



Shekinah Volunteer Newsletter

September Edition 2005

Shekinah Homeless Services Inc.
C/o PO Box 146, East Melbourne Vic 3002

**Volume 4 Issue 2
September 2005**

A Note from the Coordinator of Volunteers

Dear Shekinah Volunteer

It's been a while since I've sent out a newsletter—my apologies for that. It has been a really busy time with lots of exciting things happening.

Shekinah Homeless Services Inc.

- Bethlehem Community
- Corpus Christi Community
- The Cottage
- Mercy Care
- Prague House
- Regina Coeli Community
- St Mary's House of Welcome
- The Good Samaritan Inn
- The Way Community

Shekinah Training

The Shekinah Training program, which was run between January and July this year was very successful. More information about this on Page 3. We are very grateful to Auseinet for the funding to run that program. There will be 2 further training sessions between now and Christmas: Offering Hand Massage to Clients and Relaxation/Caring for the Carer. More information on this at a later date.

Resources Sheet

One of the results of the training sessions is the Resources Sheet which is attached to this newsletter. This is a document which I will keep updating, so if you have any titles which you feel would be of use or interest to other volunteers, please let me know and I will periodically update it.

Accreditation

All of the Shekinah agencies which are not already accredited are currently going through an accreditation procedure. It is a long process which requires a great deal of time and effort, but which ultimately will improve the services we provide, in line with the best practices now being followed in Australia. It will also improve my services to and support of you, the volunteers, and, over the next few months, I may be asking for your feedback over a range of issues to do with volunteering.

Shekinah Ball

Preparations are starting for the next Shekinah Ball. Collingwood Town Hall has been booked for 8th April 2006, so I hope you will all put this date in your diary now. For those of you who have not attended a Shekinah Ball before, this is a wonderful event which brings together all the people who are involved in Shekinah –clients, volunteers, staff, funding bodies, friends and family. Last year 450 people attended and a great time was had by all, with dancing, prizes, good food and a great atmosphere. I do hope you will be able to come in April.

Please feel free to contact me at any time if you have any questions or comments. I work Monday to Thursday and am often out of the office, but I always return calls or emails. My contact details are:

Tel: 9287 5568 / 0422 266 122 Fax: 9287 5567

Email: shekinah@pacific.net.au

With kind regards

Gill Sealby

Co-ordinator of Volunteers

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INDUCTION TRAINING

New volunteers who have not attended Induction Training before are invited and urged to attend. (All volunteers are welcome to attend). This session covers issues such as confidentiality, Duty of Care, information about homelessness, the mission of Shekinah Homeless Services and so on. Sessions are offered on different evenings once a month to give people more opportunity to attend. All sessions will take place at 383 Albert Street, East Melbourne 3002. There is parking in the car park off Lansdowne Street but please enter the building via the main entrance in Albert St. You will need to ring the bell as the door is locked before 6.30pm.

September— Thursday 22nd Sept. 6.30—9.00pm

October— Tuesday 18th Oct. 6.30—9.00pm

November— Thursday 17th November 6.30—9.00pm



SUPPER WILL BE PROVIDED.

PLEASE RING GILL TO BOOK A PLACE.



A BIG THANK YOU TO ALL OUR VOLUNTEERS!!

On behalf of all the Shekinah agencies, I would like to offer our sincere and heartfelt thanks to all our volunteers. We are so fortunate to have such wonderful people giving their time and commitment to the men and women who live in or visit the Shekinah communities. I have now met many of the Shekinah volunteers and I am so impressed with your generosity, patience, enthusiasm and goodwill.

I would also like to extend thanks to our volunteers from GE Finance who have been helping out in many of the Shekinah agencies in all sorts of capacities: painting, cleaning, gardening, serving meals, teaching computer skills—a whole host of activities which have benefited the clients of Shekinah. We feel privileged to be developing this relationship with GE Finance and would like all the GE volunteers to know how much we appreciate your contribution.

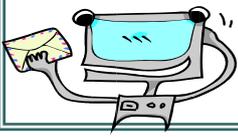
To all our volunteers

A VERY BIG THANK YOU!

WITHOUT YOU OUR SERVICES WOULD BE IMPOVERISHED OR WOULD NOT SURVIVE AT ALL!

CONTACT DETAILS

I would really like to be able to mail out the newsletters by snail mail every time (it seems much more of an event and more personal) but it is so much cheaper to email them to those of you who have email. **Could you please let me know if you don't mind receiving the newsletter by email?** If you can't access my version of Publisher and I will post newsletters to you.



If you could keep me up to date with new contact details, including email addresses, I would be very grateful. I also don't have addresses for some of you and would appreciate those contact details if possible. You could ring or email me. Thank you.

VOLUNTEER NEEDS AT PRESENT

If you know anyone who is looking for volunteer work, the following list might be of interest to them:

The Way Community needs: Coffee Companions, Drivers, General Support Workers

St Mary's House of Welcome: Dining Room Workers, Recreation Assistants

Mercy Care: Domestic Violence Support Workers

Bethlehem Community: Coffee Companions, Hobby Enthusiast/Facilitators, Gardener, Drivers, Facilitator,

Regina Coeli Community: Coffee Companions, Exercise Buddies, Drivers

Corpus Christi Community: Drivers, Hobby Enthusiast/Facilitators, Coffee Companions

Prague House: Drivers, Entertainment Groups

Good Samaritan Inn: Cooks needed from December 2005/January 2006

Some of the agencies would be delighted to host suitable entertainment groups such as choirs, small bands etc.

Please contact Gill for further information about any of these opportunities.



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Some thoughts on Volunteering (by a volunteer from St Mary's House of Welcome)

It was a real surprise to discover the joys that followed after volunteering at St Mary's House of Welcome. After about 6 months of retirement from a fairly demanding and responsible job at The University of Melbourne, I started to feel that there was a void in my life. Sure, it was great not having to go to work, and it was wonderful that there were no deadlines or pressures – but after 40 odd years of working five days a week, it was quite a sea-change to be doing nothing or very little. The realisation that nobody or nothing now depended on you was not an attractive thought!

Having lived in Fitzroy for over 25 years, I was aware of St Mary's and decided to give them a ring. Was asked to attend an initiation, and before you could say Louise de Marillac, found myself in charge of a dish-washing machine!

One of my first impressions was the ownership that clients have about St Mary's. Many have been coming for years, and consider the House as a home! A new face, whether a volunteer or a client, is a new chum and needs to hasten slowly!

Somehow, you have to earn your right to be there. This makes sense, once you realise that St Mary's commenced offering its service in the 1960s! and it is important to remember that the House is one aspect of life that is stable and constant in many persons' chaotic lives.

I do believe that people need to be needed. We all seek meaning in our lives, and to put yourself in a situation where others are relying on your contribution is very rewarding.

There are ways we can all use to encourage volunteering among our friends. Tell them of the positive aspects of your experience as a volunteer. Tell them about the new friends you have made. If they are retired, and have time to spare, tell them about the joy of being needed and useful.

(If you would like to volunteer for SMHOW, please ring Lara Denes, Co-ordinator of Volunteers. Tel: 9417 6497)