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From the President's Desk: This Holiday Season

It seems that the year just began yet here it is, time for the holidays again. With all that has transpired over the course of 2002, it's easy to lose sight of what's really important in life but hopefully the holidays will give each of us reason to pause and remember our blessings. The most important blessing we have is our children, friends and family. It is my hope that as we prepare to close out another year each of us will remember that the children are our promise for the future.

Nowhere is hope for the future more evident than in the faces of our children. As I ponder the problems of business and try to make my own contributions I find solace in the excitement I see in children's faces when Halloween and the promise of treats are mentioned or when little ones talk of the holidays and the New Year. It is during those opportunities to talk with children that I am reminded of what is really important. It is the simple example given to me by a smiling child who is full of hope and expectation that reminds me of my purpose. As we enter this holiday season I am reminded that our children are our blessing and that their fate is in our hands.

This holiday season will see us facing many challenges as well as changes in political administrations

and the resultant shift in some ideologies and attitudes. One thing must prevail no matter what changes, challenges or ideologies bring and that is we are responsible for the future of our children. As we think of belt tightening, the constant threat of terrorism and the pos-

sibility of war we must remember our children and what is best for them. As we concern ourselves with profits and growth in our communities whether locally, regionally, nationally or internationally there are also numerous opportunities. The first and highest priority being our children. No plan can be complete that does not provide for the health and well being of our children.

As we go about our celebrating this holiday season let us remind our children of why and what we celebrate. Let us remind our children and ourselves that holidays irrespective of religious or personal beliefs celebrate the oneness of humankind and the blessing of existence. Let us remind our children and ourselves that holi-

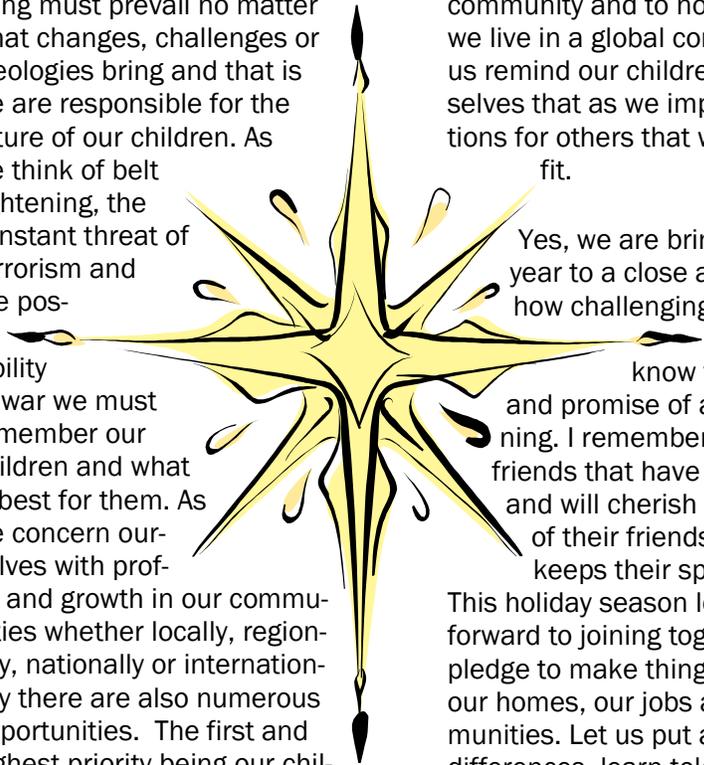
days serve as a time to reinforce commitment to family, friends and community and to not forget that we live in a global community. Let us remind our children and ourselves that as we improve conditions for others that we too benefit.

Yes, we are bringing another year to a close and no matter how challenging things may seem, we know there is hope and promise of a new beginning. I remember family and friends that have passed on and will cherish the blessing of their friendship which keeps their spirits alive.

