

# VOICES OF HOPE

Serving

people of

all cultures

and beliefs

AUGUST 2005 NEWSLETTER, CATHOLIC CHARITIES OF SANTA CLARA COUNTY VOLUME 11, ISSUE 16

## WHAT'S INSIDE

- 2** A Message from Diane Saig
- 2** A Message from Board President Marcos Herrera
- 3** High School Service Awards
- 3** Anniversary Dinner Underwriting Opportunities
- 4-5** The Many Faces of Catholic Charities
- 6** Annual Golf Tournament
- 6** May Appeal
- 7** Annual Golf Tournament Photos
- 7** Caritas Society Events Highlight

## CATHOLIC CHARITIES 50<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION

**THURSDAY, OCTOBER 6, 2005**

Join us for a special celebration of 50 years of service to the community.

The event begins at 5:30 PM with Mass celebrated by Bishop Patrick J. McGrath at St. Joseph's Cathedral, followed by a cocktail reception, dinner, and a special program at the Fairmont Hotel.

For reservations or underwriting opportunities, contact Magi Young, (408) 325-5225.

## The Many Faces of Catholic Charities *Sustaining a Community of Hope and Compassion*

In our 50th year, it's clear that Catholic Charities has become much more than a social services agency. We are a strong network of professionals, volunteers, and donors who, year after year, demonstrate enormous commitment to breaking the cycle of poverty in our community.

Our 272 staff members are among the most dedicated social services professionals in the county. Their work is not easy. Our clients confront serious challenges, including poverty, unemployment, homelessness, physical and mental disability, addiction, and persecution. In the difficult



Sr. Irene Lukefahr (L) and Mariam Ghazvini (R) of Catholic Charities review housing alternatives with Oasis Mobile Manor residents Wally Wiseman and Elizabeth Nichols.

teach young children to read, collect clothing and supplies for needy families, and much more.

Of course, we could not continue this work without strong financial support from the community. Approximately 13 percent of our annual budget of \$14 million is provided by more than 1,000 individual donors. Hundreds of local institutions, including more than 50 parishes, also contribute on an annual basis. Their generosity blesses and sustains us.

Visit the Catholic Charities program sites and you'll see the many faces of this community of hope. Our work brings together people from all faiths and backgrounds who have a common goal: to change lives for good. This mission unites and strengthens us as individuals as well as a community.

As we continue our journey, we hope to see even more of your faces alongside ours.



Volunteers and staff gather at John XXIII Multi-Service Center each Wednesday morning to fill and distribute grocery bags to 125 low-income seniors.

moments, our faith and our sense of mission help us continue the journey with them.

We also rely on the support of approximately 600 volunteers to maintain 46 programs that serve more than 50,000 clients each year. They visit the elderly in nursing homes, interpret for newly arrived immigrants, distribute food to low-income seniors,

To learn more about what inspires our volunteers and staff, turn to page 4.

## “WHAT YOU RECEIVE AS GIFT, GIVE AS GIFT.” (MATTHEW 10:8)

With these words, Christ sent off his disciples to begin their ministry of preaching. The instructions given to these twelve unassuming individuals echo through the centuries to us today: go out to the world with your talents and treasure—the gifts you have been given—combine them with your other most precious asset, time—and give your gifts away!

The theme of this issue of Voices of Hope is Catholic Charities’ core value for service. This value draws us together as we allow ourselves to really look at the needs in our local community and be moved to try to make a difference. Inside this newsletter you will find stories of both staff and volunteers who are bearers of the “good news” of help and hope to clients who suffer the devastating effects of poverty. Inspired by the virtue of charity—caritas—they walk alongside our clients on a path to wholeness in a spirit of service and selflessness.

Somewhere along this path the “givers” usually experience an unexpected epiphany. It is common to hear a member of our staff—or a volunteer—describe the blessings they receive by reaching out to someone in need. Mysteriously, by reaching out to help someone in pain and suffering, their giving of self becomes a source of healing for them as well.



Diane Pelosi Saign

I am twice-blessed to have spent the past seven years entrusted with the work and mission of Catholic Charities. It has been a sincere privilege to meet and work with individuals whose commitment to the poor is so incredibly powerful. At the same time, I can honestly say that the opportunity to know and experience the world through our clients’ eyes has changed my life—for good!

