



Sheltervoice

Quarterly Newsletter of The Women's Shelter
Volume XXXIV Number Two, Fall 2016

2016 THANKSGIVING SOUPER

By Kathy Riley

I think I say this every year but it is true, I can't believe that it is time for the "Souper". On Thursday, November 17th the Shelter will celebrate its 37th year of hosting this event. So many things have changed over the years but the "Souper" has pretty much remained the same. It will be held the Thursday before Thanksgiving, just as always. The asking donation changed from \$2.00 to \$5.00 last year but it is still the best bargain in town. Chick-fil-A will once again sponsor the event, just as it has since 1994. Most importantly, the meaning of the "Souper" has not changed. It still stands as a reminder that hunger and homelessness exist in our community. The event was always meant to be a teachable moment for everyone about the true meaning of the Thanksgiving holiday. Many have used the evening as a "kick-off" to their holiday season. I have always used the evening to catch up on old friends and share stories from the previous year.

There have been some changes over the years concerning the location of the event. The first two years we traveled from Dreher High School to Washington Street United Methodist Church before finding our ultimate home at Eastminster Presbyterian Church. The hospitality extended to us from the Eastminster Church community has been a blessing. Six years ago, at the invitation of New Kirk Presbyterian Church in Blythewood, we expanded the "Souper" to include a second location. New Kirk partnered with the Shelter to offer a similar experience to residents in the Northeast. The Town of Blythewood welcomed us with open arms and gave us access to their resources. We are grateful to all who helped these past five years.

However, times and circumstances change and once again so has the location of our satellite "Souper". This year we are leaving Blythewood and coming back to Columbia, reaching out to another part of the City. NewSpring Church, located at 5700 Bush River Road, has graciously consented to host this year's "Souper". With this addition to the Eastminster Church location, we hope to expand our presence in the city. Chick-fil-A will be at both locations with their delicious chicken soup, crackers and tea. We appreciate the faithful support of the owner/operators. For over 20 years they have willingly given

their time, energy and resources to making each "Souper" successful.

The "Souper" is our major fundraiser for the year. Monies raised help to off-set operational expenses and fund immediate needs of our residents. This event is modeled after the Shelter...simple, straightforward and inviting. My wish is that many "old timers" will come and renew friendships and new folks will come for a "look see". We invite you to spend some time with us.

The important information you need to know:

Thursday, November 17, 2016

5:30 pm – 7:30 pm

Two locations:

**Eastminster Presbyterian Church
3200 Trenholm Road, Columbia**

**NewSpring Church
657 Bush River Road, Columbia**



Emphasis on Exit Strategies

By Cynthia Ellis

For almost 40 years The Women's Shelter has been very successful in helping homeless women who come into our emergency shelter to stabilize emotionally and mentally. We have also been successful in our transitional housing program with reintegrating our residents into the workforce and society while working on long-term goals. From the beginning we have set very minimal program fees for our program participants. Residents understand that maintaining employment, establishing savings, and debt reduction are expectations of our program. Our experience indicates that the women who entered our program with a limited work history generally exit the program working in stable entry level jobs. Therefore, for the past two years we have put into place our Emphasis on Exit Strategies program in order to put more effort into assisting our residents with overcoming obstacles that keep them from accessing higher education, skilled jobs, and affordable housing. The program participants who recognize the benefits of our highly structured and supportive program stay for an average of nine months and some for up to two years. As a result they are overcoming many obstacles.

Our Emphases on Exit Strategies program is funded largely by grants from the Sisters of Charity Foundation and the NORD Foundation as well as support from our faithful donors. This program includes classes and one-on-one sessions on such topics as employment strategies; interviewing skills; leadership/management skills; budgeting; debt reduction; goal setting; and communication skills. It also includes case management for our residents and assistance in establishing and taking action steps necessary to overcome obstacles to meet their goals. The third program component is paid internships. These internships are helping our program participants to reduce their debt as well as begin to dream beyond stable entry level jobs. They

are experiencing and considering career options with higher earning potential. Over a third of our residents have participated in an internship over the past two years.

