



Neighbor to Neighbor

A center for women

We're a center for women and women with children in downtown Concordia, Kan. Our services and programs are all offered without charge to the women taking part, thanks to continuing support from the Sisters of St. Joseph of Concordia, our growing cadre of volunteers and generous donations from people who care about making our community a better place, today and into the future.

SPRING/SUMMER 2014

Friendship. Camaraderie. Fellowship. Compassion.

You hear many of the same words over and over again when you ask the women at Neighbor to Neighbor why they come to the center in downtown Concordia. And that was exactly the question asked of both guests and volunteers on a random and typical Wednesday. Here are some of their replies:

I come here for the excitement of love. I would come every day if I could. I come twice a week for sure, and then one other day if I can think of an excuse to be here.

— LOUISE SUMMERS who takes part in painting classes and volunteers where needed

I wanted to learn to sew. I was scared to come at first, just because it was a new thing for me. But now I want to eventually learn to crochet. I'm a stay-at-home mom so it's nice to interact with adults.

— VANESSA WICKHAM, the mother of two preschool children who visits twice a week for Playtime

I have cancer and can't work, and I get tired of being home and watching TV. So I try to come Monday, Wednesday and Friday.

— LINDA STILLABOWER

I come here to do quilting and quilling. (And she has recruited a number of her friends to come along.) I tell them, "Come have fun. It's better than staying home."

— TARI KADEL

Since I don't do much except work, I can come here to socialize. Now that I'm babysitting (the children of a woman she met at Neighbor to Neighbor), I bring them to play with other kids.

— BROOKE MARTIN

I love this place. I love the sisters, the atmosphere, the friendship. I can give these people so much crap and they give it right back. When I leave here, I'm filled with hope and joy, and I can go out and spread that.

— MYRNA SHELTON, who volunteers during Playtime and doing whatever else is needed

It's better for me than for the people I'm teaching (to make jewelry). They think I'm helping them, but being here helps me so much more.

— VIRGINIA PORTER, who comes from Belleville one morning a week

I just like the atmosphere here. It gets me away from my husband; he drives me batty!

— DORIS HALE, who comes just about every day to do quilting and jewelry making



LOUISE SUMMERS
painting
classes



VANESSA WICKHAM
sewing,
children



LINDA STILLABOWER
crafts,
friendship



TARI KADEL
crafts,
"recruiter"



BROOKE MARTIN
crafts



MYRNA SHELTON
volunteer



VIRGINIA PORTER
volunteer



DORIS HALE
crafts,
friendship

----- Turn over for more -----



How You Can Help

Be a good neighbor

Special Needs:

Some needs have no season! We're always running low on these "staples."

- Diapers (sizes 2 to 6)
- Moist towelettes & baby wipes
- Paper towels & toilet paper

We always welcome extra produce from your garden. Please think of us when all those tomatoes start ripening!

Learning to KOHP

The Kansans Optimizing Health Program — or KOHP — is a workshop designed for people living with chronic health issues.

The next workshop will be Thursday mornings from Aug. 21 to Sept. 25.

To learn more, contact Sister Jean at Neighbor to Neighbor.

Stay in touch with us!

Want to receive our schedule by email? Just let us know and we'll add you to that emailing list.

That way you'll be among the first to know about special events — like our Family Picnic planned for this summer!

Neighbor to Neighbor

103 E. Sixth St.
Concordia KS 66901

785/262-4215

neighbortoneighbor@csjkansas.org

Hours

9 am-4 pm M,T,W & F
1 pm-6 pm Th

Center Staff

Sister Jean Befort
Sister Ramona Medina
Sister Pat McLennon

A MINISTRY OF THE
Sisters of St. Joseph
of Concordia, Kansas
... loving God and neighbor without distinction ...



ANSWERING THIS QUESTION

What attracts you to Neighbor to Neighbor?

It's like getting a big, warm hug. I've learned things here, and it gets me out of my comfort zone.

— LINDA BECK of Olathe, Kan., who spent time here two years ago when she stayed at Manna House of Prayer for a 40-day personal retreat; she still visits whenever she's in Concordia

We can do our crafts and talk and get out of the house.

— AMY FREED

I've learned a lot of things here, like very intricate lacemaking, and I love the sisters. I can come to them if I have a problem and they give me good advice.

— SARAH SCHLEICHER, who visits almost every day

It's peaceful here. I knit, crochet, help with the cooking and even clean when I feel up to it.

— ANN BURNETT, who was the first volunteer to help at Neighbor to Neighbor

I come on Tuesdays and Wednesdays for the children's play group and then on Thursdays to bake.

— RUBY GENEREUX

I'm not too crafty so I like to be in the kitchen; I can explore my creativity in here. When I first came, I was not in a good place in my life; I was being a hermit. Now it's good to be able to help and to be wanted.

— ALICE NONDORF, who volunteers as the cook almost every day that lunch is served



LINDA BECK
learning



AMY FREED
crafts,
friendship



SARAH SCHLEICHER
crafts,
advice



ANN BURNETT
volunteer



RUBY GENEREUX
children,
baking



ALICE NONDORF
volunteer

SPOTLIGHT ON OUR VOLUNTEERS

Jean Wilcox

As Sister Ramona Medina puts it, "Jean Wilcox can help you make a wedding dress or sew on a button with equal ease."

The wedding dress in question was for a woman Jean met at Neighbor to Neighbor and who had a picture of what she wanted but no pattern or sewing skills to go with it. The buttons are, well, buttons and too numerous to count.

Neither does Jean count the compliments or praise she gets from the sisters here.

"I'm having a ball," she says. "They wouldn't be able to get rid of me!"

Not that they'd want to.

Four years ago, Jean had recently retired — for the second time, she notes — so when the three sisters who founded the center for women and their young children hosted their first open house for Neighbor to Neighbor, "I came to that and asked, 'What do you need?'"

She's been finding the answer to that question ever since.



Despite being diagnosed with lymphoma and an autoimmune disease called Sjögren's syndrome — both of which cause chronic fatigue — she has been a consistent presence on almost any project involving needles and thread.

There was that wedding dress pattern, and then the wedding dress itself. And there have been quilt patterns and quilts, canvas tote bags and the "Little Dresses for Africa," just to name a few.

To them all she brings a lifelong passion for "crafting" combined with experience in Christian education and ministry, including four years as pastor of United Methodist Church in Concordia.

"Originally I called myself a teacher," Jean says. "But then I saw that when what is needed and what my skills are come together, that's a call. Now I see it as a ministry."