

**April  
2009**

# Lydia Place

## Celebrates 20 years!



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### **Why I Volunteer at Lydia Place**

By Kristen Kuusela

I've been a volunteer at Lydia Place since September 2008. The Whatcom Volunteer Center had given me a list of organizations that needed help. It was a long list, with Lydia Place being near the top of page nine. As a thrift store shopper, I had been to Wise Buys many times. I knew the proceeds of the store went to support Lydia Place. I also remembered reading in the Herald about when they got the house. They were asking for a volunteer to help create a safe comfortable environment and be a good listener. Since I am all about safety and comfort, I gave Noriko a call. I was nervous because I've never volunteered before.

I took the bus out to Lakeway and got out at Puget St. A short walk down the hill past the Skate Park and there was Gladstone St. The neighborhood was interesting and the house looked good. I liked what Noriko had to say and enjoyed meeting the staff. What struck me the most was that I was in somebody's home. There were women and children here going about their daily lives, and I was a stranger. I wondered how it must be for them to be at Lydia Place. I hoped I wasn't too reserved to fit in, but I had all ready decided this was a place I wanted to volunteer.

The first day on duty I spent most of the time in the volunteer office, reading all the material there and getting familiar with things. People came and went. I made sure the front door stayed locked and let people in and out. Each time the doorbell rang I would open the door and there would be another new family. The children would look up at me with big smiles and say "hi". It was great.

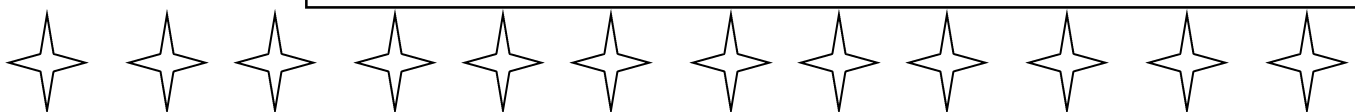


After a couple of weeks Lydia Place had a lunch for the volunteers. It was an opportunity to meet the other volunteers. We had our picture taken which is displayed in the volunteer office. What a bunch of nice people.

Cont. on pg. 2

### Lydia Place Mission Statement

*Lydia Place provides a multi-faceted program that supports women and their children in transition from homelessness to independence.*



**WHY I VOLUNTEER AT LYDIA PLACE** Cont.

The next twelve weeks came and went. Since I'd committed to Lydia Place for twelve weeks, I thought I'd try something different. I told Noriko I would probably move on to something else. I recorded this information in the daily volunteer log, and then I went home and felt really bad. I kept thinking of the clients and the children who would wonder where the Tuesday afternoon lady was. I thought of the other volunteers who I had barely begun to know and Noriko and the staff downstairs, who always said "thanks for volunteering" to me many times a day. I had to call everyone back and tell them I wasn't leaving.



That was six weeks ago and I'm so happy to still be here. The clients and especially their children have enriched my life. When they transition on to their next home it will not be easy for me to say goodbye. Lydia Place is a fine place to volunteer, and I plan on continuing here.

*The Lydia Place Spring Dinner ~ is just around the corner*

*On May 15th, Lydia Place will hold it's 2nd annual Spring Dinner at the Bellingham Golf & Country Club.*

*If interested please call Teresa or Janet at (360)671-7663 for more information.*

## We would like to thank this years

### Spring Dinner Sponsors

*Bp Cherry Point*

*Anonymous*

*Rice Insurance*

*Community Food Co-Op*

*Spice Hut*

*Rodger Jobs Motors*

*The Markets L.L.C.*

*The Chrysalis*

*Great Harvest Bread Company*

*M&M Floral*

*Avenue Bread & Café*

*Jensen's Ferndale Floral*

*Chuckanut Bay Foods*

*Haggen, Inc.*

*The Abby Garden Tea Room*

*Boundry Bay Brewing Co.*

*WECU*

*Wal-mart*

*Lydia Place Board of Directors*

# Thoughts From Maryann

-Maryann Schmitt



As Family Services Coordinator I had the pleasure of working closely with a terrific 7yr. old who had built up walls to keep everything together in his world. He had trouble communicating and expressing his feelings and would sometimes get angry or would easily cry without us knowing why. Getting him to trust me or the other adults in Children’s group took many months.

Early on he was very excited for our Children’s group. Window Between Worlds workshops helped wonders towards breaking down his walls and gave us a glimpse of his life and worries. Through some of the Window’s workshops I saw healing for him. One workshop that touched my heart was “My

This boy has “A smile that could light up a room!”

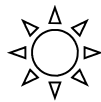
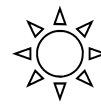
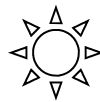
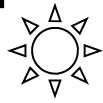
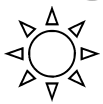
Safe Home”, sharing about what makes us feel safe about our homes. This boy said “I always feel safe around Christmas time”. His

mother told me that he always gets to spend Christmas with his father, who he adores. He was missing his father and this story came out. He drew a picture of a house that was decorated with Christmas colors and lights to symbolize the happiness and security he feels spending time with his dad.



Often our work at Lydia Place focuses on the family unit we work with here. It’s easy to forget how kids are coping with seeing some family members less often. I know this boy often writes his father and sends him the art he makes in group. I’m thankful for the Window’s program and how it gives children a space to express through art, what they’re really thinking and feeling about daily.

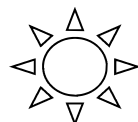
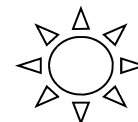
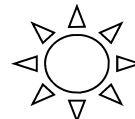
## Reminder ~~~ Reminder ~~~



The Lydia Place 11th annual community wide “Mother of All Garage Sales” will be held at the Sportsplex on August 14th & 15th.

Call (360)671-7663 or visit our web site -

www.lydiaplace.org for more information.



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**[www.lydiaplace.org](http://www.lydiaplace.org)**



## **Help Wise Buys help Lydia Place**

In September of last year Wise Buys thrift store moved to 1224 N. State Street from their previous location on Holly street. It is here at this new location that the store seems to thrive, business has been very good. This in turn is good for Lydia Place since ALL proceeds from the store go directly to fund the Lydia Place programs. Because business is so good, Wise Buys has extended their hours, which means they need more volunteers to help sort and price donations and keep the store nice and tidy. If you are interested in volunteering please call Arla Fowler at 734-0202 or Teresa Josephson at

\*Store Hours are Mon-Sat 10am-5pm\* 671-7663 .

Wise Buys is also in need of donations of household goods, pots & pans, clean and gently used bedding, small furniture & appliances. If you have items to donate please call the store @ 734-0202

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