



# Genesis House, Inc.

...a new beginning

## Happy Thanksgiving, 2015



**Daily we receive many phone calls from desperate, tearful women.** The homeless problem appears to be increasing in our area judging from requests we receive for shelter at our three shelter homes. The calls from homeless mothers seeking shelter for themselves and their children have increased over this past year, plus we receive many calls from homeless, single women.

We added a new service in our shelter program this year because of the need for beds for homeless, single women

who are homeless because of a recent crisis. We are now taking a few homeless, single women when we have bed space for them. We have sheltered 12 homeless, single women at Genesis House III this year. These women were referred to us by the Daily Bread and other agencies we work with through the Brevard Homeless Coalition. We have sheltered them on a short-term basis. Their ages have ranged from 30 to 70. Our goal when helping these women is to provide them with a safe, supportive place to stay while they improve their situation. We have helped them find jobs and permanent housing.

This year we have provided:

**4,864 nights** of shelter to homeless women and their children, infants to 17 years old, at Genesis House I.

**8,393 nights** of shelter to student mothers and their children (many of these children are school age) at Genesis House II. Two residents earned AA degrees from EFSC.

**1,787 nights** of shelter to pregnant and homeless single women at Genesis House III. We had 10 babies born this year.

*I was a stranger and you made me feel welcome... Matthew 25:35*

**We constantly work to improve our three shelter homes and to add additional help to meet the needs of our residents.** We recently added a Computer Lab/Study Room for our residents to use

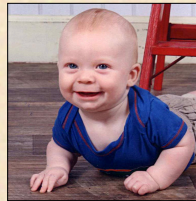


for their college and GED studies and for job searches and affordable housing searches. We moved our Free Boutique into a former storage room at Genesis House III. We have set up the Computer Lab/Study Room next to our Case Manager's office in a free-standing building at Genesis House I. It is supervised and help is provided by our Staff and Interns. We have started with three new computers and a printer. We plan to add several more computers. The positive impact from having computers available in our new Lab on-site is amazing. Already, five residents have used the computers to acquire jobs and will be moving into housing they can afford now that they are working.



We are very happy to have The South Brevard Junior League Provisional Class of 2015 working on decorating the Lab as their Community Service Project.

— Mary Allen, Founder and President of the Board of Directors



### MESSAGES FROM PAST RESIDENTS

A recent resident, who moved out to be independent and self-supporting, wrote: "I appreciated their constant support and confidence in me." She proudly told us she has a professional job and her own apartment and just paid the first utility bills she has ever paid all on her own.

Another past resident said: "Genesis House gave me a place to stay while I started getting back on my feet. They helped me find and maintain a job that I still have. They also provided emotional support during my pregnancy. They helped me to learn to manage and budget money as well."

A resident who moved out in October wrote: "As I leave to begin a new chapter in my life and in my 17-year-old daughter's life, I want to thank you. We were welcomed with open arms. Being here we grew, became stronger than I ever thought possible. I will hold and cherish my memories of love and friendship."

Another resident who moved out in October wrote: "When I came I had nothing. I was pregnant and homeless. Now I have a healthy baby, a job, an apartment, and attend college. You taught me to be independent. I have changed so much. I thank you for the loving help you gave us."

A past resident wrote: "I was blessed 8 years ago when Genesis House helped me. My children and I had no place to go. The Genesis House staff encouraged me to go back to school and make a better life for me and my family."

### ACTIVITIES FOR RESIDENTS & CHILDREN

• **Christmas in July & Splash Party.** We were so thrilled to have Santa Claus visit the residents at Genesis House this past July. Each child received a backpack full of supplies needed for school, along with a new outfit and shoes for the first day of school. We celebrated the "Back-to-School" themed



Christmas in July Party with a barbecue, swimming, and bonfire. Santa fit right in, in his shorts and T-shirt.

• **Holy Name of Jesus Fall Festival.** The children (and their moms) enjoyed the carnival rides.



### FUNDRAISERS FOR 2016

• **3rd Annual "Genesis of Art"**—An evening of art, jazz, and fun to benefit Genesis House; Thursday, Jan. 28, from 6:00 to 9:00 at Lexus of Melbourne, 6927 Bromley Dr. in Viera. Local, award-winning water-color artists Therese Ferguson, Linda Neal, Frank Spino, and J. Susan Cole Stone are among the artists who will participate in a "paint around." Tickets are \$60 per person/\$100 per couple. We are seeking sponsors at levels of \$750, \$500, and \$250. Don't miss this enjoyable evening! Tickets and more information are available by calling 288-4754.

