

GOOD SAMARITAN

St. Vincent de Paul | Louisville

www.svdplou.org

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Let's Play!

Community Comes Together to Build Playground in a Day

More than 250 volunteers, including St. Vincent de Paul staff and clients in the nonprofit charity's homeless shelter, women's recovery center, and housing programs, pulled together for a one-day blitz May 31 to build a new community playground on the SVDP campus.

The playground is providing hundreds of children in the Louisville community with a safe place to play. More than 60 formerly homeless children live in family apartments on the St. Vincent de Paul campus. The new playground will also serve children through SVDP's future Family Success Center, which will provide year-round programs for at-risk children.

The brightly colored playground equipment, in shades of turquoise, lime green, cobalt blue, and purple, was assembled a section at a time by volunteers. Elements of the playground, which was based on the kids' own designs, include slides, a rock wall, monkey bars, and more.

In addition to shoveling 42,120 square feet of mulch-like safety surfacing by hand, the volunteers split into teams to complete several other projects, including painting, building shade structures and wooden benches, and planting trees and shrubs.

Among the VIPs in attendance were Louisville Mayor Greg Fischer, who joined in the work



Children who live at SVDP couldn't wait to try out the blue slide. More photos, page 2.

efforts mid-morning, and Kentucky Attorney General Jack Conway, Kentucky U.S. Representative John Yarmuth, and 4th District Metro Councilman David Tandy, who spoke at a rainy but spirited ribbon-cutting ceremony in the afternoon.

"We are truly fortunate that there are caring people who take the time to help others and, in this case, help show children they can dream and make those dreams become reality," Tandy said. "What we saw today was

the willingness of our community to make a difference and those who have been helped returning to help others."

The playground project was made possible through a grant from KaBOOM!, a Washington, D.C. nonprofit, as part of Let's Play, a community partnership led by Dr Pepper Snapple Group. In addition, the Kroger Co. provided food for the breakfast and lunch that was served to volunteers on Build Day.



On the Ground

By Nancy Naughton



Pope Francis, in his installment homily, called for ordinary people to become the protectors of humanity. “It means protecting people, showing loving concern for each and every person – especially children, the elderly, those in need – who are often the last we think about,” he said.

On May 31st, more than 250 ordinary people came together on St. Vincent de Paul’s campus to build a beautiful play space for children who have experienced severe poverty, homelessness and uncertainty.

The volunteers were a mix of neighbors, SVDP residents, staff and businesspeople. They ranged from corporate CEOs to the homeless.



On this day, everyone came together for a selfless, common purpose. Backgrounds and socio-economic standings were invisible and mattered not.

Forty of our volunteers were residents of Ozanam Inn, St. Vincent de Paul’s men’s shelter. They worked tirelessly to prep the site two days prior to building and volunteered for Build Day as well. Many volunteered for leadership roles as “Build Captains,” leading teams in various aspects of the project. All were enthusiastic contributors to this great event.

This project has left a lasting impact on the St. Vincent de Paul campus. Not only do the children of St. Vincent de Paul and the Smoketown and Shelby Park neighborhoods have a beautiful new playground, but a community came together to make it happen.

All of our residents played a part in its creation, and they now take pride in helping make their home a better place. And they also know that many people joyfully came to their campus to help create something special because they cared.



From top: Volunteers paint the playground fence green; Congressman John Yarmuth addresses the crowd at the playground ribbon-cutting ceremony, as VIPs Jack Conway and David Tandy look on; and Louisville Mayor Greg Fischer assists Randy Bright, 7Up Snapple Bottling Group Market Development Manager for Dr Pepper Snapple Group, and Ed Wnorowski, SVDP’s executive director, installing the new playground sign.



St. Jude Roommates Encourage Each Other While Completing CNA Training Together

Marilyn felt angry, frustrated and hopeless before she sought treatment for her lifelong alcoholism at St. Vincent de Paul's St. Jude Women's Recovery Center. Likewise, Sue's history of drinking, drug abuse, and drug trafficking cost her dearly, contributing to the death of her grown son. She felt worthless and unable to get a grip on life.

Both women had worked as bartenders, but beyond that they had little else in common. However, months after becoming roommates at St. Jude, Marilyn and Sue have become steadfast friends. "God put us together," Marilyn says. "He knew what we'd been through, and knew what we needed, and what we needed was strength and someone to lean on."

