

## **Pets & Companion Animals**

### **ANOTHER WAY TO FEEL AT HOME**

A pet's love and affection are unconditional and everlasting. That love is an important part of the emotional support network for people living with HIV/AIDS. There are a number of pets in our homes and many residents in the apartments enjoy the company of their dog or cat.

Residents at Agape Dos enjoy spoiling Flash, the gentle beagle that lives with them. Flash can often be found curled up at the foot of a resident's bed when someone isn't feeling well. He also loves going out to the backyard with the residents, going for a walk, and hanging out in the dining room looking for a treat.

"The animals in our homes provide comfort, entertainment, a reason to get outside and a constant companion on long days," says program director Michele Boyer. "Having a pet nuzzle up to you when you're not feeling well is great medicine."

At Clare Apartments, where residents live independently, a number of residents have pets. One of these is Coco, a lively Chihuahua Miniature Pincher mix. When his owner is not feeling well, there are always volunteers to take him for a walk and play "chase the ball" with him on the lawn. He entertains at Clare parties and even dresses up for Halloween

*continues on back*



Wesley with Coco outside Clare Apartments.



### **A MESSAGE FROM THE Executive Director**

I have been thinking about community recently –how Clare Housing's programs are elements of neighborhoods, how we try to nurture communities of support and how we engage the larger community in our work.

*All of our programs - foster homes and apartments –are in communities.* The people who live in our homes and apartments walk their dogs, chat with neighbors, ride the bus, weed the garden and patronize the local coffee shops and convenience stores. The volunteer profile on page 3 tells of how a simple encounter by a neighbor blossomed into a wonderful long-term connection.

*Our programs are communities of support,* places where individuals have the opportunity to give and receive support and build human bonds. People support one another in the easy times as well as the hard. When a long-term resident at one of our foster homes recently passed away, a number of Clare Housing staff and residents joined family and friends at the memorial service to mourn the loss. He had lived with us, off and on, for 7 years. In the article on page 7 you will read about another resident, Carmen who lives at Agape Dos.

*Finally, we can only accomplish our mission with community support.* Tom Kingston, the president of the Amherst H. Wilder Foundation, has identified what he calls the three disciplines of successful nonprofits. One of them is engaging the social capital of the community:

*"The successful nonprofits of the future will be those who align their agenda with the tremendous social capital of our community. That social capital lies in the desire of so many citizens to give of their time, talent, and resources to maintain our extremely high quality of life in the Twin Cities."*

Engagement takes many forms – people who volunteer to cook at a home, help in the office, tutor a resident, attend an event, make a financial contribution, serve on the board of directors, make a phone call to a member of congress regarding pending legislation or simply talk about our work to their friends and colleagues. Without the social capital of the diverse and generous Twin Cities community, we at Clare Housing could not do our work.

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One way we "engage the social capital of the community" is through our signature event, *Friends Dining with Friends*. It is successful because it raises critical funds for our programs while it emphasizes community and friendship. What better way to spend a winter's evening than by inviting friends into your home to share good food and tell people about Clare Housing's work and mission. Stay tuned – you'll be hearing more about FDWF – and please consider hosting a party.

Lee Lewis, Executive Director

■ **Thank you for helping us build a better path for people living with HIV/AIDS.**

PLEASE VISIT US ONLINE AT: [www.clarehousing.org](http://www.clarehousing.org)

## Home Profiles

*This is the second in a six part series on the history of our homes for people living with HIV/AIDS. To read more about the history of Clare Housing and housing for people with HIV/AIDS check out the "About Clare Housing" page of our website [www.clarehousing.org](http://www.clarehousing.org).*



## CRITICAL NEED LEADS TO A COMPASSIONATE SOLUTION *Grace House I*

The year was 1989 and HIV/AIDS had made its devastating way into the communities of Minneapolis/St. Paul. St. Joan of Arc Church, a catholic church in south Minneapolis, had just hired a new priest named Father Bill Murtaugh to lead its congregation. Fr. Murtaugh issued a challenge from his pulpit one Sunday: he called on his parishioners to form an AIDS task force to respond to the HIV/AIDS crisis that had hit the Twin Cities.

