

Sisters' VOICE

A Quarterly Newsletter of Sisters Of The Road, 133 NW Sixth Avenue, Portland, OR 97209

Volume 8, Issue 4: November, 2005

We Challenge You to a Match!

By Caroline Petrich and Monica Beemer

Matching Challenge, that is! It's that time again—November brings Thanksgiving, Veteran's Day, and the annual kick off for the Holiday Matching Grant Challenge. During the months of November and December all gifts to Sisters Of The Road will be matched 50 cents on the dollar by a group of generous individuals and businesses. Thus, a \$1 gift becomes \$1.50, a \$100 gift becomes \$150, and a \$1,000 gift \$1,500!

Our goal is to raise \$225,000 to maintain and enrich the vital work of Sisters Of The Road throughout 2006.

The funds raised during this holiday campaign are crucial to Sisters throughout the year. In addition to representing 40 percent of our total annual contributions, they help us meet the ongoing

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Breaking Down Barriers and Tearing Down Walls . . . Literally

Bringing the Personalist Center to Life

By Kate Cox

The Sisters Of The Road community has been creating a vision for connecting the Café and the space next door, not to expand café seating, but to bring our Systemic Change work to another level. We call this space the Personalist Center, as it provides an opportunity to grow our philosophy of Gentle Personalism, both within the organization, and in the larger Portland community. Although we see the whole organization as a Personalist Center, the office space at 137 NW 6th allows us to bring a long-time vision into being. The Personalist Center will be:



The new Personalist Center is at 137 NW 6th, adjacent to the Cafe.

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Our Mission:

Sisters Of The Road exists to build authentic relationships and alleviate the hunger of isolation in an atmosphere of non-violence and gentle personalism that nurtures the whole individual toward changes that will reach the root of his or her homelessness and poverty and end it forever.

*Cross Class Lines, eat a meal at Sisters Of The Road! The Café is open Monday through Friday from 10:00 am to 3:00pm. The last meal of the day is served at 2:45pm. Our administrative office is open 9:00am to 5:00pm.
info@sistersoftheroad.org
call (503) 222-5694
FAX (503) 222-3028
www.sistersoftheroad.org*

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"At Sisters Of The Road, there are no strangers, just friends we've never met."

Matching Challenge continued from page one

costs of operating the Café and sustain our job training, and community and self advocacy programs.

In 2006, we'll use the funds raised in the Matching Grant Challenge on some new projects, too. For example, we will begin publishing an anthology of stories from the Sisters' Research Project, in which 600 people with the experience of homelessness were interviewed. These interviews are also the basis of a landmark research study on homelessness being conducted by the University of Washington Tacoma Urban Studies Program.

The Matching Grant Challenge started in October 1994 with one anonymous donation of \$4,000. The generous gift came with some interesting strings attached—it was to be used to match donations at the rate of 50 cents to the dollar, and they must be received between November 1st and December 31st.

For 26 years, Sisters Of The Road has held the vision of ending homelessness right here at home. Please join us and help make this the most successful Matching Grant Challenge yet by sending your holiday gift to Sisters now. Gifts in any amount are welcome, and a donation made in the name of a friend or relative is a wonderful gift idea.

For questions or more information, contact Lisa Hawash at 503-222-5694 x 14 or e-mail her at Lisa@sistersoftheroad.org. You can also make your donation securely on-line at sistersoftheroad.org. Stock gifts are very welcome as well. Please call us if you are planning to make a stock gift – it helps us to track the sale of the stock through the system and also ensures we will know who sent the gift.

The 2005 Matching Grant Challenge ends on Saturday, December 31, so hurry and get your donation in today—Thank you!

Holiday Matching Grant Challenge Drop-Off Sites

Once again this year, these businesses have generously offered to receive Holiday Matching Grant Challenge donations from November 1st to December 31st. If you leave your donation with their handy staff, they will turn it over to Sisters Of The Road for the Matching Grant Campaign.

