

Clare House Clips

Providing transitional shelter and services for homeless women and their children.

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Fall 2008

My Story

By Gloria Flowers

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My name is Gloria and I have two beautiful children, Sha and Vernon. I came to Clare House almost four months ago and this is my story. In my twenties drugs and alcohol destroyed me. My life passed me by. Then one day, I woke up and I was in my forties. Where did the years go? Drugs and alcohol had a strong grip. After jails, institutions, coming close to death and eight failed attempts to get clean on my own, I decided to give treatment another try--I was desperate. My life had to change.

I went to detox. I stayed for a 28 day treatment and after that a halfway house, The Gate House, here in Lancaster. My counselor there suggested I relocate to Lancaster to start a new life. I said no, I wanted to go back to the familiar. I wasn't up for changing the people, places, and things. I went back home to Allentown and another counselor also suggested I relocate to Lancaster, but again I refused. I was afraid of change. Two weeks before my discharge date at the halfway house, I decided to stay in Lancaster, to relocate, to change. The next week my counselor called Clare House. I'll remember that day forever, July 25th 2008. I started a job in housekeeping within a few weeks. Clare House referred me to Tabor Community Services to participate in their Shelter to Independent Living Program. I wasn't too thrilled about being put on a strict budget, but looking back at it now I know that it helped me to get where I am today. I learned to live on a budget, manage my money, clean up my credit, and balance a check book. After a few weeks in housekeeping, Clare House encouraged me and helped me to get a better job, making more money and I continued to save, save, save. I even got a second job at the Renaissance Faire this Fall.

At Clare House I had the opportunity to meet a lot of nice people. It was tough at times. There were many days that I struggled but I will never forget my stay at Clare House. With their encouragement, support and assistance and my determination, I moved into my own apartment November 1st. I even shared my story for an article on homelessness in a magazine. I'll be starting school soon through O.V.R. Clare House helped me to get back on my feet. The staff has become like my family. They are my dream team. I would like to thank Clare House for believing in me. I now see the light. I'm out of that dark tunnel. I had to let go and let God do the driving. Thank you Clare House staff and all of the board members! Thank you to those that support this program, it has changed my life.



(2008 Clare House Summer Picnic Photos, Courtesy of James Wellman Photography)

A View From the Chair

By Beth Carr

There are many points in our lives when we hit hard situations. I can always remember my grandmother, an incredibly strong woman say, "Oh Beth don't fret, you are just going through a rough patch." What does "rough patch" mean? Does it mean having just a bad day? Coffee spilled on a new shirt? It is more like things spinning out of your control, feeling like there is no one you can turn to. Is it looking ahead only seeing a bumpy road, full of potholes ready to swallow you up at any moment? What gets you through a rough patch in life? Many of us can identify with the "rough patches" that my Nana talked about. Even the fortunate few who seem to have their life so organized and together have those moments where despair can seep in, feeling that the rug has been pulled out from underneath you.



Beth Carr (left), Board President and Jennifer Powell, Executive Director

Recently, I went through a rough patch. Being president of a Board, sometimes calls you to handle things that surpass what you think you are prepared for. Leaving you feeling unqualified or unable to manage. There were many days and much sleepless nights that I thought, "How am I going to get through this?" However, just like all rough patches, there comes a time when the road is smooth again. When the sun is a little brighter, and we know that we can take a deep breath and exhale all the way. Although at the time it felt like a waking nightmare, I kept reaching inwards trying to learn from what I was going through.

Now looking back, I feel grateful and blessed. Through this incredibly hard time, I found out how true my friends are, and how amazingly compassionate people can be. Everyone around us rallied together and cemented into a far better unit than we could have ever expected. What a gift was brought to us, our board now stands stronger than ever. I am now a different person, from just that one small rough patch. I can stand a little straighter, feeling more confident in what I can attain. I also feel more clear about my goals in my life, and this little rough patch has shed more light on a longer straighter path. This thing called a rough patch is why Clare House is here, and continues to grow stronger. Women everyday, walk out of a home or environment, not knowing where they are going to go. They enter Clare House's doors, looking for someone to smooth their path out. Someone to guide them through these potholes that have been laid before them. It is so important to not only guide these women, but to give them the opportunity to grow and see the strength they are gaining. I believe even from personal experiences, its important to teach people to be grateful for their tough times. To learn from them, and use the situation as their strength to persevere.

