

TRANSITIONS

The Newsletter for Volunteers & Friends of the Lincoln Park Community Shelter

Spring 2009

A MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

By Erin Ryan, MSW



As spring showers renew the grounds around us, we at the Lincoln Park Community Shelter are grateful to be cozy and dry in our beautiful, bright basement space! Even now, 18 months after the renovation was completed, the facility seems fresh and new. We've recently completed our "spring cleaning," and enlisted the help of many volunteers and spring breakers to help touch up paint, buff floors, and otherwise keep the space sparkling and like new – a source of pride for all our volunteers, staff, and guests!

Also renewed is the LPCS' relationship with the surrounding community. Since the commencement of our renovation, a small group of board and staff have been meeting regularly with a group of close neighbors. This monthly meeting has created an ongoing forum to discuss program operations, successes, and address potential concerns. As a community-supported organization, it is important to us that all members of the community – our neighbors as well as guests, graduates and volunteers – feel comfortable and "at home" here.

Our renewed relationships led to an exciting new partnership this winter, when neighbors purchased a snow blower in order to hire LPCS guests to remove snow on the public sidewalks within a four-block area. This mutually beneficial arrangement gives our guests some productive work and a little income, as well as fostering trust and more understanding between the LPCS and its surrounding community. The response from LPCS guests and neighbors has been enthusiastic and overwhelmingly positive, and we are looking forward – if not to the snow – to the opportunity for further collaboration in snow removal next winter!

We hope that this spring, you will also renew your commitment to LPCS by volunteering, donating, or attending an event (Don't forget to buy your tickets to The Metamorphosis Party, coming up on June 5!). Your support thus far has helped us to plan, build, and now maintain this beautiful space in this wonderful community – which is uplifting our guests and helping them to succeed every day.

FOR GRADUATE JOHN, EDUCATION IS THE KEY TO LONG-TERM SUCCESS

By Betsy Carlson, MSW, Program Director



John came to LPCS after several years of problems with drugs and alcohol, resulting in a DUI, job loss, and strained relationships. Bouncing between friends' houses and halfway houses and struggling to maintain his sobriety and to find work, he was ready for change. That is when John came to LPCS. After spending a few weeks on the waiting list, John was finally able to move in. He immediately began the hard work of rebuilding his life, attending 12-step meetings and looking for work.

After getting on LPCS waiting list, John put in an application at the *Spicy Pickle*, a Lincoln Park sandwich shop. On the same day he was able to move into LPCS, he got an interview at the *Spicy Pickle*. John began part-time work later that same week.

Although working part-time was a good start, John's case managers at LPCS didn't check off the box labeled "employed" in his file. Instead, they helped John build on this success. With motivation and a stable place to stay, John got help from LPCS volunteers to develop a resume and applied for admission to a building engineering program at Coyne Institute, receiving Pell grants to pay for classes. Going to school would mean a six or seven-day week, but he jumped in eagerly. Looking back at this time now, John recognizes that the goal setting and tracking that are a part of LPCS' On Track Program helped him to stay focused.

Working with his case managers to develop a budget and plan for life independently, John
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GET YOUR TICKETS NOW FOR THE METAMORPHOSIS PARTY 2009!

Hope needs no address...

Join us for another fabulous party celebrating hope and change in the face of homelessness, while supporting the programs of the LPCS!

Check your mail for your invitation, or buy tickets online at www.lpcsonline.org

OPEN BAR, including **SIGNATURE MARTINIS** at our Butterfly Bar

ABUNDANT SPREAD OF DELECTABLE FOOD

OUTDOOR CIGAR LOUNGE

MUSIC SPUN by guest DJ Mat Devine of Kill Hannah

IRRESISTIBLE LIVE AND SILENT AUCTION ITEMS – see descriptions at www.lpcsonline.org

You're not going to want to miss this one!



Auction Items Needed!

Help us make the Metamorphosis Party 2009 a great success!

Do you or someone you know have tickets to Chicago area sporting events (Wolves, Cubs, White Sox, Blackhawks, Chicago Fire) or theatre performances that you would like to donate to the LPCS' live/silent auction? Please contact Heather Reynolds at hreynolds@lpcsonline.org for details.

