



SUMMER 2011

MEET OUR ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR

I would like to introduce Amy Weber who has joined Respond Now as Associate Director. She will concentrate on recognizing and acknowledging our donors who make our work possible. We know that her passion for the work at Respond Now, evidenced by 7 years of volunteering here, will lead to great things in her official capacity as we look to expand our core services.

-Carl Wolf

For my first newsletter column, I want to introduce myself and clear up a few common misconceptions about Respond Now that I

have heard over the last 7 years. My name is Amy Weber. My husband, Lou, and I moved to the south suburbs from Chicago in 1988. We have raised three children and our youngest will leave for college in the fall – a fact that often leaves me a little teary-eyed. For the past 7 years, I have volunteered at Respond as a client counselor, and I have assisted with some grant writing and special projects. At the end of May, I began my new position as Associate Director at Respond. My main focus will be on donor relations. To that end, please feel free to email me or call

me with any questions, comments or suggestions you have on how we can serve you, our donors, better. If you would like to visit us and see firsthand what we do here, please let me know; I would be happy to meet you and show you around. You can contact me at 708-755-4357 or

6responnow@sbcglobal.net.

I thought I might talk about a few facts that sometimes confuse people about our agency. If you are very familiar with Respond Now, this portion of my column is not for you.

(see Associate pg 2)

SPECIAL THANKS TO

Ms. Qori Harper for collecting food for Respond Now at her Sweet 16 birthday party.

The Jack and Jill South Suburban Chapter which honored Respond Now at their yearly fundraiser.

The National Council of Jewish Women South Cook Section for their continued support and the hygiene fundraiser.

The Emergency Fund and the Chicago Cubs who provided tickets to a Cubs game for our hard working volunteers.

Our new volunteers:

- * **Tim Becker**
- * **Susan Wolken**
- * **Cathy Everett**
- * **Lydia Quinones**
- * **Carol Mortensen**

Mike Mals for the special collection at the annual Advance Electric Supply Customer Outing at Maywood Racetrack.

The Suburban Service League for their continued support.

Girl Scout Troop 60607 and the Prairie State College Film Club for organizing a toy drive for the children of Respond Now

The Unitarian Universalist Community Church of Park Forest RE Group for their great work in our Community Garden.

BACK TO SCHOOL FESTIVAL RETURNING

After a successful Back to School Festival in 2009, Respond Now is doing it again!! On August 6th, we will grill hot dogs and hamburgers, have a bouncy house, pony rides, face painting and a DJ. Most importantly, we will be giving children school supplies. Can you help us make our Back to School Festival a great success? A donation of \$25 will buy 40 hamburgers or 100 hot dogs to throw on the grill. It may be difficult to fathom buying school sup-

plies before the 4th of July, but we are already thinking about it at Respond NOW.



We can fill a kid's backpack with school supplies for \$30. What is more important than making sure boys

and girls can start the first day of school with new pens, pencils, crayons, paper, and folders? Respond Now gets requests from parents every year to help buy school supplies and uniforms. You can make a difference in a child's future by making sure they have the necessary school supplies. Please donate generously and join us August 6th on Emerald St. from 12pm-4pm and relish a hamburger, get your face painted, and witness the joy of seeing children prepared for the new school year.

Respond Now Executive Director honored as Fund Manager of the year from Emergency Fund

Carl Wolf, Executive Director of Respond Now, was recently honored by the Emergency Fund with their Wanda S. Morris Award, recognizing the hard work done at Respond Now in delivering services to the community. The Emergency Fund provides funding to Respond Now on a monthly basis to assist our clients with their utility bills. Just as Respond Now operates in a way that quickly responds to the needs of our clients, the Emergency Fund expects their funding to be used the same way. While Carl was the recipient of the award, none of it would be possible without the work of the volunteers and staff, particularly Anita Alvarado, the Assistant Director at Respond Now.



Lilia Wolf and friend holding the jars of money collected at the awards dinner

for *Big Change* and to encourage giving, the Emergency Fund left jars on the table for the attendees to take home and save their change to then donate to the Emergency Fund. The highlight of the evening was 6-year old Lilia Wolf (daughter of Carl) taking the jars to each table and asking for donations to benefit the Emergency Fund. Lilia raised \$560!!! A future fundraiser!



Emergency Fund
Helping people today for tomorrow

Check out the Emergency Fund at
www.emergencyfund.org

The theme of the evening was *Small Change*

(Associate continued)

- * We are not a religious organization. We were founded by a group of ministers from various religious groups in the south suburbs in 1969 that saw a need to feed the hungry; however, we are a non-denominational non-profit, charitable organization. We are generously supported by many churches, temples, congregations and other religious organizations, but they are not our sole source of funds.
- * We are not a government organization. We do receive food for our food pantry from the USDA, through the Greater Chicago Food Depository, and we have a program set up to help our clients sign up for SNAP benefits (food stamps). We also receive a federal grant for our Homelessness Prevention Program. However, we count on your donations to keep our doors open.
- * We are a United Way sponsored organization, but the majority of our funds come from donations from individuals, religious organizations, other organizations and service leagues,

businesses, and grants.

