

GREEN TREE TIMES

VOL. 18, NO. 11 • JULY 2011

www.greentreetimesonline.com

FREE

serving the metropolitan communities of

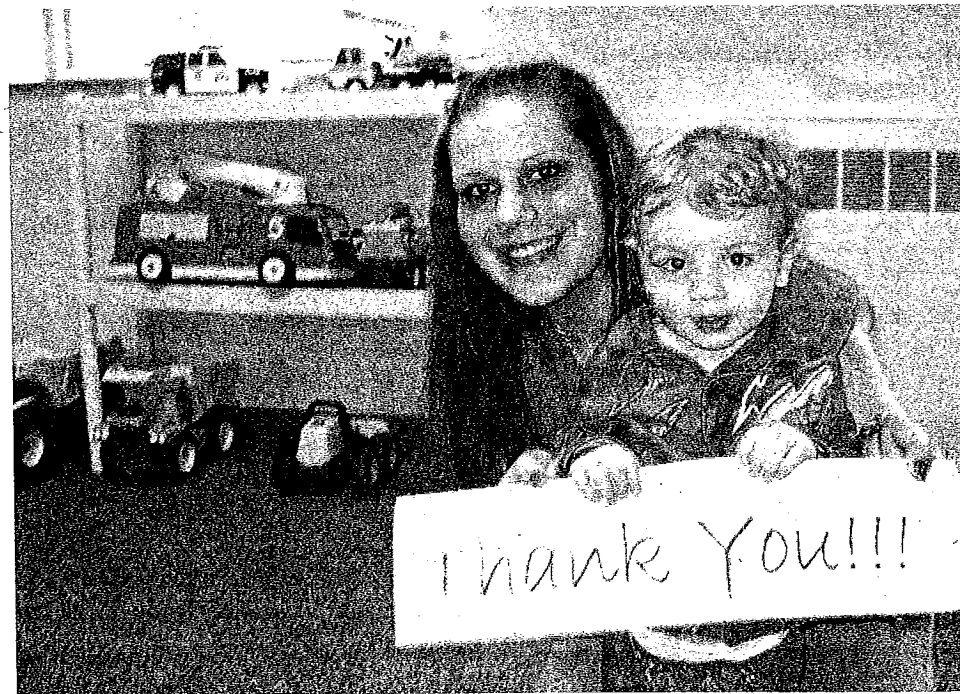
GREEN TREE • SCOTT TWP. • BROOKLINE • DORMONT • CARNEGIE • MT. WASHINGTON • CRAFTON • INGRAM • THORNBURG • ROSSLYN FARMS • ELLIOTT • WEST END • WESTWOOD

HEARTH Families Welcomed as New South Hills Neighbors

by Peg Stewart

HEARTH, a proven transitional housing program to help homeless mothers and their children, has been moved from the North Hills to temporary housing in Carriage Park apartments on Greentree Rd.

Ironically, HEARTH's homeless program became "homeless" when the Benedictine Sisters of Pittsburgh wanted to sell their property where the program had resided for 15 years. With a year's notice, the board of this non-profit searched for both temporary and permanent housing. The central location and public transportation of Carriage Park is convenient for program participants. A major capital campaign to raise \$1.5 million is underway to purchase and renovate the Boar Home and property on Mt. Royal Blvd. as a



This young mom and her son are now living in a lovely, fully furnished apartment in Green Tree while she attends school and participates in a two-year program that supports self-sufficiency and success.

~photo courtesy of Hearth

play in a fully equipped play room and computer room.

- Child Care Volunteers, who help the Child Care Supervisor on Monday evenings.

- Donations Coordinator and Gifts in Kind Coordinator who work in preparing apartments for new families. Before a family moves in, the rooms are fully furnished and decorated so that the family feels welcomed and at home. Bed, Bath & Beyond provide some furnishings and members of the American Society of Interior Designers provide guidance.

Those who are interested in learning more about volunteering may call Vicky Gill, Communications and Community Outreach Manager at 412-939-2302, ext. 13. She would love to meet with you and answer any questions.

permanent home for HEARTH.

This acronym HEARTH stand for Homeless Ends with Advocacy, Resources, Training and Housing. Founded in 1988 as North Hills Affordable Housing, this comprehensive program is designed to give women a *hand up*, not a *hand-out* as they must work hard to become self-sufficient.

This model program is demanding; women must enter a 12 to 18 month training program that leads to a job, look for a job, save enough money for permanent housing, as well as manage the day-to-day responsibilities of running a home and parenting children. Strict rules are in place and as participants move through the three phases of the program, they are able to build upon their successes. They become empowered to get back on their own feet.

Unlike most shelters, HEARTH allows boys ages 12-18 to stay with their mothers instead of being placed in foster care. Overall, the children of all ages thrive because they live in a stable home and attend good schools.

Because of the comprehensive nature of the program and the involve-

ment of many community partners, HEARTH has achieved a high level of success. Of the last 41 women to exit the program, 88 percent obtained permanent housing; 75 percent increased their educational level; 59 percent increased their income, and 42 percent obtained full time jobs.

HEARTH needs volunteers who live in the South Hills, because the old cliche that Pittsburghers don't cross rivers is somewhat true.

- Child Care Supervisor, who supervises 15 children, ages 1 through 15, while mothers attend a Monday night Life Skills program. The children

HEARTH is a program that not only changes the lives of mothers and their children, but also has a profound and positive affect for generations to come.

To learn more about the success of HEARTH participants and how you can help, visit www.hearth-bp.org.