



The Starry Night Gazette



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

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www.vincent-house.org

DECEMBER 2007

Seeds of Hope

For many of you, Vincent House has become your charity of choice. You have decided to support us through generous donations of time, clothing, household goods, and financial contributions. Without your support and encouragement, we could not have achieved everything that we have accomplished over the past five years: ICCD Clubhouse certification; a lifetime membership of over 425 people in recovery from mental illnesses; occupancy of our current facility on over an acre of land, debt and mortgage-free; and 46 members in competitive employment settings, collectively earning nearly \$300,000 annually, just to name a few. So during this time of

thanksgiving, we give thanks to you, our supporters, family and friends for joining us in making recovery a reality for so many people in Pinellas County.

A gardener waters a flower bed with the hope that the roses and daffodils and lilies will eventually bloom. Farmers fertilize crops with the hope of high yields. And land owners irrigate their orchards with the hope of a plentiful citrus fruit harvest. The Mayor of Pinellas Park, Bill Mischler, affectionately calls Vincent House the "House of Hope". Donors give of their time, energy and money with the hope that our members will create community, build a new life and fulfill once discarded dreams.

In turn, our member and staff efforts continue to bear fruit. When we began to ask around the Clubhouse, we discovered that collectively, we support many organizations, by giving of our time, energy and money. We have become givers as well. Some profits from our Casey's Café snack shop were recently donated to NAMI – Pinellas County. Staff and members volunteer their time and money at a variety of organizations and we are about to use earnings from our thrift shop to support a new Clubhouse in Uganda. We, too, feel good giving back to the community! Hope has blossomed.

Charitable Organizations that We Value

Our members and staff give back to the community by donating time and money to many local and national organizations. This is where we sow our seeds of hope:

American Cancer Society	Everybody's Tabernacle	Pinellas Cty Coalition for the Homeless
American Heart Association	Fire Department	Pinellas Humane Society
Amnesty International	Florida Council of the Blind	Pregnancy Center
Angel Fund	Florida Highway Patrol	Salvation Army
Angel Tree	Florida State Police	Samaritan's Purse
Animal Services of Pinellas	Florida Wildlife Organization	Seabird Sanctuary
Association of Late-Deafened Adults	Fraternal Order of the Police	Sierra Club
Beijing 2008 Olympics	Habitat for Humanity	Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (SPCA)
Boley Centers	NAMI—Florida	Special Olympics
Chamber of Commerce—P. Park/Gateway	NAMI—National	St. Jude's Hospital
Churches	NAMI—Pinellas County	Suncoast Centers
Diabetes Association	National Society - Daughters of the Revolution	Veterans of Foreign Wars
Directions for Mental Health	The Nature Conservancy	Wilderness Society
Disabled Veterans	PEMHS	Women's Breast Cancer
EMT Services	PETA	



For Thanksgiving we offered an exquisite buffet, complete with all the fixings. Together, we prepared, served and enjoyed a delicious meal.



We were joined by members, staff, families and friends. It was an opportunity for thanks, good food and plenty of happiness.

Working when I don't want to...

By Billy Kuropatwinski

Today I joined my unit meeting in Food Services and decided to sign up for stacking the chairs and emptying the trash. But honestly, I did not want to do either job. Inside myself, I wanted to find a way to get out of working. But you know, I made myself do it! Why? Because it has to do with building character and self-respect. I want to earn the love and respect of my peers by showing them that I know how to work. Yet I don't want to be looked up to as better than anyone else. I want to be equal to everyone. I want to just do what needs to be done and stop talking about working. When everyone sees it done, they'll know and I'll get a compliment through the non-verbals.

Working is the best therapy there is. It's good for depression. You'd be surprised, but the busier I am, the less time I have to think or smoke cigarettes. Work gets my mind off my own problems and issues. There are good people at Vincent House. I pick up on other people's thoughts and I sense good vibes here.

You know, I didn't even want to come to Vincent House today because I had a paycheck coming and could have stayed home to wait for it and then go out and spend it. I come to Vincent House because it's good for my self-esteem. Being here leads to my own self-enrichment and the enrichment of those around me. My goal is to raise myself out of the depths of depression.



"Billy K" working with a smile!

A SEASON FOR GRATITUDE

By Kaye Shakeshaft

I just woke up and I am getting ready to go to Vincent House. I'm thankful to have a place like Vincent House to go to because of the care and support members show to each other. We enjoy each other's company and we are all able to understand where each other is coming from with regard for mental illnesses. I'm not only thankful for the support of the members but also for the mentoring of the wonderful staff. If it weren't for Vincent House I'd be home, probably in bed, just feeling depressed and giving in to the voices that I hear. Instead I go to Vincent House and I am part of a team that works in Business Unit. I come at least three days a week, and I feel valued about what I am able to contribute. I really feel thankful for all the opportunities that Vincent House has given me.

COME AND JOIN A VINCENT HOUSE SHOWCASE!



Elliott Steele, Executive Director, captivates guests with an explanation of the Vincent House mission and story.

Vincent House has opened its doors to the community! Families, friends and interested people are invited to join us for one-hour visits and tours of our Clubhouse. It's a wonderful way to learn more about Vincent House and the Clubhouse Model. Choose from any of the following dates:

- Tuesday, January 8, 2008 at 5 PM
- Thursday, January 24, 2008 at 10 AM
- Tuesday, February 12, 2008 at 5 PM
- Thursday, February 28, 2008 at 10 AM

For inquiries and RSVP, call 727-541-0399

last minute news flash Legislative Breakfast a Success

On Wednesday, November 28, Vincent House held its Annual Legislative Breakfast. This event happened right before the publication of this newsletter. A complete story will be available in the January 2008 *Starry Night Gazette*.