And so, as I take my leave to follow my personal path back to education, I carry many more gifts away with me than those

with which I entered. I pray for the wisdom and generosity to give them back to the world again in a way that honors the charity that shaped them. I thank each of you for the opportunity to walk this part of the journey together and I encourage

you to continue the important work you have joined through Catholic Charities. The potential for creating good is only limited by our willingness to give—and receive—the gifts that create new life.

*Editor’s note: In appreciation of Diane’s significant contribution to Catholic Charities, the Board of Directors has established the Diane Pelosi Saign Endowment. To contribute, contact Magi Young, Director of Development, at 408-325-5225 or myoung@ccsj.org.*

### CATHOLIC CHARITIES BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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### REMEMBERING HELEN HANSEN

Helen Hansen, the first Executive Director of Catholic Charities, died April 29 at the age of 93. She was a leading figure in the social services sector of Santa Clara County for nearly 30 years. Her compassion and dedication live on through many programs she pioneered to help the poor and marginalized.

## From Marcos Herrera, Board President

Since saying goodbye to our CEO, Diane Saign, I’ve reflected on the many positive changes made in the last seven years, which have enabled us to better serve the poor and vulnerable in our area. Today, I see Diane’s vision, energy, and her strong organizational understanding reflected throughout Catholic Charities.

Diane always encouraged us to look for ways to better support our clients. This enabled us to reach a higher level of professionalism than ever before. We are much better organized now to both assist our clients and meet the challenges that non-profits must confront in a time of increased competition for funding.

Diane helped instill a strong sense of mission in the agency, to ensure that we never forget the reason we do this work: the Gospel teachings that compel us to care for those less fortunate than we are. Her compassion was also evident in her incredible concern for our staff. She has been a caring colleague, manager, and friend.

We wish Diane well in her new position as President and Principal of Notre Dame High School in San Jose. We ask that God continue to bless her in all her future endeavors. And while we look backward with gratitude, we also look forward with confidence to continuing our mission to serve the most vulnerable in our community.



Marcos Herrera, Board President



### Microsoft Provides Cash Grant and Agency-wide Software Donation

Based on the impressive results achieved in its first year, Catholic Charities' Refugee Services Computer Lab was awarded a cash grant of \$60,000 by Microsoft to enable the program to operate for another year. The grant included an unexpected gift of Microsoft software for agency-wide use valued at \$333,139.

### St. Nicholas Parish Supports Refugee Family

The St. Nicholas Parish Tithing Committee donated \$8,630 earlier this year to assist Burundi refugees. Some of the funds were allocated to a family whose father underwent brain surgery after being hit by a truck shortly after their arrival in the community. The funds supported the recuperating father, his wife, and three young sons after the normal resettlement period had ended.

### Successful First Season for EZ Tax

The EZ Tax program staff and volunteers prepared 595 tax returns and collected \$617,045 in refunds, \$259,014 of which was Earned Income Tax Credit, a tax credit for low-income working families. Approximately 80 volunteers contributed 1,500 hours of tax preparation time.

## Students Recognized for their Commitment to Service

As part of its 50th anniversary celebration, Catholic Charities created the "Change Lives for Good" Community Service Recognition Award to honor senior students at Catholic high schools in the Diocese of San Jose for their outstanding commitment to community service.

The following students were honored at recognition events at their respective schools: Eric Chrisman, Bellarmine College Preparatory; Jillian Begin, Archbishop Mitty High School; Michelle Shaffie, Notre Dame High School; Kayla Ladd, Presentation High School; and Audrey Barden, St. Francis High School.

Receiving Honorable Mentions were Mike Gutierrez, Bellarmine; Maria Landeza and Katie Collins, Notre Dame; and Angelina Altamirano, St. Francis.



Attending the awards presentation were: (L-R) Marcos Herrera, Catholic Charities Board President; Steve Pinkston, Director of Christian Service/Bellarmine; Winners Eric Chrisman, Audrey Barden, Jill Begin, and Kayla Ladd; Maggie Dellamano, Presentation faculty member; and Diane Saign, former CEO of Catholic Charities.

