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# THE CENTER

*Choice ~ Growth ~ Independence*

VOLUME 15  
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## Dear Friends, Family and Supporters



Eva Aguirre  
Executive Director

Here we are at the end of 2010, and what a year it has been. We have weathered cuts in government funding and an economic recession all without impacting our clients or services.

And thanks to your strong support, our fundraising has remained fairly steady throughout the year.

We began 2010 with a generous anonymous donation of \$50,000 designated for a campus-wide renovation project. Those funds are now at \$260,000 and projects have been underway since early summer. As you well know, The Center has been around for more than 60-years, and all of our buildings were showing great wear and tear. Growing demand for services and declining government support set our priorities for more immediate needs. Special thanks to Ron Nixon, a local businessman and founder of the Mutt Foundation and The Catalyst Group, as well as his colleagues at Midway Companies, The Center is on its way to a much needed "makeover." Moreover, we were awarded a \$500,000 grant from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development allowing for renovations of elevators, roofs, restrooms and the laundry room at Cullen Residence Hall, and other projects. Walls will be painted, furniture replaced, landscaping renewed, and signs updated. New flooring and lighting will be installed in main areas, as well as new outdoor furniture and "art designs" throughout the campus. The total of all renovation work nears \$1.3 million dollars, however, the majority of this work is being

done through donated materials, labor and design work!! Read more about our "makeover" on page 2 of this newsletter.

Lastly on the makeover front, we finally received our FEMA dollars from the damage caused by Hurricane Ike. This final piece of the puzzle will round out our projects for the year ahead.

On the program side, The Center is at its highest enrollment ever. All of our programs show on-going growth, particularly in day services. On the residential front, we successfully launched an independent living unit on the 6th floor of Cullen Residence Hall whereas rooms are "rented" as efficiency apartments. As of today, all but four of the sixteen units are rented. The tenants on this floor have the safety and security offered by The Center while still maintaining a high degree of independence, both in their employment and personal lives. As a supplemental service, case management, nursing and housekeeping services can be independently purchased.

For 2011, The Center has entered into an agreement with Houston Community College's Vocational Advancement and Social Skills Training Program, (VAST), to offer dormitory-style living to their young students with developmental disabilities so that they can experience the full college experience. We will have capacity for 20 students on one wing of the third floor and hope to have our first students move in by this coming summer. We are very excited at this partnership with HCC as it will further the recognition of The Center and its mission.

Lastly, a note of appreciation to the staff and management of The Center for their

continued commitment to those we serve. Through good times and bad, it is their day-in and day-out dedication that truly makes a difference. Here's to a wonderful 2011!

### The Center Consolidated Statement of Activities

	Year Ended June 30, 2010
<b>Revenue and Support</b>	
Contract service fees and tuition revenues	\$12,327,000
Contributions and special events	1,231,000
United Way allocation	1,337,000
Sales of products and services	404,000
Investment loss, net	147,000
All other	160,000
<b>Total Revenue and Support</b>	<b>\$15,606,000</b>
<b>Expenses</b>	
Salaries, payroll taxes, and benefits	8,493,000
Program cost, including food and supplies	2,159,000
Facilities	1,558,000
Outside services	1,972,000
Depreciation	784,000
Insurance	334,000
Interest	299,000
All other	150,000
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>\$15,749,000</b>
<b>Decrease in Net Assets</b>	<b>(143,000)</b>

Includes The Center and The Center Foundation

### Enrollment Data by Program: Year Ending 2010

Adult Activity Center	189
Cullen Residence/Supported Living	140
Cullen Residence/Independent Living	14
Adult Training & Employment Services	293
Willow River Farms	64
Home & Community based Services	61
<b>Total Served</b>	<b>761</b>

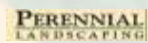
2009 program enrollment: 756

<b>Active Volunteers</b>	<b>638</b>
<b>Volunteer Hours</b>	<b>23,580</b>
Active Volunteers 2009: 552	

