

Welcome  
Central

# Helping people find help they need

*As he awaits word about reinstatement of his disability income, Ronald expresses his appreciation to Welcome Central, Leavenworth, Kan. "I appreciate everybody's help," he says. "I'm glad I came here. Nobody else seems to have been able to help me."*

**A**t Welcome Central, volunteers take time to listen and help as they live up to the new initiative's motto and commitment "to help you find the help you need." Welcome Central, an outreach ministry of the Sisters of Charity of Leavenworth in collaboration with area churches, opened in downtown Leavenworth on Jan. 27. It is a community resource to help persons connect with needed social services and to provide other assistance.

While she believes Welcome Central has the capacity to serve more people, Sister Vickie Perkins, coordinator, is amazed at how great the need is. In the first months at Welcome Central, volunteers provided transportation primarily for grocery shopping; did referrals for food; and helped people complete applications for food stamps and disability income. "We have done several job searches with people and filled out quite a few applications for utility assistance," she adds. "We continue to work on how to get the word out about Welcome Central."



Sister Vickie Perkins (left) follows up with Ronald and Betty, his Mother, during their recent visit to Welcome Central.



### Making contact with Welcome Central

Welcome Central is open  
Monday through Friday,  
10 a.m. to 3 p.m.

It is located in the  
Youth Achievement Center,  
314 Delaware, Leavenworth.

For more information,  
call Welcome Central  
at 913-530-4535.

### Understanding people's needs

Welcome Central evolved from a year-long process of meeting with churches, agencies and individuals to understand the needs of persons living in poverty. The clearinghouse concept emerged from these discussions. Welcome Central's objectives are to:

- Inform persons in need about available services.
- Directly assist those in need to access appropriate services.
- Help move people out of poverty through skill-building activities and training.
- Provide transportation for short shopping trips or appointments.

Sister Vickie is impressed with both the people seeking assistance and those volunteering. By early March, Welcome Central had 20 volunteers. They include Linda Martin, retired from Kansas Social and Rehabilitation Services and a member of First United Methodist Church, Leavenworth. She's on the mission team of her church, and says her role as a "technical advisor" at Welcome Central "seemed like a fit for me." Linda put her expertise and experience to work helping Ronald complete required paperwork.

Sister Vickie staffs Welcome Central; Sister Diane Hurley is one of the volunteers. During the first month, a Heartland Charity Volunteer joined the volunteer team (see related article page 5).

"The people who come in are so gracious and responsive," Sister Vickie says, "and the volunteers have gone way beyond to try to meet the needs that are presented. We hope to keep expanding and reaching more people in need."



Linda Martin brings her experience and expertise to Welcome Central where she volunteers to help guests complete detailed paperwork for assistance.



In her volunteer role at Welcome Central, Sister Diane Hurley transports Leavenworth residents to the grocery store or appointments.