



St. Vincent's Way

SUMMER 2010

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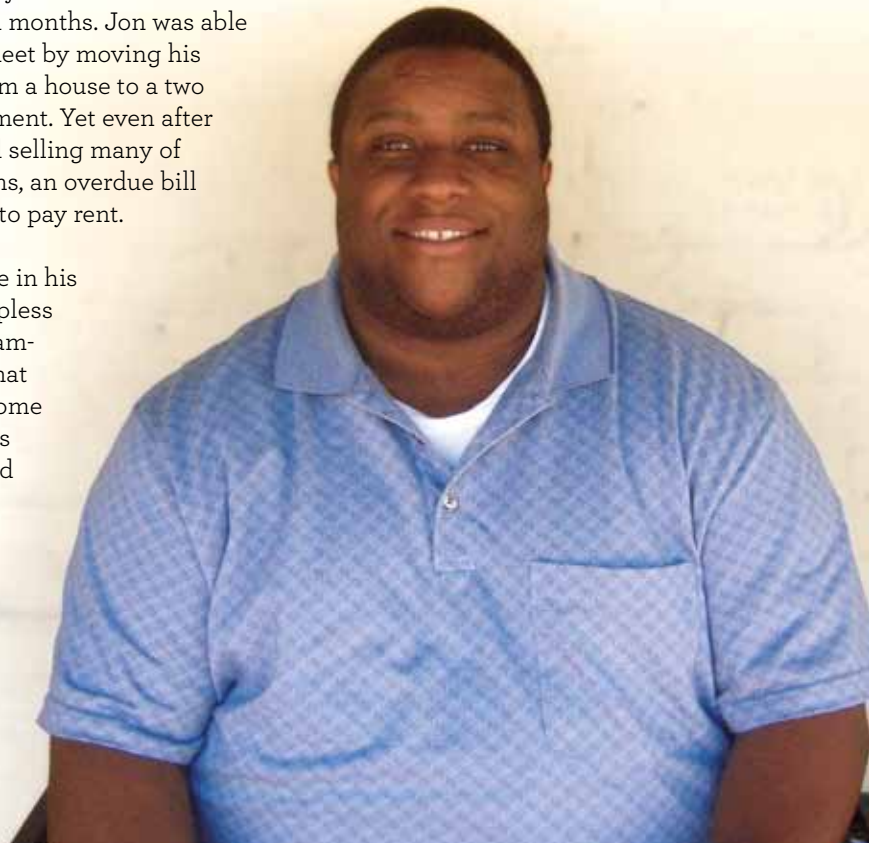
A hand up during a crisis

Jon has always cared for his family of six. Working hard for his family gave him a sense of accomplishment and he enjoyed the maintenance jobs he held.

"It means a lot," said Jon. "It's been a hardship, but this is a real blessing to us. We're hoping to enjoy life the way we did before."

Then Jon was injured and could not work for several months. Jon was able to make ends meet by moving his large family from a house to a two bedroom apartment. Yet even after downsizing and selling many of their possessions, an overdue bill left Jon unable to pay rent.

For the first time in his life, Jon felt helpless to care for his family and feared that they would become homeless. That's when Jon turned to St. Vincent de Paul, where he received enough assistance to keep his family secure in their home.



inSight

A mother with a child can work 40 hours a week, 52 weeks a year and still be living in poverty. Both parents in a married couple family with three children can work full-time, year-round and still be living in poverty.
(Poverty in Greater Cincinnati)

Help beat the heat

Each summer the young, elderly and the chronically ill suffer in the heat. You can bring relief to a family in need by donating a new fan or air conditioner at the St. Vincent de Paul ministry center, 1125 Bank Street, or at any of the six thrift store locations. Drop off fans or air conditioners at Coney Island, or give a financial gift at any Greater Cincinnati Huntington Bank location now through August 13.

For more information, contact Sarah Gerrety at sgerrety@SVDPCincinnati.org or (513) 562-8841 ext. 217.



Summertime can be difficult for children living in poverty

I have very fond memories of my childhood summers. Summertime was a



moment to take a break from homework, relax by the community pool, see how many books I could read for the summer reading program, and maybe go on a family vacation. Needless to say, it was a time

eagerly anticipated each year! It's hard to imagine a child not looking forward to this time of the year.