Are you a connoisseur or fan of wine? Help create a one-of-a-kind Wine Cellar that one lucky bidder will take home. We are looking for high-quality (\$25 minimum value) bottles to be dropped off at the LPCS to be auctioned off at the Metamorphosis Party. We are looking to have approximately 100 bottles donated. To make a donation, or for questions, please contact Heather Reynolds at hreynolds@lpcsonline.org. **Thank you for your donations!**

THE LINCOLN PARK COMMUNITY SHELTER
BRINGS OUR COMMUNITY TOGETHER
TO EMPOWER HOMELESS MEN AND WOMEN
TO MAKE LIFE CHANGES.

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BOARD CORNER

By Peg Wander, Vice President



The concept of Social Networking as a means of communication is nothing new to the Lincoln Park Community Shelter... but, not necessarily by its 21st century definition. As I reflect on my years of involvement with LPCS, much of our support has come from the “old fashioned” networking of friend to friend,

family member to family member, work colleague to work colleague and so on and so on. Through these interactions, hundreds of people have learned about the LPCS’ efforts face-to-face in the way people might share information today via social media such as Facebook, MySpace, LinkedIn and Twitter.

The benefit of this storytelling, be it “live” or electronic, has been immeasurable and it needs to continue. But, we also believe there are even bigger, better and more in-depth stories to tell our supporters and potential supporters. To this end, the Marketing and Communications Committee has developed a comprehensive communications plan that we have started to implement.

Among the highlights of this integrated plan are the refinement of our key messages, revamping of our website (look for our new site in the coming months!) and printed brochure as well as added participation in community events. In addition, if you haven’t noticed – LPCS is on Facebook and LinkedIn, we have an enewsletter and we’ve initiated a blog! (You can link to the blog via our website: www.lpcsonline.org or at <http://lincolnparkcs.blogspot.com/>).

Keeping you well-informed about our activities is very important to us. We would welcome your comments on what and how you see “news” about the LPCS in the time ahead.

GRADUATE SPOTLIGHT, *continued from page 1*

graduated from the LPCS mid-way through his program at Coyne. He continues to work nearly full-time at the Spicy Pickle, maintains a perfect attendance record and an A/B average at school, attends 12-step meetings, and regularly visits LPCS with soups and sandwiches from work. He even continues to set goals for himself, as he learned to at LPCS. John reports that the continuing support of LPCS’ Graduate Community has contributed to his success: he is able to meet with case managers to check in, to “shop” for non-perishables in the graduate food pantry, attend dinner with current guests, and participate in classes and activities at LPCS.

John will graduate from school in August and hopes to find work as a building engineer here in Chicago or in Florida near his family. He acknowledges LPCS as a “stepping stone” in his life, surrounding him with positive people and helping him to create a structure for his life to move forward.

WELCOME NEW STAFF

Murray Manus is a graduate of the University of Chicago with a B.A. in sociology. He subsequently went to Stanford Law School and returned to Chicago, his native city, to become an attorney in the private sector. After practicing for over 15 years, he decided to leave the field of law and became Legislative Policy Manager for Equip for Equality, a not-for-profit organization that advances the rights of all people with disabilities in Illinois, including those with mental illness, his particular area of expertise. He directed the organization’s state legislative strategy in Springfield, which included drafting legislation, working directly with legislators and state policymaking officials, and testifying before legislative committees. During this time he represented Equip for Equality on the Chicago Continuum of Care, working to end homelessness for people with mental illness. In 2006, he entered social work school full-time as a returning student and graduated from the Jane Addams College of Social Work at the University of Illinois at Chicago in May 2008 with an MSW. He shortly thereafter passed the licensing examination to become a licensed social worker in the State of Illinois.