Students were nominated by school staff. They were evaluated based on the consistency of service throughout their high school careers; depth of knowledge about the social needs in the community; and ability to rally necessary resources to meet the needs of their project.

Winners each received a \$250 cash award to further their chosen projects.

We'd like to thank our panel of judges: Marcos Herrera, President, Catholic Charities Board of Directors; Susan Alberto, Program Manager, Catholic Charities Foster Grandparents Program; Catherine Wolff, Professor, Santa Clara University; Marybeth Benham, community volunteer; and Christopher Payne, M.D., Associate Professor, Stanford University School of Medicine.

## 50TH ANNIVERSARY DINNER TO BE HELD OCTOBER 6

The highlight of celebrations for Catholic Charities' 50th anniversary year will take place on Thursday, October 6, 2005 in San Jose. The evening will begin at 5:30 PM with Mass celebrated by Bishop Patrick J. McGrath at St. Joseph's Cathedral, followed by a cocktail reception, dinner, and a program at the Fairmont Hotel.

The program is expected to include a video presentation with a retrospective of Catholic Charities' accomplishments over the last 50 years, plus an overview of the agency's contributions to the community today through long-term solutions that address the root causes of poverty.

Caritas Society members Wendy and Roger Mairose, and Andrea and Joe Thomas, have generously agreed to underwrite the costs of the dinner. Because of their generosity, all proceeds from underwriting or program advertisements will directly benefit Catholic Charities' clients.

Underwriting opportunities are still available, ranging from \$1,000 to \$10,000 for general use or for specific elements such as parking, wine, or the video presentation.

"We're expecting a large turnout of supporters and community leaders to help us celebrate this important milestone," says Mary Quilici Aumack, Chair of the 50th Anniversary Dinner Committee. "This is a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to pay a special tribute to Catholic Charities and highlight the generosity of our community toward the poor."

For more information about how you can help make the celebration a success, contact Magi Young at (408) 325-5225.



# THE MANY FACES OF SERVICE

## **Karen Herreman**

**CASE MANAGER, OASIS MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES  
FOR OLDER AND LOW-INCOME ADULTS**

Karen is starting her 26th year of work with Catholic Charities in day programs for Older Adults. As a case manager for OASIS, she helps coordinate mental health services for older adults and dual-diagnosis clients. "My clients are very near and dear to my heart, and I do my best to help them through their difficulties. I could not have been successful in this work for so long if it weren't for the outstanding support I get within Catholic Charities, from our program staff all the way up to the CEO. I can't emphasize enough how much I appreciate the caring environment."



## **Aurora Romero**

**PARENT VOLUNTEER, WASHINGTON UNITED YOUTH CENTER**

Aurora has come to the center with her two children for over seven years, attending the Mother's Support Group and the Salsa-Aerobic Dance. When the center lost its dance instructor, Aurora volunteered to take over and has taught the class for four years. "I've gained a lot of confidence from teaching. Most of mothers have hard lives and they don't get a lot of support. When they go to the class, they can let out their stress and work on their health. It makes me feel good to help them out."



## **Raul Tornel**

**PROGRAM MANAGER, WASHINGTON UNITED YOUTH CENTER**

Raul joined the staff of the Youth Center nearly eight years ago after working with the City of San Jose's Gang Intervention program in the same neighborhood. He now oversees all of the programs of the center. "We're designing programs that will keep youth coming back to the center where they can be in a safe, supportive environment. We're also working on more intergenerational activities. This year we led several rafting trips, including one for mothers and daughters. These trips are amazing experiences where we can take kids out of the city, challenge them to be strong and work as a team, and have fun together."

## **Marilou Cristina**

**SENIOR DIRECTOR, AGENCY PROGRAMS, AND DIRECTOR,  
OLDER ADULT SERVICES DIVISION**

Marilou first began volunteering with the Independent Aging Program, which later became part of Catholic Charities. Now, more than 25 years later, she directs the Older Adult Services Division and has broad responsibility for all agency programs. "My work with Catholic Charities is very much in alignment with my values. I'm also surrounded by the most dedicated, talented, caring, and creative staff imaginable, as well as great volunteers. All of us are inspired by our clients' determination to rise above difficult circumstances and create a better future for themselves. And the work itself is so engaging. We're always finding ways to improve our services, either by creating new solutions or refreshing what's already working."



