

INSIDE THE CENTER

Serving Children & Families of the Chicago Southland since 1963



Good Shepherd Center
FALL 2010

Celebrating 25 Years of Service

Julie Gembara refers to herself as “Rent a Gramma,” and to the families in Good Shepherd Center’s Respite program, that means a lot. Julie is a caring and positive respite worker who finds something good to say about everyone. She has worked for Good Shepherd Center since 1985 and is proud of what she does. Julie explains, “I meet a lot of great parents who are very accepting of their circumstances. Respite is a valuable service for everyone. I feel I learn as much



from my families as they do from me.” Julie feels good about being informed, trained and prepared for each individual case. As a respite care worker, Julie gives parents and care givers a break from their child care responsibilities, allowing them time to shop, work, run errands, etc.

Julie and her husband Rich live in Oak Forest and have two daughters, a son and four grandchildren. She has a broad educational background, having attended Lawrence University and University of Illinois. She also lived in Europe for four years.

Julie is yet another example of the outstanding staff who work at Good Shepherd Center providing the best possible care for children.

Interested in Respite Care? Please call 708-335-0020 x 22.

A Reason to Fight

by *Brendan McCormick,*
Executive Director

When I started at Good Shepherd Center I looked forward to coming to work everyday as I enjoyed my time with the children



in our school and their parents. It was so much simpler then, as my job was to provide support for the staff and families, assuring that they had what they needed to be successful. It also renewed my energy for attending to difficult tasks in my job by simply spending time in a classroom with the children.

Since that time, my job has become much more difficult, regularly fighting with the State on changes they continue to make to already successful programs for children and families. I also have

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Upcoming Events - Mark Your Calendars Today

Parent Institute Day Conference

“Strong Children Strong Communities”
NEW DAY!! SATURDAY February 26, 2011
Prairie State College - Chicago Heights
CEU and CPDU credits available
Registration call 708-957-2600
Exhibit tables and Sponsors call 708-335-0020 x 20



Billiards Tournament

Sunday, Nov. 14, 2010 - S. Suburban location TBA
Come and meet The Black Widow!!
Call 708-335-0020 x 20 for more info



Winter Holiday Party - Sat. December 11, 2010
3rd Annual Golf Outing - Friday, June 3, 2011

Second Annual Golf Outing Review

Good Shepherd Center's golf outing on Friday, June 18th at Ravisloe Country Club was a day no one will forget. Despite temperatures in the 90's, a severe thunderstorm, loss of power and tornado warnings, everyone had an absolute blast. The old saying, "It is what it is" certainly pertained to the sequence of events as the day rolled on like nothing was happening.

Many thanks to sports celebrities Steve McMichael and Doug Buffone, the golfers, Major Sponsors and Hole Sponsors for making this event a huge success.

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had to become more political, as Legislators face difficult decisions on how best to meet the needs of the community with shrinking State funds. They need our input to assure that they can serve their constituents. When I started, politics only took a small percentage of my time, assuring that local Legislators were aware of the services we offer for those they served. Today, politics is 40% of my job as I work with Legislators for assistance in maintaining our services for families.

Advocating for our children may be difficult, but it must be done. While I miss the chance to go into the classrooms to look into the faces of our children and be reminded of why we all must continue to fight, I recently had this opportunity present itself again. I attended a great program for young children offered by Good Shepherd Center alumnus, Jack, Sophia, Dave and Brooke Klawitter. Once a month, this family

hosts the “Young Athletes” program at Homewood-Flossmoor High School. This sports play program provides children with and without developmental disabilities (ages 2 to 7) an opportunity to learn team play and for parents to network with others. It also allows children over the age of 7 to become volunteer coaches, assisting the younger children in having fun. If you would like to have your child become a participant of this program or would like to volunteer to become energized as I was this past weekend, simply contact Brooke at BKlawitter@usg.com.

So, while continuing the good



Jack Klawitter participates in “Young Athletes.”

fight on behalf of children may be tedious and difficult, it is something that must be done. If you find yourself growing weary of the fight, look into the face of a child with developmental disabilities and I assure you that you will easily find the strength to persevere.

What exactly is the Community Partner Program?

Good Shepherd Center’s Community Partner Program works in collaboration with Illinois Action for Children to provide training and support for Child Care Providers throughout all of south suburban Cook County. The service area encompasses 52 zip codes and touches the lives of thousands of children through Day Care and In-Home Child Care Providers. This program provides assistance to individuals planning to open a

Child Care Site in either a Center or Home based setting. Support is also essential to providers already in operation, to ensure high quality childcare continues on an everyday basis. This support involves training and classes on topics that include everything from CPR / First Aid to working with children with medical and disability issues. Each year, this Community Partner office implements more than 200 trainings that serve 450 Day Care

Centers and 900 Home Providers in the service area. Good Shepherd Center also provides support for Spanish speaking Providers through an on-staff, Bilingual Specialist.

For more information on the Community Partner Program, please call 708-957-2600.



Community Partner Program
17512 Carriageway
Hazel Crest, IL 60429
(708) 957-2600

Good Shepherd Center
Serving Children & Families Since 1963
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Good Shepherd Center Mission Statement

Good Shepherd Center, a community advocate for children and adults with and without disabilities, provides support, service, and education to empower individuals and families to lead exceptional lives.

501 © (3) Organization

NEW LOCATION

Winter Holiday Party

All former and current Good Shepherd Center families are invited.

Saturday December 11, 2010

9:30 to 11:30 a.m.

FREE - FUN for EVERYONE!!

Salem Lutheran Church
18324 Ashland Ave,
Homewood



Breakfast, games, crafts, prizes
pictures with Santa.

Any questions or to register
contact June at 708-335-0020 x 16

Register soon.