

Safety~Net

April 2005
Vol. 1, Issue 1

Welcome to Safety-Net!

by Joel Rekas
Director of the Shalom Community Center

Do you remember a time in your life when something went terribly wrong (a serious illness perhaps, or a lay-off or divorce)? Who did you turn to?

Family? Friends? Your church? Can you imagine what might have happened without that support?

Welcome to the first issue of Safety-Net, a quarterly publication devoted to highlighting the incredible work done by the social agencies that exist for all of us. From hunger relief to health care, Safety-Net will introduce us to the people and programs that work tirelessly to ensure that every citizen has the opportunity to be a thriving, contributing member of our community.

In this first issue, many of the agencies will acquaint us with their mission and the challenges they currently face. As all communities are ultimately affected by policy decisions that are

made on the State and Federal levels, every issue will include a legislative update.

Future issues will focus on policy issues, such as health care, that affect all of us and the vitality of our community. Stories from those of us who have been impacted by the work of the agencies that comprise the social safety net will be a regular feature, along with opinion pieces from community members.

If you or your agency would like to write a column for the next issue, please contact David White, Editor at white@indiana.edu. This newspaper welcomes your comments and suggestions.

Thanks for picking up this newspaper, and a special thanks to the agencies represented within for all that you do to make Bloomington a special place.

The Lost Child Fund

Back in the early eighties when I first moved to Bloomington, I was desperate for baby sitters that I could afford. I worked evenings as a waitress, so it was difficult to find cheap, dependable care. I recruited neighbors as well as co-workers. I went to Big Brothers/ Big Sisters hoping that a big brother for my son would help, even for one night, a couple of hours a week, which it did. Twenty-some years later, I have more discretionary income and have founded a fund with the help of Monroe County Wrap-Around which gives money to single parents to help defray the cost of child-care (see article on page 6). It is called the Lost Child Fund. If you would like to make a contribution to the lost child fund, contact Cindy Skoog at Wrap-Around. Wrap-Around is located at 645 South Rogers Street, Bloomington, and the telephone number is (812) 337 2418.

I also financially help a single mother in a neighboring community on a monthly basis. I am not a particularly religious person, so I can only hope that I would feel the same way about helping my fellow man if my own experience had not allowed me to develop the necessary empathy. All of the great religions teach us to give to those less fortunate. Giving comes in many forms. For me, right now, it is in the form of money. Some of you may be in a better position to give of your time. Others may not yet be in a position to give of yourself, and must allow yourself to receive. Whoever you are, it is clear that the world is a complicated, small, and volatile place and we cannot be blind to one another's needs. Be aware of your brother. Care. Act.

Anonymous

The Community Kitchen of Monroe County

Phone: 332-0999

Website: www.bloomington.in.us/~kitchen

Writer: Nick Hillman, intern

Bloomington during our "Summer Breakfast Program."

Funding for the Kitchen comes from a variety of sources. The majority of our funds are donated by private contributions.

Additionally, we have been a United Way member agency since 1990. The Kitchen receives CDBG funds from the City of Bloomington and NAP tax credits from the State of Indiana. Special events also provide

revenue for Community Kitchen services. Our largest special event is the silent art auction "Palette to Palate." "Taste of Bloomington" staged by Bloomington restaurants, and "Homeward Bound" a local 5K walk to fight homelessness are other special events that help raise funds and awareness for the Community Kitchen. The Hoosier Hills Food Bank, local restaurants, and private donors also provide the Kitchen with in-kind food donations — approximately 2,000 pounds per month!

The Community Kitchen of Monroe County serves free, hot, nutritious meals Monday through Saturday 4:00pm-6:00pm. Meals are served at two locations: sit-down meals are served at the main location (917 S. Rogers Street) and carry-out meals are served at the Express location (1100 W. 11th Street). These locations are provided by Perry and Bloomington Townships.

The Community Kitchen has been serving meals since 1983. In 2004, we provided approximately 120,000 meals equaling almost 400 meals per day. 22% of the Kitchen patrons are seniors and 40% are children under the age of 18. What makes the Community Kitchen special is that we meet patron's emergency food needs anonymously. Whatever the emergency, patrons find the Kitchen a place where they not only eat, but linger for conversations with other patrons, volunteers, and staff members. Additionally, we provide meals for after-school programs at the Boys and Girls Club, The Rise, and Girls Inc. We also deliver meals to neighborhoods around

Volunteers are vital to our operations — we always welcome groups and individuals to help during the meal preparation shift (11:30am-1:30pm) and the meal serving shift (3:30pm-6:30pm). To volunteer individually or as a group, please contact our office manager, Annie Brookshire at 332-0999.



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Center For Behavioral Health — Who Are We?

By Cathi Norton, Community Relations Specialist, Center for Behavioral Health

In the 1960's a variety of national, social movements sprang to life. Causes like Civil Rights, Women's Rights, and the Anti-war Movement galvanized the country. It was a fertile time for building a better future...a future that our leaders realized must also better address the healthcare of our society. It was during that time our nation's fledgling mental health movement received a giant assist, when President John F. Kennedy signed the Mental Retardation Facilities and Community Mental Health Centers Construction Act of 1963. It was Kennedy's goal to see mental healthcare made available for all regardless of their ability to pay. Thus, with help from the government and committed local efforts, Bloomington's South Central Community Mental Health Center (SCCMHC) was established in 1968.