• **Valentine's Event.** Have a Heart mailing with your chance to win a cruise for two.

• **11th Annual Genesis House Golf Tournament.** Sponsorship opportunities from \$150 to \$1500. Check our website for exciting changes to the tournament. Please consider sponsoring, forming a golf team, or volunteering.

• **Mother's Day Cards.** Cards can be found at many churches in the area. Please suggest to your church that they participate.

• For information on attending or volunteering at any of the events, call 321-288-4754.



Genesis House I shelters adult mothers with children who are homeless or in transition.



Genesis House II provides a home for homeless mothers and their children while the mothers complete their education.



Genesis House III provides shelter for homeless women, mainly pregnant women, but occasionally shelters recently homeless single adult women who are in desperate situations.

**IT IS THE MISSION** of Genesis House to provide transitional shelter for homeless women and their children, long-term housing for student mothers with children, shelter for homeless pregnant women, and shelter for single recently homeless women. Genesis House, Inc. is committed to providing a safe, supportive, caring environment. Education, self-discipline, self-reliance, and independence from the welfare system are earnestly promoted. Counseling, personal improvement classes, and appropriate health care are obtained for all residents. Classes in childbirth and parenting are provided as needed.



## OTHER WONDERFUL 2015 IMPROVEMENTS

We have hired a part-time counselor, Michelle Chanda Hawks, MA, who has recently completed her Master's Degree and was our Intern during her graduate studies at Webster University. Michelle works one-on-one with all our residents doing Counseling and Weekly Accountability Sessions to help them meet their goals as they work toward being self-supporting and independent.

We painted the living room, dining room, and kitchen at Genesis House II; installed plantation shutters on the first floor at all three houses; and refinished the floors on the first floor and replaced the screens on the porch with vinyl windows at Genesis House I to provide a comfortable counseling area.

## PROJECTS BY VOLUNTEER GROUPS & INDIVIDUALS

We welcome Kelley Wixted, our new Babysitting and Student Tutor Coordinator for Wednesday night's **Life Skills Classes**. She is doing a fabulous job and has 4-5 student helpers. Anyone wishing to help out please call Kelley at 321-960-7433.

Christy Vergara, a volunteer with Space Girl Organics and a nutritionist, has held several classes with the women and teens in regards to healthy eating. Christy and a group of volunteers have held classes for all the moms on nutrition and the importance of a good balanced diet, one just for teens, a class for pregnant women and one on infant diets. Lucinda Clark, CEO of Space Girl Organics continues to send a box of fruit and vegetables each week.

St. Paul's Lutheran Church continues to treat the mothers and children at the student house with a monthly birthday cake and cupcakes. They also conducted the 2nd Annual Vacation Bible School for our children.

Holy Name of Jesus Catholic Community and School support Genesis House in so many ways. Jane Burley's 2nd grade class collected baby items, diapers, cleaning supplies and held a baby bottle coin collection. The Life Teen group sponsored the women to enable them to attend the Tony Melendez concert. The Religious Education Department helped us with the fees for our children to attend CCD classes for those who wanted to attend. Several generous parents sponsored the children to receive free wristbands so they could enjoy the rides at the Fall Festival.

Covenant Presbyterian Church in Palm Bay continues to lend a helping hand throughout the

year by conducting work days at Genesis House doing repairs and pruning bushes and cutting dangerous tree limbs.

Stewart Hacker, a Boy Scout with Pack #380, planned and installed a beautiful fence and arbor at Genesis House III for his Eagle Scout Project.



The Legion of Mary ministry from Holy Name of Jesus provided lunch for Stewart and his workers while they worked. Currently we are working with three Boy Scouts from various troops who are planning their Eagle Scout

projects.

A group of seven teenagers and young adults, from all over the United States, along with their chaperone from the Catholic Heart Organization spent a week with us installing flooring for the new Boutique area and putting up a picket fence in the front of Genesis House II.

During that same week we had a group of 20 local teens spend a day landscaping and sorting canned goods. These teens were organized by The Radius Group, a non-profit based out of Nashville.

Throughout the year we had many churches hold fundraisers and have baby showers as well as gather diapers and baby items for the new moms. We have received donations of meals from several churches and groups, plus fruit baskets for holidays.

