



FAMILY PROMISE
BRYAN-COLLEGE STATION

Hospitality

VOLUME 2, ISSUE 2

OCTOBER, 2009

SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST:

- Family Promise was awarded a \$10,000 Community Block Development Grant (funded via the City of Bryan) to add case management hours to Family Promise—for current and former guests
- Project Hope, BISD Homeless liaison program, spearheaded a grant to get \$4000 worth of computer equipment for Family Promise guests!

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

- Aimee's Desk 2
- Faith-based 2
- Uncork the Promise 3
- Thank Yous 3
- Faith in Humankind restored 4

Faith in Humankind Restored...by Mary Lenn Dixon

When Nancy moved to Texas with her sons Bryan and Benjamin (not their real names), she thought she would be reconciling with family members. When those plans fell apart, she was left without a job, a place to live, or an extended support network. She turned to Family Promise and found the support and shelter she needed to get back on her feet.

It wasn't always easy to have her family life so publicly displayed. Being a parent is challenging under the best of circumstances, and having the volunteers and hosts around could feel sometimes like being in a goldfish bowl.

But Nancy knew that she and her sons were accepted, and she appreciated the help she got in times of stress not only from the volunteers but also from other guests.

Bryan and Benjamin are lively, intelligent, attractive kids, and they found a safe place in the program.

"Sometimes it's stressful," Nancy said, "but I don't know what I would have done without the program. I don't know where we would be now."

"I am humbled by the way I see those involved in Family Promise truly walk with God. They've inspired me to want to change and improve who I am, so I can do the same. My life and faith in humankind is restored and I will not forget those who helped bring that about!"

Working on the goals she set when she entered the program, Nancy eventually found a job that she loves and was planning to move into an

apartment that worked well for her family. But the very first day of her new job 30 minutes outside of BCS, her plans were threatened when her car broke down as she drove back. The converter was shot, and the repairs would cost \$700-\$800. Without the repairs, Nancy could not get to her job and would lose "the job of a lifetime."

A single email from director Aimee Myers resulted in a number of offers to help, and just two days later, Aimee sent out the good news "that the guest's car in need of repair is back on the road and the bill has been paid. The response was overwhelming!"

Just a few days after moving into her new apartment, Nancy wrote the following beautiful testimonial to the experience she had in Family Promise.

Continued pg. 4

From Aimee's Desk



Aimee Myers,
Network Director

Fall marks the change of seasons... As we end our first year of operation, we welcome a new season for Family Promise—positive changes that will keep Family Promise of BCS on its tireless path to preserve human dignity and inspire our guests to carry on.

I am humbled as I realize what amazing experiences I've been allowed to share with all of you this past year. As my family and I move on to our next phase of excitement, I ponder the amazing accomplishments of our network in just one year's time. This is not the work of just one

person—this is the collaborative effort of hundreds of people—the Director, the board members (who are indeed a working board), the day center volunteers, and the 20-40 volunteers at each church during each of their host weeks.

When my family and I decided to return to our home state of PA, I was overwhelmed with concern for the future of Family Promise—that is, until I realized how insignificant my own individual contribution was as compared to the huge collaborative efforts of all of our Family Promise supporters, including donors.

I am so proud of our network for all of the accomplishments, but what I am the most proud of is how we have set the tone for years to come.—Family Promise of BCS now has a reputation—a reputation for being concerned, caring, thoughtful, non-judgmental, and *tireless* in our efforts to give our guests exactly what they need—physically and emotionally. What an accomplishment! How many organizations in the world can boast this?

I am passing the torch—to my board, to our volunteers, to you, our supporters—*keep on loving thy neighbors...*

Notice from The Board:

The Board of Directors has accepted the resignation of our Director, Aimee Myers, reluctantly. However, we know that she and her family will be returning to their home in Pennsylvania and will continue to serve others with the same compassion and devotion she extended to the children and families in the Family Promise network in Bryan-College Station. She has been a guiding light to all who were blessed to work with her in serving the "least of these." She has provided us with a strong, stable, well-organized network of interfaith organizations which will continue because of her leadership example. We ask for God's blessings and a safe journey for Aimee, Nat, Zoe, and Liam as they travel.

