



CATHOLIC CHARITIES NEWS

Volume 6, Number 1

Catholic Charities - Serving Southwest Florida

Fall 2006

Top Rating for 5th Straight Year

Venice – “On behalf of Charity Navigator, I wish to congratulate Catholic Charities, Diocese of Venice, on achieving our coveted 4-star rating for sound fiscal management,”



said Trent Stamp, Executive Director of Charity Navigator.

As America’s premier charity evaluator, Charity Navigator recently recognized

Top Rating on page 4

Generous Donor Honors Wishes

North Port - When you walk into Lyuda Dankanych’s modest, gray house, it is the first thing you see. Positioned in a prominent place, this source of happiness for Dankanych, 26, is a slightly used, upright Baldwin piano.

The piano is an answer to Dankanych’s prayers. “When I came here, I prayed I would meet people who would help me,” she said through a translator.

That is where Lawrence Dwyer comes into the story. Several months ago, Dwyer read in the “Wish List” of the *Catholic Charities News* that someone was in need of a piano. So he set out to find one.

Dankanych, a refugee from Ershava, Ukraine, relocated last February through the Catholic Charities Refugee Resettlement Program. Along with her husband and five-year-old son, she lives in North Port.

Generous Donor on page 6

Bishop Dewane Meets CC Up Close



(L to R) Ninfa Drago, program director, Guadalupe Social Services of Catholic Charities; Dr. Daysi Mejia, chair, Board of Directors, Catholic Charities; Father Ettore Rubin, pastor, Our Lady of Guadalupe Parish, Immokalee; Bishop Frank Dewane, coadjutor, Diocese of Venice; and Peter Routsis-Arroyo, president/CEO, Catholic Charities.

Venice - Newly ordained Bishop Frank J. Dewane spent time this summer familiarizing himself with the work of Catholic Charities (CC) in southwest Florida. He visited

CC program sites in Sarasota and Immokalee.

In Sarasota he met and played with the young children at St.

Bishop Dewane on page 2

www.catholiccharitiesdov.org

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Bethesda House Offers New Housing

Sarasota – In July, Bethesda House of Catholic Charities opened an assisted living facility, called Casa San Jose, to serve clients who are at risk of being homeless.

The housing program, located at 3900 17th Street, offers case management services to single individuals with HIV/AIDS who reside in the eight-unit complex.

Bethesda House, which

oversees the new housing, is one of two Catholic Charities community centers that provide support services for HIV/AIDS individuals. The centers assist clients with their physical, spiritual and emotional needs.

Program director of Bethesda House, Derick Fabien said, “We provide life skills and employment training to help Casa San Jose residents maintain

optimal living standards.” A property manager and a caseworker are on site at the new apartments.

New Building

Initial capital for the building was a \$250,000 SHIP loan from Sarasota County and a \$500,000 U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) grant. The HUD grant provided \$250,000 for construction and \$250,000 for support services over three years.

Bethesda House appealed to area Catholic parishes to help furnish the apartments. “Incarnation Parish was the first to respond with a donation of \$2,000,” Fabien said.

Donations Needed

Fabien reported he has seen an increase in Bethesda House clients who are at risk of being homeless. “Casa San Jose gives us the opportunity to offer more comprehensive services to our clients,” he said.

For any organization, group or individuals wishing to donate to Casa San Jose, contact Bethesda House at 941-366-1886.



The courtyard of Casa San Jose, the new housing program of Bethesda House of Catholic Charities in Sarasota.

Bishop Dewane from page 1

Martha’s Early Learning Center of Catholic Charities. An educational day care program for ages 1 – 4, the center has a mission to serve the working poor.

Also, Bishop Dewane visited Bethesda House of Catholic Charities, a community center for HIV/AIDS clients in

Sarasota. Support services of the program provide for the physical, spiritual and emotional needs of individuals in a compassionate, nonjudgmental way.

In Immokalee, where many dilapidated and broken-down trailers serve as housing for migrant farm workers, Bishop Dewane came to witness the work of Guadalupe Social

Services of Catholic Charities. This program provides a food pantry, emergency financial assistance, tutoring and immigration services.