Quietly serving the community for 37 years, the SCCMHC, now called Center for Behavioral Health (CBH), continues to be a mainstay for people with behavioral and mental health challenges, rich or poor. Help is available in a wide variety of

services at CBH, including those for depression, stress, panic disorders, alcohol and chemical dependencies, phobias, child behavior disorders, grief and loss, marital and family problems, and severe and persistent emotional disorders. Psychiatry, 24-hour emergency services, and vocational and residential services are also part of CBH's efforts to help every person live a rich and rewarding life as independently as possible.

Treatment is specifically designed for each client individually, according to his or her needs. Treatments that work, based on evidence gathered over years of research; a computer "electronic health records" to make all medical charts legible and easy to access from any of our variously located clinics; the largest residential program in the state; Indiana's number one-rated employment support service for the mentally challenged; and an array of educational workshops (most predominantly the free, monthly "Breakfast Learning Series") to educate and reduce stigma against the mentally challenged, are but a few of the Center's contributions



to community.

Over nearly four decades, CBH has grown and in addition to the Bloomington site, now has clinics in Bedford, Martinsville, Mooresville, and Spencer, IN. In general, CBH hours are Monday through Friday from 8:00 a.m. —

5:00 p.m.; services are provided in the evening and weekend by appointment only.

More information can be found by calling (812) 339-1691 and (800) 334-8802, or by visiting the Center's Web site: www.the-center.org.

Martha's House

Jodi Tobias, Executive Director

PO Box 2115 • Bloomington, IN 47402-2115
(812)336-2597 phone • (812)332-9690 fax

The Martha's House mission is to provide safe shelter while working to end homelessness. We provide individual emergency shelter and professional case management services to men and women experiencing homelessness.

Those served by MH include people from all walks of life. Some of those served have included people in crisis situations; young pregnant women on their own for the first time; individuals suffering from mental illness; veterans unable to find a job; women leaving abusing relationships; and people experiencing addiction issues.

During 2004, Martha's House served 257 individuals for a total of 5,276 nights of service provided. Last year residents were about 80% male and 20% female and ranged in age from 18-74. Services provided include social services and shelter, food, and clothing. Life skill classes have begun to be implemented, as well as a Self-Sufficiency Program.

Over the last year, demand for shelter services has doubled! We need your help to maintain the level of services people have come to expect from us. Donations of food, toilet paper, paper towels, laundry soap and shampoo/conditioner are desperately needed.

If you would like to make a donation or volunteer, please contact Jodi at 336-2597.



Above: Exterior view of Martha's House, a local overnight shelter serving both men and women since Jan. 1, 2004. Martha's House has 28 beds to offer. Left: This bedroom at the shelter provides six beds for residents.

March 2, 2005

To Whom It May Concern:

First of all I would like to say, being homeless is a scary experience, not knowing if you're going to find a safe place to sleep and eat a meal, wash your clothes, etc. or if you're going to find a place on the street to lay down.

Martha's House is, for me and many others, a blessing. Many people would be sleeping on the street or just walking the street at night. Here at Martha's House as soon as you walk in the door all of the staff are making sure you feel at ease about any need or concern or just having someone to talk to. When I arrived at Martha's House I was tired, hungry, and needed my few changes of clothing washed. I was treated very well.

Staff made sure I had a nice, clean, safe, warm bed to sleep in, bath towel, wash cloth, a meal, clean clothes, tooth brush, comb, etc. The Case Manager meets with the residents once a week. She helps me try to get my life back together, such as ideas about jobs, housing, even bus tickets, or just someone to talk to. All the staff at Martha's House are caring people.

Please support Martha's House in whatever way is appropriate.

Sincerely,

Greta Lane
Resident of Martha's House

A Message From The Indiana Coalition on Housing and Homeless Issues, Inc. (ICHHI)

Michael Reinke, Executive Director
 mreinke@ichhi.org
 website: www.ichhi.org

The Indiana Coalition on Housing and Homeless Issues (ICHHI) is a statewide 501(c)(3) non-profit organization dedicated to the right of all Indiana citizens to safe, decent and affordable housing with an income and career necessary for self-sufficiency. ICHHI was formed in 1988 by a group of housing and homeless service providers and advocates from all over Indiana who recognized a need for a unified and concerted effort to streamline programs and services for Indiana residents working towards self-sufficiency. ICHHI is committed to using a holistic grassroots approach to building stronger communities through research, planning, and education. Through these methods, ICHHI has been successful at bringing together public and private sector organizations on a local, state, and federal level to find solutions to affordable housing, homelessness, and poverty.

What ICHHI Members helped accomplish last year:

- Secured \$10.5 million in federal funding for homeless initiatives in Indiana.
- Raised \$300,000 for homeless shelters through the statewide Homeward Bound Walk for the Homeless.
- Worked to preserve the state Earned Income Tax Credit for low income families.
- Brought together over 250 people from across the state for a forum on the issues affecting low income Hoosiers.
- Organized seven community task forces to assess the need for affordable housing in local areas.

Top Four Most Dangerous Bills in the Indiana General Assembly

Senate Bill 483, Voter Identification.

Summary: This bill would require a voter to provide proof of identification before the voter is permitted to vote. Provides that a proof of identification is a document issued by the United States or the state of Indiana that shows: 1) the name of the individual to whom the document was issued; and 2) a photograph of that individual. Specifies that a voter who is unable or declines to produce proof of identification at the polls receives a provisional ballot if the voter signs the affidavit required for a provisional ballot.

Last Action: On March 21st, SB 453 passed the House on third reading by a vote of 52-45 and was returned to the Senate with amendments.

Senate Bill 222, Preexisting Condition Waivers.

Summary: Provides that individual and certain group policies of accident and sickness insurance may contain a waiver of coverage for a specified condition under certain circumstances. Specifies that an offer of coverage under a policy that includes a waiver does not preclude eligibility for a comprehensive health insurance association policy. Requires reporting by insurers to the department of insurance. Requires the department of insurance to submit a report to the legislative council.