The Horse Brass Pub

4534 SE Belmont Street
(503) 232-2202

Hours: 11am-2:30 am Weekdays
10am- 2:30 am Weekends

Food Front Cooperative Grocery

2375 NW Thurman
(503) 222-5658, ext. 133

Hours: 8am- 9pm Every day

Would your business like to be a Matching Challenge Grant drop-off site? Call Lisa at (503) 222-5694 x 14.

Research Update

Sisters Of The Road's research project continues to focus on producing a book, *Voices from the Street*, a literary anthology of the distilled experience of over 515 people with the experience of homelessness. We are currently researching and contacting possible publishers. As always, check our website at sistersoftheroad.org and future newsletters to learn when and where *Voices from the Street* will be made available.



Hoedown Thanks

by Lisa Hawash

Yippie kai-yay! Our 3rd Annual Hoedown & Auction held in early October was a huge success! Good food,

great company and fabulous music by the *Columbia Cutups* and *Uncle Earl* was enjoyed by all. Thank you to all of you, including our volunteers who helped in so many ways, and all our guests; your generosity will help Sisters do its work all year.

A special thanks to our customers and volunteers who made the fantastic scarecrows that

livened up the hall and were bid on and taken home by happy guests. The nine scarecrows that were auctioned off raised a total of \$1205!

See ya'll next year!



Jeremy Johnson and the scarecrow he helped make, Billy Joe (psst, yes that's a mop head!)

Breaking Down Walls continued from page one

A place where our community can get services that they need through a model that shares power and responsibility

Sisters Of The Road provides mail, phones, and message services, and also personal hygiene items, diapers, and infant formula. This year, we'll be changing the way we do these services to follow the model the café has been using for 26 years, sharing power and responsibility with the folks who eat in the Café (or, in this case, use these services.) Throughout the winter, our Personalist Center Visioning Group will be looking at one service at a time, until the whole system is redesigned. Very likely, this will mean an expansion of our barter system, the cornerstone of our Café.



The crossroads Leadership Operating Team

A place for our community to share ideas and information

The Personalist Center will be a place where folks can get information about how to cope with the challenges of homelessness and poverty. This will include information about services, as well as the wisdom of the streets – like an answer to “where can I find a safe place to sleep outside?” Although the Café has always played this role, the Personalist Center will take it to the next level.

A place to gather, meet, and organize as a community to advocate for our civil rights and an end to homelessness in Portland

Since 1979 the Sisters community has been advocating for the civil rights of all people, especially those experiencing the extreme challenges of living on the streets of Portland. The Personalist Center space is already housing our **crossroads** Leadership Operating Team, the Personalist Center Visioning Group, and the Civic Action Group. These groups are all working on Systemic Change within Sisters and in the larger Portland Community. When mail and other services are moved into this space next fall, it will become far more accessible to all people interested in organizing for social change.

A place that brings Systemic Change to the Café

In the summer of 2006, we'll be literally tearing down the wall between the Café and our Systemic Change work. We'll be removing part of the wall between the café (133 NW 6th) and the Personalist Center (137 NW 6th) allowing continual access to its services, information, and organizing opportunities. This will also allow customers to wait inside for a table, instead of standing in line outside. We expect construction to be done by October 2006, just in time for next year's rainy season! To get involved with planning the Personalist Center, contact Nikki Jardin at Nikki@sistersoftheroad.org or at (503) 222-5694 x 18.

Plan MLK Day 2006

The committee planning our Martin Luther King, Jr. Day celebration meets the first and third Wednesday of the month in the Personalist Center from 4:30-6:30 pm. The celebration will be held on Martin Luther King, Jr. Day—January 16th, 2006. If you want to be part of the visioning process in this celebration of non-violence, please join us. If you'd like to participate on the day-of, please keep your eyes on our website for details. Contact Julia@sistersoftheroad.org or (503) 222-5694 x17 with questions or ideas.

Soul Food!



Chef Rosie Dean

Sisters' version of Thanksgiving Dinner is happening on November 23rd from 10-2:45. We are very pleased to announce that Rosie Dean, former owner and operator of Doris' Café will once again be assisting our cooks in preparing this wonderful meal. BBQ Ribs, Chicken, Greens and Sweet Potatoes will be on the menu. Please join us for great eats & fun!