Clare House has always been the best place, to not only move on with your life, but move up. The shelter we give women is not only a place to sleep and call home, it is comfort, compassion and but most of all understanding and knowledge. We are all going to go through these rough patches in our lives. Hopefully, none of us will have to ever experience the rough patch of homelessness or domestic violence. I'm so glad that those who do have someone like Jennifer Powell, Executive Director, and the Clare House in their corner. I want to thank all of you who contribute to helping us keep this door open for women who have no where else to turn. I ask that you continue to help the Board members and the Staff be the light on the rough patches of women and children who have found themselves lost. In your life, the rough patches can build you, make you stronger. Don't succumb to them, and lay down. Push upwards and onwards. Dig deeper and be more creative. It's what you do when the going gets tough that defines you.

Have a Blessed Day,

Beth Carr

Jazz Fest 2008 Recap

8-8-08...Was A GREAT Date!

The 2008 Jazz Fest was an overwhelming success. From the great food catered by Rettews Catering, to the standing room only crowd, the evening was truly one to remember. Over 140 items were available to bid on during the silent auction and Paul Scott of Smooth Jazz 92.7 kept things Smoooooth during the live auction and all night long as emcee!

It was also an opportunity for the community to hear and see first hand the exceptional service Clare House is providing and was highlighted by the premier of a new informational video. The video was produced and underwritten by Max Films and features Clare House volunteers, staff, residents and aftercare clients sharing the inspiring message of hope, determination and faith. See the video online at www.ClareHouseLancaster.org.

Entertainment by Bailey Park, The Reese Project and Amaryllis Santiago kept us snapping our fingers and tapping our feet. Lancaster Brewing Company and Turkey Hill Minit Markets generously donated the beverages. While many local businesses and individuals provided sponsorships and made contributions, the event was captured by photographer Jim Wellman of James Wellman Photography. Check out his website, www.JamesWellmanPhotography.com, to view the pictures from the evening and to purchase copies; Jim is generously donating 50% of all proceeds generated from picture purchases back to Clare House.

The event also included the Helping Hand Award presentation. Annually, Clare House awards an individual, church and business for their ongoing commitment to the mission of Clare House through the donation of time, talent and treasure. This year, Clare House volunteer Melinda Horner, the congregation of Sell Chapel and Lancaster County Woman Magazine were honored. Congratulations to the 2008 awardees!

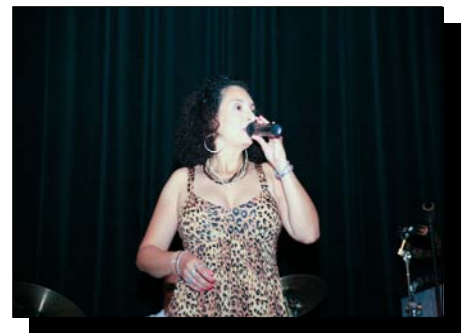
A special thank you to event underwriter, Direction Discovery, Independent Distributor for Max International, the event planning committee, sponsors, silent auction contributors, donors, attendees, volunteers and Board of Directors. See ya next year...



Artist Bill Brown



Executive Director, Jennifer Powell and
2008 Helping Hand Award Recipient,
Melinda Horner



Singer Amaryllis Santiago

SAVE THE DATE...

**Jazz Fest 2009 will be held at the NEW
Lancaster Marriott at Penn Square
on August 14, 2009!**



Volunteer Connection



Volunteer (v): To perform or offer a service of one's own free will. To do charitable or helpful work. (n): A person who renders aid, performs a service or assumes an obligation voluntarily. Clare House is a volunteer driven organization. Each volunteer brings something unique and special to Clare House. Clare House appreciates each and every one of you—you are part of the Clare House family! We value our volunteers and have something for all—childcare, transportation, home maintenance/improvement, donation organization—just to name a few of the opportunities available. Give us a call if you are interested in volunteering!

Featured Volunteers: Deb and Anya Miller



Deb and Anya Miller

Deb Miller and her daughter, Anya, have been loyal Clare House volunteers for over a year. On any given Thursday evening, they can be found holding babies, reading stories, coordinating crafts, and reaching out to our children. With this support, our residents are able to fully participate in our life-skills programs where weekly our women are listening to presenters and learning about nutrition, budgeting, interview techniques, health care, and much more. We'd like to take this opportunity to thank Deb and Anya for their commitment to our mission and find out more about why Deb chose to support Clare House.

Where do you work? I work at the Corporate Office of Isaac's Restaurant & Deli.

