



# The Oakleaf



### Special points of interest:

- Without St. Mary's County Churches and their dedication to the homeless in our community, certain critical services would be greatly diminished for men, women, women with children, and women experiencing domestic violence.
- HOPE reigns supreme: Area Churches care deeply for the poor and homeless.
- On average there are over 300 homeless in St. Mary's County daily.
- The bicycle is the most civilized conveyance known to man. Other forms of transport grow daily more nightmarish. Only the bicycle remains pure in heart ~ Iris Murdock

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## St. George's Episcopal: How a Little Church Makes a Big Difference

St. George's is a congregation of 124 members that is deeply committed to community outreach. Starting in 2000, they established a financial and volunteer partnership with Three Oaks Center as a community resource that is "highly effective" in achieving the goals in the St. George's Outreach Mission Statement. Those stated goals are to: "share our life's gifts with those who are alone, destitute, homeless, sick, hungry, or in need of any of life's sustaining necessities. The gifts we share are without condition and are of our wealth, our time and ourselves."

From the beginning, their commitment of time, talent and treasure to Three

Oaks has continued to grow. They have two members on our Board of Directors, Ian Brodersen and Susan Hazen, incorporate us as a line item in their annual budget, obtained and administer a \$198,000 Jessie Ball DuPont fund grant for us, contribute to our annual fundraisers and respond to special needs requests such as funding our 85-children Christmas party and motel shelter for homeless women with children. They prepare and serve weekend dinners here; conduct monthly contributions of new undergarments, toiletries and food for our clients on "Undies and Basic Blessings Sundays"; and the Horne family's mini-farm contrib-



What we are is God's gift to us. What we become is our gift to God. ~Eleanor Powell

utes their egg sale profits to us. St. George's is an amazing example to all who wonder how to effectively execute a desire to make a difference. Their mission statement is not just words. It is their instruction, just as surely as the Gospels.

They are "the little church with the big heart."

## What HOPE Means to the Poor and the Homeless

HOPE is a Hotline that has been serving the poor in Lexington Park since 1988. It was developed by 22 churches, DSS, and the County Commissioners to address the many needs for the poor: emergency shelter, fuel, food, rent and assistance, etc. The telephone hotline was organized by Fr. Mike Wilson, Immaculate Heart of Mary, the Rev. Rona

R. Harding, the Church of the Ascension, and Tim Frink of Patuxent Assembly of God. Its goals were to serve the poor better by giving them only one phone call to make to get assistance and advice. Lynn Major was the first volunteer coordinator. The program seeks ways to link the poor with social workers and teaches those interested in

budgeting and seeking solutions for housing problems. The present director is Debbie Cooper who reports that HOPE is supported now by 12 churches and the United Way. To the homeless HOPE means that they have a place to go for counsel and advice as well as much needed assistance.



# Trinity Churchmen Recycle Bikes Bicycle Program Aids Homeless Adults and Children

About 10 years ago, Jim Otto, a member of St. Mary's Parish in St. Mary's City began recovering old bicycles, taking them to his garage, repairing them from stem to stern, and then giving them away to the needy — particularly children. After a time, his work grew larger and his garage didn't, so he moved his operation to Dan Capper's horse barn in Dameron. There, Jim and other fine men from his parish, Lane Kispert, Chris Wagoner, Jim Hardin, Gary Williams, Paul Bruan, Joe Dick, Jack Lawrence, Tommy Jones, Bob Maddox and others have continued this fantastic work. The Bicycle



Biking can get you to school and work

Project, as it is called at Trinity Church, is one of the initiatives their Outreach Committee continues to embrace and support.

The majority of the refurbished and new bikes with helmets continue to be given by the Church especially during the Christmas Season to families in the southern end of St. Mary's County who are unable to purchase a bicycle for their children. The Project also provides bikes to individuals who need them for transportation, but are unable to purchase or operate a

vehicle. Many of these bikes go to Shelter clients, individuals and families at Three Oaks Center.

This past Christmas, the number of bikes needed far exceeded what had been repaired and refurbished. A letter was sent requesting donations to members and friends of Trinity Church. The response was extraordinary. Over thirty-five new and used bikes were received. In addition, over \$2500 was donated. Lane Kispert reports that because of this amazing generosity not a single child on their list went without a bike this past Christmas. Three Oaks Center solutes these men and thanks them for the difference they have made for children and adults in our community

## The Center's Wish List

- Blankets, Sheets, and Pillow Cases for Twin Bedding
- Kitchen Appliances—Especially Stoves
- Kitchen Supplies —Cutlery and Flatware
- Canned and Dry Boxed Foods
- Toiletries
- Build a Wheelchair Ramp For One of Our Kids
- Power Point Projector for Teaching Tool

## Upcoming Events

Thursday, July 14th at 9am: *Three Oaks Center*

*10th Annual Golf Tournament*. If you would

like to play give us a call and we will add you to one of the teams. If there are four (4) of you reserve your place on the list of 25 teams. This has always been a great event full of fun for friends and supporters of Three Oaks. Come join us and be part of a great day. We look forward to being your host.

Saturday, September 10th at 7:30pm: *Capitol Steps* performance at Great Mills High School Saturday.

