



# Sheltervoice

Quarterly Newsletter of The Women's Shelter  
Volume XXIII, Number Three, Fall 2009

## 30th Thanksgiving Souper

This is a special Invitation to join us for the 30th Annual Thanksgiving Souper benefiting The Women's Shelter. Have fun; fellowship with friends old and new; enjoy good food; and create a Thanksgiving tradition!

**When:** November 19th 2009, from 5:30 until 7:30 p.m. **Donation:** \$2  
**Where:** Eastminster Presbyterian Church, 3200 Trenholm Rd, Columbia, SC 29204

Fundraising for any non-profit agency is an ever present activity. We all try to find an event that reflects the unique spirit of our organization. For The Women's Shelter, that event has been the "Thanksgiving Souper." The simplicity of inviting people to attend an event where the main meal is soup and crackers underscores the gratitude on which the shelter is built. Designating the Thursday before Thanksgiving as the appropriate time for the Souper was not a coincidence. We have so much to be thankful for and taking time to realize our blessings comes naturally during the holiday season.

What started out 30 years ago as a good idea has grown into an annual event for many members of the Columbia community. It evolved from mixing a variety of Campbell soups together to the partnership we now share with local Chick-fil-A operators for a hearty and delicious chicken soup. We have asked some of our long time attendees to share some reflections about their Souper experiences.

*Nancy Rogan*

"It's almost time for the Souper." Every year as spring turns to summer and summer to autumn, Kathy and I go over the financial status of the Shelter and see costs rising and donations slowing. It's the cyclical nature of giving to slow down during the warm months of the year when people aren't noticeably suffering from the cold – a visible reminder of the homeless. Our hope always centers on the upcoming Souper to give us a financial boost as we go into the holidays when donations peak. The Souper has never failed to provide that income just when we need it most, but it provides something else. The familiar faces that we see year after year, along with enthusiastic newcomers, reassure us that you believe in the work that we do and in our ability to use your generous

gifts wisely and that boosts our spirits as much as our bank account. It's almost time for the 30<sup>th</sup> Souper – and we can't wait!

*Lee Coggiola*

As November nears my first thought is of the Souper. Looking forward to this year I cannot believe it will be the 30<sup>th</sup>. I tried to figure out how many years the Souper has been a tradition in our family. With help from my two grown children, it appears to be the 26<sup>th</sup> year we have attended, as have so many other supporters of the Shelter. We have enjoyed a variety of entertainment, warm soup, and most importantly the sharing of friendships as we remember the blessings we have in our lives. We have had the privilege of recognizing and celebrating significant women who have touched us and miss dearly those who are no longer here to share the meal. The world has changed a great deal in the thirty years since the first Souper, but for many of us the Thursday before Thanksgiving, Kathy's warm smile, greeting friends of years past as well as new friends will be a reminder of what is meaningful and for what we can be truly thankful. Last year I brought my granddaughter to her first Souper, a tradition that will surely continue and endure.

*June Miller*

The Souper is a benevolent act of generosity and understanding. I found that it provides me with newfound hope as a resident. More important is that it has provided me the ability to be proactive in making the necessary changes, to become a person that will and should contribute back to The Women's Shelter as you contributors do. I truly feel that God plans for me to remain a part of the shelter even after I leave this wonderful program. None of the changes I have been working on would have been accomplished without your donations. My gratitude cannot be put into words. It is amazing to me what you give to all of us. We are not unique in our stories, but we are unique in how we

grow from the experiences and the gracious and continuous care provided here. Sincerely, it touches my heart. I look forward to meeting you and thanking you personally.

*Frances Close*

I've explained our Souper countless times as a reminder that not everyone has a turkey dinner on Thanksgiving. Although since the advent of Chick-fil-A soup it's impossible to feel deprived at the Souper, it's still the same lesson. A few years ago I went to a nephew's college graduation and Marian Wright Edelman was the speaker. She gave a powerful speech relevant to the Souper, and it made a real impression on me. In fact, I think I quoted her at length in the newsletter at Souper-time that year. She basically said that we should all feel personally outraged and responsible – I can't remember her exact words but that's what she said – as long as there are people around us who are hungry, homeless, lack health care, whatever, we should be outraged.. Outraged is a big word. She meant it. Personally outraged and responsible.

I have a bumper sticker in my kitchen that says "If You're Not Outraged, You're Not Paying Attention" and I'm squirming as I write this, since as firmly as I believe that we should all be outraged and are personally responsible to do something about it, the evidence from my everyday life doesn't prove it. In fact, I don't think I've lived a single day of my life based on that belief. Most days I don't even think about the starving people in the world, much less feel outraged about it. As the sticker says, I'm just not paying attention. I don't know what it would take to make me spend more time paying attention, feeling outraged, and doing something about it. I do believe that if more of us did just that, problems that feel so insurmountable to us now would turn out to be solvable.

*Rod Kinard*

Wow!! Thirty years of memorable Thanksgiving Soupers. Having been drawn into the group that made up the very first Souper Committee, I have many fond and fun memories.

