

# PERSPECTIVES

BREAKING CYCLES - CREATING HOPE

Winter | 2007

## **Braggin' Rights**

*2008 Golf Classic is  
Right on Course*

## **Nash Finch**

*Donates Bikes Books & Bikes  
To Kids in Need*

## **An Evening To Remember**

*"A Perspective of Hope" Raises the Bar for Perspectives*



# Letter

## This Issue

### Page 3

A Perspective of Perspectives

The "Good Do!"

### Page 4

A Tale of Two Parents

### Page 5

A Volunteer's Perspective

### Page 6

An Evening to Remember

### Page 7

Edina Firm Donates Bikes To Kids In Need

### Page 8

2008 Golf Classic is Right on Course

## On The Cover

Children in our after-school program Kids Connection

Winter 2007 Edition  
Issue 2, Vol. 25  
Circulation 2,500

Editor  
Brian Tuttle

Graphic Designer  
Kym Stelmachers

## From the President/CEO

Dear Friends,

Miracles happen. We see them every-day. More than any time of the year, the holidays bring out the best in us all; allowing us, in a very personal and heartfelt way, to create miracles for those who have lost hope.

Each November marks the beginning of our Annual Fall Appeal. By donating to our annual appeal you help assure that at-risk and homeless families and children not only survive in this competitive and challenging world ...but thrive. Before coming to Perspectives, *survival* was the daily goal of our families. We witness the miracle in the progress made with our families each day.

Because of our partnership with you...

- ◆ Homeless mothers in recovery and their children have a safe, supportive home and community to begin again.
- ◆ 50% of the mothers are reunited with their children.
- ◆ Families are moving from homelessness to permanent housing.
- ◆ Self-sufficiency is reinforced and celebrated.
- ◆ Children improve their school performance by staying in one school through the entire year.
- ◆ Children are cared for after school and throughout the summer months. Young students come to Perspectives Family Center for extended day learning taught by licensed teachers,
- ◆ Our Kids Cafe provides daily nutrition and positive adult supervision.
- ◆ Parents become skilled in effective parenting.

Above are just some examples of the activities and happenings that occur on a daily bases, as we continue, with your help, to pursue our mission of "Breaking the Cycle for At-Risk Families and Children for Total Family Recovery."



During this holiday season, all of us at Perspectives take this opportunity to wish you and your loved ones a glorious *miracle* of your very own.

Happy Holidays,

Jeannie Seeley-Smith

*"Miracles  
Happen"*

## “The Joy of a Victorious Tennis Match is Over in Two to Three Hours.”

By Paul Hyatt, Perspectives Board Member

This Fall, I happened to watch the Oprah Winfrey show with featured guests, Bill Clinton and Andre Agassi. At first, I wondered what a former U.S. President and a legendary international tennis star had in common, that they would appear together on Oprah. However, as the show progressed, a coherent theme emerged - *giving*. President Clinton was promoting his new book, GIVING: How Each of Us Can Change the World, which features Andre Agassi's charitable focus on schools for the disadvantaged. When asked by Oprah, "What has given you the biggest thrill in your life - your most notorious win on the tennis court or visiting the school you have funded?" Andre did not pause to answer.

"The joy of a victorious tennis match is over in two to three hours. Visiting a school where so many disadvantaged children are encouraged and challenged to learn gives me hope and joy that never ends."

Andre's comment resonated so closely with my feelings about Perspectives that it sent chills up my spine. I am truly privi-

leged to be a part of the many miracles that happen at Perspectives each day. The miracles occur because the Perspectives community approaches the challenges of at-risk families in a comprehensive, holistic, and hopeful way. The results of Perspectives programs are impressive and inspiring. When I hear the accounts of our resident families - where they were when they came to Perspectives, their progress, their future plans, I am touched by the realization that the human spirit emerges strong and hopeful, in spite of past pain. Comprehensive, holistic support is what distinguishes Perspectives' approach to rebuilding at-risk families. Many agencies target only one need. Our residents, parents and children learn a new way of life together, full of health and hope.

The heartwarming experiences I have witnessed, as a Perspectives volunteer and board member, reflect a true gift of HOPE - hope for success through supportive education and career planning; hope for a safe place to live for them and their family; hope for long-term sobriety after years of

struggle. Families learn, from our programs and from each other, how to break the painful cycles of their past and move forward ...with hope. Our fall fundraiser, *A Perspective of Hope*, is so descriptive of Perspectives' approach to our mission. Once our guests hear the amazing stories of total family recovery, they are inspired to become involved through their gifts of time, money and resources. We couldn't do the work we do without their support.

