

ALDERSGATE SPECIAL NEEDS MINISTRY

Aldersgate Special Needs Ministry continues to slowly move forward in the development of Christian homes for adults with developmental disabilities. This year we have focused on fundraising and disseminating information about our ministry. Excitement abounded the first of the year when we received notification of approval of a Section 811 Housing and Urban Development grant for the home on The Oaks campus. This was followed by approval from the South Carolina State Housing Finance and Development Authority for a grant for the home at Epworth. Central Carolina Community Foundation presented us with a grant for a strategic marketing campaign. The Horne Foundation and the Norton Family Foundation also awarded grants.

As the year progressed, we became painfully aware that we were still in dire need of extra funds in order to begin construction on both of these homes. Because our homes have to be licensed by DHEC, we must meet their building criteria. These requirements cause a significant increase in the construction costs. Our board members and friends immediately began working extremely hard to provide various avenues of raising funds. The Columbia group hosted an informational fundraiser. An Orangeburg high school student held a tennis tournament. The Women's Missionary Ministry of the First Baptist Church in Orangeburg along with six other churches sponsored an "Aldersgate Angel Evening" at which dinner was served, paintings by artist Philip Powell were sold and Rev. Stephen Taylor spoke. An 18th birthday party was held in Rock Hill in honor of a board member's son and "Grace at Aldersgate" bracelets were sold at a Columbia church. Encouraging individuals to become an "Aldersgate Angel" by agreeing to give \$24 a month is another project that is ongoing. The board continues to research and identify other means of financial support for our ministry.

Ceremonial groundbreaking was held at Epworth Children's Home in March for the Aldersgate home to be built there. Dan Shumaker and the Columbia Home Builder's Association continue to procure materials, labor and donations for that home. It is anticipated that construction will begin at Epworth in April. Six females have been chosen as residents of this home.

The home at The Oaks has also been delayed because of lack of adequate funding. It is hoped that construction will begin there in August. The Admissions Committee is meeting to determine resident selection for this home.

Brochures were distributed at Conference, the Senior Men's Conference and the Women's Conference as well as the Home Builder's Home and Garden Show, the Down's Syndrome Conference and numerous churches. We are currently updating our informational packet with the funding received from the Central Carolina's grant.

Although it has been a difficult year, we feel very blessed to be a part of this wonderful opportunity to help provide Christian homes for these adults.

Our sincere gratitude goes to all who have supported Aldersgate Special Needs Ministry this year. We ask that you continue to keep us in your hearts and prayers and encourage you to participate in Aldersgate Sunday on August 12, 2007.

Judy Weathers, Chairperson, Trustees