

Take a chance on '69 Corvette to build a home

By Rita Frankenberry
Correspondent

When Carine McCandless Hedrick was 13, she helped pay for a 1969 Corvette convertible.

She wanted the car as a hobby project that she started with her dad and her high school sweetheart. Over the years, the trio worked to restore the classic car to its former glory.

Since then, Hedrick has driven it sparingly, usually on sunny days. But for the past few years, the mother of two has become too busy to take it for a spin. Lately, she said, it's been in storage more than it's been on the road.

Although she has poured a lot of hard work into the car over the years – it's now valued at \$30,000 – she recently decided against selling it. Instead, she decided to raffle it off in a fundraiser benefiting Assisi House.

The nonprofit group is in the middle of a capital campaign to open a 5,800-square-foot facility in Kempsville that would provide supervised housing for adults with moderate mental challenges.



Deni Brown, president of the Assisi House board of directors, said this population is an underserved group in need of supervised housing. Once these adults turn 21, public assistance for them isn't often an option.

"After 21, they are total-



COURTESY OF ASSISI HOUSE

Above: Assisi House will be a family-oriented residence built in the Kempsville area of Virginia Beach to service adults with mild to moderate mental challenges. Below: Someone will win this Corvette in a raffle.

ly dependent on their caregivers," Brown said.

It's a need, Brown added, that many people don't understand unless they are faced with it. Shortly after the birth of Hedrick's 3-year-old daughter Christiana, who was born with Down syndrome, she realized the challenges.

"I'm lucky to be able to do long-term financial planning for her," she said. "But it made me realize how many families out there are trying to get through the everyday needs of special needs children. I just



wanted to do what I could to change that."

Brown is hopeful that the Corvette raffle will raise about \$100,000 for Assisi House. The group has a \$1.2 million fundraising goal.

"We've got \$200,000, and we're looking to make \$800,000 to put the shovel in

the ground," Brown said.

Once the facility is constructed – it will be built on the property of Church of the Ascension on Rosecroft Street – Brown hopes it will be the first of many.

"We would like to build more homes," Brown said, adding that the Kempsville facility will be open to anyone, not just Virginia Beach residents. "We hope to have others in Hampton Roads."

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interested?

- For more information, contact Assisi House at 498-1398, or visit www.assisihouse.org.
- Meet Carine McCandless Hedrick, see the Corvette (pictured at left) and get your raffle tickets from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. Saturday at Alpha Music, 3234 Virginia Beach Blvd.
- Raffle tickets for the car, which is valued at \$30,000, are \$100 each.
- A drawing will be held at 4 p.m. April 21 at 4853 Princess Anne Road.