



Serving the  
Homeless  
since 1988

Macomb County Rotating Emergency Shelter Team



Winter  
2008



Check out our website!  
[www.mcrest.org](http://www.mcrest.org)

**CLEAR YOUR CALENDAR!**  
Coming Events...

*Spring Fling*  
April 19th, 2008

**Dancing to "Thrill"**

The Motown Sound

<http://thrillgroup.com/main2.html>

at Zuccaro Banquets & Catering  
46601 N. Gratiot - North of Hall Rd.  
Chesterfield Twp., MI

For more information, see  
**"Spring Fling Fundraiser"**  
on page 2.



**Bus Tickets**

Buy 1 - Buy 1,000

\$1.50 each

Order through the  
**MCREST Office**

**(586) 415-5101**

**From the desk of the President.....**



*Laurie Huff, President*

Dear Friends of  
MCREST,

It's time to say  
goodbye to 2007. It  
was an eventful  
year with many ex-  
citing adventures  
and the loss of a  
dear friend. MCREST  
learned that the grant  
request to HUD was

approved and the planning began for a multi-purpose building to meet the needs of the homeless population in Macomb County. Everyone was charged and ready to go forward. We have all learned quite a lot from this experience. The project is complex with many details that must be considered such as zoning, financing, developing a business plan, and hiring a construction supervisor and on and on. But through all this, MCREST continued to provide shelter, food and case management services to 1,095 homeless individuals.

The Board and staff of MCREST know that we owe our gratitude and thanks to the 84 churches that house the homeless throughout the year. Each and every church family makes the commitment to gather their resources to make their week the very best for their guests. Many of these churches rely on the help of neighboring parishes to assist them in providing food, laundry, workers, haircuts, and fun activities. It takes creative planning and hours of work, but each year our church partners embrace their guests with kindness, concern and respect. Thank you.

The New Year will also bring its share of difficulties. The demand for MCREST services is on the increase as evidenced by Macomb County's financial woes, high rates of unemployment and the collapse of the housing market. It is comforting to know that MCREST has a committed Board of Directors, a devoted staff and the support of 84 churches. In this uncertain environment, funding will be difficult, but our Christmas appeal was the most successful we have ever had. Our community recognized the needs of others and rose to the occasion. Thank you.

We accomplished a lot last year. A few knowledgeable Board members and the Ex-

ecutive Director developed a very detailed business plan for the multi-purpose building. After several months, the Strategic Planning Committee has developed a very comprehensive five-year plan. MCREST hired a development director. A PR/Marketing Committee was established and has successfully kept MCREST in the news. Our web site has been redesigned and it's wonderful (Check it out at [www.mcrest.org](http://www.mcrest.org)). We lost our president, Dwight Blaser, in June, which left us all in shock and mourning. We retired our long-time employee and dedicated friend, Sharron Kaczynski. We hired a new full-time caseworker, Tim Franco. We graduated some very successful CAP clients. And, we provided 18,924 shelter nights for homeless men, women and children. Thank you.

2008 promises to be another busy and exciting year. While we never know what's on the horizon, MCREST knows that it can continue to count on its churches, supporters, friends, staff and board. Thank you.

Laurie Huff, President  
Board of Directors



**Macomb County Rotating  
Emergency Shelter Team**

*Saturday, April 19, 2008*  
at

*Zuccaro Banquets & Catering*  
46601 N. Gratiot - North of Hall Rd.  
Chesterfield Twp., MI

Doors open at 6pm - Business Casual  
Station style dinner at 7pm  
Cash Bar

**Guest Speaker:**  
Sheriff Mark Hackel

**Dancing to "Thrill"**  
The Motown Sound  
<http://thrillgroup.com/main2.html>

**Silent Auction**  
**Ticket price: \$60 - \$30 is Tax Deductible**  
For tickets call (586) 415-5107

Advanced ticket sales only,  
Deadline April 12, 2008  
Tables seat 10  
All proceeds to benefit MCREST

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# Jimetta's Journal



Jimetta Lewis

Sometimes life comes at you like a curve ball and you aren't always prepared to deal with it. What I have found, is that there are blessings abound for us if we are open and choose to look for them. What we have are the dedicated, loving and generous churches and volunteers that make up the one half of MCREST. This year, we have been blessed with a professional and forward moving Board of Directors who had to take up the reins where our blessed Dwight left off. We have seen generous community groups, General Motors,