The task force immediately became active by converting the church's rectory into a care facility for people with AIDS. Grace House opened its doors in early 1990 and welcomed its first resident into the facility, Terry Caldwell.

In the early days, volunteers provided the majority of services necessary to run the home. They worked volunteer shifts (often hand-in-hand with family members) providing end-of-life care to our very ill residents. There was also a live-in caregiver and an administrator who oversaw resident's care and supervised the volunteer care giving staff.

Over 50 members of St. Joan of Arc worked around the clock providing bed side care, preparing meals, supporting grieving families, fundraising, and much more. The time commitment and the intensity of work was taxing on this compassionate group. Eventually, it was determined that the home needed additional staffing and Kevin Dorenbach was hired as the first executive director in 1991. Four additional staff members (including current staff person Nancy Wilke) were hired to manage the resident's care shortly after.

Grace House served 80 individuals in the years 1990-1996. All but two of them passed away there. Quilts created in memory of these residents will be on display December 11th through January 31st in the foyer of the Clare Housing offices and board room. They are part of a larger display commemorating 20 years of housing for people living with HIV/AIDS in the Twin Cities.

The services of Grace House began to shift from all hospice and end-stage care to long-term care services in 1996. This was a turning point for HIV/AIDS treatment due to the discovery of a new class of HIV medications called protease inhibitors. Today, approximately one-third of Grace House's residents are able to stabilize their health and return to lives in the community. However, Grace House still cares for persons in the final stage of their life.

Today, MaryJo Jeppesen serves as the Lead Caregiver for the home, coordinating the care of the four residents, and St. Joan of Arc remains a critical partner in our work. They help with upkeep of the facility, provide financial support and more often than not they are still cooking the evening meal.

### AIDS TASK FORCE MEMBERS:

*The people with the passion and dedication that made Grace House a reality.*

Rita Steinhagen, Fr. Jim Cassidy, Jim Maurer, Cathy Meyer, Sharon Schachl, Sister Joanne Lucid, Ron Joki, Jay Pearson, Beth Crummy, MaryJo Fritz, Mike Armato, Peter Peterson, Jack O'Connell, Marlys Weber, Bill Borgman, and Mary Eve Thomas.

Brother Paul Hanisko was the live-in caregiver, Jan (Schutz) Buczek was the administrator and Kevin Dorenback was the first Executive Director.

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An excerpt from a recent letter of support written by longtime Grace House volunteer and AIDS task force member, Cathy Meyer:

"When Grace House began to minister to those with HIV and AIDS, it was hospice. People came there to die with dignity. Many people came and went quickly. It was difficult to show up with dinner and not know who might be gone that week. Now it is a different story. While they are residents, they are given a safe and stable place to regain strength and serenity. In the environment of an adult foster care program, they are given the care they require and the support they need to manage their health and their lives. When their health has failed and they face death; they are provided with an atmosphere that allows them to die in comfort and peace. Many residents regain their health and are able to move on and out. They face life on their own with new skills and with dignity. Miracles happen at Grace House. As a volunteer, I am delighted to be part of those miracles."

*“They aren’t just dog walkers. Sometimes it is all we can do to keep up with the needs of our residents”*

–Michael Brey, Agape Dos caregiver



## VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

Volunteers play an important role at Clare Housing. We rely on their generous spirit to cook meals at the homes each evening, to help in the office, to raise awareness about HIV and AIDS, to run errands for the homes, and much, much more..

**Do you have a talent to share? We need you.**

Clare Housing is currently looking for additional volunteers in these areas:

- Cooks to prepare an evening, family-style meal in the homes
- Office support at our administrative offices in northeast Minneapolis
- Gardening, housekeeping and errands
- Assistance at Clare Apartments
- Tech saavy intern
- Help Shoveling

Offer your professional skills, i.e. hair cuts, tax services, holistic therapies, etc.

**Interested in learning more?** Contact Lee Haugee, Event and Volunteer Manager, at: [lee.haugee@clarehousing.org](mailto:lee.haugee@clarehousing.org) or by phone at 612-236-9527. She will be happy to tell you more about volunteering with Clare Housing.

