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inside the newsletter

THE CENTER

Choice ~ Growth ~ Independence

VOLUME 15
NUMBER 2
Spring/Summer 2011

EXTREME "CENTER" MAKEOVER



a complete renovation. It had new ceiling and lighting installed, as well as a complete makeover thanks to the wonderful design team from Gensler. Both clients and staff are showing improved morale and greatly enjoying their new home.

Another successful part of our makeover was the "Sit With Me Campaign." Thanks to donations from some of our families and friends, the campaign generated enough funds to purchase six, high quality, outdoor table and chair sets along with four park-like benches. It is truly a pleasure seeing our clients and staff enjoying their renovated outdoor space and courtyards.

For Phase II, we are working with the design firm of Interior Adaptations and students from the Art Institute of Houston for a total makeover of our Cullen lobby, the Fondren Building classrooms and the Annex portion of the Adult Activity Center. We have given approval for the design proposal of the Cullen lobby and the enthusiasm expressed by the residents is overwhelming. The makeover of the lobby will include a relocation of spaces, new lighting, modern furnishings and paint, and a vividly designed "hip" laundry room, as well as enhanced garden space. The Fondren classrooms will have a heavy focus on not just making the rooms more visually

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Dear Friends, Families and Supporters:

By now, you have heard us mention some of the wonderful makeover projects we have been undergoing in the past several months. I am happy to report that Phase 1 of the West Dallas campus beautification and renovations is complete! One of the more visible projects is the completion of the art work on the old yellow train cab. Thanks to the wonderful and talented artists with the Museum of Cultural Arts Houston, it is now a modern piece of graffiti art. Our logo dominates the east panel that faces Allen Parkway. Next in completion has been the installation of carpet in the work program, Cullen Residence Hall lobby and first floor offices, the Annex unit and the Adult Activity Center. Speaking of the AAC, this program has undergone



Sit With Me Campaign

The ladies were enjoying the new tables and chairs purchased with gifts from The Center Foundation's Sit With Me Campaign. Generous donors listed below helped bring this dream come true. Each donor was offered the opportunity to place a plaque on their table. Listed below are donors and their chosen tributes.

Andrew Delaney Foundation

In Memory of Andrew Delaney

Bob and Delta Goodside

Henry A. Hill

In Honor of The Center's Volunteers

June and Wayne Johnson

In Honor of Kimberly Johnson

The Donald Lewis Family

In Honor of Linda Lewis, Our Very Special Sister & Daughter

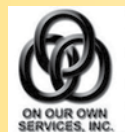
Gayle Holt Snowden

A Gift With Love From The Family of Mildred Holt

Adrian, Lorene and Wilson Windle



The Nettles twins Rosalyn (l.) and Robyn (r.) flank Phebe Cuthbert outside of Cullen Residence Hall.



Doing well on their own

The Center is a proud partner with On Our Own Services, Inc., non-profit Community Rehabilitation Program that provides employment,

training and guidance in a nurturing environment to enable each disabled individual to maximize his or her potential. Currently, eleven of The Center's clients are on an On Our Own crew that provides litter clean up and disposal for the City of Houston. Our clients are picked up at The Center and returned back at the end of the workday at no charge.



(from left,) Johnny Collins, Jack Williams, Judy Brady and Bennie Nichols return from their jobs at On Our Own.

The Center clients who are employed by On Our Own Services, Inc include:

- | | |
|----------------|--------------------|
| Judy Brady | Torrence Nowlin |
| Johnny Collins | James Rochow |
| Henry Gonzales | Chester Sledge |
| Jack Gustavsen | Christian Verotsko |
| Bennie Nichols | Jack Williams |

Work training is provided through the State of Texas "Works Wonders" and the Federal government's "Ability One" programs. On Our Own Services trains and employs individuals in real world work experiences while demonstrating each persons ability to provide the highest quality of services to their customers that include the Federal Government and the State of Texas.

On Our Own Services, Inc. also provides job placements services to individuals wanting to work in the community. Placement promotes the interaction between the community and the persons with disabilities.



