



**SOCIETY OF ST. VINCENT DE PAUL  
BILLINGS DISTRICT COUNCIL  
2610 MONTANA AVENUE, BILLINGS, MT 59101  
DOWNTOWN STORE: 406-252-1855  
GRAND AVENUE OUTLET: 406-248-9125  
CHARITY OFFICE: 406-248-1411**

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# The Vincentian Word

## From the Director's Desk...

The inviting colors at our freshly painted Charitable Works Office took on an even warmer ambiance last month when a crew of young men delivered our new washers and dryers.

The effect could not have been more dramatic, and one could see the impact of these new appliances on the eyes of our staff and our friends who make St. Vincent de Paul a part of their daily lives.

In only a few short weeks, our Society of St. Vincent de Paul has undergone a wonderful and magnificent transformation.

We have gone from a poorly lighted space to a warm atmosphere where friends and visitors are welcomed to come visit, use our restroom and now, at long last, to use our new Whirlpool washers and dryers.

All of this is the result of a grant from the M.J. Murdock Charitable Trust and from the continued, monthly contributions of our supporters and donors.

I want to thank everyone who made a special contribution to our renovation fund last month, and, of course, to those of you who donated to our Charity Office.

I am pleased to be able to report that all of the funds (100 percent) contributed to our Charitable Works Office are returned monthly to those in need in our community.

We are planning an open house to highlight our new offices later this year, and I urge you to accept our invitation when our plans are finalized. If you cannot wait until fall, please feel free to come visit us anytime at 2610 Montana Avenue. Everyone is always welcome.

Although our Charitable Works Office and thrift store on Montana Avenue have received a lot of publicity this year, I want to shine the spotlight on our thrift store at 1235 Grand Avenue.

The store's location is a convenient place for shopping, and for quick donation of your slightly used items and all those things that did not sell in your weekend garage sale.

We offer a wide range of clothing for adults and children at our Grand Avenue Store, and our staff is constantly offering new discounts as we pass from one season to the next.

Therefore, if you have not visited our Grand Avenue store recently, I urge you to do so at your earliest opportunity. We have ample parking and our parking lot is sparkling with new stripes put down by this summer's Catholic HEART Work campers.

The Grand Avenue store is open until 5:30 p.m. Monday through Friday, and until 5 p.m. on Saturday for your shopping convenience.

One of our lesser-known programs at St. Vincent de Paul is our Payee Program, which allows us to handle the finances of clients who need assistance with budgeting and payment of bills. Two part-time employees maintain the program, and we currently serve more than 90 clients monthly. This program has been so successful that the Social Security

Administration recently asked us to take on new clients.

In a world that is constantly re-inventing itself with new technologies and "improved" products it is sometimes helpful to be reminded of one's roots or family tree.

With that in mind, I would like to retrace our roots for those who may be new to our Society, or to those who are thinking perhaps of redoubling their financial or volunteer effort to St. Vincent de Paul.

Frederic Ozanam, a young Frenchman who saw the need to help those in poverty, founded our Society as a lay Catholic organization in 1833 in Paris. Today, about 12 million people receive help each year around the globe and all are served regardless of race, creed, color or status.

The Society opened a chapter in the United States in November 1845. The Society opened its doors in Billings in 1972 with a few items and a shoebox as our "computerized" bookkeeping system.

Since then, SVDP in Billings has grown into a thriving Society offering a variety of services to those in need. SVDP employs seven full-time paid staff members, several part-time employees and a host of dedicated volunteers who give their time, energy and love of our society monthly.

Lay Catholics in four Conferences in Billings support SVDP – St. Thomas, St. Pius X, St. Bernard and the Cluster Conference, which includes Holy Rosary, Little Flower, and Our Lady of Guadalupe. Each conference supports a different ministry: Prison Ministry, Home Visits, Nursing visits, and taking the Holy Eucharist to the homebound.

Many people are familiar with our thrift stores, but we are more than a thrift store. SVDP is a beacon of hope, and sometimes the last glimmer of hope, to the homeless, the poor and to those who find their lives turned upside down in our current economic situation.

SVDP provides assistance to those seeking help with rent and utility expenses, clothing, or food and furniture vouchers. We provide bus tickets for local transportation, out-of-town travel, and we also provide help to those needing assistance in obtaining a birth certificate for identification, and help with prescriptions.

More than half of the people who come to SVDP for emergency assistance are unduplicated visits; these are new friends who need immediate help.

This describes the new population we are assisting: the working poor, single mothers, and homeless families with children. We continue to serve the chronically homeless, but it is the new population that is having the most difficulty obtaining assistance in Billings because of programmatic changes at other agencies.

When an agency no longer helps with fuel assistance, SVDP will continue to provide such help. When an agency decides to not feed breakfast to the homeless, SVDP will continue to offer coffee, rolls and doughnuts. When an agency decides to help only those who choose to enroll in their programs, SVDP will continue to open its doors to those in need.