Looking for a way to earn a living once they left St. Jude, Marilyn and Sue applied to a training program to become certified nursing assistants (CNA)s. They were intimidated by going back to school in middle age, but they encouraged each other. "We studied hard," Marilyn says. "We sat here at night with flashcards – and we did it!"

Sue is grateful to their case manager, Myra Woodard, for helping them get scholarships that paid for their CNA training. "I'm glad that she believed in me, and that she just didn't throw me away," Sue says. "I've been treated that way before, and it doesn't feel good."

Optimistic about their future and proud of their latest accomplishment, the women are more confident and fearless than before. "We're known around here as Laverne and Shirley!" Sue says.

From left: Sue and Marilyn in St. Jude's library.

Meet Bonnie Lyvers

Please join us in welcoming Bonnie Lyvers as the newest addition to the St. Vincent de Paul staff. She started her new job as development assistant in April.

Hometown: I grew up an "Army brat," so I didn't have the traditional hometown. I was born in Texas, and I did visit some amazing places while growing up, including Germany, Italy, Austria, and Switzerland, as well as Kansas, Oklahoma, and Kentucky. Shortly after we got married, my husband and I settled in Huntsville, Ala., and we lived there for more than 11 years, which is where our three boys were born. We moved back to Louisville in December of 1993.

Family: My family includes my husband Bruce; sons Jason (his wife Erin), Adam, and Cody; dog Herbie; and cat Ellie Mae.

Hobbies: I enjoy family outings, flower gardening, bird watching, reading, camping, and taking family photos and videos – plus, I surf the Internet and chat on Twitter and Facebook about my favorite television shows.

Work Experience: I've worked in nonprofits for nearly 10 years, having previously been at The Cabbage Patch Settlement House, Jewish Hospital & St. Mary's Foundation, and the Louisville Zoo.

Favorites: My favorite author is James Patterson. When we have game night, my favorite game is Pass the Pigs.

Favorite Quote: "Use what talents you possess: The woods would be very silent if no birds sang there except those that sang best." – Henry Van Dyke

What She Enjoys About Working at St. Vincent de Paul: Helping to achieve the Society's mission and seeing, on a daily basis, the devotion of St. Vincent de Paul staff and volunteers.



Calendar

Contact Donna Young
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Sept. 11-15
SVDP National Meeting
Madison, WI
To Register: www.svdpusa.org

Oct. 19
Vincenian Retreat
Nazareth Retreat Center
Nazareth, KY
Father Louis Arceneaux:
"Building Vincenian Spirituality"

Monthly Cooking Classes at Women's SRO Focus on Health and Nutrition

The formerly homeless women who live in SVDP Homes' SRO (single-resident occupancy) supportive housing program, cook their own meals in the building's kitchens.

But one afternoon a month, they pull up chairs to watch cooking demonstrations. But one afternoon a month, they pull up chairs to watch cooking demonstrations. Focusing on budget-friendly, healthy meals that can be simply prepared, the sessions are informal and fun for residents.

Focusing on budget-friendly, healthy meals that can be simply prepared, the sessions are informal and fun for residents. While some of the women already know how to cook, others are eager to learn how to prepare dishes such as baked chicken, pasta Bolognese, and pot roast.

Food safety issues and kitchen sanitation methods are also discussed.



CAN WE DO IT?

We're counting on St. Vincent de Paul friends and supporters to help us do something we've never succeeded at doing before: We are hoping to sell all 750 raffle tickets this year for our 10th Annual Golf Scramble and Charity Auction Event Sept. 8-9.

Tickets are only \$25 each. A winning ticket – worth \$5,000 – will be drawn at the close of the Golf Scramble on Sept. 9. However, the winner need not be present to win.

St. Vincent de Paul's only fundraiser of the year, the Golf Scramble and Auction raise money for our future Family Success Center for at-risk youth in our community.

To get involved this year, and to purchase raffle tickets, please call Bonnie Lyvers, development assistant, at (502) 301-8695, or e-mail her at blyvers@svdplou.org.



**RAFFLE TICKETS
NOW ON SALE**

September 8-9, 2013

**St. Vincent de Paul's 10th
Annual Golf Scramble &
Charity Auction Event**

- Big Spring Country Club
- Porcini

*For more info and to buy
raffle tickets, contact
Bonnie Lyvers at
(502)-301-8695
blyvers@svdplou.org*