

Metro Lutheran Ministry: With vision, purpose and compassion since 1971.
MLM affirms the right of all people to food, clothing and shelter, while promoting self-sufficiency and hope through direct client services and advocacy.

Volunteers' Timing Helps Critical Need

Many people have heard that it's better to be lucky than good. A few have learned that what is often called "luck" is really nothing less than a blessing.

A recent project through Metro Lutheran Ministry was a good example. The story is complex and crosses several city and church boundaries, but the conclusion is that a woman who was almost immobilized because of surgery is now able to get around.

Donna Harle has lived at her home in Independence for 11 years. Although she has experienced several health issues, last fall her arthritic knees led to replacement surgery that resulted in several complications. She was in and out of the hospital twice and spent time in a nursing home because

she was nearly immobilized. Then, when she returned home, even her small front stairs made traveling to the doctor, shopping or church almost impossible.

"She's been stuck in the house because the stairs were just too hard," her daughter Paula said.

When Donna returned to the hospital for

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Donna Harle

MLM To Address Major Homeless Issue

Metro Lutheran Ministry recently took a significant step toward addressing one of the nation's most challenging issues: home-

lessness among those with mental illness.

MLM this year will begin a partnership with the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development to operate permanent, supportive housing for people with chronic mental illness.

The MLM/HUD agreement was announced at a regional press conference Jan. 11 at the MLM offices at 3031 Holmes. The event also featured announcement of all of HUD's area 2008 contract awards, and drew newspaper and broadcast media from throughout the area.

MLM's housing program will be located in Wyandotte County, beginning in late 2008. The project will be among the first here to address directly the widespread but often overlooked problem of mental illness among the area's homeless people.

"We have been waiting to hear this news for many months," MLM Executive Director Jim Glynn said. "It is a blessing to

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MLM received more than \$200,000 in a grant from HUD to begin a housing program for homeless people with mental illness. The grant was among 28 announced Jan. 11 at MLM's offices. Those present were (from left) HUD Regional Director Macie Houston, MLM staff members Eric Sundquist, Barbara Cabill, Cachet Montgomery and Jim Glynn, along with Terri Porter, HUD Community Services Director in Kansas City, Ks.

MLM works hard to minimize expenses.
Ninety percent of designated gifts go directly to programs.

Volunteer's Are Just In Time To Help Rebuild Mobility

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treatment of a secondary infection, Paula's husband Mike put in a temporary ramp to help Donna's situation. It was a good start, but without side rails and other city code issues, the effort needed some assistance.

"We checked with one church, but we were out of their zone," Paula noted. "We wanted to get it finished because she really needed it."

That's when "luck" came into play. The first church recommended the family contact Metro Lutheran Ministry, where more than mere coincidence had placed some volunteers ready to help. Abiding Savior Lutheran Church, which has worked with MLM for years on a wide range of projects, had recently asked if any projects were available for a group of

volunteers. Their timing could not have been better.

"I told them that we just happened to have this family that could sure use their help," noted Older Adult Services Director Earl Isaac. With MLM providing the materials, all that was needed was good weather.

On Jan. 5, the crew composed of Pastor Michael Hartzheim, Terry Davis, Dave Hallerud and Cliff McCormick turned out and, over the course of more than six hours, built a new ramp. Donna was very appreciative of Abiding Savior's Christian service to people in need.

"There are a lot of people out there who are worse," Donna said. "I knew God would let us come out of this. You just have to keep trying."



Terry Davis (center) led volunteers Dave Hallerud (left) and Cliff McCormick of Abiding Savior Lutheran Church on a recent Saturday to complete a ramp for an Independence woman whose knee surgery left her nearly immobilized.

Spring Fling Scheduled for March 1

The annual MLM Spring Fling will be especially fun for children March 1 when the annual fund-raising event returns to Bethany Lutheran Church, 91st and Lamar, Overland Park.

Scheduled for 8 a.m. to noon, the carnival-like event will have more games for kids than ever, clowns, magicians and fun activities for everyone. The annual silent auction and bake sale will return along with pancake breakfasts.

Tickets are \$4 in advance and \$5 at the door. Children 4-12 are only \$2. Proceeds from the event go to the MLM Christmas Store, which helps more than 900 area families have a merry Christmas.

Help is needed to set up events on Friday, Feb. 29, from 5 to 7 p.m. and for the event March 1. Items are needed for the silent auction, including craft and homemade items. All donations should be dropped off at Bethany Lutheran Church on Friday, Feb. 29 between 5 and 7 p.m.

For more information, contact Suzanne Bartling at 816- 931-0027 or suzannebartling@mlmkc.org.

New Housing Program

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be able to expand our homeless program and serve people who really need quality services."

Mental health issues are estimated to be a major problem for as many as half of the nation's homeless people, including many military veterans. People with severe mental illness tend to remain homeless for longer periods, have less contact with family and friends, encounter more barriers to employment, tend to poorer physical health, and have more contact with the legal system than other homeless people.

Scheduled to open in the summer or fall of this year, MLM's Wyandotte project will include nine apartment units with a full time professional staff person for support. Wyandotte Mental Health will contract for additional support services.

Feinstein Food Program Scheduled This Year

Metro Lutheran Ministry will hold its seventh annual Feinstein Challenge in March and April.

Last year, MLM supporters gave more than \$50,000 to provide food for area homeless and other needy families and individuals. Funds raised during the period can also help generate additional contributions from the Feinstein Foundation.

Alan Shawn Feinstein founded the program and each year contributes \$1 million among hunger fighting agencies nationwide, using the program to help organizations such as MLM to raise funds. With the Feinstein funds, a total of more than \$100,000 was raised during

2007 in metropolitan Kansas City.

