



University Community News

Volume 4

Restoring hope . . . one life at a time.

Issue 4

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FRIENDSHIP BRIDGE (Senior Adult Connection)

Thirteen Years ago when Friendship Bridge first began its outreach to the community, it was our hope that as we grew that we would not have to increase our fees for the lunches. During this time span and because of the generosity of University Community Ministries and University Church, we have not had to increase the fee except four times. For many this would not seem like a lot. However, to those who are on a fixed income, it is.

Beginning the first meeting in October, the price of the meal increased to \$4.00 per person. If anyone is interested in sponsoring a meal or two for all those who attend Friendship Bridge, it would be greatly appreciated not only by the Friendship Bridge staff but also the senior adults who attend on a regular basis. We are now servicing 70 to 75 twice-a-month.



*They (We) will celebrate
 Your abundant goodness
 and joyfully sing of Your
 righteousness. The LORD is
 gracious and
 compassionate, slow to
 anger and rich in love. The LORD is
 good to all; He has compassion on
 all He has made.*

Psalm 145:7-9 (NIV)

UCM is all about *"Restoring
 hope . . . one life at a time".*

Save the Date

**11/23/2008 @ 12:30PM – Operation
 Jumpstart "Heart of the Harvest"
 Thanksgiving Dinner at University
 Church Family Life Center**

**12/11/2008 – PCAT Christmas Party
 in Sulphur Springs**

**12/19/2008 – Operation Jumpstart
 Christmas Party at the home of the
 Van Gorp's.**

**06/18/2009 – 2009 Restoring Hope
 Banquet**

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Spotlighting Volunteer Doris Hill -

When you think of Doris Hill, you think of the ultimate happy and willing worker. Whether she is assisting in preparing food, setting up tables, placing labels on

various mail outs or making a video as "Greasy Granny" to help promote the student ministries, she is willing to volunteer her services to help others.

For Friendship Bridge to be successful in reaching the senior adults in the North Tampa Community, we depend upon volunteers to give of themselves to help prepare meals, decorate tables, send out birthday cards, serve the tables, and much more. When Doris is asked to do any of the above, she will tell you, "I'll try" and then she gives 110 percent.

Having retired from Maas Brothers Stores where she prepared food in the restaurant, she can tell you the right amount of seasoning, how long to cook it, and she makes the best tea and coffee in town.

Doris, we salute you this month as the Friendship Bridge Volunteer. Thank you for all you do!

For more information about Friendship Bridge, call the UCM office at (813) 949-0109 or contact the Friendship Bridge Director, Molly Cox at (813) 933-3991 ext. 227.

OPERATION JUMPSTART (Homeless Recovery Program)

UCM, Inc continues to help the homeless population in the Northeast Tampa area by reaching out to them with compassion and the love of Christ. We provide food to the hungry, as well as clothes and services that restore hope to the hurting.

Homelessness in the Tampa Bay area is growing. We have not seen it this bad in all the years we have been serving. The men are not able to find

work and the number of women coming to the feeding lines has increased significantly. These folks are hopeless and desperate for a hot meal, a hot shower, an opportunity to work, a change of clothes, and some sign of hope from someone to show they care. They come to UCM filled with fear, anger, shame, mental illness, addictions, and hurting due to abuse, emotional trauma, bad decisions, and circumstances beyond their control and no fault of their own.

The limited services that UCM is able to provide are life changing and provide hope to many to help them face another day. We believe every time we restore hope by helping a broken, hopeless, lost man or woman get their life back in some small way, we improve our Northeast Tampa community area.

This Thanksgiving UCM will be preparing a traditional Thanksgiving meal. Many look forward to this meal but with the increasing numbers it also means UCM has an increasing need and you can help us.

How can you help?

- Pray for Operation Jumpstart (OJ) that God would continue to provide more volunteers.
- We need permanent and second (2nd) chance job connections for the homeless men and women who are really trying and want to get back into society as productive members.
- We need transitional housing for several of the homeless who are faithful.
- Participate in and support financially UCM, Inc.
- We desperately need men's clothing, especially men's pants sizes 28 through 36.
- We need canned goods, socks, razors, and food donations.

On Sunday, November 23 at 12:30 pm. in the University Church Family Life Center, UCM will be hosting the annual "Heart of the Harvest" Thanksgiving dinner for the homeless. If you would like to give of your time or resources, please call

the UCM office at 813-949-0109 or America Van Gorp at 813-390-0271 (cell). In preparation of the cold weather ahead of us, we are collecting blankets and warm clothing for the homeless; we especially need men's clothes. Please contact UCM or America if you have these items to donate.