Sharing Power Storm Event

Sharing Power is a column by our customers. This installment is by Diamond Reo.



How much impact will the holidays have upon the survivors of the recent storms? Well that depends on which storm we are talking about. Our country is now imbalanced with a staggering number of houseless people. Already there is an unsteady anxiety on the streets of Portland, about who gets what. Or, as a source of mine more curtly states: the disaster survivors are already getting much better treatment than we are here. Hotels, food, medical, credit cards; we want that stuff too.

And why not? I think that even on the streets, people want fair and equal value. No one human tragedy should ever take precedent over another. I would like to believe that this holiday season would show the heart in the country and the presence of spirit in the mechanics of our government.

This season for the homeless should be one of great reflection, like how the government and the President both failed inside our own borders. And of questions, many questions: Will our government fail to treat all the homeless in the nation, during this holiday season, with an even and equal hand? Or will the political agenda set values, marking the survivors' needs as greater, and the urban homeless population as lesser? Will the homeless continue to allow the distribution of goods to the survivors without resentment, jealousy or feeling undervalued?

If during these moments of reflection, we have questions on how to address these issues in an open, "non-violent" discussion, action or demonstration, I would highly suggest beginning at Sisters Of The Road. Also, *street roots* is great resource for getting your opinions out in a free-form open-mic forum.

And letters! Writing letters to your Mayor, congressperson, local newspapers and other local media can begin to open a lot of doors, especially if letters in large quantities begin to flow in from the homeless communities. Or imagine how dynamic it would be if even two thousand letters from homeless people reached the President, asking him to take a moment to open deliberations on how even the smallest homeless community can be addressed.

I personally think that we should all put aside our differences and open all of our hearts, minds and

spirits, so that this holiday season and every one after, will be one of giving, caring, growing up, reaching out, and expanding our concepts; one of legend, not of disaster, loss or suffering. It could be the age that America awakened to realize that we were a nation in danger of losing our touch with the human element.

Do Our Circumstances Make Us Worthless?

From the crossroads Leadership Operating Team

We are survivors of Hurricane Homelessness, a hurricane akin to Katrina in its casualties. Every night in Portland there are thousands of us sleeping outdoors because every subsidized rental unit is filled -- and has months and years long waiting lists, every available shelter bed already has someone in it, and there are not enough matching funds to make market rate rentals in our city affordable.

Homelessness is, in and of itself, an emergency situation forcing a person to camp outside in order to get some sleep (a non-negotiable human act) because there are no other options.

Under Chapter 14 of our City Code, "It is unlawful for any person to camp in or upon any public property or public right of way, unless otherwise specifically authorized by this Code or by DECLARATION BY THE MAYOR IN EMERGENCY CIRCUMSTANCES." For goodness sake, one person on the streets tonight is an emergency. At last count Portland had 2,355 people out there!

So dear readers, whether we are housed or homeless, none of us are worthless, and we are asking you to call, email or write a letter to Mayor Tom Potter (contact info below) asking him to declare an emergency and suspend *Chapter 14A.50.020 Camping Prohibited on Public Property and Public Rights of Way* until every homeless person is housed.

Homelessness is solvable, we can end it together!

Mayor Tom Potter

Address: **1221 SW 4th Avenue, Suite 340,
Portland, Oregon 97204**

Phone: **(503) 823-4120**

Fax: **(503) 823-3588**

Mayor's 24-Hour Opinion Line: **(503) 823-4127**

Email him at: **www.portlandonline.com/mayor**.

A Regal Hygiene Drive

by Caroline Petrich

Members of Sisters' community who experience extreme poverty don't have basic hygiene items, such as razors, toothpaste or tampons, because these items aren't covered by food stamps or available in pantries. Sisters fills this need by



Myoko with a hygiene kit.

Photo by Mary Kay McDermott

maintaining a stock of much needed hygiene supplies, and it's time to replenish the shelves!