That is, of course, unless you are living in poverty. For children living on the margin, summer has a whole new interpretation. For impoverished children,

summer means hot, humid days and nights in a small, cramped apartment or mobile home with a fan to circulate the sticky air, if you are lucky.

For many who depend on school-subsidized breakfast and lunch programs, summer can also mean going without breakfast and/or lunch as mom struggles to find extra money to pay for these two additional meals a day plus babysitting. Instead of being a time of respite from the school year, summer can actually add another layer of stress to an already tense family situation.

About 45 percent of people helped by St. Vincent de Paul volunteers across the city are school-aged children. What can I do to help? You might ask. Here are some ideas...

- **Contribute a fan and/or air conditioner.** (See the front page for more information on how to help and for drop off locations.)
- **Donate \$150 to send a child to Camp Joy, a week long summer camp.** (See enclosed envelope on how to help.)
- **Drop off food, especially breakfast and lunch items such as cereal, peanut butter/jelly and canned soups to any of the St. Vincent de Paul thrift stores, the Bank Street Center in the West End, or the St. Vincent de Paul pantry or volunteer group at your nearest Catholic church.**

As always, we are so appreciative of our donors and St. Vincent de Paul volunteers and staff, who strive each day to make life just a little more bearable for those who are most vulnerable among us...the children.

Blessings to all,

Sandy Brielmaier
Cincinnati District Council President



Children look forward to summer vacation and spending warm days outside during a carefree summer. More than 200 children living in poverty in Winton Hills will be experiencing a summer vacation in a home where food is scarce, toys are a luxury, and time at a summer camp to learn new skills and experience the outdoors is unimaginable.

This year, you can help a child grow and give them an experience they will never forget. A gift of just \$150 will send a child from this impoverished neighborhood to a week-long summer camp at Camp Joy. There they will have a chance to learn about nature, swim, canoe, take biking trips, and simply be a child. Please see the enclosed envelope to help.

One volunteer's experience



Nadine's life has been filled with good moments and with struggles. A lot of health problems have become hurdles for her, but she has never given up. Nadine is back in school and has never

forgotten about her past volunteer work at the St. Vincent de Paul food pantry and thrift store.

Now Nadine volunteers in the St. Vincent de Paul Social Services Department. She helps in the office, doing data entry and filing, making telephone calls and helping people find the assistance they need. "I just love it," said Nadine, "It was the Lord's calling. I get the experience I need for a job and I have the chance to give back."

"Go for it. You'll get the best experience you've ever had," said Nadine, encouraging others to try volunteering. "Treat each day like it's your last. Don't wait, just act."

Volunteer opportunities

Without volunteers, St. Vincent de Paul could not help our neighbors in need throughout Cincinnati. There are many ways to give your time and to give hope to a family in need. Contact the volunteer coordinator at dtiow@SVDPCincinnati.org or (513) 562-8841 ext. 211 and ask how you can change a life.

Food Pantry Each month, over 500 families visit our West End Food Pantry. Come serve a neighbor in need on Tuesdays, Fridays and Saturdays from 10 a.m.-noon at 1125 Bank Street. Volunteers are also needed to stock and sort food and make pick-ups of donated food during the week.

Office Assistance Calls for help continue to increase and volunteers are needed to answer calls, file, organize and enter data at our office, 1125 Bank Street.

Home Visits Wednesdays from 9-11 a.m. volunteers are needed to bring hope home to our neighbors in need of furniture, household items and clothing.

Garden The garden at the St. Vincent de Paul ministry center is a peaceful

place for those who are caught up in difficult times. If you have a green thumb, our garden needs your care and expertise.

Adopt-A-Store As needs increase, more families are relying on our thrift stores. You can make a life-changing difference by volunteering to sort donations, create displays, straighten and stock our six St. Vincent de Paul thrift stores.

Organize a Drive Lend a helping hand by organizing a drive or event at your school, office or church to collect food, baby items, clothing, household items or furniture. Our staff can help you plan. Contact Sarah Gerrety at sgerrety@SVDPCincinnati.org or (513) 562-8841 ext. 217 to get started.