In April, LifeCare client Katherine "Ronnie" Kenner recently suffered a fall that resulted in an injury. Ronnie, who lives in an apartment in the community, needed full time assistance, even at night, from LifeCare

aides. After she left the hospital, Ronnie was moved into Cullen Residence Hall where 24-hour care was arranged for her. She has recuperated nicely and moved back to her apartment. This is an example of the seamless care LifeCare provides when one of its clients is in a difficult situation.



Ronnie with an aide

LifeCare handles many entertainment activities, too, but when urgent care is needed, your loved one is ensured the best when you have a LifeCare plan.

For information about the LifeCare program, call 713-525-8482.



Everybody Loves Gordy

Gordy is a 24 year old, yellow head amazon parrot who now resides in Cullen's lobby. He may live to be 100+ years old. A big thank you to Ethelyn Kuldell, owner of Southwest Antiques and Collectibles, who donated Gordy to us.



News from Willow River Farms



Back row: Jean Corrigan, Joey Harper, David Vacek, Roger Kopp, and Charles Fernandez
 Middle: Lisa Jones, Sandra Forest, Wade Schmidt, and Pat Korenek
 Front: Eileen McGarry, Janet Hand, and John McDevitt.

Three Willow River Farms bowling teams won medals at Showplace Lanes at the Special Olympics tournament in Austin. WRF Soldier Boys 2nd place Silver, WRF Wrecking Crew 2nd place Silver and WRF Pink Panthers 3rd place Bronze.

Family members who live locally drove all the way from Sealy to cheer our athletes on! Special thanks to our wonderful coaches Patricia Scott, Jaime Tijerina and Nathan Tijerina.

“Like” us on **facebook**

Go to www.facebook.com/CenterHouston and click on the “Like” button. Keep up with The Center’s goings-on with news of impending legislative issues, client activities and special events.

THE CENTER	FREQUENTLY CALLED NUMBERS
Admissions.....	713-525-8318
Adult Activity Center	713-525-8419
Momentum Industries.....	713-525-8303
Fulfillment, Packaging, Mailing & Assembly	
Caning	713-525-8453
Gingersnaps Etc.....	713-525-8468
Donations.....	713-525-8484
Gifts In Kind.....	713-525-8431
Volunteer Opportunities	713-525-8431
Community Relations.....	713-525-8431
Willow River Farms	713-525-8300
Cullen Residence Hall.....	713-525-8400
The Center Foundation.....	713-525-8484
LifeCare	713-525-8482

Houston Community College Day of Caring and Tour

On Friday, April 15th, student volunteers from Houston Community College’s Eagle Club planted beautiful roses in six containers outside our Chi Omega Building. Upon completing their Day of Caring, Catherine Chandler, Community Relations Manager, provided a campus tour to students and their VAST coordinator, Ana Calvo.



Included in the tour was the newly created model room located in Cullen Residence Hall. The Center is excited about our partnership with HCC’s Vocational Advancement and Social Skills Training Program, (VAST) to offer dormitory-style living to their students with developmental disabilities so they can enjoy the full college experience. The whole north wing of the third floor is reserved for the VAST program which can be expanded to the whole floor if needed.

As the students sampled our cafeteria lunch, Jean Morris, Supported Living Coordinator, provided a lively discussion about living on campus. Three new VAST residents recently moved in and three more are scheduled. We have capacity for a total of 20 residents but welcome the opportunity to expand. New resident, Allison, excitedly said “Living at Cullen has been the best experience in my life.” Her parents, Cheryl and Richard Rosenberg relay, “Allison is thriving at the VAST Program and with living independently at The Center. We are so grateful that she has the opportunity to have as close to a typical college experience as possible.”

Admissions Manager, Rick Rettig, stated “The Center is looking forward to providing VAST students with an opportunity for independent living in a safe and supportive environment. In conjunction with the VAST program the Center will strive to provide a living environment that meets the needs and desires of the students.” For additional information and to schedule tour of campus and rooms, contact Rick at 713.525.8318.

United Way Days of Caring ExxonMobil April 18th-20th

Red shirted volunteers from ExxonMobil were a familiar and welcomed sight at The Center for three days straight! The Exploration Company sent two groups of volunteers who successfully completed our top five priority projects. Their amazing manpower of almost 70 volunteers included Rick Weber, vice president; Sam Conner, EMEC United Way Campaign Leader and Eric Wildermuth, United Way Campaign Manager.



