

Society of St. Vincent De Paul of Contra Costa County

Spring 2013 Newsletter

Announcing ShopSVdP-CC.org

Start your usual online shopping on ShopSVdP-CC.org and a portion of the proceeds of every sale will go directly to St. Vincent de Paul. Simply start on ShopSVdP-CC.org and click through to the shopping experience of your choice. It's an easy and fun way to support SVdP!

Upcoming Events:

- May 4, 2013—Ozanam Orientation
- August 3, 2013—Bocce Ball Tournament Fundraiser

Upcoming Thrift Store Sales:

- April 27—End of the Month Sale (Pittsburg and Pleasant Hill Stores)
- May 11—Mother's Day Sale (Pittsburg Store)
- May 25-27—Memorial Day Sale (Both Stores)

SVdP Updates Website, Facebook, and Announces New Blog

SVdP has been working hard to update and streamline our interactive online experience. We are in the process of updating our website, Facebook, and rolling out a new SVdP blog to bring you up to the minute information about what is happening at the district council office and throughout the county at our 27 conferences.

These platforms are designed with interaction in mind. If you have photos or updates from your conference, please post them on our Facebook wall and give all of our Vincentians a chance to see what your conference is doing. You may also send pictures and updates to our Communications Associate, Leslie Spainhower (lspainhower@svdp-cc.org) and she will post them to Facebook or the website for you.

Social Media gives us an opportunity to further connect with Vincentians around the county. Please take advantage of this great opportunity!

Visit SVdP's updated website at www.svdp-cc.org and follow us on Facebook at [facebook.com/svdpcontracosta/](https://www.facebook.com/svdpcontracosta/)

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Caroleve (left) returned to the clinic to thank Dr. Jane Hewitt and the rest of the staff for their excellent medical care.

RotaCare Pittsburg Free Medical Clinic at St. Vincent de Paul Saves Patient's Life

Volunteer doctors and nurses at RotaCare Pittsburg Free Medical Clinic at St. Vincent de Paul literally saved a woman's life, one of many examples of high quality

medical care for the uninsured in our community.

Caroleve, a 61-year-old single woman without medical insurance, first visited the clinic for pain in her thumb and big toe, then a couple of weeks later with pain in her thigh. During her exam, the doctors discovered that she had elevated blood pressure. She returned a week later to have her blood pressure rechecked and was put on two medications, provided for free by the volunteer pharmacists.

When she returned for her follow-up appointment two weeks later, her condition had worsened. She was tired, short of breath, had a persistent cough, and a skin rash.

itt agreed to see her, and became concerned.

Dr. Hewitt determined that Caroleve needed further testing. She called the Contra Costa County Regional Medical Center in Martinez and convinced the doctor on duty to see her patient.

Following a stress echo, Caroleve was immediately transferred to John Muir Hospital where she underwent emergency angioplasty and had a stent placed to treat critical coronary artery disease. She is now in a cardiac rehab program with John Muir, has normal blood pressure, and a regular doctor through County Health Care to oversee her care.

"This is exactly how this should work," says Volunteer Nurse Angela Rivello, "Nurses who listen, doctors who have the expertise and take the time, and local health care providers all working together to make sure that those who don't have insurance don't fall through the cracks. The staff at RotaCare, the County ER, and John Muir Hospital all worked together to save this patient's life."

Caroleve returned to the clinic to thank the nurses and Dr. Hewitt for taking the time to listen to her and for making sure she got the care she needed.

"This is why I volunteer at the free clinic in Pittsburg," says Dr. Hewitt. "I am able to help those with little or no insurance get the quality medical care they need to improve and even save their lives."

Workforce Development Program Receives \$10,000 Donation

In March, Wells Fargo donated \$10,000 to SVdP's program that helps tough-to-employ individuals get back on a payroll.

The SVdP Workforce Development Program helps people develop the skills necessary to find and keep employment. It combines classroom training with paid, part time work at SVdP. The goal? Help chronically unemployed people gain the hard job skills and the soft skills necessary to be successfully employed.



Ashoo Vaid (far left) and Greg Young from Wells Fargo present SVdP Executive Director, Melanie Anguay, and President, Jim Noe, with a \$10,000 donation to support our Workforce Development Program



Workforce Development helps participants like Samuel (left) find long term, successful employment. Samuel, pictured with Thrift Store Manager Willie Moffet, participated in the Workforce Development Program in 2012. He is now employed full time with CalTrans and intends to pursue a degree in psychology in the fall.

