



# Amigos en Cristo

A Ministry of the Southwest Florida Outreach Council: LCMS

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[www.amigoscenter.org](http://www.amigoscenter.org)



## Hurricane Help by Pastor Selle

I met Gessie last year in Immokalee. She is a gifted young Haitian mother of three. Her husband works with security at the Immokalee Seminole Casino. A grant from **LCMS World Relief** allowed me to hire her as a case manager to work with the Immokalee long term disaster recovery committee (called I HOPE). Her compassion and fluency in four languages (English, Creole, French and Spanish) has made her an important asset to our outreach efforts. The following is an excerpt from a written report she sent me last year concerning a victim of Hurricane Wilma:

This family lives in a trailer badly damaged by the hurricane: The entrance floor get a big hole; all the kitchen is damaged, floor, roof and appliances; the living room roof get 2 holes full of water; the worse thing of all is one of the bedroom which is totally unlivable, almost all the roof is gone, it is only covered by plastic full of dirty water, the walls are moist, the carpet wet, and get a lot of debris. And, in that particular case, what I think is a potential danger, is by the fact she get 2 little kids who can go in there and play with electrical wires, or whatever get live electrical power. My advice to her was to close that door in order to prevent the kids to enter the room.

They really need help, and it can't wait. They need immediate response. The owner was telling us that they went everywhere she knows about, and they didn't help them. What touched us the most is that when she was telling us her story, she was crying, and you can see that she is desperate to get help. I think if we help this family, it will make a great difference in their lives, and also we will feel great to know that we help them get a better life and to bring a smile on their faces.

This family recently received a makeover of their trailer. A group of Amish volunteers came from Michigan and completely rebuilt the roof, ceiling, walls, floors and electrical system. Gessie reports that this grateful family now has a beautiful and safe trailer home. Thanks be to God this happy ending is being repeated with dozens of Immokalee families.

## Amigos Center Banquet 2007

With over 200 in attendance, we celebrated the Fourth Annual Amigos Center Fundraising Banquet. We are still tallying the profits. Thank you for your support.

## Amigos Center is Unique

Amigos Center has the distinction of being the only ministry to have two staff members who have received awards from Wheat Ridge Ministries. Sarah Willig (Paganes) received the "Servant of Hope" award in 2003 while still a student at Concordia University, River Forrest, IL. Pastor Bob Selle received the "Seeds of Hope" award on February 19, 2007. **Wheat Ridge Ministries** is Lutherans seeding new ministries of health and hope in the name of the healing Christ.



## Growth Means Change

Pastor Selle has assembled a group of seven volunteers to help Amigos en Cristo, Inc. d/b/a Amigos Center forge a new structure that will better serve our growing mission. With the help of our United Way recommended consultant, Janet Eustis, we will reach a consensus on mission, vision and structure of Amigos en Cristo, Inc. that includes proposals for Board responsibilities and membership. We expect to accomplish this by end of April. Our group consists of:

☛Denny Brown: Volunteer Financial Officer of Amigos Center, ☛Rev. Richard Browning: Pastor of Hope Lutheran Church, ☛Maggie Bowles: Extensive board experience with non-profits; ☛Herb Nelson: Extensive administrative experience with non-profits; ☛Christina Leddin, Staff member of Amigos Center; ☛Julio Estremera: Small Business Consultant, Florida Gulf Coast University, Amigos Center board member; ☛Marve Ann Alaimo: Attorney with Cummings & Lockwood LLC and board member of Amigos Center

## Give thanks to God for . . .

- The dozens of Immokalee families who have had their homes restored through I HOPE;
- The outpouring of support and encouragement during our recent fund raising banquet.