One of our residents completed a 150 hour internship at Turnipseed & Associates. She had previously worked at a law firm and had begun paralegal classes before beginning a downward spiral. The internship at Turnipseed & Associates was a wonderful opportunity for her to update her resume with current experience at a law firm. She listed Turnipseed & Associates as a reference on a recent job application and received a very favorable recommendation which resulted in being hired at the new job earning more per hour and having more opportunities for advancement. The internship monies allowed her to pay off outstanding debts.

Due to the opportunity to do an internship in the banquets area of the Marriott, another resident was encouraged by the supervisor over banquets to apply for a part-time position with the hope of a full-time position becoming available. She did apply and is now working part-time at the Marriott in addition to her full-time job in food service at a local university. A full-time position at the Marriott would be a wage increase over the wages with her current employer so she hopes to eventually obtain a full-time job there. The money earned from the internship has enabled her to make payments on outstanding debts, and her credit score has improved since coming into our program. She is making payments to get out of default on students loans so she can go back to school to pursue culinary arts. Her great attitude and strong work ethic displayed during the internship opened doors for her at the Marriott.



AmazonSmile is a simple and automatic way for you to support The Women's Shelter every time you shop at no cost to you. When you shop at <https://smile.amazon.com/ch/57-0934329>; you get the exact same low prices, vast selection and convenient shopping experience as Amazon.com with the added bonus that Amazon will donate 0.5% of the purchase price to The Women's Shelter.



Revente's Second Chances

3050-A Millwood Avenue
Columbia, SC 29205

All net profits benefit The Women's Shelter.

Will you help us provide Christmas gifts for our residents or their children? Please contact Angie at 803-779-4706 or angie@womenshelter.org



THIRTY-SEVENTH ANNUAL THANKSGIVING SOUPER

Thursday, November 17, 2016, 5:30-7:30 P.M.

Eastminster Presbyterian Church, 3200 Trenholm Road, Columbia

NewSpring Church, 657 Bush River Road, Columbia

\$5 per person

Sponsored by *Chick-Fil-A* of Columbia

HOW TO SUPPORT THE SOUPER:

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

BUY A BUNCH OF TICKETS: Treat some 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, send a message about your wife, mom, daughter, mother-in-law, friend, role model or mentor. Your honoree's name will grace a lovely table, and she will receive recognition in the Souper program. Complete the following information and return the form with your contribution in the enclosed envelope by November 11, 2016.

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.)

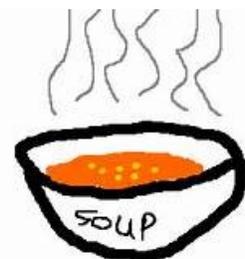
Honoree's Name: _____

By (*your name or group's name*): _____

Circle one (which location for table sign?):

Eastminster Presbyterian or **NewSpring Church**

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



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

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

Address Service Requested

Wish List

The Women's Shelter greatly appreciates and strongly depends on donations from individuals, churches and other civic groups. We do not have a lot of storage space, but the items listed below are frequently needed. If you have any other items you would like to donate, please contact us. Thank you for your continued generosity!
(803) 779-4706

SEASONAL:

- ◆ Holiday baked goods/desserts
- ◆ Soft drinks
- ◆ Fresh fruits/vegetables
- ◆ Watches
- ◆ Bedroom slippers
- ◆ Gift cards for haircuts
- ◆ Phone cards
- ◆ Zoo/movie/entertainment tickets
- ◆ Basic alarm clocks
- ◆ Cordless phones w/answering machine
- ◆ Umbrellas
- ◆ Small Day Planners

ONGOING:

- ◆ Gently used or new black pants/tennis shoes/black no-show socks
- ◆ Shower caddies
- ◆ Creamer/sugar
- ◆ Coffee/tea
- ◆ Sugar free items
- ◆ Toilet paper/paper towels
- ◆ Paper plates
- ◆ Tall kitchen bags
- ◆ Tin Foil/cling wrap/zip lock bags
- ◆ Laundry detergent/Regular & HE
- ◆ Dryer sheets/liquid softener
- ◆ Cleaning supplies