Even after serving on the Perspectives Board for 22 years, I am still not ready to be known as a board member *emeritus*. Serving Perspectives is never tiring. I am energized by sharing the mission of Perspectives with others who enjoy hopeful and miraculous stories. The next "big story" focuses on our plans to create a national model for Perspectives mission: *Breaking the cycle for at-risk families and children for total family recovery*. How could I possibly leave now, with yet another new chapter ahead in the evolution of Perspectives? I feel just like Andre Agassi!

## The "Good Do!"

By Brian Tuttle, Vice President of Community Affairs

In recognition of the quality of our work, my father had a saying to praise his tribe of twelve, ornery kids: "Good do!" With his homey, low-key delivery, those words were golden to us - after a baseball game, a good test score, or something as ordinary as mowing the lawn. But, for a job well done, he always gave us the "Good do!"

Before starting my job in late November 2006, my experience as a volunteer dinner

mentor in Kids Cafe was all I had as a measure of the good work done by Perspectives. What I didn't fully grasp until becoming an 'insider' was the full breadth of need and contemplated role for Perspectives: the design of our programs to touch every aspect of a broken family's life; the effective, high-quality people who assemble for the benefit of this organization, on such a dedicated and passionate basis; and the dire need for supporters for Per-

spectives' work in breaking the challenging cycles faced in our community. Our contributors are many, are greatly needed and very much appreciated.

So, like my father, who rewarded us with little more than two, simple, but very pleasing, words, I share this: For all your contributions, for the trust you give Perspectives, for *your* job well done... "Good do!"

## A Tale of Two Parents

By Jeffrey Postuma  
Director, Parenting Time Programs



Clair and Tom came to the Perspectives Parenting Time Program in need of supervised, transitional and co-parenting services for them and their daughter, Roxy. Their rocky history created a thick and palpable tension. As children do in observing their parents' behavior, Roxy began to carry the weight of their resentful relationship. Tom had a long record of chemically dependent behavior that contributed to the breakdown of the marriage and threatened the physical and emotional well-being of Clair and Roxy.

He started visiting Perspectives four years ago, viewing our supervised visitation program as his only means to see Roxy, but was suspended from the program for his continued use of alcohol.

Tom received the chemical dependency treatment he needed to become sober, and, after years of separation from Roxy, signed up for another supervised program in the city. These supervised sessions went well, and he maintained his schedule with Roxy - every other week for 2 years, missing only one session, due to illness. This was even more impressive, considering he was driving five hours, each way, to see his daughter.

Tom and Roxy were making progress in reestablishing their relationship. Tom and ex-wife Clair, however, couldn't interact respectfully in the presence of their daughter, and they couldn't progress beyond a supervised visitation program. Tom and Clair's weak co-parenting relationship had to improve. They enrolled in Perspectives' Transitional Services Program, designed to move parents from supervised to unsupervised parenting in a gradual and deliberate manner, while learning proper co-parenting skills.

Perspectives created a plan that involved parent coaching for Tom and a monitored, visitation program for Tom and Roxy. Tom's visitation time with Roxy demand that a Perspectives case-worker supervise the parent-child visit. Over time, supervision decreased and Tom progressed to unsupervised visits, eventually moving off-site from Perspectives to a mall, where father and daughter could experience their relationship in a public setting. The parents exchanged their child, face-to-face, as our staff coached them on appropriate co-parenting interactions. The goal was to prepare

Tom and Clair for healthful exchanges on their own. As time and trust progressed, Tom was allowed to pick Roxy up at Perspectives and take her off-site, unsupervised, for progressively longer periods of time. During the period, Tom and Clair communicated with each other using, *Our Family Wizard*, a program designed to enable a staff person from Perspectives to monitor and coach parents through their communication exchanges, and teach proper co-parenting behaviors.

With guidance from Perspectives, Tom and Clair are now stronger co-parents, with reestablished, mutual trust. They are more comfortable with each other, practiced in communication and problem solving ...in the best interest of their daughter. Of course, the ultimate winner is Roxy. She now has a mom and dad who, not only love her but, were willing to work to be better parents. With the skill-base they acquired through Perspectives' Transitional Services, they will continue to grow with their child - in mutual respect, support and cooperation.

“ Kindness can become its own motive. We are made kind by being kind ”  
Eric Hoffer

## A Volunteers Perspective

### *Chef George Mixes it up at Kids Cafe*

When George P. Snyder, III signed on to be a guest chef at Perspectives Kids Cafe in St. Louis Park, he didn't have a teaspoonful of an inkling what life-changing impact he would have on the lives of the students in his cooking class.

George is the executive chef at McCormick and Schmick's Seafood Restaurant but once a month for the past four years, he takes on the role of teaching chef. His classroom is the kitchen of Kids Cafe and his students are the children who attend Perspectives Kids Connection child enrichment program after school. The program is designed full of activities for at-risk young people from Kindergarten through 6th grade.

