

LARSLETTER

Spring 2009

Dear Friends:

I would like to thank you for your support of LARS, particularly during the recent months. LARS has entered uncharted waters, providing services for the growing numbers of people coming to us because of the current economic crisis. Last summer, we would have seen 45 people on a busy day, but in recent months as many as 70 people pass through in a day's time. LARS is on track to help nearly 100% more people avoid eviction compared to last year! Two temporary funding increases have provided the necessary resources for preventing many evictions: and assisting with the purchase of food for our pantry. They include an additional \$42,5000 Community Development Bloc Grant (CDBG) and an increase of nearly 100 percent in our Emergency Food and Shelter Program Grant (EFSP) that now brings that grant total to \$50,000. Councilman Tom Dernoga, District 1, has been a wonderful advocate for LARS within Prince George's County, and helped us with securing these funds. Thank you, Mr. Dernoga! .

LARS has also seen a tremendous increase in requests for food. We estimate the number of bags of food distributed annually will be nearly double last year's total of 5,500. Although we stress the need for continued food drives, our pantry is adequately stocked, at the moment, due to the generosity of the community and the funding efforts of the county. At LARS, we believe that no one in our community should go hungry. We are fighting hunger one individual or family at a time, and experiencing success because of your help.

My current outlook is realistic but optimistic. On one hand, private foundation resources are drying up. Our holiday giving was down by about \$9000. Proceeds from the 2008 Turkey Trot were somewhat less than 2007 and congregational giving is down as well. On the other hand, government is doing its part, at least from what I see in Prince George's County, and much-needed resources are being provided, and quickly. The saying that "it takes the village" has been proven for us at LARS when we see others in the community pitching in as never before. Overall, our financial picture is not too bad. Barring something unusual, we should definitely finish our fiscal year in the black.

Thank you for everything you have done to help.

Sincerely,

Nancy Graham

Nancy Graham, LCSW-C
Executive Director