Catholic  
50th An

## Celebrating Our Volunteers and Staff



### **Jeffrey S. Kanel, MD, PC**

**ORTHOPEDIC SURGEON**

In 1994, two Bosnian teenagers, evacuated from war-torn Sarajevo, received free surgical and medical services to correct crippling scoliosis upon their arrival in the U.S. Thanks to Dr. Kanel, who performed multiple surgeries and arranged for follow-up care through Good Samaritan Hospital and other providers, both are able to stand tall and lead normal adult lives. “I first heard about this need at a conference for orthopedic surgeons. I contacted the International Organization for Migrations, who worked through Catholic Charities to bring the teens to the U.S. It’s gratifying to know that they’re doing so well today. It was really my pleasure to help them.”

### **Mary Catherine Parker**

**MEMBER, CATHOLIC CHARITIES BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

Cathy first heard about Catholic Charities at her parish during the annual May Appeal. Since 2003, she has been a Board member and also serves on the Behavioral Health Advisory Committee.

“The more I learned about Catholic Charities, the more amazed and delighted I was with all they can do. I encourage everyone to get to know the agency and its work—it will inspire you beyond belief. They have a phenomenally dedicated staff that really gets down to the grassroots and helps the people who need it the most. They’re a wonderful team that works wonders.”



### **Micaela Garcia**

**VOLUNTEER, FOSTER GRANDPARENT PROGRAM**

For nearly 20 years, 85-year-old “Grandma Mickie” has worked with orthopedically disabled and visually impaired preschoolers at Chandler Tripp School in San Jose. “I’m the mother of 15 and the oldest of 12. I love little children—the littler the better! I heard about Foster Grandparents in 1984 and when I went to the school, it nearly broke my heart to see the little ones who needed so much help. I went to work right away and I’ve been there ever since, during the regular school year and summer school, too. These poor children need me but I need them, too. I love every minute of it.”



### **Gene and Barbara Gerwe**

**VOLUNTEERS AND CARITAS SOCIETY MEMBERS**

Among their many activities with Catholic Charities over the years, Gene served on the Board of Directors for ten years and as its Chairman for three, while Barbara taught English as a Second Language. Gene says, “The work of Catholic Charities is essentially putting the Gospel message into action. I feel truly honored to have served on the Board; it’s a group of key leaders from our community who have become deeply committed to the agency and who work hard to help achieve its goals.” Barbara adds, “We’ve been so blessed in our lives and feel it’s important to give back to those less fortunate than we. But we’ve gotten more out of working with Catholic Charities than we’ve put in.”

Charities  
Anniversary

## Sponsors

*We owe a debt of gratitude to our title sponsor of six years, Heritage Bank of Commerce, as well as all of our sponsors and in-kind donors, many of whom generously support the tournament year after year. Your donations brighten the lives of thousands of families in our community.*

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**HERITAGE BANK OF COMMERCE**

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# Golf Tournament Sets New Record

## Lively Event Scores Major Contributions for the Poor

The 21<sup>st</sup> annual Catholic Charities Golf Tournament, sponsored by Heritage Bank of Commerce, took place on June 13. Guided by Ron Pelzel in his sixth year as Chairman, a large volunteer committee and Catholic Charities staff planned and executed an exciting event at Cinnabar Hills Golf Club.

Following play on the beautiful and challenging courses, first place winners in the men's division were Bill Rehbock, Tom Connelly, Casey Connelly, and Bryan McCollam. First place winners in the women's division were Barbara Bocks, Vickie Cupples, Linda Floyd, and Roxanne Peterschmidt.

Activities also included lunch, cocktails, dinner, and live and silent auctions. The most popular auction items included Hawaiian and Mexican vacation packages, an opportunity to play at the Lexus 2005 Champions for Charity National Championship at Pebble Beach, and a five-course gourmet dinner for ten prepared by Chef Emile Mooser of Emile's Restaurant.