Saturday, October 22nd at 8am: *7th Annual Cole Travel/ Three Oaks Center Pledge Run/Walk* at Sotterley Plantation and Greenwell State Park



## We need Weekend Monitors....

*The Center has been blessed these many years with a group of men who have been willing to give 4 hours , four to six times a year, out of their weekend to serve as monitors at the men's shelter. If you or someone you know would like to do this kind of volunteering please let us know. This work is meaningful. It greatly benefits the men living in the shelter; seeing new faces, role models, who can encourage them and at times advocate for them.*

*about it. We would like 10 more men to our current great guys.*

*Please think to add about rent line-up of*



## Facts:

- People need affordable housing. Lack of affordable housing and limited scale housing assistance programs are the primary cause of homelessness in St. Mary's County.
- Compared with low-income housed children, homeless children experience more health problems, developmental delays, increased anxiety, depression, behavioral problems, and lower educational achievement.

## Area Faithful in Large Part Are Key to Success of Programs for Homeless

From the moment of its conception, local faith-based congregations have made the critical difference in the success of the core programs at Three Oaks Center. It is

fair to say that there would be no Center were it not for the inspired congregants and determined clergy that strove to put in place the initial framework that allowed Three Oaks Center to grow into what it is today. Men and women of all faiths coming together with one thing in mind. To bring dignity and opportunity to the homeless. Not a



day goes by when this organization or its many participants are not

There are 1.5 million children who are homeless in our country — Today we are caring for 85 in St. Mary's County.

touched by the hands and hearts of our local faith community. Meals, furnishings, volunteering, capital, ideas, actions of all sort on the part of these generous ones truly make the difference in the Center's ability to deliver quality services.

It is our local faith-community that will lead and support our mission.

## TOC Exec. Trains on Effective Case Mgmt.



On April 8th, Lanny Lancaster accepted an invitation from our HUD Baltimore office to give training at a two-day long workshop for organizations participating in the McKinney/Vento Homeless Programs. "It was nice to be recognized for our performance and asked to do such a thing," said Lancaster, "but I learned as much from the experience as I was able to offer. Excellent case management is at the core of any successful homeless services program. I'm very proud of our staff. They should get the credit."

## From the President's Pen ... waging war on Homelessness and Domestic Violence

Hi! Welcome to the second issue of the Oakleaf! We are stunned by the response to the first edition! Comments have been all positive and we received a tremendous amount of donations of food, clothing and money! Thank you very, very much! There is much information elsewhere in this issue and I certainly hope you enjoy it. It is our aim to keep you as up-to-date with things as I can. I'd like to bring to your attention the Cole Travel-Three Oaks Center Walk/Run that we nor-

mally hold on Mother's Day weekend. Because of many conflicts we have decided to move it to October 22nd. The event will be at Sotterley Plantation and include courses through Greenwell State Park. We hope to make the day bigger and more wonderful as we wage war on Homelessness and Domestic Violence! Stay tuned. The county budget hearing was on April 26th at Great Mills High School.



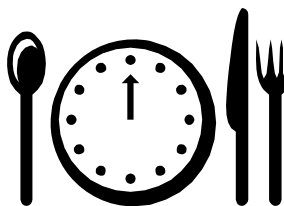
We asked the Commissioners for an increase in their funding for the coming year. With the escalation of Domestic Violence and Homelessness in our county, these funds are much needed. Thanks to those of you who came out and showed your interest and support. If you know a Commissioner, please bend his ear a bit!

Sincerely,

*Dan*  
Dan Capper, President

## Meals: "24/7/365"

For a number of years, Three Oaks Center has depended on community support to supply dinners daily. Church groups, Scouts, individuals, members of St. Mary's College of



Food services are of critical importance at Three Oaks

Maryland, and other organizations have faithfully provided these meals, generally for about twenty residents at a time. Three Oaks wants all of our meal volunteers to know how important you are to us and how grateful we are for your long-standing dedicated commitment. At present, a course in food preparation and kitchen management is be-

ing planned at the Center in conjunction with the College of Southern Maryland. This program will equip students with job-appropriate skills. Eventually (in the not too distant future), these students will be able to prepare dinners for those living at the Center. At that time, community involvement will still be needed and necessary to keep the Food Services Program viable. We will keep you informed.

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## The Oakleaf

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## Essex House: Thanks to Blessings from Ascension Church

The Church of the Ascension in Lexington Park was blessed with a gift of a house to be used for Social Ministries by an anonymous member. After much study, the church decided to make the building available to Three Oaks Center for their expanded ministry of working with homeless women and children. This meant that the house had to be completely gutted and remolded to make it habitable for its new residents. This work was contracted out to Essex South Builders who did a wonderful job in restoring the building for \$80,000.

The next step was more difficult. Once we had the building in shape, it still needed to be painted, which the Three Oaks Men volunteered to paint the insides with paint given by Dyson



Ascension Church cares deeply for our children's needs

Lumber. New floors and windows were put in and then we were ready to move in. The women of the church sponsored showers with tags of things needed for the various rooms all through Lent, one day for the bathrooms, another for bedrooms, another for the kitchens, another for the sitting rooms, etc. Other churches joined in the work as well. Good Samaritan Lutheran Church collected children's items for the new shelter. Trinity

Church in St. Mary's City made quilts for the beds. Christ Church, Chaptico and St. Andrew's Episcopal Church, Leonardtown all supplied much needed items.

The Church then turned over the whole building to Three Oaks to manage and lease. Presently, there are two families and two single women living in the house.

## Bermuda Cruise for Three Oaks



**Three Oaks Center Annual Cruise Vacation August 14-19, 2005**

An exciting 5 Night Bermuda Cruise from Baltimore, Maryland aboard Grandeur of The Seas is what Cole Travel is preparing for you this year. Fantastic!

Days	Ports of Call	
	Arrive	Depart
1 Baltimore		5pm
2 At Sea		
3 Kings Wharf	9am	
4 Kings Wharf		5pm
5 At Sea		
6 Baltimore	8am	

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