The 2005 Hygiene Supply Drive has an extra special plot twist: Regal Cinemas has generously agreed to partner with us to make this a blockbuster year. From November 19 until January 1, every Regal Cinema theater in the Portland metro area will have a collection bin just waiting to be filled. So you can enjoy the show *and* help support our community members in one fell swoop.

We need the following priority items, new and unused: razors and shaving cream, deodorant, toothpaste, toothbrushes, lip balm, travel size shampoo/ conditioners, feminine hygiene products, combs and brushes, diapers, socks, and school supplies (notebooks, pens, pencils).

You can also drop off your hygiene donations at Sisters, Monday through Friday, 6:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. For more information, contact Carrie Lett at 503-222-5694, x13 or Carrie@sistersoftheroad.org.

Planned Gift Benefits

Did you know that the charitable gifts you leave in your will may be deducted from your total estate and could lower the amount of estate taxes you owe? In addition to the opportunity to participate in the future work your favorite non-profit, there are many practical benefits of planned giving. Here are a few:

Outright gift of appreciated stock or bonds:

This type of gift allows you to save taxes three ways: through the charitable deduction, the avoidance of capital gains tax, and the reduction of estate tax.

Life income gifts: Funded by appreciated stock, bonds, or real-estate, this type of fit allows you to save taxes in three ways: (as above) while providing dependable income for your lifetime through pooled income funds, charitable gift annuities, or charitable remainder trusts.

Life insurance policies: The organization can either be the beneficiary or owner of the policy. This

gift has a modest out-of-pocket cost and is particularly attractive to younger donors and those of any age who have a paid-up policy that is no longer needed for its original purpose.

The gift you can live in for the rest of your life: In giving a home or a farm, you can retain the right to live in the property for your lifetime through retained life estate.

The gift you get back: A gift of income, with the income producing assets placed in a charitable lead trust for a fixed income period can be returned later to you or your heirs.

The gift with wealth replacement: A gift plan can be devised in which you and/ or others are paid a life income and insurance is used to replace the asset value that would have passed to heirs. The cost of premiums may be defrayed by tax savings and/ or increased income from the gift plan.

If you'd like to know more about giving a planned gift, contact Monica at (503) 222-5694 x 19 or Monica@sistersoftheroad.org.

Source: *Breathe Life Into Planned Giving Workbook* by the Gill Foundation's OutGiving Department.

Give Winterfolk for the Holidays, December 15

Winterfolk XVIII tickets will go on sale Dec. 15th in time for holiday gifts. Tickets will be \$26 advance and \$28 on the day of the show, available at Ticketmaster outlets, the Aladdin Theater, and both Music Millennium stores. Utah Phillips is one again featured at this year's show! Tickets sell out, so get them early for you and your favorite music lover. The show is on Saturday, February 4, 2006, at the Aladdin Theater (503)-233-1994. Performing are: Utah Phillips, Tracy Grammer, Nancy Conescu, Sky in the Road, Peter Yeates, and Tom May.

Raffle goes Millennial

Sisters is once again holding a guitar raffle, this year hosted by Music Millennium! The instrument is yet to be determined; tickets will be \$10 per ticket, and they will go onsale December 15th at Music Millennium. The winner will be announced at this year's Winterfolk benefit concert, but you don't need to be present to win. Look for more info soon!

Genny Nominated for National Caring Award

by Caroline Petrich

Genny Nelson, who co-founded Sisters in 1979, is being considered for the 2005 National Caring Award. Given by The Caring Institute, the award honors the ten most caring men and women and five most caring young people in America as selected by a prestigious panel of judges each year. Past



Genny Nelson

recipients include President Jimmy & Roslyn Carter; and Millard Fuller, founder of Habitat for Humanity. The Institute will announce the award winners soon.

What is the purpose of the National Caring Awards? In response to a challenge from Mother Teresa to do something about the "poverty of the spirit in America that far exceeds the poverty of the body that one finds in the Third World," Caring Institute Founder Val J. Halamandaris created a program to educate and inspire the public.

