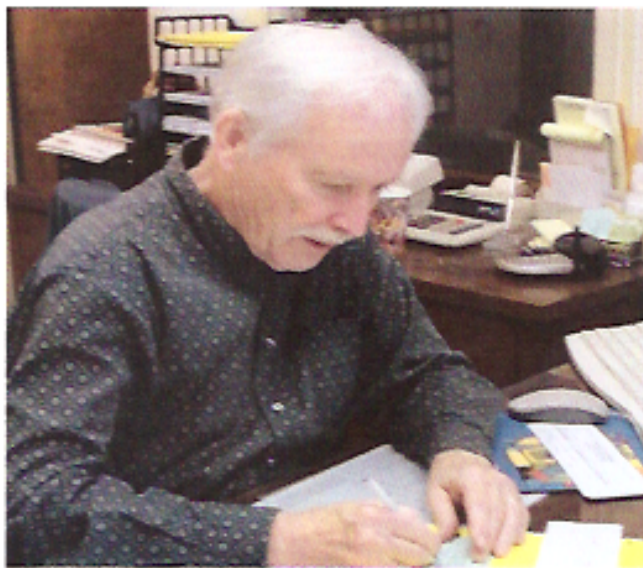


# The Canticle

The newsletter of Santa Maria Urban Ministry, San Jose, CA September 2010

## Volunteer Sees a Need and Fills It

Volunteers make services at Santa Maria (SMUM) possible and useful, and an excellent example is Larry Bursch, who started as a volunteer in 1999, buying supplies for the nurse running a clinic we operated at that time. A great bargain hunter, Larry has identified good buys for various supplies since then and began working at the reception desk in 2003. He continues to be the smiling face that clients see each Wednesday morning.



In working at the reception desk, Larry has become especially interested in the need of homeless clients for personal hygiene kits "that will make their lives a little less difficult," he says. "I have been so impressed with the generally positive attitude of most homeless clients that it gives me great satisfaction to be a part in providing hygiene kits and sleeping bags for them." His motivation, he explained, is "to have the sense of helping those less fortunate in my own community." In the article below, he tells how the kits are prepared and distributed.

## Hygiene Kits for Homeless Clients

Homeless clients who register at Santa Maria Urban Ministry (SMUM) are eligible for a hygiene kit once a month. Each kit contains at least seven items: a toothbrush, toothpaste (1.5 oz fluoride),

deodorant (1.6 oz.), shampoo (4 oz. bottle), hand soap (1.5 oz. wrapped), four razors (doubled edged), and two packets of shaving cream (0.25 oz.). The kits for women include some feminine napkins.

The cost for the seven items is \$2.00. Five of these items are ordered once a year from a wholesaler, the toothbrushes come from Dr. Fresh near Los Angeles, and a Santa Maria supporter is donating the disposable razors (Big Lots). Santa Maria volunteers package the kits, and about 40 kits are given to clients each month, or 480 kits per year.

You can help. If 200 individuals each gave only \$10 (a once-a-year special gift), this \$2,000 would provide not only the hygiene kits for a year but also about 50 quality sleeping bags (from Big 5 Sporting Goods) that can be given out during the fall and winter months as part of Santa Maria's Warm Heart Ministry.

Please consider making a special donation for the hygiene kits and sleeping bags and noting "Warm Heart Ministry" on your check. Thank you!

Larry Bursch, SMUM Volunteer

## St. Timothy's Annual Dinner— Same Cause, New Theme

On Saturday, October 2, St. Timothy's Mountain View will hold its annual event that provides a wonderful evening of fun and fellowship and benefits SMUM. In the past, this event has been called a Gourmet Dinner, but this year it has a more informal theme: an Oktoberfest. Featuring a German dinner with beers and wine, the evening will also include music with the Oktoberfest theme, a silent auction, and a raffle. Wunderbar!

You are invited. Tickets are just \$30 per person, and childcare is available by advance purchase (\$5 per child). The dinner is held at the church, 2094 Grant Road, Mountain View, starting at 6:30 PM. To join in the fun and support a good cause, contact the office at (650) 967-4724 to arrange for your ticket.

The Santa Maria Urban Ministry Board of Directors wishes to express its condolences to the Reverend and Mrs. Lawrence Robles on the passing of Lawrence's father, Arnold Diaz Robles. Arnold Robles died on August 5, 2010. An Orange County resident, he lived in Southern California for 79 years. He is survived by four siblings, eleven children, and ten grandchildren. Mr. Robles served for six years in the United States Air Force and was a retired member of the Cement Mason's Union. Funeral services were held August 11 in Tustin, California.

