

OCTOBER

2011

Thank you for supporting the following programs:

Brother Francis Shelter

Charlie Elder House

Clare House

Homeless Family Services

McAuley Manor

Pregnancy Support & Adoption Services

Refugee Assistance & Immigration Services

Special Needs Services

St. Francis House Food Pantry

*Providing Help
Creating Hope*

Catholic Social Services

Faith Motivates Former Client to Become Donor

Chong has met and been deeply moved by many people in need over the last 20 years. During the last two decades, Chong and her two children have stayed in numerous domestic violence shelters from Orlando to Los Angeles, as she worked to break free from an abusive relationship. The final shelter she called home was Clare House. Now, two years after leaving Clare House and living self-sufficiently, she donates 10% of her income back to Clare House.

In sharing her story with CSS, Chong recalled the story of others and their profound suffering. Chong cried when she told CSS of a teenage mother she met in Kansas City and a Hispanic family from Los Angeles. Chong didn't cry for herself but for the many others she met during her long journey to her modest one-bedroom apartment in Anchorage.

It took Chong months to save the money to move to Alaska from Los Angeles and leave her abusive husband for good.

After arriving in Anchorage, Chong stayed for three months at Clare House.

Case managers at Clare House helped her secure an apartment and find a job. Chong cleans apartments for a living and she deeply believes that her money is God's money and that she needs to give 10% of her income away. "The Bible tells us, page after page, to serve the poor, that is what God wants me to do, serve the poor," she explains.

"I asked God, when I was staying in the shelter in LA, why do your precious people live like this? Now I know, God wanted me to see suffering and experience my own suffering to be ready to help others. God sent me to earth to take care of poor people; that is why I give a monthly donation to Clare House. Poor mothers and children live at Clare House," Chong explains.

Chong moved to the United States from Korea in 1979. She never knew her birth mother and didn't get along well with her step-mother. "Clare House restored my body, mind and soul – it gave me energy to really change my life. I had never eaten so many fruits and vegetables before. I tell people, Clare House gave me the mother's love I missed out on as a child," said Chong.



Chong

A turning point in Chong's journey was when her 17-year-old son was unable to stay at Clare House. He was encouraged to go to Covenant House, the teen shelter. Chong realized that she didn't want to be the one living in shelters anymore, she wanted to work hard, keep her kids together, and help poor women with children. And that is exactly what she is doing today!

Make a gift today to join donors like Chong! Go on-line to our secure website at cssalaska.org and click on the donate button.

Thank you!



Catholic
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Calendar of Events

Anchorage Thanksgiving Blessing will be held Monday, November 21, 3 — 8 p.m. at St. Patrick's Parish (2111 Muldoon Road). Visit cssalaska.org to volunteer or host a canned vegetable collection drive.

St. Patrick's Advent Concert will be held at St. Patrick's Church on Friday, December 2, 2011 at 7:00 p.m. (\$7 per person / \$20 per family). Concert proceeds benefit Pregnancy Support at Catholic Social Services.

Christmas carols & Christmas Eve Mass, celebrated by Archbishop Schwietz, 5:30 p.m., Saturday, December 24th at Brother Francis Shelter, 1021 East 3rd Avenue.

PFD Check Off coming soon January 1, 2012 - March 31, 2012. Please remember CSS when you are filling out your PFD application. You are able to designate CSS as a beneficiary of all or a portion of your PFD! To find out more visit www.pickclickgive.org

Wilma Carr Charity Ball 2012 "All That Jazz" will be held Saturday, May 12, 2012, at the Hotel Captain Cook. The Charity Ball is Catholic Social Services largest annual fundraiser and helps to fund our nine social service programs. Please contact Tricia Teasley at 222-7355 or tteasley@cssalaska.org for more information.