- * We are not a homeless shelter. We are an emergency services agency that provides our clients with food, clothing, SNAP (food stamps) outreach, mortgage, rent, and utility assistance, prescription medication assistance, financial literacy programs, a community garden and occasional temporary housing and transportation vouchers.
- * We serve clients at all levels of poverty. Many of our clients are employed, but do not earn enough money to make ends meet, or are facing temporary crises. Some of our clients had stable jobs and are recently unemployed. Some of them are unable to work due to physical or mental disabilities of their own or are caring for a disabled family member. Some are homeless. We strive to treat all of them with the kindness, dignity and respect that they all deserve.
- * We have low overhead costs and a mostly volunteer staff. If you come to visit us, you will see why your donations go far at Respond Now.

When gifts come in, we try to make sure that as much financial assistance as possible goes to our clients. Our furniture is dated, our telephones are old, we do not have caller id. Our large, donated copy machine is on the blink as I write this column. Most of our computers are older models. We have only one full-time employee at Respond – our Executive Director, Carl Wolf. There are 4 part-time employees. Every other staff member at Respond is a volunteer, from the client counselors to the food pantry workers, the Tuesday cleaning staff, and the SNAP Program case workers.

I hope you have learned something about our agency. I hope you come to see us. Most of all, I hope you realize how profoundly grateful we at Respond Now are for your continued support.

-Amy Weber

708-755-4357

6respondnow@sbcglobal.net

NICOR VOLUNTEER DAY A HUGE SUCCESS

On May 21st, an enthusiastic group of volunteers from NICOR painted and planted at Respond Now. Our back room is looking spiffier than ever and our Community Garden has taken another great leap forward! NICOR volunteers weeded, put new vegetables into the ground, planted over 30 bushes and laid down a path to walk through the garden.



**THANKS TO NICOR FOR
THEIR GENEROSITY AND HELP!!!**

OUR PARTNERS St. James Hospital

The work that we do at Respond Now is supported by many groups and organizations in a wide variety of ways. This is the first column to recognize these people for the little and big things they do.

Many times, when people ask for directions to Respond Now, they ask, "Are you close to St. James Hospital?", to which we reply "Both figuratively and literally!" St. James is more than our neighbor. They are also a partner and supporter of the work we do at Respond Now. Our friends at St. James are there for Respond Now on a regular basis bringing good prepared food that we pass out to our food pantry clients. Whenever Respond Now holds a special event, such as our Spaghetti Dinner, Christmas Store, or Back to School Festival, St. James is generous with donations of food, gloves, hats, and a winter coat drive.

More than anything, St. James has been there from the beginning, serving the people of Chicago Heights. Board Member Liz Wisnasky remembers times when St. James would bring in indigent patients to provide a dignity in their death. "They have a great respect for life", she says. We thank all involved at St. James Hospital for their compassion, as we all try and provide a better life for our community members.

SOUTHLAND COMMUNITY GARDEN WALK



Sunday, June 26, 2011

10:00 am to 4:00 pm

Seven Beautiful Gardens in

Homewood, Flossmoor & Olympia Fields

(Rain or Shine)

Master Gardeners will be available to help you enjoy the WOW factor in the diverse horticultural artistry showcased in 7 awe-inspiring gardens

**Advance Ticket: \$20.00 purchased by June 26th at
Sunnycrest Nursery, 19725 Governors Highway**

**Day of Walk : \$25.00 purchased at Goldberg Park
3301 Flossmoor Road**

**Garden Walk ticket includes a day of walk 15%
dicount at four area restaurants**

For more information

southlandgardenwalk@gmail.com

or call (708) 957-3781

**Presented by National Council of Jewish Women,
South Cook Section**

**Proceeds benefit Aunt Martha's Youth Service
Center and Respond Now**



P.O. BOX 215
1439 SOUTH EMERALD
CHICAGO HEIGHTS, IL 60412

Phone: 708-755-4357
Fax: 708-755-4381
E-mail: 4respondnow@sbcglobal.net
Web site: www.respondnow.org



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PLEASE HELP RESPOND NOW

DOLLAR CONTRIBUTIONS help us provide money for rent, utilities, medication, food and our major operating expenses.

NON-PERISHABLE FOOD DONATIONS

CLOTHING DONATIONS especially children's clothes.

FURNITURE DONATIONS please call first to determine our need and ability to pick-up

HONORARIUMS & MEMORIALS

HONORARIUM

Donna Roach's Birthday
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DONOR

Lou & Chris Schmidt
Pat & Bob LaFond
Mr. & Mrs. Dan Barth

MEMORIAL

Michael Howard
Jack Dominy
Cynthia Shutak Wicks
Margaret Wilkins
Karen Oosterbaan
Karen J Clifford
Jerry Archie
Mrs. Francis Cimarrusti
Chris Predny
Marian J Bistolfo
Anne & Hubert Keenan
Jack Porche
Warren Daubenspeck
Merle Arr
Tully Trainor
Mary Ann Czapek

DONOR

John & Donna Roach
Jack Coogan
Mary Aubuchon
Rita & Lou Ross
Jan & Tim Coleman
Robert & Emile Clifford
Anita Pellettiere
Susan Neale
Faye Predny
Donna M Attinello
Charles Gill
Joan G. Porche
John & Donna Roach
The Aubuchon Family
Frank & Marge Romweber
Elizabeth Bigelow

Save the Date

Foodapalooza

September 10th, 2011

Prairie State College