## LORI NIETERS AND PAUL WILKIN *Pets Connecting Neighbors*

When Agape Dos was in the planning stages, Lori Nieters and Paul Wilkin became aware of the “AIDS house” that was being built on their block. “It really interested us both, but we were too busy to become involved at that time.”

It wasn’t until years later that Lori and Paul stopped to talk to Jon, a resident of Agape Dos who was out in the yard with Flash, the house beagle. Jon was talking about how chubby Flash was getting and that the vet had prescribed more exercise. Lori and Paul walked their two dogs every night and offered to add Flash to the mix. The affair began right then and there.

What began as an occasional jaunt around a block has morphed into a wonderful long-term commitment to Flash and Agape Dos. “We don’t have kids,” says Lori. “Not the two-legged kind anyway, so we lavish that attention on our dogs, including Flash. Some of the dog accoutrements are expensive so we help when we can.” Michael Brey, lead caregiver at Agape Dos, praises Lori and Paul. “They aren’t just dog walkers. Sometimes it is all we can do to keep up with the needs of our residents. They keep an eye on Flash and her health; they brought it to our attention that she was slowing down and limping a lot.” Sure enough, Flash was diagnosed with arthritis and is now on glucosamine and baby aspirin. “They take care of Flash so that Flash can take care of some of the emotional needs of the residents.”

They even take Flash on occasional field trips. A month ago Lori took Flash on an outing to a pet store for a new leash and look at winter booties. “No dog likes to walk in the cold, especially one with arthritis,” commented Lori as she described their field trip. “It was just the two of us. Flash was so excited, sniffing around the store with her tail wagging. Flash actually smiles when she is happy!”

The Animal Humane Society is Lori and Paul’s other volunteer activity; where they are involved in a foster care program. “Of course we want to keep every kitten and puppy we take care of,” gushes Lori, “but so far we have only added one cat named Floyd.” Flash is now considered a cousin to the Nieters/Wilkin family. And what about that weight problem Flash exhibited earlier? She is still carrying around extra weight. According to her vet, every dog has a job. Flash’s job is to comfort the residents. If that means eating the food they enjoy offering to her, well, so be it. In the meantime, Lori and Paul will do all they can to see that Flash remains happy, healthy and well exercised.

## BINGO HIGHLIGHTS

Bingo A-GoGo attendees had a blast at Mad Hatter Bingo, held for the first time at the Zurah Shrine Center on September 22. The event raised critical funds for Clare Housing and Park House, the benefiting partners of Bingo A-GoGo. Miss Richfield 1981 led the evening's festivities with her signature flair, entertaining the crowd while she read the numbers and chided her guest game callers and volunteers.



Photos by John Hustad



## More Bingo A-GoGo

*2008 Bingo A-GoGo events*

- March 1 – Mardi Gras Bingo
- May 10 – Spring Prom Bingo
- September 20 – Camp Bingo
- November 22 – Sporty Bingo

Check out [www.bingoagogo.com](http://www.bingoagogo.com) to see more photos, buy tickets or sponsor a game.



## STRATEGIC VISION

### Clare Housing will create more housing for people living with HIV/AIDS.

When Clare Housing opened Clare Apartments in 2005, over four times as many people applied for an apartment as the number of units we had available. After just six weeks we stopped adding names to the waiting list. However, we could not ignore a closed waiting list of people living with HIV/AIDS who are homeless, in substandard (or unstable) housing. In response, the Clare Housing board of directors began discussions on how to alleviate this critical need.

A committee of the board reviewed literature, interviewed key informants and reflected on Clare Housing's own experience and capacity. It attempted to determine the need for housing for people living with HIV/AIDS and explored options for meeting them. The result of the research and analysis are that **Clare housing has reaffirmed its commitment to increase housing opportunities and services to PLWH/A** who:

- are most marginalized, e.g., homeless, mentally ill and immigrant populations
- have least access to resources such as housing and health care
- are most vulnerable, e.g., those with multiple diagnoses or who lack social supports
- need family housing

### Specifically, Clare Housing will:

- Seek to create a scattered-site housing program that provides rental assistance and case management to targeted groups. This model allows for flexibility in both location and size of units, can be implemented more quickly than new construction and allows for more confidentiality.
- Develop a second supportive housing program, similar to Clare Apartments, that includes home health services. This model allows for the creation of a supportive community and more cost-effective provision of services.
- Expand and/or enhance the continuum of housing opportunities for PLWH/A. This will be accomplished by the first two goals as well as by assessing gaps in the system and identifying individuals who are currently not served well or "fall through the cracks."

