



# Reaching Out

Serving the Poor with Dignity and Respect

Volume 26, Number 3 • Fall 2008

## Violet in Bloom

### A new look and a new life for one resident of Maria Lorenza Longo House

From the outside, Maria Lorenza Longo House, named after the 16th century founder of the Capuchin Poor Clares, is a modest yet attractively appointed, brick townhouse with features very similar to other historic façades along Jefferson Street. On the inside, the house is a mighty fortress, permanent sanctuary, and peaceful home for women who have won the battle over substance abuse and remain committed to a new life.

One such resident, Violet Burkel, speaks forthrightly about her personal saga of dependence on drugs and alcohol that ended both her marriage and halcyon days as a business owner.

"I came from Mexico in 1975," says Violet, "I was married and we transferred from Detroit to Delaware in 1980. Violet confides that she struggled off and on with bouts of drinking and drug use, even prior to her marriage. "I come from an alcoholic family. Then in 1997, I was doing very well. I was a very successful woman and operated my own beauty salon called, 'A New Look.' But I was a little overweight and someone introduced me to crack. I thought I could lose weight, and I did, but I lost my whole life and my identity in the process."

By the age of 40, Violet was a heroin and cocaine addict, "The drugs got really bad ... to the point where I was spending more than \$1,000 a day." Her marriage of 16 years ended. "We divorced because of the addiction, not because we didn't love each other. I was very lucky to have a man like him, but he just couldn't deal with it anymore."

A few years after the divorce, Violet had reached her nadir. "I was sleeping under the bridge and didn't care if I was dead or alive. I lost everything and almost my life. I prayed to God." Her new life began at a program, Hogar Crea, that fostered a determined spirit to fight her crack and heroin addictions and regain self-esteem.



After two substance-free years, Violet needed a place to continue her rebirth, and she arrived at Mary Mother of Hope House I.

"I only had the clothes I was wearing, no money. I was so grateful that someone would open the doors while I looked for a job." Four months ago, Violet transferred to Maria Lorenza Longo House, a permanent residence with supportive services, and what she calls, "the closest feeling to having my own home. I'm learning to be more independent and responsible. I pay my own bills. I even buy my own toilet paper."

Currently, Violet is employed at a dollar store and enrolled in computer classes. "My plan is to stay at Maria Lorenza Longo House as long as I do the things I'm supposed to do. It will give me enough time to save and learn to manage my life again. I don't know where I'd be without this program. My job would never be enough to pay for an apartment."

Three weeks ago, Violet heard from her 29-year-old daughter for the first time in seven years. "She's happy that I'm doing good," she says, adding, "For a new life you need to be willing to change."

## Maria Lorenza Longo House

*Permanent supportive housing for single women*

822 N. Jefferson Street,  
Wilmington, DE



*Resident manager, Renee Mosely offers a welcoming smile to residents as they return home from work.*



## Speaking Out:

# Continuing to Serve the Needs of the Poor and Sick

Dear Friends,

I hope you and your family are well and that you have enjoyed your summer.

As we pass through this period of economic slow-down and increased unemployment, there are a growing number of individuals and families turning to us for help. In the past few months, we have seen a sharp increase in the number of people coming for assistance with housing, food, medical and dental care. We have recognized the need to provide ongoing support to chronically-homeless individuals through more transitional housing. To meet this need, the Ministry of Caring is moving forward with two new residences: **Padre Pio House** and **Mother Teresa House**.

**Padre Pio House** will be a group home for up to six single, chronically-homeless men who need continued support after they leave House of Joseph I. This facility will offer case management, medical and behavioral health services to help residents maintain a level of independence. Plans are being undertaken to construct this facility at 213 N. Jackson Street, Wilmington.

**Mother Teresa House** will be a group home for people who are living with AIDS, who do not yet need the skilled nursing care provided by our House of Joseph II program. This house is born of the incredibly long waiting list of individuals hoping to get into House of Joseph II. Without the ongoing supports, they are living in inappropriate or sub-standard conditions and — all too often — die before a room becomes available. Property has been donated at 829 Church Street on the Eastside of Wilmington in order to construct this house.

It has always been the Ministry's philosophy that the poor should never be treated poorly. We have tried to fulfill this mission by expanding and adding services, trusting in the goodness of people. God is never outdone by generosity; this is demonstrated through the amazing support of our benefactors, our generous corporate neighbors and the thousands of people who believe in our mission.