For a list of Catholic Charities program sites, see page 5 of this newsletter. For detailed information, visit www.catholiccharitiesdov.org or call Silvia at 941-488-5581.

Volunteer Spotlight: Everett LaPort

Bradenton –Everett LaPort is familiar with American laws after serving as a police officer for 12 years in his hometown of Skowhegan, Maine. Teaching citizenship classes during retirement came naturally for him.

As a Florida resident for nearly four years, LaPort and his wife of 23 years had visited LaPort's parents for more than 15 years in Bonita Springs. They have one daughter.

Even before retirement, LaPort volunteered. He started a Boy Scout troop for mentally challenged boys, ages 6-16, and worked in the program for two years.

In Bradenton, initially LaPort volunteered at a non-profit agency that closed due to lack of funding. Then, Sister Teresa Costello phoned to invite him to help at Catholic Charities. Sister Costello knew LaPort from working together at the other agency.

In March 2005 LaPort began helping in the Citizenship Program at Catholic Charities of Manatee County. A year-round resident, he tutors students two evenings each week.

"All my students have passed the citizenship test in Tampa," said LaPort. "Now I'm helping two women—one from Mexico and one from Nicaragua."

To become eligible to take the test for citizenship, immigrants must reside in the United States for five years. The test requires applicants to write, read and speak English. They must also complete a 100-question exam on U.S. history and civics and fill out a lengthy immigration form.

According to LaPort, the test



covers many issues including questions about our flag, four U.S. wars — American Revolution, Civil War, and World Wars I and II — and how Supreme Court justices are picked. Students at Catholic Charities' Citizenship Program usually study for three to six months before taking the test.

Talking about a former student, LaPort said, "The first time I tested him orally, he got only 8 out of 100 questions correct. Before he took the exam, he answered 96 out of 100!" LaPort's enthusiasm resonated in his voice.

After his career in law enforcement—seven years as a patrolman and five as chief of police—LaPort worked for Scott Paper Company in Maine, where wood pulp and paper are the biggest industry. Lumbering requires laborers to sign a contract for one to three months of work in the forests. Because Americans do not want to do this work, immigrant French Canadians are hired. "I cannot see what our country would do without immigrants," said LaPort.

For more information about Catholic Charities of Manatee County, call 941-714-7829.



LaPort tutors a student in Bradenton.

On the Road Again

Immokalee –Rolling down the roads of Immokalee for the past eight years is School on Wheels, a service program of Guadalupe Social Services of Catholic Charities.

Program Director Sister Lorraine Soukup, SSND, attributes the program's success to the almost 700 women who were motivated to learn English for their daily needs and those

of their children. Hundreds of volunteer tutors from all over southwest Florida have contributed their time and talent. They have tutored conversational English one-on-one, once a week, for four months to eight years.

Volunteers are trained in the Laubach Way To English, an

On the Road Again on page 4

Getting Ready!

Venice - As residents of Florida are in the midst of hurricane season, Catholic Charities assists the remaining victims of Hurricane Wilma to make a full recovery.

Catholic Charities is participating in a project, sponsored by Governor Jeb Bush's Florida Hurricane Relief Fund, called Neighbors to the Rescue (NTR). This program puts neighbors in touch with neighbors to provide relief to



Hurricane Wilma victims Betsahida, 2, and her father Rufino Vasquez waited for food and water in long lines outside Guadalupe Social Services of Catholic Charities in Immokalee.

individuals and families whose lives were disrupted by Hurricane Wilma.

The NTR program connects volunteers, taps into community resources and creates virtual warehouses of available materials, goods, services, transportation and housing for

those recovering from the storm.

Help can come in the form of interior and exterior home repair, donation of furniture or appliances, landscaping services and cleanup, hurricane prevention materials, housing, transportation, or volunteers who can coach a family or individual with specific needs.

Mary Ashley, a physically challenged victim of Hurricane Wilma, was assisted by the NTR program. According to Patricia Rios, Catholic Charities NTR Coordinator in Collier County, a tree fell on Ashley's mobile home. The roof was damaged and the floors collapsed in the bedroom and hallway. The roots of one tree also ripped the air conditioning unit away from the home, and another fallen tree blocked her doorway.