Last Action: SB 222 passed the Senate with a vote of 47-0. On Thursday, March 24 at 8:30 am, SB 222 will be heard in the House Insurance Committee on its first reading.

Senate Bill 269, Health Mandate Coverage Option.

Summary: Allows, under certain circumstances, an accident and sickness insurer or a health maintenance organization to provide a policy or contract without complying with all health benefit mandates. Requires insurers and health maintenance organizations to report specified information to the department of insurance (department) concerning these policies and contracts. Requires the department to report this information and other specified information to the legislative council.

Last Action: On March 1st, SB 269 passed the Senate on third reading with a vote of 40-8. On March 14, SB 269 was referred to the House Insurance Committee for its first reading.

House Bill 1075, Health Insurance Waivers.

Summary: Provides that an individual policy of accident and sickness insurance and certain association and discretionary group policies of accident and sickness insurance may contain a waiver of coverage for a specified condition if certain requirements are met. Specifies that an offer of coverage under a policy that includes a waiver does not preclude eligibility for a comprehensive health insurance association policy.

Last Action: HB 1075 passed the House on third reading on January 25th with a vote of 76-14. The bill was referred to Senate Health and Provider Services for its first

Upcoming Events

Monroe County United Ministries

Opportunity Knocks: MCUM's Benefit for Neighbors in Need

A buffet luncheon and silent auction to benefit Monroe County United Ministries' Emergency Services and Childcare Programs.

April 17, 2005 at Terry's Banquet and Catering

11:30 Coffee Hour

12:30 Lunch

Tickets: \$20 adults

\$10 children 4-10

children under 3 are free

Items in the silent auction range from children books to a hot air balloon ride, from tickets to an IU football game to paintings by local artists.

For more information, visit www.bloomington.in.us/~mcum or call 339-3429. Tickets can be purchased at MCUM or from members of Church Women United.

Shalom Community Center

A benefit concert of music and storytelling will take place on Saturday May 14th at 7:30 PM at the Buskirk Chumley Theatre. Performers will include local singer songwriters Beth Lodge-Rigal, Jason Fickel, and Sophia Travis, and writer, storyteller, and local radio personality Arbutus Cunningham. Students from Clear Creek Elementary School will also make a special appearance to perform songs they have written about issues of homelessness, hunger, and poverty. Tickets for the event are \$15 for adults and \$8 for children 12 and under, and will be sold through the Sunrise Box Office. All proceeds will go to benefit the Shalom Community Center.

May 14, 7:30 p.m.

Buskirk-Chumley Theatre

Tickets can be purchased at the Buskirk-Chumley

Center for Behavioral Health (CBH)

Upcoming "Breakfast Learning Series" Events: At the Unitarian Universalist Church, 2120 N. Fee Lane, Blgtn. 8:00-9:30 a.m. Free, No Reservations

March 25, 2005 "Adult Bipolar Disorder" Jerry Neff, M.D.

April 22, 2005 "Motivating Behavioral Change" Cindy Houston, ME.D., LCSW, LMHC, LMST

May 20, 2005 "Eating Disorders: Assessment & Beginning Treatment" Anne Price, M.S., Ed.S.

June 17, 2005 "Impulse Control Disorders" Gregory Sidell, M.D.

April 7, 2005 "National Alcohol Screening Day" 1-6 p.m.

(free screenings and opportunities to speak with counselor if desired)



EDITORIAL BOARD

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Gretchen Clearwater.....Assistant Editor

Evan Wade.....Assistant Editor

Safety-Net is made possible by generous supporters and does not use resources from the general fund of the Shalom Community Center or partner agencies.