We ask you to continue to help us through your gifts, your volunteer efforts and your prayers. We pray that we can help lift up those around us who have fallen on bad times. And so we can be our brother/sister's keepers.

Peace and blessings,

*Br. Ronald*

Br. Ronald Giannone, OFM Cap.

## The Trip of a Lifetime: The Holy Land and Jordan

November 4-13, 2008

Travel with Br. Ronald to Tel Aviv, Jerusalem, Bethlehem, Galilee, and then on to Amman and Petra in Jordan (visa required) from November 4 through 13. The trip, based on double occupancy, includes airport bus transfers, round-trip tickets from New York to Tel Aviv, deluxe motorcoach transportation, stays at 3 & 4-star hotels + tax, breakfast and dinner, and select excursions, all for \$2,479 each. Optional trip insurance (recommended) is \$139. For an itinerary, trip and insurance forms, call 302-652-5523.



## State Tax Credit Program Benefits Ministry

Individuals and organizations/businesses who pay Delaware State Income Tax may qualify for a special tax credit, through the Delaware State Housing Authority's Neighborhood Assistance Act Program (NAA). This program allows corporations, businesses and individuals who make contributions to non-profit agencies that provide neighborhood assistance - including affordable housing - to take 50 percent of their contribution as a tax credit.

NAA requires a minimum contribution of \$10,000 for a business and a minimum of \$5,000 for individuals. The maximum contribution is \$200,000 (\$100,000 tax credit), and the program is limited to \$500,000 in tax credits per year (first come, first served), and must be pre-approved by Delaware State Housing Authority. In addition to the Delaware State NAA tax credit, the contribution also qualifies as tax-exempt on the contributor's Federal return.

To file an application to qualify for a tax credit under NAA, call Lisa McCloskey at the DE State Housing Authority at 302-739-4263, ext. 208, or email her at [LisaM@DeStateHousing.com](mailto:LisaM@DeStateHousing.com). Please consult your financial advisor about what tax-deductible contributions best meet your needs.



**TWO EVENINGS BENEFIT EMERGENCY SHELTERS**

# ELEGANZA

## **PWP: Let's Get Elegant**

On Friday, October 24th, 7 pm, the Ministry of Caring Guild will host the 2008 Party with a Purpose (PWP). PWP will compliment Eleganza and feature men's and women's fashions from local designers and boutiques. PWP is a celebration of everyday elegance and the casual chic lifestyle.

The event will feature casino gaming, signature drinks, and the hottest music east of LA. Get ready to party and make your reservations early. The last PWP sold out weeks in advance, so don't miss your chance to party with the coolest crowd in Wilmington! To benefit the Ministry of Caring's emergency shelters. Tickets \$65 each. For additional information about the event and to purchase tickets now, go to [www.partypurpose.com](http://www.partypurpose.com).



## **An Evening of Elegance:**

On Saturday, October 25, 6 - 11 pm, the 19th annual Eleganza will be held at Greenville Country Club, Owls Nest Road, Wilmington. Co-chairs for this year's event are Thomas Abel, Corinne Murphy and Tara Quinn. A classic Guild event, this year's event will feature St. John fashions, delivered by Neiman Marcus, cocktails, dining, live auction and raffle, a band and dancing. Individual tickets are \$125, and can be purchased online with VISA/MasterCard at [www.ministryofcaring.org](http://www.ministryofcaring.org). Tickets can also be ordered by phone at 302-428-3702.

Eleganza is an annual fundraiser in support of the Ministry's four emergency shelters and helps provide funding for daily operations, maintenance and renovation for House of Joseph I, Mary Mother of Hope House I and Mary Mother of Hope House II & III.

**SAVE the DATE**



## **Voices of Caring 2008**

**Friday, November 21st, 6 pm**

Food, drink, auction, raffle, merriment.  
The Patio at Archmere Academy  
3600 Philadelphia Pike  
Claymont, DE 19703

Benefits Ministry child care programs.

To purchase tickets by credit card, call Beth at 302-428-3702, or buy them online at [www.ministryofcaring.org](http://www.ministryofcaring.org), and click "EVENTS". For more info call Jen Andrisani at 302-234-1922.

## **Voices of Caring**

**A great way to start the holidays**

An annual holiday tradition - Voices of Caring - has been scheduled for **Friday, November 21, 2008**, at 6 pm. The Friday night the event will take place at The Patio at Archmere Academy on Philadelphia Pike in Claymont. Voices of Caring is the Ministry's largest annual fundraiser in support of its three child care programs: the Child Care Center at 121 N. Jackson Street, Il Bambino at 903 N. Madison Street, and Guardian Angel Child Care at 1000 Wilson Street.