Through the NTR database and virtual warehouse, Rios

Getting Ready! on page 7

Top Rating from page 1



Catholic Charities with this top rating for the fifth consecutive year. Charity Navigator evaluates the financial health of over 5,000 charities.

"Only 12% of the charities we've rated have received at least two consecutive 4-star evaluations, indicating that Catholic Charities, Diocese of Venice, outperforms most charities in America in its efforts to operate in the most fiscally responsible way possible," said Stamp.

"I am extremely pleased that we have received this top rating of 4 stars for the fifth straight year," said Peter Routsis-Arroyo, President/CEO of Catholic Charities. "The award provides tangible evidence Catholic Charities is worthy of donors' trust."

For details and information on how Catholic Charities earned this top rating, visit www.charitynavigator.org and www.catholiccharitiesdov.org.

On the Road Again from page 3



Sister Lorraine Soukup is "on the road again" to find new volunteers.

instruction method used in over 100 countries and proven to be very successful in overcoming functional illiteracy. The organization's motto is, "Each one, teach one." The motto comes to life as volunteers conduct individual, 90-minute lessons in the home of their assigned student. In an atmosphere of care and compassion, tutors and students agree that the woman-to-woman bonding is often as important as the language learned.

For more information, and how you can help, call Sister Lorraine at 239-657-6242.



Catholic Charities

1000 Pinebrook Road
Venice, FL 34285
(941) 488-5581 • (941) 484-9543

www.catholiccharitiesdov.org

Arcadia

Catholic Charities-DeSoto County
& Immigration Services

Bonita Springs

Hispanic Services of Catholic Charities

Bradenton

Catholic Charities-Manatee County
Immigration & Housing Counseling

Clewiston

Hispanic Services of Catholic Charities

Fort Myers

District Office (Lee County)
Clare House of Catholic Charities
Community Counseling Services
Haitian Center
Immigration & Refugee Services
of Catholic Charities
Hispanic Services of Catholic Charities

Immokalee

Rural Services Office (DeSoto, Glades,
Hardee, Hendry & Highlands Counties)
Guadalupe Social Services of Catholic Charities

LaBelle

Hispanic Services of Catholic Charities

Naples

District Office (Collier County)
Family Counseling Services
Family Resource Center
Refugee Related Services

Port Charlotte/Punta Gorda

Catholic Charities of Charlotte County
"A Special Place" Respite Program

Sarasota

District Office (Sarasota & Manatee Counties)
Bethesda House
Direct Assistance Services
Family Counseling Services
Refugees Employed & Productive (REAP)
St. Martha's Early Learning Center

Venice

Community Resource Coordinator Office
Joseph's Place
Our Mother's House of Catholic Charities
Refugee Resettlement Program

Wauchula

Administration of FEMA Funds



CREDIBILITY • INTEGRITY • ACHIEVEMENT

President's Corner

Catholic Charities has five exciting, new events to share with you in this Fall newsletter. First, we at Catholic Charities are proud of our latest award, the top rating of 4 stars from Charity Navigator. For the fifth straight year, Charity Navigator recognizes our excellent financial management of resources and low administrative overhead.

Next, newly ordained Bishop Frank J. Dewane, coadjutor of Bishop Nevins and his future successor, is acquainting himself with Catholic Charities programs by personally visiting them.

The last three new occurrences are the following.

- Casa San Jose apartments in Sarasota, affordable housing for homeless Bethesda House clients, have opened.
- Neighbors to the Rescue grant award helps Hurricane Wilma victims still in need in three affected counties.
- Manatee Community Foundation grant provides funding for financial assistance in Manatee County.

While these new events challenge Catholic Charities to perform new work, our other programs continue to provide their good services. We thank our contributors and volunteers for their support, allowing us *to provide help and create hope*.


In closing, we invite you, our readers, to send the names of deceased loved ones and friends for remembrance in a novena of Masses on All Souls' Day, November 2. Simply fill in their names on the form on page 8 and mail it to the address on the form. No donation is asked or required.

