



Three Oaks Center

Upcoming Events

- April 28th — "Cabaret Night" at J. T. Daugherty Center
- July 20th — 10th Annual Three Oaks Center Golf Tournament
- September 30 — "Capitol Steps" Performance at Great Mills High
- Fall 2006 — Three Oaks Center/ Cole Travel Run/Walk
- December 2006 — 1st Annual Day of W.A.R.M.T.H (Working Artist Raising Money for the Homeless) — This year's artistic theme; "Refuge" at Camalier House, Leonardtown

Inside this issue:

Face of Homelessness <i>continued..</i>	2
Program Beneficiaries 2005	2
Interfaith Conference <i>continued...</i>	2
Culinary Arts at Three Oaks Center	3
President's Message	3
Capper Team Recognized	3
"Come to the Cabaret"	3

The Face of Homelessness in St. Mary's County by Lanny Lancaster

THE URGENT PROBLEM

Homelessness is a pervasive problem throughout this county. The exact number of individuals living without stable housing in this county is almost impossible to know, but according to the most recent survey (February 2005 Homeless Survey conducted for the annual HUD *Continuum of Care* submission), it is estimated that between 1,000 and 1,100 people are homeless on a given night in St. Mary's County. This year's Homeless Survey was conducted on February 24, 2006. The data are still being analyzed in order to avoid duplicate counting, but the new numbers should be available by the end of March. While the exact numbers are uncertain at this time, it is generally acknowledged that homelessness in St. Mary's County and throughout South-

ern Maryland is unfortunately experiencing a steady increase.

Most homelessness is short-term, and many individuals who are temporarily homeless exit that state with minimal assistance. But the subgroup that tends to be most visible is a group known as the chronically homeless. This group consists of about 300 people who experience homelessness on a protracted or repeated basis. On any given night, this group will represent almost half of those who are seeking emergency shelter. Members of this group frequently have one or more serious and disabling health conditions, including mental health and/or substance use disorders, all of which present a complex set of challenges to service providers. Why are people homeless? There are a vari-



Three Oaks Center Headquarters at Lei Drive in Lexington Park

ety of conditions that contribute to an individual becoming homeless. Underlying virtually all cases of homelessness are the conditions of poverty (and inadequate income in particular) and the lack of affordable housing. Inadequate income may be due to unemployment (either because of market conditions, lack of skills, or an inability to work due to disability) or underemployment.. pg.-2

Interfaith Conference on Health and Human Services Held by Sandy Allen-Moore

On March 9th, 2006, the Interfaith Conference on Health and Human Services, a workshop sponsored by the Local Management Board of St. Mary's County, was held to raise awareness about health and human services needs and to create partnerships to address

unmet needs in St. Mary's County. Participating in the event from Three Oaks Center were Lanny Lancaster, Executive Director, and Dennis Nicholson, long-time member of the Center's Board of Directors, and Executive Director of the St. Mary's County Housing Au-

thority. The topics addressed were hunger, social services, domestic violence, substance abuse, mental health, housing, and young children's school readiness. Lancaster and Nicholson participated on the housing panel which was moderated by John Savich, pg.-2



Good Resource: United States Interagency Council on Homelessness – www.usich.gov

Face of Homelessness *continued...*

Even for those who have jobs, the decline or stagnation of wages has meant that employment is not necessarily a relief from poverty.

People with little or no income have difficulty accessing affordable housing. The St. Mary's County Housing Authority estimates that 30% of households in St. Mary's County with incomes below 50% of the local median pay more than half of their income for rent and/or live in severely substandard housing. This is worsened by the decline in the number of affordable housing units available to extremely low-income households and the limited availabil-

ity of Federal rental assistance to bridge the gap.

In addition to poverty, there are also health and social factors that increase an individual's or family's vulnerability to becoming homeless. Some of these factors include acute and chronic physical health problems or disabilities, mental illnesses (both chronic and acute), substance use problems, domestic violence, or a history of abuse and neglect. The men, women, and children who experience homelessness are challenged at nearly every turn in their daily struggle to survive. Whether concentrating on finding a meal or a place to

sleep, they must maneuver through a series of support systems, always hoping that they will not fall through the cracks. It is important to note that homelessness is not a purely housing-based problem or issue. It carries with it significant emotional, social, and psychological dimensions. Homelessness is much more than the lack of housing; it is a disassociation with one's family and/or community. Changing the face of homelessness in St. Mary's County will not be easy, and Three Oaks Center welcomes the interest, and contributions of the community in bringing hope to this most vulnerable population.

"On the issue of homelessness, partnerships strengthen the system. We are all Countians working together to end a social disgrace."
H. S. Lancaster

Statistics

The need for services for the homeless is increasing, and Three Oaks Center is meeting those needs. On average, the Center provides daily services to approximately 200 people. The following chart provides the service demographic for the year 2005:



Program Type	Number of Persons
Outreach/Prevention:	
Women in Crisis	106
Men in Crisis	48
P.A.T.H. (Mental Health Outreach)	36
H.O.P.E. (Disabilities Outreach)	23
Emergency Shelter:	
Men (Shelter)	99
Women (not including children)	25
Supportive Housing:	
Transitional	95
Permanent w/Disabilities	61
TOTAL	493

Interfaith Conference *continued...*



Dick Myers, Elfreda Mathis, David Mattingly, Lane Kispert, Nora Collins, during housing discussion at Interfaith Conference

Director of the St. Mary's County Department of Housing and Community Development. The whole point of this exercise, beyond the opportunity to communicate and exchange ideas about the pressing social issues of our day, was to emphasize that religion exists in social

context, is shaped by that social context, and in turn, often influences it. In that spirit the Local Management Board pulled together a diverse group of social service providers and representatives from many of our county's churches in an effort to kindle a renewed partner-

ship, or better said, a new and more interactive partnership that with effort could provide over time a stronger more effective way to communicate and deliver a full compliment of services to the citizens in St. Mary's County. The LMB did a stellar job in giving this idea life.