Remembering a quote from Albert Schweitzer which said, "When it comes to education, example is not just a factor, it is the only factor that matters," Halamandaris began looking for individuals who had dedicated their lives in service to others—individuals who could serve as societal role models.

"A nation is what it honors," says Halamandaris. "Mother Teresa recognized that caring is the one-word distillation of the Golden Rule. She helped me recognize that America has a high stake in identifying and honoring individuals who are preeminent in this value."

Included on the National Board of Trustees of the National Caring Award is the Hon. Robert (Bob) Dole and poet Maya Angelou, a testament to finding common ground to make the world a better place. We'll share the results when we find out, and you can always check the News and Press section of our website at sistersoftheroad.org. Good luck Genny!

To start peace, make a friend.

--Javier, 5th grade

quote from the Shanti Foundation for Peace

Happy Birthday to Us

We are throwing a party on the evening of November 11th to celebrate Sister's 26th year! There will be food, dancing and fun, fun, fun from 5-9 on Friday night, at Sisters Of The Road Cafe.



Our wonderful volunteer Brad has offered up his DJ prowess to get us moving. All are welcome; come celebrate with us!

Dan Newth to Join Mayor's Committee

By Monica Beemer

We congratulate long-time **crossroads** member and **streetroots** writer Dan Newth, who has been invited to sit on the Mayor's Downtown Public Safety Action Committee (PSAC). As part of PSAC, he'll meet once a month with others representing different communities within the Downtown and Old Town/Chinatown Neighborhoods. The Committee will identify areas of public safety concern, and then recommend long-term, community-based strategies to address them.

Dan was invited to sit on PSAC after Sisters' Executive Director Monica Beemer and Co-Founder Genny Nelson successfully petitioned the Mayor's office to seat someone with experience with homelessness. Sisters Of The Road supports and thanks Dan for his hard work on this effort, and on this very important Committee.

If you want to help shape the public safety and



Dan Newth

crime prevention priorities for Downtown neighborhoods, the Mayor's Office is also sponsoring a quarterly Public Safety meeting that's open to the public. For more information on these public forums, check www.portlandonline.com/mayor.

Schools, Look Here!

The PhotoVoice Project, which provided our customers with cameras to photograph their day-to-day existence seeking food, shelter, healthcare and community, is part of a multi-media exhibit, "Look Here: Views From the Invisible Community," and is now available to come to your school or community group as part of an exciting traveling exhibition.

If you would like to give your students an invaluable education about poverty and homelessness, call Julia at (503) 222-5694 ext. 17, email her at Julia@sistersoftheroad.org, or fill out and return a scheduling form online at sistersoftheroad.org. Sisters asks for a small (sliding scale) donation to off-set the cost of bringing the exhibit to your group.

Goodbye Mary Kay

by Mary Kay McDermott, Vista Volunteer and former Sisters' Volunteer Coordinator

The dictionary says that one of the definitions of the word Utopia is: an ideally perfect place, especially in its social, political, and moral aspects. Based on this definition, I feel more than comfortable deeming Sisters Of The Road as a Utopia.



November 18th will undoubtedly be an emotionally charged day for me. After 2 years I will be leaving Sisters— this magical place that has become such a safe haven for me. I came to Sisters fresh from college feeling more than a little uneasy about life outside of the education system, only to find myself in an even more intense learning environment.

At Sisters I learned how to live nonviolently, how having a supportive community is essential to being a healthy human being, and most importantly I learned how to love without judgment. Sisters is not just a workplace, it's a way of life, and I've come to realize that once a person comes into contact with this utopian place they are changed forever.

I will be utilizing the skills and tools that I've developed at Sisters to do international service— most likely in Haiti with the Haitian Project. I'd like to thank the entire Sisters' community for the part they have all played in making the last 2 years the most transformative years of my life. I'll take you with me when I go, in my heart. Much peace, Mary Kay.