George enjoys his time at Kids Café so much that last year on "Take Your Child to Work Day" he hosted 10 of his students for a day of working at the restaurant. Snyder said, "It was great, they were here all day, I cooked a really special dinner for them. To this day, when I show up at Kids Cafe, without fail some of the kids ask me, "Did you bring us oysters today?" In addition to acquiring a taste for oysters, the young cooks also gain an appreciation for all that goes into planning, preparing and serving a meal.

Chef George enjoys just "hanging out with the kids" at Kids Cafe but found, to his surprise, that the benefits of volunteering are not just for the kids! As Guest Chef at Kids Cafe, he's met other volunteers who have become friends, and with whom he enjoys socializing when not working or volunteering.

His advice to would-be volunteers who may be a little hesitant to sign up: "Just jump in and do it. It's a great experience."

Laura Arne, Director of Volunteers at Perspectives says, "The population of Kids Cafe is very stable, so it gives George and the kids a chance to get to know each other. It's a very powerful way for the kids to learn how to cook, and they make a connection that is vital and growth enhancing."

To measure the life-changing impact his cooking lessons have on the children, all you have to do is to listen to the young lives Chef George has touched.

*From Samira:* "Chef George is cool because he likes to play around and tell jokes to us. He has good manners and is good at making chicken. I was excited to visit his restaurant because I got to eat oysters. It is good to have Chef George come and cook fun things with us in the Cafe."

*From Kira:* "I like cooking with Chef George because he helps us to become serious chefs. We don't clown around when he is in the kitchen. My favorite meal he made was tilapia. I think it is cool when he comes to cook with us because we get to eat a variety of unique food when he is the chef."

With Chef George, it's more than just a teaspoonful of mentoring and fun! It's absolutely tasty!

Subscribe to our e-Newsletter  
[www.perspectives-family.org](http://www.perspectives-family.org)



### Proud Protégés

Chef George would be proud! The younger kids of Kids Cafe share their favorite recipe...

#### **Chocolate Chip Cookies** by Sienna J., age 6

3 scoops sugar	Little Mermaid sauce
4 scoops salt	3 cups butter
Little nuts	5 chocolate chips

Stir it up! Put in oven for 5 minutes.  
Eat with fork or spoon. Drink with milk.

## Cover Story

# An Evening to Remember

## 2007 A Perspective of Hope Raises the Bar for Perspectives

With the smooth jazz of the Paul Cherba Quartet in the background, guests strolled and visited within the oak-paneled walls of the Metropolitan Ballroom for the 2008 *A Perspective of Hope*. The October 26 Gala, Perspectives largest fundraising event of the year, was a smashing success, every way you looked at it.

It was an evening that broke all records for the elegant, eight-year bash. The 265 guests this year out-bid and out-bought all previous Gala flings, raising the proceeds for the night to a record \$145,000. New highs were generated in the silent and live auction, which featured auctioneer Karen Lee Sorbo. Items of peak interest included a round-trip for two to La Costa Spa & Resort in San Diego to golf with actor, Gabe Kaplan, of "Welcome Back Kotter" fame, a Cocktails & Appetizer Evening with Jane Fonda, and a dinner and overnight stay at the Chateau at Long Shadows Winery in Washington State.

Highlights of the evening included the presentation of two awards. The 2007 *Perspectives Community Partnership Award*, was given to Cargill to honor and recognize its long-standing leadership and contribution to people in need. William Buckner, Senior Corporate Vice President, accepted the award on behalf of Cargill. With his accepting remarks, Buckner surprised the crowd with a generous gift to Perspectives in the amount of

\$25,000. The announcement elicited gasps of delight from the audience and an astonished reaction from Jeannie Seeley-Smith, Perspectives President and CEO.

"This has been a year of spectacular displays of support for Perspectives, yet, we were simply staggered by what happened tonight," said a visibly joyful Seeley-Smith. "The support Cargill has shown is so wonderful, so generous. They are a spectacular honoree for the 2007 *Perspectives Community Partner Award*."

The 2007 *Perspectives Commitment to Families Award* was given to Minnesota business man, Karl Schmidt, for exceptional contributions to improve the quality of life for children and families. Mr. Schmidt, in addition to his award, was presented with a personalized photo from the Perspectives staff and board of directors.

Perspectives Director of Events, Kym Stelmachers, says plans have already started for next year's *A Perspective of Hope*, stating that her challenge is to create an event bigger and better than this year's.



# Edina Company Donates Bikes to Kids in Need

By Paul Wahl (reprinted from MN Sun Newspapers, October 3, 2007)

It's not often you see the CEO of a Fortune 500 company assembling a bicycle. It's even more rare to see him doing it wearing a blind-fold.

Alec Covington, president and CEO of Nash Finch in Edina, joined his management staff in a team-building effort Sept. 27 in the company's parking lot. While one or two team members coached, the blind-folded co-workers turned screws and held parts in place.