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St. Francis House Food Pantry Open House & Blessing



Friends & funders cut the ribbon on the newly renovated St. Francis House Food Pantry. Catholic Social Services hosted an open house & blessing September 29th. From left to right, Archbishop Emeritus Francis T. Hurley, Jeff Baird (Ramuson Foundation) blocked from view, Terry Allard (Charity Ball Chair/The Wilson Agency), Marty Howard (Walmart), Darrell Hess (Municipality of Anchorage), Bill Hogan (Alaska Mental Health Trust Authority), Linda Bond (St. Francis House Program Manager), Susan Bomalaski (Catholic Social Services Executive Director) and Lyn Whitley (FNBA).



Walmart presented a check for \$50,000 to purchase food.



Lyn Whitley admires First National Bank Alaska's name on the 2011 Wilma Carr Charity Ball "Together We Can" project box truck. FNBA gave a leadership gift of \$5,000 to purchase the truck. The Charity Ball Committee selected this capital project because they knew what a vitally important piece of equipment it is for CSS. This truck transports groceries for over 13,000 individuals a year seeking help at the food pantry and transports furniture and household items for the Refugee Assistance and Immigration Services program, helping to establish a safe home in America for those who have been traumatized by war and persecution.



Gospel Groove generously donated their time and talent.

Clare House Replacement Project Update



Susan Bomalaski, Ph.D., LPC
CSS Executive Director

Pick.
Click.
Give.

It is PFD time! A special thank you to all of those who Picked, Clicked & Gave to CSS when they filled out their on-line Permanent Fund Dividend application in early 2011. CSS received \$28,395 to help the homeless & hungry in our community. To find out more about the program visit: pickclickgive.org.



Clare House has been in the news recently as a result of receiving a Community Development Block Grant (CDBG), administered by the Municipality, to provide the funding necessary for the Clare House Replacement Project. The seeds of this project were planted several years ago when, after thoughtful consideration and significant client, staff and community feedback, the Catholic Social Services (CSS) Board of Trustees decided to move forward to replace the current Clare House facility. The project will allow flexibility for longer stays made necessary by the lack of affordable housing in Anchorage and the long waits for subsidized housing by providing an increased number of emergency shelter and transitional housing beds.

Currently, Clare House is only able to accommodate 45 women and children per night in a 7,500 sq. foot space, sleeping in one of two large rooms, fitted with bunk beds in living units separated by a short wall. Families basically live in cubicles. This lack of privacy leaves little room for quiet and meaningful time for parenting and planning. How-

ever crowded, Clare House residents are very grateful to be at Clare House, and there is often a significant waiting list to get in. Families on the waiting list often need to spend the night in their cars, camp, sleep at a hotel or find some type of shelter — most often unsuitable for children.

The physical structure was built in 1969, and was acquired by CSS in 1984. Over its 27 years of service, CH has provided critically needed shelter and case management services.

As many of you know, Clare House is located at the end of an industrial zone at 420 West 54th Avenue; an inconvenient and hazardous setting. Most job interviews, appointments with other agencies and doctor appointments require one or two bus transfers; the nearest bus stop is 1/2 mile away down a road heavily travelled by large trucks. Women often walk in the dark and cold with their children to the bus stop on Arctic Blvd. 54th Avenue doesn't have sidewalks and isn't pedestrian friendly.

The Eagle's Nest hotel located at 4110 Spenard Road is a suitable replacement property currently on the

market and is approximately 17,000 sq. ft. The property includes a 31 room hotel (capacity of 120), a four-plex apartment unit, and a 9,660 sq. ft. excess land parcel with single family zoning. The purchase price is \$1.7 million with additional expenses for necessary renovations and furnishings. We have secured \$1.5 million for the project so far from a State Capital grant, the Rasmuson Foundation, the Block Family Foundation, and the CDBG grant. Proceeds from the proposed sale or lease of the current facility, as well as additional grant and donation funding, are still pending.

We still need your help to purchase this facility! Please make your contribution to the Clare House Replacement Project fund by visiting cssalaska.org and clicking on donate. Part of the Rasmuson Foundation funding is a \$50,000 challenge grant. So each dollar you donate will be matched dollar for dollar!