Bluegrass for the Bayou

by Larry Wilder

Bring your family to Bluegrass for the Bayou, a Concert for Human Kindness featuring the talents of Cross-Eyed Rosie & the Columbia Cutups, playing Acoustic Americana, Bluegrass and Folk. It's Saturday night, November 5th, 7 – 9:30 PM at the First Unitarian Church, at 1011 SW 12th Ave., Portland. The event will be emceed by Oregonian columnist and community activist S. Renee Mitchell.

All Proceeds go to Katrina Relief (through Mercy Corp International), JOIN and Sisters Of The Road, and all donations will be matched by the Unitarian Universalist Veatch Foundation! Admission is on a sliding scale \$0 to \$20 - no one will be turned away for lack of funds. Tickets are available at the door, and there is plenty of room for all.

The concert organizer Larry Wilder, who is also an activist, a Portland musician, and a Vancouver school teacher for at-risk kids, wanted to do something when he heard about the devastation of Hurricane Katrina.

"To me, poverty is at the heart of the devastation, no matter how you look at it. Poverty, unfortunately, is also epidemic in our own community of Portland. That such an epidemic exists in a country with the wherewithal of the United States feels unconscionable to me. We wanted to do something for our community here while also reaching out to those in need because of Katrina. We have so much to give - and the more we give the more comes back to us."

Federal Campaign

Federal workers and their friends and families can donate to Sisters through the Combined Federal Campaign, now through December 15! Our CFC Number is 8230, and we're on page 19 of the new CFC Contributor's Guide, which you can also read on-line at www.oregon.feb.gov/cfc.htm. There are over 2000 CFC charities to donate to this year.

If you are a federal employee, you can make automatic deductions from your paycheck by visiting www.opm.gov/cfc or by talking with your CFC Coordinator. If you are a retired federal employee or a friend or family member of a federal employee, you can also donate with cash or check by using the "Other" area of the CFC form, also on-line.

We thank the CFC, all the big-hearted federal employees who run it, and **you**, for your support!



Sisters Of The Road
133 NW Sixth Avenue
Portland, OR 97209

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Wishlist

Your kind assistance, please! Call (503) 222-5694 to donate any of the following:

- ✓ InFocus projector, for example, an InFocus LP70+. For more information about projectors we could use, please contact Terrence at tkpunk@msn.com.
- ✓ 10-gallon new soup pots
- ✓ New carpet for our offices
- ✓ Air purifier
- ✓ Stereo with CD player
- ✓ High quality coffee maker
- ✓ Bike wall hooks



Heyyyyy, there's something *different* about this paper... Yes, it's true, the newsletter is now printed on thicker paper. It helps our printers make a better product. Let us know what you think!

Your name is safe with us!

We will never sell your name or information to anyone else. We collect it only to process your kind donations, and to send you news about what we're up to. Contact Marilyn Lipko at (502) 222-5694, x 12, or Marilyn@sistersoftheroad.org with your questions.

Taking Stock

A note to those considering donating stock to Sisters: Your donations of stock are always appreciated! Our DTC # is 0418; our Account number is 8814718212054. If you are going to transfer stock, give us a ring or drop us a line and let us know: contact Margi at (503) 222-5694 ext. 11, or Margi@sistersoftheroad.org. Thank-you!

Meal Coupon Community Partners

Go to any one of these generous, community- supporting merchants to purchase meal coupons:

- *Alberta Food Co-op (503) 287-4333; 1500 NE Alberta
- *Divine Café kiosk (503) 314-9606; SW 9th & Alder
- *Food Front Cooperative Grocer (503) 222-5658; 2375 NW Thurman
- *People's Food Co-op (503) 236-5388; 3029 SE 21st.

Meal Coupons: Small Pieces of Paper that Magically Transform into Hot Meals

Meal Coupons: \$2 each. Please send me #_____ Meal Coupons to give out to my family/ friends/ co-workers @ \$2 each = \$_____ Total, plus .37 for postage. Pixie dust extra.

Name: _____

Address: _____ Zip: _____

Phone: _____ E-Mail: _____



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Sisters is profoundly about Love!