

# Spirit of the Streets

The Trinity Center Newsletter

## Director's Corner

*"See that you do not despise one of these little ones...So it is not the will of my Father who is in heaven that one of these little ones should perish."  
(Matthew 18:10, 14; Revised Standard Version)*

We don't always realize what effect we have on someone. I received a letter a few weeks ago addressed to "Anybody Working for Trinity." The letter writer, "Ted," said he'd visited Trinity Center a few times and thought we were helpful. Now, Ted was trying to reach his family but he didn't have their address, and he couldn't make long-distance calls. He asked if we would contact his sister and give her his address. I called her and offered to forward Ted's letter. She said the family has been worried about Ted, and she felt relieved to know that he was trying to reach them. She thanked me for taking the time to call.

Trinity Center clearly made an impression on Ted, who returned to us more than a year later, asking for our help to re-connect him with his family. What a beautiful testament to our work and the relationships we foster here at the center!

How do we care for the "little ones," those vulnerable members of our community, some of whom we see only once or twice? *"Open our eyes to see them; open our mouths to speak up for them; open our arms to embrace them"* (Forward Day By Day, May/June/July 2008, p. 51)

## My Experience at Trinity Center

I really had little idea what I was getting into as I agreed to sign up with AmeriCorps. All I knew was that AmeriCorps was like the Peace Corps for the U.S., which really didn't mean much to me either. But I wanted to help people, and this seemed like the thing to do.

My eleven-month roller coaster of a journey began the second week of September. I will spare you the details of the scream-filled drops and let you know what I learned. I learned that many of these homeless folks are the greatest people that I have ever met. Their stories of life would bring anyone to give up and stay in a fetal position until the end of time. But, not these people. They are filled with faith, hope, and strength. They just need someone to listen and help them out, and if you lend them your ear, they will fill you with life-changing words. I feel guilty that I have gotten more from them than I could ever give back.

The greatness of people not only lies with the "neighbors" but also with the staff and volunteers. I have met some of the most caring and helpful people this world has to offer. Without Melanie, Mary, Donna, Valerie, Diana, Anna, and all of the volunteers, the magic of the Trinity Center would be quite different. I want to thank the Trinity Center, AmeriCorps, St. David's, and all of the volunteers for the best year of my life.

Justin Schmidt

## Trinity Center Bridge Receives Award from Salvation Army

The Salvation Army has recognized the Trinity Center Bridge as an "Outstanding Community Partner." At its annual meeting and luncheon on May 15, The Salvation Army honored Bridge with a plaque. The Bridge brings together families who are staying at The Salvation Army Shelter downtown and volunteer families for fellowship, recreational time and lunch. Gene Shepherd, current Trinity Center board president, and his wife Robin and their children, Trey, Sam and Ben, began Bridge three years ago. Approximately 40 families participate in the program every month.

*For more information about serving as a volunteer family, please contact Robin and Gene at 512-626-4115 or [rshepherd5@austin.rr.com](mailto:rshepherd5@austin.rr.com).*



Doug and Diana, thank you for everything.  
Indeed, you are neighbors to all!

## Award To Honor Doug & Diana Bell

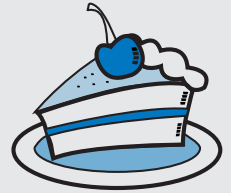
Doug and Diana Bell were given the Bell Award at a special Trinity Streets service on May 25th. The couple were honored for all their work with Trinity Center over the past nine years. The Bell Award is given to recognize outstanding volunteer efforts and support of Trinity Center. The Bells' nameplate on the award plaque reads, "Doug and Diana Bell, neighbors to all."

Sally and Michael Gannaway said these kind words about Doug and Diana: "Doug and Diana were the original heart and soul of Trinity Streets, which grew into Trinity Center. They took a vision and turned it into a reality, and we had lots of fun along the way."

The Rev. David Boyd, Rector of St. David's, said: "Indeed, you were guided by God, but the most important thing is that you listened, listened and acted. Reminds me of last week's Gospel lesson about those who just hear versus those who do Jesus bidding...thank you for your love, work, faithfulness and support."



