

Dominican Center Newsletter

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www.dominican-center.org

Volume 11 Issue 1



From the Director: Sara Kierzek



It's been a few months since I became the new executive director at the Dominican Center, and I've been enjoying getting to know everyone. One of my favorite parts of the day is when the students, tutors, volunteers and staff all get together to share a meal. I love listening to the sounds of conversation and laughter shared-there's a very real sense of caring and community here at the Center.

Adult education classes began in September, and we have a very full house this semester, with over 26 students and 14 volunteer tutors. We are so grateful to our tutors, who help us provide one-on-one instruction to our women (and a few men!). There is still need for a few additional tutors, so if you are interested in volunteering your time to work with our students, please give us a call.

The computer and writing classes are also at capacity this semester. We are pleased to share some articles authored by some of our writing students in this newsletter.

Our rehab staff is busy getting as much exterior work done as possible while the weather is still mild enough to be outdoors, but soon they'll be moving indoors to continue working with low-income seniors who need help with interior repairs on their homes. Are you handy with a hammer or a paint brush and would like to give of some of your time to assist our homeowners? We are putting together a volunteer group to work one or two weekdays on rehab projects in our neighborhood, and would love to have you join us.

Not interested in swinging a hammer, but you like to cook? We are looking for individuals or small groups who would enjoy preparing and serving lunch at the Center. Whether you can help out just once, or once a month, or even once a week, we welcome your help in the kitchen.

Stop by and see us anytime and check out what's happening at the Center, and find out how you can get involved. Come and join the fun!

Sara Kierzek
Sara Kierzek
Director

A Big Welcome to Barbara Becker, OP who joined our staff in August and will be working in the education department. Sister Barb is a Sinsinawa Dominican, who, after 49 years teaching elementary education, took a year's sabbatical to decide what to do with the next 30 or so years of her life. She has always loved teaching, so as she was regrouping her life, education of some sort was always in the back of her mind. "Through the grace of God, I'm here at the Dominican Center for Women doing what I love...teaching. Seeing that I have been immersed in computer education for many years, integrating technology in the curriculum, is my hope for the center. There are so many ways that computers can make learning fun...I hope our grants come through."



Sr. Barbara Becker O.P.

“New Computers” - Thanks to the generosity of our friends at UWM—Milwaukee and the Bader Foundation, we have been the recipients of 5 laptop and 4 desktop computers. The laptop computers will be used to enhance our education program by still providing our one-on-one tutoring, but utilizing educational software to provide some additional challenges and incorporate some fun, too. The laptop computers should be fully integrated into our educational program by the start of the spring semester. The plan for the desktop computers is to provide practical business application experience. While this plan is still evolving, it too, will be in place by the spring semester.



Sponge Race at the 2010 Back to School Fair.

24th St/24th Pl Initiative - We are proud to report that security lighting and new mailboxes have been installed on 19 homes. The Dominican Center hosted the “Lighting Up the Neighborhood” event on Saturday, October 2. Weatherization kits were distributed to each house on 24th St and 24th Pl. Representatives from the City of Milwaukee were also present.

The Garden - The garden is done for the year...a sure sign that the colder seasons of fall and winter are on their way. Folks in the neighborhood enjoyed the produce: cabbage, onions, carrots, tomatoes, beans, peppers, all sorts of greens and, of course the marigolds. The green tomatoes were an especially big hit! The young people of Hephatha Lutheran Church, as part of their work ministry, were the caretakers of the garden under the guidance of Doris, Katrina and Sr. Sue. We thank all of our wonderful benefactors who donated plants for the garden and the MSOE students who created the raised garden beds under the guidance of Nick, Tom and Sr. Ann.

Back to School Fair - Over 500 adults & children attended this year’s Back to School Fair with over 300 book bags (filled with paper, pens, crayons, rulers, etc.) distributed, 40 children were researched by the City of Milwaukee Health Department resulting in 20 children tested for lead poisoning. There were games and contests that the children participated in to “earn” their book bags. Even McGruff, the police safety dog was present to help. A big thank you to Hupy & Abraham who were on hand to finger print children and give them ID cards. Residents were also given certificates for a free eye exam and free glasses. Drawings were held for gift cards and prizes donated by Milwaukee area businesses.

Education - We are extremely pleased with our education program. Last year we had a record enrollment of 22 students. This year we have a new record of 26 students. We are grateful to Mary Fran for her writing lab curriculum which she teaches two days a week. We also have a record number of tutors this year and we are so very blessed. The goal of six to eight of our students is to pass their GED tests in June 2011. Sister Stella has again filled to capacity her Monday and Wednesday computer classes.

Seniors Group - The first Intergenerational Breakfast of the year took place on Friday, October 8th. Nova High School Students and Seniors in the neighborhood collaborated in an attempt to break down intergenerational barriers. Individuals shared their life experiences.



On July 15, two School Sisters of Notre Dame visited the center to learn of our ministry to the neighborhood. They live in a community in Kenya. One of them serves the needs of the children of families who are infected with HIV AIDS; and the other is studying for a degree in Mathematics. She is a high school teacher from Nigeria and will return in a year and a half.

Both the staff of the Dominican Center for Women, and several women from the neighborhood were present. We shared our experience of services we offer or have received. The Sisters told us the story of their ministry as well. This exchange of stories generated some wonderful conversations around the issues of the stigma attached to people living with HIV, and how education is done in both countries.