**Men's Winners, L-R: With the lowest net score after they won a tiebreak, Bill Rehbock, Tom Connelly, Casey Connelly, and Bryan McCollam were declared the winning men's foursome.**



**With a net score of 59 the foursome consisting of (L-R) Linda Floyd, Roxanne Peterschmidt, Vickie Cupples, and Barbara Bocks were declared winners of the women's division.**

To honor Catholic Charities' 50th year, a record number of foursomes and sponsorships were sold and a total of \$205,000 was raised. The proceeds from this tournament provide a significant portion of the agency's funding from private sources, which makes the event even more important in these difficult economic times.

This year's special beneficiary was Catholic Charities' Eastside Neighborhood Center nursing services. Faced with a funding shortage, service hours would have been reduced by 75 percent. Following a testimonial from client Gabriela Hernandez, tournament participants contributed enough funds to maintain the existing schedule of free health care and health education services for very low-income seniors.

"In each of the past five years, this tournament and auction have substantially increased their contribution to Catholic Charities," says Ron Pelzel. "It's wonderful to see such a high level of enthusiasm for the important and needed work of the agency."

# Parishes Demonstrate Compassion Through Successful May Appeal

Once again, Catholic Charities' May Appeal was generously answered by thousands of individuals who showed their care and concern for "the least among us." In our 50th anniversary year, more than \$xxx,xxx was raised. All of the proceeds will go to help the poor create stable lives by providing tools for self-sufficiency.

"May Appeal is an important expression of the growing partnership between parishes and the agency," says Marcos Herrera, President of the Board of Directors of Catholic Charities. "We are working together to live out Christ's concern for the poor."

We offer our thanks to the many donors, speakers, volunteers, and parish organizers, as well as our co-chairs, Thanh Nguyen, Catholic Charities Board member and St. Mary of the Immaculate Conception parishioner; Marianne Jackson, Board member and parishioner at St. Francis of Assisi; and Rev. Rene Juarez, pastor of Our Lady of Guadalupe parish. We are also grateful to the pastors who welcomed us into their parishes.



L-R: Tim O'Donnell, Golf Committee member, Sam Fouquet, Mitch Loran, winner of the putting contest, and Paul Newman.



L-R: Tory Sherman, Rev. Justin Zawadski, Pastor of St. Mary of the Immaculate Conception-Los Gatos, Vince Bono, and Ron Pelzel, in his sixth year as chairman of the Golf Tournament.



L-R: Bill Albanese, Ray Triplett of Triplett Financial Services, Golf Committee member and Golf Cart Sponsor, and Murphy Sabatino.

HERITAGE TITLE  
BANK OF COMMERCE SPONSOR

SAVE THE DATE! *2006 Golf Tournament*  
June 12, 2006  
Cinnabar Hills Golf Club



L-R: Les Pelio, Golf Committee member and Dinner Co-sponsor, Bob Miroyan, Jim Mair, and John Ziegler.



L-R: Len Fryer, Joe Thomas, Golf Committee member and Board member of Charities Housing Development Corporation, Paul Neese, and Jim Fox.

## Caritas Society Members Host Events

The Caritas Society was founded in 1985 to acknowledge individuals who annually support Catholic Charities with gifts of \$1,000 to \$50,000. Caritas members provide over \$1 million in unrestricted financial support for vital programs that serve over 50,000 people in our community each year.



L-R: ????, Judy, and George Marcus. Eighty-six members of the Caritas Society and their guests attended a reception on April 20 at the Marcus home in Los Altos Hills to learn more about the services provided by Catholic Charities throughout Santa Clara County.



L-R: Diane Saign, John Michael and Abby Sobrato. In celebration of Catholic Charities' 50th Anniversary, all Caritas members and those interested in learning more about the Caritas Society were invited to attend this special reception held at the Sobrato home in Saratoga on May 16. Nearly 200 guests had the opportunity to learn how Catholic Charities' programs strengthen families and build economic self-sufficiency for the poor in our community.

## Giving Kids an Early Start

Catholic Charities' Youth Services Division co-sponsors summer soccer league for ages 4 to 14 hosted by Washington United Youth Center.



PHOTO: CATHOLIC CHARITIES

**This new soccer league is a collaboration between Catholic Charities and other groups including MACSA (Mexican American Community Services Agency). Year-round sports programs bring the community into Washington United Youth Center and introduce children, youth, and parents to all the Center has to offer. The team sports also contribute to healthier, active lives for our young people and encourage parental involvement that strengthens families.**



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