



The Starry Night Gazette

Vincent House, 4801 78th Avenue
Pinellas Park, FL 33781
Telephone 727-541-0321



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www.vincenthouse.org

December 2008

Our First BREAKFAST OF HOPE: *Believing in the Power of Hope*

By Gayle Marchiniak and Stephen Gregosky III

Hope was the theme for a pivotal event in the lifeblood of Vincent House. Our first annual fundraiser, the Breakfast of Hope, was held on October 28, 2008, at the Radisson Hotel. Why did we choose **hope** as our theme and why is this so important? People suffering from mental illness generally do not **think** they have anything to **hope for**, with issues such as living in isolation, social stigma, lack of social support, insufficient living facilities, and little opportunity for employment.



Hope is and will always remain our core value. Vincent House is the solution and promotes recovery through work. Participation begins at Vincent House as volunteer work but doesn't end there. Many members - mental health consumers - are soon hired by real employers in the "real world." This is the impetus for having hope.

The Breakfast of Hope was a tremendous success: We promoted interest in the local community, stoked enthusiasm for mental health consumers, and encouraged financial contributions. Vincent House members thoroughly enjoyed volunteering for the event. Some handed out bookmarks and shared their testimony with guests at their tables, others greeted guests as they entered and some even ran the elevator.

Pinellas Park Police Chief Dorene Thomas and Vincent House members Brittaney Spaulding and Steve Scofield shared their experience. The speakers let the guests know that although having an illness is difficult, it is possible to overcome. The guests received the speakers intently and were treated to fruit, croissants, juice and strawberry parfait. Pleasant keyboard music performed by Justin Shea entertained the guests as they relaxed at the quaint and comfortable tables.

We give our sincerest thanks to all who made the Breakfast of Hope such a success. First and foremost, we thank Eli Lilly and Company for sponsoring the entire fundraiser. A special thanks to the following individuals and organizations for their Leadership and Challenge gifts:



- Walmart Neighborhood Store (\$3,000)
- Senator Dennis Jones (\$3,000)
- Jay and Marcine Miller (\$2,500)
- Central Florida Behavioral Health Network (\$2,000)
- Representative Rick Kriseman (\$1,000)
- The Posey Group at UBS (\$1,000)
- Vincent House Members (\$1,000)

Garden of Hope Society is Founded

The following individuals are the founding members of the Garden of Hope Society. Their generous financial support will help ensure the growth and effectiveness of Vincent House.

Mr. Tim Bogott (Tradewinds Island Resort)	Mr. Louie Ladson (& Lincourt Pharmacy)
Dr. Christopher Cronin PHD	Mayor and Mr. Maloof
Ms. Helen England (England Bros. Construction)	Mr. & Mrs. Bob McIntyre (Ditek Corporation)
Ms. Dianne Franz	Mr. & Mrs. Zenon Post
Dr. Alina Gonzalez-Mayo	Mr. & Mrs. Elliott Steele
Representative Bill Heller	Mr. Chris Sulimay (Salon Salvatore Christian)
Mr. & Mrs. Langston Holland	Mr. & Mrs. Donald Turnbaugh
Dr. & Mrs. Karl Jones	

In addition we received the following generous in-kind donations for our expansion from Mr. Housh Ghovae, Northside Engineering, for all Civil Engineer expenses and Councilman Jerry Mullins for concrete pumping.

The valued support of our friends and benefactors makes the recovery of our 500+ lifetime members possible.

SIRATA Beach Resort A New Partnership Offers Employment

We are proud to announce that the Sirata Beach Resort joined forces with us and offered several jobs to our members. On November 3, Gary Hinkson and Lisa Sanders (pictured below), accepted a job with the Grounds Crew and are happily employed.

Read more on Page 2.



Exciting News from the Sirata Beach Resort

By Leilani Smith

Lavonne Derringer, Director of Human Resources at the Sirata Beach Resort heard about Vincent House through the grapevine. She decided to attend one of the Vincent House Showcases and was greatly impressed by our members' friendliness and the pride they take in their work. At that moment, Lavonne knew that Sirata needed some Vincent House's members working at their resort. William and I had several meetings with Lavonne Derringer and John Slodyczka, the Director of Engineering, to work out the details for two Transitional Employment positions in grounds keeping.



Pictured left to right: Lavonne Derringer, Gary Hinkson, Lisa Sanders and Leilani Smith.

