

The Canticle

The newsletter of Santa Maria Urban Ministry, San Jose, CA September 2008

“SMUMday” at Barnes and Noble Book Store on Monday, October 6

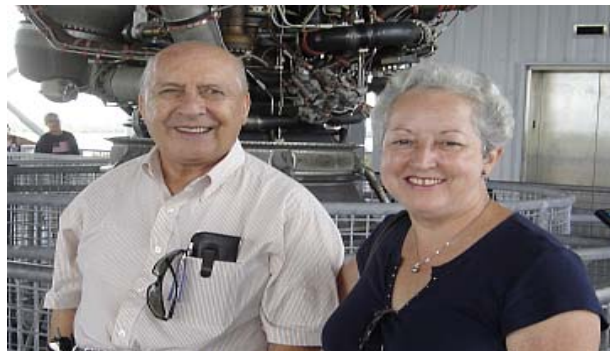
Santa Maria Urban Ministry (SMUM) will benefit from sales at Barnes and Noble stores again this year, thanks to organizing efforts by the Santa Clara Valley Deanery. Here’s how you can participate:

- Shop at one of the Barnes and Noble stores in San Jose (at 3600 Stevens Creek, Eastridge, Westgate, The Pruneyard, and Almaden Plaza) or in Gilroy at Gilroy Crossing on October 6.
- Buy some books or music, and show the enclosed voucher when you pay for them so that Santa Maria will get credit for the sale.
- If you can’t go to a Barnes and Noble store, phone Patty Michael at (408) 249-5201 any time before or on October 6 and place an order, indicating that your purchase is for the Santa Maria fundraiser.

SMUM will get a percentage of all designated book and music sales, and the proceeds will help buy and install a safe and age-appropriate playground for ABC Playtime. Our ABC classroom is small, and outside activity is crucial to the growth and development of young minds and bodies. Thanks for your help!

Santa Maria Offers Family Counseling

A licensed family therapist, Mario Murillo, is now providing marriage and family counseling to Santa Maria clients. Available on Fridays from 9 AM until noon, Mr. Murillo helps our clients deal with family problems, depression, and other issues, either in individual or small-group family sessions.



Mario and Christina Murillo at Cape Canaveral, FL

The counseling services are provided at no cost, and as SMUM’s Executive Director Lawrence Robles points out, “Mr. Murillo is helping to educate the community that it’s OK to seek help.” Not only is Mr. Murillo donating his time, but his wife Christine Murillo is assisting at the welcome desk on Friday mornings. They are an important part of the volunteer corps who make Santa Maria’s work so valuable.

THE BISHOP IS COMING!! THE BISHOP IS COMING!!

"Together with God we wonder, believe, and create"

On October 15, Bishop Mary Gray-Reeves, Bishop of the Diocese of El Camino Real, will visit Santa Maria Urban Ministry. During her visit, she will have an opportunity to see how SMUM is living the vision statement of our diocese.

Bishop Mary will be greeted by SMUM’s Rev. David Breuer, Board Convener, and the Executive Director, tour the facility to get a first-hand view of several of the programs operating during the day, meet the volunteers who staff the programs, interact with the children from ABC Playtime, share time with Santa Maria clients and board members, and join staff and volunteers for lunch. This will be Bishop Mary’s first visit to Santa Maria, and we are looking forward to greeting her with joy and purpose.

Emergency Food Demand Is Up, Supplies Are Down

During the months of July and August, the demand for food at Santa Maria was the highest in four years, and this increase is expected to continue. The difficulties in meeting increased demand are exacerbated by reduced food supplies from Second Harvest, where we buy most of our warehouse food at greatly reduced prices.

Second Harvest is officially known as the Second Harvest Food Bank of Santa Clara and San Mateo Counties, and it distributes donated and purchased food to nonprofit partners like Santa Maria through a core service model. Much of the food comes from farms in the Central Valley. The “first harvest” there goes to grocery stores, and the “second harvest” goes to nonprofit organizations like Second Harvest. The local Second Harvest sends 18-wheeler vehicles to pick up these 'leftover' foods, and because of the rapidly rising price of gasoline, they are finding it difficult to pay for the gas for these vehicles.