This holiday season let us all look forward to joining together in a pledge to make things better in our homes, our jobs and our communities. Let us put aside petty differences, learn tolerance and try to understand one another in our on-going quest to live in a better world. We must all believe and live in the passage from a song entitled the "World of Children" is a better place because of YOU.

Peace,

Michael E. Williams
President



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“A Toast to the Children of Detroit”



Theron Beaver and a guest enjoying the evening.

Raise a glass and toast the children of Detroit was the theme for the 11th Annual Wine Tasting Extravaganza hosted by Tom George and Jerry Mansour of the Harbortown Market. This fundraising event was held on November 14, 2002 at the Detroit Historical Museum. As local dignitaries, business men and women, and philanthropists walked the cobbled streets of 19th century Detroit, they were treated to a sampling of hundreds of various wines for selection. StarrVista staff generously donated their time to pour samples of the wine for the glittering assemblage. A generous buffet of succulent shrimp; mouthwatering pate; an array of cheeses and delicious, chilled fruit was served to the guests who ate, tasted

wine and were a merry group. Those who volunteered their time for the event were an exhausted but happy group when the gala finally came to a close. All proceeds were generously donated to StarrVista.



Party guests enjoying the gaitery of the evening.

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The Mayor's Initiative – Kids, Cops, Clean – Remembering Mayor's Time



Starr Vista is invested in the lives of the families and communities we service and take pride in being a part of Mayor's Time. Currently, Starr Vista has serviced over 1,000 youths. As our evening hours grow longer we'd like to again make mention of the Mayor's Time Initiative Website which includes a variety of programs such as AlKeBu-Lan Village (a cultural passport for over fifteen organizations such as the museums and zoo). Once the passport is thoroughly marked off it can be exchanged for prizes and gifts. Mayor's Time is a long term campaign aiming to increase the importance of after-school programs between the hours of 3-8pm. To find out more about Mayor's Time also visit the Website of Kids, Cops, and Clean where there are over 300+ activities.

At-Risk Youth

Juveniles 7-16 years of age with behavior that may lead to out of home placement and entry into the juvenile system are defined as at-risk. Starr Vista received its first at-risk youth October 2002. While able to utilize preventive and early intervention programs such as the Blanche Kelso Bruce (BKB) Strict Discipline Academy and shelter programs, families are able to address concerns without the

formal intervention of court processes. Youth qualifying for such services can be referred by law enforcement, courts, WCDJF, public schools and parents.

FYI, Blanche Kelso Bruce (1841-1898) was the first Black man to serve a full term in the U.S. Senate (1875-1881), representing Mississippi.



REALITY CHECK



From left: Referee Smart, Officer Deck and Officer Townsend at Sampson Elementary School

Stepping in to help bridge the gap between the community and the police department is a group of officers and support persons headed by one of the 8th precincts finest, Officer Geoffrey Townsend. This ensemble better known as Reality Check, volunteer their time, working in conjunction with area based businesses addressing educational, social and juvenile justice concerns of youth heading towards the wrong path. Reality check is a crime prevention program designed to assist youth 6 to 17 years of age in school, in the community and also offers a physical re-instruction program, much like a mini boot-camp. Officer Townsend overcame illiteracy and a troubled childhood while going on to obtain his life long dream of becoming a police officer. His own personal triumphs formed the basis for Reality Checks Mission statement- **“Together we can, and will make a difference by turning a vision into a Reality!”**

Youth Spotlight

The Agency’s business is invested in the lives of children and families we serve. This month we are spotlighting Kenneth W.; his case worker is Ms. Dianne Richardson. Since being in our care, Kenneth is compliant with program objectives and currently resides in a Semi-Independent Living program. He is currently in the 12th grade at Charlotte Forten Academy and very involved in the school’s basketball team. Kenneth is currently maintaining a 3.3 GPA and plans to graduate in June 2003. Kenneth was awarded a basketball scholarship to North Carolina A & T where he plans to study criminal justice. Keep up the good work Kenneth!