Family Promise—living one's faith

I have often heard people use the word faith-based when referring to Family Promise, but I wonder if there is a full understanding of what this means. Certainly, it means that churches are involved in hosting our families each week. - Selfless congregations who sacrifice their space, adjust the church's calendar to ensure guests have their own room for the whole week, and who provide caring volunteers.

One might think that faith-based also means that guests are required to attend church services, or to endure conversations with volunteers about spirituality. Those would be inaccurate assumptions—faith-based for Family Promise does not mean forcing one's spiritual beliefs onto our guests. For many volunteers, however, it does mean living one's faith. Our congregations are all Christian and thus all share a belief in helping "the least of these". But we also believe in providing what

our guests need physically first—shelter and food without conditions (other than basic shelter guidelines). Our volunteers indeed get to share their faith by praying with guests, for guests, and by sometimes providing spiritual nurturing and guidance. All of this is conducted with an attitude of respect and consideration. As you can see by Nancy's story, our guests do benefit spiritually.

Our volunteers also benefit as they are transformed and humbled by their experiences: "So often, I feel overwhelmed by all that is wrong in the world and think I can't make a difference. With Family Promise, I know I make a difference in someone's life, by laughing with them, commiserating over parenting ups and downs, or playing with their child. One little corner of the world is a better place when I give my time to Family Promise."

"At Family Promise, the guests and the hosts can interact face to

face. This is where relationships are formed and transformation happens. My participation in other programs has changed the lives of others. My participation in Family Promise has changed my life."

"In the parable of the Good Samaritan, a kind soul gives the innkeeper two day's wages in order for the man that he'd found beaten and robbed on the road to be nursed back to health in the inn. What I take from this detail of the story is that the good Samaritan was happy to go without his family's usual commodities for two days so that the stranger who'd been left for dead could have a chance at life...not a guarantee, but a chance. I participate in Family Promise because I believe that our neighbors, in this case our families who are homeless, deserve at the very least a chance, even if it means that I and mine have to go without to make that possible".

Uncork the Promise—1st Annual Fundraiser!

Family Promise of BCS is launching its first annual “Uncork the Promise!” fundraiser. When brainstorming for ideas for a 2nd community fundraiser (The Annual Comfort Food Cook-off in January is a long-standing annual fundraiser), fundraising committee members were struck by how many fundraising events are already associated with other non-profits such as golf tournaments, bowling fundraisers, and annual galas with silent and live auctions. The committee members believed that a fundraiser similar to those already associated with other non-profits would just not be successful.

With help from the Family Promise BCS board of directors, the Family Promise Fundraising Commit-

tee co-chairs Hank Lawson and Amanda Childress orchestrated a unique fundraiser—a wine tasting and education event by WineStyles paired with appetizers, smooth jazz music, a silent auction and a raffle.



The featured raffle item is a gorgeous diamond pendant by Montelongo’s Fine Jewelry, a \$2500 value for \$10 per raffle ticket. Purchasers of raffle tickets do not have to be present at the event to win the pendant and raffle tickets are already available for purchase at the Day Center.

Among the 12-15 silent auction items are: bracelet by David Gardner’s Jewelers; bed/breakfast at Astin Mansion; one night at Abigail’s Treehouse; one night and couple’s massage at 7 F Lodge; one month

fitness boot camp; celebrity dinner for 10 with Coaches Gary Blair/Vic Schaefer/Rob Childress; wine tasting for 8; wine tasting for 20 at Messina Hof; tickets to A&M/UT game; hunting package. A wine fridge donated by Buddy’s Appliances will also be available as prize for purchaser of the lucky wine charm.