It was difficult to end our time together after lunch. We wanted to learn more and more about another culture. The Sisters reported that their lives will definitely be changed after their experiences here. We are all very grateful for this interchange among women of different backgrounds.



We were selected by a contingency of officials of the Republic of Ireland who spent several hours with us at the Center discussing our missions of housing and education.

Thanks to you our donors who make our programs possible!

Donors July 1, 2010 through October 25, 2010

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In Honor of Mary Elizabeth Gerlach & Friends

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Catherine Dwyer, OP
 Bianca Madder, OP
 E. Jane McGinn
 Mr & Mrs Gregory Wnuk

In Memory of Walter Halloran, S.J.

Mary Souza

In Memory of Mary Markquart

Leroy Markquart

In Honor of Sinsinawa Dominican Jubilarians

Elizabeth Toohey, OP

In Memory of Ginni Wold

Mary Therese Johnson, OP

In Memory of Andrew Zieve

Christine Zieve

Happy Thanksgiving! We thank God for all of you.



Sara accepting a check from St. Thomas Aquinas Parish in Waterford for our housing program.

Ways You Can Help

Wish List

- Prayers for our ministry
- Volunteers for special events
- Tutors for adult learners
- Prepare lunch for our students
- Invite us to speak at your organization
- Tools (for a more complete list, see our website):
 - tape measures
 - utility knives
 - levels
 - caulking guns
 - screwdrivers (slotted & Phillips)
 - flash lights

Other Donations

Pick 'n Save Advantage Card

Use your Pick 'n Save Advantage card and help the Dominican Center! The Pick 'n Save "We Care" program contributes to the Dominican Center for Women based on the number of our supporters who sign up and shop! If you already have an Advantage card and have not designated the Dominican Center, simply stop at the customer service desk at your favorite Pick 'n Save and fill out a new form! You can even download a form today and sign up or update your current charity! Just drop it off at Pick 'n Save next time you're shopping.

The time it takes to sign up will mean additional dollars to support the mission and values of the Dominican Center. The Dominican Center's program code is **#172385!**

The Dominican Center for Women is a United Way Donor Choice organization. Simply designate the Dominican Center for Women on your United Way Donor Choice card to direct your donation to the Dominican Center.

Sponsorships:

- \$5 Brighten a senior's yard with flowers
- \$10 A reader-friendly bible for an adult student
- \$25 Paint to add a splash of color or freshen a room
- \$25 Puppet to help with the lead abatement program (we need 4)
- \$50 Sponsor an adult learner (text books and supplies)
- \$120 Sponsor online educational program license for one year for one adult learner
- \$250 Give a window to the world (replacing a lead painted window)

Name: _____ Phone: _____ Cell Home

Address: _____

City _____ State: _____ ZIP: _____

Email: _____

I would like to sponsor:

- Flowers Bible Paint Puppet Adult Learner Online Program License Window

Enclosed is my check in the amount of \$ _____ made payable to the Dominican Center for Women, Inc.

Calendar	
Senior Meeting: 1:00 p.m.	11/11/10, 12/9/10, 1/13/11
Home Action Meeting: 8:00 a.m.	11/6/10, 12/4/10
Advisory Meeting: 1:00 p.m.	11/1/10, 12/6/10, 1/3/11
St. Sebastian Social Justice Awareness Sunday: 9:00	10/31/10
Vote at Outpost for Community Wednesdays: no later	10/31/10
Boston Store-Bayshore Community Days Sale	11/13/10
1st Annual Bowl-A-Thon	11/14/10
Thanksgiving Break: noon	11/24/10-11/29/10
Alternative Christmas Markets	
Wauwatosa Presbyterian Church: 9:00—10:30 a.m.	11/28/10
Emmanuel Presbyterian Church: 11:00 a.m.—1:30 p.m.	12/5/10
Christmas Break (no classes): starts noon 12/22/10	12/22/10—1/3/11



Sister Barbara working with some of the students in the writing class.

- Dominican Center Staff***
- Barbara Becker, OP
 - Tom Beres
 - Carolyn Boehmer
 - Katrina Capleton
 - Stella DeVenuta, OSF
 - L. Thomas Doyle
 - Sue Felice, OSF
 - Marcia Helton
 - Sara Kierzek
 - Wesley Landry
 - Kelly Lemens
 - Nicole Lester
 - Virginia Ripp, OP
 - Elise Zettel, SSND

Dominican Center Mission Statement

The Dominican Center for Women partners with the community to maintain and enhance a beautiful, stable, healthy and safe neighborhood consisting of residents who are community-minded and are striving to be meaningfully educated and employed.

- Corporate Board Members***
- Fran Bauer
 - Beverly Bell
 - Pastor Willie Davis, Jr
 - Mary Howard Johnstone, OP
 - Charles Klawitter
 - Rev Mary Martha Kannass
 - Suzanne Lorentz, OP
 - Carl Quindel
 - Ivarena Taylor

Dominican Center for Women, Inc.
2470 West Locust Street
Milwaukee, WI 53206



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Save the Date: April 29, 2011

The 2011 Dominican Center for Women
Annual Fundraiser
will be at Boerner Botanical Gardens.