A deposit for a fresh start

Maya had always been self-sufficient, working full time and attending college. When she became pregnant with her son, complications forced her to stop working. To make ends meet, Maya began downsizing.



When Maya found an apartment that fit her budget, she was short on the deposit. With nowhere else to turn, Maya came to St. Vincent de Paul where she received the remaining amount she needed for her deposit. "It's a big relief. I will be able to get the keys today," said Maya. "This means everything. Everybody falls sometimes. When I get back on my feet I want to help someone, too."

St. Vincent de Paul thrift stores great for a 'treasure hunt'



Scout out the bizarre, the unusual and the unique or uncover valuable

collectibles at St. Vincent de Paul's six thrift stores scattered throughout

Greater Cincinnati. Shopping at the stores is never dull and can be a lot of fun if you enjoy bargain hunting.

Known as stores that help families purchase life's necessities and stay within their budget, St. Vincent de Paul stores also have another draw. They're unpredictable, and those who love a bargain understand this. In fact, many shoppers come in daily (some twice a day) to search the shelves for overlooked treasures that have just arrived.

"There are many unusual things in the world and they usually end up at St. Vincent de Paul," laughs Milford Store Manager Phyllis Swett.

A recent week-long treasure hunt at the SVDP stores uncovered the crazy

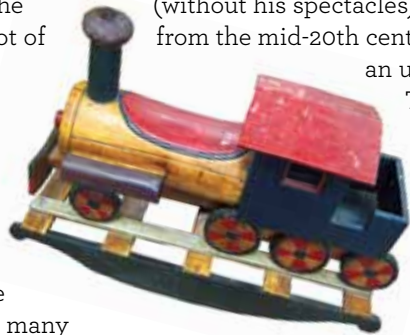


The St. Vincent de Paul Thrift Stores provide more than a way

to shop on a budget and support programs for those in need. The thrift stores provide no-cost items on an emergency basis to families in need. Through our voucher system, parents are able to obtain a bed for a child sleeping on a floor, a single mother can have pots and pans to cook meals after coming out of a shelter, or a father, after being laid off, can have clothing for his growing children.

and the collectible among the mounds of clothes, toys and housewares that help so many people. Quality antique furniture, valued musical instruments or quirky items may only last half a day on the shelves, if that, store managers say.

For example, at the Milford store, Phyllis produced a Charlie McCarthy dummy (without his spectacles) that came from the mid-20th century. It was an unusual find.



The store also boasts a collection of collectable beer steins, an autographed Bengals

poster (Anthony Munoz), handcarved wooden shoes, an antique toy top and an unusual pewter nativity set.

On the shelves at the Evendale location during the "treasure hunt week" were a Michael Jackson album in excellent shape, brand new name brand clothes (Nike, Ann Klein and Tommy) and a like-new Noritake 40-piece china set. Manager Lisa Claus said she has seen Rookwood Pottery come through the door, as well as valuable antique furniture.

In Mt. Washington, the Society's newest remodeled store is receiving many donations. During the treasure hunt week, an old set of valued granite-ware, an enamel-ware pitcher and bowl set and unusual paintings were among the surprise finds. A drop-leaf antique writing desk was on the floor, priced at \$135, but valued much higher.



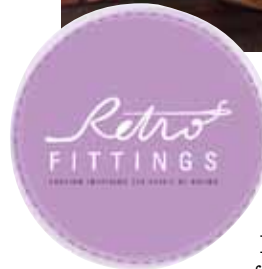
Other more unusual items seen during the week included a purple metal Christmas tree, original Mickey Mouse memorabilia plates, World War II collector's items, the original sheet music to the Hughes High School Alma Mater and a hand-carved Noah's Ark toy.

The icing on the cake for shoppers is knowing that every penny they spend is used by St. Vincent de Paul to help people in need right here in our local community.



Gently-used clothing, household items and furniture are accepted at all six thrift store locations or call (513) 421-CARE (2273) to schedule a free pick up.

- Evendale**..... 9864 Reading Rd.
- Mason Town Center**..... 1065 Reading Rd.
- Mt. Washington (New location)** ... 2300 Beechmont Ave.
- Milford** 813 Main St.
- Este Avenue (Superstore)**..... 4530 Este Ave.
- Colerain** 6900 Colerain Ave.