***The true measure of our thanksgiving is not what we say about our blessings, but how we use them.***

Have you noticed? The leaves from trees are starting to fall. This means that we are heading into the part of the year when holiday spirit fills us with love and caring for others. At Santa Maria, this means that we are gearing up for Thanksgiving. You can help!

For the two weeks leading up to November 25, SMUM will place the makings for Thanksgiving dinners in the food boxes distributed to clients. We can use frozen chickens, and turkeys, and canned hams of all sizes. All types of protein sources are needed (e.g., canned meat, fish and fresh eggs). Financial donations are also being accepted to purchase needed food items.

Please bring frozen items to SMUM between 9 am and noon Monday-Saturday. SMUM is located at 778 South Almaden Avenue, San Jose. If you need more information, call Lawrence Robles at 408-292-3314. Canned items can be left at churches with delivery systems to Santa Maria.

### **Another Successful Backpack Project— Thank You to All Who Contributed**

Thanks to contributions from six Episcopal churches, SMUM was able to distribute 285 new backpacks to school children. The American Association of University Women (AAUW) also played a key role, holding two "packing parties" at SMUM to help fill the backpacks with school supplies. Backpacks would represent a major

expense for our clients with school-age children, so SMUM's distribution of backpacks, complete with a wide range of school supplies, is especially helpful to parents. Many thanks to everyone who assisted with this project.

### **Fall Is Here! ABC Kids Are Back!**

With the beginning of the school year, Santa Maria's ABC Playtime program is operating again. Welcome back, kids!



### **SHOP FOR A CAUSE (SMUM) AT MACY'S ON SATURDAY, OCTOBER 16**

Santa Maria is again participating in Shop for a Cause, the Macy's program to benefit nonprofit organizations. All you do is buy a \$5 coupon and use it in a Macy's store on Saturday, October 16. The coupon will enable you to receive discounts on purchases—the only discounts available at Macy's that day. Of the \$5 purchase price, 100 percent will go to Santa Maria so it's a great opportunity to help both your wallet and SMUM. To get a card, contact Edy Unthank at [edyunthank@yahoo.com](mailto:edyunthank@yahoo.com) or visit SMUM's table at Macy's Valley Fair that Saturday.

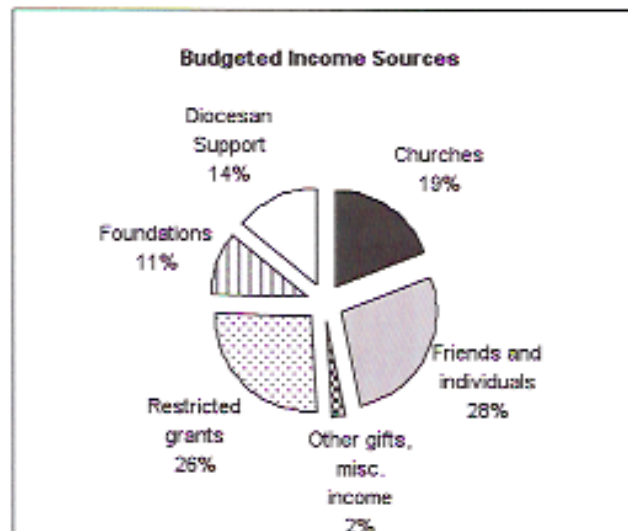
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## How Does SMUM Stretch Its Money?

Santa Maria gives food and clothing to hundreds of clients each month, and we provide preschool and after-school programs for children in the area, all on a budget of just over \$180,000 per year. How is that possible? There are six reasons.

1. **Our small staff is dedicated and hard working.** SMUM has only three salaried employees: an Executive Director, Ministry Supervisor, and Office Assistant, all of whom work only part time. In addition, a grant writer's time is covered when funding opportunities arise. That's it. All of them work diligently to respond to the needs of our clients.
2. **Volunteers provide hours and hours of labor.** Three part-time employees cannot do all of the many tasks at SMUM, such as picking up food, stocking warehouse shelves, and preparing food boxes; sorting clothing; welcoming clients, checking their eligibility, and answering the telephone at the reception desk; preparing and teaching preschool lessons and managing these active ABC Playtime students; assisting and supervising middle school students in the STUDIO after-school program; writing and preparing this newsletter for mailing; and maintaining our financial records. All of these tasks are carried out by approximately 100 volunteers without whom SMUM could not survive.
3. **Food and clothing contributions and discounts are significant.** Each month SMUM receives food from Second Harvest, Safeway, Le Boulanger, and Martha's Kitchen, either free or at reduced prices. This enables us to feed more people, more economically. In addition, both churches and individuals contribute clothing and food. We buy food from standard retail outlets only when it is a critical part of our food supplies and not available from other sources.
4. **Our diocese gives us critical support.** The Episcopal Diocese of El Camino Real established Santa Maria in 1983 as the diocesan outreach agency, and we operate as a 501-3-c

nonprofit under their umbrella. We are governed by our own Board of Directors but are accountable to the diocesan Board of Trustees. Currently the diocese provides us with \$25,000 each year—a vital 14 percent of our budget. Income from this source and all others is shown in the pie chart below.