Members Lisa Sanders and Gary Hinkson were chosen to fill the two grounds positions. After much sweeping and many smiles, Gary and Lisa have made an excellent addition to the Sirata staff. Their supervisors only have glowing remarks to say about them. They both love their job at Sirata, but how could it be any other way? It is a beautiful resort located right on St. Pete Beach with immaculate grounds and a very welcoming staff.



Gary Hinkson, left, is trained by Vincent House staff, Leilani Smith, right.

I have enjoyed watching this Transitional Employment position grow from an idea to the actual hiring and training of members for the job. Being a newer employee at Vincent House, I think it was important for me to see how the community responds to our organization and to be involved with the job creation process. I loved learning the grounds keeping positions with Lisa and Gary in the beach atmosphere and under the warm sun. Every day, Lisa and Gary tell me that they are so thankful to have such a pleasant job; I couldn't agree with them more.

We highly recommend the beautiful and relaxing Sirata Beach Resort. Supporting our business partners is a great way to support Vincent House.



SIRATA
BEACH RESORT &
CONFERENCE CENTER

5300 Gulf Blvd.
St. Pete Beach FL 33706
727-363-5100
www.sirata.com



Lisa Sanders, left, with Leilani Smith, right.

Awesome

By Lisa Sanders

I just finished my first day working on my own at the Sirata Beach Resort without my Vincent House job coach. It was awesome. I feel strong and good about myself. I have all this energy and I like physical jobs. I get to work at my own pace. Even though it seems like a big resort, it's not that large. I work as a grounds keeper and keep everything clean. I like cleaning the ashtrays and even shining the ashtrays to get them clean for the next person.

I like my co-workers and bosses, John and Bill. They've been very understanding. We work together and we are all on the same team. I also like to see the guests come and enjoy a vacation with their families. I work a four-hour shift and need to take three PSTA buses each way to get back and forth from work. It takes an hour and a half each way, but it's worth it. I just feel happy that God blessed me with this job. At 41 years old, I feel like I finally have a job that fits my personality. And I am going to do an awesome job.

A Veteran's Message

By James "Jay" Wallace

I am like most veterans, proud of the chance to serve our country. I joined the Army at age 16 as a ward of the state. At that age, I felt like I was invincible and going to live forever. At 77 years old, it seems as if I will do so! I served in combat in Palestine, China, Korea and Vietnam. I lost all three of my brothers and my father to combat. I am also the only one remaining from my Korean Unit. I have traced my family's commitment to military service back to the 1200's believe it or not.

I decided to join Vincent House because I was beginning to feel useless. A friend suggested Vincent House and since coming here I feel like I have found more meaning. I re-discovered that I can be useful.



Join a Vincent House DISCOVERY TOUR

Interested in seeing Vincent House??

Choose from any of the following dates:

- Wed, Dec. 10, 2008 @ 10-11am**
- Tues, Jan. 13, 2009 @ 5:30-6:30 pm**
- Wed, Jan. 28, 2009 @ 10-11 am**
- Tues, Feb. 10, 2009 @ 5:30-6:30 pm**
- Wed, Feb.25, 2009 @10-11am**

A Vincent House Discovery Tour can be a life changing experience!

Please RSVP: 727-541-0399
Ask for Elliott, Dianne or Fran



Hope Brings Direction

By Berhanu 'Abraham' Youssouff

I have been a member of Vincent House since May 15th of this year. I am currently on my first Transitional Employment (TE) at Galleria Plumbing/Castle Supply. I have been employed here since the end of August. I work Monday through Friday from 12:30 to 4:30.

I worked in the Electronics Industry for roughly 22 years before becoming diagnosed with a mental illness. After being diagnosed, I had been out of work for almost 6 years before becoming a member of Vincent House and receiving the opportunity for Transitional Employment. I felt that I had the ability and stamina for work and was just waiting for the opportunity to put it into practice through my TE placement.

Vincent House has given me the opportunity to contribute and grow. It helps keep me busy while gaining confidence to push myself harder. This is the first time that I have been happy to go to work each day. This is truly a new beginning for me.