RetroFittings fashions support SVDP programs

Don't miss the event of the year! This year's annual RetroFittings fashion show has moved to a new location. Mark your calendars for Thursday, October 14 at The Hilton Cincinnati Netherland Plaza Hall of Mirrors to enjoy this unique fashion show displaying artistic creations by University of Cincinnati Fashion Design students. Each student takes a \$10 voucher to the St. Vincent de Paul Thrift Stores and turns their retro finds into cutting-edge fashions.

With a new location, an updated look, creative designs and a stylish boutique, you will not want to miss this event. RetroFittings gives a "fresh, exciting twist on modern fashion that really gives students the opportunity to showcase their work and talent while bringing the community together," said Rachel Mason, a graphic design student at UC who designed and hand drew the artwork showcased in RetroFittings invitations



this year. Rachel also participated in RetroFittings her sophomore year at UC by designing an outfit.

"I shop at the thrift stores. Seeing the reuse of items purchased there was a neat experience," said Rachel. "Some people do that (shop at thrift stores) as part of their wardrobe anyway. Taking it to the runway was exciting. It was a good opportunity for me to support the SVDP programs that help those in need."

Mark your calendars now and stay tuned for more details. Or contact Julie Rack jrack@SVDPCincinnati.org or (513) 562-8841 ext. 225 for more information.

Mother looks to SVDP to help children with mental health issues

Yolanda has a full plate of responsibilities. She attends college for special education while taking care of four children, and deals with complicated mental health issues of her two oldest children. These two children were diagnosed with bipolar disorder and as teenagers are going through tough times.

During the school year, Yolanda can attend college and study to prepare for the future, but during the summer, she cannot leave her children unattended. The two oldest are hard to manage and often act out, even under positive circumstances.



Although she wants to provide for her family, she cannot be successful at a job and leave her teenage children at home alone. Relatives are unable or unwilling to help, she said. They know how difficult two of the children are, even on medication, and they stay away.

"Their (the two children's) situation is so bad, even on medication.... I'm going through a lot. I have to pray. All I can do is pray my kids get better," said Yolanda. "We're barely making it."

St. Vincent de Paul and other agencies have stepped in to help. The Society has provided rental support and food. A clinic for children with mental disorders has helped ease the burden. But overall, the next few years could be difficult for this family, and St. Vincent de Paul will be there for them.



Sally is a perfect example of the important role SVDP plays in its patients' lives. Sally has a medical history of diabetes, high blood pressure and a myriad of other chronic health conditions. She knows that she should check her blood sugar and blood pressure often, but doesn't. I checked her vitals, explained what they meant and provided education to help keep her blood sugar and blood pressure levels at goal.

This was something that Sally had never experienced before. "I knew that I had some health problems, but never knew what they really meant," said Sally. "Now, I think I will be able to work at home to be healthy." The final step before a patient leaves is to not only receive prescriptions, but patients must know why they are taking each medication, how and when to take their medication and any potential side effects they may encounter. This step is vital in making the patient an active learner and participant in their health care.

"St. Vincent de Paul Pharmacy has been a lifesaving blessing," said Sally. "I have been uninsured for a year because I could no longer pay for my basic needs. I am very appreciative of St. Vincent de Paul and all its donors for their heartfelt desire to help those in need, such as myself. I commend the staff and the students for all their help."

St. Vincent de Paul Charitable Pharmacy has provided over \$5 million worth of medicine to its patients, filling roughly 200 prescriptions a day. No patient leaves without proper drug and chronic disease knowledge and management skills. Without the help from volunteers including pharmacists, pharmacy students, and pre-pharmacy students, so many people could not be helped.

The Charitable Pharmacy may be the only place where patients receive this service. SVDP is bettering the lives of their patients one prescription at a time.

Medicine, Education, Hope: From the perspective of a pharmacy student volunteer

Walking into St. Vincent de Paul Charitable Pharmacy I noticed immediately that St. Vincent is different than the major retail pharmacy where I have worked for the past five years. Along with medicine, SVDP dispenses education as an integral part of patients' health care.

When a patient loses their job or has even minimal financial struggles, they give up taking their medications to cut down on expenses. When a patient comes to the Charitable Pharmacy, the first step to filling a prescription is to undergo a complete medical history background interview.