Paul Ziegler, President of the Board of Directors of Van Gogh's Palette, gives welcoming address.

Senator Dennis Jones is accompanied by Betsy Collins and Vincent House member Aimee Hunnell.



Vincent House Members

CELEBRATING RECOVERY THROUGH WORK

during November - 2007

TRANSITIONAL EMPLOYMENT

Jeff Albertson	Tri-Glo/Raytheon
Richard Baker	Suncoast Center
Gigi Behar	Liberty Lanes
Brian Craver	Tri-Glo/Raytheon
Stephen Gregosky III	Seashell Books
Larry Haines	Suncoast Center
Gary Hinkson	Tri-Glo/Raytheon
Carol Jackson	Galleria Plumbing
Gayle Marchiniak	Senior Services
Jason Michaud	Tri-Glo/Raytheon
Lisa Sanders	Liberty Lanes
Justin Shea	Seashell Books
Allyn Spidella	Tri-Glo/Raytheon
Joe Stabile	Tri-Glo/Raytheon
Athena Steele	Seashell Books
Michael Taddeo	Suncoast Center
Ed Wohlford	Tri-Glo/Raytheon

Supported & Independent Employment

Susan Alvey	Karen Maloof
Nicholas Cercone	Philip Noonan
Bill Champion	Rand Pierce
Debbie Cibik	Bob Pitts
Tess Daniels	Warren Prince
Don DiCarlo	Michael Ralston
Eddie Gares	Shannon Riley
Art Hallman	Heidi Rippen
Kim Harrell	Ron Ritchie
Kathleen Hartwell	Beth Schweikert
Eileen Jones	Terry Taggart
William Kuropatwinski	George Torrence
Bonnie Lawniczak	Judy Wilson

Casual Employment

Kerry Birchett
Gerard Caldarise
V. Mike Hodges
Aimee Hunnell
John Markle

Continuing Education

Bridgette Elias
Kathleen Hartwell
Michael Serkes
Justin Shea
Jeff Suzanne
Edwin Wohlford



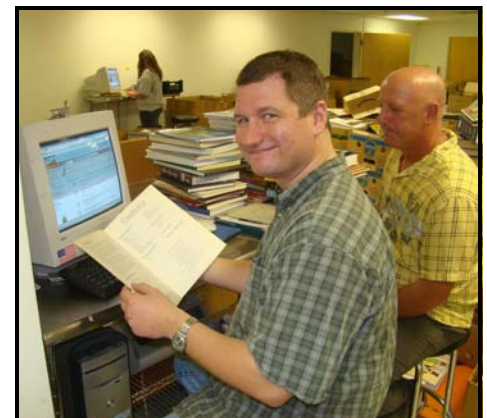
Seashell Books of Clearwater, FL, is one of the 25 largest booksellers in the world

My Job at Seashell Books

By Stephen Gregosky III

I work at Seashell Books.com. If it was not for Vincent House, I would not be working at Seashell Books. Vincent House offered me a Transitional Employment position at the bookstore, and I am grateful for it. The job requires a lot of mental and emotional energy, but I've managed to meet this challenge. Another challenge of mine is not getting a job, but keeping a job. So far, I have been working at the bookstore for two months. I have four to seven months to go, but I am confident I can continue.

Evaluating books and entering the data into the computer is my job. It sounds easy, but is challenging because we have to move extremely fast. I have a certain amount of books to process in 4 hours. Sometimes I achieve this goal, sometimes I don't. Nevertheless, it is satisfying to have a steady job (which means, steady paycheck!). It is the first time in four years that I have had anything steady in my life, and I am thankful for this!



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Mayor Mischler is quoted on *page 1* and joined us for our Annual Legislative Breakfast. See *page 2*.



DECEMBER 2007

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
December 30	December 31					1
<i>Yolanda LaVine</i>	Shepherds Pie <i>Karen Bussiere</i>					"Nutcracker" <i>Lorraine Laird</i>
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
	Grilled Cheese with Tomato Soup <i>Elizabeth Schweikert</i>	Spaghetti with Mushrooms	BLT Wrap Employment Dinner Ham & Sweet Potatoes	Chicken Salad Sandwiches	Chef's Surprise <i>Susan Jacobs</i>	NAMI Holiday Party 11am-2pm <i>Daniel Rendon III</i>
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
	Black Beans & Yellow Rice with Jerk Chicken <i>Clive Pugsley</i> <i>Sydney Harrell</i>	Potato Soup with Vegetables, Noodles & Cornbread	Meatball Hoagie <i>Steven Whitney</i>	Gyros <i>Carol Delgado</i>	Chef's Surprise <i>Michael Ross</i> Pizza & Movie <i>Santa Clause Two</i>	Ellenton Mall 11:00am <i>Guy Dorzuk</i>
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
<i>Donna Mazzei</i> <i>Richard Cope</i>	Creamed Chicken With Rice	Eggplant Parmesan <i>Lisa Poutre</i>	Tuna Melt with Chips Employment Dinner Turkey w/ Stuffing	Kaye's Chili Cheese Dogs <i>Sally Woodcock</i>	Chef's Surprise Holiday Party 4:30-7:30	No Outing Scheduled <i>James Kraus</i>
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
	Jeff's Chicken Noodle Soup	Christmas HOLIDAY DINNER 11:00-3:00	Chicken Tacos	Roast Beef with Vegetables	Chef's Surprise	No Outing Scheduled

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