



# Deep Roots

A Newsletter of the Community of  
Deep Roots at Clairvaux Farm



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[www.deerootsinc.org](http://www.deerootsinc.org)

Spring, 2015



Deep Roots Valentine's Day Gathering

## News from Deep Roots at Clairvaux Farm

by Carl Mazza

On one of the coldest afternoons in mid-February, we got a call to help a woman and her teenage daughter were sleeping in their car. That night they slept in a warm room at Clairvaux Farm and the following day they were laughing as they helped prepare lunch with everyone in the dining hall. This is what Clairvaux Farm is about: it is a place of refuge and a place of meeting; shelter from the storm and a place of transformation; from homelessness to home. We are filled to capacity now, and in March we will add four additional family rooms with the help of volunteers from Nazareth College in Rochester, NY and Trinity United Methodist Church in Chesapeake City.

On Sunday afternoon, February 7, the young people of Elsmere Presbyterian Church in Wilmington joined with the young people of Deep Roots to celebrate a Valentine's Day Craft Event at Clairvaux Farm. For the community at the Farm it was a time of celebration for another reason as on that Saturday a mother and her three sons, who had been in residence for the past three months, were able successfully to transition to permanent housing. The family will continue to be involved with the monthly Deep Roots events and the mother will continue to participate in the "Serve Safe" food handler credentials training in which she had been enrolled along with others at Clairvaux Farm. But they have joyfully ended their homelessness.

### The Wise Woman's Stone

**A** wise woman who was traveling in the mountains found a precious stone in a stream. The next day she met another traveler who was hungry, and the wise woman opened her bag to share her food. The hungry traveler saw the precious stone and asked the woman to give it to him. She did so without hesitation. The traveler left, rejoicing in his good fortune. He knew the stone was worth enough to give him security for a lifetime.

But a few days later he came back to return the stone to the wise woman. "I've been thinking," he said, "I know how valuable the stone is, but I give it back in the hope that you can give me something even more precious. Give me what you have within you that enabled you to give me the stone."

- Author unknown

At its heart *Deep Roots at Clairvaux Farm* is not defined primarily as a shelter; we offer families experiencing homelessness a home. We are an organic community designed to end homelessness for families through emergency housing, direct assistance and ongoing extended community involvement through the Deep Roots fellowship and mentoring program. Over 50 young persons participated in the craft event, making Valentine cards and cookies to give to parents and other family members. One five-year-old girl proudly carried her hand-crafted card around the playground, eager to show everyone what she had created for "my mom." When I asked her to show me, she held it up with a huge smile and then, without breaking the smile, she began pulling cookies wrapped in plastic sandwich bags from her coat pockets carefully describing each carefully decorated goodie as, "this is for my brudder... and these are for my sisters..." all the way to her mom who was to get two cupcakes. Then she quickly corrected herself and said, "Oh, I forgot, one of the cupcakes is for me!"

Cookies, valentines, & cupcakes are perhaps not the most potent of instruments for change in the world. But the loving experience of creating them, of passing on the joy of giving, may transform a soul forever. Who is to know? But we do know how important it is to try, one child at a time, to fashion for them a vision of it. Well, maybe it's not a vision, perhaps it's just a cookie after all. Yet, strange how when we ourselves look back, did we not build our own adult lives on such small things as cupcakes and valentines? And the care we learned from those who cared for and about us. **Ω**

## Expansion of Homeless Prevention Services at Clairvaux Farm

- **Count Your Blessings Exchange**
- **Faith in Action Food Pantry**
- **Clairvaux Farm Furniture Barn**

The Count Your Blessings Exchange, currently open on Saturday mornings, will also open on the first and third Thursdays mornings from 9 am - noon. This expansion is coordinated with the opening of the Faith in Action Food Pantry for families in need which is now operated from Clairvaux Farm on the first and third Thursday mornings of every month from 8 am to noon. Families and persons who come for the Food Pantry who will also be able to obtain clothing and household goods from the CYB Exchange. It all helps low-income families to be able to make ends meet.

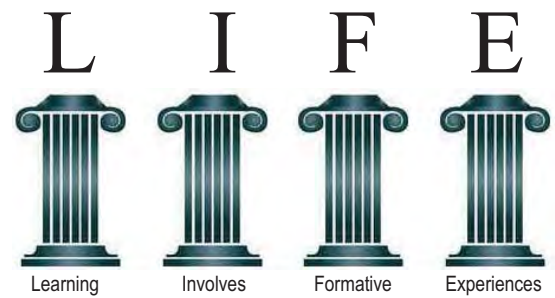
*Faith In Action* is the ecumenical community outreach of the Cecilton area churches and has offered emergency food and free clothing to low-income families for many years. Clairvaux Farm has now agreed to be the host center for both food and clothing for the community served by Faith in Action.

Also in March we will place a storage unit at Clairvaux Farm to accept donations of furniture for families in need. Information on any of these programs is available by calling the main phone number for Clairvaux Farm:

**410-275-2194 or email: [info@deeproootsinc.org](mailto:info@deeproootsinc.org).**



**FAITH IN ACTION**, a collaboration of Cecilton area churches including Zion & St. Paul's United Methodist, St. Stephen's Episcopal and Grace Community Baptist - will manage the Food Pantry for families in need at Clairvaux Farm.



## Mentoring Program Update

Under the leadership of John Harris, Deep Roots has been developing a detailed prospectus to offer a formal mentoring program for children and youth who have experienced homelessness. The program's objective is to challenge children and their families to embrace life without fear of being ill-equipped, impoverished and marginalized as a result of experiencing homelessness. We synergistically accomplish this objective through providing stable housing at Clairvaux Farm in Earleville and the on-going support of the L.I.F.E. Mentoring Program for children and youth who have experienced homelessness.

This program is available to all children who have experienced homelessness whether or not they have resided at Clairvaux Farm. Our efforts combine to increase the protective factors and reduce the risk factors in the children's personal, family, academic, civic and social lives. Our efforts are deliberately designed to aid them to acquire the key skills for thriving, leading, working, learning and connecting in and to the greater community and thereby living a productive, well-rounded, and self-sufficient life.

*For Information on the program or to inquire about serving as a volunteer mentor, contact:*

John Harris

[John.Harris@DeepRootsInc.org](mailto:John.Harris@DeepRootsInc.org)

302-588-0129

### Our Current Needs:

- Canned food of all types
- Spaghetti, macaroni, etc
- Spaghetti sauce
- Fruit juices
- Fresh vegetables & fruit
- Blankets
- Single bed sheets
- Trash bags (39 gallon)
- Children's clothing in very good condition
- Toilet paper
- Paper towels / tissues
- Cleaning supplies
- Bleach / Lysol / etc.
- Towels & washcloths

**Clairvaux Farm Main:** 410-275-2194

**Mentoring Program:** 302-588-0129

**Nights / Weekends:** 410-441-6912

**Deep Roots, Inc.**

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*Deep Roots, Inc. is a non-profit, tax-exempt 501c3 organization. Our Federal Tax # is 45-5115992.*

*All donations to Deep Roots, Inc. are deductible for federal tax purposes.*

*Delaware United Way Designated Giving Number is: 12904*