TRANSITIONAL EMPLOYMENT

- | | |
|----------------------------|----------------------------|
| Dimitri Byelov | Liberty Lanes |
| Adam Franz | SeashellBooks.com |
| Stephanie Freskos | SeashellBooks.com |
| Debra Gaide | SeashellBooks.com |
| Gary Hinkson | Sirata Beach Resort |
| Brian Howe | Liberty Lanes |
| Carol Jackson | Senior Services |
| Lisa Sanders | Sirata Beach Resort |
| Brittaney Spaulding | Liberty Lanes |
| Athena Steele | SCC-FACT Team |
| Michael Taddeo | Suncoast Center |
| Deborah Wilson | Suncoast Center |
| Ed Wohlford | Tri-Glo/Raytheon |
| Abraham Youssouff | Galleria Plumbing |

Continuing Education in 2008

- | | |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| Michael Ballenger | Aloysia McPherson |
| Latoya Johnson | Shawna Rylander |
| Bob Krehbiel | Steve Scofield |
| Franklin La Torre | Justin Shea |
| Gayle Marchiniak | Jason Sulimay |

Before the opportunity to work at Liberty Lanes I felt like I was just taking up space. Now I wake up proud that I am giving back to society.

Dimitri Byelov

Supported & Independent Employment

- | | |
|--------------------------|------------------------------|
| Michael Ballenger | Irrigation Specialist |
| William Champion | Recovery Specialist |
| Ursula Clarke | Retail Sales |
| Debbie Cibik | Driver |
| Jennifer Dickey | House Cleaning |
| Tess Daniels | Housekeeping |
| Eddie Gares | Recovery Coach |
| Dennis Hill | Theater Usher |
| Brian Howe | Prep Technician |
| Bonnie Lawniczak | Machine Operator |
| Brian Lutz | Food Preparation |
| Alvis Mills | Recovery Coach |
| Ralph Morphew | Food Service |
| Philip Noonan | Maintenance |
| Angela Parker | Transportation |
| Michael Ralston | Transportation |
| David Reed | Transcriptionist |
| Shannon Riley | Recovery Coach |
| Heidi Rippen | Service Clerk |
| Ron Ritchie | Transportation |
| Chris Schaer | Telemarketer |
| Justin Shea | Recreation Leader |
| Joe Stabile | Floor Maintenance |
| Jason Sulimay | Receptionist |
| Terry Taggart | Pet Groomer |
| Judy Wilson | Transportation |

Van Gogh's Palette, Inc.
4801 78th Avenue
Pinellas Park, FL 33781
Address Correction Requested



Clubhouse members, Abraham, left, and Tess, right, find friendship at our Clubhouse.

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DECEMBER 2008

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1	2	3	4	5	6
	Chicken Caesar Salad <i>Lorraine Laird</i>	Eggplant Parmesan	Sheppard's Pie <i>Alvis Mills</i> <i>Elizabeth Schweikert</i> Employment Dinner Angela's Crabcakes	Reena's Scalloped Potatoes w/ Ham & Broccoli <i>Larry Barron</i>	Chef's Surprise	NAMI Holiday Party
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
<i>Susan Jacobs</i>	The Works' Baked Potatoes <i>Daniel Rendon III</i>	Veggie Chili w/ Rice	Tuna Casserole <i>Sidney Harrell</i> <i>Clive Pugsley</i>	Baked Chicken w/ Twice Baked Sweet Potatoes	Chef's Surprise <i>Jerry M. Huber</i> Pizza & Movie \$1.50 ELF	Pinellas Park Holiday Parade <i>Carol Delgado</i>
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
<i>Michael Ross</i>	Teriyaki Chicken w/ Rice <i>Guy Dorzuk</i>	Bean Burrito w/ Chips <i>Nicole Adelaja</i> <i>Richard Cope</i> <i>Donna Mazzei</i>	Stuffed Peppers Employment Dinner Alice Springs Chicken	Shrimp Fried Rice w/ Egg Drop Soup <i>Susan McCarley</i> <i>Lisa Poutre</i>	Chef's Surprise <i>Joyce L. Gibson</i> <i>Anthony L. Pheil</i> Holiday Party 4:30-7:00	Nutcracker Ballet (Limited seats available) <i>Sally Woodcock</i>
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
	Bob's Meatloaf Manhattan <i>James Kraus</i>	Veggie Sandwich w/ Leilani's Potato Salad	Ham and Asparagus Alfredo	CHRISTMAS DAY Luncheon 11-3	Chef's Surprise	Holiday Weekend (No Outing)
28	29	30	31			
	Cobb Salad	Creamed Noodles w/ Veggies <i>Yolanda LaVine</i>	Gyros w/ Greek Salad <i>Karen Bussiere</i>			

Menus are subject to change. Casey's Café offers alternative lunch – call to order before 11:00 A.M.