5. **Individuals, churches, and other agencies are generous and responsive.** We depend heavily on individuals, churches (both Episcopal and other churches), and community organizations like the American Association of University Women and businesses like ACE Hardware and Britannia Arms. All of these contributions account for about 28 percent of our income.
6. **Grants from foundations and the outreach arms of organizations help fund our work.** We have been fortunate to receive financial assistance in the past from groups like the Wu Foundation and the George and Wilma Leonard Charitable Foundation. A limiting factor is that many foundations want to fund new programs, not ongoing costs like food and utilities, but we continue to seek funding sources actively.

**Questions about the Budget?** SMUM's Executive Director Lawrence Robles and Treasurer Joanna Shreve are always ready to provide information about our finances to interested persons. You can contact either of them by calling or e-mailing SMUM.

## New Clients, New Needs

During the past several months, it is fair to report that SMUM has been taking in new clients with a variety of needs. It seems that the clients that are seeking services recently need more than food, clothing, and other basic needs. We have been experiencing a greater demand of our clients for assistance with past due rent, PG&E, and water bills.

Imagine the plight of Sarah,\* a single mother of three children in north San Jose. She recently lost her job and is able to subsist on her unemployment insurance. Sarah can pay rent and PG&E and have some money left for food, yet she is struggling to pay her \$50 water bill. Like Sarah, Lisa\* recently called SMUM because she is on a fixed income (unemployment insurance), and she was in need of assistance with her past-due rent of \$250/month. She is fearful that if she does not pay her past-due rent, she faces eviction from her room. Frequently, our clients' personal budget requires them to pay 60 to 70 percent on housing alone!

In our neighborhood, families frequently make hard choices: Pay the rent or buy food for the children? Pay the PG&E or the water bill?; What can we pay, and what can we do without? Most of the family choices that are made in our community are centered around financial opportunity and economic hardship. Over the past several months, we at SMUM have experienced an increase in client demands for services related to employment, health care, and economic stress.

**What WE (SMUM) can do:** As advocates for the needy in the inner-city, we have been able to respond to the present economic needs of clients by providing financial resources through the help of local churches, individual donors and community resources for assistance. Our first step, usually, is to provide referrals to agencies that specialize in the particular needs that are being requested: housing, rent, PG&E and more. In this sense, we seek cooperation with other

\* Clients' names were changed in this article to preserve confidentiality.

social service agencies. And, we hope to avoid attitudes of competition, especially when serving the needy ought to be our unifying goal. Yet, when services are not readily available from other sources, we depend upon the caring generosity of our donors and local churches. So, if you are a regular contributor to SMUM, it may be a source of comfort and joy for you to know that we actively participate in meeting the increasing, immediate needs of the working-poor people in our community.

**What YOU can do:** There are three ways you can help us meet the needs of our clients:

1. Are you a regular donor in support of SMUM? Please consider using the enclosed envelope to make a tax-deductible contribution. Your one-time gift in support of meeting immediate needs is deeply appreciated. We are confident that you will be blessed by your donation!
2. Please consider being a regular, monthly donor to the ministries of SMUM. We believe that all "Friends of SMUM" continue to be blessed through their faithful, regular giving!
3. Please consider giving of yourself to the ministries of SMUM. The greatest capital in the ministry of SMUM is "human capital." In the sharing of your personal assets, such as your special gifts, talents and time with people in this community you will encounter the power to transform people, even one life at a time!

So, please contact Alfonso or me at (408) 292-3314; email: smum83@gmail.com or check our website ([www.smum.org](http://www.smum.org)) for more details on how YOU can participate at SMUM.

The Rev. Lawrence Robles  
Executive Director, Santa Maria Urban Ministry

### Our mission statement:

Santa Maria Urban Ministry (SMUM) serves the inner-city San Jose community by providing basic services to meet short-term needs such as food, clothing and referral services, and by supporting long-term transformation through education, counseling and seasonal programs.