Somerset HOME for Temporarily Displaced Children

NEWSLETTER ■ SUMMER 2003

Member: Somerset County United Way and United Way of Greater Union County

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49 Brahma Avenue ■ Bridgewater, NJ 08807 ■ 908–526-6605 ■ www.somersethome.org

Titans Score Donations for Somerset Home

Somerset Home found a new friend in the Trenton Titans hockey club in 2002. Our development associate contacted them about potential fundraising activities and they exceeded our expectations with their response. Their community relations coordinator, Ms. Shannon Ruefly, proposed not one, but three different activities to raise money for Somerset Home.



Titans fans at the player handprint auction.

The first venture Shannon arranged was an auction of art created by the hockey players. Each player created a drawing that was auctioned off at one of the games. Appreciative fans donated $900.

The second fundraiser was called "Time with a Titan Auction". After the January 14th hockey game, fans were invited to participate in a player auction to benefit Somerset *(continued on page 3)*

Somerset Home Announces a New Street Outreach Team

Lisa D'Ottavio recently became a street outreach counselor for Somerset Home. The Street S.M.A.R.T. street outreach program was developed to meet the needs of adolescents between the ages of 13 and 21 who are living on the street or in other unsafe environments. Street outreach offers homeless youth respite from hunger, cold, loneliness and sexual victimization, along with the opportunity to reclaim for themselves a sense of dignity and worth.



Paula Taylor (left) and Lisa D'Ottavio are the Street S.M.A.R.T. team.

In her new role, Ms. D'Ottavio joins Paula Taylor, who has been a Somerset Home street outreach counselor for more than a year. The two counselors encourage youth to leave the streets by helping them to build individual strengths and by supporting the youth's right to set goals and make decisions for him/herself. With every contact, meal, counseling session, group meeting and referral provided, the outreach counselors communicate to youth a concern for their lives and a belief in their potential.

Ms. D'Ottavio has been with Somerset Home since 2000. Hired as a resident advisor, she also worked as an administrative associate and obtained a bachelor's degree in sociology and administration of justice from Rutgers College. Ms. Taylor also joined Somerset Home as a youth counselor in 2000 and was promoted to street outreach counselor in June 2002. She is a Jersey City State College graduate with a bachelor's degree in sociology. To contact the street outreach team, call 908-526-6605.

Eighth Annual "Bid for Better Futures" a Success

There was quite a bit of friendly competition at this year's "Bid For Better Futures" charity auction. The May event at Raritan Valley Community College, North Branch, drew 200 attendees and earned $70,000 for our programs that serve runaway and homeless youth.



Enthusiastic attendees check out silent auction opportunities.

The event began with a cocktail reception and silent auction. Some of the most hotly contested items included celebrity artwork created exclusively for Somerset Home's auction by Al Pacino, Mario Andretti and John Travolta. Other hot items included golf packages and a Coach purse ensemble.

The highest bid on a silent auction item was for a framed pair of autographed poems by Maya Angelou. Auctioneer Alfred Finocchiaro conducted the live auction, which included exciting getaways to London; Disney World and Naples, Florida; Washington, D.C.; and Bar Harbor, Maine.

One of the more unusual offerings was tickets to an exclusive movie screening at Warner Brothers Studio of "The In-Laws," starring Michael Douglas and Albert Brooks. Another unique item was an Arts & Entertainment package consisting of an exclusive studio tour with an Emmy Award-winning producer, an invitation to a show taping, overnight accommodations in New York, tickets to a Broadway play and car service.

The signature item of the night was an adorable, custom-built playhouse constructed by volunteers, Ben Stump and Steve Sosis, using materials donated by Swingtown in Flemington. Somerville Lumber provided other materials for half price.



Somerset Home Board vice president, Tom Divilio, places a silent bid.

"It was exciting to see the fervor of the bidders for the playhouse," said Jeffrey Fetzko, Somerset Home executive director. "It was also fitting an item that can be enjoyed by children should result in a generous donation benefiting the young clients of Somerset Home."

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Youth Speak Out

Dreams

As I lay I look
up in the sky I sit and
wonder why. My life is filled
with pain and sometimes I
just want to cry. When I
sleep I dream. About what
my life would be like with
out this scene. I dream
about being a star. But sometimes
I feel like I'm so far
when I dream it's like a script
from a movie scene. One
day I pray that my dreams will
come true some day

E.Y. age 17

Titans Score Donations for Somerset Home



Trenton Titans hockey fans bid on players' handprints at fundraiser for Somerset Home.

(continued from cover)

Home. Each hockey player was up for bid and the winning bidder was entitled to a dinner buffet with the player and an exclusive one-of-a-kind gift. To make things even more interesting, the highest bidder of the night became a Trenton Titans "player" for a day. Competition was lively and the players were great sports about participating. The event raised over $3,500.

A player handprint auction was the third activity Shannon arranged for the insatiable Titans fans. This time the bidders were competing for handprints from each of the players. The silent auction was held at the stadium during the game and by the end of the game there were many happy fans with their favorite players handprints who donated a total of $585 to the cause.

"We're looking forward to working with the Titans again during the 2003-2004 season," said Jeff Fetzko, Somerset Home executive director. "They are a great and compassionate group."

Check our website (www.somersethome.org) in the fall for more information about how you can support Somerset Home and enjoy some exciting hockey games at the same time.

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Thank you to all our board members for their dedication and service.

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Eighth Annual "Bid for Better Futures" a Success

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Somerset Home's 5th Annual Run for Runaways

www.runforrunaways.com



Saturday, November 1, 2003
Duke Island Park
Bridgewater, NJ

5K Run
2 Mile Nature Walk
Kids' Sprint (for ages 2 - 11)

Post-race barbeque, t-shirts, prizes, entertainment and surprises!

Sponsored by: Ethicon, Schering Plough, Catered Affair, Merrill Lynch, Phillips-Van Heusen, United Trust and Applebees Restaurant

For more information, contact Joe Manuelli at
jmanuelli@somersethome.org or visit www.runforrunaways.com
or call (908) 526-6605 (days)