



Franklin Footnotes

"We Are Making A Difference"

An Update for Friends and Future Friends of Franklin Community Center

January 2009

A Letter From The Executive Director

Change. It was the word of the year for 2008, seemingly interjecting itself into nearly every print and television news story I laid eyes on. It really got me thinking, is it just a political buzzword, or is it a concept I can really embrace? What changes, either positive or negative, have I noticed that have impacted the lives of those around me? And when it came down to it, I began to realize that in the past year alone, I have witnessed more change than I could even begin to comprehend, let alone write about in this letter to you. But I also realized I couldn't let the opportunity pass me by to offer you a new perspective on change—one that begins and ends directly with you.

The holiday season is never easy here at the Center, but this past year may have been my hardest yet. As the state of our economy is on a downward spiral, we are no longer just seeing your "stereotypical" low-income families requesting our services at Thanksgiving and Christmas. We are now seeing an influx of hardworking families who are forced to choose between groceries and gas or gifts for their children. It is an incredibly eye-opening experience when a man who was once able to support a family of four must turn to us for help after suddenly losing his job. It makes you realize it could happen to any one of us these days. The folks we rely on everyday in our community have become the new faces of Franklin Community Center. Picture your favorite waitress, or your child's teacher at daycare. How about the woman who works at your favorite coffee shop, or the guy who delivers your paper each morning? Maybe even a neighbor, a family member or a close friend is struggling to make ends meet. These are now the people who are relying on the Center for help. This is how much things have changed.

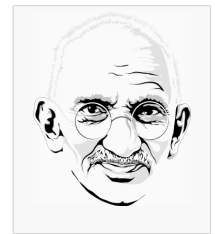
Now, think about how many lives have been changed thanks to your support. Think about how your donations to Franklin Community Center have changed us from a once unknown entity to a well-established organization that is truly making a difference in the lives of others. Think about how each time you drop your spare change into our coin boxes someone's life will be positively affected by your goodwill. I am constantly overwhelmed by the generosity that exists in the hearts of our donors, and I am motivated by your desire to continue reaching out to those in need. It's not easy being reminded everyday of the constant struggle faced by some of our local residents, but it's never been more apparent to me that agencies like ours would cease to exist without your help. I cannot thank you enough for changing my perspective and helping me realize that no matter how difficult things get or how much they change, Franklin Community Center will always have your support.

Gandhi once said, "Be the change you wish to see in the world"; I think it's safe to say we're headed in the right direction.

Kari Cushing
Executive Director

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Mohandas Gandhi
1869 - 1948
peace activist and advocate for the poor.

"I will give you a talisman. Whenever you are in doubt, or when the self becomes too much with you, apply the following test. Recall the face of the poorest and the weakest man whom you may have seen, and ask yourself, if the step you contemplate is going to be of any use to him. Will he gain anything by it? Will it restore him to a control over his own life and destiny? In other words, will it lead to swaraj [freedom] for the hungry and spiritually starving millions..."

—One of the last notes left behind by Gandhi in 1948

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Project Lift, our after school prevention based program for youth attending **Greenfield Elementary, Geyser Road Elementary, and Lake Avenue Elementary** Schools, is up and running!

We kicked off our winter with our Annual Winter Family Celebration at each school. **Eat Smart New York** and **Legal Aid** attended the parties and provided some wonderful information to our families.

Thirty-five of our Project Lift families received holiday assistance through our program with many thanks to the community members, civic groups, companies, and churches who are providing these gifts and meals.

Our Center and local artist **Shawn Banner** are pleased to announce we have been awarded a SPAF grant to provide an exciting, six week, visual arts workshop for



Project Lift Update

“We are looking for interested community members to help assist us in this wonderful adventure”

the children participating in Project Lift. The **“Self Portrait Books”** workshop will be starting on February 23rd and running on Mondays, Thursdays, and Fridays until April 3rd. We are looking for interested community members to help assist us in this wonderful adventure. This

program is made possible in part with funds from the **Saratoga Program for Arts Funding** (SPAF), part of the Decentralization regrant program of the **New York State Council on the Arts** (NYSCA), administered by the **Saratoga County Arts Council**. For more information, please contact **Jaime Williams**.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone for their continued support.

Jaime Williams
Project Lift Program Coordinator
587-9826

The 25th Anniversary of Franklin Community Center has bestowed a very successful holiday season thanks to the generosity of our community! We were once again able to provide assistance to so many of our less fortunate neighbors to ensure each of their families a wonderful memory of the holidays.



Celebrating Our
25th
Anniversary

Statistics that will be sure to knock your “stockings” off—We were able to provide a hearty **Thanksgiving basket** to 43 families, serving a total of 158 people! 221 less fortunate children happily received **Christmas gifts** and 130 people were the recipients of a delicious dinner to enjoy over the holidays.