May God bless you and yours,

Peter Routsis-Arroyo
President / CEO

To see a listing of our Boards of Directors, visit our website at
www.catholiccharitiesdov.org

Upcoming Events

- | | |
|-------------------|--|
| December | Catholic Charities Annual Christmas Appeal. Watch for our letter in your mail box.  |
| February | |
| <i>Sarasota</i> | 18th Annual Sarasota Catholic Charities Ball. Saturday, Feb. 3, 2007; Michael's on East. For tickets call (941) 379-5119. |
| <i>Fort Myers</i> | 8th Annual Venetian Charity Ball. Saturday, Feb. 3, 2007; Sanibel Harbour Resort & Spa. For tickets call (239) 334-4007. |
| <i>Venice</i> | 6th Annual Our Mother's House Wine Tasting. Thursday, Feb. 15, 2007; Plantation Golf & Country Club. For tickets call (941) 485-6264. |
| March | |
| <i>Naples</i> | 22nd Annual Emerald Ball. Saturday, March 17, 2007; St. Ann Jubilee Center. For tickets call Madeline at (239) 455-2655. |
| <i>Arcadia</i> | 5th Annual "Boots & Bandannas." Dinner-Dance for Catholic Charities of Desoto County; Saturday, March 24, 2007; Mission Valley Country Club in Laurel (just north of Venice.) For tickets call Rose at (863) 494-1068. |

Generous Donor from page 1

A well-trained music and piano teacher, she was prepared to give all that up so that her son could have a better education in the United States. "I was ready to do another job, any job, so that my family could make a good life here," said Dankanych.

Dwyer, a resident of the Sunnyside Retirement Village in Sarasota, asked around the community to a few retired piano teachers about what kind of piano to buy. "I didn't know much about pianos, but I looked around and learned about them," Dwyer said. "It gave me much pleasure getting out there and finding Lyuda a nice one."

Dankanych was told that a man wanted to donate a piano to her so she could teach lessons and make money for her family. "It

was a dream come true to have my own piano," she said. "I felt like a bird soaring. I cried when it arrived at my home. Then I immediately began to play."

Currently, Dankanych teaches seven students and is a substitute pianist at a local church. She is taking conversational English classes so she can instruct even more budding piano players and maybe someday again be a music teacher at a school.

Dwyer not only donated the piano on the "Wish List" but also a sewing machine to another refugee resettlement client who is now making a living as a seamstress. Other "Wish List" items he has contributed are a digital camera for St. Martha's Early Learning Center in Sarasota and much needed dressers for Our Mother's House in Venice.

"This gives me something to do while helping someone out."



With her newly donated piano, Lyuda Dankanych, a resettled Ukrainian refugee, teaches lessons to Korneliya Dankanych, 8, and Vasily Halas, 9.

"It's fun to shop around," Dwyer said. "It is better than just watching TV or reading books. This gives me something to do while helping someone out."

Please read the "Wish List" below, or access it online at www.catholiccharitiesdov.org.

Wish List

Catholic Charities programs appreciate any help you can give.

Arcadia

Call Sister Ann at (863) 494-1068, ext. 106.

- non-perishable food items

Naples

Call Allegra at (239) 793-0059.

- volunteers – food pantry & refugee program
- school uniforms
- diapers, wipes

Port Charlotte/Punta Gorda

Call Andy at (941) 629-9990.

- volunteers for "A Special Place" Respite Program

Venice

Call Ruth at (941) 496-8286.

- 2-drawer file cabinet with lock
- HP deskjet 3915 printer
- Wal-Mart gift cards for emergency client use

Call Joyce at (941) 485-6264.

- diapers, size 4-6, & baby wipes
- cleaning supplies
- digital camera
- bath/shower linens
- pots, pans, utensils

Refugee Programs

Lee & Collier Counties

In Lee County, call Lizbelle at (239) 826-8915; in Collier County, call Hernan at (239) 455-2655.

- dish set, silverware – new or gently used
- towels, linens

Sarasota County

Call Lyuda at (941) 492-4855.

