

NAVARRE DAY RESOURCE CENTER will provide

assistance to the homeless and eminently homeless in South Santa Rosa County. The first meeting was held at the Navarre Tourist Information Center on October 13, 2009 under the leadership of Brunie Emmanuel, Exec Director of the EscaRosa Coalition on the Homeless (ECOH). Considerable discussion followed regarding the number of camps and the increasing number of families that are doubled-up (1173 children were identified as homeless in K-12 in Santa Rosa county), whereupon, meeting facilitator, Janis Wilson, the AmeriCorps VISTA Volunteer assigned to Santa Rosa County by the National Coalition for the Homeless, explained the annual count that is underway by ECOH. Two Committees were set up, Facilities Committee (Chairperson: Patti Mankoff, realtor from Coldwell Banker) and Programming Committee (Chairperson: Olga Batova – GBUMC). The group of concerned citizens and representatives from local churches, charities and businesses have been meeting monthly since then and the very first volunteer training was held on May 13th at Navarre United Methodist Church from 1:00-4:00 p.m. In order to volunteer at the Navarre Day Resource Center the following is required:

- Signed Statement of Intent
- Interview process
- ECOH volunteer orientation
- CPR and First Aid training
- HMIS Data Entry Training
- Two references furnished
- Signed consent for criminal background check
- Resource and referral training

Times of future trainings will be announced later and facilitated by Sophia Young, another VISTA worker with ECOH.

The Navarre Day Resource Center will start operating in a portable building of Navarre United Methodist Church, three days a week, Monday, Wednesday and Friday, from 8:00 a.m. till 12:00 p.m. The date TBA. Volunteers will be asked to work at least one 2-hour shift at a time. Two-three volunteers will be working during each shift.

Services offered at the Center will be:

- Counseling by a care coordinator
- Access to computer to apply for assistance
- Phone with a voice mail system (to be used in a resume)
- Referrals to nursery for pre-school children and childcare during school breaks
- Lockers for personal valuables
- Courses on budgeting, parenting, resume writing and computer skills
- Information on local job opportunities
- Referral to local agencies (like Good Samaritan Clinic, Habitat for Humanity etc.)

In the future when there will be a permanent site for the Center other services will be offered like washer and dryer, showers, brown bag lunches, after-school program for children etc.

The Facility Committee has been **researching possible sites** for the Resource Center, reported that an offer of the donation of two portable buildings totaling approximately 1800 sq ft had been received and that the committee had been investigating several possible sites for placement of those buildings. That search for a suitable site was not producing any seemingly appropriate locations thus far. Anyone with knowledge of an appropriate, available site is encouraged to contact Patti at 850-501-3342. Our desire is for an existing building that could be donated for little to nothing for a couple years until a fund raising program could be developed to make possible the purchase of a site if and when needed. Other considerations would be a site that would be suitable for placement of the donated portable buildings that already is permitted for such use. Office furniture has been already donated to the future Center and is in storage.

For a **Long Term Solution**, the two committees (Facility and Operations) would continue their work and report regularly on progress with recommendations for the future. Our church, Gulf Breeze United Methodist is committed to support the future Center with finances and volunteers. If you are interested to volunteer and to start a training as a Care Coordinator, please contact Olga Batova at 850-932-3594 or obatov@gbumc.org.