The effect on Santa Maria, and other agencies that obtain food supplies from Second Harvest is reduced availability. Each week our Executive Director makes out an order for food to ensure available supplies for the emergency food boxes we distribute. He is finding that many of the items on the order either cannot be filled or can be filled only partially. For example, in the past we could order and obtain 14 to 24 cases of eggs per week from Second Harvest at much-reduced prices. Currently, we are able to get only 6 cases. These shortages, then, necessitate going to local sources to buy eggs—or whatever food is not available—at substantially higher costs. Because of the increased needs and higher costs, we urge you to contribute food and funds so that we can continue to assist our clients.

St. Timothy's Annual Dinner To Benefit SMUM

St. Timothy's Episcopal Church, Mountain View, will hold its annual Gourmet Dinner, which benefits SMUM, on Saturday, October 25. If you would like

to attend this special, enjoyable event, contact the church office (650-967-4724) for more information. Thank you for your support!

SMUM Board Holds Planning Day

The Board of Santa Maria Urban Ministry held an all-day planning session on Saturday, September 27, at St. Luke's Episcopal Church, Los Gatos. Under the direction of the Board's Convener, the Rev. David Breuer, the Board worked on planning ministry improvement, leadership, and the mission and vision for this vital ministry. If you are interested in serving as a Board Member, please contact Rev. Lawrence Robles at smum83@gmail.com.

FIRST STEP, Backpacks, and More

Nearly 400 backpacks were distributed to SMUM's children and youth in August, due to the generosity of many people and the hard work of numerous volunteers, including Shelly Hill of the U.S. Girl Scouts, members of the American Association of University Women (AAUW), the Santa Clara Valley Deanery, and St. Stephen's-in-the-Fields San Jose. The AAUW also donated \$500 to the project. Each child or youth received a backpack that was filled with school supplies, and the project helped get the kids off to a great start for this school year. Many thanks to all who made the FIRST STEP project possible!

Kiwanis Club Gift

The Kiwanis Club of San Jose recently gave Santa Maria a check for \$1,000 to be used in our Food Warehouse. Bravo and thank you, Kiwanis Club!

SANTA MARIA URBAN MINISTRY EL MINISTERIO URBANO DE SANTA MARIA

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STUDIO 17 Kids Receive Instruction in Karate This Summer

STUDIO 17 students attending SMUM’s summer program received Karate instruction—a terrific opportunity to learn from a skilled teacher. Jessica Dickinson Goodman was the instructor, and she is a Shodan rank Shito Ryu Karate Black Belt who also teaches at the Taekwondo and Shito-Ryu club at Carnegie Mellon University in Pittsburgh, PA. We are grateful to her for sharing her time and talent—so are the kids!



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PEANUT BUTTER!! WHAT DO YOU NEED TO KNOW?

- An 18-ounce jar of peanut butter needs 850 peanuts to be made.
- One acre of peanut crops yields 2860 pounds of peanuts, enough to make 30,000 peanut butter sandwiches.
- Americans on the West Coast prefer chunky peanut butter, whereas those in the East Coast like it creamy.
- The Aztecs had their own recipe for peanut butter.
- Peanut butter was almost never used outside the U.S. until 1960.

- 96% of people, when making a peanut butter and jelly sandwich, put the peanut butter on before the jelly.
- Adults actually consume more peanut butter than kids do.

NOW, WHAT YOU REALLY NEED TO KNOW

Santa Maria has a shortage of **peanut butter**. As described in the page 2 story, Second Harvest has been unable to provide this product in the quantities we need. As a result, we have had to go to wholesale warehouses to purchase what is needed at a much higher price. **The same is true of canned vegetables and canned fruits.**

Please help by organizing drives at your churches and organizations to help collect these items to restock Santa Maria’s shelves. For example, you might organize a “Peanut Butter Sunday” or a “Can-Do Can Collection.” You can also make a contribution and encourage others to do the same.

SMUM Receives New Freezers and Silicon Valley Community Foundation Grant

Two recent awards to SMUM have helped ameliorate our financial situation. Our food warehouse is benefiting from two chest freezers we acquired through Second Harvest’s “Capacity Grant Fund.” Edy Unthank, our grant writer, wrote the proposal that made this possible. The freezers increased our frozen food capacity about five percent, enabling us to store from 10 to 20 additional family servings of frozen food.