*"Wow, this cake is great!", exclaimed Austin attorney Laura Fowler. It was baked by St. David's Chef Ray Trono (Café Divine). She liked the cake so much she placed a standing order for six rum cakes per week to share with friends and acquaintances. She then had the clever idea to auction fifty cakes at a company party...and they were very popular! With proceeds from the auctioned cakes The Fowler Law Firm was able to make a sizable "Sweet" donation to Trinity Center. Trinity Center Executive Director Mary Rychlik noted "It was fun to see Ms. Fowler find such a creative approach to raising money to help our Neighbor to Neighbor programs. We are grateful for the generosity!"*



## Become a Program Sponsor

What is a Program Sponsor? A Program Sponsor is an individual, a business or a group that picks a particular Trinity Center program and underwrites it for a week, for a month, for a year or longer.

### Examples:

One couple realized how hard it is to read and fill out forms without reading glasses. Result: They now sponsor our reading glasses program.

One family understood the importance of coffee to our neighbor-to-neighbor approach. Result: The family now donates all the coffee we serve and provides the coffee pots, too.

A group of friends saw the need for nutritious meals that people could take for times of need. Result: They assemble approximately 100 non-perishable sack lunches every month.

### Sponsorship Opportunities

**Sunday Sausage** – At Trinity Streets on Sundays, we serve a hot sausage wrap, chips, fruit, lemonade and dessert. Sausage is the big ticket item. Sponsor Sunday Sausage once a month for \$50.

**Bus Passes** – Lack of transportation is a significant barrier to working and taking care of personal business. \$1 provides a day pass for a neighbor to get to a doctor's appointment or a job interview and \$10 pays for a 31-day pass. \$5 provides a two-year pass for a person with a disability. Just \$5-10 per week makes a big difference.

**I.D. Program** – Obtaining birth certificates and a photo I.D. or driver's license are important steps in helping people toward self-sufficiency. Consider sponsoring our financial assistance program for one week at \$150.

## Welcome To New Board Members

*In the Spring issue of our newsletter you met four new board members. Four more people joined the Trinity Center board in May, bringing our total to 13. Here's some information about our newest members.*

### *Pam Beachley*

Pam Beachley is new to the Trinity Center community. This year she served on the Barbara Jordan Luncheon committee and was very impressed with the work that Trinity Center does and the commitment of its volunteers, board and staff. Professionally, Pam is an attorney, specializing in legislative and regulatory issues regarding workers' compensation. Personally, she is an aunt...many times over and including kids that are not related by blood but happily call her "Aunt Pammie."

### *Don DeGrasse*

Don DeGrasse and his family have been involved in the Trinity Center Bridge Program for more than two years. Don is currently taking classes in computer animation and working at a local studio. Previously, he led product development teams with both Dell Computer and Apple Computer. Don will serve this year as the president of the Austin Parks Foundation board. Don is married to Martha

*Opposite page left: Doug & Diana Bell.*

*Opposite page right: Laura Fowler and the Fowler Law Firm make a sweet donation. Right: Neighbor and volunteer Stacy Schoolfield enjoy a hug.*

**Prescription Co-Pays** – Prescription medications are vital to many of our neighbors. Even with medical insurance, co-pays range from \$2 to \$25. Be a program sponsor for as little as \$25 per month.

**Breakfast Program** – We provide a nutritious meal with protein and fruit for approximately \$0.75 each. Consider sponsoring 10 meals per week at \$30 per month, or 25 meals per week at \$75 per month. One week, one month...it's all appreciated and needed.

**Security Services** – Security personnel make Trinity Center a safe place for all. Costs run approximately \$70 per day, over \$1,600 per month. Sponsor a day, a week or a month...it all helps.

Moody DeGrasse and has three children. The DeGrasses attend St. David's.

