



Along THE LINE



January 2012

Hope and Hardwork

Published by

Neighbors Along The Line, (NATL)

a non-profit organization

whose mission is to:

meet basic needs and provide opportunities for development and increased independence.

Located by the old Katy Railroad

line at 5000 Charles Page

Boulevard in Tulsa, NATL is in

its 34th year of operation. Its

5 1/2 square-mile primary service

area is bounded on the north

by Edison Street the east by

Hwy. 75, the west by 81st West

Avenue, and the south by the

Arkansas River.

NATL is not a United Way agency

Visit us online at:

www.neighborsalongtheline.org

or on



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Some people just stand out. From the first day Amber came into NATL seeking a GED, this petite, all-American girl impressed us with her positive attitude and self-confidence. So when she announced she was ready to take the test, to us it was money in the bank. We knew she could pass the test and she did exactly that.

We asked if we could write about her for NATL's newsletter. We knew a bit about her past from prior conversations and knew she'd been through some tough times. However, hearing her whole story gave us a deeper admiration for a strong young woman who rebuilt her fractured life. Amber agreed to share her story with you.

Born in Port Angeles, Washington in 1977, Amber's family moved to Broken Arrow when she was two. Although the family spent a number of years in the Broken Arrow area, moving became a way of life, she says. In fact, she never stayed in one school much longer than a year. Amber says all the moving around made her feel like an outsider who never quite fit in.

In the 10th grade, she moved back East to live with her sister. Unable to enroll in high school there, she gave up and never went back. Instead, she began taking college

courses. The first two semesters went really well, but something went wrong. Looking back on it now, she says, she's not sure what derailed her. Shortly after leaving school, she became pregnant.

Through the following years she slipped into drug and alcohol abuse. She moved back to Oklahoma and had two more children. Throughout her second pregnancy she remained clean, but while in the hospital delivering her third child, she tested positive for cocaine. DHS stepped in and took her children away. Shocked and alone, the loss of her children made her face her messy life. To deepen her troubles, a background check turned up outstanding traffic tickets that had graduated into warrants. Amber went to jail. Although in jail for only a week, the experience changed her life. Amber says she experienced a spiritual awakening so powerful it gave her hope for a new beginning.

In her absence, the children's father fled with them to Maryland. As he also had an addiction problem, DHS helped Amber bring the children back to Oklahoma. Upon her release, Amber entered a program through Tulsa Women's and Children's Center (TWCC). Amber succeeded at TWCC in all areas, but broke a rule when she called the children's

Cont. on back.

Medical Clinic Volunteer Opportunities Mon. 5:30 - 7:00 p.m. Additional times possible in the coming months.

- Doctors, nurses, pharmacists, medical assistants and others needed.
- Dentists - call us to find out how you can help in your own office, on your own time.
- Donations needed - sample, in-date meds, equipment and monetary donations are always welcome.

Food Pantry Volunteer Opportunities Mon., Tues., Thurs. 1:30 - 3:30 p.m. & Wed. and Thurs. 5:00 - 6:45 p.m.

- Sack Groceries, Take Groceries to clients' cars, stock pantry shelves, sort donations, etc.
- Donations always welcome! Protein items most needed!

Literacy Volunteer Opportunities Mon. - Thurs. 10:00 a.m. - 7:00 p.m.

- Tutor, IT help, Library Maintenance, etc.

Community Activities and Board Membership Opportunities Available Call for more information.

"What would life be if we had no courage to attempt anything?"

Vincent van Gogh

father. Because of that mistake, the kids were put into the foster care system; luckily all three were in the same foster home waiting for Amber to get well. DHS took strong steps, but Amber credits them for saving her life. Their intervention in her life made her see it for what it was and stopped her downward spiral. Through TWCC and joining a 12-step-program, Amber got back on her feet and lifted herself up. When her case closed, she and the children were reunited. Now sober for a number of years, life is better every day.

She started college again, but the GED still nagged at her. "I'm stubborn and I wanted to finish it for myself," she says. That's when she came to NATL. As you might imagine it didn't take her long to get ready for and pass the test. Now, with the GED behind her, she can focus on her Television Communications degree. She hopes to one day become a news reporter.

She'll be a great one. She'll bring her understanding of the fragility and resilience of life and the strength of a survivor. We wish her and her children all the best life has to offer.

January 2012 Upcoming Events

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday
2 Food Pantry - 1:30 - 3:30 p.m. Mental Health Svcs. - 3:00-7:00 p.m. Medical Clinic - Sign in at 5:15 p.m. Legal Aid - 6:00 p.m.	3 Food Pantry - 1:30 - 3:30 p.m. Narcotics Anonymous - 6:00 p.m.	4 Senior Bingo - 10:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m. Food Pantry - 5:00 - 6:45 p.m.	5 Food Pantry - 1:30 - 3:30 p.m. Food Pantry - 5:00 - 6:45
9 Food Pantry - 1:30 - 3:30 p.m. Mental Health Svcs. - 3:00-7:00 p.m. Medical Clinic - Sign in at 5:15 p.m.	10 WIC - 9:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m. 1:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m. walk-ins welcome Food Pantry - 1:30 - 3:30 p.m. Narcotics Anonymous - 6:00 p.m. *Volunteers needed to unload Food Truck 10:00 - 11:00 a.m.*	11 Senior Bingo - 10:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m. Food Pantry - 5:00 - 6:45 p.m.	12 Food Pantry - 1:30 - 3:30 p.m. Food Pantry - 5:00 - 6:45
16 <u>Closed for MLK Day</u>	17 Food Pantry - 1:30 - 3:30 p.m. Narcotics Anonymous - 6:00 p.m.	18 Senior Bingo - 10:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m. Food Pantry - 5:00 - 6:45 p.m.	19 Food Pantry - 1:30 - 3:30 p.m. Food Pantry - 5:00 - 6:45
23 Senior Art Class - 1:00 - 3:00 p.m. Food Pantry - 1:30 - 3:30 p.m. Mental Health Svcs. - 3:00-7:00 p.m. Medical Clinic - Sign in at 5:15 p.m.	24 WIC - 9:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m. 1:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m. walk-ins welcome Food Pantry - 1:30 - 3:30 p.m. Narcotics Anonymous - 6:00 p.m. *Volunteers needed to unload Food Truck 10:00 - 11:00 a.m.*	25 Senior Bingo - 10:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m. Food Pantry - 5:00 - 6:45 p.m.	26 Food Pantry - 1:30 - 3:30 p.m. Food Pantry - 5:00 - 6:45
30 Senior Art Class - 1:00 - 3:00 p.m. Food Pantry - 1:30 - 3:30 p.m. Mental Health Svcs. - 3:00-7:00 p.m. Medical Clinic - Sign in at 5:15 p.m.	31 Food Pantry - 1:30 - 3:30 p.m. Narcotics Anonymous - 6:00 p.m.	1 Senior Bingo - 10:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m. Food Pantry - 5:00 - 6:45 p.m.	2 Food Pantry - 1:30 - 3:30 p.m. Food Pantry - 5:00 - 6:45

Neighbors Along The Line
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