Edy Unthank was also responsible for our success in obtaining a \$10,000 grant from Silicon Valley Community Foundation. This grant is particularly welcome because it can be used for operating expenses. Many other grants are designed to fund specific programs, such as STUDIO 17, and although we are grateful for all types of support, the flexibility in this grant helps us meet our increasing day-to-day expenses.

Meet the Need and Share the Love

Any casual survey of current newspapers, radio, and TV will offer you a sense of the economic stress that prevails in our society now. Santa Maria was started about 25 years ago with the simple mission of meeting the immediate needs of the underprivileged within downtown San Jose. And, even though this is a different world from those short 25 years past, some things do not seem to change.

Last month, "Denise" (fictitious name), a young single mother of five children, called needing immediate assistance with her water bill. Recently out of work, she could pay the rent for her apartment but could afford little else. The water bill was past due, and she had received a notice that her water would be shut off in a few days. As she sought help from the community, Denise had been turned down by churches and other agencies in the area, either due to a lack of funding or the family "not fitting into the service criteria." The thought of five children without water in the home seemed to require an urgent and helpful response.

In a meeting with Denise, it was clear that she was determined to find work. She had repeatedly placed applications for employment without success. Even though she was willing to work, the region's economic stress seemed to keep her from obtaining gainful employment. Her children were all healthy and attended school regularly. Yet the family savings were running low, and it was difficult to pay rent and bills and keep food in the home.

Due to our faithful donors, SMUM was able to pay Denise's past due and current water bill so that her water would not be turned off. Further, she received help with emergency food and given up-to-date resources for obtaining employment. In this way, Santa Maria is more than a place where people get their immediate needs met. SMUM does this and is able to make lasting, long-term positive changes in the lives of our clients and their families. Because people have chosen to support this vital ministry, SMUM is able to share the LOVE. Yes, as our mission statement reveals, we can *meet the needs*, and through this, we *share the love*.

Please consider sharing your love with a generous donation in support of Santa Maria Urban Ministry through the coming year. A self-addressed envelope is provided with this mailing for that purpose-Join SMUM in Sharing the LOVE, today.

--Rev. Lawrence Robles, Executive Director

Opportunities for Helping at SMUM

We can always use more helping hands. We hope you will give prayerful consideration to being one of our volunteers. Currently we need the following:

Session Leaders for STUDIO 17. This after-school program is provided to 16 students from ages 5-15 in our computer lab. Session leaders are adults who serve, in teams of two, as tutors and assistants, ensuring that students get needed help on their homework and providing oversight while they have snacks. The emphasis is on helping students see the computer as a tool for school, not a toy, and tapping into their energy and creativity. Currently STUDIO 17 operates on Tuesday and Thursday afternoons from 4 to 6 PM, and SMUM's Executive Director says, "It breaks your heart" to have to cancel sessions when two people are not available to serve as Session Leaders. He also notes that the computer lab is well equipped and should be used every day. With enough Session Leaders, sessions could be added on Mondays, Wednesdays, and/or Fridays.

Teachers in ABC Playtime. We now have enough teachers to offer our academic and school preparation program to 11 preschoolers on Monday, Wednesday, and Thursday mornings. We would like to respond to needs and requests and add a Tuesday session. Teachers work in teams, have an established curriculum, and receive training and assistance as needed.

Help with Monday Morning Food Pickup. Volunteers from our Food Warehouse go to Second Harvest on Monday mornings to pick up food already ordered and shop for newly available items not listed on the order forms. We need someone to assist with this task.

If you feel called to assist us with any of the above, please call Rev. Robles at (408) 292-3314.

**SAVE
THE DATE**

Santa Maria Urban Ministry

Barnes & Noble BOOKFAIR

Monday, October 6, 2008

Barnes & Noble

3600 Stevens Creek Boulevard
San Jose, CA (408) 984-3495

(Book fair also taking place at Barnes & Noble stores in Almaden, Pruneyard, Westgate & Gilroy)

Help finish our playground!!

- Visit www.smum.org

**Barnes & Noble
BOOKFAIR**
Supporting

**Santa Maria
Urban Ministry**

Monday, October 6, 2008

Barnes & Noble

3600 Stevens Creek Blvd.
San Jose, CA (also at Almaden,
Pruneyard, Westgate & Gilroy)

Please present this voucher prior
to making your purchase.
A percentage of the net sale will
be donated to your school/organization.*

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