



**Joseph's
Coat**

Joseph's Coat

SEPTEMBER 2010

Shopping

Hours: Monday and Wednesday 9:00 - 4:30

Donation

Hours: Tuesday and Thursday 9:00 - 2:00

WE ARE NO LONGER OPEN FOR DONATIONS ON SATURDAYS. IF YOU ARE UNABLE TO DROP OFF ON DONATION DAYS PLEASE CONTACT US FOR AN APPOINTMENT.

Financial support is fully tax deductible. Your contribution may be designated toward purchasing items to meet the needs of the people we are serving.

Farewell, Liz

Dear Friends:

How wonderful you have been over these last 10 years while I have been the director of Joseph's Coat! Your thoughtfulness and your amazing generosity have moved me to tears on so many occasions. Your great kindness has touched my heart and I will never be the same. I can't thank you

enough for all that you have been and for all that you have done for Joseph's Coat. I will

be in your debt forever and will remember you each day with grateful prayers.



Liz and Cheryl at Liz's retirement party.

Some of you have loved Joseph's Coat even longer than I have and can recall our first location downtown and our second location on University Avenue. I have occasion to drive past the University site occasionally. It is empty now

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A Note from Cheryl

It's hard to believe that a person as tiny as Liz would have such huge shoes! But, we all know that filling her shoes is exactly the challenge I face as the new Executive Director of Joseph's Coat. Liz's reaction to my concern about this subject was: "I'm not asking you to fill my shoes. I'm asking you to make your own." It is with these words of wisdom in mind that I approach this job.

I have no experience as a shoemaker, but I do have a

business and marketing communications background. Every time I dropped off donations over the years, I reminded myself that I was going to volunteer at Joseph's Coat when I retired. There was always such a great atmosphere in that building. I have volunteered and worked part-time at Joseph's Coat for more than one and one-half years and share Liz's passion for treating those in need with dignity and respect.

Liz has created an incredible resource for those facing hardships in our community. Many, many adults and children depend on Joseph's Coat to make it. It is with humility that I ask all of you who have been so dedicated in your support of Joseph's Coat to help me continue the work that Liz has so competently begun. I can't create these new shoes alone.

Farewell, Liz continued from Page 1

and has kind of a sad and lonesome look about it. Ten years ago when I was thinking about applying for the directorship of Joseph's Coat I went over to University, just to take a peek at the place. A lovely man and I arrived at the door at the same time. He sensed my hesitation, and must have realized that I was visiting for the first time. He ushered me right in; he was so welcoming! I was very impressed by his warmth and hospitality and vowed that if I were ever (by some miracle) selected, I would try to offer this same welcome to every person who came to shop or make a donation. I hope each of you reading this has had lots of warm welcomes over the years, no matter which location you came to.

I don't have occasion to go past the 5th Street location very often but will never forget the miracles really!) that happened there: the gifts of parking passes and rent money are just two examples. Both brought me to tears of overwhelming gratitude and tremendous joy. The Top Hat bar was right across the hall from Joseph's Coat on 5th Street. Every single time I took a hungry, homeless individual over there, Mike, the bar owner back then, fed them what ever was on the menu that day; **no charge!** I don't really have much experience or knowledge of bars, but the Top Hat and Mike were first class and in my admittedly biased opinion, I thought it was a finer place than the Oval Room!

The Lord has almost always been a major player in my life,

but once I became the director of Joseph's Coat, I came to realize in a whole new way two important things: that my guardian angel was ever present and very busy and, that the Lord was really in charge and I was just a vehicle doing God's work. It has been my greatest honor and privilege to be a part of Joseph's Coat for these last many years. I am grateful to each person reading this for your love and care of this very special place and for your wonderful friendship. You are very special indeed and I'll never forget you!

May every blessing be yours for your great kindness to Joseph's Coat.

Love,

Liz

"It has been my greatest honor and privilege to be a part of Joseph's Coat for these last many years."

Volunteers for School Supplies



While in town attending a conference, a group from St. Mary of Gostyn Church, Downers Grove, Illinois, stopped by to help put together school supply packs at Joseph's Coat.