### *Mary Keenan*

Mary Keenan is pleased to bring her experience in non-profit fundraising to the Trinity Center board. Her experience includes work with several Austin organizations, including KIPP Austin College Prep, Texas Appleseed, El Buen Samaritano and others. A member of St. David's Episcopal Church, she and her husband Aldo Waker have two children, 7-year-old Asher and 1-year-old Maggie.

### *Louise Pincoffs*

Louise Pincoffs is a lifelong Episcopalian and has been a member of St. David's Church for thirty-three years. Louise is a new volunteer at Trinity Center, working with the Woman to Woman program on Mondays and the neighbor to neighbor program on Fridays. Louise hopes to bring her fundraising and long-range planning experience to the Trinity Center Board. Louise is married to Peter Pincoffs, and they have three adult children.



**Woman to Woman** – The volunteer leaders of this program emphasize fellowship and support as well as a delicious brunch, clothing and toiletries. Ladies' undergarments are always needed. Sponsor a Monday's worth of underwear for \$40.

**Movie Day Popcorn** – This program is a fun non-necessity, a chance to provide some entertainment and downtime for our neighbors. On Fridays we show a movie while the neighbors cool off (or warm up)! Popcorn is a perk you can sponsor for \$30 a month.

## Board of Directors

The Rev. David Boyd, Chair  
Gene Shepherd, President  
Michele Bondy, President-Elect  
Jennifer Stayton, Secretary  
Julie Jansen, Treasurer  
Pam Beachley  
Don DeGrasse  
The Rev. Lex Breckinridge  
Mary Keenan  
Louise Pincoffs  
Rebecca Powers  
Linda Prentice  
John Rouse  
Mark Warner

### Staff

Mary Rychlik, LMSW,  
Executive Director  
Melanie Behrends, LMSW,  
Program Coordinator  
Donna Spence,  
Center Administrator  
Justin Schmidt, AmeriCorps Member

#### Layout & Design:

Carol Reifsnyder  
CCR Communications

Trinity Center is a faith-based organization conducting programs that improve the spiritual, mental, and physical well-being of the poor and homeless in inner-city Austin.

Trinity Center achieves its mission through volunteer opportunities that foster compassion, understanding, and acceptance of God's people who are homeless and poor; neighborly hospitality in a caring environment; collaboration with similarly-focused agencies, faith-based organizations, service providers, and partner congregations; and the responsible use of space provided by St. David's Episcopal Church.



TRINITY  
CENTER

304 East 7th Street  
Austin, Tx 78701  
(512) 610-3515  
[www.TrinityCenterAustin.org](http://www.TrinityCenterAustin.org)

Trinity Center is a 501(c)3 tax-exempt organization. Your donation is tax deductible to the extent allowed by law.

## Trinity Center & Shoe Boxes are a Good Fit

Local shoe and clothing retailer, Shoe Boxes (2423 W. Anderson Lane), in collaboration with shoe manufacturer NAOT, provided 150 pairs of new shoes, boots, and sandals to Trinity Center's Woman to Woman (W2W) program. Working with W2W volunteers, Shoe Boxes' owner and employees distributed the shoes to women experiencing homelessness and poverty. On March 10, Shoe Boxes owner Chuck Banks, his son Brian, and Shoe Boxes' Office Manager, Cindy Jacobs, brought in the shoes and then fitted the women with the style of their choice.



**Like to help the Trinity Center but not sure how? Here are three easy ways:**

- **Check into your workplace giving programs; designate Trinity Center as the recipient.**
- **Does your workplace offer a Matching Gifts program? Leverage your giving!**
- **Go to [www.TrinityCenterAustin.com](http://www.TrinityCenterAustin.com) and click the "donate" button!**

Office Manager, Cindy Jacobs, brought in the shoes and then fitted the women with the style of their choice.

"Shoes for our neighbors are always in short supply, especially comfortable ones," said Trinity Center Executive Director, Mary Rychlik. W2W Volunteer, Leila Lederer, said, "It was hard to tell who got the greater benefit: those doing the giving or those receiving the shoes."