Please send comments, questions or suggestions to white@indiana.edu

The Shalom Community Center

Joel Rekas

Director

website: www.shalomcommunitycenter.org

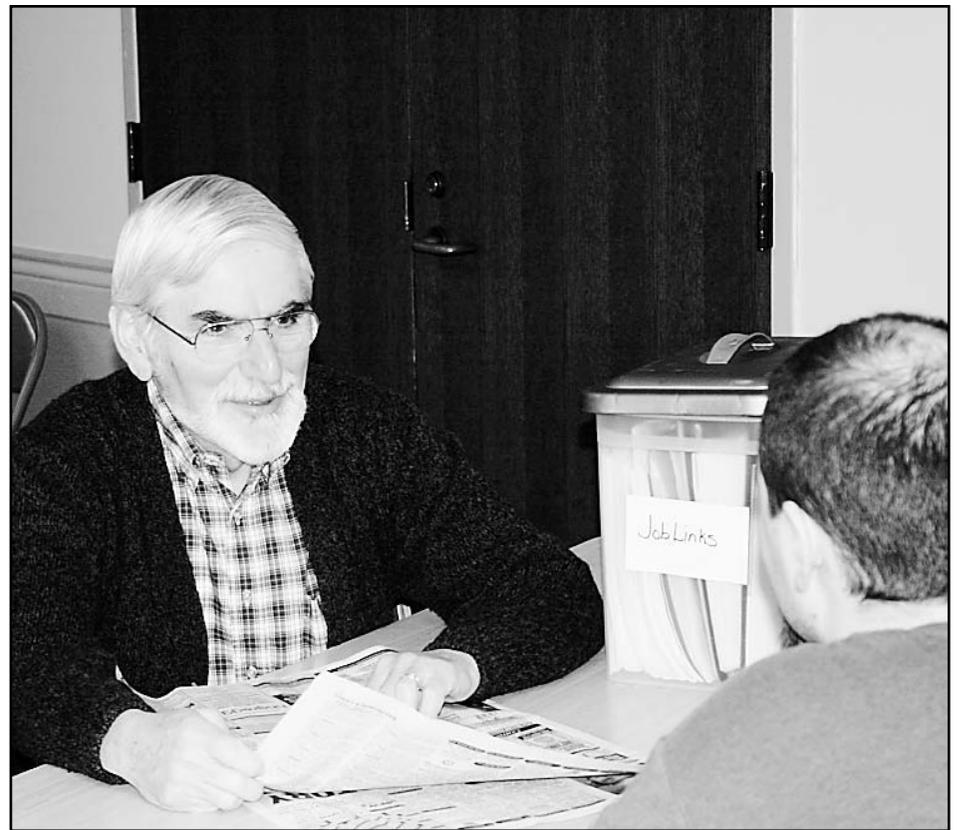
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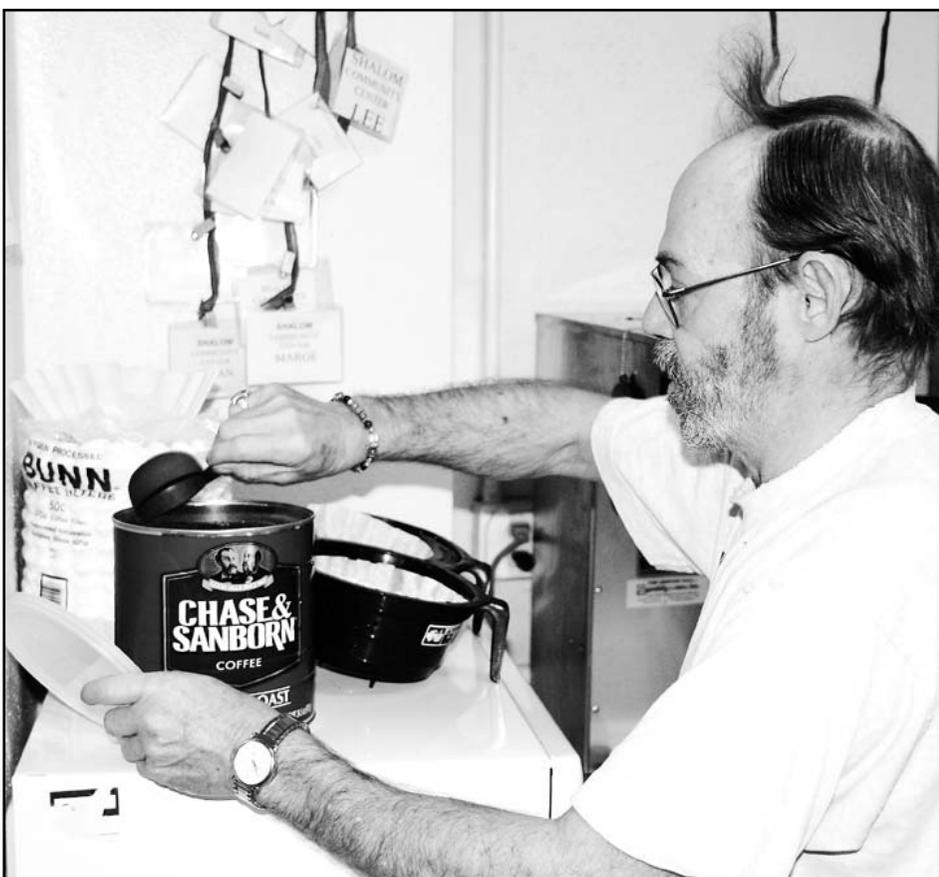
The Shalom Community Center is a safe daytime resource center for those experiencing homelessness and poverty in Bloomington. It is located in the basement of the First United Methodist Church at 219 East Fourth Street. The Shalom Community Center is an independent, non faith-based 501(c)(3) not-for-profit charitable organization. The Shalom Community Center works in collaboration with many service partners that send representatives to the Shalom Community Center including: Social Security Administration, Head Start, Indiana Legal Services, Monroe County Youth Services Bureau, Work One, Center for Behavioral Health (CBH), Planned Parenthood, Martha's House, and City of Bloomington Housing and Neighborhood Development (H.A.N.D). In addition to this collaboration with other agencies, the Shalom Community Center also offers breakfast and lunch, mail boxes, telephones, laundry facilities, diapers and other baby supplies, as well as in-house job counseling, job placement, resume assistance, G.E.D. preparation, and computer training programs. Over 200 guests come in every day Monday through Friday between 8 a.m. and 4 p.m., including a significant number of families with children. The Shalom Community Center also operates a daytime Family Resource Center, funded by the local C.A.P.E grant which includes family programming housed at the First Presbyterian Church and programming for Latino families at Trinity Episcopal Church in downtown Bloomington.

In the coming year, the Center will begin the Family Homelessness Prevention Project. The Project will identify families at imminent risk of becoming homeless and arrange for necessary social services and financial assistance in order to keep them housed. The project will also work with families who are currently homeless, with an emphasis on a rapid move to permanent housing combined with intensive case management to promote housing stability. A feature of the Family Homelessness Prevention Project is a revolving security deposit fund designed to minimize a major barrier to securing housing.

Other new programs at the Shalom Community Center include hosting a Social Justice Advocacy group that meets monthly at the Shalom Community Center to discuss how our community can improve the lives of the poor through advocacy efforts at the local, state, and federal levels. Shalom Community Center volunteers serve on a committee called Crossroads that works inside the jail with inmates, and also when they are released, to help them rebuild their lives.

