



WeCAN *Connect*

Communication for donors, volunteers and friends of Western Communities Action Network - Spring 2009

You are Invited! **WeCAN Annual Meeting**

WeCAN will hold it's annual meeting on Monday, June 8th, 2009 at 4:00 PM at the Westonka Public Library. Learn more about WeCAN and our plans for the future.

Community Prayer Breakfast

Poverty was the theme of this year's Annual Community Prayer Breakfast held at Our Lady of the Lake Church on April 23rd.

Imposter guests claiming to be the "Ghost of Delano" challenged attendees to discover the real "Ghost" that grew up in a one-room plywood shack in the woods outside Delano. The family was living in poverty with little help from relatives and neighbors. They moved often for dreams of a better life and a better job.



When the real "Ghost" was identified, the audience was shocked to see it was someone that many of them knew. Offering hope for children growing up in poverty, this child grew up to become a Pastor who happened to be called to serve others in similar situations in this same community.

Scotty B's Restaurant was generous in donating and serving the great meal. Thanks are never enough when you see how hard Scotty works in the kitchen to serve 120 people.

Art of Living Home Tour *Benefitting WeCAN*



Wednesday's
July 1, 8, 15,
& 22, 2009

Sign up on the enclosed communication/donor card to reserve a ticket. Limited to 100 guests.

WeCAN Builds Partnerships

By giving locally your gift saves on administration fees and goes directly to work in your community!

WeCAN develops local partnerships to meet specific community needs.

Clinic Connection is a partnership with Ridgeview Medical Center covering medical services for uninsured and under insured clients. Included in that program is prescription coverage, available at Thrifty White.

We also collaborate with JVS (job counseling) and Hennepin County to meet clients in our WeCAN office. These partnerships benefit the clients that have transportation issues and would not otherwise receive services.

The existence of WeCAN as a "local" human service agency is why we can build these partnerships, identify local needs and issues, help our residents without transportation to the city, save tax dollars by using volunteers and community donations, and recruit neighbors to help neighbors thereby building community.

WeCAN is looking to collaborate with additional partners to research, address and serve the growing demand in our community. Do you have any contacts that might help low-income families?

2008 WeCAN Program Services

In 2008, WeCAN was able to serve 887 low and moderately low-income families, improving the lives of 722 children and 915 adults.

WeCAN is the only emergency service provider in 92 square miles on the western edge of Hennepin County, serving a combination of rural and suburban communities. Some of our service area cities mirror poverty data from inner-ring suburbs.

In 2008, donations from individuals, churches and businesses were our largest revenue source. Please consider making a donation this year!

WeCAN Programs:

- **Emergency Assistance** - rent or mortgage assistance, gas cards, bus passes, car repair, utility assistance, or temporary shelter for homeless clients.

- **Family Support Programs** - Birthday Zone, Adopt a Family, hat and mittens, quilts and blankets.

- **Meals on Wheels** - a warm, nutritious meal and friendly check-in delivered by volunteer drivers to senior and disabled persons.

- **Clinic Connection** - free medical appointments for adults and children plus coverage of prescriptions.

- **Referrals** - families received referrals for additional services and/or see the County human service staff or JVS job counselor at our office.

From a WeCAN client edited for data privacy

Dear Jessie,

I want to thank you for all the help you've given me over the course of time. It was a very happy moment for me when my landlord told me that WeCAN had provided a check to assist with my past due rent. I know your devotion and advocacy was significant in being able to send him the additional amount. I also appreciate that you stayed in touch with Hennepin County to ensure that my request for emergency assistance was being attended to.

Also, I want to thank you and WeCAN for the assistance in having a doctor appointment and getting an antibiotic earlier this week. It is a good thing I went, for this has been a challenging infection to cure. Now I am making progress towards healing.

In general, WeCAN has made a difference in my life...even for years...and through various services. As far back as 2006 I received services in the area of employment counseling and resume assistance. You helped me get clothing for interviews and some other items I needed too. WeCAN is wonderful.

*Best Regards,
name withheld*

Moving to paperless!

In an effort to be good stewards of the funds you donate, we are creating a web and email based newsletter. Expect to see it soon.

Sign up on the enclosed communication/donor card to receive our newsletter electronically.

From the Executive Director

Leah Weycker

Spring blossoms bring a wonderful change in our environment. Unfortunately the economy is still in a down turn and many families are needing help to make ends meet.

We are seeing an increase in clients that have lost jobs and are having a hard time finding new employment. Those with unemployment benefits are now living on half the salary that they earned previously.

In the office, we are working on new, more efficient communication tools. Expect to see a new web site, a volunteer database, improved visibility and a new client data tracking system.

As I celebrate one year as executive director, I have to say that it has been challenging. The client letter printed below, helps me realize that all our hard work does pay-off.

WeCAN makes a difference in people's lives!