# MOVE OVER EXTREME MAKEOVER...

## Houston's big hearts donate materials and expertise to shore up The Center's Infrastructure

When Ron and Ginni Nixon gave The Center a donation from their Mutt Foundation, he accepted an invitation to tour the campus at West Dallas. He was dismayed by the condition of the buildings and grounds, including unrepaired damage from Hurricane Ike. "I realized very quickly that the grants they received from foundations, such as the one I had



just given, were barely meeting the needs of feeding and clothing the residents and funding the ongoing work projects for The Center," Nixon exclaimed. Ron Nixon wanted to help. He immediately called his friend, Brad Freels, Chairman and CEO of Midway Companies. Midway is the developer, among many other properties, of the stunning mixed-use CityCentre on the former grounds of the Town & Country Mall

in West Houston. Brad then asked one of his associates at Midway, Shon Link, to help coordinate the project. Brad and Shon assembled an architectural/interior design team to perform a detailed review and analysis of The Center. After many visits and working with The Center's executive director, Eva Aguirre, a plan

was put together identifying and prioritizing the many jobs that needed to be tackled. A budget was developed and Ron, Brad, Shon and members of the architectural/interior design team set about seeking in-kind materials and labor, as well as donations to shore up The Center's infrastructure. "Not one single person or company we contacted turned us down," said Nixon. "Companies such as Midway Companies, A&E Products, Acme Brick, Brickfield Builders, Garza McClane, Gensler, Gilbane, Interface, Inventure Design, Kudela Weinheimer, Marek Brothers, Perennial Landscape, Studio 68, Tree Source, Tribble & Stephens, and Upchurch Kimbrough gave generously with their products, expertise, and labor," Nixon noted.

Many projects have been completed and many more are in the works. Completed projects include a beautiful new central plaza courtyard, masonry work, cleaning and restoration, new carpet, new signage, and other enhancements and refurbishing projects. The project, which the team has tagged as "Creating a Vision," started in April of this year, and will complete Phase I by the end of



Midway Companies' Shon Link and Brad Freels flank The Center Foundation's vice president James Pavlik

the year. There are many more buildings, classrooms, offices, resident halls and an activity center that are on the list for Phase II in 2011.

There are plenty of opportunities to sponsor this project. If you want to know more, contact Debra S. Collins, Executive Director of The Center Foundation at 713-525-8479.

**Donors include:** The Mutt Foundation, Fondren Foundation, Houston Project of St. Luke's United Methodist Church, EOG Resources, Anonymous, Joe Swinbank, Midway Companies, Harriet and Joe Foster Foundation, Mr. and Mrs. Sam Anderson, Mt. Brilliant Foundation and Mr. and Mrs. Anthony Deluca.



## A very special Thank You to our faithful friends

Our dear friends from Chi Omega had a spectacular year in 2010! With a glorious auction, outstanding leadership and a superb speaker, The Center realized a contribution of \$47,500 this year!

(from left) Kaleidoscope luncheon chair Drue Terry DaSilva, Carey D. Dow, current Chi Omega Houston president and The Center executive director Eva Aguirre

## The Center Salutes the Rosenbaums & Sligers

### Ray and Dorothy Rosenbaum

Ray Rosenbaum was one of the co-founders of The Center's Boy Scout Troop #205 in 1971. The Troop has 22 Scouts, three of whom are from the original troop and two of whom come in from Willow River Farms each week. Troop 205 is the oldest Special Needs Troop in the Harris County area that is still active in traditional scout activities such as camping out at Camp Strake, going to camporees and fishing. Most Special Needs troops are confined to activities in the public schools during the school day. Ray is an active leader who organizes and attends meetings every Thursday night with co-leader Margaret Bridgewater. He and his wife Dorothy also prepare the meal for the Annual Court of Honor Spaghetti Supper where badges and awards are presented.