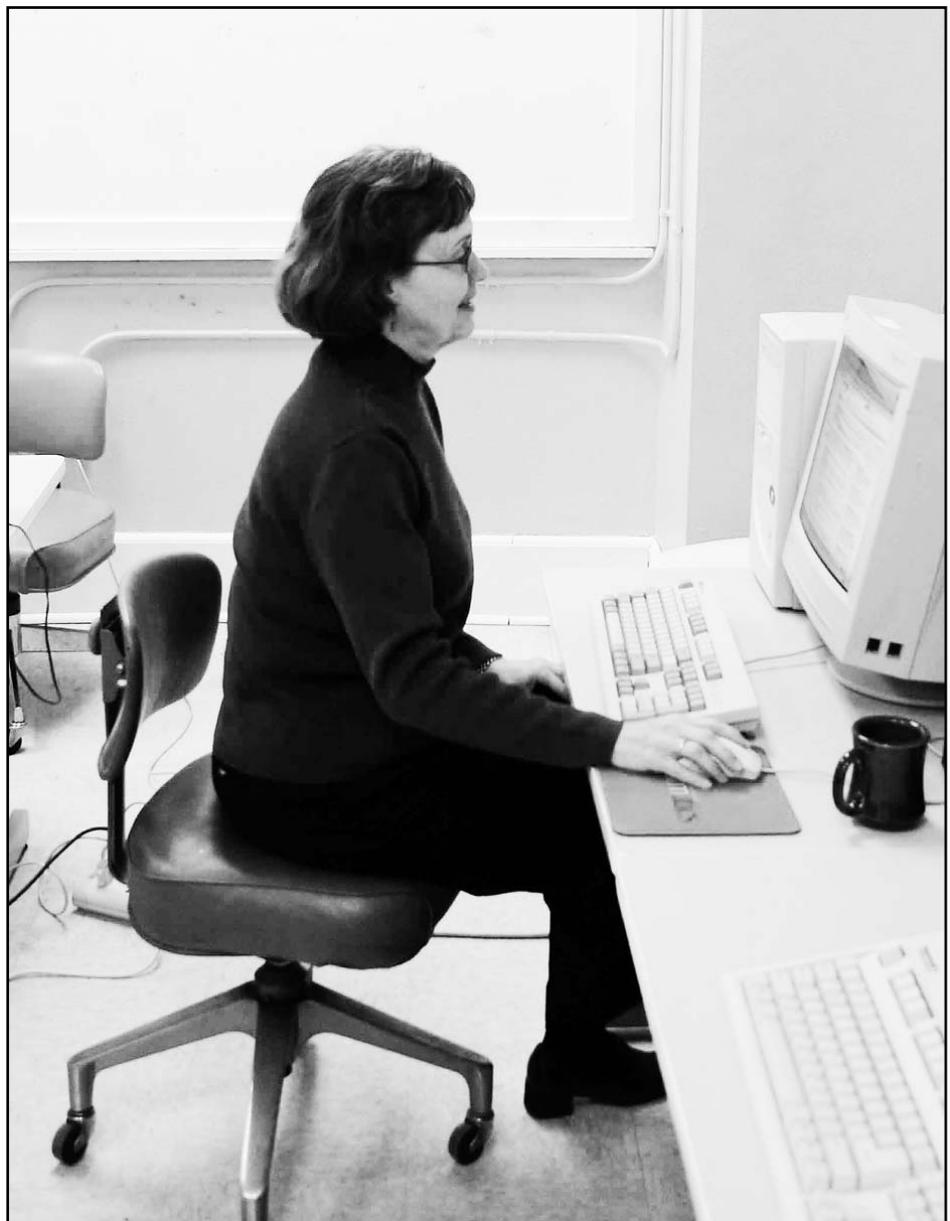
From a student volunteer: Volunteering at the Shalom Community Center "has certainly opened my eyes to a new world and has allowed me to learn a lot about Bloomington, about poverty and homelessness."





An article by a guest and volunteer at the Shalom Community Center

My name is Kennedy Marshall and I am one of the many guests that have been assisted here at the Shalom Center. I came to Bloomington in June of last year and did not know where to turn. I had no friends and no hope to ever again be half the person I was. The staff here helped me to get in touch with the many agencies that come here to help the guests. I had no place to live and they put me in touch with the shelter for women. After that was exhausted and I still had no place to go due to some legal problems I'm having, they helped even further with a place to lay my head, food and clothing. Every Wednesday, Shalom (through the goodness of First United Methodist Church) has a food pantry to ensure that the homeless and those in poverty DON'T go hungry. Because of these contacts, I have all confidence I'm going to be just fine. Because of the guidance I received at Shalom Community Center, I now do volunteer work in the administrative offices. Because they have done so much for me, I have a chance to give back to an organization that has done so much to help the community.



Images from Shalom Community Center: these two pages show volunteers, student volunteers and staff, that help with the more than 200 guests that come through on a daily basis. Working hand-in-hand with other community agencies, the Shalom Community Center helps those experiencing homelessness and poverty in Bloomington.

Advertise In This Newspaper!

To help defray the cost of publishing this newspaper, we are soliciting advertisements from local businesses and sponsors. If you would like to advertise, or be a sponsor, please contact David White at white@indiana.edu.