MLM's Wish List

MLM's current wish list includes a lot of things to help start new homes.

The wish list includes armchairs and couches, beds, (especially beds!), as well as bath towels, hand towels, wash rags, pots, pans, utensils, gloves and socks.

MLM also needs volunteers to help pick up furniture and home furnishings for the homeless program, and move people into permanent housing.

If you have anything you would like to donate, call (816) 931-0027.

MLM Is Ready for More Progress This Year

by Michelle Jakobe, MLM Board President

I am honored to be serving as president of the Metro Lutheran Ministry Board of Directors and am pleased that Sue Tarkka is vice president. Sue and I plan to work together and really serve more as co-presidents this year. We are very excited about the upcoming year at MLM.

MLM had a very productive year, helped launch the thrift store, and ended 2007 with a very successful Christmas Store, serving more than 800 families and an additional 100 individuals in their homes. This year is off to a great start and the staff and volunteers are well on their way to planning what promises to be a very exciting Spring Fling. So mark

your calendars for Saturday March 1 at Bethany Lutheran Church to join in on all the activities.

Sue and I would like to thank the MLM staff, all our volunteers, and the board members for all their hard work in 2007. As our Power of Each One event reminds us, it is the power and contributions of each one that makes all the difference. We thank each one of you for your continuing contributions and support of MLM. We are looking forward to 2008 and to working toward maintaining and strengthening our relationships with member congregations and the community while serving the needs of our clients.



Michelle Jakobe (right), new MLM board president, and Sue Tarkka, new MLM vice president will serve as co-leaders for 2008.

New Officers, New Members for 2008 Board

MLM's Board of Directors has several recent changes. Michelle Jakobe has been named the new MLM board president and will work as co-leader with Sue Tarkka, the new MLM vice president.

New members are Becky Bielharz, Curt Johnson, Vicky Westerhaus and Sharon Yelton.

Becky Bielharz has been self-employed for nearly 10 years as a facility-planning consultant. Her company is called Workplace Strategies. A resident of Westwood, she has been a member of Our Savior Lutheran Church in Kansas City, Ks., all her life—actually a third

generation member! With the church, she serves as the Chair of the Board of Trustees.

A resident of Overland Park, Curt Johnson is a project manager at Black & Veatch engineering firm. He and his wife, Elaine, belong to Holy Cross Lutheran in Overland Park.

Vicky Westerhaus is an attorney with Stinson Morrison Hecker LLP. Also a resident of Overland Park, she is a member of Holy Cross. She and her husband, Doug Westerhaus, have two sons. In her law practice, she helps people buy and sell businesses. She also advises companies

on securities law matters and helps them comply with the law.

Sharon Yelton retired Jan. 3 after 37 years as computer specialist and IT manager for USDA Farm Service Agency. A resident of Overland Park, she has been a member of Atonement Lutheran for 26 years.

Other board members are Karen Bame, Cheryl Bender, Flora Buford, Sun Choi, Doug Dallman, Emma Edwards, Roger Heim, Jessie Jefferson, Lisa Peck, Rev. Cynthia Schnaath, and LeRoy Zimmerman.

MLM Fund Established With Greater KC Foundation

The MLM Foundation Fund has been established at the widely respected Greater Kansas City Community Foundation. With the affiliation, long-term, tax-deductible contributions to MLM can be made either by mail or at the Community Foundation's Web site, <http://www.gkccf.org>.

"It's a good place to give a contribution, especially a larger one that you want to contribute to the long-term support of

MLM," said Dick Ballentine, secretary of the MLM Foundation Board. "It's a place to put that money and know it will be used for MLM's needs in the future."

By partnering with the Community Foundation, donors receive the security, simplicity and tax advantages of a public charity combined with the personal recognition, involvement and flexibility of a private foundation. Donors also gain access to the highest level of strategic

thinking on ways to meet community challenges. Ballentine noted that contributions to the MLM Foundation Fund at the Community Foundation can be cash, stock or securities that will be utilized to help support the MLM mission.

Founded in 1978, the Community Foundation manages more than \$1 billion in assets, houses more than 2,000 charitable funds and has provided more than \$1 billion in grants.

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"with God all things are possible." —Matthew 19:26

Food Programs Set To Start—Volunteers Still Needed!

MLM is starting "Food Giveaways" in which Harvesters will deliver food at MLM for pre-screened, less-fortunate families.

A key to the program will be church groups who will sort the food beforehand then help the families find the food items that they need.

MLM will have a delivery from Harvesters the second Saturday of every month. The volunteer groups need to be at the main MLM office, 3031 Holmes, Kansas City, from 9 a.m. to 1 or 2 p.m. Approximately 10-12 people will be needed each delivery day, with at least one adult if it is a youth group. Work clothes and

no open-toed shoes are recommended.

Lunch will be provided through a cookout for the families and volunteers that participate. It will be one-two hot-dogs, chips, a drink and cookies. MLM does ask that each group bring \$3 per person to cover the cost of the food. Or you may bring your own sack lunch if you prefer. There will be a cooler to store it.

The Saturdays that remain open are as follows: Feb. 9; May 10; June 14; July 12; Aug. 9; Sept. 13; Oct. 11; Nov. 8 and Dec. 13.

MLM needs church groups to step forward and take one month a year. They

may contact Suzanne Bartling, by calling 816-931-0027 or e-mailing suzannebartling@mlmkc.org.

Leave a Legacy

Please consider helping MLM for years to come with a gift through your will or trust.

One of the greatest challenges in providing for the area's homeless and others in need is a reliable source of income.

Even modest long-term donation helps provide critical stability for planning and ensures funds are there to maintain services such as the food pantry.

For more information, call Jim Glynn at (816) 285-3117 or visit www.mlmkc.org on the Internet.

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