



## Residential Assistance to Families in Transition

P. O. Box 1741 • Kearney, Nebraska 68848-1741 • (308) 865-1355

*Mission Statement:*

*To stabilize families in distress within a safe, secure, and empowering environment while they regain self-sufficiency.*

December 2006

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Sharon Fox,  
Executive Director  
Amanda Hall,  
Case Manager

### MEET OUR STAFF

#### Amanda Hall, CSW Case manager

Amanda became Case Manager at R.A.F.T. in April. She is a 2005 graduate of UNK with a Bachelor of Science degree in Social Work with a minor in sociology, and is a Certified Social Worker in the State of Nebraska. She is currently pursuing a Master of Science in Community Counseling.

Amanda's hometown is Campbell, Nebraska. She has been living in Kearney for about five years. She recently became engaged to B. J. Warburton of Roseland, Nebraska. They are planning to be married in the fall of 2007. Amanda enjoys going to Harlan County Reservoir during the summer where she can go water-skiing, wake boarding, and jet-skiing.

She is a welcome asset to the R.A.F.T. program and the families it serves.

### HAPPENINGS AT R.A.F.T.

Since our last newsletter, three families have moved on to permanent housing to continue their path to self-sufficiency, and four new families have come to R.A.F.T. This makes a total of 10 families who have resided and participated in the program during 2006. R.A.F.T. is currently serving five adults and eight children. All of the adults are employed at least part-time, and are working very hard to meet the goals they have established so that they can move into permanent housing with the skills to remain there and lead a healthy, productive lifestyle.

The holidays are almost here and our staff is planning with the families so that they may experience the joys of the season with less stress. Due to the generosity of the Kearney community, the families will be able to enjoy the blessings of gifts and good food!

In April, we welcomed our new Case Manager, Amanda Hall. She stepped into the position with experience and fresh ideas and is helping the families establish and meet their goals.

We wrapped up our Annual Campaign in early June and are now making plans for a 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary celebration in the spring of 2007.

### 2006 DONORS

#### *Annual Campaign*

RSVP  
David Wiebe  
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#### *Donated Items:*

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**RURAL HOMELESS FACTS**

The causes of rural homelessness are much the same as those of urban homelessness, poverty and lack of decent affordable housing. However, there are differences in the characteristics of the homeless. The rural homeless are not as visible as urban homeless. They are more likely to be white, married, and currently working. The episodes of homelessness are shorter and less frequent than those in urban areas. Of rural homeless, 62% are homeless for the first time; 45% live temporarily in private housing.

The chance of being poor in rural areas is 1.2 to 2.3 times higher than in urban areas. Many rural areas have a poverty rate of 20% or higher. Rural homeless are more likely to stay with family or friends, partly because there are fewer shelters in rural areas.

Although housing costs in rural areas are lower, so are incomes. Problems of housing quality also contribute to homelessness in rural areas, with homelessness being precipitated by a structural or physical housing problem jeopardizing health and/or safety. As families relocate to safer housing, the rent is often too much to manage, and the cycle of homelessness recurs as the search for safe, affordable housing continues. Other factors include the distance between low-cost housing and employment opportunities, lack of transportation, and a decline in homeownership. (Statistics from the National Coalition for the Homeless)



During 2006, R.A.F.T. has received referrals for 34 homeless families. Four have completed the application process and moved into the residence. Fourteen chose not to complete the application process after learning more about the program. R.A.F.T. was unable to serve fourteen because there was no room in the program; these families had to locate other housing opportunities.

**CALENDAR OF EVENTS:**

- December 21:** Resident Christmas Party
- December 25:** Office Closed in observance of Christmas
- January 1:** Office closed in observance of New Year's Day
- February 2007:** Fundraising event to be announced
- February 13:** Annual Meeting
- February 19:** Office closed in observance of Presidents' Day
- April 14:** 10 Year Celebration Event

An opportunity to serve: Enclosed is a donation of \$\_\_\_\_\_ (Donations are tax deductible.)

I would like to Volunteer. Please call me! Phone:\_\_\_\_\_ (Home/Work)

Please keep me informed of RAFT's progress and activities.

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

For additional information on the RAFT Program, please contact the Executive Director at (308) 865-1355 Ext. 133 or Case Manager at (308) 865-1355 Ext. 137

**SAVE THE DATE APRIL 14, 2007**  
**R.A.F.T., INC.**  
 RESIDENTIAL ASSISTANCE TO FAMILIES IN TRANSITION  
**CELEBRATING**  
**10 YEARS OF SERVING**  
**HOMELESS FAMILIES FROM THE BUFFALO**  
**COUNTY AREA**  
**DINNER/CONCERT EVENT**  
**NOW SEEKING SPONSORSHIPS**



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