

2006

# SOS nabs \$200,000 federal housing grant

BY SHARBARI BOSE  
Staff Writer

Strengthen Our Sisters, a local chain of shelters for battered and homeless women, and a community-based organization called NewBridge Services, received over \$200,000 in federal housing grants Thursday through the joined efforts of Congressman Bill Pascrell, Jr. and the Passaic County Freeholders Board.

At a press conference at Eva's Village - a soup kitchen, shelter and rehabilitation center for Paterson's homeless - Pascrell handed over a \$1.6 million "assistance grant" from the federal Department of Housing and Urban Development to county freeholders. County officials in turn distributed the funds to nonprofits that aid the underprivileged.

"Through your services, you work to reverse the underlying causes of homelessness," said Pascrell, addressing the award

recipients. "... To the organizations that are getting peanuts today, I know you're grateful. But this in no way will shrink our intensity to do more."

Pascrell shared Census Bureau statistics in an effort to emphasize the gravity of American homelessness. He said about 800,000 US citizens are living on the streets today and 38 percent of them are children. The average age of a homeless person is nine years old.

SOS and NewBridge, both based in West Milford, were awarded a total of \$223,334 for their work in putting needy families under roofs. SOS, which provides shelter, job counseling and legal advice to its residents, will use its portion to transfer three shelter families into permanent housing and to assist them with rent.

NewBridge's West Milford office offers health-related services, educational programs, as well as housing opportunities. Representatives were unavailable for com-

ment Thursday.

Other award recipients included Eva's Village, the New Jersey Community Development Corporation, the Paterson Coalition for Housing, the Hispanic Multi-Purpose Service Center, and St. Philip's Ministry of Paterson.

For her share, SOS Director Sandra Ramos was obviously thankful, but the purple-clad eccentric spoke in her typical flamboyant style as she joked with county officials about the amount.

"This is nice, but where's the rest of it?" Ramos said.

Eleese Evans, the county freeholder director, said the grant might awards are a step in the right direction.

"This is America, people - the richest country in the world - and we have many of our people who are poor," Evans said. "I thank Congressman Pascrell for bringing the bacon home. It's just the tip of the iceberg but it's enough to get us started."



PHOTO COURTESY OF LPPD

a Lincoln Park Care Center patient, has been missing since Dec 29.

## are seeking missing re Center patient

regarding the whereabouts of Evette Biggs is asked to contact Detective Sergeant Michael Hackett of the Lincoln Park Police

Rebecca Scanlon's email address is scanlon@northjersey.com

## BOE candidate kits are available

The deadline for filing nominating petitions to run for positions on the Riverdale Board of Education is 4 p.m., Monday, Feb. 27, Michael J. Mados, Business Administrator/Board Secretary, announced recently. The election is scheduled

dates can obtain a "School Board Candidate Kit" at the local school district office. Published by the New Jersey School Boards Association, the School Board Candidate Kit includes a sample nominating petition and information about

the school board member. Information about the New Jersey School Ethics Act, important dates in the school election process, and briefing sessions for school board candidates are also included in the