The interview process is something I have never seen completed at a retail pharmacy. Rather than simply obtaining a current list of health conditions and medications, as is the custom at most pharmacies, SVDP also obtains basic vitals including blood pressure, pulse and blood sugar level. SVDP also offers options for obtaining a primary care physician, evaluates compliance of medications, and provides basic education regarding the patient's chronic diseases.

Prescription for Fun

Support the St. Vincent de Paul Charitable Pharmacy by participating in the annual *Prescription for Fun* golf outing on Thursday, August 5, 2010 at 2 p.m. for the 9-hole shotgun start (18 holes optional). To learn more about how to register or to sponsor the event, contact Julie Rack at jrack@SVDPCincinnati.org or (513) 562-8841 ext. 225. Or visit www.SVDPCincinnati.org for registration options.



Support in Winton Hills

Abiona has lived in the Winton Hills community for 10 years. Recently she began attending the Sister Circle, a support group for women hosted at the St. Vincent de Paul office in Winton Hills. Suddenly she has seen a dramatic change in her outlook on life.

"It helps me with my walk with God—to be faithful," said Abiona. "It's a good place to vent and have someone to talk to as far as emotions and different things you may not know how to handle."

Abiona earned a cosmetology license and wants to open her own salon. She attends church in her community and diligently prays for her neighbors. "I see myself owning my own home and want to come back to the community to volunteer," said Abiona. "I want to be a part of the change. A positive change."

The Sister Circle meets twice a month. The first monthly meeting encourages women to set goals and provides guidance regarding the completion of goals. The class also teaches about finances, establishing a budget, emerging from

debt and building good credit.

The second meeting each month is a women's support session. Participants say it is a safe time to talk about struggles and encourage one another. "The Sister Circle is somewhere I can come be myself and be relieved and share things," said Pamela, another member of the Sister Circle. "I have lots of dreams. It keeps me motivated."



167,000 children are living in poverty in the Cincinnati Tri-state area (US Census).

In addition, families need income equivalent to twice the official poverty

standards to become economically sufficient (Family Poverty and Its Implications for School Success).

To help families struggling to make ends meet, see the enclosed envelope on page 4 and decide how you can help.

Help during an unexpected life change

Lydia was content with the life she had built for herself. Her children were grown, she had a tiny apartment, and she was squeaking by on a fixed income. But when circumstances led her to take full custody of her grandson, the stable life Lydia had built collapsed.

Lydia needed a larger apartment and a new bed for her grandson, but had no hope of getting either. Then she came to St. Vincent de Paul and received help with the deposit for the apartment and a thrift store voucher for furniture for her grandson. "It's really helped me, I wasn't ready for this," said Lydia.

When Lydia left St. Vincent de Paul she didn't feel completely prepared to raise her grandson, but she was encouraged, "It's a good place to pull you up. It's going to get better."





Help make good things happen through the Car program. Call (513) 421-CARE (2273) to learn more about donating a car or to schedule a pick-up of gently-used clothing, household items or furniture.

A chef shops at the pantry



Marion always had an interest in cooking and recently finished his culinary arts degree and began working in two local restaurants. Culinary school was a way to combine his passion with a means to provide for his 5-year-old twin sons. But when the economy failed, Marion was laid off and struggled as a single father to make ends meet.

A friend told Marion about the St. Vincent de Paul Choice Food Pantry where he now receives groceries to help

stretch his food dollars each month. “It’s a big help, a perfect way to get the help I need,” said Marion. “Without the food pantry I don’t know what I would do. I can’t let my babies go hungry.”

Marion continues to look for work and remains hopeful. In the meantime, Marion’s boys always hope for fresh meat at the pantry. Chicken and pork chops are their favorite—especially the special way their dad prepares the meal.

Children in impoverished families are likely to have low cognitive scores and learning disabilities in combination with other health problems, with average cognitive scores that are 60 percent lower than those of other children. (*Family Poverty and Its Implications for School Success*)

You can bring hope to families like Marion and his sons. Find out how to host a food drive and learn more about volunteering in the Choice Food Pantry on page 2, or see the envelope on page 4 to make a financial donation.