Besides serving as a lesson in management strategy, the bicycle-building experience produced a bumper crop of blue and purple two-wheelers for children from two area schools later in the day. The event was part of the first *Books and Bikes* event, sponsored by Nash Finch's charitable giving arm, the NFC Foundation. The event was part of an on-going educational initiative launched in 2006, according to Brian Numainville, Nash Finch's senior director of research and public relations and chair of the foundation.

"The idea is to help families and youth in the communities where our employees live, Numainville said.

Initially, the idea was to provide books for children, but through a partnership with Eric's Bike Shop, the Raleigh two-wheelers became part of the picture. Scott Hebel, regional manager for Eric's, said his company is always looking for ways to connect children with bicycles. Given the fondness for many of today's young people for video games, Hebel said a bicycle encourages activity and thereby can help fight child obesity.

Hebel brought several technicians with him to assure the Nash Finch teams had properly assembled the bikes. They gave each bicycle a final safety check before turning them over to the children. Late in the afternoon, the bikes were hustled into a large tent with the flaps down.

At 4:30 p.m., a large yellow school bus and a smaller white model pulled into the Nash Finch parking lot. Inside were children from Perspectives Family Center in St. Louis Park and Excell Academy for Higher Learning, a charter school in Brooklyn Park. Both schools serve children from families with low-income and otherwise disadvantaged backgrounds. The trip was an adventure for the students, who weren't told their destination or that they would be returning home with shiny news bikes. The group assembled in front of the Nash Finch executives and about 400 employees. Each child held a large number and 51 employees had matching numbers.

Children screeched, laughed and jumped at the announcement that bicycles would be given away. The students paired with employees and were taken for a helmet fitting. Children were also given a bag of items, including bottled water and a guide to "eating healthy." Helmets of stunning purple, yellow and red soon covered heads large and small. Taking age and size into account, the workers matched children to bicycles. The wind and rain that blew through the event did not dampen the enthusiasm level.

Eventually, the bikes were extracted from the clutches of the young owners, tagged and loaded into an Erik's truck for transport to the respective schools.

Brian Tuttle, vice president of community affairs for Perspectives in St. Louis Park, said he considers a bicycle a rite of passage for children. Prior to the event, many of the students didn't have bikes of their own.

"It was written all over their faces," Tuttle said. "You could see how much this means to them."



# Braggin Rights!

## 2008 Golf Classic is Right On Course

"Were starting with a real high this year!" said Kym Stelmachers, director of events for Perspectives. "The momentum we created in last June's *Perspectives Charity Golf Classic* gives us a terrific start for our June 2008 event."

Stelmachers isn't just braggin'. For a first-year golf fundraiser, in a seemingly endless sea of summer golf events, the 2007 *Perspectives Charity Golf Classic* surpassed the expectations of every guest who participated and created a strong, word-of-mouth buzz for its quality and organization. Stelmachers cites presenting sponsor, General Mills, for making the day such a great and memorable experience.

"Our guests were treated very well, right down to the free Footjoy® Contour™ golf shoes they received for joining us, and the 19<sup>th</sup> Hole appetizer buffet was sen-

sational! The value, for the price of playing was so well worth it!" added Stelmachers. "We're gonna do it all over, again!"

Again, she's not braggin'. Last year's *Classic* has placed the Perspectives event on many player's "must do" list. General Mills has signed on to repeat as presenting sponsor, and Bearpath has scheduled the 2008 Perspectives Charity Golf Classic for June 9, both very valuable partnerships in creating this golf spectacular. In addition, many who played last June have asked to join the planning committee for the 2008 event; a definite sign of approval. This kind of momentum has put the Perspectives *Classic* on the 'fast track' of golf fundraisers.

"Perspectives is a terrific organization" said Jim Murphy, president of General Mills Meals Division. "We have chosen to support Perspectives because they put families' lives together from the ground up. They resolve issues so families can get back into the mainstream of society. General Mills is proud to associate our



brands with this type of work."

Details of the 2008 *Perspectives Charity Golf Classic* will be announced in the coming months, says Stelmachers, however, she hinted that Perspectives is offering an "Early Birdie" promotion, to award early registration. As such, players who register a foursome before February 28, 2008 will each receive an official Perspectives golf umbrella.

"We just hope you won't have to use it on June 9!" says Stelmachers.

Sponsorships are available now by calling Kym Stelmachers at 952-926-2600. We hope you can join us for our Charity Golf Class on Monday, June 9, 2008.



### Perspectives, Inc.

3381 Gorham Ave.  
St. Louis Park, MN 55426

Phone: 952-926-2600  
Fax: 952-926-9395  
Website: [www.perspectives-family.org](http://www.perspectives-family.org)

**Breaking Cycles - Creating Hope**