

Florence's Comfort House

Volume 1, Issue 1

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Dear Friends of Florence...

Many volunteers and friends of Florence have expressed interest in hearing about activities, events, and what's on the horizon for Comfort House. We have great news for this inaugural newsletter regarding the two vacant lots next door to Florence becoming available – see Operation Greater Comfort following.

We'd like to create a newsletter on a regular basis, 2 to 4 times/year. If you have suggestions for things you'd like to see in it, please contact Florence and let her know.

Some of you may not know that Florence's Comfort House is now an official 501(c)3 non-profit organization. This simply means that contributions are now tax-deductible. The Board of Directors is comprised of volunteers who've known and loved Florence for years, and who donate all their time and expenses. All donations go directly to Florence's mission and projects. This is still the same grass-roots effort you've always known.



Cornelius Swist Goes to College –

One of Florence's kids recently headed off for Cisco Junior College with the aid of both a football scholarship and an academic scholarship provided by NW Hills United Methodist Church.

Operation Greater Comfort

Opportunity to make dreams come true

About a month ago the two lots to the right of Comfort House came up for sale. It has been Florence's dream to own the lots for several reasons. Owning the lots would halt the drug trafficking on the land and would also give Florence more room to expand her mission.

A member of the Board of Directors was able to put up a retainer and there has been a lot of activity to raise the remainder of the money. We intend to close on the lots by the end of the month.

In addition to buying the land, donations can also be made to sponsor gardens, a greenhouse, recreational equipment, etc. Please contact Florence if you would like to help make her dream a reality.

In October we are planning a "party" on the new land. It will be a time for all those who have given their hearts and contributions to making Comfort House a unique resource for the kids and families of Montopolis. More information to follow!

We Invite You To Share the Vision!

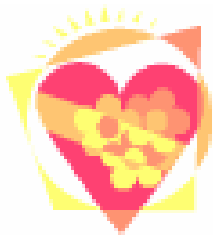


Excerpt from Florence's Diary

One thing one of my teachers, Miss Brown told me in Harlan High School—I will never forget. She told me I should never stop trying to finish what I start no matter how difficult the job is and if I believed it is what I am supposed to do.

No matter that I went to school looking like a rag-a-muffin, I had more friends, and everybody in the high school knew my strengths overrode my clothes or anything else.

She also told me I was going to succeed in life and I am still trying to do that.



THANKS TO...

As we are writing this, Florence has mentioned numerous people, groups and organizations that she wishes to thank by name. Because there are so many to recognize, and we are concerned with leaving anyone out, we will wait until the next newsletter to determine how best to pay tribute to all those support her. Florence asked us to let everyone know how much she appreciates the love, support and friendship you've given her.



Message from the Board

When I look back over the last year, I am amazed at the progress we have made. As an organization we became an official nonprofit, finished the learning center and were able to provide some stability for Florence to continue her mission. All of this was done with no paid staff and with 100% of donations going to take care of the kids. Florence continues to volunteer her time, 24/7 to improve the lives of the kids. This is an accomplishment that is hard to match. Her spirit, love for the children and relentless determination has made a major impact on everyone she has touched.

What I have gained from associating with Comfort House is hard to put in words. I have seen people come together, offering their time and talents to improve one life at a time. Comfort House just attracts big-hearted people. The accomplishments have been extensive, without big money or government support. I have seen people open their hearts and give of themselves; in the process I know they have benefited.

What Florence and the kids have to offer is a new perspective on life. Faith in a spirit that keeps fighting to make a difference and love that survives.

Holly Vatter
Executive Director

Summer

Highlights of Summer at Comfort House:

Austin Night Out:

"Big Party" with Bells of Joy Singers
Kids sold hotdogs and drinks
Florence gave away books that were duplicates

The kids kept the neighborhood cemetery clean.

UT students came once a week to be with the kids. Obviously they had a lot of fun since Florence is still complaining about cleaning up their messes.

Currently Comfort House has 3 chickens, "Bubba" the dog, and "Magic" the cat. Bubba and Magic got married this summer. The kids made "wedding" clothes, held the ceremony, and celebrated with ice cream and home-made cupcakes.

Ate at a Chinese Restaurant, learned manners and how to eat with chopsticks!

Neutered/spayed, got rabies shots for local, wild cats.

Laid cardboard over the weeds and put mulch on top in the garden.

Went to "Comfort House Schlitterbahn" (the river near Florence)...collected fossils, and swam.

Brought fruit and lots of lovin' to the elderly.

Had lots of dress-up days. Florence says she's still looking for a reason to wear her Cinderella dress.

Erika left the twins on the roof for an hour for cussing.

We have heard the kids are cleaning up graffiti to get some of Florence's great cooking - "Will Work for Italian Food!"

Florence

- ♥ **Gives** without boundaries, well beyond the limits of her neighborhood.
- ♥ **Supports** without questions, even to those in trouble.
- ♥ **Loves** without conditions.



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