

'Tis the Season of Wishes.....
...and Sharing! Do you have
any of these items to
share with Goldie's
Place?



- Artificial Christmas Tree
- Air Purifier
- Large Size Coffee Maker
- Office Supplies....copy paper, folders, pens, etc.
- Cleaning Supplies

- Light Fixtures/Installers (Clothes Closet)
- Mannequin
- Clothing Organizing Units/Shelving
- Target Gift Cards for \$10
- Wall Mirrors (for Clothes Closet)
- Plus Size Clothing (Men & Woman)

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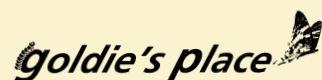
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Mailing
Goldie's Volunteers!

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Thanks to all for your generous
contributions of materials and energy!



Our mission is to
assist adults who are homeless
to become self-sufficient by
providing life skills, education,
and support, based on our belief
in human potential and broad
spiritual principles.

For Volunteer opportunities please call or visit us at

6230 N. Clark
Chicago, IL 60660
tel (773) 274-1212 fax (773) 274-1270
email: hope@goldiesplace.org

Roberta continued

she never said anything directly, the implication was that she was dying. But that day we did not speak of death.

A short while later, she finally said to me: "You know I never really talked to you about this situation. How do you feel about this situation?" My reply was heart-felt. "You will always be close to me," I said. "We will be connected even after your death."

Roberta's health declined rapidly and she had to have 'round-the-clock in-home hospice care. During this time, the only visitors she was able to see were close friends and family. I was considered family. I was privileged to bear witness to her dying. She died as nobly as she lived. The last time I saw Roberta alive was in the afternoon of the day she died. I told her I loved her and would be back the next day...but if she needed to leave sooner, that was okay. I would understand. She died that evening.

For several months, I tried to feel connected to Roberta, but I just felt empty. I started to get really angry at God. Why did He take Roberta away so early in her life? Why did I not feel Roberta's spirit? Why did I feel so separated from her? And then I had an epiphany. I was at Unity Church. I looked around at all my friends in the congregation and knew they loved and cared about me. Instantly, I realized that Roberta was in this place and that she had given me Unity. Not only did she give me my Unity "family," but she gave me a goal. For the last three years, I have been studying to become a Licensed Unity Teacher (LUT). I am very close to finishing the

dental continued

to Goldie's Place as a walk-in one day in July, asking how to receive services. The young man stated that he was living in an emergency shelter, and was in need of clothing, job skills, and GED tutoring. He was given the Goldie's Place referral forms and asked to bring them back the following day at a designated time. He did, and since that day has received job readiness counseling from our Job Coach, Malvin Jeffries, met with volunteer Tutor, Marcia Sweet, joined the fledgling dental assisting training program, and signed up for GED classes. He has excelled at the dental assistant training, never failing to

requirements. During this time I have put together a one-woman show called This is What Happens When a Nice Jewish Girl Meets Jesus for the First Time. All of this and more Roberta has given me.

And now I have come full circle. Recently a friend of mine, Bay, and her daughter, Star, became homeless and moved into a shelter. As soon as they were settled, I brought them to Goldie's Place. Everybody there was friendly and helpful. Most importantly, they were respectful of Bay's dignity. Now, Bay is thinking about taking the GED and is much more hopeful about her future. The people at Goldie's Place have also given her ideas for finding an apartment.

Sometimes events in our lives don't make any sense at the moment. "Why did this happen to me?" "What good can ever come of this?" People want to understand what happened, but often the meaning of an event won't become clear until much later. Even obviously "bad" events may turn out to be "the best thing that happened to me in a long time." For example, if I never had a problem with drugs and alcohol, I would never have lived in Ashland House and I would never have met Roberta. Usually, we need to let go, get out of the way, and let God. Rest in the understanding that there really is a Divine Plan. This is Roberta's legacy. I will never forget her.

Roberta passed away on Valentine's Day in 1998.

Her great spirit and heart continue to inspire the work of Goldie's Place.

make an appointment or fulfill any request.