What is your family like? My husband, Tyrone, and Zach (26), Julian (21), Zarek (17) and Anya (7). It is a lot of fun (and interesting) having a girl after three boys and with such a big age difference.

When did you first start volunteering? My daughter, Anya, and I started in October 2007.

What do you enjoy doing in your spare time? Between work and my children, there is little spare time but it would definitely be soccer...soccer...soccer! I also love reading.

What do you enjoy about volunteering? The biggest thing is that I enjoy volunteering with Anya and spending time with her in a different setting. It makes me feel good that I am part of helping women putting their lives back together.

What do you tell your daughter about volunteering? I tell her that we are part of a Community and people in a Community care about each other and that, sometimes, people make bad choices, or sad things happen to them, and it is our responsibility to help them.

What does your daughter enjoy most about volunteering at Clare House? Anya will be quick to tell you she loves the children and especially the babies. It gives her a chance to be the big sister.

How has volunteering at Clare House impacted your life? It makes me feel blessed and, every time I leave, I am happy that I have a wonderful husband and children to go home to that love and care about me. I think the biggest thing it has taught me is to never, ever be judgmental of another person.

What would you say to someone who is thinking about becoming a volunteer? Never doubt that you have something to give. Use it to make this Community a better place.

The Clare House Difference

When you choose to support a program that helps those in need in our community, consider the following...

Clare House is proud to be a collaborative partner with many other social service agencies in Lancaster County to provide resources and referrals to meet the needs of our residents and aftercare clients. These partnerships enable Clare House to offer a multitude of client services to our residents and program graduates. It is our philosophy that if we all work together to collaborate, the clients will be the ultimate beneficiaries.

At Clare House we work diligently to focus on the big picture. We recognize that we are physically and financially, unable to provide all the services that our clients may need. A concerted effort was made over five years ago to establish working relationships with other emergency shelters and addiction treatment facilities to refine a seamless transfer between programs.

In addition a formal program shift was made that requires all Clare House residents to work within the parameters of Tabor Community Service's Shelter to Independent Living Program which includes budgeting, protective payee and housing assistance. In addition, Penn State Extension provides onsite nutrition classes and the residents partake in a Parenting Program facilitated by the YWCA.

Further, each week the in-house meetings are host to an outside presenter who educates the residents on a variety of topics—from learning interview and soft skills from representatives of ADECCO Staffing, Breast Health from LGH nurses or 'healing through writing' with local community volunteer, Scott Feifer, Clare House is committed to providing a well-rounded program to our residents and aftercare clients.

This attitude of partnership and collaboration is at the forefront of the Clare House program and financially makes good sense. *Together*, we can make a difference.



What's Happening?



The Reason for the Season

The holidays are approaching and this is the time of the year when many churches, civic groups, community organizations, families, and individuals are looking for ways to help others in need.

Clare House has been blessed to have received such support in past years by linking individuals wanting to help with families in need through our annual Adopt-A-Family project. What a difference your giving has made in the lives of those families! Each year Clare House is amazed by the generosity of the community. During the Holidays, this outpouring of love and goodwill demonstrates clearly the concern which Lancaster County has for those who suffer from homelessness.

We recognize that there is a warm and fuzzy feeling when one purchases gifts for the women and children. However, this year we are asking the community to consider helping Clare House to assist many more women and children well past the holiday season. Clare House has felt the sting of the looming economy and this year we are hopeful that our supporters will recognize the importance of financial contributions to our shelter as well as the donation of shelter supplies. Below is a listing of our current needs. A financial contribution or a donation of supplies will enable Clare House to support the many women and children who seek our services and assistance well past December.

Welcome 2008-2009 Clare House Board of Directors!

Clare House is proud to welcome new members to the Board of Directors. In the following year, we will have the opportunity to meet the new (and seasoned) Board with a brief informational piece and picture.



- Beth Carr, President
- Jay Laser, Vice-President
- Dyan Myers, Treasurer
- Jacqueline Banyasz Fogarty
- Jay Brenneman
- Maxi Cotto
- Jane Keller
- Dr. Nazafarine Keyvani
- Alejandro Rosado
- Elizabeth Peris
- Jeff Shelly
- Jennifer Thompson
- Andrea Turasky



Shelter Wish List: Current Needs

- ♥ Mops, Brooms, & Buckets
- ♥ Bleach
- ♥ Pillows
- ♥ Feminine Hygiene Products
- ♥ Diapers/Pulls-Ups (size 4+)
- ♥ Local Bus Passes
- ♥ Twin Sheets
- ♥ Twin Blankets & Comforters
- ♥ Garbage Bags
- ♥ Toilet Paper
- ♥ Dishwasher Detergent
- ♥ Paper Towels
- ♥ Liquid Hand Soap
- ♥ Towels (Bath & Dish)
- ♥ Cleaning Products
- ♥ Air Freshener



Around The House

Welcome Breck!