After having spent a year and a half consolidating the growth experienced with the opening of Clare Apartments and the merger of AIDS Care Partners and Clare Housing we are grounded and well positioned to capitalize on what we've learned and move forward. It is time to continue to realize our mission of providing housing, supportive services and compassionate care to people who are living with HIV and AIDS.

### THE CLARION

*is a publication for friends of Clare Housing, a 501(c)3 non-profit provider of care, services and housing for people living with HIV/AIDS.*

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**GIVING AT WORK?** Consider directing your donation to Clare Housing through your work place giving campaign. Just write in Clare Housing and our address utilizing a donor choice option that is available through most work place campaigns including United Way and Community Shares. Be sure to let them know that you would like to be acknowledged by Clare Housing. **QUESTIONS?** Contact Melissa Conway at 612-236-9524.



# 7

## FRIENDS dining with FRIENDS

### WISH LIST

*The donation of items listed on our wish list help us to provide special touches that help our residents feel welcome and at home. Many of these items or services would not be possible without generous donations from community members.*

#### Welcome supplies for residents

- New linens and comforters (twin size)
- New linens and comforters (full and queen size)
- Bed pillows
- New towels and wash clothes
- Laundry detergent/softener
- Paper products (toilet paper, napkins, paper towels)
- Household cleaning supplies

#### Special touches

- Video's/dvd's (new/used)
- Music CD's (new/used)
- Movie passes
- Museum or theatre passes
- Gift certificates to affordable restaurants
- Bus passes

#### Creating a household

- Floor/table lamps
- Grocery store gift cards
- Target/Kmart gift cards

#### Staying connected

- Long distance phone cards

#### Services

- Handyperson to help with occasional projects
- Volunteers to help shovel/snow blow at any of our homes

### FESTIVE, FUN AND OH SO EASY!

*February 2008–June 2008*

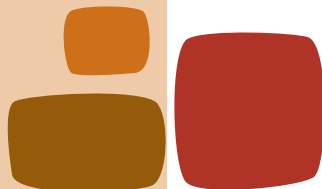
**Friends Dining with Friends** is a constellation of cocktail and dinner parties, with each host providing a forum for the awareness and support of Clare Housing's work. Hosts plan an event –ranging from a small neighborhood dinner to a catered gourmet affair– and guests are then provided the opportunity to donate to Clare Housing's quality programs. This is a grassroots effort that connects friends, neighbors and colleagues to the good work of Clare Housing.

*Because there are very few direct expenses for Clare Housing, all of the proceeds go directly for services to people with HIV/AIDS.*

Our goal is to have 50 parties in 2008 beginning in February. If you're interested in hearing more about hosting a party contact Lee Haugee at 612-236-9527.



photo by Terry Gydesen



## Resident Profiles

Clare Housing provided affordable housing, supportive services and compassionate care to 76 diverse individuals during the last year. Their stories are each unique and memorable. A few of our residents have graciously agreed to share their story. These will be published in the Clarion and on our website in the months to come.

### UNTIL THERE'S A CURE

Clare Housing recently received a grant from the Until There's A Cure Foundation which was started by two California mothers in 1993 to raise funding and awareness about HIV/AIDS. The heart of the foundation is The Bracelet. It is the key source for funding efforts in the foundation's HIV/AIDS prevention education/awareness, care and services, and vaccine development support.

To date, nearly \$9,000,000 has been granted to organizations throughout the United States. Please go to their website [www.utac.org](http://www.utac.org) to learn more about Until There's A Cure and consider adding The Bracelet to your holiday list. You'll be supporting a great cause.

"Many thanks to Rock the Cause and all the volunteers who helped produce Glitter Ball – A tribute to DIVA Glam on November 3 at the Fine Line Café in Minneapolis. The event benefited Clare Housing and Minnesota AIDS Project."