Participants have been out of the workforce and lack the experience most employers need. With guidance from volunteer instructors, mentors, and SVdP staff, participants are coached in writing resumes, interview skills, time and financial management and more. Participants work in several areas of SVdP operations, gaining administrative, retail, warehouse, and truck driving experience.

On March 1, Wells Fargo representatives Greg Young and Ashoo Vaid toured SVdP's Family Resource Center in Pittsburg and presented SVdP with \$10,000 to support the Workforce Development Program. Thank you to Well's Fargo for this generous donation! This donation, and others like it, is vital to SVdP's goal of helping people get back to work.

Volunteer Needs!

The RotaCare Pittsburg Free Medical Clinic at St. Vincent de Paul is in need of **volunteer medical professionals**, especially pharmacists and bilingual social workers. For more information please email Pittsburg@rotacarebayarea.org

The District Council Office is looking for an **administrative volunteer** Monday-Friday 10 am—2 pm (hours flexible). Duties will include greeting clients and visitors at the door and light office duties such as shredding, data entry, mailing, etc.

SVdP Acknowledges Hard Working Volunteers

As a volunteer driven organization, SVdP relies on hundreds of volunteers each year to fulfill our mission of bringing concrete aid and comfort to those in need. These five volunteers have gone above and beyond in their service to St. Vincent de Paul. We want to thank: Steve Polcyn, former chairperson of the Communications Committee; David Tomcik and Ernest Pierucci for donating their time and legal expertise; Mike Maita, who has completed building projects and performed maintenance at our Pleasant Hill store and District Office; and Katy Andino for promoting Thrift Store sales and donations. We are grateful for all of our dedicated volunteers and, this month, we would like to extend a special thank you to these generous people.



SVdP Board of Directors From Left: Ron Costanzo, Melanie Anguay, Ed Regan, Anne Clark, Steve Polcyn, Katy Andino, Ronn O'Connor, Sergio Palaganas, Jo Ann Evans, Bill Clarke, Bob Van Slambrook, Ron Weston, Jim Noe, and George Miller

SVdP Board of Directors

The St. Vincent de Paul of Contra Costa County Board of Directors works to support the mission of SVdP and to make real change in Contra Costa County. We want to thank these men and women for

their support of our mission, for their concern and action in our communities, and for their dedication to bringing aid and comfort to our most vulnerable neighbors.

Volunteer Spotlight: Gloria Villaluz

After retiring three years ago, accountant Gloria Villaluz wanted to work with the poor. Now, Gloria volunteers 40-60 hours every week at Good Shepherd church's St. Vincent de Paul conference, managing volunteers, organizing food distribution, making home visits, and more.

Gloria's favorite challenge with SVdP is helping families make better financial decisions. "Our goal at Good Shepherd," says Gloria, "is not just to give people food, but to help people get out of poverty and survive on their own."

Gloria is passionate about helping families get back on their

feet financially. Her expertise as an accountant plays a big part in her success. Many of the families she meets have never learned how to make a budget much less stick to one. "90% of the time, I am able to help a family save money each month by showing them how to budget," she says.



For the last three years, Gloria has been volunteering over 40 hours every week with St. Vincent de Paul's Good Shepherd Conference in Pittsburg.

Yet the best thing Gloria has learned from working with SVdP is not to be afraid of poor people. "I used to be the person who avoided homeless or needy people asking for help. Now I know that they are people, just like me, and there is no reason to be afraid of them." Her work with SVdP has made her feel more comfortable reaching out to all people in need.

Six Ways to Help SVdP From Your Living Room

1. Donate—The best way to support SVdP's mission is to fund it! You can donate online right now, your donation is tax deductible, and your donation supports programs that bring tangible aid to families in your community.
2. ShopSVDP-CC.org—Are you an online shopper? If you start your online shopping at ShopSVDP-CC.org and click through to retailers' websites, a portion of the proceeds from every sale goes directly to SVdP-CC. The best part? Featured websites are places you already shop like Target, Amazon, and more!
3. Like us on Facebook—It seems simple because it is! If you are already a Facebook fan, comment on a post, share your own SVdP experience, or post a photo from your latest conference event!
4. Donate Furniture and Household Goods—Did you know you can schedule a free donation pick up? Call (925) 439-5060.
5. Tell a Friend—You love SVdP, so do we. Now tell someone about it! Share a story, tell someone about our website, or tell your friends why you are a supporter of St. Vincent de Paul!
6. Donate a Vehicle—Get that old vehicle out of your garage! SVdP will accept any vehicle, running or not. And, because we do not contract to a third party, 92 cents of every dollar goes straight to helping those in need. Call 1-800-YES-SVDP to schedule a free pick up.