Ray, a vintage Corvair buff, brings his convertible to NovemberFest and the Holiday Parade at the West Dallas campus each year where he drives the King and Queen in the open-topped car. Ray and the Scouts also march in both parades as color guards.



Ray Rosenbaum drives 2009 NovemberFest King and Queen in the opening parade

Mr. and Mrs. Rosenbaum are generous donors each year to The Center and we are extremely grateful for their volunteer spirit and financial gifts to help provide programs and services to our clients. Happy New Year Ray and Dorothy!

### Joann and Glenn Sliger



Glenn and Joann Sliger at Willow River Farms

It was through Jesse and MaryAnn Noland that Glenn and Joann Sliger became involved with Willow River Farms in June of 1995. They have since become members of the Farm family with their years of volunteer work and are beloved for the special care they take with the Farm's residents.

Joann helps each year with the quilt for NovemberFest and works with the residents on their needlecraft and embroidery skills. She also plays UNO, an excellent teaching device for colors, numbers, and strategy, with residents. Our residents absolutely love it!

Glenn's skills include everything from gardening in the new vegetable patch to mowing the grass with the client work crew. He and Jesse Noland reworked all the deckles (framework) for the paper-making area. Glenn also strings the looms with the warp threads that enable our residents to weave the beautiful rugs and placemats we sell to benefit Willow River.

The Sligers are also generous donors who have helped with the purchase of farm and landscape equipment. They have donated books and movies to the library. They are cherished members of The Center and Willow River Farms family!

## Employee Service Awards



The Center honors the longevity of our employees each year.

### Congratulations to all!

Years of Service	Employee
45	Robert Von Minden
30	Katherine Samford
20	Jonell Scott
15	G.B. Antwine
15	Stephanie Decay
10	Nolan Bailey
10	Timothy Cervantes
10	Jean Morris
10	Esther Ross
5	Jerry Anderson
5	Denise De La Garza
5	Allie-Wallie Jarr
5	Ramona Hagler
5	Brenda Harris
5	Sandra Morgan
5	Keith Rodriguez
5	Karen Slaughter
5	Loretta Vasquez

## Holiday Awards Banquet

The Center hosted its annual Holiday Awards Banquet on December 11. Residents of Cullen, Willow River Farms, Supported Living and HCS enjoyed dinner, dancing and a multitude of awards throughout the evening. Entertainment was provided by **Houston Choral Showcase**. The Robert E. Von Minden Award of Excellence was presented to **Yena Snyder**, for her 15 years of outstanding service and dedication in Supported Employment. **Special thanks to friends and colleagues of David and Maire Baldwin** who volunteered their time throughout the evening. Many thanks also to **Prince Food Systems** and our **talented staff** who decorated and transformed ATES into a Winter Wonderland.



# United Way *Days of Caring*



*October 14*

Williams kicked-off their United Way Day of Caring at The Center with Frank Ferazzi, vice president and general manager WGP - East, providing humor and inspirational comments to almost 100 volunteers. Catherine Chandler, The Center's community relations manager, summarized their services and programs and thanked Williams for all the projects they were about to embark upon!

At the end of the day The Center had a newly constructed picnic table, benches, and locking cabinet doors. Many areas around campus were weeded and trimmed to make ready for an abundance of new, colorful flowers, shrubs and mulch. A variety of painting projects transformed offices and bathrooms from the dated turquoise and purple paint schemes to more neutral shades. Over 40 classroom doors received a fresh coat of chocolate brown paint. Each and every project was completed to perfection but the pièce de résistance was the mural painted in the Lynda Winston Memorial building, Adult Training Employment Services (ATES) program. The mural measures 143 ft. long and is 857 sq. ft. of wall space. Matthew Reynolds headed up Williams' creative team of artists who designed and painted this masterpiece!

A very special thanks to Helen Laughlin, Williams DOC Chairman, who organized all the teams, supplies and tools necessary for a very productive day!



