

C.R.O.S. Currents

A quarterly publication for the friends of Christians Reaching Out to Society, Inc.

Winter 2007

Dear Friends of CROS Ministries,



Gas prices are up. The housing market struggles to stay afloat and many people are losing their jobs. Insurance is up (if you can get

it), along with the cost of food and almost everything else. As we end this year, it may be difficult to be filled with much cheer and goodwill. If this year as been a struggle for you and your family, know that you are not alone. C.R.O.S. Ministries has found it difficult to meet the ever increasing need.

Through September we have served over 30,000 individuals. We have spent \$103,197 on food this year in comparison to last year's amount of \$43,664.

A friend recently gave me a Nelson Mandela quote that says "It always seems impossible until it's done." That is the way I feel about this ministry. It is difficult, if not impossible, to know what it feels like to be without hope. Yet, through your support, hope is offered to many. I see the difference you make and those touched are so very grateful.

Miracles happen every day because you care. May the holidays fill you with hope and joy as you know you have blessed others with hope and joy.

Peace and Grace,

Pam

Rev. Pamela A. Cahoon

Harvest Helpers Needed



Fresh produce is a commodity that is hard to come by for many local feeding programs like The Caring Kitchen. The large quantities of vegetables needed to provide lunch each day to the 200 people that come to The Caring Kitchen are too expensive to purchase and very rarely are donated.

C.R.O.S. Ministries' gleaning program utilizes volunteers to pick crops from the fields of local farmers and harvest produce that would otherwise go to waste. The fresh, nutritious food goes to area food banks and is then distributed to various agencies, like The Caring Kitchen, that work with the hungry.

The 2007-2008 gleaning season starts in December and continues every Saturday until May 2008.

If you are interested in volunteering and helping us alleviate hunger in Palm Beach County, please contact Ian Oudit at (561) 233-9009 or (561) 762-9628 or e-mail at ioudit@croministries.org.



Holidays at the Caring Kitchen

Sarah is a single mom, working paycheck to paycheck to provide for her family. Her youngest child caught a nasty cold that was passed to all three children. The youngest was so ill that Sarah was forced to take a full week off work. The fragile budget of a cashier, working full-time at a local grocery store, was shattered and the family was facing eviction. Thanks to the generosity of our benefactors The Caring Kitchen was able to pull together enough money to bring the family back from the brink of homelessness.



It is families like Sarah's who will be receiving holiday boxes of food donated by local congregations and turkeys, again, donated by Office Depot. Christmas festivities are coming together as Temple Beth El will continue with their tradition of preparing and serving Christmas dinner. More than 600 children (agency total of 1,100) are signed up to receive gift cards for

Christmas gifts and many will receive SHARE food packages provided by local congregations. The families served through your holiday generosity are so grateful. Thank you for sharing your blessings with others.

CROS Walk Success



C.R.O.S. board member, Nancy Thurston-Lang, from Palms West Presbyterian, with her son, Nicholas, and their dog, Sunny.

The 13th Annual CROS Walk was a GREAT success. Holy Trinity Episcopal Church, again, graciously offered the use of the church grounds and facilities for the event. Over 360 walkers from 28 congregations and community groups participated, pledging over \$30,000. We are also grateful for the support of our corporate sponsors raising an additional \$11,000 for the Walk. Many thanks to all of you. We appreciate your support of the CROS Walk and C.R.O.S.'s many programs.

Thank you to the many volunteers who helped with registration, water stations, fruit preparations, setup and cleanup. This large event would not be possible without your help. Special thanks also to the hand radio operators who help every year with safety and traffic control. And last but certainly not least, thank you, thank you to the CROS Walk Steering Committee for planning, arranging and working the event!



Dick Tomasello, from First United Methodist Church of Jupiter/Tequesta, provides water for walkers at a water station.

We hope to see everyone again next year, on October 11th for the 14th Annual CROS Walk.

Sara Allen, Russell Parker and Nancy Parker, members of First United Methodist Church of Boca Raton at the CROS Walk.



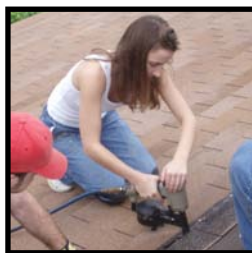
Food Needs Increase



Jim, Hannah, and their two children, recently moved to Florida to help care for Hannah's mother. Due to the low number of service industry jobs available in our area, he has been unable to find a job despite his unceasing efforts. This family is one of over 12,560 families that have been offered emergency food assistance through our food pantries this year. C.R.O.S. anticipates that by the end of 2007 we will have served over 18,000 families. These numbers represent a 53% increase in the number of families we are serving. Your support is vital to this ministry. Thank you for helping us offer hope to families in our community.

Home Sweet Home

Elvira is 44 years-old and lives with her 78 year-old mother. After losing their home to Hurricane Wilma the two have been living with family and friends for the last two years. Elvira and her mother scraped together enough money to purchase a mobile home from FEMA. Only having enough money to transport the mobile home the two moved back in with family until they could save enough to hook-up the electricity and air-conditioning. In April, Elvira was referred to C.R.O.S.'s Hurricane Recovery program and through the program Elvira and her mother were able to get the financial assistance they needed.



There are many other families like Elvira's. If you are interested in learning more about Hurricane Recovery and how you can help, please contact Sue Grimm at (561) 233-9009 or email sgrimm@crosmministries.org or contact Mayra Enchenique at (561) 779-7980.