Don has adopted Goldie's, and the whole staff has adopted him as well. It is our pleasure to work with this young man and help him achieve his goals. Don has had two interviews for part-time dental assistant positions and his aptitude in this area bodes well for his future. He has a strong desire to be able to care for his young daughter, and is committed to completing the GED process so that he can qualify for better paying jobs. He has demonstrated his willingness to do whatever it takes, which makes him an inspiration to us all!

goldie's place



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A support center for people who are homeless

Winter 2004

Goldie's Place and My Place... A Remembrance of Founder Roberta Friend

by Danni Scher

"Sure, I can do that." Those five words changed my life in a profound way. I had just made a commitment to Roberta Friend, founder of Goldie's Place, to be her personal assistant. She was recovering from brain surgery, which had left the right side of her body compromised.

When I first met Roberta, I had six months of sobriety and was living in a transitional recovery home (Ashland House). The Director there was a friend of Roberta's. She asked him if anybody in the house wanted a part-time job doing light housekeeping and driving Roberta wherever she wanted to go.

I just happened to walk by the house phone when one of the residents was talking to Roberta about needing a helper. For some unknown reason (which became clear later), I chimed in and said I could do it. My speaking up surprised even me.

It's hard to talk about Roberta and Goldie's Place without talking about Unity in Chicago (a non-denominational Christian-based church). All three are inextricably linked in my memory. I drove Roberta to work, to church, and to her doctor's appointments. I was very curious about Unity, so when she went to church one Sunday, I went with her. I really loved everything about it—from the songs to the messages to the congregation. I started going every Sunday—even when I wasn't "Driving Miss Roberta."

Roberta and I were both raised Jewish. When we were growing up, our families didn't speak of Jesus. That taboo stayed with me as I got older. Even in Unity, I

felt a little uneasy about the concept of Jesus. Roberta taught me a way to reconcile Jesus the Christ and Judaism. Because I respected Roberta's opinions, I began to feel comfortable with the idea of Jesus. She was the only person who could have gotten me to go to church. Today, I feel that I have blended Unity with my Jewish upbringing in a way that feels right for me.

I loved talking to Roberta about any and all subjects. No matter what was going on in her life, she was always positive and upbeat. For her, everything was part of the divine order. She knew she was going to die soon, and she was still upbeat. She never felt sorry for herself. She believed that it was time for her to leave her earthly body. Her faith never wavered. She was never afraid.

Unfortunately, Roberta's brain tumor came back and she had a second surgery. The day before the surgery, I stayed overnight because she could not take care of herself. My care-giving skills had greatly improved, mostly because I cared so much about Roberta. That night she told me I have a mother's ear because I woke up every time she needed something.

After her surgery, things got back to "normal." I was still driving Roberta to her appointments. One day I was waiting in the car for her. As she walked toward me, she stumbled slightly. I knew instantly that the tumor had grown back again. I think Roberta knew it also. A couple of days later she casually mentioned that the tumor was back and nothing more could be done. Although

continued on back

Introducing Our First Class of Dental Assistant Trainees!

Goldie's Place is proud to announce its first Dental Assistant Training Class! This trial program grew out of our need for volunteer dental assistants and Dr. Bill's interest in offering a free training opportunity to people who are motivated to move beyond homelessness.

Over the years our founding dentist, Dr. Bill, has trained a handful of dental assistants as a way of providing valuable training to the participant, and filling Goldie's need for volunteer dental assistants. As our program has grown so has the need for more dental assistants and the interest level among the people we serve.

In August of 2004, under the guidance of Dr. Bill Bjork, Goldie's Place recruited and began working with six participants in the Goldie's Place "trial" dental assisting program. These participants come to Goldie's Place three times a month for practical, hands-on instruction, during which time they learn basic dental assisting from our wonderful volunteer dental staff and David Bradford, who came to Goldie's as a volunteer and stayed to learn dental assisting and become a highly respected part of our staff.

Of the six original recruits, one is working full time on the late shift and sees Dental Assisting as filling her goal of getting a better job. Another was a former patient of Dr. Bill who expressed an interest in learning this skill.

