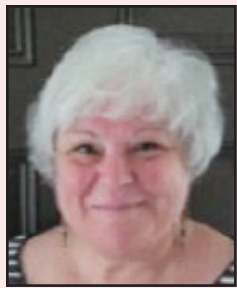


## Thank you Marilyn, Sharon, Sister Mary Anne, and Dianne!

Thank you for your countless contributions to St. Paul's Center - you will be missed!

**Marilyn and Sharon:** Without you, St. Paul's Center would not exist; we would not be here doing the work our community so desperately needs. You are founding members of this organization, and will always be a part of our family. Thank you.



**Sister:** Your support has been a strength that has helped our Center persevere through good times and bad. You have helped connect us with so many wonderful opportunities that have contributed to the growth of our organization. Thank you.



**Dianne:** As our current Board President, you have been a dedicated leader that has guided us through challenging fiscal times and complex decisions, always keeping us grounded and focused on our mission. Thank you.



Words cannot express the immense appreciation and gratitude St. Paul's Center has for all of you. Thank you for selecting us, for helping us grow, and for giving yourself to the Center and the women and children we serve.



Your energies have created change in the lives of many families, and for that we thank you!

## ARE YOU INTERESTED IN SUPPORTING ST. PAUL'S CENTER? HERE'S HOW YOU CAN HELP!

**DONATE** wish list items or consider cash donations

**PARTICIPATE** in our fundraising events, like A Murder Mystery

**VOLUNTEER** to provide child care, organize, drive mothers to appointments

**SPREAD THE WORD** about the great work we do and encourage your family and friends to help

Connect with St. Paul's Center to find out more about how you can help support our mission!

www.stpaulscenter.com • @stpaulscenter • www.facebook.com/stpaulscenter

## Death of a Blackheart

Randy Manning and  
Jest Mysteries Presents



JEST  
MYSTERIES

If you liked Bullets in the Bathtub,  
you won't want to miss  
St. Paul's Center's next  
Murder Mystery Event!

Save the Date: July 25, 2012

## A Taste-Full Evening

A tasteful event celebrating our local community

thursday, april 19, 2012 • 6:00pm - 9:00pm  
taste • 30 south pearl street • albany

silent auction entertainment wine & beer tasting light hors d'œuvres



St. Paul's Center  
BUILDING BRIDGES TO A BRIGHTER FUTURE

PO Box 589 Rensselaer NY 12144  
www.stpaulscenter.com

**DAVID R. ROSSETTI, LCSW-R**  
Executive Director

### Executive Committee

DIANNE EWASHKO, MSW • President  
DOLORES MASCOLO • Vice President  
TIM PIERCE, CPA • Treasurer  
MARILYN M. DYER • Secretary

### Directors

SUSANNE ALTERIO, MPA  
CRYSTAL L. BRANDOW, MA  
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SHARON L. De MARTINI, MS  
DEBRA FRENN, DNS  
SHIRLEY LEAHY  
SISTER MARY ANNE RODGERS, CSJ  
MICHELLE SANDOZ-DENNIS  
VICKIE TOWER

## OUR MISSION STATEMENT

WITH THE STRONG BELIEF IN THE DIGNITY AND VALUE OF EVERY HUMAN LIFE, THE MISSION AND PURPOSE OF THE ST. PAUL'S CENTER IS TO PROVIDE A WARM, NURTURING, HOME-LIKE ENVIRONMENT WHERE EACH MOTHER WILL HAVE THE OPPORTUNITY TO BECOME BETTER EQUIPPED AND EMPOWERED TO MAKE A SUCCESSFUL TRANSITION TO INDEPENDENT LIVING AND TO A BETTER LIFE FOR HERSELF AND HER CHILDREN.

## A Taste-Full Evening

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St. Paul's Center  
BUILDING BRIDGES TO A BRIGHTER FUTURE

# transforming transitions

WINTER 2012

The newsletter of the St. Paul's Center for homeless mothers and their children in Rensselaer County  
PO Box 589 • Rensselaer, New York 12144 • 518.434.2910 • www.stpaulscenter.com

## A Message from St. Paul's Center's Executive Director

Transitioning from an Amazing 2011 to a Hopeful 2012

2011 was an amazing year at St. Paul's Center! We have greatly increased public awareness of homelessness in the Capital Region and created great, healthy partnerships in the community. Despite the challenging economy, we have been successful at increasing support for the shelter and our services - thanks to supporters like you!