Matching Funds Grant

Again this year, C.R.O.S. has been offered a \$10,000 matching grant. To date we have received \$6,600 towards the match. Our goal is close in sight but we are still short. Please consider making a gift to our match appeal, doubling your contribution. Your generous gift will help ensure that we receive the entire match grant. Please mark your gift "matching grant."

Remember that end-of-year gifts must be postmarked by December 31, 2007 in order to be counted for your 2007 taxes.

CROS Walk 2007 Corporate Sponsors

Friends of Jeffrey Spagna

Platinum



**The Corella & Bertram F.
Bonner Foundation**

Gold

United Methodist Church of the Palm Beaches
900 Brandywine Rd. • West Palm Beach, FL 33409

Law Offices of Valentin Rodriguez
601 N. Dixie Hwy, Suite C • West Palm Beach, FL 33401

Holy Trinity Episcopal Church
211 Trinity Place • West Palm Beach, FL 33401

Silver

G. W. Purucker Homes, Inc.
5608 PGA Blvd., Suite 208
Palm Beach Gardens, FL 33418

Hans Topfer

**In Memory
of Dr. Wilmot Carter**

Bronze

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Faith in Action Committee
The Episcopal Church of Bethesda by the Sea

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12788 W. Forest Hill Blvd. Ste. 2005
Wellington, FL 33414

Edward's Electrical Enterprises
1395 N. Killian Drive
Lake Park, FL 33403

William R. F. Broome, Attorney
1818 Australian Ave. S., #202
West Palm Beach, FL 33409

Kauff Signs
3587 Northlake Blvd.
Palm Beach Gardens, FL 33403

John D. Harris, Harris Associates
2994 Jog Rd., #B
Greenacres, FL 33467

Seeking Tax Preparation Volunteers

C.R.O.S. is working with the IRS and United Way to recruit volunteers to provide free tax preparation. Please consider volunteering your time to help people receive the money they have earned through the IRS's Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) program.

Training classes begin in December. If you are interested, please call Raymond Morse at (561) 375-6685 or e-mail raymondmorse@unitedwaypbc.org.

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Offices located at:
4401 Garden Avenue
West Palm Beach, FL 33405
Telephone: (561) 833-9499
Fax: (561) 833-1299
E-mail: info@crosmministries.org
Web: www.crosmministries.org

Our Mission

The mission of Christians Reaching Out to Society is to enable people of all faiths to work together to identify needs and collaborate in creating solutions.

C.R.O.S. Staff

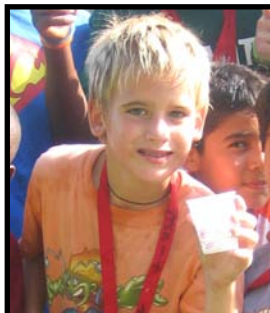
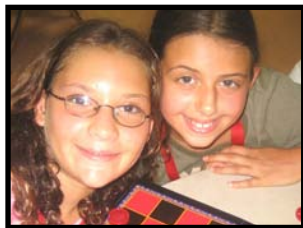
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Copy of official registration and financial information may be obtained from the Division of Consumer Services. Registration does not imply endorsement, approval or recommendation by the state. Registration # CH20251

CROS CAMPS

"I came to CROS CAMPS July 10-13 [with a volunteer group]. I truly had a blast and the kids had an amazing impact on me. I was thrilled to see a camp for families with low incomes. At the end of the week we donated balls to the children and saw the smiles just cover their faces. I've never seen such joy in children. I just wanted to encourage you in everything you do for those children and let you know you're doing an excellent job. Keep doing what you're doing. I just thought I'd let you know every day since I've been home you have been in my prayers and I will continue to pray for you."

- Camp Volunteer, Cloe



This summer CROS CAMPS served 289 children, of which 75% would have been home alone. Six weeks of day camps were offered free to families with low incomes in West Palm Beach, Delray Beach, Boynton Beach and Belle Glade. A one-week residential camp in Clewiston was also offered. The support of 517 volunteers, like Cloe, helped make our CROS CAMPS possible. If you are interested in volunteering with CROS CAMPS or receiving more information about this program, contact Claribel Baron at cbaron@crossministries.org.

HELP WANTED: The Caring Kitchen needs drivers to deliver meals to the homebound on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays. Delivery times are flexible between 10:30 a.m. and 5 p.m. For more information please contact Donna Buchalter at (561) 699-5113 or email dbcros@bellsouth.net.

UPCOMING EVENTS:

December 29, 2007

Gil's 80th FUNdraising Birthday Bash
benefiting The Caring Kitchen
7 p.m.
at First United Methodist Church
in Boca Raton

January 29, 2008

C.R.O.S. Ministries'
30th Anniversary
with guest speaker Peter Vegso
6:30 - 8:30 p.m.
at United Methodist Church
of the Palm Beaches
in West Palm Beach

March 6, 2008

3rd Annual
Magical Evening of Music
6:00 - 9:00 p.m.
Music by the Thomas Pizzi Ensemble,
with guest trumpeter Jeff Kaye and
teen pianist Marcus Comiter
at Old School Square
in Delray Beach

Honor a loved one for a lifetime by
making a contribution to C.R.O.S.
Ministries' Endowment Fund.
Call (561) 233-9009
for more information.



RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

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