Looking back to the first one held at the Dreher High School no one had a clue as to how it would turn out. But, as always, with God's blessing it was a success. Dancers entertained us that first year followed in subsequent years by guitarists, piano performances, solo singers and gospel groups. I also can't forget the people walking around in raccoon, possum and cow outfits. I believe somewhere in my past someone in such a getup must have traumatized me because I will immediately leave the area if they get close to me!

My busiest times on Souper night have been spent receiving donations, handing out programs and free Chick-fil-A coupons and tallying the number of supporters. It is like old home week to see so many who have come out for so many years to support the shelter. We are truly thankful for you, our supporters, and look forward to many more Thanksgiving Soupers together. See you on the 19th and God Bless You.

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## Home for the Holidays

Written By Prentiss Hallman, Shelter Staff

It's hard to believe that the holidays are once again fast approaching. November and December are certainly our busiest months—for several reasons: The number of calls for service rises and the number of community members, church and civic groups looking for volunteer projects increases. Not only are we busier with a larger number of calls, we are planning the Souper, hosting our own Thanksgiving and Christmas celebrations and paying special attention to our residents who miss their loved ones more acutely during the holiday season. We want them to feel at home and know they are in the right place for the right reasons.

This may be our busiest time of year, but it is also my favorite time. This is when we get to interact most with you, our supporters. We might receive a gift certificate for a honey baked ham, stocking stuffers, several frozen turkeys and even specific gifts for our residents and their children. We are able to combine your individual holiday contributions and create fabulous holiday meals and celebrations. Our residents are always in awe of how warm this house becomes during the

holiday season .

Just as Kathy worries every year about the success of the Thanksgiving Souper, I worry about the holidays we will provide for our residents. But never fear, a new group and forever friends of the shelter will show up at the back door with a gift certificate to the grocery store and a nice robe for each resident at the shelter. These are great gifts that give more to these families than any holiday dinner or gift has in a long time. These gifts provide proof that there are people who support them, despite their past decisions. These gifts give them hope and energy for the life they are creating.

I look forward to seeing you and hearing from you as the holidays rapidly approach. Most of all I look forward to combining your selfless, generous gifts to make this house feel even more like home for the holidays. If you would like to donate please call us for suggestions. THANK YOU! (803) 779-4706 or e-mail [prentiss\\_hallman@yahoo.com](mailto:prentiss_hallman@yahoo.com).

**THIRTIETH ANNUAL THANKSGIVING SOUPER**

Thursday, November 19, 2009, 5:30-7:30 P.M.

Eastminster Presbyterian Church

3200 Trenholm Road

\$2 per person

Sponsored by Chick-fil-A of Columbia and Sumter

**HOW TO SUPPORT THE SOUPER:**

**SELL TICKETS:** For more information, call (803) 779-4706.

**BUY A BUNCH OF TICKETS:** Treat a group of your friends to dinner at the Souper.

**CAN'T MAKE IT?** Join us in spirit. Use the enclosed envelope to support the shelter with a Souper donation.

**SPONSOR A TABLE:** Sponsor a table in honor of a special woman. For a donation of \$150.00, you can let 500 of our friends know how you feel about your wife, mom, daughter, mother-in-law, friend, mentor or role model. Your honoree's name will grace a lovely table, and she will receive special mention in the Souper program. Complete the following information and return the form with your contribution in the enclosed envelope by November 12, 2008.

Your Name \_\_\_\_\_

Your Address \_\_\_\_\_

*Circle one:*            **In honor of**            or            **In memory of**

*(Please print names as you want them to appear on the table and program.)*

Honoree's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

By (*your name or group's name*) \_\_\_\_\_

Return to: The Women's Shelter  
3425 N Main St.  
Columbia, SC 29203

*The Women's Shelter  
3425 North Main Street  
Columbia, SC 29203  
Address Service Requested*

*Nonprofit Organization  
U.S. Postage Paid  
Permit #1018  
Columbia, SC*

## WISH LIST

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The holiday season is approaching. During this time of hustle and bustle, The Women's Shelter appreciates all that you do to make this time of year a little less difficult and a little more "normal" for our families. You will never know how much your time and donations affect the families we work with. If you are interested in helping provide food, gifts, or decorations during this holiday season, please contact  
The Women's Shelter at (803) 779-4706

### HOLIDAY WISHES

- ♥ Baked Goods
- ♥ New toys/games for children
- ♥ Stocking Stuffers
- ♥ Small gifts for the women
- ♥ Grocery Store Gift Cards
- ♥ Gloves, Scarves and Umbrellas
- ♥ Phone Cards
- ♥ Postage Stamps

### ONGOING NEEDS LIST

- ♥ Alcohol free Cold/Flu Remedies
- ♥ New Underwear/Bras
- ♥ Lotion
- ♥ Coffee
- ♥ Hot Chocolate
- ♥ Sugar
- ♥ Laundry Detergent
- ♥ Tall Kitchen Trash Bags

*Happy Holidays!* 