Monroe County Wrap-Around

645 S. Rogers
Cindi Skoog
Director
(812) 337-2225
cskoog@the-center.org

Monroe County has one of Indiana's first and most established Wrap-Around initiatives. Efforts began in 1996 when providers from several local agencies began attending conferences that introduced the concept of Wrap-Around: a strength-based, family driven process of planning for kids with complex needs. Over the next year, Wrap-Around gurus like Karl and Kathy Dennis and John Vanderburgh presented Wrap-Around to Advisory Committee and Community team members. By 1998, the local Step-Ahead Council provided the funds to hire the first coordinator, and within the first year 15 children and families were referred. The county recognized that they needed a more "collaborative effort to help kids in their community" and made this a priority. Currently there are 2 full-time staff who serve approximately 35 families a year. 35 agencies are part of the larger community team that meets monthly to staff cases and share information about local resources.

Beth Krouse, who was there in the beginning, adds "Monroe County Wrap-Around began as a real grass roots effort. Front line and middle managers came together as volunteers to try and begin a strengths-based, family focused process for working with families. They also saw the need for better communication among service providers in order to seamlessly serve families and create plans that would not conflict with the goals of other providers involved. It has been a real testament to the commitment of providers in Monroe County by the way they work with families and one another to embrace the philosophy of Wrap-Around. It grew from strictly all volunteers in terms of oversight, to it's current staff of three."

Currently, families are being included at all levels of the structure of Monroe County Wrap Around, which is a critical component of the Wrap-Around philosophy. They are beginning to serve on committees that look at policies and goals for Wrap-Around. The hope is to increase family involvement even more in the form of support groups and possibly team leaders or parent mentors that have actually experienced the process.

Holley Gentry, a parent member, says "Wrap-Around has been a wonderful experience because it has not only helped our son to grow, but it has helped all of us grow as individuals and as a family as well. The best part is that we got to choose who to have on our team."

The Salvation Army

Steven Koehler, Corps Officer/Director
Steven_Koehler@usc.salvationarmy.org

The Salvation Army, 111 North Rogers Street, an international movement, is an evangelical part of the Universal Christian Church. Its message is based on the Bible. Its ministry is motivated by love for God. Its mission is to preach the gospel of Jesus Christ and meet human needs in His name without discrimination. The Salvation Army of Bloomington, Indiana has been active for 98 years in the social services and faith community. The local branch provides a variety of services which includes the following: food pantry, food vouchers, emergency shelter, transitional housing living program, seasonal assistance, clothing, furniture, appliances, household items, hygiene items, rent/mortgage assistance, utility assistance, medical assistance, disaster relief, summer child care, after school programs, summer residential camps, adult programs, child care connection, nursing home visitation, gas vouchers, bus tickets, a place of worship and operates a thrift store. All services are without charge with the exception of Child Care Connection, thrift store and transitional housing. The Salvation Army receives a majority of its funding from United Way, private citizens, thrift store sales and businesses. The Salvation Army receives funding via several mail solicitations and by conducting the annual Red Kettle campaign. These funds assist seasonal and year-round services.

Volunteers help year round with serving on our Advisory Board, Women's Auxiliary, ringing bells for the red kettles, supervising youth programs, and helping in our thrift store. For more information, call 336-4310

Mother Hubbard's Cupboard

Libby Yarnelle
Director, Mother Hubbard's Cupboard: a
Bloomington community food pantry
1010 S. Walnut Street, Suite G
Bloomington, IN 47401
www.bloomington.in.us/~mhc

While hunger is a serious problem in the Bloomington community, so too is the nutritional quality of the food that lower income folks can access. Often the healthiest foods are the most expensive, and the well-being of people in our community suffers as a result. Mother Hubbard's Cupboard (MHC) is organized around the belief that all people, regardless of economic status, deserve access to food that will benefit their health.

MHC is Bloomington's largest food pantry, currently serving an average of over 850 clients per week. In 2004, we distributed over 370,000 pounds of food—food that would have cost over \$750,000 if our patrons had purchased it retail. Our mission is to provide wholesome, healthful foods to people in need, as well as nutrition and gardening education. We provide our services in ways that build community while enhancing the dignity, respect, and self care of all involved. Our food stock consists mainly of fresh foods that are important to a healthful diet: fruits and vegetables, milk, yogurt, soy foods and fresh, locally baked breads. We receive the majority of our food from the Hoosier Hills Food Bank, whose great work makes ours possible. MHC is almost completely volunteer run; we have over 50 active volunteers, 80% of whom are also pantry patrons.

But we do more than provide people with food. MHC's Community Gardening Program goes straight to the source of our interest in food—growing it ourselves. In this program, we teach patrons and community members the skill of organic gardening and raise fresh produce for the pantry—last year over 1,400 pounds. MHC also helps organize the local Plant-a-Row for the Hungry campaign, which encourages local growers to donate fresh produce to help alleviate hunger.

Through our Nutrition Education Program, we offer information about the benefits of proper nutrition and how to use food in our pantry. We offer recipes, food samples, handouts on nutritional issues, and even workshops on special topics like canning or vegetarian cooking.

Our programs are funded by a combination of generous donations from community members, grants, special events, and in-kind donations. It is our vision that, as a result of our programs, all those involved will begin to see the interrelatedness of nutrition, health, community, and our natural environment.

To learn more about us or how you can get involved, please contact us at mhc@bloomington.in.us or 812-355-6843.

