



A Note from Joe's Pen

“Respect,” is what he said.

It was early morning and I was standing with one of our guests in the bright light of the parking lot. He had the look of a Dickensian character: a thick mop of unkempt hair; his clothes ragged and he in need of a shave and shower. His eyes were narrow slits in the sun. He had a crooked scar down the center of his nose, the result of an attack last summer by a young man who went around beating up people who were homeless.

“Respect,” he repeated, as he wavered in the slight breeze. It was early, but he had already had something to drink. I knew his philosophizing Irish roots ran deep; he was always pontificating; contemplating one thought or another; offering suggestions; looking for solutions. “That’s what you give us. That’s what we get here at the shelter. Respect,” he emphasized.

“I get it,” I replied, and placed a comforting and stabilizing arm around his shoulder. “That’s what we’re all about,” I assured him.

It’s a cautious and sensitive dance we do with the people we serve. They are our partners; sometimes we lead, sometimes they lead, but we do this dance together and we need their trust to be a partner in their life. Leslie Nathanson, in preparation for the shelter season, offered us a great acronym that will work as well for our guests as it will for us working with our guests: E-A-R. Empathy. Attention. Respect. Three words that make our little shelter something more than simply a shelter from the cold; but, hopefully, a nonjudgmental refuge and place of healing for those in greatest need in our community.

Of course, practicing those three words is not as simple as it sounds. It requires us to set aside our egos and to not personalize whatever it is that is thrown in our direction and to respond with objectivity and compassion to some very daunting situations. But whenever I take a look around the shelter at the people we serve and think about all that they must have endured to have arrived at our doorstep, all I see are living, breathing, walking miracles; each and every one of them. After all, we all came into this world the same way and at one time, like all of us, our guests were these tiny, innocent infants entering a new and unfamiliar world.

The other night, as I left the building, one of our guests commented, “Joe, this is a healing place.”

So, “a healing place” is what we’ll let it be. But all that healing needs to start with those three little words; empathy, attention, respect. E-A-R; listen to the sound of healing.

Peace,
Joseph Jordan-Berenis

ICS Volunteer Feature - Barbara Roush



Barbara was born in Cleveland, Ohio and raised on a farm in Columbus. She has a younger brother and an older sister Pat, who once volunteered at the Shelter organizing the Sunday showers and now is a Core Team volunteer on Tuesday evenings.

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She graduated from The Ohio State University with a degree in music education and taught school in Cleveland and Columbus, then for 3 years in Seoul, Korea. She is a trained classical singer and sings with the SF Symphony Chorus and First Presbyterian Church choir.

Barbara and her husband Nic moved to Santa Fe 4 years ago from Key Largo, Florida where she was the Executive Director of Membership at a private club with more than 4,000 members from around the world.

Barbara serves on the Board of both the SF Symphony Orchestra and Chorus and the SF Women's Ensemble. She volunteers with the SF Opera and Las Golondrinas in the summers. She and her husband Nic started two years ago working at the Shelter with her sister cleaning showers Sunday evenings and now works Wednesdays with Earl in the kitchen preparing lunches.

Working as a volunteer at the Interfaith Shelter Barbara says has been and continues to be a fulfilling and rewarding experience.

ICS Partner Provider – Food Depot SNAP Program

“Collaboration – We’re Stronger Together”

Kia Mudge is one of the local Food Depot’s gifts to the shelter. Once a month she comes to the shelter and hangs out in the dining room offering to help guests obtain food stamps (SNAP). The Food Depot believes that it is a human right, not a handout, that everyone have access to healthy, nutritious food. This outreach to the shelter is one of the many things they do to assure that.

SNAP (Supplemental Nutritional Assistance Program) is the federal program that delivers nutritional income to low people. It is known as EBT (electronic benefit transfer) and is critical to the health of many. Kia started for our



guests. They do not need any documents to sign up for an EBT and Kia gets them an interview with state social services. After they acquire an i.d., they then receive a prepaid credit card with their benefits with which they can buy food. Kia also provides them with a place they can receive mail, in this case, the shelter. Once she has started the process, it is up to the person to continue it.



Kia has been in Santa Fe for eight years and stays pretty busy. In addition to working at the Food Depot and shelter, she also goes to the Salvation Army once a month, has done tutoring at Caesar Chavez School and does garden maintenance at the Railyard. Originally from Vermont, she became a nurse in 1981. She had always been interested in going abroad to “dig wells and give vaccinations” as she put it, but the illness of her mother caused her to stay in the States. At that point, she decided she didn’t need to go abroad; there were plenty of people right here that needed her help as well, and she was right. She worked for the Indian Health Service on the Hopi reservation for several years. She enjoys the kind of work she does because it allows her to talk with people and hear their stories. She is accessible, with a big smile, which puts people at ease. The shelter is grateful that at least once a month we can offer this service, thanks to Kia.

ICS Alumni – Jacqueline Cordova

This picture of Jacqueline was taken the day she came in to announce that she has a new job at a local grocery store. She had recently moved in to a new apartment at Casa Cerrillos and had just settled in. Now she is working and when Sue spoke with her on the phone, she was looking for a pot to cook mole! We are thrilled for her and her new direction in life!



In Memoriam



Alan Cruthrids, one of our dear friends at the shelter, was tragically killed walking on I-25 and Cerrillos Rd. October 19. His family visited us Friday, November 13 and remarked about how this was like another family to him. May he have rest and be at ease.

Sharon Wirth, one of the many generous supporters of the shelter, also passed away in October. “Sharon was one of the most giving and kind people on the planet and, ...Sharon was steadfast in her commitment to providing organic healthy food at the shelter saying, ‘I want to give the shelter guests the same quality of food that I prepare and eat myself.’”

Memorial Service

The annual memorial service for the homeless will be held this year on December 18, at Our Lady of Guadalupe Church, 3:30 pm. Please note that the service will be held outdoors in the courtyard near the statue of Our Lady of Guadalupe. All are invited to join us in this powerful service in celebration of the lives of those who struggled with homelessness.

To Make a Donation, Please visit our Website:

www.interfaithsheltersf.org

To Volunteer, Please email Sue at

interfaithsheltersf@gmail.com