Employee Spotlight



During her life she has successfully raised several children (including an adopted daughter and god-son), she

has secured two Master’s degrees in Guidance/Counseling and Social Work respectively, she’s worked five years in the prison system as an Assistant Resident Unit Manager, and has probably touched more young women’s lives during her fifteen years with

Salvation Army/Denby Center - than she would care to admit.

Her name is Shirley Atkins and she’s a phenomenal woman. Quite innocently, Shirley stumbled upon StarrVista during its infancy stage, as her former agency (Denby) was working on securing a provider contract. However, months after her initial contact with the StarrVista agency, she eventually came aboard as one of Starr’s Case Management Supervisors.

As expressed by a member of our treatment staff, Shirley has been described as “consistently suppor-

tive – but firm and uplifting.” When she’s not helping others or working, Shirley enjoys shopping and watching HGTV. As of late, Shirley proudly announced and showed pictures of her newly sponsored child, Workenesh Mengesha, of Ethiopia. When asked, Shirley expressed her greatest accomplishment to date is her ability to take care of her family’s needs. With her unselfish demeanor, words of advice, and boisterous laughter – it’s not surprising to hear some staff refer to her as “mom” or “auntie.” But whether she’s called Shirley, Ms. Atkins, or “ma’, she’s phenomenal in her own way.



December Birthdays

We would like to wish a Happy Birthday to the following staff:

Kisha Parnell	December 5
Mike Williams	December 16
Kerry Herd	December 19
Sherry Davis	December 19
Gricelda Bonner	December 23



Employee Activities Committee Seeking New Members/Suggestions

The Employee Activities Committee is seeking new members and suggestions for activities for next year. You can submit your ideas via e-mail to Gwen Shannon or Barbara Douglass. A suggestion box will also be made available to staff. The calendar for next year will be set at the EAC meeting in January so give us your suggestions prior to the meeting.



NEW EMPLOYEES

Rose Berry-Mills and Magdalena Gubanski joined the StarrVista team as full-time employees on Monday, November 11, 2002. Ms. Berry-Mills filled the post of File Clerk and Ms. Gubanski filled the post of Accounting Clerk. Rose is a recent newly wed and her hobbies consist of cooking, singing, doing crossword puzzles and playing the piano and organ. She is heavily involved with her church, family, seniors and youth welfare. Magdalena is pursuing a Bachelor of Arts Degree from the University of Michigan-Dearborn, where she is majoring in Economics with a minor in Management; she will graduate in April, 2003. Magdalena enjoys nature and outdoor activities. She also enjoys movies, dancing and swimming. Welcome!



Upcoming Events

The following is the schedule of upcoming events:

Friday, December 13	12:00 p.m.	Statewide Luncheon - Mama Mia's, Plymouth Road, Livonia	
Friday, December 13	4:30 p.m.-7:30 p.m.	Families First Christmas Party	StarrVista
Monday, December 16	12:00 p.m.	Majestic Noble Luncheon	StarrVista
Wednesday, December 18	11:30 a.m.	StarrVista/Starr Comm. Holiday Party Vassels, Eight Mile, Southfield	

Reminder: The agency will be closed December 24 and 25, Christmas Eve and Christmas Day; and December 31 and January 1, New Year's Eve and New Year's Day.



HAP Corner: (Excerpted from HAPWISE, Member Health News)

ENTERTAINING AT HOME: Where's the Party?

Celebrations seem to rule our lives during this time of year. But remember: Celebrations are about friends, not food. Instead of giving in, learn how to keep yourself from overindulging.