Retired and Senior Volunteer Program

Shalini Sarin
RSVP (Retired and Senior Volunteer Program) Director
Area 10 Agency on Aging
7500 W. Reeves Road
Bloomington, IN 47404
Phone: 812-876-3383

The Retired and Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP) of Monroe and Owen counties provides opportunities for persons 55 and over to utilize their life skills and interests to help solve problems and build stronger communities. RSVP volunteers help tutor children in reading, help to build houses, participate in neighborhood watch programs, deliver meals to the homebound, offer disaster relief to victims of natural disasters, and help community organizations operate more efficiently. RSVP offers maximum flexibility and choice to its volunteers. There are no requirements regarding education, income or experience for an older adult to become a volunteer. RSVP assists volunteers in finding projects which match their interests and abilities and then provides follow-up, recognition, information, and referrals to ensure success and fulfillment as an RSVP Volunteer and valued community contributor! Locally 378 RSVP volunteers gave 58,000 hours of their time in 2004; 54 volunteers tutored 94 students over 2,600 hours; 51 volunteers delivered meals to 400 low-income homebound giving 7,000 hours; 34 volunteers made 1,000 bears for traumatized children in hospitals; 12 volunteers collected 450 pounds of medical waste; 170 older workers sought and received employment services.

Family Service Association and the Mental Health Alliances

Are You Looking For An Opportunity To Give Back To Your Community?

Donna Graves, Executive Director

Family Service Association and the Mental Health Alliance, an agency committed to strengthening the quality of family life and promoting awareness, acceptance and treatment of mental illness is currently accepting applications for new board members. FSA/MHA operates a diverse range of programs including Oak Tree Counseling, CASA (Court Appointed Special Advocates), Families in Transition/ Family Strengthening (parenting classes for both the community and for incarcerated parents), Jail Diversion, Ombudsman Program and a variety of support groups for persons with mental illness and their family members. Oak Tree Counseling provides individual and family therapy for a variety of issues including depression, communication, school issues, grief and loss, marriage/divorce and other mental illness. Oak Tree also offers group services for children and teens. Oak Tree has offices in both Bloomington and Bedford, Indiana. Support groups through the Mental Health Alliance include confidential peer-to-peer support groups for persons with schizophrenia or depression and/or bi-polar related issues.

Board members would provide guidance to the agency regarding goals, policies, and initiatives with an ultimate goal of ensuring viability and growth of FSA/MHA. Board members would be accepted for a three-year term. Contact Donna Graves at 339-1551 Ex. 12.

The CASA program is currently looking for volunteers to work on their largest yearly fundraiser, the CASA Playhouse. The Playhouse will be raffled off with a number of other prizes at the mall on August 27, 2005. Volunteers are needed for all stages of the project. Contact Deborah Dunning at 339-1551 Ex. 25.

The CASA program is also recruiting for direct service volunteers to serve as advocates for children in the court system. Volunteers must be 21 years of age and serve a minimum of one year. Volunteers would work directly with children and their families helping to advocate for the best interest of the child.

More information regarding our agency and its programs may be found on our website: monroementalhealth.com.

Middle Way House Bloomington

Web site: www.bloomington.in.us/~mwhouse

24 Hour Crisis Line: (812) 336-0846.

by Charlotte Zietlow

Middle Way House is a comprehensive program in Bloomington that provides services to protect and help women who are victims of domestic violence and sexual assault, as well as other women who feel they are in danger. The services provided include: a 24 hour crisis line, an emergency shelter at Middle Way House, advocacy for victims of domestic violence and sexual assault, case management, referrals and advocacy with other agencies, in-house children's programs and children's advocacy with local agencies and schools, legal advocacy, and in-shelter and off-site support groups. Middle Way also has a transitional housing program called The Rise, that opened in 1998. It is for families leaving abusive relationships. The Rise offers safe, secure, and supportive housing for up to two years. There are 28 self-contained apartments, where families who are low-income and have a history of domestic violence can stay. The Rise has an on-site child care program, a mentoring program for older children, and a number of support opportunities as well as case management. Staff and volunteers are available 24 hours a day and emergency transportation is available.

Middle Way also has businesses which provide decently paid jobs and training for its clients and other women in need of employment. It has a mobile shredding and imaging service which services the general public as well as local businesses, called Confidential Document Destruction. CDD recycles all the paper it shreds, diverting over a thousand tons of paper from the landfill in the last 8 years. Middle Way also operates Middleway FoodWorks which prepares around 900 lunches a day for four day-care programs and Area 10 Senior Nutrition program, plus breakfasts and snacks for two programs. Middle Way FoodWorks also provides catering services for meetings, receptions, weddings, luncheons, and birthdays and does special baking. Middle Way FoodWorks can be reached at (812) 333-7404 ext 222 or 219-9525.

Middle Way has had numerous success stories which will be featured in upcoming issues of this newspaper, so watch for them! If you are interested in volunteering or donating money, call (812) 333-7404.

Amethyst House

Janna Hocker

Associate Director, Development

P.O. Box 11

Bloomington, IN 47402

(812) 336-3570

Amethyst House is a Bloomington based, not-for-profit, United Way agency that provides high quality structured living environments, treatment, and recovery services for individuals with addictions. Now in its 25th year, Amethyst House operates three transitional living facilities, a men's 1/2 way house that serves 19 men, a women's 1/2 way house that serves 10 women and their dependent children up to age 6, and a men's 3/4 way house that serves 5. Amethyst House operates an outpatient treatment facility in Bloomington as well as in Evansville. Amethyst House receives funding from a variety of sources including: the Indiana Division of Mental Health and Addictions Hoosier Assurance Program (HAP), Housing and Urban Development (HUD), United Way, CARES, CDBG, NAP, and other private donations. For more information about our programs, services, making a donation, and volunteer opportunities, please check out our website at: www.amethysthouse.org or call our Administrative Office at: 812-336-3570.

