



## EASTER FUN AT POPC

Despite the rough weather and moving to the rain date, the annual Easter Egg Hunt was a great success this year! Children that came to the Center for the hunt enjoyed face painting, egg decorating, photos with the Easter Bunny, and a fun and edible holiday craft in addition to dinner and the hunt itself.

Overall, we served 122 children and their parents and guardians at this year's event. We would like to thank our volunteers for being flexible—their help was an essential part of the success of the hunt—and we hope everyone had a happy and blessed Easter holiday.

*If you would like to see more photos from this year's Easter Egg Hunt, head to the Events page of our web site!*

Due to funding decisions made at the state level, the **PA WORKWEAR** program and its services will no longer be provided at Prince of Peace Center as of *July 1, 2011*. It will continue to run right up to June 30. For more complete information, please visit the News page of our web site.

## Learning to Stand

*by Stephanie McDonald, FSS participant*

I am a 48 year old woman who became homeless in 2007 after quitting my job at a local doctor's office. I was evicted and had to move in with my adult daughter and her family for a year, for which I was very grateful. I sent out resume after resume, but my job hunting landed me nothing. The depression, which I had most of my life, got worse.

I applied for the Project RUTH program at Prince of Peace, and weeks later I was accepted. I entered the house on 3rd Avenue and it felt like home. Now, after one and a half years in the RUTH program, I will be moving into my own apartment and switching to [the Center's] HOPE program.

I lived a life of mental, physical, and sexual abuse

until my early 30s, when I brought myself and my three children here to the Aware Shelter. I always thought of myself as a victim who pitied herself a lot. This program has taught me to stand on my own two feet that God gave me. They gave me support where and when I needed it, and I am now a survivor.

I fought alcoholism most of my life, which I used to numb all the pain, guilt, and shame I felt. Today I am clean and sober, taking it one day at a time. I've learned to let go of resentments and ill will against others, and now I am free! I am so grateful to everyone associated with Project RUTH, HOPE [Advocacy], and Prince of Peace; I will carry a special piece of all of them with me. I can finally stand up and be strong, and know who I am, and love that person today.



# The Olive Branch

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a Prince of Peace Center newsletter



Representatives from POPC attended the 2011 Business Expo at the Radisson hotel. The entrance fee for the event was either \$2, or \$1 and 2 nonperishable food items to be donated to our food pantry. Employees worked in two shifts, providing brochures about our services to those interested as well as enjoying the other businesses' displays around the room. It was an excellent opportunity to see what the area has to offer.



Recently, one of our vans was deemed unsafe for use by Prince of Peace Center staff and program participants, and we had to retire it. Now we are in the market for a good deal on a used van, and any avenue of funding we might pursue in order to obtain one. The safety of our staff members and clients is always a priority for us, and we hope to be blessed with good circumstances for a new vehicle soon!



## An Internship with FSS at POPC

by Joanne Bickerton, FSS intern

I have to say, having the opportunity to be an intern with Family Supportive Services at Prince of Peace Center has been a true blessing. I have received many blessings from God throughout my life time, but this one was a true surprise.

I have to shamefully admit I did not know POPC even existed until November of 2010 when I was VP of the HDFS Club and we helped organize the Jim Withers presentation at Penn State. After hearing him speak, and meeting Natalie and Miss Lisa McCoy, I knew I wanted to learn more about the Center and the services they offer. This was a surprise to me because my focal point in my studies was gerontology, but God led me here.

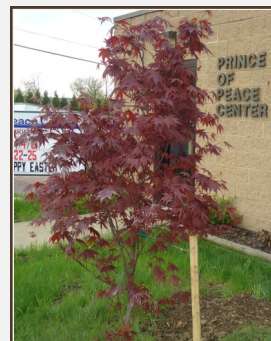
The first day here I was welcomed by all the staff and volunteers with open arms, and made to feel like part of the family. I remember Joe Flecher saying, "We are happy to have you join our family." The ladies from FSS have all taken me under their wings and shown me the ropes, from the paperwork to the face to face interaction with the clients. They have included me in the interviews - I had the opportunity to lead one - and allowed me to accompany them on home visits and to several meetings in the area. I have participated in the group meetings, where I have learned so much, not just about the clients but about myself as well.



I have also had the chance to learn about the Food Program and work with Chris and the others downstairs, with Jawdy in PA WORKWEAR, Carolyn in the Thrift Store and April in Emergency Services.

All in all I would recommend the Center to anyone interested in an internship. I know the things I have learned and the relationships I have formed here will be with me throughout my lifetime. I thank God every day for leading me here.

## News Bytes



Spring is here! In addition to sprucing up the front of the building with this beautiful maple tree, a generous Cottage Gardens team designed and installed a memorial garden dedicated to Phyllis Gallant, a Center employee who passed away just last year.



Members of the Hermitage Middle School Student Council return to POPC to fill bags for our Food Day senior citizens!

POPC staff worked hard outside in mid-April in recognition of Earth Day and the importance of the environment in our community.



**To read these stories in full and see more photos, please visit the news page of our website:  
[www.princeofpeacecenter.org/news](http://www.princeofpeacecenter.org/news)**