
Hestia's Voice

A Quarterly Newsletter For Friends Of Hestia's Children, Inc.

Volume 3 Issue 2

April 2000



Mission Statement

Hestia's Children will provide a strong mentoring program combined with clean, safe, affordable housing without duplicating existing community resources.

Our society has an affinity with labeling people according to a perceived problem or affliction. Thus, we have "welfare mothers," "homeless," "mentally disturbed," "alcoholic," and so on.

Labels are okay when developing statistical reports. However, they can also dull our sensitivity towards a particular group of individuals. Take a few minutes to try a simple experiment. Which evokes a stronger reaction?

- ⇒ "There is a homeless family living in a makeshift shelter in Coon Rapids."
- ⇒ "Having nowhere else to turn, Mary Jones along with her daughter (Susan) are living in a tent along the Mississippi River in Coon Rapids. "

Okay, so what is the meaning of this little experiment? It clearly shows how labeling can desensitize our feelings. Suppose you knew Mary? Suppose you went to High School with her? How would you react?

A recent newspaper article illustrates the end result of this type of thinking.

"A proposed homeless shelter at the Dorothy Day Center in downtown St. Paul has Ramsey County commissioners debating how cold is too cold for sleeping on the streets. ... The board is expected to give its final approval to a shelter plan -- expected to provide sleeping mats for about 75 people -- but, commissioners remain divided over whether the facility will be open all winter or only during the most

dangerous cold and snow conditions. Opponents fear an all-winter shelter could quickly become a year-round fixture near St. Paul's new hockey arena and convention center."¹

Wow, we sure do not want *those* people mingling with hockey fans! I am picturing a Ramsey County Commissioner checking his/her thermometer each evening. If the "magic" degree reading is shown, will the tornado sirens be triggered?

I am currently spending about one week each month in San Francisco (CA). To my dismay, San Francisco has a very large and visible homeless population. Seems the San Francisco County Board must be "smoking the same thing" as Ramsey County's. San Francisco has an old armory. It is stable, functional, and unused. A proposal to allow homeless people to simply sleep on the floor of the armory was turned down. So the building remains unused, while the homeless sleep on the street.

I look into the eyes of these "street people." There is no hope, no self-worth, no joy. We, who are privileged, are allowed to experience those emotions. Therefore, to numb our sensitivity, labels are created.

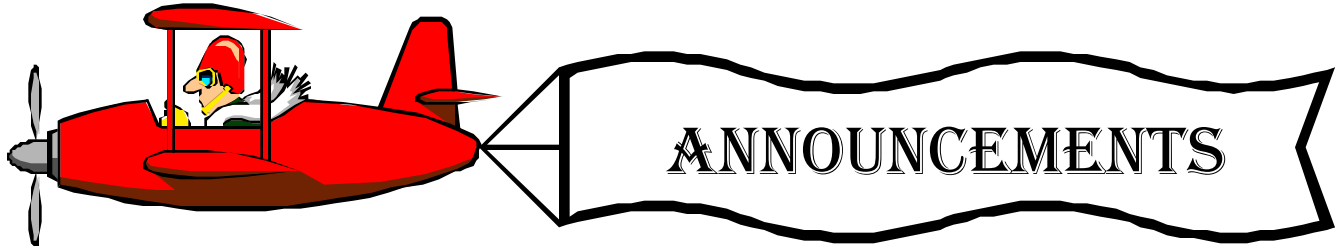
Hestia's Children cares more about doing "what is right" rather than interpreting meaningless statistics. Each volunteer will hold a strong and consistent vision for our families. We will extend a hand of hope, a voice of cheer, and a vision of self-sufficiency.

Mary Jones, and her daughter (Susan), will be welcomed and appreciated. They will never be "labeled."

Thank you,

Mike

¹ Smith, Mary Lynn (1999, November 22). Ramsey County debates when to bring homeless out of the cold. Star Tribune.



Mission

Hestia's Children, Inc. was organized as a non-profit Minnesota corporation on 07-16-1996. On 12-27-1996, the Internal Revenue Service approved our 501(c)(3) application. Hestia's Children, Inc. is also registered with the Minnesota Attorney General's office.