*October 22* Thirty volunteers from ExxonMobil's Human Resources Department painted a hallway in Cullen Residence Hall and sorted, organized and labeled items in the in-kind donation closet.



*November 10* Thirty volunteers from El Paso painted a hallway and common area in Cullen Residence Hall and filled planters with beautiful crotons and decorated pine trees located in front of the Chi Omega building.



*November 4* Over 30 volunteers from Kinder Morgan did a fantastic job painting a hallway in Cullen Residence Hall in addition to weeding, trimming and mulching around campus.

*Thank you  
United Way*

*and all the wonderful volunteers from Williams, Exxon Mobil, El Paso and Kinder Morgan!*

# Unite the Possibilities

The Center kicked off its United Way Campaign "Unite the Possibilities" on Monday, October 25, with the Salvation Army's Harbor Light Choir and key note speakers Cheryl Robertson, Glenn Lucadou of United Way and The Center's executive director, Eva Aguirre. Starbucks donated coffee and breakfast.

"The committee's high energy and excitement inspired everyone to participate in the activities and make a pledge!" relayed Catherine Chandler, community relations manager for The Center. Committee members included Cindy Rodriguez, David Dye, Sean Boyle, Tanisha Gray, Julie Argo, April Granado, Jonell Scott and Brenda Newsome. The week of fun-filled events included balloon grams, team relay races, breakfasts, lollipop pull, Let's Make a Deal, silent auction, prizes, jail time, staff appreciation lunch, and more! Over 2,000 balloons were delivered to clients and staff during the campaign. Smiles and cheers erupted everywhere on campus as Balloon Grams were delivered! "As we strived to unite the possibilities for United Way we united the staff at The Center! Way to go!" said Mary Nowell, director of quality assurance.





## Edward Frey comes to LifeCare

Edward's father Rudolph came to us in 2007 with a request for help. He was in ill-health and needed to find a safe, secure place for Edward to live after he could no longer care for him. He wanted to make sure Edward was well-cared for for the

rest of his life. The Center Foundation referred Mr. Frey to an attorney to create a Special Needs Trust for Edward to ensure his financial security. With the assistance of LifeCare Director Bob Von Minden, Mr. Frey created a personal care plan that described exactly how Edward's life would be after Mr. Frey passed. Mr. Frey passed in 2010 and The Center Foundation became Edward's agent and trustee of his trust. We will soon begin outings with Edward where he will be taken out to a meal and a movie and, later in the year, on vacation to



*LifeCare Advocate Sue Lee with Edward Frey*

Galveston or San Antonio. Edward has a great interest in word puzzles and can be seen in the lobby of Cullen Residence Hall working away at them.

## EKS Day at A&M

Eunice Kennedy Shriver (EKS) Day was September 25. Residents from Willow River Farms celebrated by attending the Baylor vs. Texas A&M hockey game in College Station. During intermission they were escorted to the A&M player's bench and recognized for their dedication and commitment to Special Olympics. EKS Day honors the legacy of Mrs. Shriver, a champion of global goodwill for persons with developmental disabilities.



*(seated front to back) Bonnie Hall, Charles Fernandez, Eileen McGarry, Roger Kopp, Wade Schmidt, Angela Earley, Sandra Forest, Pat Korenek and Jean Corrigan*

## Cheerful Clowns



Cheerful Clowns bounced into the Annex resulting in huge smiles from clients and staff! Lively music filled the room as they danced, sang, blew bubbles, and placed happy face stickers on wheelchairs!

## Fall Camp



This fun filled week, October 18 -22, included field trips to Moody Gardens in Galveston and Boardwalk in Kemah and a carnival in Autry park!

## St. John's School

One hundred teens and parents from St. John's 9th grade class volunteered their time on November 6th, planting flowers and painting our outdoor metal picnic tables. Thanks!