Kelly, a 16-year-old girl, continued to raise money through her yearly birthday celebrations.

Carmen, a 13-year-old girl, saved up her allowance to purchase gas cards, photo albums, diapers, clothing, wipes, and supplies.

## FREE BOUTIQUE

We are accepting limited donations of new and gently used clothing for boys and girls (infants to high school age) and for women from petite to plus size (ages 18-45). If you have household items or furniture to donate, please call the office at 321-723-3133 to check on our current needs. We also need school supplies all year long because of new homeless school-age children coming into our shelters throughout the year.

**Donation drop-off hours are Thursday, 4:00-6:00 p.m. and Friday, 10:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m. at 2108 Waverly Place (between New Haven Ave and Melbourne Ave in Melbourne).**

## ITEMS ALWAYS NEEDED

Paper products  
Soap, shampoo, conditioners  
Cleaning products  
Dish washer tablets  
HE laundry detergent  
Hand sanitizers and wipes  
Grocery store gift cards  
Baby clothes/diapers all sizes  
New infant and toddler car seats  
Strollers  
School supplies and back packs  
Pillows and zip-on pillow covers  
Single-bed sheets/pillow cases  
Single-bed bedspreads/quilts  
Crib sheets  
Bath towels and wash cloths  
Skid-proof area rugs and door mats  
Light bulbs  
AA & AAA batteries  
Flashlights  
Pots and pans  
9 X 13 in. casserole dishes  
Food storage containers  
Dish towels/cloths  
Gift cards  
Funds for GED testing - \$128.00/test  
Cash donations always welcomed

## VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

- Sort and organize donations in Free Boutique
- Baby sitters for Wednesday early evening and special occasions
- Someone with a pickup truck or van to occasionally pick up donated furniture

## GROUP PROJECTS NEEDED

Group Projects such as decorating a bedroom or yard projects. Our three shelter homes were built in 1899, 1924 and 1927. We keep them in wonderful condition, but sometimes houses need to be repaired and our yards need cutting and bushes trimmed. Church youth groups, Scout Troops, and students needing community service could help us on a one-time basis or more frequently. *We can give student community service hours for Bright Futures and other school-required volunteer hours.*

*A kind gesture can reach a wound that only compassion can heal... Dr. Steve Mariboli*

## GENESIS HOUSE GUILD

The Genesis House Guild, under the direction of President Carol Ashwell, hosted a Membership Drive Luncheon at The Mansion on Thursday, November 5th. The Guild's purpose is to operate as a fundraising arm of Genesis House, Inc., to serve as community liaisons and advocates, increasing awareness and broadening the base of financial support for Genesis House, Inc. Helping with the Guild's first luncheon were board members: Anita Carbone, Nan Evans, Valerie Miller, Jeanette Pitten, Laura Chiesman, Tracy Lewis and Kristen Snyder. **If you are interested in becoming a Guild Member contact Carol - 321-723-3628 or Kristen - 321-288-4754.**

## STAFF

Our staff consists of two full-time employees: Kristen Snyder – Administrator and Dona Guindon – Case Manager; one part-time employee, Michelle Chanda Hawks, MA – Counselor; and three live-in House Managers: Michelle Garcia at Genesis House I; Carol Sisti at Genesis House II; and Beth Richner at Genesis House III. We also have graduate students doing their internship with us from Webster University and Catholic University of America. They are under the supervision of Mary Allen, LMHC.

Our interns provide individual counseling to all our residents and conduct Life Skill Classes every Wednesday evening for our adult residents. The interns provide classes on parenting, budgeting, job preparation, self-esteem building, and other self-improvement topics every week.

## CHRISTMAS WISH LIST



*Gifts should be unwrapped, but gift bags are appreciated. We would like to receive gifts before Dec. 11 so the gifts can be sorted and wrapped. Any gifts received after Dec. 11 will go under the Christmas trees in the houses for Christmas morning.*

**For infants, toddlers, and school-age children:**  
Toys and clothes

**For the mothers, pregnant women, and single women:**  
Sweaters  
Sweatshirts/pants  
Watches

Backpacks  
Purses and wallets  
Fluffy, warm bathrobes  
Alarm clocks  
Gift certificates  
Movie tickets  
Youthful costume jewelry

Warm PJs and night gowns  
Bus passes  
Gas cards  
Your special gift ideas



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