The mission of Hestia's Children, Inc. is to serve single mothers with dependent children. Target population are those families who are on the "borderline" for requiring public assistance. A woman earning \$10.00 per hour, for example, may be disqualified from public assistance. Realistically, this woman will have a very difficult time providing food, clothing, and shelter for her family.

The objective is to "catch" this woman before she finds herself requiring public assistance. The stated goal is to help her emerge into a self-sufficient member of society.

Hestia's Children, Inc. has an aggressive five (5) year plan. The objective is to provide a safe, nurturing, environment for these women to realize their full potential as members of society.

At the end of five (5) years, the women may purchase "their" home. Or, they may choose to purchase another home. Thus, women who may have required public assistance will become full tax paying members of society. The degradation, and endless cycle of frustration, is avoided. Significant taxpayer money is saved.

No Board member will receive direct, or indirect, compensation. Within the foreseeable future, there is no intention to hire staff. All work performed by Board members, mentors, and other individuals will be "gratis".

No Board member, or family member, will reside in the home. Or, derive direct or indirect financial benefits from Hestia's Children, Inc.

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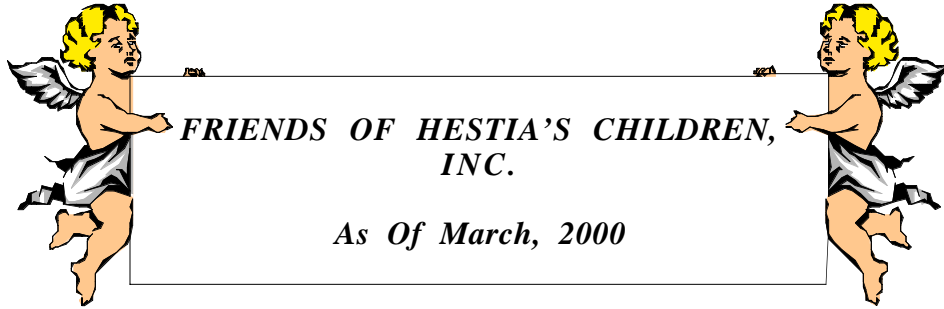
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Individuals

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Carol Kniskern
Debra McKelvey
Helen Meehan
Michael Meehan

Kathy Piela
Kathy Porter
Charles Pospisil
Lynn Vickerman

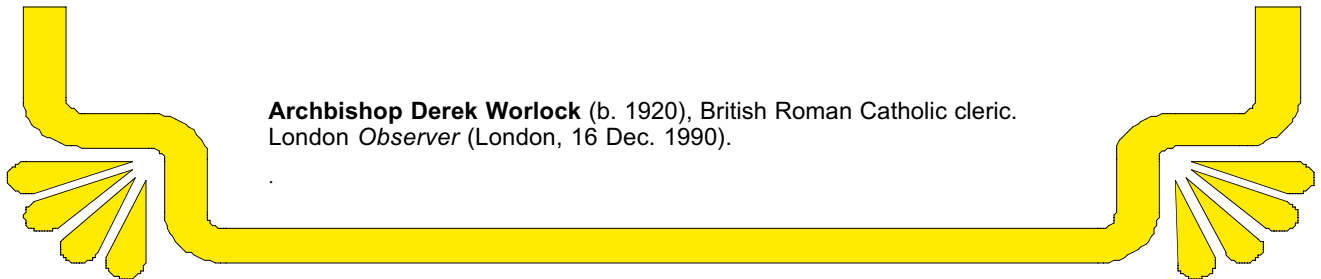
Corporations/Organizations

Anoka Electric Cooperative
Dependable Software Solutions, Inc.
LaMaur, Inc.

Medical Arts Press
Unity North Church



***I am my brother's keeper, and he's
sleeping pretty rough these days.***



Archbishop Derek Worlock (b. 1920), British Roman Catholic cleric.
London Observer (London, 16 Dec. 1990).

Count me in! I'm contributing:

\$25 _____ \$50 _____ \$100 _____ \$ Other _____

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Telephone Number (____) _____

_____ Please add me to your mailing list.

_____ I would like to volunteer. Please contact me.



Double your contribution? Check with your employer for the availability of matching donations.

Make check payable to: Hestia's Children, Inc. Your contribution is tax deductible.

Hestia's Children is a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization, and is registered as a charitable organization with the Minnesota Attorney General.



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