Pictures of Hope

Award-winning photojournalist and author, Linda Solomon, brought her nationally acclaimed program “Pictures of Hope” to Flint in July. At Shelter of Flint, Ms. Solomon provided a photography lesson to fifteen children, ages 6-12, who (along with their families) reside in one of the shelter’s housing programs. She empowered these children to capture photos of their hopes.

Following the photo exercise, the children were surprised by Ms. Solomon and Mr. Larry White, Executive Vice President/Co-Owner, Patsy Lou Chevrolet, with digital cameras graciously donated by Walgreens. Immediately following, the children went on their photo assignment to capture and reveal their hopes and dreams.

“Through photography children share their heartfelt feelings,” expressed Ms. Solomon. “Their hopes and dreams captured in quiet moments tell a story that few adults can imagine. When you show children that you care about what they wish for in life, it builds self-esteem. ‘Pictures of Hope’ is a fourteen-city program this year and I am so very proud to work with Patsy Lou Chevrolet to help children living in the Shelter of Flint. The children’s photographs will express their heart. Their photo assignment to photograph their ‘hopes and dreams’ is life-changing.”

The hopes and dreams of these children will be transformed into holiday greeting cards — one photo from each child. Through the generosity of Patsy Lou Chevrolet, one hundred percent of the proceeds from the sale of the “Pictures of Hope” greeting cards will benefit the children and families who receive services at Shelter of Flint.

“As the only agency in Michigan selected to participate, we are delighted to be a part of this program. Sixty percent of those we serve are children under the age of 10. They are often too young to quite understand why they are at the shelter, but they are old enough to be scared or worried. Through ‘Pictures of Hope’, these kids will be given an opportunity to dream big as they focus on their hopes and dreams for the future,” said Liz Ruediger, Director of Development.

Pictures of Hope cards are available for purchase from Shelter of Flint. The cost is $20 per box of fifteen cards. For more information, please visit www.shelterofflint.org or contact Meg Sprecher at 810.238.4711, ext. 305 or msprecher@shelterofflint.org.

“Theyir hopes and dreams captured in quiet moments tell a story that few adults can imagine.”
A Fresh Coat of Paint

The bedrooms at Shelter of Flint received a fresh coat of paint courtesy of Sherwin-Williams Northern Michigan District. Nearly 20 Sherwin-Williams employees donated their time, and local stores donated the paint for twelve bedrooms and the children’s playroom. The Sherwin-Williams employees were joined by staff from Great Lakes Contracting in this day of service. Shelter of Flint is so thankful to Sherwin-Williams for making this project possible!

Chevrolet Encourages Play: ONE WORLD FUTBOL

In conjunction with “Pictures of Hope,” Chevrolet reached out to Shelter of Flint to participate in the One World Fútbol Project. One World Fútbol Project was founded in 2010 after inventor Tim Jahijen realized there was a global need for a nearly indestructible ball that could withstand the harsh conditions faced by youth living in refugee camps, disaster areas and other disadvantaged communities. He set out to design a ball that played like a “real fútbol,” but would never wear out, never go flat, never need a pump. The project’s goal is to bring the joy of soccer and play to youth in disadvantaged communities.

Nine-year-old Ronnie, a “Pictures of Hope” participant, listed among his dreams to become a professional soccer player. Inspired by his love of the game, Chevrolet chose to surprise his family with tickets to attend the Manchester United vs. Real Madrid match at the Big House in Ann Arbor in August. He was given a Manchester United scarf, and the opportunity of a lifetime: walking onto the field with a Manchester United player.

“We believe in children’s potential,” said Kristen Alexander, manager of global marketing for Chevrolet. “We saw him light up with excitement when we gave him the ball and thought we would help him further his dream. Through play, his hopes and dreams can come true.”

“*We saw him light up with excitement when we gave him the ball and thought we would help him further his dream. Through play, his hopes and dreams can come true.”*
A Home of Their Own Breakfast

On May 20, Shelter of Flint was happy to host an early morning breakfast at the Riverfront Conference Center to share our mission and story with new friends from our community. The theme for the event was A Home of Their Own, which is the ultimate goal of each individual and family that comes through our doors.

Anne Grantner, President and CEO of Shelter of Flint, welcomed nearly 200 guests by sharing the history and mission of Shelter of Flint. The true highlights of the morning were the moving remarks made by two former clients, Anita and Paul.

Anita had come to Shelter of Flint in April. Anticipating a job loss, Anita had already gone back to college with plans to become a probation officer. With one year of school left, the permanent lay-off came and she was forced to expend her savings to maintain her housing. When the money was gone, she turned to Shelter of Flint for help. In the three weeks she was with us, she was able to find an apartment that she could afford with the assistance of a program designed to help military veterans such as herself.

As a working professional, Anita never imagined herself in a situation such as homelessness. Of her time at the shelter, Anita says, "Shelter of Flint was available for me in my crisis. The program guidelines and timelines kept me on task."

The morning’s second testimonial came from Paul, who along with his family, came to Shelter of Flint in October of 2011. Paul, disabled with no medical insurance, had exhausted savings, sold the car, and sold anything else anyone would buy. The family was then living in their camper in Grand Blanc. As the days and nights grew colder, their circumstances were discovered and they came to the shelter. Working with their case managers, they secured housing and successfully fought for the disability coverage he had earned in years on the job. Today, the family is financially secure, has medical insurance, and is looking to purchase a home of their own.

Paul left the guests with these words: “If I could convey anything, it is the far reaching impact that the support Shelter of Flint has given my family. The Shelter of Flint has made it possible for my children to have a normal life. It has allowed them to grow up as normal, exceptional to me, children. The impact this will have, not only on my children but, their children and for generations to come not only benefits my family but, society as a whole. One day my children, because we were rescued and able to live productive lives, may grow up to be President, create a cure for a disease or just as important; rescue a family like mine some day.

The help and support Shelter of Flint provides people and families like mine positively impacts not only the families involved but, all of our lives and future. While the impact may not be immediately visible on a large scale, the long term benefits from your help and efforts to families, and all of us, reap exponential returns and positively changes the world, one family at a time.”

Youth Empowerment Solutions Surprises Children

This June, Shelter of Flint welcomed middle school students from the Youth Empowerment Solutions (YES) program. YES is a curriculum based program centered on the theory of youth empowerment and community engagement. The goals of the YES program are to provide youth with opportunities for meaningful involvement in preventing youth violence and creating community change, to enhance neighborhood organizations’ ability to engage youth in their activities, and to change the social and physical environment to reduce and prevent violence (especially youth violence).

As part of the YES program’s focus on youth helping youth, the visiting students surprised children staying at the shelter with filled backpacks and gifts. Gifts included personal care items as well as books and toys to make each child’s stay at the shelter a little brighter.
JOHN DOE
12345 Address
City, St Zipcode

HealthPlus Employees Support Shelter of Flint

The Employees of HealthPlus hosted their 8th annual Mother’s Day Silent Auction to support the children and families at Shelter of Flint. With over 100 baskets to auction off this year, event organizers Brenda Bishop, Vanessa Clifton, Nancy Swapp, and Carol Wilson continue to outdo themselves. HealthPlus team members create the one-of-a-kind baskets, which are then on display and open for bid in the atrium at the corporate office in Flint. Bidding can become quite heated, and friendly competition is encouraged between departments to create the best basket or item. The auction, completely organized and supported by HealthPlus employees, raised over $6,000 this year in support of summer programs and assistance to families at the shelter.