He has won numerous awards, including The United States Department of Justice Award for Public Service for contributions to the U. S. Attorney’s Mental Health Committee and the Dean’s Award from the Jane Addams College of Social Work for academic excellence, and received recognition from Aspire, a service provider for people with developmental disabilities, for his volunteer work on its Human Rights Committee. He also volunteered for several years as a tutor for people with mental illness at Thresholds and with the Night Ministry on its health outreach bus where he provided food, conversation, and good cheer to the residents of poor neighborhoods, including many homeless people. He joined the Lincoln Park Community Shelter as a general case manager in February after volunteering here as well. He is married with no children and two dogs.

WISH LIST

Briefcases or black workbags	Men’s underwear
Razors	Toilet paper
Tissues	Alcohol-free mouthwash
Breakfast supplies (ground reg. coffee, cereal, creamer, sugar)	Travel-sized shampoo

Please call ahead to arrange drop off of donations, 773-549-6111.

Thank you!

LPCS STAFF: WHERE ARE THEY NOW?



Remember these names and faces? Ever wonder what happened to them after leaving LPCS? Read on for some brief updates!

Katie Cousino

Former position at LPCS, dates:

Shelter Coordinator, Volunteer Coordinator,

and Community Support Manager from March 2002 - April 2005

What have you been doing since you left LPCS?

I was offered an amazing job to work in the running/fitness industry that I love and am passionate about at New Balance Chicago. For three years, I was the marketing manager and event coordinator for their three local retail stores. I found my fit in working with both people and business through marketing, especially the part where I got to donate money to worthy charities like LPCS. I recently started at Triblocal as a marketing specialist. Triblocal is a local paper focused on the communities in the Chicago suburbs and is sponsored by Chicago Tribune.

In June I will also be starting a new chapter in my life as a wife to Matt Lauck

(and he a devoted, loving husband to me). We will be getting married at Saint Mary's College in South Bend, Indiana.

What do you miss most about LPCS?

I miss working daily with both volunteers and guests. I get my energy from others and the care and concern of volunteers always charged me to do a better job for the guests. I miss the privileged time I had with the guests learning about their lives and their hopes for the future. I always say the three years I spent working at LPCS were the hardest and the best. It truly was my "toughest job you'll ever love."

Family updates...

Nothing yet! Though I am a busy new aunt. In the past two years my siblings have given me three new nephews to adore. I am still running a couple days of week and, in addition, started to play soccer two nights a week.

My other hobby is collecting crafts supplies (jewelry making, card making, scrap booking), but never actually make anything but a big storage problem.

Future plans...

Leave work before 8pm on a regular basis!

COMMON GOALS CONNECT GUESTS OF GRACE HOUSE & LPCS

By Linda Gibson, Interim Housing Coordinator

The Lincoln Park Community Shelter and St. Leonard's Ministries are two community-based non-profit organizations designed to help find stable and affordable housing for their graduates. St. Leonard's Ministries operates two homes, Grace House and St. Leonard's House, which serve ex-felons who are released to their custody when paroled.

Women staying at Grace House, like LPCS guests, are required to participate in a structured program, which includes psychological evaluation and therapy, substance abuse counseling, parenting classes, job readiness and specific job training. After completing this intensive program successfully, as well as finding work, one prize for Grace House residents is referral to LPCS' One on One program, to learn financial management skills and receive financial assistance with a security deposit on a new apartment.

In turn, LPCS refers guests to St. Leonard's Michael Barlow Center for job training and educational opportunities, ranging from a high school diploma to building maintenance skills or food service preparation. LPCS and St. Leonard's Ministries are partners in helping to assist people in reclaiming their self-worth and abilities to be contributing citizens in the community.



Women from Grace House attending LPCS' One on One class.

VOLUNTEER APPRECIATION WEEK, APRIL 19-25

By Abby Lane, Interim Housing Manager

To commemorate National Volunteer Appreciation Week, LPCS hosted a brunch on April 19 to honor many of the volunteers who make the work done at LPCS possible. The shelter was decorated in spring colors while guests, staff, board members, and volunteers took a few hours to socialize. The day's events included delicious main dishes prepared by guests of the shelter, the presentation of awards, and door prizes.