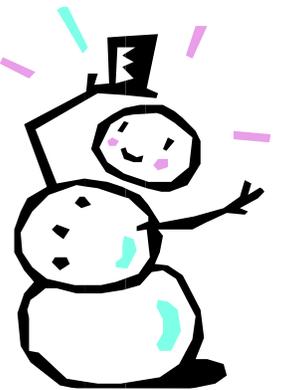
- * **Have a snack before you go.** Never go to a party hungry. You'll have a great deal of trouble passing up food. Instead, have some fruit, a cup of yogurt or another nutritious snack to curb your appetite before you leave the house.
- * **Use the smallest available plate for buffets.** The smaller

the plate, the less food you can accommodate. Once you fill up your plate with food, tell yourself that seconds are not allowed.

- * **Make healthy selections.** Enjoy plenty of fresh fruits and vegetables. Have a moderate portion of lean meats, cheeses and breads. You don't have to skip dessert at every party. Opt for only a small amount to satisfy your sweet tooth.
- * **Drink alcoholic beverages in moderation, if at all.** Alcohol gives you nothing but empty calories, and can stimulate your appetite. Drink juices, seltzers, soda or water in-

stead.

- * **Resist the temptation.** If you do overeat at a party or dinner, don't dwell on it. Just pick up your good eating habits and try not to over indulge again. With a little perseverance, you'll emerge from the holidays with good memories instead of extra pounds!



Where Two or Three Are Gathered...

"...where the families and StarrVista staff can see each other as real people – working for them not against them with the same focus – our kids' future." Sarah Harris

What happens when a group of people from different ethnic and cultural backgrounds come together for a common cause? *Something truly magical.* While sitting in a team meeting the week before Thanksgiving, the Rising Stars were trying to come up with something - anything special they could do for the StarrVista youth

and families. Out of all the suggestions that came forth – there was one that seemed perfect. A **Families First** feast to honor and thank our families and youth for their hard work and support of all our efforts. And so, the planning began. Theron Beaver (Director of Operations) not only approved the venture on behalf of the administrative team, but provided an additional incentive by offering matching funds from StarrVista if the staff was truly serious. Serious was not the word. With Sarah Harris (Youth Investment Counselor) at the helm and the support of StarrVista's administration, the

staff set in motion a plan of 'thank you'. The treatment and clerical staff worked feverishly to ensure correct address information was available for the prepping and mailing of invitations. The staffing body as a whole personally donated funds for the purchasing of food, decorations, and other necessary items. So as the families continue to RSVP and the staff continue to prepare for December 13th's holiday celebration, we salute the small group who saw an opportunity to sprinkle a little magic dust on those who help us shine.



Holiday Trivia 2002

Try your hands at these whimsical holiday trivia questions. In the spirit of giving, we've included the answers for the puzzle on the back. Give yourself five points for each correct answer and rate your trivia knowledge. Happy Holidays!!

1. In *Frosty the Snowman*, who brought Frosty back to life?
2. Who lost \$8,000 in *It's a Wonderful Life*?
3. In *How the Grinch Stole Christmas*, what biological shortcoming made the Grinch so mean?
4. What is the biggest Christmas single of all time?
5. What was Scrooge's first name?
6. What carol contains the line "O tidings of comfort and joy"?
7. Name the three reindeer whose names begin with a "D"?
8. What is the first gift my true love sent on the sixth day of Christmas?
9. In *The Night Before Christmas*, where were the stockings hung?
10. What is the last ghost called in *A Christmas Carol*?
11. What color is the Grinch?
12. In the movie *The Santa Clause*, who starred as the substitute Santa Claus?
13. In *A Charlie Brown Christmas*, who plays the dusty innkeeper in the Christmas play?
14. What holiday drink contains sugar, milk, and eggs?
15. What popular bite-sized chocolate candy comes wrapped in red and green foil at Christmas?
16. What Saturday Evening Post artist was known for his whimsical pictures of Santa Claus?
17. In *It's a Wonderful Life*, what did Clarence receive for accomplishing his mission: wings or a halo?
18. What did the Grinch use as a substitute for reindeer?
19. What 1990 movie told of a boy's experience when two men break into his house during Christmas?
20. What is Charlie Brown's complaint about Christmas?
21. Counting Rudolph, how many reindeer are there?
22. What carol is known as the counting song?
23. Traditionally, does the oldest or youngest family member open the first present?
24. What carol demands figgy pudding?
25. Whose eyes were made of coal?
26. What holiday film annually appears on television more than 300 times?
27. What country started the tradition of exchanging gifts?
28. Name the reindeer whose name begins with a "B"?
29. What song contains the line "Although, it's been said, many times, many ways"?
30. What do most elves wear on the tips of their shoes?



