Presbyterian Church of Ben Avon, Nancy Furbee and friends, Incarnation 8th Grade CCD, Ingomar United Methodist Church Missions Committee, Presbyterian Church of Sewickley Women's Association, St. Paul's Episcopal Church, Sts.

John and Paul Catholic Church Women's Guild, and Zonta Three Rivers Pittsburgh North for participating in HEARTH's Get Organized Shower on May 7.

- Norwin High School Show Choir for coordinating the best Un-Birthday Party ever for the children of Benedictine Place on May 20.

- Parkvale Bank and Northgate Church for making our moms feel special on Mother's Day.

- Girl Scout Troop 1248 for a collection of diapers and West View AARP for a collection of paper products.



- Child Care Volunteer Corrie Parrish for organizing a Cinco de Mayo fiesta for the children.

- North Hills Community Outreach for providing back-to-school supplies for our children.

- Teens from The Pittsburgh Project for providing child care on July 28 and August 4 and for washing our playground equipment on July 29.

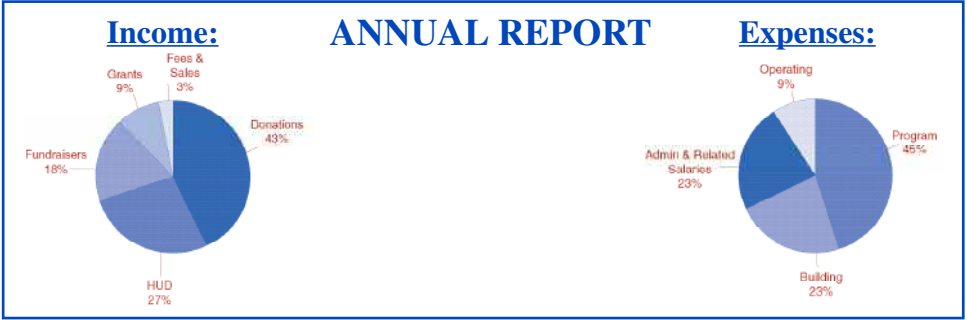


- For monetary donations: North Boroughs Rotary, AARP Pittsburgh Mellwood Chapter, Glenshaw Presbyterian Church Presbyterian Women, Northgate Church, Girl Scout Troop 1023, Girl Scout Troop 746, Ingomar United Methodist Church Missions Committee, Point Park University Sociology 202 class, and Christ Episcopal Church.

Beginning in October, we will look for donations for our families for the holidays. If you are interested in sponsoring a family or donating other holiday items, please contact Meghan Labiaux at (412) 939-2302 ext. 13.

GRANT UPDATE

PNC Charitable Trust (Joella Bane Trust Fund)	\$1800 to purchase fans
The Pittsburgh Foundation Wish Book (John R. and Margaret S. McCartan Charitable Fund)	\$2400 to purchase refrigerators
SallyCares	\$2000 for operating expenses
Centria	\$500 for operating expenses
Mt. Lebanon Jr. Women's Club	\$125 for operating expenses
Bayer USA Foundation	\$10,000 for operating expenses
Cahouet Charitable Trust	\$2500 for operating expenses



HEARTH HAPPENINGS

Welcome Meghan! **Meghan Labiaux** began work as our new Donations Coordinator in July. She will be responsible for coordinating donations, preparing apartments for new families, and contacting former program participants for our outcome surveys. With Meghan's hiring, **Cherie Hugh** will become our Special Events and Volunteer Manager, with the responsibilities of coordinating events, writing grants, and recruiting volunteers.

Congratulations to Board Members **Christy Kosakowsky** and **Susan Kostkas**, who both had babies recently. Jack was born to Christy and her husband Ed on Memorial Day, and Sophia Ann was born to Susan and her husband Donald Smith on December 29, 2007.

HEARTH would also like to congratulate our new Board officers: President **Debra S. Flinger**, Vice-President **Jerry Drozynski**, Secretary **Susan A. Kostkas**, and Treasurer **Paul E. Block**.

Finally, we would like to welcome our new Board Members: **Sylvia Bell** of Alpern Rosenthal and **Sr. Benita DeMatteis** and **Sr. Shelly Farabaugh** of the Benedictine Sisters.



(Formerly North Hills Affordable Housing)
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