Although all six of the recruits have shown tremendous aptitude, one young man has become a leader for the others. Don came

continued on back

PARTICIPANT PROFILES...

A Journey of Determination and Hope

By Terry Miles

John came to our attention via one of our partnership agencies that provides emergency shelter. He has proven to be hard working, highly motivated and well intentioned. Through Goldie's Place, John enrolled in the McCormick Hospitality Academy, and while there landed a job with Hilton Hotels as a House Man. The job entails exposure to a number of in-hotel functions within the Laundry & Housekeeping services. It is heavy work with long hours, but he is determined! While at the Academy, he received his certification in



Food Sanitation Management. This is another enhancement to his resume, and he is working on finding a better job in the food service and management area.

We are assisting John in pursuing his goal for full time employment and eventual self-sufficiency. But his commitment is the driving force of his success. We were

proud to see him qualify for secure transitional housing. We have seen him grow in confidence and self-esteem and take each challenge in stride. Through our transportation exchange service, we provided a 7-day transportation pass for his first week on the job; we are pleased to report that he has already reimbursed us. Giving back and helping others is another important component of self-worth.

The road is still steep and narrow, but the climber and crew are focused on the prize. In the weeks and months ahead, there will be more closed doors to choose from. Goldie's Place will be pointing John toward the best doors to try. The knocking is for him to do.

Watching John make this journey of transformation gives us hope—a hope that inspires others in need as well as all of us at Goldie's Place. For John and all our friends bravely striving for a better life, we ask for your blessing, for your belief in him and for your continued belief in us.

Homeless Facts & Fallacies

Fallacy: Homeless people are dangerous.

Facts:

- In general, the homeless are among the least threatening, most vulnerable group in our society. If anything, they are victims of crimes, not perpetrators.
- Some have suffered child abuse or domestic violence. 20% are children.
- Battered women who live in poverty are often forced to choose between abusive relationships and homelessness. Nationally, approximately half of all women and children experiencing homelessness are fleeing domestic violence.

Fallacy: Most people who are homeless are substance abusers, mentally ill or both.

Facts:

- Approximately 22% of the single adult homeless population suffers from some form of severe and persistent mental illness.
- Many are unable to access mental health services or are too ill to stay in a shelter. Some homeless people are substance abusers. Research suggests one out of four. Many of these are included among those who are mentally ill.
- Many addicts never become homeless, but people who are poor and addicted are at increased risk of homelessness. The lack of appropriate treatment may doom one's chances of getting housing once on the streets.
- People who are homeless often face insurmountable barriers to obtaining health care, including addictive disorder treatment services and recovery support.

Fallacy: People who are homeless are to blame for their own situations—they are uneducated, unemployable, or just don't want to work.

Facts:

- Less than 6% of the homeless are homeless by choice.

- 30% of homeless people are employed on a full-time or part-time basis.

- Many homeless people have lost their jobs after years of employment.

- Many people who are homeless have completed high school. Some have attended college and even graduate school.

- Two trends largely responsible for the rise in homelessness over the past 20-25 years are: a growing shortage of affordable rental housing and a simultaneous increase in poverty.

- In 2000, 11.3% of the U.S. population (31.1 million people) lived in poverty. While the number of poor people has decreased slightly in recent years, the number of

people living in extreme poverty has increased. In 2000, 39% of all people living in poverty had incomes of less than the poverty level.

- Media reports of a growing economy and low unemployment mask a number of reasons that homelessness persists and, in some areas, is worsening. These include stagnant or falling incomes and less secure jobs offering fewer benefits.

- For families and individuals struggling to pay rent, a serious illness or disability can start a downward spiral into homelessness.

From: The Goodwill Inn Homeless Shelter, Goodwill Industries of Northern Michigan and National Coalition for the Homeless, Washington, DC.

We Couldn't Do It Without You!

Goldie's Place and all of our participants express our thanks and gratitude for your kind concern and generous contributions. The work we do and the hope we nurture would not be possible without your support!

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Happy Holidays to all of our Goldie's Place Family!!