The 2007 Voices of Caring, which raised more than \$66,000 for the Ministry's child care programs, was co-chaired by Guild members (left to right) Danielle Andrisani Nowaczyk, Ciara O'Connell, Jen Andrisani and Amy Anzilotti, who will also be co-chairing this year's event. Also pictured is Christine Dealy, a committee member who helped organize the event.

Tickets are \$100 each and several sponsorship packages are still available. If you would like to donate something for the event's auction, please call 302-234-1922. To purchase tickets by credit card, call Beth at 302-428-3702, or buy them online at [www.ministryofcaring.org](http://www.ministryofcaring.org).

# Upcoming Events

Sunday, September 28 (Wilm.) and  
Sunday, October 4 (Dover and Rehoboth)

**AIDSWalk Delaware** - Join your friends from the Ministry in supporting the House of Joseph II and the other agencies that serve people with AIDS. Walk day registration begins at 12 Noon and the walk begins at 2 pm. Go to [www.AIDSWalkDelaware.org](http://www.AIDSWalkDelaware.org) and sponsor a Ministry of Caring walker!

Monday, October 6, 2008, 5-8 pm

**Dress for Success at Chico's** - Chico's women's casual clothing in Greenville will be holding a benefit for the Ministry. Ten percent of your total purchase price (Greenville store only) on this night will be donated to the Ministry. Refreshments to be served. At Chico's, 3846 Kennett Pike, Greenville, 302-777-4478.

Sunday, October 12, 2008, 4 pm

**Swing Time Dinner/Theater** - Dinner and the State Street Orchestra at FXN, 917 N. Madison Street, to benefit Sacred Heart Oratory. Tickets \$40 ea./\$75 per couple. Call 302-428-3702 to charge tickets by phone or purchase tickets online at [www.ministryofcaring.org](http://www.ministryofcaring.org).

Friday, October 24, 2008, 7 pm

**Party with a Purpose: Let's Get Elegant!** - (See page 3) Call 302-428-3702 to charge tickets by phone or purchase tickets online at [www.ministryofcaring.org](http://www.ministryofcaring.org).

Saturday, October 25, 2008, 6 -11 pm

**Eleganza** - (See page 3) Call 302-428-3702 to charge tickets by phone or purchase tickets online at [www.ministryofcaring.org](http://www.ministryofcaring.org).

Sunday, October 26, 2008, doors open at 5, dinner 5:30 pm

**Oktoberfest!** - The last International Night of the year, Oktoberfest is presented by the Saengerbund Club of Delaware. Bavarian cos-

tumes, music and dancing with knee and shoe slappin' fun! Tickets \$25 per person. Francis X. Norton Center, 917 N. Madison St. RSVP to 652-5228 after October 1st.

Monday, November 3, 2008

**Easy as Pie! Sale Begins** - The Ministry of Caring, in partnership with the HIV Consortium, begins its pie sale for Thanksgiving. Benefits the Ministry's House of Joseph II, a residence for people with AIDS, and the HIV Consortium. To place an online order using a credit card, go to [www.HIVDelaware.org](http://www.HIVDelaware.org).

Wednesday, November 5, 2008 - 7 pm

**Guild Annual Meeting** - At St. Joseph's on the Brandywine. For more information, contact Maureen Lesutis at 429-9441.

Friday, November 21, 2008

**Voices of Caring** - (See page 3) More information to follow. Call 302-428-3702 to charge tickets by phone or purchase tickets online at [www.ministryofcaring.org](http://www.ministryofcaring.org).

Tuesday and Wednesday, November 25 & 26, 2008

**Easy as Pie!** - Pick up your pre-ordered pies (see above) at Francis X. Norton Center, 917 N. Madison Street, Wilmington, or at one of the many convenient sites throughout Delaware.

## Keep in Touch with Us

If you would like to know more about upcoming events, learn about our programs to serve the poor, or make a contribution to the ministry, you can do so at our website, [www.ministryofcaring.org](http://www.ministryofcaring.org).

For any mailing address changes, including seasonal changes, please contact Tres Haines at 302-428-3652, or email her at [thaines@ministryofcaring.org](mailto:thaines@ministryofcaring.org).

Thank you for your continued support of the Ministry of Caring!

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