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For Immediate Release – September 5, 2008

Press Release – Faith and Generous Donation Thwart Closing of Domestic Violence Shelter

Newhouse, the oldest domestic violence shelter in the Kansas City area, **will remain in operation**, thanks to a significant donation from an anonymous “angel donor” this week.

Newhouse was in danger of closing and had even informed its staff members two weeks ago that funds were in jeopardy. As a result, 72 women and children from the 86-bed shelter were moved to other safe, temporary space throughout the community.

Newhouse and The Don Bosco Centers, both Northeast area agencies, have been in discussion in recent weeks regarding a possible merger/acquisition. “When Newhouse found itself in a financial dilemma, the leadership of The Don Bosco Centers stepped forward, working diligently to help ensure that this critical community resource was not lost,” said Jim Feller, chairman of the Newhouse Board of Directors. “Board and staff from both agencies have worked to explore this option thoroughly and identify common resources. After much thoughtful deliberation, the Board of Newhouse voted on Wednesday to move forward as a separate entity with the generous support of its “angel donor.” We are grateful for the interest and encouragement of The Don Bosco Centers during this time. Although we will not be merging, we are very interested in further

exploring ways to further collaborate for the good of both agencies' clients and the Northeast community," said Feller.

"Don Bosco is committed to providing a full complement of services to the Northeast community and the metro area," said Don Bosco Board Chair Dan Cranshaw. "We did what we had to do to ensure that Newhouse's critical services and programs would continue. We are thrilled that Newhouse will be able to move forward on its own."

The Don Bosco Centers operate six inter-related centers offering a variety of programs and resources for residents of Northeast Kansas City. These include: a Charter High School, Counseling Center, ESL School, Family Support Center, Senior Center and Youth Development Center

"This donation is such an amazing gift for us. We have been praying for a donor to help us over this financial hurdle," said Jim Feller. "It turns out that our 'angel donors' were praying to find a place where their money could make a real difference in the lives of struggling women and children. Clearly, these donors were led to our door," he said.

Newhouse was founded 37 years ago through the efforts of three Methodist and Presbyterian Churches. What began simply as a neighborhood resource including emergency assistance quickly grew into much more as the need for housing for women and children dealing with domestic violence became clear. The shelter was operated in residential homes before a larger space became available nearly ten years ago.

Since 1971, Newhouse has provided shelter for women and children who were fleeing from domestic violence in their lives. Last year alone, Newhouse sheltered over 600 women and children, providing over 17,000 bednights.

According to Feller, Newhouse relies on funding from government grants, United Way, private foundations, faith communities, individuals, companies, and civic groups for its survival. “Our recent financial crisis was precipitated by delays in grant payments, a drop in corporate and individual donations, decreased grant funding and the overall economy. “Although this significant donation is an incredible blessing for Newhouse – and the largest donation we’ve received in our history -- we need additional funds in place to ensure the long-term financial viability for the organization,” said Feller. “This gift has seen us through this crisis, but we invite others – individuals, faith communities, anyone whose life has ever been touched by domestic violence – to add their donations to this seed money. The many and diverse needs of victims of domestic violence continue to grow, as do the numbers of those affected by it. We are truly blessed to be a blessing to others and hope to long continue our mission of helping women and children live independent lives free of domestic violence,” he said.

To make a donation to help support the shelter, or for more information on Newhouse, call 816-462-0508 or visit the website at www.newhouseshelter.org.