Uncork the Promise is open to the community and is an important event for Family Promise fundraising. Please help us to spread the word about this event so we can reach our 2009 budget goals!

Help us to “Uncork the Promise” of a new home, a new life, and a new start for our Family Promise guests by attending this special event. We look forward to toasting with you! Join us on October 29th, at 630 PM at the College Station Hilton.

2009 Funding Update

2009 Budget \$100,000
 YTD Income \$65,183
 YTD Expenses \$71,119
YTD Deficit (\$5934)

Club 274 Goal 182 members
 Club 274 Actual 70 members

Please consider donating \$274 to Family Promise—this is the cost of one day of operations. Without money to operate, we cannot serve our families and children!

Thank you!!!

New Club 274

Stacy and Clay Reibe
 Nancy and Donald Ladewig
 Ruth Ann and Edward Hazen
 Mary Lenn Dixon
 Kathy Ruth
 Doug and Linda Rape
 Susan and Leon Bowen
 Mr. Randy French
 Brian Perkins
 Don and Beth Montgomery
 Laura Higgins
 S. Chester and Ross Jones
 James Thompson Jr.
 Joseph and Mari Ward
 Richard and Sunny Keelan
 Kenton and Lindsay Kirkpatrick

New Club 274 Organizations/ Group

The Neighborly Class, FUMC Bryan
 FUMC Bryan
 The Adult Bible Study Sunday
 School Class, FUMC Bryan
 The Rotary Club, College Station

For a comprehensive list of 2009 Club 274 members, go to:
www.familypromisebcs.cfsites.org



**EMPLOYMENT:
Two Employment Oppor-
tunities with FPBCS are
posted on our website.**

Family Promise of Bryan-College Station is an area-wide, volunteer-based nonprofit organization that supports families by providing shelter, meals, and support services to homeless families. The program is affiliated with the nation-wide Family Promise in Summit, New Jersey. [Www.familypromise.org](http://www.familypromise.org)

Family Promise Bryan-College Station

1806 Wilde Oak Circle
Bryan, Tx
P.O. Box 11232
College Station, Tx 77842-1232
Phone: 979-268-4309
E-mail: familypromisebcs@gmail.com

**A community response for Homeless
Families**

Board of Trustees

Marilyn Egger, President
Linda Snyder, Vice President
Lewis Ford, Treasurer
Amanda Childress, Secretary
Hank Lawson
Ken Fogle
Judge Jim Locke
Rodney McGlothlin
Mari Ward
Barbara Moore



Faith in humankind continued...

In her cover note to the volunteers, Aimee added, “We cannot thank you enough for helping our guest to feel warm thoughts about her stay in Family Promise”.

Nancy's Thank You:

“With sincerest gratitude, I'd like to express my thanks, not only to those who helped with repairs on my car, but also to all those who donated items for my new apartment! I am touched and continually amazed by the generosity I've seen, since I came into the program, from volunteers and donors involved. Those who donate time and/or items for our needs and an occasional luxury, like a dinner out, are the quiet angels of the program. They give, often

anonymously, although many gifts, such as fellowship and wonderful food served, are openly given daily.

“Often, I know, when I was discouraged and probably somewhat unpleasant to deal with, there were special individuals who were patient and kind, who saw through the mood and continued to be kind and giving. And Aimee, our guiding light, is tireless in all she does to help us get on our feet. The other families have been wonderful to get to know.

They've been great examples to a weary fellow parent, as well as a source of encouragement and examples of tolerance. I will be grateful to them always.

“I am finally graduating, thanks to angels who encouraged, pushed and helped in many ways. All I can say is I am humbled by the way I see those involved in Family Promise truly walk with God. They've inspired me to want to change and improve who I am, so I can do the same. My life and faith in humankind is restored and I will not forget those who helped bring that about!”

And those of us who had the pleasure of knowing Nancy, Bryan, and Benjamin won't forget them, either. Her determination and persistence in the face of some pretty rough challenges are inspirations in their turn.