

FRIENDS IN DEED

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Washtenaw Area Network of Congregations

Spring 2003

Program keeps 'em rolling

Life in the U.S., in contrast to most other developed countries, depends heavily on private transportation for work, shopping, child and health care, and leisure time activities. Hence our cars (or trucks, vans, SUVs, etc.) are integral to our lives. For the needy, however, a functioning car is often a necessity to satisfy stringent "welfare reform" work and education requirements. Many do not live or work on bus routes, or work at hours when buses don't run. In addition, the cars they operate are often older, unreliable, and frequently need costly repair. Reliable and inexpensive auto repair can be the critical difference in helping needy families to survive and ideally move from welfare into

improved circumstances.

Recognizing that need, FID began in 1998, and has continued to operate, with annual grants from the Inter-Faith Council of Congregations and additional support from other sources, a Transportation/Car Repair program serving 25-35 families per year. The program is open to low income persons and families in Washtenaw County who need the transportation for work or have an illness in the family requiring frequent transportation to doctor's appointments, treatment, or therapy. Those persons must have already exhausted other community resources for financial support and other means of transportation.

Central to this program is the dedication

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Paul and Walt

The Encarnacion Story

By Julio Encarnacion

Seconds, minutes, and hours go by. And every day there is a story for every person. Three months ago my wife, Milly and I were at our very lowest point in our lives. Desperation was in us every second of the day. Faith in our Lord God was the only message that kept us going. My two children were just boys having fun, with little or no knowledge of what was really going on.

With no place to stay and very little money, a kind friend directed us to a beautiful woman. Mrs. Candice Williams helped us immediately. Mrs. Williams, who works for the Salvation Army, set us up in the Ambassador Hotel. The Salvation Army also provided our family with our every need. Ten days later Mrs. Williams blessed

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The Encarnacion family and their new car donated through FID.

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NEWS BRIEFS



New Foundation Aids FID

FID recently received one of the first grants awarded by the newly created Ypsilanti Area Community Foundation (YACF). The \$1,000 award will provide direct assistance to persons facing financial emergencies linked to a need for improved budgeting or money management skills. Terry Jones of the Washtenaw County Cooperative Extension Service gets rave reviews for giving useful and sensitive help (even house calls!) to persons in developing those critical skills.

FID Remembers Board Member Harry PaDelford

Harold "Harry" PaDelford, EMU Professor Emeritus and long-time community activist, died at home December 19, 2002. Ypsilanti District Library, Holy Trinity Chapel, Kiwanis, the Scrap Box, and the Ann Arbor Hands-On Museum were some of his notable involvements. Described at a January memorial service as one who constantly "longed for a new challenge," Harry was a recent and valuable addition to the FID Board of Directors. In our office he's fondly remembered for donating the badly needed copier we currently use. He will be greatly missed by FID and our entire community.

Thank You

To Congregations: Special recognition is due to the following congregations for providing direct assistance during December: St. Francis of Assisi and St. Thomas the Apostle Catholic Churches (both long-time providers) and Immanuel Baptist, St. Andrew's Catholic Church (Saline), and Holy Trinity Chapel. Many persons had happier holidays because of your help. We also welcome Fellowship Baptist Church of Saline as a new FID congregational partner.

To Volunteers: From its beginnings, FID has been and remains a largely volunteer organization. The activities of volunteers, both in our office and in the congregations, are essential for helping those in need in Washtenaw County. We gratefully acknowledge the gifts of time and talents by the following named volunteers during 2002. Thank you so very much!

Ted Barber, June Bixler, Bob & Nancy Burandt, Sally Carpinella, Betty Damren, Conor Dishman, David Galbraith, Patti Eaton, Lou Ann Edwards, EMU Athletic Department, EMU Day of Caring Group, Peter Fletcher, Bob Fryman, Jennifer Goulet, Barry Hall, Joan Hall, Mary Ruth Hegerich, Dave & Toulou Jacobsen, James Johnson, Dave & Rita Kieras, John & Jane Kinzinger, Bob Krzewinski, Tom &

Claudia Larson, Betty Lennig, Mary Jane Mallory, Liz & Taylor Margolis, Glenn Meske, Sam Mitchell, Gloria Murillo, Harry PaDelford, Paul & Mona Peterson, Ken Pingel, Sarah Prince, Tom Prince, Mary Rupke, Second Baptist Brotherhood of Ypsilanti, St. Luke's Tuesday Evening Bible Study Group, Betsy Sidell, Bill Smith, Peri Stone-Palmquist, Bob Stevenson, Dick Stuber, Josephine Taylor, Ken Timmer, Dana & Donna Underwood, Dee Valvanis, Jim & MalindaWaltz, Pat & Mary White

Special mention is given to Ken Pingel of St. Luke Lutheran Church. Recently Ken volunteered to do a toilet repair for a needy person. As he did that task, however, he noted other needed repairs and began doing them. His willingness to go "above and beyond" the initial task helped that person and improved her quality of life. Many thanks, Ken, to you and to so many others who do so much to help our neighbors in need.

FID WEBSITE

Yes!
At last!



With knowledgeable help from Steve Weiss of Huron Valley Community Network and Meredith Bull, Michigan Comnet Coordinator, the FID web site has been updated.

Check us out at
www.comnet.org/friends

Want Ads

Board Members Wanted

Knowledgeable and enthusiastic individuals are needed for 3-year terms on FID's Board of Directors. The Board provides oversight and guidance to FID operations, meets monthly (second Tuesdays), and involves some limited committee responsibilities. Persons having legal, marketing, or human resources expertise are especially sought. As a Board member, you can help direct efforts to assist persons in need in our community. To volunteer, or to suggest others who may

be interested, call (485-7658) or e-mail (Friends-In-Deed@att.net) Kirstin Jackson at the FID office.

