



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**November 12, 2008**

*Angel of The Centre*

**Winnipeg** – While ghosts roam local hotels and phantoms lurk at the opera, an angel is hard at work in the Winnipeg Convention Centre.

Frieda Rutherford, Supervisor of the Centre Place Café, is the *Angel of The Centre*. For the second consecutive year, Frieda heads up her **Pennies From Heaven** celebration right out of the little Café that could. Customers at the Café can leave their pennies or other change from breakfast, lunch or a coffee purchase in the Wishing Well of Hope. Or, they can request a Penny Pouch which they take to their office or business to fill up and bring back to The Well. There are currently 104 Penny Pouches out to local business. Frieda is also collecting donations for Winnipeg Harvest and new toys for the Salvation Army.

**Pennies From Heaven** is a charity fundraising campaign driven by the Winnipeg Free Press to provide food, toys and other gifts this holiday season to financially challenged Winnipeggers. Last year, Frieda and her team of angels, staff and customers of the Winnipeg Convention Centre, raised over \$900 - pennies and coins she and Convention Centre co-worker Graham Konrad rolled themselves! The Café also donated 777 pounds of food to Winnipeg Harvest. All this in only four weeks in 2007!

With an earlier start this year, Frieda is overwhelmed by the support this initiative has already received. “I work with incredibly supportive management and staff and I am so fortunate to have the best customers in the City”, boasts Rutherford. “Our carpenter here, Jim Spikula, built the Wishing Well, TrueServ Canada donated the treasure chest inside the Well, office staff designed all of the signs and donation certificates, a customer is sewing 50 holiday pouches, and other customers are giving me cheques to put into the Well or to buy food or toys! Those who donate are eligible for a draw of an impressive Winnipeg sports art piece, which was designed by Jerry Olmstead in event security.”

“We are very proud of Frieda and how she has brought our staff and customers together in support of these most worthy causes,” notes Convention Centre President & C.E.O. Klaus Lahr. “The incredible response from everyone demonstrates just how valued she is at our Centre.”

Originally from Ontario, Frieda has called Winnipeg home for the last 14 years, spending the last 10 years at the Centre Place Café. Her mission has always been to improve the lives of those around her. When she was a child, her father was always nervous that he’d come home and strangers would be living in their home as Frieda would have given their house away to a disadvantaged family. Or, she’d sneak clothes out of the house to take to school for someone who needed it.

“I may not be able to save the world, but I can play a role.” And that, she does.

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For interviews, please contact: Klaus Lahr, President & C.E.O., Winnipeg Convention Centre at 956-1720.