Scoring:

- 1-10:** Your last name wouldn't happen to be Scrooge, would it?
- 11-20:** Pretty decent, but you could use a little more holiday exposure.
- 21-27:** It's obvious that you watched a lot of television as kid. Good Job!!
- 28-30:** You're the type to complete your shopping by mid-October, send out cards to everyone the day after Thanksgiving, decorate-bake-and create everything necessary for a wonderful holiday celebration. We're impressed!!





Holiday Trivia Answers

1. Santa Claus
2. Uncle Billy
3. His heart was two sizes too small
4. White Christmas
5. Ebenezer
6. God Rest Ye Merry Gentlemen
7. Dasher, Donder, Dancer
8. Six geese a-laying
9. By the chimney
10. The Ghost of Christmas Yet to Come
11. Green
12. Tim Allen
13. PigPen
14. Eggnog
15. Hershey's Kisses
16. Norman Rockwell
17. His wings
18. His dog
19. Home Alone
20. It is too commercialized
21. Nine
22. The 12 Days of Christmas
23. The youngest child
24. We Wish You a Merry Christmas
25. Frosty's
26. It's a Wonderful Life
27. Italy (Romans)
28. Blitzen
29. The Christmas Song
30. Bells



Here are the answers to last month's puzzle:

1. Good Times
2. Different Strokes
3. Facts of Life
4. Different World
5. Three's Company
6. Adams Family
7. Cheers
8. Happy Days
9. Sanford and Son
10. Laverne and Shirley
11. M*A*S*H
12. Brady Bunch
13. All in the Family
14. The Jefferson's
15. Golden Girls
16. Petticoat Junction
17. Family Ties
18. Charles in Charge
19. Alice
20. What's Happening



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**Solutions through youth & family
partnerships**

Recipe Corner

Christmas is coming and the goose is getting fat...

This menu of goose and winter vegetables is perfect for a traditional Christmas, and provides a good segue for a family reading of Dickens's classic, "A Christmas Carol". The Wassail recipe below is perfect for entertaining. Serves eight. The following recipes can be found on All Recipes.com.

[> Winter Fruit Salad with Lemon Poppyseed Dressing](#)

[> Roast Goose with Stuffing](#)

[> Green Beans with Walnuts](#)

[> Whipped Carrots and Parsnips](#)

[> Chocolate Bread Pudding with Bourbon Pecan Sauce](#)

[> Lion House Wassail](#)

Wassail

Ingredients:

2 liters ginger ale
25 fluid ounces sherry
1 cup brandy
1 cup milk
1 cinnamon stick
4 whole cloves
4 whole allspice berries
1/2 teaspoon ground nutmeg
1/2 teaspoon ground ginger
8 lady apples

Directions:

- 1** Preheat oven to 350 degrees F (175 degrees C). Place whole apples on a baking sheet and bake until brown and tender, about 25 minutes.
- 2** Gently crush the allspice berries and break up the cinnamon stick. Place the allspice, cinnamon, cloves, nutmeg, and ginger in a cheesecloth bag.
- 3** In a large sauce pan place 2 cups of the ginger ale and the spice bag. Bring to a boil, reduce heat and simmer for 10 minutes. Remove spice bag and add the remaining ginger ale, the sherry and the brandy heat until hot. **DO NOT BOIL!** Whisk in milk and pour into a punch bowl garnish with the baked apples.

Serves 25