Space Wanted

FID needs by summer 2,000-2,500 square feet of donated warehouse space for long-term use for our furniture program. Hope Clinic is reclaiming the space it has generously allowed FID to use. Please call (485-7658) or e-mail (Friends-In-Deed@att.net) Kirstin Jackson at the FID office with suggestions or possibilities.

FRIENDS IN DEED

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Seventh Annual Bed Drive is success

FID's seventh annual Bed Drive in November-December 2002 received \$7,850 in donations to purchase 78 bed units (mattresses & springs) for distribution to needy persons on our furniture waiting list.

Again we thank Ann Arbor Bedding for making these items available at low cost (last year's prices!) to help these gifts go further in meeting needs. Additional thank you's go to Westminster Presbyterian Church for collecting bedding items (sheets, blankets, pads, pillows, etc.) to give along with these beds, and to the Brotherhood of Second Baptist Church of Ypsilanti, EMU Gospel Choir, John Kinzinger, Paul Peterson, Bob Stevenson, Dick Stuber and Jim Waltz for help with the actual distribution.

Glancing at the Past: FID's Beginnings

In 2003, to recognize FID's 20th year of being a bridge between congregations and people in need in Washtenaw County, each newsletter will include a story on our past.

FID first opened for business at 64 N. Huron St., Ypsilanti, on June 6, 1983, following a year of thought, prayer, planning, and preparation. Modeled upon the Love, Inc. framework implemented by Dr. Virgil Gulker in Holland, Michigan, FID began as a clearinghouse to maintain an inventory of services in the county, a network linking those in need with those able to help, and a mechanism for energizing human resources of local congregations. During fall 1982 and winter 1983, activities included inventorying and compiling services provided by community agencies and congregational resources, identifying and training volunteer coordinators, securing a donation of office space (from Detroit Edison, now DTE Energy) and completing operational tasks. The letter announcing the opening reminded recipients that "you are the Friends In Deed network" and concluded by stating "We begin this venture in caring for one another as a leap of faith and we ask for your prayers and co-operation."



Volunteer coordinators' tasks included publicizing FID's services by visiting other agencies and local congregations, spreading information through media articles or self-produced materials (a newsletter, long edited by Joanne Kooyers, and brochures), promoting participation by congregations and recruiting volunteers, creating and maintaining usable client files, and developing office policies and procedures. In contrast to the detachment and depersonalization of merely giving a donation or gift, FID volunteers worked directly with clients and where appropriate attached self-help conditions to assistance.

With FID office volunteers contributing an average of 18 hours of work per week,

they and the Board agreed to create a program coordinator position, first filled by a volunteer (Helen Kuehl) and after her departure advertised as a paid position. The need for FID's services was quickly apparent as 183 requests for assistance were received during 1983 and another 480 (an average of 40 per month) during 1984. Because many requests sought money, the Board established in March, 1984, with a generous gift from the St. Vincent de Paul Society, a direct assistance fund and a policy for its administration.

In 1984, FID's financial report showed receipts of \$3,102 and expenditures of \$2,306. The Board decided not to affiliate with Love, Inc., partly because of changes in that organization and partly because of the founders' desire to include congregations of all faiths rather than being, as Love, Inc. wanted, exclusively Christian in scope. By 1985, FID was actively demonstrating, in its logo's words, "love in action" and "action in love" to congregations, social service agencies, and the needy in Washtenaw County and the Board could justly claim it had "become a rather successful organization."

Program, continued from Front Page

of Walt Hayes, licensed mechanic, and his employer, Paul Milske of Select Auto. Walt, a member of Knox Presbyterian Church, first approached Friends In Deed in 1996 about a partnership. Recognizing that car repairs were a necessary but costly burden to the working poor, Walt wanted to help but didn't want to be taken advantage of. Friends In Deed gladly accepted his offer and agreed to provide verification and assessment of client requests. Walt and Select Auto then do the repairs at a reasonable cost. Walt's service was recognized by his selection in 2001 to receive FID's first Stan Harbison award.

In addition to car repairs, the Transportation/Car Repair Program has helped with other car-related needs. FID sometimes provides assistance with payments for cars or auto insurance. FID has also registered and given cars donated by members of the community to persons in need. Cars are first assessed by Walt to ensure there are no major problems. Cars in good condition are then passed on to clients. Priority is given to working clients with children, as well as those without access to the bus line. Car donations are always welcome; call the FID office at 485-7658 for details.

Family, continued from Front Page

our family even more by introducing another member of the Salvation Army, Ms. Johnnie Bass, to what my wife calls her "An angel from heaven". Man oh man we were blessed even more.

My thoughts of the Salvation Army were ideas that they only helped out with coats for the winter. But let me tell you how wrong I was. Shelter, food, and clothes don't even come close as to the spiritual and emotional support that we encountered at the Staples Family Center. The staff at the Staples Family Center are just wonderful. They are really into helping people. We would not have been able to make it through without their support.

Blessings do not stop. We have been lifted up out of a very deep dark hole in the ground. About two months ago after Ms. Bass helped us with information as to an organization called "Friends In Deed", our lives took another turn for the better. We were given a beautiful vehicle that has been a blessing in our daily lives ever since.

The kids are no longer receiving cold weather by walking to school. My wife and I don't need a bus to and from work, and

Car Donations

gratefully accepted



Call (734) 485-7658

family outings are now more frequent and comfortable. Friends In Deed are more than just what they call themselves.

I thank the Lord everyday for sending all of his angels to help us when we need Him.



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