You Made the Difference in Dianne's Life



Like so many people who contact Joseph's Coat for the first time, Dianne started with, "I don't know if you can help me . . ."

"What's going on?" I asked. She lives in a pop-up camper that had seen better days. The canvas top was worn and leaking. Wet blankets and bedding that never thoroughly dried provided a perfect environment for mold, causing Dianne to have difficulty breathing. She is highly allergic to mold, and a doctor told her that the only solution was to throw away the bedding. "I don't know what to do," she said in a quivering voice. "I have to fix the holes in the roof. Can you help me?" I told her we'd figure something out.

Because you donated, I was able to give Dianne two huge tarps, hygiene products, batteries for her flashlight, and some

clothing. I only wish that you would have been there to see the gratitude in her eyes as tears of thanks spilled over her smiling, freckled face. Maybe her story will help you envision it.

Born with severe dyslexia and short-term memory problems, overcoming difficulty has always been a part of Dianne's experience. She knows how to make the best of a situation, though. Physically strong and with an aptitude for numbers, she earned a living in construction. A car accident involving a drunk driver ended that. When others may have given up, Dianne found a job that was perfect for her — one that she loved — helping autistic children. "I really understand how life is for them," she said.

Dianne rented a house near work. Life was good, and she was happy. Until, representatives from a bank knocked on her door and told her that the property was in foreclosure and she had to leave. It seems that the self-professed Christian man who owned the house was not using her rent money to pay

the mortgage. Unable to find housing in the city, Dianne lost the job she loved.

Today Dianne makes her home in the old pop-up camper, which she feels fortunate to have. Dianne has no electricity — she uses a flashlight and eats canned food. She showers at a nearby campground. Her family and friends do what they can but face their own struggles. She is currently painting a house for a woman with the hopes that the trade-off will be a place to stay over the winter.

You helped Dianne stay dry, have a change of clothing and hygiene products, but *most importantly*, you gave her *hope* to keep on going. That's what Joseph's Coat is all about. Thank you for caring about Dianne.

"You helped Dianne stay dry, have a change of clothing and hygiene products, but most importantly, you gave her hope to keep on going."

**WE NEED VOLUNTEERS TO ASSIST
OUR SHOPPERS FOR MONDAY
AND WEDNESDAY AFTERNOONS!**

Please contact us at (651) 291-2472 if you are interested.

HISTORY OF JOSEPH'S COAT



Joseph's
Coat

P.O. Box 2202
St. Paul, MN 55102
Phone: 651-291-2472
www.josephscoatmn.org

Joseph's Coat was founded in 1989 by Patricia Fetsch, who at the time was working at Listening House (a day shelter for homeless individuals).

Pat saw the need for a place that would serve the poor by giving away clean clothing and household items. She thought of it as an opportunity for people in the community to give their time, their surplus goods and help financially, letting those in need know that others cared about them.

The first storefront opened on 5th Street and St. Peter in downtown St. Paul. Our present (and largest store) on West 7th Street is our fourth location. We have about 150 volunteers at this time. Many of the volunteers who worked in the first store are still working at Joseph's Coat today.

Our **donation day volunteers** sort clothing, shoes, toys, books, and household goods. All sorted items are put in their appropriate place in the store to make it ready for shoppers. Our **shopping day volunteers** assist shoppers in finding what they need.

For 20 years, Joseph's Coat has stood as an example of peoples' willingness to help one another.

Special thanks to the West 7th Business Association for organizing hygiene product drop off locations on behalf of Joseph's Coat.

NEEDS LIST

- Clean **seasonal** clothing for men, women and children (**NOTE:** We will begin to accept winter apparel on September 28).
- Hygiene products: soap, toothpaste & brushes, deodorant, lotion, shampoo, conditioner, shaving soap, razors, foot powder etc.
- Household items (pots and pans, glassware, dishes & silverware, small electric items, sheets, blankets, towels, rugs for the bathroom & kitchen, etc.)

Financial donations for rent, utilities, etc., are always appreciated.



Vicky, Hygiene Program Manager, shown with a portion of the hygiene products collected at businesses on West Seventh Street.

— PLEASE NOTE: Joseph's Coat will be closed November 22-27, 2010 —