Roseville Schools and their 'Stuff a Bus', the A.S.K. participating schools with the Macomb Intermediate School District, students needing community service hours for confirmation or graduation and their supportive parents, the Detroit Executive Service Corps, our donors and our wonderful staff who comprise the other half of MCREST. Black Elementary gave a special surprise to one of our guests for Christmas and shared a valuable lesson for all those who heard, experienced or read about it. I don't want to exclude anyone and please forgive me if you felt you should have been added. There were so many blessings this year that it would take the whole newsletter to list them all. Every thank you letter we send out of our office goes out with a prayer and a grateful heart. I never could have dreamed of all the assistance we received this year and that also includes Wakely and Associates with Dominic Abbate and Brian Smilnek, Kensington

Eastside Edge and Lester Gilbert. We were able to assist a few of our clients with co-pays for their psychiatric medications. We had an array of jackets, socks, t-shirts and toiletries for those in need. We are truly blessed and I am very grateful.

There is a synergy around MCREST and we are moving forward to build Jack's Place. For those of you who are not familiar with Jack's Place, it will be another MCREST building that will reside 25 seriously mentally ill men, a day-time drop-in center, laundry facilities, health, mental health, dental services, commercial kitchen, job training, showers and offices for the service agencies in Macomb County. If assisting us in this much needed venture interests you – please join us! You can reach me via e-mail at [JimettaL@mcrest.org](mailto:JimettaL@mcrest.org) or 586-415-5107.

Peace, Love and Joy,  
Jimetta J. Lewis, Executive Director

## CAP CORNER

Tim Franco  
CAP Case Manager

**We currently have six clients in the Choose-A-Path program.**

We would like to congratulate our CAP graduates. We had 2 guests complete our CAP program and acquire housing. Congratulations and a good job for all your hard work.

**George G.**- His recovery is his primary goal. He has worked hard at Michigan Works and is in the process of obtaining his GED. He was recently offered employment.

**Nathaniel J.** is resolving issues with Friend of the Court. He is working toward his Commercial Drivers License, and is working full-time. His goal is obtaining permanent housing.

**Robert D.** is working full-time. He is paying back debts. He is making adjustments with the Friend of the Court to make his payments current.

**Jeff S.** has submitted several applications, and is going through a background check. His goal is to acquire housing and obtain a car to go back and forth to work. Jeff worked very diligently before he entered the CAP program.

**Rick D.** has mental health issues. He is taking his medication and keeping follow

up appointments with Recipient Rights to get the help he needs. He is currently seeking employment and trying to get his life back on track.

**Frank B.** is working full-time and was excited to be in the CAP program. He works very hard to achieve his goals.

We are very proud of our CAP clients. With a lot of determination and hard work, they are learning to overcome difficult situations like substance abuse, mental health issues, and/or underemployment/unemployment.

*We need individuals to mentor our clients. If you are interested, please call April or Tim at the MCREST office at: (586) 415-5101.*

## Spring Fling Fundraiser

**Save the Date!**  
**April 19<sup>th</sup> !**

Tell your friends! MCREST is pleased to announce our annual fundraiser, the Spring Fling! Filled with fun music, dancing and surprises, our Spring Fling promises to be a real crowd pleaser.

You voted and we listened. Many of you asked for a new theme this year so we replaced our Mardi Gras party with our new and fresh, tulip inspired, Spring Fling! What better way to usher in spring than with a party?

And many members expressed their desire to kick up their heels and dance so we are excited to bring you our musical guest **Thrill-The Motown Sound**. They are full of energy so be sure to bring your dancing shoes! We know our crowd will give Dancing with the Star's real competition.

And as a special treat we have invited Macomb County's Sheriff Mr. Mark Hackel to be our keynote speaker for the evening. Sheriff Hackel has distinguished himself as one of the country's top law enforcement officials and is a well known advocate for any and all of our citizens who are in need.

All proceeds from this event benefit MCREST and its mission of providing emergency shelter and services to our citizens in need. Your support and participation in this years Spring Fling will help us continue this important work.

Tickets for the Spring Fling of April 19th are \$60.00 per person with seatings in tables of ten for those who wish to bring a group (\$30 tax deductible per ticket). A cash bar, silent auction and a 50/50 raffle are also part of the festivities and business casual dress is requested.

Call 586-415-5101 for tickets and to learn about sponsorship opportunities. And visit [www.mcrest.org](http://www.mcrest.org) for information too!

## Bus Load of Warm Gifts



Faye Maraman  
and  
Karen Coleman

Roseville Community Schools bus drivers set their sights on collecting a busload of donations for the homeless. In mid December, they did just that! We would like to thank Faye Maraman and Karen Coleman who delivered these much needed gifts to the MCREST office.

Jeff S.  
and  
George G.