Monroe County United Ministries

Rebecca Stanze

Development Coordinator

Monroe County United Ministries (MCUM) started in 1939 as a project of the Bloomington Council of Church Women (now known as Church Women United). These women saw a need for child-care on the northwest side of Bloomington, known as "The Hill" or "Pigeon Hill," for families where both parents had to work. At that time, there were no all-day nursery schools in the area. The Council of Church Women opened the Bloomington Day Nursery, the first such center in Bloomington, in 1940. That was the beginning of what is now Monroe County United Ministries.

MCUM still has strong support from Monroe County's religious community but there is no religious element to the services we provide. We also have a variety of other important partners in the community, including United Way Community Services of Monroe County, the City of Bloomington, and Opportunity House, to name a few. These organizations all recognize the value of our Child-Care and Emergency Services Programs. Our Child-Care Program includes year-round subsidized care for children, ages two to six, from low-income families and summer camp subsidized child-care for children, ages six to ten, when school is out of session. These services are available to Monroe County families where all care-givers are working full time or attending school part-time and working part time. Our Child-Care Program is licensed by the state of Indiana and accredited by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC). The Emergency Services Program assists families who are experiencing a short-term crisis. The program includes a food pantry, a clothing program in conjunction with Opportunity House (a resale shop located on West 11th Street), and financial assistance in the form of rent or utility payments to prevent eviction or disconnection.

Volunteer opportunities abound at MCUM. Volunteers can bag groceries in the food pantry, serve as office assistants, help in the classrooms or cook in the kitchen. Families can volunteer together, groups can arrange to help with big projects, individuals can come in regularly or just volunteer for one project at a time.

United Ministries is located on the near west side next to Tri-North Middle School and Mills Pool. Visitors are always welcome and we are happy to arrange a tour for your club, group or family. Representatives can also make presentations at meetings or other gatherings. For more information about MCUM, call (812)339-3429, email mcum@bloomington.in.us or visit us online at www.bloomington.in.us/~mcum.

Stepping Stones, Inc.

Transitional Housing for Youth

Sheri Benham
Executive Director

Research shows two disturbing trends: young people experiencing homelessness are increasing in number and there is a greater risk for teens to be homeless than adults. There are basically three groups of young people experiencing homelessness:

1. "System" youth are in the process of moving out of foster care because they are turning 18.
2. "Runaway" youth leave home to escape physical and/or sexual abuse, substance abuse, or domestic violence.
3. "Throwaway" youth are neglected or pushed out of their homes by parents or guardians.

Many of these youth would not consider themselves homeless. They end up staying with friends for a while, living with family for a few months, or just finding a place to spend the night. They are "couch surfers" and technically are homeless. And if we do not help them learn how to break this cycle during this vulnerable time in their lives, their chances of becoming chronically homeless escalates.

Stepping Stones, Inc. is a new nonprofit organization in Monroe County partnering with Family Solutions and Youth Services Bureau to start a transitional housing program that can fill this need. Our program allows young people, aged 16 to 21 years of age, the experience of living independently under the guidance, support and structure of a community.

We have been awarded a federal grant through the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) to provide housing + supportive services for youth experiencing homelessness. It is targeted to begin late spring/early summer. The grant brings in \$232,000 in federal dollars over a three-year period. Our community has to show a commitment to the program by contributing a cash match of \$46,000. To date, we have raised \$23,500.

Communities need to make special efforts to reach out to youth in crisis. We can help them remove or mitigate barriers in their lives. We need to help them maintain a sense of hope by providing them with the opportunity to succeed. So what can you do to help support this new organization? Donate your time: we have a good core of people helping to bring this organization together but we can always use more expertise. Donate money: we need to raise more money to meet our cash match. Donate furniture/household items: we will need to outfit our apartments. For more information you may contact Sheri Benham, Executive Director at 336-7196 or shbenham@indiana.edu. Please send donations to: Stepping Stones, Inc. P.O. Box 1366, Bloomington, Indiana 47402.

Youth Services Bureau of Monroe County

David Torneo
Clinical Coordinator
615 S. Adams St.
Bloomington, Indiana 47403
Phone: 812-349-2506
Website: www.youthservicesbureau.net

Y^SB programs are designed to meet the needs of youth and their families in Monroe County and its surrounding communities; a goal which requires a wide variety of services.

YSB is often referred to as the Youth Shelter, a fifteen bed, fully handicapped accessible division of our agency that provides short term residential care and crisis intervention for youth ages 8 to 17. The Youth Shelter provides emergency shelter to runaways, homeless, and youth in crisis or abusive situations at home. Accessible 24 hours a day, the Youth Shelter provides counseling, education, supervised recreation, and transportation to and from school, as well as referrals to a variety of agencies for other needed services. Referrals to the Youth Shelter can be made by other social service agencies, parents, or youths themselves.

YSB also runs Project Safe Place, a community-wide outreach service for runaways and at-risk youth in crisis situations. Youths in need of immediate assistance can go to locations displaying the yellow Safe Place sign, where a trained volunteer will come meet the youth to assist in diffusing the crisis.

YSB takes a proactive role in diverting youth from the juvenile justice system. We provide a number of activities geared at keeping our community's youth on the right track. The Youth Outreach Program, in collaboration with MCCSC, works with suspended and expelled middle school youth. Youth Outreach provides these students with intensive, one-on-one teaching to help them keep up with their education while they are out of school. To ease the transition back to school when they are readmitted, counseling is provided to students and their families to address issues adversely affecting school performance.

The Youth Network, an YSB prevention program in partnership with the Asset Building Coalition, is an organization that helps to create and support student coalition groups in each middle school and one collective student coalition at the high school level. The mission is to promote a healthy teen community in Monroe County by providing fun, drug-free alternatives and spreading awareness about the effects and consequences of abusing drugs, alcohol, and tobacco.

