Lesson learned—back on track

Danial said that she and her family were at the shelter due to living beyond their means. But really, what is the definition of living beyond ones means? Danial and her husband have three children - Donovan (10 years old), Jewell (3 years old), and Michael (2 years old). When they were both working they started earning bigger bucks and decided to get a bigger house (4 bedrooms). This meant more money to rent, furnish, and pay the increase in utilities. But no big deal, things went along as they got by paycheck to paycheck.

When Michael lost his job, and found this to be a tough job market, they started regretting taking on that bigger piece of the pie and realized if they had stayed where they were, they could have managed on one income until Michael found work. Like most of us, they floated their lifestyle upwards as their income grew. The sudden reduction in income resulted in what was unthinkable—losing the home and not having the resources to get immediately back into an affordable home. The Shelter took them in and Danial said she had no idea of all that Stockton Shelter had to offer. The children had plenty of activities and other kids to play with while Michael pounded the pavement and found not one but two jobs. They saved up money during their stay, and just this past week moved into smaller but comfortable housing.

Hindsight is 20/20 and they know now to take their time, put money into savings and prepare for the uncertainties that invariably pop up. It is unlikely that they will ever need shelter services again. This hardworking family made it through a tough spot with just a little bit of help.

Better ways to help the homeless (reprinted from letter to the editor 2009)

I am getting sick and tired of seeing people going door to door or accosting me in front of stores asking for my monetary support of the homeless. Less than one in 10 panhandlers is really homeless. Why is it that I don’t see these panhandlers at homeless shelters or dining halls, and they flatly refuse my offer of non-monetary assistance? Probably because they aren’t homeless and they don’t need free food as much as they want (and get) free money—your money maybe. Do legitimate agencies helping the homeless go door to door or camp out in front of stores with official looking binders asking for your money? No, they don’t!

So, if these people aren’t homeless or helping the homeless, who are they, and what do they do with the tax-free income they collect day in and day out? Unfortunately, lots of the money goes for illegal drugs, alcohol and prostitution. This community has a safety net for the homeless and the hungry.

If you want to help, give your “spare change” or contribution to agencies providing emergency assistance to the poor. When a stranger asks you for money, tell them to contact the local shelter, food bank, dining hall or police. They can call us 24 hours a day at (209) 465-3612 for immediate referral. We will make sure they get connected to emergency food, clothing and shelter if that is what they truly need. Aggressive panhandlers will go away only if there is no profit to be made.
Susan Valdez is one member of our senior staff at the Family Shelter who keeps things running smoothly! Susan has been with Stockton Shelter for over 24 years! She began her career with us as a Shelter Aid at the original Family Shelter before it moved to our current location in 1996. She has been the Senior Intake Specialist for the Family Shelter for the past 10 years. She is the Front Desk Manager as well as supervisor over the Shelter Aids. It’s a big job and she handles it effortlessly. In addition to all her responsibilities, Susan has an uncanny memory for each and every client we have served at the Family Shelter! She is an invaluable member of the Stockton Shelter Staff!

Tung Tran from San Joaquin Public Health Services educates families on the dangers of and how to prevent childhood lead poisoning.

We don’t have our own medical clinic at Stockton Shelter, but we collaborate with many health care agencies to ensure our clients are either referred to proper health care or receive it right here on site. Some of our partners in this realm are Care Link, Channel Medical, San Joaquin County Behavioral Health Services, San Joaquin Public Health Services (left), WIC Program, and St. Mary’s Medical and Dental Clinics. We rely on the kindness and generosity of organizations such as Walgreens Pharmacy (above), Pump Up The Cure, Visiting Nurses, Nursing Students, and all the individual donors who contribute over-the-counter medications. We are so grateful for the support we receive which allows us to assist our clients in maintaining their health.
Tina Banford comes to the shelter once a month with her cases of art supplies and gathers all the women for arts and crafts time. This is such a great opportunity for the ladies to demonstrate their creativity while making little “treasures” for gifts or personal keepsakes. Tina also offers her support to the Family Shelter through her church, Calvary Chapel Laguna Creek with ongoing donations of diapers, baby-wipes, baby formula, schools supplies and financial contributions. How nice is that?

THE HOLIDAYS ARE COMING!
Now is the time to find stuff for Halloween costumes & holiday decorations, as well as fall and winter-wear ~ all at bargain prices! Come and check out the many treasures you will only find at great thrift stores! We now have two locations to shop - our original store on Pacific Avenue and our newest location on West Fremont Street. Check out our web page for more information at SHELTERTHRIFT.COM

Shelter Thrift is where the entire community can help the homeless!

Thank You
There truly is a caring spirit in our community and it has been expressed by so many thoughtful and generous people. We would like to recognize and thank the following for their amazing support of our efforts to help the homeless:

- Claudia Landeen PTSA
- First Presbyterian Church of Stockton
- Manteca Boys & Girls Club
- Saint Andrews Lutheran Church
- Sonny Vasquez-Black Rose Tattoo Parlor
- Stockton Community Church
- Takken’s Shoes
- Thuyen Tran

SHELTER THRIFT & DONATION CENTERS
"Where the entire community can help the homeless"

20% off one entire purchase
* not valid with any other offer *

Coupon expires November 30, 2013
Shelter Wish List

FOR THE THRIFT STORES

- Formal and Prom Dresses
- Jewelry, Purses and Shoes
- Women’s Clothing
- Men’s Clothing
- Children’s Clothing
- Home Décor
- Kitchen Utensils
- Furniture
- Books, CDs, and DVDs

FOR THE FAMILY SHELTER

- Back packs
- New Sleeping Bags
- Pillows and Blankets
- Reading Glasses
- Diapers & Baby Wipes
- Bars of Soap
- Financial Assistance

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Stockton Shelter
for the Homeless
P.O. Box 4803
Stockton CA  95204
Phone: 209-465-3612
Fax: 209-939-9733
Website: stocktonshelter.com

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