

Joe's Place

NEWS & NOTES

A community partnership

Winter 2007

Life at Joe's Place is in Full Swing

Daily life at Joe's Place is busy these days, with high schoolers completing homework assignments, house parents and young men cooking and doing household chores to keep the place running smoothly and a one-year-old running around keeping them all on their toes.

Joe's Place welcomed its first resident in January, and the second and third were not far behind. By the time summer came, the house was full with four young men who are students at MRH High School, house parents Dan and Alyssa Reeve and their young son Carter. The group has settled into the home, and has made themselves into a family.

The young men who live at Joe's Place have adjusted well to their new home. They have come from varied backgrounds, each having struggled in some way to find a stable place to call home in the past. At Joe's Place, they have found a caring environment with supportive adults all around them.



House parent Dan Reeve (front) enjoys some time at home with the young men of Joe's Place.

A Plan Put Into Action

When the idea for Joe's Place was originally hatched, the organizers spent countless hours and meetings laying the groundwork for the organization to ensure that its launch and operation would be successful. Because Joe's Place

is a first-of-its-kind organization in the United States, there was not one clear-cut model to follow.

A key element of the successful launch of Joe's Place was the support that the organization received from the community. Donations completely furnished Joe's Place and allowed its residents to stock up on everything a household needs to get running. Generous monetary donations at the outset helped with the day-to-day operations of the program and have allowed it to get to where it is today.

You Can Help Joe's Place Today

After getting settled in, it didn't take long for the residents of Joe's Place to make a dent in the stockpile of donated supplies. While some donations are still coming in on a regular basis, there is a great need for additional monetary support to help the organization reach its short and long-term goals. Please see the reverse side of this newsletter to learn how you can make a difference.

It's fitting as I sit down to write this that we are almost at our one year mark here at Joe's Place. I have a rush of emotions now, as I think back to all that has happened this year. The young men that have chosen to become part of the Joe's Place family have become such a huge part of our "smaller" family.

I think of the birthday candles that have been blown out, the sports that have been played, the hours of homework at the dining room table, the family meals together, the loads of laundry that have been done, the hours spent learning to live together as one family and I realize all of the support of the community that has made this Joe's Place family able to exist. I always love to tell people where we live. What an amazing thing that a conversation between a school district superintendent and local church pastor would germinate into a living solution like this for kids in our community.

One of the great things about this program is the emphasis on this house being a home. We operate like any family with high school age children. The guys are up by 6:30 am and out the door by 7:45 am (most of the time). They check in with us after school as they head to practice, work, out with friends, or back here to the house. We have dinner together every night as a family. These meals are a great time to talk about our days. More often than not the conversation drifts into sports or music. Two nights a week our meal is dropped off by a family or local restaurant. These meals are such a huge help!

After dinner and the dishes are done, the guys head to our downstairs rec room or the backyard to play video games, use the computer, or start a game of basketball. Their nightly chores are then done by 9 pm and homework is done by 10 pm. Lights out is at 11 pm and so ends our day, a day made possible by so many of you!

- Alyssa Reeve, house parent

Fund Raising Drive Critical to the Future of Joe's Place

Joe's Place is in the midst of a donation drive with the goal of raising enough money to ensure the successful operation of the program for the next five years. The organization's fund raising committee is making contacts with potential new donors, but the key to fundraising success will be the support of those who have already shown that they care for the program.

You can help guarantee that Joe's Place will continue to serve young men in need by making a gift today. Funds that were donated at the program's inception were critical in getting the program running, but now more help is needed for day-to-day operations.

Your support will help us purchase food, toiletries, clothing, bedding and much more.

The ultimate goal of the Joe's Place Board of Directors is to raise funds to purchase the home outright from the MRH School District, at the same time taking over payment of utilities, insurance and other expenses.

Thank you for your past support and for considering how you can help Joe's Place today. **Donations can be sent to: Joe's Place, P.O. Box 3457, Maplewood, MO 63143-9998.**



Members of the MRH High class of 1967 recently donated \$5,000 to Joe's Place. Pictured are (left to right) MRH Board of Education President Nelson Mitten, Class of '67 members Stephen Moore, Karen Dickerson, Alan Grantham, and Roy Dale, and MRH Superintendent Linda Henke.

Meet Joe's Place's New Program Director

"I love nonprofits and have a passion for them," says Hannah Wood, the new director of Joe's Place. "In nonprofit work at the end of the day I feel like I've made a difference in the world."

When Hannah joined Joe's Place as its director she was already familiar with the organization "I'd heard amazing things about the program even before I applied," she says.



Hannah is excited to be part of Joe's Place and her experience will be an asset to the organization as it moves forward.

She most recently served as a campaign director for the United Way in Augusta, Georgia. Previous to that she worked at a domestic violence shelter in Augusta where she counseled children who were in abusive situations and organized various children's programs.

You can contact Hannah about Joe's Place at h.woodjoesplace@gmail.com.

Joe's Place Board of Directors

Victor H. Farwell, private-practice therapist

Steve Findley, professor, Webster University

Jim Ford, executive vice president, Presbyterian Children's Services

Josh Hager, vice president intl. supply chain, Hager Companies

Nelson Mitten, attorney, Riezman Berger, PC

Brian Q. Newcomb, pastor, Christ Church UCC

Joe Pieber, vice president, National City Bank

Andrew Vander Maas, pastor, Crossroads Presbyterian Fellowship

Dan Weinstein, private-practice psychologist

Joe's Place currently has two slots to fill in the monthly meal rotation. If you would like to make and donate a meal for Joe's Place once a month, contact volunteer coordinator Anne Arias at (314) 645-2516 or jfaeba@yahoo.com.

MRH Wins Achievement Award for Joe's Place

The MRH School District has been awarded an Outstanding Local Government Achievement Award from the East-West Gateway Council of Governments for the creation and implementation of Joe's Place.

MRH received the award for exemplary accomplishment by a local government jurisdiction, agency or individual. The award honors local government jurisdictions, school districts, public agencies and individuals for unique achievements in the creation and implementation of exemplary government programs or projects and exceptional public sector contributions.