2011 was indeed a year of growth and excitement for us. The year presented us with a number of outstanding opportunities, such as the acquisition of property on First Street in Troy - which was graciously donated to the Center by the Sisters of St. Joseph of Carondelet. We had a wonderful turn out at our 2011 Murder Mystery, and raised a significant amount of funds for the women and children we serve during our 2011 A Taste-Full Evening auction and tasting event. Our December 2011 Adopt-a-Family program was yet another success for our organization, bringing much-needed holiday cheer to the families we serve.

As we enter 2012, there is so much to look forward to! The most significant bitter-sweet event occurring in 2012 is the exit of four amazing officers from our Board of Directors: two of the shelter's founding members, Marilyn Dyer and Sharon DeMartini, as well as two of our first Board members Dianne Ewashko and Sister Mary Anne Rodgers, will be completing their final terms with us in March 2012.

These four women have been a solid foundation for the growth that St. Paul's Center has experienced over the years. Their passion, kindness, drive, and motivation has kept the shelter operating and moving forward in times of abundance, as well

as times of scarcity.

The work of these women has been such a strong contribution to our mission and purpose. They truly have provided the basis for the shelter to have an opportunity to grow and provide continuous support to homeless women and their children. We will miss their expertise, insight, humor, and, mostly, their dedication to the St. Paul's Center mission.



While it saddens me to say goodbye to these four leaders, I am very excited about all of the new faces on the Center Board. We have had so many new people join us - all passionate about the mission of the agency and all dedicated to the work that needs to be done in Rensselaer County and beyond. I am so excited to see all of the places they will take this organization in the future. This is a very exciting time!

These new Board members are soaking up the expertise and experience of our departing members this winter; acquiring the knowledge and skills to implement a new strategic plan for St. Paul's Center, as well as our first fund development plan. These new plans will surely guide us into a bright future filled with hope and success. We look forward to sharing our plans and progress with our supporters, and look forward to your continued enthusiasm and contributions to our mission.

Continued on Page 2

## Executive Director's Message

Continued from Page 1

In this season's newsletter, you have the opportunity to read about some of the very exciting upcoming events St. Paul's Center staff and the Board, both old members and new, are planning for 2012. All of these events support the women and children served by St. Paul's Center, and help us to expand our mission and reach more families with unmet housing and support needs. In 2012, we are very enthusiastic about hosting A Taste-Full Evening tasting and auction event in April, a Murder Mystery dinner and performance in July (if you missed the 2011 Murder Mystery, you'll definitely want to check out pictures on Facebook at facebook.com/stpaulscenter – what a great time!), and our first-ever 5K run, Momijigari, in November. Our staff and Board have been working diligently planning these events, and we look forward to your support of our mission through participation in, sponsorship of, or volunteering at these events.

As we move into a fresh and exciting new year, if there is anything you would like to know about our work, please feel free to contact me at drossetti@stpaulscenter.com. I would love to share more about our Center with you!

*David R. Rossetti*  
David R. Rossetti, LCSW-R  
Executive Director

## 2011 Snapshot

The most important aspect of 2011 was the impact we were able to have on families in need in Rensselaer County. All of our 2011 achievements would have been impossible without supporters like you. On behalf of St. Paul's Center, our Board of Directors, staff, and the women and children we serve, thank you for helping create change in the lives of nearly 80 families in 2011. We look forward to serving even more families from the Capital Region in 2012!