## Halloween Bash 2010

Held at Autry Park adjacent to The Center on October 24, this family event has gained momentum since its debut last year. The co-chairs bested their 2009 record by raising over \$27,000! With fun events ranging from Karaoke 4 Kids to Laser Tag, the 300+ guests had a great time!



*(from Left) Halloween Bash event chairs Monica Bickers, Margaret Fitts, Leisa Dillon, and Anna Moss*

## HAAPC annual love



(L,C) Judy Collins and Joni Fichter of **Houston Area Association of Personnel Consultants** deliver holiday gifts to Sabrena Akenten, The Center's director of human resources. Thank you!



## Fabulous Fest!

A great day was had by all! Absolutely marvelous weather drew everyone to Willow River Farms for our annual fall festival. The most lovely part of the day was when the Lee family – everyone of them! – came for the dedication of a bench given in memory of Jeffrey Marc Lee, their family member. The beautiful bench was created for the Lees by Carlos Cortes of Tallér Studio in San Antonio. It is inscribed “In Loving Memory of Jeffrey Marc

Lee.... Yes, Jeffrey, we are very proud of you!” The faux bois cement bench is also “sealed with a kiss” from his mother, Alicia.

Many thanks to our bike ride co-chairs Tom Wurth and Judy Tuttle-Worth and their great team from Urban Bicycle Gallery. Shout out to Mike Kern and the American Pontiac Association for the terrific vintage car show he presented for us. A big cheer to the staff of Willow River Farms and Prince Foods for a perfect day!



The Lee Family gather around the bench in Jeffrey Lee’s memory



ExxonMobil volunteers help set up NovemberFest on Friday.



NovemberFest Queen Brenda Herron and King Maxie “Junior” Kulhanek, Jr.

## Day Program Holiday Parade



Our spectacular annual parade was held on December 8. The line up was lead by the Color Guard, The Center Boy Scouts and ended with Mr. and Mrs. Santa Claus. There were many



participants for the crowds to cheer on including Dancing Divas, Santa’s Gents, kings and queens from several departments, Booker T. Washington and Hightower Marching Bands plus many others.

## Joyful Sound!



Joyful Sound! performed around campus on December 6. They are a thriving performing arts organization for Houston homeschoolers. These performers, ranging in age from 8 to 18 years old, were very interactive with their audience. The singing and dancing was enjoyed by all!

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3550 West Dallas  
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**MARK YOUR CALENDAR!**

Co-chairs of the 10th Anniversary Luncheon (L) are Stef Levy, Christy Rowland and Candace Dickerson. Mark your calendars for Tuesday, April 26th at River Oaks Country Club. Featured speaker is Lisa Birnbach, author of *True Prep: It's a Whole New World*, the sequel to the 1980s best-seller *The Official Preppy Handbook*. Put on your pink and green and come join us for a fun-filled lunch break. Look for your sponsor letters soon!



April 26

Early campaign contributors include: Delta and Bob Goodside, June and Wayne Johnson, Mrs. Betsy Lewis and Family and Henry A. Hill. S. Collins at The Center Foundation at 713-525-8484.

Donors can have a small brass plaque with an inscription of their choice to pay tribute to someone special in their lives. Table and bench tribute contributions are \$1,500 each. We welcome contributions at all levels for this campaign. For more information, call Debra

clients from the Texas sun in the summertime. the campus. We will also purchase umbrellas and stands to protect our are attractive and comfortable and will add to the overall new look of doors. In addition to being extremely sturdy and solidly built, they galvanized steel and coated with plastisol to give it a long life out of



Wabash Valley, the outdoor furniture is made of and benches for our clients' use. Manufactured by to purchase and install heavy-duty tables, chairs, and benches for our clients' use. Manufactured by to purchase and install heavy-duty tables, chairs, and benches for our clients' use. Manufactured by

As part of an overall renovation and beautification at The Center, we are asking for contributions to purchase and install heavy-duty tables, chairs, and benches for our clients' use. Manufactured by

Sit With Me Campaign