Due to the state of our current economy, our Center was concerned that our community would not be able to contribute as much to our less fortunate families this year...were we wrong! **Many thanks to all of the local businesses, groups and organizations who made our success a reality:**

- The Giving Circle (\$800 donation, numerous gifts and Ron Deutsch for his coordination)
- The Ayco Company
- Double A Provisions
- Kiwanis Club of Wilton
- Skidmore College (Skidmore Cares)
- St. Clements Regional Catholic School and its students (and Trish Kirbey for her coordination)
- Saratoga Springs Transportation Department
- Division Street School PTA (\$300 donation and numerous gifts)
- Saratoga Gaming and Raceway
- Borders of Saratoga
- St. Peters Church (and Judy Walker and Sharon Droskey for their coordination)
- Saratoga Springs Children’s Committee (and Staci Mannion for her coordination)
- State Farm’s Recognition & Wellness Committee of Ballston Spa
- St. Edwards Church classrooms and parishioners (and Rick Amico for his coordination)
- Ladies of Charity
- Wilton Mall Management
- Embury Residents Assoc.
- Informz Inc. Tourism Assoc.
- Lake Avenue Elementary Student Council
- Hawley Foundation for Children
- The Congregation of Saratoga Springs United Methodist Church (and Peggy & Mel Abbondandolo for dropping off weekly food & gift deliveries)
- Dorothy Nolan School
- Saratoga Springs High School Student Council
- Atlantic Energy
- Blue Sky Bicycles
- G. Willikers (and Beth Alexander & Julie Bonacio for their coordination)
- Fidelis Care
- St. Peters Lutheran Church
- Quad Graphics
- Girl Scout Troops 3154 and 3123
- Cub Scout Pack 16
- Brownie Troop 3248
- The Retired Nurses Luncheon Group
- Staff of New York State Hospitality and Tourism Assoc.

The support of **local residents plays a HUGE part in the success of our Center** every holiday season. We wish we could list every single person that contributed gifts and food to our families this year; a special thanks to you!

M.O.M. "Methods of Motherhood"



Franklin Community Center has always been committed to meeting the needs that exist in our community. It has been brought to our attention that there is a desperate need for ser-

vices for pregnant and parenting teenagers in our area. Accordingly, we would like to provide programming for this underserved population through a program that will collaborate with other non-profit organizations to educate and inform as well as connect these individuals to beneficial services.

Pregnant and parenting teenagers in our community

As of May 2008, within Saratoga County, there were 74 girls under the age of 19 that are receiving WIC (the free supplemental food program for women, infants, and children). To qualify for WIC, a person must first meet income and residency guidelines and must reside in New York State. Out of the 74 girls just mentioned, 47 are within the ages of 17 – 19; 22 are 16 or 17; and five are under the age of 16. Currently in the Saratoga Springs High School, there are five students pregnant and one parenting.

Monthly education classes

We are pleased to announce that **The Charles R. Wood Foundation** graciously supported our initiative with a \$5,000.00 grant to begin our program. Starting February 24, our Center will provide monthly education classes for pregnant and parenting teens in our area.

Some of the topics will be:

- Breastfeeding and Developing Healthy Support Systems
- Budgeting for Your Family and Child
- CPR and Family First Aid
- Dealing with Difficult Behaviors (colic, tantrums, eating patterns)
- Infant Massage and Exercise for You and Your Child
- Infant Safety and Baby Proofing the Home
- Making Homemade Baby Food

We will also provide a healthy snack and/or meal and giveaway, as well as baby-sitting services.

Based on individual need, we will provide the teenagers with the services or refer them through our connection with various agencies. Our Center's ancillary services will be available and beneficial to all that enroll in our program; we want to reach out and make a difference in the lives of our youth and their children. Our vision of this program is one that will be successful and innovative for our agency; we strive always to meet the needs of our community and feel that it is now time to add yet another level of service for the community.

What You Can Do To Help

Franklin Community Center depends on the benevolence and compassion of our community. You are part of our community.

As you have discerned from reading this newsletter, monetary donations are always welcome and appreciated. Other ways to help are:

Center needs: An up-to-date fax machine and an up-to-date laptop computer that will enable us to make presentations in the community. Also, quarterly newsletter printing services will help immensely.

M.O.M. program baby and infant needs: carseats, diapers, wipes, clothing, shampoo, soaps...etc. We request that these items be new.

Food pantry needs: tuna, pasta sauce, and non-perishable items.

Other client needs: hygiene products, gift cards to local supermarkets, or WalMart, and gas cards are always needed as well.

We are pleased to announce that we are now able to accept your tax deductible donations via credit card, both on-line and at the center.



Save The Date...