The work of all of the volunteers at LPCS is crucial to the ongoing success of the shelter and the variety of programs offered. At the Appreciation Brunch, LPCS took the time to honor a few volunteers for their hard work over the past years, by presenting the following awards: the Mission Award; Vision Award; and Community Partnership Award.

This year's Mission Award, given in honor of a "hands on" volunteer who has demonstrated a commitment to furthering the mission of LPCS by his/her direct volunteer service, was given to Dan Ahmer. Dan is a graduate of LPCS and has given back by leading a bi-weekly recovery group for current guests. Additionally, Dan has assisted LPCS in many of our facility issues and was a big help in the renovation of the new facility.

The Vision Award was given to Nada Riley, for her work as a "behind the scenes" volunteer who, through her continued active support of LPCS, has helped further the broader vision of LPCS. Those at LPCS and others in the broader community commended Nada for her continued community work assisting those who are in need.

The Community Partnership Award is given in recognition of an organization or institution that fosters community and support for LPCS and its mission through collaboration with the shelter. This year's winner was Cubs Care, a fund of the McCormick Tribune Foundation, who has been a long time donor and partner of LPCS.

LPCS would like to offer a big thank you to all of our volunteers. Each year over 1,500 volunteers contribute over 12,000 hours making meals, teaching classes, answering phones, serving on committees, and more! Thanks for all of the work you do. We really couldn't do it without you!

Thank you to members of the Volunteer Committee, who helped plan the event: Michelle Stoessel, Randy Hayden, Deborah Eddy, and John Wilson; and to all the guests who helped cook and clean the day of the event!

We would also like to thank the following sponsors for their support: Einstein Bros. Bagels, Jewel Osco, Dominick's, Costco, Whole Foods, Caribou Coffee, and Swirlz Cupcakes. Additionally, we offer a big thanks to the following organizations for donating fabulous door prizes: Adler Planetarium, Chicago History Museum, Chicago Park District, Gap, Inc., Minnie's, New Balance Chicago, Peggy Notebart Nature Museum, and Steppenwolf Theatre,



From the top: LPCS guests prepare brunch items before volunteers arrive. LPCS Executive Director Erin Ryan presents Dan Ahmer with the 2009 Mission Award. LPCS Program Director Betsy Carlson presents Nada Riley with the 2009 Vision Award.

GOING GREEN

In an effort to reduce our footprint, LPCS would like to send *Transitions* out electronically to those who are interested.

If you would like to receive our newsletter electronically, please make sure that we have your email address on file by emailing Heather Reynolds at hreynolds@lpcsonline.org.

VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT: JIM & MARY CELE DOYLE

By Heather Reynolds, Volunteer & Community Relations Coordinator



and other volunteer groups at the shelter. When asked what they like best about volunteering, Mary Cele responded that the “guests are so appreciative of any kind of service that is done for them, and the staff is always friendly and grateful.” Mary Cele and Jim are both active members in the community, particularly with their church, St. Clement. Jim is the Vice-President of Student affairs at DePaul

Mary Cele Doyle and her husband Jim have been volunteering at LPCS for over five years. When asked why they wanted to volunteer, Mary Cele responded that she “was especially moved to know more about the shelter after a talk by George Kuhlman,” a fellow member of St. Clement Church, and a current LPCS Board Member. Mary Cele helps ensure that there are volunteers to prepare and serve breakfast once a month at LPCS’ Community Engagement Program (CEP). In addition to helping with CEP, Mary Cele has also coordinated meals

University, and Mary Cele works as Director of Community Involvement at Saint Clement Church. When they aren’t busy working or volunteering, they like to spend their time with family and on the golf course.

Jim Doyle also recently joined the board of LPCS. His relationship with DePaul has contributed to DePaul’s increasing support for the shelter through student, faculty and staff involvement over the years, including serving meals and volunteering overnight or at the front desk. DePaul also donated the furniture for the men’s and women’s dorms as well as the couches and armchairs in LPCS’ Community Room.

PLACE AN AD in our next newsletter!

To find out how, contact Heather Reynolds at 773-549-6111 x202 or email hreynolds@lpcsonline.org.