

APRIL/MAY 2010

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www.verafrenchmhc.org

Coming Home to Vera French Court

Few things are more essential to us than home – but for the person with persistent mental illness, a safe, comfortable and affordable home can seem an impossible dream. That’s why recent groundbreaking ceremonies were so gratifying:

The event launched construction of Vera French Court, providing rent-assisted housing for the most vulnerable members of our community.



Ground Breaking of Vera French Court, Bettendorf, Iowa

Blending housing with services

Located at 3465 Holiday Court in Bettendorf, Vera French Court offers a proven formula: independent living blended with a variety of support services provided by Vera French Community Mental Health Center and other local agencies.

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“Persons with persistent mental illness, who live independently and receive support services, are much less likely to be hospitalized, become homeless or end up in emergency rooms,” says Dean Drexel, executive director, Vera French Housing Corporation. “We have very low turnover. The program works well.”

The 13-unit complex provides comfortable, safe housing for single adults. Each one-bedroom apartment has a living room, kitchen/dining area and bathroom. The complex offers additional amenities, including a community room with computer, kitchenette, patio and grill; laundry facilities, raised-bed gardening area, and offices for service providers.

Shopping, public transportation, bike paths, restaurants and medical facilities are within walking distance. The entire complex is handicapped accessible, and meets all standards of the Iowa Green Streets program, certifying an environmentally friendly facility. Site preparation is underway with project completion expected in the fall.

Ongoing Need

Vera French Court has been three years in the making. The current economy slowed the process, but not the need. Nearly 30 names are on a waiting list for apartments, and that’s just the tip of the iceberg. “There is a shortage of affordable housing in this community,” Dean says, “especially for people with disabilities. One recent study identified 800 people receiving services at Vera French that could benefit from a facility like this.”

With your support and encouragement, the Vera French Housing Corporation has been creating additional housing opportunities for persons with persistent mental illness since 1994. We currently serve more than 100 people in rent-assisted units, helping people succeed in a community living environment at various locations throughout Scott County.

“There’s been a lot in interest in this Bettendorf location,” Dean adds. “Many of the people receiving services at Vera French have ties to Bettendorf, and they want to be there. And it helps that the community and neighbors have been very supportive.”

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Funding for the \$2.3 million project is provided by public and private low-interest loans and grants. Financial partners include Scott County Regional Authority, Scott County Housing Council, NAMI Scott County, Iowa Department of Economic Development, Iowa Finance Authority Tax Credit Program and American Recovery and Reinvestment Act funds, Vera French Community Mental Health Center and Vera French Foundation. Midwest Housing Equity Group, Iowa Fund V, provided equity for the project; Horizon Bank, Waverly, Neb., is the construction lender. Russell Construction of Davenport is the general contractor.

Want to be a part of Vera French Court? Help furnish an apartment!

While many of our residents are able to provide some of the furniture for their apartment, most need a hand with furnishings.

Your donation to Vera French Foundation will help turn a house into a home, and ease the transition into this new environment. For more information, please contact the Vera French Foundation at (563) 888-6257.

The Miracle of School-based Services

In the midst of a busy world, a miracle is happening in Scott County. In the past eight years, with help from people like you, more than 2,000 children have received treatment that helps them learn, live and laugh.

That treatment – delivered through Vera French School-based Services – is changing lives. But it's not the miracle. The miracle is you, and people like you, who have made a commitment to the lives of children of this community. The miracle is that you have inspired others to join in your support of the most vulnerable among us.

"I don't know if our donors know what a powerful program this is," says Joyce Morrison, Clinical Manager for Children and Adolescent Services at Vera French. "For 25 years I've worked with children who have mental illness or who've been abused, and for 25 years, I've watched safety nets disappear. School-based Services puts those nets back in place. We are able to catch kids who might not otherwise get attention until they commit a crime or end up in the ER. Because of donor support of

this program, every child who needs help gets it, regardless of ability to pay. We never turn a child away, and that's very unusual in today's world."