Culinary Arts at Three Oaks Center by Pinky Morgan

The Culinary Arts Training Program graduated its first class on December 7th, 2005. The graduation ceremony of the Inaugural Class took place at the Three Oaks Center in Lexington Park.

A unique collaboration of the Three Oaks Center, the Division of Rehabilitation Services, the College of Southern Maryland and the St. Mary's County Community Development Corporation brought about the creation of a sophisticated culinary arts training program for St. Mary's County residents. The first class, which started on September 19th, was made up of nine St. Mary's Co.

resident with disabilities.

Funding for the program was secured by the Three Oaks Center with grants from the Harry and Jeanette Weinberg Fund and with the assistance of St. George's Episcopal Church, and the Jesse Ball DuPont Foundation. This funding was used to establish a fully equipped commercial kitchen training facility located at the Three Oaks Center in Lexington Park. The purchase of professional uniforms and utensils and the instruction fees for the class of students was financed through the

Division of Rehabilitation Services. The College of Southern Maryland developed a customized training course for students entailing 220 hours of classroom instruction, hands-on food preparation and service including a 45 hour internship at local restaurants and institutions. Students received training in food service safety and sanitation, nutrition and culinary arts. They learned to cook for a crowd and are now well groomed to understand the professional demands of a full kitchen in a restaurant, school or private institution such as a hospital or nursing center.

††

President's Message by J. Michael McCauley

For the last four years Dan and Ellyn Capper, as President and Secretary of Three Oaks Center have led our organization to new levels of public recognition, financial stability, and organizational strength. Their willingness to put their business experience and network of contacts at the service of poor and homeless people has been an inspiration to me and many others on our Board and in the community. We are most grateful for their contributions, which, happily, will not end here, since they will continue as Board members and serve on important committees.

What has inspired the commitment of the Cappers and many other generous people is the mission of Three Oaks to restore the homeless to productive lives in our community. The payoff came forcefully home to me in a recent visit to the Center. One of the residents, a man in his forties whom I had seen off and on over many months, was sitting alone on a sofa with a detached but peaceful look on his face. I came over and asked how everything was going for him. He turned, looked me in the eye, and said quietly and deliberately: "This week will mark my twelfth

month of being dry for the first time in my life."

That is the struggle that goes on here day in and day out: persuasion, encouragement, discipline, treatment, opportunity on one side and change, motivation, healing, renewal, commitment on the other. Every day the direction of someone's life or the integrity of a family hangs in the balance. It is difficult work for all involved but necessary. We are grateful to all who support and participate in it.

Peace,

Mike McCauley



Capper Team Recognized by Board of Directors by Lanny Lancaster

By unanimous consent the Board of Directors approved two resolutions honoring Dan and Ellyn Capper for their many years of service to Three Oaks Center.

The two Resolutions, one for each of them, reflected on a variety of specific contributions

made by this dynamic couple. Both Mr. and Mrs. Capper were visibly moved as the Board Secretary, Joan Marsh, read into the minutes how both were to be "recognized and officially commended for their tireless efforts to assist the homeless in St. Mary's County and support their reconnection to the com-

munity." Mrs. Capper served as Secretary to the Board from 1993 until this past December 2005 and Mr. Capper served as President from 2000 until this past December 2005. The Center is fortunate that they both intend to remain active on the Board but to spend a little more time enjoying each other.

Three Oaks Center
Presents:
"Come to the Cabaret"
Dinner and Dancing



Featuring:
The Swinging Sounds of
Crooner
Ken Rothfield
J. T. Daugherty Center
Lexington Park, MD
Friday, April 28, 2006
7PM - Midnight
\$75.00 (cash bar)
For Tickets Call:
(301) 863-9535 x104





Honorees Dan and Ellyn Capper at a recent Three Oaks Center event.



Three Oaks Center

US Postal Postage Paid
Non-Profit
Lexington Park, MD
Permit #705

Address Correction Requested

46905 Lei Drive
Post Office Box 705
Lexington Park, Maryland 20653

Phone: 301-863-9535
Fax: 301-863-0245
E-mail: threeoaks@threeoakscenter.org

Housing and Supportive Services for the Homeless



We're on the Web

threeoakscenter@threeoakscenter.org

The Oakleaf : Newsletter of the *Three Oaks Center*

Mary DeLuca Morgan, Editor

Sara Martin, Co-Editor

Officers:

J. Michael McCauley, President

Sue Gelrud, Vice President

Frank E. Taylor, Treasurer

Joan B. Marsh, Secretary

Daniel S. Capper, Past President

Directors:

Ian Broadersen - Elynn G. Capper

Michael A. Guy - Susan Hazen

Margaret Jarboe - Alfred A. Lacer - Robbie M. Loker

Sara Martin - Mary DeLuca Morgan - Donnita Moore

Charles Newkirk - Dennis Nicholson - Thomas Russell

Eleanor F. Slater - David D. Zylak

Administration:

H. S. "Lanny" Lancaster, Executive Director



Certificate presentation at first culinary school graduation— Three Oaks Center, December 2005