- car, in good running condition
- toaster, coffee maker, tea kettle – new or gently used

Manatee Community Foundation Grant

Manatee County - The Manatee Community Foundation awarded Catholic Charities a \$2,000 grant for the Financial Assistance Program.

The program helps individuals in Manatee County who are struggling with an emergency economic need that can be solved with short-term help. Disruption or loss of income, illness or death in the family, or simply a family encountering difficulties trying to

make ends meet, all can cause financial hardship for the working poor.

Often one-time assistance will keep a family from becoming homeless or an elderly person from having to choose between buying food or medication.

“The Manatee Community Foundation’s focus with its unrestricted grant-making program is toward supporting healthy families. This includes

the most needy who are one payment away from no electricity, housing or medical treatment,” said Marilyn Howard, executive director of the Foundation. “Catholic Charities has a respected and reliable reputation for getting help to those in need and giving a hand up, not just a hand out.”

For more information, call Catholic Charities at 941-379-7997.

Getting Ready! from page 6

found a volunteer group called Chain Saw for Jesus to cut and remove tree branches at no cost for Ashley. Affordable #1 removed tree stumps at a reduced rate. Florida Comfort Systems installed the air conditioning system with a rebate given by Florida Power and Light.

Also, Taylor Made Roofing donated materials for the roof repair and built a foundation for the new air conditioning unit. “After this project, the owner of Taylor Made Roofing volunteered for the program by donating construction materials to help victims,” Rios said.



Hurricane Wilma was especially devastating to residents of mobile homes, such as this one in Immokalee.

“When communities work together after a disaster, recovery time is much faster.”

NTR offers two basic opportunities to become involved. The first is by offering to coach a family or individual where a volunteer is matched

with victims who qualify for assistance. Second, those looking to help can donate items or services to the virtual warehouse, where other donors or volunteers will be contacted when a match is made for a hurricane victim.

For information about the Neighbors to the Rescue Program, contact the coordinator in your area:

- Lee County – Marielys Figueroa at 239-337-4193
- Collier County – Patricia Rios at 239-793-0059
- Hendry County – Maria Depaz at 863-983-2274

For more information about Catholic Charities, visit www.catholiccharitiesdov.org.



- MASS CARDS***
Send a free sample of the new Mass cards from the Guild.
- WILLS WORKSHEETS***
Send a set of wills worksheets, for those without a will or updating one.
- CHARITABLE GIFT ANNUITY**
Please send me information on charitable gift annuities for the Catholic Charities Foundation.

The Good Samaritan Guild

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone (_____) _____

MAIL TO: Catholic Charities Foundation

6900-29 Daniels Pkwy, Box 334, Fort Myers, FL 33912

*** OR - Call Toll-Free 1-866-410-7656**

Remembrance For All Souls' Day

*I am the resurrection and the life:
whoever believes in me, though
they should die will come to life.*

John 11:25



On Thursday, November 2, 2006, the Good Samaritan Guild of the Catholic Charities Foundation has asked our Chaplain, Father Joel Schevers, O. Carm, to say a novena of Masses in memory of your deceased relatives and friends.

The Guild invites everyone to join us on The Feast of All Souls' Day by sending the names of departed loved ones whom you would like to have remembered in this novena of Masses. Please fill in the coupon provided below, clip and mail it to us no later than October 20, 2006. No gift is required.

All names received will be placed at the altar for the All Souls' Day Masses said by Father Joel. Together we shall remember and pray for our loved ones. Please be assured that we appreciate your support of the work of Catholic Charities with the poor and vulnerable in the Diocese of Venice.

Fr. Joel: Please remember the deceased friends and loved ones listed below in your Masses.

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

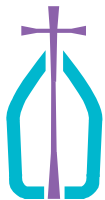
To send additional names, attach a separate sheet.
Please mail to:

Catholic Charities Foundation
6900-29 Daniels Pkwy, Box 334
Fort Myers, FL 33912

From: _____

Please mail your names to Catholic Charities by October 20, 2006.

Catholic Charities serves all who seek help regardless of race, religion or national origin



Catholic Charities
Diocese of Venice
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