- Agnes. B. Samples

## In Memory Of...

**Leah Boyer**

by: Francis and Georgette Boyer

**Mike and Eunice Mueller**

by: Francis and Georgette Boyer

**Hilda Best**

by: Francis and Georgette Boyer

**Clarence Olfert**

by: Eugene Eggebrecht

**Annie Sorley**

by: Eugene Eggebrecht

**Sue Glatt**

by: Lawrence Glatt

**Jackie Hurick**

by: Dorman Hurick

**Cletus Walsh**

by: Kathleen and Bill LaMeres

**Art Schaaf**

by: Marion Schaaf

**Sr. Mary Depner**

by: Kim Larsen

**Frank Sabo**

by: Gil and Marge Ficek

## In Honor Of...

**Kay Latta's Birthday**

by: Maxine McCurdy

Sisters of Charity

**Bonnie Herminghaus' Birthday**

by: Sisters of Charity

**Sharon Scharosch**

by: Julie Palmersheim

**Regan Walker Snodgrass' Birth**

by: Rita and Edward Reeve



## From the Volunteer Coordinator

Summer is almost over and I would like to thank everyone who supported us and volunteered during these long hot days. I am excited to announce that we had 1,506 volunteer hours in July.

With the end of summer our attention now turns to the busy holiday season. The holidays are a great time to spend with our families and loved ones but it is also a time to give back. In the upcoming months we will be busy sorting toys for Santa, filling holiday dinner baskets, and giving support for those less fortunate. In order to achieve our mission and to provide the best possible service for the Billings community we will be asking for more volunteers. Please ask your family and friends to join us in achieving our goals. If you would like to volunteer or need more information please feel free to contact me at 252-1855 ext. 309 or email me Glynis@svdpmt.org.

- Glynis Burchell

## Volunteer of the Month



Gracie Reif

Gracie Reif is September's volunteer of the month. Gracie has been volunteering with SVDP for 4 years. Gracie delivers food boxes to shut-ins and fills in whenever we need her. She is a cheerful, caring and devoted person. She gives so much to her family and the community. Thank you, Gracie, for your kindness and joyfulness. SVDP is blessed to have you as a volunteer.

## Friends of the Poor Walk



Participants are encouraged to make a personal monetary donation and collect pledges from supporters. We will be raising funds to relieve poverty in the Billings area, as we also raise awareness for the plight of the poor among us.

Be ready to walk with us on **Saturday morning, September 10**. Registration begins at 9:15 a.m. and the two-mile walk starts at **10:00 a.m.** The walk will begin and end at St. Vincent de Paul (SVDP), 2610 Montana Avenue. All proceeds will directly benefit those in need here in Yellowstone County. SVDP programs include food box deliveries, housing assistance, disaster relief, clothing, transportation and utility costs, thrift stores, and home visits. For more information about the walk log on to: [www.svdpm.org](http://www.svdpm.org) or call 406-252-1855 ext. 309. Free parking is available in the SVDP parking lot on the corner of 27th Street and Minnesota Avenue.

## Kelly's Corner...

We are all called to serve one another. And I'm so excited that's what we as the Voice of the Poor Committee do. We all try to serve, support, and help in the best ways we can. We have started by asking the people we serve what their needs are. The best question to ask first is, "How are you doing?" so we can get to know them. Then let them tell their story. We listen. There are three gifts and talents we all can share with each other: time, listening, and giving of self. So let's all reach out to one another. Reach out in the way you feel called, and comfortable. If you have questions, or ideas, please feel free to call 406-252-1855 ext. 301.

- Kelly Studer

## Charity Office Update

Last month I got a visit from a very old friend of SVDP's. He had been a frequent visitor when I had first started here. He was homeless, had a drinking and drug problem, and he was living in an old, abandoned camper shell somewhere on the outskirts of Billings. He would walk to SVDP everyday; it would take him about three hours to get here, but he would always be the first one at the door when we would open. He was always so kind to everyone and never started any problems. He was the first one to admit the problems he was plagued with, and he never made excuses for himself. Then one day he wasn't at the door, and I had not seen him since. That was about eight years ago.

Last month he finally came to visit me. It was so good to see him again. And he had so much wonderful news to share with me. When he first left he had gone to Washington state. He knew if he was going to get clean he would have to leave Billings. He stayed on the streets in Washington for about a year, and finally found a program that would help him. It was a very intense inpatient treatment program. And it took him almost one year to get through it. After treatment he found a transitional housing program until he could find a job and get on his feet. He found a job washing dishes at a restaurant during the day and he went to business management school at night. He went to school for two years. He found a place of his own after he was finished with schooling and then got a great job as a night manager at a hotel. He slowly bettered his life and would accomplish a goal and then set another one. He managed to stay off the drugs and alcohol. And was able to make something of himself.

He is now the director of a grocery store chain in Spokane. And he is married and has a little girl who is three years old. It was so good to see his successes and how proud he was of himself. But most of all it was good to seem him happy.

- Felicia Lehman

## Ellis Resigns from Board

Longtime board member, Bruce Ellis, has resigned from the Board of Directors. Ellis most recently served as Treasurer.

### Society of St. Vincent de Paul — Staff

Executive Director:	Agnes B. Samples
Volunteer Coordinator:	Glynis Burchell
Store Manager:	Debbie Butler
Resource Worker:	Felicia Lehman
Payee Representative:	Jeanette Skinner

### Society of St. Vincent de Paul— Board of Directors

President:	Mary Jo Michels
Vice-President:	Jeanne Bender
Program Coordinator	Donna Pavlish
Spiritual Advisor	Bill Belinski
Other Members:	Jim Good
	Joan Michael
	Kelly Studer