## ONE DAY AT A TIME

### Carmen's Story



Carmen was born in Leech Lake, Minnesota. Of Ojibwe heritage, she and her younger brother were adopted by a Quaker family and raised in Lake Elmo. While her adoptive parents provided a stable and happy home life, she characterizes her youth as rather rebellious. As an adult she traveled all over the country, including California and then Boston, working as a seamstress while making art with paint and textiles.

Carmen's life was disrupted suddenly by a car accident in the early 1980s, which left her with a traumatic brain injury (TBI) that has caused continual challenges. She says, "It's really affected my thinking. I have been in nursing homes on and off since then." It was while living in a metro-area nursing home in 2003 that Carmen first learned she was HIV-positive. "When [the disease] first hit me I was sick. I was so sick, right away," she recalls, "and at that time it didn't matter to me if I died or not. But now, you know, I'm kind of healthy, so that's not what I want to happen. Even though I know it will, because nobody lives forever."

She started taking HIV medications when she moved into Agape Dos in 2004, after learning of Clare Housing through her nurses. When asked her opinion on living at Agape Dos, she replies, "What I like about it is that I'm allowed and kind of expected to go my way. But [staff] give me lots of memory help, like

with meds." Care giving staff members also work with Carmen on the tasks of daily living. Some are easier for her than others.

She describes how different the environment is at Agape Dos than in a nursing home. "I was in so many nursing homes; it really is pretty stressful. I would call this house a peaceful setting, and that just makes [such a] difference." Staff at Agape Dos referred Carmen to Park House, a day program for people living with HIV/AIDS. Here she is able to socialize with others who have had HIV and TBI or similar challenges. She says, "I don't interact much socially and don't go out a lot, because memory is so important and I always feel kind of like, what's your name again? But people at Park House, we've all got similar situations...it's a wonderful place."

When not at Park House, Carmen loves to spend time with her 22-year-old daughter, who lives and works in the neighborhood, and her two "wonderful" grandchildren. Many afternoons Carmen can also be found playing her favorite games—Scrabble and cribbage—with a housemate friend at Agape Dos. She also looks forward to having her nails done by a volunteer who comes to the home. Carmen says she is very pleased to be living at Agape Dos. "I am well-suited for this environment," she says, "it is a lovely place to be."

Carmen's story serves as an example of Clare Housing's holistic approach in working with people who struggle with multiple diagnoses. In addition to managing her health related to her HIV, the staff members at Agape Dos have helped Carmen find a routine that fosters independence within the memory limitations related to her brain injury.



*Freddie, the cat who thinks he's a dog, lives at Agape Home*

**Pets and Companion Animals continued from page 1**

(last year he was Zorro). "Coco is very smart –he opens my desk drawer where I have doggie treats hidden for him," says Cynthia Wolterding, supportive services manager at Clare Apartments. "Like many dogs, he is very intuitive and snuggles up to his owner when he is feeling sick or depressed. He is a real therapy dog!"

Six of the residents at the apartments have cats. One resident, who was homeless before moving to Clare Apartments, says that being able to have the companionship of his cats is the most attractive part of living in his own place. There is always someone to greet him when he comes home.

Clare Housing staff members also educate residents on how to stay healthy with their pets. "The health risks are generally pretty low compared to the benefit of the companionship, but there are some health risks for people with HIV/AIDS," says Boyer. "We clean cat litter boxes and remind residents to wash their hands well if they do it themselves."

The combination of comforting pets and caregiving staff are another way Clare Housing helps make our facilities feel like home. "Having a dog or cat in our houses can really give residents a sense of 'home'. Our mission is to be more than a sterile care facility, our goal is to provide a warm, loving home in which our residents receive care," says Boyer. "We believe the pets provide comfort, companionship and healing to our residents."



929 Central Avenue NE  
Minneapolis, MN 55413  
Phone: 612-236-9515  
[www.clarehousing.org](http://www.clarehousing.org)

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*"We can throw stones,  
complain about them,  
stumble on them,  
climb over them,  
or build with them..."*

*–William Arthur Ward*