Here is a snapshot of the women and children we helped in 2011:

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## 2011 Snapshot

<b>Number of Families Assisted</b>	78
<b>Number of Children Assisted</b>	178
<b>Age Range of Mothers</b>	
17 and below	1
18-30	48
31-50	24
51-60	5
<b>Employment Status of Mothers</b>	
Employed	8
Unemployed	70
<b>Marital Status</b>	
Divorced or Separated	14
Married	4
Single	60
<b>Family Monthly Income</b>	
None	40
25.00 - 500.00	20
501.00-1,000.00	13
1001.00 - 1,625.00	5
<b>Ethnicity</b>	
Hispanic / Latino	16
<b>Race</b>	
American Indian or Alaskan Native	2
Black or African American	45
Multi-Racial	1
White	23
<b>Mother's Highest Level of Education</b>	
No Data	1
No Schooling Completed	1
GED or High School Diploma	33
7th or 8th Grade	3
9th or 10th Grade	12
11th or 12th Grade - No Diploma	26
Post-Secondary School	2
<b>Number of Children in Household</b>	
None	3
1-3	61
4-7	14
<b>Ages of Children</b>	
Age 0 to 5	84
Age 6 to 12	64
Age 13 to 17	30

## The "Last" of the Founding Board Members



No, this is not the title of a new movie with Daniel Day Lewis playing the role of the Executive Director (although we're sure David would approve). But rather, beginning in April

of this year and for the first time since the plans for the Center were begun in 2001, there will be no founding board members on the Board of Directors. We're not worried. Each time a new group of board members joined us, we have been so impressed with their unique gifts and contagious excitement for the future of the Center. As we pass the reins of St. Paul's Center to a group of dedicated, enthusiastic and visionary board members, we have every confidence that the Center will continue forward in good hands.

It will seem strange to not be "directing" the Center after all these years. St. Paul's has been such a huge part of our lives for so long, what ever will we do with all our time now that we won't have all those meetings to go to!? We spent months helping to write the grant that won us the state award to renovate the building. We struggled through interminable meetings as design plans, staffing, by-laws, job descriptions, and finances were developed. We groaned as the transfer of property saga dragged on and on and on. Attorneys, contractors, architects, permits, construction change orders, oh my! And then we marveled as the 100-year-old church building was transformed into a lovely respite for our homeless families - sparkling new and one of the nicest buildings in the neighborhood!

When we proudly opened our doors in 2006 we were the first shelter in the county built so that homeless mothers and their children could remain together and we were immediately full to capacity! Our goal was to provide a safe, nurturing place for the families to get their lives back on track and to help them find permanent housing. We strove to equip the moms with the skills necessary to be successful in their independent living so they would not become homeless again.

While that focus remained paramount, it became very clear very quickly that our services to these families

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could not end once they moved out of the Center. Our Bridges Program was begun to establish a safety net to help our families deal with whatever came along that might put them at risk for repeated homelessness – problems paying rent, telephone or utility bills; trouble with neighbors or the landlord; paperwork snafus; court dates; legal problems; health issues; school issues – the list is quite extensive. Following up on our families with regular phone calls – letting them know that the Center was still there for them – has proven successful in virtually eliminating incidents of recurring homelessness for past residents.

Always striving to meet needs head-on, when we learned that more two-parent families were becoming homeless because of the economy and subsequent job loss, we embarked on plans to create a shelter that would accommodate mothers, fathers and children. We were disappointed when those plans could not be brought to fruition. Now, however, because of the gift of a two-family house in Troy, the Board is beginning to address another enormous need in the community: creating affordable, decent permanent housing.

So, our baby has grown up. Feeling a little like "empty nesters," we send her off into the future knowing that she has grown to become a respected member of the community of homeless services providers through the nurture of many wonderful people: our devoted staff and, of course, our Executive Director; former board members and officers, individual and business supporters in the community, our friends at the NYS Homeless Housing and Assistance Program and at the Rensselaer County Department of Social Services; the good people at St. Timothy's, the Sisters of St. Joseph, the Daughters of Charity and many other faith communities of all denominations. We know that our baby is in the hands of people who love her as much as we do and who only want the best for her. We expect many, many more great things to follow.

While we may be "gone" we will not be far away. We plan to join the Friends of St. Paul's Committee in order to stay involved and offer our support in whatever way we can. And, just like any beloved child, St. Paul's Center and the families it serves will always be in our hearts.