Many thanks to ALL volunteers! Tackling projects of this magnitude takes a lot of pre-planning to successfully execute them; thus, major thanks to team leaders Piotr Lewandowski, Ron Peake, and Katja Hasner and project coordinators John Mayhew, Josh Ulla, Patricia Dennis and Stacie Grady. Special thanks also to Brian Sabin and Yarasel Cruz for initially viewing projects for consideration!

The Center looks forward to many more days of red shirted volunteers on campus!



Power wash, repair and stain the deck around our boxcar



Cleaning and painting over 50 outside classroom doors



Power wash and paint curbs around our seven acre campus



Clear out debris and foliage from behind Cullen Residence Hall by recycling and filling a 30 yard dumpster



Consolidate, sort and organize our in-kind donation closet including our hurricane preparedness supplies

Field Trips



One hundred clients and staff enjoyed a field trip to the Toyota Center for Disney On Ice Toy Story 3 on April 15th.

Cullen Cougars Track and Field team complete great season!!!

Twenty athletes from Cullen Residence Hall competed in four Special Olympics track and field meets this year. The Cullen Cougars range in age from mid thirties to mid seventies, yet everyone participated and cheered as if they were teenagers.

The team is blessed to have a dedicated group of volunteers who make sure our athletes have a great time. The volunteers also wish to thank Cullen's staff for their help getting the team ready on game days.

Everyone involved is a true winner!



Chi Omega Carnival



Our Cullen residents once again enjoyed the annual carnival sponsored by the Chi Omega fraternity (Psi Zeta Chapter) from the University of Houston. Megan Henry, philanthropy chairman, did a fantastic job organizing fun games and great prizes.

Easter Treats



Over 1,000 Easter Bags were donated to The Center by our wonderful mother/daughter volunteers from National Charity League (NCL) Bayou Villages. Clients and staff at The Center's main campus, Willow River Farms and HCS enjoyed a special treat! Volunteers handed out Easter Bags after the fun Easter Egg Hunt in ATEs.

THANKS NCL BAYOU VILLAGES!



Fun Run

Celebrating its 26th Anniversary, the John J. Eikenburg Law Week Fun Run has now contributed over \$940,000 since 1986. This year's run raised over \$60,000 through sponsorships, runners fees and a program called "Adopt a Walker" in which individuals could make an extra contribution of \$10 so that the clients could walk free of charge. The wind was at our back and the sun shone brightly on this very special occasion. Many thanks to the Houston Bar Association and co-chairs John Spiller and Danielle Harsany. Awards were presented by HBA President T. Mark Kelly who had just completed the Fun Run, too.



From left Candace Dickerson, author Lisa Birnbach, Christy Rowland and Stef Levy

10th Annual Luncheon

Co-chaired by Candace Dickerson, Stef Levy and Christy Rowland, over 325 clambered to hear author Lisa Birnbach talk about her book *True Prep: It's a Whole New World*, a follow up to her 1980 sensation *Preppy Handbook*.

The event raised \$160,000 for The Center's programs and services which includes raffle ticket sales of over \$12,500.

The author/speaker had the audience in rapt attention as she regaled stories of prep then and now. Guests wore their finest preppy outfits and the room was filled with pink and green!

Many thanks to all of you who supported The Center Foundation's 10th Annual Luncheon!

Ice Cream Sunday

Co-chaired by Elizabeth Vail and Andrea Soper, over 200 guests joined in the fun with new rides and activities this year. Among the favorites was laser tag and the Video Games Truck. Old favorites like Karaoke4Kids and the trackless trains are still big hits. Ice Cream Sunday raised \$30,000 for The Center's programs and services. We are grateful to the co-chairs for their dedication to The Center.



Volunteer Corner



(l to r) Jane Harrel, Dick & Van White, Christine Ho, John Caudillo

Meet Round Up Volunteers – Van & Dick White. They have been dedicated volunteers at the Round Up Boutique, located in Cullen Resident Hall, for a combined total of 25 years! They are permanent fixtures at the Round Up every Wednesday from 11 - 1:00 along with other long time volunteers, Jane Harrel and John Caudillo. In January, they welcomed new volunteer, Christine Ho!