For You Know What!

It's the 11th Annual "Franklin Open" Golf Tournament

When: Saturday, June 6, 2009

Where: Windy Hills Golf Course
Greenwich, NY

Details: Check our web site when the ground starts to turn green again for further details

Web: www.FranklinCommunityCenter.org

Franklin Community Center

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Kari Cushing..... Executive Director
Maxine Lewis..... Property Management Asst.
Jen Loeffler..... Coordinator of Development
Patricia Sammler..... Office Manager
Chris Ulrich..... Prog. Asst./Volunteer Coord.
Tracie White..... Family Outreach Educator
Jaime Williams..... Program Coordinator

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Michael Russo
Edward Stano
Paul Sutherland

This quarter has been an exceptionally good one here at Franklin Community Center. Our Center has been extremely blessed with the amount of donations we have received from businesses, organizations and groups. The generosity of the community of Saratoga Springs has always been a constant; even as the economy of our country is at -risk. We value our supporters and if it weren't for you – we would not have the necessary funding to assist our less fortunate families and children.

The expansion of **Project Lift** into Geyser Road Elementary School would have not been possible if it weren't for the extremely generous donations of \$10,000 from **The Alfred Z. Solomon Charitable Trust** and \$5,000 from **Saratoga Gaming & Raceway**. The highest number of homeless children in our area attend this school and we are now able to improve the quality of life for twenty at-risk youth and their families through our after school prevention based program. The importance of a supportive family structure is an emphasized component of Project Lift. With the donation of \$1,700 from **Saratoga Gaming & Raceway Foundation**, we can now provide family events at Lake Avenue, Greenfield and Geyser Road Elementary Schools with a focus on gambling prevention. The longevity of Project Lift and the quality of its programs and dedicated staff would not be possible if it weren't

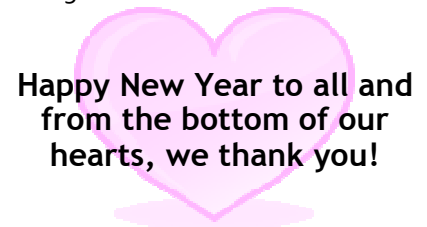
for organizations such as **Hawley Foundation for Children** graciously awarding Project Lift a \$6,000 grant toward our Project Lift expansion, as well as a \$1,500 donation from **Target** to purchase much needed supplies and keep our curriculum and equipment up to date.

With the donation of \$1,700 from Saratoga Gaming & Raceway Foundation, we can now provide family events at Lake Avenue, Greenfield, and Geyser Road Elementary Schools with a focus on gambling prevention.

Franklin Community Manor, our safe and affordable housing unit, will now have larger refrigerators that contain freezers for our tenants. A contribution from **Saratoga Springs Rotary Club** of \$2,500 will give our clients this necessity. **Our Center's Board of Directors**, **Wilton Mall Management's** \$150 donation and matching funds of \$300 from **Lowe's** allowed our agency to purchase a brand new snow blower this winter. In 25 years, we had the largest amount of families frequent our food pantry. We would not have been able to service these individuals if it weren't for the large donations of \$2,500 from **Quad Graphics Community Fund**, \$700 from **Principessa Elena Society**, and \$400 from **Mission Committee of Saratoga Springs United Methodist Church**.

In striving to always meet the needs that exist in our community, we are thrilled to announce that we are now able to begin our M.O.M. "Methods of Motherhood" program. **The Charles R. Wood Foundation** awarded us \$5,000 to assist and provide guidance to the pregnant and parenting teenagers in our area. **The Troy Savings Bank Charitable Foundation** also saw the need for our proposed program and graciously offered a \$5,000 grant, but we had already received the proper funding.

All of our Staff, Board of Directors and Clients thank the following donors who have awarded us funding this quarter to be used towards general expenses. In order to secure and maintain the numerous programs we facilitate; we need funding for operating costs. **Ethel & W. George Kennedy Family Foundation, Inc.** generously donated \$10,000; a foundation that has been asked to remain **Anonymous** awarded us \$3,000; the young ladies of **Girl Scout Troop 3154** donated \$1,300; and **McFarland-Johnson, Inc.** contributed \$500.



Franklin Community Center is fortunate to have seemingly unending support from numerous local businesses. Here are four that just keep giving.
Thank you.

Kincaid Network Solutions, LLC.

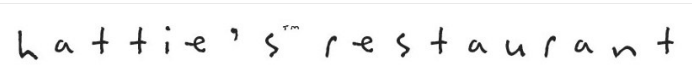
Based in Saratoga Springs, Kincaid Network Solutions is a one-stop shop for all your IT needs offering desktop, network, application and database support for small to mid-sized businesses in the Upstate NY area. www.KincaidNS.com



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