Today, one in five children in America has a diagnosable mental illness. Tragically, only one-third of those children receive the help they need. Locally, SBS therapists are seeing an increase in the numbers of very young children – often kindergarteners – with very serious problems. Early identification is critically important: The sooner these children receive treatment, the better. In the last year, SBS therapists saw symptom reduction in 95 percent of all cases. In the month of March, one therapist reported successful closure of 12 cases. Through your help, children are getting better!

Funding for SBS comes entirely from donor support. In today's world, the simple reality is this: Without your gifts, this program would not exist. Every time a child receives treatment, we offer a silent, heartfelt thank you to people like you who've made it possible. Your generosity is literally saving lives. Just as important, you've inspired others who share

your commitment to ensuring availability of quality, accessible mental health care for all local children. Buoyed by your compassion, the future holds promise!

Invest in Vera French: Invest in Your Community!

Gifts of any amount invested in the Vera French Foundation help make mental health care accessible for the children in our community. Never has that been more important!

A donation in any amount can fund prevention, detection and treatment of emotional disturbances in children. A donation of \$250 underwrites the cost of one week of summer camp for the child with emotional disturbances.

If you would like to invest in the kids in our community with a contribution or gift to fund children's mental health, contact the Foundation at (563) 888-6257 or visit www.verafrenchmhc.org

Get Your Tickets Now!

Early ticket sales have been strong for the May 6 showing of Joe Pantoliano's documentary *No Kidding?! Me Too!*

Sponsored by NAMI Scott County, Judy and Richard Kreiter M.D., Genesis Health System, Quad City Times, Cumulus Quad Cities, Sears Manufacturing Co., and the Vera French Foundation Speaker Series Committee, the event puts a spotlight on a matter of critical importance: The stigma surrounding mental illness and substance abuse. Programs like this help expand awareness and end the stigma. Please join us for this special event, which includes a question-and-answer session with acclaimed actor, producer and author Joe Pantoliano!

acclaimed actor, producer, and best-selling author

Joe Pantoliano
is affected by brain disease

No Kidding?! Me Too!

and he wanted to do something to
MAKE A DIFFERENCE!

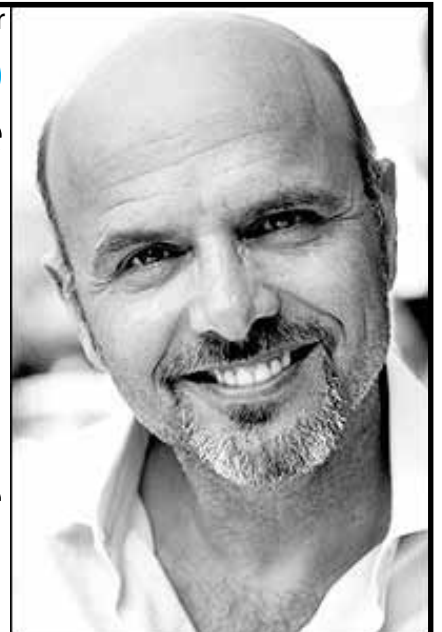
No Kidding?! Me Too!

so he made a documentary...
join him at the Capitol Theatre

Thursday, May 6 - 6:30 PM
Adults \$10... Students \$5

SHOW YOUR SUPPORT... BUY YOUR TICKET TODAY! 888-512-7469

Sponsored by: NAMI Scott County, Judy and Richard Kreiter, M.D., Genesis Health System, Quad-City Times, Cumulus Quad Cities, Sears Manufacturing Co., Ruhl & Ruhl Inc., Quad City Bank & Trust, and the Vera French Foundation Speaker Series Committee



Your Birdies for Charity donation helps weave a safety net for those with emergency needs ... food, transportation, clothing and housing. In 2009, the Vera French Client Needs Emergency Fund helped 230 adults and children who had nowhere else to turn. Little things mean a lot to these people: Won't you help us lend a hand?
Please return completed Birdies forms to the Vera French Foundation by July 6!

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563.383.1900
Vera French at Terrace Ridge
4626 Progress Drive, Suite D
Davenport, IA 52807

VERA FRENCH



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