“We enjoy visiting with the clients and helping them find what they need, whether a gift or personal item,” relayed Van and Dick. The volunteers also spend many hours shopping and pricing the unique and wonderful merchandise sold in the boutique.

Van has also served on The Center’s board and was president of the Volunteer Auxiliary. We are lucky she chose the Round Up to start her new volunteer career. Before coming to The Center, Van was a speech pathologist. Fifteen years ago, she retired from Houston School for Deaf Children (renamed Center for Hearing and Speech). Dick retired from Formers of Houston 10 years ago where he was a sales manager. In her free time, Van enjoys Mah Jongg, music and reading. Dick enjoys big band and jazz music, and vintage airplanes. They are very active in their church, Trinity Episcopal. Van was a full time church organist starting at age 13 and both were active in the choir too. They have two daughters Susan Cole and Emily and a grandson, Shane.

The Center is very fortunate to have these wonderful volunteers.

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

Volunteer commitments may be one-time events or ongoing participation. Please contact us to learn more.

We are also updating our records, if you have volunteered with us in the past and/or want to become part our new volunteer team, please fill out new Volunteer Application located in new Volunteer Sign-In Book at the Cullen reception desk or contact Catherine.

For questions or to schedule a tour, contact Catherine Chandler at 713.525.8431 or cchandler@thecenterhouston.org

EXTREME “CENTER” MAKEOVER

continued from page 1

appealing and functional, but also a total transformation of the outdoor covered patio. This will hopefully include an outdoor kitchen, atrium-like green areas, and improved flooring and outdoor furniture. We hope to see these projects finished by early Fall. Rounding out our Phase II was the installation of mosaic tile art around our entry sign on Marston. This work is also being designed and developed by the Museum of Cultural Arts Houston.

The Center acknowledges the generous in-kind and discounted materials and services from: Midway Companies, Marek Brothers Systems, A&E Graphics, Gilbane, Acme Brick, Perennial Landscape, Piper-Houston Electric, Adaptations, Tree Source, Gensler, TERRYPRO and Tribble & Stephens. The Center has benefited from the wonderful support of so many people during this process, but of particular thanks are Shon Links and Brad Freels of Midway, and of course, Ron Nixon. It is through their knowledge and contacts that so many wonderful “angels” have come our way.

Along with the above mentioned, we are also rounding out the renovation projects covered by a HUD Community Block Grant. Thanks to these funds, the work program now has two newly expanded restrooms, automated doors for the Annex, and an expanded laundry facility and new roof at Cullen. The last piece of this project is the complete upgrade of our elevators. Although this has taken longer than anticipated due to unforeseen problems with our former system, we do anticipate a June 30th inauguration of the new elevator system.

All in all, a true “Extreme Center Makeover” is happening right before our eyes! We look forward to a late Fall/early Winter Open House event and hope all of you will join us. You can also keep track of our progress on our Facebook page at www.facebook.com/CenterHouston.



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HURRY
HURRY!**

Want your clients to know just what kind of a caring and thoughtful person you are? Get your company's logo created by The Center's artisans for use as the decoration on the top of your holiday cookie tins. No, it's not too early for Gingersnaps ETC to get to work on your personal mold for your future orders. We like to stay on top of things!

Can you imagine how exciting it would be to send gifts to all of your clients with your very own company logo right there on top of your gift?

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The Center Foundation



It's time to add or renew your Neighbor to Neighbor program for July 1, 2011 - April 30, 2012! Simply clip the barcode provided here and present it to your Kroger cashier upon CHECKOUT along with your Kroger Share Card. When you shop at Kroger a small percentage will go to The Center. A one-time visit is all it takes and you're in business of shopping for The Center. The Center has received \$5,670.62 since 2003 — thanks to you!



**SATURDAY,
NOVEMBER 5, 2011**

WILLOW RIVER FARMS



**EARLY BIRD SPECIAL
Register July 1 to August 31
\$25 per person**

Includes lunch and t-shirt!

Ride Directors:
Judy Tuttle-Wurth and Tom Wurth

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www.facebook.com/NovemberFest**