Breck joins the Clare House team as our new Case-Manager; she has been involved with the non-profit/social service realm both as a professional and volunteer for the last 20 years. She obtained her Bachelor's degree from Shippensburg University in Criminal Justice, with a concentration in Juvenile Justice, and a minor in Sociology. Since graduation, she has held various positions within the non-profit world both in Lancaster and York Counties. These positions has helped mold Breck into the dedicated and well-rounded professional that she is. Breck is dedicated to the health and well-being of all individuals, both young and old, which is evident both in her work and volunteer opportunities she partakes in. In 2004, Breck moved to California to serve in AmeriCorps (national volunteer service) to be an Academic Mentor for an alternative middle and high school located in Eureka, California. This experience led her to decide to go back to school and complete her Master's degree. Breck graduated with honors in December, 2007 with a Master's degree in Child, Youth and Family Studies with a specialization in Youth Development from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln.

Breck enjoys spending time with her family, which means the world to her. She is the proud mom of two cats (Sebastian and Reesie) and her dog (Taiyhia). Breck's future goals include traveling the world (especially to Africa to work with AIDS-affected children and teens), creating a non-profit youth center for the west-side of Lancaster City, adopting a child, becoming a motivational speaker and trainer, obtaining her PhD, and living life to the fullest! She is one of the proud directors of Camp Horizon, which offers children ages 8-12 affected with a chronic skin disorder, to attend a one-week camp during August. Her love of volunteering has been incorporated in her daily life and with those teens she works with at Otterbein United Methodist Church as their Coordinator of Youth. Helping our young people learn to be successful and dedicated citizens of our communities will help the future of Lancaster County. Together we can make a difference, one step at a time!

Going Green...Trying!

We still need your help in our effort to Go Green. In our last two newsletters we issued a plea to you, our supporters, to help us in our endeavor. Of the over 3,000 newsletters we sent out, only about 10 of you responded with updated information. To support these efforts, please take a moment and help us by sending an e-mail to clarehousecontact@comcast.net or call in to (717) 291-8967 and talk to Shannon.

Remember, for those of you that do not have access to e-mail or prefer the mailed newsletter document, we will still print a quarterly copy but would like for you to connect with us as well to ensure that all of your information is up to date. It is our intention to do all we can to help our environment by minimizing production so that we can maximize your donations. Thank you in advance for your help with this endeavor!

Summer Fun

Twice a year, we have the pleasure of getting the entire Clare House family together to celebrate. Our most recent event was a fun-filled picnic on one of the muggiest days that July had to offer! The Clare House Board of directors, residents, staff, aftercare clients, and other friends of Clare House were all invited to join us for fun, food, and fellowship. In spite of the hot and humid weather, everyone had a great time! Many of our guests brought in a special dish to share and the potluck-style picnic was a great success with plenty of food to go around. The kids were entertained by our special guest, Zig Zag the magical clown, and Hilda the Turkey Hill turkey also stopped by to join in the festivities! Our good friend, photographer Jim Wellman, also attended the picnic and captured some great shots of our kids in action. Check out Ariella (below) with her balloon animal made by Zig Zag the clown!



Contact Clare House!



Jennifer Powell, Executive Director:
clarehousedirector@comcast.net

Breck Artz, Case Manager:
clarehousecasemanager@comcast.net

Shannon Bower, Office Manager:
clarehouseassistant@comcast.net

Mail: 342-344 E. Chestnut Street, Lancaster, PA 17602

Phone: (717) 291-8967 | Fax: (717) 291-6830

Visit us online at: www.ClareHouseLancaster.org

Year End Appeal

In an effort to continue our mission to Go Green, we have decided to enclose our year end appeal letter and a donation envelope in this publication. Please read the enclosed letter asking you to support the Clare House program through a year end financial contribution. Remember, all donations are tax deductible and will help Clare House continue serving homeless women and children. Thank you for your continued support of Clare House!

Need a Speaker?

It would be our pleasure to come and speak to your group about the Clare House program. Rotary, Church, Business, Schools...we love to make new friends! For more information, give us a call at (717) 291-8967.



Where there is hope, there are possibilities...