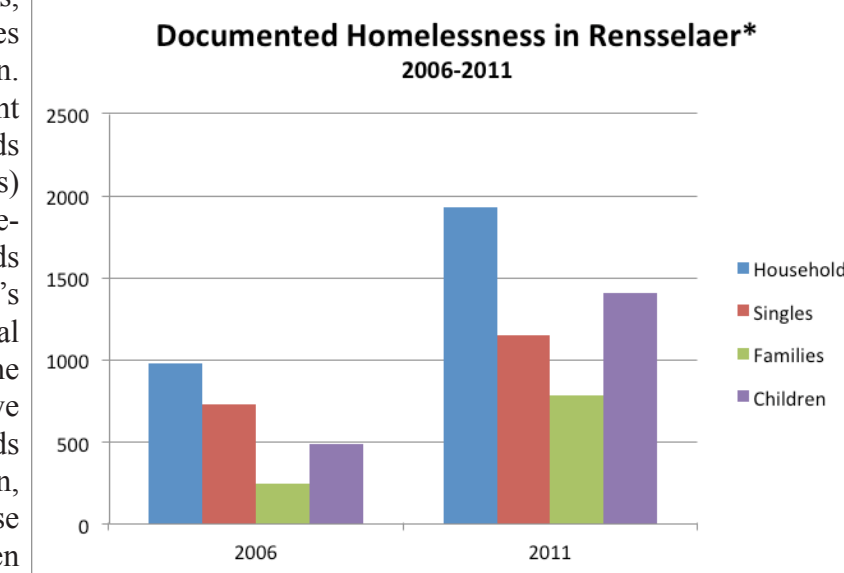
*Sharon DeMartini, Founding Member, Past President*  
*Marilyn Dyer, Founding Member, Past Vice President and Secretary*

## State of the County: Homelessness

Homelessness in Rensselaer County, as in all regions across the nation, affects all facets of the community. Homelessness presents life-threatening challenges to single adults; however for families, the tragedy is compounded. It can result in devastating physical and emotional health issues for both parents and their children and can lead to the separation and disintegration of families. Since 2005 homeless, especially for single parent households, has increased in Rensselaer County.

According to the Capital Region Homeless Management Information System (HMIS), in 2011 Rensselaer County's homeless service providers served

1,932 households, including 782 families with 1,416 children. Twenty-three percent of the total households served (445 households) were single female-headed households with children. St. Paul's Center plays a vital role in supporting the community. In 2011, we housed 76 households with 172 children, helping to provide these women and children with a safe, nurturing environment while they worked diligently to get their lives back on track. The shelter was able to provide the support and services these women so desperately needed to turn their lives around and start the path to successful, healthy, and happy futures.



As we move into the new year, it is important to remember that families in Rensselaer County are continuing to find it difficult to afford rising apartment rental and utility costs. The Fair Market Rent (FMR) for fiscal year 2012 in the Albany-Schenectady-Troy Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA) is \$870 for a two-bedroom apartment. This amount, of course, is the rental unit alone, and does not include heat, hot water, electricity, cable, phone, and other utilities. In the City of Rensselaer, for example, the median household income is \$45,420 and 17.9% of people living in the city are living below the poverty level. Affording the rising costs of rent and utilities, then, is still a challenge

that many households will continue to face in this new year.

Fortunately, our community is home to a plethora of great people and excellent resources dedicated to preventing people from slipping through the cracks, like Rensselaer County Department of Social Services, the Commission on Economic Opportunity, Unity House, Joseph's House, Troy Area United Ministries, and

the Roarke Center, just to name a few. When people in our community do reach the limit of their current potential and need a helping hand, a safe place to call home, and support services, organizations like St. Paul's Center are there.

*Michelle Sandoz-Dennis*  
Board Member, Resource Development Committee Member

### St. Paul's Center Resident Wish List

The needs of the families we serve go beyond the shelter walls. Through the generosity of the community, the Center strives to help mothers set up their new apartments. New or gently used items on the following list are always appreciated. Please call the shelter at 518.434.2910 if you would like to drop off a donation.

**General** household cleaning supplies; cash or gift cards to chain stores • **Baby** diapers, wipes, cribs  
**Kitchen** pots and pans, dishes, silverware, small kitchen appliances • **Bedroom** dressers, mattresses, bed frames  
**Bathroom** new towels, toiletries, shower curtains • **Living Room** couches, chairs, coffee tables, end tables, lamps

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