Expressions of help and donations for the homeless may be dropped off at University Church Benevolence House or Family Life Center. You can also call the UCM, Inc office at 813-949-0109 or contact the OJ Program Director, Jerome Van Gorp at 813-334-3709.

Remembering Wanda Oliveras -

Mrs. Wanda Oliveras, who was known as just "Wanda" to many who knew and loved her. Wanda lost her battle with lung cancer and died on June 21, 2008 in her home with family.

Wanda came to UCM over ten years ago through the OJ breakfast outreach program with no hope and in much pain. Through the support services, encouragement, much prayer, and support from the UCM volunteers, Wanda turned her life around.



Wanda was born in New York City but lived most of her life in Tampa as a Floridian where she graduated as a nurse's aid and worked with the elderly people. After her restoration, Wanda helped the homeless people and gave from her heart the little that she had. She became faithful to her church and loved her University Church family.

Wanda loved to dance, cook, and make people laugh, but most of all she loved her family. She loved all her children. While we wish she were well and cancer free with us, we are confident Wanda is happy in another place. She strongly believed in God



and His good works. So we remember Wanda and her contribution to the poor and hungry, not in sorrow but in joy.

PARENTS AND CHILDREN ADVANCE TOGETHER (Family Literacy Program)

The PCAT after-school literacy program in Sulphur Springs opened its door for the 2008-2009 school-year on September 22.

Fifty-four students and 42 tutors enthusiastically walk through that door each week. Each student enjoys the one-on-one tutoring they receive from dedicated USF and HCC students. The tutors volunteer their time to assist these underserved children to read. The children look upon these university students as teachers and mentors. A wonderful trust develops between them - they work together, they play together, and they discuss issues that affect their day to day lives.

A Family Night Orientation was held in October. The purpose: to allow parents to tour the PCAT facility, learn about their child's schedule, and to meet their child's teacher/tutor. The families later enjoyed a meal of hamburgers and hotdogs.

In keeping with the PCAT mission . . . to assist underserved children and parents to acquire the knowledge and skills necessary to maximize academic and social growth . . . GED classes began with 25 parents in attendance. These classes are given twice a week, Tuesdays and Thursdays from 9:00 a.m. – 12:00 noon. To encourage parents to attend, child care is provided for their pre-school children ages 3 - 5.

BOARD MEMBER PROFILE

UCM is pleased to introduce you to Jerome Van Gorp, President of University Community Ministries, Inc. and Operation Jumpstart Program Director.



Jerome currently works for AT&T Corporation as a Project Manager and holds a Realtor License with Avalar Florida Real Estate Services specializing in Residential Sales.

Jerome graduated from St. Leo College in Dade City with a degree in Business Administration. While at St. Leo College he served as President and Vice President of the Sigma Lambda Fraternity from 1977 to 1998, Vice President of the International Club in 1974 and President of the Circle K club from 1975 to 1976. He also served as the Lt Governor of Circle K Sun Coast Division in 1979 and 1980.

In 1978 Jerome joined IBM Field Engineering Division as an Administrative Assistant and was promoted through various jobs and joined the management staff in 1998 and was later outsourced to AT&T Corporation in 2000. Jerome also served as the IBM Club President in 1985 when he worked for IBM.

Jerome has attended University Church for the past 30 years, serves as a teacher for the last 28 years and serves as an elder for the last 11 years. He is married to America Van Gorp and they just celebrated their 15th year of marriage. They own active and adorable male and female brother and sister yorkies named Boscoe and Gidget.

He has a heart of compassion for the poor, the needy, and the homeless men and women in the Tampa Bay area. We are pleased to have him serve as our UCM, Inc Board President.

VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT

One word comes to mind when one mentions John and June Thacker . . .



Faithfulness. They credit the late Frank Brown, an elder at University Church for introducing them to the church approximately five years ago. Since that time, they have become

involved in Operation Jumpstart, which their zeal and passion are obvious to anyone who is around them for even a short period of time.

Through family experience, they know about the hardship of addiction and living on the streets. It is through feeding the hungry that they take the gospel to the streets of Tampa.

So if you are ever looking for June or John, just stop by the kitchen or Benevolence House on any particular weekend and you will readily see the gospel at work - Going into the entire world sharing the gospel by feeding the hungry.

Thank you June and John for all that you do!



NEEDS

UCM needs your time and talents – volunteer today! Call the UCM office at (813) 949-0109 and let us hear from you!

CHECK US OUT!

Visit UCM's website at www.ucom-ministries.org for the latest news and updates. Your comments are welcomed and encouraged.

If there is anything that you would like to see posted on the website or in the quarterly newsletter, email us at universitycommin@msn.com or fax to (813) 949-9159. We would love to hear from you!



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