*Joelene Beckett*

Happy New Year to All and 2008 is going to be great! I'm sure most of you have heard this already but I believe in keeping positive energy going. In 2007 December 2-9 was open as of the last newsletter article but Trinity

Evangelical Lutheran Church returned filling that date. The February 3-10 date has been filled with another returning church Metropolitan Church of the Nazarene and we welcome both back to the team. We missed you and all your dedicated volunteers. There are a few issues with the schedule pending for 2008. The week of June 8-15 needs a combination church added and the week of July 20-27 needs an all male program. A couple of churches have asked to be moved and I am currently working on all of these weeks. I attended many

volunteer and de-briefing meetings in 2007 and continually learn about new ideas, suggestions etc. The volunteer/leader meetings are the time that I can bring you up to speed as to the trends, etc. Again, I would like to remind you to contact me if you have a meeting on the horizon so I can get it on my schedule. This information is passed onto the staff and future church meetings. **YOU ARE THE VOICE OF MCREST** we want to hear from you. We just completed our first certification/re-certification meeting for the year which was very well attended.

Thank you to all who were there and it is our hope that you glean useful information for your program at these meetings.

Recovery Coaching remains very busy and the outcomes have been positive. Sharing this gift with our recovering folks has been a blessing to me and I am grateful for this opportunity.

In closing, my wish is for world peace, health for all and most of all .....Love

Joelene

**Community Connection Day Helpers**

Jacob Kraski had a mission to complete some community hours for school. He brought his brother and mother in to help when others walked away and separated all the jackets and coats for the homeless for our Community Connection Day January 29th! Much thanks to the Kraski family!



**Connection Day Success**

Community Connection Day was well represented by Macomb County Service Agencies. MCREST was well represented by Board members and staff.

**A Generous Donation**

Featured from left to right behind Associate Director, April Fidler, are Daniel Grieshabar, Brian Jutila, Toni Pardy and Bob Muzichuk.

They presented us with a check from the GM Casual Day from the Lower and Upper Structure and Engineers!



**Thank you to All!**

**From Our Guests...**

Sorry that it took nearly two weeks to get this to you, but here it is everything that has been going on in my life since we last saw each other in 2003.

Let's see where to begin.....

Well, I started out in MCREST in May of 2003. I was accepted into the Choose a Path, or Cap, program. I graduated from that program in September of 2003. I moved on to the Salvation Army Transitional House in that same month. I stayed there, despite the many problems that I saw within that program.

I knew in my heart that there had to be a better way to run a program, than this, because the relapse rate at that program was very nearly 90%. It was at this point that I thought that I should talk to the leadership at my church about maybe starting our own program, but this dream remained just that, a dream, until this past year. I had to wait for it to be the right time in God's eyes for my dream to have a voice.

Currently, there has been a house purchased and it is starting to be set up as a transitional house for women with me as the house manager. This is quite a change for a recovering heroin addict, don't you think?

Now, on to those of you who are reading this and thinking that you couldn't possibly be able to make that much of a change in your own lives. I'm living proof that you can. I have a felony conviction for embezzlement and a drug history that would turn your hair white, yet I'm here and able to do this, but only through God's Divine Grace and Mercy. Once you get to the point where you think that you have absolutely nowhere else to turn, LOOK UP. He'll be there for you just like He is, was and always will be for me.

Sincerely,  
Ruth Nichols  
Beloved Child of God

Date: December 21, 2007

- To: The MCREST Staff
- American Lutheran - Carl and Volunteers
- St. Lucy - Jerry and Volunteers
- St. Jane Francis - Tom and Volunteers
- Warren Methodist Church - Judy and Volunteers
- St. Michelle - Pam and Volunteers



I would like to again thank all of you. In my time of need, God gave you the strength and where with all to help me and my fellow men. You gave from your hearts and for this I will forever be thankful. You will always be remembered, and I will always have a special spot in my heart for all of you. God bless you all and have a Merry Christmas and Happy new Years.

Sincerely yours,  
Susie Smith



MCREST Staff and Families,

I am thanking you for your Organization just being who you are and doing what you do, as well as providing me with shelter, food and even clothing this past July, 2007. Although I was only in the program for three weeks, Jesus moved me and did many wonderful things, as he does, and is always glad to do. This card also comes to extend a proper condolence in the passing of the President of MCREST during my time with you. Let his family know that I truly appreciate MCREST and that his death was not in vain. Once again, thank you. Be encouraged!

*Wishing you a wonderful holiday season*

Ms. Brenda Smith



*Thank  
You*



*For all the support you have  
given to MCREST.*

*Please know that your generosity and  
kindness is changing lives!*

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Fund Developer:

Phillip D. Ogle



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**We're on the Web!**

